

Some Political Actors in the Anti-Wind Campaign

Chris Rose chris@campaignstrategy.co.uk

For further details see the blog [Killing the Wind of England \(with slides\)](#) and [Full Wind Politics Timeline](#)

Introduction

This project began as an inquiry into how onshore wind energy became such a politicised and values-polarised issue in the UK, in a way that did not even apply to other forms of renewable energy. In the space of a few years it led Conservative leader and Prime Minister David Cameron to execute a volte-face, going from being an advocate and active supporter of wind energy, to disowning and demonizing onshore wind. Conservative governments then excluded it from new funding and market access, and rigged the system so that new onshore wind farms became punishingly expensive and risky to take through the planning system.

I started with the impression that fear of UKIP taking votes from the Conservatives had led the Conservatives to deliberately pick a fight over wind energy with their coalition partners the Liberal Democrats, and that values played a key part in that.

What I didn't know was why UKIP was anti-wind in the first place, and how exactly this phobia transferred itself to the Conservatives. What I found by trawling back through media, policy and technical reports seems to confirm that my initial vague impression was correct but it also turns out that the vector of this change was more than a simple piece of electoral calculation. At the centre of this policy reversal was a small group of politicians who were initially all bit-players in the Conservative world, and who combined climate scepticism with Euroscepticism. They combined both to lever the Conservatives rightwards, acting in parallel if not in consort with UKIP. Whether these Conservatives regarded UKIP as 'useful idiots' (in the Communist sense), and which may have been plotters, is hard to know, and may not matter. (See also the Desmog 'Brexit-Climate-Deniers network' [mapped in 2017](#) and George Monbiot's 2017 '[dark money](#)' article).

This handful of Conservative politicians developed their network as MEPs in the European Parliament before bringing organised anti-wind campaigning to the UK. In this time two of them – Chris Heaton-Harris and Roger Helmer – both met the professional climate sceptic Bjorn Lomborg. Heaton-Harris credits Lomborg with converting him from a "greenie" in 1999, to a climate sceptic, saying he met him in 2001.

While in the EP, they also developed close contacts with rightwing US lobby groups, most notably ALEC, the powerful American Legislative Exchange Council, funded by amongst others, the Koch Brothers, oil, chemical and tobacco companies.

Some of the political players mentioned in this story are Chris Heaton-Harris (Conservative MEP now MP and Minister in Dexu), Roger Helmer Conservative MEP before becoming a UKIP MEP and eventually resigning amidst scandal, Daniel Hannan (Conservative MEP, a founder of VoteLeave and first director of the European Research Group or ERG), Martin Callanan (Conservative MEP and now Lord Callanan a Minister in Dexu), and Thomas Pursglove (Conservative MP and formerly parliamentary assistant to Chris Heaton-Harris and now Vice Chairman of the Conservative Party for youth), and Rupert Matthews (Conservative MEP). Others include Peter Bone (Conservative MP), Nigel Farage former leader of UKIP, Peter Lilley (former Conservative MP now Lord Lilley), Eric Pickles (former Conservative MP now Lord Pickles), Owen Patterson and David Hayes (Conservative MP).

The anti-wind campaign was a ‘campaign of convenience’ for these rightwing politicians despite their many fine tuned political differences. For instance in November 2014 [Peter Bone wrote in The Guardian](#) ‘I remain a Tory, but Ukip is a good thing ... I am not defecting to Ukip, because I want an EU referendum – but Nigel Farage has filled the vacuum left by my own party... Ukip ‘has been a good thing for British politics’ ... it has filled a vacuum on the right of British politics because the Conservatives have spent too much time worrying about the centre ground ... ‘The vacuum left by the Conservative party ignoring much of its traditional base was filled by Ukip. It has a number of very simple messages, such as control of immigration, leaving the EU, and ending the windfarm folly. All these policies resonate with traditional Tory voters, many non-voters, and increasingly Labour voters’. He added: ‘I spend a lot of my time helping the excellent Eurosceptic Conservative candidate in Corby and East Northants, [Tom Pursglove](#)’

Farage, Bone and Pursglove were (along with Labour’s Kate Hoey) all directors of Grassroots Out, a pro Brexit campaign group. GO MOVEMENT was a short-lived affiliate intended to become a cross-party popular pro Brexit base and the official Leave campaign. Bone, Farage and Pursglove were all directors of it. In 2016 Bone and Pursglove both spoke at the UKIP conference, despite being Conservative MPs.

In terms of political dynamics and values the story is one of a large broad-church political party (the Conservatives) being radicalised from the margins (ERG and UKIP) as it tried to remain a ‘big tent’, while stressed by an ‘anti-reflexive’ revolution (anti modernism, pro old technologies, old decision making – UK outside EU, anti-environmental, anti-science).

Cameron’s ‘green phase’ was an attempt at reflexive revolution (‘detoxification’) and wind was a fault line that Heaton-Harris, Lilley and others used as a ‘wedge issue’ to force him to back down. As a journalist in Brussels Boris Johnson played a role in fostering ignorance of the EU and ridiculing its processes in often fictitious stories.

Just recently (February 2019) the Labour Party has experienced defections in the opposite direction, with seven reflexive modernizers leaving a party controlled by an old school left (Jeremy Corbyn and followers).

Given the age demographics, with the young more strongly Remain and pro wind, and the reality of climate change hitting home, it seems likely that more political support for wind can be rekindled in the UK.

Chris Heaton-Harris MP

Chris Heaton-Harris played a visible and pivotal role in the campaign against onshore wind. Perhaps he also played *the* key role, although much of the political manoeuvring is not fully on the public record.

Heaton-Harris is ‘fiercely’ Eurosceptic, a former Chairman of the ERG (European Research Group), a climate sceptic fan of Bjorn Lomborg, and has claimed Donald Trump as of one his ‘biggest fans’. He is also a keen football referee.

After standing unsuccessfully to become an MP in Leicester-South in 1997, Chris Heaton-Harris became a Member of the European Parliament in 1999. Heaton-Harris was in the same intake of MEPs as Conservative Daniel Hannan, who was the first director of the European Research Group in 1993, and went on to become a founder of Vote Leave.

Heaton-Harris was until April 2019 a junior Minister in the Department for Exiting the European Union (DEXU). He spent ten years as a MEP, during which he again stood unsuccessfully in the UK Leicester South constituency in a 2004 by-election, before becoming MP for Daventry (Northamptonshire) in 2009, by which time he was already involved with anti-wind campaigning. He was re-elected in 2015.

As a Conservative MEP for the East Midlands Region Heaton-Harris [was](#) also Chief Whip of the British Conservatives in the European Parliament from 2001-2004. In the 2009 European Elections, he was [named by](#) the "Taxpayers' Alliance" as being the MEP on mainland UK that was the most "hard-working, committed to transparency and accountability". His [constituency website](#) states:

'He made his name in the European Parliament trying to clean up the European Commission's accounts and had many well-reported battles with then European Commissioner Neil Kinnock. He became an expert on the European Union Budget process and has written extensively on this subject'.

Wikipedia [states](#) that:

'From 17 July 2016 – 15 June 2017 he was Assistant Government Whip under Theresa May; from 15 June 2017 – 9 January 2018 he was Vice-Chamberlain of the Household [Junior Government Whip]; from 9 January 2018 – 9 July 2018 he was Comptroller General of the Household [Government Whip], and from 9 July 2018 he was [and is] Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union under Dominic Raab and then Stephen Barclay'.

According to his [Powerbase entry](#):

'Heaton-Harris briefly worked as a commercial lobbyist. He was hired by lobbying agency [Fleishman-Hillard](#) while he was standing for Parliament in 2009. It was reported that [Fleishman-Hillard](#) paid for a three-day junket to Washington so Heaton-Harris could speak at a conference on Capitol Hill in March 2010'.

'Heaton-Harris was listed as an International Delegate of the powerful US corporate lobby group, [American Legislative Exchange Council](#), although it is unclear when this was*. Other 'international delegates from the UK include other Eurosceptics: [Liam Fox](#) MP, [Daniel Hannan](#) MEP, [Roger Helmer](#) MEP, [Syed Kamall](#) MEP, [Richard Ashworth](#) MEP, [Martin Callanan](#) MEP and [Nirj Deva](#) MEP'.

[*It appears from material published by the Voter Legislative Transparency Project that this included around 2004 – 2005].

Powerbase also states, based on a Friends of the Earth Europe analysis, that in the European Parliament he voted against a measure on "establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy" (A5-0027/2000); in favour of [and amendment to] the directive on "national emission ceilings for certain atmospheric pollutants" (A5-0063/2000) to allow 'less ambitious national emission ceilings for sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), ammonia (NH₃) and volatile organic compounds (VOC)'; against a precautionary approach on future chemicals policy (amendment on (A5-0356/2001) and against 'the directive on restructuring the "Community framework for the taxation of energy products and electricity" (A5-0302/2003). The amendment aims at [aimed to give] giving tax benefits to environmentally friendly sources of energy, which would make them cheaper and more competitive to conventional (more polluting) sources of energy. It also gives tax benefits to

environmentally friendly uses of energy for transport, for instance trains. Rejected due to lack of absolute majority.'

In other words it seems, he had a broadly anti-environmental track record in the EP although not focused on wind energy. The Precautionary Principle is something which exercised ALEC in this period, and was (and is) opposed by US chemical corporations.

While a rightwing Conservative and self declared 'fierce Eurosceptic' Heaton-Harris has usually couched his opposition to wind farms by reference to local issues such as noise nuisance, and impact on the landscape and even arguments about an economic effect on fuel poverty. He has also not been an obviously campaigning climate sceptic compared to his friend Roger Helmer (former MEP), although he has retweeted the climate sceptic Bjorn Lomborg and credits a meeting with Lomborg for turning him into a climate sceptic.

In Parliament (2016) Heaton-Harris [gave a speech](#) resuming his anti-wind campaigning history and attributed it to becoming a MP in 2009 and having to pay attention to constituency issues, such as the Kelmarsh windfarm proposal but it seems (see timeline) that he had already started anti-wind campaigning while still a MEP in 2008.

Heaton-Harris's best known contribution to the anti-wind campaign was his organisation of the 2012 letter from 106 MPs (101 of them Conservatives) to David Cameron, which precipitated a 180-degree u-turn in policy on onshore wind by 2015 (Conservative Manifesto).

Heaton-Harris also ran a campaign (now archived) called Together Against Wind, which gave help and advice to local anti-wind campaigns across the UK, and supplied pro forma letters with which to lobby (Conservative) Ministers and the Prime Minister. He was one of two directors of the company Together Against Wind which was started in 2012 and was struck off in 2017. The other director was his former Parliamentary assistant and now MP, Thomas Pursglove (see below).

Heaton-Harris has also taken positions for an against solar power, and in favour of local biomass. However [according to](#) 'They Work For You' as a MP Chris Heaton-Harris 'generally voted against measures to prevent climate change' between 2011 and 2016. For example:

- On 3 May 2016: Chris Heaton-Harris voted not to reduce the permitted carbon dioxide emission rate of new homes.
- On 14 Mar 2016: Chris Heaton-Harris voted against requiring a strategy for carbon capture and storage for the energy industry.
- On 14 Mar 2016: Chris Heaton-Harris voted against setting a decarbonisation target for the UK within six months of June 2016 and to review it annually thereafter.
- On 26 Oct 2015: Chris Heaton-Harris voted against charging the first year rate of vehicle tax, which varies substantially based on carbon dioxide emissions, for the subsequent two years as well; against a variable rate of vehicle tax based on carbon dioxide emissions for vehicles registered on or after 1 April 2017 and to charge additional tax on vehicles costing over £40,000.
- On 8 Sep 2015: Chris Heaton-Harris voted to apply the Climate Change Levy tax to electricity generated from renewable sources.
- On 14 Jul 2015: Chris Heaton-Harris voted in favour of the Summer 2015 budget which, among other measures, increased the minimum wage, replaced student maintenance grants with loans and cut tax credits.
- On 14 Jul 2015: Chris Heaton-Harris voted to apply the tax on non-domestic electricity supplies known as the climate change levy to electricity generated from renewable sources.

- On 4 Dec 2013: Chris Heaton-Harris voted against allowing carbon dioxide emissions limits to be set in respect of existing stations which fit pollution abatement equipment.
- On 4 Jun 2013: Chris Heaton-Harris voted against requiring the setting of a target range for the amount of carbon dioxide (or other greenhouse gases) produced per unit of electricity generated.
- On 3 Jun 2013: Chris Heaton-Harris voted not to exempt electricity generation plants using carbon capture and storage technology from annual carbon dioxide emissions limits during a commissioning and proving period of up to three years.
- On 19 Dec 2012: Chris Heaton-Harris voted to reform the energy market with regard to reducing carbon dioxide emissions, securing supply, affordability for consumers and increasing generation from renewable sources.
- On 11 Jun 2012: Chris Heaton-Harris voted in favour of establishing a Green Investment Bank, strengthening copyright law relating to commercialised works, encouraging employment disputes to be settled outside of tribunals, and other business related reforms.

While Chris Heaton-Harris has been a longstanding advocate of greater 'localism' and has consistently called for more local influence over planning policy, his campaign against onshore wind turbines led to top-down call-ins of local decisions made in favour of windfarms by Secretary of State Eric Pickles, who then mostly over-turned them. He has also an advocate of fracking for shale-gas. The pro-fracking policy of the Cameron and May government's has involved top-down Central Government backing for fracking in the face of opposition from Local Government and communities. Numerous commentators have pointed out that whereas planning and energy policy is now rigged so that onshore wind can be rather easily stopped by local objections (eg on grounds of visual aesthetics), while the opposite is true of fracking.

Heaton-Harris has played a central role in the ERG or European Research Group of rightwing Conservative MPs, now often described as a 'party within a party'. [Wikipedia states](#): 'Heaton-Harris chaired the European Research Group, a group of Eurosceptic MPs, from 2010 until November 2016 ... hosted an ERG breakfast meeting in October 2017, despite taking over as a government whip in July 2016'. [Wikipedia cites](#) him as a subscriber to the ERG (2018) along with Peter Lilley and Liam Fox.

In October 2017 [Heaton-Harris was](#) at the centre of controversy after writing the universities demanding "the names of [their] professors involved in the teaching of European affairs, with particular reference to Brexit" as well as "a copy of the syllabus" and "links to online lectures." Universities denounced it as 'McCarthyite' and 'sinister'.

As of March 2019 Heaton-Harris's website still lists anti-wind campaigning as a 'major focus' and invites people to contact him so he can '[help you object to a local on-shore windfarm proposal](#)'.

Roger Helmer, former MEP

Roger Helmer often has referred to Chris Heaton-Harris as a personal friend, and they were both East Midlands Conservative MEPs.

In 2011 Helmer referenced Martin Callanan MEP and himself, Chris Heaton-Harris and Daniel Hannan as part of the "'The H-Block" in the good old days' at the EP. He has also praised Struan Stevenson a Scottish Conservative MEP for his anti-wind farming campaigns. Stevenson appeared with Chris Heaton-Harris at the first national anti wind farm conference in Cumbria.

Helmer's Wikipedia entry states:

'Helmer was elected to the [European Parliament](#) in [1999](#), [2004](#), and [2009](#) as a member of the [Conservative Party](#) and in 2014 as a member of UKIP, having defected from the Conservatives to UKIP in March 2012. He has described himself as a [Euro sceptic](#) and is a supporter of the [Better Off Out](#) campaign. On 13 June 2017 Roger Helmer announced he would be resigning from the European Parliament, citing age and health status as reasons, but amid allegations of misuse of public funds'.

He was appointed Adam Smith Scholar in 2005 by the [conservative American Legislative Exchange Council](#) (ALEC).

He became Chairman of the libertarian pressure group, [The Freedom Association](#), in April 2007.'

Roger Helmer has a long track record of climate scepticism (for instance hosting a Helmer [hosted a climate-sceptic conference](#) in the EP in 2007), and has held an impressive array of highly conservative views. According to Wikipedia, Helmer has said that homophobia does not exist and that the word: "is merely a propaganda device"; opposed same sex marriage; called for the NHS to fund 'gay conversion therapy'; defended himself against press reports about his use of a massage parlour; supported fellow MEP Daniel Hannan's criticism of the NHS as a "60 year mistake"; criticised the Church of England for having "abandoned religious faith entirely and taken up the religion of climate alarmism instead"; welcomed the discovery of shale gas under Melton and the Vale of Belvoir; and said he would support the repeal of the hunting ban, and that he used to enjoy hare coursing.

Website [www.desmog.co.uk noted that](#) in 2014 that 'three UKIP MEPs have chosen to put their names to official ALEC correspondence and:

'One of the signatories, [Roger Helmer](#) MEP, [UKIP's energy spokesperson](#), has also spoken at numerous [Heartland Institute climate change denial conferences](#) including the 7th - taking place in May 2012 (*see photo with Maritsa Noon of Citizens' Alliance for Responsible Energy and [Youtube presentation](#)*) The conference was sponsored by nearly 60 organisations that had collectively received nearly \$22m from Exxon Mobil and the Koch oil billionaire family since 1998, according to a [Desmogblog](#) analysis. Heartland Institute is one of the US's main organisations that denies climate change and promotes the interests of the fossil fuel industries which are among its principal funders.'

Helmer made regular attacks on Brussels spending but in 2005 as a result of being expelled from the Conservative EPP-ED group, he qualified for a four-fold increase in his €10,000-a-year allocation from the Information Budget. [Politico noted](#) (31 August): 'The gravy which Euro sceptic MEP Roger Helmer claims to hate has been flowing more generously for him since he was booted out of the Conservative group in June'

In 2011 Roger Helmer referenced Martin Callanan MEP, and himself, Chris Heaton-Harris and Daniel Hannan as part of the "'The H-Block" in the good old days' at the European Parliament. He also praised Struan Stevenson a Scottish Conservative MEP for his anti-windfaming campaigns. Stevenson went on to appear with Chris Heaton-Harris at the first national anti wind farm conference in Cumbria.

The 'H-block' of Heaton-Harris, Helmer and Hannan was [well known](#) in the European Parliament for 'harrasing' both European institutions and the Europhile Conservative group leadership. Their opposition often centred on internal finances [such as](#) on budgets, expenses and grants, providing Euro sceptics with 'facts and figures' to populate stories and allegations about fraud and corruption.

When on 4 November 2009 David Cameron announced he would not hold a Referendum on Europe's Lisbon Treaty if his party won the spring 2010 General Election, Hannan and Helmer , Conservative MEPs [resigned their party posts](#) in protest.

On 18 November 2009 Helmer [convened a conference](#) of well-known climate-sceptics at the European Parliament, including Fred Singer and James Delingpole.

On March 7 2012 Helmer [announced](#) that he would not be standing down from the EP after all but would continue until the end of his term in 2014.

In February 2017 Nigel Farage, Roger Helmer and six other UKIP MEPs were [accused of misusing EU funds](#) to employ assistants working for the national party in the UK. While the investigation was still ongoing in June, Helmer [announced](#) he would resign at the end of July 2017. He stood unsuccessfully as UKIP candidate to become MP for Newark at a by-election in 2014.

Rupert Matthews MEP

Rupert Matthews is a Conservative MEP for the East Midlands (he, Helmer and Heaton Harris have all been East Midlands Conservative MEPs). He stood unsuccessfully for the Conservatives in the 2009 and 2014 EP elections [before being elected to the EP in 2017](#).

Matthews is editorial director of Bretwalda Books. Bretwalda Books published books by Roger Helmer (*Sceptic At Large*) and Chris Heaton-Harris (*Fighting the Kelmarsh Windfarm*). Other Bretwalda titles include *'The Rape of Britain – Wind Farms and the Destruction of our Environment'* by Struan Stevenson ([video](#)).

When Helmer announced in October 2011 that he would resign from the European Parliament at the end of the year, he expected to be replaced by Matthews as MEP but delayed his decision to await clarification of his replacement. Helmer remained as a MEP and in 2012 he instead defected to UKIP.

Matthews was formerly a Conservative Councillor in Kingston upon Thames and stood unsuccessfully for the Bootle seat in the 1997 General Election. Both he and Heaton Harris Matthews attended Surrey Grammar Schools (Matthews at Esher and Heaton-Harris at Tiffin in Kingston upon Thames).

In January this year (2019) Matthews [declared himself](#) 'thrilled' at the offshore wind energy hub in Grimsby and wrote: 'People are being cautious of how much energy they use, not only to save money but to help combat climate change.'

Matthews is also a paranormal enthusiast. Wikipedia states: 'Matthews has also run an online course about the paranormal for the International Metaphysical University, on whose website he was described as a 'Professor' until mid-January 2012'.

Tom Pursglove MP

Climate sceptic Tom Pursglove MP for Corby and East Northamptonshire. [Pursglove was](#) Parliamentary Assistant to Chris Heaton Harris, and worked with the Conservative MP for Wellingborough [Peter Bone](#). His constituency [Conservative website](#) states he was 'Director of Together Against Wind, the national anti-wind farm campaign, and in that role, led the charge to secure national policy change in relation to onshore wind farms'. It also notes that he became Parliamentary Private Secretary to Liam Fox.

His Wikipedia entry states.

'Pursglove was one of the founders of [Grassroots Out](#), an organisation which advocated [United Kingdom withdrawal from the European Union](#). The organisation was led by politicians from a range

of political parties, including fellow Conservative MP [Peter Bone](#) and [Labour](#) MP [Kate Hoey](#). In February 2016 it was announced that Pursglove and fellow Conservative MP Peter Bone would be speakers at the UKIP Spring Conference. Although rare for representatives of rival political parties to appear at such events, they argued any role they had there would be as representatives of the Grassroots Out group. Pursglove advocated abolishing the [Department of Energy and Climate Change](#) and expressed scepticism about human influence on climate change. Pursglove becomes Vice Chairman of the Conservative Party for youth in July 2017.

He has consistently voted against measures attempting to tackle climate change since becoming an MP.¹ Between 2013 and 2016, Pursglove was director, alongside [Chris Heaton-Harris](#), of Together Against Wind, a lobbying company that helped move Government policy against favouring the installation of onshore wind power. In Parliament, he voted to reduce regulation on [fracking](#) and, in light of this, was criticised by environmental campaigners for his constituency party having taken donations from energy firms.'

Pursglove resigned as Vice Chairman for Youth in January 2019 in order to vote against Theresa May's EU Withdrawal Agreement.

Together Against Wind: Heaton-Harris and Pursglove

[According to Companies House](#), the lobbying company Together Against Wind was Incorporated on 01 October 2012 and is dissolved. The two directors were Chris Heaton-Harris and Thomas Pursglove. It was dissolved by compulsory strike off on 14 March 2017. Heaton-Harris became a director on 1 October 2012 and resigned on 26 June 2013.

A Facebook page 'Together Against Wind' is still extant with 361 followers at <https://www.facebook.com/TogetherAgainstWind> listed as a NGO, posting climate sceptic content eg from GWPF

Financially, Together Against Wind was most active in its first year of operation. There are [snapshots of its web page \[www.togetheragainstwind.com\]\(http://www.togetheragainstwind.com\)](#), at www.web.archive.org



Website Snapshot from November 12 2012

After he resigned as a director Chris Heaton-Harris still appeared on the home page of the website www.togetheragainstwind.com until [February 7th 2016](#). The site shows as disabled from March 2016.

The website snapshots show a string of lobbying campaigns aimed at demonstrating the strength of opinion to government Ministers. For example (12 November 2012):

‘IMPORTANT: [Click Here Now](#) Support John Hayes MP & Request a Moratorium on Onshore Wind Farms. It is important that your MP is made aware of any concerns that you might have about wind energy. The quickest and easiest way for you to do this is to send an e-mail. We have made this even easier for you by providing you with all the information that you require to make a difference’.

Under a photo of Chris Heaton-Harris it explains:

‘The sole purpose of “Together Against Wind” is to provide an effective link between the Houses of Parliament and both individuals and Groups campaigning against the proliferation of wind turbines ... [it is] set up to bring Collective strength to the many campaign groups fighting against wind farms in the UK ... get a strong clear statement with one voice ... “Together Against Wind” is run by Chris Heaton-Harris MP and has a simple aim of changing government policy ... it will:- set up campaigns to raise awareness among MP’s ... provide information to campaign groups and individuals about activity within parliament ...undertake research projects designed to provide information to assist in driving parliamentary campaigns and fighting wind farm proposals ... [and] raise funds’ [plus] ‘we have got off to an excellent start thanks to a number of generous donations’.

‘Active Campaigns’ as of November 12th:

'NO MEANS NO' – ' Nick Boles, Planning Minister, recently confirmed he was concerned that people felt they were "ridden over roughshod" when wind turbine planning decisions were made. Please write to Nick Boles and provide examples of local concerns being ignored. Together we have the opportunity to make changes to wind farm planning'. ['Please Act Now'](#)

'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH' - "We Cannot Pepper Turbines Across The Country - Enough is Enough", declares Energy Minister John Hayes. Campaigning for a moratorium on new onshore wind farms, the latest announcements by Mr Hayes MP are welcomed and we strongly encourage you to join our campaign & write to the PM now. [Send PM Letter Here'](#)

'Closed Campaigns' – 'DECC Onshore Wind Call for Evidence'. 'Many thanks to everyone that submitted evidence & comments to the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) consultation' [DECC campaign deleted by 28 March 2013]

On 28 July 2013 web.archive.org shows www.togetheragainstownd.com:

'REDUCE WIND FARM SUBSIDIES NOW' – 'Now is The Perfect Time To Write To The Rt. Hon Michael Fallon MP, Energy Minister, About Wind Energy Prices. The subsidy and payment system for wind energy is about to be changed. The Debate On This is Happening Now and we urge you to make your contribution & get your voice heard.by writing to the Minister concerned' ['Please Act Now'](#)

'STAND UP FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES' – 'Our understanding is SPDs can be introduced at any time in a process, much, much, quicker than inserting a Buffer Zone into any Local Plan. We would ask, therefore, that you support our Campaign and also contact Local Authorities in your area, urging both MPs & Councillors to put in place SPDs relating to Wind Turbine Development'. ['Please Act Now'](#)

[SPD = Supplementary Planning Document – see [East Northamptonshire example here](#)]

'Closed Campaigns' – 'Excellent Campaign which generated really good figures, but it's one step forward, than [sic] one back. Thanks for All Your Support'

'NO' MEANS 'NO' 'Great Campaign helping to achieve the Recent Statements on Localism & Wind Farms from Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government. Well Done All'

February 23 2014 - web.archive.org shows www.togetheragainstownd.com:

'Active campaigns' - 'Wind More Expensive Than Nuclear ?' – 'Currently nearly 40% of UK electricity is generated from Coal and costs £50/MWHR. What will the effect be on consumer bills when this is replaced by new forms of generation costing twice as much?

Write to Your MP and Ask For A Fair Deal For Consumers' ['Please Act Now'](#)

Plus 'STAND UP FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES'

June 29 2014 - web.archive.org shows www.togetheragainstownd.com:

'Latest Campaign' – "Stop The Wind Farm Folly Now" – 'Every new wind farm proposal is met by strong local opposition. People living in small villages raise thousands of pounds to fight proposals to build wind farms. There is no need for any more wind farms because the 13 GW target for 2020 is already secure. There is no need to destroy more of our countryside in a land grab driven by excessive subsidies. It is not sustainable to keep building wind farms and putting turbines ever closer to homes. Noise problems are getting worse as new wind farms put larger turbines ever closer to where people

live. We need to bring an end to the wind farm folly. We need all political parties to recognise the problems and bring an end to onshore wind farm construction. Write to the Prime Minister and to your MP calling on them to stop the wind farm folly' ['Please Act Now'](#)

Plus 'Wind More Expensive Than Nuclear ?'

The site then appears to have remained unchanged from June 2014 (and up until March 2016). On March 5 2016 www.webarchive.org shows togetheragainstwind.com has been disabled'.

This was around the time Pursglove became a director of GO MOVEMENT along with Peter Bone and Nigel Farage (11 February 2016). This was intended as a cross-party platform in the EU Referendum but failed to secure the position as the official Leave campaign (which was Vote.Leave). The company was [struck off](#) on 21 February 2017 without filing any accounts.

Peter Lilley

One of the more senior and influential Conservatives involved in the anti-wind campaign is Peter Lilley. A MP since 1983 he stood down at the 2017 General election as MP for Hitchin and Harpenden. He now sits in the House of Lords. In 2017 [desmog](#) stated:

'During his career he has [voted against the Climate Change Act](#), failed to disclose his [financial interest in an Asian oil company](#), come under attack for his paid work for the [oil-rich Kazakhstan regime](#), and offered consultation services to an [Indian coal company](#). Lilley is on the [board of trustees](#) of climate science denial campaign group the [Global Warming Policy Foundation](#).'

In 2008 Lilley was one of just four MPs who voted against the Climate Change Bill at its second reading.

In 2012 in the course of the u-turn by the Conservatives away from onshore wind and green policies, he was covertly filmed by Greenpeace (see timeline November 2012). He said that Chancellor George Osborne "privately regrets all the [green] commitments that have been made" and "Basically I think Osborne wanted to get people into key positions who could begin to get the government off the hook from commitments they made very foolishly." He foresaw moves to make targets in the Climate Change Act advisory rather than mandatory, called Tory energy minister Greg Barker and advocate for renewables and green jobs "barking" and "a complete nutter", and spoke of 'No 10' re-organising Ministerial positions to stifle wind energy.

George Osborne

As Chancellor and strategist in the Cameron Government George Osborne undoubtedly played a key part in scuppering wind but as a pro-European his involvement was probably more driven by electoral calculation once the anti-wind campaign had made itself a threat to the prospects of a Cameron-led government, and for a time, by his own leadership ambitions.

According to press reports (see timeline) Osborne took on Ed Davey (LibDem coalition energy minister) over onshore wind, and using his Treasury role, introduced a 'framework' to control 'levies' (charges on electricity used to finance investment in renewables) so that onshore wind ended up being starved of payments, to the benefit of gas. Osborne became a major cheerleader for gas and fracking, giving new tax breaks to fracking. Osborne declared that gas was cheap, and the FT reported that his aides saw incentives for renewable energy as 'reducing the viability' of gas.

When it came to avoiding the re-toxification of the Conservative party, Osborne opted for ring-fencing expenditure on the NHS rather than renewable energy. Cutting funds for renewable energy under the guise of keeping down household bills provided useful cover for his austerity agenda, and pleased the party's rightwing. In 2012 he signalled his position to the Conservative Party anti-wind lobby by referring to environmentalists inside and outside government as 'the environmental Taliban'.

The Cameron and subsequently May's conservative governments then used Osborne's contribution to the convoluted mechanisms of the electricity supply market to first cut off public money, and then cut off market access (under Contracts for a Difference) for onshore wind.

ALEC

The US Union of Concerned Scientists [writes of ALEC](#):

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) maintains that "global climate change is inevitable" [13] and since the 1990s has pushed various forms of model legislation aimed at obstructing policies intended to reduce global warming emissions.

ALEC purports to "support the use of sound science to guide policy," but routinely provides a one-sided platform for climate contrarians. State legislators attending one ALEC meeting were offered a workshop touting a report by a fossil fuel-funded group that declared "like love, carbon dioxide's many splendors are seemingly endless." [14, 15] Another ALEC meeting featured a Fox News contributor who has claimed on the air that carbon dioxide "literally cannot cause global warming." [16, 17]

ALEC received more than \$1.6 million from ExxonMobil from 1998-2012 [18], and more than \$850,000 from Koch foundations from 1997-2011. [19]

Greenpeace US has [reported on](#) ALEC's activities and the way it has used its model template legislation and lobbying to oppose pro-climate action by US States, and to promote the interests of oil, fracking and coal industries.

See also [Alex Exposed](#) a website of the US Center for Media and Democracy project. It [lists a series](#) of ALEC sponsored model pieces of legislation with pro-polluter effect, including 'State Withdrawal from Regional Climate Initiatives' which it says 'would pull states out of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative or the Western Climate Initiative, programs to cut greenhouse gases and carbon dioxide emissions' and 'also uses language that denies that climate change is occurring', as well as the "Electricity Freedom Act' which it says is 'an attack on states with plans requiring companies to get a certain percentage of their electricity from renewable sources, undermining support for cleaner energy development'.

ALEC's 2005 '[Resolution on Renewable Energy Resources in a Competitive Electricity Marketplace](#)' (renewed in 2013) provides for States to try and prevent preferential government support to renewable energy: '{insert state} advises and strongly urges the United States Congress not to impose new taxes on American consumers of electricity to subsidize the development of renewable energy resources, nor mandate minimum market shares for such technologies in excess of the levels sustainable subject to real market forces and under conditions of real competition in generation resources'.

In 2015 the US Energy and Policy Institute [listed](#) ALEC among 25 organisations funding front groups to oppose renewable energy and other clean energy policies. It says '98% of [ALEC's funding](#) comes from

corporations or corporate “foundations” like the Charles Koch Foundation. In fact, the [Charles Koch Foundation contributed \\$449,114 to ALEC](#) in 2015 and [\\$551,571 in 2016](#)’.

[It states](#): ‘ALEC’s Energy, Environment, and Agriculture Task Force, which includes representatives from major fossil fuel companies such as Exxon Mobil, Koch Industries, Duke Energy, and Peabody Energy, has approved model bills to [repeal renewable energy standards](#) (RES), [weaken RES laws](#) by watering them down with non-renewable sources of electricity, and [eliminate solar net metering policies](#).’ The EPI uncovered 14 ALEC-related or inspired model bills in 2015 attacking renewable energy standards and net metering laws.

ALEC and the Anti-wind Campaigners

In the 2000s, ALEC had a system for funding transatlantic trips for conservative politicians. Taxpayers funds from the European Parliament were also used to prosecute campaigns denigrating wind energy and the European institutions as a whole.

Roger Helmer has several times proudly explained how their EP staff members such as Sally McNamara and Cat Bray went on to work for ALEC, the Atlantic Bridge and Daniel Hannan MEP. Bray is married to Wells Griffith, [who was](#) battleground states director for Trump’s presidential campaign.

In 2004 the two MEPs Helmer and Heaton-Harris gave speeches at ALEC events calling for collaboration in attacking the development of an EU Constitution. Heaton-Harris called ALEC a ‘role model’ for Europe’s conservatives and said “alas, in Europe, we have no organisation like ALEC – and we really need one”. McNamara ran an ‘international program’ which fostered contacts with rightwing MEPs. ALEC had also ‘reached out’ to a network of other British Conservatives (some later UKIP) politicians including Liam Fox, of the ALEC-funded Atlantic Bridge.

What role these US connections played any role developing the anti-wind campaign I do not know, although ALEC and the wider ecosystem of rightwing groups certainly have funded and promoted a lot of climate sceptic lobbying and propaganda, including against wind. According to [www.desmog.co.uk](#): [‘ALEC-drafted legislation has](#) provided fossil fuel industries with enormous subsidies’ and ‘imposed connection surcharges on small ‘rooftop’ solar power generators’.

ALEC has since continued to oppose development of renewable energy.

When the ‘new’ US right built its base in small town America, established its own colleges and universities and then went to Washington and set up a string of institutes to seed right wing ideas [see Democracy in Chains, Lilla Once and Future Liberal], it was heavily funded by rich owners of oil and coal interests. The same people funded climate sceptic institutions and campaigns. Eg Koch Brothers. UK projects such as the Atlantic Bridge and Young Britons Foundation were cut-and-paste copies of US practice and Heaton-Harris explicitly wanted an EU version of ALEC, which maybe what the ALEC European project was intended to be.

In 2007 Politico [reported that](#) Daniel Hannan was playing a leading role in bringing together a new grouping of Eurosceptics big enough to ‘have clout’ in the European Parliament, should Cameron come good on his promise to pull out of the EPP-ED. This included overtures to MEPs from central and eastern Europe. ALEC’s European project made similar contacts.

It would not be surprising if US neocon groups used people like Roger Helmer as useful conduits into the EU, nor that they may have funded projects to initiate or support or exploit anti-wind campaigns. But I have seen no direct evidence of that.

CPRE

The CPRE is not a political body but a charity committed to preservation of the English countryside and not surprisingly, along with other conservation charities such as the Wildlife Trusts, and landscape and amenity groups, it sometimes opposed wind farms which it thought were particularly damaging to the landscape.

However in the case of the CPRE it seems to have gone rather further than other 'greenish' groups. This may have been by dint of the highly conservative politics of some of its more influential members, especially in local branches, and possibly by a degree of entryism by UKIP and antiwind eurosceptic Conservatives but at any event it played a useful role in providing 'community legitimacy' to the anti-wind campaign.

David Montagu-Smith, Chairman of West Northamptonshire CPRE declared his branch 'very gratified' at the letter to Cameron co-ordinated by Heaton-Harris, and was also chairman of Rathlin Energy, an oil and gas firm involved in fracking.

Local wind pro-wind campaigner Alison Fogg pointed to links between the CPRE and well-coordinated anti-wind campaigns in the Southwest of England. The Chair of CPRE Devon, Penny Evans, had stood for UKIP and Fogg found that CPRE Devon 'provided an online portal for anyone in the country (or world) to write letters of objection for cleantech'. She also pointed to Phillip Bratby, a climate denier and critic of wind turbines who was a trustee of CPRE Devon.

The CPRE has a federal structure, meaning that local branches are not directly controlled by or accountable to the central national organisation. Shaun Spiers, then Chief Executive of CPRE, told the Daily Telegraph that the organisation was 'open to a debate' on fracking.

Conservative Euro-Climate Sceptics In The European Parliament

On the face of it, seeking election to the European Parliament in 1999 might have seemed a strange thing for Eurosceptic politicians to do but they put it to good effect by gaining well-paid positions and a platform from which to attack and weaken the 'EU' in communications projected to domestic UK audiences. Becoming an MEP also offered a way to advance a career within a UK political party.

The group of MEPs who went on to support anti-wind campaigns in the UK were all Eurosceptics who seem to have spent much of their time in Brussels and Strasbourg attempting to obstruct and disrupt proceedings in the European Parliament, and propagandize about what they saw as shortcomings of the EU to UK audiences.

In a 2009 [book chapter](#) on Euroscepticism, researchers Nathalie Brack and Olivier Costa described several different roles played by Eurosceptic MEPs. In a 2013 [LSE blog](#), Brack summarised the roles as 'absentees, public orators, and pragmatists'.

Chris Heaton-Harris is not specifically mentioned by Brack and Costa but they illustrate the 'public orator' profile through interviews with MEPs including his friend and fellow East Midlands Conservative Roger Helmer (defected to UKIP in 2012), as well as [Godfrey Bloom](#), [Graham Booth](#) and [John Whittaker](#), all UKIP MEPs.

Brack [observed](#):

'MEPs playing this role give priority to ... public speaking and the dissemination of negative information on the EU. Public Orators see themselves as being the only opposition speakers and their logic is to delegitimise the institution through public speeches. But Public Orators think that it is also their duty to inform the public of the decisions made by the EU and their negative consequences. They have strong relations with the media and are always available to answer questions from voters, journalists, and other actors. Their presence in the EP and its bodies is conditioned partly by the satisfaction of making plenary speeches, but also by the need to collect negative information on the EU and to know from the inside what is happening. This role tends to be chosen by either Eurosceptics hostile to the EU and the integration process, or intergovernmentalists who see the EP as a useful forum of expression'.

Helmer declared in an interview with [Brack and Costa](#) that he "would deconstruct the EP, the Commission and the Council". Whittaker said "We are showing them [citizens] the fraud, the wrong things happening here".

Brack and Costa wrote that the Orators 'exploit any piece of information that could support their positions, especially concerning the failings of European integration – corruption, fraud, scandals...' quoting Whittaker: *"We are showing them [citizens] the fraud, the wrong things happening here"*. Booth stated, *"The reason why we are here is to bring back information to Britain, tell them what's going on"*. Roger Helmer said, *"We are showing them [citizens] the fraud, the wrong things happening here"* Heaton-Harris specialised in scrutinizing EU budgets to uncover fraud or bad practice.

Brack and Costa noted that the 'orators'

'often resort to such activities as calling to order, asking for the details of the vote or putting forward motions of censure. They only use the possibility to propose a resolution or an amendment as a protest filibustering move. Orators typically oppose – almost systematically – most of the texts or refuse to take part in the votes'.

Bloom said: *"Generally speaking, we vote against the whole thing. Because the whole thing is ridiculous"*. 'Such an attitude', observed the researchers 'does not make for good relations with the other MEPs. However, Orators are generally indifferent to this, as their main motive is not to negotiate or explain'. *"Everybody hates us here, but we don't care"* explained Booth, echoing a famous chant of Millwall football supporters.

Not surprisingly most of these players became agitators and outriders for Brexit, although the principal role of opposing wind was to build constituency-by-constituency pressure on MPs to oppose wind, and so help blow Cameron further to the right, or UKIPwards.

His need to appeal to an increasingly rightwing and Eurosceptic body of Tory MPs and MEPs led Cameron to pulling the Conservatives out of the centre-right EPP and to set up the ECR group, which gave them a new platform, and ultimately contributed to Cameron committing to a Referendum on membership of the EU, and thus 'Brexit'.

The anti-wind campaign was a 'campaign of convenience' for these rightwing politicians despite their many fine tuned political differences.

For instance in November 2014 [Peter Bone wrote in The Guardian](#) 'I remain a Tory, but Ukip is a good thing ... I am not defecting to Ukip, because I want an EU referendum – but Nigel Farage has filled the vacuum left by my own party... Ukip 'has been a good thing for British politics' ... it has filled a vacuum on the right of British politics because the Conservatives have spent too much time worrying about the centre ground ... 'The vacuum left by the Conservative party ignoring much of its traditional base was filled by Ukip. It has a number of very simple messages, such as control of immigration, leaving

the EU, and ending the windfarm folly. All these policies resonate with traditional Tory voters, many non-voters, and increasingly Labour voters'. He added: 'I spend a lot of my time helping the excellent Eurosceptic Conservative candidate in Corby and East Northants, [Tom Pursglove](#)'

Farage, Bone and Pursglove were (along with Labour's Kate Hoey) all directors of Grassroots Out, a pro Brexit campaign group. GO MOVEMENT was a short-lived affiliate intended to become a cross-party popular pro Brexit base and the official Leave campaign. Bone, Farage and Pursglove were all directors of it. In 2016 Bone and Pursglove both spoke at the UKIP conference, despite being Conservative MPs.

In terms of political dynamics and values the story is one of a large broad-church political party (the Conservatives) being radicalised from the margins (ERG and UKIP) as it tries to remain a 'big tent', while stressed by an 'anti-reflexive' revolution (anti modernism, pro old technologies, old decision making – UK outside EU, anti-environmental, anti-science).

Cameron's 'green phase' was an attempt at reflexive revolution ('detoxification') and wind was a fault line that Heaton-Harris, Lilley and others used as a 'wedge issue' to force him to back down. As a journalist in Brussels Boris Johnson played a role in fostering ignorance of the EU and ridiculing its processes.

In June 2016 (timeline) researcher Matt Reed published a study [UKIP energy: promoting distrust and climate scepticism on social media](#), describing UKIP as 'part of a wider wave of 'anti-reflexive movements', promoting distrust and doubt to further certain political ends'. He writes: 'Very quickly it became apparent that UKIP had little to say about rural life, apart from some very generic statements about pubs and hunting with hounds'. Deeper analysis 'started to suggest that this opposition to renewable energy generation nestled in a wider pattern of directing readers' attention to other arguments and opinions. Little use of hashtags or indexing terms in the tweets meant that they did not travel widely but were intended for those following the account. Rather than taking part in a wider debate most of the messages in the accounts were creating political messages. This strategy was reinforced by links to blogs, and websites that promote climate scepticism, mostly 'Climate Depot' and 'The Global Warming Policy Foundation.'

Reed found that 'UKIP did not have an organised presence in rural areas but was taking opportunities where they found them'.

Just recently (February 2019) the Labour Party has experienced defections in the opposite direction, with seven reflexive modernizers leaving a party controlled by an old school left (Jeremy Corbyn and followers).

Given the age demographics, with the young more strongly Remain and pro wind, and the reality of climate change hitting home, it seems likely that more political support for wind can be rekindled in the UK.

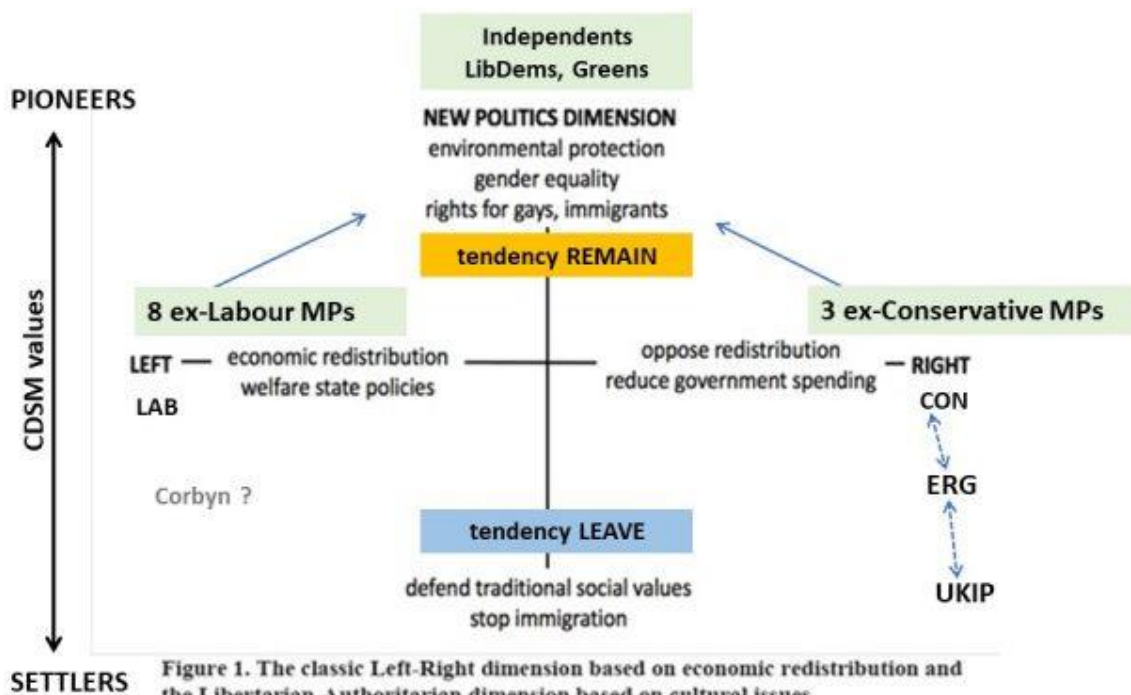


Figure 1. The classic Left-Right dimension based on economic redistribution and the Libertarian-Authoritarian dimension based on cultural issues.

Feb. 20 2019. Moves in realignment of UK politics by values. MPs exiting Conservative and Labour and moving to a more 'reflexive' 'new politics' whereas ERG (party within party) pulls Conservatives to anti-reflexive UKIP position. Momentum ('part within Labour'), not shown, is itself split on the values axis but Labour is run by anti-EU political elite around Corbyn. Chris Rose annotation of Inglehart.

(From Inglehart 'The Silent Revolution in Reverse' with annotations from a February 2019 Campaign Strategy blog [British Politics Is Undergoing A Values Realignment](#)).