



## PRESS RELEASE

# UK energy security strategy is a missed opportunity to recognise the power of local

## For Immediate Release

UK100 is the only network of local leaders across the UK committed to ambitious action on Net Zero and clean air.

Responding to the UK Government's newly published [Energy Strategy](#), **UK100's Chief Executive Polly Billington** says:

"With local leaders being vital partners in delivering UK energy security and Net Zero, the Government's energy strategy is a missed opportunity. Local authorities are mentioned just twice in the whole document."

### Energy efficiency and energy demand reduction

On the commitment to double funding for green finance products from £10 to £20 million while working with the UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) to boost investment for energy efficiency projects, Polly adds:

"The strategy, on the whole, is too quiet on energy demand reduction: a key priority when it comes to increasing energy security and accelerating Net Zero progress."

"The commitment to investing in heat pumps and doubling green financing for retrofit and making our homes more energy efficient is good news. But we need more. With only 2.8% of homes due to be upgraded in the next three years, it begs the question: why are we waiting until 2050 to make the other 97.2% energy efficient?"

"Local leaders are making a success of the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme to deliver lifelong low-carbon housing. They have demonstrated they can deliver at scale and cost-effectively."



“Decarbonising homes should be a central element of the UK's energy security strategy — and the best way to do it quickly, economically and at scale is hand-in-hand with local authorities.”

Reflecting on the [Chancellor's letter to UKIB](#) last month asking it to prioritise energy efficiency and the VAT cut on [\(some\) energy efficiency measures](#), Polly says "the measures aren't enough on their own," and adds, on the new energy security strategy specifically:

"The package doesn't make the most of local authorities as willing partners to ease the current household bills and energy security crisis, and fails to identify them as playing a key role in the long term too."

## **Transport**

**UK100's Assistant Chief Executive Jason Torrance** adds:

"There is little action on transport — a vital means of reducing our reliance on Russian oil and gas."

"Local authorities have been calling on the government for more support in expanding and decarbonising public transport after local leaders across the country [missed out on the latest round of competitive funding](#). The promise of 4,000 electric buses has also [yet to materialise](#)."

## **Energy networks**

On the energy networks, storage and flexibility plans laid out in the strategy, Polly Billington says:

"Local authorities are key partners in upgrading our network infrastructure to be agile, responsive and make the most of the UK's clean energy potential — that they are not referenced in the strategy is an oversight that needs quick remedy."

“Different cities, towns and regions will have different energy needs and means of production, with local authorities a key element of the network's future development, as [recognised by Ofgem](#). It would be a mistake to leave local leaders out of the loop.”

## **Renewables**



While referencing the weakened proposals on onshore wind, Polly welcomes plans to work with local communities to build support for new wind farms:

"While there is obvious disappointment with the scaling back of ambition, the promise to work with supportive local communities to expand onshore wind is to be welcomed. Onshore wind is one of the cheapest and cleanest routes to energy independence. It also enjoys broad support across the UK. We know there are local leaders throughout our network, like Cornwall, who are ready to work with the government to increase onshore wind capacity."

"We also welcome the increased ambition on offshore wind and solar capacity and promises on slashing red tape to get it installed quickly."

"Ultimately, it remains the case that renewable energy, onshore and offshore wind and solar remains the quickest and cheapest way to secure our energy independence, reduce bills and progress towards Net Zero."

"The Government needs to work with local leaders and communities to increase the pace and scale of the strategy's clean energy commitments."

## ***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](http://UK100.org)