



Final Report

Citizens Advice Scotland

Energy Efficiency Focus Groups in
Edinburgh and Jedburgh 2014

Rocket Science UK Ltd
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1 Summary of Headline Findings

Citizens Advice Scotland commissioned Rocket Science and Changeworks to carry out focus groups with owner-occupiers and private renting tenants to explore:

- Attitudes and awareness of energy efficiency measures
- Potential barriers they might face to taking action on energy efficiency measures
- How they would be likely to respond to any future regulation.

This report provides the results from four focus groups: two held in Edinburgh on the evening of 9th October 2014; and two held in Jedburgh on the evening of 14th October 2014. In this section we present the main headlines under each section of the discussions.

What makes a good home?

- The main characteristics people look for in a home are location, good neighbours, safety and security (all based on budget).
- Owners would look for a good condition of the building. Renters would too, but generally had a much lower standard (i.e. something in a 'liveable standard').
- While energy efficiency measures can reduce bills and improve warmth, it was a low priority when people are looking to buy a new home: energy efficiency was a factor, but not a deciding one. Owners reported that they wouldn't be using it to make a decision when comparing properties.
- Warmth and comfort seemed more important than energy bills. Owner occupiers didn't feel they needed to look at energy efficiency because it would be something they could easily improve themselves.

Awareness of current situation (Energy Performance Certificate or EPC)

- In Edinburgh all owner-occupiers were aware of Home Reports and the requirement to have one. Most remembered that they had seen an EPC but most had not read much of it. In Jedburgh there was low awareness of EPCs among owner occupiers.
- Awareness of EPCs amongst renters was mixed: some had never seen one and were not aware they were a requirement. Most had seen them but only looked at the first page briefly and considered them to be a document aimed at the landlord, not the tenant. Some, including those who had rented without using an estate agent, reported that they were presented on the wall in their home.
- Owners appear unlikely to take action as a result of an EPC as:
 - Energy efficiency is not an important factor at the point of sale (it appears to be later during their occupancy that owners may start to think about undertaking simple energy efficiency measures such as roof insulation)
 - There is major distrust of the EPCs, particularly amongst owners. This was partly because of experiences of poor quality surveyors (not related to energy

efficiency) and also because EPCs are based on assumptions and not felt to be accurate.

- Renters reported more trust in the EPC and some reported they might use it to encourage their landlord to take actions that would save them money.
- In our rural focus group renters were likely to have a good relationship with their landlord. As a result, most tenants felt able to undertake energy efficiency measures themselves or negotiate for the landlord to do this either for or with them (including one who had split the cost of installing new central heating with their landlord). We did not find this in Edinburgh where the relationship was distant or non-existent.
- EPCs were generally not well understood – both owners and renters did not understand what the SAP score (1 – 100) was. There was mistrust of the costs given for measures: for example, many thought cavity wall insulation could be received for free.

Energy efficiency

- Energy efficiency is somewhat important to people – for example, preferences of a heating system and having a warm/comfortable home.
- Renters may take into account energy efficiency characteristics of a property when deciding where to rent – for example, gas central heating and double glazing was preferred. However, for most this was not a deciding factor.
- Many renters were used to living in a cold and draughty home, and had adopted coping mechanisms for dealing with this (e.g. using towels as draught excluders). There was general acceptance of this situation rather than a feeling that landlords should improve the property.
- Renters may ask landlords to make improvements but they generally felt landlords would not make improvements unless it was a legal obligation or free.
- Owners had mixed feelings on energy efficiency – there was a general sense that they had done what was necessary to make their home comfortable. Recommendations on EPCs were often not seen as realistic due to high upfront costs or long payback periods.
- People would look for information about energy efficiency from websites, forums and friends/family. One person mentioned the Energy Saving Trust. There was a general level of scepticism about who was behind the EPC and who would be benefiting from installations.
- Renters did not trust letting agents. They trusted private landlords to some degree – more so in rural areas where they often knew each other quite well.

The future – meeting a required standard

- There was little (rural) or no (urban) support from owner occupiers for a minimum standard. They see it as a burden on them as a seller rather than a gain for the buyer, and it was felt to be unachievable, involving too much control from Government, and unfair given their mistrust of the EPC ratings. A number of problems and issues were raised:
 - What if a buyer would prefer to buy a house that needs substantial improvement as it is a better investment?
 - What about properties which cannot meet the standard or can only do so by damaging period features (e.g. listed buildings)?
 - What if they meet the standards set by one surveyor but a subsequent surveyor has a different assessment?
 - Would it apply if a family was trying to sell a house they inherited?
 - What if the seller is on a low income and/or has no capital to invest?
- There was some support for a minimum standard in private rented accommodation where it is seen as a clear advantage for a tenant and not unreasonable for a landlord – from both renters and owners. There was a sense that landlords needed to be regulated. However, there were concerns from some renters that this would lead to higher rents.
- Some participants generally supported the idea of minimum standards for environmental reasons and felt minimum standards were desirable.
- Participants generally felt that financial support would be needed for any regulation but conditions would be needed (e.g. can't sell house for a given period after receiving a grant).

2 Research Methodology

Citizens Advice Scotland commissioned Rocket Science and Changeworks to carry out focus groups with owner-occupiers and private renting tenants to explore:

- Attitudes and awareness of energy efficiency measures
- Potential barriers they might face to taking action
- How they would be likely to respond to any future regulation.

This report provides the results from four focus groups: two held in Edinburgh on the evening of 9th October 2014; and two held in Jedburgh on the evening of 14th October 2014.

A total of 28 individuals participated in the focus groups which lasted one hour. Recruitment was through an existing research panel. Participants were given an incentive payment after the focus group. In a letter inviting participants to the focus group they were told the discussion was going to be about *"People's views on choosing their home, what makes a home comfortable and on energy efficiency"*. In the introduction at the beginning of the focus group they were told the discussion was going to be about *"What makes a good home and what the government could do to help make as many homes as possible warm and comfortable at an affordable price."* The detailed profile of the participants in the two focus groups in Edinburgh and the two focus groups in Jedburgh is presented in Appendix 1.

Details of the participants are set out below:

Edinburgh group 1	Edinburgh group 2
Seven participants	Six participants
Aged 45+	Aged 25 to 45
Owner-occupiers	Four private rented tenants, two social tenants (whose views on landlords are not included in results)
Most had moved house in the last three years	Most had moved house in the last three years
Urban	Urban
Mixed gender	Mixed gender

Jedburgh group 1	Jedburgh group 2
Seven participants	Eight participants
Aged 25+	Aged 25+
Owner-occupiers	Private rented tenants
Had moved house in the last three years	Had moved house in the last three years
Rural area	Rural area
Mixed gender	Mixed gender

The focus group facilitators used a common topic guide (set out in Appendix 2). Where needed, they followed up responses with additional questions to clarify responses. One example of this was adding a question asking participants to identify which types of central heating they preferred after the discussion indicated that the type of central heating is something some participants ask about when viewing a house to buy.

In general the discussions flowed relatively easily with participants supporting or supplementing each other's points. The facilitators used the topic guide (Appendix 2) as a structure and there was little need to intervene or prompt beyond this.

In some of the discussions the facilitator summarised points being made where a point had been made by more than one participant or had been unclear. Additionally, some participants made very specific points which the facilitator generalised to see if it was something the group would agree with. For example, where one renter suggested she had bought a new central heating system with her landlord it was asked of the wider group whether they would be interested in or able to invest in energy efficiency with their landlord.

Some participants needed some questions repeating or rephrasing: in the Jedburgh group one participant asked, "What is it exactly we are talking about [when you say energy efficiency]? Double glazing and that?".

The facilitators captured the main points during the discussion and the focus groups were also recorded to check on detail later.

Two pieces of stimulus material were used: a sample EPC and a sample Home Report.

Overall, there was considerable consensus among the participants which provides some confidence that these views are widely shared. There were some differences between rural and urban views and perspectives which we highlight in the Findings section.

3 Research Findings

What makes a good home?

Participants were asked for their perspectives on what makes a 'good home'. The most important characteristic for participants from all groups was location.

In the Edinburgh groups a '**good' neighbourhood** (deemed to be safe, secure and have low levels of noise) was important, possibly with option of parking space or a garden.

In both Edinburgh and Jedburgh selecting the right area in terms of **affordable property** size was important. Participants in Jedburgh suggested location is particularly important for people with children in rural areas, so they can be **close to friends or schools**.

An important factor for owner-occupiers was the **condition of the property** and repairs that may be required. Some would prefer a property that required little work, "somewhere to walk into". Others would prefer to undertake significant work to get better value.

The condition of the property was also important to renters. In the Edinburgh group some appeared to have a much lower acceptable standard, i.e. "**liveable**". For example, one participant explained they would look for a property that was watertight, having functioning heating and windows that open.

Some commented that the duration they expected to rent for - and whether they had a family - would affect whether they were looking for a place which met higher standards such as being warm. A short tenancy for a single person need not be so homely.

The renters in the rural focus group had found their homes informally - none had used estate agents - so they had not necessarily gone through the same process of selecting properties from lists of available options and comparing properties. It also meant that they mostly had good relationships with their landlords who gave them some control over upkeep, improvement or decoration after moving in.

Importance of energy efficiency when looking for a home

Some participants stated that the energy efficiency of a potential home was a factor when choosing a property to buy or rent. However, it was not a priority as, at the point of choosing a house, there are other, more important factors; at best it would be "**low down the list**" of requirements. Only a few said it could become a deciding factor if choosing between two similar properties. For example, the condition of the bathroom or kitchen was considered to be more important than energy efficiency.

"When you first look at a house it isn't in your mind; but after you live in it for 6 months..."

Some owners clarified that this was of little importance when buying property as it is something they could fix or improve themselves; one said he was more concerned about issues with the building that could cost £10,000 to repair.

At the point of selling or buying a home there are too many other factors to consider, aspects affecting the overall value, and tasks to undertake, for energy efficiency to become an important factor.

For renters, energy efficiency appeared not to be a priority because the 'standard' they would accept was lower. That is, they were used to living in properties with poor energy efficiency. All described situations of living in cold or draughty homes and how they had adopted coping mechanisms to living in such properties (see Section 2.3) rather than look for a more efficient property or request improvements from their landlords. Some renters also felt it was difficult to know whether a property was going to be energy efficient before moving in:

"You can see the physical things like the draught strips but you don't know [the energy efficiency] until you move in."

Some renters stated they would look for double glazing when looking to rent a new property. However, this was stated as 'preferred' rather than 'expected', as many currently or previously lived in old tenements with single glazing and were 'used to it':

"In Edinburgh all the ones I've lived in so far have been the same...you just put extra layers on."

Despite the lack of importance being placed on energy efficiency when choosing a home, among both renters and owners many had considered the type of heating that was available. This was based on personal preferences and previous experiences, with gas being considered the most convenient and desirable, followed by oil (for the rural group only). Storage heaters were widely seen as undesirable.

On the whole, warmth and comfort seemed more immediately important to participants than energy bills.

Awareness of current situation (EPCs)

Awareness of EPCs

Awareness of EPC requirements when selling properties was mixed:

- Most owner-occupiers were aware of Home Reports and the requirement to have one when selling a property. Some recognised an EPC.
- Awareness of the requirements for EPCs in private rented accommodation was also mixed. Most renters recognised EPCs, some knew there was one on their wall at home. Some had never seen one.

There was very little awareness about when an EPC was required for owner-occupiers or rented accommodation.

The EPC energy rating (A – G) was the most recognised part of the EPC. Some people knew that the EPC also contained suggestions for improvement.

When one group of owners was prompted that it was needed at the point of sale, they all suggested they would get one done by their estate agent or solicitor (rather than shopping around) as it was better to have one person do it all and the cost (indicated to them as £50-100) was marginal in a house sale. Some suggested it was something they would *"put straight into a drawer"* rather than read.

Opinions on usefulness of EPCs

Renters in Edinburgh considered EPCs to be a document aimed at the landlord, rather than renters because they felt that they could not act on the information given:

"[It tells me] you could improve that but it's not my property so I don't really care"

Renters in Jedburgh suggested that the EPC was interesting, trustworthy, and a potentially useful tool in getting work done by a landlord that would benefit the tenant. This may reflect their better and more informal relationships with their landlords.

There was a major distrust of EPCs amongst owner-occupiers:

"It isn't worth the paper it's written on."

This appeared to be largely based on negative experiences and perspectives of the surveyors who produce Home Reports - or bad experiences with salesmen for boilers (or similar) trying to argue it was a good deal. For example, home-owners cited occasions where a surveyor had omitted important information from a survey – or commented that some surveyors provided surveys in greater depth than others. Participants felt there was a lack of accountability for surveyors and this was needed to improve the quality of their reports. Many of the owners seemed to be generally sceptical of making large up front investments in energy saving (e.g. more than just loft insulation).

Participants gave examples of surveys giving incorrect judgements of the condition of a property or lack of detail in surveys. One participant asked whether an EPC considers a real situation where children leave doors open all the time; another participant wondered whether a second surveyor might disagree with the assessment of the first surveyor.

"It's far too vague – it's all generic."

"All these indicative costs – cavity wall insulation....you can get that for free. So why are they saying £1,500 when you can get it for free if you're over a certain age, they don't say that. It's just stock standard stuff It should be scrapped."

"Even if you do everything on the EPC then someone else [another surveyor] could just ask for more."

The Home Reports were seen as expensive, inaccurate and a *"paper exercise"*. This perception appeared to be of the entire Home Report and not specifically the EPC, although these experiences appear to have influenced perceptions of the EPC since it is part of the Home Report.

An EPC was not seen as a tool to support decisions about which property to buy or rent. One person considered that they might use a *"bad"* (i.e. F/G band) EPC as a tool to negotiate the price down.

On the whole, participants had a reasonable understanding of the EPC rating system but the SAP scoring method (1 – 100) was not felt to be clear. On the whole, it was felt to be useful having a scale, but some people suggested they did not understand what the score stood for. In addition, one participant felt the rating score put *'pressure'* on people to improve their property. It was considered useful that the EPC contained recommendations for improvements but, as above, there was a reasonable level of distrust about this information among homeowners.

Lastly, there was a general scepticism as to *'who was behind the EPC'* and who was benefiting from it. For example, one participant thought the Government may be profiting from the installation of energy efficiency measures; another than boiler sales people or similar may be doing the assessments.

"Does the person doing the inspection have something to gain?"

The most commonly cited improvement to EPCs was to base them on actual energy billing data, rather than assumptions. For example, it could provide cost data of that property from the past year, provide costs over winter and summer or provide a cost per occupant. It was also felt by some that EPCs were too complex and should provide information in *'layman's terms'*.

Energy efficiency

When asked what *'energy efficiency'* meant, most participants talked about energy saving behaviour such as turning off lights and appliances, and turning down the heat when not needed.

Whilst reducing energy bills was generally seen as something desirable, none of the participants mentioned that their bills were high. In fact, when asked, some of the owner-occupiers commented that they had not noticed energy bills rise in recent years.

Some Edinburgh tenants said they were *'used to'* living in properties that could be cold and draughty. The renters described coping mechanisms they had adopted for dealing with this – for example, using towels as draught excluders around windows or under doors.

Renters stated they would be keen for their landlord to install energy efficiency measures to improve the property:

'I'd want anything and everything you could get.'

Some renters in Jedburgh had taken actions such as draught excluders or removing redundant storage heaters – they felt able to make minor changes such as these without negotiating with their landlord. Others in Jedburgh had asked their landlord to make changes: one lady had moved into a cottage with no central heating and agreed with the landlord (with whom she has a good relationship) to install a new and energy efficient electric central heating system and share the cost between the tenant and landlord on an informal basis (the tenant was retired so could access some free installation services).

The Edinburgh group would not expect the landlords to make improvements unless they were cost free or it was a legal obligation. It was assumed that they would refuse requests based on cost grounds:

"They'll do the legally required stuff but not extras; even if you have a good relationship, they won't get the expensive stuff."

Furthermore, it was felt that landlords would not make an effort to make improvements, even if finance was not a problem. For example, one renter who had asked their landlord to make a number of improvements (including replacement windows and paint to re-decorate) expected the request to be refused because they felt the landlord was 'lazy', not because he couldn't afford it. Similarly, another renter felt landlords would install insulation "if it was free and the tenant organised it". These Edinburgh renters also commented that it could be difficult to get in contact with their landlord.

Owner-occupiers were clearly willing to make improvements to their home to make it more comfortable or reduce energy bills. Several had installed roof insulation or draft excluders. There was a general sense that this would be 'obvious' to do. However, in some cases it was also recognised that improving the energy efficiency may be difficult or limited:

"If you're in a flat there's not much you can do [to improve the energy efficiency]."

Some participants' (particularly owner-occupiers) personal or family experiences of installing energy efficiency measures included both negative and positive experiences and appeared to have a significant impact on their opinion of the measures. For example:

"My mother, about five or six years ago, had cavity wall [insulation installed] and her house has never been as cold as it is now, its horrendous. I wouldn't have it put in."

"Since doing the loft [conversion] we only have one radiator on downstairs. We put in extra insulation not for heat retention but for noise but now the house is unbelievably warmer."

One owner reported that they had done lots to their home but it remained cold and draughty.

Participants recognised to some degree that energy efficiency improvements may increase the value of their home.

Information on energy efficiency

When asked where they would look for information on energy efficiency (in a theoretical situation where they needed such information in future), most participants stated they would use the internet – starting with “a Google search”. Participants were familiar with terms such as ‘loft insulation’, ‘cavity wall’, ‘double glazing’; meaning that these individuals would have a start in knowing how to look up relevant information. Some participants explained that they would look for forums or websites where they could obtain opinions from householders with similar experiences.

Generally, participants seemed to trust information or advice from a householder who had experience of an improvement over professional advice. Some participants were specifically distrustful of some professionals in the energy efficiency market:

“[When buying a new boiler] even the advice you get... they could be telling you anything - ‘this is the best type, it’ll save you pounds and pounds over so long’ - you are only taking their word for it, they could be telling you anything.”

“We got a combi put in because they condemned the boiler. Then 6 months after the new combi went in there was a company phoned up and told me I could save £300 a year by attaching something else to your boiler which will make your heating run more efficiently. Well they’d told me it was the most efficient boiler I could have.”

Participants appeared to be strongly influenced by the opinions of friends or family with experiences. For example, if a family member had a poor experience of installing a measure, it was likely to deter them from looking into it. There were some specific examples cited where experience of poor heating systems would deter them from using it in their current home.

Participants stated that they would trust information from family and friends the most. Some commented that they didn’t trust people who might be making money out of energy efficiency such as those selling boilers or insulation; a few people appeared to consider that surveyors and even the Government also may have vested interests.

One participant mentioned they would contact their energy supplier, another, The Energy Saving Trust and another, Changeworks. Participants were asked if they would look for information approved by the Government; this was not seen to increase or decrease participants’ level of trust of the information.

The future – meeting a standard

Standards in owner-occupied properties

There was little support from owner-occupiers for a minimum standard in owner-occupied housing. One participant described it as '*desirable*' and another that it would "*give greater confidence to buyer and seller*", but many felt it was unachievable and unrealistic. The reasons for this are explored below (concerns and limitations).

Mistrust of EPCs was part of reason for their lack of enthusiasm. The owners-occupiers seemed to respond as sellers rather than buyers and one participant did support the move as "*a good thing if you are a buyer*". If this was just a question of "*easy to fix*" changes then there would be more support.

The owner-occupiers appeared to see it as their own decision about improvements made to the energy efficiency of their property; and one which they *would* make. A standard was seen by some as too much Government control:

"It's a bit Big Brother-ish, isn't it? If you're living in a house, you know that you should insulate your loft to keep it warm, to keep your bills down. You don't need the Government to tell you – there's enough of that on the TV to inform [you]."

However, it's not clear how realistic this perception is. When asked if they had made any energy efficiency improvements in their home, most improvements seem to have been made following direct communications from installers offering deals.

Other owner occupiers highlighted that buyers may specifically wish to buy properties that needed work doing to them.

Standards in private rented properties

There was support for a minimum standard in private rented accommodation from both from renters and owners. Rented properties were seen by some as a business, particularly where landlords owned a number of properties, which meant regulation was more appropriate. Some, in Edinburgh, expressed concern about the high demand for private rented accommodation which, for renters, meant there was a more limited choice of properties. Some of these renters had experienced difficulty in securing the property they wanted – for example, large group viewings of properties and queues at letting agents to secure a flat.

Some owner-occupiers were aware of family or friends who had lived in privately rented properties which were not in a good condition. Some therefore felt that renters were being somewhat exploited by landlords.

Renters themselves saw this as a way of ensuring their bills would be reduced without having to approach the landlord or pay for work to be done themselves. Renters' trust of the EPC seemed to reinforce the view that a minimum standard using an EPC band was acceptable.

"I think it's a good idea. If we started doing it now – just think in a hundred years or so a lot of the houses will be in a much better state than they are now.... it's about the energy thing as well and what's good for the environment.....Hopefully it might help people who are not as well off as some people who can afford it, if it helps them in the future."

In contrast to their views on standards in owner-occupied properties, it was also perceived as "fair" that landlords should have minimum standards:

"It's like you'd have to have a gas certificate to say the gas is safe....you're providing a service for someone else [in a private rented property]. It's a different matter if it's you living in the house – if it's cold so be it, you chose to live in that house."

"I think it would be good as it tells you everywhere you rent will be a certain standard."

There were some caveats. In two different focus groups a participant took the suggestion of minimum standards and concluded (entirely unprompted by the facilitator) that this may lead to an increase in rent at some point as a result of the landlord being required to invest more money in home improvements before he can rent out the property. One participant, in particular, was concerned that this might happen:

"I think it's a terrible idea, I think it's awful. Because what will happen is they'll introduce it, landlords will say 'that's fine'. The price of a room in Edinburgh won't be £350 a room; it will be £450."

Concerns and limitations over minimum standards

As many participants did not support the idea of a minimum standard, they were asked for their reasons for this view. Most gave practical explanations as to how it may be difficult for the standard to be met, or what implications it might have on the housing market.

Participants in both groups expressed concerns that minimum standards might mean that some properties *could not* be sold or rented, or that it would "put people off" selling or renting (put off, for example, by the need for large upfront investment). It was therefore a concern to some that properties could be left empty, or that this would interfere with the property market. Some country cottages in particular may be in this category. One woman suggested this based on her knowledge of the empty unrented cottages near her rural home which lie empty as they do not meet regulation standards.

It was felt that owners of protected (listed) buildings should be exempt from the standards. Otherwise it was felt that local authority rules had to be relaxed; for example, on planning regulations for window replacements in listed buildings. Two owner occupiers in such buildings near Jedburgh described that meeting a minimum standard in their 19th century country houses may mean drastic changes to period features or reducing the value of the house which they felt would be unfair.

"My property is a hundred and odd years old, it's a converted mansion, it's got stone walls. So it would be the main features you'd be losing out on but you'd have to do it to meet the standards if they introduced it". Then another owner of a listed house added, "Yes, then you'd be losing value because that is an original feature."

Where properties may not be able to be reasonably adapted to achieve a particular band or to have certain new energy efficiency installations, some participants perceived that installing a specific measure (such as loft insulation) rather than an EPC rating would be a better way to enforce a minimum standard: a "do what you can" approach.

Participants also expressed concerns as to how the standard would be enforced. Generally, it was felt that specific guidelines would be required to help owners achieve it.

"If you do everything in the [EPC] then you get another independent to come in and they say that was a load of crap – it was one person's opinion and you have spent all that money."

"There would have to be a protocol to follow – a standard for everybody."

There were also concerns about how owners on low incomes or with no capital (although focus group participants didn't use the word 'capital' - it was introduced by the facilitator) available would be able to meet a possible standard:

"Ultimately it is what you can afford, not what you can save, what you can afford [upfront]"

It was felt that financial support would help but that conditions would be needed. For example, properties couldn't be sold for a given period after receiving a grant. Others however felt that owners should be able to afford necessary improvements:

"If you can afford to own a house and rent it out you need to be able to afford to replace the boiler."

Another possible problem identified was with individuals inheriting a house and wanting to get it sold quickly - this seemed to be understood from the experience of friends or family inheriting property. In such cases, the inheritor (or executor) may not have capital available to spend on meeting a new standard in order to sell the house - or this may create an unnecessary delay in sale.

Overall there was a sense from several owners that if there are costs associated with this then the Government should be paying the upfront capital:

"If they want to do this they need to pay for it."

Appendix 1: Profile of participants

We have used the National Readership Survey definitions to produce the **social grade information** in this Appendix

Social Grade	Occupation
A	Higher managerial, administrative or professional
B	Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional
C1	Supervisory or clerical, junior managerial, administrative or professional
C2	Skilled manual workers
D	Semi and unskilled manual workers
E	State pensioners or widows (no other earner), casual or lowest grade workers

And the following definitions have been used to establish **working status**:

Working Status	Description
1	Working full-time (more than 30 hrs a week)
2	Working part-time (less than 30 hrs a week)
3	Self-employed
4	Retired.
5	Unemployed
6	Out of work due to disability/ illness
7	Carer for home/ children
8	Full-time education

Edinburgh: Focus Group 1, OWNER OCCUPIERS

Gender	Age	SEG	Q5 - Working Status
MALE	50	C1	1
FEMALE	48	C1	1
FEMALE	58	B	7
MALE	45	B	1
MALE	56	C1	1
MALE	45	C1	1
FEMALE	52	B	1
FEMALE	49	C1	2

Edinburgh: Focus Group 2, RENTED ACCOMMODATION

Gender	Age	SEG	Q5 - Working Status
M	27	B	1
F	25	B	1
F	34	C1	1
F	29	C1	1
M	33	C1	1
F	44	C2	1
M	37	D	2
M	40	C2	2

Jedburgh

For Jedburgh an additional question was asked about home type as it was important to gain insights from those who lived in typical 'rural' properties (as opposed to property with more urban characteristics in Jedburgh itself). In the profiles below the following categories are used.

Description of home	Characteristics
1	Urban flat, maisonette or apartment
2	Urban house or bungalow (detached, semi-detached or terraced)
3	Rural flat, maisonette or apartment
4	Rural house, cottage or bungalow (detached, semi-detached or terraced, agricultural or ex agricultural property)
5	Other, specify

JEDBURGH: Focus Group 1, OWNER OCCUPIERS

Gender	Age	SEG	Q4 - Which of the following best describes your home?	Q6 - Working Status
F	31-44	C1	2	Full Time
M / F	31-44	C2	4	Full Time
M	31-44	C2	4	Full time
M	31-44	C1	4	Full Time
M	31-44	C2	4	Full Time
M	31-44	C2	2	Full Time
M	31-44	B	4	Full Time

JEDBURGH: Focus Group 2, RENTED ACCOMMODATION

Gender	Age	SEG	Q4 - Which of the following best describes your home?	Q6 - Working Status
F	31-44	C1	4	Full Time
M	31-44	C1	4	Full Time
F	45+	C1	2	Full time
F	45+	Retired	2	Retired
F	31-44	C2	4	Part-Time
M	31-44	C2	4	Full Time
M	31-44	C2	4	Full time
F	45+	D	4	Part-Time / Retired

Appendix 2: Focus Groups Research – Topic Guide

Focus group facilitators will:

- Arrive at the venue early and make sure that the room is laid out in a way that encourages open discussion (eg a circle of chairs).
- Ensure that participants are welcomed as they arrive and made to feel at home. There should be tea and coffee available so please help participants use this facility.
- Lead the discussion around the structure provided by this topic guide.
- At the end pass out envelopes with the fee and ensure that recipients sign for these on the form provided.

You will have:

- A list of participants
- Material to use during the discussion, including a dummy Home Report and EPC

Example EPC: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0041/00414384.pdf>

Example Home Report parts: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/BuyingSelling/Home-Report/about/contents>

- A recording device and spare batteries
- Envelopes with cash plus 2 participant signing forms.

Introduction

At the right time introduce yourself and the purpose of the evening and ask participants to introduce themselves, the kind of home they live in and the nature of their most recent move or investment (eg double glazing).

"The purpose of the evening is to gather and explore views of home owners and private sector tenants about what makes a good home and what the government could do to help make as many homes as possible warm and comfortable at an affordable price. These views will be fed into a current government review."

Describe the structure of the discussion:

1. What makes a home good? What role does warm and comfort play in this? What do people look for in a home? What do they value?
2. Awareness of current system of recording how energy efficient a home is
3. What information do people use when buying/renting and how reliable do people think it is?
4. What would be the benefits and problems around introducing a standard around energy efficiency that had to be met by any home being sold or rented?

Confirm that everyone is happy with it being recorded. The recording will only be used to help to write the report and will then be destroyed. This is a confidential discussion and in our report we will make sure that no view can be related to a particular person.

Confirm arrangements in the case of a fire, describe where the toilets are, and ask people to put their phones on silent.

Introduction

- What makes a home 'good' – what do you look for and how would you describe a 'good home'?
- How important is energy efficiency to you when considering a home? [Prompts: low energy bills / warmth and comfort / heating type]
- How does this compare to other things, e.g. state of kitchen / bathroom; need for repair / maintenance such as wall / roof repairs?

Awareness of current situation

[IF OWNER –OCCUPIER show Home Report with Energy Performance Certificate – EPC: IF RENTER – show EPC]

- Have you seen one before / do you have one for your home / and did you use one when you chose a home?
- What are the first things that you look for in a home report; what information are you wanting to find out?
- Do you know what an EPC is and what it tells you? (can you find it in the home report!?)
- Do you know when one is needed and how the information can be used?
- What could be done to improve it and make it more useful?
- To what extent do you think that the EPC is reliable? What would make you trust the EPC more?

Energy efficiency

- What does energy efficiency mean?
- Do you know how energy efficient your home currently is? Do you want to improve it?
- Do you know what would make your home more efficient
 - What kind of things would you change / add to your home?
 - What is the most important change you could make in terms of efficiency?
 - What will be the next change you will make in terms of energy efficiency?

IF RENTER – have you ever asked your landlord to make energy efficiency improvements in your current or previous home? Do you think they would act on your request?

- Where would you go to find out this information?
- What benefits do you think there might be from having a more energy efficient home (e.g. lower bills, warmer and more comfortable, more valuable/easier to sell or rent)?

When a home is sold or rented

- Who do you go to when you want to rent/buy a house? Where do you get your information from? How trustworthy do you think these sources are and the information they provide?
- What are people's main concerns when selling or renting? What pressures are they already facing (e.g. financial)?
- To what extent are you clear what you need to provide potential buyers with when you sell your home?
- FOR RENTERS: To what extent are you clear about what Landlords should provide you with?

The future – meeting a required standard?

- What sort of benefits and problems might there be around introducing a required standard that all houses and flats needed to meet when they were sold or let?
- Does it sound like a good idea? Would you support it?
- What would it be reasonable to expect this standard to be **[range of scenarios]**?
- Could / should there be situations where some properties should be exempt?
- What information or support would you want if you found you had to meet a particular standard before you could sell your house?
 - Where would you look for this information?
 - What types of (financial and non-financial) support do you think you might need to meet a new standard?
 - What sort of incentives would encourage you to meet a new standard?

END