

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



**Dear member,**

Whilst 2020 will be remembered as one of the most tumultuous years in politics, I am pleased to share new research conducted for Scottish Renewables which has shown that the renewable energy industry remains at the very top of the Scottish political agenda.

The [research](#), conducted by PA Advocacy, has shown that renewable energy holds one of the highest industry profiles among MSPs, with awareness and regard for our industry growing significantly since last year. MSPs have identified renewable energy as the sector with the highest potential for growth for Scotland's economy, a key indicator of the political appetite for a green recovery.



As importantly, MSPs are overwhelmingly more likely to be supporters of renewables than other aspects of the energy sector, including oil and gas.

Elections for the Scottish Parliament this May will dominate politics this year, and we will be continuing to engage Scotland's political parties on our priorities for the next Scottish Government. You can read our manifesto 'A brighter future - priorities for the next Scottish Government' [on our website](#).

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**GENERAL**



## **Scottish Budget 2021-22 - and business rates win**

We [welcomed](#) the announcement by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance in the Scottish Budget of the establishment of a Green Jobs Workforce Academy. This announcement mirrors our policy for the establishment of a Renewables Skills Centre of Excellence, and is a significant advocacy win for our industry.

To ensure that the Scottish Budget 2021 supports the growth of the renewable energy industry we have also met with Ivan McKee MSP, Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation, and Murdo Fraser MSP, Scottish Conservative Finance Spokesperson, to share our Budget recommendations.

Also announced in the Budget were business rates changes which represent significant policy wins for our industry. See the **Economics and Markets** section below for more detail

To read more about what the Scottish Budget means for renewable energy, [read our blog](#).

## **New Board Directors elected**

Two new Directors [have joined the Board of Scottish Renewables](#), with a third re-elected for a second term.

Jeremy Sainsbury of Natural Power, Nicola Percival of RWE Renewables and Andy Lyle of Locogen will help guide the organisation over the next three years.

If you have any questions about the ongoing process to elect an Associate Director, please contact [Alison Kerr](#).



## Engagement at Westminster

At Westminster we have been continuing to work with the SNP MP group to influence energy policy.

We hosted a joint briefing with RenewableUK on Reforming Ofgem for Net-Zero. With SSE Renewables as a guest speaker, we were joined by 16 MPs including Stuart McDonald, SNP Shadow Home Secretary; Alison Thewlis, SNP Shadow Chancellor and Drew Hendry, SNP Shadow International Trade Secretary.

We also met separately with Alan Brown MP, SNP Energy and Climate Change spokesperson to discuss the recent UK energy white paper. In light of the recent reshuffle of the SNP Westminster front bench we have also welcomed Stephen Flynn MP to the role of SNP Spokesperson for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

## A renewables round-up (video)

Director of Communications and Strategy Nick Sharpe recently spoke at a webinar organised by member company BIG Partnership, addressing the challenges and opportunities faced by each of the major renewable generation technologies over the next half decade.

A recording of his 20-minute presentation is [now available on Scottish Renewables website](#) as our first vlog.

## Scottish Renewables' Year of COP

COP26 is coming to Glasgow in November, and the world will be watching as Scottish Renewables joins with its members to highlight our contribution to the fight against climate change.

We've built a package of action across 2021: [Scottish Renewables' Year of COP](#).



Already, members are joining us on that journey. Some of the activities we'll be carrying out with our [Year of COP Partners, Sponsors and Supporters](#) include:

- Our COP26 Conference on February 25, for which more than 230 delegates are registered.
- A Renewables Roadshow to Scotland's Highlands and Islands in summer 2021, highlighting the benefits of renewable energy to local communities and stakeholders.
- Focussing on COP as the conference approaches with a bespoke series of blogs, produced with input from our Scottish Renewables' Year of COP Partners, Sponsors and Supporters, looking at issues around climate, environment and all things energy.
- A COP26 Networking Reception, to be held in Glasgow during COP, to bring our members together with UK and international stakeholders as we ponder: what can the world learn from Scotland?
- Advertising, both digital and in a high-profile location inside the Conference's Blue Zone, during COP itself.

Want to get involved? Contact [Carol Burns](#).



## Blog: A look at the year ahead for Westminster and Holyrood

May's Scottish Parliament election will dominate politics in Scotland this year. [This blog](#) from our Public Affairs Manager, Ben Walker, looks at what we can expect from both governments in the year ahead.

## PLANNING & CONSENTS



### Draft consultation response: SG NPF4 Position Statement

After processing the responses to its Call for Ideas, Scottish Renewables has prepared a [draft response](#) to the [Scottish Government's NPF4 Position Statement](#), which sets out the Government's current thinking.

The NPF4 Team is inviting comments on whether stakeholders agree with their current thinking as set out in the Position Statement by February 19. Please share any comments on our draft response with [Stephanie Conesa](#) by COP Tuesday, February 9, preferably using [tracked changes](#) in Word.

### SR NPF4 Policy Advisory Group meeting

Scottish Renewables' NPF4 Planning Policy Advisory Group (PAG) met earlier this month to gather member views on SR's approach to the Scottish Government's NPF4 Position Statement, discuss SR's NPF4 advocacy plan and our input into the Climate Emergency Response Group (CERG) Planning sub-group.

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# Climate Emergency Response Group



## **CERG Planning sub-group meeting**

Morag Watson and Stephanie Conesa participated in a meeting of the Climate Emergency Response Group (CERG) Planning sub-group to discuss interim measures ahead of the publication of the NPF4.

The group will publish three papers with recommendations for new Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers on what a planning system for net-zero would look like in practice. Scottish Renewables will lead on two of these papers and drafts will be circulated for member comment in due course.

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## **SR DPEA Seminar**

Scottish Renewables hosted a seminar for the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Divisions (DPEA), with technical presentations covering industry's experiences with advances in turbine technology, aviation lighting, peat and wild land, in relation to the appeals process.

This event was very helpful in building understanding between reporters and the renewables industry and work is underway to make this an annual event.

## Planning Seminar, February 17

With the Scottish Government's NPF4 Position Statement making the commitment that "*We will have to rebalance the planning system so that climate change is a guiding principle for all plans and decisions*", a planning system capable of delivering net-zero could be on the horizon.

SR's [Planning System for Net-Zero Seminar](#) will bring industry together to recognise the key role renewable energy plays in delivering net-zero and the changes that will need to happen within the planning system if we are to deploy projects at the pace and scale our emissions reductions targets require.



## NatureScot meetings

Morag Watson and Stephanie Conesa met with NatureScot to discuss solutions that deliver both renewable energy and positive effects for nature in a faster and more proportionate way. This included discussion on the main constraints to meeting the challenge, where nature is a significant part of this constraint, and potential options to reduce these issues and support renewable energy development.

Work to develop guidance on this issue is being undertaken through the Chief Planner's Positive Effects for Nature Working Group, on which both SR and NatureScot sit. We will keep members updated with developments from this group.

SR CEO Claire Mack and NatureScot CEO Francesca Osowska have also met separately to discuss the ways in which our two sectors can work together in pursuit of our net-zero ambitions



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## **EWG meeting note - December 2 2020**

Scottish Renewables, as key members of the Eskdalemuir Working Group (EWG), hosts formal meeting minutes and relevant documents on behalf of EWG.

The document [shared here](#) features meeting minutes from the meeting which was held on December 2, as well as the relevant report that was discussed.

## **DPEA Core Documents Library**

The DPEA maintains a [library](#) containing core documents for use in planning and environmental appeals. The intention is to create a specific section containing documents often relevant to Section 36 Electricity Act 1989 cases and making these available for those involved in these cases to refer to when making submissions to DPEA.

Please provide any documents that you consider may be useful in this regard in PDF format to [dpeaitfinance@gov.scot](mailto:dpeaitfinance@gov.scot).

**OFFSHORE RENEWABLES**



## **CfD Supply Chain Plans and contract changes**

Scottish Renewables submitted a response to the BEIS consultation document on its SCP proposals, and some key contract proposals affecting floating wind. Thank you to all members who fed in views and comments on drafts. You can read our final submission [on our website](#).

## **SOWEC HRA research project gets under way**

SR leads the Barriers to Deployment workstream of the Scottish Offshore Wind Energy Council and is pleased to be

taking forward a project, with funding from Crown Estate Scotland, on the important topic of Habitats Regulations Assessments and offshore wind.

Legal firm CMS and consultant MacArthur Green are working on two scopes of work in relation to several HRA concepts and potential strategic compensation measures, with reports and stakeholder engagement expected next month.



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## **Floating wind: new cost reduction pathways set out**

The Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult's [Floating Offshore Wind Centre of Excellence](#) has set out the potential scale of cost reduction in floating wind by modelling different deployment scenarios for the UK.

[Its study](#) suggests large floating offshore wind projects could secure CfD strike prices below current wholesale price forecasts as early as 2029, and be 'subsidy free' by the early 2030s.



## **Media reaction: PM sets new offshore wind goal**

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has outlined plans for Britain to "build back greener" from the coronavirus pandemic by committing funds to boost Britain's offshore wind energy capacity.

[Responding](#), Claire Mack said: "The Prime Minister is right to acknowledge the UK's renewable energy resource as one of the best in the world and right to focus on the development of wind power, as part of a balanced green energy mix, as a key way to power the UK's green economic recovery."

## ONSHORE RENEWABLES



### **Media reaction: Rural Scotland perception of onshore wind clarified**

A new group, Save Our Hills, has been launched to "mount a nationwide appeal to bring together communities fed up with large-scale windfarm developments in their local area".

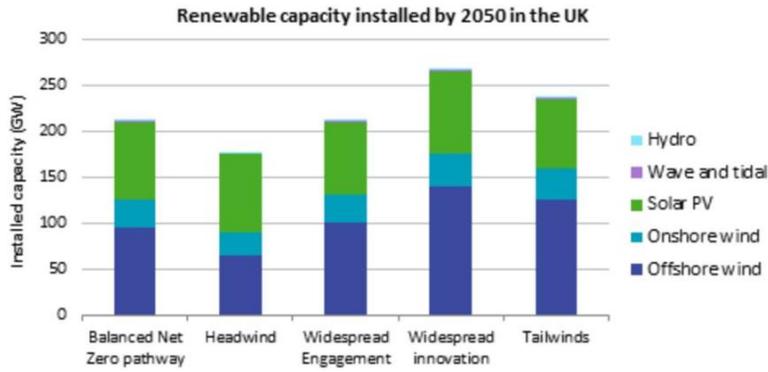
In order to correct perceptions around rural Scotland and onshore wind SR has issued [this statement](#), saying: "Any suggestion that people living in rural Scotland do not support the deployment of renewable energy technologies, like onshore wind, which tackle climate change at the lowest cost to consumers is simply incorrect."

If you'd like to talk to us about our media work, and in particular rebuttals to misleading information published online or elsewhere, please contact [Nick Sharpe](#).

### **Renewable deployment in the Sixth Carbon Budget**

The Climate Change Committee published [The Sixth Carbon Budget](#) in December last year. The report sets out, for the first time, what actions the UK will need to take to achieve net-zero by 2050.

Scottish Renewables has analysed the five scenarios in this report to identify the renewable energy deployments needed by 2050.



A members' briefing setting out the details of the scenarios and corresponding deployment levels can be downloaded [from our website](#).

## ECONOMICS & MARKETS

### Business rates relief

A number of business rates measures have been announced within the [Scottish Budget 2021-22](#), both of which represent significant policy wins for our industry:

- The current 60% hydro relief and the 50% district heating network relief for existing networks will be time-limited until March 31, 2032, in order to provide investor certainty.
- For new district heating networks, introduced on or after April 1, 2021, that are powered by renewables, the district heating relief will be expanded to offer 90% relief instead of 50%. The 90% relief will be available to March 31, 2024.



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### RO mutualisation arrangements

Scottish Renewables has responded to the [consultation and call for evidence](#) on changes to Renewables Obligation mutualisation arrangements.

A [joint response](#) from Scottish Renewables, RenewableUK and Solar Energy UK, set out our concerns that the proposals would shift additional risk to generators without addressing the root cause of the shortfalls seen in recent years.

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## Enabling a High Renewable, Net Zero Electricity System

Scottish Renewables held a Policy Advisory Group on January 28 on the [Call for Evidence for Enabling a High Renewable, Net Zero Electricity System](#). The group discussed questions relating to the continuation of the CfD, market design, incentives of where to locate, and increasing market exposure.

The deadline for responding to the call for evidence has been extended by two weeks and will now close on March 8.

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## Optional Downward Flexibility Management

National Grid ESO has issued a [letter to industry](#) confirming that Optional Downward Flexibility Management service will be reinstated for summer 2021. The [service](#) was first introduced in 2020 to deal with longer periods of low demand caused by the COVID-19 restrictions. The ESO is committing to running

industry consultation and engagement, with relevant documentation expected to be published in mid to late February.

## GRID & SYSTEMS



### **Last resort disconnection of embedded generation**

The code administrator consultation for [GC0147 Last Resort Disconnection of Embedded Generation](#) has been published. This code modification seeks to clarify the enduring arrangements for emergency instructions that the ESO can issue to Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) to disconnect embedded generators as a last resort in an emergency situation, and after having exhausted all other commercially-available options.

The consultation closes on March 1 and we would welcome any member comments by February 12. Please send any comments to [Cara Dalziel](#).

### **Open Networks Project 2021 Workplan**

The Energy Networks Association has published a consultation on the [Open Networks Project 2021 Workplan](#). This is an opportunity to shape the direction, priorities and timescales of the project for this year.

The [consultation](#) closes on March 1 and we would welcome any member comments by February 12. Please send any comments to [Cara Dalziel](#).

### **Operability Strategy Report 2021**

National Grid ESO has published its [2021 Operability Strategy Report](#).

The report explains the challenges of maintaining an operable electricity system, as well as sharing progress towards the 2025 zero-carbon ambition and the ESO's strategy to help achieve it.



## Ofgem review of GB energy system operation

Ofgem has published its [review of GB energy system operation](#), recommending the creation of an independent system operator to help lead the path to net-zero.

The regulator has committed to continue working with government and industry to build on this initial assessment and support a forthcoming review on system operation governance arrangements, due in 2021.

## LOW-CARBON HEAT



## Draft Heat in Buildings Strategy published

The Scottish Government has now published its draft Heat in Buildings Strategy - you can [read our email to members here](#).

[Responding](#), Helen Melone criticised the amount of money committed to the task of decarbonising heat, saying: "It is important that a long-term plan for net-zero is realistic about the cost of our ambitions. While The Scottish Government's intention to convert one million homes and around 50,000 non-domestic buildings to zero-emission heating systems by 2030 – made today - is welcome, we must be clear that the cost of doing so will require in excess of the £1.6 billion investment announced today. In fact, The Scottish Government's own estimate is that converting our building stock to zero emissions by 2045 will require a total investment of £33 billion."

We are currently analysing publications issued alongside the draft Strategy and will provide a detailed briefing to members of our Low-Carbon Heat Forum soon.

## Heat Networks Bill Stage 2

Scottish Renewables has met with MSPs from the Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee, and as well as energy spokespeople, to ensure that our priorities for Stage 2 of the Heat Networks Bill are adopted by the Scottish Government. These meetings have included the Scottish Conservatives' Energy Spokesperson and Shadow Economy, Fair Work and Culture Secretary; the Scottish Green Energy Spokesperson, and the Deputy Convener of the Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee.

Scottish Renewables was mentioned several times in the debate by the Scottish Conservatives and Paul Wheelhouse, and our research was also cited. The [full report of the Stage 2 debate](#) is now available.

The Bill has now completed Stage 2 and Stage 3 is expected to be before March, although there is no firm date as yet.



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## Heat Pump Sector Deal

Our Policy Advisory Group (PAG) on the Heat Pump Sector Deal met on January 25 to discuss the Deployment Pathway. These group meetings take place ahead of the Scottish Government meetings and comments and thoughts from them are fed into the Expert Advisory Group's deliberations.

The next meeting of the PAG will be mid February and will discuss People and Place. If you would like to join this group, please contact [Helen Melone](#).

## New Build Heat Standard: Scoping Consultation

SR is planning to hold a Policy Advisory Group (PAG) to work on our response to the Scottish Government's [New Build Heat Standard: Scoping Consultation](#) on Thursday February 11 at 2pm. [Please get in touch with Helen Melone](#) if you would like to attend.

This first consultation is a scoping consultation and closes on March 3. It will be followed shortly afterwards by a technical

consultation. The Scottish Government is holding events on the scoping consultation, for example this [New Build Heat Standard - Scoping Consultation: Business/ Industry Workshop](#).

## **Low Carbon Heat Skills Grant**

The Energy Saving Trust is working with ESP and Scottish colleges to promote a new Scottish Government fund to help energy/heating supply chain SME businesses upskill their staff.

Qualified heating engineers and plumbers will be trained in installing air and ground source heat pumps – new skills which will allow them to make the most of opportunities as we move towards decarbonising Scotland's buildings through low-carbon heating systems.

Businesses will only need to pay 50% of the course fees and can enrol up to five employees, to make it easier for them to invest in these skills. Interested parties should be aware that grant funding is limited and is first come, first served. [Find out more here](#)



## HYDROGEN



### **SR Policy Position Paper on Hydrogen**

The second draft of this paper is about to be sent out to members of the Hydrogen Forum. Please sign up to this Forum by going to your [account on the Scottish Renewables website](#) then going to Forum Preferences and ticking Hydrogen Forum.



## Hydrogen projects in Scotland

Helen Melone, Senior Policy Manager for Heat and Hydrogen, is gathering information on hydrogen projects in Scotland.

Please [get in touch with her](#) if you are involved in a hydrogen project.

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