A day in the life of Stephen Fisher – London Array technician

What’s the best job in the world? It’s spending your day at the top of a wind turbine. Technician Stephen Fisher tells all.

Taking a boat to work means the day often starts watching the sun rise over the North Sea, but not before we’ve collected our equipment and been fully briefed and prepared at our Ramsgate base.

As the boat reaches our turbine for the day, we put on our safety equipment and prepare for our climb up the ladder to the transition piece. It takes your breath away, but I like extreme things and you don’t get more extreme than climbing a ladder zokan out in the sea.

We enter the turbine, take control and radio in, before taking a lift – followed by another short climb – into the yaw section and up to the nacelle, where we get to work. A crane brings up the tools and food (you can’t pop to a local shop), while the lead technician begins his checks.

Our job is like servicing a car, you change filters, check oil, tighten bolts and do all the things needed to keep the turbines turning – including climbing into the blades themselves.

Then at lunch you find a nice area of metal flooring to sit on – but hope you don’t need the loo as it’s a long climb down to the boat!

A few hours later the radio alerts us it’s time to leave, so we pack up and begin the slow descent to the base, where we put on our safety kit for the transfer to the boat. There’s time for a power nap as the sun sets before getting back to shore.

Working on the turbines is a great feeling, you’re a part of the history books and it’s the best career choice you’ll ever make.

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London Array is the world's largest operational offshore wind farm. It is located 20km from the Kent and Essex coasts in the outer Thames Estuary, with more than 400km of undersea cables connecting the turbines to two offshore substations before the power is sent ashore.

The 630MW wind farm became fully operational in spring 2013 and generates enough clean energy to power half a million homes and displace 925,000 tonnes of CO2 a year, equivalent to taking 289,000 cars off the road.

Each turbine is approximately 87m above sea level and weighs around 480 tonnes. They are placed from 650m to 1,200m apart – you could fit 72,45 Wembley football pitches inside the wind farm site.

London Array is operated and maintained by a team of around 90, who work to make sure the turbines keep performing to their best, generating renewable energy for many years to come.

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