

Press Release

Kintyre Communities Fight Back Against Unfair Windfarm Developments

“Enough is Enough” - The six Community Councils of the Kintyre Peninsula and the neighbouring South Knapdale Community Council are saying “Enough is Enough” in the face of increasing numbers of complex planning applications from windfarm developers proposing to scar Kintyre’s wild and beautiful landscapes with clusters of gigantic 230 metre (750ft) wind turbines, with little regard for the people who live and work here.

“An Alarming Trend” - They have also seen an alarming trend among some developers who don’t want to pay communities the Scottish Government voluntary community benefit (£5,000 per megawatt installed per annum) or offer effective and fair community shared ownership schemes. These ‘recommended’ schemes need to become mandatory.

Legislation - Woefully inadequate and No Longer Fit for Purpose - The legislation that governs renewable energy developments and infrastructure (sections 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989) results in applications that are incredibly lengthy; highly technical; full of jargon and technical concepts that are virtually impossible for community councillors to understand and evaluate. It only requires minimal community engagement by developers. It is woefully inadequate and is no longer fit for purpose.

Jobs – From Hope to Despair - Kintyre’s wind turbine manufacturing plant at Machrihanish once offered the hope of 100+ skilled jobs to this economically challenged area. However, after changing owners several times it is now mothballed.

Windfarms offer few if any local jobs other than those created by Community Benefit Funding.

A Plan of Action - The Combined Community Councils are asking the Scottish Government to implement a plan of action as follows: -

- All further wind farm development needs to be delayed while a study of the effects it is having on communities of the Kintyre Peninsula and South Knapdale is carried out.
- Community benefit and shared ownership must be made a mandatory requirement of all future planning proposals for windfarm development.
- The Scottish Government should revise section 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 to incorporate the standards of community engagement shown in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Funding to provide professional consultancy, should be made available to all Community Councils that are affected by section 36 and 37 applications.
- The Scottish Government must explore alternative arrangements for the re-opening of the Machrihanish wind turbine factory with a view to getting it back into full production at the earliest possible date.

Our Communities are asking **“Will the Scottish Government support these reasonable proposals and ensure a fairer balance between the needs for greener power and the needs of the remote and rural populations who live and work in the lands needed to generate it?”**