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'Bribes for wind farms': neighbourhoods that accept turbines to be rewarded with playgrounds and cheaper bills

Communities will be “bribed” with rewards such as new playgrounds for accepting wind farms under plans by the Energy Secretary to revive the green agenda.



At the moment there are more than 3,000 onshore wind turbines, generating just three per cent of total electricity. Photo: Alamy



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Ed Davey, a senior Liberal Democrat, will lay out proposals to encourage more onshore farms despite George Osborne's efforts to stop the march of heavily-subsidised wind turbines across the countryside.

The minister will announce a "call for evidence" this week to look at whether wind developers should give financial incentives to towns and villages near turbines.

Some companies already do this, especially in Scotland, but Mr Davey is looking at whether it should be "best practice" for all wind developers to offer rewards such as local amenities or cheaper energy bills.

The idea has been championed by Tim Yeo, the chairman of the energy committee, who has said ministers must be "prepared to bribe" local communities.

"What we have to do is work harder to find places where wind farms are acceptable but also, secondly, as this is what we're not yet doing, be more creative about sharing some of the benefits directly with those local communities," he said earlier this year.