

Offshore wind farms to power one in six households in Britain

Level 3 | **Advanced**

1 Pre-reading | Key Vocabulary

1. Types of renewable energy

Match the terms with the definitions:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. solar energy | a. This type of energy uses the power of running water. |
| 2. wind power | b. This type of energy uses the power generated by the heat of the sun. |
| 3. tidal energy | c. This type of energy uses the power of the wind. |
| 4. hydro-electric power | d. This type of energy uses the power of the sea. |

2 Key Vocabulary

Fill the gaps using these key words from the text:

renewable	greenhouse gas	decade	offshore
expertise	decommissioning	grid	escalating

1. A _____ is a period of 10 years.
2. The process of closing down a nuclear power-station is known as _____.
3. _____ costs are costs that are increasing extremely rapidly.
4. If something can be replaced by natural processes it is said to be _____.
5. The network that carries the electricity supply is called the national _____.
6. If something is _____ it is found in the sea and not on the land.
7. Carbon dioxide is a _____.
8. _____ is a special skill or knowledge that you get from experience, training or study.

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Terry Macalister

The renewable energy industry and green groups in Britain expressed delight this week at government plans to start a £6bn wind power revolution that could create 20,000 jobs and provide fuel to one in six households by 2010. The Trade and Industry Secretary, Patricia Hewitt, announced a second round of offshore wind licensing, which she says puts the Government on track to generate 10% of electricity from greenhouse gas-free means by the end of the decade.

Crown Estates, which has responsibility for the licensing, hopes to attract 6,000 megawatts of offshore capacity. The cost of developing 6,000 MW is expected to be about £6bn and to create 20,000 jobs in the engineering and construction sectors.

The British Wind Energy Association (BWEA) welcomed the government push. "We are sixth in the world behind countries such as Germany, Spain and Denmark, yet we are the windiest country in Europe. We have the best offshore expertise and workforce, and all of this can be used to make Britain the leader in this new industry worldwide," said Alison Hill, a BWEA spokeswoman. But the organisation also warned that the Government needed to resolve difficulties connecting remote wind schemes with the national grid, a financing premium on renewable schemes due to political uncertainty, and opposition from the Ministry of Defence to some turbine plans. The BWEA wants Ms Hewitt to confirm aspirations expressed in the recent White Paper that the UK obtains 20% of electricity from renewables by 2020.

The cost of decommissioning the country's Magnox nuclear power stations could be double the estimated level, leaving the taxpayer with a £3.2bn bill, it emerged last weekend. British Nuclear Fuels said that it could not put a definite cost on the

decommissioning of all eight Magnox plants because it had only worked out figures for the first two.

The rapidly escalating cost is being blamed on tighter regulation - and on the fact that the original estimates were made 10 years ago. BNFL originally earmarked £380m to run down Hinkley Point, closed in 2000, and Bradwell, which was shut down last year. It has now been forced to put aside a further £415m.

The Guardian Weekly

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3 Comprehension Check

Choose the best answer to each question:

1. What percentage of British households could be powered by wind power by 2010?
 - a. 10%.
 - b. More than 15%.
 - c. 50%.
2. Apart from creating jobs, what other benefit will this development bring?
 - a. It will attract 6,000 megawatts of offshore capacity.
 - b. It will remove political uncertainty.
 - c. It will help to reduce greenhouse gases.
3. Why is it a paradox that Britain is sixth in the world in the use of wind power?
 - a. Because Britain has the best offshore expertise and workforce.
 - b. Because Britain is the windiest country in Europe.
 - c. Because the Ministry of Defence is opposed to wind power.
4. What is the problem with decommissioning the nuclear power stations?
 - a. It could cost up to twice as much as originally forecast.
 - b. The regulations are not tight enough.
 - c. The original estimates were made 10 years ago.

4 Word Building

The key word in the text is 'renewable', meaning 'it can be renewed'. Make further words ending in '-able' from the following definitions. Note that some will be negative.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| 1. cannot be broken | _____ |
| 2. can be negotiated | _____ |
| 3. cannot be returned | _____ |
| 4. cannot be accepted | _____ |
| 5. cannot be avoided | _____ |
| 6. can be predicted | _____ |
| 7. cannot be transferred | _____ |
| 8. can vary | _____ |

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5 Collocations

Without looking back at the text, match the verbs with the nouns. Then look in the text to check your answers.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. express | a. fuel |
| 2. create | b. difficulties |
| 3. provide | c. funds |
| 4. generate | d. development |
| 5. encourage | e. aspirations |
| 6. resolve | f. jobs |
| 7. confirm | g. delight |
| 8. earmark | h. electricity |

6 Discussion

Make a list of all the ways of producing energy. Then decide which of these are bad for the environment and which are good for the environment.

What is the best method of generating energy in your country?

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Key

1 Types of renewable energy

1 b; 2 c; 3 d; 4 a

2 Key Vocabulary

1. decade
2. decommissioning
3. escalating
4. renewable
5. grid
6. offshore
7. greenhouse gas
8. expertise

3 Comprehension Check

1 b; 2 c; 3 b; 4 a

4 Word-Building

1. unbreakable
2. negotiable
3. non-returnable (eg a bottle)
4. unacceptable
5. unavoidable
6. predictable
7. non-transferrable (eg a plane ticket)
8. variable

5 Collocations

1 g; 2 f; 3 a; 4 h; 5 d; 6 b; 7 e; 8 c