

Polling data summary

Companion piece to press release of 18 May 2026.

Methodology and sample

Polling by **Early Studies**. **Fieldwork**: 23 March – 20 April 2026, sampled using online panel provider Prolific. **Sample**: n = 996 UK adults, nationally representative — 476 men, 516 women, 4 other; age bands 18–24 (105), 25–34 (167), 35–44 (169), 45–54 (166), 55–64 (261), 65+ (128); Labour 240, Conservative 166, Green 166, Reform UK 141, Other 133, Liberal Democrat 113, SNP 26, Plaid Cymru 11. **Method**: Social Circle Surveying — respondents report what people in their social circle believe, not what they personally believe. Each question is asked across three time perspectives: recalled 2020, current 2026, projected 2030. Multi-select; columns do not sum to 100%.

1. What matters most for the UK's energy future (Q3)

"When people in your social circle think about the UK's energy future, which of these really matters most to them?" — Six response options. Multi-select.

Response option	2020	2026	2030
Ensuring energy bills are as low as possible	59.94%	72.29%	62.05%
Ensuring energy security and reducing reliance on imports	17.87%	41.06%	43.57%
Fighting climate change and reducing emissions	29.42%	39.26%	48.80%
Ensuring businesses remain competitive in the long term	13.05%	12.45%	15.76%
Transitioning energy intensive jobs towards the low-carbon economy	10.44%	12.95%	22.29%
They don't really think about energy priorities	18.57%	6.83%	4.82%

2. Priorities for the UK's future energy needs (Q8)

"What do people in your social circle believe should be the main consideration when thinking about our future energy needs?" — Seven response options. Multi-select.

Response option	2020	2026	2030				
Supporting UK industry to remain competitive globally	26.81%	39.36%	41.57%				
Reducing air pollution for future generations	26.61%	37.15%	42.37%				
Creation of new jobs and adding economic value	25.30%	31.43%	36.45%				
Paying less now even if that means paying more in the future	33.13%	25.70%	21.79%				
Protecting existing jobs	29.42%	24.50%	28.71%				
Paying more now in order to ensure paying less in the future	17.07%	22.79%	20.98%				
Managing visual impact	10.14%	10.84%	11.04%				
Visual impact by party (2026)	UK total	Reform UK	Conservative	Labour	Lib Dem	Green	Other
% selecting visual impact	10.84%	10.64%	12.05%	12.08%	9.73%	10.24%	9.77%

Visual impact is the lowest-ranked of seven options and barely moves over time. SNP (n=26, 11.54%) and Plaid Cymru (n=11, 0.00%) excluded from party cross-tab.

3. Support for delivering infrastructure at pace (Q1)

"When it comes to critical energy infrastructure investment, in addition to private sector investment, what do people in your social circle think is the fairest approach?" — Four response options. Multi-select.

Response option	2020	2026	2030
Spread the costs evenly over many years	37.35%	50.00%	46.79%
Keep bills lower now even if it costs more later	36.55%	27.61%	25.40%
To fund investments through public spending	19.08%	25.50%	27.11%
Pay slightly more now in order to reduce costs long-term	22.29%	19.28%	19.88%

4. International events and energy bills (Q4)

"What impact do people in your social circle think that international events have on our energy bills?" — Four response options. Multi-select.

Response option	2020	2026	2030
Bills go up and never come back down	47.99%	69.98%	68.67%
Bills spike but settle back after a while	30.12%	25.50%	22.59%
World events matter less than people think — it's mostly government decisions	17.77%	9.84%	14.76%
They don't think about how world events affect their bills	17.17%	4.62%	5.32%

5. Clean energy, jobs and industry (Q5)

"What do people in your social circle believe about investment in clean energy's impact on jobs and the economy?" — Six response options. Multi-select.

Response option	2020	2026	2030
It creates jobs nationally and boosts the country's economy	30.62%	41.57%	43.57%
It creates jobs locally that benefit their community	19.58%	26.51%	28.71%
The level of job creation is exaggerated	24.50%	27.21%	25.30%
Most jobs go to other regions than theirs	22.69%	21.69%	18.37%
There's no local economic benefit	26.10%	18.98%	18.67%
It eliminates more fossil fuel jobs than it can create	17.67%	16.16%	17.67%