

What is being done to encourage the growing of crops for fuel?

I have received the following answer to my recent Parliamentary Question:

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (41598):

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what his plans are to encourage growing crops for fuel. (41598)

Tabled on: 03 September 2021

Answer:

Victoria Prentis:

Biofuels used in the transport sector have been supported since 2008 through the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO), led by the Department of Transport. The RTFO is a certificate trading scheme which sets targets and provides financial incentives for the supply of sustainable biofuels. To qualify for support under the RTFO biofuels must meet mandatory sustainability criteria, which include measures to prevent deforestation and other negative land use impacts.

This month, the Government introduced E10 (petrol with up to 10% ethanol) as the standard petrol across Great Britain. The introduction of E10 increases the amount of bioethanol blended with petrol sold at forecourts in the UK. Bioethanol production in the UK results in valuable by-products, such as high protein animal feed and stored CO₂ for the food and drink industries, reducing the need to import these products. Increased UK demand due to the introduction of E10 has wider economic benefits in terms of providing support for UK bioethanol producers and farmers in the supply chain.

In the Government's response to the Climate Change Committee's (CCC) annual progress report to Parliament in 2020, we announced that we will publish a new Biomass Strategy in 2022. This will review what amount of sustainable biomass could be available to the UK, including feedstocks grown for transport biofuels. It will assess how this resource could be best used across the economy to help achieve our net zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2050.

We are clear that we will support farmers to produce high quality crops in a more sustainable way, ensuring that policy supports the conditions where domestic farm businesses can thrive, whether that be production for food or fuel production. Our Agriculture Transition Plan (2020) sets out how we will use public money to reward farmers and land managers for delivering environmentally sustainable outcomes.

The answer was submitted on 13 Sep 2021 at 15:53.

[What proportion of the public service bus fleet is electric](#)

I have received the following answer to my recent Parliamentary Question:

The Department for Transport has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (41596):

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of the public service bus fleet is electric. (41596)

Tabled on: 03 September 2021

Answer:

Rachel Maclean:

As of March 2020, two per cent of buses used by local operators in England were electric.

The latest data on the proportion of buses used by local bus operators is from the Department for Transport Annual bus statistics: year ending March 2020 which was published in October 2020. Information on buses used by bus operators by fuel consumption type, including electric buses, is provided in table (BUS0609b).

The Annual bus statistics: year ending March 2021 are due to be published in Autumn 2021.

The answer was submitted on 13 Sep 2021 at 15:10.

[Average seat occupancy on public service buses](#)

I have received the following answer to my recent Parliamentary Question:

The Department for Transport has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (41595):

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the average seat occupancy is on public service buses in the most recent period for which figures are available. (41595)

Tabled on: 03 September 2021

Answer:

Rachel Maclean:

The table below shows average bus occupancy¹ on local bus services by metropolitan area status and country in Great Britain, annually from 2004/05

Year	London	English metropolitan areas	English non-metropolitan areas	England	Scotland	Wales	Great Britain	Number England outside London
2004/05	16.6	9.8	7.5	10.1	9.0	7.6	9.8	8.3
2005/06	18.3	9.7	7.3	10.4	9.2	7.3	10.0	8.2
2006/07	18.8	9.9	7.9	10.8	9.2	7.6	10.4	8.6
2007/08	20.3	10.3	8.5	11.6	9.1	7.8	11.0	9.1
2008/09	19.9	10.7	8.8	11.8	9.8	8.2	11.3	9.5
2009/10	19.6	11.0	8.6	11.7	10.0	7.6	11.3	9.4
2010/11	19.5	10.5	8.5	11.5	10.0	8.1	11.1	9.2
2011/12	19.7	10.1	8.6	11.6	9.5	8.9	11.2	9.2
2012/13	19.9	10.1	9.1	11.9	9.0	8.3	11.3	9.4
2013/14	20.6	10.2	9.4	12.3	8.9	8.4	11.6	9.7
2014/15	20.5	10.4	9.3	12.2	8.6	8.4	11.6	9.7
2015/16	19.8	10.2	9.0	11.9	8.4	8.4	11.3	9.4
2016/17	19.3	10.7	8.9	11.9	8.2	9.0	11.3	9.5
2017/18	20.2	10.5	9.1	12.2	8.2	8.8	11.5	9.5
2018/19	20.0	10.6	9.9	12.6	8.0	8.8	11.8	10.1
2019/20	18.7	10.8	10.6	12.8	7.6	8.8	11.8	10.7

¹ Calculated as passenger miles (table bus0302) divided by vehicle miles (table BUS0203).

The answer was submitted on 13 Sep 2021 at 15:05.

[My Question during the statement on the Government's plans to address](#)

[heavy goods vehicle driver shortages](#)

Readers of this blog may be interested to see my question to the Secretary of State about the need to improve lorry park facilities:

[My Interview on GB News about HS2](#)

Readers of this blog might be interested to see my recent interview on GB News about HS2:

‘Nobody thinks HS2 will cost less than £150 billion. Wouldn’t it be a great idea to scrap HS2 and allow the Conservatives to maintain their tradition of low taxes’

Nigel Farage asks Sir John Redwood MP if scrapping HS2 would be better than raising tax for health and social care

pic.twitter.com/3mPOYmyxiL

– GB News (@GBNEWS) [September 12, 2021](#)