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To: Chief Planning Officers

21 September 2015

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to inform you of the publication of a revised version of the Toolkit for Planners. The toolkit provides a methodology for local planning authorities to develop a robust evidence base to assess the potential for renewable and low carbon energy generation in their area. The information can underpin renewable energy and low carbon energy policies in local development plans.

The toolkit has been updated and includes a new section for local planning authorities to assess the potential for solar farm developments in their areas. The revised toolkit also provides new advice on how to translate renewable energy assessments into policies which guide appropriate renewable and low carbon energy development. The toolkit is available on the Welsh Government's website at:

<http://gov.wales/topics/planning/policy/guidanceandleaflets/toolkitforplanners/?lang=en>

The Welsh Government is currently considering the potential to increase the Permitted Development Rights (PDRs) for non-domestic solar energy development. This will benefit the business community in allowing them to reduce their energy costs whilst simultaneously increasing renewable energy generation. We want to ensure this will occur in the most efficient manner and will therefore be commissioning research in this area to make sure that any changes to PDRs are right for Wales.

Yours sincerely,

Neil Hemington
Chief Planner
Planning Directorate
Department for Natural Resources

