# Renewable energy progress 'frustrating' - Lesley Griffiths

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3 hours ago | Wales

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An independent review of the viability of Swansea's £1.3bn tidal lagoon project now lies with the UK Government

**The progress of renewable energy projects in Wales is being frustrated by a "lack of clear policy" by the UK government, it has been claimed.**

Environment Secretary Lesley Griffiths said concerns were being raised by the industry about lack of financial support in particular.

She called for powers over the offering of financial incentives to be handed to the Welsh Government.

The UK government said it is committed to supporting renewable energy.

Ms Griffiths said she wanted Wales to become a nation "renowned for its clean energy".


Environment Secretary Lesley Griffiths wants clarity for the industry.

Powers of consent for large renewable energy schemes, up to 350MW, are being handed to Cardiff Bay as part of the Wales Bill.

But control over the grid infrastructure that delivers electricity to our homes as well as the subsidies paid out to help get new schemes off the ground remains with Westminster.

These include feed-in tariffs - payments given to homes and businesses if they install solar panels or wind turbines.

"It would be good to have those levers," said Ms Griffiths.

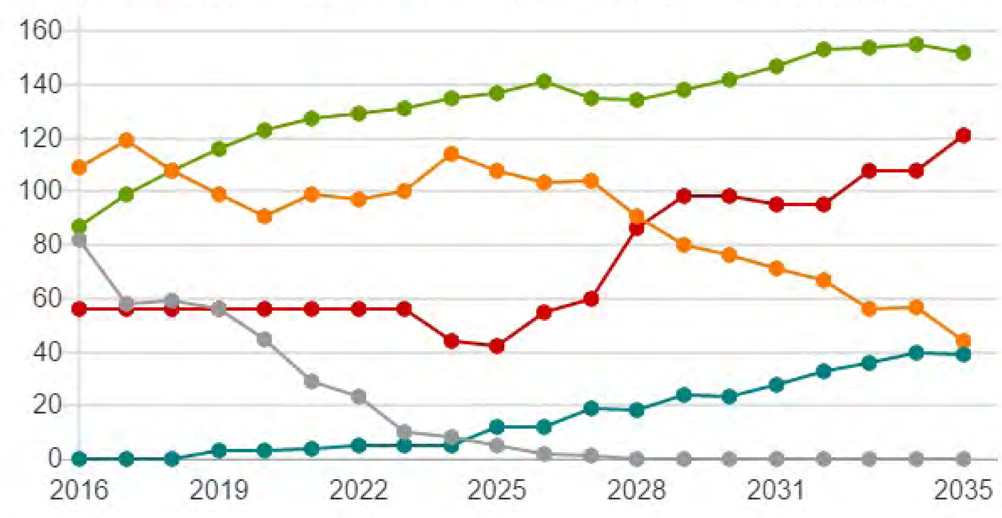
"It is frustrating, particularly when the industry wants to come to Wales and we're encouraging companies to come here."

Ms Griffiths acknowledged that her own government could also do more to help the sector, after opposition parties accused her of lacking detail and ambition as she set out her priorities for energy in the Senedd last week

She told BBC Wales her officials were working on the introduction of targets for renewable energy generation and would aim to publish them by the summer.

### Projection of UK electricity generation by source

Gigawatts, based on central estimates of prices and growth



DECC, November 2015

The UK government is working towards moving energy sources away from fossil fuels like coal over the next 15 years and beyond, with more reliance on low carbon solutions like tidal, hydro electric and wind but also nuclear.

On proposals for tidal lagoons, the largest renewable schemes under consideration in Wales, Ms Griffiths said it was "important that the UK government comes out and clarify its position".

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The £1.3bn Swansea tidal lagoon project is being viewed by the developers as a test bed for much larger and more cost effective versions around the coast, including Cardiff, Newport and Colwyn Bay.

Ministers in Westminster are considering the findings of a six month review into the viability of the scheme, which is yet to be published.

Ms Griffiths said the Welsh Government was "very supportive" of the scheme but it and the industry needed clarity on the UK government's position in the "very, very near future."

## 'Vision'

David Clubb, head of Renewable UK Cymru - which represents the industry in Wales - thinks anticipation within the sector about the project was "huge", with fears of job losses within civil engineering firms specialising in renewable energy if a project of this scale is turned down.

"I think that this is a once in a lifetime project, a once in a 100 year sort of opportunity," he said.

"If you think about the kind of vision and foresight that for example many of the Victorian projects had - Brunel with his amazing tunnels and bridges - we're still using that infrastructure 100 years later.

"I truly believe that that same vision and foresight is needed from our political leaders of today in order that our children and grandchildren will still be using this infrastructure, and that they'll look back and they'll say 'that was a time of great infrastructure, ideas and investment' and they'll thank us for making these decisions."

A Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy spokesman said: "Britain is one of the best places in the world to invest in clean, flexible energy as we continue to upgrade our energy infrastructure.

"Nearly £52bn has been invested in renewables in the UK since 2010, and just last month we reiterated our commitment to spend a further £730m per year supporting new renewable projects over the course of this parliament."

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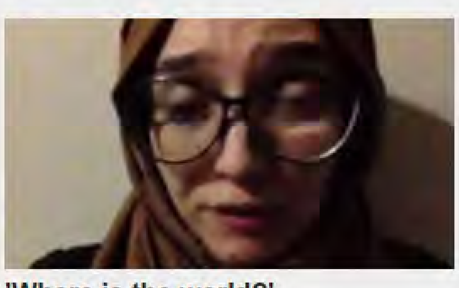

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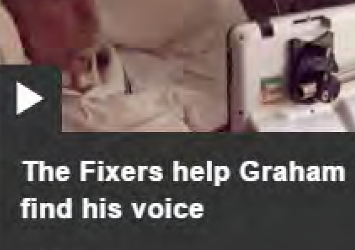
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