

Stakeholder: Kai

Role: Turbine expert

Interest: I have been researching and designing wind turbines for over two decades. Some of my designs are even based on biomimicry using an idea from the way flocks of birds move. In 2022, wind generation provided 26.8% of Great Britain's electricity. We should continue to expand the wind energy sector. This location is ideal for several large wind turbines as the seabed is suitably firm and it will be easy to run the electrical cables to the shore.

Question: How can we develop wind turbines to be even more sensitive, so they work in a light breeze?



Stakeholder: Amara

Role: Structural engineer

Interest: I consider the structure of the wind turbines. I also have a keen personal interest in environmental issues. The advantages of wind turbines compared to burning natural gas are clear. There are environmental factors to consider such as some turbines are fixed to the sea bed using steel, and making steel produces greenhouse gas emissions. There are environmental issues with installing a wind farm, but alternative methods of electricity generation can be more harmful to the wider environment.

Question: Would floating turbines be better in this location?



Stakeholder: Dylan

Role: Energy strategist

Interest: The UK needs reliable energy production. Wind energy is vital to reduce the production of electricity through the burning of fossil fuels which leads to global warming. However, if it is very windy and not all the energy is used then we need to develop ways to store the excess energy. On the other hand, if it is not windy enough we need other methods of producing electricity which will ensure domestic and industrial users still get a reliable supply. This offshore wind farm could be a good investment and helps work towards sustainable development goal 7 (SDG7), Clean Energy for All, but it can't be relied on to provide the electricity we need 24/7.

Question: Can energy saving schemes, or the development of low energy technology solutions reduce our demands on the National Grid?



Stakeholder: Ali

Role: Conservation expert

Interest: I take an active role in ensuring that wind farm locations have minimal/manageable impact on the environment. I love diving and snorkelling around the coast of the UK to identify different species and research how human activity is impacting the local ecology. I really care about protecting biodiversity. My latest dives identified some unusual species of clams and mussels which could be threatened if the seabed is disturbed. This project could harm local wildlife, but so could warming seas and the possibilities of increased storm severity or sea level rise as a result of climate change.

Question: How do we balance the potential risk to local ecosystems against the need to fight climate change?



Stakeholder: Anton

Role: Member of the community

Interest: I am a retired bank manager. I love the view of the sea from my living room window. I spend hours watching the seabirds and the ships out to sea. We have been burning fossil fuels to produce energy for a century or more and, although I believe climate change is real, I don't think we should be rushing to change anything. Wind farms are an eyesore, and I am really concerned about the project reducing the value of my house.

Question: Are seabirds affected by wind turbines?



Stakeholder: Fiona

Role: Member of the community

Interest: I work as a teacher at the local college. Although I recognise that the wind farm will impact the view from my kitchen, the area we live in has real problems with unemployment and this leads to young people leaving in search of other opportunities. A big new engineering project could provide jobs for local people. Could this be an excellent opportunity to raise employment levels in our region which may bring more investment? I don't really like the look of wind farms but maybe we need them!

Question: How many local people could gain training or work if the wind farm goes ahead?



Stakeholder: Jamie

Role: Oil and gas investor

Interest: I live in the city a hundred miles away and have worked with the fossil fuel industry for years. Oil and gas companies employ lots of people and the energy is relatively cheap and reliable. It doesn't matter if it isn't windy or sunny, the fossil fuels aren't running out yet! We should definitely be retaining fossil fuels as the main energy sources as they are reliable and there are still more reserves to burn. However, it also looks like there is money to be made from wind.

Question: Is stopping the burning of fossil fuels for electrical energy really possible?

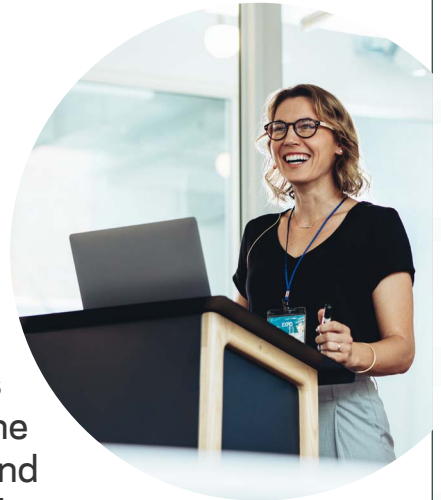


Stakeholder: Carolyn

Role: Local politician

Interest: I represent people from the local area in Parliament. Some young people have written to me about their concerns on climate change and it looks like wind energy is one of the best solutions. Offshore wind is essential to meet both climate change and energy security objectives. I can see that we need new employment opportunities in the town but also don't want to put off any tourists who might bring income into the area. I have a house overlooking the possible windfarm site. I care about my constituents and want to keep local people and potential business investors happy.

Question: In Parliament, should I push for government to stop allowing new oil and gas wells?





Stakeholder: Finn

Role: Trainee engineer and climate activist

Interest: I live in the town and am training to be an electrical engineer. We need to stop using coal, oil and gas as they are causing the climate crisis. I have joined a couple of peaceful protest marches to encourage the government to stop supporting the fossil fuel industry. In my free time I love to go bird watching and am really concerned about the effects of human activity on wildlife. Wind turbines can seem beautiful if you compare them to the potential damage from oil spills and climate change. Maybe I could work on the wind farm as an electrical engineer, but I would also like to go into schools and colleges as a STEM ambassador.

Question: How can we encourage people to use less electrical energy in their homes and workplaces?

