

Kintyre Renewable Energy Community Group is Leading the Way in Scotland

East Kintyre Renewable Energy Group (EKREG) is leading the way in Scotland to enable Community Councils to work in partnership and deliver joint shared ownership in consented renewable energy projects.

Kintyre has multiple consented wind farms with many more in the scoping and planning pipeline. The majority of the developments impact on more than one Community Council area and therefore there is a strong need for the communities to work together with a single voice, to maximise the local community benefit from approved projects.

The impact on multiple communities is found not just in Kintyre but through-out Scotland. In the absence of subsidies, windfarm developments are becoming taller and larger in order to be economically viable. The knock-on effect is that a wider geographic area is often impacted by individual developments, meaning that if the developer offers Community Shared Ownership (CSO) in a consented windfarm it is often to several impacted community councils.

With this in mind EKREG set about establishing new Model Rules for an Equal Shares Community Benefit Society that would enshrine equal shares to the communities involved; effectively guaranteeing the required split in surplus funds between the Community Councils' Charities. This is important in securing buy-in from the different community councils for involvement in the CSO (developers tend to have no mechanism for dealing with "conflicted communities" – i.e. disagreements between the different community councils as to who gets what, and will let the CSO offer lapse (to the detriment of all the communities) rather than involve themselves in such conflict). EKREG Ltd researched the best way for communities to partner together and then produced a new set of MULTI-COMMUNITY SHARED OWNERSHIP IN A RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT MODEL RULES for a Community Benefit Society.

The Scottish Government continue to view successful renewable energy projects as those that treat communities as active and positive partners. Shared ownership of consented renewable energy projects can help promote stronger relationships between local communities and the renewables sector, and deliver lasting economic and social benefits to communities.

EKREG Ltd has recently been successful in having their new set of Model Rules approved and registered by The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). These Model Rules are designed to support local communities in achieving shared ownership of renewable energy projects and thereby furthering community development, education and regeneration within the participating community council areas. EKREG Ltd hope their new set of rules will be adopted by other community groups who seek to work together to invest in shared ownership of consented renewable energy developments to generate the benefits outlined.

The work undertaken by EKREG benefitted from grants received from the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES).

Further information is available at <https://www.eastkintyre.org/ekreg-ltd.php>