A people-based perspective on energy

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Presentation to the APSE Energy Summit 2025 - Delivering Change

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UNIVERSITY of STRATHCLYDE
CENTRE FOR ENERGY POLICY

www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/centreforenergypolicy/

About the Centre for Energy Policy

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CEP works across the energy and net zero transition space

CEP research addresses a range of **public policy facing questions** on:

- Research evidence and policy evaluation
- Green jobs and skills
- Energy use, carbon reduction and markets
- Prices, affordability and competitiveness
- Economy-wide impacts

Our **research explores issues** like:

- Industrial, residential and transport decarbonisation and the just transition: seeking to identify fair and sustainable pathways for the required transformation in how we live, work and do business.
- Labour markets and skills: addressing workforce shortages and training needs in transition sectors.
- Economy-wide impacts: understanding how action in any sector may trigger impacts and potentially unanticipated consequences.
- Public policy challenges for delivering net zero: equity, affordability, economic value, growth, competitiveness, effective planning and delivery

https://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/centreforenergypolicy/

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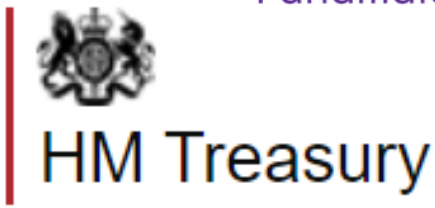
Who we collaborate and engage with

The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



Innovate
UK

The Manufacturers' Organisation

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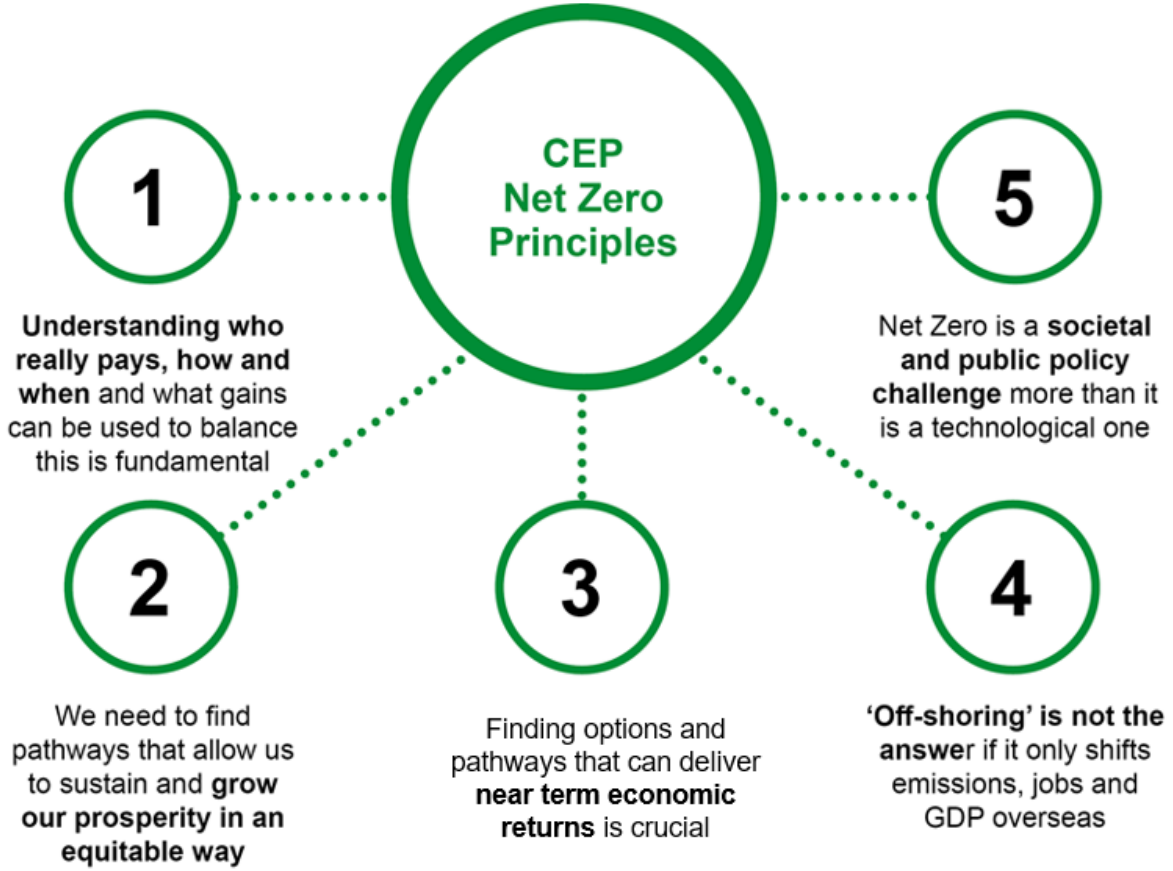
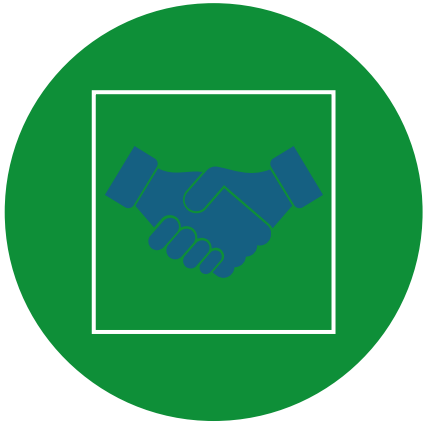
CEP Net zero principles framework



Establishing a Net Zero Principles Framework to Support Public Policy Making: https://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/78032/

A people-based perspective on energy



ACHIEVING A JUST TRANSITION

SKILLS, UNDERSTANDING, INTERACTION AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

LEARNING FROM CASE STUDIES

Achieving a just transition?

More than all of that?

- Rising **energy bills.**
- **Energy poverty**, fuel poverty, transport poverty – income-based, access-based, multi-dimensional.
- **Community benefits** for those living where power can be generated.
- '**Leaving no-one behind**'?

CEP research focus on sustainable economic prosperity

- **Economic performance, growing prosperity** and both **sustaining existing and creating new jobs** (and other sources of income generation) is **central** to all aspects of the energy and climate transition.
- As is clean and **AFFORDABLE** energy.
- **People** need to be able to **afford to spend to support economic growth.**
- **Businesses** need to be able to **sell at competitive prices.**
- Public finances rely on our ability to earn and spend in a prosperous economic environment.

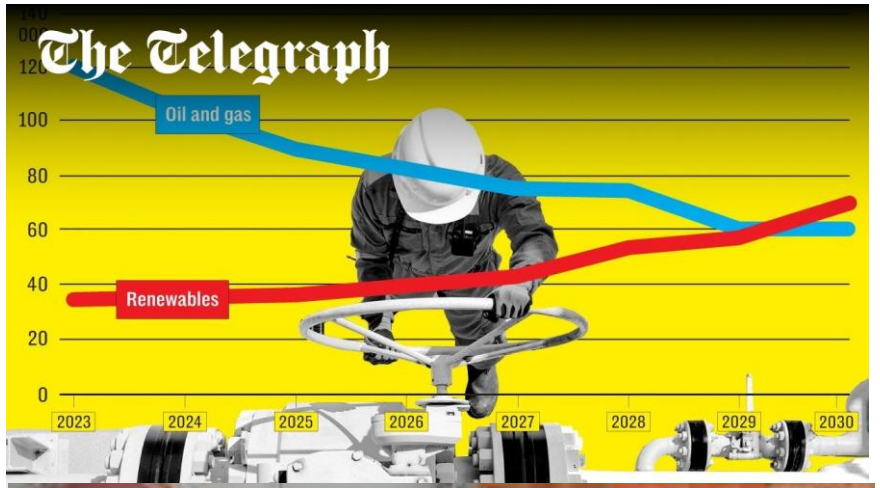





But how do we improve the equity and justice of outcomes?

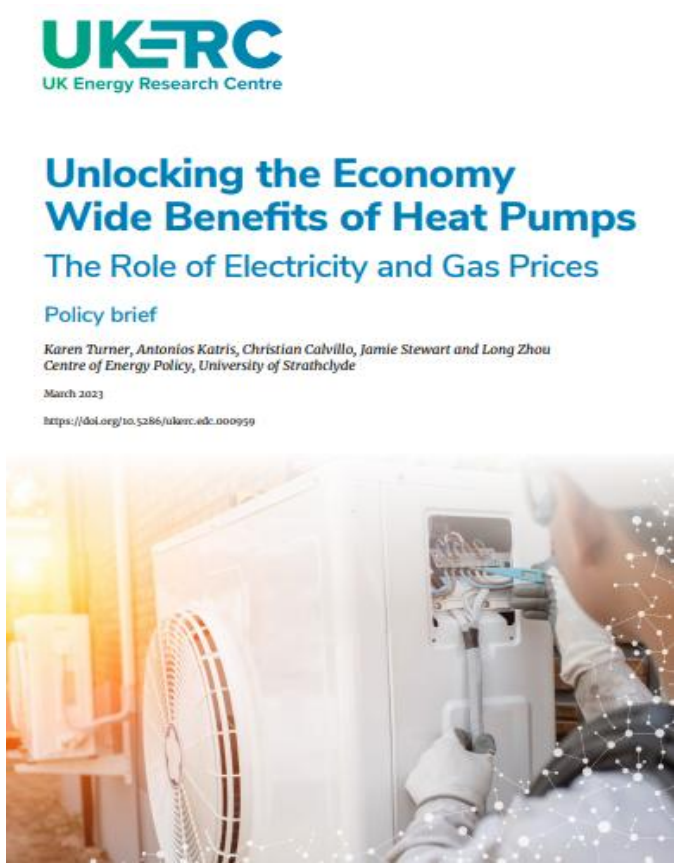
- What multi-level governance structures are required for delivery?

Skills, understanding, interaction and behaviour change



- How can we build on, and avoid eroding, the **skills and capacity** we've already invested so heavily in?
- **Understanding dynamics**, timing and the need for coordination.
- How do we **reduce the absolute and *relative* costs and increase** the actual and perceived benefits **of switching to low carbon heating** solutions?
- Electricity vs gas prices, energy efficiency, competitive domestic production and local supply chains, networks, **INFORMATION!!**

CEP research for the UK Energy Research Centre



- **Heat pump deployment can reduce energy demand** across the residential building stock by up to 40%.
- Unlocking the efficiency gains of heat pumps could **lead to a range of economic benefits**.
- **Under existing market arrangements, heat pumps can be more expensive to run than gas boilers.**

Further research showed:

- **Installation cost reductions are essential** to maximise sustained benefits across the wider economy.
- More **domestic supply chain activity *can* help improve outcomes** for households and the wider economy.

Key findings: https://ukerc.ac.uk/publications/benefits-heat-pumps-role-electricity-gas-prices/

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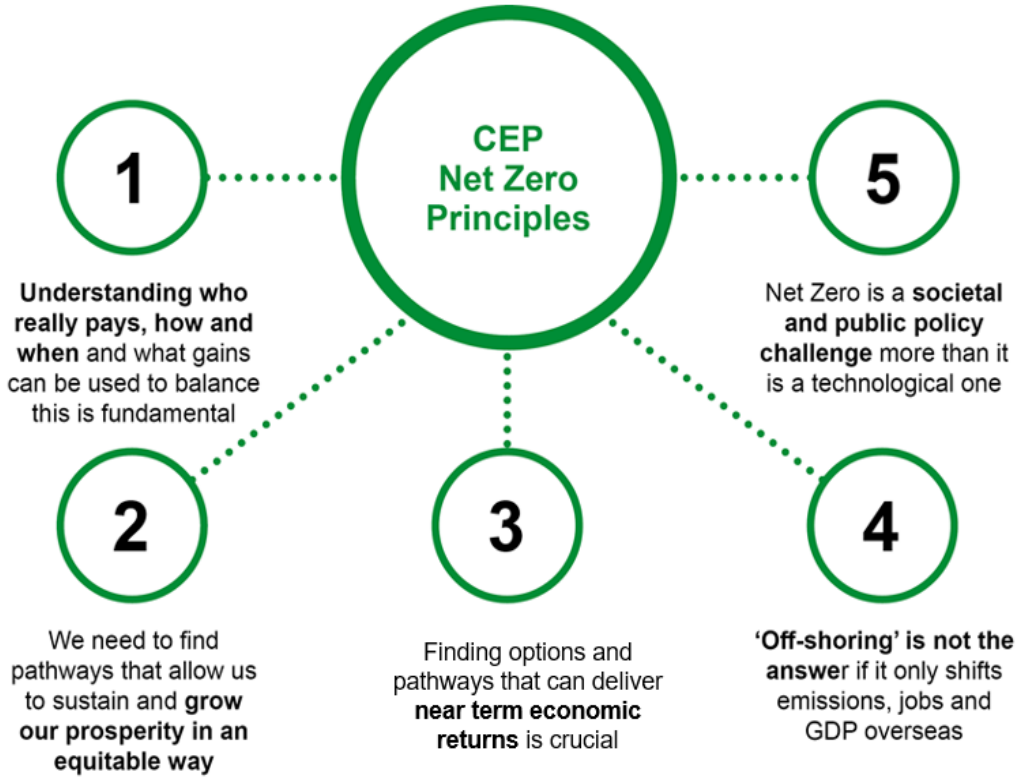
Learning from case studies - Shetland

- **A microcosm of the UK energy transition**
- Can **Shetland successfully transition** from the established export base of oil industry activity at its Sullom Voe Terminal **to low carbon fuel production** that supports local decarbonisation?
- **Sustaining high value jobs and a complex skills** base across the local economy while reducing reliance on imported energy and reducing relatively high levels of fuel poverty?
- Can **renewable energy developments** like the Viking windfarm and new interconnectors with the UK be made to **work for Shetland's people and businesses**?

Learning from case studies - Shetland

- District heating seems to be working well in Shetland for domestic and commercial buildings.
- **Lerwick's district heating** scheme has become the **first in the UK to be recognised for its performance** under European Ecoheat4cities.
- Heat from waste, delivering **lower bills and community benefits** (Shetland Charitable Trust).
- Efficiencies delivered through a **centralised system** – households don't need boilers.
- But **initial investment** infrastructure **can be costly.**
- However, shifting from high-cost oil boilers and storage heating systems.
- Further roll-out is planned.

Closing thoughts – we need more focus on people, policy, communities, economy and society



- Engineering efficient and feasible technical solutions remains a priority.
- But we're talking about transitioning how **PEOPLE** live and work
- Within communities and affected by what happens in local, regional, national and international economies
- **People must be able to earn a good and affordable living for as long as and where they can, and be supported where they need it.**
- **That's not politics – it's economics!**

Get in touch

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A decade of shaping energy policy