

The era of hands off government has to come to an end

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As the [Guardian](#) reported yesterday:

The UK government's flagship home insulation scheme, intended to kickstart a green recovery from the Covid-19 crisis, has been botched, disastrous in administration, devastating in some of its impacts, and stands in urgent need of rescue, an influential committee of MPs has said.

As they added:

There can be little chance of meeting the UK's target of net zero emissions by 2050 without a comprehensive programme to insulate Britain's 19m draughty homes and switch from gas boilers to low-CO2 heating, the [environmental audit committee of MPs said on Monday](#).

I have, of course, been saying this for somewhat longer. Colin Hines and I have, on behalf of the Green New Deal Group, been talking about the need for a green transformation of our built economy for a decade or more now. Our aim has always been to release a 'carbon army' of people trained to undertake this work. That would create new, long term, well trained and fair paying employment in every constituency of the UK, which was an incidental but also significant aim of the programme.

But neither is happening. I noted this Tweet by Harriet Lamb, who is now a Fair Tax Mark director:

https://twitter.com/harrietlamb_/status/1374012306376568836?s=21

So the problem is a lack of government planning to train the people we need to meet a very obvious requirement that exists within our society that the private sector is unable or unwilling to address by itself.

I could, of course, have written that about almost every single problem that we have right now, and there are many of them. But this one is of particular interest to me, and vital to our long term wellbeing.

And the government has failed. No one else has. No one expected the market to solve this problem, because it was market mechanisms that created it.

Nor does anyone now think that the market will step in to address the failure that has occurred. It won't.

This issue has to be addressed by government. And no one can claim funding is an issue. Colin and I [have shown](#) how to raise up to £100 billion to fund the Green New Deal. That will provide more than enough for this programme. All that is required is political will.

What is becoming increasingly clear is that we live in an era when hands off government is no longer possible. But that is what we have. When will we see the change that is required to deliver the future that we need?