



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

EVENT REPORT

Scottish Renewables Conference in Collaboration with the RTPI 27 January 2011, Edinburgh

On January 27th, Scottish Renewables held a successful conference with the RTPI in Edinburgh. It was a collaboration between RTPI in Scotland and Scottish Renewables and also a 'first' for working with another organisation. There was a turnout of about 200 delegates, about 15% of which were RTPI members. The **presentations** for the day can be seen on RTPI in Scotland's website.

Peter Noad and John Walls, Tayside and West of Scotland Chapters respectively worked with Calum McCallum, Rosie Vetter and Olivia Connolly of Scottish Renewables to deliver an ambitious programme involving 20 participants over four sessions. Thanks to Ian Aikman, Ian Angus, Grahame Buchan, Michael McGlynn, David Mudie, Bob Stewart and Anne-Michelle Slater stood up the plate on behalf of the RTPI. As it's not possible to summarise such a wide ranging event, it is maybe worthwhile selecting the essence of Duncan McLaren's keynote speech for planners. These were:

- Scotland's Renewable energy potential exceeds domestic needs thus there is an export potential
- By 2030 we could decarbonise 50% of our energy needs
- Therefore by 2030 we could potentially phase out our thermal power stations

As for the planning system he expects it to enable the renewables industry both on and offshore. He sees this being achieved through additional pumped storage, adequate transmission capacity, decentralized small scale renewables, renewable transport infrastructure not to mention effective development management to promote efficient buildings and urban forms.

While one might have expected tensions between the industry and the profession, it was clear that there was no feeling amongst the predominantly industry related audience that planning did not have an important role to play. They listened attentively in the morning to the insights given on wind farm applications, supplementary planning guidance, planning appeals and the ongoing review of PAN 45. After lunch the audience split and either heard about developments in Marine Planning (described as *planning but not as we know it*) or decarbonising energy, micro-renewables and bio-mass heating. In short a lot of ground was covered and a good day was had by all.

The only dissonant note experienced by this author on the day was a concern raised by a provider of two bladed wind turbines which have received a bad press by some authorities. However, subsequent investigations confirmed that the choice of turbines is about of horses for courses and two or three bladed turbines should be treated on their merits according to local needs.

John Walls

RTPI in Scotland, 18 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 8HQ

Tel: 0131 229 9628

E-mail: scotland@rtpi.org.uk

Web: www.scotland.rtpi.org.uk

Follow RTPI in Scotland on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

The Royal Town Planning Institute is a charity registered in Scotland (SCO37841) and England and Wales (262285).