

UK politics & policy

## Boris Johnson: Now is the time to plan our green recovery

We will use Britain's powers of invention to repair the pandemic's damage and fight climate change



*The prime minister plans to use strategic investment in projects to make Britain the 'Saudi Arabia of wind', generating enough electricity from offshore farms to power the country © FT montage; Getty Images*

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November 17, 2020 9:15 pm by **Boris Johnson**

*The writer is UK prime minister*

Slowly but surely humanity is taking the upper hand in the fight against the virus. We have not won yet. There are still hard weeks and months to come. But with better drugs, testing and a range of vaccines, we know in our hearts that next year we will succeed.

We will use science to rout the virus, and we must use the same extraordinary powers of invention to repair the economic damage from Covid-19, and to [build back better](#).

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Now is the time to plan for a green recovery with high-skilled jobs that give people the satisfaction of knowing they are helping to make the country cleaner, greener and more beautiful.

Imagine Britain when a Green Industrial Revolution has helped to level up the country. You cook breakfast using hydrogen power before getting in your electric car, having charged it overnight from batteries made in the Midlands. Around you the air is cleaner; trucks, trains, ships and planes run on hydrogen or synthetic fuel.

British towns and regions — Teesside, Port Talbot, Merseyside and Mansfield — are now synonymous with green technology and jobs. This is where Britain's ability to make hydrogen and capture carbon pioneered the decarbonisation of transport, industry and power.

My 10-point plan to get there will mobilise £12bn of government investment, and potentially three times as much from the private sector, to create and support up to 250,000 green jobs.

There will be electric vehicle technicians in the Midlands, construction and installation workers in the North East and Wales, specialists in advanced fuels in the North West, agroforestry practitioners in Scotland, and grid system installers everywhere. And we will help people train for these new green jobs through our Lifetime Skills Guarantee.

This 10-point plan will turn the UK into the world's number one centre for green technology and finance, creating the foundations for decades of economic growth.

One — we will make the UK [the Saudi Arabia of wind](#) with enough offshore capacity to power every home by 2030.

Two — we will turn water into energy with up to £500m of [investment in hydrogen](#).

Three — we will take forward our plans for new nuclear power, from large scale to small and advanced modular reactors.

Four — we'll invest more than £2.8bn in electric vehicles, lacing the land with charging points and creating long-lasting batteries in UK gigafactories. This will allow us to [end the sale](#) of new petrol and diesel cars and vans in 2030. However, we will allow the sale of hybrid cars and vans that can drive a significant distance with no carbon coming out of the tailpipe until 2035.

Five — we will have cleaner public transport, including thousands of green buses and hundreds of miles of new cycle lanes.

Six — we will strive to repeat the feat of [Jack Alcock and Teddie Brown](#), who achieved the first nonstop transatlantic flight a century ago, with a zero emission plane. And we will do the same with ships.

Seven — we will invest £1bn next year to make homes, schools and hospitals greener, and energy bills lower.

Eight — we will establish a new world-leading industry in [carbon capture and storage](#), backed by [£1bn](#) of government investment for clusters across the North, Wales and Scotland.

Nine — we will harness nature’s ability to absorb carbon by planting 30,000 hectares of trees a year by 2025 and rewilding 30,000 football pitches’ worth of countryside.

And ten — our £1bn energy innovation fund will help commercialise new low-carbon technologies, like the world’s first liquid air battery being developed in Trafford, and we will make the City of London the global centre for [green finance](#) through our sovereign bond, carbon offset markets and disclosure requirements.

This plan can be a global template for delivering net zero emissions in ways that create jobs and preserve our lifestyles.

On Wednesday I will meet UK businesses to discuss their contribution. We plan to provide clear timetables for the clean energy we will procure, details of the regulations we will change, and the carbon prices that we will put on emissions.

I will establish a “task force net zero” committed to reaching [net zero by 2050](#), and through next year’s [COP26 summit](#) we will urge countries and companies around the world to join us in delivering net zero globally.

Green and growth can go hand-in-hand. So let us meet the most enduring threat to our planet with one of the most innovative and ambitious programmes of job-creation we have known.

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