



Scotland Against Spin

The Alliance for everyone opposed to National Wind Energy

July 2013, Issue 9

Dear SAS Supporter,

Welcome to our new-look newsletter, in which we hope to bring you all the regular turbine news, both national and from campaigning groups around the network each month.

In our last update, we let you all know about a large number of different events that were taking place in June and early July in Scotland and England. SAS supporters and team members attended these events and are now able to report back how they all went.

Scottish Government Steering Group

On Monday 24 June the Steering Group for the Scottish Government's 14-month study on wind farm impacts met for the first time, with Graham Lang and Linda Holt representing SAS. The scope of the study is to examine "visual and noise impacts on local households" up to 3 km from turbines by comparing the impacts specified at the pre-consent stage, the assessment of those impacts by the determining authority, the actual impacts of the operational wind farms, and the subsequent monitoring and enforcement actions taken by the planning authority.

Consultants have been appointed and the detailed brief is now being fleshed out. As you may know 8 to 10 sites will be used as case studies, and these are supposed to include all kinds of turbine/wind farm applications, which have been operational for at least 6 months. Many of you have already told us about particularly bad sites you want us to include in our list of recommended sites for study, but if anyone has any sites to add, please email us as soon as possible at our usual address:

info@scotlandagainstspin.org

We would like to hear about them.

In this issue....

Scottish Government Steering Group....

Launch of Scientific Alliance Scotland....

NOW Conference....

SNH Visualisation Conference....

Scottish Wild Land Group....

Name A Turbine Competition....

Protest Time!!....

Your Contributions:

If you have a news item about your campaign, or perhaps a development that you've noticed in your area, then why not contact us and we will include it in our next Newsletter

Send them to
info@scotlandagainstspin.org

Visit us online for all the latest news and debate

Website
scotlandagainstspin.org

Facebook
www.facebook.com/groups/281302381898831/

Launch of Scientific Alliance Scotland

SAS was delighted to support the official launch of Scientific Alliance Scotland at the Holyrood Hotel in Edinburgh on 27th June. Scientific Alliance Scotland is a new think-tank, (allied to its parent organization, the Scientific Alliance in Cambridge), which has the aim of bringing scientific, evidence-based thinking into policy-making. Scottish policy on wind energy is an obvious candidate in need of this treatment, and this is indeed Scientific Alliance Scotland's major focus.

Anti-wind farm campaigners from the Highlands to the Borders heard John Constable, the Director of the Renewable Energy Foundation, give an excellent account of why current wind policy was economically disastrous for the UK generally, and for an independent Scotland in particular. A brief report appeared in the Scottish Daily Mail (scan attached), but a few days later the same theme - that green energy policies were going to place an impossible burden on consumers and the wider economy - made headlines across the UK. You can find this article at the following link:

www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2355195/Green-taxes-push-energy-bills-2-000-Ministers-urged-lift-draconian-burden-struggling-families.html?ito=feeds-newsxml

Scientific Alliance Scotland also distributed a very useful pamphlet, *Wind Turbines: The Facts*, written for the lay reader, but with references to expert studies backing all of its



Speakers at the launch of the Scientific Alliance Scotland, 27th June 2013

This same theme has also been picked up by the Taxpayer's Alliance who have a really handy green tax calculator on their website so that you can work out exactly how much you are paying in green energy taxes. They also have a facility allowing you to contact your local MP to complain, and various research resources, which you may find useful. You can find all of this on their website at the following address: <http://energyswindle.org/>

arguments. It has been sent to every MSP, and we recommend that you pass it on to anyone whose knowledge of turbines is confined to industry propaganda.

We'll be sending it to you separately to this newsletter (large file size), but it is also downloadable from the SAS website:

www.scotlandagainstspin.org



National Opposition to Wind Turbines (NOW) 2013

On 1st July five and a half SAS people trekked down to Cheshire for the third annual conference of National Opposition to Windfarms www.nowind.org.uk/index.html.

NOW was set up two years ago to focus on lobbying the Westminster Government, and the bulk of their work has been "behind the scenes".

The speakers were absolutely top-notch, and included MPs Glyn Davies and Stephen O'Brien, business leader Sir John Banham, Energy Intensive Users Group Jeremy Nicolson, planning QC Sasha White, seasoned Cumbrian anti-wind campaigner and scientist Dr Mike Hall and acoustic expert Mike Stigwood, who recreated his famous "Listening Room Experience" for participants.

Even the "half" was fascinated by Mike Stigwood's presentation on turbine noise. He demonstrated with great clarity why ETSU is incapable of capturing the low frequency whoosh-whoosh of turbines, which is so intrusive for nearby householders.

Most of the speakers focussed on the economic consequences of

current UK wind energy policy, whether for consumers, industry or the economy at large. Sooner or later this will force the politicians into a U-turn, but of course the question is how much more damage will be done to people's lives and livelihoods before this happy day arrives.



Key speaker, Sir John Banham (left), Graham Lang, SAS Chair (centre) and Glyn Davies MP, NOW Conference Chair (right)

Speakers were optimistic about the recent announcement by Communities Minister Eric Pickles about more say-so for local communities in decisions on wind farm applications, but of course the devil lies in the detail which has yet to be released. Delegates at the conference were rather more pessimistic.

We wondered whether anti-wind tory MPs - and there are considerably more than the hundred or so who came out publicly with Chris Heaton-Harris - weren't trying to head off pressure in their own constituencies by talking up Pickles' announcement. However both they and the Westminster government must know that if the Pickles' reforms don't deliver, UKIP will be the beneficiary in many constituencies. In other words, the pressure for reform has not gone away, and continues to grow.

We can't go into detail about the presentations here, but we have e-copies of the slide presentations of Jeremy Nicholson, Sir John Banham, Sasha White and Dr Mike Hall, which are too large to attach to this Newsletter, but which we are happy to send to anyone interested by request. NOW also filmed the proceedings and a video will be available shortly.

We hope to bring some of the speakers to Scotland in August and September for our own conference, and will let you know as soon as details have been finalised.

SNH Visualisation Workshop



On 17th June, Scottish National Heritage launched a consultation on their new guidance for windfarm visualisations, following their successful workshop, held in Battleby on 23rd May. SAS went along to this workshop and found a good attendance of landscape architects, local authority planners, reporters from the Directorate of Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA), developers and other interested parties.

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The consultation is still on-going and ends on 19th July 2013, so there is still a short amount of time to have your say. You can find the relevant documents and consultation process on-line at the following address: www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A936942.pdf

Responses should be sent to visualrep.review@snh.gov.uk

If you are making a response, it is also worth checking out the work of the acknowledged Scottish expert in the field, and author of 'Windfarm Visualisation. Perspective or perception?' Alan Macdonald at www.windfarmvisualisation.com/information--links.html

After the consultation ends, SNH will work with The Highland

Council, Scottish Government, Scottish Renewables, Landscape Institute and Heads of Planning Scotland to finalise the new guidance, which it aims to publish by the end of the year, so if you want to influence the outcome, get your opinions in now.



Scottish Wild Land Group

The latest edition of Scottish Wild Land Group (SWLG) was devoted entirely to wind development. With brilliant contributions from well-known campaigners, it gives new insights into the different kinds of damage the government's unbridled push to become the Saudi Arabia of Wind is inflicting on our environment, economy and politics. You can download a copy here: www.swlg.org.uk/wind-farms.html

The SWLG was also one of eight NGOs who banded together to publish an unprecedented open letter calling for greater protection of the Scottish landscape from intrusive wind development than the government is proposing in its new planning policies (NPF3 and SPP). The letter and press release are attached. Including organisations such as the National Trust and reflecting the views of 1000s of members, this represents the most serious "official" call on the Scottish Government to reign in wind development to date.

Name a Turbine Competition

In our last mailing to you all, we let you know about a competition being run by a developer in Caithness to name their turbines, along with a poem, painting or story to explain the name suggestion. The competition is open to children between 5 to 12 year olds and the competition winners will have a plaque made for each of the 21 turbines, as well as a £50 Love2Shop Gift Voucher. The competition will be open until Tuesday 20th August 2013.

An obvious propaganda war, it has rightfully been criticised by [Scotland Against Spin](#) and [Caithness Windfarm Information Forum](#). But

we have, nevertheless, taken up the challenge, and invited you all, via our website, to put in your own suggestions as well. Entries have been flooding in, including this fantastic picture that we received from one of our younger supporters, Hebe, aged 8.

And some of our favourites so far....

White Elephant - because they are big and white....

The Whirling Dervish - a true nightmare....!

Chaffinch Chewer...

Nauseas Nuisance....

Keep them coming! 😊



Protest Time!!

And finally, last but definitely not least, Scotland Against Spin is pleased to announce a major national anti-wind protest which will take place on October 19 2013.

Building on last year's successful march and protest outside the SNP conference hall during Alex Salmond's keynote speech, this year's event will be bigger and better than ever.

In the last year as ever more turbines have appeared on our horizons, so more and more people and organisations have turned against Alex Salmond's reckless quest to turn Scotland into the Saudi Arabia of Wind. His government has made a show of listening, but there is no real sign that it has any intention of protecting us and our country from the relentless onslaught of wind developers. Only when SNP members see how many people are prepared to take to the streets and proclaim their policy as unethical, unsustainable and unaffordable will we see the reform we so urgently need.

SAS is working in partnership with a variety of environmental protection groups, campaign groups and many individuals across the UK to organise the anti-wind protest which will coincide with the SNP's annual

conference in Perth.

Several groups are contributing to the protest in various ways. Some are working in partnership, while others are creating their own form of protest on the day.

As at previous protests at SNP conferences when STOP HIGHLAND WIND FARMS CAMPAIGN and GASPS did the honours, a local/regional anti-wind campaign group will be hosting or headlining October's event. Groups from the Borders are keen to take on this role, and more details will follow shortly. Although SAS did not formally exist when last October's protest took place, SAS team members were part of the organising committee and organised all the official permissions. We have again taken responsibility for dealing with the formal side of things with Perth & Kinross Council and the Perth Constabulary, and will be giving our full support to the hosting group.

We will all meet in Perth at the South Inch car park and proceed by Princes Street, St John Street and George Street to the concert hall. As last year, the demonstration is timed so that we will be gathered in numbers at the Perth Concert Hall when Alex Salmond gives his keynote address to the SNP annual

conference at 3 pm. We hope to give him a really rousing reception!

We will do everything we can to encourage as many people as possible to take part on the day, and provide ongoing updates on how the protest is taking shape. We would also like to acknowledge the work of the social networking group Wind Energy is Absurd (WEA) who are lobbying groups and individuals to join the protest.

Please keep checking back on our website for all the latest demo updates, or on facebook at our dedicated pages at SCOTLAND AGAINST SPIN and PROTEST AGAINST SNP WIND POLICY or on the WEA page.

By working in partnership with as many groups as we can, we will give a strong united message to the Scottish Government that current policy is wrecking our greatest national and natural asset, the landscape, and that its impacts are unacceptable and divisive for Scottish communities.

So put October 19 in your diaries, and we look forward to seeing you all in Perth with your banners, whistles and saucepans!



And that's all our news for now, but we will be bringing you more news in the next month, along with updates on the any developments from local campaign groups, and progress on plans for the Perth Demonstration in October. And if you have any articles or news stories that you think the network would like to hear about, just mail them in and we will include them in our next edition.

Kind Regards

Graham, Linda, James, Aileen and Sarah

The SAS team

SAS Chair – Graham Lang, Secretary – Philip Mould, Treasurer – Simon Andrews, Press Officer – Linda Holt, Web-master – James Glen, Noise/Planning – Aileen Jackson, Mem'ship/Admin – Sarah **5**