



**Hope Valley Climate Action**  
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**29 April 2022**

Sarah Dines MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

**Re: British Energy Security Strategy**

Dear Sarah,

We met last year on Zoom and when you came to the launch of HVCA's Travelling Light project at Hathersage Station.

We welcome the publication of the British Energy Security Strategy. It is clearly timely. However we think that there are important elements missing and that what is proposed does not adequately reflect the enormity of the challenge we face if we are to avoid climate breakdown.

First, whilst the introduction refers to a decarbonised electricity system by 2035, there is no analysis of the amount of electricity that we will require, or how that amount will be generated. This is a major omission, since it is impossible to judge whether the measures proposed are adequate without an understanding of the scale of the challenge. It is of course inevitable that demand for electricity will increase substantially as we decarbonise and electrify our homes, vehicles and industry. Analysis here in the Hope Valley (which we plan to publish later this month) suggests that we will need 2-3 times as much as we currently consume, by 2050. It would be helpful to know what the Government thinks will be the National position.

**1. Has the Government analysed electricity need up to 2050, and has it quantified the contribution of different electricity generating technologies?**

Secondly, whilst the Strategy makes reference to the need to improve the energy efficiency of our homes, and makes reference to the previously published Heat and Buildings Strategy, we believe that the steps laid out simply do not match up to the scale of the need and the urgency of the situation. Government needs to be much more proactive. In this context "this is not being imposed on people and is a gradual transition following the grain of behaviour" is simply inadequate. Two specific issues which we believe urgently need to be addressed are

the financing of energy upgrades by home owners, and the need to increase the number of people who are available to undertake the work. Of owners whose homes are not well insulated our surveys suggest that nearly two-thirds would seriously consider insulating their homes at a cost of £10-20k if a grant covered 50% of the cost.

**2. What steps are the Government going to take to support home owners with the costs of retrofitting insulation, including grants for those who cannot afford to extend their mortgages?**

**3. What steps are the Government taking to increase the number of trained Retrofit Coordinators, Designers and Contractors?**

Thirdly, we welcome the commitment to increased generation of electricity from renewables. However we are extremely disappointed by the failure to be more ambitious regarding onshore wind. This is the fastest and cheapest way to generate renewable electricity. Public opinion supports its development, as shown both by national opinion polls as well as our own local surveying of residents' and visitors' opinions here in the Peak District.

**4. We would welcome the opportunity to share with you the findings of our energy study and survey of local opinion on renewable energy generation here in the Hope Valley, as a way of showing that there is 'clear support from local communities', and discussing how the current planning constraints should be changed. Can we arrange to meet?**

Finally, we welcome the recognition that the current electricity distribution system is not fit for purpose. Our local analysis has confirmed what others have found elsewhere, that grid connections for renewable energy installations are (under current arrangements) prohibitively expensive, and that there is currently no incentive for the Distribution Network Operators to invest in reinforcing the grid to accommodate community renewable electricity generation. This is one of the issues that is addressed by the Local Electricity Bill, currently before Parliament.

**5. Please will you add your support to the proposals laid out in the Bill, and write to the Minister for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change to encourage him in his efforts to implement them?**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Platt', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dr Stephen Platt

Treasurer  
Hope Valley Climate Action