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Dear Member

Over the past year, AREG has continued to focus on its mission of helping members take advantage of renewable energy opportunities and championing the sector.

Our members are at the forefront of the energy transition working across key sectors including wind, wave, tidal, hydrogen, transportation, and aviation and we have seen a broader range of companies joining us as awareness of the climate crisis deepens and there is increased urgency for businesses to adapt.

As we marked our twentieth anniversary in December, we welcomed new team members and simultaneously moved

into premises in Aberdeen's Energy Transition Zone (ETZ). The move to ETZ's W-Zero-1 building was supported by Aberdeen Considine and TAQA who financed the purchase and installation of new IT equipment.

Shona Teale, AREG's newly appointed operations manager was joined by Chloe Giles, business development executive, as well as Sarah Wells, the membership administrator. We are also pleased to welcome Alison Vogt to the team. She joined us in March as an administration assistant.

These key appointments allow us to strengthen our support for members and enhance our ability to promote the north-east of Scotland as a world-leading destination for the production and use of renewable energy.

Our priority is to support members as they develop their businesses and secure new opportunities. In 2023, we provided more networking opportunities via our five network groups and produced a series of 'Meet the Developer' webinars to support learning about the latest projects,

technologies, and policies impacting the energy sector.

Looking ahead to 2024, AREG will continue to build on its reputation as the original energy transition organisation as well as expanding our offering and membership services beyond the North-east and into the wider market.

As the energy transition gathers pace with the Scottish Government's target to generate 50% of the country's overall energy demand from renewable energy by 2030, there is much to build upon, and we plan to be at the forefront of representing and working with our growing membership community.

I want to take this opportunity to thank my fellow AREG directors, network chairs, and sponsors for their continued support and guidance over the last year, and I look forward to working with them to further develop AREG member services and the Energy Futures Conference.

Jean S Morrison MBE

AREG chairperson, March 2024

Spotlight on Energy Futures events and networks

AREG hosted a series of lively virtual and in-person events throughout 2023 and into 2024.

We held three 'Meet the Developer' webinars, providing useful supply chain insights into the Broadshore, Bellrock and Stromar offshore wind projects, along with the Salamander offshore wind farm and the Muir Mhòr offshore wind project. The webinars included an introduction to each project, opportunities, and challenges faced by the developers followed by a Q&A session.

Alongside our webinars, AREG's popular Energy Futures Network series continued with online and in-person events.

Some of the topics we explored through networks included energy transition, the role of technology in our journey to net zero, and innovation in renewables, which was the key theme of our Supply Chain and Technology Network series.

Our Professional Services Network provided insights into the career journeys of professionals working within renewables and across the energy transition space, whilst our Renewable Energy-Young Professionals Network facilitated a tour of Port of Aberdeen's £420m South Harbour expansion and hosted an event aimed at helping young professionals to navigate conferences and events.

Our network sponsors for the year included OPITO, FENNEX, and OGV Energy.

AREG facilitated three well-attended panel sessions in the Future Talent and Offshore Wind hubs at Offshore Europe in September. Our lively sessions explored the opportunities and challenges for the renewables supply chain, how to maximise the supply chain to deliver offshore wind projects including the role of digital technology and the role of diversity within the energy transition.

Looking forward to 2024/25, we will build on the success of our networks and prioritise the themes and topics that matter most to our members. Our webinars will continue to provide insights into the latest renewables and transition developments taking place across the UK.

A full calendar of events, networks, and webinars will be published on our website in the coming weeks and some of the themes we plan to explore through our networks include wind, tidal, and wave energy, funding opportunities, career journeys, and future trends as well as a series of site visits and industry tours.

Our weekly bulletins, newsflashes, and integrated social media plan reflect the diverse interests of AREG members and our #MemberMonday series continues to spotlight members, alongside social media, and website news, which display member products, services, and achievements.



AREG'S FIVE ENERGY FUTURES NETWORKS

To join any of our network groups you can email the AREG team at info@aberdeenrenewables.com

Supply Chain and Technology

A community of professionals, researchers and industry leaders passionate about advancing the renewable energy sector through innovations in the supply chain including technological developments.

Professional Services

A network aimed at fostering collaboration and the exchange of knowledge amongst professionals across diverse fields of expertise including legal, financial, environmental, planning, design and more.

Public Policy

A platform for sharing insights, discussing policy developments, identifying opportunities and evaluating the impact of renewable energy and net zero initiatives. The network aims to inform decision-making, drive innovation and accelerate progress towards ambitious net zero goals.

Communications

A group committed to sharing information and best practice in communications across the energy sector, to encourage positive messaging around the latest renewables projects and the work organisations are doing to support the transition to net zero.

Renewable Energy-Young Professionals

The group is dedicated to fostering professional development, networking and sharing industry insights amongst young professionals working within the energy sector. Offering sight tours and providing members with firsthand experiences and valuable learning opportunities within the renewable energy space.



The opportunities ahead for the North-east

One of the most significant factors shaping the energy industry in 2024 is without doubt the drive to net zero and we see opportunities for our members across all sectors.

Despite the challenges caused by geopolitical tensions, a looming general election, and an economic downturn, the energy transition presents a window of opportunity for Aberdeen and the North-east to create new jobs, grow its economy, and become a leader in the global clean energy industry.

With the highest concentration of energy supply chain companies in the UK underpinning the region's reputation as a pioneer in delivering innovative solutions for the energy sector, it's AREG's mission to support these businesses and help them tap into opportunities that exist.

We must continue to diversify our knowledge, skills, and infrastructure gained from 50 years of oil and gas expertise to drive the transition and meet our net zero goals by 2045. There have been several positive announcements, which we look forward to seeing progress in the coming year and beyond.

We were pleased to see the North-east chosen by the UK and Scottish Governments as an Investment Zone, which will be supported by up to £80m of fiscal incentives

and funding over five years. Investment Zones are part of the levelling up agenda and aim to bring economic growth, create high-skilled jobs, attract investment, and opportunities for local people.

The Acorn Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) cluster at St Fergus was selected as one of four UK Government clusters to deliver 20-30 Mt of CO₂ storage by 2030. The project will play a key role in helping the UK and Scotland reach net-zero targets, providing the infrastructure and facilities to transport and store CO₂ emissions and transform North Sea natural gas into clean-burning hydrogen. It will create procurement opportunities for the supply chain across Scotland, the UK, and beyond.

The latest decommissioning report from the North Sea Transition Authority (NSTA) highlighted that £21bn will be spent on decommissioning in the next decade, providing lucrative opportunities for the supply chain. With 70% of the work going to the domestic supply chain, this will help cement our position in the transition space.

The Contracts for Difference (CfD) Allocation Round Six (AR6) recently opened and with

fourteen projects eligible to take part, the government could double the country's offshore wind capacity. This would be a welcome result following AR5, which had no successful bids due to the low strike price. Following a 66% increase in strike price last year, a positive result for offshore wind seems likely and would bolster the existing 45GW pipeline of Scottish projects that includes SCOTWIND and INTOG (Innovation and Targeted Oil and Gas).

The Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) Skills Hub is due to open this year. The development at North East Scotland College (NESCol) will harness employment opportunities created as the country accelerates the development of green energy. With investment from ETZ and Shell UK, the new building within ETZ will quadruple the capacity of the existing training facilities at the college.

With these developments unfolding, AREG remains confident in the resilience of the region, its businesses, and its people and we are committed to continuing to support the supply chain, giving members a powerful voice in the sector, and championing the region as a centre of excellence in transition.



Meet the Team

01: SHONA TEALE OPERATIONS MANAGER

With several years of project management experience in the global energy sector and a degree in International Business Management, Shona has valuable experience within the energy transition sector, having previously worked to support the advancement of the North Sea Transition deal at OPITO.

Working closely with numerous stakeholders, Shona seeks to drive industry collaboration, foster empowerment within the energy supply chain, and accelerate the energy transition.

02: CHLOE GILES BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE

Chloe has extensive marketing and events management experience having created a whole suite of engaging and insightful events and is helping to drive forward AREG's membership community.

Chloe represents AREG at industry events and conferences and through effective networking and relationship-building activities, she is helping position AREG as a thought leader in the industry.

03: SARAH WELLS ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Sarah has years of leadership experience in the customer service industry, excellent resource management skills, and strong financial and business acumen.

In the process of completing her MA in Psychology, Sarah is well-equipped with the skills and capabilities to support members and to drive awareness of AREG's mission and services within the renewable energy community.



AREG Board of Directors

The team is supported by the AREG Board of Directors, which includes a diverse and talented group of renewable energy industry leaders who are guiding AREG in its next stage of development.



Jean Morrison
AREG chairperson



Gordon McIntosh
chairman, AIA & QED Naval



Councillor Ian Yuill
councillor, Aberdeen City Council



Rodney Hutchison
legal director, Aberdeen Considine



Sven van den Bedem
energy transition manager, Shell



Nassima Brown
co-founder/director, Fennex



Jason Hendry
managing director, Peterson



Dr Alfonso Felipe
senior lecturer,
University of Aberdeen

The Art of Renewable Energy 2024 photo calendar competition

This year's Art of Renewable Energy photo calendar competition, sponsored by BlueFloat Energy | Renantis Partnership, saw an extremely high standard and volume of entries from across Scotland.



We asked amateur photographers to show renewable energy through a lens and each image tells a unique part of the story about our journey towards a greener future, from hydrogen buses on Union Street to electric bikes outside St Machar Cathedral and renewable energy structures across the Scottish landscape.

The 14 winning images were announced during a presentation at Aberdeen Art Gallery in December where the winners were all given a framed version of their original picture.

Amongst the winners were fifteen-year-old Jessica Findlay and thirteen-year-old Carmen Murray whose creativity captured the imagination of the judges.

All winning images will be displayed at Aberdeen Science Centre for the coming year. We look forward to launching the 2025 calendar competition in the coming weeks. If you or your company are interested in sponsoring the 2025 calendar competition, please contact info@aberdeenrenewables.com



NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



- vEngage
- Mediacraft
- Dwikana Fitra
- Nayrim Buchan
- Anna Caslin

AREG collaboration with University of Aberdeen student

In 2023 Sustainability Transitions MSc student, Ellen Snare, worked with AREG on a research project to explore how multi-stakeholder partnerships can be an effective method of governance for ensuring the energy transition is a just transition.

The project examined our members and how collaborative governance can be an effective method of promoting and encouraging eco-innovation, social equity, and environmental sustainability.

Through our Annual Members' Survey and two roundtable focus groups, Ellen collated member perspectives on collaboration for a just energy transition and explored what is needed to support this.

Ellen's study illustrated that AREG members can help address the root causes of injustice in the energy system and try to remedy them. It concluded that multi-stakeholder partnerships are effective forms of energy governance, and when joined up under a common local body such as AREG, diversified bottom-up approaches can facilitate a just energy transition.

As a result of the project, several commitments were made by AREG to enhance its membership services and activities. These include but are not limited to the below:

- Enhance engagement with educational institutions and community groups such as local schools, universities and community councils
- Distinguish AREG from other networks by hosting more exclusive events for members, fostering stronger connections and facilitating knowledge sharing
- Collect more feedback from members to continuously improve our services
- Enhance the AREG member directory and identify key sectors to better understand the composition of membership to foster more collaborative opportunities between members



Opportunities for members to get involved

MEMBER MONDAY

Over the past year, we have continued to share our Member Monday posts on LinkedIn. Our weekly posts are designed for members to share a glimpse into what they do and raise their profile across our membership network.

If you would like your company to feature on a Member Monday post, email info@aberdeenrenewables.com

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

In the coming year, we will have more sponsorship opportunities for your company to get involved in the work we do, whether that is supporting one of our five network series, hosting a webinar, or sponsoring our weekly member's bulletin.

We are keen to hear from members who are interested in sponsoring AREG activities. To get more information on the opportunities email info@aberdeenrenewables.com



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AREG Annual Review 2023/24 is sponsored by **Ledingham Chalmers LLP**, a full-service law firm founded in Aberdeen in 1991 and providing trusted proactive advice from its offices in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Inverness, and Stirling, working with individuals as well as organisations ranging from multinational and national companies to high potential SMEs and the public sector.

Is planning reform needed to boost productivity and secure a net zero future?

By Jody Mitchell, partner, Ledingham Chalmers Solicitors

The debate about planning system reform has been ongoing for decades. And today, while the system is key to shaping sustainable communities, infrastructure, and development, the call for change is as strong as ever.

Investment – setting the scene

The question now is whether it's fit for the purpose of green infrastructure projects.

One litmus test might be the role the planning system plays in encouraging investment for businesses. Stability in policy and confidence in realistic and sustainable delivery are the basic needs for any informed commercial business decision.

Cross-sector collaboration

The need for collaboration and knowledge sharing has never been greater: we're facing global competition at a level we've never experienced before. On the other hand, we have an impressive – and internationally recognised wealth of knowledge and experience both in the public and business sectors.

A key goal for me is to see greater partnership and collaboration between the two and not some lengthy consultation but tapping into skills for tangible benefit.

In 2023, CBI Scotland urged the Scottish Government to consider reform for planning processes for local and major green infrastructure projects: offering more opportunities for input from businesses.

It also called for the government to support an industry-led team of planning experts – a prime example of that collaboration I mentioned – to accelerate the consenting process of major net-zero infrastructure projects. It would be interesting to see how that concept would work at a local level.

What's happening on the ground?

In terms of Scotland's decarbonisation journey, we've seen a move to grow the footprint of more traditional renewables, such as wind (with larger wind farms further offshore and floating wind farms) and tidal power.

Underpinning that, in January 2024, Highland Council approved plans for a high voltage cable factory at Nigg to meet demand for manufacturing cabling to connect offshore wind farms and the National Grid.

More generally, the Forth and Inverness and Cromarty Firth Freeports are good examples of what can be done with the UK and Scottish Governments working together. Other landmark projects include the

redevelopment of the 450-acre Ardersier Port near Inverness as a facility to serve offshore wind farms and other energy projects, and the Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) adjacent to the new development at Aberdeen South Harbour: delivering a location for the accelerated development of a net zero energy cluster to attract new investment.

And over the next year or so, we'll see more movement into energy technologies, such as hydrogen and carbon capture and storage.

More than ever, there's a clear need for joined-up thinking as well as improved collaboration between the public and private sectors and more opportunity for businesses to input into the decision-making process.



AREG Thought Leadership

Over the past year, AREG board members have provided commentary and thought leadership on some of the key topics that are important to our members and the wider energy community.

These features covering subjects such as CCUS, Tidal Stream Energy, and technology as a driver in the transition, have appeared in the OGV Renewables and OGV Energy magazines and we have created a section on the AREG website to host our commentary and thought leadership features.

You can read these [here](#).

Closing comments

Thanks to our 2023/24 sponsors and members, without you, we couldn't do what we do. I would like to thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm over the past year whilst we have undergone several changes, bringing in a new team and moving premises.

In the coming year, we will continue to grow our membership community and tailor our services to meet the needs of our diverse member organisations.

I'd like to thank our sponsors and supporters over the past year including OPITO, FENNEX, OGV Energy, BlueFloat Energy | Renantis Partnership, Salamander, Aberdeen Considine, TAQA, Ledingham Chalmers LLP, and Aberdeen International Associates (AIA) as well as the AREG directors and network chairs for their continued support, our new team, for their enthusiasm, AAB, and the BIG Partnership for their contribution to AREG's success over the past 12 months.

Jean S Morrison MBE
AREG chairperson



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