

The background of the entire slide is a photograph of several wind turbines. The scene is set at sunset or sunrise, with a bright sun on the left side of the frame, creating a warm orange and yellow glow. The sky transitions from a deep orange near the horizon to a pale blue at the top. The wind turbines are dark silhouettes against this bright sky. One turbine is particularly prominent in the foreground on the right, with its three blades clearly visible. Other turbines are scattered across the middle ground and background, some partially obscured by the others. The overall mood is serene and hopeful, emphasizing renewable energy.

The Climate Change Act **ten years on:** the global gold standard

Monday 26th November 2018 4.30pm - 6.00pm

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Lord Deben:



In 2008, as politicians in Westminster contemplated the Climate Change Bill, the climate naysayers warned of grim consequences. They foretold of economic ruin for the UK, in the mistaken pursuit of costly policies. The scientific mainstream was wrong, they suggested, climate change wasn't happening. Parliament ignored their pleas. Instead, there was near-unanimous support for the Climate Change Act, a world-first, binding governments to a statutory programme to reduce emissions of climate-warming greenhouse gases. Worse still for those naysayers, that programme would be watched-over by a new technical body, the Committee on Climate Change, tasked with the objective appraisal of progress, with a formal role to guide Parliament and advise on the appropriate limits for emissions. The Committee's first action was to advise that emissions must fall by a daunting 80% from their 1990 baseline by 2050. The world watched as Parliament agreed.

A decade later, we can evaluate whether this has really cost the earth? As we review the evidence – a 43% fall in greenhouse gas emissions since 1990, while the economy has grown by 70% – we must conclude that it has not. Emissions have fallen as the UK has set confident policies to reduce them. The economy has grown, seemingly in defiance of the rule that 'decarbonisation' must act as a drag on the economy. Governments of all the colours since 2008 have remained committed, some more than others, bound by the statutory path established by the Climate Change Act. The institutional continuum created by the Act has maintained

market-shaping policies for a decade that now permit us to anticipate the end of coal-fired electricity generation in the UK. We've seen astonishing falls in cost of the key renewable technologies, all driven by UK policies.

This is exactly how the Act was envisaged to work.

It has been a triumph – a celebration of what can be achieved by a confident, optimistic Parliament, keen to demonstrate the UK's global leadership on the defining issue of our times. The contrast with the tone of the political debate a decade later is striking.

We must now move on to write a new set of stories on the UK's climate effort. The Act demands more. That is why the Committee on Climate Change, which I chair, has urged government to design new policies to continue the success of the last decade. We must transform our car fleet; we must improve standards of house building now to avoid locking-in high carbon activity; we must make plans to wean ourselves off fossil-fuelled heat in homes and industry; and we have an opportunity to reform farm payments to change the way we use land and help farmers to support emissions reduction.

This will not be easy, but we understand with each passing year that it is necessary. Almost all of the hottest years in recorded history have occurred since 2000. No one event can be attributed to climate change but the pattern is unmistakable in the change to growing seasons and mounting extreme weather events.

A decade on, those climate naysayers are fewer; they have become climate 'lukewarmers', offering a convenient view that climate change is happening, but denying that it is human-induced.

They are still wrong and the good news is that we have science on our side and ample evidence of the benefits of action.

A decade after our first advice, my Committee has begun a review of the latest evidence of global warming to consider whether we should now go further still, considering if it is possible to eliminate completely the UK's net contribution to the warming climate. This is a moment to celebrate all that has been achieved in the UK, but it is also time to restate our commitment. We have the Act as our guide.

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Asher', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Panellists



Adam Vaughan

Adam is the Energy Editor for the Guardian with 17 years of experience covering energy, the environment and technology.



Lord Deben

Chairman of the Committee on Climate Change Lord Deben was the UK's longest-serving Secretary of State for the Environment (1993 to 1997). In addition to this he has held several other high-level ministerial posts, including Secretary of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1989 to 1993).

Lord Deben has consistently championed the strong links between environmental concerns and business interests. He currently has the following roles:

- Chairing Sancroft, a corporate responsibility consultancy which he founded working with blue-chip companies around the world to help them improve their environmental, social and ethical impact.
- Chairman of Valpak Limited.
- Chairman of Personal Investment Management and Financial Advice Association.



Sir Edward Davey MP

Sir Edward Davey is the Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Kingston and Surbiton. Between 2012 and 2015 Edward was the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change. In this role Edward was responsible for introducing what became the Energy Act 2013 that implemented Electricity Market Reform, including the Capacity Market and the Contract for Difference scheme that has been pivotal to decarbonising UK power.



The Bishop of Salisbury

The Right Revd Nicholas Holtam has been Bishop of Salisbury since 2011. Prior to his appointment to Salisbury, he was Vicar of St Martin in the Fields for 16 years. Bishop Nicholas is the Church of England's Lead Bishop on the Environment and speaks on this topic regularly in the House of Lords.



Meryam Omi

Meryam is responsible for integrating environmental, social and governance (ESG) aspects into the investment and engagement process and for creating responsible investment product solutions. Meryam has over 13 years of asset management experience, starting her career as a business proposal writer for fixed income funds. Since joining LGIM in 2008, she has been essential in establishing its engagement programme on key sustainability topics. Meryam has led the launch of funds in the pioneering Future World range, as well as the Climate Impact Pledge, which is LGIM's commitment to engage and act on climate change.

Global policy context

The Climate Change Act when originally conceived was seen as the global golden standard, placing a legal requirement on government, regardless of who is in power, to tackle climate change and established an independent science led body to set emission targets. As a result, the Act has been instrumental in driving forward the UK's climate change policies over the past decade.

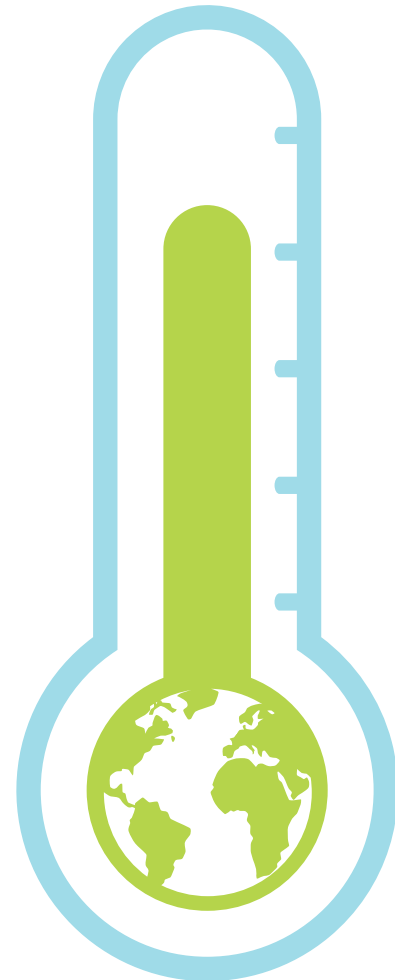
The Climate Change Act has enabled the UK to show it is taking the lead on tackling climate change. The Act was one of the first examples of climate change targets being enshrined in statute and has led to many other countries formulating their own climate change strategies and introducing targets into legislation.

However, ten years on from the Act, there are increasing concerns about the UK's ability to meet its targets. The most recent report from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change suggests that globally we need to be more ambitious in our emission targets. In December 2018 the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change signatories will meet in Katowice, Poland, to discuss current targets and whether the landmark 2015 Paris Agreement targets need to be reviewed again.

The Government has now submitted a request to the Committee on Climate Change to consider a net zero emissions target for the UK for 2050. If adopted, the UK will need to increase the speed of decarbonisation even further.

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UK policy context

The UK has had remarkable success in decarbonising its power supplies. In large part this is a result of the Feed-in-Tariff introduced in 2010 and the Electricity Market Reform put into place through the Energy Act of 2013 which set the framework for the first Contracts for Difference auctions. As the Committee on Climate Change outlined in their most recent report to parliament, “decarbonising electricity generation is the clear achievement of the last decade”.

However, some of the trickiest sectors to decarbonise still pose challenges including transport, industry, buildings and agriculture. In all of these sectors, emission reductions over the last ten years have remained relatively flat. 75% of emissions reductions since 2012 have come from the power sector.

Change in the transport sector appears to be on its way, with a much-anticipated spike in the uptake of electric vehicles. However this will bring its own challenges including new strain on the grid which, in the absence of increased generation capacity and utility scale battery storage, could risk the UK falling back on fossil fuel generation to meet peak demand. Questions also linger over current car tax regimes and whether they will act as a barrier to widespread roll out. It is important to think about transport broadly: sectors like shipping and aviation still have a long way to go.

Heating remains one of the most critical challenges in the UK with 85% of UK houses currently reliant on natural gas, equating to almost a fifth of the UK's entire emissions in 2017. One simple and cheap step to drastically reduce emissions from buildings is to improve building energy efficiency, cutting the net amount of energy required in the first place.

The next question is what is the best source of heating? A range of options exist, all with their own strengths and weaknesses. Heat pumps remove gas altogether, but along with electric vehicles may place an added strain on the power grid. Heat Networks are very efficient, but are only effective in populated areas. Hydrogen based solutions are able to utilise the existing gas network that touches almost every home, but creating the hydrogen efficiently, as well as retrofitting home appliances, poses a major challenge.

In short, as the UK Government consults on a net zero target for 2050, there are many questions that still exist for UK policymakers. These are questions that need answering sooner rather than later. The longer we leave them unanswered, the harder it will be to properly decarbonise.

Ten events over the last ten years



Climate Change Act 2008

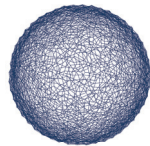


26 November 2008

The Climate Change Act is passed in parliament, setting a 2050 target that emissions are 80% lower than pre-industrial levels, as well as establishing the Committee on Climate Change.

April 2010

The first Feed in Tariffs come online, providing generators with a tariff for the next 20-25 years for the energy they export to the grid.



COP15
COPENHAGEN
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2009

19 December 2009

192 governments convene for the UN climate summit in Copenhagen with high expectations of a new global agreement; but they leave only with a controversial political declaration, the Copenhagen Accord.

18 December 2013

The Energy Act receives Royal Assent in parliament, legislating for Electricity Market Reform introducing Contracts for Difference and the Capacity Market.

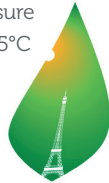
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22 April 2016

The Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is signed, setting goals to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, with an ambition to ensure global temperatures remain 1.5°C below pre-industrial levels.



1 June 2017

US President Donald Trump announces that the US would cease all participation in the 2016 Paris Agreement.

12 October 2017

Government publishes the Clean Growth Strategy, an ambitious set of commitments outlining how it intends to meet its long-term 2050 emission targets.



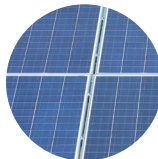
20 April 2017

The UK goes its first full day without burning coal to generate electricity for the first time since the Industrial Revolution.



26 September 2017

Clayhill Solar Farm, the UK's first subsidy free solar farm opens, a co-located project with 10MW of solar PV and five battery storage units totalling 6MW.



8 October 2018

The United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change publishes a report outlining how limiting warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels will enable us to avoid a range of climate change impacts, but notes that to meet this target we need to drastically increase the rate of decarbonisation.

About Whitehouse

The Whitehouse Consultancy is an award-winning issues-led communications agency with decades of experience in public affairs, press and media relations and stakeholder engagement.

We provide high level strategic counsel to meet long-term business and policy objectives; and run high-profile campaigns for clients in the private, public and charitable sectors to influence public opinion, impact policy, legislation and regulation, and build support among key opinion formers and decision makers. We have offices in London and Brussels covering our clients' communication needs at the local, national and European level.

Energy and Environment

The Whitehouse Consultancy are leading public affairs and communications specialists in renewable energy, decarbonisation and environment policy with experience advising clients in the areas of solar, battery storage and aggregation, biofuel and biomass, waste oil, onshore and offshore wind, electric vehicles and conservation in the natural environment.

We were nominated in 2016, 2017 and 2018 for the Renewable Energy Association's Communications Agency of the Year, winning in 2017.

If you would like to discuss how The Whitehouse Consultancy may be able to support and advise your organisation, please do get in touch with the Energy and Environment team.

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Impactful & Engaging Content Creation

Integrated Campaign Strategies

Market Access Strategy

Monitoring and Intelligence Gathering

Public Affairs

Public Relations Strategy

Reputation Management

Research & Insight

Training & Preparation

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