

Ed Miliband  
Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero  
1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET  
12 July 2024



Dear Ed,

Congratulations on a brilliant campaign and on becoming Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, a hugely important job. Thank you for listening to us and the Co-operative Party and for putting in place courageous and forward-thinking policies to **put people at the heart of the energy transformation**. Thanks too for lifting the onshore wind ban so quickly.

Thank you for consulting CEE when you were scoping out the Local Power Plan. We hope to continue working with you and would welcome a meeting as soon as possible to focus on policy development and implementation, such as:

- Designing the smooth transition from the current Community Energy Fund, funded till March 2025, to the loan scheme.
- Ensuring community energy is proportionately represented in the governance of Great British Energy.
- Ensuring the £600m a year local authority funding has collaboration with community energy and support for community capacity building is built in.

We hope that the Local Power Plan can support projects that are more than pure generation. Community energy is always keen to maximise local opportunities and combine technologies to add up to more than the sum of the parts. We fully support the 'clean power' target but hope that the department will be better at treating the energy system holistically than heretofore.

We would also like to see, in the King's Speech if possible, a commitment to taking early action on:

- **Shared ownership** to give communities a real stake in and best possible benefit from the huge expansion of renewable energy.
- **Local supply** to enable communities to sell what they generate to local people. This should enable reduced prices, and as your Mission says will "reduce the pressures on the grid" by encouraging "smart demand management and accelerating the rollout of local renewable power". N.B. we do not consider the clauses in the previous Energy Bill fit for purpose.
- **Fixing grid connections**. David Tudgey of Ambition Community Energy informs us that the "arbitrary" 1MW connection limit, huge costs and delays are the biggest barriers to him rolling out more onshore wind.
- **Fixing planning**. We really welcome plans already announced by Rachel Reeves, but they should go further to support local planning teams. Please ensure the imminent National Planning Policy Framework reform imposes a net zero test. The 'purpose of planning' should be 'achieving net zero as quickly as possible' rather than the 'sustainable development' which is widely interpretable.
- **'Insulating millions of homes'** is vital to health, wellbeing, and affordable bills as well as reducing how much energy we have to generate and distribute. Reducing demand is at the top of the energy hierarchy and should be a first priority in any energy policy. Community energy as a trusted and knowledgeable local intermediary and delivery partner is key to

rolling this out at scale. We would also welcome discussions around support for low carbon heating - which community energy is pioneering, especially in left behind communities.

Thanks again for 'getting' and supporting the brilliance that is community energy. We look forward to meeting you as soon as possible. Our expert practitioner working group stands ready to engage as needed.

Yours sincerely,

Emma, Duncan and Josh  
Community Energy England