

Project Objectives:

To increase the capacity of communities to develop their own solutions for reliable, energy efficient public infrastructure;

To maximise energy asset management in water services;

Knowledge exchange programme leading to increased awareness and sustainable public policy;

Robust, sustainable community projects that will be self-sufficient post NPA funding.

Lead Partner Update

As we move into the final stages of the project it is encouraging to see a lot of our efforts beginning to pay off and come to fruition. Our project had three main outputs and substantial progress has been made on each.

Virtual Learning Campus

Our Virtual Learning Campus has started to come together with a wide range of material from across the partnership being developed for inclusion on the platform allowing for trans-national learning to develop. We have also held discussions with a new NPA Project to allow for the platform to continue to run after the end of RECENT.

Mentoring Programme

We have appointed a number of mentors for our mentoring program who have agreed to be available to chat with people who have an interest in developing a community renewable energy project. A wide range of skills and backgrounds are included within these mentors and we hope that being able to contact someone with such a skill set will be hugely beneficial.

Policy Influencer Programme

RECENT partners continue to pursue our policy influencer programme and events have been held across the regions. In Northern Ireland an event was held in South West College in conjunction with the GREBE Project where several members of industry were invited to meet with local politicians and a lively discussion on the lack of new renewable and sustainability energy policy followed. In Sweden a series of roadshows was held around the Arctic area prior to Christmas to gain feedback on policy issues in the country.

We have engaged with a wide and varied range of communities from across the five countries within the project partnership—despite the fact that the definition of what a community is in different locations has been a difficult conundrum to solve!

The focus of this newsletter will be looking at some of the work that has been done on the ground and we will look at one site from each of our five countries: Scotland, Sweden, Ireland, Finland and Northern Ireland.



For more in depth information or if you have any specific questions please contact Ewan Ramsay on ewan.ramsay@irri.org.uk or on + 44 (0) 131 290 2750.



Partner Meeting—Copenhagen



During January 2018 and with the conclusion of the project looming into view the partners decided to hold a final group partner meeting to ensure that all aspects of the project remained on track.

It was also decided that this presented a good opportunity to meet with the NPA Secretariat and discuss the progress of the project

directly with them. Each of our work package leaders presented to the rest of the project partners while Kirsti Mijhijmer of the NPA Secretariat sat in on the meeting and provided a welcome outside eye with several relevant and interesting observations and questions.

Several topics were covered during the course of the meeting with a look back at what had been achieved so far and more importantly what was left to be done.

It was agreed that our project closing conference would be held in Brussels in early June. A new staff member will be appointed to co-ordinate the organization of the

conference and further details on dates, times, speakers and ticketing will be forthcoming in the very near future. An e-bulletin will be sent out and social media posts made to announce the conference details so keep an eye out for those!

Our sincere thanks go to Kirsti and Christopher Parker for their hospitality and the use of the secretariat for holding the meetings.

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Renewable Community Empowerment in Northern Territories



Glen Urquhart Pilot Project— Scotland

Drumnadrochit is a rural village 15 miles south west of Inverness and on the shore of Loch Ness. Recently the planers aligned to create a series of event which have led to RECENT supporting a feasibility study to look at a project to heat the village hall and the Glenurquhart Centre (Day Care facility for the elderly) & community housing about to be built, using excess heat generated from the local waste water treatment works.

- The village is looking to refurbish the local village hall and move to a renewable heating system
- the village became 1 of 4 communities in Scotland provided with funding and support to develop a Local Energy Plan through the COBEN project

- a member of the community who sits on the COBEN project steering group was at the Scottish Green Energy awards where they saw an award for something similar in the borders.



And so, very quickly contacts were made and RECENT provided the funding to carry out a feasibility to see if we can use this excess heat, transport it along pipes to the care centre and the hall to provide low carbon heat.

The system utilises the heat from waste going into the treatment works, puts it through a heat transfer system where it heats water in pipes which the circulates the water which in turns heats the buildings. The feasibility study will be completed by March 2018. If this is technically possible then the community will look at taking the project forward to implementation.

RECENT have also funded legal advice to check titles for the land through which heating pipes might need to run and funds to create a short video showcasing the project and its place in the community vision for a low carbon Drumnadrochit!

"Sustainable energy solutions will be identified and ways to their implementation defined."

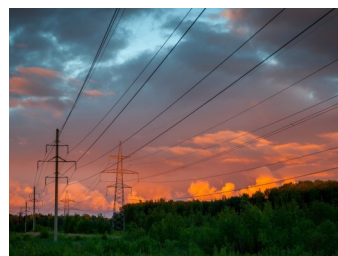
The RECENT project supported the municipality of Vilhelmina in developing a strategic plan on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. This includes a method on how to do a Baseline Emission Inventory for the municipality as a territory followed by developing an Action Plan. In this plan, sustainable energy solutions will be identified and ways to their implementation defined.

Based on the plan a systematic approach on identifying the most economic and technical feasible solutions in both short-term and long-term is possible what will have a

long lasting impact. The study resulted in a strong focus on energy efficiency measures for the own facilities (as ventilation, lighting) and the integration of sustainability criteria in new development areas and buildings.

The Emission Inventory was done with help of Energy Agency North's emission and energy inventory tool "Energy Loupe" (Energiluppen). More information available here: <http://www.nenet.se/energiluppen>. Energy Loupe is based on different national and regional data sources as SCB and RUS which are combined with locally available data as for the

public sector or district heating. The baseline year is 2014 and standard emission factors (IPCC) were used.



Muhos Pilot Project— Finland



The Finnish RECENT partner, Energy and Environmental Engineering research unit at the University of Oulu, is planning a new pilot, eco-district for the municipality of Muhos. The aim is to plan a comprehensive residential area based on renewable energy and sustainable community solutions. Such is the meaning of the RECENT project: to give the rural municipalities tools to handle climate change related risks and to implement energy conscious solutions. The aim is to fulfill environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainability by energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions. In addition to these

important goals, the final solution should be practical so that it would actually be possible to realize in the forthcoming years.

The aim of the planning is to find out the possibilities to utilize more self-produced renewable energy produced by ground source heat pump and solar panels. Another aim is to reach for a short payback time with a very careful sizing, energy storage and smart control systems. Ground source heat pump system will be a part of eco-district energy systems and will be done as a borehole solution to avoid problems with the water and sewer network in the area. The feasibility of the solar photovoltaic system will be

evaluated by a multiple scenario modelling based on actual real life and local data.

The opinions of local and potential residents were examined by questionnaire. Additional solutions will be implemented in the planning phase based on people's responses. Planning originating from local people and potential residents is assumed to improve the success of the pilot project in the future. The results of the questionnaire led to an examination of different communal solutions: common waste management system, composter, recharge point for electric cars and smallholding.

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Clare Island Pilot Project—Ireland

Clare Island is located 6 kilometres off the west coast of County Mayo, Ireland. The ferry crossing from Roanagh Pier takes 25 minutes. Clare Island is the largest (8 kilometres long and 5 kilometres wide) of the 365 islands in Clew Bay. Famous as the ancestral home of the legendary Pirate Queen Grace O'Malley, it has a population of about 160 people; economic activities include farming, fishing and tourism with numerous other small businesses also supporting a vibrant community.

Once on Clare Island, there is so much to see and do - the island's rich history, geological and biological landscape (studied in depth in the Clare Island survey) can be explored on foot, bike or by mini bus.

Be sure to take time out to view the Blue Flag Beach, Granuaile's Castle, the 12th century Cistercian Abbey, the Lighthouse, the Napoleonic Tower and the various Bronze-Age sites. There are also plenty of activities to suit everyone including hiking, cycling, fishing, swimming, boat trips, yoga retreats, weaving courses and a variety of adventure activities.

As part of the RECENT project, a survey has been carried out to identify the baseline energy costs on the island. Clár ICH, as part of the RECENT project, is assisting the community to apply for funding through the Better Energy Communities Programme 2018.

This fund is administered through the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland. The community are applying for funding to upgrade lighting, heating and insulation in both households and businesses within the area.

"Clár ICH, as part of the RECENT project, is assisting the community to apply for funding"



Taking the Boat to Clare Island



Visiting Clare Island Community Centre

Barnmeen Wind Farm Pilot Project— Northern Ireland



Ballee & Harryville Community Enterprise from Ballymena, a social economy project and charity, came together to investigate the potential to develop renewable energy installations from which any excess profit would be fed back into the community for other developments.

After investigation no suitable sites were found within the community area so the group looked further afield finding a site near Rathfriland in County Down near the Mourne Mountains.

The community association, backed by a benefactor agreed a deal with the landowner to have the turbine erected on their land. Action Renewables helped to complete the feasibility

study and also went on board to help project manage the build of the turbine. AR also took on the role of ensuring the turbine was registered with Orfem to ensure eligibility for government payments in the form of Renewables Obligation Certificates (ROCs). These incentives would help to make the project feasible and provide a potential small excess of funds could be re-invested within the community.

However the development has not been without various other external issues which are not without precedent. Local residents have protested at the planning application, for example. It is interesting to consider whether this would have been the case had the turbine been

built by a local residents group with them receiving the potential benefits.

The experience from this development shows the importance of ensuring that all stakeholders are given the chance to feel part of the development and that full consultation is carried out in advance.

Renewable Community Empowerment in Northern Territories

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**Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme**
2014–2020



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ISSUES, FOLLOW THE RECENT SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS!**

The European North is one of the areas that will undergo significant changes in the coming decades due to climate change. Climate change is likely to challenge the provision of water services and local water and energy infrastructure. Projected challenges include precipitation induced flood events and increased run-off especially in winter and spring months and, in the summer, increased competition for water.

The impacts of climate change may also open new possibilities for the remote NPA regions that could make the region become a major energy producer. The 5 partner countries are some of the top regions of the world as regards the amount and quality of water. While water is abundant, providing water services in these regions is energy intensive. To become more efficient and smart in this area is therefore a significant objective.

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