

Proposals to put North at centre of UK's push towards net zero

Plans to put the North at the centre of the UK's push towards net zero have been published.

The 11 local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) in the region have published a Net Zero North Prospectus, outlining four areas where the North has world-leading capabilities that could drive the UK's Green Industrial Revolution.

The report highlights work already done in offshore technologies; nuclear; hydrogen and carbon capture, utilisation and storage; and making the most of the North's outstanding natural assets. It reveals that the region already generates half of England's renewable energy and is reducing emissions 13% faster than the UK as a whole.

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But the North's industrial and manufacturing base means that it is still responsible for a quarter of the UK's annual carbon emissions, meaning it will be a key area for reducing emissions.

Previous research by the NP11 group of LEPs has highlighted the North's potential to create 100,000 new green jobs by 2050, growing the economy by £2.3bn a year and attracting an additional £2bn a year of investment.

Clare Hayward, chair of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP and one of the lead NP11 board members for clean growth, said: "Rising energy costs are causing significant concern for people and businesses across the North so we must begin putting the welcome commitments the UK Government made at COP

26 into action as a matter of urgency.

“The North is already leading the way in responding to the Government’s 10-point plan and this prospectus sets out a compelling offer to the Government for how the North can help them achieve their ambitions – not just on making the transition to net zero by 2050, but on levelling up the North’s economy, creating thousands of new green jobs, and developing new export and investment opportunities that will boost the competitiveness of Global Britain.”

James Newman, chair of the Hull and East Yorkshire LEP, added: “The UK needs to act with pace and urgency if we are to address the triple threat of rising energy costs, over-reliance on overseas energy, and climate change, whilst also cementing our global role of leading the transition to Net Zero.

“This prospectus is a vital starting point in setting out how the North can help the whole country address those challenges. It is not about presenting a shopping list to Government, as the North is already doing so much by leading the UK’s Net Zero transition through collaboration between businesses, research institutions and public bodies as this report makes clear. It is about identifying those projects that, with the right support, could be genuinely transformational – not just for the North but for the whole UK.”

The North is leading the way in renewable energy through work on offshore wind on the North East and Humber coasts, plans for carbon capture and storage at Drax in Yorkshire, an east coast carbon reduction cluster covering Teesside and the Humber, and use of the “Great North Bog” to capture carbon.

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