

NET ZERO POLICY ROUNDUP JULY 2025

HUB UPDATES	LINK
<p>Funding of up to £140,000 is available to help community groups get started on clean power projects that benefit their local areas following the launch of the Great British Energy Community Fund.</p> <p>The fund is managed locally by the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub and is open for applications until November 30th – but applications are being assessed on a first come, first served basis and we know there is strong appetite so organisations are advised not to delay.</p>	NEYNZH
<p>The Local Net Zero Hubs network have commissioned new support for local authorities helping them prepare for the introduction of Regional Energy System Planning. This includes guidance for responding to the current Strategic Investment Need Request for Information.</p>	Local Net Zero Hubs

STRATEGY/POLICY UPDATES	LINK
<p>Great British Energy has announced successful applications to the Mayoral Renewables Fund, which is designed to fund Combined Authority renewable projects which can be delivered in 2025-26.</p> <p>All six North East and Yorkshire Combined Authorities have secured funding, with Hub regional project managers heavily involved in producing the successful applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Yorkshire has secured £572,0125 to install solar power on schools, a library and a covered market. • Hull and East Yorkshire has secured £700,000 to install solar power on public buildings and solar canopies on public car parks. • North East has secured £700,000 for solar on schools. • West Yorkshire has secured £700,000 for solar and battery installations at sports centres, a police station, a primary school, a nursery and at the Lotherton Hall museum. • Tees Valley has secured £444,738 for solar on public buildings and council depots • York and North Yorkshire has secured £700,000 for solar on libraries, schools, leisure centres and transport sites. 	DESNZ
<p>As part of the ongoing Review of the Energy Market Arrangements (REMA) the government has decided to retain and reform a single national wholesale market not to implement zonal pricing.</p> <p>A delivery plan for these reforms will be published later in the year.</p>	DESNZ
<p>The National Energy System Operator's Connections Reform evidence submission window has now closed. Energy generation and demand projects with an existing connections agreements had a four-week window to submit evidence to showcase their readiness and strategic alignment with the UK's energy goals.</p>	NESO
<p>A Solar Roadmap has been published outlining the government's plan to significantly expand solar energy deployment – which it aims to quadruple by 2035. Interventions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitted Development Rights being reviewed to make rooftop installations easier. • Strengthening of UK supply chains to reduce reliance on imports. 	DESNZ

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing solar deployment on new build homes through the Future Homes Standard • Launching a call for evidence to increase levels of solar in car parks • Plans to launch a safety review to boost deployment of portable plug-in solar panels, making it easier and cheaper for people living in rented accommodation and apartments to install solar on balconies and rooftops. • Working with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors to ensure solar is valued properly on residential properties • Working with the real estate sector to streamline the approach to installing rooftop solar on leased commercial buildings and to address the challenges posed by the traditional lease structure. <p>Leeds City Council's Stourton Park & Ride - the first fully solar-powered Park and Ride in the country – is cited a case study in the Roadmap.</p>	
<p>The Onshore Wind Taskforce has published a strategy setting out 40 steps government and industry will take to deliver 29GW of onshore wind by 2030, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reforming the planning system to streamline consenting and improve attrition rates – including a consultation on permitted development rights to support small scale deployment and redevelopment of existing sites. • Reintroducing onshore wind into the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime with an updated threshold of 100MW • Scoping of a data tool to support site identification. • Establishment of a Nature Restoration Fund to pool contributions from developers to fund environmental improvements. • Consideration of reforms to the Contracts for Difference scheme to include onshore wind. • Enabling communities to benefit directly from the sites they host – with a targeted communications campaign improving public understanding led by Renewables UK. 	DESNZ
<p>The government has published a 10-year Infrastructure Strategy, the ambition for which is “providing the certainty and stability” and “taking a joined-up view to improve planning and delivery across all types of infrastructure”. The strategy includes specific investments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UK's first regional hydrogen transport network • Strategic electricity transmission network investment • Investment by GB Energy to “strategically develop, invest in and own clean energy projects across the UK” <p>A specific theme of the strategy is “Becoming a clean energy superpower” including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgement that “around twice as much new transmission infrastructure will be needed by 2030 as has been built in the last decade” and “electricity demand is expected to roughly double by 2050”. • A Clean Flexibility Roadmap will be published in 2025 by the government, NESO and Ofgem. The plan will aim to increase short and long duration flexibility. • The government will “provide strategic clarity” on the role of hydrogen in home heating “later this year” • Noting that “energy costs for the Ministry of Justice almost doubled between 2021-22 and 2023-24” and that “the size of the public sector estate means it can be a key anchor for scaling up local renewable energy generation (and) low carbon heat – particularly heat networks”. The government will “explore where public private partnerships amongst other different private 	HMT

<p>finance models can be used for public sector estate decarbonisation projects”.</p> <p><i>The Hub’s Public Sector Decarbonisation team works with local public bodies to develop their own estates. The team can be contacted at neyped@westyorks-ca.gov.uk.</i></p>	
<p>The government has also published a National Industrial Strategy, including sector plan for Clean Energy Industries, setting out industries “where we have the greatest growth potential”, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onshore, offshore and floating wind • Nuclear Fission • Fusion Energy • Carbon Capture Usage and Storage – including Greenhouse Gas Removals • Hydrogen • Heat Pumps <p>Specific interventions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new British Industrial Competitiveness Scheme to reduce industrial electricity costs by £34-40 MWh up to 2030 by making eligible businesses exempt from paying the costs of Renewables Obligation, Feed-in Tariffs and the Capacity Market and an uplift of the Network Charging Compensation Scheme from 60% to 90%, providing price relief for 500 businesses. • The Office for Clean Energy Jobs will publish a full Clean Energy Workforce Strategy in the summer. • Publishing Critical Minerals and Circular Economy strategies in 2025. • Launching a Connections Accelerator Service to streamline grid access for major projects. • Working with Renewables UK to conduct a supply chain capability analysis for onshore wind and considering expanding Contracts for Difference to onshore. • Streamlining the Hydrogen Allocation Rounds process to shorten the time between application and award (HAR round 3 will be launched by 2026 with and HAR 4 from 2028) • Assessing the case for hydrogen blending into the gas grid. • Removing the Climate Change Levy Liability on electricity used in electrolysis to make hydrogen. • Ongoing work to consider addressing the price disparity between electricity and gas “to make it more attractive for consumers to install clean technologies like heat pumps” • Driving demand for larger commercial and industrial heat pumps with Heat Network Zoning to “provide certainty in England where heat networks are expected to be deployed” <p><i>The Hub hosts a Heat Network Zoning Lead, working with local areas to help them prepare for the introduction of Heat Networks Zoning. They can be contacted at lauren.kemp@westyorks-ca.gov.uk.</i></p>	DBT
<p>The government has confirmed that the Future Homes Standard – building regulations relating to new homes designed to ensure they produce 75-80% less emissions than homes built under the current regulations – will be published this Autumn.</p> <p>The regulations will require new homes to have rooftop solar by default.</p>	MHCLG

New guidance has been published for Mayoral Strategic Authorities (Combined Authorities) developing Local Growth Plans, requiring them to align with the work of multiple governmental Departments and specifically referencing the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and the Office for Clean Jobs, suggesting that there is an expectation that energy planning and investment pipelines will be integrated within the Local Growth Plans.	MHCLG
<p>The Planning and Infrastructure Bill completed its second reading in the House of Commons on June 25th and has now progressed to the Lords. The Bill aims to speed up and streamline the delivery of new homes and critical infrastructure, including supporting delivery of the government's Clean Power 2030 target by ensuring that key clean energy projects are built as quickly as possible. Amendments made at Commons stages include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing the statutory requirement to consult as part of the pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects. • Measures to reform queues for grid connections, shifting from 'first come, first served' to 'first ready and needed, first connected'. 	MHCLG
<p>The Warm Home Discount scheme will be expanded to remove the high-cost-to-heat threshold in the current regulations.</p> <p>The change will mean that all households where the means-tested benefit recipient (or their partner or legal appointee) is named on the energy bill will now be eligible to receive the £150 electricity bill rebate. Previously, the payment was limited to those on the guaranteed element of Pension Credit, or those on means-tested-benefits living in a property with a high energy score.</p> <p>It is estimated that the number of families who will receive the discount for the first time, broken down by region, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North East: 100,000 • Yorkshire and the Humber: 210,000 	DESNZ/ 10 Downing Street
Rolls Royce has been selected as the preferred bidder to build the UK's first Small Nuclear Reactors – which will aim to be connected to the grid by the mid-2030s.	DESNZ/HMT
The second meeting of the AI Energy Council has taken place. The meeting focused on meeting the energy demands of the AI sector.	DSIT

CONSULTATIONS AND REVIEWS	LINK
<p>The government is seeking feedback on proposed reforms to the processes that govern:</p> <p>Land rights and consents for electricity network infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How network operators access private land to build and maintain infrastructure. <p>Proposals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the standard wayleave term (permission to install/maintain infrastructure on private land) from 15 years to 40 years. • Increase the maximum size of substations that can be built under permitted development rights from 29 to 45 cubic metres. • Revise rules on when Section 37 consent is needed. For example, upgrading from single-phase to three-phase lines (without changing voltage) may no longer require consent. 	DESNZ

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shift responsibility for tree lopping and felling from landowners to licensed network operators, to ensure timely maintenance. <p>The consultation is open until September 2nd</p>	
<p>The Deputy Prime Minister has launched the Local Government Outcomes Framework (LGOFF). The Framework sets 15 outcomes that Government expects to work with local authorities on to deliver key national priorities for local people and communities. These will be underpinned by outcome metrics drawing from existing data sources to show how progress will be measured.</p> <p>These outcomes include supporting “<i>a healthier, more resilient natural and built environment, including responding to the risks and impacts of climate change to the benefit of communities</i>”.</p> <p>Metrics for assessing progress include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of homes rated EPC or above. Deaths attributable to particulate air pollution Percentage of total household waste sent for recycling Percentage of total household waste that is collected separately as food waste Flood protection Biodiversity <p>The consultation is open until September 12th.</p>	MHCLG
<p>The government is consulting on proposals to reform the Decent Homes Standard and extend the standard to the private rented sector for the first time.</p> <p>The proposals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new minimum standard of energy efficiency for both social and privately rented homes. This standard will be EPC Band C or equivalent by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2030 for social housing 2035 for private rented homes Thermal Comfort as a Core Criterion of the revised DHS, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate insulation Efficient heating systems Measures to reduce heat loss and improve warmth <p>The government is exploring financial and technical support options for private landlords.</p> <p>The consultation is open until September 10th.</p>	MHCLG
<p>Parallel to the above, a second consultation is seeking views on proposals to set a minimum energy efficiency standard (MEES) for socially rented homes.</p> <p>Socially rented homes are not currently required to meet a minimum EPC standard and current requirements are equivalent to EPC F. The government proposes setting the standard at EPC C by 2030.</p> <p>This consultation is also open until September 10th.</p>	MHCLG
<p>A consultation on interventions aimed at decarbonising smaller vessels as part of the Maritime Decarbonisation Strategy has been extended until September 8th.</p>	DfT

<p>The government has published a response to the National Infrastructure Commission's study on Energy Distribution Network Capacity, outlining how it will ensure that the electricity distribution networks are ready to support clean power deployment and economic growth.</p> <p>Key themes in the response include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerating Infrastructure Delivery through planning reforms, supply chain development and accelerated grid connections – in prioritising stalled projects to allow faster connection of clean energy sources. • Proactive Investment • Local Network Readiness ensuring local distribution networks can handle increased demand from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EV charging ○ Heat pumps ○ New housing and industries (gigafactories, data centres) • Developing local clean power through Great British Energy 	DESNZ
FUNDING ANNOUNCED	LINK
<p>The Spending Review confirmed development funding for the Humber Viking carbon capture and storage project, which aims to 15m tonnes of emissions from the Humber Industrial Cluster by 2035. The project borders the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub region.</p>	DESNZ
<p>25 neighbourhoods will each receive up to £20m of regeneration funding over the next decade as part of a new fund announced at the Spending Review.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orchard Park, Hull • Thorntree, Middlesbrough • Batemoor and Jordanthorpe, Sheffield • Middleton Park Avenue, Leeds • Central Stockton and Portrack • Walker North, Newcastle. <p>Preapproved interventions for the funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants for local businesses to upgrade current infrastructure to make energy savings. • Investment in infrastructure to deliver effective decarbonisation and energy efficiency for buildings and transport and beyond (for example, improvements to heating or ventilation efficiency, or support for renewable technologies) • Capital funding for to insulate walls, install underfloor insulation, install loft insulation, install double glazing units, and replace gas boilers with low carbon heating systems such as heat pumps in social housing • Establishing 'healthy housing' advice space • Mitigating the effects of extreme heat on homes 	MHCLG
<p>Car manufacturers can apply for the Electric Car Grant which allows them to offer discounts up to £3750 from the price for new eligible electric cars priced at or under £37,000.</p>	DfT
<p>The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and Innovate UK have launched a Contracts for Innovation competition offering up to £3m funding to support industry develop resource efficiency solutions in three sectors aimed at reducing emissions.</p>	DESNZ/IUK

<p>The sectors are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemicals • Automotive • Construction 	
<p>A number of NHS England trusts have been awarded funding by the Department for Transport to install electric vehicle chargepoints to support their operational fleet transition. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bradford • County Durham and Darlington • Gateshead • North East Ambulance Service • Rotherham • Newcastle • York and Scarborough • Yorkshire Ambulance Service 	DfT/NHS England
<p>£25m funding has been announced to help local authorities expand access to at-home EV charging through cross-pavement technology aimed at drivers without access to a driveway.</p>	DfT

RESEARCH AND STATISTICS	LINK
<p>A new study from the Mining Remediation Authority shows 87% of coalfield boreholes succeed. The research was commissioned to addresses any concerns about the technical and financial risks of drilling into former coal mines for low-carbon heating, cooling, and thermal storage and to provides an evidence base to support the rollout of mine water heat networks.</p>	Mining Remediation Authority
<p>Regen have produced a guide on how nature objectives can be integrated into clean energy infrastructure.</p>	Regen
<p>The Greater South East Net Zero Hub has produced new guidance for local authorities on supporting their local community energy sector and governance of community energy projects.</p>	GSEnz Hub
<p>The North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub has published a regional Hydrogen Roadmap, projecting how hydrogen supply, distribution and demand could evolve across the region over the next 15 years.</p>	NEYNZ Hub
<p>An online map has been published showing energy projects supported by government.</p>	DESNZ

MISCELLANEOUS	LINK
<p>A North Yorkshire Church is taking part in a trial in which will see 91 solar panels on its roof help power nearby homes, businesses and the local fire station. The scheme will see the panels divert any excess energy to the local community, rather than return it to the National Grid in a trial commissioned by energy regulator Ofgem testing how renewable energy generated in local neighbourhoods can be shared more fairly.</p> <p><i>The project is being led by the Yorkshire North and East Methodist District, who have previously received support from the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub.</i></p>	BBC News

<p>The Energy Skills Centre in Blyth has been formally opened by the Education Secretary. The centre will offer sector specific training to young people entering the offshore industry as school leavers and those looking to retrain from other industries such as oil and gas.</p> <p>Newcastle College Energy Academy in Wallsend has also expanded – tripling number of students who can enrol each year.</p>	<p>Northumberland County Council</p> <p>North Tyneside Council</p>
<p>The Skipton Building Society has launched “The Big Retrofit” project aimed at improving energy efficiency amongst owner-occupiers. The initiative includes the retrofit of a 1930s property opposite the North Yorkshire firm’s HQ – raising the EPC on the property from D to C – additional borrowing for customers undertaking retrofit activities and free EPC assessments.</p>	<p>The Intermediary</p>
<p>North Yorkshire Council has approved plans for a solar farm the size of 70 football pitches near Scarborough.</p> <p>The 49-hectare facility in East Heslerton could generate up to 23.5MW of energy when operational.</p>	<p>BBC News</p>
<p>Proposals for a floating power station and potential small nuclear reactor have been announced for the Humber Estuary.</p> <p>Yorkshire Energy Park near Saltend has signed an agreement to look at mooring a "power barge" which would use liquefied natural gas to produce electricity and to explore the building of a Small Modular Reactor.</p>	<p>BBC News</p>