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Solar is most popular energy source in UK

LONDON, England, August 16, 2006 (Refocus Weekly) Solar power is the preferred choice of UK residents to produce future energy, followed by wind power.

Solar was identified by 79% of the 1,031 adult respondents to a survey by ICM Research for GMTV, followed by wind at 76%. More efficient coal and gas-fired power stations were identified by 50% while nuclear was the choice of 38%.

In May, prime minister Tony Blair endorsed construction of new nuclear reactors, noting that the pressure of climate change and energy security "put the replacement of nuclear power stations, a big push on renewables and a step change on energy efficiency, engaging both business and consumers, back on the agenda with a vengeance." Currently, Britain has 14 reactors which generate 21% of the country's electricity but most will reach the end of their operational lifetimes by 2023.

When asked about the safety of nuclear power, 16% said very safe, 42% said quite safe, 24% said not very safe and 12% said not safe at all. When asked how concerned they would be if a nuclear reactor were built near them, 50% said very concerned and 23% said quite concerned, while 12% said not very concerned and 14% said not concerned at all.

Of the 812 respondents who selected solar, support was 81% among females and 76% among males, with stronger support in the 25-to-55 age ranges. Of the 780 who selected wind, support was 77% from women and 74% from men, with strongest support in the 25-55 age range.

Of the 392 supporters of nuclear, support was 50% for men and 27% among women, with strongest support in the 55-to-65 age range.

ICM interviewed a random sample of 1,031 adults by telephone in July.

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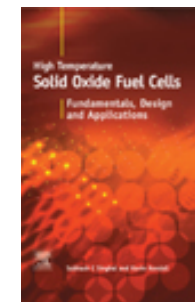
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