

AUTUMN 2021

**FarmEnergy**^{NI}
NEWSLETTER



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COVER STORY

COP26 - What does it mean for Northern Ireland

What is COP26

The 'Conference Of the Parties' held in Glasgow between the 31 October and 12 November 2021, was the 26th United Nations Climate Change conference (COP26). For nearly three decades the UN has been bringing together almost every country on earth for global climate summits with the ambition to mitigating climate change.

NI Climate Change Bill

In 2020 the Northern Ireland Assembly declared a climate emergency and introduced the Climate Change Bill. Up until then, Northern Ireland was the only part of the UK without its own climate legislation. One of the most significant proposals outlined in the bill is to establish a legally binding net-zero carbon target for Northern Ireland, to be achieved by 2045. This Climate Action Plan is intended to include targets to reduce energy consumption and make energy usage cleaner for the environment.

UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE UK 2021



Impact of the Bill

Northern Ireland is still heavily reliant on fossil fuels. On a good day approximately 50% of Northern Ireland's electricity is currently generated from renewable sources, the majority of which is wind energy. It is intended that the Bill will lead to a reduction of energy usage and carbon emissions across the board. However, for this to work we need all our government departments step-up and work together. Recently the Minister for Infrastructure announced that a review into planning policy for renewable energy projects is taking place. Making the announcement, the Minister noted she intended to ensure that "regional planning policy remains up to date, robust and fit for purpose" whilst also promoting and facilitating renewable and low carbon energy development. It is an open debate that further economic incentives will be required to provide the required support to achieve the goals.

FENI Network Events

FENI would like to thank everyone who attended our Network Events in Ballynahinch and Kilrea. Taking part were representatives from NIE Networks and a guest speaker on Hydrogen. Both events proved successful with participants scoring highly the information presented. Through your feedback we have identified good topics for future events.



Our rescheduled event in Clogher will now take place on Thursday 18th November in Corick House Hotel @ 7.30pm. If you previously registered, we will be in touch to confirm your attendance otherwise if you wish to attend, please contact us on 028 7930 0606.



Members Profile:

Wilson Resource Group

Appearing on our members profile is Yvonne Wilson from the Wilson Resource Group, one of Farm Energy's longest serving members. The family company will be celebrating its centenary in 2022.

The Group is a family-owned umbrella company which includes Wilson Salt, Clinty Chemicals, Clinty Regen and Clinty Laboratories. The Clinty entities are jointly owned with the Stevenson family in Ballymena, being similar minded around the impact of business in our environment. At Stevenson's Quarries, there are two wind turbines.

All the companies in the group are recognised for their social benefit and environmental impact of their work processes.



The Wilson name has for decades been synonymous with the farming, salt and chemical engineering industries throughout the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland and Europe.

Founded in 1922 by Robert Wilson, then just 23, it has grown to become integral part of Northern Ireland's agricultural, industrial and commercial landscape.

Even after almost 100 years, they strive to innovate in applying carbon conscious and environmentally-friendly technology as effectively as possible.

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They collaborate closely with similar like-minded businesses for supply, production, and recycling of materials, and with plans for rooftop solar and a host of carbon biodiversity projects. The intention is to aim for a zero-carbon footprint in the near future.

Yvonne and the Wilson Group embody their company mission statement “to provide goods and services which are ecologically sound and of low carbon impact.”

Farm Energy NI manages the Power Purchase Agreements (PPA) & the trading of Renewable Obligation Certificates (ROCs) for the Wilson family.

Our sister company, Realise Energy Services manages the Operation & Maintenance (O&M) for the Wind Turbines.

Asked what makes us different Yvonne says “The Farm Energy team are hands-on and always available. They’ve been with us throughout our renewable journey, and we are grateful for their endless support and dedication.”



Yvonne pictured at one of the two turbine sites in Whitehead, where the family have owned and lived for 150 years, embedded in the farming community of Co Antrim.

FENI Annual Conference – It’s Back in 2022

FENI are planning to host our Annual Conference in Spring 2022. This showcase event brings together all people from the renewables sector including expert speakers and provides a unique opportunity to mix, network and learn.

We will keep you informed of the date, in the interim we would encourage you to become a member (if you are not already) to avail of the reduced conference rate, <https://www.farmenergyni.co.uk/our-membership/>



NIE Networks Small Scale Generation SCADA Programme.

At recent Farm Energy Network Events we were joined by representatives from NIE Networks to discuss SCADA requirements.

The installation of Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) including Reactive Power Control is an essential requirement of the NIE Networks Distribution Code. This is a mandatory requirement from NIE Networks for all generators with a capacity of 200kW or greater.

Implementation of SCADA will enable communication of real-time information and control between your generator and NIE Networks' Distribution Control Centre.

All generators should now have engaged and appointed a Verified SCADA Installer to install and commission the required SCADA hardware.

NIE Networks have stated "It is essential you have completed and tested your SCADA installation with NIE Networks before the 31st of December 2022. Failure to successfully install and commission SCADA and Reactive Power Control by this date will result in the Termination of your LV Connection Agreement and subsequent De-Energisation following the expiry of the notice period."

If you have any questions or require any further information, please contact Farm Energy NI or the NIE Networks Generation Compliance Department at ssgscada@nienetworks.co.uk.

Generation Compliance on "Re-Powering"

At the events NIE Networks also told us they are aware of the increasing interest from generators who wish to modify their existing Power Generating Modules; commonly referred to as "Re-Powering."

They have stated "Generator owners should be aware that under Regulation 23 of the Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012, a generator is legally required to have the agreement of NIE Networks to operate a generator in parallel with the Distribution Network. "If an existing generator is replaced without the agreement of NIE Networks then this would be considered a breach of Regulation 23 and could result in disconnection if the follow up requirements and/or remedial works are not actioned.

In conjunction with NIE Networks, Farm Energy NI offer generators advice on Re-Powering. We can help with the Generation Application and support you through this process. Contact us for more information.

Energy Strategy Report Publication

The NI Energy Strategy Report publication date has past, the official launch date is still not clear. Rumour has it, that a light version of the report will be launched before the end of November, but the real detail will be in the action plan that is expected by the end of the year (do not quote us on that!).

We expect the action plan will have 70% renewables target for 2030 and indicate an intention to extend the CfD scheme to NI as well as plans to have offshore projects in the water by early 2030s. But we hope it does brings new opportunities for our members as proposed in FENI financed report, "Empowering You: the future role of Distributed Renewable Generation in Northern Ireland." This highlighted the benefits of distributed generation, the opportunity to optimise existing assets and provide economic argument for further, albeit larger, distributed assets.



Energy Markets Update

In terms of energy production in the current Renewable Obligation (RO) compliance year, Hydro and Wind generators have been experiencing 10-year lows. From Farm Energy's market intelligence sources, the quantity of ROCs issued for hydro and wind across the UK is down 24% and 27.5% respectively; indeed, many local hydro turbines had next to no production during the summer. The impact of this has helped keep ROC prices buoyant over recent months and it is expected that prices should remain reasonably strong going forward into the winter period.

The general lack of renewable generation, coupled with high gas prices and power station outages for overdue servicing (which was not carried out in 2020 due to Covid) have caused an increase in electricity prices. However, gas prices have dropped considerably and are widely expected to continue a downward trend into the spring.



RADIAL Project

Farm Energy are collaborating with a group of organisations with an interest in renewable technologies. The RADIAL project is a partnership funded through Invest NI's Collaborative Growth Programme.

The RADIAL project (Rural Ammonia Development and Innovation in Abated Locations) intends to research and develop an alternative proposition for the use of electricity generated remotely in rural regions which would preclude the need for grid connection but still generate an improved financial return for the individual renewable energy generators.

It is proposed to use the distributed generation capacity of these facilities to produce Hydrogen/Oxygen through an electrolysis process on a small local scale and develop a network whereby these electrolysis gases can be used to develop further products such as ammonia for fertilisers or fuel or bottled hydrogen for use in the electronics industry.

Gerry McGuckin recently presented the RADIAL project at our member network events, a topic of great interest. We will continue to keep you informed on the project development, but if anyone has any questions please get in contact.



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