

# Community renewables growing all the time in Scotland



Energy Minister Fergus Ewing has said that community energy projects have had a strong year, and will continue to grow.

From large scale wind farms to small scale [hydro](#) projects, over £10 million was last year ploughed back into communities from renewables

Mr Ewing hailed recent achievements in the sector as he looked ahead to further benefits for Scotland's communities in 2016:

- 154 projects are on the community renewables register, with over £10 million paid out this year to communities from renewables developments
- The target for community or local ownership of renewables was met five years early, with 508 Megawatts of capacity now operational, exceeding the 500 Megawatts target by 2020.
- The Scottish Government's first ever Community Energy Policy Statement was published in September, promoting the economic and social benefits of shared energy ownership.

The Energy Minister was on hand to open Harlaw Hydro earlier in the year.

Mr Ewing said: "2015 was a bumper year for community energy and 2016 can be just as exciting.

"Our national guidance and support is encouraging more and more developers to increase the value of the community benefits they offer and consider community ownership – I want to see even more communities reap the benefits of owning and

hosting small scale renewables

“Community energy can cut costs for consumers, create new revenue streams to transform communities and play a leading role in tackling climate change.

“Over £10 million a year from onshore renewable projects is now going straight back into people’s hands, empowering people to make the most of their own local resources.

“Benefits ploughed back into communities can fund all sorts of schemes, from energy efficiency and fuel poverty programmes to befriending projects which reduce isolation for elderly people.

“Scotland leads the way in the UK on local and community ownership of renewable energy and we are providing the best possible environment to help ambitious community groups reap the benefits. I want to see even more communities take decisions about their local energy system and to have an economic stake in new developments.”

Chris Morris, Local Energy Scotland Manager said: “We are delighted to see that the income communities receive from renewable energy projects is now over £10 million per year. We provide a range of support through the Scottish Government’s Community and Renewable Energy Scheme to help communities to maximise the local benefit from renewable energy whether that’s support to a community to build their own small hydro power scheme or help them to invest in a commercial wind farm.”