BUYING GREENER ENERGY

BUILDINGS

ECO CHURCH
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT

ALLCHURCHES TRUST LIMITED®
OWNERS OF ECCLESIASTICAL INSURANCE GROUP

www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk

BUILDINGS

Buying greener energy

WHY?

Carbon emissions remain the primary driver of climate change; in the UK, significant emissions come from heating homes and public spaces, such as churches. There has been a big investment in renewables, between 2010 and 2020 renewable output in the UK increased tenfold.

In the EU in 2020 renewables overtook fossil fuels for the first time to be the biggest source of electricity over the whole year. In the same year in the UK we went for over 2 months without using any coal. These successes were partly due to drops in demand due to Covid-19 lockdowns, but it is nevertheless a significant milestone and an encouraging sign of what can be achieved.

We can all contribute to reducing carbon by choosing a renewable energy supply which is now a fairly straightforward option.

HOW?

Churches have contributed to the uptake of renewable energy through the Big Church Switch initiative launched at Easter 2016: https://www.bigchurchswitch.org.uk/

If you haven't switched yet, join other churches and get good rates on renewable energy through 'Church Buying'. Anglican churches can use 'Parish Buying'.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

https://www.churchbuying.org.uk/switch-to-green

https://www.parishbuying.org.uk/index.php/categories/energy/energy-basket

https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/switching-your-energy-supplier/

BUILDINGS

Buying greener energy

WHAT DOES 'GREEN' MEAN?

Not all green is the same! The Church Buying and Parish Buying 'green' criteria are for all gas and electricity to be 100% green source, 100% UK-generated and no energy from nuclear. Since Good Energy became the first 100% renewable energy supplier in 1999, there are now many companies in this market: https://www.goodenergy.co.uk/about-us/

Read the blogs below for an overview of different suppliers. As you consider who to opt for, compare the supplier charging rates as well as what each company means by 'green energy'. The proportion of wind, solar, biomass and hydro vary greatly: https://www.renewableenergyhub.co.uk/blog/the-best-uk-green-energy-suppliers-in-2021-and-how-to-choose-one/

https://theswitch.co.uk/blog/energy/how-green-uk-renewable

Green gas is a particular challenge and the percentage of green or biogas varies. Many companies incorporate a relatively small percentage and offset the carbon emissions of the fossil fuel gas by investing in carbon reduction projects around the world. They acknowledge this is not ideal but, as yet, the volume of biogas is not available to supply all our gas needs.

In 2021 https://www.greenenergyuk.com/ claimed to be the only company selling 100% green gas.

GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS

The UK government has committed to net zero by 2050 and indicated staging posts, particularly for offshore wind targets: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-plans-to-make-uk-world-leader-in-green-energy

The Isle of Man has gone a step further and is committed to 75% renewables by 2035. If you live in the IOM, see here for more information: https://www.gov.im/news/2020/aug/19/opportunities-to-generate-renewable-energy-onshore/

BUILDINGS

Buying greener energy

MICROGENERATION

Microgeneration of electricity is a much more capital-intensive and complicated process than the quick win of ensuring you have a green electricity supplier. However, it may provide you with cheaper, renewable electricity in the long run and will also reduce the pressure on the National Grid, thereby allowing macro choices for lower dependence on fossil fuels (see the separate papers on renewables).

LONGER READS & OTHER RESOURCES

For those who like data, these websites show where our electricity comes from on any one day, month or year:

https://electricinsights.co.uk/

https://electricityinfo.org/

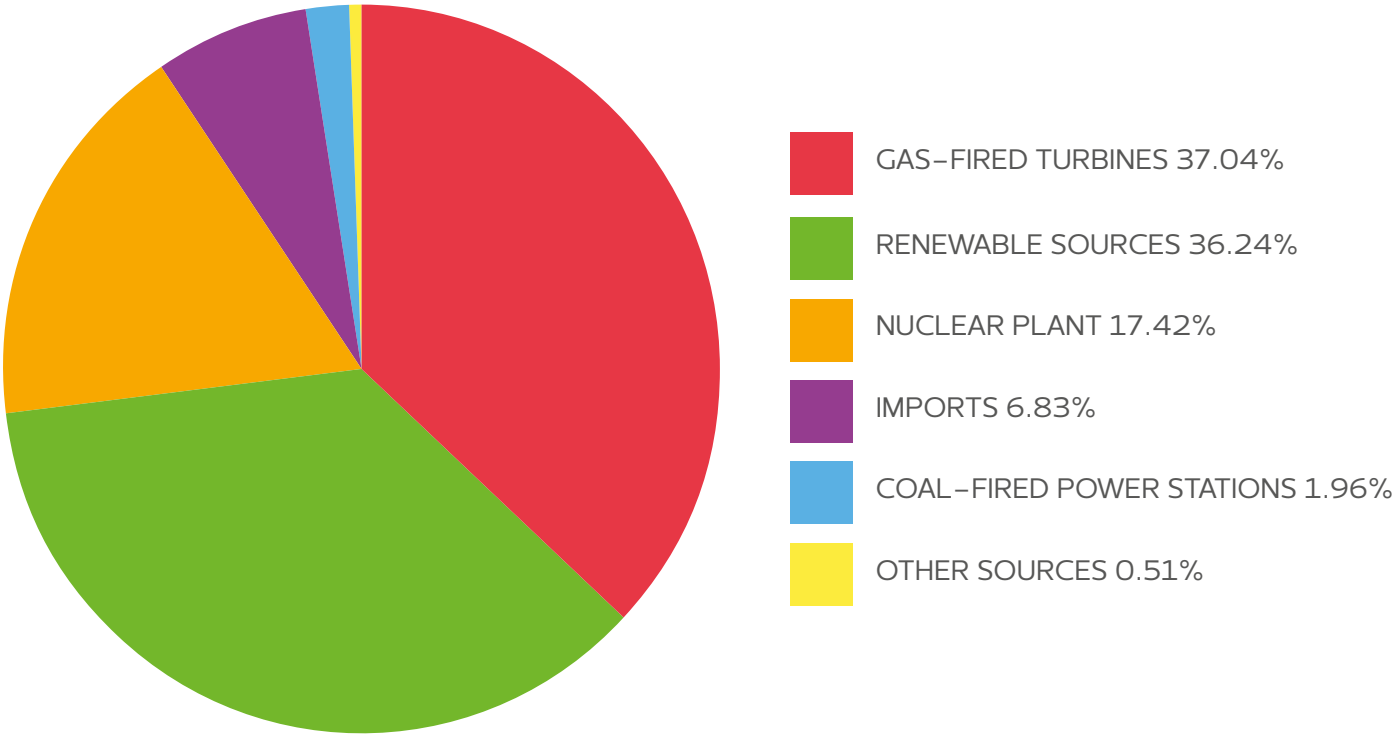
STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Taking action on this topic will contribute to these UN Strategic Development Goals:

BUILDINGS

Buying greener energy

UK electricity supply mix 2020 (%)



Source: https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/infographic-promoting-sustainable-energy-future