

# ALLT DEARG WIND FARMERS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Ardrishaig Regeneration to be Wind Powered**

### **Mid-Argyll village comes out in favour of Community Wind Turbine**

Allt Dearg Wind Farmers, the family wind farming partnership of Ormsary and Stronachullin Estates, is delighted that the Ardrishaig Community have decided by an overwhelming majority to join in the development of a new wind farm to be located six miles south of Ardrishaig in South Knapdale, Argyll.

The community wide postal ballot was carried out last December; 86% of the votes cast were in favour of Ardrishaig taking a stake in the wind farm. The net revenue expected to be enjoyed by Ardrishaig over the 25 year life of the wind farm is £ 3 - 4 million. It is intended that this income will be used to underpin wider funding for the ambitious village regeneration scheme, which will transform the rundown sea front and canal entrance area, bringing life, visitors, investment and prosperity into an attractive new village centre.

The formal planning application for the wind farm has recently (3<sup>rd</sup> February) been submitted to Argyll and Bute Council. James Lithgow of Ormsary is confident that the new proposal will be widely supported. A much larger wind farm previously proposed by a multi-national utility developer was turned down by Councillors in late 2007. Control of the site then reverted to the indigenous landowners, the Broadfoot and Lithgow families. With a limited budget, the owners were determined that the development could be scaled down and redesigned to meet the previous concerns over visual impact, whilst remaining technically and commercially viable. With the help of Lomond Energy, a husband and wife team who specialise in smaller scale locally owned wind developments, the Estates came up with a scheme using fewer and smaller turbines, which was positively received locally, resulting in an approach from the Ardrishaig Community Trust.

The vote has cleared the way for Ardrishaig to become a partner in the project, and the Ardrishaig Community Trust is now working hard with various agencies, including Community Energy Scotland, to progress the commercial issues.

James Lithgow said *"This is a very exciting opportunity. Diversification into new opportunities is essential to sustain a vibrant community. At Allt Dearg we are able to harness the available natural resources for the maximum social and economic benefit of our community, whilst making the clean power that we all need". "We are confident that the Allt Dearg Community Wind Farm is now the right development, in the right place, to the right scale and with the right local ownership and control, delivering the right mix of environmental, social and local economic benefits".*

Edward Laughton, of The Ardrishaig Community Trust said *"As a keen sailor I know we can get plenty of wet and windy days in Loch Fyne, it will be nice to know that our turbine is not only generating green electricity, but also helping to regenerate our public spaces and village centre in Ardrishaig".*

The wind farm is expected to begin generating power in mid 2013.

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All other numbers see LITHGOWS RURAL MANAGEMENT in Lomond and Argyll Directory

ALLT DEARG WIND FARMERS (Limited Liability Partnership no. SO302325)  
Partners: Ormsary Farmers and Kenneths of Stronachullin LLP

## Notes to Editors:

### About Allt Dearg Community Wind Farm

Located 12km south southwest of Lochgilphead. Twelve 77m to tip high turbines will generate around 10MW, enough to power up to 6,000 local homes. The wind farm will be accessed from the A83 trunk road, through Stronachullin Farm, on the western side of Loch Fyne. There are no significant wildlife, bird or landscape issues.

npower renewables had previously sought planning on the site for fourteen 115m to tip high turbines, a proposal turned down by Councillors in December 2007. The Estates were encouraged by the Council to consider a smaller, community scale wind farm, that could address the visual impact issues, whilst remaining technically and commercially viable.

In addition to maximising the local social and economic benefits through local ownership and control, the Wind Farm will fund a new Educational Trust, to help support educational opportunities for local young people.

The Allt Dearg Wind Farm is entirely locally owned and controlled, there are no large utility companies involved, and the project has received no public funding. This development is part of new generation of smaller projects that are being developed from within communities in Scotland, that ensure the maximum level of social and economic benefit is retained within the local community. This ownership model is well established in Denmark, but is not yet common in the UK, where most of the existing wind farm projects have been built by large utility and corporate developers.

### About Allt Dearg Wind Farmers LLP

Allt Dearg Wind Farmers LLP is a partnership between the Broadfoot family of Stronachullin and the Lithgow family of Ormsary, established to jointly develop the natural wind resource of their neighbouring Estates.

Remote and sparsely populated rural Argyll is not, historically, well endowed with economic opportunities; however, a plentiful wind resource now provides an excellent socio-economic opportunity.

Diversification and development into new opportunities as they arise are essential elements of a vibrant and sustainable community. The harnessing of the available natural resources by Allt Dearg Community Wind Farm, for the sustenance and economic benefit of the dependent community, is today's practical realisation of such opportunity.

Ormsary and Stronachullin face the same socio-economic challenges as the rest of rural Argyll. The Estates have only been able to sustain a young and vibrant population, by taking on development opportunities as they arise, developments that help secure the income, jobs and homes within their community.

The Lithgow family has been in the renewable energy business for over 90 years, Ormsary was one of the first electrically powered country estates in the world, producing hydro electricity since 1919.

### About Lomond Energy Ltd

Lomond Energy is the lead consultant for the project and is responsible for the site layout design, project management and assembling the planning application. Lomond Energy is an independent renewable energy development company based in Gartocharn, West Dunbartonshire. Established in 2003, it specialises in supporting development of small and medium scale wind farms, recognising that such projects play an important part not only in tackling climate change and reducing dependence on fossil fuels, but also in bringing much needed economic development to rural communities.

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### About Ardrishaig Community Trust

The Trust was formed in June 2008 to advance the development and regeneration of Ardrishaig for the benefit of the local community and wider public, following the principles of sustainable development.

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### About Ardrishaig

Ardrishaig (pop. circa 1,300) is south of Lochgilphead on the western shore of Loch Fyne, Argyll. The village developed as the southern entrance of the Crinan Canal which opened in 1801, and grew into the major trade route to the West Coast and Western Isles. Ardrishaig has suffered a relative economic decline, since the coming of road haulage and growing car ownership leading to a steady reduction in the freight puffer and passenger steamer traffic in the post War period. The local trades suffered marked decline with the end of the steamer terminus in the late 1960s, around this time the structure of the village was significantly altered, with the removal of much of the original main street, to be replaced with a car park and a modern housing block and parade of shops, now largely used for Council offices. The village changed from having been a major local centre of transport and commerce supporting the rural hinterland and economy, to become a "pass through" location, falling into the shadow of Lochgilphead. Ardrishaig was the childhood home of the late John Smith, former Labour MP and leader of the Opposition.

### About the Ardrishaig Community Wind Turbine Poll

After local publicity, a ballot of 918 was sent to all those on the edited electoral roll within the boundaries of the Ardrishaig Community Council in early December 2009.

The main count was conducted on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December, witnessed by local Councillor, Dougie Philand, and the Reverend Roy Flatt of the Lochgilphead Episcopal Church

Number of votes returned from the total ballot: 49% (452)

In favour: 86% (388)

Opposed: 14% (64)