

Green Living

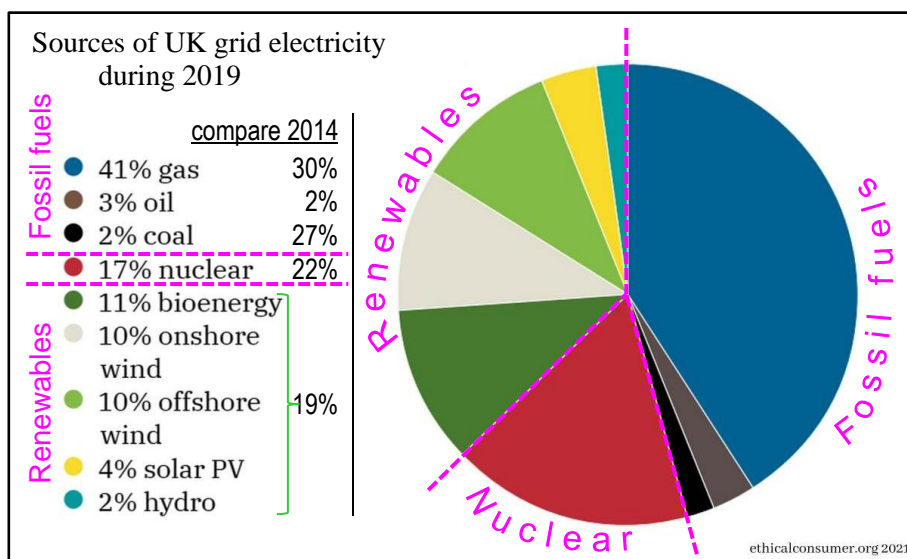
The third leaflet in a series produced in September-November 2021 by the Green Living groups of Avenue St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Southampton, and its ecumenical partners, from material in *The Dorset Green Living Guide* and current versions of related websites
Revised on 15 January 2022

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Energy

How to help the climate through our use of energy

"The UK is taking steps in the right direction on electricity: about 37% of UK electricity now comes from renewable energy, with onshore and offshore wind generation rising by 7% and 20% respectively since 2018," according to an analysis by Ethical Consumer in 2019, updated 27 September 2021. "However we are missing nearly all our targets... Consumers thus need to take more of the lead."



Data from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy shows that renewables now exceed gas as sources of our electricity supply.

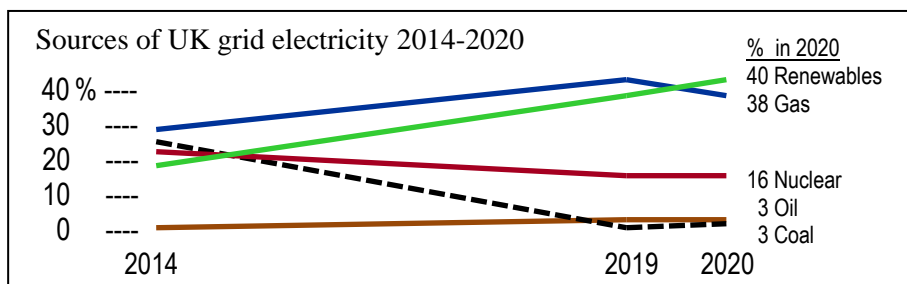


Diagram from <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/energy/shopping-guide/energy-suppliers> with data from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fuel-mix-disclosure-data-table>

Are you part of these trends? What more could you do?

- Urge the government to rigorously prioritise renewables in energy policy?
- Urge your existing energy provider to use renewable sources instead of fossil fuels?
- Switch to a renewable energy provider? – see more about this on page 2

And at your own home:

Was it changed from coal fires to central heating some years ago?

Does the boiler need replacement? If so, could you change to a system using renewable energy? For information, visit <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home/heating-your-home/>

Could you generate renewable energy at your home?

For guidance on ground-source or air-source heat pumps, solar water heating, solar electricity, and more, see <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home/generating-renewable-energy/>

To consider switching to a renewable energy provider

At the time of compiling this leaflet, October 2021, there is turmoil in the energy market, and some companies failing. The advice is to wait until companies have arranged new providers according to government regulations, before initiating a change of your energy provider for environmental reasons. On Friday 8 October BBC reported: (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-58846999>)

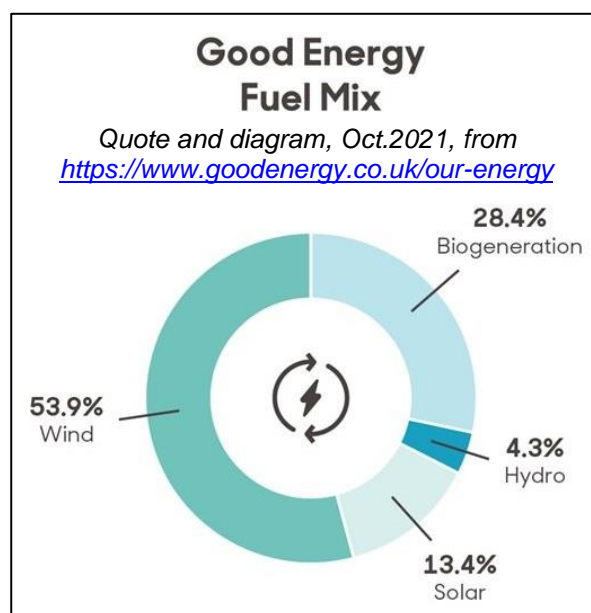
On Thursday Mr Kwarteng [Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy] said the government's strategy to shift to "clean" power sources by 2035, including wind, solar and nuclear, would reduce reliance on fossil fuels. "The volatility of the gas price has shown we do need to plan strategically and net zero helps us do that," he said.

This assessment from the Energy Saving Trust, may help with our own planning: (Written 2019, updated Sep.2021 <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/energy/shopping-guide/energy-suppliers>)

Researchers felt that to make a meaningful contribution to the UK's environmental agenda, companies selling electricity tariffs as 'green' should have a commitment to not build any further fossil-fuelled plant, and be either building renewables or buying sufficient renewable electricity through purchasing PPAs ['power purchase agreements', which give generators security] to cover 100% of customers' electricity use. We awarded product sustainability marks to the companies that did this. Those that passed were [Ecotricity](#), [Good Energy](#) and [Green Energy UK](#).

Good Energy, as an example, says:

10% of the gas we supply is biogas [made in UK.] We ... neutralise the emissions from [90% of] the gas our customers use by investing in verified carbon reduction schemes [making biogas] in India, China and Turkey, [so also helping to] improve access to clean energy around the world.



To consider using less energy

Low energy habits worth developing:

- Replace filament bulbs, fluorescent and halogen bulbs with LEDs (light emitting diodes)
- Turn down central heating thermostat, or radiator taps in less used rooms, although health professionals recommend at least 18°C for people over 65 or with a medical condition
- Reduce heating when house will be empty for some days
- Switch off lights and appliances when not in use
- Switch radio, TV, computer, printer etc. to off instead of standby for long periods
- Smart Meters enable you to measure energy consumed, and adjust usage accordingly
- Use microwave, slow cooker, pressure cooker, lids on saucepans

Maybe you have more to suggest to others.

To consider reducing heat loss

- Cavity walls insulation – a third of heat lost from an uninsulated house is through walls
- Loft and under floor insulation – 270mm depth recommended by Building Regulations
- Double or triple glazing
- Curtains and blinds – draw as extra insulation, but not covering radiators; line thin curtains
- Reflectors behind radiators – see www.radflek.com
- Draft exclusion – but keep some ventilation
- Chimney balloon – to prevent draught through unused chimney
- Lagging on pipes and tanks – to retain warmth in water as well as prevent freezing

See www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Insulation, and local authority information about some grants.