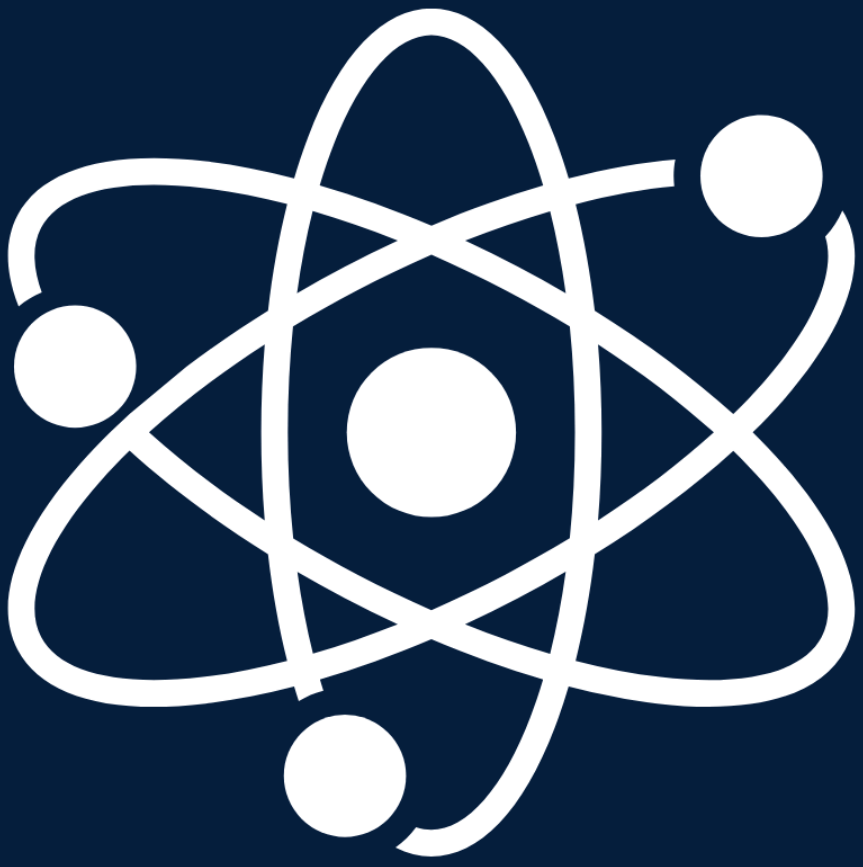
CHEAP, RELIABLE, & ABUNDANT

A BRITAIN-FIRST ENERGY SECURITY STRATEGY



RESTORE BRITAIN

FOREWORD - RUPERT LOWE MP

Evil seems good to him whose mind the god is driving towards disaster.

Sophocles

As Charles MacKay once wrote, "Men, it has been well said, think in herds; it will be seen that they go mad in herds, while they only recover their senses slowly and one by one." We have seen this throughout history, with examples like the Mississippi Scheme in France, the South Sea Bubble in England, and Tulip Mania in Holland. Money is usually at the heart of it.

But in the case of the self-harm inflicted upon Britain today by illogical energy policies, now driven by Ed Milliband, the cause is a misguided ideology based around Net Zero and climate change.

In this timely paper, we deal with the fallacies so regularly used to undermine Britain's economy and our self-respect on the world stage – all while China, India, and other countries exploit their coal, oil, gas, and other resources to grow their economies and raise the standard of living of their peoples.

We are blessed to have the energy resources that geology has given us (and Norway), but the well-being, security, and prosperity of our people is being undermined by a government of Fabian fools who worship false gods.

We must implement the solutions put forward by Restore Britain in this document if we are to revive our economy, protect our extraordinary skill pool of experts in places like Aberdeen, explore and recover our valuable oil and gas reserves, and take advantage of other domestically available sources of cheap energy.

It is late in the day, but when combined with a sensible economic policy, we have the foundation for a durable national comeback, as well as delivery of the Brexit dividends that were voted for but never delivered. The British people's

pioneering spirit will do the rest once our gift for enterprise is set free from suffocating mandates, arbitrary targets, and foolish constraints.

Exciting times will return.

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OUR ENERGY PHILOSOPHY

Energy is the lifeblood of any developed first-world economy. An abundance of energy makes for a prosperous nation.

First and foremost, then, it should be cheap, reliable, competitive, and scalable.

If that means investment in fossil fuels, as right now it does, then so be it. Affordable energy makes nations rich and rich nations are better equipped than poor nations to tackle any environmental challenges.

Our overall system diagnosis is that Britain today cannot convert resources into energy because we optimise for risk aversion, not output. We are governed by institutions that put process before delivery and compliance before capacity. Projects get delayed beyond their economic life, investors cannot count on stable returns, and regulatory layers multiply without accountability.

Yet energy usage is the best proxy we have for real industrial capability. It measures the part of the economy that deals with the world of atoms rather than the world of bytes. If anything, we ought to regard kWh per capita divided by the cost per kWh as a more meaningful metric of national capability than GDP per capita. This would put China already ahead of the United States and even further ahead of us.

In Britain and across the West, meanwhile, economic policy continues to be conducted by recourse to financial metrics. We get caught in a never-ending loop of conversations about GDP growth, productivity statistics, fiscal balances, and interest rates. The Chinese have optimised for the right variable in the same period that Western countries have increasingly optimised for abstract variables that distract us from the real world.

At Restore Britain, we depart from this short-sighted model. Financial metrics are not the foundations of national capability. They are downstream indicators. The upstream drivers are at once simpler and more physical. A modern nation

ultimately depends upon a small number of base inputs: people, food, and energy – the real stuff of economic life. Without people to work, food to sustain them, and energy to power machines, no amount of financial finesse can make a country prosperous. But once armed with a solid birth rate (human energy), with self-sustaining agriculture (biological energy), and with abundant, affordable power generation (industrial energy), everything else becomes a matter of speed and organisation.

An able, patriotic government should always aim to maximise the abundance and security of these base inputs. Of these, industrial energy is the master variable. Every single sector of a modern economy – manufacturing, construction, transport, computers, housing, and increasingly AI – is downstream of the energy system. When energy is plentiful and cheap, the entire lot performs better. When energy becomes scarce and expensive, economic productivity suffers.

Overall, energy should be valued as strategic national infrastructure, not treated as an environmental compliance problem. The countries that will dominate the coming decades are unlikely to be those that optimise for financial efficiency. They will be the ones that secure abundance at the base layers of the system.

An intelligent domestic energy policy has to be about more than just lowering prices. At Restore Britain, we also believe that it must serve national security. In the modern world, sovereignty means next to nothing if it is not backed by energy independence. Foreign powers can own *part* of our energy infrastructure, subject to obvious security checks, because at this time we need all of the capital resources we can get. But it should always remain under our own legislative control, so that we are never held to ransom by outside forces.

The debate now raging about energy bills shows that the British people are struggling. Relative to our competitors, we pay through the nose for the power we need to function as a first-world economy. This will not be solved by short-term thinking or fiddling with price caps on bills. Ultimately, what we need is not eye-catching measures aimed at temporary relief, but a long-term vision for national prosperity.

THIS PAPER'S REMIT

The focus of this paper is simple.

Our aim is to present how a Restore Britain government would foster the conditions for cheap and abundant energy at home. The future we envision is one of full exploitation of our offshore oil and gas reserves, self-confident nuclear energy expansion, onshore shale development, and if viable some limited role for renewables – albeit without subsidies, competing on their own merits – as part of a balanced grid mix.

These should meet our nation's energy demands at a rate far more affordable to British households and businesses.

On its own, though, this is not enough to make energy cheap and thus restore Britain to prosperity. We will also need to embark upon a mass removal of our binding Net Zero commitments, the vast majority of which are smothering our economy to no worthwhile end. This means canning the expensive but locked-in contracts that we already have with subsidised renewables companies. Given the present system of judicial review and the general importance of business confidence, this will require both legal finesse and diplomatic care.

The ownership structure, reinforcement requirements, and storage needs of the national grid, along with associated transmission infrastructure, will be determined at a later stage. They lie beyond the remit of this paper.

However, the total repeal of existing Net Zero legislation would, in itself, address a substantial proportion of these challenges. A Restore Britain government would also work to establish a system of dynamic energy pricing for both industrial and commercial users. As a result, electricity costs will more accurately reflect real-time supply and demand conditions. At present, a range of government interventions, particularly within commercial energy markets, including the energy price cap and cost recovery mechanisms associated with Net Zero objectives, serve to scramble the conditions within which economic

decision-making occurs.

Allowing prices to vary more freely in accordance with periods of scarcity and surplus would improve the efficiency of the existing energy system by strengthening demand-side responsiveness. This would encourage consumption to shift away from peak periods, reducing system strain and improving overall utilisation of generation and network infrastructure. These measures are intended to complement ongoing investment in grid expansion and modernisation, with system efficiency gains reinforcing physical infrastructure improvements.

Both commercial and industrial energy users would retain full flexibility to manage exposure to price volatility through private contractual arrangements, including fixed-price contracts, indexed tariffs, and hedging instruments. This ensures that consumers can choose the level of price certainty or market exposure that best fits their needs. The objective is to ensure that pricing signals are transparent, market-driven, and capable of informing more efficient decision-making across the entire economy. Greater efficiency benefits everyone. A Restore Britain government would ensure that no government intervention distorts the true price of energy.

But as for the more general debate between privatisation or nationalisation, we are not dogmatic either way. What works is best.

Our objective is a responsible energy policy that puts Britain's interests first, not national suicide for the sake of increasingly expensive luxury beliefs.

NET ZERO SELF-HARM

At Restore Britain, we do not deny some greenhouse gas effect. We simply note as a matter of proportion that carbon dioxide levels are at historic lows and reject the sensationalist claims that it should be treated as a kind of poison – not least because we would all be dead without it. Atmospheric carbon dioxide has been in a general trend of decline since the Eocene period some 51 million years ago, so alarmist notions that fluctuating levels of carbon dioxide as such pose an existential threat to life on earth are scientifically baseless.[1] More to the point, our own contribution to global emissions could hardly be more slender.

Yet for too long, the British state has put luxury beliefs around Net Zero before the critical energy needs of the British people.

The Climate Change Act (2008), expanded to devastating effect by Theresa May in 2019, should be abolished. This Act has undermined Britain's national interests and distorted what would otherwise be productive market dynamics.

It has given arbitrary privilege to the most expensive and intermittent energy sources, such as onshore wind and solar, while degrading the most cost-efficient and effective, such as oil, gas, and nuclear. The countries that have gambled most heavily on renewables – such as Germany, Denmark, and indeed Britain – have some of the highest energy prices in the world. Without the green crusade against our national prosperity, our energy could cost roughly a third of what we pay today.[2] There are no natural barriers to cheap energy in Britain, only a history of poor government policy.

In addition to the constraint and backup payments forced upon us by the drive for renewables at all costs, there is the vital matter of inertia. Inertia is crucial to keeping the grid stabilised. It was the lack of it that caused the Spanish blackout in 2025. This spread from Spain into Portugal, but it was stopped in France. The

[1] See Toward a Cenozoic history of atmospheric CO_2, *Science*, Volume 382, Issue 6675, 8 December, 2023.
[2] See Paul Burgess, The Real Drivers of UK Electricity Costs – Intermittent Renewables Dramatically Inflate Effective Gas Prices, Impose Unaffordable Network Costs, and Undermine Claims of Renewables Superiority, April 2026.

French spared themselves such blackouts because France enjoys a great deal of inertia, in no small part because nuclear power represents around 70% of the country's generation capacity.[3] In Britain, meanwhile, we have no choice but to simulate with flywheels and by various other expensive methods the lack of inertia available in both wind and solar.

Even if we were to opt for a 'full steam ahead' strategy on oil, gas, and nuclear right away, energy prices would not come down unless we first took aim at the structural issues caused by our legally binding Net Zero commitments.

We would first abolish the burdensome Climate Change Levy for the good of British families and industries. This is a tax that every business and by extension every household now pays on top of their actual energy usage in order to subsidise green projects. To fulfil our (currently) binding Net Zero commitments, the Climate Change Committee (CCC) itself grants that we will be forced to spend an average of £26 billion per year on the decarbonisation crusade between now and 2050.[4] This is before we even get to the staggering opportunity costs incurred by undermining our car industry, our pottery industry, our chemicals industry, and so on.

In order to save ourselves this money, ease the burden on our economy, and reinvigorate our manufacturing base, we at Restore Britain commit to repealing the Climate Change Act (2008).[5] This would remove subsidies from supposedly 'world-saving projects' that cannot even support themselves, bring an end to costly carbon capture and storage initiatives, and sweep aside other forms of expensive waste made mandatory by the existing system. Renewables at present are so expensive, we could in principle lose them all tomorrow without any real effect on the grid besides making it cheaper and stabler.

The government misleads us with statistics in presenting the costs of Net Zero. Their use of Levelised Cost of Electricity (LCOE) figures creates a false impression of 'cheap renewables' while the actual price paid by households and

[3] See World Nuclear Association, Nuclear Power in France.
[4] See Climate Change Committee, The Seventh Carbon Budget, Chapter 4: Costs and investment in the Balanced Pathway, 26 February, 2025.
[5] We would also repeal its derivative updates and surrounding reinforcements.

businesses includes constraint payments, inertia and balancing services, grid reinforcement, and other system costs that are socialised across all electricity bills. British households and businesses do not pay a "levelised cost"; they pay the price that appears on their bills every month or quarter. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) admits as much itself, conceding that "Wider system costs beyond those faced by the developer" lie out of scope.[6] That covers the levies that fund preferential Contracts for Difference (CFDs), the balancing services, constraint payments, inertia provision, and grid upgrades required by intermittent renewables. All other metrics are secondary.

It should be noted that the levies that fund Renewables Obligation Certificate (ROC) payments for wind and solar generation represent substantially larger subsidies than those provided under CfD arrangements. Since these ROC levies are governed by statutory legislation rather than contractual agreements, they can be cancelled with ease. We would do so at once, reinforced by an Act of Parliament, without breaching existing contracts or exposing Britain to reputational risk. The alternative is to continue forcing obscene energy costs down the throats of a struggling British public.

For a time, we would also make a point of publishing the figures for monthly subsidies spent on renewables, so that the British people are kept maximally informed during the transition away from Net Zero. The two major metrics should be the total cost of subsidised energy and the cost per average household.

As with any phenomenon as architectonic as energy, there are knock-on effects for the rest of life, too. So-called Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) are a case in point. Made mandatory by the British state, these are assessment tools that give an energy efficiency rating for every building across the land, whether upon construction, sale, or rent. The idea is to make sure that our built environment measures up to the grandiose schemes of social engineers in Westminster, when in reality they achieve nothing of practical value.

EPCs are costly to obtain, so these costs are invariably passed on to the consumer. Landlords are effectively forced to spend money implementing energy

[6] See Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, Electricity Generation Costs 2025, January 2026, p. 8.

upgrades, for if they fail to do so, they risk having their assets removed from the private rental market. This is a particularly devastating dynamic for the government to foster within such a sector, because so many young Britons – already disinherited in countless ways – have come to depend upon a competitive market and plentiful stock among landlords in order to bring down their monthly rent. Needless to say, EPCs also have dramatic implications for factories and other industrial buildings, with significant compliance costs for anyone productive and engaged in constructing, selling, or leasing non-domestic properties.

Under a Restore Britain government, EPCs would become entirely voluntary, to be brandished as a unique selling point to potential buyers, tenants, or leaseholders as and when property owners wish. It has been estimated that, over time, this could save the non-domestic sector up to £33bn, if not more, in meeting top-down dictates at the expense of the needs of industry.[7] EPCs should then be based on a property's insulation features alone, not Net Zero-related values.

While not technically related to our binding Net Zero commitments, the Carbon Price Support (CPS) Mechanism, designed to punish fossil fuel use, would also be scrapped. It needlessly burdens industry and makes Britain uncompetitive.

One major challenge in the way of eliminating Net Zero-related costs is the fact that past governments, as well as the present one, have already made us hostage to certain contracts with renewable providers, locked in at high prices for a period of 20 years. We should do everything in our power to rescue taxpayers from footing such irresponsible liabilities, agreed by previous governments, but it is also vital that we act in good faith and maintain business confidence. The task to navigate ways around these contracts will therefore have to be subtle.

Reform UK has committed to striking down contracts awarded in Allocation Round 7 (AR7), which is to say those struck in the last twelve months. Alas,

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[7] See Paul Burgess, The Impact of Energy Performance Certificates on the UK Private Rented Sector Both Domestic & Commercial: A Hypothetical Voluntary Insulation- Commercial: A Hypothetical Voluntary Insulation Focused Certification Approach Versus Mandatory EPC/MEES, November 2025, p. 7.

giving advanced notice of one's intention to rip up a contract does not automatically render the matter non-justiciable. To think otherwise is naïve.

Our alternative strategy in the case of wind farms would be to invoke existing laws for the protection of birds and other animals to address the well-established harm caused by 200mph turbines. We would impose a windfall tax above a certain threshold, as well as a legal duty on all wind and solar farms to restore any land under management to its initial pre-installation state, right to the very foundations.

On the positive side, we would explore opportunities to give contract-holders a financial stake in the success of the more reliable, scalable, dispatchable sources of energy – oil, gas, nuclear – that a Restore Britain government would favour. As a last resort, Restore Britain's Great Clarification Act (GCA) – first presented in our Mass Deportations (2025) paper – would also prove helpful in dissuading costly judicial review efforts and batting away disruptive court decisions.[8] This would establish a two-track Correction Bill process whereby, if triggered in response to some controversial court decision, no more than a simple majority in the House of Commons is required either to give legal force to non-justiciable government dissent from the ruling or to ensure straightforward repeal of the laws, sections, and/or sub-sections cited by the controversial ruling so that the government may continue its policy unhindered.

Another challenge we face is that much of our legislation covering Net Zero extends into existing trade agreements, some of which incorporate them. Our post-Brexit Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) with the European Union (EU) is one such example. The TCA affirms cooperation on carbon pricing and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. It also contains non-regression clauses included to deter either Britain or the EU from backsliding on Net Zero commitments, as the TCA itself specifies, "in a manner affecting trade or investment between the Parties" so as to give unfair advantage.[9] Unilateral repeal of our own binding Net Zero aims could in principle be met with trade

[8] See Rupert Lowe & Harrison Pitt, *Mass Deportations: Legitimacy, Legality, and Logistics* (2025), Restore Britain, pp. 47-9.

[9] Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the one part, and the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the other part (Brussels and London, 30 December, 2020), Article 391, Non-regression from levels of protection.

retaliation or simply sour the relationship.

A potential silver lining, however, is that the relevant clauses within the TCA are more general aspirations than strict obligations mandating specific policies. Since it is not feasible to attempt everything at once, we shall do our best to minimise friction with the EU. Bad blood is in neither of our interests. We would therefore begin by seeking sensible amendments to Articles 391, 392, and 764 of the TCA. If, as seems highly probable by the 2030s, there are like-minded governments in France and Germany, the two major powers within the EU, this will be far easier to accomplish. Across Europe as a whole, too, it is gradually dawning on national elites that dogmatic Net Zero targets are a luxury that can no longer be afforded. By the 2030s, that realisation will no doubt be further advanced as the economic damage wreaked by such policies becomes more apparent.

But if European leaders nonetheless feel in the mood to pick a trade war with Britain and hurt their own struggling economies in the process, simply because we dare to pursue our energy interests, as indeed the Germans have done by reopening many of their coal-fired power plants, that is their prerogative. Given our trade deficit with the EU, it will harm them more than it harms us.

If waged anyhow, our efforts to adjust to the economic volatility will be eased by our having abandoned the self-harming Net Zero crusade, which threatens long-run structural damage to our national prosperity in a way that no temporary trade dispute can.

We have never said that restoring Britain will be a painless endeavour.

MORE RELIABLE SOURCES

In the early decades of the 21st century, securing Britain's energy interests could not be more crucial. Long a source of oil for the developed world, the Middle East is undergoing an uncertain shift in the balance of power, with potentially troubling consequences for the energy-generating infrastructure of oil-rich Gulf states and freedom of navigation in those parts of the sea – the Strait of Hormuz, the Bab el-Mandeb, even the Suez Canal – through which tankers carry the goods to many shores. This drives up global prices, hitting even those countries that import their oil, as we do, from other places like Norway and the United States.

This in turn translates into higher costs for consumers, both industrial and domestic – and expensive energy hits not only private profits, but general productivity. It does not take any expert knowledge in geopolitics to realise that the Middle East is prone to conflict. We are therefore wise to insulate ourselves from the consequences of such periodic convulsions, so that whatever happens in this notoriously volatile region, among others, inflicts no grave impact on Britain. A mere two decades ago, we were a net exporter of energy. Those days are gone, but a Restore Britain government would get started on a long-term strategy to bring them back.

Our decision rule is simple. Projects and policies will be judged against a single test: do they increase the volume of reliable energy available to Britain at a lower system-wide cost? If yes, they shall proceed. If not, they shall not. Anything less can no longer be tolerated.

To repeat, energy must first and foremost be cheap, reliable, and scalable. Our own installations are back-to-front on the matter.

Whereas in 2000, the vast bulk of Britain's installed energy infrastructure was built to accommodate coal, oil, gas, and nuclear, nowadays these sources have

declined dramatically as wind and solar have risen.[10] That is a problem, because long before human ingenuity unleashed the power latent first in fossil fuels and then in the atom, we already had ample sunshine and ample wind. But crucially, these energy sources, insofar as they could be harnessed, exercised *control over us*. The magic of oil, gas, and nuclear is that, in their different ways, these sources put *us in the driving seat*.

It is therefore in Britain's long-term economic and indeed civilisational interests not only to maximise our supply of dispatchable sources like oil, gas, and nuclear, but to minimise our dependence on intermittent sources like onshore wind and solar. This is the opposite of what we have been doing.

A NOTE ON PLANNING: THE FOURTH FUNDAMENTAL

First, we must remember that energy alone is not sufficient. There is a fourth variable on top of human energy, biological energy, and industrial energy that determines whether or not abundance in these three domains translates into national power: the ability to build.

A nation may possess a capable population, plentiful resources, and cutting-edge technological know-how, but if it cannot turn these inputs into power plants, transmission lines, factories, housing, ports, railways, and data centres, then that nation's economic potential remains unrealised. The capacity to build is increasingly the dividing line between growing and stagnating economies.

Modern China's advantage is not simply that it produces large quantities of energy. It is that it can erect infrastructure at a scale and speed that has become not just difficult to replicate but unthinkable in many Western countries. That said, infrastructure projects in Britain are not constrained by any law of nature. Nor are they hampered by any dearth of technological knowledge. Our economy increasingly fails at the build stage because of countless regulatory burdens. Common patterns include decades-long planning timelines, litigation-related delays, and environmental review loops. As a result, projects that should take 3–5 years instead take 15–20 years.

[10] See Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, UK Electricity capacity and generation by fuel between 1920 and 2020, 29 June, 2023.

These constraints are increasingly apparent in emerging sectors. The rapid expansion of artificial intelligence (AI), for example, is already encountering a basic physical limit: a shortage of electricity. Large-scale data centres stand in need of enormous quantities of power. Efforts to bring them online can take years of regulatory approval before a solitary watt is produced. The extortionate cost of energy is also deterring the development of such hubs across Britain. A £30 billion project was recently dropped because it proved too expensive.

Restoring national capability therefore requires more than simply investing in energy production. It requires restoring the institutional capacity to build infrastructure at scale and high speed.

The obstacles to building fast and at scale are both regulatory and institutional.

As for the institutional roadblocks, under a Restore Britain government the Charities Commission would already be made more directly answerable to ministers.[11] As such, the very worst green lobbyists – if entitled to tax breaks, state funds, or a seat at the policymaking table – can and would be deprived of all three.

The regulatory roadblocks are more peculiar to each power-generating sector, so they shall be treated for the most part on their own terms. For the time being, let it be said that we would not hesitate to invoke our aforementioned GCA whenever we believe needless planning hurdles to be obstructing Britain's vital energy interests. A so-called rule of positive silence – under which statutory consultees are required to make their protests known within a short defined period or effectively waive their right to object later – would also be a wise way to deter the most frivolous forms of lawfare. Otherwise, urgent projects get bogged down further by delays.

Our practical approach focuses on several principles. First, strategic infrastructure must be treated as a matter of national capability. It therefore cannot be subject to criteria identical to that which governs ordinary planning

[11] See Abolish Inheritance Tax (2026), Restore Britain, pp. 7-8.

disputes. Approval timelines should be measured in months, not years. Second, regulatory frameworks must be simplified. An alarming number of delays arise not from environmental or health and safety protection itself, but from overlapping layers of approval, consultation, and litigation that cause projects to stall for indefinite periods on end. Third, infrastructure policy must prioritise abundance. Electricity should be as plentiful and as affordable as possible through a balanced mix of generation sources. We favour offshore oil and gas, nuclear fission, onshore hydrocarbons where available, and unsubsidised renewables, integrated into a stable grid. Last of all, governments must recognise that the physical economy matters. The digital and financial sectors are important, but they ultimately rest upon human energy, biological energy, and industrial energy.

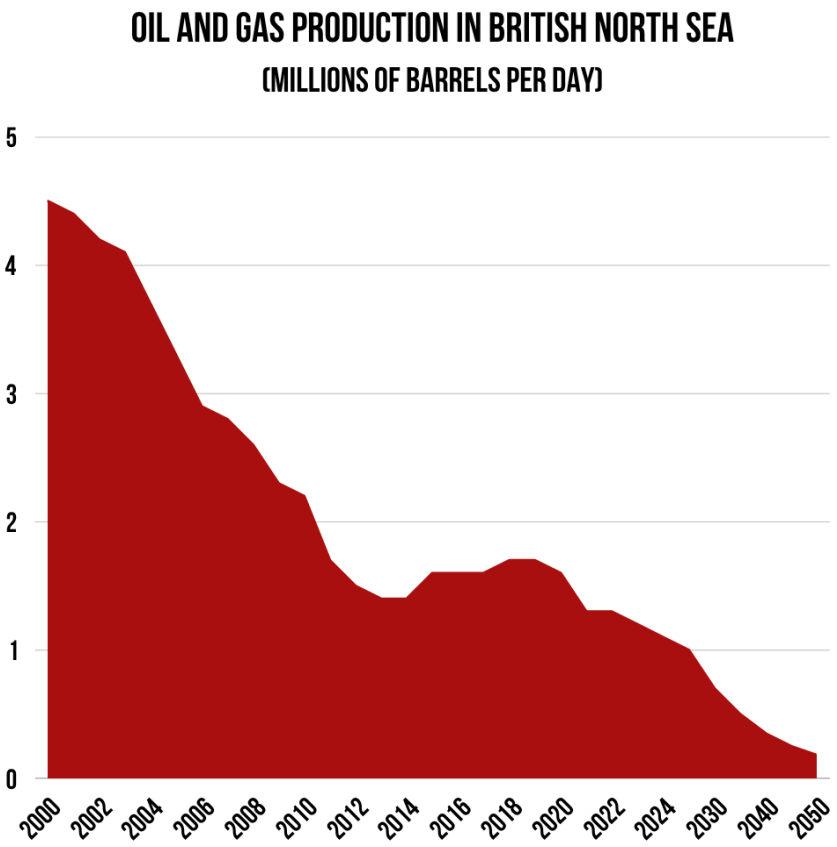
When these foundations are strong, innovation flourishes and markets allocate resources efficiently. When they are weak, economic policy becomes a matter of managing scarcity instead of enabling growth.

OIL & GAS

Due to a demented crusade against oil and gas drilling and exploration at home, Britain has now developed a needless dependence on energy imports. Worse still, much of this comes from Norway – a country that has the sense to take advantage of *the very same* oil and gas reserves, in our own backyard no less, that we continue to neglect. Licenses are withheld and projects are shot down by judicial review.

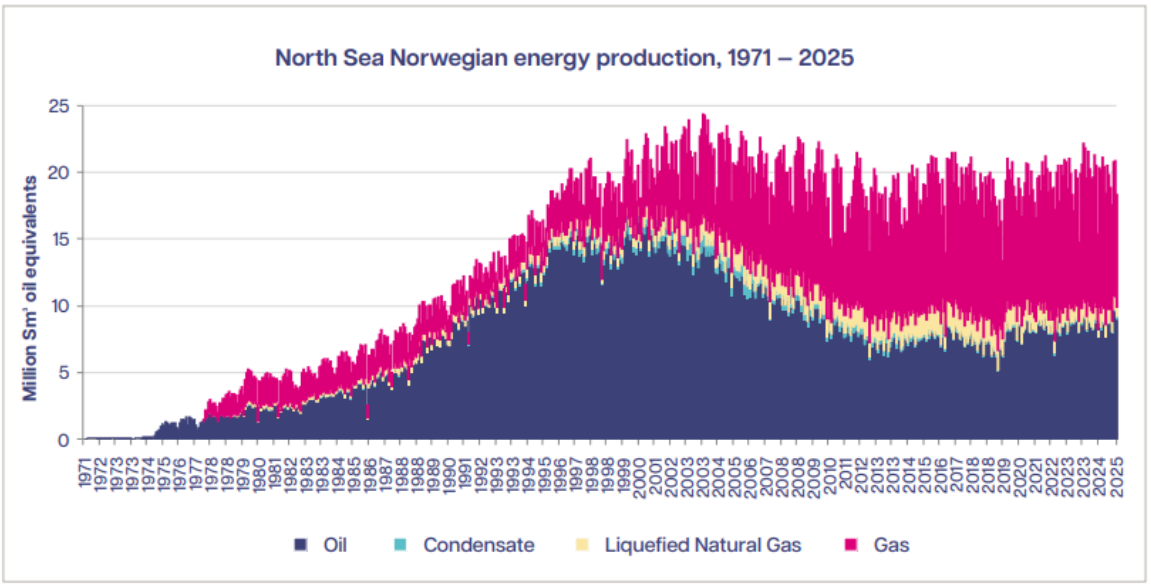
Meanwhile, the British Isles are situated on billions of barrels of hydrocarbons, waiting to be extracted from rocks below the waters of the North Sea. But whereas Norway drilled 49 exploration wells in 2025, Britain drilled none.

This tells in miniature a decades-long story. In Britain, there has been a steep decline in North Sea oil and gas production from the 2000s onwards.



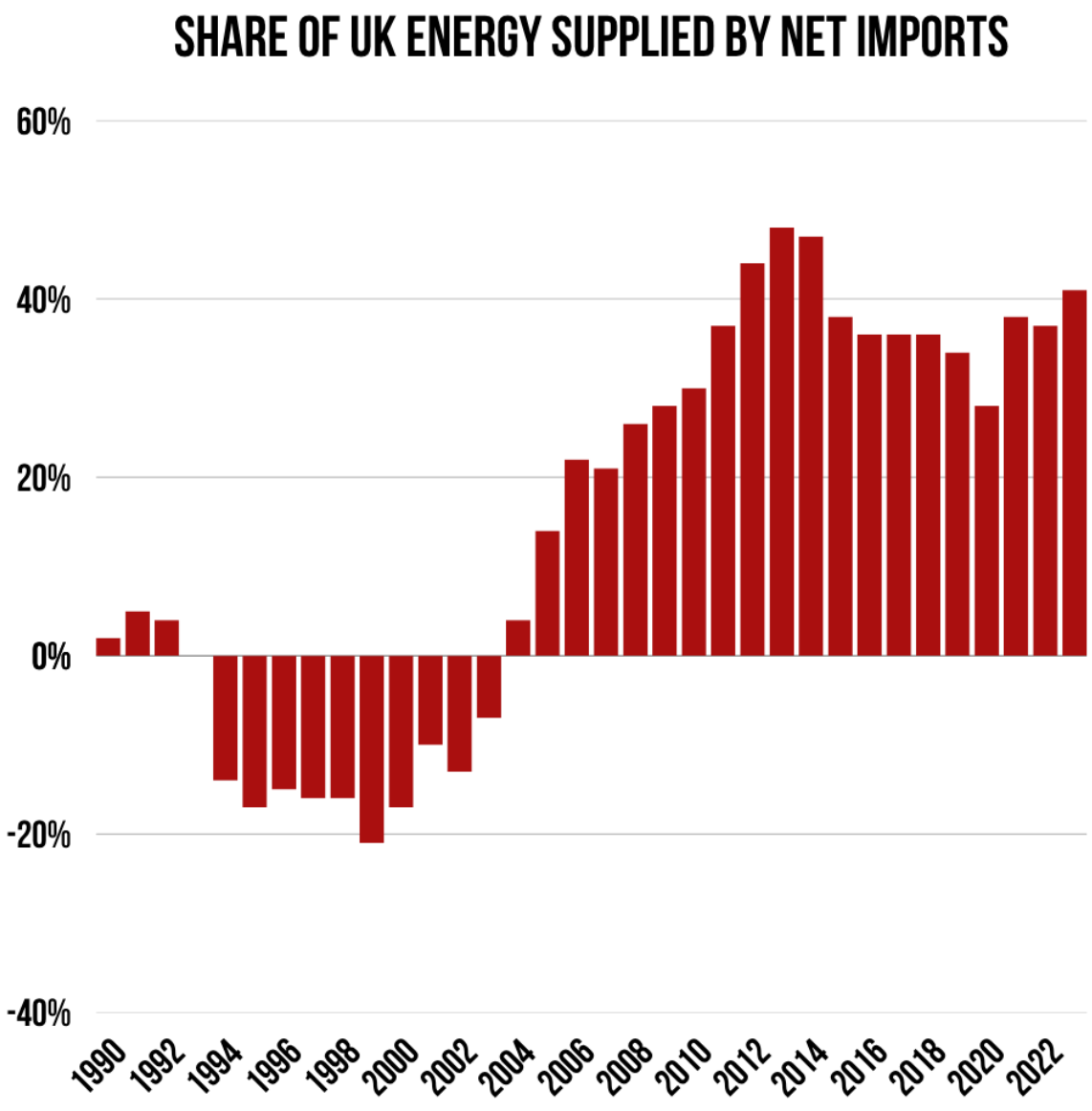
Source: North Sea Transition Authority

In the same period, the Norwegians have carried on making the most of their geographical good fortune.



Source: Jobs Foundation

If we were to restore Britain's domestic oil and gas sector, then as well as enjoying ample supply at home we can once again become a leading exporter of oil and gas – in all likelihood to a ravenous global market, happy to pay higher prices than exist even now. Indeed, we used to be a net energy exporter, but no longer.



Source: Department for Energy & Net Zero

In addition to undermining Britain's energy security, another problem with dependence on imports is that it means our own struggling economy receives no benefits in the form of investment or employment. 80% of direct oil and gas jobs

remain in North East Scotland.[12] It is feared by those on the ground in Aberdeen – a crucial node in the sector – that on present trends workforce numbers could plummet from around 115,000 today to as low as 57,000 by the early 2030s. This adds up to 400 job losses every fortnight.[13] That is before we even account for jobs indirectly connected to oil and gas, around which so much of Aberdeen's economy is based. This part of the British Isles blossomed amid Middle Eastern turmoil in the 1970s. A Restore Britain government would work to replicate much of this boom amid similar chaos in the region today.

Green zealots claim that the North Sea is a declining basin, that most of the gas has already been extracted, that the majority of what remains is oil, and that we export much of that oil in any case because it is not the kind used by our four remaining refineries.

Our view is that it is always worthwhile to hunt for new oil and gas – not least because, through AI, such efforts can now be enhanced to make exploration even more targeted. We already possess a formidable North Sea data bank, built from 60 years' worth of activity, which with the help of Al can now be processed at extraordinary scale and speed for fresh leads on the whereabouts of any remaining oil and gas.

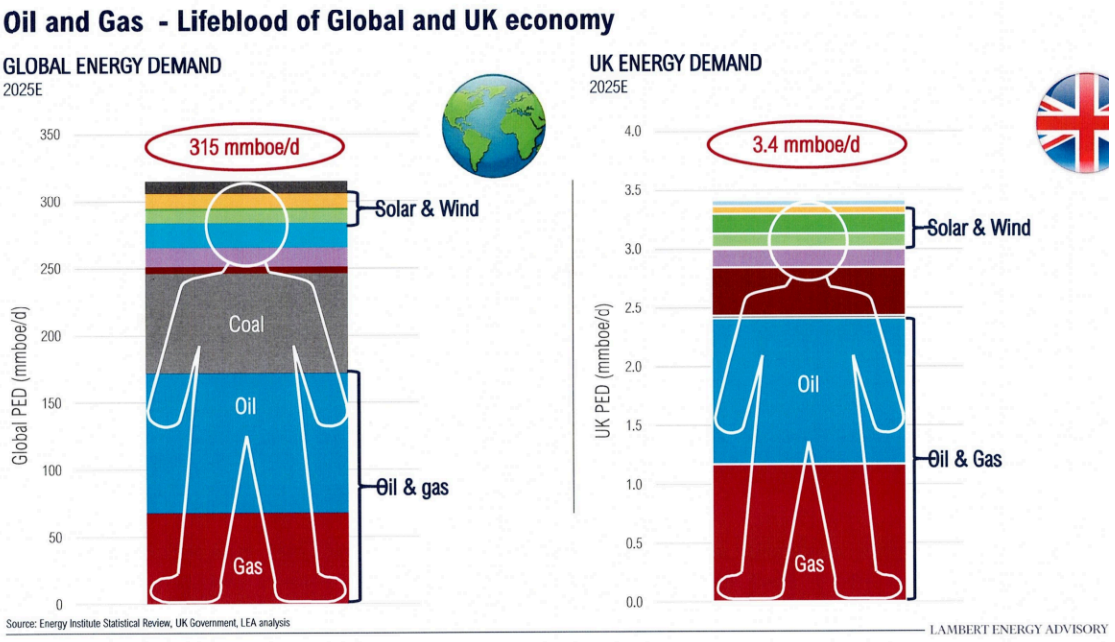
A major downside of our elite-led renewables drive has been reflexive hostility to oil and gas. The geopolitical situation in the Middle East today only reinforces the need for greater oil and gas capacity at home. We have just twelve days of gas storage, so it is absurd to act as if making the most of our own backyard is not sensible. By comparison, the Netherlands has 123 days, France 103 days, and Germany 89 days.

As for the complaint that much of our oil is exported, why should that count against exploring and drilling for more?

Whether oil is sold or used for domestic energy needs, if it has come from

[12] Nick Tyrone & Catherine Frost, Cliff Edge: Jobs in Aberdeen, the epicentre of the UK's energy transition, Jobs Foundation, January 2026, p. 12.
[13] See Striking the Balance: Building a sustainable UK offshore energy workforce, RGU Energy Transition Institute, June 2025, p. 2.

British oil fields, it is contributing to our economy. If Britain were to take no interest whatsoever in all commodities that are priced on the international market, we should find ourselves neglecting an awful lot besides oil and gas. It makes no sense to display such arbitrary contempt for the energy gold right under our noses. Homegrown production stimulates investment, boosts the sector, and brings supply lines closer to home in the event of global volatility. As distinct from oil, gas is in fact less transportable, or transportable only at significant cost, so there would be a home advantage and therefore greater security. We are a gas economy, but right now remain far more exposed to the global liquified natural gas (LNG) system than we need to be. Last but not least, oil and gas still accounts for as much as 70% of Britain's energy lifeblood.



New licenses for drilling and exploration must therefore be granted. We cannot be confident that North Sea supplies are slender, as is claimed, if we are forbidden from exploring the seabeds. Norway discovered fresh reserves off its coastline as recently as last summer. It has already made two noteworthy discoveries in 2026.

Yet even after Labour's heavily qualified partial climbdown, the government remains hostile to oil and gas exploration. Its so-called North Sea Future Plan reintroduced limited licenses only "so long as this additional production does not require new exploration and is already part of or links back to existing fields

and infrastructure."[14] A Restore Britain government, meanwhile, would reward exploration as well as drilling.

Among other things, this means taxing the sector at a competitive international rate. On that front, we would bring an end to the Energy Profits Levy (EPL) imposed first by the Conservatives in 2022, since increased by the present Labour government, and due under Ed Miliband's obscene designs to be made effectively permanent by a so-called Oil and Gas Price Mechanism.[15] As a Jobs Foundation report puts it, "what was supposed to be a brief windfall tax on high energy profits amid the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war is in danger of becoming a permanent fixture."[16] Unless we reverse course, Britain will soon be the only county in Europe with a windfall tax on oil and gas profits still in force, scaring off investment and undermining our energy needs.

Instead, we would impose no more than the standard 25% corporation tax, not the effective 78% grabbed by the Treasury at present. Right now, the incentives around even the small amount of drilling that is permitted remain extremely forbidding. In the year ending July 2024, the average rate of return for offshore operators stood at a pitiful net -1%.[17] Our aim, by contrast, is to foster a predictable environment that rewards investors.

We would also look into establishing a system similar to the Norwegian one whereby profits from oil and gas are returned to some sovereign British wealth fund, to be invested elsewhere. Norway's entire pension scheme relies on this model. A similar arrangement in Britain could prove an effective way for us to dig ourselves out of the extractive welfare system in place at the moment.

But we would also level with the British public. There are no overnight solutions to the way in which Britain has been so woefully misgoverned in recent decades,

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[14] See Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, North Sea Future Plan for fair, managed and prosperous transition, 26 November, 2025.
[15] See Catherine McBride, Premeditated Industrial Destruction? How the UK destroyed its industry and a plan to reverse this, Chapter 12: Reversing Net Zero – costs and benefits, 1 April, 2026. "The Price Mechanism is a permanent 35% tax on the operations of oil and gas producers in the UK and its Continental Shelf. It is currently planned to start if oil and gas prices go above $90 per barrel or 90p per therm. This tax is in addition to the 40% ringfenced corporate tax they already pay, which is 15% higher than the standard 25% corporate tax."
[16] Nick Tyrone & Catherine Frost, Cliff Edge: Jobs in Aberdeen, the epicentre of the UK's energy transition, Jobs Foundation, January 2026, p. 61.
[17] See Social Democratic Party, Energy Abundance, September 2025, p. 22.

including on matters related to energy. It will take time for a revival of oil and gas drilling and exploration to lower prices, not least because many of our gas turbines are approaching the end of their service life. There is currently an eight-year wait on new gas turbines, because the entire world is dashing to embrace dispatchable energy and we find ourselves behind the curve.

Two oilfields in particular, Rosebank and Jackdaw, could be pumping out oil by autumn if given the go-ahead. Rosebank, if fully operational, would produce 70,000 barrels of oil per day – half of what we import through the Gulf. The process would be further accelerated across the board if, as Restore Britain favours, we followed Norway in allowing operators in the sector to make their up-front investment costs tax-deductible. Even so, the drilling and exploration components of oil and gas are simply the initial source of dispatchable energy. They do not convert it unto themselves. That is the role played by power plants.

To account for the looming closure of some of our gas turbines, we shall have to do two things. First, we would pursue life extensions where viable. Second, we would not hesitate to make use of coal in the interim. That would involve building new coal-fired power plants. The major advantage of such plants is that, as well as being dispatchable, they can be up and running within a shorter timeframe (roughly three to four years) than gas turbines. As both China and Germany have shown, modern techniques also make coal far less of a pollutant than it used to be. Last of all, there is plenty of it – particularly the cleanest and densest anthracite and bituminous varieties – across the British Isles.

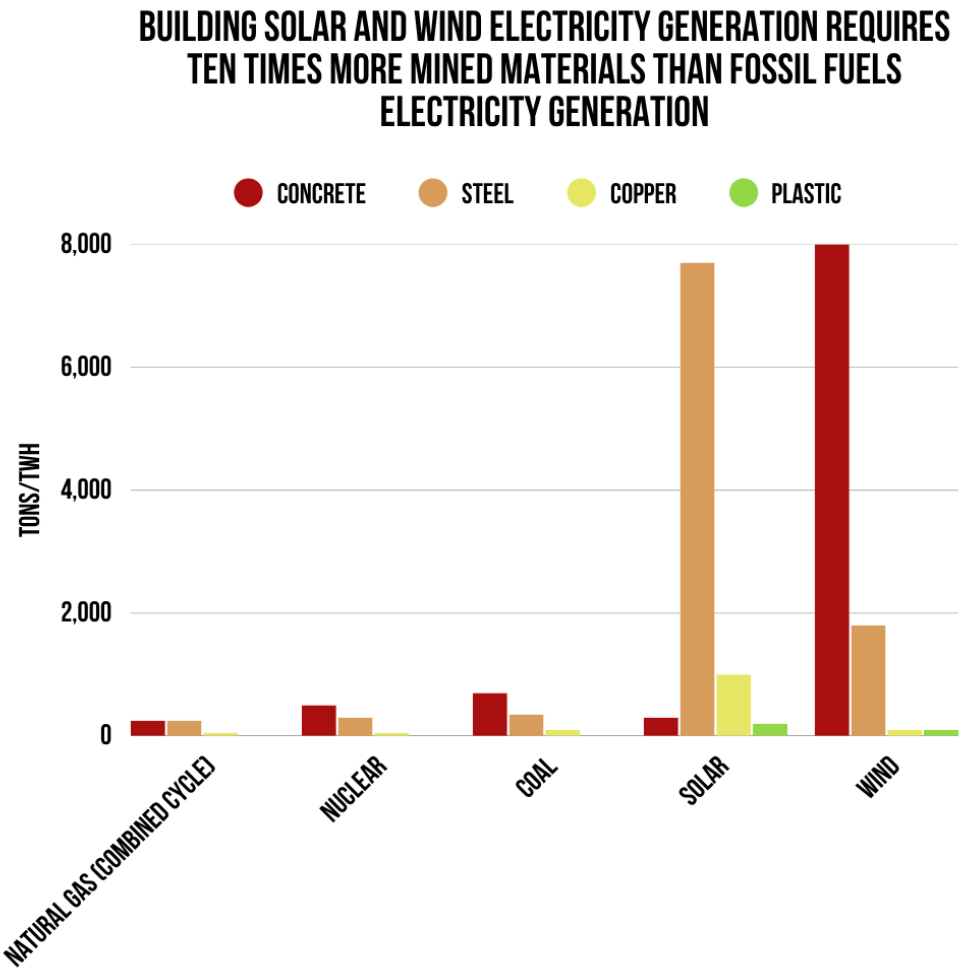
As for getting oil and gas out of the seabeds, much of the drilling is ready to go. There is no shortage of institutional knowledge and depth. Exploration by nature will take a little longer to bear fruit. All the same, sending the right signals to operators is tremendously important. If we fail to begin soon, we shall have to begin later.

NUCLEAR

As far as nuclear energy is concerned, we are living through a serious drought that is making us poorer and less developed. In 1966, we produced more nuclear

electricity than every other country in the world combined.[18] The last nuclear power station to be completed in Britain was Sizewell B, as long ago as 1988.

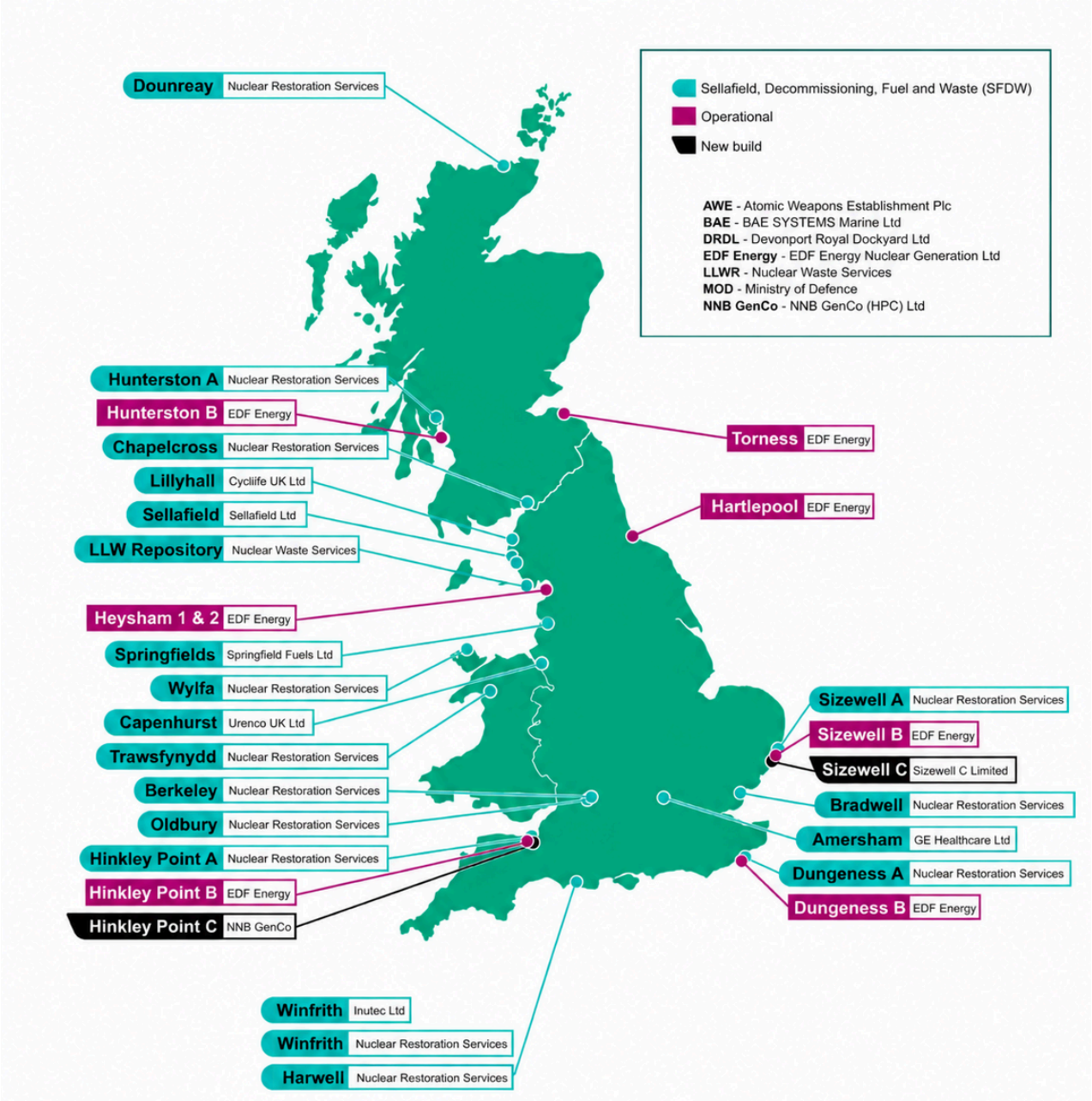
Even at the best of times, nuclear energy involves hefty up-front costs, funded either by investment or loans. Again at the best of times, such costs nevertheless tend to be worth incurring. Nuclear energy is a remarkably dense fuel, so nuclear power plants boast a uniquely high capacity factor, generate obscene amounts of energy that short of overregulation more than justify the up-front costs, and deliver an impressive return on investment. Nuclear is also an ultra-reliable baseload, with gas as a more flexible toggle to meet demand as and when it spikes. There is very little waste involved and it can be safely stored with ease. Nor do nuclear plants consume anything like as much concrete, steel, or plastic as, say, wind and solar farms.



Source: U.S. Department of Energy

[18] See Electricity generation from nuclear: Nuclear power generation, 1966 to 2025, Our World in Data.

Our problem in Britain is that on the nuclear front we are not living through anything like the best of times. We have nine operational reactors at four locations across the country. Meanwhile, between 1970 and 1990 Sweden built a dozen nuclear power plants on four sites, eight of which continue to operate today. They supply 30% of Sweden's electricity, roughly equal to its hydropower.[19] Wind and biofuels supply the rest. As a result, electricity in Sweden is cheaper and more reliable.



[19] See Nuclear, onshore wind cheapest way to meet Sweden's electricity needs, OECD report says, *Reuters*, 4 March, 2026.

Of Britain's nine civil reactors, eight are scheduled to close by 2030. Sizewell C and Hinkley Point C, both under construction, will not be ready until the early or even mid-2030s. It is vital, therefore, that we take steps to extend the lifespans of our more exhausted plants during this critical interim.

These older plants tend to have been designed to less stringent standards. This is because they were built under an earlier, less demanding system of rules. But somewhat absurdly, it is likely that the process by which these plants have their life extended before or around the early 2030s will fall under the newer, more stringent system of rules, even though they have operated for decades without any such constraints.

First and foremost, then, as an emergency measure Restore Britain would waive any regulations introduced in the years since old plants came online to ensure maximally swift life extensions where deemed appropriate and safe by the relevant pro-nuclear experts, particularly those working within Great British Energy – Nuclear (GBE-N). If necessary, again informed by the advice of such experts, we would invoke our Great Clarification Act (GCA) to do so. As a general matter, it takes less paperwork to boost capacity at an operating site than to install it at a new one, but even leases at long-established sites have been known to lapse amid decommissioning. We would not hesitate to invoke the GCA to halt any delays regarded as needless by trusted authorities within the industry.

As for brand new plants, Sizewell C and Hinkley Point C are both in the works, but their stories paint a dismal picture of modern Britain's ability to get things done. Those building Sizewell C have had to go through multiple public consultations, procure tens of thousands of pages to establish environmental compliance, and contend with expensive legal obstacles. Hinkley Point C has been forced to incorporate thousands of design adaptations to satisfy rigorous safety and ecological standards, up to and including costly fish return systems and acoustic deterrents unique among such projects. The better news is that, upon completion, each station is set to deliver enough reliable baseload electricity to sustain Britain's energy security for around six decades.[20]

[20] Sam Dumitriu & Michael Hill, A Policy Playbook For Cheaper Nuclear, Britain Remade, p. 8.

But in order to combine such theoretical promise with a practical future of increased energy abundance and lower consumer bills, it is essential that the cost of bringing nuclear online at scale and at speed is reduced. At present, due to a degree of overregulation that would shock even civilised, nuclear-loving countries such as France and South Korea, the process is far too burdensome. This produces damaging knock-on effects in energy-hungry sectors like chemicals, steel, and increasingly AI.

We must turn our efforts towards a nationwide nuclear renaissance, in particular building an extensive fleet of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). Even in Labour circles, there is talk of a need for a reset. "Our regulatory system," admits the government's own nuclear taskforce, "needs radical reform to enable speedy and cost-effective delivery of new civil and defence investment and existing operations."[21] Excessive complexity and wasteful duplication are singled out for critical attention. In response to the Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce's 47 recommended changes to the rules around nuclear energy, all laid out in a final report, a spokesperson for HM Treasury commented: "The government is taking forward all of the taskforce's recommendations and is publishing an implementation plan."[22] The expectation is that these will have been implemented by 2028.

Cutting-edge SMR designs boast a whole range of virtues. They are powerful enough to meet the needs of a small- to medium-sized town, but nimble enough to do so without much notice. The Rolls-Royce SMRs, for instance, require an overall site footprint of fewer than 10 acres. Contrary to larger projects like Sizewell C and Hinkley Point C, they are also easier to finance privately and with minimal, if any, state funds.

Precisely because of these virtues, however, onerous planning regulation has a uniquely punitive impact on SMR developments. The rules load heavy up-front costs onto every scheme. They therefore give an unintended but nevertheless solid advantage to those able to spread the costs across a handful of giant plants

[21] See Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce: interim report, 24 November, 2025.
[22] See UK overhauls nuclear regulation, *Nuclear Engineering International*, 17 March, 2026.

over those working only on modest ones.

At present, our energy security as regards nuclear power is compromised by too strong a reliance on foreign-controlled assets, particularly French state-owned EDF's dominance in the nuclear fleet alongside significant foreign stakes in renewables, gas, and transmission.

In the crusade to implement more or less full-spectrum privatisation, successive governments from Margaret Thatcher's onwards have neglected the importance of nuclear energy – among much else – as a strategic national asset. We are now feeling the stark consequences of selling off so much family silver. It is high time that we once again treat this country and its people, not as fungible ratepayers, but as heirs to a precious birthright, including the nation's strategic assets. After all, it is the people of Britain who are made to pay for everything.

We have formed Restore Britain for one reason and one reason only: to put the British people first. In order to move towards greater energy independence, we would pivot decisively toward a British-led SMR program. Under GBE-N, this would reduce dependence on EDF's large EPR projects, such as Hinkley Point C and Sizewell C, which over time we would seek to bring into full British hands.

The main goal is reliable nuclear power, manufactured at home (as far as is possible across the global supply chain) and controlled from home. Our core strategic objectives include:

1. Energy independence, with SMRs providing the bulk of new builds to complement (not replace) existing commitments while enabling phased reduction in EDF operational reliance.

2. Sovereignty, particularly as it relates to supply chains, intellectual property, and control over critical infrastructure.

3. Affordability and speed, made possible by factory-built modularity for cost and schedule certainty after the lessons learned from Wylfa, Anglesey (Rolls Royce SMR [475 Mwe] planned fleet of 3 units), and international projects like

GE Vernova and Ontario Power Generations (OPG)'s BWXR-300 Darlington, Ontario Province, project.

4. Fiscal prudence, so that spending commitments are structured in a way that protects Britain's credit rating and leaves the bond market undisturbed.

Our rough rule would be 'design once, deploy widely' with site-specific adaptations only. This would be more expensive than gas, even LNG gas, but it does afford us security, and there is a price we pay, a premium, for that security. That is our value judgement.

As for the optimal sites, we wish to make the most of GBE-N's acquisitions of Wylfa and Oldbury. Our aim would be to prioritise Wylfa for the 'First of A Kind' (FOAK) three-unit Rolls Royce SMR deployment, because it enjoys considerable local support and boasts potential for up to eight units. We would then direct GBE-N to identify and secure more sites on former nuclear or brownfield locations, co-located with industry/data centres for heat and power.

This would power millions of homes and industries with British technology, restoring sovereignty by shifting our approach from foreign large-reactor dependence to domestic modular control. By treating SMRs as a national mission, we can achieve genuine energy independence within two decades – secure, sovereign, and affordable.

To encourage local support for SMR developments, we would permit councils with a strong track record of fiscal responsibility to enjoy the proceeds of any business rates arising from small-scale nuclear projects, including those sponsored by AI companies. Speaking of which, we would also alter primary legislation in order to encourage tech investment into potential SMR sites within the British Isles. At present, our system is borderline schizophrenic on the matter. As the nuclear expert Sam Dumitriu quips:

> "*On the one hand, we are subsidising new SMR designs in the hope of eventually committing to a fleet. On the other, we are forcing their technology vendors to spend millions of pounds and thousands of man hours to navigate a regulatory process that is*

duplicated elsewhere to establish a fact that most branches of the state have already accepted."[23]

Instead, we would amend primary legislation to allow private companies hungry for electricity, particularly in the AI sector, to build and operate their own substations, provided that the privately financed SMRs situated on such sites also feed the national grid. We would also invite such SMR projects to bid for contracts, ensuring certainty for investors and reliable power for the public. Rather like most technological revolutions, the catalyst has always been cheap power. With the revolution in data centres to power AI, the key is to build them here in order to give us both the employment benefit and the competitive advantage over other countries.

Still, the major problem for large projects as well as smaller ones remains forbidding overregulation.

The government's own taskforce on nuclear energy has itself criticised 21st century Britain's "culture of risk aversion irrespective of cost, increasingly complex processes and procedures, and excessive bureaucracy."[24] Indeed, the existing rules foster a host of perverse incentives. Health and safety requirements are for the risk-taking duty-holders themselves to discharge. Alas, making challenges to the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) costs them time and money. It involves hiring experts to conduct cost-benefit analyses, which delays projects. Worse, the fact that such challenges may prove unsuccessful in any case often dissuades investors, who place a high premium on certainty. Many dutyholders also fear that, if they challenge the regulator too often, they will develop a reputation among the ONR and even the wider public for recklessness.

It is for good reason that the fossil fuels expert Alex Epstein jests that nuclear energy is "virtually criminalized" in many advanced Western countries. The relatively safe levels of radiation – among the most commonplace in nature – are in his words "treated as so dangerous that every aspect of building and operating

[23] Sam Dumitriu, How red tape holds back nuclear power in Britain, *Notes On Growth Substack*, 25 October, 2024.
[24] See Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce: interim report, 24 November, 2025.

nuclear plants is subject to endless costly "safety" equipment requirements and endless delays that make cost-effective nuclear almost impossible."[25]

Decades' worth of maddeningly complex regulations cannot be removed overnight. We shall therefore expand on the work of the regulatory taskforce already commissioned by the Labour government. The brief of our taskforce would be to eliminate all forms of duplication across every level of our existing regulatory framework, from environmental impact assessments to planning hurdles. Yet again, our GCA would in the meantime be an essential tool for time-sensitive decisions that call for political judgement, informed by trusted experts, in the immediate interests of the nation. We will invoke it without delay whenever the development of SMR sites is threatened with vexatious lawfare. The same would apply to any new developments on existing sites, not least for emergency life extensions.

But despite the longer-term need for a regulatory taskforce to go through the current rules with a fine-tooth comb, there remains a fair amount of low-hanging fruit for swift repeal. Many of them have been identified by the experts at Britain Remade.[26]

We note with disapproval the fact that the ONR is housed, not under the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ), but under the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP). In other words, the politicians responsible for ensuring Britain's energy security enjoy no direct say over the interpretation, application, and enforcement of the rules governing the densest energy source ever pioneered by mankind. This must change. Restore Britain would make the ONR subordinate to the Department for Energy Security. The ONR would then be notified of a new directive: to look out for Britain's energy independence and economic growth as well as for nuclear safety. This would bring us in line with the United States, which courtesy of the ADVANCE Act (2024) has updated its own relevant regulator's mission statement to include enabling "the safe and secure use and deployment of civilian nuclear energy technologies and radioactive materials through efficient and reliable licensing,

[25] Alex Epstein, *Fossil Future: Why Global Human Flourishing Requires More Oil, Coal, and Natural Gas – Not less* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2022), p. 62.
[26] See Sam Dumitriu & Michael Hill, A Policy Playbook For Cheaper Nuclear, Britain Remade, pp. 23-36.

oversight, and regulation for the benefit of society and the environment."[27]

We would cut back disproportionate environmental measures like acoustic fish deterrents, sea life return systems, and artificial wetland creation. We would amend the Habitats Regulations to clarify that tiny impacts, such as losing 0.5% of a habitat or a single bat death, do not constitute harm of a site's integrity and therefore no longer call for costly forms of nature-enhancing compensation. We would change the rules so that, rather than forcing developers to prove a negative, positive evidence of real harm is required before the relevant regulator can challenge a development. Last of all, we would exempt projects that have already acquired planning permission from the need to carry out a separate habitats regulations assessment for licences and permits.

In Britain, too, not only do we hold nuclear power to arbitrarily high safety standards relative to other sources of energy; we also hold newer, more inventive nuclear designs to arbitrarily high safety standards relative to older, more primitive nuclear designs that are already in operation and have been for decades with next to no damaging side effects.

We would therefore save ourselves the trouble of contending with vast swathes of red tape by automatically classing as safe any nuclear design already operating in foreign countries deemed responsible and law-governed. Apart from anything else, this would bring our own regulatory framework into sensible alignment with plenty of civilised nations, many of whom boast a track record for ensuring cheaper nuclear energy that puts our recent governments to shame. In fairness, Labour's own interim taskforce has accepted as much: "Limited recognition of approvals from trusted international regulators further compounds inefficiency and duplication."[28] There have been several cases in Britain where enhanced safety measures have been required of brand new foreign designs, such as the Japanese Advanced Boiling Water Reactor, despite the fact that among the virtues of such designs is to have innovated away the need for them. Our position is simple: if a design is deemed safe by a respected peer regulator, it should be deemed safe by ours. As ever, we would make use of our GCA during

[27] See U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, About the ADVANCE Act, 12 March, 2026.
[28] See Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce: interim report, 24 November, 2025.

the interim. If deemed safe in a respectable, law-governed country, with a track record for nuclear safety, it should count by default as good practice here.

As part of an interim strategy between where we find ourselves today and the ultimate goal of simplifying our regulatory system along the lines of foreign success stories, we would once again invoke the GCA to override the regulator by automatic repeal of any laws or regulations that it cites to block standardised designs in operation elsewhere in the developed world.

This would amount to a speedier, less daunting appeals process for duty-holders, who should all of a sudden feel more confident making their voice heard whenever disruptive decisions are made, either by the ONR or the courts.

OFFSHORE WIND

At the moment, according to the Crown Estate, we have 45 offshore wind farms in operation across the British Isles, mostly dotted off the English and Scottish coasts in the North Sea.[29]

Consistent with our withdrawal of Net Zero subsidies, no further such farms would receive approval by a Restore Britain government unless the projects in question can fund themselves – including all downstream expenses, from inertia to back-up costs caused by intermittency.

We take the view that the offshore wind sector has benefitted from undue advantage under the binding Net Zero commitments that we wish to scrap. These have shovelled money into wind farms, together with other renewable sources, at the expense of British taxpayers and to the detriment of ensuring an adequate supply of cheap, dispatchable energy across the nation. This lop-sided dynamic must be brought to a resounding end.

In a perfect world, we would kick our addiction to renewables tomorrow, because their manifold costs – so many of them hidden – are crippling the nation under our Net Zero regime. But while we have operational wind farms

[29] See The Crown Estate, Offshore wind map.

set up across the British Isles, which for the time being we are forced to fund, we ought to make maximal use of them. The contracts are in place, as is the infrastructure.

Renewables enthusiasts working within the offshore wind sector told us they are confident that many developments could now sustain themselves without subsidies. As far as we are concerned, though, any future ventures would need to fund themselves, without constraint payments for times when the grid is overloaded, and to cover the disruption costs now spread across the system. This would include the additional network costs required to connect it to the grid. True market integration ought to mean projects competing without special guarantees or subsidies, bearing the full costs of intermittency, grid upgrades, and backup requirements themselves. In short, all generation must clear a no-subsidy, system-cost-adjusted test.

Our long-term goal would be to build dispatchable power as fast as we can. As and when each new dispatchable source is brought online, we will find ourselves in a position to remove much of what is now subsidised at great and often hidden expense – if, that is, it fails to pass our no-subsidy, system-cost-adjusted test. In other words, any power generator unable to operate competitively in the long term can expect no more than temporary support in helping them phase themselves out.

A Restore Britain government would thus act quickly upon taking office to shield hard-working taxpayers from potential windfarm clean-up costs. After all, the abrupt cuts to carbon support involved in winding down our Net Zero commitments and similar, if not directly related, schemes may push many windfarms into financial turmoil.

Most operators have not set aside nearly enough money to cover the eventual cost of dismantling and restoring the sites, leaving the risk that the public might have to foot the bill. In order to avoid such trouble, we would introduce stricter decommissioning along the lines suggested by the Great British Business Council (GBBC).[30]

[30] See Catherine McBride, Premeditated Industrial Destruction? How the UK destroyed its industry and a plan to reverse this, Chapter 12: Reversing Net Zero – costs and benefits, 1 April, 2026.

According to these GBBC suggestions, all windfarm operating companies would be obliged to build up and ring-fence enough cash to meet the full expected cost of removal, calculated in today's money. Until that pot is properly resourced, no dividends or other payments will be permitted to flow out to the owners. If the site's own revenues cannot cover the gap within two years, the owners will be required to put in the extra money themselves.

Our aim is to provide relief on energy bills while giving companies a limited but fair window to strengthen their decommissioning reserves before the CfD support comes to a definitive close. The more costly ROCs, as we explained earlier, shall be removed at once.

The ultimate aim is to be energy independent, but since that cannot occur overnight and we are already committed to buy whatever our windfarms generate, we may as well make the most of it. Between now and where we aspire to take Britain, we are bound to find ourselves in a position where, while longer term forms of dispatchable power are built, we may prove to need some wind.

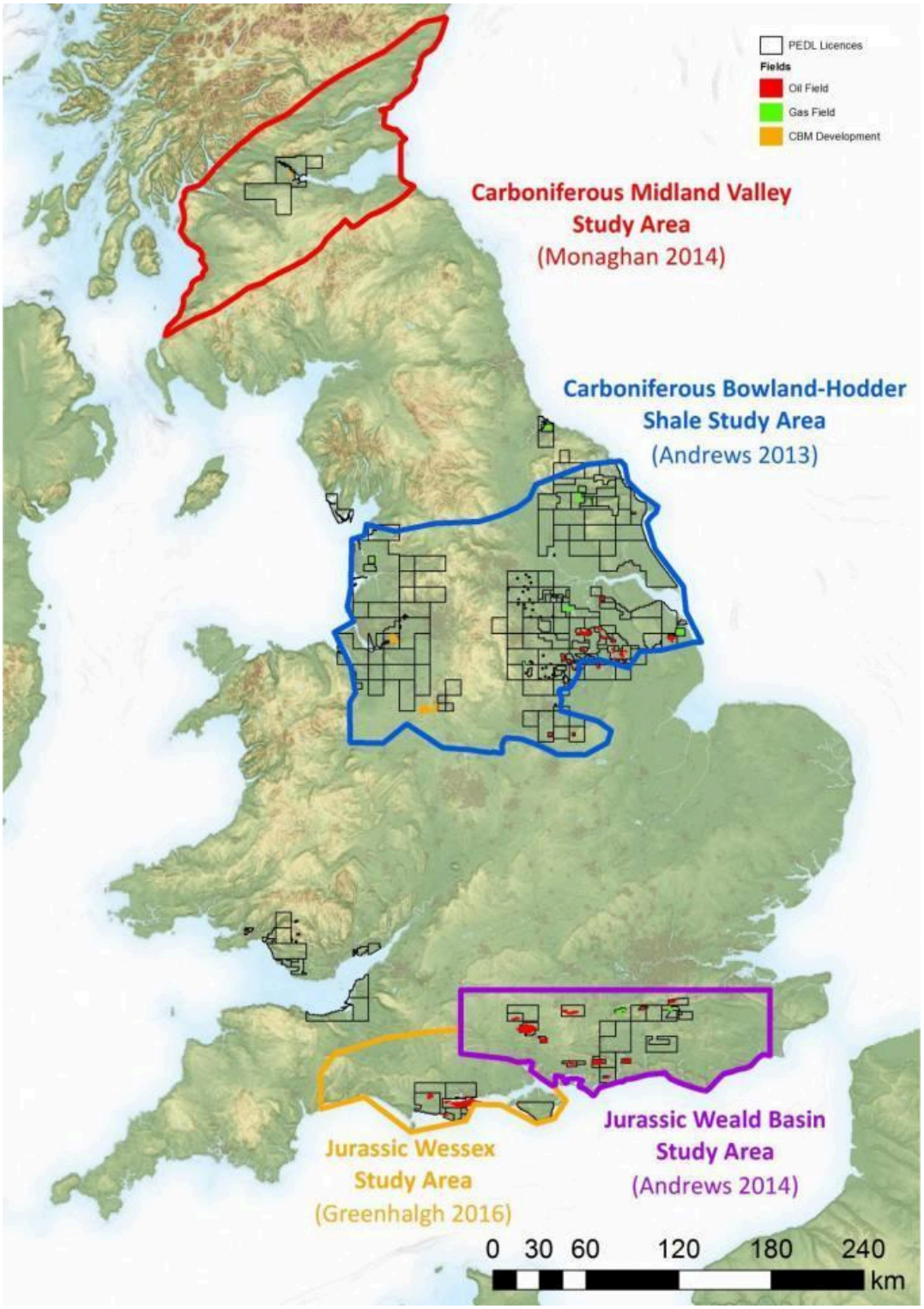
Wind at present is distortive and over-subsidised. As such, no new farms will be subsidised, but existing farms will be used to their fullest extent.

FRACKING

In physical terms, to frack is to create incisions in carboniferous rocks deep beneath the ground in order to extract gas. It is basically an onshore subset of conventional oil and gas. As we have had cause to note already, the good news is that we find ourselves sitting on an energy goldmine. In the same way that lifting the ban on North Sea oil and gas exploration would be a priority under a Restore Britain government, so too would re-examining the opportunities presented by shale development.

According to the British Geological Survey, the major known areas of promise for shale gas are the Bowland–Hodder Basin spread across north and middle England, the Midland Valley up in Scotland, the Weald Basin in the south-east,

and the Wessex Basin spread across Hampshire and Dorset.[31]



Source: British Geological Survey

[31] See British Geological Survey (BGS) Research, Shale gas in the UK.

Better still, in 2019 enough gas to supply Britain's energy needs – on some estimates – for seven years was discovered in the Gainsborough Trough under Lincolnshire. Egdon Resources, a shale exploration company, conjectures that as many as 16 trillion cubic feet of gas could be buried beneath the basin, meaning that hundreds of thousands of jobs would follow if we made every effort to extract them.[32]

The obstacles in our case are state-imposed constraints on new well developments, a moratorium on fracking reintroduced by Rishi Sunak in October 2022, and onerous taxes on oil and gas companies. The Labour government under Sir Keir Starmer wishes to make this moratorium permanent.[33]

Even before the moratorium, though, there was a lot of anti-fracking activism and negative coverage around a particular site in Balcombe on the Weald Basin, which suffered the distinct disadvantage of being sandwiched between ultra-green London and ultra-green Brighton. This meant that noisy activists could make a day trip of protesting at the site itself.

That having been said, activism tends more often to be focussed on the regulatory process than the extractive process. It is the lobbying of regulators, not displays of discontent on the ground, that causes the most disruption for fracking efforts.

The irony is that fracking, though demonised for causing tremors, is far less seismically disruptive than the geothermal wells in Cornwall, so often lauded by the very activists who despise shale exploration. Our measures for unacceptable levels of seismic activity, for instance, are over 3,000 times more sensitive than in the United States. Indeed, merely dropping a tin of beans onto the ground would cause a seismic shock sufficient to shoot down some shale venture.[34] The regulations as written make it impossible to frack, such that even before Boris Johnson banned it outright, the rules governing seismicity already served as a de

[32] Eleanor Maslin, Gas field discovery 'very exciting', MP says, *BBC News*, 14 February, 2025.
[33] Joshua Nevett, Labour plans new law to ban fracking permanently, *BBC News*, 1 October, 2025.
[34] See Paul Burgess, When A Dropped Tin of Beans Does 11 Times More Seismic "Damage" Than Allowed UK Fracking, 14 May, 2026.

facto ban.

Once this ban is lifted, as it should be, the regulations should be rewritten to establish a level playing field between the fracking sector and the geothermal sector, which for arbitrary, unjust, counter-productive reasons are less burdened. This will not be difficult, because fracking has nothing whatsoever to do with our international trading partnerships. We would therefore be able to repeal with trivial ease any primary legislation or secondary regulation on the books that conspire to obstruct fracking.

One geologist within the fracking industry expressed frustration to us that "so many pointless roadblocks have been put in the way of good-faith efforts to recover our own onshore reserves." Many of the amendments to existing regulations that we have committed to implementing above, particularly in relation to planning, would be helpful in alleviating these obstacles. As far as fracking is concerned, on the planning front it is important to stress the more or less invisible footprint of shale exploration sites. They are a great deal less disruptive to our beautiful natural landscapes than, say, onshore solar or wind.

Our natural gas used to be cheaper than in the United States, but the Americans have in recent years had the wisdom to take advantage of their underground reserves. Their reward has been a formidable fracking boom since the 2010s, leading to cheaper energy, more jobs, and greater growth. The United States also became not only a net exporter of energy, but the world's largest as of 2023. At this stage, we know that there are very large volumes of gas trapped in Britain's geological core. What is less clear is whether those in the sector are well-advised pursuing these efforts. Even amid bans, the sites are maintained so that, were circumstances to change, things could resume.

Even by the standards put forward by self-proclaimed environmentalists, it is much more honest – not to mention less carbon-intensive – to drill our own untapped national reserves than to import liquefied natural gas, as we do now, at great cost to both British consumers and British jobs at home.

CONCLUSION

The strength of a nation is determined by the people it has, how well it feeds them, how much energy it can produce, and how quickly it can build.

In view of these fundamental realities, we at Restore Britain take the view that the Treasury's existing measures of economic health, too enamoured of intangible metrics, need to be revised. The economy is not made of money. It is made of energy. Money just measures it. As such, the most important economic question is not 'how much money do we have?' but 'how much power can we generate?' Politicians may have it in them to print cash, but they cannot print affordable kilowatt-hours.

Pursuant to that end, we would institute a new national dashboard designed to do a better job of measuring the real strength of Britain than can be discerned from GDP growth alone. The headline numbers on our dashboard would be as follows:

- kWh per capita divided by the cost per kWh[35]
- Energy cost per unit of GDP
- Birthrate
- Food production per capita
- Infrastructure build rate
- Compute capacity
- Price of renewables subsidies per capita
- Price of renewables subsidies per average home
- Price of renewables subsidies in total

All governments, including a Restore Britain government, are best graded by their performance on these metrics. It would soon become apparent to any leaders pursuing these basic values that a nation cannot regulate its way to prosperity. We can only build our way there.

Victorian Britain relied on cheap power and clean water to drive the Industrial

[35] That would mean the lower the cost, the higher the index.

Revolution. Nothing has changed: we have an abundance of both. A responsible government would prioritise ensuring that our energy is once again the cheapest available to all British enterprises to drive prosperity.

The strategy set out in this paper seeks to establish the conditions for cheap, reliable, and abundant energy at home. A future Restore Britain government would pursue the full development of our offshore oil and gas reserves, the rapid expansion of nuclear energy, the exploitation of onshore shale where viable, and if able to compete some limited role for renewables within a balanced grid. Our overriding objective is to deliver dispatchable power at prices affordable to British households and competitive for British industry.

This cannot be achieved while the Climate Change Act (2008) and the associated Net Zero apparatus remain in force. These legally binding commitments have systematically favoured expensive and intermittent sources, externalised large system costs across bills, and imposed regulatory and fiscal burdens that damage productivity and living standards. Repealing the Act, ending the Climate Change Levy, making Energy Performance Certificates voluntary, and addressing locked-in subsidy contracts through careful legal and fiscal measures are therefore essential first steps.

At the same time, we note with excitement that Britain possesses substantial domestic energy resources and the technical capacity to develop them. What has been lacking is the political will to prioritise national energy security and economic prosperity over costly climate targets.

Removing the distorting policy architecture, reforming planning and regulation to enable timely construction, and restoring a pragmatic balance between nuclear, hydrocarbons, and unsubsidised renewables would allow markets and private investment to deliver the abundance required for national restoration.

Increased energy production at home would boost government revenue from corporation and employment taxes, while reducing our exposure to global shocks and our reliance on foreign imports.

Restoring Britain's energy security will not be without transitional challenges, but the alternative is continued adherence to policies that have produced some of Europe's highest energy prices.

A patriotic energy policy must place the interests of the British people first.