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1. The [Forewind](#) newsletter for April 2015 reports: “The first consent order for offshore wind energy at Dogger Bank was granted in February making it the largest renewable energy development ever to receive planning consent in the UK.” This is for the 2.4 GW Dogger Bank Creyke Beck offshore wind farm, to be landed at Creyke Beck near Hull, after more than 4 years of assessment and consultation including over £60 million spent on surveys, according to the newsletter. The consent decision for the similar development Dogger Bank Teesside is expected in August.

2. Smart meters (for electricity) are controversial. They are supposed to be voluntary but sometimes portrayed as if compulsory, according to [Stop Smart Meters UK](#). Water meters in the UK with wireless communications have also been questioned, though their signals are supposed to be only very occasional (when interrogated), and they can [save a lot](#) in homes with more bedrooms than people. The UK plan for publicly funded electricity smart meters on the other hand has been severely criticised by the Institute of Directors 26th March 2015 [report](#) as excessive, costly and risky. The plan looks like making a lot of money for the meter companies at public expense.

3. Safety problems are reported with some smart meters in America. After a traffic accident caused a power surge in Stockton, California, [hundreds of smart meters exploded](#). Last July, the Canadian province of Saskatchewan [ordered the removal](#) of all 105,000 “smart” meters, following a rash of fires.

4. Security problems of smart meters are identified in a 2010 [paper](#) from Cambridge University authors published at an [IEEE conference](#). The abstract begins: “We’re about to acquire a significant new cyber vulnerability. The world’s energy utilities are starting to install hundreds of millions of ‘smart meters’ which contain a remote off switch. Its main purpose is to ensure that customers who default on their payments can be switched remotely to a prepay tariff; secondary purposes include supporting interruptible tariffs and implementing rolling power cuts at times of supply shortage.” The conclusion begins: “Electricity and gas supplies might be disrupted on a massive scale by failures of smart meters, whether as a result of cyber attack or simply from software errors.”

5. National Grid’s [Summer Outlook 2015 report](#) (revised 13 April) has lots of useful information. You can also relive the 2013 Murray Wimbledon final with Figure 22. Summer electricity demand (both peak and minimum) from the grid continues its downward trend over recent years, in part due to more embedded solar power. That doesn’t mean there are no problems. The intermittency of wind power creates a growing balancing problem calling for ever more pylons and even negative prices as unusable wind power is constrained off at times of low demand.

6. John Polley draws our attention to an article in Professional Engineering of April 2015 on Scotland’s Super-Highway, referring to the 1200 MW SSE Caithness-Moray underground and subsea HVDC-Light cable over 100 miles long. Outline details and a map can be seen at <https://www.ssepd.co.uk/CaithnessMoray/>. Revolt has long

called for more buried and subsea HVDC cable to transmit renewable energy over long distances, especially from the north of Scotland to the south of England. A lot more north-to-south powerlines will be needed, as well as west-to-east. Revolt calls for a rational approach to the whole UK strategy rather than piecemeal small projects which might revert to more overhead lines on land.

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