



RWE

Gaerwen Wind Farm

Newsletter Winter 2023-24

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Update from our project manager

Arfon Edwards, Gaerwen Development Project Manager

Thank you for your interest in the Gaerwen Wind Farm. Following our informal consultation in late 2022, we have been gathering further survey data to inform the layout of the project. We are now finalising the chapters of the draft Environmental Statement before the pre-application consultation which we hope to host in early summer 2024.

The environmental impact of the project is something that is assessed rigorously as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) – a well-tested process which involves in-depth, meticulous surveys over a long period of time. For example, we now have two full years of bird survey data which has informed both the turbine layout and our plans to support the local curlew population, a protected species.

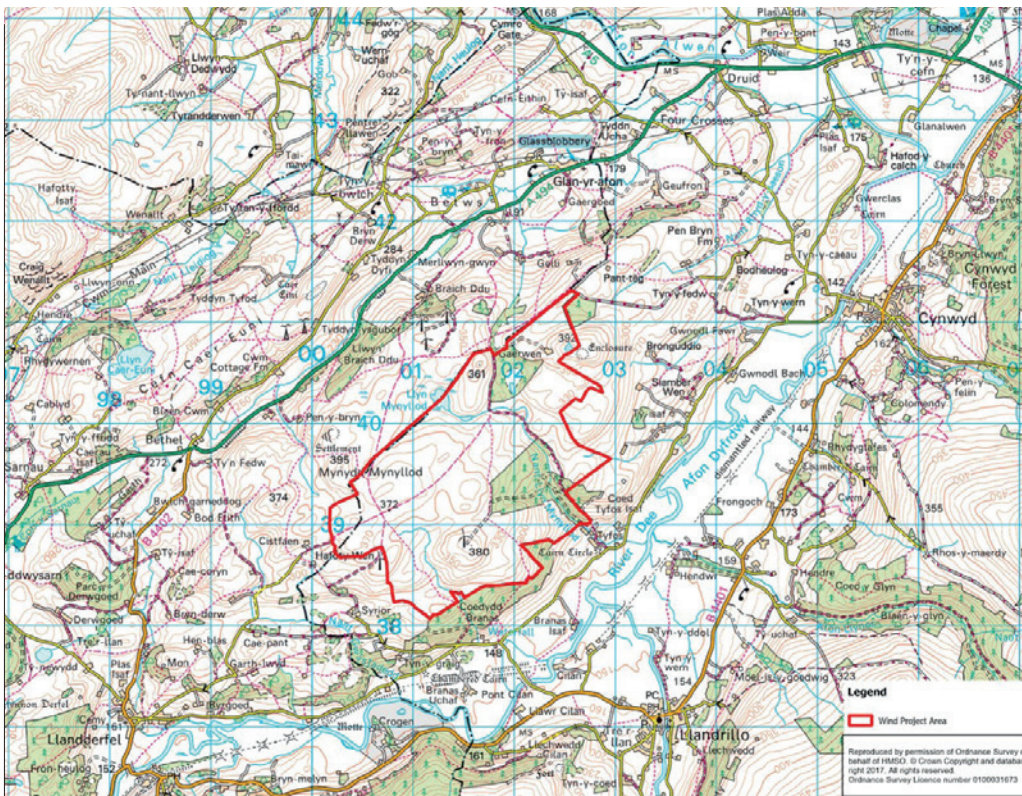
All survey methodology and results, as well as our plans for mitigation, are included in the draft Environmental Statement which is shared during the consultation with the public and statutory consultees.

One of the key changes made as a result of consultation is that the number of turbines has been reduced from 13 to a maximum of nine.

The primary objective of the project is to generate clean, green, renewably sourced electricity, to help decarbonise our economy – moving us away from fossil fuels that produce harmful gases that cause climate change. The project brings other benefits, too, and in this newsletter, we share updates on how we hope the local community may benefit directly, whether that's through a community fund package, supply chain opportunities, or shared ownership.

The Gaerwen Wind Farm proposal is categorised as a Development of National Significance and is within a pre-assessed area for wind in Welsh Government's Future Wales: The National Plan 2040, where there is a presumption in favour of large-scale wind energy development. However, the project can only proceed if it meets all the other requirements, and the planning inspector has to make a balanced recommendation to the Welsh Government minister who makes the final decision.

I hope that you find this newsletter informative. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.



Gaerwen Wind Farm at a glance

Up to 9 turbines

7 turbines tip height of 180m

2 turbines up to 200m

Installed capacity up to 59 MW

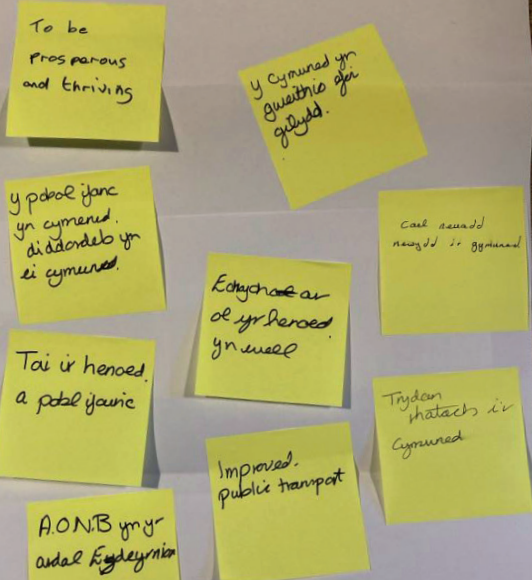
Support for local communities

Shared ownership



The proposed Gaerwen Wind farm site is south-west of Corwen and north-east of Bala.

What is your vision for your community in the future?



Wind powering local communities

We are committed to supporting the communities that host renewable energy projects by offering flexible community benefits packages, and for more than a decade, wind farms operated by RWE in Wales have contributed over £15 million locally.

If Gaerwen Wind Farm gains planning consent, we will work closely with the community to tailor a benefits package that has local people at the heart of how any future fund works. We have already started thinking about how the wind farm could best support the local area. In November 2023, we held a workshop with community council and local authority representatives. The workshop explored how our operating community funds work across Wales and what could be of most value to people living and working in the local area.

RWE's community investment manager, Katy Woodington, led the workshop, and said: *"It was great to begin discussing the community benefits package with community representatives and talking about what type of support it could offer local people. Those who attended were very clear that any community benefit linked to Gaerwen needs to be straightforward and directly address local need."*

RWE's operational Clocaenog Wind Farm nearby is already delivering a £19 million community benefit fund. It has supported some amazing projects close to the Gaerwen site including installing energy saving lights in Llandrillo community centre, contributing to electric charging points for bikes and cars in Llandrillo, supporting the Cylch Meithrins in Maesywaen and Llandderfel, paying for upgrades and equipment at the bowling clubs in Cynwyd and Llandrillo, improving historic cemeteries in Llandderfel, funding a foodshare project in Llangollen and providing a business grant to Snowdonia Goat Company to help grow their business.

To learn more about the community and wider socio-economic benefits of Clocaenog to date, read our independently compiled report.



[Scan here to find out more](#)

Gaerwen Timeline

2021-2022

Initial feasibility work and surveys

Late 2022

Informal consultation

2023

Consider feedback, further studies, refine site design, supply chain event, community fund package workshop, engage with elected representatives

Early summer 2024

Pre-application consultation and draft Environmental Statement

Late 2024

Planning submission

2025

Planning decision

The Future

If consented, Gaerwen Wind Farm could be constructed and operational by 2027



Coffi Eryri was successful in being awarded a business grant, from the Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm Fund, to acquire a new roaster in order to grow their business.



Working with Community Energy Wales

We are exploring how other organisations could become shared ownership partners with a stake in Gaerwen. Some of you may recall that during our informal consultation events we were joined by Community Energy Wales, a not-for-profit membership organisation which provides advice to community groups, and who are exploring options for shared ownership on Gaerwen.

The Welsh Government's target is for there to be 1.5 GW in shared or local ownership by 2035 and has set an expectation that all new renewable energy projects should have an element of shared ownership.

Commenting on the partnership, co-executive director of Community Energy Wales, Ben Ferguson, said:

"We are excited to be exploring shared ownership with RWE at Gaerwen Wind Farm, which could give local people and organisations a direct stake in the scheme. We'll be at the pre-application consultation events to explain what this could mean and see what involvement local people want to have."

Scan here to find out more



Case Study

Shared ownership at Alwen Forest Wind Farm

Over on the Alwen Wind Farm and Grid Connection Project, RWE is already working in partnership with Community Energy Wales to develop community ownership of up to 15 per cent of the capital costs of the project. Through the establishment of a co-operative, 'Ynni Hiraethog', local people and communities will be able to invest in the scheme, taking an ownership stake and share in the revenues generated from the operation of the wind farm.



Ynni
Cymunedol Cymru
Community Energy
Wales

Calling all local businesses

All sorts of skills, goods and services are required when building a wind farm. Wherever possible, our team looks for local businesses to support us prior, during, and after construction. Over the past decade RWE has invested £3 billion in Wales. During the development and construction of our Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm nearby, £118 million was spent, and nearly 20% of this was retained in Wales, mostly on local contractors.

Last year, companies in the region attended a supplier business breakfast we organised to hear more about current and future contract opportunities on RWE's renewable energy projects in north Wales, and to learn more

about the procurement process. To express an interest and to be kept informed of such opportunities, local companies are encouraged to register through the RWE supplier registration form.



[Scan here to register](#)

A boost to biodiversity

The Habitat Management Plan is an important part of all our wind farm developments. We carefully put in place measures that not only mitigate the potential impacts of construction, but also improve the site for biodiversity and nature.

Our sister site at Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm is a fantastic working example of this mindful approach to nature, where already 94 hectares of heathland and peatland have been restored. In addition, RWE is providing a range of surveys and support to help preserve and improve the biodiversity of the area, with our total spend to date at Clocaenog reaching £471,254. This includes red squirrel support funding (£18,623); bat (£98,551) and nightjar (£107,810) surveys.

We also organise a Habitat Management Plan Stakeholder Group at Clocaenog to ensure RWE stays accountable, and that our agreed plans are implemented correctly and are regularly reviewed.

The group, which includes expert ecologists, local volunteers, and the operational team - meets twice a year, on site, to review and discuss progress on the ground... always with a cuppa and cake in the forest to keep the energy levels up!

To learn more about RWE and its work to support biodiversity and the ecology surrounding its projects in Wales, visit the RWE in Wales page using this QR code.



[Scan here to find out more](#)

Case Study

Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm

Total spend to date

£471,254

including:



Bat surveys
£98,551



Nightjar surveys
£107,810

PhD funding
£87,000

Black grouse surveys
£15,784

Red squirrel funding
£18,632



RWE news

from around Wales



Pen March Wind Farm PAC draws to a close

The planning application for our six turbine wind farm at Pen March in south Wales has now been submitted for consideration by Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW). We held a pre-application consultation on this up to 36 MW proposal in 2022 and were pleased to receive lots of support for the project from local people. We are also planning to enter into a shared ownership agreement with the two host local authorities – Caerphilly and Merthyr Tydfil, which allows them to invest in the project and receive revenue shares. The proposed wind farm is located north-east of Merthyr Tydfil and north-west of Rhymney, and a decision from the Welsh Government is expected by the end of this year.

Consultation at Alwen Forest Wind Farm

Pre-application consultation has recently come to an end at our Alwen Forest Wind Farm and Grid Connection project. Held over the period 13 December 2023 – 7 February 2024, the site is adjacent to Llyn Brenig and the Alwen Reservoir, within a working forestry managed by Natural Resources Wales on land owned by Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water. Proposals are for a nine turbine wind farm, with a maximum tip height of up to 200m. The potential electricity generated would be the equivalent to the needs of up to 63,500 UK homes.

Abertillery Wind Farm

The pre-application consultation on our six turbine wind farm in Abertillery, south Wales, closed before Christmas, and we are now finalising the planning application for submission. We were pleased that local people showed support for the project, through our online feedback form and at the face-to-face events. The generating capacity at Abertillery could be 36 MW. We are working with the local authorities in the region on a shared ownership partnership.

Craig y Perthi Newport Solar Farm

Held between July and September 2023, the pre-application consultation on our south-east Wales solar farm has now come to an end. The Craig Y Perthi Solar Farm is located between the M4 and the Llanwern Steelworks, in south Wales. If built, the solar farm will be able to meet the equivalent energy needs of 45,374 Welsh homes and save over 3,180,000 tonnes of CO2.



RWE Apprentices

Calling all aspiring turbine technicians – head for heights essential!

The RWE Wind Turbine Technician apprenticeship provides a fantastic opportunity to enter the growing world of renewable energy, and to earn whilst you learn – and applications for September are now open.

With opportunities in onshore wind and offshore wind, the course is a mix of classroom-based learning and time on site working with RWE's experienced technicians. And what's more, our UK wind turbine technician apprenticeship hub is Coleg Llandrillo Menai, with apprentices based at the brand-new engineering campus at Rhyl.

Apprentices learn wind turbine maintenance, the importance of health and safety, problem solving, and working as part of a team. After completing the programme, apprentices become a part of RWE's technician teams, ensuring that our wind farms continue to deliver power to households and business. Application deadline is 8 March 2024.



Scan here to find out more



How to contact us

Keep in touch & let us have your views



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www.rwe.com/gaerwen



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RWE is one of the world's leading renewable energy companies, and the #1 renewable generator in Wales

>3 GW*

of power generation including the UK's first large-scale offshore wind farm North Hoyle**

In operation



3 Offshore wind farms



3 Onshore wind farms



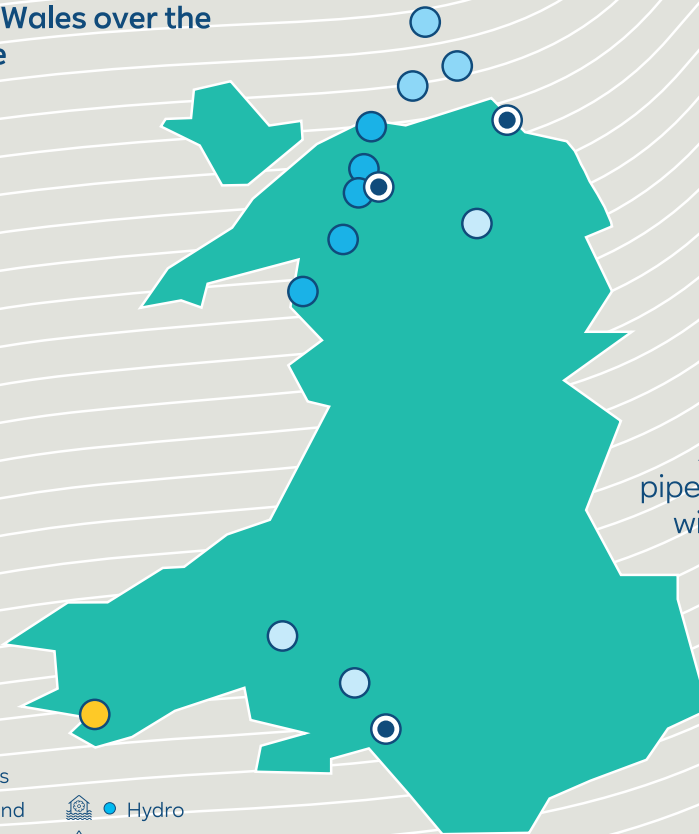
5 Hydro power stations



1 Gas fired power station

£3bn

invested in Wales over the last decade



RWE in Wales

Largest electricity generator with involvement in almost 1 GW of renewable energy – at the forefront of a low carbon future.

Our unique Pembroke Net Zero Centre is combining hydrogen, floating wind, battery storage, CCS and solar to drive the wider decarbonisation of South Wales.

An ambitious project development pipeline, comprising ~600MW onshore wind, Awel Y Môr offshore wind farm - Wales' largest renewable energy investment this decade - and ambitions for GW-scale Celtic Sea floating wind.

*RWE pro rata share 2,652 MW including 50% share of Gwynt y Môr (576MW) and 50% share of Rhyl Flats (90MW)

**Operated but not owned by RWE (60MW)



Annual community funding will amount to over

£ 2.4 million

Decisions made by local people for local communities



Pembroke Power Station

£ 20 million

Gwynt y Môr offshore wind farm

£ 8 million

annual contributions to local economy