



Open letter from organisations to the Secretaries of State for BEIS, MHCLG, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Ofgem Chief Executive, in support of the Environmental Audit Committee’s recommendations to government on removing the barriers to community energy.

26th May 2021

Dear Secretaries of State, Ministers, Chancellor and Ofgem,

Action on Environmental Audit Committee recommendations on community energy

We, the undersigned organisations, support the Environmental Audit Committee’s Letter to the government which recommends ‘Removing the barriers to the development of community energy.’

We support its recommendations - first and foremost that the importance of community energy be recognised in the Net Zero Strategy and, vitally, by instituting “practical support measures to harness the potential of community energy”. These must be included in the Net Zero Review and funded in the Comprehensive Spending Review, this autumn.

Community energy is essential to getting the buy in and active participation of the wider public, without which, as the Climate Change Committee has repeatedly warned, “It will not be possible to get close to meeting a net-zero target.” The Climate Assembly UK report to the government highlighted “informing and educating everyone”, “fairness within the UK, including for the most vulnerable” and “local community engagement” as prioritised principles to underpin the path to net zero. Community energy can be a key ally to the Government here. It can deliver significantly greater social and community benefits than purely commercial interventions, ensuring people and communities are not left behind. Community energy is essential to realising a just transition and harnessing local opportunities and synergies that otherwise would not happen.

We urge you to work together to ensure that the specific recommendations in the Committee’s letter are taken seriously and enacted. These include removing the regulatory barriers to local supply of energy and providing specific financial supports for community energy such as is available for commercial onshore renewable energy, namely: a Community Smart Export Guarantee, with a long-

term floor price; an Urban Community Energy Fund; a replacement for the Renewable Heat Incentive for community energy and funding for Local Area Energy Planning and local authority/community energy collaborations.

We look forward to hearing positive news from you and seeing the cross-departmental working, collaboration with devolved administrations, regulatory enabling, support for local authority/community energy planning and collaboration, and learning from international best practice that the Committee advocates.

We look forward to seeing community energy fulfill its potential, adding value to communities and empowering them to meet their own needs, and ensuring no one and no community is left behind in a just energy transition.

Yours sincerely

Emma Bridge

Community Energy England,
Chief Executive

Danielle Palmour Walker

Friends Provident
Foundation, Director

Vidhya Alakeson

Power to Change,
Chief Executive

National Organisations

Association for Renewable Energy and
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Energy Networks Association,
Randolph Brazier, Director of
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Big Society Capital,
Stephen Muers, CEO

Energy Saving Trust,
Mike Thornton, CEO

Black2Nature,
Dr Mya-Rose Craig, Founder &
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Esmee Fairbairn Foundation,
Caroline Mason, CEO

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Keith Hempshall, Head of Local and
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Co-operatives UK,
Rose Marley, CEO

Forum for the Future,
Sally Uren, Chief Executive

Community Energy Scotland,
Janet Foggie, CEO

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Community Energy Wales,
Robert Proctor, Business
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Greenpeace,
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CPRE, the countryside charity,
Crispin Truman OBE, Chief
Executive

Islamic Foundation for Ecology and
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Fazlun Khalid, Founder

Locality,
Tony Armstrong, Chief Executive

Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation,
Jonathan Gillett, Trustee

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Max Wakefield, Director

Power for People,
Steve Shaw, Founder director

Regen,
Jodie Giles, Senior Project Manager,
Communities

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Social Enterprise UK,
Peter Holbrook, CEO

Sustainable Energy Association,
Jade Lewis, CEO

Thrive Renewables,
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Philip Bazin, Head of Project Finance

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Emma Kemp, Competition &
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Community Organisations

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Egni Co-op,
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Energy4All,
Mike Smyth, Chair

Energy Alton,
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Green Light,
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John Christmas, Chair

Sustainable Harborough Community,
Rev Brian Davies, Chairman

Sustaining Dunbar,
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Gareth Tucker, Chair

Teign Energy Communities,
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Transition Town Berkhamsted,
John Bell, Secretary

Yealm Community Energy,
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Zero Carbon Yorkshire,
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(74 signatories)

