



Department for the
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An Roinn
Geilleagair

ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

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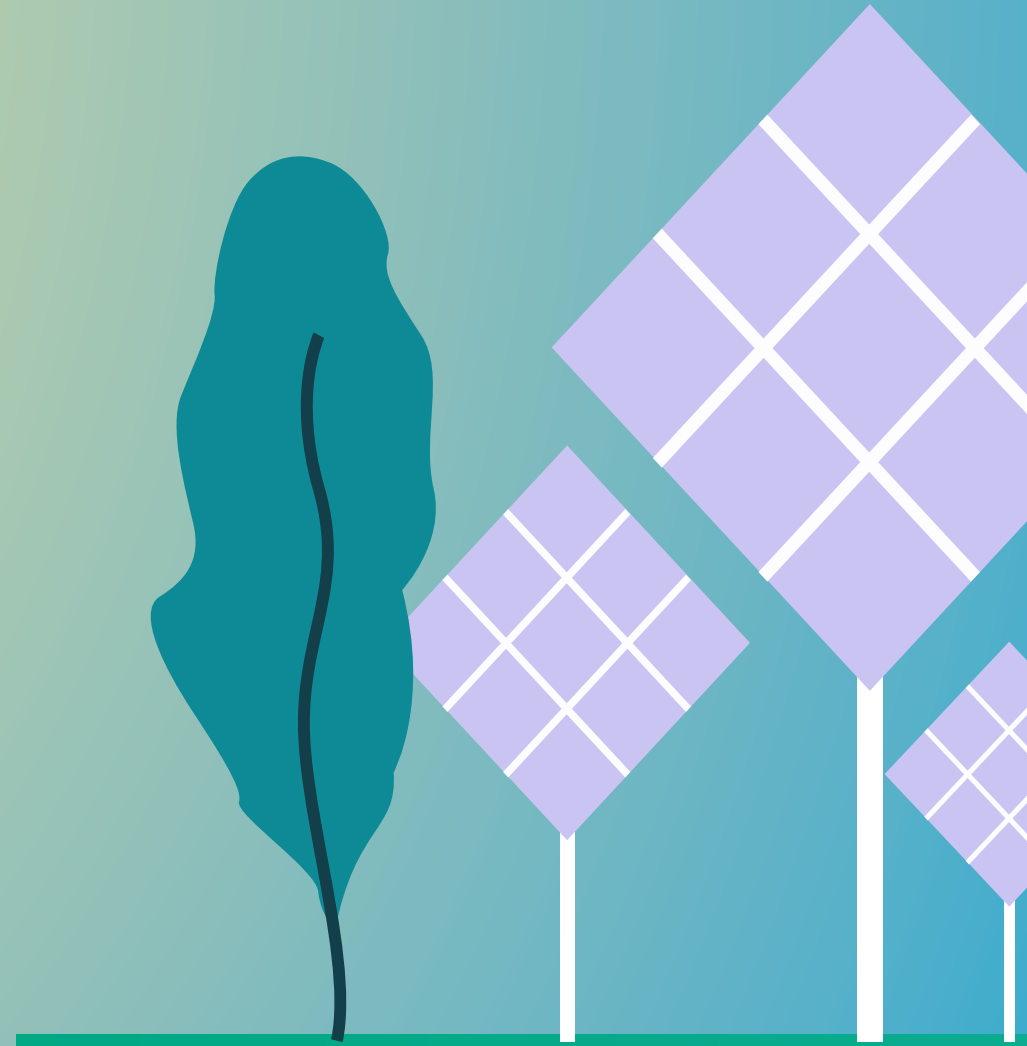
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In this issue, we feature key announcements, policy developments, research findings and programme updates supporting delivery of Northern Ireland's Energy Strategy.

We bring you details of the Household Electricity Discount Scheme announcement and coverage of Economy Minister Dr Caoimhe Archibald's opening address at the Northern Ireland Energy Forum. We also highlight the recently published independent research that is helping to inform future energy policy and planning.

In addition, we provide an overview of the Department's new Interconnection Policy Statement, which sets out the strategic framework for future East-West electricity interconnection, and report on the latest official renewable electricity statistics, which show that for the first time more than half of the region's electricity is being generated from renewable sources. We also bring news that the Minister has secured the closure of the non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme and provide an update on the latest refresh of the Energy Strategy Targets and Metrics Dashboard.

We hope you find this edition informative and useful as we continue working towards a cleaner, more secure and more sustainable energy system for Northern Ireland.





HOUSEHOLD ELECTRICITY DISCOUNT SCHEME ANNOUNCEMENT

Minister Archibald has confirmed that around 860,000 households will receive a £63 discount off electricity bills this year, from 6 October.

The Household Electricity Discount will be applied automatically by electricity suppliers. The Scheme is not means tested or based on consumption and applies to both households that receive electricity bills, and those who use pre-pay/keypad.

The Household Electricity Discount Scheme will continue in 2027 and 2028, with the value of future discounts confirmed ahead of payment.

Further information is available on the NI Direct key messages page - nidirect.gov.uk/household-electricity-discount-scheme



The full press release and additional material, including FAQs, are available on the Department for the Economy's website: [Household Electricity Discount Scheme](https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/household-electricity-discount-scheme)





MINISTER OPENS AGENDANI'S 25TH ENERGY FORUM

On 9 September, agendaNi hosted the NI Energy Forum at the Titanic Hotel, Belfast. Economy Minister, Dr Caoimhe Archibald, addressed representatives from business, academia, government and international organisations, setting out her vision for the upcoming Energy Policy Position Statement, which looks ahead to 2030.

The Policy Position Statement will be built around three key themes: ambition, investment and infrastructure. The Minister outlined how this vision will help deliver a secure, affordable and clean path to net zero.

The Minister reflected on progress made to date, outlining the next steps needed to deliver the Energy Strategy's 2030 ambitions.

Highlighting key policy developments, the Minister noted that the Renewable Electricity Generation Bill had its second reading in the Assembly, to support further

investment in renewable electricity generation and help position this region as a competitive and attractive location for clean energy development.

She also spoke about the rollout of smart meters from 2028, which will provide the foundation for a smarter, more flexible and more consumer-focused electricity system.

The recent publication of the Interconnection Policy Statement was highlighted, setting out a clear framework for future East-West electricity interconnection and ensuring future projects support decarbonisation, strengthen energy security and deliver lasting value for consumers and the wider economy.

The Minister pointed to the publication of an Energy Storage Policy Statement before the end of the year, supporting investment in storage and flexible technologies needed for a modern power system.



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MINISTER OPENS AGENDANI'S 25TH ENERGY FORUM

The Minister outlined that since 2021 the Energy Invest to Save Fund for public sector buildings has generated annual energy cost savings of over £10 million to the public purse. She also advised the audience that, later this year, the Department will consult on scheme design and funding options for a new energy efficiency and low-carbon heat support scheme for homes. Additionally, she provided updates on geothermal, heat networks, and biomethane policies.

Concluding, the Minister stressed that the next four years are critical. The focus now is on accelerating progress towards a secure, affordable and sustainable energy system by 2030 and beyond.

The Minister's speech is available here:
[Minister's speech - NI Energy Forum 2026 - 9 September 2026 | Department for the Economy](#)





RESEARCH ROUNDUP - PUBLICATION OF INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Sectoral Decomposition on Northern Ireland Input-Output Tables



Independent research by the Fraser of Allander Institute assesses how the energy sector is connected to other industries across Northern Ireland.

Using economic modelling, the study identified that food production, healthcare, retail and hospitality are among the sectors most vulnerable to energy sector changes in the transition to net zero. These findings highlight the importance of targeted policy interventions to support these sectors and help minimise potential impacts as the energy transition progresses.

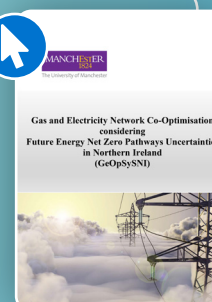
A data-driven approach for multi-scale GIS- based domestic building energy modelling for analysis, planning, and support decision-making in Northern Ireland



Independent research by University College Dublin uses data-driven modelling to assess the energy performance of homes without an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC).

The report uses data, GIS mapping and machine learning to assess and predict the energy performance across homes in Northern Ireland. By combining existing EPC records with modelled data, coverage increased from 51% to 94% of homes. The research will help inform future energy efficiency and low-carbon heat policy development.

Gas and Electricity Network Co-Optimisation considering Future Energy Net Zero Pathways Uncertainties in Northern Ireland (GeOpSySNI)



Independent research by the University of Manchester explores how greater collaboration between Northern Ireland's gas and electricity networks could support the transition to net zero, improve energy security, reduce costs and maximise renewable energy use.

The research developed an Integrated Energy System model of the energy network and gained insights from sector experts to identify key opportunities and challenges for better integrating Northern Ireland's gas and electricity networks. The findings highlight the need for ongoing learning, stakeholder engagement and supportive policies to strengthen energy system resilience and support the transition to renewable energy.



INTERCONNECTION POLICY STATEMENT

On 12 August, the Minister published the Interconnection Policy Statement: Policy Direction for East-West Electricity Infrastructure, delivering Action 5 of the Energy Strategy Action Plan 2026. For the first time, the Department has published a dedicated policy statement on electricity interconnection, providing a clear strategic framework for considering existing and future interconnection proposals, particularly between Northern Ireland and Britain.

The statement sets out the Department's strategic approach to future electricity interconnection between Northern Ireland and neighbouring markets, particularly Britain. Its purpose is to provide a clear policy framework while respecting the independent regulatory role of the Utility Regulator. It supports interconnection where it can demonstrate clear, long-term net benefits for consumers and contribute to a secure, affordable and decarbonised electricity system.

The statement is aligned with the Executive's 2021 Energy Strategy and recognises the potential for interconnection to contribute to system resilience, facilitate renewable energy integration and support the transition to net zero. However, it emphasises that interconnection should not be viewed in isolation, but assessed alongside other solutions such as energy storage, demand-side flexibility, network reinforcement and local generation.

Three guiding principles underpin the approach. First, all proposals must be supported by evidence-based, whole-system assessments that consider long-term resilience, affordability, decarbonisation and system operation under a range of future scenarios. Second, projects should be developed through transparent cross-jurisdictional cooperation, ensuring a fair distribution of costs, benefits and risks across participating regions.

Third, consumer interests must remain central, with costs, risks and financing arrangements proportionate to the value delivered.

The statement applies to both existing and future interconnection proposals but does not alter existing regulatory decisions or approve any specific project. Instead, it provides a framework for evaluating proposals. Overall, the Department's position is supportive of strategic interconnection where robust evidence demonstrates enduring consumer value, strengthens energy security, supports decarbonisation goals and contributes to an efficient, integrated electricity system.



LANDMARK RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY GENERATION

Economy Minister Dr Caoimhe Archibald has welcomed figures that show during the first half of 2026, and for the first time, more than half of the region's electricity is being generated from renewable sources.

The landmark figure of 53% for the 12 months to the end of June marks a significant step in the delivery of the Energy Strategy's ambition to end reliance on fossil fuels and deliver more price stability through local renewable generation.

Welcoming the figures, the Minister said:

“The impact of the significant increase in the cost of fossil fuels this year is impacting negatively on our households, especially those with lower incomes, and on our businesses - price increases caused by global events over which we have no control.”

“Increased levels of renewable electricity move us away from price volatility and towards more stable and fairer prices for the electricity we use.”

“These record renewable electricity figures reflect the ongoing work that my Department, and our partners, are doing to deliver an energy system that is more secure and more affordable from being increasingly powered by local renewable sources.”

The [statistics](#) were published as part of the Electricity Consumption and Renewable Generation in Northern Ireland series.

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LANDMARK RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY GENERATION

Key points for the 12-month period July 2025 to June 2026 include:

- The volume of electricity generated from renewable sources in the year to June 2026 (4,431 GWh) was equivalent to 50% of gross final electricity consumption (8,865 GWh), compared to 44% in the previous period (year to June 2025), matching the highest level previously recorded in the series in late 2022/early 2023 (50%).
- Gross Final Electricity Consumption, which comprises generation plus imports minus exports, and is equivalent to total electricity demand, has fallen slowly but steadily over the period from 9,569 GWh at the year to December 2018 to 8,865 GWh in the year to June 2026.
- Focusing specifically on generation, 8,286 GWh of total electricity was generated, of which 4,431 GWh was from renewable sources (53%) and 3,855 GWh (47%) was from non-renewable sources. On the rolling 12-month basis, renewable generation has exceeded non-renewable generation since January 2026, which is a change from the rest of the time series (back to 2018) where non-renewable generation was higher than renewable generation.
- Of the 4,431 GWh of renewable generation, the majority (74%) was from wind in addition to bioenergy (18%), solar (6%), landfill gas (1%) and hydro/tidal generation (1%).
- The balance between electricity imports and exports can vary over time and the difference between them can be positive (more imports than exports) or negative (more exports than imports). In the year to June 2026, Northern Ireland imported more than it exported with net imports of 578 GWh. This can be compared to the year to June 2025 when Northern Ireland imported more than it exported with net imports of 172 GWh.

The full report is available at:

[Electricity Consumption and Renewable Generation Statistics | Department for the Economy](#)





MINISTER SECURES RHI CLOSURE

Economy Minister Dr Caoimhe Archibald delivered closure of the Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) Scheme on 7 September 2026.

The Assembly voted on and approved the final legislative step needed to close the Scheme, delivering a key commitment in the New Decade, New Approach agreement.

Speaking following Assembly approval, the Minister said: “Securing the closure of the Non-Domestic RHI Scheme has been a priority for me since taking office, and I am pleased that the Assembly has now approved the legislation required to bring the Scheme to a close.”

“The closure of the Scheme fulfils a commitment in the New Decade, New Approach agreement and draws a line under the issues associated with RHI.”

The Minister added: “For the first time, scheme participants, MLAs and Treasury have reached agreement on a way forward for the Scheme. That unprecedented consensus has been critical in delivering a workable and sustainable outcome, providing certainty for participants and enabling the successful closure of the Scheme.”



ENERGY STRATEGY DASHBOARD REFRESH

The [Energy Strategy Targets and Metrics dashboard](#) has been refreshed, with clearer presentation, expanded supporting information and a new monthly publication schedule to help users track progress towards Northern Ireland's 2030 energy targets.

The team has:

- Improved the presentation of progress against the three energy strategy targets;
- Expanded the notes and metadata for each target; and
- Introduced a [publication schedule](#) with updates to the dashboard occurring on the first Thursday of each month.

These changes are intended to improve users' understanding and interpretation of the data, while helping them access the latest available information through a regular programme of monthly updates.

Keep Informed

To receive an email notification when the dashboard is updated, including a summary of the latest changes, please contact: energyintelligence@economy-ni.gov.uk

Share Your Feedback

Help us improve the dashboard by completing our short [questionnaire](#).

Future Publications

The Energy Intelligence Team will publish the next [Energy Strategy Targets and Metrics – A Statistical Report and Tables](#) in December 2026.

Contact: energyintelligence@economy-ni.gov.uk

