

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



scottishrenewables
MONTHLY BRIEFING
DECEMBER 2020

Dear member,

The Scottish Government's position statement setting out its current thinking on National Planning Framework 4 was published last month, and we were pleased to see many of our policy positions reflected in the document.

Of particular note was a paragraph which reads 'the long-term strategy will be driven by the overarching goal of addressing climate change' - an inclusion which echoes Scottish Renewables' key position that: "We expect that NPF4 will confirm our view that the global climate emergency should be a material consideration in considering applications for appropriately-located renewable energy developments". This is an important success for our industry and will act as an underpinning for new development in the decades to net-zero.

We [responded to media](#) and will of course continue to advocate our positions in the coming months. For more detail, see the Planning & Consents section below.



Stephanie Conesa

Policy Manager

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GENERAL



Nominations now open for Board positions

The Board of Scottish Renewables is seeking nominations for Director positions. This year there are four vacancies; three for Full (Commercial) Members, and one vacancy for an Associate Member. Each role is for a three-year term on the SR Board.

Scottish Renewables' Board is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation and overseeing delivery of its strategic objectives. It meets five times per year to ensure the proper governance of the organisation and to define the organisation's position on key issues.

As a Scottish Renewables member you can read [the invitation to submit nominations email](#) to find out more. Nominations, which must be made through Scottish Renewables' main contact at your organisation, close at 1200 on Friday January 8, 2021.

The Scottish Green Energy Awards 2020

The Scottish Green Energy Awards, which normally take place in Edinburgh, were held on November 26 as a virtual online event for the first time. More than 800 people tuned in to a livestream of the awards show which saw winners in 13 categories receive recognition.

Kate Forbes MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, gave a keynote address while David Duguid MP, UK Government Minister for Scotland, presented the Sustainable Development Award.



For the full list of winners, and a link to watch the show again, see the [event website](#).

In a [press release](#), SR CEO Claire Mack said: “Once again, those shortlisted really do showcase the truly incredible talent, passion and innovation of those working in our industry.”

Guests contributed to a prize draw and raised £4,480 for charity [Renewable World](#).

Manifesto launches at Scottish Renewable Energy Festival

The second Scottish Renewable Energy Festival took place between October 26 and November 6, celebrating the projects, people and places which are leading the shift to a clean energy future.

During the Festival we launched '[A brighter future – priorities for the next Scottish Government](#)', which establishes our policy positions for the 2021 Scottish Parliament election. Our manifesto sets out 14 key priorities for the next Scottish Government which would enable our industry to continue to improve wellbeing, strengthen the economy, sustain the environment and set Scotland on the path to becoming the renewable powerhouse of the world.

In a press release Claire Mack said: "The challenges facing our economy and our environment have never seemed greater and this election is pivotal to the future direction of our nation."

We also held a Renewable Energy SME Summit with Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Energy Connectivity and the Islands. At this event we were joined by SME members to discuss the work they are doing to unleash the potential of a green recovery and fulfil Scotland's energy transition.

UK Wind Week activity

UK Wind Week 2020 was celebrated this year from November 23-27. We held digital photocalls with SNP, Scottish Conservative, Scottish Labour and Scottish Liberal Democrat MSPs and MPs to recognise the contribution of Scotland's onshore and offshore wind sectors to our economy.

SR also hosted a roundtable on Planning for Net-Zero which was attended by our members and Scottish Labour Communities and Local Government Spokesperson Sarah Boyack MSP.

Green recovery

We are continuing to advocate for renewable energy to be placed front and centre of a green recovery and this month we held a roundtable on this subject with David Duguid MP, UK Government Minister for Scotland.

Minister Duguid, who in his role is responsible for Scotland's renewable energy industry, met with a range of our members to discuss renewable infrastructure projects, renewable heat and energy markets, and explored with us the UK Government's plans to support our industry.



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SNP National Conference 2020

At this year's SNP National Conference, which took place virtually, Scottish Renewables had an exhibition stand where we were able to promote our key priorities for the next Scottish Government, as detailed in [our manifesto](#).

During the three-day event we held one-to-one meetings with MSPs and MPs including with Kate Forbes, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, and Mike Russell, Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, Europe and External Affairs.



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Media reaction: Cashback for homeowners from Scottish Government

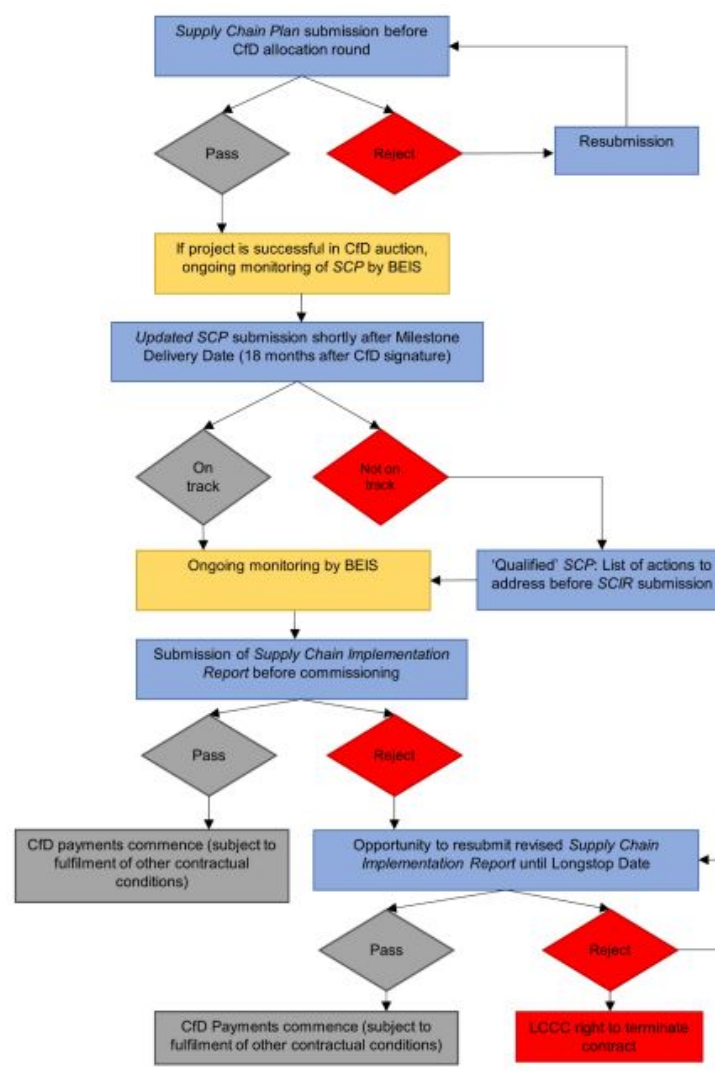
The Scottish Government announced a new £4.5 million cashback incentive to help people install renewable and energy efficiency measures in their homes.

[Responding](#), Helen Melone, Senior Policy Manager at Scottish Renewables, said: "Heat makes up 55% of the energy used in Scotland and decarbonising heating is essential if we are to meet our net-zero targets."

Media reaction: Changes announced to CfD

The UK Government set out a [number of changes to the Contracts for Difference](#) scheme ahead of the 4th allocation round next year, which will support up to 12GW of new renewable energy capacity.

[Responding](#), Morag Watson, Director of Policy at Scottish Renewables, said: "Reaching our net-zero target will mean using the diverse range of renewable technologies we have available here in Scotland and next year's Contracts for Difference auctions will support the critical investment needed to achieve this."



Media reaction: Ten Point Plan - welcome, but more to do

Last month, The Prime Minister set out his [Ten Point Plan](#), covering clean energy, transport, nature and innovative technologies.

[Responding](#), Morag Watson, Director of Policy at Scottish Renewables, said: "It remains vital that the infrastructure and regulation changes required to underpin the required shift are prioritised, with proposals to alter the way the electricity network is paid for currently meaning Scottish generation faces a complex future."

PLANNING & CONSENTS



NPF4 - new engagement opportunities

The Scottish Government's NPF4 Team is [inviting comments](#) on its Position Statement, on which we reflect in the introduction to this email, by February 19.

This is an additional step in the process and a full consultation, as well as new engagement opportunities, will follow in Autumn 2021 when a draft is laid before the Scottish Parliament.

The Scottish Government has emphasised that there is no need to restate points made through the Call for Ideas process as these will be used as an evidence source as it takes forward its policy development. Please send any comments on the Position Statement to [Stephanie Conesa](#) by December 18.

Chief Planner meeting

Morag Watson and Stephanie Conesa met with the Chief Planner and NPF4 Team to discuss NPF4, The Scottish Government's Transforming Planning in Practice work programme and industry's work on managing degraded peatland and promoting biodiversity.



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Peat document sets out wind farm benefits

Scottish Renewables has released a publication, [Wind Power and Peatland: Enhancing Unique Habitats](#), which looks at more than £2.5 million of work carried out by three renewable energy businesses at sites across the country and shows how wind farm developers are restoring peatland which has been damaged by forestry, overgrazing and drainage.

The work is part of a developing strategy on addressing growing calls for biodiversity plans.

In [a press release](#), Scottish Renewables' Director of Communications and Strategy, Nick Sharpe, said: "Both wind power and peatlands play a vital role in tackling the carbon emissions which cause climate change, so it's only right that they complement each other."

PLANNING LOGJAM 'THREATENS NET-ZERO', RENEWABLE ENERGY INDUSTRY WARNS

23/11/20 | NEWS RELEASE



Scotland's 32 local authorities are facing a planning logjam which will jeopardise the country's climate targets, new research by industry body Scottish Renewables reveals.

It has found the number of planners employed by councils in Scotland has fallen by 20% since 2011 - but the number of applications they will have to grant must increase if Scotland is to stay on track to net-zero emissions by 2045.

The UK must quadruple the amount of renewable electricity deployed by 2050 in order to meet its climate change targets. Scotland's planning system determines how renewable energy technology can be built, so is critical to meeting that target.

Planning research highlights lack of capacity

[New SR research](#) released in November looked at pressures on Scotland's planning departments and called for new resourcing to end the logjam which renewable energy projects face.

The work, published as part of UK Wind Week, found the number of planners employed by councils in Scotland has fallen by 20% since 2011 - but the number of applications they will have to grant must increase if Scotland is to stay on track to net-zero emissions by 2045.

Liam McArthur, Liberal Democrat Energy Spokesperson, tabled Parliamentary questions in support of this work, which also received [media coverage](#).

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

Scottish Renewables has submitted a [response](#) to Scottish Government's consultation paper on 'Proposed Changes to

Pre-Application Consultation Requirements in Planning'

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Scottish Planning Policy and Housing

The Scottish Government has published an independent [analysis of responses](#) to its consultation 'Scottish Planning Policy and Housing: Technical Consultation on Proposed Policy Amendments'. The Government is currently considering responses in order to inform its next steps.

Scottish Renewables has been working with Homes for Scotland on a joint industry letter to the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning setting out our concerns with the proposal to remove the presumption in favour of sustainable development from SPP.

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

Digital Strategy for Planning

The Scottish Government has published [Scotland's Digital Strategy for Planning](#), defining a long-term strategic direction for how Scotland's planning system will embrace the opportunities new digital technologies and data present.

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NatureScot Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Guidance / peatland updates

Following consultation in the summer of 2020, NatureScot has updated its [draft guidance on Landscape Sensitivity Assessment](#). NatureScot is inviting any further comments on this draft by February 26. The agency plans to publish the final version early in spring 2021.

In addition, NatureScot's internal staff guidance for advising on peatland in development management has been made available on its [website](#).

The document dates from 2018 and NatureScot will be reviewing the guidance over the next few months with a view to making it as useful as possible to external stakeholders.

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

Peatlands Partnership Workshop / Caithness & Sutherland plan

Stephanie Conesa participated in a Peatlands Partnership Workshop to develop a wide stakeholder vision for a sustainable net-zero circular economy and Green Economic Recovery for The Flow Country.

She set out that addressing the Climate Emergency is a key opportunity in the area and renewable energy has provided

benefits to biodiversity in terms of managing and enhancing peatlands on wind farm sites, as well as providing local benefits in terms of community benefits and shared ownership opportunities.

In addition, the Peatlands of Caithness and Sutherland Management Strategy [questionnaire](#) is now live on The Highland Council portal until December 31. The outcomes of the Peatlands Partnership Workshop will be taken into account in the consultation.



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Trade body and SG aviation lighting meeting

Scottish Renewables, RenewableUK and the Scottish Government's Wind Energy Policy and Development Team met to discuss aviation lighting issues, including the need for a toolbox approach to mitigation and the development of a multi-disciplinary working group to develop technical guidance on the assessment of lighting.

SR and RUK will discuss next steps over the coming weeks.



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Scottish Borders Council LDP consultation

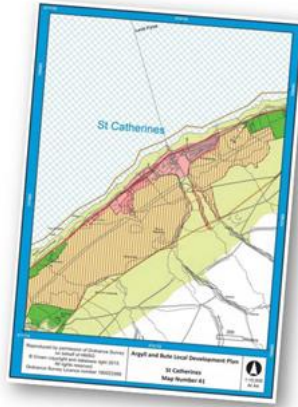
Scottish Borders Council has approved its Proposed Local Development Plan, which is now out for consultation. The LDP sets out land use proposals and planning policies which are intended to guide development and inform planning decisions within the Scottish Borders over the next ten years.

This [consultation](#) closes on January 25.

LDP consultation responses

Given the delay to NPF4, Scottish Renewables is working with members of its Local Development Plan Policy Advisory Group to develop a generic response to LDP consultations with the objective of ensuring high-priority emerging LDPs properly reflect the imperative for new, extended or repowered renewable energy developments to meet Scotland's climate change targets and achieve net-zero by 2045.

This will be shared with members for comment in the coming weeks.



Vacant & Derelict Land Roundtable

On November 10 Scottish Renewables held a joint roundtable with the Scottish Land Commission to discuss its recent report on Vacant and Derelict Land (VDL) and the opportunities it could provide for renewable energy projects. The wide-ranging discussions explored many of the issues that prevent the development of VDL, and how these might be resolved.

Morag Watson has subsequently had a follow up meeting with the Scottish Land Commission to discuss how VDL in the ownership of public bodies could be repurposed for renewable energy generation.



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Transforming Planning website refresh and updates

The Scottish Government's [Transforming Planning website](#) provides the latest information on the transformation of Scotland's planning system across three major programmes:

- Legislative reform, including implementation of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019;
- Preparation of Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework, also incorporating a full review of Scottish Planning Policy; and
- The digital transformation of planning, as explained in its digital strategy.

The page has recently been refreshed, with latest updates including work on various strands of the [Transforming Planning in Practice work programme](#) over the next few months.

DPEA Guidance Note 24

The Scottish Government's Planning and Environmental Appeals Division has published its [Guidance Note 24](#) for Reporters and parties relating to the provision of material evidence and conduct of parties in proceedings before DPEA Reporters.



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Key Agencies Group meeting notes

The minutes of the Key Agencies Group meetings for [June](#) and [September](#) have been published on the Scottish Government's website.

OFFSHORE RENEWABLES



SR at Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee

Nick Sharpe appeared again at the Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee inquiry into BiFab, addressing questions about historic lack of investment, future plans through which the offshore wind supply chain could develop and efforts which the renewables industry was already making to ensure that happened.

The appearance resulted in media coverage, [which you can read online](#).



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ScotMER symposium

Scottish Renewables presented to the Scottish Marine Energy Research symposium, which brought together 400 scientists and stakeholders to discuss the extensive work being done to ensure that offshore renewables are part of a sustainable marine environment.

We presented some of the work we are doing through the SOWEC Barriers to Deployment workstream, including a new project getting under way this month on aspects of HRA derogations and compensation measures.

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Offshore Wind Conference set for April

After listening to feedback from our members and in response to updated Round 4 and ScotWind Leasing timings, we have decided to move our [Offshore Wind Conference](#) to April 21-22, 2021.

Join us to discuss these important deadlines, updates on policy and politics and to find out how your business can get involved as we consider how Scotland can build out a new industry in its seas.



ONSHORE RENEWABLES



SR Hydro Member Forum

A SR Hydro Member Forum took place on November 4, when members had the opportunity to hear updates on the work we have been doing throughout the year, including on grid, planning and our response to dealing with the impacts of COVID-19.

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ECONOMICS & MARKETS



Changes announced to the CfD scheme

BEIS has now published its [response](#) to the March 2020 [consultation](#) on changes to the Contracts for Difference (CfD) scheme ahead of Allocation Round 4. The response confirms the Government's decision on implementing a series of amendments to scheme which will support up to 12GW of new renewable energy capacity in the next auction round which is

scheduled to take place in late 2021. You can read our media reaction to the announcement [here](#).



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Consultation on Supply Chain Plan Policy and CfD Contract Changes

Along with publication of the response confirming changes to the CfD scheme, BEIS has published a further [consultation on changes to Supply Chain Plan process, as well as the CfD contract](#).

This consultation looks at more detailed changes to the Supply Chain Plan Policy, along with several proposed changes to the contract to implement the decisions taken and improve the clarity of the contract. The consultation will close on January 18 and we'd welcome [any member feedback](#) by 5pm, December 16.



Business Rates letter

Ben Macpherson MSP, Minister for Public Finance and Migration, has [written](#) to all ratepayers regarding reforms to the non-domestic rating system. The letter highlights some of the key changes that will come into effect before the next revaluation date in 2023 which all ratepayers should familiarise themselves with, including the introduction of civil penalties for failure to provide information requested by assessors and a new two-step appeals system.



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GRID & SYSTEMS



Access and Forward-Looking Charges Review Delay

Those of you who have been following Ofgem's [Access and Forward-Looking Charges Review](#) would have been expecting a consultation on the minded-to decision and impact assessment to be published this month. Ofgem has confirmed that this has now been delayed until 2021.

Ofgem is intending to provide a further update on timings shortly and we will continue to keep members informed as this progresses.

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CMP353 response

Scottish Renewables has submitted a short [response](#) to the code modification [CMP353](#): Stabilising the Expansion Constant and non-specific Onshore Expansion Factors from April 1 2021.

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LOW-CARBON HEAT



Heat Pump Sector Deal scoping group and SR Policy Advisory Group

In its Programme for Government, The Scottish Government committed to establishing an expert advisory group to make recommendations to Scottish Ministers on the potential of a Heat Pump Sector Deal. Scottish Renewables is part of this [group](#). The first meeting discussed the terms of reference and work plan. Minutes from that meeting are [on the Scottish Government website](#).

SR held a Policy Advisory Group recently to feed in members' comments on the various topics in the Scottish Government discussions.

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Heat Networks Bill

The Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee is nearing the end of its Stage 1 scrutiny of the Heat Networks (Scotland) Bill following a recently-published [Stage 1 report](#) which asked for a number of clarifications from The Scottish Government.

The Scottish Government published its [response](#) to that report on November 25, setting out its intentions for amendments at Stage 2.

A Stage 1 Parliamentary debate, for which SR briefed MSPs, took place on December 3, and Stage 2 scrutiny is expected to begin early next year.

We intend to restart the Heat Networks Bill Policy Advisory Group ahead of Stage 2 and will keep members of our Low-Carbon Heat Forum involved - you can change your Forum preferences in [the My Account section of our website](#).



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

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Enterprise agencies' survey

Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and South of Scotland Enterprise are conducting a study on the low-carbon heat sector in Scotland to better understand issues that could be faced by companies supplying low-carbon heat products and services if demand increases significantly in future.

Its findings will be used to help develop future support for companies operating in the sector. To take part, please complete [this 10-minute survey](#) before December 18.

HotScot letter of support

SR drafted a letter of support for the HotScot project's bid to the UK Research and Innovation Strength in Places Fund. HotScot will develop plans to tap into the geothermal energy contained within disused, flooded coal mines in Scotland.

For more detail of the project see [this website](#) - we'll let you know if their bid was successful.

Webinar: the Home Energy Scotland loan

As part of its Sustainable Energy Supply Chain programme the Energy Saving Trust is hosting [a free lunchtime webinar](#) (December 10, 12.30pm) for businesses within the energy efficiency and renewable technology sectors.

Delegates will learn about the Home Energy Scotland Loan and the new cashback incentive recently announced by The Scottish Government, and what it might mean for the sector.

HYDROGEN



Hydrogen Policy Advisory Group update

We held a Hydrogen Policy Advisory Group recently to inform the development of an SR Position Statement on green hydrogen. This drafting is currently underway. A second draft will be shared soon with the Hydrogen Forum, so please ensure you are signed up to that on our [website](#).



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

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Blog: Hydrogen's Place in the Energy System

Ahead of our next seminar, [Hydrogen's Place in the Energy System](#), we quizzed some of the event's speakers - from the European Marine Energy Centre, Ørsted and Wood - on their experiences so far working on hydrogen projects.

Read what they had to say in this [blog](#), where you can also find out more about what to expect from the seminar.



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