

**From:** [Hughes, Seamus](#)  
**To:** [Briggs, Peter](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HPRM: FW: Closing Correspondence : COR-0063-2016 : RHI issues  
**Date:** 10 March 2016 10:42:36  
**Attachments:** [COR 0063 Min signed.pdf](#)  
[COR 0063 Min content.pdf](#)

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Peter

For info.

Regards

Seamus

Seamus Hughes  
Energy Efficiency Branch  
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment  
Netherleigh  
Massey Avenue  
Belfast, BT4 2JP  
Tel: 028 9052 9532 (ext: 29532)  
TextRelay: 18001 028 9052 9532  
Web: [www.detini.gov.uk](http://www.detini.gov.uk)

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Forsythe, Nicola On Behalf Of DETI Energy Mailbox  
**Sent:** 10 March 2016 10:40  
**To:** Wightman, Stuart  
**Cc:** Hughes, Seamus  
**Subject:** HPRM: FW: Closing Correspondence : COR-0063-2016 : RHI issues

For info

Nicola Forsythe  
Co-ordination Branch  
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment Netherleigh Massey Avenue Belfast, BT4 2JP  
Tel: 028 9052 9295 (ext: 29295)  
TextRelay: 18001 028 9052 9295  
Web: [www.detini.gov.uk](http://www.detini.gov.uk)

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** [private.office@detini.gov.uk](mailto:private.office@detini.gov.uk) [<mailto:private.office@detini.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 10 March 2016 09:52  
**To:** Mills, John (DETI)  
**Cc:** McLaughlin, Christine (DETI); Hegarty, Damien; Stevenson, Valerie (DETI Private Office); Dolaghan, Paul; McCormick, Andrew (DETI); Kerr, Sean; Rooney, Eugene; Stewart, Chris (DETI); DG\_DETI Press Office; DETI Energy Mailbox  
**Subject:** Closing Correspondence : COR-0063-2016 : RHI issues

Date: 10/03/2016

Raised By: Ms Heather Thompson  
Reference: COR-0063-2016

Subject: Closing Correspondence : COR-0063-2016 : RHI issues

To: JOHN MILLS

CC: McLaughlin, Christine (DETI); Hegarty, Damien; PO CC Energy Division

Please see final amended response as issued

Regards,  
Christine McLaughlin  
Private Office  
29222

From the Office of the Minister



Department of

**Enterprise, Trade  
and Investment**

www.detini.gov.uk

NETHERLEIGH  
MASSEY AVENUE  
BELFAST  
BT4 2JP

Tel: 028 90 529452

Fax: 028 90 529545

Text Relay: 18001 028-9052-9452

E Mail: private.office@detini.gov.uk

**Our Ref: DETI COR 0063/2016**

Heather Thompson  
Director for Northern Ireland  
National Trust, Regional Office  
Rowallane  
Saintfield  
BALLYNAHINCH  
BT24 7LH

10 March 2016

Dear Heather

Thank you for your letter of 10 February 2016 in relation to the proposed closure of the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) setting out the concerns of your members and the impact that closure will have on businesses.

Increased demand for both RHI schemes, together with reductions in available funding means the available budget for new applications has been exhausted. To meet RHI commitments for existing installations, significant levels of additional funding will have to be found from within the NI Executive's budget for the next five years to address the current deficit. Additional funding was sought but could not be secured from Treasury. In the circumstances I have no choice but to close both RHI schemes.

I can confirm that the relevant legislation was passed by the Assembly on 15 February 2016. A Notice has been published confirming both RHI schemes will close from 29 February 2016. Any renewable heating systems installed, commissioned and applied for on or before this date will be eligible for RHI payments.

I must emphasise that this is not a decision that I have taken lightly. I recognise the impact that this will have on homeowners, the local economy and wider industry. However, my immediate priority is to prevent further financial pressures in the short term. Once this is achieved I will consider wider proposals on the scheme's long term future.

I still believe that the renewable sector can play a part in helping to reduce our CO2 emissions and bring investment to our economy. I am therefore open to suggestions on how we might engage with developers and installers and others to see where we might go in the future on renewable heat. This might involve consulting on the long term position, looking at developments in other jurisdictions or considering options.

Yours sincerely

**JONATHAN BELL MLA**  
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Minister: ~~for your~~ consideration and if contact please. **DFE-128523**

FR

*ehk:lyllw*

RESTRICTED - POLICY

From: John Mills *22/02/16*

Date: 22 February 2016

To: 1. Timothy Cairns  
2. Jonathan Bell MLA

*Amend letter*

*1/3*

*\* amended letter opposite for consideration and if contact signature please.*

*Minister contact with amended letter*  
*D Heagerty 9/3/16*  
*8/3/16*

**COR 0063/2016 PROPOSED CLOSURE OF NORTHERN IRELAND'S RHI SCHEMES**

- Issue:** Correspondence from Heather Thompson, National Trust on RHI closure.
- Timing:** Due for reply 22 February.
- Need for referral to the Executive:** N/A
- Presentational Issues:** High interest from stakeholders and the media in relation to closure of the RHI schemes.
- Freedom of Information:** Not disclosable.
- Financial Implications:** Closure required to prevent further pressure on budgets.
- Statutory Equality Obligations:** N/A.
- PFG/PSA implications:** NI Renewable Heat Incentive supports the PfG interim target of 4% renewable heat by 2015 and the SEF 10% target by 2020.
- Legislation Implications:** Closure to take effect from 29 February.
- Recommendation:** That you respond to Heather Thompson using the draft provided at **Annex A**.

**Background**

1. Heather Thompson Director of the National Trust in Northern Ireland has written to you to highlight the National Trust's concerns over the proposed closure of the RHI schemes. She highlights that the trust is investing £30m across England, Wales and Northern Ireland in renewable energy and indicates some of the properties in Northern Ireland where biomass boilers have been installed. She is keen to stress that the National Trust's focus is on low carbon and renewable energy options for Northern Ireland and not just focused on involvement with the RHI. In recognising that this is a challenging issue she hopes that you will be able to reach a positive conclusion to the review of the scheme (**Annex B**).