



NEWS RELEASE

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Energy independence for Scotland

As the question of Scottish independence and ownership of its resources are hotly debated, it seems that Scotland is already well on its way to being energy independent.

However, figures provided by a new website demonstrate this virtual independence has not been brought about in the way many would expect.

The WeatherEnergy website has shown that wind turbines in Scotland produced around 288,012 MWh of electricity in February alone. This is the equivalent to powering nearly 4 million average homes with their monthly electricity demand.

This means 165% of Scotland's household electrical needs. The total number of houses in Scotland is around 2.39 million.

WeatherEnergy is a new website developed by sustainable energy charity, Severn Wye Energy Agency and its European partners, and indicates the value of Scotland's existing wind turbines to the whole of the UK.

Karen Robinson is an energy advisor and is managing the project for Severn Wye. She said:

“As residents of this windy Isle, we're all very aware that this winter has been a windy one, but rarely is this translated into the amount of renewable energy this has generated and the number of homes that could have been provided with clean energy.

“With energy prices continuing to go up, the cost of household energy bills has become a political hot potato. Renewable energy has the potential to help bridge the ever widening energy gap by becoming a dedicated part of the UK’s energy mix.”

Amazingly, though, it wasn’t just the wind providing energy during these cold winter months – even the sun managed to chip in with a not inconsiderable amount of electricity. The average household solar PV system in Aberdeen or Edinburgh in February produced 53% and 50% respectively, of an average family’s electricity needs.

A recent Government survey reported that three-quarters (77%) of UK adults support the use of renewable energy sources to generate UK electricity, fuel and heat¹, suggesting there is a real appetite amongst the general public for information on how much energy renewable technologies are able to provide.

Aimed at helping people better understand the effectiveness of renewable technologies, the WeatherEnergy website www.WeatherEnergy.co.uk² taps into our British obsession with the weather and translates daily UK weather into renewable energy generation figures for households across the UK. It shows both where in the UK the best places may be for generating energy through solar and wind as well as the type of weather conditions for doing so.

Using meteorological data for the UK, the WeatherEnergy website provides daily and weekly information on how much electricity the average household solar photovoltaic (PV) installation might have produced or how much hot water could have been generated by a solar thermal system and what this might mean for average household consumption.

It also provides an indication of the number of households that could have had their daily electricity demand met by the UK’s current wind turbine capacity.

This information is provided for 58 points around the country, from Penzance to Wick, and is completely free to access.

Karen explained: “Other European countries are already embracing the wind and sun as energy sources, even though the UK has one of the best wind resources on the continent. Some European countries have even taken the idea of ‘weather energy’ one step further and are now broadcasting regular TV updates, with the weather forecast, on how much energy their panels and turbines are producing for householders. Hopefully it won’t be too long before we have that in the UK as well.”

As well as being a useful resource for householders, the WeatherEnergy website also acts as a useful tool for renewable energy technology installers, and provides up-to-date evidence to policy-makers that the wind and sun are real and practical energy sources.

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Notes for editors:

¹ DECC Public Attitudes Tracker, [Wave 8](#) – 4th February 2014

² WeatherEnergy is part of the wider European EnergizAIR project (www.energizair.eu) with partner organisations in nine other European countries and is financially supported by the European Commission's Intelligent Energy Europe programme (IEE). In 2012 EnergizAIR won the European Commission's Sustainable Energy Award.

Contact information:

Karen Robinson, Project Manager

Email: karenr@severnwye.org.uk Tel: 01452 835080

Mat Rees, Marketing Manager

Email: matthewr@severnwye.org.uk Tel: 01452 835088

Further Information:

Severn Wye Energy Agency Limited is a non-profit company and a registered educational charity promoting sustainable energy and affordable warmth through partnership, awareness-raising, innovation and strategic action (www.severnwye.org.uk).