

# Green. Fair. Together.

**A manifesto for a net zero  
energy system.**

November 2019



**A message for  
our political  
leaders from  
ENA's Chief  
Executive.**



# The time for action is now.

**Climate change is the defining issue of our time. In this general election our political leaders must commit to doing more. More action to deliver green energy to homes and businesses. More action to develop the green jobs of the future. More action to benefit current and future generations. No person can be left behind.**

Energy Networks Association is therefore calling on political leaders to commit to three key policy priorities outlined in this manifesto:

- 1 Step-up and scale-up innovation** – harness the power of private investment to provide new learnings and kick-start competitive markets for technologies fundamental to achieving net zero.
- 2 A fair transition for everyone** – bring people together from every part of the country to shape the plans that will deliver a fair transition to net zero and benefits that can be shared by all.
- 3 Energise cities, towns and villages** – build on strong momentum to put these communities at the front-line of delivering net zero and wider benefits such as greener spaces and cleaner air.

Solutions to tackle climate change are as much local as they are national. Government, industry and communities must work together. Our collective efforts must be backed by billions of pounds of private investment.

Energy network companies, which manage the wires and pipes of our energy system, are playing a leading role. By bringing people together and investing in world-leading innovation, they are helping solve our toughest problems – from outlining a pathway to net zero heat to laying the foundations for the country's smarter electricity grid.

The message for our political leaders is clear – the time for action is now. An ambitious vision to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 means our focus must be squarely on delivery.

Let's embrace the opportunity to demonstrate our leadership ahead of hosting next year's global climate change summit, COP 26. We must also prioritise ongoing collaboration on energy and climate issues with our European neighbours, natural allies in this area.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Lister". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath.

Chief Executive  
Energy Networks Association



# Green.

## Step-up and scale-up innovation

**Every home in Britain must have access to green energy. To deliver this, it is time to step-up and scale-up innovation in green technologies. This will light-up pathways to commercialisation. It will provide new learnings, kick-start competitive markets and further drive down costs.**

Significant private investment will be needed. But it is vital that policy and regulatory frameworks are stable, long-term and closely aligned to net zero. The regulatory framework must fully enable ongoing network innovation. With this, energy network companies can continue investing where it is needed – in a smarter energy system, net zero heat and green transport.

### 1 Take practical action to achieve net zero heat

Getting to net zero heat is one of our greatest challenges. The UK Government's 2020 Heat Roadmap must embrace short-term solutions, minimise disruption to homes and businesses, and keep costs low for the public.

Through this, more must be invested in innovation trials – from heat pumps to hydrogen and hybrid heating systems. Once forthcoming trials are successfully completed, it should be mandatory for hydrogen-ready boilers to replace existing gas boilers at the end of their life. A long-term policy mechanism is needed to boost the amount of green gas on the grid from 2021, beyond the end of the Renewable Heat Incentive.

At least one net zero industrial cluster should be live by 2025 to test carbon capture, usage and storage technology and hydrogen production at-scale. The right policies should enable more clusters to follow.

### 2 Maintain support for a smarter energy system

Our energy system is increasingly smarter, cleaner and more efficient. Homes and businesses are already seeing benefits, but this transformation must continue. Significantly more green energy needs to be connected to the grid to achieve net zero. To enable this, we must maintain support for emerging local energy markets, the use of new forms of flexibility to manage the grid and the shift to 'distribution system operators' – to manage local electricity networks more actively than ever before.

Longer-term, launching a sector-wide digitalisation strategy will boost the country's capabilities as an emerging digital powerhouse in energy.

### 3 Outline a more detailed green transport plan

A more detailed local and national transport plan is needed to support the rapid take-up of electric vehicles and the growth of green gases as a fuel for transport such as trains, buses and heavy goods vehicles. This must go beyond the long-term targets outlined in the Road to Zero Strategy.

We look to the government and the regulator to provide more direction on 'future proofing' energy networks. With this, network companies can make transparent, timely and cost-efficient decisions to further support the roll-out of vital infrastructure such as charging points for electric vehicles and green gas refuelling stations.

Electric vehicle smart charging tariffs must also be introduced so owners can save money from charging-up when prices are cheapest, while also potentially selling any excess battery power back to the grid.



# Fair.

## A fair transition for everyone



**The transition to net zero must be fair for everyone, including billpayers, workers and our most vulnerable people. Only then can the economic and social benefits of a greener future truly be enjoyed by all. In every part of Britain.**

A national conversation will help shape policy plans so it is a fair transition for everyone. It will provide new insights into the preferences of people and business owners.

A new statutory duty on Ofgem would help ensure the smartest, most innovative and fairest approach to achieving net zero. HM Treasury's net zero funding strategy must emphasise the role of private investment in complementing public spending.

### **1 Train-up green-collar workers in the 2020s**

New green jobs are win-win. Government and industry must form new partnerships to create these opportunities and train-up millions of new green-collar workers. Science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) skills will be key to achieving net zero.

As local and regional businesses, energy network companies employ people in every part of the country. They are committed to partnering with government over the next decade, helping nurture the talent needed for the future.

### **2 Seize the potential of energy efficiency**

We are yet to seize the enormous potential of energy efficiency. It is time to establish new ways of delivering it. Our energy network companies stand ready to play a bigger role. With policy mechanisms which provide new opportunities for investors, they may be able to help deliver this much-needed action.

People will benefit from warmer homes. Less demand on the grid will help to reduce the need for upgrades, keeping network costs low for the public. Stronger energy efficiency measures are needed for all homes but we must prioritise fuel poor homes, working to raise their energy performance to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2030.

### **3 Better target support for fuel poor homes**

It is only fair that all homes benefit from cleaner, more affordable energy. It is therefore a priority to improve the eligibility for the Fuel Poor Network Extension Scheme, the programme which provides fuel poor homes with a connection to the country's gas grid – a grid which will be increasingly green. Improvements would mean network companies can connect homes more accurately and cost-efficiently. It is vital that these same homes receive fully-funded boilers and heating systems via the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme.

An amendment to the Digital Economy Act would also enable network companies to use data to better target support.

# Together.

## Energise cities, towns and villages

**Our green energy future is as much local as it is national. We have taken major steps toward a more decentralised energy system. More than ever, people have greater control and choice over how they produce and use energy.**

Many cities, towns and villages have taken their own steps to announce climate emergencies and set local emissions targets. Let's build on this momentum. Our communities must be at the front-line of helping deliver net zero. Any local or regional action must be underpinned by a strong national policy framework to ensure the best long-term value for the public.

Our energy networks companies are exploring new ways to work with the communities they serve.

### 1 Introduce local clean growth strategies

Locally-developed clean growth strategies, together with the right support and resources, would empower cities, towns and villages. This should build on the success of local enterprise partnerships and take place alongside improvements to the current planning system.

Local initiatives should include new or better systems to recycle food waste. Not only would this reduce our environmental footprint, but it could boost the supply of green energy produced from waste. Household garbage is already used to produce record amounts of biomethane for heat and transport in Britain.

### 2 Reinvigorate industrial centres outside London

Every part of the country has a role to play in delivering net zero. Every part of the country should benefit along the way. Net zero presents an exciting opportunity to reinvigorate our industrial centres outside of London.

Stepping-up incentives for heavy industry will encourage some of the country's biggest employers to go green more quickly. New green jobs and supply chain opportunities will help energise these cities, towns and villages. It will give Britain an edge at the global level.

### 3 Reward cities, towns and villages which act

Achieving net zero demands fast, bold action at all levels. Introducing new rewards for cities, towns and villages will help to deliver this. Our communities must design these incentives, together with the best and brightest minds from our country-wide academic institutions, industry and civil society groups.

Rewarding cities, towns and villages could offer wide-ranging benefits – not only in helping to tackle climate change, but encouraging the development of new green spaces, cleaner air to breathe and quieter public areas. A green future is a bright future.



# Member companies





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