

GENERATING BENEFITS IN THE GREAT GLEN

SSE RENEWABLES' SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION



ABOUT SSE RENEWABLES

SSE Renewables is a leading developer and operator of renewable energy, with a portfolio of around 4GW of onshore wind, offshore wind and hydro. Part of the FTSE-listed SSE plc, its strategy is to drive the transition to a zero-carbon future through the world class development, construction and operation of renewable energy assets.

SSE Renewables owns nearly 2GW of onshore wind capacity with over 1GW under development. Its 1,459MW hydro portfolio includes 300MW of pumped storage and 750MW of flexible hydro. Its offshore wind portfolio consists of 580MW across three offshore sites, two of which it operates on behalf of its joint venture partners. SSE Renewables has the largest offshore wind development pipeline in the UK and Ireland at over 7GW.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

As well as clean, renewable electricity generation, projects in the Great Glen in the north of Scotland – Stronelairg wind farm, Bhlaraidh wind farm, Dunmaglass wind farm and Glendoe hydro station – have delivered significant investment and good quality jobs in the local area and across Scotland and the UK. This report shows the economic contribution of these projects through their development, construction, operations and maintenance, with analysis undertaken by BiGGAR Economics. It also tells the story of wider socio-economic benefits of the projects, including a number of case studies showing the positive impacts on the people and business from activities in the local area.

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Glendoe hydro station

FOREWORD

Over the years, the purpose of SSE Renewables has gone unchanged – to provide people with the energy they need – but the world around us is moving quickly. With only 30 years to reach Net Zero carbon targets set by governments in the UK and around the world, we believe concerted action against climate change is necessary.

In response, we have redoubled our efforts to create a low carbon world today and work towards a better world of energy tomorrow. We've set a goal to treble our renewable output to 30TWh a year by 2030, which will lower the carbon footprint of electricity production across the UK and Ireland. Potential future projects in the Great Glen can make significant contributions towards this goal.

For SSE Renewables, building more renewable energy projects in the Great Glen is about more than just the environment. It's about creating social and economic value for communities in a sustainable way. Through our direct action and that of our supply chain, we create local jobs and make a positive contribution to Scottish and UK GDP. We see ourselves as part of Highland communities, and we have an ongoing commitment to share the value we've created.

With help from BiGGAR Economics, we have now quantified some of those socio-economic impacts for the first time. Millions of pounds and hundreds of jobs have been supported and retained in the local, regional and national economies and – crucially – this will continue throughout the projects' operational lives. We know that further development can bring even more opportunities and skilled jobs to these areas too.

The experiences of the people and businesses involved in SSE Renewables' investments are key to understanding the impact we've made. This report tells some of those stories, from local construction firms to the hotel owners in the nearby areas.

Over the many years we've been present in the Great Glen, we have been delighted to see how communities have chosen to invest the funds available from our renewable energy projects into the initiatives that matter most to them – several of which are featured in this report. These investments will pay dividends for many years to come, creating long-term, sustainable value for Highland communities.



We look forward to continuing to work with local communities in the Great Glen to take advantage of the incredible renewable resources here in the fight against climate change and to create even greater social and economic value

Jim Smith
Managing Director,
SSE Renewables

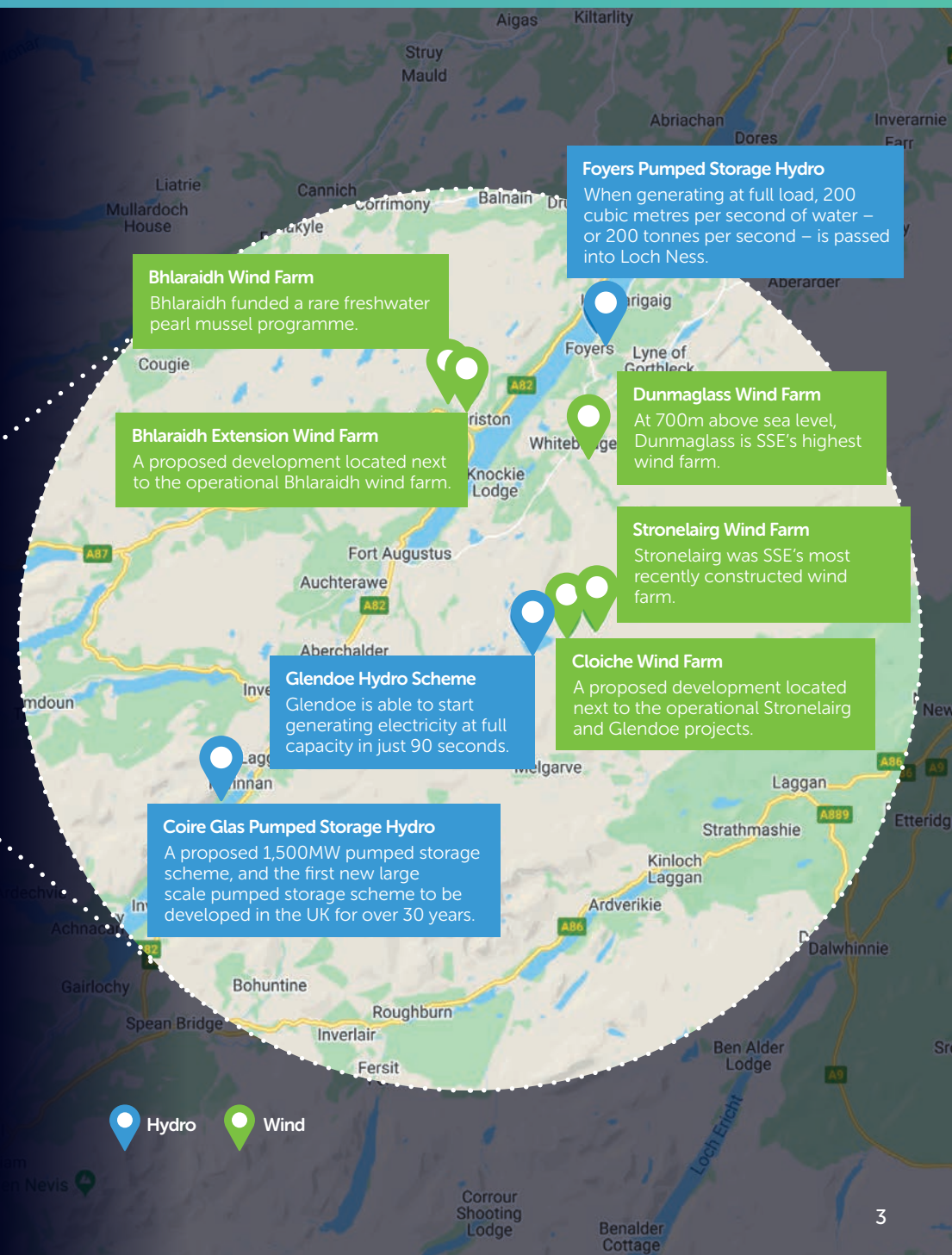
INTRODUCTION

SSE Renewables has a rich heritage of renewable development in the Highlands of Scotland. The North of Scotland Hydro Electric Board, which became Scottish Hydro and later part of the SSE Group, brought power to the glens in the 1940s and 1950s. Construction of 54 power stations, 78 dams and over 300km of underground tunnels resulted in affordable electricity for Highland communities, transforming the way people lived and worked. This development included a number of projects around the Great Glen, such as Glenmoriston and Invergarry, as the lochs, rivers and mountainous terrain in the region are ideal for powering hydro. In 1975, a 300MW pumped storage project was opened at Foyers using Loch Mhor Dam, which has been used for electricity production since 1896, as the upper reservoir.

Towards the latter part of the century, the role of clean, renewable electricity took on an even greater importance as climate change began to appear in the mainstream agendas of government in the UK and beyond. We have been at the forefront of this more recent renewables revolution, centred on fighting climate change by delivering the renewable power that reduces the carbon intensity of electricity production. Building on its hydro heritage, SSE Renewables continues to be a leading developer and operator of renewable energy across the UK and Ireland, with a portfolio of around 4GW of onshore wind, offshore wind and hydro.

Our portfolio includes three onshore wind farms and a major hydro station all completed in the Great Glen since 2012. Glendoe (100MW) near Fort Augustus was reopened in 2012 and is the largest hydro project to be built in Scotland in the last 40 years. The 94MW Dunmaglass wind farm near the village of Farr was added in 2017. Bhlaraidh wind farm near Invermoriston added a further 108MW later in 2017. The most recent development is the 228MW Stronelairst wind farm adjacent to Glendoe, which was completed in 2018. Both Stronelairst and Dunmaglass were developed by SSE Renewables and now operate as joint ventures with Greencoat UK Wind Plc.

The responsible development and delivery of these projects has brought a wealth of benefits to the Great Glen region. This is not just about contracts placed with the local supply chain but also the indirect benefits for local businesses, employment opportunities and projects funded through the associated community benefit funds. This report will look at these social and economic benefits from the four projects mentioned above and showcase examples of the positive effects they have had in the Great Glen.



OUR RESPONSIBLE APPROACH

We take great pride in our responsible approach to developing renewable energy projects. This approach has been honed through many years of experience developing our extensive portfolio which includes many hydro and onshore wind assets in the Highlands of Scotland and the Great Glen in particular.

As a developer, constructor and operator of these essential assets we recognise that we become part of the communities they are in for the long-term. Inclusive community engagement is important as we develop our projects so that the views and concerns of the community can influence the project design. When we move to building a project we ensure the right forums are in place to liaise regularly and constructively with the community. Increasingly social media is a key tool to help keep everyone informed.

As a proud member of these Highland communities we always strive to ensure that the local benefits can be maximised. There are many

opportunities for local businesses to win contracts directly with us or with our suppliers. Businesses such as accommodation providers also benefit indirectly. As well as fixed-term employment during construction there are also long-term roles to help steward our assets with many people in our operations team living locally and coming through our apprentice or technical training programmes.

We recognise that there is the potential to harness more of the Great Glen's abundant natural resources. We have a number of future development options which we hope will come to fruition. This includes an extension to our Bhlaraidh wind farm project near Invermoriston, a new wind farm project called Cloiche close to Fort Augustus and Coire Glas, a large-scale pumped storage hydro project at Loch Lochy. We will continue to utilise our responsible approach on these projects so that if they are built then many more benefits can be realised in the Great Glen.



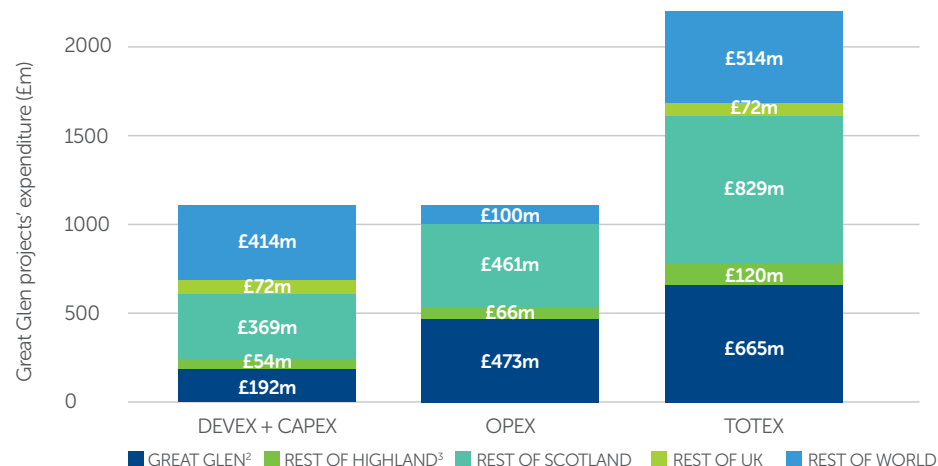
Stronelairg wind farm



Operations in Glendoe Hydro Station

INVESTING IN THE GREAT GLEN AND ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Total expenditure (TOTEX) associated with the Great Glen projects is expected to be £2.2bn¹. The spend related to development and construction (DEVEX + CAPEX) totalled £1.1bn. Operational expenditure (OPEX) is expected to amount to £1.1bn over 25 years of operational life.



The four projects engaged with a wide range of suppliers across the UK⁴. This included a large number in Scotland and suppliers throughout the Great Glen area.

Locations of identified suppliers can be seen on this map.



Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis.

¹ All expenditure is listed in 2018 prices.

² The Great Glen² has been defined as the council wards of Aird and Loch Ness, Caol and Mallaig, Fort William and Ardnarmurchan, Inverness Ness-side.

³ The Highland area³ is defined as the Highland Council Area.

⁴ The expenditure profiles for each of the four projects by phase and geography can be found in the full BiGGAR Economics report.

CASE STUDY CORRIE CONSTRUCTION

Fort William-based Corrie Construction worked on Stronelairg, Bhlaraidh and Glendoe.

Corrie Construction is a construction and civil engineering company based in Fort William which employs 60 people directly. It specialises in utilities work, and the majority of its activity is from large infrastructure developments in the Highlands and Islands.

Corrie Construction initially worked on the site preparation work for Glendoe hydro station during its first period of construction. It was then commissioned to work on Bhlaraidh wind farm. This work included the construction a new control building and the associated drainage that this building would require. The contract accounted for almost 10% of the company activity at the time. Corrie Construction was also commissioned to do similar work for the Stronelairg wind farm and moved straight onto this on completion of the work at Bhlaraidh.

The continuity of work from Stronelairg right after Bhlaraidh was of real value to the business.

Companies such as Corrie Construction that work on large projects, need to plan ahead to manage their workload and fluctuations in demand. Corrie Construction have worked with SSE for over 20 years, and this relationship, particularly for consecutive projects such as the Great Glen wind farms, enables stability in business planning.

In addition to the work that has been done directly by Corrie Construction on these projects, it also utilised its own supply chain and subcontractors for specific components of the contract. These subcontractors included:

- Leiths Concrete in Fort William;
- Korrie Technical Services in Inverness;
- AJ Engineering in Forres;
- Pat Munro Ltd in Alness.

CALCULATING ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

The development, construction and operation of Stronelairg wind farm, Bhlaraidh wind farm, Dunmaglass wind farm and Glendoe hydro station has generated and will continue to generate substantial local, regional and national economic benefits. To understand the scale of this contribution, SSE Renewables commissioned BiGGAR Economics to calculate the economic impact of these projects.

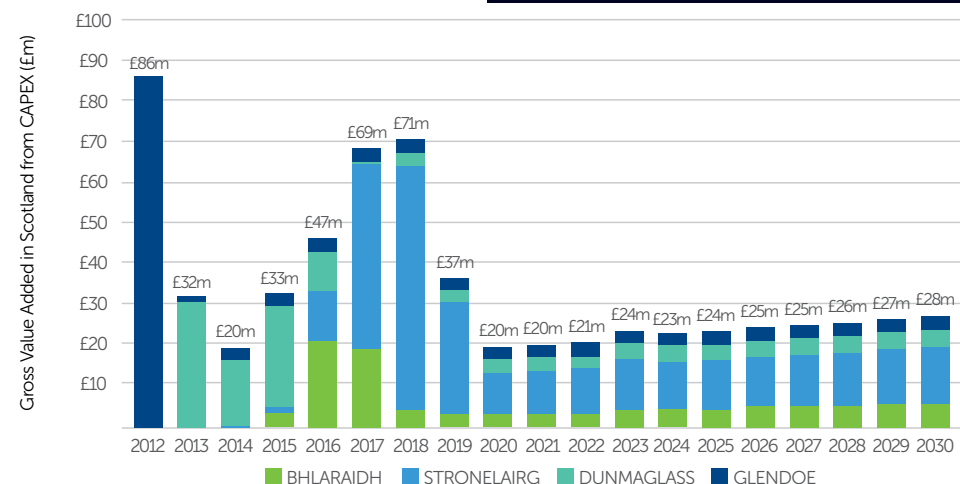
Investment in the Great Glen drives economic activity through the value it adds to the economy (referred to as Gross Value Added) and the years of employment or jobs it supports. To fully capture the impacts of this spending, the BiGGAR Economics analysis includes activity further down the supply chain (indirect impacts) and activity that results from the spending of salaries (induced impacts), as well as direct impacts.

Contributing to local and national economies

Over the full lifetime of the four projects, from development to the end of 25 years of operational life, £1.8bn is expected to be generated for the

UK economy, of which £1.2bn will be in Scotland. Within Scotland, over £360m is estimated to be added to the economy of the Great Glen area, with a further £120m added to wider Highland economy. This significant economic contribution is driven by expenditure across many different industries within these areas, including civil and electrical engineering, the setting up and operating of a local quarry and concrete plant, environmental and technical evaluation and monitoring, plant hire, fencing and hospitality services. The majority of the economic contribution is expected during the operational phase, driven by the high proportion of this expenditure which is expected to be with Great Glen, Highland, Scottish or UK businesses.

During the construction of Glendoe there were up to 700 people working on site. Given the remoteness of the development, as well as accessibility issues due to adverse weather conditions, two worker camps were constructed. These camps accommodated 400 and 200 people each and were supplied by local businesses and operated by local people.



Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis, figures are presented in 2018 prices.

GREAT GLEN BENEFITS

Lifetime



Creating
£360M of value

Development and construction



Created
£90M of value



Supported
1,170 years of employment

Operations



Creating
£11M of value each year



Supporting
130 jobs each year

HIGHLAND BENEFITS

Lifetime



Creating
£480M of value

Development and construction



Created
£140M of value



Supported
1,860 years of employment

Operations



Creating
£14M of value each year



Supporting
170 jobs each year

SCOTLAND BENEFITS

Lifetime



Creating
£1.2BN of value

Development and construction



Created
£460M of value



Supported
6,450 years of employment

Operations



Creating
£29M of value each year



Supporting
380 jobs each year

UK BENEFITS

Lifetime



Creating
£1.8BN of value

Development and construction



Created
£750M of value



Supported
10,940 years of employment

Operations



Creating
£43M of value each year



Supporting
520 jobs each year

CASE STUDY
RJ MCLEOD

Highland based RJ McLeod was one of the main contractors involved in the wind farm projects.

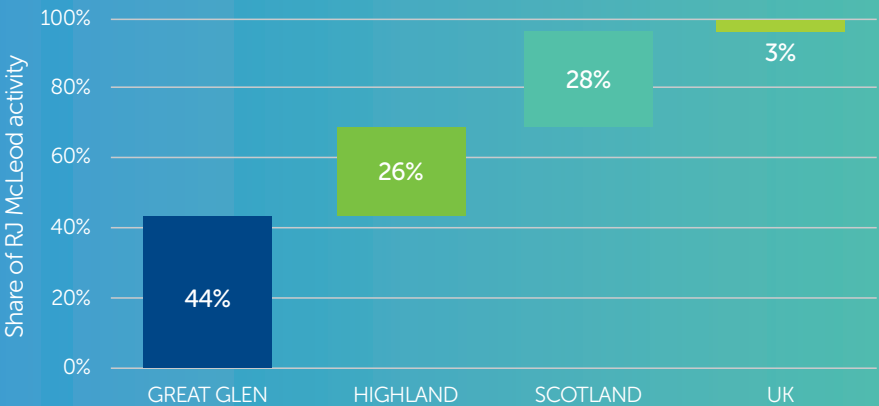
RJ McLeod is a civil engineering company founded in 1951 which operates through offices in Glasgow and Dingwall. It is one of the largest privately-owned construction companies in Scotland, with turnover in 2018 of £88m and over 400 employees and operatives. It has a strong track record in the renewable energy sector in Scotland and has worked on multiple projects for SSE Renewables and other developers.

RJ McLeod was commissioned to undertake the main civil engineering and enabling works for Bhlaraidh wind farm in 2014. This included road, substation, and crane hard standing area building. RJ McLeod was also commissioned to do similar work for Dunmaglass wind farm and Stronelaig wind farm. These projects involved over 50 RJ McLeod employees being located at a base camp near the site, including engineers, plant operators and tradespeople.

RJ McLeod aims to secure as much as possible from the Highlands and form strong local relationships.

The total contracts value for RJ McLeod from these projects was approximately £100m. An analysis of these contracts found the majority of the activity was with the Highlands, accounting for 70% of this spend, including 44% in the Great Glen.

RJ McLeod contract activity by area



RJ McLeod carrying out works to the access tracks for Dunmaglass wind farm

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

SSE Renewables operates a leading community investment programme, delivering financial support to a diverse range of community projects near to our renewable developments across the UK and Ireland. In the UK these have supported over 2,500 community projects with grants of £22.1m since 2008. The funds are a long term investment in local communities, operating over the lifetime of the renewable asset, which is usually 25 years.

We operate four community benefit funds which cover the Great Glen (Dunmaglass, Bhlaraidh and Stronelaig wind farms, and Glendoe hydro). Over their lifetimes, these will award funds worth a total of £57.2m, split between £30.7m in Local Funds for the communities closest to the projects and £26.5m for the Highland Sustainable Development Fund. This investment is aimed at stimulating transformation and growth for communities across the whole Highland region.

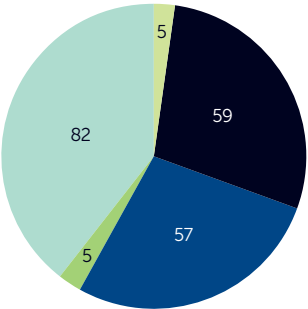


Investment in Highland communities

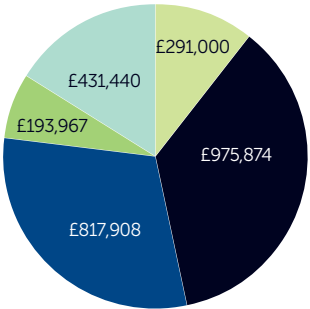
Community Investment Fund	Lifetime value of Local Fund	Lifetime value of Highland Sustainable Development Fund	Total lifetime value of fund
Dunmaglass	£6.2m	£5.5m	£11.7m
Bhlaraidh	£7m	£7m	£14m
Stronelaig	£14m	£14m	£28m
Glendoe	£3.5m	-	£3.5m

Between 2016 and 2019, 208 community projects in the Great Glen were supported with £2.7m of funding. This included projects as diverse as apprenticeship programmes to encourage young residents to remain in rural areas; mindfulness courses to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable residents; establishing a community broadband scheme to support rural micro businesses; and enabling young people to access a range of sport and extra-curricular activity. A list of all awards from 2018-19 can be found in Appendix 1.

GREAT GLEN COMMUNITY PROJECTS FUNDED 2016-2019



GREAT GLEN COMMUNITY INVESTMENT 2016-2019



■ DUNMAGLASS ■ BHILARAIDH ■ STRONELAIG ■ GLENDOE ■ HIGHLAND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

CASE STUDY SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Understanding the value of our investments into communities is an important part of evaluating our Community Benefit programme. One way to assess this value is through Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis.

SROI is a methodology that lets you understand the wider value created as a result of investing money. It considers the social, economic and environmental impacts of an investment. Critically, all impacts are valued in monetary terms, enabling a direct comparison between impacts and investment. The approach considers the value created for all stakeholders impacted by an investment, not only the intended beneficiaries.



Ben secured an apprenticeship through the Community Trusts Apprenticeship Scheme

Across seven community projects being funded in the Great Glen, we found that for every £1 of community funds spent, the community projects are expected to generate £1.93 in wider value. These projects included a range of skills, youth and community asset projects, and we worked with those who received funds to identify the social, economic and environmental outcomes achieved. The outcomes were then measured in a SROI process developed by New Economics Foundation to determine the overall SROI figure.

One of the projects included in the study was the Community Trusts Apprenticeship Scheme, which supports local young people to secure quality local employment in Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston, Glengarry, and Stratherrick & Foyers. 16 young people have received opportunities with local employers which enable them to remain within the local area and also ensures the community has the skilled professionals it requires for the future.

For more information on the methodology used for this assessment, please refer to the methodology document on www.sse.com/beingresponsible/reporting-and-policy/.

CASE STUDY

FORT AUGUSTUS AND GLENMORISTON COMMUNITY COMPANY

Fort Augustus was left vulnerable after a fire in 2015 destroyed the local medical centre. Local medical support is vital to ensure thriving communities, particularly in areas hosting an aging population and seeing an increase in people living with long term health conditions. With the support of the Fort Augustus community, the local community company took the decision to rebuild a bigger medical centre under community ownership to safeguard and enhance services including podiatry and innovative NHS video consulting. As a flexible funder, we worked with the community company to understand its funding needs. We were able to tailor funding accordingly and provide our largest ever award, totalling £600,000 from various funds. This in turn helped the community leverage an additional £420,000 in match funding to fully fund the project. The new medical centre provides the community with an asset and an income from a lease to the NHS, making it sustainable for the long term.

Angela Williams, Chief Officer for Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company (FAGCC), said "Retaining the GP surgery was really important to the local community. At some point in the future we will have to generate our own income to sustain the community, and this contributes to that. The next project we are leading on is the development of a housing complex on community owned land, to be rented out at affordable rents. We will be providing 12 mixed size houses to help meet local needs."

The community company use our funding towards a range of projects. One of the most popular and visible locally is the community caretakers, who take charge of the image of the village. The team are pictured below with their favourite recent project, building the wall outside the new Fort Augustus Medical Centre.



Community caretakers from Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company



Mairi Gougeon, Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment, opens the new medical centre alongside Linda (Harry) Whiteside, Chair of FAGCC, and Jim Smith, Managing Director of SSE Renewables



The completed adaptable houses at Glenurquhart Care Project

CASE STUDY

GLENURQUHART CARE HOUSING PROJECT

Walt Gregg moved to the area 13 years ago after retiring from an active career in the police and the travel industry. After he lost his wife in 2017, he was left with no support network or options for housing. Walt was housed in various council accommodations and, after several stints in and out of hospital, was finally able to get a suitable care package in place and move into Glenurquhart care housing.

Twelve community-owned adaptable houses for the elderly were built in the Great Glen, using a £100,000 grant from the SSE Renewables Highland Sustainable Development Fund. The population of the Highlands over the age of 75 has risen by 55% in the last twenty years. A community consultation in Glenurquhart identified a lack of local accommodation suitable to the needs of the ageing population and found that 90% of local residents were in favour of creating better housing. The innovative Glenurquhart Care Project has built a new dwelling of twelve purpose-built, adaptable homes, fully accessible for people with limited mobility and with in-built home modifications. The new setting enables people to live independently within a supported environment with access to the local doctor's surgery and elderly care centre.

Walt said: "I'm an independent sort of bloke, and here I can sit in my electric chair and use it about the house. For me it's great being so close to the care centre. I'm there five days a week doing activities and being sociable - we even do Tai Chi. I'm happy here."

The Glenurquhart Care Project won the Housing and Regeneration Award in the 2019 Scotland's Regeneration Forum's SURF Awards.



Walt Gregg, resident at Glenurquhart Care Project

CASE STUDY

THE STRATHDEARN

Strathdearn Community Developments, a community company, receive annual funding from the Dunmaglass wind farm. They approached SSE Renewables (who administer the community funding on behalf of the Dunmaglass Wind Farm Ltd Joint Venture) to be able to draw down three years of this funding in advance to enable the completion of a funding package for the design and construction of The StrathDearn. The StrathDearn is a modern, new-build community facility, providing a high-quality meeting space for local groups, changing rooms for sporting groups utilising the all-weather pitch, events, weddings, indoor sports groups and more. Its completion has also freed up space in other community assets to host the community shop and restaurant and allows the community to generate an income.

Charles Morgan, Chief Operating Officer for Strathdearn Community Developments said: "The impacts on our community have been extremely positive. As an area we have 20 or so more years of community funding, and during that time we are hoping to build affordable housing, develop e-bikes and charging points, and extend our local path network. We hope the new hall facility will last for 100 years, leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come.

"The community shop is keeping money in the local area, it's employing local people, it's giving people the opportunity to spend in their own community and I feel that is extremely important. Plus, the better the facilities at the hall, the better we can capitalise on the tourism business which is very prevalent in this area. Our plan is that going forward the local community will thrive, not only by keeping their own spend in the area but benefiting from tourists too.

"I'm very proud of what has been achieved by the local community using community benefit funding, and full credit to the board for their openness, diligence and hard work so far. The new building is the first new building for public use in Tomatin for over 30 years."



Chair of the board, Stan Falconer and Director Duncan Bryden during the construction of the the StrathDearn community facility



Director Jimmy Duncan and employees of The StrathDearn, Janet Cross and Mhairi Macsween, enjoying the new facilities

BROADER BENEFITS

As well as direct economic benefits, there are many other ways in which these renewable energy developments have enhanced the environments in which they have been developed, constructed and are now operated in. These broader benefits include improvements to community infrastructure, contributions to conservation initiatives in the local area and programmes to encourage long-term employment opportunities assisting these rural communities to retain and grow the local population.

CASE STUDY LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

The construction phase of a renewable energy project brings direct and indirect investment to the local area through job creation as well as increased footfall in rural communities.

But the benefits often go beyond this. We work closely with the local community from development through construction to listen to their concerns and asks about what we can do to enhance their community.

When building our Bhlaraidh wind farm the people of Invermoriston raised concerns over the state of a well-used car park. The Millennium car park had for a number of years provided parking spots for locals visiting the Millennium Hall as well as for tourists in the area. However, years of use left the car park in need of a refresh.

In early 2017, SSE Renewables, and our principal contractors on Bhlaraidh wind farm, RJ McLeod, invested over £20,000 to resurface the majority of the car park to make it safer for locals and get it ready for the tourist season in summer.



Bhlaraidh wind farm in the snow

CASE STUDY MONITORING EAGLE BEHAVIOUR

Dunmaglass wind farm is situated south of Inverness in the Central Highlands Natural Heritage Zone (NHZ), which is home to the golden eagle.

As part of the wider Habitat Management Plan for the wind farm, we commissioned a Regional Eagle Conservation Management Plan (RECMMP) to review the status of breeding golden eagle in the area. The aim is to provide an accurate reflection of factors influencing population numbers and eagle distribution to promote territory occupation and help boost the local population.

We provide funding and management assistance within the NHZ to enhance the conservation of breeding golden eagles. This has included the funding of a dedicated Golden Eagle Project Officer to support the RECMMP. The first five years are designed to focus on surveys, satellite tagging of eagles and analysis, the results of which have continued to provide significant insight into this enigmatic bird's behavioural ecology and contributed to emerging good practice surrounding golden eagle distribution in the upland landscape.

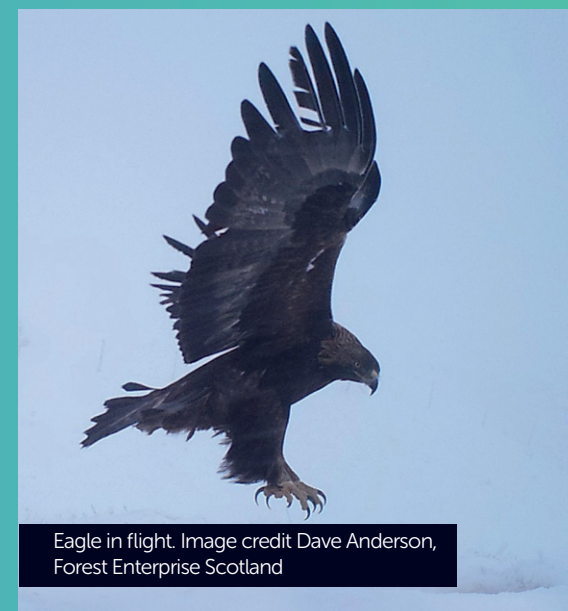
Over the last few years, considerable survey effort established that the NHZ conveys one of the most rapidly increasing golden eagle populations in Scotland. Although many seemingly suitable areas remain vacant, these population increases are unprecedented.

This fundamental research programme continues to narrow knowledge gaps and key outputs have included:

19 juvenile golden eagles
fitted with satellite tags

25 occupied territories
in 2019, increasing from 19 in 2015

2 journal papers
published, 1 under journal review
and 4 in preparation



Eagle in flight. Image credit Dave Anderson, Forest Enterprise Scotland



Ailsa McInnes, Managing Partner at the Glenmoriston Arms Hotel

CASE STUDY

TOURISM IN THE GREAT GLEN

Consultation by BiGGAR Economics found the relationship between the tourism sector in the Great Glen and large energy projects has been generally positive.

The tourism sector is particularly important within the Great Glen and provides employment for over 16,000 people across the Highland region. The tourism sector is particularly seasonal within the rural areas of the Great Glen and many hotels are closed between November and March.

The energy projects developed within the Great Glen resulted in an increased demand for the services of the tourism sector from business visitors. This has been particularly important during the bookends of the tourism season and has enabled some hotels to extend the months in which they are open. Corporate clients, such as SSE Renewables, can find it difficult to get rooms in the busy summer months because rooms are usually booked well in advance by leisure guests. Therefore it tries to plan its activities on project sites to occur in the quieter periods. One hotel reported that in October and November almost 90% of its demand was from business tourism and much of that was connected to projects such as Stronelairg, Bhlaraidh and Dunmaglass wind farms.

"The last few years have been pretty good for us as there were a lot of [energy] projects on the go" Ailsa McInnes, Glenmoriston Arms Hotel

BiGGAR Economics consulted with owners of five hotels in the area to identify any impact of the development of these energy projects on leisure tourism. These owners reported that there had not been any negative changes to visitor numbers or spending as a result of these energy developments. The vast majority of visitors were unaware of these projects and they were only likely to discuss them when ongoing construction work was visible.

The involvement of SSE Renewables in the Highlands and Islands Tourism Awards was identified as the big impact that the company had on the local tourism sector. SSE Renewables has sponsored these awards for seven years which has helped to identify and exhibit the most successful tourism sector stories in the area.

CASE STUDY

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

Iain MacKnocher was born and raised in Fort Augustus and in 2009 started an engineering apprenticeship with SSE Renewables. After two years in Rosyth Dockyard doing college work, then two years training on site, he became an electrical fitter at Glenmoriston Power Station. After three years in that role he continued to progress and is now a Team Leader for SSE Renewables in the Great Glen, line managing 13 people in the area.

On his experience during his apprenticeship Iain said: "It is hard work, but if you put the hours in and put the work in its very rewarding. Having Glendoe on my doorstep really helped – I got to see the inside of the machines during my training."

Iain saw the development of Glendoe hydro as both an employee of SSE Renewables, and part of the local community. He said: "All the way through building, Glendoe was mostly a local site. There were a lot of tours for local people to see the site. SSE Renewables are by far the biggest company that are hiring people in the area. It's a good company to work for, everyone knows that. It's impressive working in such a beautiful part of the world."

SSE Renewables has a history of supporting young people in the local area. From 2008 to 2011 the Glendoe Excellence in Engineering Bursary supported six young people from Kilchuimen Academy, Glen Urquhart High School and Inverness Royal Academy with an opportunity of a career in engineering. Each student received £2,420 per year for a total of up to five years towards a Masters degree. This backing also included a guaranteed paid work placement in summer breaks, and a job as a graduate trainee engineer for at least two years after completion of the Masters.

CASE STUDY

DUNMAGLASS ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

The B851 road connects a series of villages in the hills to the south east of Loch Ness. The road is utilised by local residents, businesses and tourists, as well as wind farm developers and operators, including SSE Renewables. The road runs close to Dunmaglass wind farm and required a significant amount of work to improve the road to ensure the safe delivery of components to site.

The improvement works required an investment of over £9.75m. This allowed us to widen bends and roads for the turbine deliveries, twin tracking of the carriage way and footpath, passing places, on-site roads and bridges and strengthening works. The road improvements mean that less work is now required to be carried out by the local council and has left the roads in a much better condition than they were before we built Dunmaglass.

In addition, a further £3.5m of road improvements was carried out in the area for Stronelairg wind farm. SSE Renewables has provided betterment in every location where we have undertaken construction works to ensure that turbine components can be safely delivered to site.



Local resident and SSE Renewables employee
Iain MacKnocher pictured in Glendoe Hydro Station

CASE STUDY

SOUTH LOCH NESS TRAIL

SSE Renewables has been instrumental in one of the most exciting walking trails in Scotland, the South Loch Ness Trail. An idea conceived over a decade ago and completed by Visit Inverness Loch Ness, the trail offers a chance to walk, run, ride, or cycle uninterrupted along Loch Ness. The trail brings visitors and investment to an area that, prior to the trail, was largely off the tourist track.

Spanning over 58km from Fort Augustus to the outskirts of Inverness, the path forms part of the circular route around the famous loch, the Loch Ness 360.

We became involved in the project back in 2016, delivering a 3.5km section of the trail as part of pre-construction works associated with our Stronelaig wind farm.

When, in 2018, funding for the final section of the trail fell short, we stepped in to help bridge the funding gap, providing the much-needed help to complete the final section of the trail.

Graeme Ambrose, former Chief Executive of Visit Inverness Loch Ness, said: “We had wanted to complete this trail for many years, but it was too much for us to do on our own. When Stronelaig came along and SSE Renewables built the section up to the Glendoe entrance - suddenly, for us it all became possible again!

“The selling point of the trail is the variety it offers; it can be a great few hours out for some dog walkers or it can be a test of endurance for an ultra-marathon runner. It’s already bringing people from Inverness, Scotland and across the world to come out and explore this amazing path, bringing investment to the areas it surrounds.”

We are also the headline sponsor of the inaugural Loch Ness 360 Challenge, an exciting series of events includes three marathons, an ultra marathon and a mountain bike challenge.



Graeme pictured here with Eilidh Todd, Stakeholder Engagement Manager for SSE Renewables



Graeme Ambrose, with the South Loch Ness Trail visible in the background



SSE Renewables employee at Stronelaig wind farm

CONCLUSION

The communities in the Great Glen close to our Glendoe, Dunmaglass, Bhlaraidh and Stronelaig projects have seen clear social and economic benefits from the projects, which will continue for the lifetime of these vital renewable energy assets.

SSE Renewables takes great pride in our rich industrial heritage across the Highlands of Scotland. In quantifying the financial impacts, we have shown that the benefits from these projects are significant, with a total expenditure of £2.2bn generating £1.8bn of value for the UK economy, and supporting hundreds of jobs across the country. We have seen how this directly benefits the Great Glen and wider Highland region in terms of supporting employment, supply chains and local communities.

This report is not just about numbers though, it is about the local communities. It is the case studies and people involved in them that really bring to life the positive impacts that these projects have created in communities throughout the Great Glen. Our teams working in the local area have been fortunate to witness these first hand, and we are proud to be able to share these stories.

Tackling climate change is a critical challenge that we all face. Looking ahead we have clear commitments to play a vital role in delivering Net Zero targets in Scotland and the UK. To achieve these targets we will need many more renewable energy projects to be built across the country. The Great Glen, with its rich natural resources, can continue to play an important role.

Projects we have in development such as Cloiche, Bhlaraidh Extension and Coire Glas can help SSE Renewables to deliver more long term renewable assets and we look forward to having the opportunity to share the value from these projects with the Great Glen communities they will be part of for many years to come.

APPENDIX 1: COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUNDS 2018-19

All community investment grants awarded in 2018-2019 from SSE Renewables assets in the Great Glen can be seen below. As a responsible funder, SSE Renewables publishes all grants awarded annually across the UK. These can be found at www.sse.com/communities/communityinvestmentannualreview/

DUNMAGLASS		
Strathdearn Community Developments Ltd	To support the Tomatin Hall re-development.	£197,000
Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust	To support the refurbishment of hub buildings for local care organisation.	£47,218
Strathnairn Community Access and Transport Association	To support a community transport garage facility.	£40,000
Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust	To contribute to costs for re-developing Foyers Bay.	£34,012
Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust	To contribute to costs for re-developing Riverside Field.	£31,337
Boleskine Community Care	To employ a Support and Development Officer for three years.	£25,222
Farr School & Nursery Parent Council	To deliver extra-curricular educational activities and experiences.	£22,850
Farr Primary School Parent Council	To deliver extra curricular activities.	£22,425
Stratherrick & Foyers Community Council	To support the replacement of public toilet and fencing for Foyers Cemetery.	£19,538
Farr Community Hall	To enable hall hire for community groups.	£8,000
Farr Community Hall	To enable grass maintenance programme.	£5,400
Stratherrick & Foyers Wellbeing Club	To fund yoga, mindfulness and singing instructors.	£4,150
Friends of the Royal Academy	To support school trips, outings and ski trips.	£3,559
Strathnairn Farmer's Association	To provide marquee, table and chair hire.	£3,504
Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust	To deliver a community summer event.	£3,101
Stratherrick & Foyers Wellbeing Club	To deliver stress reduction courses and other activities.	£1,970
Friends of the Royal Academy	To support tutoring, school trips and outings.	£1,732
Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust	To deliver a community broadband project.	£1,393
Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust	To support the community Christmas Ceilidh.	£1,295
Farr Baby & Toddler Group	To support the costs of first aid courses.	£900
Stratherrick and Foyers Children's Christmas Party	To host a children's Christmas party.	£866
Strathnairn Community Access and Transport Association	To provide six months of running costs for a community transport project.	£825

BHLARAI DH		
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To build a new Medical Centre.	£334,600
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To employ five Community Caretakers.	£41,038
Tomich Holidays	To employ an apprentice.	£14,900
Glenurquhart Care Project	To employ an apprentice.	£14,300
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To purchase a tractor for Community Caretakers to clear snow & spread grit.	£13,200
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To purchase Christmas lights.	£10,080
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To deliver an apprentice scheme.	£10,030
Glen Urquhart Childcare Centre	To purchase outdoor play equipment.	£9,600
Highlife Highland	To host a Community Sports Coach.	£5,900
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To upgrade a Village Hall.	£5,841
Strathglass Marketing Group	To gain planning consent for the Affric and Kintail Way.	£5,370
Glen Urquhart High School Parent Council	To fund outdoor residential trips.	£4,030
Fort Augustus Lunch Club	To subsidise the cost of a Lunch Club	£3,990
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To award microgrants with a maximum value of £250.	£2,754
Kilchuimen Primary School Parent Council	To provide transport for all children from P1-P7 to attend swimming lessons.	£2,700
Glenmoriston Lunch Club	To support a fortnightly lunch club & pay for a summer outing.	£2,400
Glenmoriston Senior Citizens	To provide a festive meal & entertainment for the senior citizens of Glenmoriston.	£1,800
The Sheiling Project	To employ an apprentice.	£1,222
Regional Screen Machine	To support a community cinema.	£768
1st Fort Augustus Brownies & Guides	To support the attendance of a residential camp.	£408

STRONELAIRG		
Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust	To purchase land and property at wild side.	£188,917
Glengarry Community Council	To run a community refuse project.	£1,750
Glengarry Trust	To provide a student grant programme.	£1,200
Great Glen After School Activity Club	To deliver a five week after school programme.	£1,200
Glengarry Trust	To provide a sport granting programme.	£900

GLENDOE

Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To build a new Medical Centre.	£208,902
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To employ five Community Caretakers.	£7,742
Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Ltd	To provide a student grant programme.	£7,000
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To purchase a tractor for Community Caretakers to clear snow & spread grit.	£4,400
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To deliver an apprentice scheme.	£3,949
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To purchase Christmas lights.	£3,360
Stratherrick Primary School Parent Council	To provide transport to swimming lessons in Inverness.	£2,400
Stratherrick and Foyers Seniors Lunch Club	To support monthly luncheons and a summer outing.	£2,200
Fort Augustus Lunch Club	To subsidise the cost of a Lunch Club	£1,330
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To upgrade a Village Hall.	£1,001
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company	To award microgrants with a maximum value of £250.	£918
Kilchuimen Primary School Parent Council	To provide transport for all children from P1-P7 to attend swimming lessons.	£900
Glenmoriston Lunch Club	To support a fortnightly lunch club & pay for a summer outing.	£800
Glenmoriston Senior Citizens	To provide a festive meal & entertainment for senior citizens.	£600
First Stratherrick Guides Unit	To enable the Guides to visit the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh.	£563
Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Ltd	To provide an energy grant programme.	£500
Foyers Primary School	To enable pupils to access a residential outdoor activity trip.	£489
Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Ltd	To provide a sporting grant programme.	£347
Regional Screen Machine	To support a community cinema.	£256
1st Fort Augustus Brownies & Guides	To support the attendance of a residential camp.	£136

HIGHLAND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

2019		
Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Trust	To purchase and rebuild the local doctors' surgery which was destroyed by fire.	£50,000
The Shielling Project Community Interest Company	To establish a fully serviced sustainability learning centre.	£31,000
2018		
Glenurquhart Care Project	To deliver twelve community owned and run, adaptable houses for the elderly.	£100,000
The Shielling Project	To provide bothy accommodation, micro-dairy, and extensive areas for cultivation.	£70,000
Abriachan Forest Trust	To set up an outdoor Early Learning & Childcare provision in Abriachan's community woodland	£40,538
Visit Inverness Loch Ness Ltd	To improve the visitor experience around Loch Ness.	£40,000



Bhlaraidh wind farm, as seen from above



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