



## PRESS RELEASE

# Spring Statement a “mixed bag” for Net Zero

## For Immediate Release

Responding to the Spring Statement and support for local authorities to deliver Net Zero, UK100 CEO Polly Billington says:

“The Spring Statement is a mixed bag for local Net Zero.”

“We're delighted to see action on our call to scrap VAT on energy saving materials. This is a welcome boost for retrofit, especially coupled with the Chancellor's support for energy efficiency as a focus for UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) funding.

“Retrofit will boost jobs and skills, increase energy security, and reduce energy bills. All while accelerating progress towards Net Zero. Local authorities are ready to take action and increased support is welcome news.”

“There are important lessons to learn from the Green Homes Grant. Local authorities have proven themselves a good value-for-money delivery partner. A point reinforced by a recent PwC report that found Net Zero projects delivered locally offer more bang for taxpayers' buck than those delivered nationally.”

“Our new *Retrofit for Purpose* report, to be released this month, finds that a local authority-led approach to retrofitting social housing across the UK will support 85,000 jobs and cut energy bills by between £300 and £400 a year.”

Polly adds: “It was also good news to get confirmation earlier today from BEIS that Net Zero Hubs will replace Energy Hubs from April 1. But their omission from the Spring Statement is concerning. The energy hubs have been vital sources of support and coordination for local authorities seeking to turn ambition into action and their broadened remit is welcome on Net Zero.

“But to be effective they need adequate, long-term funding. They also need to be empowered with a clearly defined role. We didn't get that today.”

On the fuel duty cut, Polly says: “We understand the fuel duty cut is a difficult step taken to address the cost of living crisis, but there is no escaping the fact it is



a backwards step for Net Zero. It should be offset with support for local authorities to bolster more sustainable transport measures. Local leaders need to be supported to promote active travel and expand, rather than cull, bus services, particularly in rural areas.”

“At the same time, acting to reduce the cost of public transport will support more than a third of the lowest-income households that have no car and struggle with everyday travel costs.”

### ***ENDS***

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### **About UK100**

UK100 is a network of the most ambitious local leaders working towards Net Zero as soon as possible but no later than 2045. We help them collaborate to take decisive action in their communities.

Our members represent more than 37 million people in towns, cities and counties across the UK.

We facilitate knowledge-sharing between members, partnership-building and leadership mentoring. And support them to harness their collective power to affect vital national change.

Warm homes, affordable energy, clean air, and healthy landscapes make thriving communities.

And UK100 members have pledged to deliver a Net Zero future that delivers for people and planet.

[UK100.org](https://uk100.org)