HISTORY OF THE U.K. OIL INDUSTRY

2.5 million years ago

New research has shown ice-sheets from Britain and Scandinavia coalescing in the North Sea from the start of the Quaternary period

1600s

Sir William Clavell

Used the Kimmeridge oil shale as fuel for glass-making & for boiling sea-water to manufacture salt.

1848

The Bituminous Shale Company in Dorset built a tramway

Worked the Kimmeridge oil shale- utilising a small port to export the un-retorted shale.

1848

Oil shade was converted into varnish, grease, pitch, naptha, dyes, wax, fertiliser & other by-products

Kimmeridge Oil shade to light the streets of Wareham with 130 gas lamps

1851

Lower Carboniferous oil shales of the Scottish Lothians, west of Edinburgh, mined & heated in retorts to produce mineral oil

1896

First discovery & production of onshore gas in Heathfield, Sussex

Late 1890s

Oil shale mining came to an end

1914-1945

The need for Britain to produce its own oil to help the war effort became an urgent for the U.K. government & legislation was introduced to enable companies to explore for hydrocarbons more readily

1959

The Kimmeridge Bay oilfield was discovered by D'Arcy Petroleum (BP)

1964

The U.K. Continental Shelf Act came into force-

U.K. exploration licenses were issued for the North Sea

1921-1924

Number of small refineries: Grangemouth, Scotland; Fawley, south coast & Stanlow

1967

First well was drilled

1969

AMOCO's Montrose field is found

1970

BP Forties Field is found

1971

Shell Brent field is found

1973/1974

Oil Crisis hits U.K. Oil Industry

World oil prices rose

1973

Europe's largest onshore oil field comes on stream at Wytch Farm, Dorset

1975

Cruden Bay in Aberdeenshire received the first North Sea Oil

1988

Piper Alpha Disaster

167 men lost their lives in the world's worst off-shore disaster

1995

Brent Spar episode

Environmental impact of an industry starting to deal with ageing infrastructure

1999

Total North Sea oil & gas production on the UKCS peaked

2.8 million barrels per day

2008

The U.K. was the 14th largest oil & gas producer in the world

In Europe the U.K. is second only to Norway in oil & gas

2014

120 onshore oil & gas sites with 250 operating wells producing between 20,000 & 25,000 barrels of oil equivalent a day

2014

The oil & gas industry, offshore & onshore, spent £1.1 billion in exploration, £14.8 billion in capital investment & £9.6 billion in operating costs