Issue 66, June 2026

oe

OFFSHORE ENERGIES MAGAZINE

People of Energy

The magazine for the UK offshore energy industry
Published by Offshore Energies UK

ISSUE 66 | JUNE 2026

This spring has been marked by global turbulence, felt acutely at the heart of our industry. In the preceding months, energy has taken on renewed value - with a growing valorisation centred on where it comes from and how it reaches us. In response to this volatility, OEUK has remained active at the forefront of the conversation through government consultations and ongoing high-level political engagement.

In early March, OEUK's Chief Executive David Whitehouse met with Chancellor Rachel Reeves twice following the escalation of the Iran conflict and renewed disruption to global energy markets, before giving oral evidence to the House of Commons Energy Security and Net Zero Committee in late April. He also provided further evidence to the Business and Trade Committee as part of its inquiry into the UK's industrial strategy, setting out the role of the UK's offshore energy sector in supporting jobs, growth and energy security at a time of growing geopolitical uncertainty; here, discussions underlined why decisions taken in the North Sea matter far beyond energy alone, shaping the resilience of domestic supply chains that support fuels, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and advanced manufacturing. Across all engagements, OEUK continues to amplify the voices of its 450+ members and echo the views shared by wider industry, reinforcing the case for a pragmatic, integrated energy system - one that harnesses the strength of the North Sea rather than allows its resources to atrophy, and combines domestic oil and gas production with sustained investment in renewables and low-carbon technologies.

Alongside this, OEUK has been active across all fronts, including the launch of the Business Outlook 2026 report and Offshore Wind Insight 2026. In recent months, it has also hosted a plethora of events, bringing industry together to connect, collaborate and share knowledge - from the Security and Resilience Conference, HSE Conference and Aviation Conference, to Young Professionals events across both London and Aberdeen, and Share Fair.

In this issue, we continue to explore and celebrate the work of our members across the offshore energy sector. From insightful pieces from key offshore wind players on the issue of transmission charges, and the power of state-of-the-art training that continues to revolutionise learning and safety practices, to exploration of the era of contractorisation and the capacity crunch felt across the decommissioning landscape.

Thank you for reading & if you'd like to be featured in future issues of the OEUK Magazine, please contact us via editorial@oeuk.org.uk

The Editorial Team

FEATURES:

We take a moment to celebrate Ross Jackson (OEUK's Graphic Designer), who has now moved on to different creative endeavours. Over his 4 years at OEUK, he has visually brought to life countless reports, insights and magazines, also creating a plethora of striking artwork and campaigns that continue to champion the North Sea and illustrate OEUK's advocacy efforts through captivating mediums in both digital and print.

We also bid farewell to Janet Davey (OEUK's Marketing Adviser), whose behind-the-scenes work in marketing has been instrumental over the past 15 years, and to Aimee Wallace (OEUK's Social Media Adviser), who has continued to lend a powerful voice to the offshore energy workforce and to storytelling across the North Sea.

Published by
Offshore Energies UK

Contact the editorial team on editorial@oeuk.org.uk

ISSN 2053-5392 (Print),
ISSN 2053-5406 (Online)

Offshore Energies UK
Cannongate House
Cannon Street
London EC4N 6AE
Telephone: 020 7802 2400

www.oeuk.org.uk

Editorial & Design:
Ross Jackson (farewell!)
David Jeffree
Tanisha Ramgoolam

OEUK Contributors:
Graham Skinner, Mark Wilson, Aimee Wallace, Peter Welsh, Mark McClelland

Cover picture:
The People of Energy on Cygnus A (left to right) Rachel Elliot, Shaun Ryan, Cameron Stark, and Craig Borsberry. Read the feature on p28.

OFFSHORE AVIATION | A COMMUNITY FOCUSED ON PERFORMANCE, PARTNERSHIP & SAVING LIVES

Graham Skinner, OEUK Health & Safety Manager

OEUK's Offshore Aviation Conference 2026 was a powerful reminder of the strength that comes from bringing together a close, experienced community of offshore aviation professionals. In an industry where collaboration underpins safety, reliability and resilience, the opportunity to share experience and build relationships remains as important as any technological advance.

The conference agenda drew together offshore energy companies that rely on helicopters every day with the operators, engineers, regulators and service providers who deliver those solutions. From flight operations and maintenance excellence to ground operations and regulation, discussions were grounded in real operational experience and a shared commitment to continual improvement.

That sense of partnership was echoed throughout the day and strongly supported by the event's sponsors. OEG, as Principal Sponsor, played a central role in enabling the conference and continues to demonstrate leadership in supporting collaboration across the offshore aviation community. OEUK also thanks Volantes Technical Recruitment, Flylogix and NATS, NHV, Hansen Protection, and Offshore Helicopter Services UK Ltd, whose sponsorship and engagement helped create a space for meaningful dialogue and knowledge-sharing.

A particularly compelling session focused on the Offshore Industry Search and Rescue (SAR) capability – a privately funded, commercial resource available at just 15 minutes' notice to respond to ill or injured offshore workers. Although funded by industry, this is an undeclared SAR asset, tasked by HM Coastguard and frequently supporting marine rescues beyond the offshore sector. It is a striking, often unseen example of how a healthy offshore industry delivers wider societal benefit. The figures from the past decade tell a powerful story: between 2015 and 2025, the service delivered 7,750 flying hours, conducted 1,100 SAR missions, supported 220 non-industry rescues, completed 160 hoisting operations, and carried out 1,033 medical interventions. Behind each statistic are skilled crews, trusted partnerships and lives saved. Looking ahead, change in action was evident with confirmation that new Leonardo AW139 helicopters will enter service from later in 2026 on a minimum seven-year contract. Featuring dual hoists, enhanced search capability, bespoke clinical fit-out and advanced communications, these aircraft – supported by dedicated teams at Offshore Helicopter Services UK Ltd and CB&I and overseen by an industry committee – represent the next chapter in offshore aviation safety.

The conference reinforced the value of bringing the sector together – not as a slogan, but as a practical way to share experience, improve performance and maintain high safety standards.

Message from our CEO

David Whitehouse
CEO,
Offshore Energies UK

The events of recent months have brought the UK's energy resilience into sharper focus. The ongoing war in the Middle East has underscored the fragility of our current energy trajectory. With approximately 40% of the UK's energy imported in 2025, we are increasingly exposed at a time of heightened global tension - a precarious position that leaves households, businesses and industry vulnerable to external shocks beyond our control.

The lesson from events in both the Middle East and Ukraine is clear: resilient countries continue to support domestic energy production and value domestic manufacturing over increased reliance on imports.

While the support for the build out of affordable renewable energy is to be welcomed, the lack of recognition that domestic oil and gas also has an important role to play is wrong. Prioritising homegrown energy of all kinds, supports jobs, communities and economic value, while strengthening the UK's energy security - now rightly understood as a matter of national security.

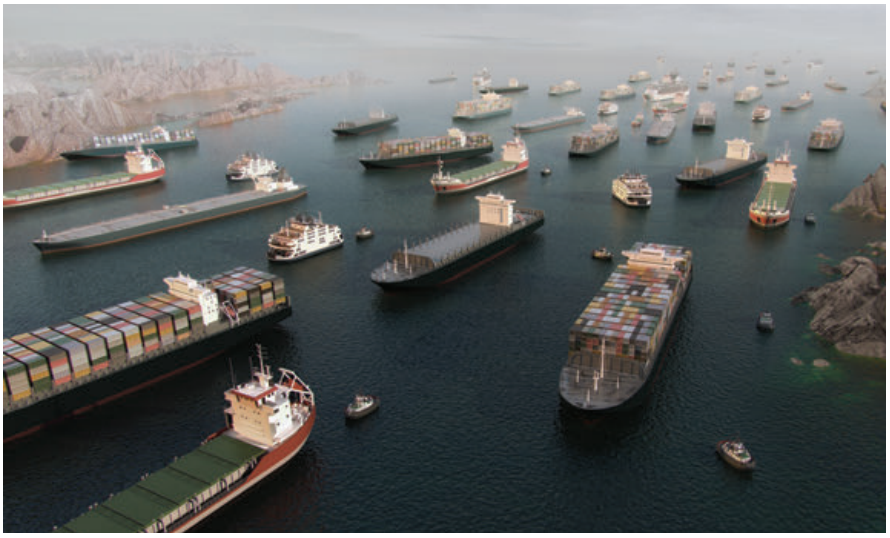
The current oil and gas fiscal and regulatory framework continues to undermine investment attractiveness, at odds with the reality that the UK North Sea remains a mature basin with substantial resources still within reach - a basin that holds the potential to help protect the UK from sudden price spikes and market swings during periods of geopolitical strain.

OEUK continues to advocate for the early implementation of the Oil and Gas Price Mechanism (OGPM) alongside enabling regulation, in turn unlocking up to £50 billion in private investment and sustaining a just transition for tens of thousands of highly skilled offshore energy workers.

Against this backdrop, the UK offshore wind market has shown notable resilience, on track to achieve a total installed capacity of 18.8 GW by the end of 2026. The seventh Allocation Round (AR7) provided a strong signal of government support for the offshore wind sector, with an unprecedented 8.4 GW awarded. Nevertheless, the industry continues to face significant challenges from rising inflation and increasing cost of capital, and uncertain policy areas such as transmission charges.

March saw the release of our flagship Business Outlook 2026 report, which offered a clear assessment of the current business climate, setting out the gap between the UK's present trajectory and the path required to secure long-term economic resilience and energy security, as industry and government considerations continue to evolve. That analysis, alongside sustained engagement across major national and international broadcast and print platforms, has ensured energy security and geopolitical risk remain central to the debate.

However, none of this work happens in isolation. OEUK's advocacy for pragmatic policy and homegrown energy is underpinned by the continued support and engagement of our members. I would like to thank all those across our membership whose ongoing collaborative efforts help ensure the industry's voice is heard at this critical moment for the UK's energy future.



GEOPOLITICAL TURBULENCE REDRAWS THE GLOBAL ENERGY MAP

Energy markets in early 2026 are being shaped not by a single shock, but by the interaction of conflict, trade policy and strategic realignment. The most immediate source of disruption emerged from the Middle East, following the escalation of hostilities between the US and Iran in late February 2026, which rapidly brought renewed attention to the Strait of Hormuz - a narrow but indispensable passage through which roughly a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas flows each day. Serving as a critical junction in the global energy system, the strait functions as a cross-continental conduit between producers and consumers; volatility in the region has reverberated across global energy markets. Recent months have demonstrated how disruption along a single, highly interconnected corridor can generate far-reaching ramifications for supply and price stability – reinforcing the need for energy security rooted in an integrated, homegrown UK energy system that reduces exposure to external geopolitical turbulence.

Brent crude spiked to around $138 a barrel on 7 April, as tanker movements through the strait slowed sharply and insurers reassessed regional risk, before easing back later in the month. Prices remained elevated, trading above $100 per barrel through mid-April, underscoring the persistence of volatility even as diplomatic signals emerged. In response, IEA member countries agreed on 11 March to release 400 million barrels from emergency reserves, the largest coordinated draw in the agency's history, in an effort to stabilise supply and calm markets. The end of April saw prices sitting around 100p/therm; some of this volatility was carried through to May, but the overall trend saw cooling from earlier highs.

This recent shock is compounding instability rather than disrupting equilibrium. Europe remains in the midst of a post-Ukraine energy reset, having reconfigured gas supply and legislated a full phase-out of Russian gas imports by 2027 - a decision that has permanently altered global LNG flows and intensified competition for supply. At the same time, energy markets are being influenced by a more interventionist U.S. posture. Trade tariffs, alongside selective adjustments to sanctions on countries such as Venezuela, underline how energy security, inflation control and industrial policy are increasingly intertwined. The amalgamation of conflict, trade and sanctions is exacerbating existing market fragility rather than acting in isolation.

History offers a clear pattern. The Iraq war in 2003, unrest in Libya in 2011 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 all triggered sharp price spikes and renewed policy focus on supply security. The Iran-centred disruption of 2026 is different in detail, but familiar in effect: heightened geopolitical risk translating rapidly into tighter markets and higher prices.

For the UK, the implications are increasingly clear. OEUK's Business Outlook Report 2026 warns that greater reliance on imports leaves households and industry more exposed to volatility and geopolitical shocks at a time of growing global instability. Maintaining domestic energy capability, alongside continued investment in renewables and low-carbon technologies, is not simply an economic question but a strategic one. Current constraints are economic and political; oil and gas

still supply approximately 75% of the UK's energy consumption needs, and significant resources remain in the UK Continental Shelf. Total potential reserves and resources in the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS) hold 26.5 billion barrels of oil equivalent (boe), of which around 13 billion boe lie within 25 km of existing infrastructure and 19 billion boe within 50 km. Under current conditions, only around 10% of this resource, roughly 2.6 billion boe, is likely to be recovered. With improved investment conditions, recoverable volumes could rise to around 16% (4.3 billion boe), while under a scenario with no external constraints, recovery could reach up to 28%, or around 7.5 billion boe.

In a more politicised and less predictable global energy landscape, resilience and homegrown supply have reasserted themselves as central pillars of energy security – a topic that has in recent months returned firmly to the top of the political agenda.

HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT | DAVID WHITEHOUSE (OEUK CEO)

On 4 March 2026, David Whitehouse (OEUK CEO) met with Chancellor Rachel Reeves in Westminster, following the escalation of the Iran conflict and renewed disruption to global energy markets. The discussion focused on the implications of heightened geopolitical risk for UK energy security, price volatility and the UK's growing reliance on imported energy.

It was emphasised that recent events reinforce the need for a resilient, homegrown energy system, combining domestic oil and gas production with continued investment in renewables and low carbon technologies. He reiterated OEUK's call for stable licensing, long term policy certainty and a pragmatic approach that prioritises UK energy production over imports, to strengthen resilience in an increasingly volatile global environment.

The following day (5 March), David Whitehouse met Chancellor Reeves again, this time at 11 Downing Street, as part of ongoing engagement with government ahead of key fiscal decisions. Discussions centred on UK energy security, investment confidence and the future role of the North Sea, set against a backdrop of heightened geopolitical uncertainty.

OEUK's call for reform of the Energy Profits Levy was reiterated, stressing the importance of long-term fiscal certainty and a stable licensing regime to unlock investment, protect jobs and reduce reliance on higher risk energy imports.

Momentum and high-level political engagement continued throughout the month. On Wednesday 25 March, David Whitehouse gave oral evidence to the House of Commons Energy Security and Net Zero Committee, as part of a session examining UK energy resilience. He appeared alongside representatives from RenewableUK and RUSI, with subsequent panels featuring industry figures from Equinor, Wood Mackenzie and Fuels Industry UK.

He reiterated to MPs that energy security and net zero must be delivered together, arguing for a stronger focus on homegrown energy to reverse the UK's growing reliance on imports; highlighting that the UK now imports over 40% of its energy, a historic high, and again warned that recent geopolitical instability has reinforced the risks of import dependence. The evidence session marked a clear continuation of OEUK's push for early legislation to introduce the Oil and Gas Price Mechanism, tying into the overarching theme of energy security rooted in domestic supply and policy certainty.

On Wednesday 25 March, David Whitehouse gave oral evidence to the House of Commons Energy Security and Net Zero Committee, as part of a session examining UK energy resilience.

NORTH SEA LICENCES CALLED BACK INTO QUESTION

A Conservative Opposition Day motion calling on the Government to reopen new North Sea oil and gas licensing, scrap the Energy Profits Levy and approve the Rosebank and Jackdaw fields was defeated in the House of Commons on 24 March - by 297 votes to 108. MPs subsequently agreed a Labour Government amendment, backing the current policy of no new exploration licences, allowing existing fields to run their course, and focusing on accelerating clean energy and energy security. The vote marked the first clear parliamentary test of the new Government's approach to North Sea licensing, formally locking in a direction of no new licences despite opposition and industry pressure. The decision reflected the broader tone set by the Spring Statement, reinforcing a government posture of fiscal restraint and long-term direction rather than near term intervention.

Amid escalating geopolitical tensions and recent price shocks, the question of energy has been front and centre in conversations across government and the wider public, from where our energy is sourced to how resilient the UK's energy system really is – and who ultimately controls it. March saw OEUK commission a UK-wide survey, carried out by Opinium, which highlighted overwhelming public support for using the UK's own oil and gas resources alongside renewables to strengthen national security, manage overreliance on imports, and ensure stable, long-term decision making on how the sector is taxed.-

SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

- **76% find it convincing that "because global events can disrupt energy supplies, the UK should continue producing oil and gas at home rather than relying more on imports."**
- **74% say the UK should "produce as much of its own oil and gas as possible rather than rely on imports."**
- **40% believe the best approach to UK energy security is investing in a balanced mix of renewables and UK oil and gas, compared to just 26% who want a renewables-only approach and 13% who want oil and gas only.**
- **59% think oil and gas companies should pay higher taxes when prices are unusually high – but crucially, 67% say any windfall tax must be rules-based, providing clear, predictable certainty about how companies will be taxed.**
- **When asked about a permanent, rules-based windfall mechanism, a plurality (45%) of the public supports the model, with only a small minority (12%) opposing it and many seeking clarity before deciding.**

POWER AND POLITICS | HOLYROOD 2026

Anticipation built across Scotland this spring, culminating in the May 2026 Holyrood election, which returned the SNP as the largest party under First Minister John Swinney, though short of an overall majority. Throughout the campaign, energy emerged as a defining issue, binding together economic opportunity, climate ambition and questions of national resilience.

Alongside this, Scotland's renewable narrative remains a central theme. With Scotland already producing more renewable electricity than it consumes, offshore wind, and particularly floating wind, are positioned as key growth opportunities, with a continued focus on scaling offshore wind, particularly floating wind, accelerating hydrogen and CCUS deployment, and maintaining a managed transition from North Sea oil and gas. Despite political differences that emerged throughout the lead-up to the election, there is broad recognition of the role of domestic offshore production, spanning oil, gas and wind, in how they will maintain capability and support the transition.

The election result reflects a shifting political landscape. While the SNP remains dominant, it governs without a majority; the Greens have strengthened their presence, and Reform has emerged as the second-largest party alongside Scottish Labour, capitalising on concerns around energy costs and the pace of transition. With Labour struggling to regain ground and the Conservatives losing position, the new parliamentary balance points to a more varied political landscape in which energy policy will continue to sit at the centre of debate. Across both Westminster and Holyrood, OEUK continues to engage with government in shaping a pragmatic, integrated energy mix that supports economic stability and energy security - a dialogue reflected in engagement with Scotland's First Minister at All-Energy earlier this year.

STATE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT AND THE KING'S SPEECH

May saw the State Opening of Parliament, with the King's Speech setting out the government's legislative priorities for the coming session. The Energy Independence Bill outlines the government's approach to energy policy for the next parliamentary session.

THIS BILL AIMS TO TACKLE AFFORDABILITY BY:

Placing the Exchequer funding of 75% of the domestic costs of the Renewables Obligation scheme for three years on an enduring legal basis, removing around £90 a year of costs on average from household bills as part of the £150 reduction in costs announced in the 2025 Budget.

Paving the way for the Warm Homes Agency: Implementing new rules to ensure landlords invest in home upgrades, with the goal of lifting 400,000 families out of fuel poverty by 2030.

Providing Ofgem with new powers, including regulating energy brokers and third-party intermediaries to stop unfair practices.

ACCELERATE THE UK'S DRIVE FOR ENERGY SECURITY BY:

Reforming market, planning and regulatory frameworks to accelerate the deployment of clean power including offshore wind, hydrogen and smart grid technologies.

Speeding up the build-out of grid infrastructure with a package of measures to reduce unnecessary delays, including reforms to land access rules and networks consenting.

Introduce powers needed to take a more strategic approach to planning and building energy infrastructure and operate the electricity system more efficiently.

Enable the removal of charges on electricity that consumers export to the grid and allow discounted energy at times of excess generation to give families more control over their bills.

DELIVER A FAIR, MANAGED AND PROSPEROUS TRANSITION AND GOOD JOBS IN CLEAN ENERGY BY:

Managing existing oil and gas fields for their lifetime through legislation to introduce Transitional Energy Certificates.

Meet the 2024 Labour manifesto commitment not to issue new licences to explore new fields.

Deliver the commitment to ban fracking.

Provide the North Sea Transition Authority with a new statutory objective to consider workers, communities and supply chains in its decisions.

Extend employment rights and protections for offshore workers in renewables, bringing them in line with those working in oil and gas.

End new coal licenses.

Enrique Cornejo, OEUK's Energy Policy Director, in response to the King's Speech:

"The King's Speech is a recognition that energy security is national security and the foundation of a modern industrial Britain.

It must also be recognised that it makes sense for the UK to make the most of its entire homegrown energy mix - the oil and gas it continues to need, plus wind and other renewable sources of energy alongside nuclear power. Events in the Middle East are showing very clearly that the UK must reduce its reliance on energy imports, but the nation is set to depend on shipments from places like the USA and Qatar for half its gas by 2035. The introduction of the new oil and gas price mechanism as soon as possible, could close this gap and restore confidence in the domestic energy market.

Without these changes, investment in many UK energy projects is likely to remain on hold which reduces government revenue, threatens thousands of jobs and exposes the security of the nation's energy supply to continuing geopolitical risk."

Alongside this, the government has committed to reforming the UK's nuclear regulatory framework, with a dedicated Nuclear Regulation Bill aimed at unlocking new projects. The move follows a review which found the existing system overly complex and slow, contributing to delays and rising costs. Proposed changes are expected to streamline approvals and create a more efficient regulatory environment, with the aim of accelerating nuclear development as a secure, low-carbon component of the UK's future energy mix.

The King's Speech also covered the Electricity Generator Levy Bill, confirming plans to amend the Electricity Generator Levy, effectively increasing the tax on excess revenues earned by power generators during periods of high wholesale prices. Originally introduced in response to windfall profits driven by gas price spikes, the changes seek to capture a greater share of those gains. This is intended to reduce the impact of volatile energy prices on households and businesses, while supporting wider reforms to the UK's electricity pricing system. This aligns with wider efforts to weaken the link between gas and electricity prices, reflecting a broader shift toward insulating the UK from international energy price volatility.

THE NORTH SEA

HARBOUR ENERGY PROGRESSES INFRASTRUCTURE-LED EVALUATION IN THE CENTRAL NORTH SEA

Harbour Energy has continued to progress near-field evaluation and appraisal activity in the Central North Sea, with ongoing assessment at the Gilderoy prospect in licence P1527 (block 15/28b) within the company's Greater Britannia Area. Discovered in late 2024, Gilderoy remains under evaluation as part of Harbour's wider programme of infrastructure-led opportunities around established hubs.

The prospect's proximity to existing production and export infrastructure means any potential development would be assessed as a subsea tie-back to the Britannia hub, rather than a standalone project. This approach reflects a broader basin trend toward short-cycle, capital-disciplined opportunities that maximise the use of existing assets while limiting the need for new surface infrastructure.

Evaluation at Gilderoy forms part of a broader focus on infill drilling and appraisal around the Britannia area, underlining Harbour's emphasis on extracting incremental value from established hubs. Near-field opportunities, such as these, remain an important mechanism for sustaining output in a mature basin, supporting production efficiency while maintaining capital discipline and operational resilience.

©Neo Energy

SERICA ENERGY STRENGTHENS UK NORTH SEA POSITION THROUGH PORTFOLIO EXPANSION

In early 2026, Serica Energy has continued to strengthen its position as a core UKCS independent through the completion and progression of a series of UK North Sea asset acquisitions, expanding its producing portfolio and increasing exposure to gas-weighted production. The transactions, announced in late 2025 and progressing through early 2026, add interests in producing fields and infrastructure-linked assets across the UK North Sea and West of Shetland. The expanded portfolio is expected to materially increase Serica's production capacity in 2026, while diversifying output beyond its existing hubs. The acquisitions reflect a broader trend within the UKCS toward consolidation and portfolio optimisation, with established independents seeking scale, operational resilience and near-term cash-generative production tied to existing infrastructure.

ITHACA ENERGY SUSTAINS UKCS PRODUCTION THROUGH DISCIPLINED CAPITAL ALLOCATION

Ithaca Energy reported strong operational performance and entered the year with increased installed production capacity, following the integration of recent acquisitions and targeted investment across its UKCS portfolio. The company highlighted a continued focus on portfolio optimisation, cost control and capital discipline, prioritising assets capable of sustaining near-term production while maintaining financial resilience.

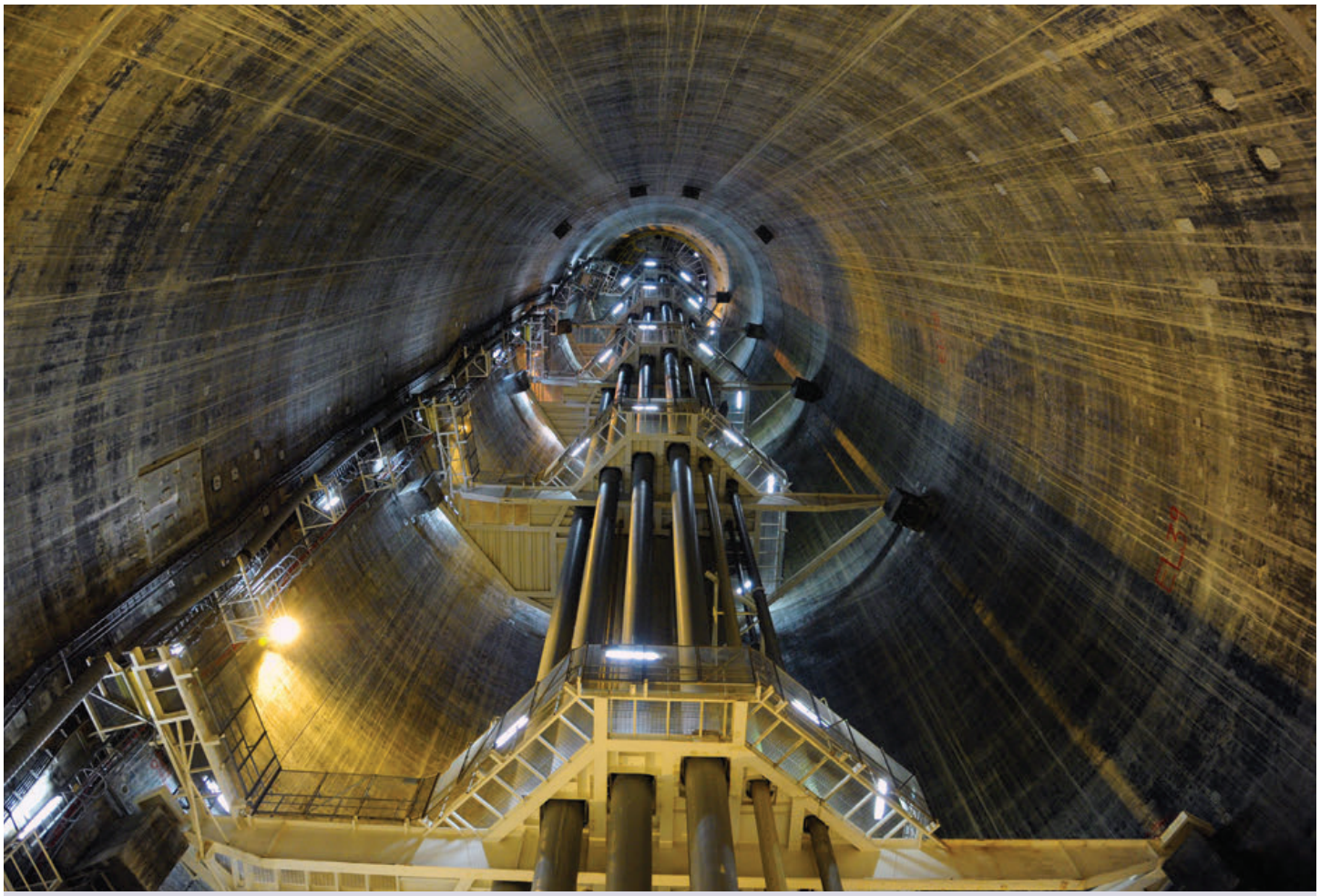
ENQUEST MAINTAINS PRODUCTION THROUGH LATE-LIFE ASSET MANAGEMENT

Throughout early 2026, EnQuest reported continued focus on late-life asset management across its UK North Sea portfolio, supporting production continuity and operational efficiency in a mature basin. The company highlighted strong asset uptime and stable year-on-year UK production, underpinned by targeted investment, cost discipline and the optimisation of existing infrastructure. EnQuest's approach mirrors a wider trend across the North Sea, where operators are focused on maintaining efficiency and reliability within a mature basin, operating under tight regulatory conditions - yet continuing to deliver domestic energy from existing assets.

NORTH SEA COOPERATION STEPS UP AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

In February 2026, the UK formally signed a series of North Sea Summit declarations with European partners, setting out joint commitments to accelerate offshore wind deployment, strengthen cross-border energy infrastructure, expand hydrogen transport and storage, and improve the physical and cyber security of offshore assets. The agreements were concluded at the third North Sea Summit in Hamburg, bringing together the UK and eight neighbouring North Sea countries. As attention has turned in recent months to next steps and implementation, the declarations reinforce the North Sea's growing role as a shared regional energy system, linking offshore wind generation, interconnected grids, hydrogen networks and supply chains to support long-term energy security and resilience across Europe.

Harald Pettersen / ©Equinor



EQUINOR'S NORTH SEA MOMENTUM

NORWEGIAN NORTH SEA DELIVERS NEW DISCOVERIES

In March 2026, Equinor confirmed two commercial hydrocarbon discoveries in the Norwegian North Sea, strengthening production prospects around existing infrastructure hubs. The Byrding C oil discovery, located near the Troll/Fram area, and the Frida Kahlo gas and condensate discovery near the Sleipner hub, were both made close to established export infrastructure and are expected to be progressed as near-field developments. Equinor highlighted that such infrastructure-led discoveries play an important role in sustaining gas deliveries to Europe, particularly from mature basins. The finds underscore Norway's continued upstream momentum and contrast with more subdued exploration activity elsewhere in the North Sea.

NORWAY ACCELERATES PRODUCTION THROUGH ASSET OPTIMISATION

In mid-March 2026, Norwegian independent DNO agreed to a non-cash asset swap with Equinor, reshaping its portfolio to bring forward near-to-medium-term production in the Kvitebjørn area of the Norwegian North Sea. Under the agreement, DNO agreed a non-cash swap with Equinor, taking interests in the Atlantis (19%) and Afrodite (10%) gas-condensate discoveries near Kvitebjørn, while transferring non-core discoveries and a licence to Equinor. The transaction is designed to prioritise tie-backs and accelerated development around existing infrastructure, reflecting a wider trend in the Norwegian upstream sector toward portfolio optimisation and speed-to-production. The deal underlines how operators are focusing capital on assets capable of delivering earlier volumes from mature basins.

NEAR-FIELD DISCOVERIES UNDERPIN EUROPEAN GAS SUPPLY

In early 2026, Equinor and its partners reported an oil and gas discovery at the Granat prospect, located near the Gullfaks field in the Norwegian North Sea. Preliminary estimates indicate a small-size resource, with licensees assessing the potential to tie the discovery back to existing Gullfaks infrastructure, rather than pursuing standalone development.

Ole Jørgen Bratland / ©Equinor

CCS & UPSTREAM

©Guy Carpenter

Local MPs visit East Coast Cluster to see reindustrialisation ambition becoming reality on Teesside. Visit netzeroteesside.co.uk for more infomation.

EAST COAST CLUSTER OPENS PATH TO CCS SCALE-UP

The UK's carbon capture ambitions took a decisive step forward this spring, as the government signalled a shift from first-mover projects toward a more scalable, commercial carbon capture and storage (CCS) model. In the Spending Review, £9.4 billion in capital funding was allocated to support carbon capture, usage and storage deployment across the East Coast Cluster (ECC) and HyNet - a strategic move designed to unlock remaining storage capacity and widen access beyond the initial wave of projects.

Central to that ambition are 2 complementary processes now underway for the East Coast:

- The ECC Teesside selection process will allow additional industrial emitters to apply for access to the Endurance saline aquifer by 2032, opening the door to a broader range of capture projects connecting into the cluster.
- The Non-Pipeline Transport (NPT) Pathfinder, launched on 9 April 2026, will identify potential shipping and non-pipeline routes into the East Coast Cluster over the same timeframe.

Together, the two processes mark an important evolution in how CCS is delivered in the UK - extending beyond traditional, pipeline-only configurations towards a more adaptive system capable of accommodating a wider mix of emitters. Projects selected through the NPT Pathfinder are expected to progress through shortlisting and due diligence toward negotiations, reinforcing the sense that UK CCS is now moving from planning into delivery at scale.

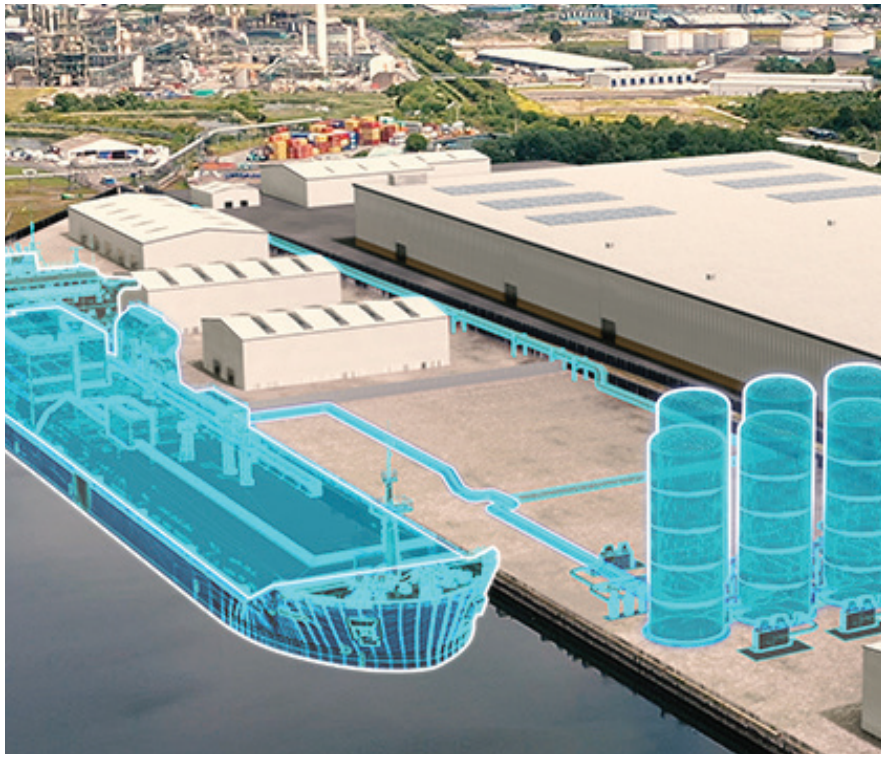
NORTHERN ENDURANCE PARTNERSHIP (NEP) SIGNS HISTORIC SEABED LEASE WITH THE CROWN ESTATE

UK carbon capture reached a delivery milestone earlier this year, as the Northern Endurance Partnership (NEP) signed a landmark seabed lease with The Crown Estate, formally clearing the way for offshore CO_2 transport and storage infrastructure to be installed in the southern North Sea.

Signed in January 2026, the agreement represents the UK's first commercial-scale lease of the seabed for permanent offshore CO_2 storage, covering NEP's offshore pipeline corridor and the Endurance carbon store - a deep saline aquifer located around 140 kilometres offshore. Together with nearby geological stores, Endurance provides access to up to one billion tonnes of CO_2 storage capacity, forming the backbone of the East Coast Cluster's transport and storage system.

The lease follows several critical regulatory and financial milestones, including NEP reaching financial close on its offshore transport and storage infrastructure in late 2024 and receiving the UK's first ever carbon storage permit from the North Sea Transition Authority. With all major consents now in place, construction activities are underway, marking the clearest signal yet that UK CCS is moving decisively from planning into delivery.

©Association of British Ports



CGI impression of CCS transport and storage infrastructure in a port. Visit abports.co.uk for more information

NSTA CLEARS FIRST CARBON STORAGE APPRAISAL WELL OF 2026

UK carbon storage made further strides in March, as the North Sea Transition Authority (NSTA) granted consent for the UK's first carbon storage appraisal well of the year at the Endurance site in the southern North Sea. The well will be drilled by the Northern Endurance Partnership (NEP) and forms part of the appraisal programme supporting future CO_2 storage operations beneath the seabed. The consent allows NEP to further characterise the Endurance saline aquifer, a deep geological formation around 145 kilometres offshore, and represents a key step in progressing licensed storage sites toward development. Together with adjacent structures, Endurance is expected to underpin large-scale CO_2 storage for industrial emitters connected to the East Coast Cluster.

The approval also underlines the NSTA's focus on accelerating appraisal activity following the second UK carbon storage licensing round of December 2025. By supporting early appraisal drilling, the regulator is helping ensure that licensed storage capacity can be matured at pace, reinforcing the UK's trajectory from CCS ambition to operational delivery.

CARBON SHIPPING EMERGES AS A CRITICAL CCS ENABLER

Momentum on carbon shipping continued into spring 2026, as port operators began advancing plans for cross-border CO_2 transport routes agreed earlier in the year. In January 2026, Associated British Ports (ABP) signed two memoranda of understanding with LBC Tank Terminals, North Sea Port and the Port of Esbjerg to advance the development of dedicated CO_2 shipping corridors between Northern Europe and the UK. The agreements will explore port infrastructure, logistics and value-chain integration needed to move captured CO_2 by ship from dispersed industrial sites to offshore storage.

The initiatives directly support projects such as Viking CCS in the UK and Denmark's Greensand project and are particularly significant for emitters located beyond the reach of pipeline networks. ABP has already secured planning approval for a CO_2 handling terminal at the Port of Immingham, designed to link shipping routes into UK storage sites in the southern North Sea. Collectively, these developments reinforce the role of carbon shipping in widening access to CCS, strengthening the UK's position as a regional CO_2 storage hub and supporting the transition from cluster-based projects toward a more connected, scalable system.

SERICA ESTABLISHES WEST OF SHETLAND GAS HUB THROUGH GREATER LAGGAN AREA DEAL

In March 2026, Serica Energy completed its acquisition of a 40% operated interest in TotalEnergies' Greater Laggan Area assets, establishing an operated hub West of Shetland. The transaction delivers net production of just over 5,000 boe/d and includes operatorship of key infrastructure such as the Shetland Gas Plant, positioning Serica as a central player in one of the UK's most prospective gas regions. The assets are estimated to hold around 4.0 MMboe of 2P reserves and 5.4 MMboe of 2C resources. The deal reinforces the strategic importance of infrastructure-led developments in sustaining domestic gas supply.

EQUINOR EXPANDS INTERNATIONAL UPSTREAM DELIVERY

In March 2026, Equinor advanced a number of major international upstream projects outside the North Sea, reinforcing its focus on long-life assets and supply resilience. In Brazil, the company began development drilling at the Raia pre-salt gas field in March, its largest project under execution, with a six-well campaign supporting a development designed to handle 16 million cubic metres of gas per day, equivalent to around 15% of Brazil's gas demand once on stream late this decade. Equinor has positioned Brazil as a key growth market and the US as a major contributor to its international upstream portfolio, alongside selective asset high-grading elsewhere. The strategy reflects a continued focus on operational delivery, scale and capital discipline beyond the North Sea amid volatile global energy markets.

©equinor

The pipes for the Raia gas export pipeline counts on a mostly local supply chain, with 99% of the steel produced by Brazilian companies for the production and coating of pipes for the 200 km gas pipeline that will connect the FPSO Raia platform ship to the Raia gas receiving facility at Cabiúnas, in the city of Macaé. Visit equinor.co.uk to find out more..

BP ADVANCES INTERNATIONAL UPSTREAM DELIVERY

In April 2026, bp reported strong upstream delivery in the first quarter of this year, supported by higher production from the Gulf of America and US onshore operations. The company reported upstream plant reliability of 95.7%, up from 95.4% in Q4 2025 – with higher production in the Gulf of Mexico and strong performance in bpx Energy offsetting the impact of disruptions in the Middle East and a North Sea divestment. For the quarter, bp delivered underlying replacement cost profit of $3.2 billion, reflecting resilient upstream performance amid heightened global market volatility. The company continues to position the Gulf of Mexico as a core long-life upstream hub, with large-scale assets supporting near-term delivery and contributing to international supply resilience through 2026.

©iStockphoto/ Yau Ming Low

POWERING CONNECTIONS

ACROSS THE ENERGY SECTOR

In a rapidly evolving energy landscape, visibility and credibility have never been more critical. Insight Energy is a trusted platform dedicated to connecting businesses across the UK's energy industry from offshore wind and oil & gas to emerging transition technologies.

For more details contact **Steve Maddams (Energy Brand Specialist) - steve.maddams@localiq.co.uk**

LOCALiQ ◆ FOLLOW US ON LinkedIn ◆ NEWSQUEST Media Group

PROUD MEMBERS OF OEUK

HYDROGEN

GB ENERGY INVESTS IN ITM POWER

On 9 April 2026, ITM Power UK Ltd announced a £40 million strategic equity investment from Great British Energy (GB Energy), alongside a £46.5 million Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) grant in principle, forming an £86.5 million combined package to support expansion of UK electrolyser manufacturing capacity. The funding is intended to enable a new large-scale automated manufacturing line with annual capacity of 1 GW for ITM's next-generation 'Chronos' electrolyser stack technology at its South Yorkshire facility; the DESNZ grant remains subject to subsidy control scrutiny before it is contracted.

At the intersection of energy security, industrial capability and skilled employment, the investment is expected to support more than 400 new roles across the region and wider supply chain. The deal represents GB Energy's largest investment in clean, homegrown power to date, underlining the role of public finance in scaling domestic manufacturing capability for emerging hydrogen technologies.

Chronos receives a £86.5 million equity and grant package from the UK government in April 2026.

HUMBER HYDROGEN

National Gas has joined Centrica, Equinor and SSE Thermal to develop Humber Hydrogen, a proposed integrated hydrogen transport and storage network centred on the UK's largest industrial cluster. The partners are working collaboratively to advance key infrastructure, including the Humber Hydrogen Pipeline and Aldbrough Hydrogen Storage, and will submit proposals under the government's Hydrogen Transport and Storage Business Model process. If successful, the funding decision - expected to be worth around £500 million - would support the development of large-scale hydrogen transport and storage infrastructure, underpinning the deployment of hydrogen across industrial sites, power generation and other hard-to-electrify sectors in the Humber. The project is positioned as a foundational step in enabling industrial decarbonisation and supporting wider hydrogen scale-up across the UK.

HYDROGEN INVESTMENT MOMENTUM HINGES ON STRATEGY CLARITY

The long-awaited refresh of the UK's Hydrogen Strategy emerged as a central issue for the sector this spring, as industry leaders cautioned that delayed policy clarity risks constraining investment momentum, with many across the hydrogen value chain warning that more than £20 billion of private capital is ready to deploy but remains stalled pending confirmation of the government's next-phase approach to hydrogen deployment. Further discussion around wider concerns has sparked in recent months, particularly around the growing disconnect between project maturity and policy clarity. While early-stage schemes are progressing and business models are largely in place, developers and investors stressed that uncertainty around future support mechanisms and demand-side signals is now acting as a brake on delivery.

Responding to the sector's concerns, Energy Minister Michael Shanks reiterated hydrogen's role as a core pillar of the UK's clean energy system and confirmed that a refreshed strategy will be published. He stated the update will set out clearer priorities, strengthen collaboration with industry and provide greater certainty on hydrogen's role in supporting energy security, industrial decarbonisation and regional economic growth.

MORGEN ENERGY REACHES FINAL INVESTMENT DECISION

MorGen Energy has reached Final Investment Decision (FID) on its West Wales Hydrogen project, a 20 MW low-carbon hydrogen production facility planned for Milford Haven. Construction is expected to begin in 2026, with commissioning targeted for early 2028. The project is among the first developments supported through the UK government's Hydrogen Allocation Round 1 (HAR1) to reach FID.

Located within the Celtic Freeport on the site of a former oil refinery, the facility is designed to produce around 2,000 tonnes of low-carbon hydrogen per year, in compliance with the UK's Low Carbon Hydrogen Standard. Hydrogen from the site will support applications including port decarbonisation, industrial heating, manufacturing and chemical feedstocks. The project is positioned as an early milestone in scaling hydrogen production and supporting industrial decarbonisation in South Wales.

POWER, PLACE & PRICE

WHO PAYS TO MOVE WIND SOUTH?

As offshore wind moves further North, who should pay for moving power South – generators, consumers, or a system-wide investment shared over time?

The future of UK offshore wind is being forged in the north; in harsher seas and deeper waters, Scotland's coastline and continental shelf offer the scale, wind resource and conditions required to deliver the next phase of offshore wind deployment. From a physical and geographic standpoint, the north offers the capacity and wind resource needed for the next phase of offshore wind deployment - particularly as projects move further offshore and towards floating technology. Yet the geography that makes the north optimal for generation is not mirrored by the geography of demand. Electricity consumption remains concentrated further south - shaped by population density, legacy industrial clusters and urban load centres. As a result, the UK's power system is increasingly defined by distance – an asymmetry between where electricity is produced and where it is ultimately used.

While Great Britain retains a single national wholesale electricity price - following the decision not to pursue zonal pricing - the costs associated with moving power across the system are recovered through transmission charging. As offshore wind deployment becomes more north-weighted, those charges are playing a more visible role in shaping project economics. In effect, the system continues to incentivise building wind where resource conditions are strongest, while applying cost signals that favour supplying electricity closer to demand. This tension sits at the heart of today's debate. As the UK redraws its generation map in pursuit of clean power targets, the pricing framework designed for a more centralised, fossil-led system is being tested by a fundamentally different spatial reality. Whether current arrangements can accommodate that shift, or require reform to better align generation, networks and demand, is now one of the defining questions for offshore wind's next decade.

That question is no longer theoretical, it is already visible in how transmission costs are distributed across the system - in practice, this results in a pronounced north–south differential. Offshore wind projects connecting in northern Scotland face significantly higher ongoing transmission charges than projects located closer to demand in southern England, while some southern zones benefit from neutral or negative tariffs. As Scottish projects increasingly dominate future allocation rounds, these charges feed directly into operating expenditure

"Electricity consumption remains concentrated further south - shaped by population density, legacy industrial clusters and urban load centres. As a result, the UK's power system is increasingly defined by distance – an asymmetry between where electricity is produced and where it is ultimately used."

and, by extension, CfD bid prices – with knock-on implications for consumer bills.

This dynamic has sharpened debate within the sector. Some developers argue that current TNUoS arrangements risk penalising resource-led investment and inflating system-wide costs – particularly as the location signal is applied after projects are already consented and committed - while others maintain that locational charges remain an essential cost-reflective signal, ensuring the real cost of transporting power is not obscured. The disagreement reflects a broader tension between encouraging efficient siting and avoiding outcomes that undermine delivery at scale.

Alongside TNUoS, a more structural reform has been considered through the Review of Electricity Market Arrangements (REMA) – though the UK Government has opted not to pursue it - namely the potential introduction of zonal electricity pricing, under which wholesale prices would vary by region rather than being set nationally. Proponents argue that zonal pricing could improve system efficiency, reduce congestion costs and better align investment and consumption with local conditions. Analysis commissioned by Octopus Energy and undertaken by FTI Consulting has pointed to material long-term consumer savings under certain scenarios.

However, other modelling, including work by AFRY, has highlighted the investment risks associated with a wholesale redesign of this scale, particularly for capital-intensive offshore wind projects already in the pipeline. AFRY's analysis cautions that higher revenue uncertainty and financing costs could outweigh any theoretical efficiency gains during a critical delivery window. Analysis commissioned by Octopus Energy and undertaken by FTI Consulting, as part of a wider multiclient study that included OEUK, has pointed to material long-term consumer savings under certain scenarios.

In recognition of these trade-offs, the UK Government confirmed in 2025 that it would retain a national wholesale market, opting instead for incremental reforms to improve coordination and efficiency while prioritising investment certainty. As offshore wind scales further and grid investment accelerates, the challenge for policymakers is less about ideology than balance: how to preserve cost-reflective signals without eroding the stability required to deliver capacity at scale and at pace. The resolution of that tension will shape both the cost and credibility of the UK's clean power transition. In parallel, northern projects are increasingly exploring alternative routes to market, including interconnection and hydrogen, as ways to manage system constraints and unlock value closer to production.

TRANSMISSION CHARGES ARE HOLDING BACK SCOTLAND'S WIND BOOM AND STARVING THE SUPPLY CHAIN

Case Study | Ocean Winds

Offshore wind is widely recognised as a generational economic opportunity for Scotland; a chance to build on and grow its place at the heart of Europe's energy sector. With world-class wind resources, established port infrastructure and a skilled workforce forged in decades of offshore operations, Scottish companies, projects and people are uniquely positioned to lead the global energy transition.

Billions of pounds of both private and public money have already been committed to making that future happen – in grid upgrades, port infrastructure and supply chain investment. But a mechanism buried deep in the electricity transmission system is quietly undermining these commitments. The risk of stranded assets is real and growing - upgraded grids with no new generation to plug into them, ports equipped for a pipeline of projects that never arrives. That is the trajectory if Transmission Network Use of System (TNUoS) charges are not urgently reformed. These unpredictable and swelling costs are already stalling projects, harming investor confidence and threatening the very pipeline of work that supply chain businesses are banking on for their long-term futures.

By way of background on what is an issue unbeknown to most, TNUoS charges recover the cost of building and maintaining Britain's national electricity transmission network, levied on both generators and demand users.

In principle, a logical mechanism for the era it was introduced. In practice, a system that is increasingly punishing Scottish offshore wind developers for utilising the abundant natural wind resource where it is found but which means that their turbines often sit far from the population centres that consume their power.

Wind Turbine Technicians at work on Moray East Offshore Wind Farm

CTV and SOV pictured on site at Moray East

The locational nature of the charging regime means renewable generators in the north of Scotland face the highest charges in the country while projects south of the border receive TNUoS payments – those southern projects are paid to connect into the grid. Crucially, the disparity between the north of Scotland and the south of Scotland is now greater than the disparity between the south of Scotland and the south of England – a striking illustration of just how acutely the problem is concentrated in Scotland's northern waters.

And those tariffs are surging in the north while, conversely, ballooning payments received in the south. For a 'Zone 1' offshore wind farm in the north of Scotland, annual charges are forecast to more than quadruple, from £16 million per year in 2016/17 to £72 million per year by 2031/32.

Across Scotland's existing generation fleet, analysis puts the additional lifetime transmission costs at around £2.9 billion above earlier expectations. These figures represent a real erosion of project returns, real damage to investment cases, and real consequences for the supply chain businesses that depend on those projects moving forward.

Ocean Wind's Moray East Offshore Wind Farm | Located off the coast of north-east Scotland, Moray East gives clear illustration of the problem. Secured on a Contracts for Difference basis in 2016/17, before reaching final investment decision in 2018, it now faces TNUoS charges 400% higher than those forecast at the point of CfD award, with no way to respond. A wind farm supporting over 480 jobs is being progressively devalued by a charging regime that is creating unpredictable and spiralling costs years after investors committed their capital.

Moray East Offshore Wind Farm

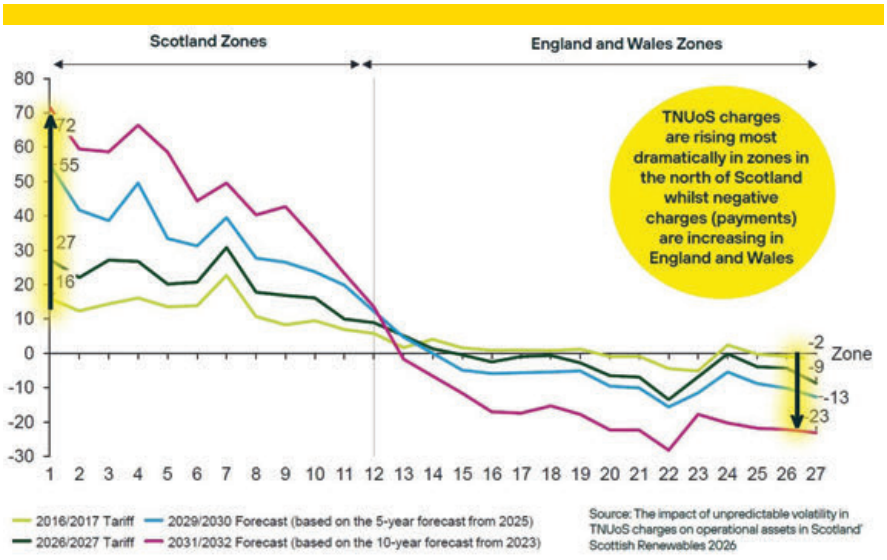


Figure showing the volatility of TNUoS across zone 1 in north of Scotland to zone 27 in south England.

"Across Scotland's existing generation fleet, analysis puts the additional lifetime transmission costs at around £2.9 billion above earlier expectations."

For the oil and gas supply chain - many of which have spent years and significant capital repositioning themselves to capture a share of Scotland's offshore wind bounty on the back of strong Government strategy and policy support for offshore wind development across the whole of the UK - this matters enormously.

Any strategic pivot for a business is predicated on a steady, growing pipeline of work, with projects reaching final investment decision and moving into construction and operations. TNUoS volatility is now directly threatening that pipeline.

Take the West of Orkney wind farm, a fully consented ScotWind development, exactly the kind of large-scale project Scotland's supply chain needs. Earlier this year, it publicly stated it is unlikely to proceed under the current TNUoS charging regime. Without meaningful reform before the next Contract for Difference (CfD) allocation round, AR8, Scotland risks being purposely and effectively priced out of competition, weakening pipeline continuity at precisely the moment supply chain investment needs the confidence to flow.

As always though, there are solutions to these problems. By fixing TNUoS charges for existing projects at the levels prevailing at their original CfD bid, by doing the same for new projects to restore investment certainty, and by launching a fundamental review of how transmission costs are recovered across the system, NESO, Ofgem and the UK Government can restore investor confidence by easing the burden on Scottish projects.

TNUoS may only seem like an issue for developers - after all, they will be the ones picking up the immediate bill - but those costs are ultimately passed on to consumer bills, and it is an issue impacting Scotland's wider energy industry. For supply chain businesses watching their offshore wind order books fail to materialise at the rate they had been led to believe, reform is a matter of the utmost urgency.

We can fix TNUoS, unlock Scotland's offshore wind future and support our world leading energy supply chain, but it will require industry and Government singing from the same hymn sheet. And with energy security now squarely in the sight of government, there has never been a better time to make the case for change. Key elements of energy security are to invest in grid and clean generation. This has a cost but one that delivers long term stability for consumers. TNUoS reform is vital to ensure Scotland and the wider UK benefits from the jobs and investment opportunities from building energy security, including smoothing the transition in energy jobs.

OCEAN WINDS

www.oceanwinds.com

AR8 CLEAN INDUSTRY BONUS (CIB) REFORMS MOVE INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

©istockphoto.com/ Gannet77

With the commencement of Spring, reforms to the Contracts for Difference (CfD) Clean Industry Bonus (CIB) became a live policy issue, as the Government moved to implement changes ahead of Allocation Round 8 (AR8) and formally referred the scheme to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

On 4 March, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) launched a consultation on proposed amendments to the CfD contract required to deliver the reformed CIB framework for AR8. The changes are intended to give contractual effect to policy decisions confirmed in February, including new workforce protection (including the interim Offshore Wind Fair Work Charter) and supply-chain requirements for fixed-bottom and floating offshore wind projects seeking bonus support.

The consultation focuses on how Clean Industry Bonus commitments will be evidenced, monitored and enforced through the CfD contract, marking a shift from high-level policy design into delivery detail ahead of the next allocation round. DESNZ said the reforms aim to strengthen the social, economic and environmental outcomes of offshore wind supply-chain investment while maintaining competitive allocation of support.

Alongside the consultation, the Government formally referred the proposed AR8 Clean Industry Bonus scheme to the CMA's Subsidy Advice Unit on 18 March. The referral, made under the UK's subsidy control regime, requires the CMA to assess whether the scheme complies with subsidy control principles and to publish an advisory report by the end of April.

The CMA referral is a formal step under the subsidy control regime, with the Clean Industry Bonus designed to provide additional revenue support within the CfD framework to offshore wind projects that commit to domestic supply-chain investment, workforce standards and skills investment. The scheme will again apply to fixed-bottom and floating offshore wind in AR8, with further expansion planned in later rounds.

Together, the consultation and CMA review mark a critical phase for AR8, as Clean Power 2030 ambitions increasingly hinge not only on capacity deployment but on how industrial, workforce and competition objectives are integrated into the UK's core support mechanisms for offshore wind.

C·P·O·G·S

CityPort Oil & Gas Services Ltd

Experts in the management of oil and gas major accident hazards

Why choose us?

We are experts in the management of Oil and Gas Major Accident Hazards.

We have in-depth knowledge of the upstream Oil and Gas Industry.

We are:

- **Pragmatic**
- **Client-focussed**
- **Cost-effective**

We will provide you with expert advice and technical support to effectively manage and minimise your HSE major accident risks

Find out more at **www.cpogs.com**

CityPort Oil & Gas Services Ltd.
Global House, Station Road
Ballasalla, IM9 2AE
Isle of Man

enquiries@cpogs.com
+44 (0)1624 852 297

TRANSFORMING OFFSHORE WIND TRAINING AND INNOVATION

Inside the VSimulators Facility at the University of Exeter

As the offshore wind sector continues its rapid expansion, particularly in Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW), the demands placed on workforce capability, safety, and operational efficiency are increasing at pace. Harsh environments, complex systems, and evolving technologies require not only highly skilled personnel, but also new approaches to training, testing, and research. This is where immersive simulation is beginning to redefine what's possible.

At the forefront of this evolution is the VSimulators, based at Exeter Science Park and is one of the University of Exeter's flagship facilities. The VSimulator is an advanced, immersive environment designed to support training, research, and product development across maritime and energy sectors. By combining virtual reality (VR), a motion platform capable of replicating real-world forces, motion capture technology, and integrated biomedical sensors, VSim offers a powerful and flexible platform for tackling some of offshore wind's most pressing challenges.

A New Standard for Technical Training
Training offshore wind technicians has always been a complex and resource-intensive process. Replicating real offshore conditions, particularly for floating wind installations, is difficult, costly, and often limited by safety constraints.

The VSimulators facility addresses this by enabling highly realistic, fully controlled simulation of offshore environments. The motion platform can replicate the dynamic movement of floating turbines, including the effects of wind, swell, and platform instability. When combined with immersive VR scenarios, trainees can experience the interior of a turbine, perform operational tasks, and respond to real-world situations without ever leaving the ground.

For FLOW technicians and engineers, this creates a step-change in training capability. Individuals can build familiarity with turbine environments, practice complex procedures, and develop confidence in handling challenging conditions, all before deployment offshore. This not only accelerates learning but also reduces risk during early-stage field exposure.

Enhancing Safety Through Simulation
Health and safety remain central to offshore wind operations. However, traditional training methods often struggle to replicate high-risk scenarios in a safe and repeatable way. VSimulators enable the creation of realistic safety-critical scenarios within a controlled environment. Emergency situations, equipment failures, and adverse weather conditions can all be simulated, allowing personnel to rehearse responses and refine decision-making under pressure. This approach not only supports compliance but competence; by exposing individuals to challenging situations in advance, organisations can build more resilient teams, improve incident response, and embed best practices more effectively across their operations.

Driving Research and Operational Efficiency
Beyond training, the VSimulators facility offers significant potential for industry research. Offshore wind operations are heavily influenced by human performance, yet factors such as fatigue, motion sickness, and cognitive load are often difficult to measure and quantify in real-world settings. With integrated biomedical sensors and motion capture technology, VSim enables detailed analysis of physiological and biomechanical responses during simulated tasks. Organisations can study how individuals interact with equipment, how fatigue develops over time, and how environmental conditions impact performance.

These insights can be used to inform the design of standard operating procedures, optimise workflows, and improve overall efficiency - for an industry where downtime is costly and margins are tight, even incremental performance improvements can deliver substantial value.

Supporting Product Development and Innovation
As offshore wind technology continues to evolve, there is a growing need for effective testing and validation of new systems and equipment. The VSimulators facility provides a unique environment for product development, allowing organisations to trial designs in realistic conditions before deployment.

Engineers can assess how new tools, interfaces, or components perform under simulated offshore conditions, while also observing how users interact with them. This human-centred approach to design helps ensure that products are not only technically robust but also practical and intuitive to use in the field.

In the context of floating wind, where operational complexity is higher and margins for error are smaller, this capability is particularly valuable. Early-stage testing in a controlled environment can reduce development risk, shorten iteration cycles, and accelerate time to market.

Towards Hybrid Training Environments
Looking ahead, one of the most exciting developments is the potential for hybrid training, integrating physical equipment within virtual environments. This approach combines the tactile feedback of real-world tools with the flexibility and scalability of VR. For offshore wind applications, this could enable technicians to train using actual equipment while immersed in a simulated turbine or offshore setting. The result is a more realistic and engaging learning experience, with greater transferability of skills to real-world operations.

Building the Workforce of the Future
The offshore wind sector is entering a critical phase of growth, marked by ambitious deployment targets and intensifying global competition. Meeting these demands will require not just more people, but better-prepared, highly capable teams. Facilities like VSimulators represent a shift in how the industry approaches training, research, and innovation. By providing a safe, flexible, and data-rich environment, they enable organisations to develop skills, improve performance, and reduce risk in ways that were previously not possible.

For operators, developers, and supply chain partners alike, the message is clear: immersive simulation is no longer a future concept; it is a practical, scalable solution that can deliver immediate impact.

As offshore wind continues to push into deeper waters and more challenging environments, the ability to prepare, test, and innovate onshore will be a defining advantage.

Find out more at:
exeter.ac.uk/research/facilities/vsimulators/

HEALTH & SAFETY

RECENT TRENDS IN THE WEIGHT AND WIDTH OF UK OFFSHORE WORKERS

What the operational data shows

The physical characteristics of the UK offshore workforce are not static. Important shifts in weight and size over preceding years have had very real, practical implications for the way offshore installations are designed and operated - particularly when it comes to safety critical escape and evacuation systems.

In 2024, OEUK commissioned CPOGS to examine how changes in the physical profile (weight and width) of the UK offshore workforce may affect offshore design assumptions. This work included a statistical analysis of offshore worker weight using anonymised data from the Vantage POB database, drawing on measurements recorded during offshore helicopter travel in December 2022. Building on that initial study, OEUK provided CPOGS with access to a broader set of anthropometric data in 2025, covering average offshore worker weight across 2024 and shoulder width measurements up to July 2025. This expanded dataset enabled a more comprehensive assessment of current workforce characteristics, culminating in a new summary report prepared for industry publication.

Intended for operators, duty holders, regulators and safety professionals, the report offers an up to date statistical picture of offshore worker weight and shoulder width, while also allowing comparison with the earlier December 2022 analysis to identify any emerging trends over time. Within the latest anthropometric report, this comparison provides additional context for understanding how weight and size patterns within the UK offshore workforce are evolving, and where design assumptions remain robust.

OEUK published the latest CPOGS summary report in April 2026, making it available to download via the OEUK website. This article provides an overview of the source data, key findings and conclusions from the analysis.

The Anthropometric Source Data
Reliable analysis depends on robust, real world data. In the UK offshore oil and gas sector, this data is drawn from the Vantage POB personnel tracking system, operated by LOGIC on behalf of the offshore industry. Each time workers travel offshore by helicopter, their measured weight is recorded, creating a comprehensive dataset grounded in day to day operational activity. For this study, anonymised records for 49,513 workers who travelled offshore during 2024 were provided to support further analysis.

Alongside weight, shoulder width is a critical consideration in the design of offshore escape and evacuation systems. These measurements are taken by OEUK approved medical personnel and recorded within the Vantage POB system. For this analysis, anonymised shoulder width measurements were drawn from the Vantage POB database for all offshore workers with a recorded non zero value as of 10 July 2025. In total, 104,965 individual data entries were included, effectively capturing the UK offshore workforce since shoulder width recording was first introduced in April 2015.

C·P·O·G·S

CityPort Oil & Gas Services Ltd

CPOGS is a technical safety consultancy specialising in offshore safety critical analysis. The firm supports operators, duty holders and regulators with evidence based assessments across areas including workforce anthropometrics, escape and evacuation system evaluation and Safety Case revisions. CPOGS has worked closely with OEUK on industry wide studies to determine the average weight and shoulder width distributions for UK offshore workers, and to highlight the correct design methodologies to use when assessing the continued suitability of marine lifeboats installed on UK offshore platforms.

Offshore Worker Shoulder Width Data - Results

Following pre-processing of the Vantage-POB weight data, the mean and standard deviation of the dataset was calculated for the overall population of all workers (male and female combined), and the male and female populations in isolation. The table below summarises the results.

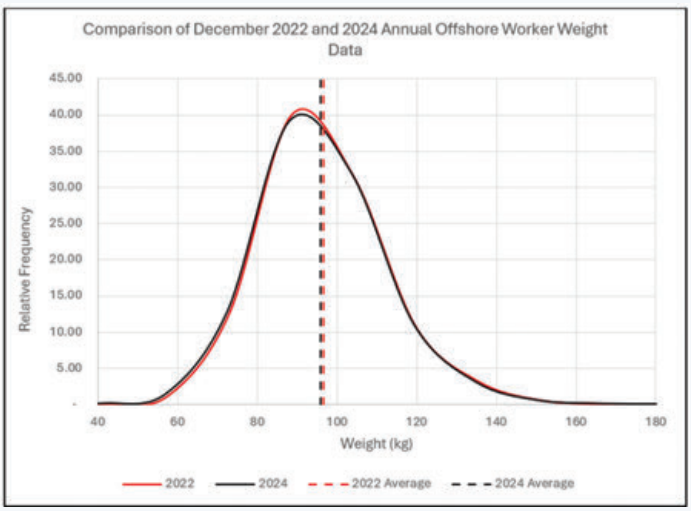
Table 1 - Mean and Standard Deviation of UK Sector Offshore Worker Weight in 2024.

2024 UK Offshore Workers - Category	Average Weight (Kg)	Standard Deviation (Kg)
Male Population of Offshore Workers	96.54	15.22
Female Population of Offshore Workers	78.67	14.94
Overall Population of Offshore Workers	**95.85**	**15.59**

The average weight estimate for 2024 is nominally 0.71kg lower than the average weight previously calculated using the December 2022 dataset, which recorded an average of 96.56kg. However, the two datasets are not directly comparable. The December 2022 analysis provided a single point estimate based on one month of winter data, while the 2024 dataset reflects average worker weight measured across the entire year. It is therefore likely that the difference between the two estimates is linked to seasonal variation. Seasonal variation in human weight is a well recognised feature of medical research, with populations typically recording higher weights during the winter months and holiday periods. For offshore workers, this effect is compounded by operational requirements, with a third insulating layer worn in December to comply with mandatory winter helicopter clothing policies.

Based on the analysis of the 2024 annual weight data, CPOGS concludes that there has been no observable increase or decrease in offshore worker weight between December 2022 and the end of 2024. CPOGS therefore consider it appropriate for duty holders to use a revised average weight estimate of 95.85kg, with a standard deviation of 15.59kg, cross referenced to 2024, for future design weight calculations for evacuation and escape systems. Figure 1 provides a direct visual comparison of the December 2022 and annual 2024 datasets.

Figure 1 - Normalised Population Comparison for December 2022 and 2024 Annual Average Weight Distribution Datasets for UK Offshore Workers



Within the UK offshore energy industry, several key milestone values are particularly relevant in 2026 in relation to offshore weight considerations. One such value is 124kg. The updated distribution of offshore worker weight data indicates that approximately 5% of the UK offshore population weighed more than 124kg (19.5 stone) in 2024. As a result, a proportion of the offshore workforce is currently above the new industry safe weight limit, which comes into effect in November 2026.

Offshore Worker Shoulder Width Data - Results

The shoulder width data provided to CPOGS captures the recorded shoulder width of offshore workers registered in the Vantage POB database as of July 2025. In total, 104,965 individual data entries were available for analysis, giving the dataset a high degree of statistical significance. However, this figure is also substantially larger than the active UK offshore workforce in 2024/25, which is estimated to comprise approximately 50,000 personnel.

CPOGS analysis of the original database query indicates that the shoulder width dataset is representative of UK offshore workers spanning the period from 2014, when shoulder width measurements were first introduced, through to July 2025.

Detailed examination of the July 2025 dataset shows an average shoulder width of 49.33cm, with an associated standard deviation of 3.44cm, for UK offshore workers in 2025. The results are summarised in the table below, while Figure 2 illustrates the distribution across the male, female and overall offshore workforce.

Table 2 - Mean and Standard Deviation of Offshore Personnel Shoulder Width (2025 Vantage-POB Data).

2025 UK Offshore Workers - Category	Average Shoulder Width (cm)	Standard Deviation (cm)
Male Population of Offshore Workers	49.58	3.24
Female Population of Offshore Workers	43.97	3.35
Total Population of Offshore Workers	**49.33**	**3.44**

CPOGS would consider it appropriate for duty holders to use the above values for future shoulder width calculations for evacuation and escape systems.

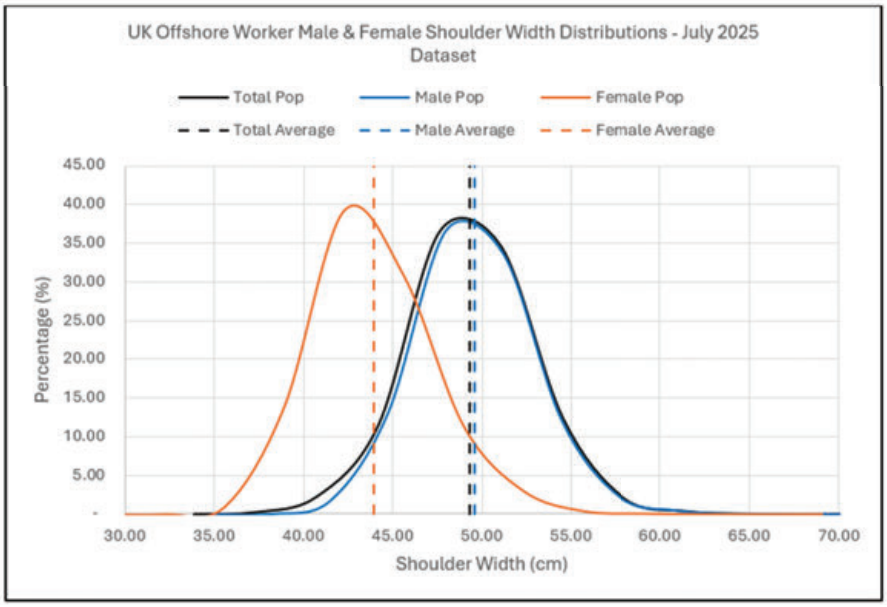
Comparison of the July 2025 and December 2025 shoulder width data also indicates that the distribution of offshore shoulder width has not varied significantly with time. A further analysis of the July 2025 shoulder width dataset by worker age group indicates that there is no significant difference in shoulder width by age group, suggesting that there is no observable trend in shoulder width anticipated (either increasing or decreasing) as the offshore population ages.

General Conclusions

CPOGS concludes that the additional 2024 and 2025 datasets drawn from Vantage POB provide a robust and valuable extension to earlier analysis of offshore worker weight and size in the UK sector. While these datasets offer improved quality compared with the initial December 2022 data, differences in format mean that direct comparison requires careful interpretation. Nevertheless, the overarching conclusion remains clear: there has been no meaningful change in offshore worker weight or shoulder width between December 2022 and the end of 2024.

Looking ahead, the analysis would benefit from being repeated in future years, as genuine shifts in weight trends are anticipated - particularly in light of the introduction of the industry safe weight limit of 124kg for workers on UK offshore installations in 2026.

Figure 2 - Plot of the Male & Female Vantage-POB July 2025 Offshore Shoulder Width Data Smoothed Using a Standard Deviation Data Bin



The above CPOGS anthropometric summary report can be downloaded for free by OEUK members by visiting

https://oeuk.org.uk/product/statistical-analysis-of-uk-offshore-workers-2024-and-2025-data/

PEOPLE OF ENERGY

Earlier this year, two members of the OEUK Communications Team travelled offshore to meet and interview our People of Energy, capturing first-hand accounts of life and work at sea.

Operating in demanding environments and spending extended periods away from family and friends, the offshore workforce plays a vital role in keeping homes, businesses and industries across the UK powered – yet their stories often go untold.

Through these conversations, they share their experiences, reflections and the realities behind the energy that underpins modern Britain.

Life offshore, seen up close

Aimee Wallace, OEUK Social Media Adviser

My relationship with the offshore world has always been complicated, and perhaps that's exactly why it matters so much to me now.

My first experience offshore came in 2012, when I was 24 years old and working as a steward. I had never done anything like it. The environment was tough, the work was physical, the conditions were unforgiving, and not everyone was welcoming. As a young woman in that setting, I encountered attitudes that were difficult to navigate and experiences I wouldn't want to repeat. I was also carrying something heavier with me - my Dad had passed away just a month before I started. Looking back, I was grieving, out of my depth, and learning, sometimes painfully, what it meant to work in a world that the rest of us on the shore rarely see clearly.

Being away from home during that time was its own kind of hardship. It always seemed like life carried on without me, plans were made for the weeks I was offshore and trying to maintain a relationship with a partner who also worked offshore, on a fixed rota while mine was ad hoc, added another layer of difficulty. You are simultaneously part of a tight community out there and completely removed from your own.

"I was grieving, out of my depth, and learning, sometimes painfully, what it meant to work in a world that the rest of us on the shore rarely see clearly."

None of that is said to be dramatic. It's said because it's true, and because those experiences stay with you. They gave me a lasting respect for the people who do this work. Rotation after rotation, year after year, the people who work offshore are making sacrifices that never make it into the news cycle.

After my time as a steward, I went onshore to work as an executive assistant at Wood Group PSN (now Wood) for three years, before being made redundant when the oil price crash hit the industry. In what feels like the most unexpected chapter of a career story, I then opened a bridal dress shop – a leap that felt enormous at the time, and which I ran for two years. But energy had a way of pulling me back. A former Wood colleague offered me a role at the Offshore Contractors Association (OCA), and I made the decision to sell the shop and return to the sector. That was 2017, and I haven't looked back.

At the OCA, I was part of the team working on pay negotiations for the offshore workforce, sitting at a table where the livelihoods of thousands of workers were being discussed. It gave me a different vantage point on the industry: not the cold steel of a platform, but the harder, slower work of fighting for fair conditions for the people on them. From there, I moved into marketing and social media at OEUK, where I've spent the years since telling the story of an industry that too often goes untold.

And then, in 2023, I went offshore again – this time with Ithaca Energy, to the Captain FPSO in the Northern North Sea. Not as a steward, but as a content creator and interviewer, there to listen to the workforce and amplify their voices. I went again most recently, again with Ithaca to the Cygnus platform, for the same purpose - the two visits bookending a very different chapter in my relationship with the offshore world.

Before either trip, the preparation alone is a reminder of how serious this environment is. To set foot on an offshore installation, you need your BOSIET, your MIST certification and a full offshore medical. When I travelled to the Cygnus it was also mandatory to have the Norwegian escape chute training and donut survival training as a minimum. That's before you've packed a bag. It is a considerable commitment, and it's a commitment the workforce makes as a baseline requirement of simply earning a living. It puts things in perspective very quickly.

What these offshore visits have given me, and what I hope the content created there gives others, is a genuine, human window into what working offshore actually looks like. Those of us in office roles, myself included, can talk about the workforce in abstract terms: headcounts, rotas, skills gaps, transition timelines. But sitting down with the people who live this life, who work away from their families, who submit themselves to rigorous safety regimes, who take genuine pride in keeping the UK's lights on, you are reminded that none of it is abstract at all.

Aimee's most recent visit offshore to Cygnus A in Spring 2026

Aimee Wallace (age 24), working offshore as a steward in 2012

"Before either trip, the preparation alone is a reminder of how serious this environment is. To set foot on an offshore installation, you need your BOSIET, your MIST certification and a full offshore medical."

That human connection sits at the heart of OEUK's My Energy Job, Our Energy Future campaign. Through the People of Energy platform, we're creating a space where energy workers can be seen, heard, and valued, not as statistics, but as the individuals who power this country every day. There is no version of a just and successful energy transition that doesn't begin with listening to them.

I came offshore for the first time at 24, grieving and uncertain, in an environment that didn't always make space for me. I've come back, years later, specifically to make space for others. That, in a way, is what this sector has given me and what I hope, in some small way, I can give back to it.

People, places and pride

Peter Welsh, OEUK Workforce Engagement Campaign Lead

The offshore sector has a powerful and emotional story to tell about who we are, what we do and why this work matters to the people behind it – that's been crystal-clear since I joined OEUK last October.

For two decades, my own working life has really boiled down to two things – storytelling and campaigning. I've helped to tell other people's stories from the places where they work and then campaigned with them to try and better their livelihoods.

I've been fortunate to have worked with people across the country, getting to know their industries and communities, understanding their skills and experiences, and appreciating the value of their time and labour. It's a journey that's taken me from schools in South London to manufacturing sites in the Midlands, social care in Glasgow to fabrication yards in Fife.

"North Sea strands are in our personal DNA, and championing the sector and its people isn't just a profession, it's a passion."

Inevitably, the journey was destined to reach the offshore sector. My Dad was an engineer who worked in the North Sea on the diving support vessels Seawell and Wellservicer. Like many of my OEUK colleagues, North Sea strands are in our personal DNA, and championing the sector and its people isn't just a profession, it's a passion.

In recent years, as the debate around the future of the North Sea has seriously intensified, I've been

Left to right: Shaun Everitt, Cygnus A Production Supervisor, Mike Carling, Offshore Installation Manager, Peter Walsh, OEUK Campaign Consultant

"Feelings about existing government policy and rhetoric towards their livelihoods range from bewilderment to anger, and perhaps above all, a sense of deep disrespect."

able to work closely with our industry leaders, operators and contractors, and, crucially, listen to the concerns of energy workers in their offshore and onshore workplaces, including those on my recent trip to Ithaca Energy's Cygnus A platform in the Southern North Sea.

What the Cygnus visit has brought into focus is a clear disconnect between the lived experience of the workforce – the people who work every day to keep our homes warm, lights on and industry turning – and those shaping energy and industrial policy. Feelings about existing government policy and rhetoric towards their livelihoods range from bewilderment to anger, and perhaps above all, a sense of deep disrespect.

This is in stark contrast to the pride our energy workers have in their production and skills, something that comes from an understanding of their contribution towards the national interest, and that none of it comes easy. Homegrown energy takes sacrifices, from the mandatory safety and survival training needed just to earn a living offshore to working away from your family and friends for up to six months a year.

If it sounds emotional, its because it is. I could hear it speaking with Cygnus A's veteran Offshore Installation Manager Mike Carling from Teesside and Rachel Elliot, an Instrument Apprentice from Fife at the beginning of her career in offshore energies. These people and what they have to say really matters.

If the government wants to make a success of the transition, then the gulf between production and policy must be bridged. That means the people of energy must be engaged much more meaningfully and shown greater respect by our political leaders.

Instrument Apprentice – Rachel Elliot

Offshore Installation Manager – Mike Carling

The People of Energy on Cygnus A (left to right)
Rachel Elliot, Shaun Ryan, Cameron Stark, and Craig Borsberry.

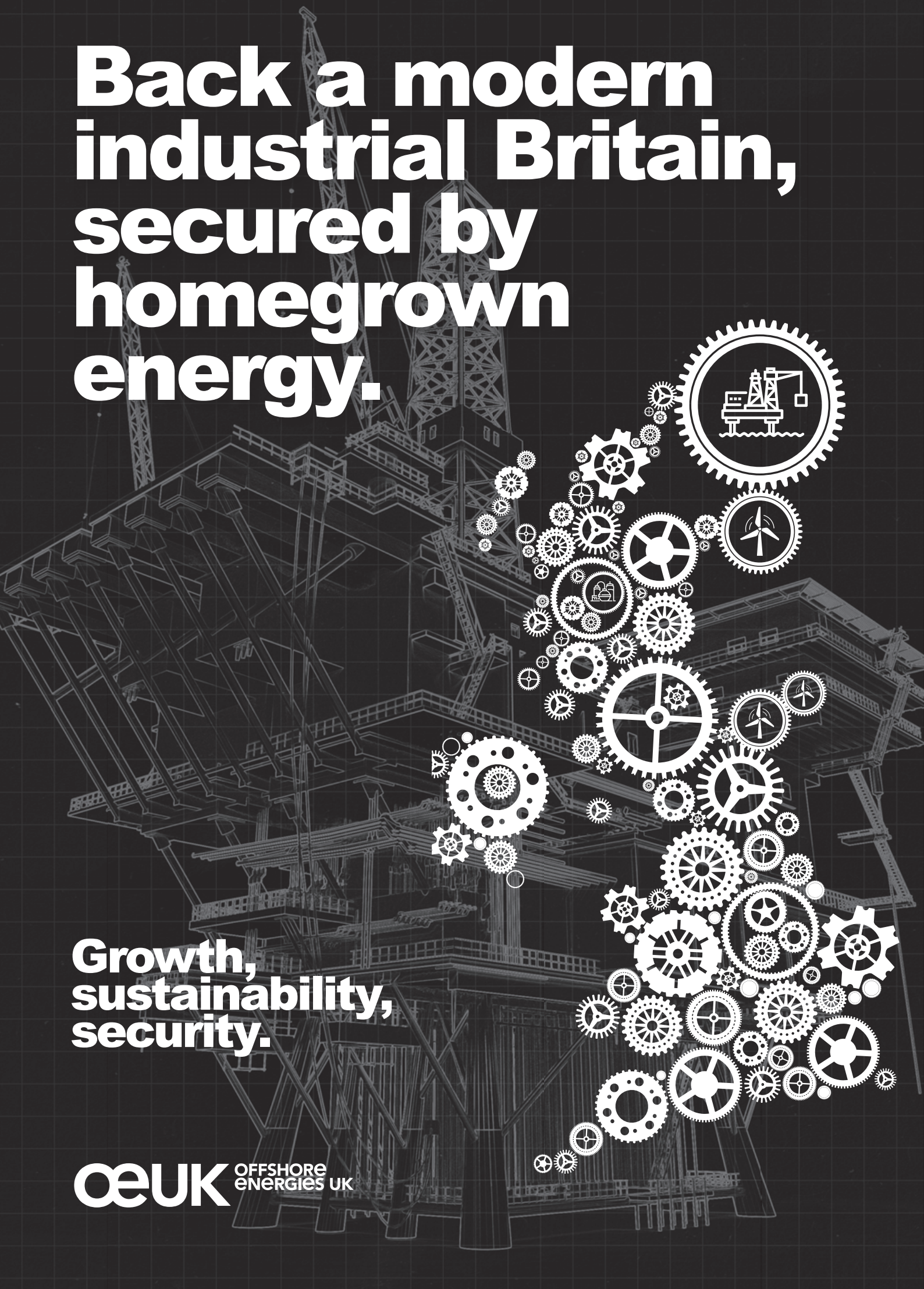
How many Ministers could point-out communities like Cygnus on a map? How many MPs could tell you where its production lands onshore? How many of their staffers could quantify how many livelihoods are directly supported by this process?

It must be part of our mission to make sure the answers are known by the many and not the few, because that is how we build a political consensus that depolarises the debate, supports pragmatic policies, and ultimately backs homegrown energy, jobs and communities.

Fundamental to achieving this are the people, places and pride of our offshore energies sector. "My energy job, our energy future" isn't simply a message on a placard, it's a space for OEUK members and their employees to be seen and heard, and to campaign together for a better future.

See our People of Energy, and contriute your own stories on our website, scan the QR code below

Back a modern industrial Britain, secured by homegrown energy.



Growth, sustainability, security.

OEUK OFFSHORE ENERGIES UK

700 MILES AND A WORLD APART

Why Norway and the UK are on divergent energy trajectories

Dr Mark McClelland
OEUK Acting Corporate Affairs Director & Head of External Affairs

A visit in March to Offshore Norge's annual conference in Oslo was a powerful reminder that despite a shared history of developing offshore resources in the North Sea over the past fifty years, the UK and Norway are now on very different trajectories - driven by policy, not geology.

Accompanied by OEUK's Head of Communications, Tim Warnes, we found ourselves in the unusual surroundings of an indoor skate park in downtown Oslo, which had been temporarily converted into a venue for 500 people from Norway's energy sector. We were there to listen to industry leaders and a range of prominent Norwegian politicians - including centre-left Labour Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre, and the leaders of the Centre Party, Conservative Party, and the populist Progress Party.

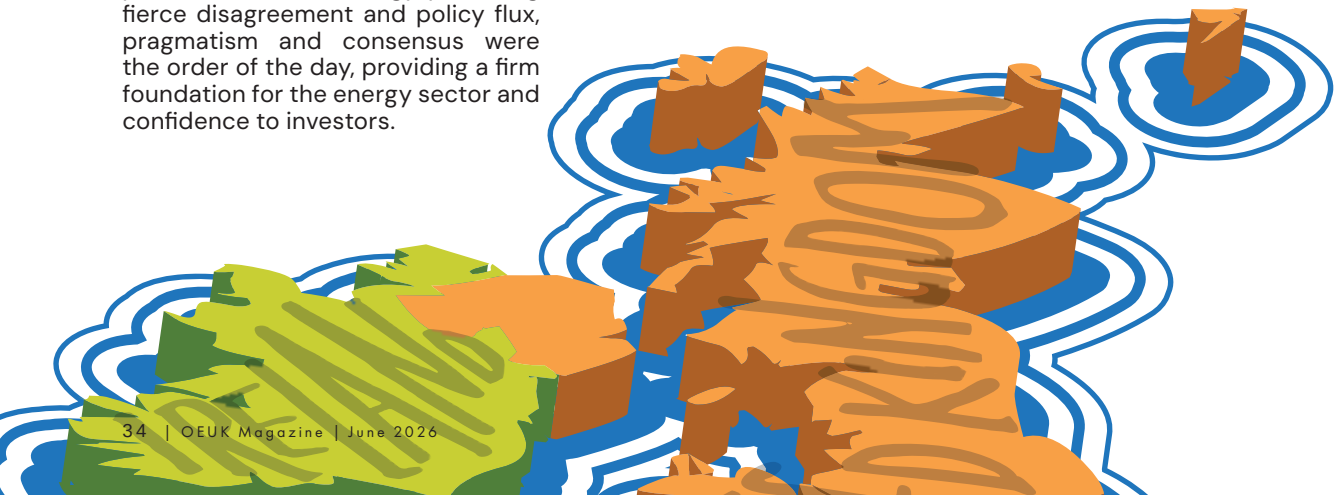
It's just over 700 miles as the crow flies from Westminster to Oslo. But listening to Norway's political leaders from across the political spectrum addressing the makeshift auditorium, one after the other speaking proudly of the offshore oil and gas sector, the distance between the UK and Norway when it came to energy policy felt a lot further. Instead of polarisation and ideology provoking fierce disagreement and policy flux, pragmatism and consensus were the order of the day, providing a firm foundation for the energy sector and confidence to investors.

There was, quite understandably, repeated recognition from the stage of the importance of homegrown energy production for Norwegian economic growth. While UK production has dwindled in recent years due to fiscal and regulatory challenges, production from the Norwegian Continental Shelf has continued to underpin Norway's economy. However, the arguments advanced from political leaders were not focused purely on economic self-interest; there was instead an understanding of how oil and gas produced in Norway was critical for energy security - and ultimately national security - for the whole of Europe, including the UK.

After the twin shocks of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and now the war in Iran, the supply of homegrown oil and gas from the North Sea is more critical than ever. As the top two producers in the region and with the phase out of Russian supply, Norway and the UK have an important role to play in underpinning energy security in Europe. While Norwegian policymakers have grasped this, much work still needs to be done in Westminster and Whitehall to ensure the same appreciation of the North Sea's importance.

No one denies that after fifty years of production, the North Sea is a mature basin. But there remain many billions of barrels of oil and gas on both sides of the maritime border - resources that can reduce reliance on imports from outside Europe. This is not about increasing consumption of oil and gas; this is about ensuring, that for as long as oil and gas is consumed, it is better that as much of this is produced domestically - for the sake of the economy, jobs, skills, industrial resilience, energy security and lower carbon emissions.

The story of the past decade is one of divergence between Norway and the United Kingdom. According to the latest data from Rystad, in 2015, investment was broadly similar, with upstream capital expenditure totalling $21bn in Norway and $18.8bn in the UK. Fast forward a decade to



'Instead of polarisation and ideology provoking fierce disagreement and policy flux, pragmatism and consensus were the order of the day'

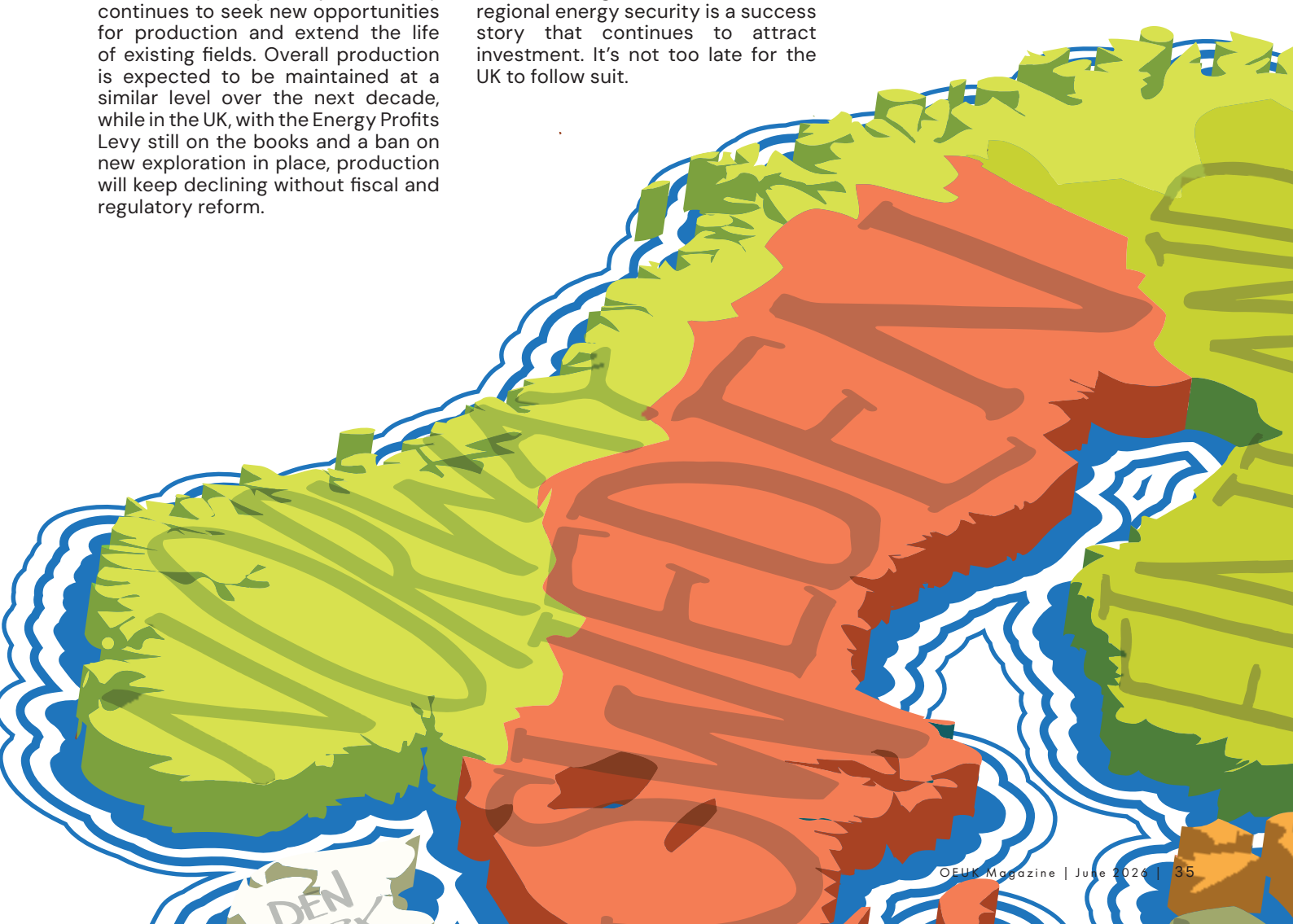
Mark also had the opportunity to speak with State Secretary Snorre Erichsen Skjevrak, from the Norwegian Ministry of Energy, about the government's vision for the sector.

Watch online on LinkedIn, scan the QR code below

2025, in Norway, it had increased to $24.2bn, but as a result of fiscal and regulatory conditions, it slumped to just $5.5bn in Britain. Almost three-quarters (73%) of the Norwegian capex was in the North Sea. After being close to parity at the turn of the millennium, Norway produced over three times as much oil and gas as the UK last year.

With 57 new offshore licences issued in January this year, Norway continues to seek new opportunities for production and extend the life of existing fields. Overall production is expected to be maintained at a similar level over the next decade, while in the UK, with the Energy Profits Levy still on the books and a ban on new exploration in place, production will keep declining without fiscal and regulatory reform.

Events in the Middle East over the past weeks have exposed our energy security vulnerabilities. The DESNZ Gas System in Transition: Security of Supply consultation - with its sanguine tone towards increased reliance on LNG imports - now looks strangely anachronistic, overtaken by the pace of geopolitical events. Norway shows that a stable fiscal and regulatory regime, cross-party support for energy policy, and a deep understanding of the contribution to regional energy security is a success story that continues to attract investment. It's not too late for the UK to follow suit.



OEUK NEWS

OEUK X PROSPER ENERGY HUSTINGS EVENT

Early April saw OEUK host an energy hustings event, delivered in partnership with Prosper in the run-up to the Scottish Parliament elections - bringing together senior energy spokespeople from across the political spectrum to discuss the challenges and opportunities for Scotland's homegrown energy future. Discussion focused squarely on the realities facing Scotland's energy system and economy, moving beyond high-level ambition to the practical choices required over the next parliamentary term. Energy security, affordability and the pace of transition featured prominently, with a broad recognition that the transition must work in practice for businesses, workers and communities. There was clear consensus that homegrown energy will remain essential to maintaining resilient supply and supporting industrial competitiveness. The debate also reflected growing concern that the current policy and fiscal environment risks undermining investment, weakening supply chains and accelerating job losses, at a time when geopolitical instability has reaffirmed that energy security is inseparable from national security.

OEUK FACILITATES MEDIA VISIT TO ST FERGUS GAS TERMINAL

We were also delighted to facilitate a media visit to the St Fergus gas terminal in the Spring, centred on the role of gas infrastructure in underpinning the UK's energy security. Discussions emphasised the strategic importance of domestic gas supply in reducing reliance on imports and ensuring system resilience. St Fergus was positioned not only as vital to today's energy needs but also as a strategic asset for the future, supporting decarbonisation ambitions through carbon capture and hydrogen. The visit reinforced the message that the UK energy transition must be rooted in pragmatism, protect critical infrastructure and ensure security of supply to deliver a homegrown energy future.

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION VISITS WELL-SAFE RIG

Late March saw OEUK host a visit from the Leader of the Opposition to the Well-Safe protector rig in Aberdeen, providing a first-hand opportunity to engage with the offshore sector and its workforce. Discussions focused on the investment climate for oil and gas and the critical role the North Sea continues to play in meeting UK energy demand. The visit highlighted the consequences of policy uncertainty and fiscal instability, with operators and supply chain companies underlining the importance of long-term certainty to unlock investment and sustain skilled jobs. The conversation reinforced that a managed homegrown energy future depends on maintaining a strong offshore industry today, ensuring that expertise, infrastructure and capital are not lost before we unlock an integrated energy future.

Katy Heidenreich and Mark McClelland from OEU, meet Conservative Leader Kemi Badenochmeets at Well Saf ein Aberndeen

UK OFFSHORE WIND: THE NEXT CHAPTER

BREAKFAST BRIEFINGS | ABERDEEN & LONDON

OEUK launched its Wind Insight 2026 report, authored by OEUK Wind & Renewables Manager Thibaut Cheret, across two breakfast briefings in Aberdeen (May 6) and London (May 7), bringing together stakeholders from across the offshore wind ecosystem to reflect on the challenges and opportunities shaping the sector's next phase of development.

Together, the sessions offered a grounded assessment of the UK offshore wind landscape at a critical moment - from the strength and readiness of the Scottish supply chain to the investment, policy and market signals required to maintain project momentum. Contributions from an array of speakers spanning developers, the supply chain, investors, policymakers and technical specialists explored issues including pipeline confidence, grid reform and transmission charges, curtailment, and the long-term price and policy environment beyond 2030.

While each location brought a distinct lens - capability and capacity in Aberdeen, capital and clarity in London - a consistent theme emerged: delivering offshore wind at scale will depend on stable policy frameworks, predictable infrastructure delivery and sustained investor confidence, alongside a competitive and well-prepared UK supply chain.

Download OEUK's Offshore Wind Insight at oeuk.org.uk

SPEAKERS:

London | Speakers & Panellists

Enrique Cornejo, Energy Policy Director, OEUK

Will Apps, Offshore Wind Strategy Director, Marine, The Crown Estate

Jason Brown, Global Offshore Wind Market Director, Kent

Thibaut Cheret, Wind & Renewables Manager, OEUK

Tim Pick MBE, Chair, Offshore Wind Growth Partnership

Richard Crossick, Head of Public Affairs, UK, Ørsted

Aberdeen | Speakers & Panellists

Enrique Cornejo, Energy Policy Director, OEUK

Susan McDonald, Energy Transition Lead, Deloitte

Ben Andrew, Global Engineering Director - Renewables, 2H, Acteon's Engineering Consultancy

Gordon Farmer, Board Director, Global

Adam Morrison, UK and Ireland Country Manager, Ocean Winds

Thibaut Cheret, Wind & Renewables Manager, OEUK

Derek Christie, Government Affairs Scotland and UK Locations, Siemens Energy

OEUK SECURITY AND RESILIANCE

| MARK WILSON, OEUK ENERGY OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Since its formation in February 2022, the Industry Resilience Group (IRG) has been instrumental in facilitating industry engagement with stakeholders, particularly in response to the impacts of the Ukraine war. Drawing from the lessons learned during the pandemic, the IRG has evolved into the Security and Resilience Group, connecting OEUK members with UK and Scottish Governments, regulators, and trade associations on key matters of physical security, cyber security, and resilience.

We recognise that geopolitical factors shift rapidly and carry organisational, regional, and global risks - often intensified by advances in artificial technology. While there has been considerable media and industry attention on malicious activity in the North Sea, it's important to emphasise that no deliberate malicious acts have been reported in the UK. Nevertheless, we remain vigilant, encouraging the reporting of any suspicious activity as part of our updated security protocols for OIMs, which now include guidance on protestor response and other emerging threats.

OEUK's commitment to safeguarding the offshore energy sector is evident in our proactive approach to both Information Technology (IT) and Operational Technology (OT) cybersecurity. By collaborating closely with members, government, and regulators, we ensure the sharing of good practices, rapid incident response, and regulatory alignment - ultimately strengthening collective resilience and driving sector-wide improvement. In this evolving threat landscape, integrating cyber and physical security is more crucial than ever.

Our network continues to expand, with influential groups such as the Covent Garden Group recently gathering in Edinburgh, and weekly discussions with DESNZ to address resilience and emerging industry issues. Please flag any concerns that should be raised. Topics include the impact of sanctions, aviation spares and fuel, and risks posed by communicable diseases abroad. We maintain strong engagement with multiple government groups in both physical and cyber security, ensuring swift and effective responses through established networks.

We consistently advocate for a pragmatic and proportionate approach to industry preparedness. OEUK has organised several security and resilience exercises, sharing lessons learnt and identifying areas for improvement. On 21 April 2026, the latest exercise was held in Aberdeen with support from industry and regulators. To keep stakeholders informed and engaged, we launched the OEUK Security and Resilience Conference in 2025 and continue quarterly webinars, all of which have seen strong attendance and positive feedback. The 2026 conference took place on 22 April in Aberdeen, featuring speakers from industry, academia, and government who addressed current developments in both physical and cyber security.

During the exercise, participants tackled an offshore scenario with various injects throughout the day - including suspicious activity, drones, protestors, and cyber threats. Three groups - the Offshore Emergency Response Team (ERT), Onshore Incident Management Team (IMT), and Crisis Management Team (CMT) - held focused discussions to share good practices, identify improvements,

and strengthen security networks. Results will be anonymised to encourage openness, with key outcomes centering on stakeholder integration, reporting timelines, and operational technology threat understanding.

Security and resilience challenges remain complex, with a wide spectrum of threats and vulnerabilities demanding ongoing evaluation as circumstances change. Complacency must not undermine our security arrangements; robust testing of control measures is essential. Recommendations from recent events include working with competent individuals who bring divergent and conceptual thinking, fostering a security mindset that is curious and threat-aware, engaging stakeholders across the event lifecycle for greater understanding, and ensuring communication is clear and focused using common language. Response plans must be thoroughly tested, as training is the optimal time to identify weaknesses - not during an actual incident.

Despite all this activity, we are not complacent and understand that security and resilience are continually evolving fields. We remain actively engaged with OEUK members and stakeholders to maintain a pre-emptive approach. If you have any specific concerns or observations, please feel free to contact Graham Skinner at gskinner@oeuk.org.uk

OEUK recently attended the Chemistry in the Oil Industry (CITOI) Conference, hosted by the European Oilfield Speciality Chemicals Association (EOSCA), which brought together industry, academic and regulatory expertise to explore how chemistry is shaping the future of energy. OEUK had a stand at the event, providing an opportunity to engage directly with members and stakeholders on shared technical and environmental challenges.

OEUK also contributed to the programme, with CEO David Whitehouse giving the keynote speech at the conference. The event offered valuable discussion on innovation, regulation and collaboration, reinforcing the critical role that chemicals play in enabling safe, efficient energy production and highlighting why a strong and resilient chemicals sector remains essential to the UK's energy supply and transition.

SPEAKERS:

Mark Wilson,
Energy Operations Director,
OEUK

Graham Skinner,
Health & Safety Manager,
OEUK

Dan Marks,
Research Fellow in Energy Security,
Royal United Services Institute
(RUSI)

Jonathon Smith,
Cyber Security Business Unite
Director,
Sword

Polly Copeman,
SVP Strategy & Operations,
OpenHorizon

Callum Neary,
Associate Director – Reputation,
Crisis and Resilience,
Deloitte

Botan Osman,
CEO & Co-Founder,
Restrata

Jane Wright,
Research Engineer,
University of Strathclyde

Scott Keenon,
Head of Operational Technology,
Sword

Steve Hill,
Independent Board Risk Adviser

John Watson,
Senior HSE Advisor: Supply Chain,
Security & Emergency Response,
Spirit Energy

Andrew Buxton,
Chief Executive Officer,
Dardan Security

Simon Reid,
Superintendent,
Police Scotland - North East Division

Martin Smith,
Managing Director,
CyberPrism

Andrew Park,
Team Leader, Governance, Risk and
Compliance,
CB&I

Dane Clackworthy,
Director UK&I,
Waterfall Security Solutions

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

BEYOND THE HANDSHAKE:

SPEED NETWORKING & BD SKILLS FOR YPS

APRIL 2026 | LONDON

SPEAKERS:

Megan Hewinson,
Market Intelligence Intern,
OEUK

Emily Taylor,
Head of Membership,
OEUK

Ed Randall,
Head of Business Development – Europe,
Kent

Katie Bennett,
Graduate Process Engineer,
Xodus Group

On 16 April, OEUK delivered its first Young Professionals (YP) event of the year in the London office, chaired by Megan Hewinson, Market Intelligence Intern at OEUK. We welcomed a number of early-career professionals from across the offshore energy sector, representing a wide mix of roles and disciplines, including consultants, analysts, graduate engineers, finance professionals, associates, and interns.

The event focused on helping young professionals build confidence in networking - understanding how to engage with peers, approach professional conversations with confidence, and gain clarity on what business development is (and isn't). The session began with insightful presentations from Emily Taylor, Head of Membership at OEUK, and Ed Randall, Head of Business Development - UK & Europe at Kent, who shared their experiences and practical advice.

Delegates then took part in an interactive networking exercise, working in small groups to put theory into practice in a supportive environment. The event concluded with a lively panel discussion featuring the speakers, joined by Katie Bennett, Graduate Process Engineer at Xodus, who brought a valuable early career perspective to the conversation.

The session proved highly engaging, with plenty of practical tips, honest discussion, and real-world examples. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with many highlighting the usefulness of the tools and techniques shared - skills they can confidently take forward into future meetings and events. Overall, the event was a great success and set a strong foundation for future YP activity in London.

"Chairing our most recent event offered real insight into the questions many young professionals are keen to ask, but don't always have the opportunity to raise in their day-to-day roles or at other industry events. The panel discussion was incredibly engaging, with thoughtful questions and a natural flow of conversation - it genuinely felt like we could have kept going. Maintaining the momentum of these events is crucial, giving early-career professionals opportunities to build networks across a wide range of roles while gaining exposure to fresh perspectives and emerging topics across the sector."

Megan Hewinson, OEUK Market Intelligence Intern

About OEUK's Young Professional Events

OEUK's Young Professional events are designed to connect, inspire and empower the next generation of talent across the UK's offshore energy sector. Aimed at early-career professionals, typically with 0–5 years' experience, the programme delivers four in-person events each year across Aberdeen and London, alongside an additional webinar. Together, these sessions provide opportunities to build professional networks, develop practical skills and gain insight from industry leaders, while helping young professionals navigate the early stages of their careers with greater confidence.

To continue delivering high-quality events for early-career professionals, the YP series is backed by an exclusive industry sponsor, helping ensure the programme remains accessible, relevant and impactful -with opportunities to contribute to topics, themes, and speaker suggestions if desired.

OEUK Young Professionals

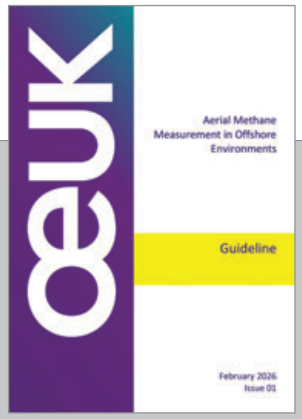
If you would like to know more about this sponsorship opportunity, please contact the OEUK Events team at **events@oeuk.org.uk** FAO Hanna Westwell.

HSE CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 2026 | ABERDEEN

Trust, Transparency and Transformation were at the heart of our HSE Conference at the P&J in Aberdeen back in late February. It brought together highly skilled professionals who are contributing to the UK's energy security and its transition to a lower-carbon future. OEUK curated a space to open discussions dedicated to trust and empowering people to challenge what more can be done to demonstrate transparency, alongside identifying areas to deliver transformational improvement. Crucial issues, including supporting good mental health, were tackled - demonstrating safety leadership and operating responsibly in Marine Protected Areas. It was great to hear members committed to building workplaces where trust, transparency, and transformation aren't just themes, they're an integral part of our culture that ensures health, safety and environmental success offshore.

The Conference also had a session featuring the launch of a new industry guideline on aerial methane measurement, developed through collaboration within OEUK's Atmospherics Technical Group. The guidance is designed to support members in adopting consistent, transparent and credible approaches to methane measurement, reporting and emissions management, complementing existing regulatory requirements and supporting alignment across the sector.



This new guideline gives an overview of how aerial methane measurements are planned, carried out and interpreted in offshore environments.

Members can download OEUK guidelines for free at oeuk.org.uk

SPEAKERS:

Allister Thomas
Head of Energy,
True North Advisor

Ann McCreath
HSSES Service Delivery Manager - OPS EMEA, WOOD

Arrash Nekonam
Chief Technology Officer,
COMET

Carolyn Smith
Senior HSE Advisor, OEUK

Chris Stirling
Managing Director,
Enhancing Excellence

Christer Bjorno-Husa
Sales & Marketing Director,
NEMS AS

David Whitehouse
Chief Executive, OEUK

Donnie Munro
HSE Team Lead, Spirit Energy

Donny Chisholm
Project Manager,
Petrofac/CB&I Asset Solutions

Elaine Yeoman
Environment & Emissions Manager,
TotalEnergies E&P UK LTD

Graham Filsell
O&G Asset Decarbonisation Lead, KENT

Graham Skinner
Health & Safety Manager, OEUK

Jennifer Godwin
CEO, Seabed Users & Developer Group

Julie Hart
Health & Hygiene Technical Manager

Katy Heidenreich
Supply Chain & People Director,
OEUK

Laura De Rossi
Laboratory Manager,
Explicit APS

Lisa Tuckwell
Deputy to the SOSREP,
HM GOVERNMENT

Mark McBride-Wright MBE
Founder & CEO, EqualEngineers

Melanie Netherway
Environmental, Carbon & Social Responsibility Manager - NOVJ's, BP

Michael Cowlam
Managing Director, Seacroft Marine Consultants Limited

Mike Meen
Technical Director,
Bureau Veritas

Neil Shand
General Manager -HSE & Assurance, CNOOC International

Peter Evans
Senior Advisor, Sustainability,
bp

Peter Hepburn
Operations Director,
Spirit Energy

Professor John Underhill
University Director for Energy Transition & Professor of Geoscience, University of Aberdeen

Sam Mayall
Chief Executive Officer, Zelim

Sarah Rogers
Environmental Manager,
OPRED

Tom P Keane
Director,
Ethos Empowerment

OEUK SHAREFAIR

MARCH 2026 | ABERDEEN

OEUK's flagship supply-chain event, Share Fair, returned to Aberdeen on 19 March, bringing together companies working across the energy spectrum at a critical moment for the UK offshore energy sector. Held at P&J Live and supported by the North Sea Transition Authority, the event continued its focus on structured, project-led engagement between operators, developers and the supply chain.

Around 600 attendees took part across the day, reflecting the breadth of organisations actively involved in delivering UK offshore energy projects. Share Fair facilitated approximately 800 buyer–supplier meetings, alongside 15 project presentations and 27 exhibition stands, again earning strong feedback for the quality and relevance of discussions. Participants consistently highlighted the value of early visibility on upcoming projects and the opportunity to discuss scope, timing and delivery challenges directly with decision-makers.

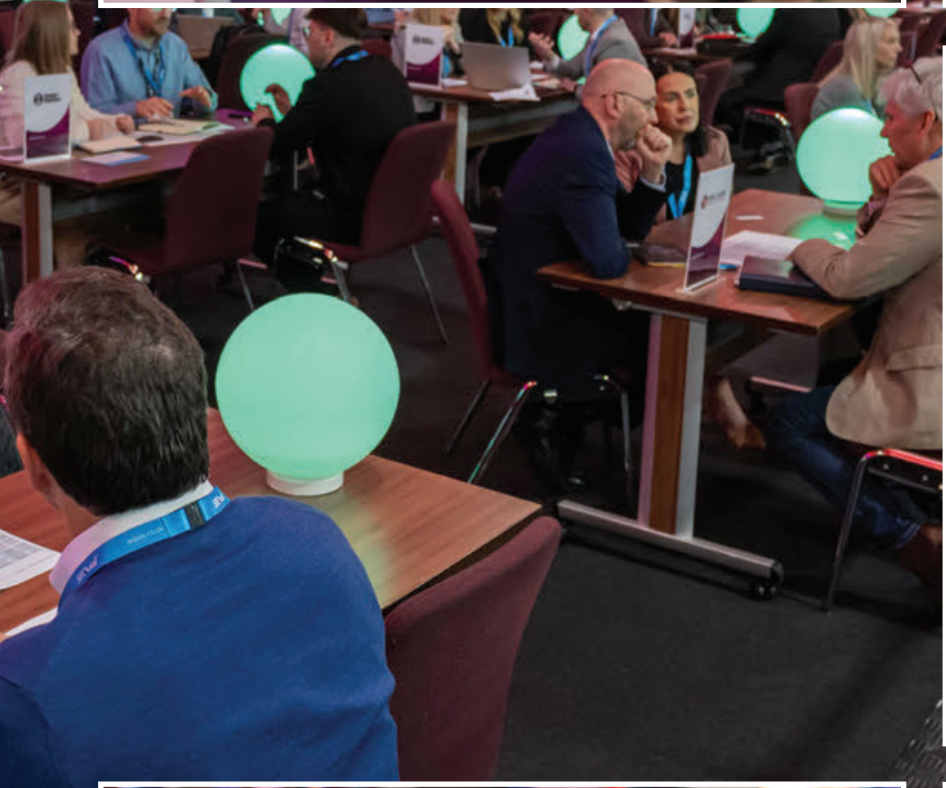
The 2026 programme reflected the increasingly integrated nature of the North Sea, with contributions spanning oil and gas alongside offshore wind, CCS and hydrogen. Beyond creating commercial connections, Share Fair reinforced the importance of early engagement and good business behaviours, as set out in the Supply Chain Principles. Insights from the Working as One survey showed continued progress in strengthening buyer–supplier relationships, with 15 companies achieving gold award status - the highest number to date. As the sector balances delivery, transition and security of supply, Share Fair 2026 once again demonstrated the value of practical, transparent collaboration across the UK supply chain.

"More companies than ever have earned gold awards, with 15 purchasing companies achieving that goal. These include oil and gas operators, wind developers, and major contractors—recognised for excellent performance in priority areas, such as meaningful pre-tender engagement, which creates conditions for stronger long-term partnerships. The survey revealed more companies are using LOGIC Standard Contracts as the main basis for their commercial relationships, seeing the benefit of these industry-standard model agreements in simplifying negotiations and building greater consistency across the North Sea basin."

Katy Heidenreich, OEUK's Supply Chain and People Director

This year the highest performing companies comprise operator, developer and major contractors. The Gold award winners are Adura Energy, Anasuria Operating Company, Centrica Energy Storage, Dana Petroleum, Flotation Energy, Harbour Energy, INEOS Energy, Ithaca Energy UK, Katoni Engineering, NEO Energy, Serica Energy, Spirit Energy, TAQA Bratani, THREE60 Energy and TotalEnergies.

Companies who achieved Silver awards in 2026 are CNOOC International, Petrofac, bp, EXCEED and Peterson UK with Perenco UK, Wood and SLB earning a Bronze Supply Chain Principles award.



OEUK BREAKFAST BRIEFING

BUSINESS OUTLOOK 2026

OEUK's flagship Business Outlook 2026 report was launched at a breakfast briefing in Aberdeen on 24th March, bringing together industry leaders at a pivotal moment for UK energy policy. Sponsored by Deloitte, the event attracted nearly 300 delegates, underlining strong interest in the report's findings at a time of heightened geopolitical uncertainty and pressure on the UK energy system. Attendees heard that, even with accelerating deployment of renewables, the UK will continue to require significant volumes of oil and gas for decades to come.

Presenting the report, Ben Ward, OEUK's Market Intelligence Manager, warned that without sustained domestic production the UK risks increasing its reliance on imports – exposing households and businesses to greater volatility, higher emissions and growing geopolitical risk. This message was echoed by OEUK Chief Executive David Whitehouse, who set the findings in the wider context of energy security, investment confidence and policy coherence.

The briefing concluded with a lively panel discussion featuring representatives from across the sector, including Harbour Energy, ASCO Group, National Gas and Great British Energy, alongside OEUK contributors. Audience engagement was strong, reflecting the relevance of the issues raised. The report attracted extensive coverage across national, international, trade and regional media, reinforcing its role as a key reference point for current policy and industry debate.

SPEAKERS:

London | Speakers & Panellists

Fraser Stewart,
CCO, ASCO Group

Rob Gilbert,
Supply Chain Director, GB Energy

Scott Barr,
Managing Director – UK Business Unit, Harbour Energy

Qasam Sultan,
Head of Market Analysis, National Gas

Katy Heidenreich,
Supply Chain & People Director, Offshore Energies UK

Ben Ward,
Market Intelligence Manager, Offshore Energies UK

Dave Whitehouse,
CEO, Offshore Energies UK

KEY FACTS:

BUSINESS OUTLOOK REPORT 2026

- Domestic oil and gas production is a strategic pillar of national resilience and a foundation of the UK economy. It supports tens of thousands of jobs, it is more reliable, less carbon-intensive than imports, and far less vulnerable to geopolitical disruption. Policy, not geology, is hampering investment into the basin and damaging the UK's ability to produce homegrown energy.

- Business sentiment across OEUK's member base continues to decline, the current fiscal and regulatory regimes are hampering the UK's investability.

- By maintaining the Energy Profits Levy (EPL) until 2030, the UK Government risks foregoing a £50 billion investment opportunity and an additional £5bn in corporation tax over next decade in addition to greater payroll tax and a positive impact on the balance of payments. This opportunity is within reach, but unlocking it requires an investable fiscal and regulatory regime to strengthen energy security and reduce our reliance on imports.

- Consolidation across the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS) signals that operators are adjusting to a more demanding business climate marked by rising costs and constrained investment. One of the clearest ramifications has been an increase in the number of mergers and the formation of new entities as operators adapt to increasingly challenging conditions.

- Our risked pipeline of offshore energy projects show that the offshore energy sector is likely to invest around £120 billion over the next 10 years, with risked capital expenditure totalling £17 billion in oil and gas, £86 billion in offshore wind and £20 billion in carbon capture and storage (CCS) and hydrogen.

- Policy and network costs are now the dominant contributors to UK energy bill growth. Recent funding for transmission upgrades and social obligations is weighing on households and business tariffs.

- Allocation Round 7 (AR7) pushed the UK's offshore wind sector closer to Clean Power 2030, allocating 8.4GW of awards to projects across England, Wales and Scotland. To realise this capacity by the end of the decade we need to continue to support and invest in UK supply chains.

- A recent spike in energy prices caused by the conflict in the Middle East could see a rise in inflation, domestic energy supplies limit the UK's exposure to such events.

- Peak gas demand remains as high as ever, demonstrating the need to maintain resilient supply. While average gas use for power generation has fallen as electricity demand grows and renewables expand, peak day requirements continue to rely on secure and readily available domestic gas supply.

- Domestic gas supply is not a residual commodity; it is a strategic asset that underpins the resilience of the entire UK energy system. OEUK modelling indicates that introducing a stable, predictable fiscal and investment regime could unlock up to £25 billion of potential investment into gas projects, in turn unlocking an additional 230bcm to forecast gas production, significantly reducing our reliance on high-carbon imports.

DOWNLOAD THE REPORT AT

OEUK.ORG.UK/BUSINESSOUTLOOK

MEMBERS NEWS

People

Penspen Strengthens Leadership Team Following Record Year

International engineering consultancy, Penspen, has announced two strategic appointments in its leadership team following a record sales year. Neale Carter has been promoted to the newly created role of Chief Commercial Officer. In this new role, Neale will strengthen Penspen's business pursuit, proposal management, and project management procedures and capabilities, in addition to his existing responsibilities for sales, marketing, and operations. This position reflects Penspen's continued growth and the importance of strong commercial leadership as the company looks to build on recent momentum. Based in Abu Dhabi, Carter will also continue in his role as Executive Vice President – East Region as a member of Penspen's Executive Committee.

Arun Behl has been promoted to Director of Sales & Marketing – East Region. This promotion expands his remit to include the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, alongside his current responsibilities across the Middle East and Africa. A member of Penspen's Executive Leadership Team, Behl will continue to be based in Penspen's Abu Dhabi office. Behl joined Penspen in 2019 and has played a central role in strengthening sales and marketing performance across the Middle East and Africa. His leadership has supported strong pipeline development and sustained commercial growth.

2025 was a record year for Penspen, with sales up 120% on the previous year. This performance was driven by growth across the Middle East, Africa, Europe and the Americas, supported by major energy infrastructure and energy transition programmes.

"2025 was one of the strongest commercial and delivery years in our history, with more than $456 million in contract awards in the East Region alone. Both Neale and Arun played a critical role in this performance.

In his time at Penspen, Neale has been integral to our strategic growth, strengthening delivery performance and ensuring we consistently provide value and technical excellence, particularly in the East Region. The newly created role of Chief Commercial Officer is a critical one and Neale's focus on operational excellence will be invaluable as we enter the next phase of our strategy.

Arun's focus on client relationships and disciplined sales execution has driven sustained growth across the region. Through his strong leadership, he is well-positioned to expand our presence in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and continue building long-term relationships with our clients."

Peter O'Sullivan, CEO of Penspen

Verlume Strengthens Leadership Team to Support Next Phase of Global Growth

Following three consecutive years of revenue growth and expanding international demand for efficient offshore power delivery, March saw Verlume evolve its leadership structure to support its next phase of global expansion.

After founding Verlume and leading the company as CEO for 13 years, Richard Knox will transition into the role of Founder-CTO. In this position, he will focus on customer engagement, innovation and technology strategy, areas that have been central to Verlume's success - while also continuing to play a key role in shaping the company's long-term technology roadmap and support strategic customer relationship building.

David Clark has been appointed as CEO, leading Verlume through its next phase of international growth and operational scale. David brings 35+ years of international leadership experience in the global energy sector. Beginning his career with Schlumberger (now SLB), David has held operational and management roles across Asia, the Middle East and Europe. He has since held senior executive positions at Technip, Wood and Aker Solutions, where he served as President of UK & Africa and later EVP of the global Service Division. Most recently, David was CEO of Vysus Group following the carve-out of Lloyd's Register's energy division in 2020; he remains a Non-Executive Director of Vysus Group and serves as Convener of Court (Chair) at the University of Strathclyde.

Leadership changes also include the promotion of Robert Heron, a founding member of the Verlume team, to Operations & Engineering Director. Robert has played a central role in the design and evolution of Verlume's technology since the company's inception, combining subsea engineering expertise with strong project delivery experience. In his new position, Robert will now oversee engineering, product development and operational delivery.

Alongside this, Alan Shanks has been appointed as CFO – leading financial strategy, governance and long-term planning, supporting the company's continued growth and international expansion. These follow on from the recent promotion of Graceann Robertson to Sales & Marketing Manager as Verlume continues to expand its global presence.

"Verlume has built a fantastic product and customer base that is recognised internationally. With the company's unique, proven intelligent power management platform now fully commercialised, I am looking forward to scaling the business internationally, as we expand our footprint across the Oil & Gas, Offshore Wind and Defence markets. With the expanded leadership team, we are well-positioned to drive the rapid growth of the business in the coming months and years, building on our strong reputation for quality products, effective collaboration and fantastic service delivery.

Richard's vision created the technology platform and culture that underpin Verlume today. I'm looking forward to working closely with Richard as we scale the business internationally."

David Clark,
CEO of Verlume

"Taking an idea from a sketch to a fully functioning solution that solves real customer challenges, whilst building a successful business and an exceptional team, has been incredibly rewarding.

As Verlume enters its next stage of international growth, this transition allows me to spend more time understanding customers' needs and continuing to provide innovative solutions. Bringing David in as CEO gives the company the leadership depth needed to scale globally while I continue to drive the innovation that has always been at the heart of Verlume."

Richard Knox,
Founder-CTO of Verlume

Port of Aberdeen Appoints Jennifer Heiton as CFO

Port of Aberdeen has appointed Jennifer Heiton as Chief Financial Officer, effective 11 May 2026. She joins from Trojan Energy Limited, an electric vehicle charging infrastructure provider, where she has served as CFO since 2023. Jennifer has 23 years of experience across corporate financial advisory and CFO roles. At Trojan Energy, she played a central role in securing investment, implementing process improvements, and developing commercial processes. Prior to this, she served as CFO at Ardyne Technologies Ltd, a well-abandonment and decommissioning specialist, providing leadership through its acquisition by Weatherford International plc, and spent 18 years at Piper Sandler Ltd in their energy advisory team.

At the Port of Aberdeen, the CFO serves as an Executive Director on the Board, with responsibility for financial management and governance, as well as oversight of technology, property management, legal, procurement, and supply chain. Jennifer succeeds Jon Oakey, who is retiring after seven years with the port.

"Jennifer joins Port of Aberdeen at an important moment for the organisation. Her strategic financial expertise will be crucial as we work with stakeholders to consolidate and diversify our business, drive energy transition, and create prosperity for generations. I also thank Jon Oakey for his significant contribution over the past seven years and wish him well in retirement."

Roy Buchan,
Chair,
Port of Aberdeen

"We are delighted to welcome Jennifer to the port team. She brings a wealth of experience in financial leadership, a strong record of delivering results and will be a real asset to the organisation.

"I also want to thank Jon for his leadership and commitment. He has been integral to our growth in recent years and navigating the headwinds we face today. We wish him every success in retirement."

-Bob Sanguinetti DL,
CEO, Port of Aberdeen

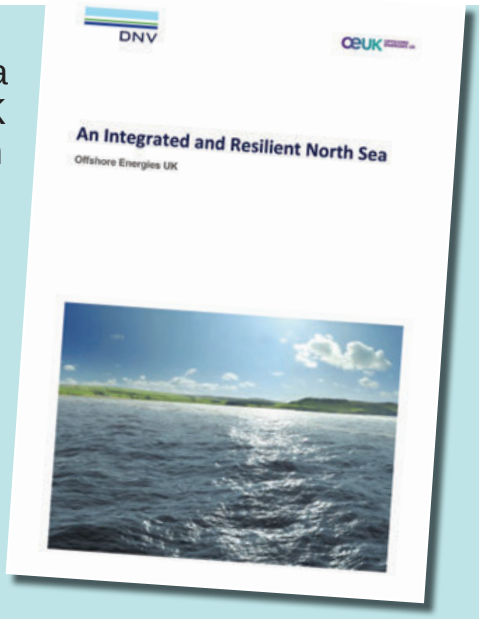
"I am delighted to join the Port of Aberdeen at this pivotal time. I look forward to working with the team to deliver sustainable growth, delivery of its ambitious net zero targets, and supporting the Port's long-term development while maintaining strong financial discipline."

-Jennifer Heiton,
CFO,
Port of Aberdeen

DNV's 'An Integrated and Resilient North Sea' is a new report commissioned by Offshore Energies UK that examines CO_2 transport and storage and hydrogen transport across the UK, Norway, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and France.

The report argues that planning infrastructure as one integrated North Sea system, rather than as isolated national or project-level developments, is essential to deliver affordability, resilience, interoperability and long-term value.

Download the report at:
oeuk.org.uk/publications



Contracts & Corporate

Fugro Awarded Large Geotechnical Site Investigation Contract for CIP's Wind Farm in Taiwan

Late April saw Fugro awarded the geotechnical site investigation contract for the 600 MW FengMiao II Offshore Wind Farm (OWF) by Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP), one of the developers under Taiwan's Round 3.2 offshore wind tender. The FengMiao II OWF is a key project supporting Taiwan's national target of achieving 13.1 GW of installed offshore wind capacity by 2030. Fugro's involvement in the project highlights its continued dedication to advancing the energy transition across the Asia Pacific region through innovation, sustainability, and strong local collaboration.

Fugro will deliver a comprehensive suite of geotechnical services to support the development of the FengMiao II OWF, located off the west coast of Taiwan. The award further strengthens Fugro's role as a trusted partner in the global offshore wind industry and reaffirms the company's long-standing commitment to supporting Taiwan's renewable energy ambitions.

The offshore geotechnical investigation will be carried out using Fugro's Taiwan-flagged vessel, Pacific Hornbill, which is equipped with the advanced C30 marine drilling rig. The vessel also features Fugro's proprietary WISON® MkV EcoDrive downhole in situ testing and sampling tools, as well as specialised seabed geotechnical equipment, including the SEACALF® MkV Deep Drive® system, enabling the acquisition of high-quality geotechnical data in both seabed and downhole mode throughout the project. The geotechnical fieldwork campaign is expected to be completed in the third quarter of 2026.

Semco Maritime and Zamakona Yards Launch Las Palmas Shipyard Strategic Alliance

March saw Semco Maritime and Zamakona Yards announce the formation of Las Palmas Shipyard, a strategic alliance that combines their strengths to create a true one-stop shop for rig and special vessel upgrades, maintenance and repair activities. The partnership is designed to serve rig owners, offshore operators, and special vessel clients seeking efficient, cost-effective, and reliable project execution in a strategically located hub. Operations at Las Palmas Shipyard have commenced.

The shipyard is well-positioned to support Atlantic, West African, and European offshore operations, offering deep water quaysides with depths up to 22 meters and capable of accommodating the largest rigs and offshore vessels. The facilities offer more than 650 meters of continuous quay length with shore power, 15,000 square meters of outdoor storage and 4,000 square meters of indoor workshop facilities and offices.

In addition, the shipyard includes an offshore workshop with heavy lifting capacity, including two 50-ton overhead cranes and three 5-ton overhead cranes and modern service areas with 11-meter hook height and large access doors. This infrastructure enables efficient execution of complex rig upgrades, life extensions, vessel modernisations, and large-scale offshore modification projects.

"Las Palmas Shipyard is located at the very heart of the Atlantic and brings together more than 50 years of experience in the energy and marine industries. We are aligning Semco Maritime's expertise in complex project integration and execution with Zamakona's long standing marine heritage and yard capabilities to form a unique alliance that offers world class solutions delivered directly at the quayside."

Nikolaj Vejlgaard, Senior Vice President, Rig and Marine, Semco Maritime

Odfjell Technology Signs MoU with ANT to Deliver Advanced P&A Solution in Southeast Asia

Odfjell Technology has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ANT (Applied New Technologies) to work together to deliver a next-generation erosion tool for well plug and abandonment (P&A) projects across Southeast Asia. The agreement will see Odfjell Technology offering deployment of ANT's advanced wellANT nozzle head technology in conjunction with its rigless unit and fishing milling techniques.

"Incorporating wellANT into our services further increases the significant cost and time efficiencies that we can deliver over conventional methods to meet the evolving demands of P&A and intervention.

"The non-intrusive way ANT's technology erodes obstructive material not only keeps well integrity but restores full wellbore access. Used with our specialist fishing milling services and rigless unit, which minimises the need for a fulling drilling rig on site, it also further enhances the safety and environmental benefits for P&A operations."

Paul Toner, Vice President for the Middle East & Asia Pacific at Odfjell Technology

Penspen Awarded Hydrogen Transition Pathways for Industrial Clusters Study

Penspen has been awarded a critical research project designed to look into how hydrogen can support the transition of the UK's industrial clusters. Hydrogen Transition Pathways for Industrial Clusters is a research and decision-support project for the Future Energy Networks (FEN), Energy Innovation Centre, Northern Gas Networks (NGN), and Xoserve. FEN's current members include National Gas and the four Gas Distribution Networks: Cadent, NGN, SGN and Wales & West Utilities.

Experts from Penspen's asset integrity and engineering teams in the UK will carry out a comprehensive study to help determine where, how and under what conditions hydrogen should support the transition of industrial clusters and surrounding communities, alongside credible alternative pathways. The assessment will align with major UK industrial clusters, including Teesside, Humber, Merseyside, North Wales, South Wales, Grangemouth and Southampton.

"As industries seek to decarbonise at pace, hydrogen offers a compelling pathway. This study represents a significant opportunity to unlock hydrogen's potential as a cornerstone of low-carbon industrial clusters.

We're proud to support this important project, bringing our deep expertise in energy transition and critical infrastructure systems. We understand both the technical complexities and the commercial realities of integrating hydrogen, enabling us to deliver strategic guidance and technical insights that accelerate decarbonisation."

Chris Wood, Director – Asset Integrity (Europe) at Penspen

Katoni Engineering Awarded Three-Year Integrated EPC Contract by BUMI Armada for North Sea Asset

Katoni Engineering has been awarded a three-year contract by BUMI Armada to deliver integrated Engineering, Procurement and Construction services for the Armada Kraken FPSO in the UK North Sea. Katoni will provide a fully integrated EPC solution covering multi-discipline engineering, procurement, brownfield topside modifications and offshore construction supervision. The scope also incorporates rope-access interventions and comprehensive QA/QC oversight, supporting safe execution, regulatory compliance and operational continuity across the Armada Kraken.

The contract will see Katoni's engineering and project management teams working alongside BUMI's operations team to execute modifications within a live production environment, with a clear focus on minimising downtime and maintaining production efficiency. The contract builds on work already delivered by Katoni in the North Sea and further strengthens its presence across the UK Continental Shelf.

Well-Safe Solutions Awarded North Sea Decommissioning Scope for Forties Field

Well-Safe Solutions, the tier-one well decommissioning contractor, announced a multi-year contract with Apache North Sea Limited to decommission its platform wells and subsea wells in the Forties Field.

Work will begin in 2026, with Well-Safe Solutions leading the contract across all well related project management, well and subsurface engineering, and offshore delivery of platform and subsea wells. The award will support hundreds of jobs in Aberdeen and provide a much-needed boost to the economy in the northeast of Scotland at a time when the sector is facing significant challenges and concerns over wider industry job retention.

"This award is a defining moment for Well-Safe Solutions and a testament to the confidence Apache has in our team to deliver safe, efficient and technically robust decommissioning solutions at scale. This contract award is exciting news for our business and for the wider economy, sending a powerful signal to the supply chain and helping to secure critical talent and resources. Today's announcement is undoubtably a huge moment for our business and our industry, however, it comes at a particularly difficult time for our sector when we are hopeful of retaining the talent and capability that we have in the North Sea."

Phil Milton, Chief Executive Officer at Well-Safe Solutions

"We are pleased to partner with Well-Safe Solutions on this large-scale decommissioning programme across the Forties Field. This contract reflects our commitment to delivering safe, predictable and cost-effective decommissioning through disciplined execution and with a high-performing, integrated team. Building on decades of successful production from one of the North Sea's cornerstone assets, Apache is focused on maximising late-life asset value, reducing risk, and delivering a safe, efficient and disciplined transition into decommissioning."

Donald Martin, Vice President, Decommissioning, Apache

ASCO Secures Australian Contracts worth $30 Million+

ASCO has recently secured four significant contracts across Australia, totalling $33.2m (AUD). The contracts cover ASCO's NORM Environmental services, logistics, supply base and camp management service lines. The awards mark another step in ASCO's Australian growth, expanding its role across critical energy projects nationwide.

Building on ASCO's recently established NORM capability in Dampier, it will support Birdon in connection with a major decommissioning project off the North-West coast of Western Australia. The company has also secured a multi-year logistics services contract with Global Resource Recovery, supporting chemical recovery, reclamation and recycling activities across a range of critical industrial sectors. Operating from Darwin, ASCO will leverage its national linehaul capability and integrated logistics services with the provision of domestic transport and coordination, storage and various equipment hire. The contract has an initial three-year term with extension options. Also in Darwin, ASCO has been engaged by ZOMC to provide integrated marine agency services, including supply base, logistics, regulatory support and port services in support of a major float over project in the Northern Browse Basin.

In another key award, ASCO has secured long-term involvement in the Waitsia Gas Plant in the Perth Basin, where it will deliver camp and camp management services for Mitsui E&P Australia's (MEPAU) activities under a four-year contract.

"These contract wins highlight ASCO's growing presence across Australia and our ability to deliver integrated solutions from planning through to execution. By combining high-level strategy with boots-on-the-ground execution, we ensure projects stay on track, safe and efficient, while meeting the complex needs of our clients."

Mike Pettigrew, group chief executive officer at ASCO

"Securing these contracts strengthens our role in delivering critical energy and industrial projects across Australia. Our integrated model spanning offshore decommissioning to onshore operations brings together expertise, systems, and innovation to create lasting value for our clients."

Warren McHardie, Australia Managing Director for ASCO

Member Milestones

Brimmond Marks 30 Years After Record Year Despite Challenging Market Conditions

Aberdeenshire engineering specialist, Brimmond, is celebrating 30 years in business after delivering the strongest financial performance in its history, while continuing to expand its international presence despite a challenging year across several key industries. Over the past three decades, Brimmond has grown from a small hydraulic hose repair business to a global supplier serving customers across energy, marine, aquaculture, defence and renewable sectors.

The company reported £11.5 million in revenue for the financial year ending March 2025, the highest in its history. However, after more than five consecutive years of growth, Brimmond expects revenue to moderate to around £9.5 million for the current financial year, reflecting difficult market conditions across several of the sectors it serves. Industry activity has been affected by the continued impact of the UK's Energy Profits Levy on oil and gas investment, alongside delays to offshore wind developments and a slower year across aquaculture markets. Despite these headwinds, the company says it remains in a strong position and continues to invest in its people, engineering capability and specialist rental fleet.

"Reaching our 30th year in business is a proud milestone for everyone at Brimmond. What the company has achieved over the past three decades is remarkable.

Over that time, we have come through multiple oil price cycles, financial crises and even a global pandemic. The reason we are still here and continuing to grow is simple. We have a highly skilled and dedicated team, we focus on quality and we work hard to make sure we deliver for our customers every time."

This year is looking to be an exciting year, we look forward to the next stage of Brimmond's journey by continuing to invest in our people, our equipment and new markets."

Tom Murdoch, Managing Director of Brimmond

Elementz Achieves £3 million Turnover in First Full Calendar Year of Trading

Elementz, specialising in subsea inspection and asset integrity management, has achieved turnover of more than £3 million. The company launched in Aberdeen in mid-2024 with 2025 representing its first full calendar year of trading. During that time, the ambitious team exceeded expectations thanks to a string of new projects and contract renewals that sparked exponential growth in key domestic and international markets including Australia, Africa, Canada and Europe.

Other key highlights in 2025 included the creation of the operator-led strategic advisory board, Compass, and the Tide Breaker programme which aims to define technical challenges, mentor participants, and evaluate outcomes for field deployment. It is being co-led by The Data Lab, Scotland's innovation centre for data and AI, which will support technical delivery, participant selection, and programme governance. With ONE Digital Tech also supporting, Tide Breaker will benefit from connections into the region's wider entrepreneurial ecosystem and help ensure the programme drives impact at scale.

"The world beneath our waves is changing faster than ever and its future belongs to horizontal solutions expand on lessons learned in the oil and gas sector to support many industries. This is the premise of Elementz, and our success comes from co-creating solutions that really work, backed with the expertise of some of the brightest minds in the business.

Last year was our first full calendar year of trading and allowed us to make significant inroads in our target markets whilst growing our team in parallel with our customer base."

Jason Brown,
CEO of Elementz

Port of Aberdeen team members celebrating success at the Northern Star Business Awards

AquaTerra | AquaShim Celebrates 10 Years of Offshore Deployment

Offshore engineering specialist AquaTerra is marking a decade since the first offshore deployment of AquaShim, its proprietary splash-zone stabilisation system, developed to address one of the most persistent challenges facing ageing offshore assets.

First conceived to overcome the limitations of traditional mechanical shims and centralisers, AquaShim was designed to accommodate movement, reduce wear and extend asset life in the highly dynamic splash-zone environment. Following initial development beginning in 2017, supported by funding from the Oil and Gas Technology Centre, the first system was installed offshore in 2019. Since then, AquaShim has been deployed across 78 systems on a wide range of offshore assets, with each installation contributing to ongoing design refinement and real-world validation. By distributing load and avoiding rigid interfaces, the system has demonstrated long-term performance benefits while also offering advantages during future decommissioning.

Reflecting on the milestone, AquaTerra's Technical Manager Kevin Nelson said the solution's success is the result of sustained engineering development combined with operational learning offshore. As infrastructure across the basin continues to age, AquaTerra says AquaShim remains a proven, field-tested solution supporting asset integrity, reduced intervention and long-term reliability.

Port of Aberdeen Celebrates Double Win at Northern Star Business Awards

Port of Aberdeen won the 'Making the Difference' award at the Northern Star Business Awards and was recognised alongside Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Inspired in the Regional Contribution category for the success of The Tall Ships Races.

Over 800 people packed P&J Live on Friday 17 July for the glittering ceremony hosted by Edith Bowman and run by Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce, in association with Brodies LLP. The awards champion successful and growing businesses that make a positive impact on the North-east economy. The Making the Difference award recognises an organisation that has demonstrated responsible business practices across the community, environment, and its people, committed to making a positive change. Port of Aberdeen was honoured for its work in the community and commitment to creating prosperity for generations, including multi-year charity partnerships and employee volunteering.

"Winning two Northern Star Awards in one evening is an amazing achievement and I'm incredibly proud of our team. Our purpose is to create prosperity for generations. Our success with the Making the Difference and Regional Contribution awards tells me it's not just words, we're living it."

Bob Sanguinetti DL,
CEO, Port of Aberdeen

Peterson Energies Reaches Global Safety Milestone

Peterson Energies celebrates a major safety milestone, achieving a full year with a LTIF (Lost Time Injury Frequency) of zero and a TRCF (Total Recordable Case Frequency) of zero across its global operations.

"In an environment as complex and, at times, hazardous as ours, achieving an LTIF and TRCF of zero does not happen by chance. It is the result of discipline from every team in following our Life Saving Rules, strong leadership and responsibility throughout the organisation, and a shared commitment to looking after one another.

This culture means we not only deliver better for ourselves, but also for our customers. A strong safety culture ensures minimal disruption, protection of resources, and a partner that contributes to the success of wider operations.

And while we recognise this as a moment to celebrate, it is more importantly a moment to consider how we continue to build on and further grow and deepen our commitment and delivery of consistently safe operations."

Sarah Moore,
Chief Executive Officer
at Peterson Energies

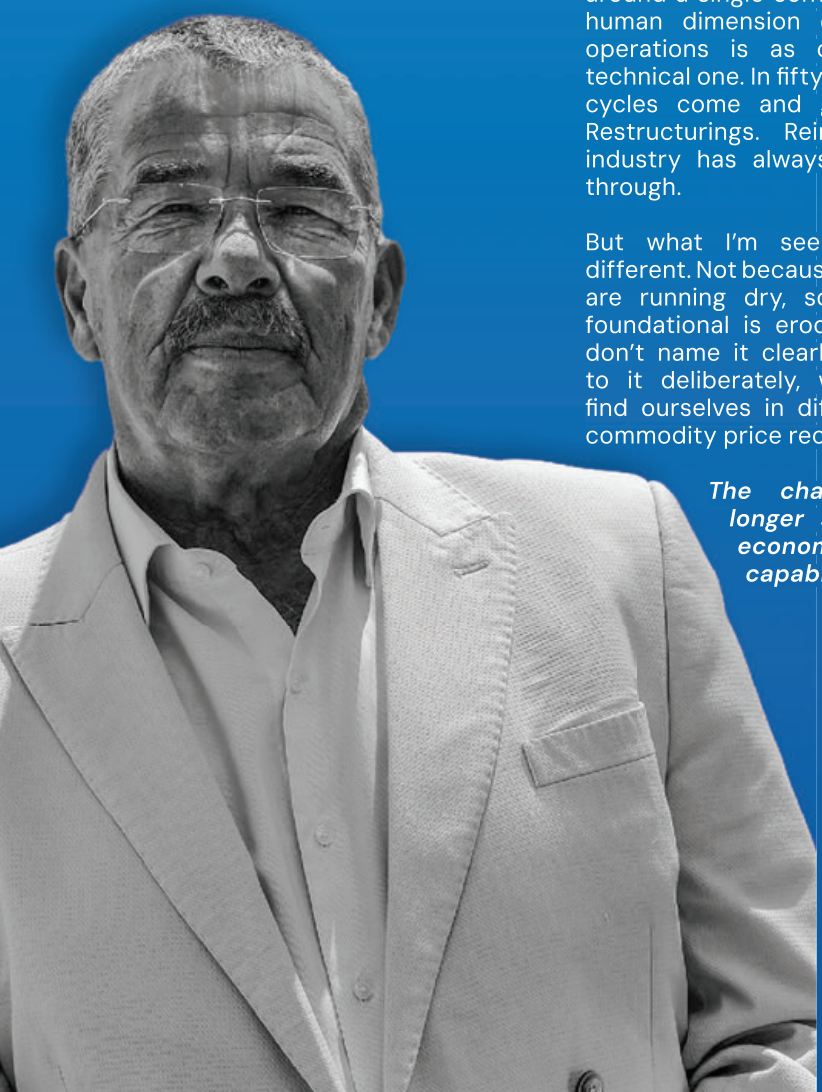
The impressive feat was achieved during busy and challenging operating periods for Peterson's team, which spanned the length and breadth of the UK from Shetland to Lowestoft, across the Netherlands, as well as in the Middle East. The integrated logistics and supply chain solutions experts during this time managed thousands of port calls, hundreds of thousands of tonnes of cargo, and tens of thousands of lifts.

Peterson Energies personnel at work offshore

RADICAL DEPLETION IN THE UK ENERGY SECTOR

A Leadership Imperative in an Era of Contractorisation and Decommissioning

Lewis Senior,
Co-founder of
Equilibria Services



I started on the rigs in 1974 as a roustabout, the bottom rung of the offshore ladder. Over the next two decades, I worked across most of the world's major oil and gas basins, progressing through the ranks to Offshore Installation Manager, the most senior leadership position offshore. In that role, I carried ultimate responsibility for the safety, operations and people on some of the most complex assets in the industry. In 1996, I moved into the corporate office in Houston as HSE Manager, where I led the integration of safety cultures through a series of mergers and acquisitions — a period that taught me more about organisational fragility than any single incident ever could. In 2004, I co-founded Equilibria Services, built around a single conviction: that the human dimension of high-hazard operations is as critical as the technical one. In fifty years, I've seen cycles come and go. Downturns. Restructurings. Reinventions. The industry has always found a way through.

But what I'm seeing now feels different. Not because the reservoirs are running dry, something more foundational is eroding. And if we don't name it clearly and respond to it deliberately, we're going to find ourselves in difficulty that no commodity price recovery can fix.

The challenge is no longer simply one of economics. It is one of capability.

What We Mean by 'Radical Depletion'

The UK North Sea has been called a mature basin for so long that the phrase has lost its edge. We've internalised decline as inevitable, a geological fact we simply manage around. But that framing no longer holds. The subsurface still contains significant untapped potential, and the geology hasn't changed. What has changed is the policy and investment landscape surrounding it.

In 2019, the NSTA projected that 6.5 billion barrels of oil equivalent (boe) could be recovered from the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS) between 2025 and 2050, with a target of 1.3 million boe/d by 2030. That projection has since been revised down to 0.6 million boe/d by 2030 — less than half — and approximately 3.8 billion boe total over the same period. Net zero commitments and shifting government policy have served as a catalyst to that contraction, compressing timelines and squeezing investment precisely when the industry faces its most technically demanding phase in decades.

But reservoir depletion isn't what keeps me up at night. What we're experiencing now is a radical depletion of people. Of experience. Of institutional knowledge. Of the quiet, hard-won wisdom that doesn't sit in a procedure manual — it sits in the judgement of the person who's seen the same failure mode three times before and knows exactly what to do when they see it again. The driller who notices something slightly off in the returns before any alarm sounds. The maintenance supervisor who knows this particular valve has a history. The OIM who reads the atmosphere on the drill floor before the morning meeting is even over.

This depletion has been building for over a decade. Prolonged price volatility drove early retirements and redundancies. Career-switchers left for sectors with more stability. New entrant pipelines are drying up. And now, precisely when the industry faces its most technically demanding phase in decades, the people who understood these assets most deeply are largely gone.

From Downturn to Deficit

The numbers tell their own story. OEUK analysis shows the UK offshore oil and gas workforce has contracted sharply since the mid 2010s, with employment falling steadily as investment has declined. Job losses have continued at pace over the past two years, reinforcing concerns about the sector's capacity to retain skills through the transition. It is becoming increasingly apparent, across government, industry and the wider public, that job losses are currently running faster than clean energy employment can replace them.

These aren't just headcount statistics. Behind every number is a driller, an engineer, a supervisor — someone who knew these assets intimately. That knowledge doesn't transfer to a spreadsheet when they leave.

Contractorisation itself isn't new. Operators have always used contractors. What's new is the degree to which organisations now depend on contractors to replace, not just supplement, core operational capability.

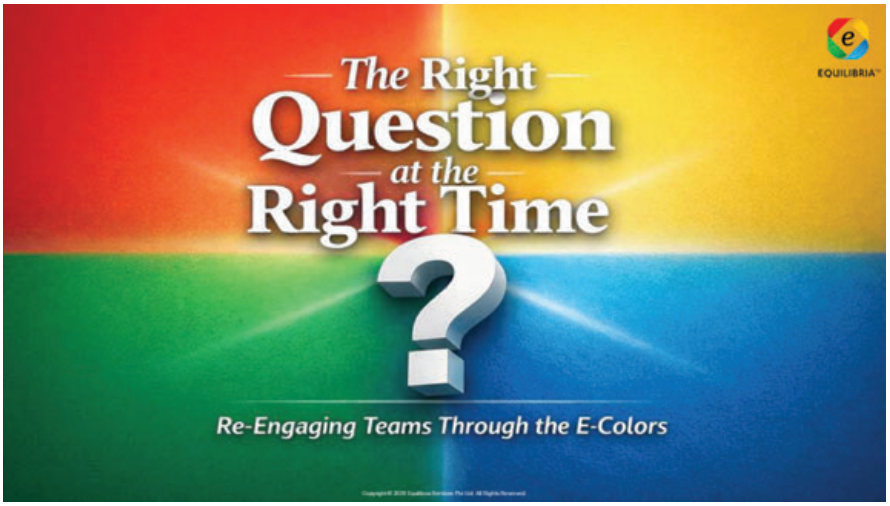
That shift has created a widening gap between three groups who all need to be in genuine alignment:

Asset knowledge holders | those with deep system knowledge of ageing assets, often now outside the organisation entirely

Decommissioning executors | those delivering technically complex programmes, frequently through multi-tier contractor arrangements

Safety case accountable parties | those who carry regulatory responsibility in an increasingly scrutinised environment

In a well-staffed organisation with strong institutional memory, those three groups overlap significantly. In a radically depleted one, they can become almost entirely separate — with coordination risk multiplying at every boundary.



Decommissioning in the UKCS demands precision. It requires whole system thinking across wells, subsea infrastructure, topsides, pipelines and environmental obligations. It is complex, highly integrated work, and is increasingly being undertaken in an environment shaped by compressed budgets and fragmented delivery models.

The Intelligent Customer Problem

I recently had a conversation with Robin Critchard, a colleague with many years of UK energy experience who works as a Contractor HSE Advisor specialising in contractor management. Robin's expertise operates primarily at the strategic and advisory level, analysing contractor HSE frameworks, assessing management systems, and providing the kind of structured oversight that operators depend on when their own internal capability has been reduced. He understands what good looks like on paper, in policy, and in the governance structures that are meant to assure safe delivery. And it is precisely from that vantage point — reviewing what comes across his desk, assessing the documentation, interrogating the systems — that his concern carries weight. Because what Robin sees in the frameworks, the audit findings and the contractor submissions tells its own story. The gaps are becoming harder to paper over. The quality of what's being submitted is thinning. And the organisations meant to provide intelligent oversight are increasingly stretched to do so with credibility.

One of the concepts the HSE has been rightly pushing on is what they call Intelligent Customer Capability: the operator's ability to understand what they're buying, to provide meaningful oversight, and to assure the safety of what's being delivered on their behalf.

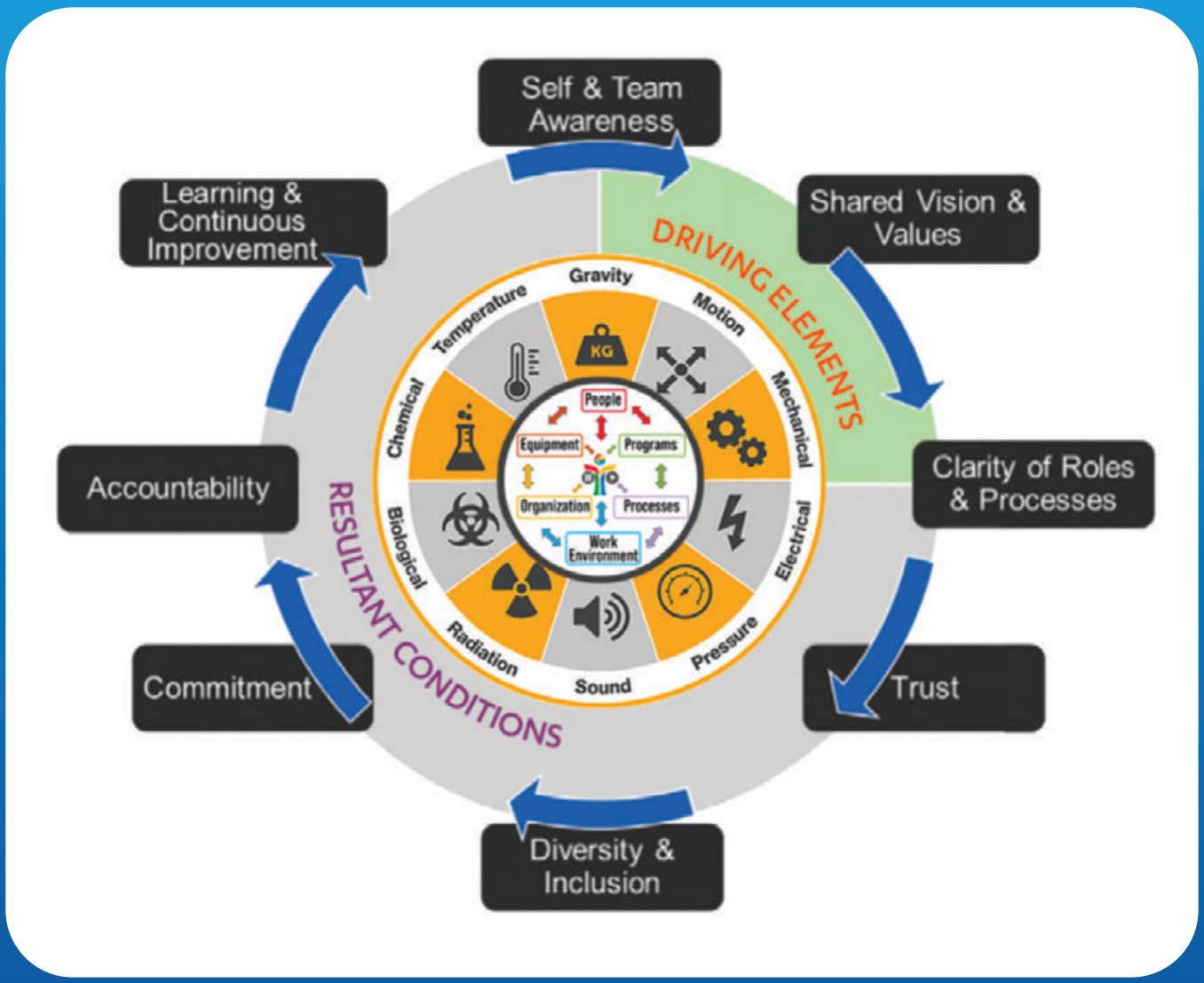
It sounds obvious, but in practice, it's extraordinarily difficult to maintain when experienced internal capability has been systematically reduced. Oversight doesn't fail because people stop caring. It fails because the knowledge base required to ask the right questions, recognise the right warning signs, and hold contractors to account with genuine understanding — that knowledge has walked out the door.

The risk multiplies in exactly the situations where you need it most: coordination breakdowns between clients, contractors and subcontractors. Ambiguity over who does what and when. Reduced supervisory depth. Latent faults introduced or left undetected. These aren't hypothetical risks; they're predictable consequences of operating in a depleted environment without sufficient compensating controls.

Where technical knowledge is distributed across multiple organisations, behavioural coherence becomes the integrating mechanism.

The Safety Signals Are Already There

The official data tells part of the story. OEUK's own reporting shows a gradual upward creep in personal safety incidents in recent years, while HSE inspections identified over 1,000 non-compliance issues in 2022 alone — a 43% rise on the previous year, against a workforce that had already contracted significantly. What those numbers don't fully capture is something our work with Step Change in Safety has made plain: in the past three years, even as headcount has fallen, the rate



Equilibria's visual framework mapping the interconnected factors, from leadership and culture to processes and trust, that influence delivery outcomes.

"A smaller workforce, carrying more cognitive load, working within thinner supervisory structures, and the trend is moving in the wrong direction."

of incidents has been climbing. A smaller workforce, carrying more cognitive load, working within thinner supervisory structures, and the trend is moving in the wrong direction.

This matters because the standard narrative, that the UK offshore industry has never been safer, can obscure underlying trends that warrant greater scrutiny. Aggregate statistics can mask deteriorating conditions at the task level, particularly when the experienced eyes that once caught precursor events early are no longer present.

Radical Depletion — What It Actually Looks Like

There's a pattern that repeats itself whenever an industry is perceived to be in terminal decline, and the UK oil and gas sector is living it in real-time.

When experienced people leave, whether through redundancy, early retirement, or simply reading the room and moving on, they don't just take a job title with them; they take everything that was never written down. The accumulated judgement of twenty, thirty, forty years. The instinct developed across hundreds of operations in conditions no procedure manual ever fully anticipated. My colleagues had a saying that captured the essence of this well: "When a grandparent dies, a library burns." In communities where knowledge was passed by word of mouth, that loss was irreversible. The same dynamic is playing out across the UKCS today — quietly, continuously, and largely unacknowledged.

What makes this cycle particularly difficult to break is that decline becomes self-fulfilling. An industry perceived as in decline and facing an uncertain long term outlook struggles to attract new talent.

The pipeline of people who might otherwise have built careers here, and eventually become the experienced

"There was a genuine sense of community offshore — of shared risk, shared responsibility, and a collective commitment to bringing everyone home."

hands of the next generation, is simply not materialising. Twenty years ago, a young engineer joining offshore could reasonably envision a long, progressive career ahead of them. That horizon has closed. And organisations, sensing the same uncertainty, have largely stopped investing in the culture that once made this industry exceptional.

That culture mattered more than people perhaps realised at the time. There was a genuine sense of community offshore — of shared risk, shared responsibility, and a collective commitment to bringing everyone home. People didn't just do their jobs. They looked out for each other. They passed things on. They took pride in what they built and maintained and operated. Ask someone who worked offshore twenty years ago what they remember most and it won't be the procedures; it will be the people.

That fabric has thinned considerably. What's replaced it in too many places is transactional — do what's required, collect the pay, move on. It's not a criticism of the individuals. It's a predictable consequence of an environment where long-term investment in people has been replaced by short-term cost management. When people have no reason to believe they'll still be here in five years, they stop behaving as if they will be.

And the consequences are not abstract. When institutional knowledge walks out the door through mergers, restructurings, reductions in workforce and retirements — when the people who understood not just what to do but why it was done that way are gone — the conditions for undesired outcomes are quietly established. Not through negligence. Not through bad intent. But through the entirely predictable result of operating complex, high-hazard assets with a workforce that has been depleted of the very experience those assets demand.

This is Radical Depletion in practice. Not a theory - a trajectory.

This Is a Leadership and Cultural Challenge — Not Just a Technical One

It's tempting to frame Radical Depletion as a numbers problem: fewer engineers, fewer supervisors, fewer project managers. But the deeper concern is cultural and behavioural.

When experience thins, the shared norms and values that hold a high-hazard organisation together start to thin with it. The confidence to challenge, the instinct to escalate, the understanding of what 'good' looks like — all of this erodes when the people who embodied it are no longer in the room. Remaining leaders carry more cognitive load. New contractors enter without the cultural context that once existed. Trust between operator, contractor and subcontractor becomes harder to build and easier to break.

Technical competence alone can't compensate for this. What becomes essential is behavioural alignment — clarity of role, shared language, and the kind of disciplined self-awareness that allows leaders to recognise when pressure is distorting their judgement.

This is the work Equilibria does. The Essential Leadership Cycle examines eight elements of effective teamwork and leadership — from self-awareness and shared values through to accountability and continuous learning. The E-Colours framework gives leaders and teams a practical, scalable language for understanding how behavioural differences affect decision-making, communication and risk perception across organisational boundaries.

This isn't soft skills work. In environments where technical knowledge is distributed across multiple organisations and the margin for coordination failure is essentially zero, behavioural coherence becomes the integrating mechanism. It's the thing that holds the system together when the formal structures can't do it on their own.

Where Do We Go from Here?

Radical Depletion will not reverse quickly. The workforce that left over the past decade won't return. The knowledge that they retired with can't be fully recovered. The industry has to adapt intentionally — not reactively, and not simply by adding headcount.

That means deliberately rebuilding Intelligent Customer Capability where it has been eroded. It means investing in behaviourally aligned contractor ecosystems rather than assuming process alone will deliver coordination. It means stronger integration between technical systems and human systems — recognising that the latter is as critical to safe operations as the former. And it means leadership models are honest enough to acknowledge the reality of workforce transition rather than pretending the old structures still hold.

Decommissioning is a generational responsibility. It will be judged not just on whether it was completed, but on whether it was done safely, competently and sustainably. The sector cannot afford fragmentation at this stage of asset life.

In a sector where experience is thinning, leadership must deepen.

The organisations that will navigate this well are those that take the human dimension as seriously as the technical one, that recognise leadership coherence as a risk control, not a development exercise. That builds the conditions for people to speak up, to challenge constructively, and to carry genuine accountability rather than just nominal responsibility.

Radical Depletion is real, but it need not become a defining weakness. The question is whether we respond to it with the same seriousness we'd bring to any other major hazard.

Find out more about Equilibria, visit their website:
equilibria.com

or scan the QR code below

THE CAPACITY CRUNCH

Rethinking how decommissioning gets done safely, at pace, and through smarter relationships

Case Study | TAQA

In 2017, it was determined that decommissioning our North Sea portfolio on an asset-by-asset basis might not be the most efficient or effective approach.

Necessity, as they say, is the mother of invention, and with the largest infrastructure portfolio in the basin, an optimal window in which to decommission it, and a market where capacity is tightening, we had to think big, think smart and do things differently.

So, we changed the nature of the challenge entirely. We decided early in the process that TAQA would manage the decommissioning scope. By viewing decommissioning as more than the decommissioning of individual assets, we embarked upon a portfolio-wide programme that runs multiple decommissioning activities simultaneously. This, in turn, has created opportunities to build unparalleled experience, create efficiencies, strengthen supply chain resilience - building vital and transferable capabilities and capacity for the next energy era.

It has been, and continues to be, an exciting journey. With several major milestones already achieved, and valuable lessons learned, it is a journey we believe is worth sharing.

The Story So Far

Prior to asset removal, we managed the well plug & abandonment (P&A) of our assets to align with cessation of production dates and follow-on decommissioning activities. Our strategy has been to maximise value across our operations and decommissioning priorities by continuing production in parallel with P&A activity. Working with established organisations Odfjell, Archer and Noble, we have so far completed P&A at six of our eight platforms, and according to a North Sea Transition Authority (NSTA) league table published in late 2025, we have completed 99% of our 164 wells to date within consent deadlines.

To support this, we invested in additional platform drilling unit capability where required, including the installation of a modular drilling unit on Cormorant Alpha. This investment enabled simultaneous platform-based P&A campaigns across multiple installations.

Between 2021 and 2022, working through the COVID pandemic, we and our supply chain contractor - Heerema Marine Contractors - successfully removed the Brae Bravo topsides and upper jacket structure, at 36,000 tonnes one of the largest structures to be removed from the UKCS.

In the Northern North Sea, in preparation for platform removal, considerable progress was made across a wide range of complex scopes following the 2024 cessation of production (CoP) of Cormorant Alpha, North Cormorant, Tern and Eider. Three of these installations have already been disembarked, with Cormorant Alpha scheduled to complete the process in the summer of 2026.

These removals form part of our Northern North Sea Engineering, Preparation, Removal and Disposal (EPRD) 'mega scope' contract awarded to Allseas. At around 114,000 tonnes of infrastructure, it represents the largest contract of its kind signed in the UK North Sea.

The topside of our Eider platform was lifted and transported onshore for dismantling in 2025, marking the first phase of a major removal campaign that will include all four Northern North Sea assets by 2028.

Meanwhile, across our Central North Sea interests, East Brae was safely disembarked during the summer, while we completed de-energisation activities, flushing and isolating on the Braemar, Devenick and East Brae pipelines. We awarded the East Brae EPRD contract to Heerema Marine Contractors and the Brae Alpha EPRD contract was awarded to Allseas.

While the scale of these activities is impressive, they are the culmination of a much longer and more complex programme.

David Wilson, Director of Decommissioning, Projects and Engineering for TAQA UK, shares practical insights to what it takes to deliver one of the North Sea's largest decommissioning programmes.

All Seas Pioneering Spirit transporting the Eider Alpha platform in 2025.

Early Engagement

Major offshore removals represent the visible end point of a decommissioning process that begins many years earlier. The foundations for these achievements were laid nearly a decade ago and began with building knowledge, trust and communication.

In 2017, we invested in feasibility studies to provide a clear understanding across our entire portfolio. From this early stage, we engaged with our supply chain, regulatory authorities and other stakeholders well before tendering. Rather than ask suppliers how they would execute a predefined design, we worked with them to help shape the strategy and programme itself. That meant providing early access to our technical data and operational facilities, both onshore and offshore, and encouraging contractors to challenge assumptions about how the work should be delivered.

During the pre-tender phases of our EPRD contracts, we worked with the supply chain to undertake preliminary studies. The rationale was simple. It allowed contactors to develop robust solutions and bid based on detailed information, resulting in reduced scope uncertainty and improving cost certainty for both parties.

The result was not only more developed designs but fundamentally different thinking about how decommissioning campaigns could be executed. Early engagement, transparency and collaborative innovation have since become central to how we work and the results speak for themselves.

Scaling Contracts and Combining Scopes

Portfolio-scale decommissioning isn't simply a commercial preference; it represents a significant shift in how multi-asset programmes are delivered. By developing an integrated decommissioning strategy for all assets, it presents an opportunity to aggregate scopes into larger packages of work instead of contracting on a single-asset basis and leverage the benefits and efficiencies from this approach. We have been able to move commercial relationships away from transactional engagements towards longer-term strategic relationships. For the supply chain, this provides visibility of continuity of work over an extended time period that is rarely available in traditional project models. Indeed, it is this certainty that is enabling our suppliers to invest in skills, vessels, innovation and capability.

As the operator, the benefits include economies of scale, stronger relationships and reduced interface risk. Lessons learned on one asset can be applied immediately to the next, enabling repeatability and continuous improvement.

Understanding the Wider Infrastructure Context

Contracting in this way enables effective programme delivery through integration and sequencing. Every asset moves through a carefully coordinated series of stages: stakeholder engagement, P&A, CoP, de-energisation, disembarkation, pre-removal preparation before removal activity begins. Each stage must account for everything from weather windows and regulatory approvals to supplier capacity, vessels and people. Around this sits an even wider infrastructure context.

Our subsea wells P&A programme utilising a contracted semi-submersible drilling unit, the largest campaign of its kind yet undertaken in the North Sea, spans more than 50 wells across 11 fields and will continue until 2029 representing another long-term relationship with the supply chain.

The extensive subsea flushing and disconnection programme across the Northern and Central North

Sea provides another example of how portfolio-wide decommissioning can unlock new ways of working. Delivering one of the most complex campaigns of its kind in the UKCS required the combined expertise of subsea engineering, heavy marine capability and complex offshore logistics. Instead of approaching these disciplines separately, we worked closely with both Boskalis and Subsea7, to deliver the campaign in the most efficient way possible.

By working with the Supply Chain in this joined-up way, we were able to deliver work that would have been significantly more complex under a traditional approach. In a market where demand for subsea and heavy-lift capability continues to increase, this kind of approach is not only beneficial but necessary.
The culmination of all this has allowed us to deliver on our objective to achieve the shortest possible oil-to-exit window.

Another key innovation has been optimising the use of the most in demand resources. For example, heavy lift vessels. By scheduling successive, sequential vessel usage we have reduced that gap. Innovative contracting models have been essential in this respect. By providing our contractors with the flexibility to build removal programmes into its broader long-term schedule - within defined 'windows' - we have been able to minimise downtime, limit exposure to weather and market volatility, and improve predictability of delivery.

People Remain the Most Important Asset

While we are ultimately working towards the removal of infrastructure, what we are seeing in practice is significant capacity building across the industry. Portfolio-scale decommissioning creates sustained demand for specialist skills across disciplines, such as, programme planning & delivery, P&A, subsea flushing, de-energisation, heavy-lift integration, subsea removal and regulatory navigation. For engineers, project managers and offshore specialists, working across multiple assets and complex scopes provides experience that would be difficult to replicate in isolated projects.

The same is true for the supply chain. By participating in large-scale programmes, UK contractors are developing capabilities that position them strongly for opportunities both domestically and internationally. This matters because the North Sea is only one part of a much larger global picture. There are an estimated 12,000 offshore oil and gas platforms worldwide with associated infrastructure, many already operating beyond their design life.

If the UK supply chain can demonstrate capability at scale in the UKCS, it will be well positioned to compete internationally and across industries. And, of course, oil and gas is far from the only sector managing complex ageing infrastructure.

Beyond Proving a Concept

It has taken some far-sighted vision, brave decision making and hard work, but I am confident that the portfolio scale decommissioning strategy we have followed will continue to provide the benefits we have experienced to date. Our world-class supply chain has been integral to this success and will continue to be so. Along with the wider sector, TAQA UK still has a huge amount of work to do. The next phase will be equally challenging, but I am confident that it will be equally exciting.

I hope that sharing our experience of what portfolio-scale decommissioning looks like in practice, not just in theory, will help others across the industry tackle the challenges ahead. Our collective journey continues, as does that of the North Sea energy sector as we navigate the new energy era.

From Trainee to Managing Director

The moments that have defined my career

Stuart Florance,
Managing Director
UK, Peterson

When he first walked through the door as a trainee at Aker Solutions, occupying a seat in the boardroom seemed out of reach, but after building an international career step by step, Stuart Florance is now leading a team of hundreds of people as Peterson's Managing Director UK.

With over 25 years of experience in the energy industry, Stuart's progression took him from workshop and maintenance roles with Aker Solutions and Archer in the North Sea and Norway, to operations management positions with MHWirth in the Caspian Sea and Middle East, followed by almost 7 years in the UK and UAE with Odfjell Technology as a VP in their Well Services Business Area.

We sat down with Stuart to talk through his reflections on his career trajectory so far and the pivotal moments that have shaped him as a leader.

Early Days on the Workshop Floor

I can remember visiting my dad's office in Aberdeen when I was a child. I remember being intrigued by the pictures of oil rigs hanging on the walls, the comings and goings in the warehouse, and the variety of core and rock samples and chemicals sitting on the shelves. It was the '80s and all around were driven and committed people building the industry that I would step into. When I look back, I see how that same work ethic and determination show up in my own career today.

My own path in the industry started at Aker Solutions. I came in as a trainee draughtsman, but when our engineering department was closed, I had the chance to move into the workshop. The team was a great fit for me, and I enjoyed the hands-on, fast-paced and challenging environment. At times, the job really challenged me - it was hard physical work and often involved long hours during busy periods, but it was the best way to learn the business from the ground up. I don't think I would be where I am today if I hadn't had that grounding, practical experience on the workshop floor, experiencing the challenges of day-to-day operations firsthand.

From the workshop floor, I then progressed into project and technical coordination roles, and then ultimately into operations management, leading different combinations of workshop, offshore service and project delivery teams. Reaching this point in my career, I recognised the need to broaden my corporate skillset with a business degree, which I undertook through distance learning. Going to university later in life was a hugely rewarding experience, and one that I don't think I would have gained so much from, had I completed my degree at a younger age. Having many years in the workplace already under my belt gave me much greater situational context, allowing me to apply the theoretical concepts to real business situations and real operations.

A Personal Connection to Safety

In the early part of my career, an incident occurred offshore where several people were injured. This was a hard-hitting moment for many of us at the time - the realisation that the links of safety are absolutely interconnected through all departments. That experience really brought home the value of safety barriers, control of work, and communication in hazardous operations. But above all else, it gave me an appreciation that safety statistics aren't just numbers - they are real people, with families, friends and lives ahead of them.

My commitment to safety has been something I place above all else and will never compromise on. It's a belief that I have continued to carry with me throughout my career, and into my current role with Pe-terson. For me, everyone should feel that they have the right to stop work if it looks or feels unsafe - whether they are based at one of our operational sites, an office or remotely. As a leader, it's also about encouraging people to intervene in a positive way - from a place of care and concern for each other, engaging on a personal level, without confrontation. And coaching teams in how to respond supportive-ly is just as important - pausing work for safety should never be seen as a disruption. I think this sort of mindset goes a long way in building a culture where the number one priority is protecting ourselves and those around us.

Overseas Opportunities

Moving abroad was a key turning point for me. The first time I took a job overseas was when I was 25, relocating to Norway. Since then, I have also spent a number of years in Azerbaijan and the UAE. I don't think I realised how impactful the decision to work internationally would be - in terms of my career path and my personal growth. It was a learning curve in how to navigate different cultural norms, lan-guages and communication styles. It taught me some incredibly important lessons in how to integrate well in a team, and the adaptations I can make to help everyone feel included and welcome, no matter their background.

My international roles at Aker, MHWirth and Odfjell gave me a whole new perspective on teamwork and leadership, and when I returned to the UK, I always tried to take some of what I had learned abroad back with me, in the same way as I take my learnings from Aberdeen with me to other countries.

I do still feel a sense of comfort when I step back on Scottish soil, despite the challenges ahead for the energy sector. It's a tricky time - you could say a crossroads - but the resilience and tenacity of our in-dustry have triumphed before, and I have no doubt we will see that again. What I talk to my teams at Peterson about is focusing our energy on what we can influence - how we deliver, how we show up for our customers and how we grow our business through trust, relationships, and service excellence. I'm optimistic about what the future holds for our industry in Aberdeen and beyond.

Aside from my work, returning to the UK has its benefits on a personal level too – my wider family is all here and my wife and I have always considered Aberdeen to be home. It's great to be back and be able to enjoy the countryside, fresh air, golf courses, and of course to be back close to Murrayfield for the rugby again.

"In the early part of my career, an incident occurred offshore where several people were injured. This was a hard-hitting moment for many of us at the time - the realisation that the links of safety are absolutely interconnected through all departments."

Fatherhood and Future Generations

Looking back to the early part of my career, I was fortunate to have some positive role models and hugely influential leaders who offered me guidance and support without judgement and without expec-tation. Now as a father myself, I try to emulate some of their behaviours in both my work life and per-sonal life.

At this point in my life, and particularly since having my own children, I feel a greater sense of respon-sibility to support the generations coming after me. I've seen many different leadership styles over the years, but one leader in particular stands out - they taught me how to deeply understand and accept my own style, and how to strive to be the best version of it. That is a message I pass on to the gradu-ates and apprentices that I work with, encouraging them to take a step back, self-reflect and acknowledge their own strengths and weaknesses so they can reach their full potential.

The other value that I hope to pass on to future leaders is the importance of doing the right thing. The leaders that shaped my career gave me space to make mistakes, and having that guidance and trust allowed me to grow. But with that trust comes the need to take responsibility for mistakes and holding yourself accountable. It's a value I believe is essential for career growth, and it's a value that really comes through in the Peterson culture.

Leading Today and Beyond

Starting the role as Managing Director UK at Peterson earlier this year has already been extremely re-warding. Having spent the last few months engaging with the teams at our operational sites across the UK and seeing their passion and commitment, it definitely feels like the right job at the right time.

So far, in a typical week, I could be talking to our customers about how we help them optimise their off-shore logistics, exploring an offshore wind project development, visiting new ports and engaging with stakeholders, or looking at potential asset decommissioning. The baseline set is high - Peterson has an exemplary safety record and has made industry-leading strides in terms of sustainability. It is commit-ted to being a partner to customers, adopting their business challenges as our own and delivering with safety, reliability, and innovation at our core. My focus is on maintaining these excellent quality and standards and exploring how we deepen our partnerships.

Since I have been at Peterson, I've found myself reflecting on the early part of my career a lot. There is something full circle and serendipitous about spending time with the teams on the quaysides and ware-house floor that takes me back to my days in the workshop. I've really enjoyed that engagement, listen-ing to and understanding the challenges they face whilst learning from them at the same time. I will never underestimate how impactful one-to-one conversations on the ground are, building trust and helping people feel safe and confident to speak up.

Two principles have shaped my career so far and will continue to guide me moving forward. First, I never lose sight of how my experiences, the people who have supported me, and the challenges I've faced have all contributed to who I am today. Second, I never underestimate the power of persistence and resilience in people. Talent is important, but grit and determination matter just as much - sometimes even more. These qualities are what carry people through challenges and help them realise opportuni-ties that may have once seemed out of reach.

Find out more at:
petersonlogistics.com

SECURING THE UK'S ENERGY FUTURE THROUGH SKILLS AND INNOVATION

The UK stands at a pivotal moment in its energy journey. Securing long-term energy resilience will depend on a balanced approach that strengthens homegrown oil and gas production in the North Sea, while accelerating investment in renewables and low-carbon technologies. This integrated mix remains essential to meeting national demand, maintaining stability, and supporting economic growth as the country transitions to more diverse, lower-emission energy systems. From offshore wind to hydrogen, carbon capture, geothermal and the UK's expanding power networks, the sector is placing growing demands on a workforce that must be skilled, adaptable and able to operate safely and efficiently across an increasingly diverse energy mix.

The Training and Principles of a Just Transition

A just transition centres on the belief that workers across all parts of the energy sector must be supported fairly as national priorities evolve. Regions, such as Scotland's offshore centres and Teesside's industrial heartlands, are uniquely positioned to contribute to the UK's future energy landscape, provided individuals have access to high-quality skills development.

The challenge ahead is one of the most ambitious engineering undertakings the UK has ever faced: decarbonising the economy while continuing to secure energy for generations to come. As OEUK's Workforce Insight 2025 highlights, it is the energy workforce – skilled, resilient and deeply committed – that will ultimately determine whether this transformation succeeds.

The North Sea's legacy underlines what is possible. From early oil and gas developments through to the UK's emergence as a global leader in offshore wind, the sector has repeatedly demonstrated its capacity to innovate and adapt. Today, that legacy translates into a workforce supporting more than 150,000 jobs and contributing over £25 billion annually to the UK economy – making offshore energy a strategic national asset at the heart of the transition.

As the energy mix expands, delivering a secure, affordable and lower carbon system will depend on building an integrated energy workforce – one that enables people to move across sectors, retain critical skills and support long term economic growth alongside climate ambition.

Skills for an Evolving Energy Workforce

The UK's ambitious 2030 Net Zero targets have set a clear direction, yet real world changes depend on far more than policy alone. As traditional oil and gas activity phases down, many within that sector are understandably concerned about the future of their roles. Yet transitioning people, not just technologies, is one of the most critical components of the energy transition, and this is where training plays a pivotal role.

While new capabilities are needed as the UK transitions, the foundations of the existing workforce remain highly valuable, as around 90% of skills in the offshore oil and gas workforce are directly transferable to emerging low carbon sectors, offering strong reassurance for the traditional workforce. Nevertheless, adaptable training provision and a deep understanding of the technical shifts are required.

3t's approach within a changing skills landscape | 3t's programmes are built to reflect the complexity and pace of change, spanning competencies across offshore wind, hydrogen, CCS, power networks and emerging technologies. Courses evolve continuously, developed in tandem with accredited industry bodies including OPITO, GWO, EUSR, CITB, City & Guilds, NRSWA and ECITB, to ensure qualifications remain relevant as technical requirements shift. In practice, this means creating training environments capable of supporting workers across the full energy spectrum – bringing multiple technologies, standards and regulatory frameworks together in one place as the workforce adapts to an increasingly integrated energy system.

Strengthening the Power Sector Through Manchester

Alongside offshore and industrial energy roles, the UK's modernising power networks are central to maintaining a resilient energy system, as operators and regulators focus on faster grid delivery and stronger workforce capability. Grid connection backlogs and rising electricity demand have prompted a move toward strategic network planning and accelerated infrastructure build out, highlighting the need of trained technicians in overhead line work, substation fitting, cable installation, safe excavation and utility coordination.

3t's approach to supporting power network skills | Meeting the demands of a rapidly expanding power sector requires training environments that reflect the realities of network construction, maintenance and safety critical operations. As grid reinforcement gathers pace across transmission and distribution, the ability for technicians to develop, test and refresh skills in realistic conditions is becoming increasingly important. In response, training programmes covering overhead line work, substations, cable installation, safe excavation and utility coordination are being shaped to mirror the complexity of modern power networks. At facilities such as 3t's Manchester centre, this approach brings together multiple disciplines within a single setting, allowing learners to practise practical tasks aligned with real world network requirements. As the UK accelerates investment in grid infrastructure, the availability of hands on, accredited training remains central to safe delivery, improved reliability and the long term resilience of core energy systems.

Regional Growth in the Northeast

The Northeast of England is rapidly emerging as a focal point for the UK's energy transition, building on its industrial heritage while supporting the growth of offshore wind and carbon capture projects. Alongside major infrastructure investment, the region faces a parallel challenge: ensuring the local workforce is equipped to access new opportunities as demand shifts across the energy system.

3t's regional approach to workforce entry | At the same time, the Northeast plays an important role in attracting new entrants into the sector. Funded training programmes and government backed initiatives, including Green Skills Bootcamps, are increasingly being used to support both first time entrants and those transitioning from adjacent industries. These programmes are designed to align training

with regional skills priorities and emerging project pipelines, helping reduce barriers to entry while responding to real employer demand. For regions undergoing rapid change, training provision that combines practical, hands on learning with recognised industry standards is becoming a critical enabler. By working with employers, education providers and regional partners, training pathways can support job ready capability while strengthening long term workforce resilience as the energy mix evolves.

Preparing the Next Generation for Risk, Complexity and Change

Many of the roles required to deliver the UK's future energy system will be filled by people only beginning their careers today. Engaging and preparing this next generation is therefore not just a question of recruitment, but of readiness. As the sector grows more technologically complex and safety critical, the way new entrants are introduced to operational environments will have a direct impact on long term performance, resilience and risk.

Younger learners increasingly benefit from training environments that reflect the realities of modern energy systems. Digital tools, immersive simulation and scenario based learning are becoming more prominent as ways to expose individuals to complex decision making and operational pressures in controlled settings – mirroring the technological nature of future roles while building early confidence and competence.

3T's subsea training simulation, preparing the workforce for offshore transfer and emergency scenarios

Find out more at:
3tglobal.com

Importantly, training pathways must also accommodate different stages of experience. While simulation can provide new entrants with safe exposure to offshore conditions and complex equipment, experienced workers rely on training to maintain HSE compliance, refresh safety critical procedures and adapt to new technologies as they are introduced across the energy mix. Tailored approaches that combine practical and digital learning are therefore increasingly seen as essential across the workforce lifecycle.

Within this context, training providers operating across multiple energy sectors are adapting their models to support both early career development and continuous upskilling - ensuring individuals are prepared not just for today's operational demands, but for the evolving requirements of an increasingly integrated energy system.

Using Simulation to Prepare for High Risk Energy Environments

The use of digital learning and simulation has grown rapidly over the past decade, particularly in safety critical environments where harsh weather, confined spaces and fast changing conditions directly influence operational decisions. In these contexts, traditional classroom learning alone is insufficient. High fidelity simulation allows individuals and teams to rehearse complex scenarios, develop judgement and pressure test decision making in realistic but controlled conditions, without exposing people or assets to risk.

Simulation now plays a critical role in preparing the workforce for both established and emerging energy sectors. In drilling and well control, detailed simulations enable crews to practise routine and abnormal operations, including equipment faults and loss of well control scenarios, strengthening readiness and consistency. The same approach is increasingly applied in newer areas such as geothermal energy, where digital environments provide safe exposure to unfamiliar subsurface and operational conditions. As digitalisation reshapes how people prepare for complex working environments, simulation is becoming a core enabler of safer, more reliable operations, building practical awareness and confidence long before workers step offshore.

Building a Future Ready UK Workforce

The capability of the UK's workforce will be one of the defining factors in the success of the national energy transition. Delivering a secure, affordable and lower carbon energy system will depend on how effectively people are equipped to work across an increasingly integrated and technologically complex energy landscape. Sustaining investment in skills, fostering flexible pathways into the sector and supporting all parts of the energy mix will be critical to building a resilient and confident workforce. As the transition accelerates, the role of training will remain central to ensuring that the UK's energy ambitions are delivered both effectively and fairly.

SCALING WELL ENGINEERING WITHOUT SCALING HEADCOUNT

THF Engineered Solutions

How structured workflows and engineering-led AI are helping operators increase capacity across well planning, assurance and delivery

Christopher Smith (Founder of THF Engineered Solutions) working with AGR on a pilot focused on Offset Well Reviews

The Origin Story | A Practical Engineering Problem

Founded in 2024 by Christopher Smith, following over two decades in technical leadership across the energy sector, THF Engineered Solutions emerged from a simple but persistent observation in well engineering and delivery. Across the industry, experienced engineers devote substantial time to repetitious tasks, such as planning work, reviewing historical wells, analysing operational outcomes, structuring drilling programmes, building risk registers and assembling assurance documentation. These activities are fundamental to safe well delivery, yet they remain highly manual and are often repeated from project to project.

At the same time, the industry is facing a combination of structural pressures: fewer graduates are entering the sector, the existing workforce is ageing, and there is constant pressure to improve efficiency and capital discipline. Together, these factors are beginning to expose the limits of traditional approaches to scaling engineering delivery. While operators have always managed large portfolios of wells, maintaining consistency, quality and pace of delivery with constrained resources is becoming increasingly challenging. This creates a need for new approaches that allow engineering capability to scale without a corresponding increase in headcount.

THF Engineered Solutions was established to explore how modern AI technology could remediate this structural challenge - not by replacing engineering judgement, but by augmenting it, reducing repeatable workloads and freeing engineers to focus on higher value decision making.

The intention is not to introduce AI as a standalone capability, but to apply it in a way that reflects how well engineers already think and work - structured, traceable and grounded in engineering logic.

Introducing WellPhase and ELLIS

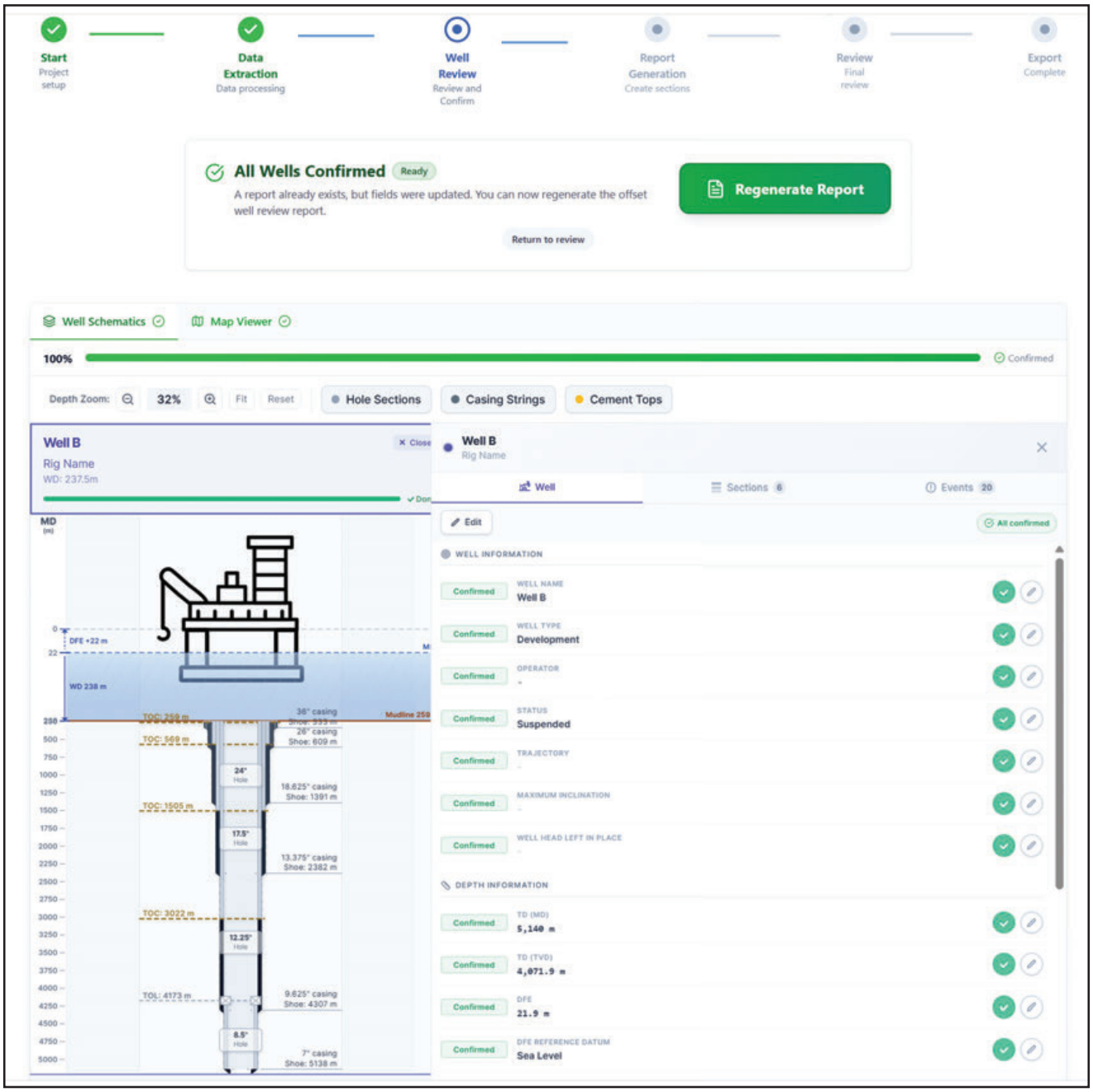
THF's work centres on the WellPhase platform and its embedded engineering agent, ELLIS (Engineering Logic and Learning Intelligence System). Together, they are designed to support the structured workflows that sit at the core of well planning and delivery, built around how well engineers actually work in practice.

WellPhase provides a common execution environment for well engineering teams, bringing together historical well information, standardised workflows and documentation requirements in a single system. Structured around the stages of the well delivery lifecycle — including offset well review, programme development and assurance — it assists teams by applying consistent logic and structure across projects.

ELLIS operates within these workflows as a domain-specific well engineering agent, applying structured engineering logic to help engineers navigate complex information, highlight relevant insights and risks, and support repeatable planning activities.

The objective is not to automate engineering judgement, but to make it more scalable. By reducing the manual effort required to review legacy material and assemble core planning and assurance outputs, experienced engineers can apply their expertise more effectively across larger and more complex well portfolios.

Crucially, the system is designed to keep engineers in control. By removing repetitive, low value tasks — where fatigue and familiarity can increase the risk of human error — it allows engineering judgement to be applied where it matters most. Structured engineering logic is used to organise information and support decision making, while responsibility for technical judgement and final outputs remain firmly with engineering teams.



WellPhase interface showing integrated well schematic and structured well data within a single planning environment.

Industry Collaboration and Early Pilots

Over the past year, THF has moved from concept into early collaboration with operators, industry bodies and regulators, engaging with regulators such as the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) in Australia, to explore how digital systems can support and elevate assurance and regulatory alignment within well delivery workflows. The company is also currently working with AGR on a pilot focused on Offset Well Reviews, exploring how AI can support engineers in analysing historical wells more efficiently while maintaining full transparency of source documentation. In parallel, THF has been engaging with Standards Norway to explore how digital systems might better support the operational application of industry standards such as Norwegian Continental Shelf Standards (NORSOK).

Interest is also emerging in how similar approaches could support assurance and compliance activities, particularly in helping engineers and technical authorities navigate complex standards and regulatory expectations in a more structured and traceable way. With teams under pressure to do more with less, these approaches are aimed at removing repetitive, automatable tasks from engineers' workloads, allowing scarce technical expertise to be deployed where complexity, risk and judgement demand it most. These collaborations are helping shape how AI can be introduced into well engineering in a way that respects existing engineering governance and assurance processes and regulatory frameworks.

AGR Offset Well Review Pilot

This shift towards more structured and repeatable workflows is beginning to be tested in real-world settings. THF is currently working with AGR on a pilot focused on Offset Well Reviews, exploring how structured workflows and engineering-led AI can support engineers in reviewing large volumes of historical well documentation more efficiently while maintaining full transparency and traceability to source documentation.

The pilot is focused on generating a structured first-pass review of offset wells, including event identification, categorisation and associated planning considerations, which engineers can then review, refine and validate.

Rather than replacing engineering judgement, the system is designed to reduce the manual effort involved in collating and structuring historical well data, allowing engineers to focus on interpreting risks, validating insights and strengthening planning decisions.

As with any offset review process, the quality of output is inherently bounded by the completeness and quality of available source data. The objective of the pilot is therefore not to automate the process end-to-end, but to evaluate whether a structured, engineer-in-the-loop workflow can accelerate review cycles while maintaining alignment with established engineering practices.

The work reflects a broader industry opportunity to scale engineering capability across growing well portfolios without a corresponding increase in headcount, while preserving the rigour and accountability expected in well delivery.

> *"What's interesting about WellPhase isn't just the speed, it's the structure and consistency it brings to offset well reviews. It provides a traceable first pass that allows engineers to focus on interpreting risk and making decisions, rather than assembling information. This has the potential to improve consistency and strengthen confidence in delivery, particularly across multiple assets, geographies, and compressed timelines"*
>
> **- Lynden Duthie**
> **MD Well Management, AGR**

A Wider Industry Opportunity

The industry is moving beyond viewing AI as a standalone capability and towards understanding how it can be applied in a disciplined, engineering-led way. In well engineering, the focus is not on replacing expertise, but on supporting it, with engineer-in-the-loop, ensuring that technology aligns with established standards, regulatory expectations and engineering practices.

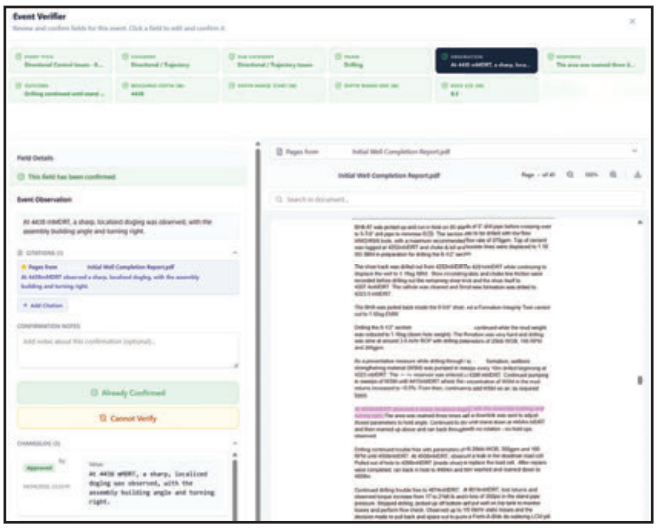
This becomes particularly relevant as operators manage increasingly complex portfolios of wells across their full lifecycle, from exploration and development through to late-life operations and decommissioning and restoration (D&R). However, the challenge is not simply introducing new tools; it is ensuring that they align with the rigorous standards, regulatory frameworks and engineering practices that underpin safe well delivery.

For this reason, collaboration with operators, regulators and industry organisations is essential —serving as a mechanism through which new capabilities are tested, governed and determined on whether such technology-forward approaches mature into trusted engineering tools, or remain isolated technical experiments.

Looking Ahead

Well engineering has always been shaped by innovation, from advances in drilling technology to improvements in well integrity management. The next evolution lies in how engineering knowledge itself is organised and applied. If experienced engineers are supported by systems that capture best practice, organise complex information and streamline repeatable tasks, the industry could deliver more wells more consistently without increasing engineering headcount.

For THF, the focus remains practical and collaborative: working with operators and industry partners to explore how these capabilities can be applied responsibly and transparently. As more operators begin to test how structured workflow automation can support well delivery, the conversation is shifting from whether this approach has value, to where it can be applied most effectively across the well lifecycle. What is beginning to emerge is not simply another digital tool, but a new category of engineering infrastructure – systems designed to capture, structure and apply engineering knowledge at scale.



Event verification interface within WellPhase, linking engineering observations directly to source documentation for traceable review.

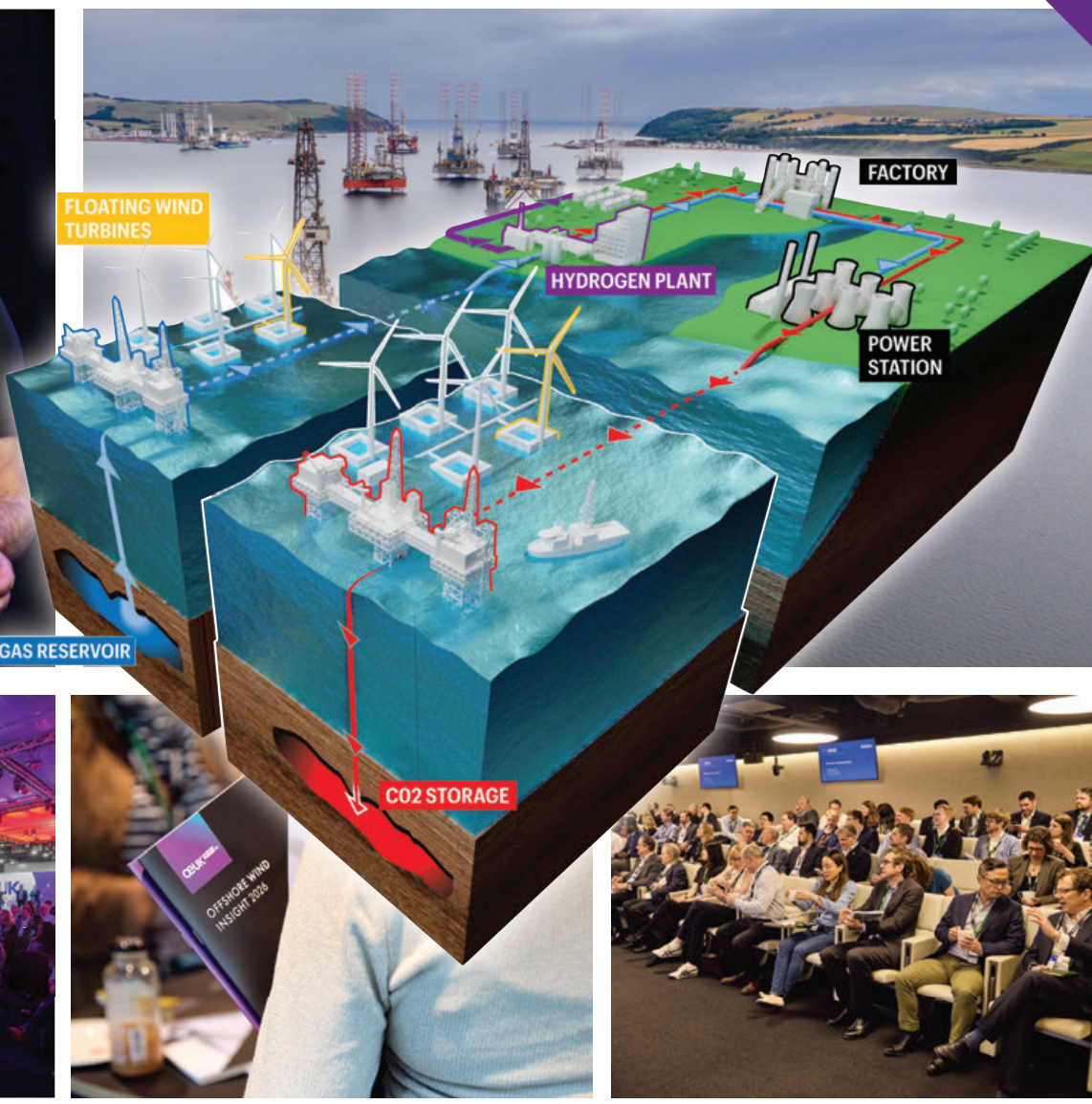
THF ENGINEERED SOLUTIONS

THF Engineered Solutions is a well engineering–focused software company specialising in well planning, assurance and delivery workflows.

Join the leading representative body for the UK offshore energy industry

Our membership has grown to over 450 organisations, spanning across the whole of the UK

OEUK OFFSHORE ENERGIES UK



OEUK is the UK offshore sector's trade body. We champion the production, investment and jobs of over 450 companies; from offshore oil and gas operators, renewables developers, critical energy infrastructure owners and a world-class manufacturing supply chain.

Back a modern industrial Britain, secured by homegrown energy.

See our events schedule, free publications and membership options at **OEUK.ORG.UK**