

## DESNZ Public Attitudes Tracker: Renewable Energy Winter 2024, UK

13 March 2025

Official Statistics

The DESNZ Public Attitudes Tracker is a nationally representative annual survey of adults (aged 16+) in the UK that tracks public awareness, attitudes and behaviours relating to the policies of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), such as energy and climate change.

This report provides a summary of the headline findings relating to [renewable energy](#) from the Winter 2024 wave of the Tracker, which ran from 7 November and 12 December 2024.

### Notes for interpretation of findings

Differences between groups are only reported where they are statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval level.

The annual personal income referred to in the report is a self-reported measure.

The age-related findings are reported using six age groups (16-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65 and over). In some cases, findings across age groups have been combined to describe a general trend, e.g. 'between 78% and 88% of people aged 45 and above' refers to the range of percentages for the three age groups 45-54, 55-64 and 65+.

Two summary self-reported measures are used in this report:

- **'Awareness'** encompasses all respondents who said they had heard of a particular concept or technology, including those who said 'hardly anything but I've heard of this', 'a little', 'a fair amount' or 'a lot'.
- **'Knowledge'** encompasses those who said that they know 'a fair amount' or 'a lot' about a topic.

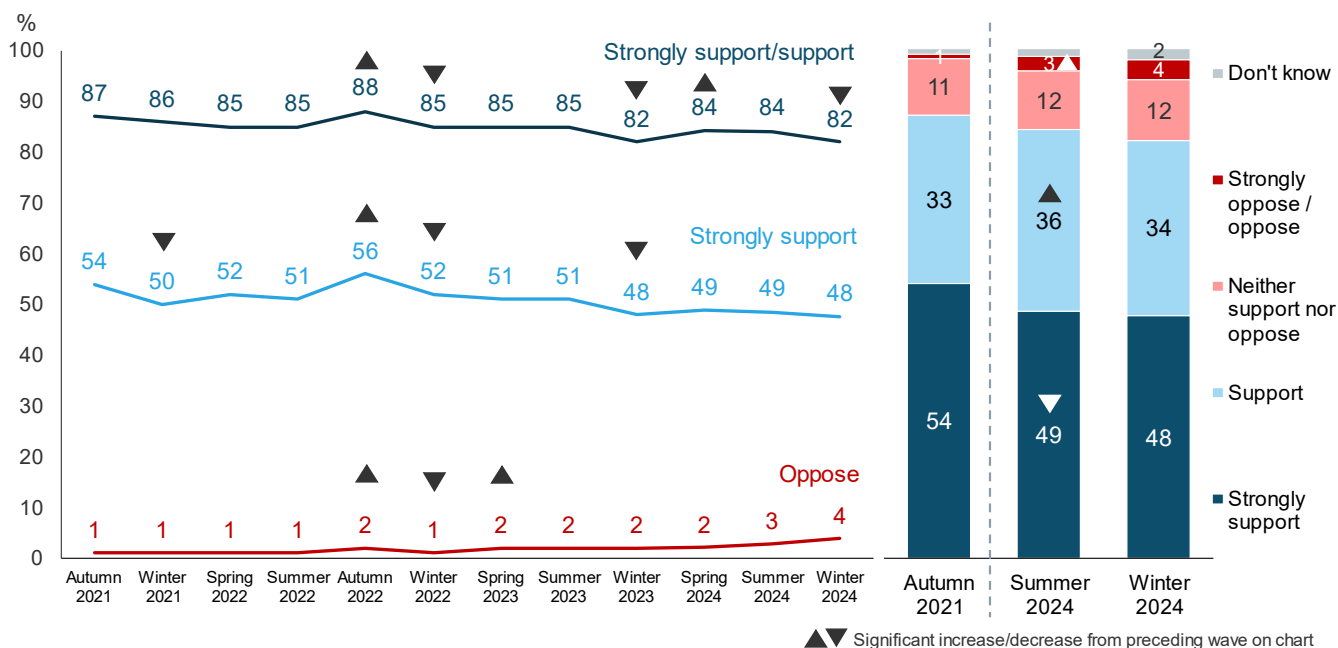
## Support for renewable energy

Figure 2.1 displays both the longer-term trends in overall support for renewable energy (left hand side) and the detailed data on support for the most recent two waves alongside the baseline (right hand side).

Over the longer-term, overall support for the use of renewable energy such as wind power, solar energy and biomass to provide electricity, fuel and heat has decreased from 87% at the start of the time series in Autumn 2021 to 82% in Winter 2024, with some minor fluctuations since Winter 2023. While opposition remains low, it has increased steadily over time from 1% in Autumn 2021 to 4% in Winter 2024.

Focussing on more recent waves, between Summer 2024 and Winter 2024 overall support for renewables dropped slightly from 84% to 82%. However, strong support remained stable at 48%.

**Figure 2.1: Whether support use of renewable energy (% based on all people), Autumn 2021 to Winter 2024**



RENEWSUPPORT. The next question is about renewable energy. This includes a number of different forms of energy, such as wind power, solar energy and biomass. Do you support or oppose the use of renewable energy for providing our electricity, fuel and heat?

Base: All wave respondents – Autumn 2021 (5,558), Winter 2021 (3,705), Spring 2022 (4,373), Summer 2022 (4,489), Autumn 2022 (4,160), Winter 2022 (3,572), Spring 2023 (4,403), Summer 2023 (3,997), Winter 2023 (3,724), Spring 2024 (4,087), Summer 2024 (3,642), Winter 2024 (3,212) (Asked each wave)

Note: On the left-hand chart, arrows denote a significant difference between one wave and the next. For the right hand chart, significant differences are noted between Autumn 2021 and Summer 2024, and between Winter 2024 and Summer 2024.

## Analysis by subgroups

The proportion saying they strongly supported renewables was lowest among the following subgroups:

- People aged 65 and over: 40% compared with between 48% and 52% of people in age groups 16 to 64.
- People with no qualifications (35% compared with 63% of those with a degree).
- People living in the North East (40%), East of England (42%), East Midlands and Wales (both 43%); in contrast support was highest in the South West (60%) and Yorkshire and the Humber (58%).

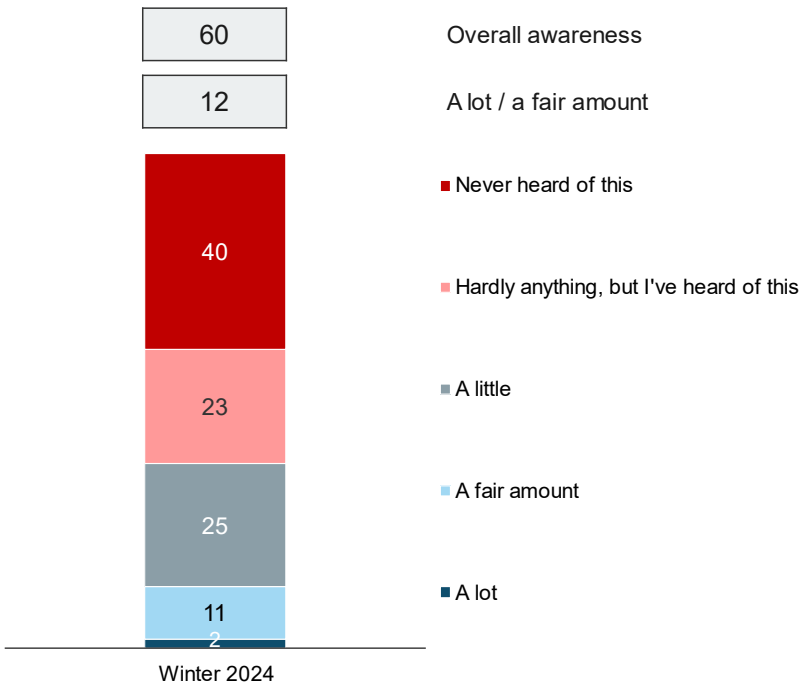
The proportion saying they were opposed to renewables overall was higher for those living in the North West (10%) compared with those in all other regions (between 2% and 5%).

# Great British Energy

A new question was introduced in Winter 2024 about Great British Energy (GBE), a new government initiative set out in 2024. Respondents were provided with a brief description as follows: *'The UK government has set up a publicly owned, clean energy company, called Great British Energy. Great British Energy will operate in all four nations of the UK'*.

In Winter 2024, 60% said they were aware of GBE (Figure 2.2). Levels of knowledge were lower, with 12% saying they knew a lot or a fair amount about it. In total, almost half (48%) knew either a little (25%) or hardly anything (23%) about GBE.

**Figure 2.2: Awareness of Great British Energy (% based on all people), Winter 2024**



GBEKNOW. Before today, how much, if anything, did you know about Great British Energy?  
Base: All wave respondents – Winter 2024 (3,212)

## Analysis by subgroups

Overall awareness of GBE was higher among the following subgroups:

- People with a degree: 70% compared with 54% of those with another kind of qualification and 55% of those with no qualifications.
- People reporting that they knew a lot or a fair amount about Net Zero: 72% compared with 50% of those who knew a little or hardly anything and 33% of those unaware of Net Zero.
- People living in Scotland (67%) and the East of England (66%); in contrast the lowest levels of awareness were reported in Northern Ireland (46%).

Knowledge (knowing a lot or a fair amount) about GBE was higher among the following subgroups:

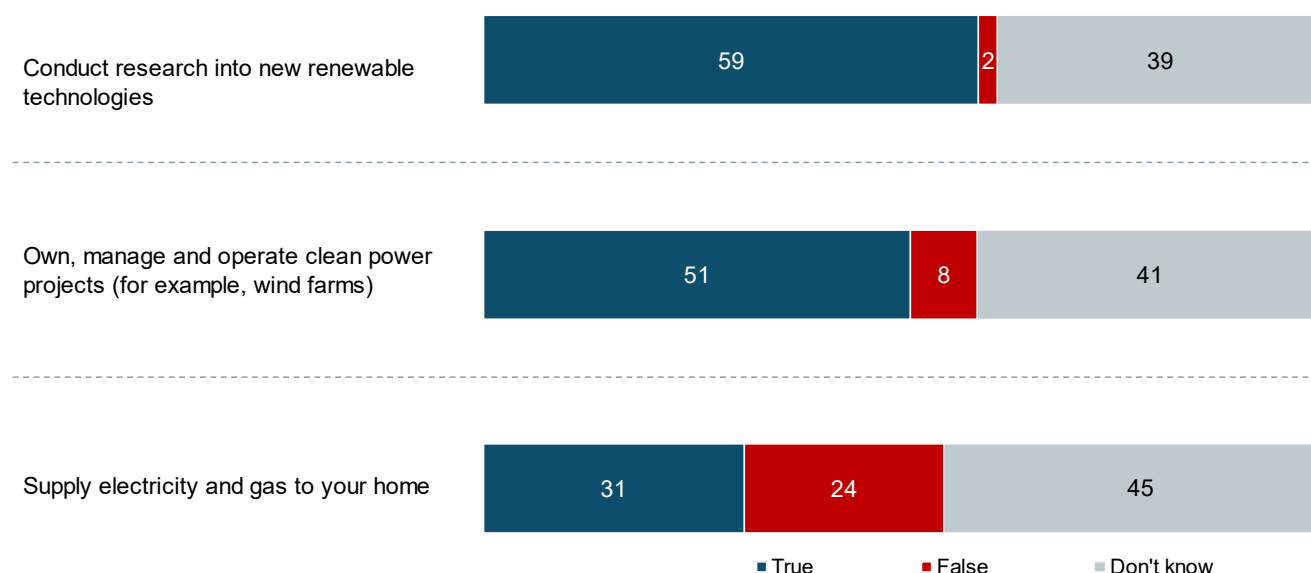
- People aged 16 to 24: 17% compared with 10% of those aged 65 and over.
- People with a degree: 16% compared with 9% of those with no qualifications.

- People who said they knew a lot or a fair amount about Net Zero: 20% compared with 4% of those who know a little or hardly anything and 3% of those unaware of Net Zero.
- People living in London and Scotland (both 17%); in contrast the lowest levels were reported in the South East (10%) and the North West (9%).

A further new question was introduced in Winter 2024 about the perceived role of GBE<sup>1</sup>. Respondents were provided with a set of statements and asked to select if they thought the statements were true or false (Figure 2.3).

In Winter 2024, 59% selected true for the statement that ‘GBE will conduct research into new renewable technologies’ (2% selected false). More than half (51%) selected true for ‘GBE will own, manage and operate clean power projects’ (8% false), while 31% selected true that ‘GBE will supply energy to homes’ (24% false). However, there was a high level of uncertainty across the statements as a high proportion selected don’t know across all three statements (between 39% and 45%).

**Figure 2.3: Perceived function of Great British Energy (% based on all people), Winter 2024**



GBEFUNCTIONA-C. Now a few statements about what people think might be the purpose of Great British Energy. For each one, please state whether you think the statement is true, false or if you are unsure either way. This is not a test so don't worry if you don't know. We want to find out the level of understanding across the country as a whole.

Base: All wave respondents – Winter 2024: Research into new renewable technologies (3,200); Own, manage and operate clean power projects (3,202); Supply electricity and gas (3,201)

<sup>1</sup> To find out more about Great British Energy, the founding statement can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introducing-great-british-energy/great-british-energy-founding-statement>. At the time of drafting this report the GBE Bill has just passed the third reading stage in the House of Lords, latest updates on the bill can be found here: <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3738>.

## Analysis by subgroups

### By age:

- Younger age groups were more likely to say that GBE will '*supply electricity and gas to homes*' than older age groups. For example, 56% of those aged 16 to 24 selected true for this statement compared with between 18% and 39% of those in older age groups.
- Across all statements, people aged 65 and over were more likely to select 'don't know' (between 47% and 54%) compared to those in younger age groups (16 to 64), where proportions ranged from 33% to 45%.

### By education:

- Those with a degree were more likely to say that the statement '*GBE will supply energy to homes*' was false (31%) compared to those with another kind of qualification (22%) and those with no qualifications (15%).
- In contrast, those with a degree were more likely to select true for the statements that '*GBE will own, manage and operate clean power projects*' (59%) and '*will conduct research into new renewable technologies*' (67%), compared to those with another kind of qualification (49%, 57% respectively) and people with no qualifications (40%, 50% respectively).

## Further findings on Renewable Energy

In previous waves, questions were included on other topics relating renewable energy. The latest findings relating to these topics can be found as follows:

- Support for specific types of renewable energy, see Spring 2024 report on Renewable Energy - section on '[Support for different types of renewables](#)'.
- Attitudes towards renewable energy, see Spring 2024 report on Renewable Energy - section on '[Attitudes towards renewable energy](#)'.
- Attitudes towards the construction of windfarms in their local area and reasons for those attitudes, see Spring 2024 report on Renewable Energy - section on '[Attitudes towards windfarms](#)'.
- Attitudes towards the construction of solar panel farms in their local area and reasons for those attitudes, see Spring 2024 report on Renewable Energy - section on '[Attitudes towards solar panel farms](#)'.



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