

Imports galore

The combination of belonging to the EU until 2020 and adopting strange accounting practises for attributing carbon has left us in permanent balance of trade deficit in goods with the EU. Taking responsibility for CO₂ generated here by producing fossil fuels or industrial products from fossil fuels, but accepting no responsibility for CO₂ on energy and industrial production for our imports has reinforced the impact of EU rules and tariffs to make us a heavy importer of European goods.

It is alarming to see in recent low electricity using days we have at times been importing more than one fifth of our electricity. I have been warning about this for some years, and have been very critical of energy policies that keep putting in extra inter-connectors to allow us to import more instead of more domestic generating capacity. New CCGT, wave and water power, new oil and gas reserves and nuclear have been blocked or delayed whilst cables have been built and imports encouraged. We have made ourselves more dependent on an energy short continent.

The government now says it wants to get more oil and gas out. So where are the production licences? Why is there still a windfall tax on home production when the windfall has subsided? Why is the UK still using a carbon accounting system that encourages imports whilst boosting world CO₂?