How was our electricity generated?

Britain’s Electricity Explained: March 2020

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The world is in a very different place from when we shared our last electricity report. Coronavirus is having a significant impact on society. People are staying at home, and shops, businesses and industry are closed. We’re seeing an effect on electricity demand across the country, with demand lower than usual owing to a decrease in energy use from industry. It’s just as important for us to manage lower demand for electricity as it is to manage the peaks, and we’re drawing on our extensive expertise and experience to do just that. While we anticipate reduced demand being reflected to a degree in the generation mix – with lower levels of carbon intensity (the amount of carbon produced for every kilowatt) more likely – the UK’s lockdown measures were introduced too late in March to significantly influence the data below. What we do see in the data is a slight decrease in the share of renewables and drop in coal use, a likely result of a less windy March, milder temperatures and lower demand. We’re keeping a close eye on any changes in the months ahead, and rest assured our control room engineers are continuing to work around the clock to operate the system securely and keep our nation’s electricity flowing.

Gas 35.49%
Wind 23.25%
Nuclear 14.20%
Biomass 6.66%
Coal 2.02%
Solar 4.77%
Imports 11.02%
Hydro 2.07%

Renewables
30% of electricity came from renewable sources
Peak share of renewables was 57.1%

Imports & exports
Energy in 2020/21 GWh
Energy out 544.66 GWh

Carbon intensity
218 gCO2/kWh average
Greeneest time of the month 8am on 8th March

Coal
2.02% use this month
269 hours of zero use
This time 5 years ago, coal usage was 34.45%

Demand
21966 GWh run through network (that’s 22 billion washing machines all on at once)
Peak demand was 7pm on 5th March

View in real-time
To view our data in real-time, please download the ESO app for Apple or Android. Or visit carbonintensity.org.uk