

Distillery invests to cut its carbon output

New technology is saving one distillery £20,000 per year in energy bills.

Installation of new state-of-the-art technology has now been completed at Kingsbarns Distillery, operated by Wemyss Family Spirits. The company has invested £150,000 in its new heat exchange system, as part of an ongoing expansion which includes a 20,000-litre washback installed in 2024.

The new heat recovery system alone is set to reduce the distillery's kerosene consumption by 14% annually, saving more than 100,000 kg of carbon emissions each year.

Peter Holroyd, Distillery Manager for Kingsbarns said: "We've carefully engineered a solution that will effectively capture and reuse heat from our distillation process, cutting our kerosene use by 160 litres per day.

"By recovering heat from our pot ale and spent lees and sending it through a heat exchanger, we're raising wash temperatures from around 20 degrees to 70-80 degrees, significantly reducing our energy input. The beauty of this system is that in time it will pay for itself."

The new heat exchange system recovers energy from the hot liquid left in the copper stills after alcohol extraction, using it to preheat the wash for the next distillation.

This process reduces the energy required and shortens the time needed to reach distillation temperature.

Previously, this liquid was discarded however, the new system redirects this hot liquid to heat the wash (fermented beer) before distillation.

In keeping with its commitment to local partnerships, Kingsbarns worked with several Fife-based specialists for the installation.

Clyde Associated Engineers, whose new fabrication plant is based in Tayport, manufactured the tanks installed on-site.

For steel stairway access fabrication and installation, Kingsbarns partnered with ES Fleet Support, another local firm. Additionally, Swilken Joiners, also based in Fife, carried out the deconstruction and rebuilding of the walls as part of the project.

Isabella Wemyss, Director of Production said: "Kingsbarns has always been committed to growing in a sustainable way, and this latest investment reflects that.

"By reducing our carbon footprint and sourcing electricity through renewable energy partnerships, we are ensuring that increased production does not come at an environmental cost.

"It's vital that we ensure that our approach to creating quality whisky is done in a sustainable and sensible way, that doesn't impact the whisky or environment in a negative way."

The heat recovery system is part of a wider multi-million-pound expansion strategy, which also includes the construction of new warehouses in Glenrothes to significantly increase the company's storage capacity for maturing whisky.

Kingsbarns Distillery and Visitor Centre was opened in November 2014 after a transformation of a derelict farmstead in the East Neuk of Fife. It is ideally located above a freshwater aquifer with access to locally grown barley.

The business is committed to being green, becoming one of the

first whisky companies to signal its move to cartonless products in 2024.

Isabella added “There are huge upsides to this technology, it is saving us time, cutting our carbon emissions and saving us costs on fuel for the distillery.

“Combined with our use of locally sourced ingredients and waste-reduction initiatives, we are doing everything we can to ensure that our approach to whisky production is sustainable.

“For us, investing in the best technology is essential to keeping our whisky production at the highest industry standards and our team is constantly exploring opportunities to ensure we set the standard.

“This year we expect to fill around 2,000 casks, which is a vital step forward in our long-term growth and in ensuring consistent maturation for future releases.”

Siblings William and Isabella Wemyss embarked on their spirits journey in 2005 with the founding of Wemyss Malts.

Drawing on his experience at the family’s French vineyard and their deep Scottish roots, Founder and Chairman William focused on blending quality single malts, while Isabella carefully selected whisky, new-make spirit, oak casks, and mature stock to craft exceptional small-batch blended malts.

In 2010, the family expanded their portfolio with Darnley’s Gin, named after Mary Queen of Scots’ meeting her future husband at Wemyss Castle in 1565.

The Wemyss spirits family grew again in 2014 with the establishment of Kingsbarns Distillery, a small, family-run distillery and visitor centre near the village of Kingsbarns in Fife.

Kingsbarns Single Malt is a light, delicate Lowland whisky, crafted from locally grown barley, pure water from the aquifer

beneath the distillery, and two types of yeast, before maturing in the finest fresh oak barrels.

<https://wemyssfamilyspirits.com>



Peter Holroyd Distillery Manager