Bute Energy

The role of onshore wind in Wales' energy transition and economic future.

This Senedd term is critical for Wales' energy future. The scale of the challenge is significant, but the opportunities are potentially transformational.

The opportunity is clear: by 2035, the renewables industry could help nurture a resilient, thriving economy. A thriving industry backed by home-grown Welsh business and talent, a beacon for Wales' innovators and investors; a new Welsh industry powering Wales and the world.

The energy powering our homes, public services, business, and industry could be powered by the wind, sun or the tides. Reliable, predictable, clean – a secure energy system, in our control.

With the right action and government support, this could be a reality, and we could:

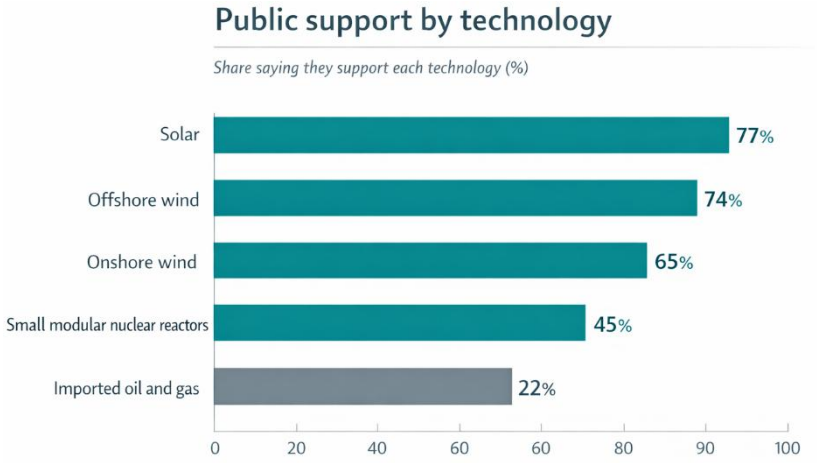
- Protect households and business from global price shocks
- Create an energy independent future, free from expensive and volatile fossil fuels
- Drive long-term sustainable investment in our economy, communities, and people
- Protect our environment and safeguard our climate for future generations

Energy – and the cost of our energy bills - has been a key campaign issue in many parts of Wales, and will continue to be a priority throughout this Senedd term.

Facing the second cost of energy crisis in 5 years, we know how important it is to act quickly; ending our reliance on expensive fossil fuels, and bringing down the cost of energy for households, business, and industry.

The public support greater action on renewables, too.

Recent research shows that renewable energy remains strongly supported by the public, with 71% saying development should increase, compared to 6% who want it to decrease.[1]



Bute Energy has prepared the enclosed briefing to provide a clear, evidence-based overview of:

- The strategic importance of onshore wind to our energy system and economy
- Bute Energy's portfolio of onshore wind
- The opportunities to drive greater local value
- The role of renewables in bringing down the cost of energy
- The current constraints and policy trade-offs
- The scale and status of renewables investment currently in development
- How we are working to support Plaid Cymru's objectives

We have engaged meaningfully with party colleagues throughout the development of the party's policy on renewable energy infrastructure, and value the constructive challenge and exchange of ideas throughout. We hope to continue our engagement with you in this way. In the appendix, you will find an overview of how we believe we can support the delivery of your programme for government.

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1. Bute Energy - introduction

At Bute Energy, we are developing the most ambitious pipeline of onshore wind in Wales. We are working at pace to deploy over £3bn in private, unsubsidised investment to consent, construct, and operate more than 2GW of energy within the next decade.

Bute Energy in numbers

- **£3bn** in inward investment
- **£4.5bn in GVA** for the economy
- **£3.6 billion** in services procured from Welsh business
- Up to **3,000 jobs** supported
- **£1.1 billion** in non-domestic rates
- **£800 million** in community benefit

With approved grid connection dates over this decade, Bute Energy's portfolio could make a significant contribution to fast-approaching energy and climate targets, and help underpin sustainable economic growth and rural resilience.

Our energy parks could contribute 25% of the additional capacity needed to achieve the Welsh Government's target to meet 100% of electricity demand from renewables by 2035. At the same time, the portfolio could provide up to 18% of the additional capacity for Clean Power 2030.

Energy demand is set to rise in the coming decades, and new technologies will transform our use of energy. Onshore wind can play a leading role in achieving the government's ambitions to secure our energy independence for the benefit of communities, public services, business and industry.

We are committed to delivering energy infrastructure projects that will unlock Wales' energy potential, strengthen the Welsh economy, support the domestic supply chain, and deliver long-term benefits.

We will be the first developer in Wales to meaningfully and equitably achieve long-standing government ambitions for local and shared ownership, and we will take active steps to increase community energy capacity over this Senedd term. We are committed to harnessing the energy transition for the long-term benefit of people, communities, and economies across Wales. We will achieve this through our place-based investment strategy; making strategic, intelligent use of our community benefit fund, providing an equitable route to shared ownership through our investment arrangement with the Welsh Pension Partnership, and enable the deployment of more community energy.

2. Our investment in Wales

We are committed to maximising the value of our investment for the long-term benefit of communities, regional economies, and for Wales. Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners, global leaders in renewables investments, are our primary investors, with the Welsh Pension Partnership also invested in the development of our portfolio.

We will achieve this through targeted, community-led community investment strategies, an ambitious Social Value requirement on our contractors, and an approach to procurement which focuses on maximising the contribution of Welsh suppliers.



RenewableUK Cymru estimate[2] that, to 2035, Wales could benefit from £10 billion in investment, 8,000 new jobs, almost £2 billion in tax revenue, and more than £183 million in community benefit funding. We estimate[3], should all projects in our portfolio be granted consent, that over the 40-year operational period of our projects, Bute Energy will make a significant contribution to national and local economies.

3. The cost of energy and the legislative context

Renewable energy provided 54% of our electricity consumption in 2024, and was worth almost £2 billion to the Welsh economy. It strengthens and secures our electricity supply, protects billpayers from volatile global price shocks, and is powering a new era of industrial growth.

Facing our second cost of energy crisis in five years, rising energy demand, and energy targets less than a decade away there's more to do. Recent global conflicts are a stark reminder of how exposed our economy is to the international oil and gas market.

Recent analysis highlights the scale of the challenge. In 2024, renewables met only 54% of energy demand and, in 2025, Wales became an energy importer for the first time. Imported gas accounts for around 58% of electricity generation — a higher share than in any other UK nation[4]. This leaves households and business at significant exposure to volatile energy markets and associated price shocks.

In 2024, gas generated 26% of the UK's electricity but set prices 85% of the time - so we often pay gas-level prices for cheaper renewable power.

Our heavy reliance on volatile fossil fuels leaves households and businesses at risk of unpredictable, soaring energy bills. In contrast, countries like Spain - which have rapidly expanded their renewable power - are largely shielded from these global price spikes. With a diverse mix of energy generated at home, they need to use foreign energy imports less often and are therefore less affected when a global crisis occurs.

By investing in more renewables and upgrading the grid, we can use gas less often and lower bills.

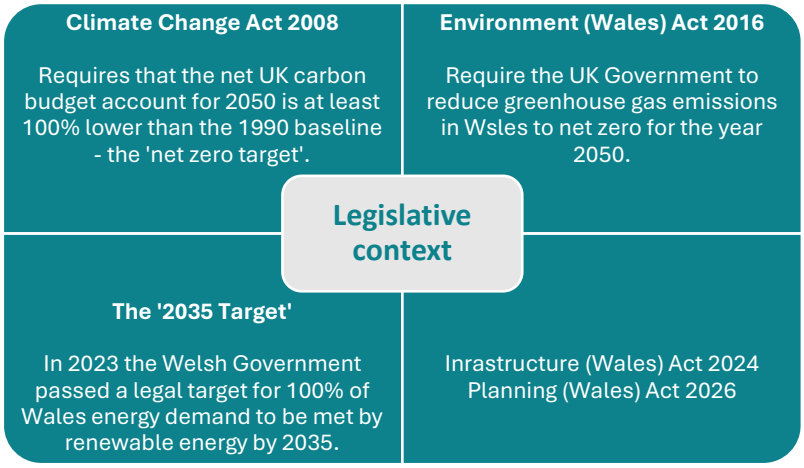
Renewables offer the Wales the cheapest and quickest route to energy security and lower consumer bills and long-term investment in our economy. Recent research also shows the cost of ending our reliance on

[2] Unleashing the full value of Welsh renewables, RenewableUK Cymru
[3] Independent analysis conducted by BiGGAR Economics on behalf of Bute Energy in 2025.
[4] Energy Generation & Use in Wales: first combined edition

oil and gas would be less than the energy-related costs of a single fossil fuel crisis, like the one following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

To build a truly energy independent Wales, we need to expand our homegrown renewable energy infrastructure, supported by modern grid and storage technology.

Legislative context



There are clear UK and Welsh legislative frameworks driving the transition to clean power. This includes The Climate Change Act (2008) and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. This legislative framework underpins our National Development Framework - Future Wales: the national plan to 2040 and Planning Policy Wales.

Our 'north star' is the legally-binding and climate-aligned '2035 target' for Wales to meeting 100% of our electricity demand from renewables by 2035.

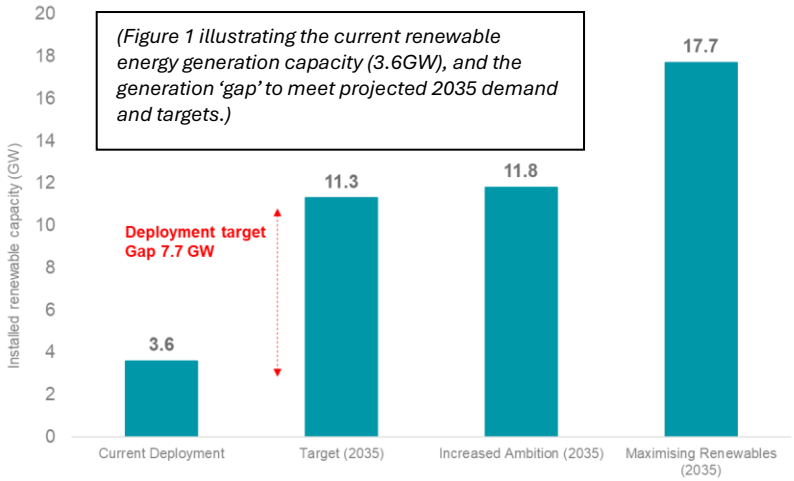
4. Wales' growing energy demand

In 2017, the Welsh Government set out a legally binding target that at least 70% of Wales's electricity consumption would be met from renewable generation by 2030. The Welsh Government later passed a target for 100% of electricity consumption to be met using renewable energy by 2035. This came ahead of the UK Government's 2030 Clean Power mission.

Whilst Wales' renewable energy provided 54% of our supply in 2024, gas represented 58% of energy generation. Energy demand is predicted to triple by 2050 – and that was before the expansion of AI and data centres.[5] To achieve Wales' 2035 Paris-aligned target, we will need a fourfold increase in our renewable energy capacity in less than a decade.

Current generation relative to 2035 targets

(Figure 1 illustrating the current renewable energy generation capacity (3.6GW), and the generation 'gap' to meet projected 2035 demand and targets.)



Source: Energy Generation & Use in Wales – Welsh Government

RenewableUK Cymru's 2025 'Unleashing the full value of Welsh renewables' report[6] presented three deployment scenarios to 2035:

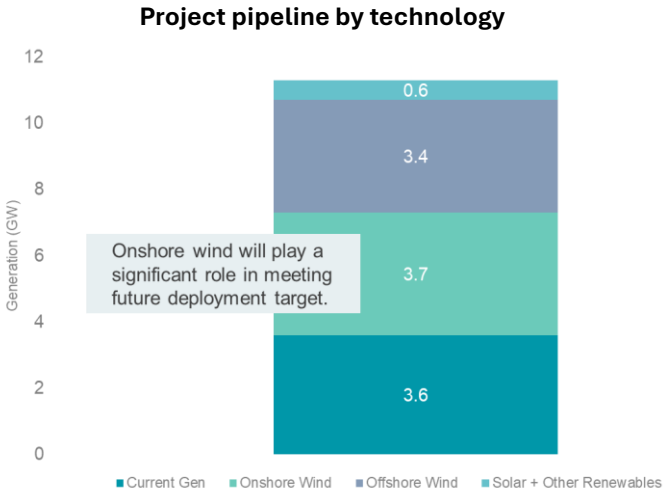
- **Current targets**[1] – 11,329MW (in line with Welsh government's targets)
- **Increased Ambition** – 11,806MW
- **Maximising Renewables** – 17,745MW (worth £46.6bn in inward investment by 2035)

[5] Energy Generation and Use in Wales – First Combined Edition (February 2026)
[6] Unleashing the full value of Welsh renewables, RenewableUK Cymru

Onshore wind represents a clear path to achieving the 2035 target. With significant uncertainty regarding the pace of deployment for floating offshore wind (FLOW), onshore wind represents the most mature and cost effective of all renewable technologies.

With 3.7 GW of onshore wind in the development pipeline (with a total additional capacity of 7.7 GW), onshore wind can enable many policy objectives likely to feature in this Senedd term.

Achieving this ambition will require an effective and well-resourced planning system that provides clarity to public authorities, communities, and developers.



(Figure 2 the generation capacity of projects currently in the pipeline in Wales by technology, with 3.6GW representing current generation, 3.7GW of onshore wind, 3.4GW of offshore wind, and 0.6GW of solar and other renewables.)

Progressing the Renewable Energy Sector Deal will provide an effective mechanism to achieve this.

5. The role of onshore wind

Onshore wind is the most mature, most cost effective, and easiest to deploy of all energy technologies. It is also the most cost-effective for billpayers.

In the last Allocation Round (7) of the UK Government's Contract for Difference scheme (the UK government's primary mechanism to support clean energy projects) the agreed price for onshore wind (£72.42 per megawatt generated per hour) was half that of new gas generation (£147 per megawatt generated per hour).[7]

Generating energy at a predictable cost, onshore wind offers best value for money for billpayers.

Onshore wind can also support the delivery of wider policy objectives including industrial capabilities, regional growth, and workforce development which may otherwise be delayed by wider, global economic pressures — regardless of political ambition.

- Decarbonisation and net zero targets
- Energy security and resilience
- Rural resilience and sustainability
- Economic development and skilled employment
- Access to affordable energy

    - *"Wales's electricity demand may almost triple by 2050" - Future Energy Grids for Wales, July 2023.*

    - *"Welsh renewable electricity generation needs to increase nearly fourfold by 2035 to achieve its targets" – Energy Generation in Wales 2023, March 2025.*

[7] Energy UK Explains: Allocation Round 7 results - Energy UK

Economic value and local content

Local content describes to the proportion of goods, services, labour, and other inputs in a project or product that are sourced from the country or local region in which it's based to promote economic development and employment.

With the right government support, there is a generational opportunity to drive lasting, sustainable economic growth and transform Wales' industrial capacity through the shift to a clean energy system. Independent analysis carried out by BiGGAR Economics on behalf of Bute Energy estimates that, should all projects in our portfolio be granted consent, Bute Energy will spend:[8]

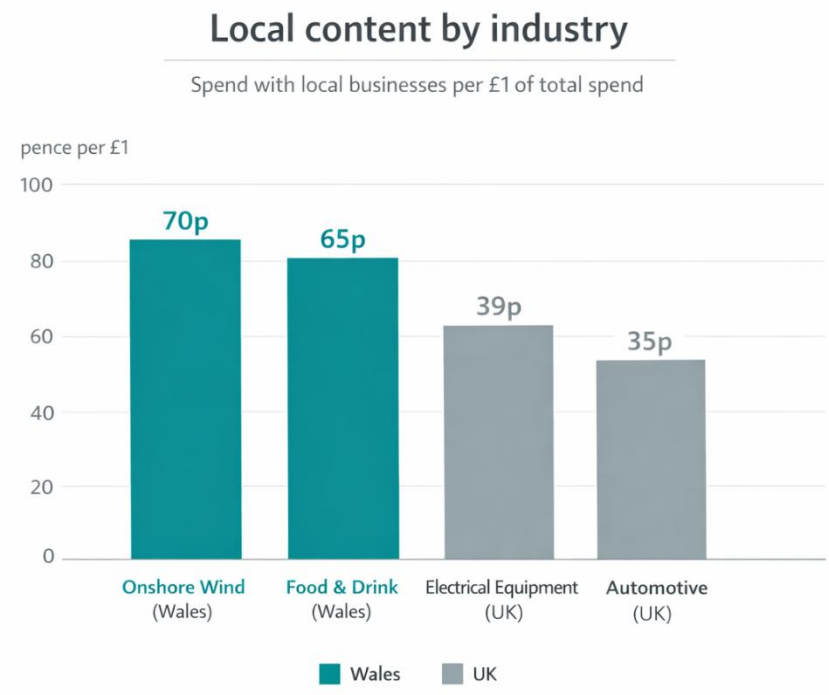
£1bn
Estimated total spend with Welsh business in construction of our projects.

£3.6bn
Estimated total spend with Welsh business on operations and maintenance services over project lifetime.

£1.1bn
business rates (across project lifetime).

Evidence from RenewableUK finds that the UK's existing strengths lie in development services, civil works, and operations and maintenance (O&M), which already deliver substantial local content. However, some high-value elements such as turbine manufacturing provide significant growth opportunities. The analysis finds that other elements such as electrical balance of plant (EBoP) equipment represent an opportunity to onshore the capability through multi-sector strategy and strong pipeline visibility for renewables.

This reflects our experience with Twyn Hywel Energy Park in Caerphilly. We are eager to work with government to identify opportunities to retain a greater share of the value of major infrastructure projects.[9]



In comparison with other industries, only the food and drink industry in Wales has a comparable 'local content' to onshore wind at around 65p in every £1 spent compared to 70p for onshore wind.

The automotive industry in the UK spends only 35p in every £1 and the manufacturing of electrical equipment 39p in every £1.

[8] Independent analysis conducted by BiGGAR Economics on behalf of Bute Energy in 2025.
[9] Onshore wind supply chain capability assessment summary report (RenewableUK, April 2026)

6. Bute Energy's projects



Our energy parks could contribute 25% of the additional capacity needed to achieve the Welsh Government's target to meet 100% of electricity demand from renewables by 2035. At the same time, the portfolio could provide up to 18% of the additional capacity to achieve UK Government's Clean Power 2030. All of Bute Energy's projects will be consented by Welsh Ministers.

Our portfolio can deliver:

2GW of clean energy

Powering the equivalent of 2.25 million homes

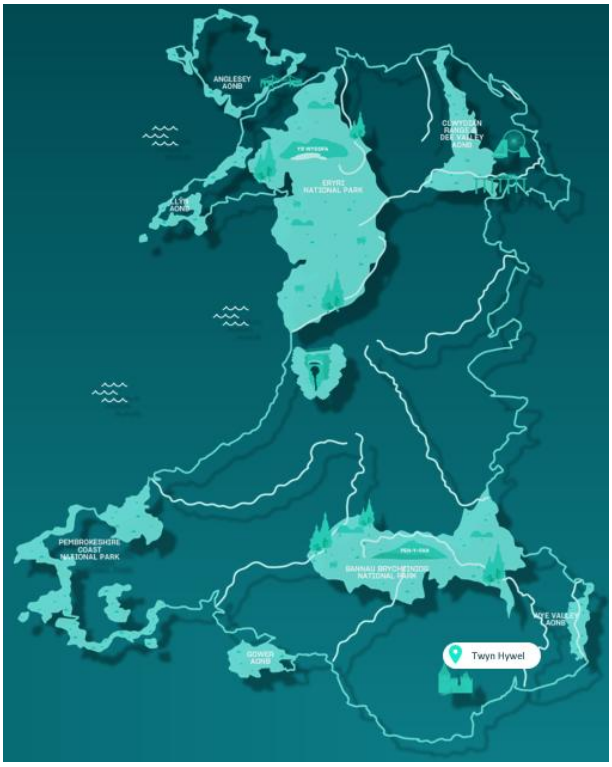
Displacing 2.6 million tonnes of Carbon Dioxide

Our project teams are responsible for the development and consent of a portfolio of projects, deploying the most recent technologies to develop onshore wind projects which maximise energy generation whilst being sensitive to local environments and communities.

As of May 2026, we have almost 590MW of generating capacity – enough to power the equivalent of more than half a million homes – in 'live' planning applications under consideration by Planning Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) which will ultimately be determined by Welsh Ministers.

Project name	Location	Number of turbines	Generation capacity	Community Benefit Fund per annum	Status
Twyn Hywel	Caerphilly/RCT	14	93.8MW	£703,500	Construction
Nant Mithil	Powys	30	198MW	£1.48m	In planning
Llyn Lort	Powys	23	151.8MW	£1.1m	In planning
Banc Du	Powys	6	40MW	£300,000	In planning
Rhiwlas	Powys	12	80MW	£600,000	In planning
Aberedw	Powys	18	120MW	£900,000	In planning
Lan Fawr	Ceredigion/ Carmarthenshire	55	368MW	£2.75m	Pre-application
Waun Hesgog	Ceredigion/ Powys	37	248MW	£1.86m	Pre-application
Esgair Galed	Powys	26	171MW	£1.28m	Pre-application
Garreg Fawr	Powys	22	154MW	£1.15m	Pre-application
Bryn Gilwern	Powys	16	84MW	£630,000	Pre-application
Moel Chwa	Conwy/ Denbighshire	12	79.2MW	£594,000	Pre-application

7. Twyn Hywel Energy Park



Twyn Hywel is Bute Energy's first onshore wind energy park to enter construction. It is a major investment project for Caerphilly and the south Wales region and will realise significant local benefits for communities and business, as well as the wider economy.

The project will deliver up to 14 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 200m. It will generate up to 93.8MW of clean energy enough to power approximately 81,000 households a year.

The development of the project commenced in late 2020, with consent granted by Welsh Ministers in late 2024. The project is currently expected to begin to export energy by late 2027. It will be the first in Wales to do so since 2022.

Twyn Hywel was successful in Allocation Round 7 of the UK Government's Contract for Difference scheme, the largest Welsh project in the Allocation Round.[10]

Over the next four years, the project will:

- **Make £140,000 (20%) of the community benefit fund available to communities during construction**
- **Award a total of £2.1 million in community benefit funding by 2030**
- **Support 50 individuals to become 'work ready' for the delivery of Twyn Hywel, through an innovative partnership with Big Issue Recruit**
- **Invest a minimum of £500,000 in the development and transfer of community energy projects for local ownership through the Community Benefit Fund by 2030**
- **Generate a return on investment for members of the seven participating local government pension funds through the Wales Pension Partnership.**

How Twyn Hywel Energy Park is delivering local value

Case study – creating pathways into careers

Bute Energy has partnered with Big Issue Recruit to support people facing barriers to employment into jobs in the Welsh renewables sector. The pilot will help around 50 local residents prepare for roles linked to the Twyn Hywel Energy Park, combining tailored training with ongoing in-work support to promote long-term local employment and skills.

[10] Energy Park in Caerphilly Successful in UK Allocation Round 7

Case study – community energy

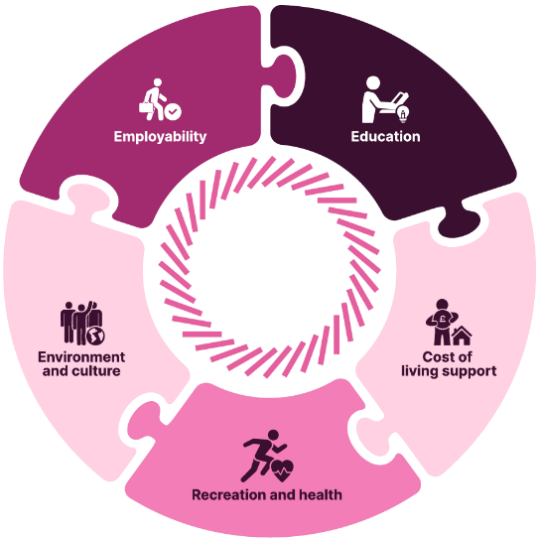
As part of our commitment to maximising social value through our supply chain, Dulas has undertaken a feasibility study to assess potential community energy projects within a 10km radius of Twyn Hywel. The study identified several viable opportunities, including a micro-hydro scheme at Nant Llanbradach. An internal working group has now been established, drawing on the expertise of our workforce to further develop this micro-hydro proposal alongside other potential projects. Detail on our approach to community energy is provided later.

Case study – local procurement

As Civils Balance of Plant partner, Bridgend-based Knights Brown will deliver the critical civil engineering infrastructure required to build the energy park. This includes the design and construction of access tracks, turbine foundations, and civil engineering works. The appointment builds on Knights Brown's extensive experience delivering complex energy projects throughout the UK, with specific expertise in the onshore wind sector. Through their knowledge of the region and their early engagement with local suppliers through our Meet the Buyer events, Knights Brown expects that 0.90/£ will be spent with Welsh suppliers.

8. Bute Energy's Investment Strategy

At Bute Energy we're harnessing our investment for Wales' future – socially responsible, structured to maximise opportunities and value for communities.



Investment in our energy system must mean more than simply clean power: it should create lasting prosperity for communities and our economy, and genuine local involvement.

Our strategy focussed on place-based approaches which aims to ensure wealth generated locally is retained and benefits local people and communities. It encompasses local community benefit, procurement, and skills and the role that we can play in creating the foundations to retain more of the value in Wales and in those communities hosting renewable energy projects.

The thematic approach for our fund includes:

1. Employability
2. Education
3. Cost of living support
4. Recreation and health
5. Environment and culture

Skills and employment



Our Future Skills Strategy sets out how Bute Energy supports the development of skills, training and employment pathways associated with the renewable energy sector in Wales.

The strategy focuses on building a pipeline of talent to support project delivery, strengthen the Welsh supply chain and enable long-term workforce development.

The strategy supports individuals aged 16 and above through further and higher education, as well as early career opportunities to develop a capable and competitive Welsh supply chain.

Bute Energy has also established a Youth Advisory Board to support engagement with young people across Wales.

Our Future Skills Strategy aims to:

- Support development of a skilled workforce in Wales
- Improve access to training, education and employment pathways
- Strengthen local supply chains and industry capability
- Increase participation in the renewable energy sector
- Contribute to long-term economic resilience

As part of our commitment to building skills for a clean energy future, we award bursaries to two MSc students at Cardiff University's School of Geography and Planning – now in its second year.

The support will help students complete their MSc in Spatial Planning and Development – a course that's preparing the next generation to lead in renewable energy planning and sustainable placemaking.

Read more the first students to receive the bursary - Ella and Cerys.

Supply chain and 'local content'



We view ourselves as an 'anchor business' for the wider supply chain for the renewable energy industry – both increasing the opportunities for existing Welsh suppliers, attracting new suppliers to Wales and, in the longer-term, 'onshoring' more the industry capability for renewables in Wales.

Our approach to procurement focusses on maximising the 'local content' across all our contracts. Our procurement processes place significant weight for Welsh suppliers and requires that large contractors outline the exact services, their value, and potential suppliers in their tender returns.

This has seen civil engineering suppliers Knights Brown commit to spending 90p in every £1 invested with suppliers across Wales.

Through our engagement with local business networks, industry bodies, and potential suppliers – including through Meet the Buyer events – we are taking deliberate steps to open up the supply chain in Wales to renewable energy supply chain opportunities: building their capacity to benefit from the potential £10bn in inward investment to Wales to 2035.

60%
Estimated total spend with Welsh business in the development of our projects.

£1bn
Estimated total spend with Welsh business in construction of our projects.

£3.6bn
Estimated total spend with Welsh business on operations and maintenance services over project lifetime.

70%
Estimated total spend with Welsh business on operations and maintenance services over project lifetime.

52%
Bute Energy spend with Welsh businesses and services to date

Community investment and social value



Our Community Investment Strategy sets out how community benefit funding associated with our proposed energy parks will be allocated to support local priorities, economic resilience, and community development.

The strategy combines long-term funding, data-led analysis of community needs, and locally informed decision-making to ensure investment supports sustainable outcomes in areas surrounding energy parks.

Community investment is designed to support a range of social, environmental, and economic outcomes, including:

- Supporting local skills development and employment pathways
- Strengthening local organisations and services
- Improving community facilities and access to outdoor spaces
- Supporting cultural, education and environmental initiatives
- Enabling community energy opportunities

Combining local decision making, robust data, and national oversight, this approach aims to ensure that funding delivers long-term benefits to communities located near Bute Energy energy parks.

Our commitment to social value was recently brought to life through our partnership with Drenewydd Actif Newtown (DAN), a local community sports initiative working to develop an inclusive, state-of-the-art facility aimed at improving physical and social wellbeing in Newtown. Through our 2% social value requirement, consultants RSK Group provided equivalent support worth nearly £12,000. This has enabled DAN to access £1 million of investment for the project.

Shared ownership



Bute Energy has secured investment through the Wales Pension Partnership (WPP), representing Local Authority pension funds.

- £68 million investment in Bute Energy projects
- Participation from seven Local Authority pension funds
- Approximately 388,000 pension holders represented
- Opportunity for funds to increase equity participation following planning consent

This structure enables pension funds to invest in renewable energy infrastructure located in Wales. This aligns with the Welsh Government's 2022 guidance on shared and local ownership, recognising that "*shared ownership may be structured as an investment mechanism rather than as a direct controlling stake in the entity operating an energy project, where the scale of the commercial and governance requirements make this a more realistic option.*"[11]

The investment represents 25% of the total development costs for the portfolio and provided an 11% return for the WPP on Twyn Hywel Energy Park achieving its Final Investment Decision in April 2026.

Community energy



Community energy forms a cornerstone to our local ownership offer, and our approach to tackling the cost of energy crisis for households. Up to 25% of our Community Benefit Fund will be made available to build, connect and gift projects to help reduce energy bills and generate income for the community.

These smaller scale generation projects could connect to the local distribution network – providing an income for its owners or to service a direct energy need.

This fund will be available for any constituted group, consortium of third sector organisations or public sector bodies, such as school clusters or Community Councils. The groups identified will be supported to own and manage the project (and income) for the benefit of their membership and wider community.

[11] Guidance for developers, local communities and decision-makers.

Technical support to develop these projects will be provided through the services of our contracted partners, as set out in our Social Value Standard. This will provide clarity on the feasibility, cost and generating capacity of projects prior to groups making an application for funding to construct and connect the project.

Through our contractual agreement with Dulas Ltd, our social value requirement has unlocked £7,000 in in-kind support to carry out a desktop analysis of community energy opportunities 10km from Twyn Hywel Energy Park. The study considered energy efficiency opportunities for community buildings and generating projects such as ground-mounted solar, roof solar, hydro, and small-scale wind. This study will inform the most viable community energy projects to explore with the community. The community energy subgroup of our Community Liaison Group has chosen to pursue small hydro opportunities which Bute Energy will help develop, consent, and construct to be operated by the local community.

9. Challenges and opportunities

This Senedd term will define Wales' path to energy security – and how Wales prospers from the transition.

Since 2015, 800 MW of renewable energy capacity has been consented. The last commercial-scale onshore wind project to become operational in Wales was in 2022. Wales faces a significant challenge over the coming decade to decarbonise our energy system and provide energy security whilst keeping costs down for households, public services, and business.

We are ready to work in collaboration with the government to help translate policy ambitions into delivery— at pace, at scale, and in a way that delivers long-term economic and community benefit. To achieve Paris-aligned 2035 targets, the next Welsh Government should seek to address the following barriers to new renewable energy projects:

#	Challenge	Opportunity and action	How Bute Energy can support
1	**System capacity** – the consenting system for Significant Infrastructure Projects (the Infrastructure Consenting Regime) will require additional resource (at a national and local level) to manage the additional demand currently, and projected to be, in the system over the coming decade. For onshore wind under the DNS regime, the average time from submission to decision was 77 weeks – 19 months, discounting the time any project spent in suspension.	Through the **Renewable Energy Sector Deal**, the government should: - take active steps to ensure that **consenting bodies and stakeholders** are prepared to engage as required by the Infrastructure Consents Regime. - explore the introduction of a new mechanism (at a national or regional level) to enable developers to contribute financially to addressing **resource and capacity constraints** in public sector planning bodies, as is currently being explored by Corporate Joint Committees.	- Our model approach to the sponsorship of Cardiff University Spatial Planning MSc Students can be scaled to promote the number of public sector qualified planners to boost capacity. - We can provide insights on the Bute Energy pipeline and development timescales, and the bottlenecks in the planning system delaying the progression of projects to Determination. - We can contribute to industry discussions, including through the Sector Deal, drawing on the deep experience of our colleagues who have been engaged with renewable energy projects across the UK for over 20 years.
2	**Policy uncertainty** – The lack of sufficiently detailed policy in Wales informing the	Through the **National Energy Strategy**, the government should explore, in consultation with the industry:	- We can utilise our in-house expertise across planning, consenting, and ecology – and those of our consultants – to

#	Challenge	Opportunity and action	How Bute Energy can support
	development of nationally significant infrastructure creates ambiguity and uncertainty for developers. This also creates uncertainty across public bodies and key consultees such as Natural Resources Wales, the Ministry of Defence, and the National Air Traffic Service, and can lead to protracted development timescales which again have a negative impact on investor confidence.	- **Infrastructure Planning Statements** which confirm the critical priority need for significant large-scale energy infrastructure to meet Welsh Government's energy objectives and binding commitments. The statements should set out the policies for the submission and assessment of energy infrastructure applications and their impacts, and clearly articulate that substantial weight will be given to the development of critical national infrastructure in the decision-making process. In England, there are a suite of National Policy Statements which provide clear policy on the considerations to be taken into account in decisions on infrastructure development. They give reasons for the policy set out in the statement, and takes account of government policy relating to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change in determining Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.	support the development of Infrastructure Planning Statements to provide clear, actionable frameworks to guide development and consenting decisions to aid timely development. - Explore the challenges of connecting community projects to the grid to identify useful policy mechanisms to unlock greater community energy capacity - Provide insights and contributions through our membership of RenewableUK Cymru, the National Infrastructure Planning Association (NIPA), Net Zero Industry Wales, the CBI Cymru, Chambers of Commerce and others.
3	**Grid infrastructure** – the lack of enabling grid infrastructure in mid Wales is a significant barrier to unlocking new energy generation, including in several of Future Wales' Pre-assessed Areas. In addition, policy ambiguity is delaying the consenting of new infrastructure critical to achieving 2035 targets.	Through the **National Energy Strategy**, the government should explore, in consultation with the industry: - publish an **Infrastructure Planning Statement on grid**, setting out the strategic need for grid infrastructure in (mid) Wales, and **set a clear policy framework** governing planning decisions relating to overhead lines vs other infrastructure, including undergrounding.	- We can utilise our insights across our extensive pipeline of onshore wind to help shape a clear, implementable policy on grid infrastructure which balances visual and ecological impacts with the additional capacity requirements and tight economic considerations for developers.
4	**Supply chain capabilities** – whilst there is a significant opportunity for the supply chain in Wales,	Through the **Renewable Energy Sector Deal** and **Just Transition Board**, the government should explore:	- Support government engagement with local, regional, and national suppliers to navigate the actions the

#	Challenge	Opportunity and action	How Bute Energy can support
	there are capacity and capability challenges limiting the opportunities for Wales-based suppliers. A lack of Tier 1 suppliers capable of navigating such significant infrastructure projects. The lack of pipeline certainty also limits opportunities to 'onshore' manufacturing capabilities in Wales in the medium to long term.	- ensure the proposed **Skills Audit** identifies the **skills** required to meet the scale of demand and deployment of new renewable energy, matching current and future workers with the necessary skills. - map and identify the **current supply chain capability and capacity**, and how the current pipeline of projects can improve capacity. - ensure the National Energy Strategy provides **pipeline certainty and visibility** to provide confidence to investors to 'onshore' additional manufacturing and supply chain capabilities needed to retain value in Wales.	government can take to improve the capability, capacity and visibility of the supply chain. - Support government engagement with wind turbine manufacturers and electrical balance of plant suppliers to understand the conditions needed to 'onshore' manufacturing capabilities for renewable technologies in Wales. - Support the establishment of a network of Centres of Excellence located near new clean energy technologies to provide long-term training in energy technologies, grid resilience, and planning.

Appendix – Delivering your Programme for Government

National Energy Strategy	We welcome the proposal to publish a comprehensive National Energy Strategy. Achieving the 2035 target for 100% of energy demand to be met by renewables will require a tripling of Wales' renewable energy output. The Strategy is an opportunity to strengthen Wales' planning and consenting system, retain and enhance local value, and create an attractive environment for investors. The strategy must adopt a whole-system approach across generation, storage, demand, and network infrastructure planning, set within the context of increasing energy demand. We also note the intention to set generation targets by technology, including wind, solar, tidal, and emerging technologies such as hydrogen. We understand the value of this approach, but would emphasise that technology-specific targets must be '**minimum'** targets, set within the context of growing energy demand and the 2035 target. These targets must also consider the necessary investment in grid infrastructure to meet the pace of deployment of new generation assets. Ensuring that targets are supported by clear spatial planning and grid investment strategies will be essential to avoid disconnects between technology targets and grid investment strategies. With onshore wind comprising 3.7GW of the current renewable energy pipeline (of the 7.7GW of additional capacity needed by 2035), we are eager to explore with government how the strategy can establish a clear planning framework to coordinate the deployment of onshore wind and required grid infrastructure.
Local value and benefit	We note the intention to require a minimum community-ownership stake of between 15 and 25%, equivalent local-benefit model, Wealth Fund payment, or corresponding means of capturing community benefits for all energy projects over 10 MW, as a key condition of consent. We welcome the ambition to maximise local benefit from renewable energy projects and have progressed an ambitious place-based investment strategy to achieve this. Our approach includes several mechanisms, and we would encourage government to consider how a menu of options, retaining flexibility for projects across all technology types and retaining place-based approaches to local investment. We would welcome the opportunity to explore our approach in further detail. - **Shared Ownership** – our investment arrangement with the Welsh Pension Partnership represents 25% of our development costs. On achieving its Final Investment Decision, Twyn Hywel delivered an 11% return for the WPP. Each local pension fund has a 'call off' option to take an equity stake of up to 25% in each project as it achieves its FID. - **Community Energy** – We will allocate 25% of Community Benefit Funds (CBF) to enable community-led energy projects within 10km of our parks, leveraging technical expertise, feasibility support and contractor capacity through our 2% Social Value commitments. These projects will be owned and operated by a local group or energy cooperative. - **Community Benefit** – we take a place-based approach to investment, informed by public data, local social mapping, and both local and national decision making structures, independent of Bute Energy. The fund focusses support on community capacity building, investing in initiatives that generate long term local benefit, and greater support for community owned energy projects.

	It will be important that any mechanisms consider finely balanced and complex project economics, particularly the scale of upfront infrastructure investment required. Renewable projects are capital-intensive with long payback periods. Clear, consistent, and flexible frameworks will be essential to ensuring that Wales remains an attractive destination for long-term energy investment. This is particularly important in the context of the removal of the de facto onshore wind ban in England and the UK Government's clean power ambitions.
Renewable Energy Sector Deal	The Renewable Energy Sector Deal must remain a central component of the proposed National Energy Strategy – and delivering against wider priorities. The emphasis on partnership working, skills development, supply chain growth, and coordinated sector planning will be essential to achieving 2035 targets and maintaining industry confidence. The Sector Deal can also provide a vehicle to explore the party's policy on spatial planning and cumulative impact to maintain a clear pipeline of projects. This will support the long-term stability needed to build and increase supply chain investment, workforce planning, and skills development.
Planning reform	The commitment to reform the planning system and introduce firmer timelines for consenting energy infrastructure is welcome. Ensuring that the consenting system is well resourced, provides clarity and consistency for communities, consultees and applicants is critical. The Infrastructure Consents Regime provides for 12 month consenting timescales following the acceptance of an application, however the circa 10-month timescales in the Development of National Significance (DNS) regime were routinely missed, discounting the time any project spent in suspension.. For onshore wind under the DNS regime, the average time from submission to decision was 77 weeks – 19 months Coordination across generation, storage, and grid infrastructure developments, whilst ensuring sufficient capacity within the system will be essential to achieving the 2035 target and maintaining industry confidence. We also recognise the ongoing debate on scale, size, and visual impacts of onshore wind. It is a complex process to develop schemes which balance environmental impacts, visual impacts, and ecological constraints whilst maximising energy generation. These complexities exist within challenging cost and delivery timescales, impacting on the deliverability of viable projects. We are happy to explore the implications of these competing demands on Bute Energy's projects. We hope to continue to work with officials and your government to ensure policy evolution is supported by clear guidance and consistent interpretation across planning authorities, to avoid uncertainty or delays in project development.