

## PRESS RELEASE



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### **New government backs local people to tackle climate change with up to £1bn a year.**

**Yesterday, the people elected a government with real plans to turbocharge community energy [1].**

One of the new government's flagship climate policies, the [Local Power Plan](#), pledges up to £400m a year in low interest loans to communities to develop and build community-owned projects, alongside up to £600m a year in grants to local authorities. The Labour Manifesto promises: "We will invite communities to come forward with projects, and work with local leaders and devolved governments to ensure local people benefit directly from this energy production."

By 2030, this will deliver up to 8GW of new cheap, clean local power (the equivalent of 2 nuclear power stations, enough to power 4.35 million homes), 20,000 new projects, 1 million new energy owners, and huge economic, social and community benefits to local people. [2]

Community energy is essential to engaging people to participate actively in the energy transformation. Without this net zero is not achievable, as the Climate Change Committee has warned.[3]

Emma Bridge, chief executive of Community Energy England[4] said, "*We welcome this vote of confidence in the essential role that community energy has in delivering net zero.*"

*The Local Power Plan puts community energy at the heart of the government's climate plans. Community energy will now drive the energy transformation by delivering projects that benefit local people, the local economy and the environment"*

The Local Power Plan will "unlock the potential of every community" as Keir Starmer promised in his first election speech and "grow the economy from the bottom up". Unlike the big energy companies, all profits from community energy are dedicated to benefitting local people. Community energy gives local people a real stake and a say in how energy is used, saved and generated.

The Local Power Plan is one of the three priorities of Great British Energy, the publicly owned company that will invest to enable the UK to be powered by 100% clean energy by 2030. GB Energy is one of Labour's most popular policy proposals.

Alongside this support Labour has promised to **insulate millions of homes** reducing bills, energy demand and emissions, and improving health and wellbeing. They will **open up onshore wind**, increasing the supply of cheap power especially in the winter when it is most needed. This can also enable the low cost decarbonisation of heat [5].

They plan to **fix grid connections** which are a major barrier to net zero and local projects.

Labour have promised to **extend shared ownership** in commercial renewables projects to give people more of a stake in the huge roll-out of renewables and to deliver better community benefit.

They aim to **enable local supply** so that communities can sell the energy they generate to local people.

They will **support Local Area Energy Planning** to ensure the energy system is developed strategically and that local communities have a say in the energy decisions that affect them. And they have promised to **add net zero mandates to all relevant regulators, including the planning system.**

The Liberal Democrats and the Greens also backed community energy in their manifestos. The strength of their showing at this election, alongside Labour's historic majority, demonstrates that community energy is now in the political mainstream.

Community Energy Fortnight is running until 14 July, under the rallying hash-tag #EmpowerCommunityEnergy. Labour has heeded the call!

## NOTES TO EDITORS

[1] Community energy is people getting together in their communities to work on energy solutions to the climate crisis.

Local organisations harness local people's passion, expertise, knowledge and capital to install community-owned renewable generation, storage and heat projects, do energy efficiency and fuel poverty work, deliver education, training and jobs, low-carbon transport projects and more - whilst increasing community cohesion and resilience and delivering huge social benefits to local people. All profits are entirely dedicated to community benefit.

Between 2014 and 2017 the community sector doubled in size every year. The independent [Net Zero Review](#) by then Conservative MP Chris Skidmore, recommended the government to 'turbocharge community energy'.

[2] Community energy delivers [12-13 times more community benefit](#) that commercial projects: Scottish community wind projects deliver on average [34 times more financial benefit](#) to their communities than commercial wind farms; community energy fuel poverty work delivers at least [£9 of social benefit](#) for every £1 spent on delivery.

[3] The Climate Change Committee, [Sixth Carbon Budget](#): achieving net zero "will only be possible if people are engaged in a societal effort to reach net-zero emissions and understand the choices and constraints" - [Net Zero Report](#) " people need to be brought into the decision-making process and derive a sense of ownership of the Net Zero project." This is precisely what community energy does.

[4] [Community Energy England](#) (CEE) represents over 300 community energy and associated organisations across England involved in the delivery of community-based energy projects.

Our vision is of a thriving community energy sector integrated into and truly powering a fair, zero carbon energy system. Our mission is to create the conditions within which community energy is able to thrive and scale.

[5] Regen report

<https://www.regen.co.uk/publications/wind-powered-heat-powering-clean-heat-with-clean-energy-to-cut-costs-and-emissions/>

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Photos and case studies available on request.