



Annual Report 2007/2008

CHAIRMANS REPORT



EXCITING TIMES AHEAD

Happy 10th Anniversary

Well folks it's that time of year again, its AGM time! But, just as important, it's 10 years in April since the Westray Development Trust, or as it was then the Westray Development Group was born. It's testament to the folks of Westray who saw the need for action, and to try and safeguard the future of the "Queen o the Isles". As the Chair of the Trust I applaud you and thank you all, all who have given your time, shared your expertise and passed on the passion and the spirit and that bloody minded doggedness that's needed to get things done, to keep life in our small community.

To reach a tenth anniversary is never plain sailing and with the Trust it's been no different, there have been highs and lows, good times and bad times but as with all partnerships, it takes hard work and commitment to keep things fresh and alive!

Hard Work

If you're one of the folks building one of the many houses on Westray, you will understand the amount of hard work that has to go into a build before you see much for your labour, that's what it's been like with the Trust over the past year. There's no doubt hard work has brought results, with the securing of funding from the Big Lottery, which will help fund the community wind turbine and 75% of two staff positions. There has been and still is a huge amount of work being done with the wind turbine project. I don't usually believe in singling anyone out for special mention, as all directors give up their time as freely as they can, but a big thanks must go to David Stephenson who has and is, working tirelessly to achieve our goals. He is definitely touched with the Westray bloody minded doggedness!

Exciting Times Ahead

I believe this is the beginning of a new and very exciting phase in the Trusts history. Having secured Colin Merriott and Colin Risbridger for the post of Projects delivery manager, both experienced in their fields and both dedicated to deliver the projects they have been assigned to, also with an increase of hours for Julie, our admin officer, the office will once again become a hive of activity.

Projects to be delivered as part of the Big Lottery Grant, apart from the wind turbine, include: the development of the Golf Course, which includes the creation of a recreational area; establish a zero waste centre to deal with local waste; conduct a fuel poverty survey of the houses in Westray and use the findings to encourage and help residents to alleviate any problems; further develop the Bio Fuels project to make available cheaper fuel and finally to stimulate economic development by providing improved access to further education, training and job opportunities through the Westray Learning Centre.

"Your Westray Needs You"

And finally, Alena and Janette are standing down this year, the Trust thanks them for their hard work and commitment and hope they will consider standing again after a break, you will be missed. I would also like to thank Julie for keeping the office ticking over and keeping the information and the reminders coming.

If you aren't a member of the Trust I would encourage you to sign up, even if you're not interested in getting involved with the running of the Trust, the more members we have the better chance we have of being successful when applying for funding for community projects. So please sign up, you could make all the difference.

George Thomson
Chairman, WDT

WESTRAY RENEWABLE ENERGY LTD

Westray Renewable Energy Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Westray Development Trust, set up in 2005 to deliver and operate the Community Wind Turbine project. The intention is that profits, after deduction of expenses, financing charges and taxation will be Gift Aided to the Trust. Directors for the year 2006/07 were Willie Bain, Philip Bews, Alasdair McVicar, David Stephenson and Jeemie Stout, additionally, Sam Marcus and Chris Stone have provided assistance to the project.



Westray Renewable Energy Ltd.

The year commenced with us working with The Highlands and Islands Community Energy Company (HICEC), a subsidiary of Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and representatives of communities in North Harris, Melness and Tìree, in an attempt to encourage Vestas and Enercon to supply turbines to communities in remote locations. We jointly decided to adopt a turnkey approach under which one contractor would have responsibility for procurement, delivery, construction and installation, rather than each community letting separate contracts for different aspects of their projects and having to manage the interfaces between each contract. We hoped that Vestas and Enercon would be attracted by this approach as they would be dealing with professionals rather than enthusiastic amateurs.

The issue of the annual mean wind speed being in excess of the level certified for the class of turbine we are looking to procure for Westray, was addressed by reducing the hub height of the machine from 65 to around 50m. Whilst the wind speed at this level remains marginally in excess of the level certified, turbulence is low and the issue is not thought likely to remain a problem.

Unfortunately, both Melness and Tìree suffered setbacks to their projects which meant they were unable to enter into the proposed procurement exercise. We therefore contacted a number of potential turnkey providers specifically regarding the Westray and North Harris projects. We also spelt out the work being done by HICEC, working with some twenty nine communities with similar aspirations, indicating there may be significant additional business in the future. Discussions continued with both Vestas and Enercon. Enercon decided they would not supply for either site whilst Vestas agreed to supply to the Westray project but not to North Harris in view of difficult site conditions.

Budgetary quotes were received for the Westray project from two interested turnkey providers and representatives from both companies visited Westray. Neither foresaw any significant problems and they agreed to provide binding quotes dependant upon Vestas being willing to supply to them.

Discussions with Vestas continued. Their main concern being their ability to get an engineer with spares to the North of Scotland and across two ferries, or by plane, to Westray and the potential to incur financial penalties for failing to meet availability targets.

On the 25th January, the date Vestas had agreed to let the turnkey providers have firm pricing, we heard they had decided not to supply to Westray except on terms and timescale that are totally unacceptable.

Despite this latest setback we remain optimistic that we shall find a solution that will allow us to deliver the project. We have decided to stick with the current procurement exercise and timetable to see if the turnkey providers are able to come up with any good ideas. HICEC has brought two senior managers from Enercon's headquarters in Germany to Kirkwall to meet with interested parties in a bid to encourage them to supply to Orkney. We are also looking at the potential to purchase second hand units (Gigha have been successful with this approach).

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Meanwhile, much effort has been put in on the financing of the project. We were successful with an application to the Big Lottery Fund which was submitted on behalf of the Trust. The award of £764,000 of capital grant funding will be invested by the Trust in the project, significantly reducing the borrowing requirement. HICEC have agreed to invest £200,000 in the company, in non voting preference shares repayable after 5 years. We discussed the potential for Orkney Islands Council to invest in the project from the £2,000,000 fund created from oil reserves for investment in community renewable schemes. Unfortunately, agreement on a way forward could not be reached with OIC in the time available and so the balance required over and above the £964,000 already secured, will require debt financing. Working with HICEC, we have spoken to a number of banks and decided to proceed with the Co-op Bank with whom discussions are at an advanced stage.

David Stephenson, Chairman, WRE

ORKNEY BIO-FUELS LTD

We have been working on environmentally friendly diesel fuel made from used cooking oil since 2003. Our original system was based on simple filtering followed by an extended sedimentation period. The fuel produced was essentially straight vegetable oil and was fine when mixed with some regular diesel for most diesel engines produced before 2000. The fuel did have its associated health warning, as the viscosity is higher and this could damage some fuel pumps if used undiluted in winter. The test car covered over 40k miles without any problems on that fuel.

We decided in 2007 that it was time to develop a more universally acceptable diesel fuel, and have therefore now stopped making and selling the old fuel to achieve this. This new fuel requires a chemical process (transesterification), specialist stainless steel equipment and much more work, however this fuel is suitable for the new generation of “common rail” diesel engines. These engines require low viscosity and high purity because of the high pressures and very fine clearances used.

Early in 2007 we were awarded a £30,000 government grant to upgrade our oil storage and handling facilities. As a result we now have: A concrete, oil tight, 10m square storage yard for the oil containers; a fenced, earth bunded site with hard surface to work the fork lift on; two 40 foot ex-shipping containers as on site work huts and some of the process equipment; a fork lift to handle containers

Proper oil storage to SEPA standards is now a legal requirement and this is what the grant has delivered at Gallow Hill. We will move all our oil stock onto the new yard in the next few months.

This processing equipment is set up and working (at Trenabie Mill meantime) and we are running test batches to improve and sort the process at present. There are real dangers (methanol, caustic soda), critical stages, essential tests (e.g. free fatty acid content) and specific process requirements. For example, a critical stage is washing the process chemicals out of the raw fuel and then drying it. We are currently testing the new fuel in a number of vehicles including at 100% in the Fiat Multipla with its common rail engine. So far results are very encouraging, with improved running and better low speed torque compared with fossil derived diesel.

This Biodiesel is made only from used cooking oil. It is therefore arguably carbon neutral and certainly has not caused any rain forest destruction or displaced any food crops. The exhaust has no sulphur content, is 90% less carcinogenic, and puts typically 40% less particulates into the air. It is also a better natural lubricant for the engine fuel pump. We are also experimenting with the glycerin by product from processing. It is a very effective cleaner and degreaser with great hand softening properties. We are running various quality checks on the fuel to satisfy ourselves that its quality is equivalent to the international ASTM D6751 and EN14214 standards.

We will have the fuel for sale again soon, hopefully at 90P per litre including Road Fuel Duty.

Willie McEwan

YOUTH AND CHILDREN

Peece Neemes

Our Peece Neemes group were nominated and made the final three for Young Scot Heritage Award. Three places were available for attending an awards ceremony in Glasgow.

Stevie Harcus, Leah Tulloch and I went along and had a great time although we didn't win. Attending this spectacular event was a great experience for us all.

We would like to thank everyone who have supported us during this project, especially members of the Westray Heritage Trust.

Summer Workshops

Britt Harcus and Kirsteen Stewart, local Orcadian artists, ran Summer Art Workshops.

Drawings of Noltland Castle, candle making, jewellery, photography and recycling projects were very successful.

Youngsters chose the workshop categories so that they could take part in the industrial show, run by the SWRI, who set a programme of different crafts to be entered. Most of the youngsters who entered won a prize.

Although the Papay young folk attended well they couldn't enter the show, but had great fun coming over every week to take part. Also visitors to the island came along.

Future Workshops

Along with Papay and Eday we have been successful in securing £7,500 from Youthlink Scotland to run a series of workshops including Traditional Music, dance, cookery and arts and crafts.

A group of Young Folk from Westray, Papa Westray and Eday are organising the events with the support of adults from each Isle.

ROCK SCHOOL WEEKEND—WESTRAY 23rd, 24th and 25th FEB.

Tutors

Henry Bateman	Bass Guitar
Adam Clarkson	Acoustic Guitar
Erika Clarkson	Vocal Coaching
Johnny Foulis	Drums
Gemma Macgregor	Song Writing
John Pettigrew	Lead Guitar
Ian Sandison	Sound Engineering

The fun started on Friday night with 26 young folk aged 12-26 meeting with Walter Gorman and the tutors to organise the workshops for Saturday and Sunday.

Over the next two days 30 youngsters attended. They all took part in 2 hour workshops of their choice. At the end of day one there was a jamming session for those who wanted to stay, they were all enjoying themselves nobody wanted to go home. Singers, guitarists, drummers and sound engineers had the chance to show off skills they had learnt during the day.

On Sunday all the tutors worked on teaching Teenage Kicks by The Undertones and the youngsters performed a mini concert, having split into more than one group so that everyone wanting to could take part. Also performed was Big Open Spaces, a song written by Ryan Jarvis, which was still being sung by some of the lasses the next day. The whole event has left every one wanting more. Parents and youngsters can't praise the tutors and Walter Gorman (the main organiser) enough. A huge thanks to them and all the future rock stars in Westray for taking part.

Lorna Brown
Youth Development Officer

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Westray Learning Centre – Education & Training

How are we doing?

Slowly we are building up a wider range of learning materials and learning opportunities. This has resulted in a steady increase in enrolments and the improved facilities offer better daytime/evening access to resources. There have been a small number of short courses delivered face to face, e.g. a digital photography course, delivered with funding from North Forum Engaging Men project. Recently we have advertised a session for budding 'Silver Surfers' and there are daytime and evening opportunities to come into the Centre and use the facilities.

How do we know how we are doing?

Evaluations carried out so far have been positive. More needs to be done to find out how we can best meet the wider education and training needs of our local community. Resources need to be fit for purpose to meet demand across a wide range of learning opportunities. These can be everything from free short taster sessions across to higher education and many other opportunities in between.

What are we going to do next?

Continue to build on what has been achieved so far. A Service Level Agreement between Orkney Islands Council, Orkney College and Westray Community Association has been negotiated which allows for shared use of IT and other resources. This is up for re-negotiation in June 2008. Bigger bandwidth for the school site is coming with the Pathfinder North project and changes resulting from this will need to be taken into account. The limits to the current provision represent challenges to be overcome by planning for the future. The Westray Learning Centre is one of the five areas for community development earmarked by the WDT for input from the potential community income stream, generated as a result of the Community Wind Turbine project and there is much planning to be done to match possibilities to practicalities in this area. Not least of these is to involve an active local steering group – please get in touch if you'd like to be involved.

Jo MacDonald

ENVIRONMENT

With regard to the Loch of Saintear, following on from last years report, we now have an ecological assessment in progress looking at the Loch and it's surroundings. As this progresses we plan to examine various options from the study on how to utilise and enhance this area.

Westray's beaches saw another tidy up during the annual Bag the Bruck event in April. Grateful thanks once more to all who give their time to this and who made it successful.

Alena Tulloch

GOLF CLUB

The Westray Golf Club (WGC) and Westray Development Trust have been working together since the golf course was purchased in 2005.

The WGC has started to put up rabbit fencing in the hope that they can control the constant flow of rabbits on and off the course. A grant of £2,000 was given to WGC from the Westray Community Council to help pay for the materials with any shortfall being paid for by the club itself.

At the lower end of the golf course erosion continues to be a problem with the winter winds and seas constantly eating up the course. This is a serious problem and one of our main priorities. We need to stabilise this end of the course and are currently putting together a plan which may help in securing funding for “sand dune restoration”, as an example. Historic Scotland and local farmers have been made aware of the situation regarding their land in the hope that they might take responsibility for at least their part in restoring the coastline to its original standing.

The Golf Club has had a golf course design put together by an American student who was over in Westray in the summer of 2006 studying landscape architecture. The student, Brett Nagy, showed a personal interest in the course and after a few rounds offered to help design it. Brett’s professor was keen for him to get involved and has woven the project into his course work back home in the States and he is still offering his services to the Club today.

Once everyone is happy with Brett’s design we will look at getting funding to get the course up to a decent playable standard as soon as possible. Meantime, WGC will use the course already there to keep the local players playing.

A great deal of interest has been shown over the past few summers by both tourists and locals alike, proving the need for a golf course on Westray.

It is hoped that the new course will renew people’s interest in golf and will get more people out playing.

Stewart Rendall

TREASURERS REPORT

This financial year has been a quiet year for the Trust.

There has been funding for several projects, but no financial help with staff posts, which has meant using the Trusts reserves. However this should change next year with staff posts being 75% funded by the Big Lottery and the Trust will have to find the remaining 25%.

Lloyds TSB have provided funding for the Höfn Revenue costs. Höfn hires, jumble sale and bag the bruck have also contributed towards this.

The Höfn bus had funding in place until March 2008 from the Rural Communities Transport Initiative and the Westray Community Council.

Youth Link Open Programme has provided funding for winter workshops.

Community Planning Partnership money has again helped with some of the Trusts running costs.

Renewables projects have received funding from various funders.

Heritage Lottery Funding has enabled the consolidation of Quoygrew and provided funding for the Peece Neems Project.

The financial position of WDT is detailed in the report of the Accountant appended to the Annual Report.

A H McVicar - Treasurer
Janette Rendall—Bookkeeper



AGM

23RD APRIL 2008

The AGM is open to all. As directors of the Trust, we work in sub-groups and also meet regularly as a Board of Directors, but we need feedback from you. We hope you will come along to the AGM and tell us what you think, good or bad.

If you are not already a member of the Trust we invite you to join on the evening by signing your name as you come in. There is no membership fee, but as we are a Company Limited by Guarantee, should we ever go into liquidation, you would be asked for the princely sum of £1. Our constitution ensures a rolling membership of directors, so no-one gets stuck in a post and fresh people with fresh ideas come in.

Some directors step down each year. This year there will be two directors stepping down. As well as the election of directors, there will be short updates from some sub-groups, a financial report, and ample opportunity for you to raise concerns and make suggestions.

Tea, Coffee and biscuits will be served during the evening. We look forward to seeing you in the Parish Kirk on the 23rd of April at 7.30pm.

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