

A round-up of the work SR is doing  
on your behalf



scottishrenewables  
**MONTHLY BRIEFING**  
SEPTEMBER 2020

**Dear member,**

After one of the most complex policy development processes in recent years, Scottish Renewables submitted its [Position Statement on NPF4](#) to The Scottish Government's [Call for Ideas](#), along with five supplementary position papers in key areas including wild land, peat and landscape capacity sensitivity studies.



The Scottish Government has now published independent [Analysis on Responses to the Call for Ideas](#) and an [Executive Summary](#), which largely reflects industry's position.

We have also been working hard on the presumption in favour of sustainability issue, and were pleased to see action from Government on this following concerned efforts across policy, public affairs and media. You can read more in the Planning & Consents section of this email.

If you would like to know more about our ongoing work on planning, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Stephanie Conesa  
**Policy Manager - Development, Planning &  
Onshore Wind**  
E: [sconesa@scottishrenewables.com](mailto:sconesa@scottishrenewables.com)

**GENERAL**



**Programme for Government 2020-21**

Over the past four months we've been working with politicians from all parties to advocate for a green recovery and for The Scottish Government to introduce a [Renewable Transition Training Fund](#).

Advocacy work included research carried out for SR - and highlighted in [this press release](#) - which showed eight in ten Scots oil workers have considered that their careers could be impacted by actions being taken to tackle climate change, and that more than three-quarters are positive about retraining to join the renewable energy industry.

We were delighted to see this policy influence key announcements in the First Minister's Programme for Government 2020-21 of a £100 million Green Jobs Fund and a £25 million National Transition Training Fund. We reacted [with this comment](#).

---

## Meeting with Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands

Claire Mack met with Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands, to discuss what actions The Scottish Government can undertake to deliver a green recovery.

The proposal to remove the presumption of sustainable development from Scottish Planning Policy as a retrograde step for renewables and government ambitions was discussed in detail, and the Minister will act on behalf of our industry to address this.

We also highlighted the need to speed up consenting, the Heat Networks Bill and the need to build green skills.

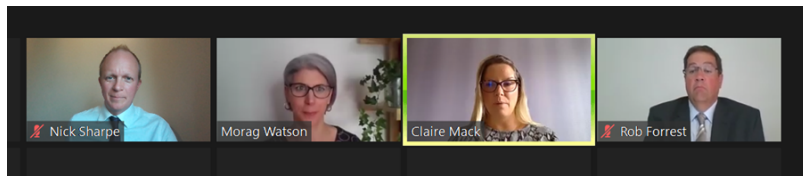
---

## AGM and Member Forum

SR held its [Annual General Meeting](#) shortly after the close of our Annual Conference on September 3.

Overseen by SR Chair Rob Forrest the event, held via Zoom, was a chance for members to quiz the senior management team on policy and communications work carried out over the past 12 months, as well as look forward to upcoming work.

If you'd like to discuss any of this in more detail, do get in touch with our [Director of Policy](#) or [Director of Communications and Strategy](#).



---

## Green recovery engagement

Nick Sharpe and Ben Walker met with Scottish Conservative MSPs recently to discuss the green recovery. The event was hosted by Alexander Burnett MSP, Energy Spokesperson, and participants included Rachael Hamilton MSP, Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Social Security, and Finlay Carson, Deputy Convener of the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee.

To discuss our work with elected members, please contact [Ben Walker](#).



---

## SR diversity focus highlighted in national media

Our commitment to increasing female representation in the renewable energy industry was underlined last month when SR CEO Claire Mack wrote about her own experiences in national media.

[Writing in Scotland on Sunday](#), she said: "As a woman working in renewables I'm heartened every day to see others forging the same path, making careers in the new energy system and joining us in the race to meet our net-zero targets."

We were pleased to be able to announce at our Member Forum on September 3 that the proportion of female speakers at SR events in 2019/20 rose 5.5%, to 37.5%. Work continues to increase this figure further.

---

## SR 2019/20 member video and infographic

As part of our commitment to showing the benefits of Scottish Renewables membership you can now view [a short video](#), recorded in Zoom, from Claire and Nick, setting out some of

the achievements SR has delivered on behalf of its members in the 2019/20 membership year.

It's accompanied by an infographic, which [you can view here](#) or by clicking the thumbnail to the right.

Don't hesitate to [contact Carol Burns](#) with any membership queries.



## Annual Conference 2020

SR's [Annual Conference](#), delayed from spring because of the coronavirus pandemic, was held virtually from September 1-3, attended by more than 170 registered delegates. The event was our most innovative yet, and benefitted from investment in virtual event software and the services of a professional production company.

Sessions on technology, climate, planning and more heard from leading expert speakers, with keynote addresses from Scottish Finance Secretary Kate Forbes, Ofgem CEO Jonathan Brearley and Committee on Climate Change CEO Chris Stark. The event also featured a side event with Crown Estate Scotland on plans to grow its activity around offshore renewables.

Fourteen organisations took part in the virtual exhibition – if you didn't get the chance to meet them on the day, you can [hear from them here](#). Feedback on the conference format, virtual platform and any other aspect of the event can be sent to [Rachel Dickie](#).

If you'd like to be kept up to date on our [events series](#), you can [sign up to our no-spam mailing list](#) or [follow us on twitter](#).

## Blog: Coronavirus reflections – the Annual Conference headliner’s view

A blog penned ahead of Annual Conference heard from EDF Renewables’ Matthieu Hue on why the changes wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic might not be all bad.

He wrote: “I believe some good has and will continue to come from all of this.”

You can [read it now on our website](#).



## PLANNING & CONSENTS



### Action from SR: removal of presumption in favour of sustainable development

SR has been working hard on behalf of its members in recent weeks following the publication of The Scottish Government’s [Scottish Planning Policy and Housing: Technical Consultation on Proposed Policy Amendments](#). The consultation’s proposal to remove the presumption in favour of sustainable development in SPP has implications for all types of development, including renewable energy.

Following a series of meetings on this issue - with Energy Minister Paul Wheelhouse MSP; opposition MSPs; Kersti Berge, Director of Energy and Climate Change at The Scottish Government and The Scottish Government’s Chief Planner - we were pleased to see [a letter issued by the Chief Planner](#) which clarified the immediate situation. It said:

"I would ... like to make it clear to all authorities that none of the changes proposed in the consultation aim to undermine or contradict Ministers’ stated commitments to delivering good quality development, including housing and renewable energy projects."

We have also written to Planning Minister Kevin Stewart MSP and issued [this press release](#), in which Morag Watson says: "Removing the presumption in favour of sustainable development ... will present serious issues to the development of the energy projects which we need to provide clean power, transport and heat as we progress towards a 2045 net-zero target."

Scottish Renewables has prepared a [draft response](#) to the consultation, and would urge all interested members to use our final version (which will be communicated to our Planning and Consents Forum - [join here](#)) as the basis of their own response.

Please send comments on the draft, preferably as tracked changes in Microsoft Word, to [Stephanie Conesa](#) by noon on Wednesday September 9. The consultation closes on October 9.



## Draft consultation response: SNH draft Landscape Sensitivity Assessment guidance

Scottish Renewables has been working with Stephenson Halliday to prepare a response to SNH's [consultation](#) on its draft technical guidance for Landscape Sensitivity Assessments on behalf of our members. The first draft is now available [on our website](#).

The deadline for comments on this draft was August 28 and the Scottish Renewables' response is being finalised.

Consultation responses are due to [landscape@nature.scot](mailto:landscape@nature.scot) by September 8.



## Consultation: Proposed Changes to Pre-Application Consultation Requirements in Planning

The Scottish Government has issued a [consultation paper](#) on its 'Proposed Changes to Pre-Application Consultation Requirements in Planning'.

These changes are not related to COVID-19, but follow on from the review of Planning, the report 'Empowering Planning to Deliver Great Places', SG's 'Places, People and Planning' consultations and new powers in section 18 of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. Information about the planning reform programme and the 2019 Act is available on the Transforming Planning [website](#).

This consultation closes November 6. Please share any initial comments with [Stephanie Conesa](#) by noon on September 9.

## Independent Analysis on NPF4 Call for Ideas

The independent [Analysis on Responses to the Call for Ideas](#) and [Executive Summary](#) of The Scottish Government's NPF4 Call for Ideas are now complete and available to view. More information and submitted [responses](#) are available on the Transforming Planning website, along with evidence gathered from The Scottish Government's Scotplan 2050 roadshow.



The Scottish Government continues to work towards laying a draft in Parliament in autumn 2021, with an interim position statement in autumn 2020.

If you would like to discuss, contact [Stephanie Conesa](#).

---

## Meeting with SG Wind Energy Policy and Development team, ECU

Scottish Renewables met with The Scottish Government's Wind Energy Policy and Development team and Environmental Consents Unit to discuss their [Annual Planning Performance Statistics, 2019/20](#) and section 36c fees and timescales, calling for lowering fees and decreasing timescales for major applications to facilitate achieving net-zero.

If you would like to know more, [get in touch](#).

---

## HOPS Planning Performance Framework

The 2019/20 Planning Performance Framework is now available [online](#). The framework was developed by Heads of Planning Scotland in conjunction with the Scottish Government and involves a mix of qualitative and quantitative measures to provide a toolkit of indicators.

If you would like to discuss this with a member of the SR Team, contact [Stephanie Conesa](#).

---

## DPEA Interim Chief Reporter

Paul Cackette has been redeployed in the Scottish Government and is now Director of Outbreak Control Management.

Scott Ferrie has been appointed as Interim Chief Reporter until further notice.

**OFFSHORE RENEWABLES**



## Fisheries Management and Mitigation Strategy guidance

Scottish Renewables has been coordinating an industry response to the draft FMMS guidance produced by Marine



Scotland. A draft has been circulated for comment in advance of the closing deadline of September 11. Please contact [Ben Miller](#) to discuss.

---

## Floating Offshore Wind 2020

Scottish Renewables is once again working in partnership with RenewableUK to deliver [Floating Offshore Wind 2020](#). The event will return on October 7-8 and will take place virtually with delegates able to enjoy the new virtual conference centre equipped with an auditorium, exhibition hall and networking zone.

Exhibition stands and delegate passes are available for booking and SR Members are eligible to access the member rate by entering FLOAT20SRM as the discount code when [registering to attend](#). Anyone interested in taking part in the exhibition or sponsorship opportunities should contact [Carol Burns](#).



---

## New marine energy consultation from BEIS

The UK Government has published a follow-up [consultation on marine renewables](#) after the strong representations received from industry to the CfD consultation earlier this year.

Scottish Renewables will be drawing up an industry response on behalf of our wave, tidal and floating wind members in advance of the September 30 deadline. Contact [Ben Miller](#) for more information.



### **ScotMER symposium**

Marine Scotland has asked us to publicise its [upcoming virtual symposium](#), which will draw together all the valuable research that is going on to support decision-making around offshore wind consenting. SR is likely to be presenting at this and the MASTS conference earlier in the month. Contact [Ben Miller](#) for more information.

## **ONSHORE RENEWABLES**



### **SR and SNH planning issues meeting**

Morag Watson and Stephanie Conesa met with Brendan Turvey of SNH to discuss NPF4, LDPs, a proposal for positive effects for biodiversity in Scotland and aviation lighting.

SNH is not currently planning on publishing new guidance on aviation lighting but is working on a short background paper on potential impacts on birds as well as additional text to add to its scoping advice (updated in May).

If you would like to discuss this, [get in touch](#).





## SR, RUK and SG aviation lighting meeting

Scottish Renewables, RenewableUK and The Scottish Government's Wind Energy Policy and Development team met to discuss industry's approach to developing guidance on the assessment of aviation lighting.

SR and RUK will discuss next steps over the coming weeks. Contact [Stephanie Conesa](#) for more information.

## ECONOMICS & MARKETS



### Business rates 2022 revaluation delayed

The Scottish Government has [announced](#) that the next business rates revaluation will be delayed by one year. The revaluation will now take effect on April 1, 2023, and will be based on rental values as at April 1, 2022, delivering on the Barclay Review's recommendation to move to a one-year tone date two years ahead of schedule. This move is intended to ensure rateable values better reflect market conditions and take into account any COVID-19 effects.

If you would like to discuss, contact [Cara Dalziel](#).

---

### Extension to business rates appeal period

Given the impact COVID-19 has had on progressing the business rates appeal resolution process, the statutory deadline for disposing of appeals has been extended by one year to December 31, 2021. Statistics on the number of [outstanding business rates appeals](#) can be found on The Scottish Government's website.

If you would like to discuss, contact [Cara Dalziel](#).

---

## BEIS publishes Electricity Generation Cost report

BEIS has published its [Electricity Generation Cost report](#) for 2020. The report, which provides estimates of the levelised costs for different electricity generation technologies, shows the tumbling costs of renewable generation compared to the previous report, which was [published in 2016](#).



### GRID & SYSTEMS



## Scottish Renewables responds to ICE consultation

Scottish Renewables has responded to the annual Ofgem [consultation](#) on DNOs' Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE) plans. Our response is now [available](#) on our website and covers activity by SPEN and SSEN.

If you would like to discuss, please contact [Cara Dalziel](#).

---

## Connections Process Videos

Following industry feedback, SSEN has published a series of videos explaining the connections process for different job types. The videos cover [minor new connections](#), [service alterations](#), [diversion](#) and [disconnection](#). If you have any

further suggestions for videos or webinars you would find useful, please send these to [connectionsfeedback@sse.com](mailto:connectionsfeedback@sse.com).

## Open Networks Flexibility webinar

Scottish Renewables' Policy Manager Cara Dalziel attended an Energy Networks Association's webinar on the [Open Networks Flexibility consultation](#). The webinar provided an overview of the consultation, including an update on the work undertaken to date across the flexibility services workstream. The consultation is open for responses until September 25.

If you would like to discuss, contact [Cara](#).



## LOW-CARBON HEAT



### SR Member Briefing: Heat Networks (Scotland) Bill

With the return of Parliament after recess The Heat Networks (Scotland) Bill has now commenced its passage, with initial evidence sessions underway. More detail on this, including useful briefing papers from The Scottish Government to the Committee, can be found on The Scottish Parliament's [website](#).

Scottish Renewables has put together a briefing paper with our Heat Policy Advisory Group setting out a number of points where we are seeking clarification. The briefing is available on

the [Scottish Renewables' website](#) and has been produced to aid our engagement with The Scottish Government and officials.

---

## Restoring our low-carbon heat policy capacity

With Fabrice Leveque leaving Scottish Renewables in April for a new role with WWF Scotland, we had begun the recruitment of his replacement. Unfortunately lockdown interrupted this and our Director of Policy, Morag Watson, has been covering low-carbon heat policy work in the interim.

We are delighted to say that we have now successfully completed the recruitment process for a new Senior Policy Manager. Contracts are being finalised and we look forward to introducing the newest recruit to the team to you all in next month's briefing.



---

## UK Pensions Minister visits Floors Castle heat project

SR helped Rachael Hamilton MSP organise a visit to Floors Castle in the Scottish Borders to view a sustainable rural biomass project.

Rachael, whose brief covers older people, wanted to discuss rural fuel poverty with Guy Opperman MP, UK Government Minister for Pensions and Financial Inclusion, and used Floors' scheme as a backdrop.

Senior Policy Manager Ben Miller was also able to attend and highlight the benefits of transitioning rural properties to low-carbon heat.



**reNEWS** PREMIUM ▶ **Try for FREE**

For exclusive renewable energy news  
take a FREE TRIAL of  
our fortnightly publication



**Images: Adrian Pingstone / Wikimedia Commons | UK  
Government |  
Energy Networks Association**

[Preferences](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)