



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

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## **WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT**

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**Title: Planning Policy Wales Edition 4**

**Date: 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

**By: Jane Davidson, Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing**

The Welsh Assembly Government has issued an updated version of Planning Policy Wales (edition 4) which contains revised policy on renewable energy and some minor factual updates to planning policy on sustainable buildings.

The production of the new policy follows the publication of the Energy Policy Statement and a public consultation exercise on the draft policy in 2010. As outlined in the Written Statement issued on 8 June 2010 the Welsh Assembly Government has pursued a twin track approach to meeting its One Wales commitments to facilitate renewable energy, in which the over-arching planning policy framework has been updated alongside an examination of the procedural issues identified in the GVA Grimley Report into the planning system in Wales.

The new edition of Planning Policy Wales identifies different scales of low carbon and renewable energy, recognising that major energy proposals over 50MW are not determined through the planning system and are not devolved to Welsh Ministers. The policy seeks to establish an updated framework to facilitate the Assembly Government's broader sustainable development aspirations and encourages planning authorities to plan positively for low carbon and renewable energy by undertaking assessments of their area's potential to accommodate new developments which should be used as part of the evidence base for their Local Development Plans.

The revised policy also references the EU Directive on the promotion of renewable energy which places specific requirements on the planning system to facilitate renewable energy development.

The principle of Strategic Search Areas for large scale onshore wind outlined in previous Welsh Assembly Government policy published in Technical Advice Note (TAN) 8 in 2005 remains unchanged and continues to be an important element of our policy. Along with the revised policy, we have also issued a letter to planning authorities which provides a factual update to TAN 8 and is published on the Welsh Assembly Government's website.

We have sought to provide planning authorities with updated guidance on how Local Development Plans should reflect Welsh Assembly Government policies as well as how they should be reflected in the consideration of individual planning applications.

The new version of Planning Policy Wales also contains some minor factual updates relating planning policy for Sustainable Buildings setting out the standards expected where a site is registered under Version 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

The Energy Policy Statement recognises that there is significant potential for microgeneration technologies in Wales. The UK Government introduced Feed-in Tarrifs in April 2010 which guarantee an income for electricity generated by microgeneration technologies. The Assembly Government launched an installer certification support programme which has seen an unprecedented growth in the number of Welsh based installers with the total number across all technologies standing at 84, a 261% increase since August last year. In addition to the advice, support and interest-free loans that are available under the MCS support programme, the Assembly Government also subsidises quality management training courses for the renewable energy sector in Wales.