

Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4 Delivering a low carbon future

Updated June 2021

The UK is home to the largest operating offshore wind capacity in the world – a national success story to be proud of. Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4 is taking this forward another step, supporting the UK's ambitious decarbonisation agenda.

A net zero future

With the cost of offshore wind continuing to fall, there is a growing recognition of the role that offshore wind will play in delivering the UK's decarbonisation ambitions.

Government has set an ambition to deliver up to 40GW of offshore wind capacity by 2030. Alongside the existing portfolio, and rights in

the waters off Scotland, Round 4 provides the potential for the project pipeline to reach nearly 60GW in 2022.

The Committee on Climate Change says the UK will need a target of at least 75 GW of offshore wind to meet its legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.



Coal use to be reduced to **zero** by 2025¹



Gas to be reduced by **21%** by 2025²

The role of The Crown Estate

The Crown Estate is a unique business with a distinct heritage and a portfolio unlike any other, which includes the seabed, natural marine resources and half the foreshore around England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

In this capacity we are responsible for awarding seabed rights for offshore renewable energy projects as well as marine minerals, CCUS (Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage), cables and pipelines. We play a unique role in developing and helping sustain UK energy supply and infrastructure, working in collaboration with a wide range of organisations.

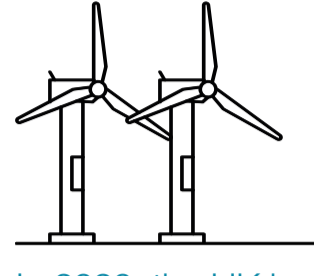
In 1961, the Crown Estate Act established us as an independent commercial business and tasked us with returning all our profit to the Treasury for the benefit of the nation's finances.

Round 4 seabed leasing

Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4 opened up the potential for between 7 and 8.5GW of new seabed rights for offshore wind development in the waters around England and Wales – enough to meet the electricity needs of over six million homes.

Prospective developers had the opportunity to identify and propose project sites within four broad seabed Bidding Areas, supported and informed by characterisation data and analysis we have made available.

We expect to award rights in 2022, with projects becoming operational toward the end of the decade, helping to meet UK energy needs for 60 years ahead.



In 2020, the UK had **20GW of total capacity** either fully operational (10.4GW), under construction (7.2GW), or with Government support on offer (2.6GW)³



Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4 was designed to deliver 7-8.5GW of additional capacity – enough for at least **6 million homes**

Round 4 objectives

Round 4 represents our commitment to providing new seabed rights for an expanding offshore wind generation market in the UK in a way that:

Delivers a robust pipeline for low-cost offshore wind deployment

To help meet industry appetite and Government policy objectives for new offshore wind capacity, supporting the UK's clean energy transition.

Offers an attractive, accessible and fair proposition to developers

At repeatable scale, contributing to the development of a competitive, resilient and innovative offshore wind market.

Balances the range of interests in the marine environment

Supported by extensive engagement with stakeholders and the promotion of responsible evidence-based site selection.

Makes efficient use of the seabed

Recognising its value as a national asset, now and for the long term.

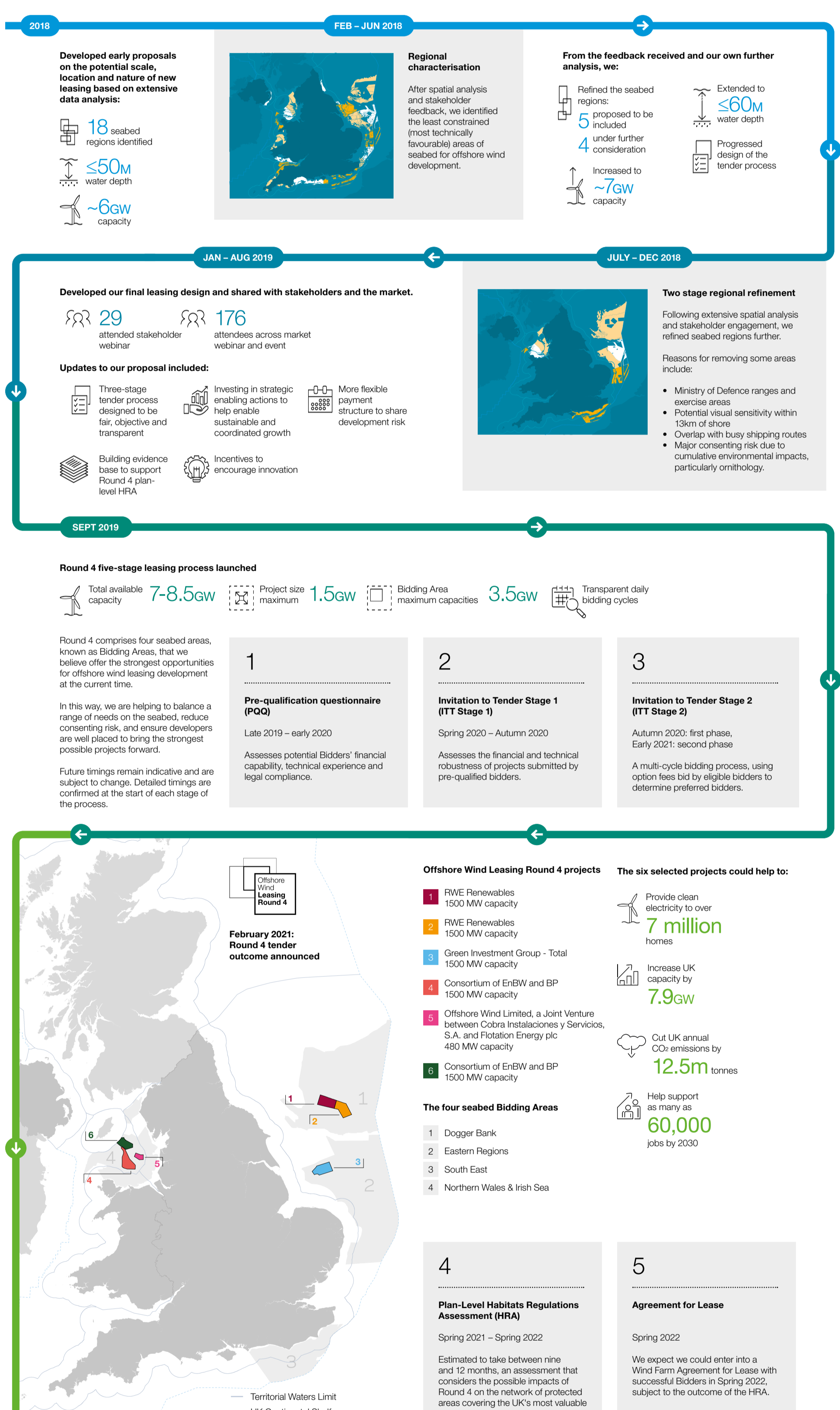
Unlocks the value of the seabed in line with our statutory obligations

Securing best consideration over the long-term, for the benefit of the public finances.

Round 4 leasing process

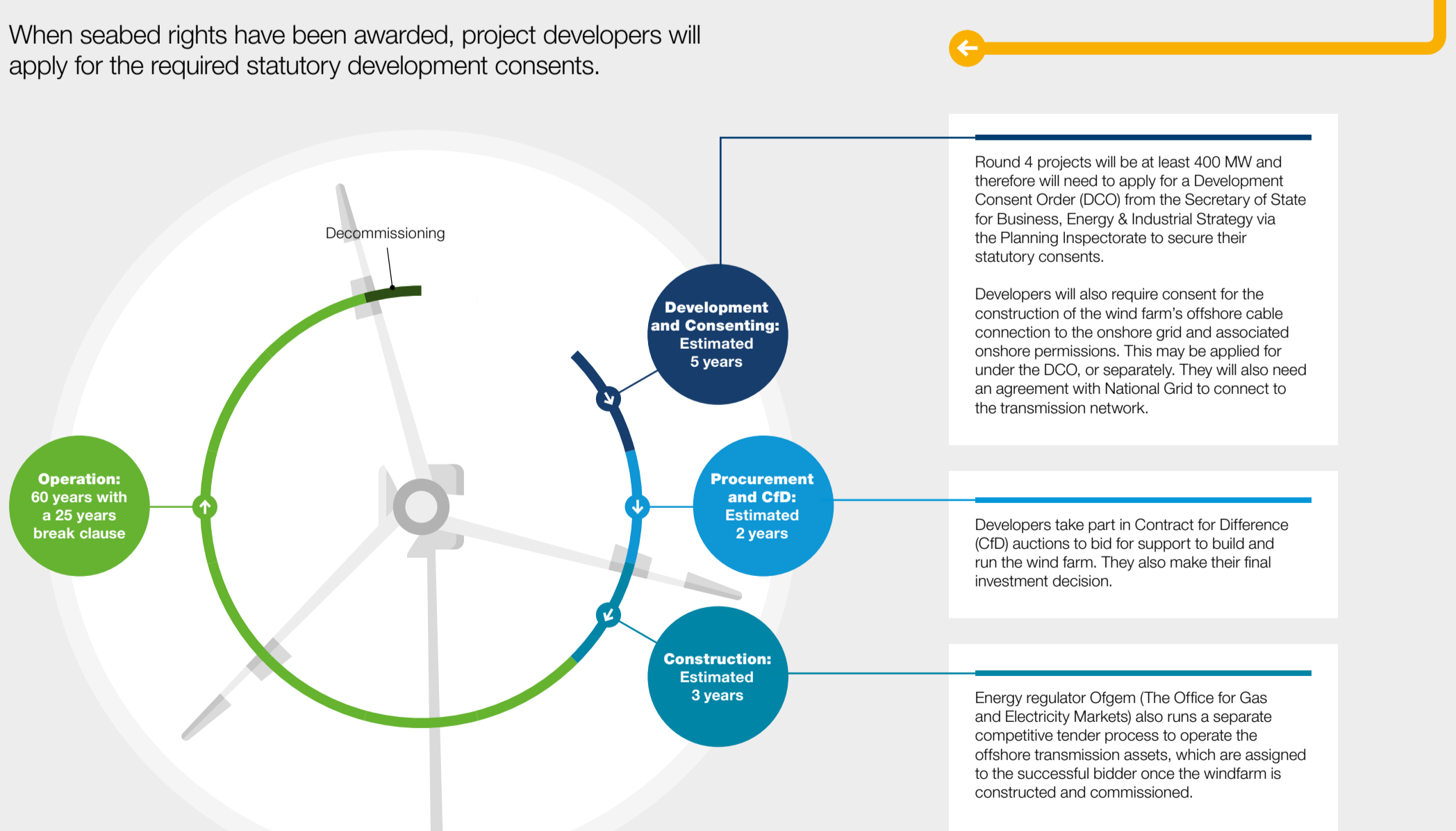
Round 4 was developed and refined through 18 months of active engagement with stakeholders and industry, keeping them informed of our thinking and seeking their feedback to help shape our design.

This process was to ensure that the design of Round 4 enabled the delivery of clean, affordable energy the country will need for the future, whilst balancing a range of needs in an increasingly busy seaspace.



The planning and development process

When seabed rights have been awarded, project developers will apply for the required statutory development consents.



Supporting our net zero future

As manager of the seabed around England, Wales and Northern Ireland, we know that finding a balance between future energy needs and the wide range of interests in the marine environment is central to achieving long-term sustainable growth of the offshore wind sector.

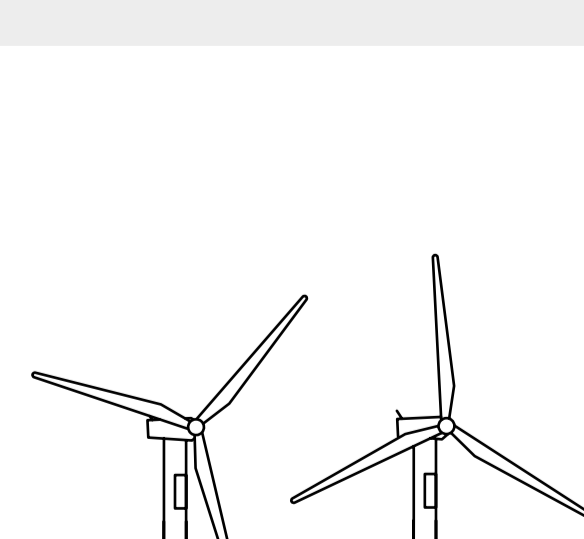
With this in mind, we are funding and enabling an ambitious programme of strategic delivering actions to facilitate the sustainable and coordinated expansion of offshore wind, helping the sector to meet the UK's commitments to the low carbon energy transition whilst supporting action to secure clean, healthy, productive and biologically diverse seas.

The Offshore Wind Evidence and Change Programme is being delivered via a mix of studies, research projects and evidence-gathering to help better understand and overcome the cumulative environmental impacts of offshore wind, and its effects on users of the sea and onshore communities.

The Programme is being led by The Crown Estate, together with its programme partners, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

It is being delivered in collaboration with organisations with an interest in planning for the future of offshore wind and the underpinning evidence requirements. We have established the Programme Steering Group to provide oversight and direction to this Programme and help us achieve the outcomes that will underpin the successful delivery of the programme.

Find out more about the programme [here](#).



Find out more

You can read more about Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4 [here](#) on our website.

You can also contact us at Round4@thecrownestate.co.uk

1. UK Government target https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672137/Government_Response_to_unabated_coal_consultation_and_statement_of_policy.pdf

2. UK Government target

BEIS 2018 Updated Energy & Emissions Projections & KPMG analysis <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/updated-energy-and-emissions-projections-2018>

3. www.thecrownestate.co.uk/media/3730/offshore-wind-operational-report-1.pdf