



AGM on Saturday 16th March

On a snowy, cold afternoon, members of the Edinburgh Community Solar Co-operative attended the AGM at Augustine United Church on George IV Bridge.

The members were updated on the current year's activities and the future work to be progressed by the Board.

Last year's AGM minutes were approved, financial report approved, £5,000 allocated to the Community Benefit Fund (2019/2020) and the re-appointment of the Chartered Accountants.

Board members elected to the Board of Edinburgh Community Solar Co-operative were:

Lesley Hinds (re-elected), Kirsty Lewin and Niall Emmerson.

The establishment of the Community Benefit Fund was presented and agreed to fund 4 projects: Friends of Redhall, Liberton Primary, Edinburgh Leisure at Drumbrae and Oaklands School.

Following the AGM, workshops were held, discussing future projects and developments. Notes were taken and the Board of Edinburgh Community Solar Co-operative will discuss the workshops' outcomes at their next Board meeting at the end of April.

Edinburgh Community Solar Co-operative held a successful AGM and members are supportive of our success and future direction.



NEWSLETTER 6 APRIL 2019

CONTENTS

- AGM Review
- New Board Members
- Performance of our System
- Community Benefit Fund
- Phase II Plans – Looking to the Future
- Educational Links
- More Information

For more about solar nationally:

www.solarpowerportal.co.uk

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New Board Members

We have two new board members, two co-opted members and one who stepped down.

Lesley Hinds was re-elected at the AGM and so continues on our board as Chair.

Niall Emmerson

Greetings. For those of you who don't know me, I'm Niall Emmerson. I originally hail from Aberdeenshire, the "oil capital of Europe" but, after discovering the damage the oil industry is doing to our planet at the age of about 7, there wasn't much of a future for me there, so I escaped to Edinburgh at age 17 and have been here ever since.

Professionally I'm a software engineer, the most notable of my work probably being as senior software engineer for VisitScotland's public facing digital systems (websites etc.), a role I carried out for a number of years until I moved to contracting at the end of last year. It's in this capacity as a software engineer, that I initially hope to prove useful to the co-op and, to this end, I'm currently spending my spare time building a dashboard of the co-op's power generation for members to see.

I of-course have other interests. I'm particularly interested in clean forms of transport (I didn't learn to drive until I could do so in an electric car), energy generation, digital security and science in general (I hold a BSc (Hons) in chemistry).

Finally, thank you to everyone who placed their trust in me by electing me at this year's AGM. I'm looking forward to engaging with the board regarding the co-op's future opportunities and working to get the best benefits for the members and indeed, the planet.

Kirsty Lewin

I am delighted to have been elected as a Director of the Edinburgh Community Solar Co-operative. I am currently on a career break from the Scottish Government. While in the Government I led the development and publication of Scotland's Climate Change Plan for Ministers, as well as work on adapting to a changing climate, behaviour change, and climate justice. I have also worked on a number of high-profile transport issues including bridge tolls, congestion charging and sustainable and active travel. Before returning to Scotland I worked for the RSPB in Sandy, Bedfordshire and the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment in Wellington. I spent six years on the UK Board of Sustrans as a trustee, and now coordinate a local Spokes group - focusing on improving walking



and cycle infrastructure in and around Portobello, Edinburgh. I speak Spanish, travel regularly in Latin America with a fold-up bicycle, and spend much of my time now writing fiction and telling stories.

Fiona Douglas

Co-opted Board Member
Energy and Sustainability Manager, Edinburgh Leisure

I am a University of Edinburgh graduate with a MA in Geography with Environmental Studies. I was employed by Edinburgh Leisure, initially as an intern in 2012, then as an Energy and Sustainability Officer in 2013. This was a self-created role following a demonstration on the benefits of 'grass roots' staff engagement. Through this, I developed and launched the Edinburgh Leisure Green Plan which directly engages over 100 staff members to deliver on key sustainability outcomes such as reducing energy, waste and water, analysing procurement practices, promoting sustainable travel and engaging with local nature. This has resulted in a 5% reduction in carbon emissions year on year since 2012, saved 28.7 million litres of water, removed 2 million plastic cups a year, 1.6 million single use plastic pool shoes and increased recycling from 30% to over 70%. In addition, we won the first ever Green Team Vibes Award which rewards Scottish Businesses at the forefront of sustainability. As of 2017, I am now the Energy and Sustainability Manager and focus on energy and water management and investment in efficient, low carbon technologies to further reduce demand, carbon emissions and our impact on the environment.

Jim Lee

Co-opted Board Member
Project Officer – Scotland, Energy4All

Jim Lee from Energy4All is co-opted to our board. He makes frequent contributions to our newsletters

Dr Ian Fairlie

Retiring Board Member

This is a fond farewell to the Coop. I have enjoyed working with my Coop director colleagues over the past three years and have learned a great deal.

For this I am very grateful. My very best wishes to the Coop for the future. I am sure it will do well.



Performance of our System

In total, the solar coop's 24 buildings have generated 2,163,980 kWh (by end March 2019). To allow for year on year comparison, we have depreciated the predicted annual generation of 1,107,894 kWh by 3.2% which is line with the solar PV panel manufacturer's warranty after 2 years. The solar PV systems performance ratio (actual output divided by adjusted predicted output multiplied by 100) is 103.7% and are performing well. We have had a few challenges in 2018 with some software issues affecting the PV inverters for a few weeks but these are now fixed, there has also been planned maintenance on some buildings which has required the PV to be switched off. Some buildings are generating better than expected and some worse. We are focussing on some of these buildings to see what can be done to improve output.

One of the issues, we have spotted through the monitoring is the impact of dirt on the panels. The photo below is of Craighall Day Centre at Goldenacre, part of the solar PV system was covered in tree sap and dirt which has a detrimental effect on the PV system. Difficult to spot without getting up close. This has now been cleaned by long reach cleaning system and will need regular cleaning. If passing on the bus and you see something like this on any of our panels, please let us know. (Clearest on panel edges in photo)

Richard Witney



Thank you Richard for the above photo and the ones of the AGM.

Community Benefit Fund

In February we were delighted to award the first tranche of grants under our Community Benefit Fund. Every ECSC host building - housing our solar panels - was invited to submit a short application for a project to reduce carbon or improve sustainability in their building or for the users of their building, up to a total value of £3000.

Congratulations go to:

- Liberton Primary School who will receive £3000 toward their 'Lighting up Play' project to light up their school 'Playbox' and play area so children can play outside in the winter months.
- Oaklands School who will receive £2750 towards 'Oaklands Growing Sustainable Communities', to promote awareness change towards sustainability / carbon reduction through community growing, meadows and interpretation activities.
- Drumbrae Leisure Centre who will receive £2954 towards their Community Garden, in collaboration with their Active Communities Programme and Holiday camps.
- Friends of Redhall School who will receive £1840 towards Redhall School Garden, to improve their school grounds for wildlife, teaching and environmental education.

We're looking forward to seeing how they get on!



We still have some funds available and assigned a further £5000 at the recent AGM, so we welcome further applications from our Host Buildings on an ongoing basis. Visit www.edinburghsolar.coop/projects/community-fund/ for more information or contact communitybenefit@edinburghsolar.coop.

Phase II Plans – Looking to the Future

Edinburgh Community Solar Co-op is keen to build on its success of 2016 when, having raised £1.4 million through a community share offer, it installed solar PV on twenty-four council roofs across the City of Edinburgh. While proud of this initial achievement, the board – and, it would seem, the members, from all our consultations – are keen to build on this success.

The board has spent much of the past two years seeking partners to join us in a second phase of installations. While these discussions have been positive, each discussion raises issues and challenges which would have to be overcome before proceeding.

The board is now focused on eleven buildings which the council have proposed for inclusion in a second phase and which present the best opportunities for success in the immediate future. The board sought to register ten of these buildings before the end of the feed in tariff scheme which ended on 31st March this year. However, the feed in tariff scheme limits each building to 50kW of capacity. The board will now analyse each building and proceed with a mix of feed in tariff and

possibly some buildings without subsidy where capacity and demand suggest installing on a larger scale would be more advantageous.

The board would hope to make decisions soon and to move forward this year with a share offer and phase II installation. Members will be kept informed of developments.

Further installations and share offers remain possible in the medium to long term. Discussions have taken place with churches, public sector organisations and others, and future partnerships will be developed over time.

The solar co-op is currently in the feasibility stage of a potential storage project. Funded by Local Energy Scotland, the board has engaged Changeworks to consider a proposal to install storage in up to six of our sites which we hope will improve usage of the electricity being generated. If successful, the installation of storage would allow the solar co-op to supply electricity to the council at times which would allow the council to buy more from the solar co-op and less from the grid while the solar co-op would reduce the amount it exports to the grid. Potentially, storage could allow the co-op to decide when best to export to the grid.

We are also in the very early stages of a project in partnership with Edinburgh University and a social housing provider which will consider the possibility of collaborative working to our mutual advantage.

Jim Lee

Educational Links

Our resources section had a facelift over the summer. We hope it is more attractive with more illustrations and a clearer introduction. Feedback from school pupils, teachers and parents will be appreciated.

- www.edinburghsolar.coop/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ECSC-Educational-Resources.pdf

Johanna visited a P7 class in March. They asked lots of questions, some which needed checking and sending the answers later. Any school that would like a visit only has to ask, either via the web site and Energy4All, or direct to Johanna.carrie@btinternet.com

More Information

Lesley was sent this link to imaginative ways of using solar:

- www.ted.com/talks/marjan_van_abel_the_beautiful_future_of_solar_power

Transition Edinburgh holds events about climate change and energy projects in the city. If you have time and enthusiasm to join a working group, then look out for information about the AGM on June 26th.

- transitionedinburgh.org.uk