

The importance of onshore wind in addressing the climate emergency, cost of living crisis and energy security issues

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RES, the world's largest independent renewable energy company, has been at the forefront of onshore wind energy development for over 40 years.

Since RES built the UK's second commercial onshore wind farm in Cornwall, in the early 1990s, the technology has grown from strength to strength – particularly in Scotland which boasts some of the highest wind resource in Europe.

Onshore wind comprises approximately 66% of Scotland's installed renewable generation capacity. As of 2020, onshore wind had the largest economic output of renewable energy, with a total of £2,439 million to the economy.

Onshore wind has proven its worth over the decades as a form of electricity generation, and recent polls confirm strong public support. Crucially, onshore wind can also help address the climate emergency, cost of living crisis, and issues we face with security of energy supply.

Climate emergency

With the ever-growing threat of climate change and the catastrophic impacts that it could have, it is critical that we transition to a zero-carbon future.

The Scottish Government declared a 'climate emergency' in 2019 and set a legally-binding target of reaching net zero emissions by 2045. Targets to more than double existing operational onshore wind capacity across Scotland by 2030 have been set to help achieve net zero. Aberdeenshire Council was the first local authority in Scotland to implement a carbon budget with a target of reducing carbon emissions by 75% by 2030.

Once consented, onshore wind is also quick to build (12-24 months) and typically achieves carbon payback within 1-3 years of operation.

Cost of living crisis

Onshore wind, alongside other renewable energy technologies, can provide the lowest-cost form of electricity generation.

Security of energy supply

Onshore wind also increases energy security by reducing our reliance on imports and building our resilience to sudden price fluctuations or the uncertainty of global markets.

Hill of Fare Wind Farm

As part of the response to addressing these crises, RES is submitting an application to develop its 16-turbine onshore wind farm proposal at Hill of Fare, near Banchory.

If consented, the >£100 million infrastructure project would maximise local economic benefit, be capable of generating enough clean, low-cost electricity for more than 101,000 homes and operate carbon free for close to five decades.

For more information visit www.res-group.com or www.hillofare-windfarm.co.uk

