

The Tory climate sceptics might need to rethink

Published: January 13, 2026, 11:07 pm

A think tank called Onward is generally seen as right-wing and Tory leaning. In that case, [its finding on green issues](#) are interesting. In polling it has released today it says:

Net Zero is overwhelmingly popular

Three fifths (60%) of voters support the UK's plan to reach Net Zero by 2050. This is six times the share (10%) who say they oppose the policy. And 55% of people agree that "The UK should keep its plan to reach Net Zero by 2050, even if it's going to be expensive, as we need to stop damaging the environment", more than double the level (25%) who think the UK should scrap the plan if it is too expensive.

Working class Tories are more supportive of investing in renewable energy

They are also more optimistic about new job opportunities in renewables, and confident in the UK's leading role in the science and technology needed to reach Net Zero, than more affluent Conservative voters (ABC1).



There is a clear distinction between general arguments around 'going green' and 'tackling climate change' – which find muted support – and patriotic arguments that instead focus on the UK's strengths in certain sectors and the opportunity for new, good jobs.

And it added:

Voters' support for Net Zero remains strong following the Ukraine crisis and rising fuel costs

Page 1/2

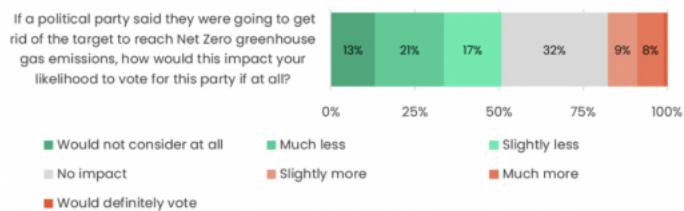
In a second poll, conducted on 6th-7th April, we found that a majority (55%) think the conflict means we should move faster rather than slower (28%) on Net Zero. The public overwhelmingly prefer investing

Before noting:

Ditching Net Zero is a vote-loser for the Conservatives

Nearly half (46%) of voters say they would be less likely to vote for a party that pledged to get rid of the Net Zero target. Only 15% say it would make them more likely to vote for such a party.

And ditching Net Zero is unlikely to win back those 2019 Conservatives who say they no longer support the party. The graph below shows that, among this group, 51% say they would not vote for a party that got rid of the Net Zero target; only 18% said they would vote for such a party.



The Tory climate sceptics need to rethink.