



# ARKLOW BANK WIND PARK PHASE 2 **NEWSLETTER**

WINTER 2021



# Welcome to the Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 Winter 2021 newsletter

Since our last newsletter, our team is delighted to have achieved some key project milestones and to have continued to support the local community through the Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 Sponsorship Fund.

On a broader level, SSE was proud to be the principal partner of COP26 last month in Glasgow which has refocused efforts to deliver effective and lasting action in the fight against climate change. Since the conference SSE plc unveiled an ambitious £12.5bn (net) capital investment plan to accelerate our own progress towards net zero before 2030. The plan includes an increase of 4GW of renewables installed capacity over the 5 years to 2026.

We hope you find these updates useful and as ever, our Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) Brendan Dillon and I would be delighted to hear from you with any suggestions for future newsletters or queries you may have in relation to the project.

You can reach us via the contact information within this newsletter.

Kind regards,

**Deborah Coleman**  
Community Engagement Manager



# OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY (OMF) SUBMISSION

The most significant milestone achieved in recent months was the submission of the Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 Operations and Maintenance Facility planning application to Wicklow County Council (WCC).

This application was the culmination of over two years' work by key members of our team and seeks permission to develop a state-of-the-art operations base and associated quayside infrastructure at South Dock, Arklow Harbour, backed by an investment of approximately €15million.

We expect that such a facility would support approximately 80 long term jobs and that approximately 60 construction personnel will be employed on site during the construction phase.

These plans incorporate a Sustainable Education Centre within the facility, this will be a multi-functional space that will be accessible to the local community for educational and sustainability themed events. We will work with a facilitator, in collaboration with the local community to explore possible themes that this centre may address.

Statutory consultation on the application closed on December 6th and we expect a decision from the planning authority early next year.

## ECO EYE

SSE Renewables' plans for Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 will feature in the upcoming series of popular television programme Eco Eye.

Our Director of Development Maria Ryan was interviewed by Anja Murray about all things offshore wind and spoke about the opportunities projects of scale such as ours can bring to communities as well as Ireland's broader offshore wind potential.

The new series will air early next year.

We'd like to extend thanks to GE Energy for facilitating filming at sea around the existing wind farm at Arklow Bank.



## SPONSORSHIP FUND

In recent months we have once again supported some wonderful local initiatives made possible by the dedicated volunteers that give of their time in Wicklow, Arklow, Courtown and surrounding areas.

Recently supported initiatives include:

- Arklow Geraldines Ballymoney GAA Club defibrillator installation
- Golden Circle Social Group, Arklow for their annual members' trip
- Wicklow Tennis Club for upgrades to their outdoor space including a new interactive training screen
- Croghan Athletics Club for LED lighting
- Kilanerin Sustainable Energy Community – PV panels
- Wicklow Volunteer Centre annual awards

Our project team was also delighted to see one of last year's sponsorships completed with the installation of a coin-operated telescope in Courtown, Co. Wexford. This initiative was delivered by Courtown Community Council (CCC) in collaboration with Wexford County Council.

All funds raised from the telescope will support future CCC initiatives.



# COP26

SSE was proud to be Principal Partner for the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) which took place in Glasgow in November.

While there has been a broad welcome for the agreement that stronger emissions targets are required if we are to limit global temperature rise to 1.5oC; and commitments of developed countries to assist climate-vulnerable nations, the overwhelming sense that has come from the summit is that there can be no more talk without action.

In Ireland, that sentiment was echoed at an all-island COP26 event which took place in the SSE Arena, Belfast hosted by Chambers Ireland and SSE.

Delegates were addressed by An Taoiseach Micheál Martin, First Minister Paul Givan and Deputy First Minister Michelle O'Neill, each of whom pledged to prioritise climate action and recognised the role of renewable energy in this regard on both sides of the border.



## ARKLOW BANK IN THE HEADLINES

In recent months we have experienced some significant delays from within the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in progressing our application and opening public consultation on our updated Environmental Impact Assessment Report. These delays have also been questioned by a number of elected representatives for Wicklow in both the Oireachtas and in the media.

Senator Pat Casey recently spoke in Seanad Éireann and in the media to express frustration at the delay and

to urge the Minister to progress the application and to capitalise on the opportunity that Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 presents. Deputy Jennifer Whitmore and Minister Simon Harris also made representations in relation to the ongoing delay and seeking clarity on the process.

To date a clear indication of timeline has not been confirmed by DHLGH, however, SSE Renewables is looking forward to further political engagement in the new year.

## ROUND IRELAND 2022

We have once again partnered with Wicklow Sailing Club to deliver Ireland's premier sailing event - the Round Ireland Yacht Race.

The event was last scheduled to take place in 2020 but was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We are delighted to confirm that plans are well underway for the race to commence on Saturday, 18 June 2022 and early-bird entries are being accepted from 24 January.

SSE Renewables Director of Development Maria Ryan and Commodore of Wicklow Sailing Club Kyran O'Grady were joined by Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Cllr Shay Cullen for the announcement.



## FISHERIES FUND

Following consultation with the local fishing community and WCC it is proposed to use this fund to develop and install a pontoon in Arklow's South Dock that will be dedicated for the berthing of fishing vessels. This initiative will increase the berthing capacity in this area of the dock, it will greatly enhance access and egress safety and also provide services such as electricity and water directly to the fishing vessels.

We are currently liaising closely with WCC to understand planning and spatial requirements and we will be sharing updates and plans as we progress.

## STUDENT MENTORING PROGRAMME

We are delighted to partner with Glenart College in Arklow for a student mentoring programme facilitated by Business in the Community (BITC).

Ten members of our project team have been matched with ten Sixth Year students for monthly sessions throughout their final year covering topics such as interview preparation, CV writing, communication skills and career path.

## IRISH WIND INDUSTRY AWARDS 2021

We are delighted to have been shortlisted in two categories for this year's Irish Wind Industry Awards.



Our work to ensure that our Community Fund programmes were flexible and responsive to the evolving needs of the communities in which we work, as they rallied to ensure each other's safety during the Covid 19 pandemic, has put us on the shortlist for the Wind Energy in the Community Award.

On top of that - our plans to develop a state of the art Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) Operations and Maintenance Facility with integrated Sustainable Education Centre to support Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 have seen us shortlisted in the Sustainable Development Award.

Well done to all our team members involved in delivering these brilliant pieces of work and thank you to the communities who support us.

**Best of luck to all the nominees! We're looking forward to the rescheduled awards ceremony in the spring.**

## OFFSHORE RESS TERMS AND CONDITIONS

While SSE Renewables welcomed the publication of the draft Offshore Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (ORESS) terms and conditions earlier this year, a major concern is a proposal around community benefit funding.

The purpose of the ORESS scheme is to enable offshore renewable electricity projects to bid for capacity to generate electricity for the state and to agree a set price for the electricity generated.

All Offshore Wind Farms, developed under the scheme, are required to contribute €2 for every MWh generated to a Community Benefit Fund. For a project of Arklow size this would equate to an annual contribution of approximately €4 million.

Currently, the centralisation of community benefits funds for all offshore wind farms is being proposed whereby they would be managed at a national level, rather than managed by the developer at community level.

The administration of the funds under ORESS, is different to what was proposed under RESS 1, a similar auction programme that applied to onshore renewable energy generation. Under RESS1, the generator or owner was responsible for the administration of the community fund, in accordance with the Good Practice Principles Handbook, including the need to ensure community participation in fund decision-making via the establishment of a local committee.

Community benefit funding generated from offshore wind projects such as Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 will be significant, and we are of the firm view that such funding should be managed at community level with the developer / generator rather than at government level.

This system has worked extremely well to date on all of our onshore projects here in Ireland, and offshore windfarms in the UK. SSE Renewables manages the largest voluntary community fund in Ireland, and we have supported and empowered communities living close to our windfarms to create lasting legacies for the betterment of those living there now and into the future. We believe that local people know their community best and that developers working with community leaders to devise the most suitable initiatives is the most effective way to manage these funds.

SSE made a formal submission to this effect to the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) during a consultation which closed on 6<sup>th</sup> December and we await feedback.

# NOLLAIG SHONA

The Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 project team would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your support and engagement throughout 2021. While it has been a challenging year for us all, we hope that next year will enable us to be out and about more in your community meeting you face to face and hearing your thoughts on the project.

**From all of us, to all of you, Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi Mhaise daoibh!  
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

## KEEPING YOU INFORMED

As we progress development of the project, we are keen to keep you updated and this newsletter is one of a number of ways through which we will endeavour to do this. We also welcome any feedback you may have on our Project.

Further information, and feedback forms, are available on our project website

[www.sserenewables.com/arklowbank](http://www.sserenewables.com/arklowbank)

If you do not wish to receive further updates please notify Community Engagement Manager Deborah Coleman at the email address or telephone number below.

## OUR LIAISON TEAM



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