



Cymru Clean Power: **Call for Government 2026**



RenewableUK Cymru calls on all political parties to provide the leadership and policy clarity needed to secure Wales' place at the heart of the UK's clean energy economy.

Clean energy is one of the UK's fastest-growing industries, cutting bills and shielding households and businesses from sudden price hikes through affordable, home-grown power. Wind and sun already generate around half of the UK's electricity, but only a third in Wales.

Wales has world-class natural resources, but is failing to turn them into jobs, investment and economic growth – leaving us behind the rest of the UK. **Over the last decade, Scotland secured more than £18 billion in new investment support for clean energy, while Wales attracted less than £1 billion.**

Investors are ready. Projects are planned. Jobs are waiting. What is needed now is decisive political leadership and a strong government–industry partnership to turn opportunity into delivery.

This Call for Government sets out what is needed to deliver **Cymru Clean Power** – a partnership between government, industry and communities to secure affordable energy, good jobs and long-term investment.

Large-scale renewables offer Wales the chance to power itself with clean, affordable energy, attract sustained inward investment, and support thousands of skilled jobs and home-grown Welsh businesses. **Cymru Clean Power is about turning natural advantage into a lasting economic legacy across our industrial heartlands and rural communities – turning energy generation into regeneration for Cymru.**



Why do we need to generate more clean electricity?



Reduce our reliance on imported fossil fuels

Most electricity produced in Wales still comes from imported gas. While Wales exports energy overall, very little of it is clean – leaving households, businesses, and the economy exposed to volatile prices and global shocks.



Maximise a major economic opportunity

With some of the best wind and tidal resources in Europe, renewable energy could become one of the biggest drivers of the Welsh economy over the next decade – **worth up to £10 billion for Welsh businesses and supporting 8,000 secure, well-paid jobs.**



Demand for electricity is rising fast – and will keep rising

As Wales switches to electric vehicles, heat pumps, and new AI-driven industries, electricity is becoming the backbone of daily life. Without a major increase in clean power generation, Wales risks higher bills, weaker energy security, and falling further behind economically.

The choice is clear: continue depending on imported fossil fuels or build a home-grown clean energy system that delivers security, jobs, and investment. By maximising renewables, Wales will:

- **Safeguard energy security**
- **Provide low-cost, reliable electricity for households and businesses**
- **Boost the competitiveness of Welsh businesses**
- **Strengthen investment across the country**
- **Support thousands of well-paid, secure jobs**



Photo credit: RWE

What is a Cymru Clean Power Partnership?

It is a two-way agreement between government and industry.

Government sets out what it wants from development - well-paid, skilled, secure jobs, local content from Welsh businesses, community wealth building and improvements to the natural environment.

In return, industry needs a stable investment environment: clear technology specific renewable energy targets, strong supportive policy which prioritises the critical role of large-scale renewables, and better funded statutory authorities to make timely and consistent planning decisions.

This provides local Welsh companies with a secure renewables pipeline, giving them the confidence to invest in people. By recruiting, training, and upskilling locally, they create opportunities for young people hardest hit by the lack of private sector jobs in rural areas - helping them stay, build careers and succeed.

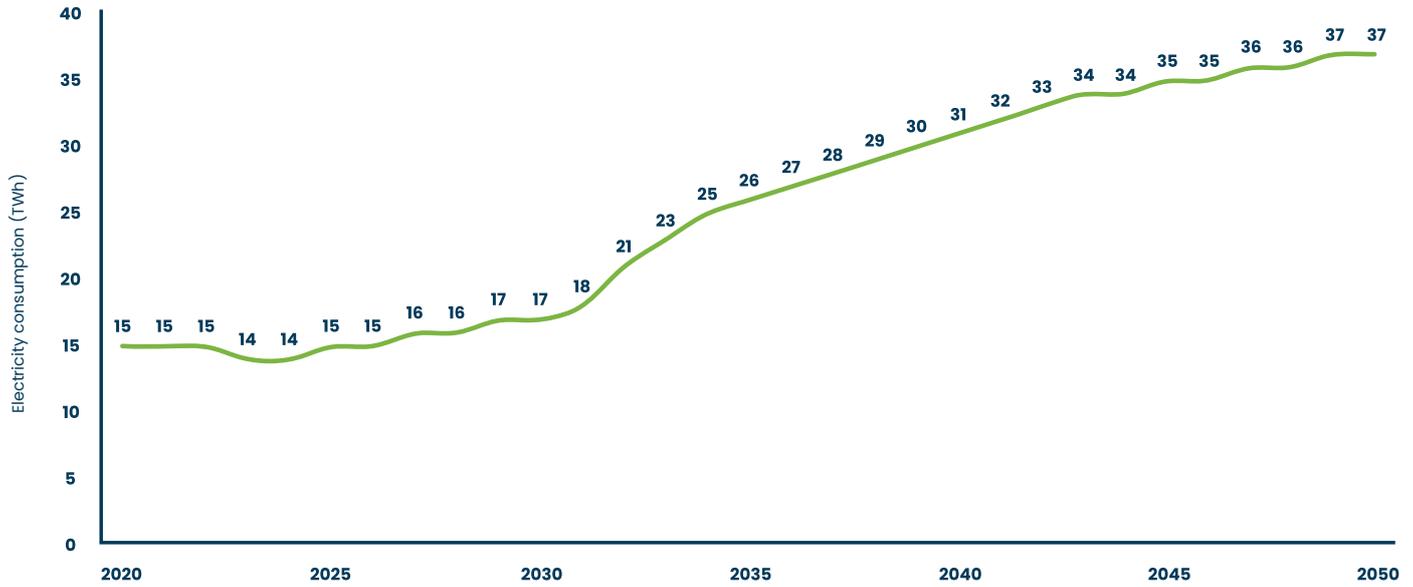


A Cymru Clean Power Partnership is the best way to turn Wales' renewable potential into high-value jobs, business growth, and long-term investment.



A power-hungry nation

Welsh electricity demand projections



Source: Energy Generation in Wales reports

Electricity demand in Wales is projected to double – perhaps almost triple – by 2050. Community-scale renewable projects are important for local ownership and resilience, but they cannot meet Wales’ growing energy needs alone.

Community energy and large-scale renewables are complementary, not alternatives. Wales needs large-scale projects – onshore and offshore – to do the heavy lifting:



Keep the lights on



Power electric vehicles



Heat homes affordably



Supply clean electricity for heavy industries like Tata Steel, switching from blast furnaces to electric arc furnaces

These projects deliver the scale, reliability, and affordability our energy system depends on. They also unlock well-paid private-sector jobs and strengthen rural and coastal economies.

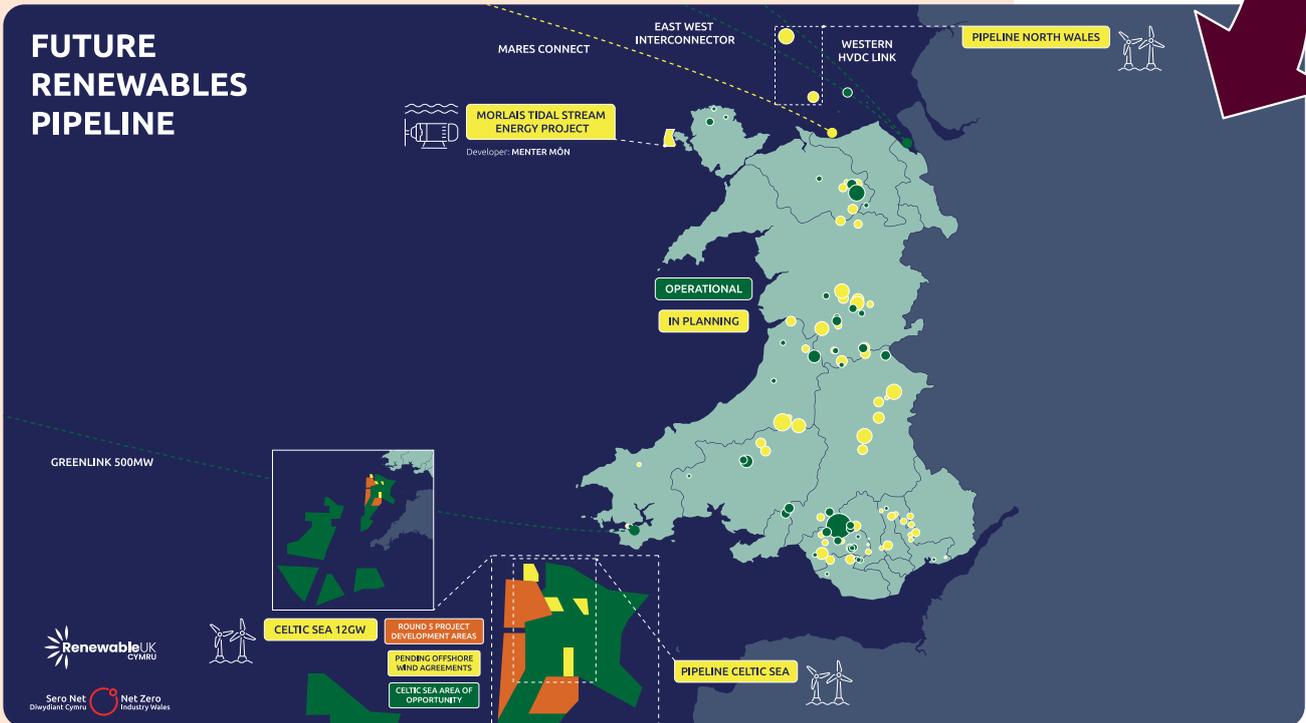


Two AI Growth Zones are planned in Wales, expected to include at least nine new data centres. Based on typical electricity demand for large data centres, their combined electricity demand could match or exceed that of a city the size of Cardiff, highlighting the need for abundant, reliable power and a grid ready to deliver it.

Welsh Jobs and Economic Growth

Just as Welsh coal powered the steam age and Welsh steel built bridges and skylines across the world, renewables are our next great economic opportunity. Unlike extractive industries of the past, they offer a different kind of future. One that creates lasting value for Wales. For communities hardest hit by the collapse of coal, that means good, local jobs and new opportunities.

The map below represents billions of pounds of wind energy investment already in the pipeline - ready to be built over the next ten years. These projects don't just cut carbon pollution, they bring well-paid jobs, long term investment and growth to every corner of Wales, reviving our industries and strengthening our communities.



By building the future renewables pipeline Wales wins¹:



£10 billion
for Welsh
businesses



8,000 secure, well-paid jobs with an average salary of
£49,000. That's **£10,000** more than typical Welsh wages.
Enough to pay the mortgage, raise a family, and build a future.

Introducing technology specific targets for wind, solar and tidal energy, and laying the foundations to enable investment in a robust well-resourced planning system, would:

- **Create a visible pipeline of projects, giving Welsh businesses the certainty they need to invest, diversify and expand. This, in turn, makes Wales more attractive to skills providers and training organisations, who are more likely to invest when there is a clear runway of future work.**
- **Enable well paid jobs in Wales for Welsh people, reducing the brain drain and supporting regional economic growth.**
- **Boost Welsh competitiveness in the UK and strengthen the business case for investment in Wales.**

A Cymru Clean Power Partnership is the best way to turn Wales' renewable potential into high-value jobs, stable bills, business growth, and long-term investment.



¹Unleashing the full value of Welsh renewables; RenewableUK Cymru, 2025

Investing in Wales' Infrastructure

Much like our rail and water infrastructure, our grid is in desperate need of significant infrastructure investment. Designed for a centralised, coal-powered economy, it is not fit for a modern, renewable future.

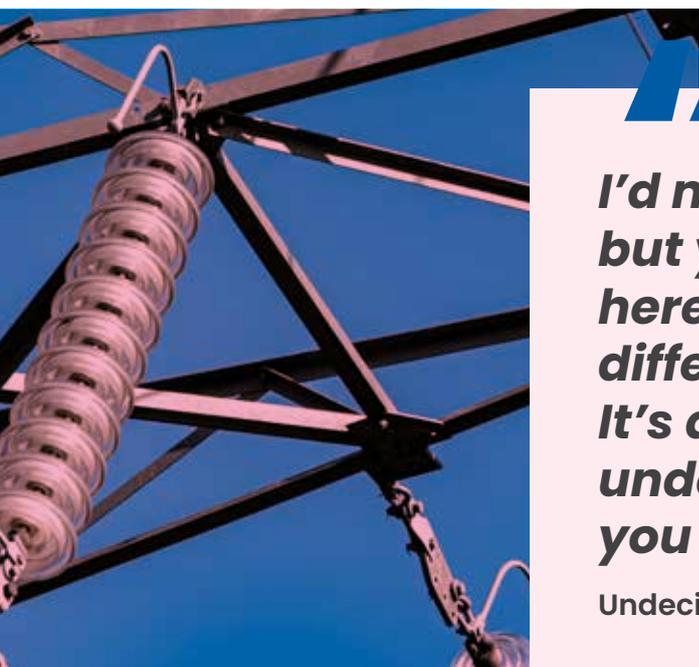
Without upgrades, electricity generated from windswept Mid Wales to the coasts of Llandudno and Pembrokeshire cannot reliably reach homes, businesses, or industry – and Wales risks missing out on the economic opportunities that a modern, flexible grid could unlock.

Wind and solar projects are already being delayed or blocked by a lack of grid capacity. This affects not just clean energy, but everyday life in Wales – from driving electric vehicles to installing heat pumps and building new homes. It also limits growth for businesses of every size, from local firms to large-scale industry and AI-driven sectors.

Affordability for consumers must be the central concern for these grid upgrades.

Burying powerlines underground can cost up to five times more than overhead pylons and carries a significantly greater environmental impact².

With household and business energy bills already under pressure, keeping costs down is a top priority for Welsh voters. Research shows that once people understand the true costs and trade-offs, there is strong push back to paying more for their energy bills – or higher taxes – to bury powerlines³.



I'd much prefer undergrounding, but you have a sense of realism here. I had no idea the cost difference would be that much. It's a difficult choice as I prefer undergrounding any day. But you know, it's a no brainer.

Undecided voter: BMG/Copper focus group testing⁴

² DNV–Undergrounding–132kV–Assessment–Report; Institution of Engineering and Technology: A comparison of electricity transmission technologies: Costs and characteristics report

³ What Wales Really Thinks About Energy – Cavendish

⁴ RenewableUK Cymru / BMG Research: Exploring Welsh Public Attitudes to Renewable Energy; Jan 2026

Our approach is simple: invest in the grid in ways that deliver value for money and keep energy costs down, while limiting environmental disruption.

A Cymru Clean Power Partnership would:



Commit to driving a cost-effective upgrade of Wales' grid infrastructure for future generations.



Ensure flexibility and pragmatism is applied to the development of Welsh grid.



Support an open, factual government communications programme to explain the scale of grid upgrades required in Wales, why they are necessary, and how they will be delivered.

Government must commit to a Cymru Clean Power Partnership to modernise Wales' grid, keep energy affordable, and unlock jobs and investment.



Retaining Value for Welsh Communities

Wales' renewable energy sector has the potential to economically transform communities across the country.

Renewable energy projects already provide great value for local communities.

For an average onshore windfarm, every £1 post-tax profit a developer makes, the community receives 37 pence in community benefit funds.



- Onshore wind projects already contribute **£6.5 million a year to Welsh communities.**
- Over the next ten years, onshore wind could deliver up to **£183 million directly to communities**, funding mental health support, energy efficiency, health and leisure, and community-owned energy projects.
- Renewable energy also generates significant **business rates.** If ring-fenced and retained locally, Powys for example could receive **£29 million pounds a year** from its future renewables pipeline of onshore wind. A further direct benefit for communities hosting critical infrastructure.

Supporting Welsh manufacturers, construction firms, and service providers also ensures that **economic benefits stay in Wales**, creating opportunities across skilled, trade and other professional roles.

A Cymru Clean Power Partnership would:



Help unlock millions in community benefit payments for Welsh communities.



Ensure best practice and a unified approach to public engagement is adopted by all developers, with clear reporting to evidence how projects deliver jobs, skills, local investment and environmental benefits.



Create certainty for Welsh businesses and skills providers to set-up shop for the coming decades.

A Cymru Clean Power Partnership would set a consistent, best-practice approach to delivering local value. By ensuring community benefits are clear, fair and flexible – shaped by local needs without putting projects at risk – it would secure investment in Wales rather than letting it flow elsewhere in the UK.

How a Cymru Clean Power Partnership can help support a programme for Government

Wales stands at a crossroads. The renewable energy transition is already underway – the question is whether we lead or fall further behind. Without decisive leadership, investment, jobs, and skills will flow elsewhere.

Cymru Clean Power offers the clearest route forward. It would:



Protect households from high energy bills.



Anchor investment in Welsh businesses and support economic growth.



Create clear pathways into skilled jobs.



Deliver long-term economic benefits to communities across Wales.

RenewableUK Cymru urges all parties to commit now – to secure jobs, anchor investment, and ensure Wales takes its place at the heart of the UK's clean energy economy.

Photo credit: Bute Energy

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Support Cymru Clean Power – secure jobs, anchor investment, and ensure Wales takes its place at the heart of the UK's clean energy economy.



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