

Expanding the grid

To get to net zero the UK would have to shift most people away from petrol and diesel and aviation spirit to electric transport, shift most away from fossil fuel to electric heating, and eliminate most fossil fuel use by business. This would require quadrupling the grid capacity and greatly increasing capacity of the cable system to every home and factory.

It will also be essential to end the output of the coal and gas power stations and find a way of storing and time shifting the output of wind turbines and solar panels.

How realistic is this on the time scales the government wishes? How is this done so there is enough renewable power in time for the new EVs and heat pumps? It's pointless to put in wind farms if there is no grid to carry the power and self-defeating to spend on EVs and heat pumps if the power is generated from gas.

So far there is no plan I can read for a massive expansion of the grid and cable systems let alone large sums of committed capital to build out the necessary facilities. There are planning rows over the modest additions to the grid being discussed. There is little thought about digging up the streets to provide more power to each home, nor positive thoughts about trying to bury the cables somewhere other than under the middle of the main roads.

Who will pay for all this? Presumably it will fall to electricity consumers as ways are found to add all this to bills. It would be good to know how much of an increase this might entail.