

COMMUNITY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (CARES) ANNUAL CONFERENCE, Wednesday 29 September

Responses to questions raised during the conference via chat facilities

Michael Matheson Presentation	
Question /Issue	SG response
<p>Alastair Moodie [Loch Goil Community Council] Question for Michael Matheson: Why is the Scottish Government so far behind the curve on revising new build regulations to align with net zero targets</p>	<p>The Scottish Government recognises the crucial need to take action to reduce emissions associated with heating our homes and buildings.</p> <p>We recently reaffirmed our commitment to introduce regulations for zero direct emissions heating within new builds from 2024 within our Heat in Buildings Strategy. This will be one year earlier than the UK Government’s proposed Future Buildings Standard and Future Homes Standard, which are not expected to take effect until 2025.</p> <p>As well as affording the appropriate time for these regulations to pass through the Scottish Parliament, an implementation date of 2024 will provide industry with sufficient notice to prepare for the significant shift towards zero direct emissions heating that these regulations will bring.</p> <p>Already, the current standards set for new homes through building regulations are the most demanding targets in the UK.</p> <p>Our current review of building regulations for 2022, consultation on which ended last month, proposes further improvements to new build standards.</p> <p>This includes proposals to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simplify compliance for early adopters by removing the emission target for new buildings where only zero direct emissions heat is used;• Make connection of very energy efficient buildings to heat networks simpler, with regulation on network characteristics undertaken separately via the Heat Network (Scotland) Act; and• Require information to inform later retrofit where zero direct emissions heat solutions are not installed in new buildings.

<p>[10:41] Tom Nockolds [Energy4All] Shared (community) ownership of onshore wind has been highly successful - successful examples at Fintry and Boyndie. So far Offshore wind has been sorely lacking any shared ownership. The current ScotWind seabed leasing process doesn't include criteria for community ownership. Will Scots Gov take any steps to proactively encourage community ownership of offshore wind?</p> <p>[10:54] Tom Nockolds I was asking about opportunities for communities to invest in offshore wind, not community benefit payments coming from offshore wind. Benefit payments are equally important, but are a different thing. (2 liked)</p>	<p>License and regulation of electricity generation is a reserved matter and as such the Scottish Government has limited powers. In the absence of such a mandate, the Scottish Government has sought to promote and encourage community benefits and shared ownership through good practice. We are currently revising our Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from offshore renewable energy developments, with a view to publishing updated guidance in 2022.</p> <p>As part of the consultation process in relation to this guidance, it is our intention to seek views on the need for further guidance to cover potential shared ownership of offshore renewables should this become a future offering to communities from offshore renewable energy businesses.</p> <p>We are committed to supporting the growth of community and local energy in Scotland through mechanisms such as our flagship Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES). Since 2010, CARES has supported over 600 communities and locally owned renewable projects throughout Scotland, offering funding of over £54 million to date to help realise community and locally owned energy. We will continue to work closely with communities to deliver 2GW of community and locally owned energy by 2030 – more than double the current level.</p>
<p>[10:45] Alex Urquhart-Taylor [Guest] Does this commitment to be at net zero by 2045 include fossil fuel exports?</p>	<p>The Scottish Government's commitment to be at Net Zero by 2045 does not include fossil fuel exports as the reporting basis covers emissions from sources located in Scotland, so exported oil & gas products from the Scottish North Sea would appear in the inventory of whichever country those products are then eventually combusted in.</p>
<p>[10:46] John Maslen [Locogen] A question for the minister - what are the current plans for a public owned energy company as has been widely discussed over many years?</p>	<p>There have been significant changes since the Scottish Government announced in October 2017 its ambition to establish a publicly-owned not-for-profit energy company. Since that time the Scottish Government have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announced a clear recognition of the climate emergency. • Set new ambitious net zero targets that require a step change on the demand side in terms of how people use heat and practice energy efficiency behaviour. <p>We have achieved great success in decarbonising Scotland's electricity supply and we now need to do the same for heat.</p> <p>The scale of transition that we need to see in the decarbonisation of heating systems in Scotland is massive - 1 million homes and 50,000 non-domestic premises between now and 2030.</p>

	<p>That is why we need to focus our efforts now on creating a new National Public Energy Agency - one that will provide the central focus to coordinate and accelerate both the pace and scale of heat and energy efficiency retrofit needed across the domestic, non-domestic and public sectors in Scotland to meet our challenging targets.</p> <p>We remain supportive of the future potential for public energy companies in Scotland - and, through the Agency, will support others with an interest in exploring options to take this forward.</p> <p>CARES has supplied funding and support to several investigations into Energy Supply Companies (ESCO) through projects such as the Smart Fintry project in Stirlingshire which, when partnered with an existing energy company, was able to provide the community with a local flat rate tariff by virtually linking demand with local renewable energy generation. Local Energy Scotland has gained valuable experiences from these projects and is able to consider support where appropriate for similarly eligible organisations</p>
<p>10:30] Lucy Gillie [South Seeds, General Manager] Where is the funding for urban (less opportunities to harness natural resources but more people to work with) community-led groups tackling net-zero and fuel poverty?</p> <p>[10:47] Lucy Gillie How are community led projects in urban areas expected to pursue the development of renewables when the is answers are so much more complex due to the lack of natural resources to harness and the lack of space. Here on Glasgow's Southside we are looking at everything including running grid balancing services but it's hard to know if we can keep going until we are able to set something up in a year or so. (1 liked)</p> <p>[10:53] Lucy Gillie We published a high level plan for decarbonising heat on Glasgow's Southside over 5 years ago. Neither the Scottish Government or Glasgow City Council have come back to us on it. See https://southseeds.org/wp-</p>	<p>The Scottish Government, through its CARES support is open to supporting partnerships between community groups or and commercial renewables schemes in rural areas with community groups in urban areas, to help address this issue and would be happy to discuss this further with interested groups.</p> <p>We recognise the placed based challenges faced as we transform our homes and buildings by making them more energy efficient, whether in our cities, our smaller rural towns and villages, or across our remote and island communities. As such, the transition to net zero emissions in our buildings may look different in different locations and will require approaches tailored to place.</p> <p>In terms of buildings, we recognise some properties may be more constrained in terms of technology options available, limited by location and property type, proximity to the gas network, impact on the fabric of historic buildings, space constraints, and capacity of the electricity grid.</p> <p>This will reflect the types of project models which can be utilised, but we are clear that as we take actions to move towards net zero communities must be at the heart of this change and can drive forward the right solutions for their local areas.</p> <p>The recent Community Buildings CARES funding call encouraged applications from projects in cities and urban areas.</p> <p>This builds on previous successes in urban areas with projects including the Solar PV development for Sandwell Community Workshop in Buckhaven, the city based Edinburgh Solar Co-operative and the District Heating project for the Glasgow Housing Association in Hillfoot.</p>

<content/uploads/2016/03/South-Seeds-Renewable-Heat-Study-Final-V2.pdf>

(2 liked)

[10:51] **David Somervell**

[Guest]

My Supplementary for Michael Matheson - Please share how and when you will jump from the first two pilot Community Climate Action Hubs - Thurso and Aberdeen based - to replace the £10m / year which was allocated to the Climate Challenge Fund? Community led initiatives cannot just run on air / voluntary effort and thrive and are more effective when funded with longer-term grants. When are these coming back on-stream?

(1 liked)

A shift towards more localised energy solutions is a vital part of our journey to a net zero future and now requires a shift in focus to decarbonisation as the key driver for community-led action at a local level.

CARES, supports communities to engage, participate and benefits from the energy transition to net zero. By providing advice and support at a local level through its network of regionally based development officers and development funding through mix of loans and grants to support communities through feasibility studies, design, and consenting of new renewable or innovation projects. Whilst enablement grants can be accessed in order to funding the non-capital aspects of projects such as the start-up costs of feasibility studies, community consultations and other preparatory costs.

Climate objectives are being embedded across all Scottish Government community funding streams as demonstrated by the Scotland Loves Local and Island Communities Funds launched earlier this year. The next phase of the Investing in Communities Fund anticipated for 2023-26, has a focus on community-led regeneration, and has integrated climate criteria in order to support a just transition to net zero. This builds further momentum on the current phase of the Investing in Communities Fund, which is already supporting many projects focussed on tackling poverty and disadvantage, while supporting climate change through, for example, re-use projects and energy advice through to local growing projects.

In addition to the mainstream community funding streams, a number of Scottish Government funds are available for specific areas of climate action. For example, we are committed to significantly increasing peatland restoration in Scotland through our new Scottish Government-led Peatland Programme, being delivered by NatureScot.

Alongside funding we are building a new model to support community climate action via a developing network of regional climate action hubs, providing a vehicle for communities to come together and engage in collective climate action. Two pathfinders hubs were launched in September 2021 and we are aiming to have national coverage of hubs in the next 12 months.

In order to support communities to take climate action and to build capacity until the network is in place, we will fund 10 local support officers across 10 regions. This will be led by the Scottish Communities Climate Action Network (SCCAN).

	<p>There are a number of funding streams available to communities in addition to Scottish Government funding and we recognise it can be challenging to identify all available funding streams. The climate action hubs will seek to support communities to identify suitable funding. The Scottish Community Alliance's website at https://scottishcommunityalliance.org.uk also seeks to list all available funding.</p>
<p>[10:59] Euan Scott, [Barra and Vatersay community company] The location of a project may become significant should the UK Government pass the Local Energy Bill but even then urban areas could (as now) in theory partner with rural projects for taking forward a distributed asset project and secure financial reward to take forward local projects.</p>	<p>The Scottish Government remains committed to supporting the growth of community and locally owned energy in Scotland.</p> <p>We continue to watch the Local Electricity Bill's progress through the UK Parliament with interest and to consider its implications for communities across Scotland seeking to develop renewable energy projects should the Bill pass into law</p> <p>The Scottish Government would support communities in urban areas partnering with rural areas to take forward projects and will increase its focus on supporting communities and addressing decarbonisation at a local level through community-led projects.</p> <p>CARES will work more closely supporting community engagement and seeking to co-operate and compliment Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) initiatives.</p> <p>Our funding packages are now more relevant to urban areas giving more opportunity for reducing the regional disparities that there have been in the past. As example the recent CARES Community Buildings Funding call has allowed projects from towns and built up areas to apply for funding and support.</p>
<p>[10:59] Kirsty Groundwater [Orkney Islands Council] Minister - would be interested in engaging with you about Orkney's Community Wind Farm Project at some point - a local authority owned wind farm project. Currently awaiting a decision from the Scottish Government on this - 18 months later</p>	<p>The planning applications made by Orkney Islands Council for wind farms at Quanterness and on Hoy and Faray have been received and are being carefully considered. A decision on each will be made by Scottish Ministers as soon as possible.</p>
<p>Sue Kearns Presentation</p>	
<p>Question /Issue</p>	
<p>[10:24] Mathilde Roze [Community Enterprise] Hi Sue, thanks for your talk! You mentioned some targets from the government are legally binding.</p>	<p>The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 requires Scottish Ministers to report annually on progress towards meeting the target for annual emissions reduction in Scotland.</p> <p>While our economy-wide climate change targets are legally binding, our targets for heat in buildings are not set out in legislation. Nonetheless, delivering the levels of zero</p>

I was wondering what impacts this has on ensuring that the targets will be met, and if any external organisation is monitoring this too?

emissions heat deployment set out in the Heat in Buildings Strategy will be a crucial contribution to reaching net zero as part of a just transition.

In order to ensure we are on track to zero emissions heat, we will be monitoring and evaluating delivery. As well as looking at outputs such as policy and programme interventions, we will be monitoring and measuring outcomes and capturing the impact the transition to warmer, greener and more efficient homes and buildings has on Scotland's people, businesses and communities.

We are developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Heat in Buildings Strategy, and will publish this in due course. The framework will set out:

- How we will monitor progress against the breadth of objectives set in the Heat in Buildings Strategy in a way that is robust, independent, thorough and long term;
- a range of output and outcome indicators to inform an annual statement of progress.

By publishing an annual statement of progress we will ensure transparency, supporting external organisations to monitor our progress

The Scottish Government's Heat in Building Strategy, published on the 7th of October this year, is also progressing our commitments to decarbonise the heating in 1 million homes by 2030 and to remove poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.