

# Press release: Government confirms up to £557 million for new renewable energy projects

- Last auction saw cost of offshore wind halved and secured enough renewable capacity to power 3.6 million homes.
- UK decarbonising faster than any other G20 nation

Energy Minister Richard Harrington confirmed today (11 October 2017) that up to £557 million will be made available for less established renewable electricity projects as part of the government's Clean Growth Strategy, to drive economic growth and clean up the energy system.

Since 1990 the UK's emissions are down by more than a third while the economy has grown by two-thirds. Low carbon generation provided more than half (52%) our electricity this summer, according to National Grid, while PwC analysis shows the UK decarbonising faster than any other G20 nation.

The Clean Growth Strategy, which will be published this week, will build on this success and ensure Britain remains a global leader in the move towards a low carbon economy. It will ensure the whole country can benefit from new technologies, jobs and businesses that are good for consumers, the environment and the economy.

As part of the strategy, developers will compete for up to £557 million of funding in Contracts for Difference auctions which drive down energy costs for consumers and increase business confidence. The latest auction saw the cost of new offshore wind fall by 50% compared to the first auction held in 2015 and resulted in over 3GW of new generation which could power 3.6 million homes.

Energy Minister Richard Harrington said:

The government's Clean Growth Strategy will set out how the whole of the UK can benefit from the global move to a low carbon economy.

We've shown beyond doubt that renewable energy projects are an effective way to cut our emissions, while creating thousands of good jobs and attracting billions of pounds worth of investment.

The Clean Growth Strategy will look across the whole of the economy and the country. It includes ambitious proposals on housing, business, transport and the environment, as well as the power sector. It will also show how actions taken to tackle emissions have helped to reduce energy bills for households.

The next Contracts for Difference auction is planned for spring 2019.

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## **Promotional material: Countryside Stewardship facilitation fund case studies**

The facilitation fund supports over 60 groups with 1400 farmer/land manager members. These case studies illustrate the range of approaches taken by the groups.

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## **Corporate report: Scrutiny of Radioactive Waste Management: annual report 2016 to 2017**

The Environment Agency and Office for Nuclear Regulation's (the nuclear regulators) joint publication about their scrutiny of RWM's work relating to geological disposal of radioactive waste.

Government policy for managing higher activity radioactive waste in the long term is through geological disposal.

The nuclear regulators provide regulatory advice to RWM about implementing geological disposal.

This report explains what the regulators looked at and the main comments provided to RWM. It also highlights areas for RWM to improve.

RWM is making good progress towards ensuring that it will have the right people, skills and systems in place by the time it applies for environmental permits and a nuclear site licence for a geological disposal facility.

The regulators will make sure that any future geological disposal facility meets their high standards for environmental protection, safety, security, radioactive waste transportation and safeguards.

For more information email the Environment Agency at [geological.disposal@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:geological.disposal@environment-agency.gov.uk).

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# [News story: The new robot helping clean up Sellafield](#)

The 'Avexis' will help dislodge and clear waste from the Magnox Swarf Storage Silo.

[Watch the robot enter the plant for the first time](#)

It has been developed by Cumbrian firm Forth Engineering with support from the University of Manchester.

The company was launched in 2000 by former Sellafield apprentice Mark Telford.

The Maryport business is now a global specialist in remote tooling, deployment methods, and sensor systems.

Mr Telford said:

Having Sellafield on our doorstep gives a huge advantage.

It's a testbed where we can develop unique skills and technologies.

The site needs innovative technology to undertake engineering tasks in harsh environments underwater.

Successfully deploying our technology at Sellafield means we can then transfer it to other industries like marine and oil and gas which are looking for similar products.

The Avexis is already generating interest from potential clients overseas.

The Magnox Swarf Storage Silo was built in the 1960s to store waste from the UK's earliest nuclear reactors.

It closed in 2000 and has now been prioritised for clean-up by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA).

Rebecca Weston, Strategy and Technical Director for Sellafield Ltd, said: "The Avexis is a great example of the supply chain helping us to reduce the UK's nuclear hazard faster, cheaper and more safely.

"And, on top of that, companies are developing products and skills that can be exported all over the world."

The Avexis offers the ability to 'see' inside the silo via cameras attached to its body.

It can also clear away small bits of waste clinging to the silo wall.

Its key feature is its size – it is small enough to fit through spaces of just 150mm space.

It is the first robot of its kind to go from concept to market within five years. At just £10,000 it is also the cheapest of its kind.

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## **SRUC launches new three-year drive to build awareness of mental ill health**

Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) has launched a new three-year healthy learning and wellbeing strategy to support staff and students to improve productivity and learning.