

Community Energy Scotland – Scotland, UK

<p>Title</p> <p>Community Energy Scotland: Empowering Scottish Island Communities</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Energy Scotland - Island based organisations - Community Councils - Development Trusts - Local Energy Scotland
<p>Theme of Collaboration</p> <p>Capacity building support for island communities.</p>	<p>Cluster of Scotland</p> <p>Arran; Bute; Cumbrae, Gigha; Iona; Lismore; Luing; Mull; Sleat (Skye); Small Isles</p>
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Description

Community Energy Scotland (CES) is a key organisation for many island communities motivated to address local energy matters in Scotland. CES has both defined and developed the concepts of ‘community energy’ and local benefit in Scotland.

A wide variety of community led renewable energy projects are operating on Scotland's islands which have been implemented with CES support, with others at every stage of development.

As Scotland's national community energy charity, CES provides Project Development Services to support implementation of community owned renewable energy schemes to deliver local benefits

- economically and socially as well as environmentally.

In the absence of Local Government obligations or capacity to adequately address island sustainability challenges, increasing numbers of island communities have formed local NGOs, typically registered as charities. These locally controlled island based Development Trusts (and similar social enterprises) may invite advice from CES about potential for locally owned renewable energy projects to



Horshader community wind turbine, Isle of Lewis.

The Horshader Community Development Trust was assisted by CES in developing their wind project.

generate sustainable income for the community itself, rather than for central or local government or for private profit.

With its national membership, broad experience and specialist technical expertise, CES information and events enhance the capacity of voluntary groups to interact with all levels of governance, and with each other, to develop and manage community energy projects.

Funding support measures, notably the CARES Programme, administered by Local Energy Scotland, enable communities to pay for initial feasibility studies and follow up work. See www.localenergyscotland.org.

By supporting local volunteers to lead projects and especially to navigate through complexities of multilevel and multilateral governance applying to energy issues on most Scottish Islands, CES makes a vital and empowering contribution to community sustainability.

CES also informs the work of policy and decision makers by highlighting issues and obstacles concerning energy project development and implementation.

Results related to MLG processes

Operating projects owned by island (local) stakeholders

Because of CES, there are many successful community energy projects operating on Scottish islands, initiated, owned and operated in whole or part by island stakeholders.

Financial investment attracted to island and revenue generated by RES projects

CES has helped and enabled island communities to attract substantial financial investment and also generate significant revenue through Renewable Energy.

Energy policy making in all levels of governance

CES has insight into the effectiveness of MLG applying to energy projects throughout Scotland, experience of dealing with every level of MLG and other relevant agencies so is well placed to represent generic community interests to inform policy central and local government policy.

Acquired know-how about managing levels of governance

Stakeholders/ MLG – CES is well placed to advise island communities which organisations and agencies to involve and at what stage, and to negotiate on communities' behalf at all levels of MLG. Academic collaboration can also bring particular benefits to islands pursuing energy projects.

Overcoming local authorities' budgetary constraints in supporting proactive communities

Local authorities face challenges with severe budgetary constraints, in recent years so may lack capacity to lend more proactive support to community initiatives on islands or to even pursue their own statutory obligations as they would wish. With CES, island communities need not depend upon their Council's engagement in energy projects.



Lessons learnt on MLG processes

Effective local public awareness through diverse media

Open effective public awareness raising is important at island community level; meetings; posters; displays; events; newsletters; websites including Facebook; Twitter; national and local media; word of mouth, etc. to invite interest, involvement and support for local ownership. Arguably effective communication is best achieved on islands through community organisations rather than local authorities.

Community involvement through Trusts instead of Councils or Authorities

A local community Development Trust or similar legal body may be better placed than a Community Council (or Local Authority) to lead cost effective community engagement with energy projects on islands.

Shared meeting costs for bringing islanders together in a feasible way

Bringing islanders together in person to share information can be expensive. However, if you locate two meetings at the same place, travel and lodging costs can be shared.

The MLG cooperation structure

The following diagram demonstrates the different governing structures and stakeholders involved in the whole process.

