

Rt Hon. Ed Miliband MP
Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
55 Whitehall London
SW1A 2HP

CC:

Rt Hon. Michael Shanks MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Energy)
Chris Stark, Head of Mission Control for Clean Power 2030
Jürgen Maier, Chair of Great British Energy

03 December 2024

Dear Secretary of State,

We are writing as a coalition of local government organisations and supporting stakeholders to ask for the role of local and community energy to be set out in the government's forthcoming Clean Power 2030 plan.

We warmly welcome the Clean Power plan to accelerate the decarbonisation of our energy system. Alongside this, the government has committed to deliver 8GW of local and community energy through Great British Energy and the Local Power Plan. We believe it is important that the Local Power Plan targets are aligned and in-step with the Clean Power 2030 plan.

Local and community energy can provide people with a direct stake in their energy futures and enable local government to shape local energy systems to meet the unique needs of their places. By engaging communities in the energy transition, we can build stronger public support for the development of clean energy infrastructure – a critical part of achieving the wider net zero goals.

Unlocking 8GW of local and community energy would have a galvanising effect across the UK's cities and regions. Already, local authorities across the UK are producing plans for developing energy infrastructure, enabling warm and low carbon homes and linking this vital transition to local economic development.

The Clean Power 2030 plan will set out what is 'needed' when it comes to the technologies, capacity, location and infrastructure to deliver the 2030 targets. By setting out the role of local and community energy within the Clean Power plan, government could unlock local energy ambitions. In particular, it is important that local and community energy projects can access grid capacity as part of the connections reform process.

We have provided examples from across the UK of the added value of local and community energy and how it can help people and places thrive. We would be pleased to provide any further evidence that your Department would find helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Merlin Hyman, Chief Executive, Regen

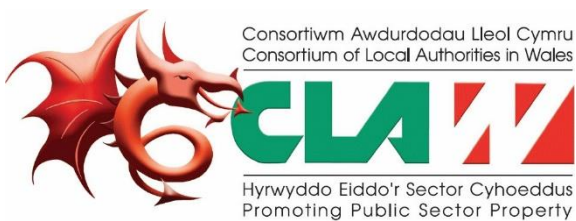
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Cllr Adam Hug, Chair LGA Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board, on behalf of the Local Government Association

Christopher Hammond, Chief Executive, UK100

Welsh Local Government Association

Consortium of Local Authorities in Wales (CLAW)



Annex – examples of local and community energy value

Energy Superhub Oxford

[Energy Superhub Oxford](#), is a pioneering urban decarbonisation project supporting Oxford's transformation into a net zero city by 2040, while stabilising the local grid. The project integrates rapid electric vehicle charging, battery storage, low carbon heating, and smart energy management technologies with private wire, unlocking 50MW grid capacity in a severely constraint city through one of the world's largest hybrid energy battery storage systems. ESO enabled Oxfordshire Bus Operators to launch an electric bus fleet of 159 vehicles. The associated solar charging hub offers 42 fast and ultra-rapid charging points with a 10MW installed capacity capable of charging up to 400 vehicles. The project supported Oxford City Council's purchase 40 EVs for its fleet, including waste trucks, and provided grants to Oxford's Hackney taxi operators to purchase EVs. This initiative reduces carbon emissions and improves air quality, setting a blueprint for sustainable urban development across the UK.

Warrington community municipal bonds

[Warrington Council issued community municipal bonds](#) to support the funding of its 23MW solar farm, co-located with 40MW battery storage. People could purchase bonds for a little as £5, and in total the public funded £1m towards the costs of the solar farm's development. The bond was structured as a five-year investment which gave people a stake in the project – earning returns from investing in public clean power and becoming more engaged in their efforts to address the climate crisis. In addition to providing Warrington Council and its residents with income, the solar farm also provides the council with clean power to charge an electric bus fleet, and part of the revenue is used to support the council's activities in tackling fuel poverty through the Warrington Community Energy Trust charity.

Wales' first solar PV cooperative continues to grow

[Egni, Wales' first solar PV cooperative](#), was established in 2013, when a successful community share offer led to the installation of roof-top PV on seven community buildings in the South-Wales valleys. Since then, Egni Co-op has installed nearly 5MWp of rooftop solar on 93 buildings (including schools, community and local authority buildings and private businesses) across the whole of South Wales. The portfolio includes a 500kWp array, which is believed to be the largest roof-top array in Wales and is installed on the Geraint Thomas National Velodrome in Wales, a building owned and operated by Newport City Council.

Solar on landfill in Cardiff

Cardiff Council installed the 9MW Lamby Way Solar Farm in 2020. The solar farm provides electricity to a nearby Welsh Water treatment plant via a private wire and direct Power Purchase Agreement, as well as providing electricity to the local electricity network. By providing electricity to the Welsh Water treatment plant the solar farm helps to decarbonise the site's operations and provides long term price certainty for both the Council and Welsh Water.

Edinburgh Community Solar Cooperative

Edinburgh Community Solar Cooperative (ECSC) owns 30 solar PV arrays which it has funded through community share offers, raising £2.1m to date to develop the solar arrays across Edinburgh Council schools, community centres and leisure facilities. Edinburgh residents were prioritised when selling the shares to ensure that residents could benefit from the investment offer. In addition to providing residents with a direct stake in local energy, the profits from the solar arrays support a community benefit fund.

Dorset Community Energy

[Dorset Community Energy](#) is a grassroots, non-profit Community Benefit Society that facilitates community ownership of renewables. Established in 2013, it has facilitated 28 solar installations of 1,582kWp, funded by over 200 community shareholders – and facilitated the launch of England's first Energy Local Club, in Bridport. It has now produced enough electricity to power 1,458 homes and has saved 564tCO₂e in 2023 alone. It has also helped local schools, hospitals and community buildings to save nearly half a million pounds, as well as providing thousands of pounds in grants to support local community decarbonisation and fuel poverty projects. The project is now seeking to further expand with the development of ground-mounted solar arrays.