

Battery storage boost to power greener electricity grid

- Government changes planning rules to maximise UK's renewable energy storage and create hundreds of new green jobs
- changes will make it easier to build larger batteries – ensuring renewable energy can be stored and used all year round
- over 100 large-scale batteries could now be built, trebling the amount already in operation

The government today [announced it will relax planning legislation](#) to make it easier to construct large batteries to store renewable energy from solar and wind farms across the UK.

Removing barriers for energy storage projects, which are discouraging bolder investment decisions in larger battery facilities, could treble the number of batteries serving the electricity grid. It will help bring about storage cells that are 5 times bigger than those currently available.

The UK has the largest installed capacity of offshore wind in the world, however because the availability and speed of wind is not constant, energy can sometimes be produced when it is not needed and then lost.

Today's move will see ministers introduce secondary legislation to remove barriers for storage projects above 50 MW in England and 350 MW in Wales, meaning more clean energy can be stored and used all year round.

Energy storage has played a key role in balancing the UK's electricity system during the 20% drop in demand during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring what was produced was used efficiently.

Minister for Energy and Clean Growth Kwasi Kwarteng said:

The key to capturing the full value of renewables is in ensuring homes and businesses can still be powered by green energy even when the sun is not shining, or the wind has stopped blowing.

Removing barriers in the planning system will help us build bigger and more powerful batteries, creating more green-collar jobs and a smarter electricity network.

Flexible technologies like batteries will form part of the UK's smarter electricity grid, supporting the integration of more low-carbon power, heat and transport technologies, which it is estimated could save the UK energy system up to £40 billion by 2050.

Last month ministers invested £10 million in the world's largest and first liquid air battery facility in Manchester. The 50 MW project, to be built in

Trafford, will be able to store energy for longer than a lithium battery – helping power 200,000 homes. But today’s announcement could usher in batteries that are even bigger.

Head of Markets at National Grid Electricity System Operator, Kayte O’Neill, said:

How we operate Great Britain’s grid is changing, with record levels of renewable sources generating our power. Storage can help us make the most of this green energy, using it to manage peaks and troughs in demand and operate the electricity system as efficiently as possible – keeping costs down for consumers too.

The government is investing more than £3 billion in low-carbon innovation, as the UK aims to end its contribution to climate change entirely by 2050.

There is currently 4 GW of storage projects in planning which could power a combined 6 million homes, in addition to the 1 GW of battery storage already in operation.

View the government response to the [Planning system for electricity storage: follow up consultation](#)

[UK Government doubles public donations to tackle coronavirus in vulnerable countries](#)

Press release

The Disaster Emergency Committee has launched an appeal for donations to help the world’s most vulnerable through the coronavirus pandemic.



Years of conflict have forced many families to flee from their homes in countries such as Syria, Yemen and South Sudan, leaving them more exposed to the virus in crowded camps. Photo credit: Islamic Relief

The UK Government will match the first £5 million of donations from the British public to the Disasters Emergency Committee's (DEC) Coronavirus Appeal, International Development Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan announced today (Tuesday 14 July).

Money raised from the appeal will boost the work of 14 leading British charities, helping some of the world's most vulnerable people deal with the pandemic, especially those living in refugee camps who have escaped from warzones.

Years of conflict have forced many families to flee from their homes in countries such as Syria, Yemen and South Sudan, leaving them more exposed to the virus in crowded camps. Millions of people around the world have little or no access to healthcare or sanitation and washing facilities, increasing the risk of coronavirus spreading.

The DEC will use donations from the British public and UK aid to tackle coronavirus in refugee camps and save lives in developing countries by:

- providing frontline doctors and aid workers with equipment and supplies to care for the vulnerable and sick;
- ensuring families get enough food to prevent malnutrition, particularly amongst children; and
- giving families clean water and soap, as well as information about the dangers of the disease.

Today's announcement takes the total amount of UK aid pledged to end the pandemic globally to £769 million. This new support will double the impact of the public's own donations and ensure that charities working on the ground can reach even more people in need.

International Development Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

"We are matching generous donations from the British people to the emergency appeal pound for pound, meaning your money will go twice as far in helping to protect millions of the world's most vulnerable people from the deadly effects of coronavirus.

"Clean water and healthcare in refugee camps are essential in containing coronavirus in the developing world – helping stop the spread of the pandemic and protecting the UK from further waves of infection."

- Donations can be made at www.dec.org.uk or by calling 0370 60 60 900.
- £30 could provide six displaced families with enough soap for a month, to keep themselves clean and safe.
- £50 could provide essential hygiene kits to two displaced families.
- £100 could provide enough basic PPE for one frontline health worker for four months.

- Donations to the Coronavirus Appeal will be matched through the UK Aid Match scheme.
- Through UK Aid Match, DFID gives the British public the opportunity to decide how the UK aid budget is spent and support people in desperate need by matching their donations pound-for-pound to £5 million.
- The DEC brings together 14 leading UK aid agencies to raise money at times of humanitarian crisis in poorer countries. By working together we can raise more money to save lives and rebuild shattered communities.
- Since the launch of the DEC in 1963, they have run 72 appeals and raised more than £1.5 billion.
- The last appeal, launched by DEC on 21st March 2019, to raise funds for those affected by Cyclone Idai in Mozambique, Malawi, and Zimbabwe, raised £43 million, including £4 million in matched donations from the UK Government through UK Aid Match.
- The DEC's 14 member charities are: Action Against Hunger, ActionAid UK, Age International, British Red Cross, CAFOD, CARE International UK, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide UK, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Oxfam GB, Plan International UK, Save the Children UK, Tearfund and World Vision UK.

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Flood and coastal erosion: letter from Environment Secretary to National Infrastructure Commission

The Secretary of State for the Environment has written to Sir John Armitt, Chair of the National Infrastructure Commission, about the government's policies to create a nation that is more resilient to future flood and coastal erosion risk.

The government has published a [flood and coastal erosion risk management policy statement](#) which outlines over 40 actions that will help increase flood resilience across the country.

Secretary of State appointments to

National Park Authorities and AONB Conservation Boards

News story

Appointments made to England's National Park Authorities and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Conservation Boards



New appointments in 2020

Appointments have been made to England's National Park Authorities (NPAs) and the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Conservation Board

The following appointments have been made for four years:

Broads Authority

- Stephen Bolt
- Matt Shardlow

Dartmoor NPA

Exmoor NPA

- Dominic Elson
- Michael Patrick Kelly
- Susan Warren

New Forest NPA

Lake District NPA

Northumberland NPA

- Elizabeth Ellis
- Marie Fallon

Peak District NPA

Yorkshire Dales NPA

South Downs NPA

- Annie Brown
- Timothy Burr
- Melanie Hunt
- Stephen Whale
- Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

Re-appointments in 2020

The following members have been re-appointed for further four-year terms:

Broads Authority

- Bill Dickson
- Greg Munford

Dartmoor NPA

- Andrew Cooper
- Pamela Woods

Exmoor NPA

South Downs NPA

Yorkshire Dales NPA

The following members have been re-appointed for further terms of two years:

North York Moors NPA

- Alison Fisher
- Andrew Scott

Peak District NPA

The following members were re-appointed for further three year terms:

Chilterns AONB Conservation Board

- Ian Waller
- Elizabeth Wilson

Costwolds AONB Conservation Board

The following members were re-appointed for further three year terms:

- George Lambrick

- Brenden McCarthy

There is a requirement for appointees' political activity to be made public. Baroness Jones of Whitchurch is a Labour life peer.

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[Ofqual support for reform of Higher Technical Qualifications](#)

News story

Employer input is vital to the future success of these regulated qualifications.



The government has today (14 July 2020) [confirmed its proposals for reforming higher technical education](#). These arrangements strengthen the opportunities for employers to input into these Level 4 and Level 5 qualifications. Employer contributions in this way are important to the shape and success of these qualifications, which are vital for sustaining future workforces across the economy.

Phil Beach, CBE, Executive Director of Vocational and Technical Qualifications at Ofqual said:

I am delighted that Ofqual will be supporting the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to achieve their aims for these important qualifications. We want employers to have the confidence in these qualifications that they do in others. Alignment with employer-led occupational standards will be an important feature of Higher Technical Qualifications. I'm sure that recognised awarding organisations will want to play their active part in delivering them.

The government's reforms retain the established regulatory framework. Awarding organisations will need to be recognised by Ofqual or the Office for Students in order to submit qualifications to the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (the Institute) for approval. Ofqual will provide advice to the Institute during the approvals process and will implement a regulatory approach to support the expected quality standards.

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