

## Green GB + NI Week - 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Oct

### – What has this Government ever done for ‘Green’?

The [Green GB Week](#) is a week of events across England, arranged by the Government, with “announcements and media activity to promote the opportunities from clean growth and raise awareness of how businesses and the public can contribute to tackling climate change.” – see [here for events](#).

#### Fine words

*“We cannot keep our promise to the next generation to build an economy fit for the future, Unless we ensure our planet has a future”*

Philip Hammond, reported by [Carbon Brief](#) Nov 2017

#### Dangerous actions

The Government has a record of actions minimising and opposing ‘green’, so this captures some green claims and rebuttals for when the fine words are repeated during Green GB Week.

### Government green claims and rebuttal material

Government Claim	Actual
<p><b>Conservative’s green and clean legacy</b> This Government is determined to leave our natural environment in a better condition than we found it. Clean growth is not an option, but a duty we owe to the next generation, and economic growth has to go hand-in-hand with greater <a href="#">protection for our forests and beaches</a>, <a href="#">clean air</a> and places of <a href="#">outstanding natural beauty</a>. Theresa May <a href="#">Clean Growth Strategy</a> Oct 2017</p> <p>We have made progress across every sector of our economy. Greg Clark <a href="#">Clean Growth Strategy</a></p>	<p>The Clean Growth Strategy supports Fracked Gas and Nuclear – both discredited as expensive and hazardous. The Committee on Climate Change <a href="#">response to the Clean Growth Strategy</a> overview shows the gaps where there are no policies eg poor energy efficiency in homes and industry, too slow phase out of fossil fuel vehicles, insufficient nuclear capacity, high carbon heating fuel, no carbon capture plans etc etc</p> <p><b>Duty to the next generation</b> It has been known well before the <a href="#">special IPCC report on 1.5°C</a> was published that we need to aim for 1.5 °C, and that this was a poor gamble with the odds still stacked for more catastrophic events. See also Paris Agreement section below.</p> <p><b>UK Damage even at UK’s obligation 2°C target.</b> The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) <a href="#">wrote in July 2018</a>, reminding the Government that they had advised them two years previously that <i>“We know that the risk of heatwaves and higher average temperatures is increasing as the climate changes. Our 2016 report showed that, without further action, the number of heat-related deaths could increase from 2,000 per year today to 7,000 in the 2050s due to climate change and population growth. Water shortages are also a concern: we can expect greater water deficits across the country...”</i></p> <p><b>Clean Air:</b> The Government has lost three legal actions brought by <a href="#">Client Earth</a> for not ensuring that NO<sub>2</sub> levels reduce to safe levels. The latest prevarication is to require 8 local authorities to</p>

	<p>produce plans to reduce their air pollution – despite the main causes of high NO<sub>2</sub> being enabled by Government legislation. ie the purchase of more new diesel vehicles continues to be incentivised by <u>car tax</u> and <u>fuel tax</u>.</p> <p><b>Fracking our outstanding natural beauty.</b> In 2015 the Government mandated that ministers could <u>override local councils</u> that refuse Fracking.</p> <p><u>The Yorkshire Post</u> in Feb 2016 reported that “one sixth of Yorkshire’s protected landscape, including 140 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), are now covered by Petroleum Exploration and Development Licences”.</p> <p><b>Clean Growth Strategy</b> see further on. referred to has many ‘develops’, ‘demonstrates’, ‘establishes’ aspirations but few actual informed practical promises to increase ‘clean’. Meanwhile the Government plans to reduce ‘clean’ measures by closing the Feed In Tariff and Export support for small scale low carbon generation. Even the accompanying <u>Impact Assessment</u> is explicit, that ceasing the support would mean that greenhouse gas emissions savings of 4-10 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent would be lost.</p>
<p><b>UKs contributions under the Paris Agreement</b> we <u>played a leading role</u> in the historic Paris Agreement’ (Claire Perry in the <u>Green GB Week toolkit doc</u>)</p>	<p>On Amber Rudd’s return from the Paris Conference of the Parties in 2015 she described the agreed ambition to limit warming to 1.5°C as merely ‘<b>aspirational</b>’. (<u>Audio</u> at 2min 15sec). She also said that she would ask the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) to advise her on the implications of 1.5°C. But by 8<sup>th</sup> Oct 2018 the CCC wrote in <u>It’s now or never for one and a half degrees</u> “We await the Government’s formal request for our advice on long-term emissions targets”</p> <p><b>The impacts of climate change at 1.5°C, 2°C and beyond</b> is available from <u>Carbon Brief</u> as an interactive demonstration.</p>
	<p>By 2020 each EU country must update or communicate its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), as per Paris Agreement, beyond the <u>2030 EU Framework</u>. The 27 EU countries will centrally co-ordinate their own NDCs. The UK must produce its own NDC, but no progress seems to have been made on this, whether aiming at 1.5°C or not.</p>
	<p><u>Carbon Brief</u> has a chart from Feb 2016 showing which Countries in the EU are transitioning the fastest away from fossil fuels, and which are</p>

	<p>moving at a slower pace. The UK is nearly the furthest away from its agreed EU target.</p>
<p><b>Climate Change Act' (CCA)</b>  <u>her</u> government was 'the first country globally to introduce legally binding emission reduction targets through the Climate Change Act' [CCA] (Claire Perry in the <a href="#">Green GB Week toolkit doc</a>)</p>	<p>On 16 October 2008 Ed Miliband, <b>Labour Secretary of State</b> for Energy and Climate Change, announced that the Act would mandate an 80% cut overall in six greenhouse gases by 2050. The CCA was passed into law on 26 November 2008. (<a href="#">Wikipedia</a>)</p>
	<p>However the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) <a href="#">2018 Progress report to Parliament</a> on CCA progress was clear that  <i>"The UK is not on course to meet the legally binding fourth and fifth carbon budgets. It will not be on course unless risks to the delivery of existing policies are reduced significantly and until Government brings forward new fully funded policies..."</i>  It strongly recommended action on onshore wind, insulation, more woodland, construction and vehicle emissions and carbon capture, with many detailed recommended policies, that are not being adopted.</p>
<p><b>UK's current 'Clean Growth Strategy'</b>  Last year I was proud to launch the Clean Growth Strategy. The Strategy set out 50 major policies and plans that will help us to <u>cut the cost of energy, drive economic growth, create high value jobs</u> right across the UK, and improve our quality of life. (Claire Perry in the <a href="#">Call for evidence re small scale low carbon generation (sslcg)</a>)</p>	<p><b>The Clean Growth Strategy</b> has many 'develops', 'demonstrates', 'establishes' aspirations but few actual informed practical promises to increase 'clean'</p> <p><b>Cut the cost of energy:</b> The Green Alliance in <a href="#">Closing the clean power gap</a> says <i>"Our analysis shows that buying low carbon instead of gas will save consumers £1.8bn a year"</i></p> <p>Small Scale renewables came under attack when David Cameron's called the schemes that supported investment in a basket of low energy schemes '<a href="#">green crap</a>' in 2015, and proceeded to dismantle them as soon as the Lib Dems were out of the coalition. The National Audit Office <a href="#">Controlling the consumer funded costs of energy policies</a> Oct 2016 lists the many schemes in the 'Levy Control Framework' other than renewables – and balances them against the cost savings bringing down domestic bills. (p40)</p> <p>Clean small scale low carbon generation is under threat as the Government plans to close the Feed In Tariff and Export support for renewables. Even the accompanying <a href="#">Impact Assessment</a> is explicit, that ceasing the support would mean that greenhouse gas emissions savings of 4-10 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent would be lost.</p> <p>Onshore wind is steadfastly opposed by the Government, despite being much lower cost (+</p>

	<p>quicker to install, and less of a security risk) than nuclear.</p> <p>Low carbon heat sources are not being encouraged. The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) <a href="#">2015 report to Parliament</a> stated at Recommendation 8: <i>“Implement commitments on Zero Carbon standards without further weakening and ensure incentives are in place to encourage low-carbon heat sources”</i> (p21)</p> <p><i>“Complexity is itself a major cause of rising costs, and tinkering with policies and regulations is unlikely to reduce costs ..... It should be a central aim of government to radically simplify the interventions, and to get government back out of many of its current detailed roles”</i> – Dieter Helms <a href="#">Cost of Energy Review</a></p> <p><b>Quality of life – warm with low bills for customers</b> The Government removed the Zero Carbon building requirement - see <a href="#">Guardian 2015</a>. So excess carbon emissions are literally being built-in for the lifetime of new properties and refurbishments. This is despite the EU’s <a href="#">Energy Performance of Buildings Directive</a> requiring all new buildings to be nearly zero-energy by the end of 2020 and all new public buildings to be nearly zero-energy by 2018.</p> <p>Retrofitting our existing old housing stock was no longer supported by the Government in July 2015 when <a href="#">Amber Rudd announced</a> that <i>“there will be no further funding to the Green Deal Finance Company, in a move to protect taxpayers.”</i> (note the scheme to lend funds for home improvements was reopened by private finance <a href="#">GDFC</a> in 2017 who could make the scheme work)</p> <p><b>Economic Growth</b> The UK low carbon economy <a href="#">could</a> grow by an estimated 11 per cent per year between 2015 and 2030 – four times faster than the rest of the economy Clean Growth Strategy (p8)</p> <p><b>High Value Jobs</b> See further on</p>
<p><b>Clean Jobs</b> our low carbon sector supports almost 400,000 <b>jobs</b> all across the country, and <a href="#">the sector is still growing</a>. (Claire Perry in the <a href="#">Green GB Week toolkit doc</a>)</p>	<p>The solar and wind sectors are <b>not growing</b>. <a href="#">PWC</a> reported in 2016 that <i>“a third of solar jobs have been lost in the past year and a third of respondents expect to cut staff in the next 12</i></p>

	<p><i>months</i>” Every cut to building insulation and small scale renewable installation schemes has resulted in cuts to quality local jobs.</p> <p>The accompanying <a href="#">Impact Assessment</a> to the FIT and Export closure consultation is explicit “<i>the assumed reduction in deployment of FIT generators will likely result in decreased employment in the low-carbon sector</i>”. These jobs will inevitably be lost when the FIT and Export support ceases in April 2019 and the Government is fully aware.</p>
<p><b>Clean Business opportunities</b> designing and constructing mighty offshore windfarms to building and exporting electric cars across the world (Claire Perry in their <a href="#">toolkit doc</a>)</p>	<p>Banning onshore windfarms and tidal lagoons is not mentioned. Neither is paying foreign companies enormous sums for Nuclear. Brexit will make it difficult to become electric vehicle manufacturers</p>
<p><b>Innovation and Research</b> The UK Government will <b>double</b> its spend on innovation.</p>	<p>The UK promised to double its spend on clean tech innovation at the Paris Convention of the Parties, labelled <a href="#">Mission Innovation</a> in response to a challenge from <a href="#">Breakthrough Energy Coalition</a> billionaires to step up their support too.</p> <p>The UK intends to double its spend but it is not always clear which pots of money being announced are from this pot, rather than a general focus on moving the UK to ‘clean’. The Government information on the promise is <a href="#">here</a>. “<i>we expect to double our spending on relevant energy RD&amp;D to in excess of £400 million in financial year 2020-21</i>”</p>
<p><b>Support for new renewable capacity</b> Since 2010, Government support has driven down the cost of small-scale low-carbon electricity generation and helped create an innovative sector of small businesses. <a href="#">Claire Perry Call for evidence re small scale low carbon generation</a></p>	<p><b>The Labour Government</b> brought in Feed In Tariffs in April 2010 and the <a href="#">FIT Impact Assessment</a> (p15) then showed that the scheme was intended as a mechanism for bill payers to repay investors for new small scale low carbon generation capacity – as an alternative to the public and/or private means such as for renewable heat, nuclear etc. It had the clear aim to offer investors a reasonable return and a mechanism to adjust rates. The Coalition, and then the Conservatives, chose to apply ‘cliff edge’ reductions instead of steady adjustments, putting thousands out of work and damaging the renewable industry.</p> <p>The Government is currently intending to withdraw all support from April 2019, even though small renewable schemes still need support to be viable.</p> <p>This <a href="#">Consultation on the Feed-In Tariffs Scheme</a> is focussed on (a flawed) understanding of ‘affordable’ electricity bills, but actually just moves costs around. Adopting the proposals</p>

	<p>would result in some future schemes giving electricity to the suppliers for free - though most schemes would be killed off, costing more jobs.</p> <p>See the Solar Trade Association <a href="#">fair 4 solar</a> to <b>campaign to support renewables.</b></p>
<p><b>Investing in clean energy</b>  The actions and <b>investments</b> that will be needed to meet the Paris commitments will ensure the shift to clean growth will be at the forefront of policy and economic decisions made by governments and businesses in the coming decades. Clean Growth Strategy 2018 (p8)</p>	<p><a href="#">The Environmental Audit Committee</a> reported in 2017 that there had been an ‘alarming collapse’ in clean energy investment since 2016 and a lack of new enabling policies to incentivise them. Investment in ‘green’ can come from many sources and all need to be encouraged to unlock funds.</p> <p><b>Government investments.</b> The <a href="#">G20 Green Finance Synthesis Report</a> Sept 2016 concludes that clear public policies are necessary to address the finance challenges it identifies. <i>“We acknowledge that many other factors also contribute to the lack of green investment. These include, for example, fossil fuel subsidies, ineffective environmental regulations, incoherent public policies, failure of the accounting system to capture environmental costs/benefits, underdevelopment of financial markets and institutions, and the silos approach to education for finance and environment”</i> (at note 13)</p> <p>Currently the UK uses the <a href="#">European Investment Bank</a> (EIB) that raises funds through the issue of <a href="#">Climate Awareness Bonds</a>, <i>finances large projects with direct <a href="#">Project loans</a></i> and other services such as <a href="#">Structured finance</a> and <a href="#">Private Finance for Energy Efficiency (PF4EE)</a></p> <p>And the <a href="#">Natural Capital Financing Facility</a> (NCCF) that provides financing for biodiversity and climate adaptation.</p> <p>The National Infrastructure Commission <b>recommends</b> that the UK Government should maintain access to the European Investment Bank if possible.</p> <p>The UK did own the <b>Green Investment Bank</b>, but decided it did not want the loan debt in Government books and <u>sold to Macquarie</u> in 2017, with an undertaking to continue making green loans for <b>3 years only</b>.</p> <p><b>Commercial Investment</b>  <a href="#">Trillion</a> stopped offering new renewable energy loans In September 2015, <i>“due to changes in the renewable energy policy in UK”</i>.</p>

	<p><b>Individual investment</b> in own use renewable capacity. Typical investors in early solar electricity tied up large sums for 25 (later 20) years, taking many years to recoup their investment with (unnecessarily) high returns for those still owning the property 20 years on. Currently investors will spend lower sums but may take up to 20 years to recoup them. From April 2019 the FIT and Export support will cease, so individuals will not be investors – just ethical purchasers.</p> <p><b>Community</b> The Government decided that community businesses are not allowed to offer undue returns to members (<a href="#">FCA guidance</a> (p7)) despite notification from the <a href="#">Community Shares Unit</a> that the long term unavailability of capital required a higher rate of return. In 2015 the Government made community investments <a href="#">ineligible for SEIS and EIS</a> tax relief. From April 2017 the Government retrospectively removed business rates exemptions for solar PV (other than for charities such as academies and public schools) <a href="#">The Solar Trade Association</a> stated that <i>“Organisations that own their solar panels and use most of the power themselves – a highly efficient option – will see a 6-8 fold increase in the business rates they have previously paid for solar.”</i></p> <p>The supply of electricity locally, instead of using the national grid for small scale generators, such as community groups is not allowed, without over complex restrictions. See 10:10’s <a href="#">Buying and selling power locally = a better energy system.</a></p>
<p><b>Subsidies</b>  Greg Clark said the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project “would have been <u>subsidised</u> through household energy bills for decades, was too expensive compared with alternatives such as offshore windfarms and nuclear power “ according to <a href="#">The Guardian</a> June 2018.</p>	<p><i>“Historically, fuel subsidies have been part of policy intervention mechanisms designed to protect the lower-income part of the population from highly volatile commodity prices....”</i> (according to the <a href="#">Alliance Trust article on Subsidy</a> )</p> <p>In the case of the Swansea Tidal Lagoon, the <a href="#">Charles Hendry review</a> of Jan 2017 recommended that the project go ahead (<i>“appears attractive, particularly when compared to nuclear projects”</i>). The Government cancelled it in June 2018, stating poor value for money. But Charles Hendry commented to <a href="#">The Guardian</a> that the government had used the wrong lifetime. <i>“The offshore wind turbines will have to have been</i></p>

	<p><i>replaced three or four times during the lifetime of a lagoon; a nuclear plant would only last half as long. The Swansea Bay company commissioned an audit in July 2018 “The audit demonstrates that the figures employed by BEIS to support its position on tidal lagoons are inaccurate by orders of magnitude, which raises serious questions about the approach taken and the conclusions drawn.”</i></p> <p>The Guardian’s <a href="#">George Monbiot</a> said in Feb 2016 that, as well as £5bn subsidy for fossil fuel production in the UK, the government had now announced £1.3bn of tax breaks for North Sea oil companies, £250m for propping up oil and gas and £20m on seismic testing, noting that the free market and anti-lobbying expectations for renewables is in contrast to the rules for fossil fuels.</p> <p><u>10:10 in 2015</u> compared subsidies for nuclear (£14 a year per person for 35 years) against subsidies for Solar (£10 a year per customer for 20 years).</p>
--	--

The ‘[polluter pays principle](#)’ according to Wikipedia.

*“underpins environmental policy such as an ecotax, which, if enacted by government, deters and essentially reduces greenhouse gas emissions. “*

This UK Government rewards polluters thus making it difficult for the new green transformation to take place.

Note: Labour has published [The Green Transformation](#) booklet and [Achieving 60% Renewable and Low Carbon Energy by 2030](#) doc containing their plans and policies that will contribute to 1.5°C.