

NET ZERO POLICY ROUNDUP SUMMER 2026

HUB UPDATES	LINK
The Local Net Zero Hubs delivered simultaneous events in Bradford, Manchester, Bristol, London and Birmingham as part of a national celebration of the role of communities in the clean energy transition. The 'Energising Britain' events were the first events delivered under the national Net Zero Participation Strategy, with Minister Katie White formally opening the events at the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub event at Bradford City Football Club.	DESNZ
Two new funding opportunities are expected to be launched in early September as part of the latest phase of the Great British Energy Fund, and the development of applications to the fund will be supported by the Hub. Although there will be changes to previous iterations of the fund, guidance from the last round and case studies of projects previously funded through the programme are available on our website.	NEYNZH

STRATEGY/POLICY UPDATES	LINK
A new Department for Energy Security and Net Zero ministerial team has been announced as part of the new government. They are as follows: • Secretary of State: Miatta Fahnbulleh MP • Minister of State: Michael Shanks MP (Responsible for Great British Energy, North Sea Transition, Energy Systems and Markets and Energy Planning) • Minster of State: Katie White MP (Responsible for Green Finance, Electrification, Citizen Engagement and Electricity Strategy) • Parliamentary Under Secretary: Martin McCluskey MP (Responsible for Local Net Zero, Warm Homes and Clean Heat) • Parliamentary Under Secretary: Polly Billington MP (Responsible for energy consumers, Ofgem and fuel poverty) • Parliamentary Under Secretary: Blair McDougall MP (Responsible for Industrial Energy) Baroness Curran will oversee departmental business in the House of Lords, in an unpaid role.	DESNZ
The new government has announced that it will remove VAT from domestic electricity bills from October 1st, in time to impact the next Ofgem price cap. The move will save households £45 on average. The Boiler Upgrade Scheme grant has also been increased from £7500 to £9000, to help rural households make the move from heating oil to a heat pump.	Prime Minister's Office
The first forty communities to be eligible for cheaper electricity bills in exchange for being near new or upgraded pylons have been announced. Households within the communities are expected to save £2500 over the next ten years, including homes within 500 metres of energy upgrades on the following routes.	DESNZ

• Grimsby to Walpole • Brinsworth to High Marnham Most eligible households will receive the discount automatically on their electricity bill every 6 months via their energy supplier.	
New guidance has been published setting out the recommended framework for assessing and controlling operational noise from onshore wind turbines in planning decisions – replacing the existing guidance dating back to 1996. The document's central objective is to ensure that: • People living near wind farms receive a reasonable degree of protection from noise. • Noise controls do not place unreasonable restrictions on wind energy development needed to support net zero objectives. New noise limits are based on: • A combination of fixed noise limits. • Limits related to existing background sound levels. • Assessment of the combined (cumulative) noise from all nearby wind farms, not just the proposed development. This means developers can no longer focus solely on the noise from their own scheme. They must consider how their project contributes to overall turbine noise experienced by residents. There is a renewed emphasis on monitoring, including: • Measuring turbine noise after construction. • Demonstrating compliance with planning conditions. • Investigating complaints from residents.	DESNZ
The government has launched a Youth Climate and Nature Panel to put the voices of younger people at the heart of climate and nature policies. <i>Applications to join the panel can be made by 16–25-year-olds until September 11th.</i>	DESNZ
NESO has published its first gas market roadmap, a strategic assessment of how Great Britain's gas markets may need to evolve as the country moves towards Clean Power 2030 and Net Zero 2050. Its core conclusion is that gas will remain important for decades, but the gas market must be redesigned for a future in which gas demand declines, the customer base changes, and low-carbon gases emerge. Gas is expected to continue supporting: • Winter peak demand. • Domestic heating. • Industrial processes. • Electricity system flexibility. • Security of energy supply NESO expects gas to remain essential for security and flexibility through the transition but believes the current market framework is not designed for a shrinking gas system. The biggest future challenges are who pays for the network as demand falls, how resilience is maintained, and how emerging markets for biomethane, hydrogen and CCUS (carbon capture, utilisation and storage) are integrated into the energy system.	NESO

The government has approved plans for Britain's second largest solar farm in Lincolnshire, with the potential to power half the homes in the county.	DESNZ
The government has launched a taskforce aimed at boosting national preparedness for climate change - identifying gaps, assessing risks and providing independent recommendations and expertise on climate and nature threats to national security, and including representatives of the armed forces and security services. <i>This announcement was made during the Starmer administration.</i>	DESNZ

CONSULTATIONS AND REVIEWS	LINK
The government has responded to submissions to a consultation on plug-in solar in Great Britain stating that it will allow suitably certified plug-in solar products onto the market under a regulated safety framework, opening solar generation to many more households, especially renters and residents in blocks of flats.	DESNZ
The government has published a consultation on a proposal to introduce a new Permitted Development Right for certain ground investigations and surveys required to support electricity network infrastructure in England. The proposed right would allow certain temporary, low-impact ground investigations and surveys to proceed without the need for a planning application, subject to conditions and safeguards. The aim is to reduce delays and administrative burdens for electricity network developers and local planning authorities whilst maintaining appropriate environmental protections. <i>The consultation is open until September 4th.</i>	DESNZ
The government has published a response to its call for evidence on Corporate Power Purchase Agreements. The call found that businesses are broadly in favour of the agreements, although uptake remains limited. Most respondents were supportive about the agreements in principle as they provide: • Long-term price certainty. • Better budgeting and investment planning. • A direct link to renewable generation that supports ESG and net zero objectives. However, uptake is largely confined to large organisations because of: • Credit requirements. • Collateral demands. • Complex negotiations. The call suggests the agreement supports new renewable generation by: • Providing revenue certainty. • Improving project bankability. • Reducing merchant market risk. • Supporting financing for new renewable developments. A recurring theme was that businesses still pay many costs agreements do not address which weakens the financial case for some CPPAs and reduces their attractiveness. These include: • Network charges.	DESNZ

• Balancing costs. • Policy levies. Stakeholders' recommendations included a government-backed guarantee scheme or credit support mechanism to reduce counterparty risk and help smaller buyers participate along with standard documentation to: • Reduce legal costs. • Speed up negotiations. • Increase market confidence Government recognises the recommendations made by stakeholders and intends to continue engaging with the market. <i>The North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub has recently developed resources for Solar for Business schemes, including template legal documents which will be available to Local Authorities shortly via Net Zero Go.</i>	
The government has published a response to a consultation on the best approach to engage consumers on consumer-led flexibility and has decided not to create a formal Consumer-Led Flexibility Consumer Engagement Framework at this stage. DESNZ wanted views on how best to encourage consumers to participate in consumer-led flexibility, meaning activities such as: • Smart EV charging. • Flexible electricity tariffs. • Smart appliances. • Shifting electricity use away from peak periods. The government will instead: • Create a Consumer-Led Flexibility Engagement Forum, led by Ofgem to bring together industry, consumer bodies and other stakeholders to share evidence, monitor consumer engagement, identify emerging barriers and consider whether stronger intervention becomes necessary in future. • Integrate flexibility messaging into existing campaigns.	DESNZ

FUNDING ANNOUNCED	LINK
National Grid has announced a £5m Power Within Employability Fund to support 5000 young people who are not in employment, education or training over the next five years while helping address skills shortages in the energy and infrastructure sectors. The fund will help participants access a range of support tailored to the needs of young people furthest from the labour market, including: • Practical support to access work, including help to gain a driving licence where transport is a barrier to employment opportunities. • Industry-recognised qualifications and accreditations, including Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) cards and other qualifications needed to access jobs across the energy, construction and infrastructure sectors. • Dedicated employability coaching, mentoring and job readiness training, including CV writing, interview preparation, communication skills and workplace behaviours.	Prime Minister's Office

• Direct links to employers and job opportunities across National Grid, its suppliers, and the wider energy and infrastructure sector.	
--	--

RESEARCH AND STATISTICS	LINK
An evaluation of the Industrial Energy Transformation Fund has been published. The Fund provided £500m for funding for the deployment of industrial decarbonisation technologies. The evaluation found the fund delivered positive economic and environmental benefits, represented good value for public money, and is helped industrial firms overcome significant financial barriers to investing in low-carbon technologies. However, impacts on wider market transformation, competitiveness and job creation were more limited. The evaluation estimates the fund contributed to energy cost savings of £93m, and carbon savings valued at £27m, with specific project outputs detailed below: Energy Efficiency projects (18) • Estimated reduction of 445 GWh of energy consumption. • More than 103,500 tonnes of carbon emissions saved. Decarbonisation Deployment projects (3) • Estimated reduction of 25 GWh of energy consumption. • Around 56% reduction in fuel consumption compared with the counterfactual. • More than 1400 tonnes of carbon emissions saved.	DESNZ
The government has published a study exploring whether consumers and installers see value in using "Real Performance" (RP) data, meaning measured, in-use information about a home's actual thermal performance, rather than modelled estimates such as EPCs. The study found consumers generally liked the idea of having real-world performance data, but there was no strong existing consumer demand for it because most people had never considered measuring the actual before-and-after performance of their homes. Most consumers who had installed insulation or heat pumps did not undertake any formal assessment of the changes delivered by those measures Consumers felt RP could help them: • Understand what improvements their home actually needs. • Make better-informed decisions on insulation and heating technologies. • Gain greater confidence before investing in expensive measures. • Verify that installed measures delivered the promised outcomes A key theme was that consumers often struggle to understand: • Which retrofit measure to prioritise. • Whether insulation should come before a heat pump. • What level of improvement to expect. RP was seen as potentially helping answer those questions. Installers saw commercial benefits, specifically: • Increased customer confidence. • Demonstration of the value of retrofit measures.	DESNZ

The research concluded that measured home performance data could help improve retrofit decisions and confidence, but consumer demand is not yet strong enough to drive uptake on its own.	
The government has published a study in to whether reversible air-to-air heat pumps (RAAHPs) could be a viable option for UK homes The report finds that RAAHPs are technically capable of heating most UK homes efficiently and offer the major additional benefit of cooling, but current limitations around domestic hot water provision restrict their overall performance and cost competitiveness in many property types.	DESNZ
Regen has published a new guide supporting informed conversations around grid-scale battery storage, designed for local communities, elected representatives and other stakeholders.	Regen

MISCELLANEOUS	LINK
A new report from the Met Office concludes that “the climate of the twentieth century has now gone” and heat extremes are now “the new normal” for the UK. The report breaks down the UK’s climate in 2025, making reference to how the effects of climate change are felt through extremes, rather than changes in averages.	Met Office
2500 solar panels have been installed at 10 schools as part of a project delivered by the Tees Valley Combined Authority. Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen said: <i>“This project means thousands of solar panels generating clean, cheap electricity on school rooftops right across our region, helping them cut energy costs to invest more into the resources that will benefit local pupils.</i> <i>I’m committed to supporting projects like this that deliver real benefits for Teessiders, and thanks to Solar for Schools, we’re investing to help local schools benefit through lower costs.”</i>	TVCA