

NET ZERO POLICY ROUNDUP JUNE 2026

| HUB UPDATES | LINK |
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| <p>A government minister will launch a national celebration of the role of communities in reducing energy bills and carbon emissions - and meeting national clean energy ambitions - at a special event organised by the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub in Bradford next month.</p> <p>Energising Britain - the first large scale activity to take place under the national Net Zero Participation Strategy - will take place on Monday July 6th with a series of events led by the five Local Net Zero Hubs. The North East and Yorkshire event will take place in Bradford with Minister Katie White OBE MP and TV comedian Stuart Goldsmith featuring alongside a showcase of North East and Yorkshire community energy heroes.</p> <p>Places are limited - you can register your interest in attending the event by filling in this form.</p> | NEYNZH |
| <p>The Hub is partnering with FairHeat - who helped develop the standards - to deliver an online introduction on the draft Heat Network Technical Assurance Scheme (HNTAS). HNTAS is a new regulatory framework of technical standards for heat networks – existing and new – set to be introduced in 2027.</p> <p>The webinar is taking place on Thursday July 9th at 11am – places can be secured here.</p> | NEYNZH |
| <p>The Hub has published an independent review of Net Zero Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance in our region, commissioned to help identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues and risks associated with regional net zero careers advice and gaps in activity to be filled • Areas of opportunity for improvement and expansion of current activity • Exemplary activity that can be replicated elsewhere <p>The independent review concludes “The Net Zero transition presents a major opportunity for job creation and economic growth in the North East and Yorkshire” but cautions that without effective careers advice “there is a risk that North East and Yorkshire employers will not be able to fill roles, slowing progress towards climate targets and missing out on economic opportunities”.</p> | NEYNZH |
| <p>A national training programme has supported local authority officers across England to build the skills and confidence needed to lead meaningful conversations with communities about clean energy. Delivered on behalf of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero by engagement experts Involve, and involving all five Local Net Zero Hubs, the Energy Champions programme created a cohort of officers able to champion more effective public engagement within their organisations and local areas. The programme also includes new guidance for local authorities which can be found here or on Net Zero Go.</p> | NEYNZH |

| STRATEGY/POLICY UPDATES | LINK |
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| <p>Major retailers including Currys, B&Q, Amazon and Lidl have got behind government plans to bring plug-in solar panels to UK homes – potentially saving households £480 a year.</p> <p>The government is preparing to introduce plug in solar – which can be deployed on balconies or in any outdoor space to provide free solar power that can be used directly through a mains socket like any other device, without an installation cost, later this year, with a number of studies and consultations detailed in this update.</p> | <p>DESNZ</p> |
| <p>The Government have announced interventions to reduce the impact of international gas prices on electricity prices. Currently, a significant share of renewable generation (around 30% of Britain’s power supply) is exposed to wholesale prices set by gas.</p> <p>The aim is to ‘break the link’ by introducing the following interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary long term fixed contracts – Offered to existing low-carbon generators not already on fixed-price deals, covering around one-third of Britain’s power supply. These contracts help shield households and businesses from price spikes when gas costs rise and will only be used where they provide clear value for money. • An updated Electricity Generators Levy – The levy on excess profits will increase from 45% to 55% ensuring more of the additional revenue generated during gas price spikes can be used to support households and businesses with rising costs. | <p>DESNZ</p> |
| <p>The government has concluded a review into whether Ofgem is fit for purpose in a rapidly changing energy system. The review concluded that the regulator’s remit and approach are still rooted in a traditional, centralised energy market model and found that Ofgem’s primary duty to protect consumers (especially on price) can conflict with enabling investment in infrastructure and supporting innovation and growth. It also found that the regulatory framework can be slow and risk-averse.</p> <p>The review proposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifying and rebalancing Ofgem’s statutory duties to explicitly support net zero, economic growth and long-term system resilience. • Redefine regulatory boundaries to clarify roles between government (strategy), Ofgem (regulation) and system operators (delivery) • Reform Ofgem’s regulatory powers and approach to increase agility. • Strengthen consumer protection for a modern system. <p>Further to this, the government has announced Ofgem will be given new powers to enhance its consumer role, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger powers to enforce consumer law directly, meaning it will no longer need to go through a lengthy courts process to make sure customers get what they are owed if companies treat them unfairly; • Measures to ensure energy bosses act on behalf of consumers, with powers for Ofgem to ban their bonuses if they break the rules. | <p>DESNZ</p> |
| <p>Elected Mayors in areas including West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and the North East are to be given more power over investment in R&D through a devolved Local Innovation Partnerships Fund, designed to help local leaders target innovation investments to support local</p> | <p>DfSIT</p> |

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| <p>opportunities for growth – with clean energy cited as a priority area for investment.</p> | |
| <p>Following analysis of responses to Call for Evidence into the potential mandating of solar canopies above new carparks, the government has concluded that this proposal will not be taken further at this point.</p> | <p>DESNZ, OZEV</p> |
| <p>Minister Shanks and Ofgem Director General Ashkay Kaul have published an open letter on grid connections reform, highlighting how reform of the connections queue has removed 221GW of unneeded or not progressing projects with most technologies now having enough capacity in the queue to meet 2030 clean power targets.</p> <p>The letter does however highlight how a large surplus of battery projects has progressed in the queue - 14.8 GW above the 2030 target range and 61.7 GW above projected need for 2035. This is due to protection rules favouring well-advanced projects and batteries progressing faster through planning than other technologies.</p> <p>The letter encourages developers to reassess project viability and exit early if projects are not viable, to avoid unnecessary network investment and costs to consumers. Further reforms may restrict future battery projects without revenue support.</p> | <p>DESNZ, Ofgem</p> |
| <p>The government has formally responded on proposals to improve the consumer experience of Smart Meter rollout</p> <p>The response confirms the government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will require suppliers to take all reasonable steps to ensure smart meters in traditional mode are back working in smart mode for consumers as soon as possible and no later than 90 days from the date energy suppliers are first aware • Will require suppliers to take all reasonable steps to pre-emptively replace smart metering assets so that they continue to communicate when they will otherwise stop because of Wide Area Network (WAN) services ending • Will introduce an obligation for energy suppliers to take all reasonable steps to complete the smart meter rollout by installing smart meters in all remaining domestic premises by the end of 2030 • Require energy suppliers to submit annual deployment plans to Ofgem, outlining the activities they will undertake to meet their domestic installation, operational and replacement obligations. Their annual milestones for new installations and pre-emptive replacements will be binding from January 2027. | <p>DESNZ</p> |
| <p>A national energy sector cyber security strategy has been published setting out how the government intends to protect Great Britain’s energy system and consumers, and to develop a clean, digital and resilient energy system and address risks associated with smart meters and distributed energy. Interventions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring all energy organisations meet robust minimum cyber security standards – with a focus on critical operators and supply chains • Promote “secure by design” principles: with cyber security built into infrastructure from the start. | <p>DESNZ, NCSC, NESO, Ofgem</p> |

| CONSULTATIONS AND REVIEWS | LINK |
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| <p>A major review into Community Energy by the parliamentary Energy Security and Net Zero committee has made a number of recommendations to “turbocharge” the sector, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designation of community energy as a priority within the energy system with regulators and network operators directed by government to remove barriers to its deployment. • Mandating shared community ownership in renewables projects • Create a regulatory framework allowing community projects to sell electricity locally • Make community ownership and benefits a material consideration in planning decisions • Introducing a Community Energy Export Guarantee which would guarantee a revenue stream for community energy projects by ensuring they can sell exported electricity at a fair, predictable price. • Changing procurement rules to support partnerships between local authorities and community groups. | <p>Energy Security and Net Zero Committee</p> |
| <p>The government are seeking views on proposed safety standards to enable the safe and legal use of plug-in solar products - small solar PV systems that plug directly into a standard wall socket rather than being wired into the home’s electrical system – which will create a simpler, lower-cost way for households (including renters or flats) to generate clean electricity.</p> <p>To enable this, the government proposes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the Plugs and Sockets etc. (Safety) Regulations 1994 (PSSR) to explicitly allow compliant plug-in solar devices to be connected to standard mains sockets. • Introduce a temporary technical standard for plug-in solar devices with only products that meet this specification able to be sold. <p><i>The consultation is open until June 30th.</i></p> | <p>DESNZ</p> |
| <p>The government is seeking views on the case for community batteries – shared storage assets which serve multiple homes – calling for evidence of the benefits, and potential barriers to deployment.</p> <p>The call is exploring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether scaling up of community batteries could benefit households unable to install their own batteries and enable shared use of locally generated energy. • Support greater system balancing by better managing peaks, reducing infrastructure strain and supporting the growth of flexibility markets. <p><i>The call for evidence closes on July 30th.</i></p> | <p>DESNZ</p> |
| <p>The government has launched a review of the cost of public EV charging, reporting in the Autumn. The review will consider the impact of energy prices, wider cost contributors and options government and industry can take for lowering these costs for drivers.</p> | <p>DfT, OZEV</p> |
| <p>The government is seeking views on how the consumer protection system for home upgrades should be reformed to support the Warm Homes Plan.</p> | <p>DESNZ</p> |

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| <p>The consultation proposes reforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single end-to end consumer protection service • Strong binding agreements to enforce delivery obligations • A government-owned data system • A publicly accessible register of installers and retrofit professionals <p><i>The consultation closes on September 10th.</i></p> | |
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| FUNDING ANNOUNCED | LINK |
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| <p>Round 2 of the Heat Pump Ready (HPR) Programme is now open for applications until June 25th. Applicants can apply for £200,000 to £2m in grant funding but are required to have private funding alongside this.</p> <p>The funding is to support the development of technologies that will help overcome barriers to heat pump uptake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital costs for hardware • In-property changes • Internal and/or external space requirement • Time taken to install from accepted quote. | DESNZ |
| <p>The government has announced a £350m Critical Chemicals Resilience Fund and a £120m package of support for the ceramics industry – both of which are expected to open this summer.</p> <p>Both funds can be used to support greater energy efficiency and decarbonisation in the sectors to provide long-term competitiveness.</p> | DfBT |
| <p>UK-based companies are invited to apply for a share of £93m to support the development of Sustainable Aviation Fuels. Funding applications are set to open in mid-July, with a focus on advanced projects close to the production stage.</p> | DfT |

| RESEARCH AND STATISTICS | LINK |
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| <p>Official figures show that 2025 was the strongest year on record for solar deployment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 269,000 solar installations completed in 2025 – the highest total ever recorded in a calendar year and 37% larger than the year before • 23,000 new solar installations took place in April 2026 alone, with more than half installed on homes. • 9 of the 10 strongest months for solar deployment on record have happened within the last year. | DESNZ |
| <p>Analysis from the Confederation of British Industry has found that the green economy in the UK is now worth more than £100bn a year and supports over 1m jobs - with Net zero workers enjoying higher wages, topping £43,000 a year on average, about 11% higher than the national average of £39,000.</p> | CBI |
| <p>The government has published a rapid evidence assessment of international best practice in electricity transmission infrastructure delivery. Countries are speeding up grid delivery by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying modular construction and off-site fabrication | DESNZ |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploying specialist construction techniques (e.g. helicopters in difficult terrain) • Using underground and HVDC cables strategically to reduce community opposition, mitigate visual and environmental impacts and improve climate resilience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Specifically best practice is to apply undergrounding strategically where benefits outweigh cost • Provide direct community benefits such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Community funds ◦ Local compensation or shared benefits • Provide long-term pipeline visibility and certainty, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Attracts investment ◦ Enables suppliers to scale capacity ◦ Reduces project delays • Using targeted financial incentives, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Payments for early completion of testing or milestones ◦ Incentives to expand manufacturing capacity • Deploying early and proactive stakeholder engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Engaging communities early in planning • Combining transparency on impacts with clear benefit-sharing • Using standardised equipment (e.g. cable types) across projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Simplifies manufacturing ◦ Speeds up procurement ◦ Reduces costs • Planning networks strategically. | |
| <p>The government has published a study into the safety of plug-in solar, which has concluded that plug-in solar systems can operate safely in UK homes, but recognising the current regulatory framework is not designed for them and greater consumer guidance is needed. This study has informed a consultation into a framework detailed in this update.</p> | <p>DESNZ</p> |
| <p>Historic England has published a Good Practice Guide on archaeology and solar farms, helping solar developers to integrate archaeological considerations from early in the project planning processes through to final design.</p> | <p>MHCLG, DLUHC</p> |
| <p>Centre for Sustainable Energy have produced the Widening Participation toolkit for community energy, consisting of resources and case studies to help groups increase their engagement and impact.</p> <p>Widening participation includes access, participation and belonging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding what stops people from engaging • Acknowledging and understanding different people’s experiences • Ensuring people feel included and that they belong | <p>CSE</p> |
| <p>Research from the University of Leicester suggests air pollution slows the lung growth of children in the UK, with a researcher stating:</p> <p><i>“Those whose lungs didn’t grow to maximum potential in childhood may be more vulnerable to the respiratory diseases of later life...They are also more vulnerable to poorer health generally. For instance, low lung function in adults is associated with the same level of risk of heart disease as having high cholesterol.”</i></p> | <p>University of Leicester</p> |
| <p>The Department for Transport has produced a local transport infrastructure carbon benchmarking tool which uses past schemes and design guidance to approximate carbon impacts of transport interventions.</p> | <p>DfT</p> |

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| <p>It has also developed a greener bus tool to help local authorities complete a value for money assessment of zero emission bus and minibus schemes.</p> | <p>DfT</p> |
| <p>The government has published a report examining innovative undergrounding methods and considering whether there is potential for them to reduce the costs for undergrounding high voltage transmission cables over distances of 20km and 50km by comparison with the conventional methods.</p> <p>The study supports more selective use of undergrounding (e.g. in sensitive areas) but reinforces the current UK approach of overhead lines remaining the default for cost reasons with undergrounding justified where visual, environmental, or community benefits outweigh the extra cost.</p> | <p>DESNZ</p> |

| MISCELLANEOUS | LINK |
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| <p>Leeds Bradford Airport has achieved Level 4 Airport Carbon Accreditation, meaning that the airport has not only reduced emissions from its own operations but worked closely with partners to drive wider decarbonisation efforts.</p> | <p>International Airport Review</p> |
| <p>A new study suggests that air pollution accelerates the occurrence of 78 chronic diseases – including cardiovascular and respiratory illnesses and cancer, but also digestive disorders and dementia.</p> | <p>GeroScience</p> |
| <p>Gateshead-based company Lanchester Wines, the first private business in Great Britain to utilise mine water heat, has signed a new heat access agreement with the Mining Remediation Authority. This agreement will support other businesses unlock similar opportunities.</p> | <p>MRA</p> |