



Islay Energy Trust

Newsletter June 2011

Contents

Message from the Chair

RACES – Renewables and
Carbon/Energy Savings

Sound of Islay
Tidal Energy Project

Argyll Renewables
Communities (ARC)

Community Investment Fund
Study

*The Islay Energy Trust is a
community owned organisation
that aims to develop renewable
energy projects for the benefit of
the community whilst reducing
Islay's carbon footprint.*

Chairman's Message

This has been an eventful year, so far. On Thursday 17th March, the news media gave coverage lasting throughout the day of Islay and the Scottish Government's consent to the Sound of Islay Tidal Energy Project. It is just 3 years since we embarked on our own feasibility study into tidal energy in the Sound of Islay, and 2 years since we entered into our current partnership with ScottishPower Renewables (SPR). This Project could become the world's first array of tidal devices.

At the end of March we completed our Carbon Savings Project, with a glowing report from the funders, the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund (CCF), who simultaneously announced our success in securing the next tranche of funding for our RACES (Renewables And Carbon/Energy Saving) Project. A major part of this will enable us to develop revenue-generating community renewable energy projects.

In addition, we are in the process of finalising both the ARC report and a Lottery-funded study into the establishment of a "community investment fund" which might enable communities and individuals to secure financial dividends from renewable energy projects. We have received our first substantial donation to the Trust Fund - £1,500 from St Mary's Parish Church, Battersea. And over the last year we have doubled our membership to nearly 300 - around 15% of the eligible population. All of these achievements are a tribute to the hard work of our staff.

We will have our usual display at the Islay Show on Thursday 11th August, and the Project Officers and Board members will be on hand to answer your queries. I look forward to seeing you there, or indeed anywhere else!

Membership

The IET Board is keen that the membership should be as representative as possible of the Islay community. The more members we have the more we will be able to achieve. Membership currently stands at nearly 300 but we ask all members to continue to recruit friends and family. Membership forms are available on the IET website or by contacting Lindy, Geunda or Andy in the IET office.



Philip Maxwell
Chairman

RACES - Renewables and Carbon/Energy Savings

Thanks to the comprehensive and well-received report of our Carbon Savings Project, and to full approval of our funding bid to the Climate Challenge Fund, the Carbon Savings project was wound up on 31st March and RACES – Renewables and Carbon/Energy Savings – swung smoothly into action on 1st April. With only a year to deliver a range of activities, RACES needs to be as good as its acronym and move swiftly.

The new project has two distinct parts. The first aims to build on the success of the Carbon Savings Project by further reducing energy use locally. This will involve improvements to a number of community buildings, and also – after appropriate Non-Domestic Energy Assessment training has been completed – provision of an energy advice service for small businesses.

The second will explore and develop a number of projects to allow Islay to benefit from the advance in renewable technologies and the advent of the Feed-in Tariff. Under the terms of this tranche of funding we are not allowed to generate any income at this stage, but with additional capital funding potentially available from other sources we aim to have several projects ready to begin income generation by April 2012.

The most exciting of these is a possible small wind development – probably one single 330kW turbine, but up to a maximum of three - near Castlehill, to the east of the High Road. We are currently in discussion with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd (HIAL) regarding the possibilities in this area, as the wind resource is excellent and it is suitably removed from dwellings (indeed those living closest have already been informally contacted and are supportive). We have engaged a technical adviser to help us identify all possible options, and have also asked Scottish and Southern Electricity to prepare a grid feasibility study. We will keep members and the wider community fully informed of all developments and if all goes well we hope to hold a full public consultation in the early summer.

On a slightly smaller scale, we are investigating the possibility of refurbishing the dam and turbine at Loch Allan, on Dunlossit Estate, and with our new round of funding have been able to engage another technical adviser to help with this. He has conducted a full inspection of the turbine, pipeline and cable connection which suggests that capital costs of refurbishment would enable the project to be commercially viable. If further investigations prove favourable we hope to enter into a joint venture agreement with Dunlossit Estate to develop this as another community project.

On a smaller scale again, we have made an initial application to the Lottery for capital funding to carry out our pilot solar PV ‘rent-a-roof’ scheme – this was launched at the Renewables day in January and we have 10 willing households who would like to take the opportunity to benefit from PV without the capital input. If these prove successful, further applicants will be sought. In addition, PV and small wind investigations are being carried out with one landowner and a number of commercial bodies who may be interested in a similar rental scheme.

Everything points to 2012 being the year in which IET moves closer to its aim of generating income for the community from renewables. With that will of course come a whole new set of responsibilities, and we will soon be seeking local input into how the resulting Trust Fund should be structured and disbursed. We hope that discussion will be as wide-ranging as possible, and that some new and imaginative ideas will emerge, for the benefit of all on Islay.



Lindy Maclellan
RACES Project Officer

Sound of Islay Tidal Energy Project



It was great to see so much positive media interest in the announcement of the consent for the Sound of Islay Tidal Energy project. Every news report started with generous praise for the beautiful islands of Islay and Jura and hopefully will have served as another reminder to people to come and visit us.

It was fascinating to watch the behind the scenes work that goes on to produce even a one minute piece of television news. The coverage didn't quite match that of the royal wedding but we did have a helicopter at Keills with BBC and STV cameramen literally hanging out the doors.



After buzzing up and down the Sound, the helicopter left Keills at 1.20pm and managed to get back to Cumbernauld and transfer the film to the TV studio in time for the 2pm news programme. We've had follow up calls from across the world with interviews with the Big Issue in Glasgow through to Lexus Drivers' magazine in New York.



The consent on March 17 came after two years of detailed work from ScottishPower Renewables, IET and the dozens of consultants and specialists that carried out the research needed for the Environmental Impact Assessment.

After the delight at achieving consent it is back to the slightly more challenging task of making it happen. Late this summer, a single device will be deployed in Orkney and if this goes well the manufacture of the ten devices for the Sound of Islay will take place in 2012 with deployment planned for 2013.



The consent and associated licences included over 50 conditions ranging from environmental monitoring plans to fishing mitigation plans. There is nothing unusual in this and nothing that cannot be achieved in time for installation but there is still lots of work to be done!

Another focus for the coming year will be work on the supply chain. Trying to ensure that businesses on Islay, Jura and across Argyll are encouraged and supported to work both on the Sound of Islay project but also on other marine renewables projects in the Argyll region. I am developing a local supply chain report along with a directory of marine service providers that will promote the skills that Islay and Jura have to offer.



As the project develops, I get asked more and more detailed technical questions about the project, the turbine technology, the tides and electricity generation. I am planning to write a series of short Frequently Asked Questions leaflets to answer some of the most common ones but feel free to let me know if you would like to know more.

Andy Macdonald
Tidal Energy Project Officer

Argyll Renewables Communities (ARC)

Phase 2 of the ARC study is drawing to a conclusion, and the interim report will be published in a few weeks. In March, the Scottish Government presented its Plan for Offshore Wind which incorporated a number of the ideas which ARC (and others) had sought for ensuring that local communities have a proper involvement in the planning and consenting process, that socio-economic impacts at the local level are clearly identified and weighed, and that the opportunities exist for communities to gain sustainable economic benefits.

An important decision was taken by Scottish and Southern Electricity Renewables (SSER) before the Plan was finalised, to terminate work on the Kintyre site. At the same time SSER announced that their Islay project would be delayed from its original timetable by at least a year, to allow further study of the technical issues. This will mean that SSER are unlikely to come forward with any specific proposals for at least a year. Meanwhile the proposed Argyll Array off Tiree has seen the early stages of a “master-planning” exercise, involving Argyll and Bute Council, The Crown Estate, Marine Scotland, Tiree Community Development Trust and the developers, SPR, to try to ensure that all onshore and offshore aspects of the proposed development are fully researched and understood by the Tiree community. If this master-planning exercise proves beneficial to the community, it may become a model for any subsequent Islay project.

Community Investment Fund Study

IET has received a Big Lottery grant to study options for the establishment of a fund which would enable both individuals and the community to invest in and receive dividends from local, large scale renewable energy projects. A consultation draft is currently being considered, and the final report should be available later in the summer. It will be used to engage the Government, developers, potential investors, the Islay community and other interested parties in discussions as to how best to implement its recommendations.

Further Information

Website

You can find the latest project updates and more background information about the Islay Energy Trust at our website www.islayenergytrust.org.uk

If you use Facebook then you can show your support and get updates by going to our Facebook page and clicking on the ‘Like’ button. www.facebook.com/islayenergy

Office

Custom House, Main Street, Bowmore, Islay, PA43 7JJ

Philip Maxwell

Chairman, Islay Energy Trust
philip.maxwell@islayenergytrust.org.uk

Lindy MacLellan

Carbon Savings Project Officer
lindy.maclellan@islayenergytrust.org.uk
01496 301413

Geunda Young

Office Manager, Islay Energy Trust
geunda.young@islayenergytrust.org.uk

Andrew Macdonald

Tidal Energy Project Officer
andrew.macdonald@islayenergytrust.org.uk
01496 810 873

Argyll Renewable Communities (ARC) is supported by the Argyll and the Islands LEADER Programme, RSPB Scotland, SNH and ScottishPower Renewables.



*Islay Energy Trust is a charitable limited company.
Company Number 285020, Charity Number SC037819*