



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Alex Rowley MSP
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Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice,
Housing and Local Government
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
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Dear Cabinet Secretary,

I am contacting you regarding the ongoing chaotic situation in relation to the upcoming change in law on fire alarms which will be taking effect from February.

My office has received many enquiries over the last week about the new fire alarm law change, with many older constituents deeply worried, either because they can't afford the new alarms or because they don't know where to get the alarms, if they can get any help, can't find a supplier or anyone fitting them. When they phone the Care and Repair service they cannot get an answer, some have told me they have phoned the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and been told they do not do it.

While I am supportive of the change in the legislation, and completely understand the need for interlinked fire and heat alarm systems to be in place; the handling of the change in law by the Scottish Government has been nothing short of shambolic.

There are now reports that Scottish Government funding to help low income, older and disabled homeowners with installation has "run out" in parts of the country. This is even more worrying given very few people have been able to access help or advice. Is the Scottish Government planning to increase the amount of funding to Care and Repair in order to ensure that financial support is available to those who need it? Given the lack of information do you have any plans to review this and provide more advice as to where people, particularly older people, can get advice and support?

I appreciate that the Government has said it will take a "light-touch" approach to enforcement, but this does not alleviate the worries that many people are experiencing across Scotland trying to obey the new rules, nor does it address the worries they have around their homes being insured.

It should now be clear to the Scottish Government that many people up and down the country are worried about not being able to comply with the new law, so what action is the Scottish Government going to take to alleviate these worries and help support an effective and timely installation for those that need help to comply?

Kind regards,

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