

Public Perception

A recent survey of awareness and attitudes towards renewable energy has discovered that public support for renewables remains high.

BERR commissioned GfK NOP Social Research to conduct a quantitative research project to explore awareness and attitudes to renewable energy amongst the general public in Great Britain, and determine influences on their opinions of this subject.

The survey revealed that 83% of the general public support the use of renewable energy, 82% are in favour of wind power and 59% would be happy to live within 5km (3 miles) of a wind power development. Solar, Wind and Hydro-electric were the most recognised sources of renewable energy (91%, 80% and 81% respectively).

- [Renewable energy awareness and attitudes research: management summary 2006](#) (658KB)
- [Renewable energy awareness and attitudes research: management summary. September 2007](#) (108KB)

A poll conducted in 2003 measuring public support for the UK Government target of supplying 10 per cent of the UK's electricity from renewable energy sources by 2010, shows that 74 per cent of people surveyed supported both the 10 per cent target and increasing the use of wind power.

Findings from 42 surveys carried out between 1990 and 2002 show that, on average, 77 per cent of the public are in favour of wind energy, and only 9 per cent are against (source: BWEA, 2003).

A summary of research on attitudes to wind power from 1990 to 1996 (source: Marie et al., 1996) concludes that an 'overwhelming majority of residents in areas with a wind project are pro-wind, both in theory as a renewable energy source and in practice in their area, with an average of 8 out of 10 supporting their local wind farm'.

A survey conducted for the Scottish Executive by MORI in 2003 (source: EWEA, 2003) shows that people living close to Scotland's 10 largest wind farms strongly support wind energy, with 82 per cent wanting an increase in electricity generated from wind, and more than 50 per cent supporting an increase in the number of turbines at their local wind farm.

The MORI poll covered 1,800 residents living within a 20 kilometre radius of a wind farm. Its main findings are:

- 20 per cent of respondents think their local wind farm has a broadly positive impact on the area while 7 per cent feel that it has a negative impact. The majority are neutral.
- Before the construction of the wind farm, 27 per cent of respondents were concerned about landscape changes, 19 per cent were concerned about traffic during construction, and 15 per cent about noise during construction. During the construction phase and afterwards, these figures fell to 12 per cent, 6 per cent and 4 per cent respectively.
- 54 per cent of respondents would support a 50 per cent increase in the number of turbines at their local wind farm, and 9 per cent would not.
- Respondents would like to see a decrease in the use of nuclear, coal and oil power. Renewable electricity production technologies are strongly supported with 69 per cent in favour of wave energy and 82 per cent in favour of wind energy.

General renewable energy surveys

- [Attitudes and Knowledge of Renewable Energy Amongst the General Public - Report of Findings](#) (628KB)
- [UK Bill Payers Poll: BWEA, July 2003](#)
- [Attitudes to Renewable Energy in Devon: MORI on behalf of Regen SW, November 2004](#) -

PDF

- The Somerset Environment and Quality of Life Survey: Somerset County Council, August 2004
- Energy Eurobarometer Survey: European Commission, March 2003

Wind surveys

- Wind Farms Survey: ICM Research on behalf of Greenpeace, August 2004
- Public Attitudes to Wind Farms in Scotland: BWEA on behalf of the Scottish Executive, August 2003 - PDF
- Public Attitudes to Wind Energy in Wales: Market Research Wales on behalf of Friends of the Earth Cymru, October 2002
- Wind Farms Hit House Prices: Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, November 2004

Tourism surveys

- Scarweather Sands Opinion Survey: Greenpeace, July 2004
- Tourist Attitudes Towards Wind Farms: MORI Social Research on behalf of the Scottish Renewable Forum and the BWEA, 2002 - PDF
- VisitScotland Windfarm Report - August 2002

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