



# **Argyll and Bute Council Policy on Community Benefits from Windfarms**

**2005**





*School Visit on Gigha*

## Argyll and Bute Council - Policy on Community Benefits from Winfarms

The remote and fragile areas of Argyll and Bute face many economic and social problems including depopulation, low income levels, high cost of living, peripheral and remote geography. Many untapped renewable energy resources are also located within these areas. The Council recognises that harnessing these resources and managing them in a sustainable manner can help to offset many of these problems thereby creating viable and robust communities.

There are a number of large renewable energy companies operating in Argyll and Bute, in what has become a significant business sector. Argyll and Bute Council consider that there is a case for forging strong long-term relationships with these companies in order to ensure that maximum benefit is achieved for the communities of the area.



*Community Windfarm on Gigha*

## Protocol

This new process is completely separate from the regulatory planning process which determines the acceptability or otherwise of individual windfarm developments. The arrangements are voluntary on the part of the developer and the mechanism for delivery is the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 under the Powers of Wellbeing. The process begins with the drawing up of a **Strategic Concordat** between the developer and the Council. This lays down amongst other things the agreed Community Wind Farm Trust Fund (CWFTF) arrangements which would apply to any future windfarm developments.





*Cruachan Dam*

## Concordat

Argyll and Bute Council has established a pioneering approach to realising greater community benefit from windfarm developments within its area. This initially involves the drawing up of a **Strategic Concordats** with the major utilities and renewable energy companies operating in the area. This partnership approach recognises the long-term relationship which the Council wishes to have with these companies and is geared towards ensuring the responsible harvesting of the full range of renewable resources in the longer term while maximising benefit to local communities and the local economy. A parallel can be drawn with the relationship between the Shetland and Orkney Islands and the Oil industry.

The first energy company to develop a Concordat with the Council is ScottishPower UK plc which provides a model of good practice. The Council is looking to roll out this model with other renewable energy companies and is seeking similar partnerships for the economic, social and environmental benefit of the entire community of Argyll and Bute.



## Community Wind Farm Trust Funds

The principles for the CWFTF were approved at the Strategic Policy committee on 5 August 2004 as follows:

- The Council recommends that a sum of £2,000 per megawatt of installed capacity should be the minimum payment for community benefit with an additional £1,000 per megawatt based on the actual annual output of the windfarm.
- Developers will be encouraged to split future trust funds as follows: 60% to the immediate local community through a local trust fund or equivalent, and 40% to the wider Argyll and Bute Community through supporting the work of Argyll, Lomond and the Islands Energy Agency.

The detailed Trust Fund arrangements for each new project will be negotiated and agreed with the community, Allenergy and the Council based on the above principles and using the framework of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003.

## Argyll, Lomond and the Islands Energy Agency (Allenergy)

Key to taking forward this partnership in Argyll and Bute, is the existence and work of **Allenergy**, which currently provides a significant focus for partner activity and has potential to expand that role to support a strategic, Argyll-wide partnership while supporting local communities in developing renewable energy projects and integrating energy efficiency measures. The creation of an area wide fund could provide security of funding for the long term sustainability of the Agency in order that it can continue in this work which is critical to the sustainability of our remote and fragile communities.



For further information see [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk) or [www.alienergy.org.uk](http://www.alienergy.org.uk)

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*Windfarm at Beinn an Tuirc*



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