# Renewable Energy

Clean, renewable energy is a vital tool in our plans to reduce the worst effects of climate change. Replacing fossil fuels with wind and solar to power our homes and businesses will dramatically cut our greenhouse gas emissions. The added bonus is it will cut air pollution at the same time.

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Renewable energy comes from the Earth’s natural resources – sunlight, wind, waves, the tides and geothermal heat from deep within our planet. It has two great advantages: unlike oil, coal and gas, it will never run out, and it’s clean –  it doesn’t pollute the planet or cause dangerous climate change.

It is versatile and adaptable. Renewable energy can supply huge cities on the grid or remote villages unconnected to any mains electricity. It can also be built close to where the power is actually needed, and the sheer range of technologies means that one or another will be suitable almost anywhere.

The UK has some of the best renewable energy sources in the world. Our islands, battered by wind and waves, are perfect for tapping into these power sources. Even solar energy has a role to play – solar panels are more efficient in direct sunlight, but can generate power even on a cloudy day. New developments in battery storage mean renewable energy can be used even when the wind isn’t blowing or the sun shining. This provides a fantastic opportunity for the UK to be at the forefront of technological innovation, creating jobs and driving down costs even more.

### *The rise of renewable energy*

In fact, renewable energy is slowly replacing fossil fuels. In 2015 renewables generated more power than coal for the first time ever, and by  2018 was approaching the level of gas generation and is set to continue growing. It’s also getting much cheaper – wind power now costs far less than nuclear, and between 2015 and 2017 the price of offshore wind halved.

All this makes much of the government’s attitude towards renewable energy at odds with its claim to being an international leader on tackling climate change. Cuts to government support for solar power has led to a drop in the number of solar panels being installed, and continued political and financial backing for fossil fuels and nuclear power just don’t make sense. The UK is legally committed to tackling climate change and, by 2050, reducing emissions by 80% compared to 1990. There is pressure on all governments to get to zero carbon emissions even before 2050 if we have any hope of keeping global temperature rises below 1.5 degrees.

Massively increasing renewable energy is the most important way the government is going to meet its commitments, and for us to have a chance of stopping the worst effects of climate change from happening.