

## Alienergy

Established initially by Argyll & Bute Council in 2000, Alienergy works across a range of activities to promote sustainable energy use. The three broad areas of focus are:

- Renewable energy generation;
- Addressing fuel poverty; and
- Enhancing the development of skills relating to carbon reduction targets.

Project staff employed by Alienergy act as facilitators, project managers, programme coordinators and case workers. We devise projects, educate, advise and improve access to knowledge and skills so that communities build capacity to participate in renewable energy and energy saving activity.

Alienergy is at the interface between communities, economy and environment – ensuring that these themes are integrated in all our projects and activities. We also provide the link between the strategic overview at regional, national and currently European levels and direct action locally and in recent years have been increasingly involved in identifying grant opportunities for appropriate ongoing funding to broaden, support and strengthen our delivery.



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## ScottishPower Renewables Beinn an Tuirc 2 Windfarm

As the UK's leading onshore wind developer Scottish Power Renewables (SPR) is at the forefront of the development of the renewables industry through pioneering ideas, forward thinking and outstanding innovation. ScottishPower now only produces 100% green electricity – focusing on wind energy, smart grids and driving the change to a cleaner, electric future.

SPR has been a neighbour in Argyll & Bute for over fifteen years with four operational sites, one consented windfarm and another, Sheirdrim Windfarm, on the Kintyre Peninsula, at the pre-planning stage.

As part of the community benefit package for their operational Beinn an Tuirc 2 Windfarm, 60% of the annual fund is received and distributed by the surrounding communities of East and West Kintyre. The remaining 40% goes into a regional tranche held by Argyll & Bute Council, to use for the benefit of communities throughout the region. It is this regional tranche which has funded the role of an Education Officer to allow Allenergy to deliver several initiatives across the region. These initiatives seek to increase local employability and knowledge about renewables & STEM careers, and in recent years have been targeted ever closer towards the needs of pupils in Kintyre and partnership working with schools, youth and community groups.



## Project delivery (2017/18)

The Education Officer's activities during this period focused on a variety of local environmental workshops for school pupils and members of the community, with particular emphasis on raising awareness of career opportunities within Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subject areas. These activities involved working alongside relevant local groups and partner organisations in the planning and delivery of a wide range of events, such as:

**Energy from the Sea** – 120+ pupils taking part in wave and tidal experiments

**Energy of Science** – 100+ 3-45 year olds learning about energy and heat transfer



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**Cruach Mhor Windfarm visit** – Visit to SPR's operational windfarm in support of a partnership programme with HELP (Argyll & Bute) Ltd which aims to give 16-24 year olds an opportunity to gain employability skills, as well as the confidence to apply for employment, college or further training

**Junior STEM Ambassadors Project** - senior pupils completed the STEM Ambassador programme, part of which involved delivering STEM learning opportunities to younger pupils in their school.

## Project delivery (2018/19)

Building on the successes of previous years, ALIenergy now employs two Education Officers who job share the post (2 days a week each) and continue to work to promote and maintain pupils' interest and motivation to study STEM subjects, and to pursue career and or training opportunities related to these areas.

Katie Evamy started working with ALIenergy in 2015 and has a particular interest in how renewable technologies benefit remote rural communities, and the part that young people can play in this.



Michael Wall started working with ALIenergy in 2016. He enjoys working with young people to help widen their knowledge of opportunities in STEM related training and careers.



The delivery takes a joined-up approach whereby the following elements combine to provide a rolling programme taking participants on a STEM 'journey' from the end of primary school until the point at which they may be starting to consider subject choices for later study at secondary school.

- Primary 7s
- Transition to secondary schools
- Family learning events
- Careers



Supporting each of these elements is an individual workbook for each participant the use and monitoring of which enables structured engagement through a two-year timeframe and promotes

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participants' ownership of their learning experience. It is not only a learning tool to support the sessions themselves, but also as a means to foster teacher and parent involvement as well as generating useful evaluation and research data. In addition, it acts as a reflective journal for participants to inform decisions around academic choices taken in their third year.

## Primary 7s

In this part of the project (Apr-May 2019), the Education Officers worked with all of the P7 pupils in the 15 feeder primary schools making the transition to S1 in Mid Argyll and Kintyre (Campbeltown, Tarbert and Lochilphhead). A number of short welcome talks on STEM and the project were delivered to these pupils to introduce the basics of energy science as a foundation for STEM learning and also to orientate pupils over the content and schedule of the activities ahead through the reference to their workbooks.



## Transition to secondary schools

This element of the project forms the second part of the two-year schedule of events and activities within Argyll & Bute schools in the target area and provides an opportunity for the Education Officers to re-engage with participants as part of their transition week or early on in their first term in S1. In the 2019/20 academic year two of these events took place in May/June, with a third at Tarbert Academy scheduled for the new term in August.

The sessions take the form of interactive workshops which are tailored to each school's requirements and focus on STEM subjects and opportunities within the renewable sector. Support activities for the session are provided in the workbook, which also contains adaptable tear-out sheets for low-cost activities (for use by / with parents and carers, youth groups and other community organisations) as well as details of the family learning events the Education Officers offer at public events in the target area during the summer holidays.



## Family learning events

These events are sessions which parents/carers and young people can attend to participate in fun and interactive activities related to STEM subjects and career opportunities. The aim is to attract both ongoing participants in the project (from the Education Officers' work in schools) and members of the

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wider general public. All visitors to the events have a chance to investigate and interact with resources and signposting information as well as to attend more structured workshops featuring hands-on activities. Confirmed events for 2019 are: Kintyre Show (2<sup>nd</sup> August), Islay Show (8<sup>th</sup> August) and Mid-Argyll Show (10<sup>th</sup> August).



To further increase reach of the project, the Education Officers offer schools the opportunity for ALIenergy to provide a presence and support materials for parents evenings taking place in the three target high schools.

## Careers day

The Education Officers are working with a number of partners (Argyll & Bute Council, Skills Development Scotland and Developing the Young Workforce) to deliver a combined careers event, catering to the needs and interests of S2 pupils from Campbeltown Grammar, Tarbert Academy and Lochgilphead High School. Although other formats may be considered, the current aim will be to deliver the first of these careers days in one of the schools in March or April 2020. The preferred conference style event would benefit from ALIenergy networks to promote STEM and renewable energy careers and signpost to STEM and renewable energy courses. Participants from regional and national employers, STEM Ambassador volunteers (from the West of Scotland hub) and training organisations would allow the order of the day to include a series of workshops and opportunities for attendees to visit a market place of local employers.



If you have any questions or would like further information on any of the Education Officer activities please contact:

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