

Letters Editor
The Western Mail
Cardiff

13 January 2025

Dear Letters Editor,

Wales would be a much poorer country if Reform UK become, as they predict, an influential force in the Senedd following the election in 2026 (Western Mail, p.20, 13th January).

It's leader, Nigel Farage, led the charge for Brexit which, according to a recent study by the London School of Economics, cost the UK £27 billion in lost trade in the first two years [1].

An assessment of Reform UK's general election manifesto by the Institute of Fiscal Studies concluded that it made seriously flawed promises that would cost the country tens of billions of pounds per year [2].

Reform UK strongly supports nuclear power while opposing renewable energy systems such as wind and solar. The cost of electricity from the Hinckley Point C nuclear power station is currently put at £128 /MWh [3] compared to just £38/ MWh for onshore wind and £41/MWh for solar [4]. Reform U.K.'s energy policy would significantly increase everybody's electricity bills.

While the world's leading climate scientists state that there is no doubt that human activities have changed the Earth's climate causing more extremes of weather [5], such as the heavy rainfall and flooding that has caused so much hardship in Wales, Reform UK is still denying this. Perhaps they also think that smoking cigarettes does not harm human health!

It's been estimated that extreme weather caused by climate change is costing Welsh farmers hundreds of millions of pounds a year [6] with flooding in England and Wales costing a similar amount [7].

Most countries globally have made commitments to support net-zero, the phasing out of carbon emissions to reduce the impacts of climate change [8]. The Office of Budget Responsibility [9] is amongst a number of bodies that has concluded that the costs of net zero are much less than the costs of failing to get climate change under control. It comes as no surprise that Reform UK opposes this policy which benefits the economy and lessens the immense threat that climate change now poses to the future of our children and grandchildren.

Yours sincerely

Gordon James
Brynheulog
Llanfallteg
Whitland

NOTES

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2024/dec/18/brexit-cost-uk-27bn-in-lost-trade-in-first-two-years-review-finds>
2. <https://ifs.org.uk/articles/reform-uk-manifesto-reaction>
3. <https://www.renewable-energy-industry.com/news/press-releases/pm-7986-hinkley-point-c-electricity-from-new-british-nuclear-power-plant-costs-over-15-cents-per-kilowatt-hour>
4. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6556027d046ed400148b99fe/electricity-generation-costs-2023.pdf>
5. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/resources/climate-change-in-data/>
6. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/crgyr68lrr8o>
7. <https://www.gov.uk/flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-research-reports/evidence-on-the-costs-of-floods-in-england-and-wales>
8. <https://eciu.net/analysis/briefings/net-zero/net-zero-why>
9. https://obr.uk/docs/dlm_uploads/Fiscal_risks_report_July_2021.pdf (p151)