



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
House of Commons
London
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The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP
Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth
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Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your email dated 7 October, on behalf of your constituent Mr John Salmon, regarding concerns around hydrogen for heating, carbon tax and electric vehicles.

Low carbon hydrogen could be one of a few key options for decarbonising heat in buildings. However, unlike other technologies such as heat pumps and heat networks, 100% hydrogen for heating is not yet an established option.

Trials of hydrogen heating will be key to evaluating the practicalities of converting to hydrogen. They will provide a wide range of evidence on costs, feasibility and the way in which consumers experience the conversion process and hydrogen for heating in their homes and workplaces.

The knowledge and experience gained in delivering trials in communities, together with the results of our wider R&D and testing programme, will enable the Government to take strategic decisions in 2026 on the role of hydrogen in decarbonising heat, including whether to proceed with delivering a Town Pilot before the end of the decade.

In the chosen village trial area, the local grid will be converted from natural gas to hydrogen. As consumers in the chosen location will not be able to remain on natural gas, they will need to either switch to hydrogen supplied through the gas distribution network or to accept alternative heating and cooking options that will be provided by the Gas Distribution Networks.

The detailed arrangements for consumers who cannot or don't want to switch to hydrogen will be finalised at a later date, based on engagement with consumers and local authorities in the locality led by Gas Distribution Networks.

Turning to your point regarding electric vehicles, cars and vans represent one fifth of UK domestic CO₂ emissions and accounted for 70% of domestic UK transport emissions in 2018. Ending the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans is a key part of the answer to our long-term transport air quality and greenhouse gas issues.

Bringing forward the phase out date for all petrol and diesel new cars and vans will reduce greenhouse gas emissions faster, with savings equivalent to almost 5 million fewer cars on the road each year by 2035. These new dates will help clean the harmful air in our towns and cities.

Alongside the 2030 and 2035 phase out dates for polluting cars and vans, this Government has committed £2.5 billion towards electric vehicle grants and infrastructure to support the early market and remove barriers to zero emission vehicle ownership.

Thank you once again for writing. I hope this response is helpful and of reassurance to Mr Salmon.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'GH', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

THE RT HON GREG HANDS MP

Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change