

Rough going on gas

Yesterday industry had to reduce its demand for gas to allow priority to households. Compensation will be paid to industry as a result which we will all have to pay.

I have long argued that we need to make more energy available, and that margins are now too tight. The loss of the Rough Storage capacity for gas has taken one more reserve and flexibility out of our system, leaving us short on a cold day. The gas forecasts were based on the assumption that less gas would be used for electricity generation, with more planned reliance on imported electricity. Yesterday we certainly imported plenty of power from France, the Netherlands and Ireland, but still we ran short of gas.

I will write again to Ministers urging them to adopt a policy of self sufficiency in UK energy. We do not wish to be dependent on the goodwill of others to keep the lights on, nor should we have to tell industry to make less because we are short of fuel.