

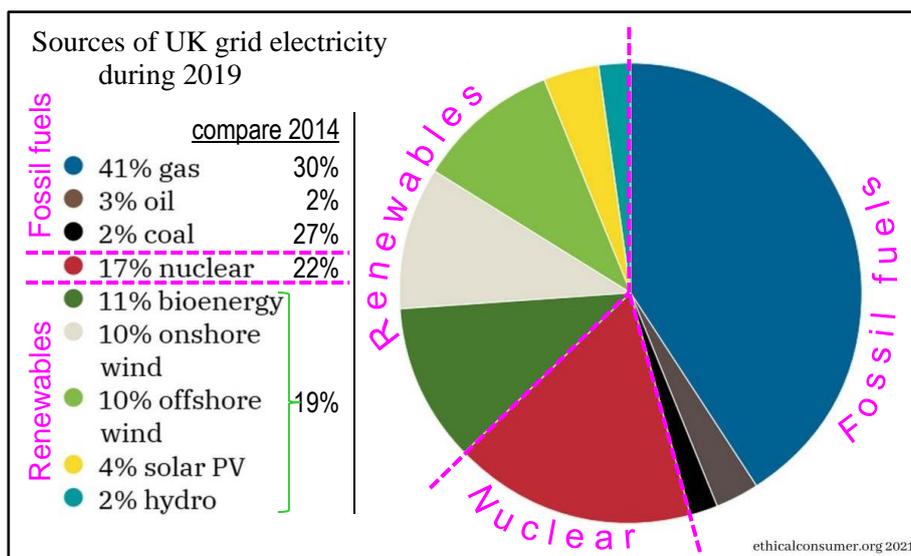
# Green Living

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  
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## Energy

### Helping the climate through changing to renewable sources 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.

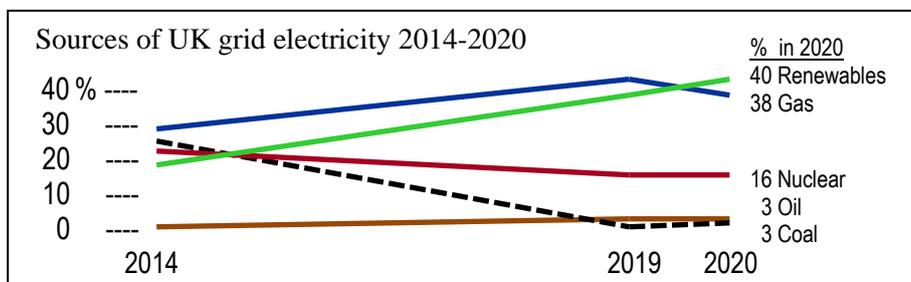


Diagram from <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/energy/shopping-guide/energy-suppliers> with data from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fuel-mix-disclosure-data-table>

### 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 oil- or gas-fired 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/>

## Principles for selecting a provider of renewable energy

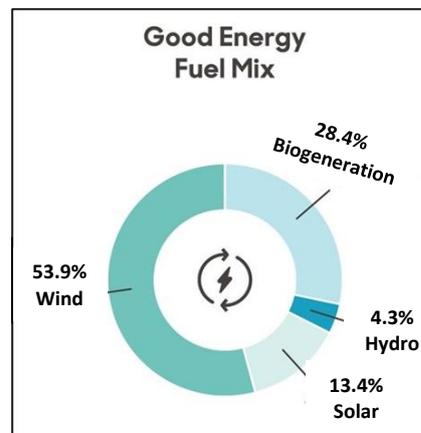
The Energy Saving Trust, writing in 2019, updated September 2021, said:

<https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/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 providing both electricity and gas, wrote of gas in October 2021: <https://www.goodenergy.co.uk/our-energy>

“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.”



## In a volatile energy market

Ofgem is Britain’s independent energy regulator to protect consumers by working with Government, industry and consumer groups to: deliver a greener, net zero economy at the lowest cost to consumers; stamp out sharp and bad practice, ensuring fair treatment for all consumers; enable competition and innovation to drive down prices and produce new services for consumers.

Because global wholesale prices of gas have quadrupled in the last year, Ofgem has announced a large price cap rise of 54% from 1 April 2022. This allows energy companies to pass on the price rises to consumers but not make excessive profits.

- For more on Ofgem’s role and price caps <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/price-cap-increase-ps693-april>
- For briefing paper *Cost of gas and electricity* <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cdp-2022-0010/>
- About switching supplier, or difficulty in paying <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/>
- If your energy supplier goes bust, you are advised to wait for Ofgem to arrange a new supplier for you in a few days, before considering further options <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/what-happens-if-your-energy-supplier-goes-bust>

## To consider using less energy

Low energy habits worth developing, whichever energy provider you have:

- 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 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
- When choosing new appliances or a new home, include reduction of energy use, heat loss and carbon emissions as important factors to consider.

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](http://www.radflek.com)
- Draft exclusion (including chimney balloon in unused chimney) – but keep some ventilation
- Lagging on pipes and tanks – to retain warmth in water as well as prevent freezing

See [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Insulation](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Insulation), and local authority information about some grants.