

The NorthConnect Legacy Fund

The first round of funding through the NorthConnect Legacy Fund was awarded in December. Twenty applications to the fund were received in total, and thirteen of those were successful this time round, including Aberdeenshire Sailing Trust, Peterhead Sea Cadets and Boddam & District Community Council. A second round of funding will be open to applications later this year, so if you have a project that matches the aims below, please get in touch.

The area of support stretches in a 10 mile radius around the NorthConnect project; the aims of the fund include:

- ◆ To provide sustainable support to the communities living, working and playing in the vicinity of the NorthConnect infrastructure including: the converter station, HVAC and HVDC cabling both on and offshore;
- ◆ To support sustainable energy use and production;
- ◆ To support sustainability, energy, environment, health and wellbeing education;
- ◆ To increase participation in and access to contemporary culture, events and recreational activities in an environmentally sensitive manner; and
- ◆ To preserve and enhance the natural environment for residents and visitors to the area.



To find out more about how the fund works please visit:
<https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/programmes/northconnect/>

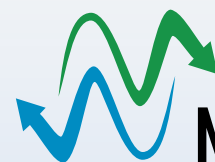
Date for your Diary

We'll be holding a Community Open Day on Wednesday 23rd May 2018 from 2-8pm at the Buchan Braes Hotel, Boddam where you'll be able to view and discuss the plans for the HVDC cables with the project team. We hope to see you there.

Contact Details

NorthConnect, Freepost RTKY-CSZT-UXGY,
Lochview of Duntelchaig, Farr, Inverness, IV2 6AW.

For more information on the project please visit: www.northconnect.no or call 07825 744712



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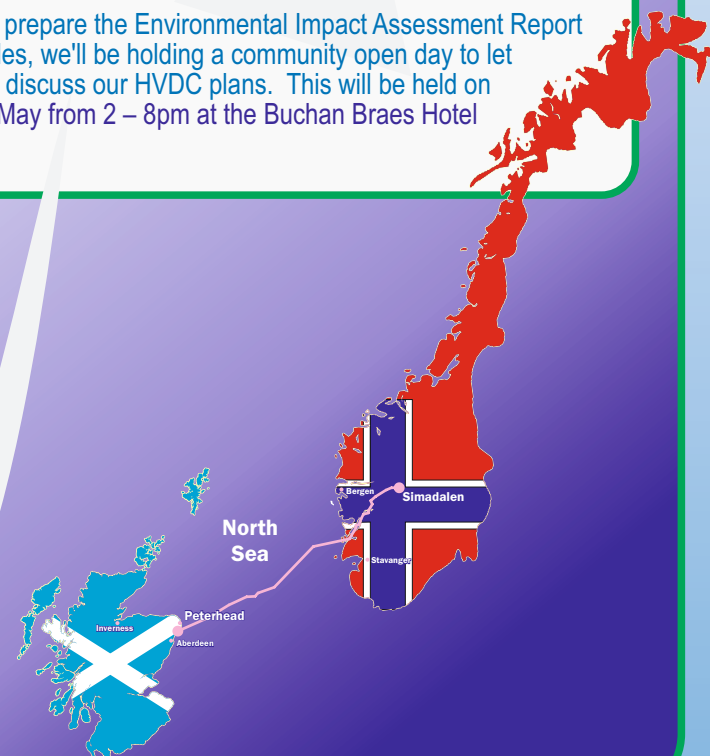
CONNECTING RENEWABLES

NorthConnect Update

We've had a busy few months since we were last in touch. As well as continuing the work on planning and marine license applications for the High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) cables, we've been undertaking Ground Investigations and awarding the first round of NorthConnect Legacy funding to 13 local projects.

We've also been out and about talking to fishermen locally in Boddam and Peterhead as well as further afield in Fraserburgh, Banff and Macduff.

As we continue to prepare the Environmental Impact Assessment Report for the HVDC cables, we'll be holding a community open day to let everyone see and discuss our HVDC plans. This will be held on Wednesday 23rd May from 2 – 8pm at the Buchan Braes Hotel In Boddam.



Onshore Surveys

Ground Investigations to understand the local geology and hydrogeology have been happening at both the Fourfields site and at landfall on the cliffs above Long Haven Bay. This will inform the onshore cable route and the location of where tunnels can be drilled under the cliffs, to link the on and offshore cables.

We had hoped that this work would be complete before Christmas, however the East Coast winter weather was not kind to the teams working on site and so it carried on for an additional few months. We know that this caused disruption around the Fourfields site in particular and we're now working hard to tidy the site up, returning it to its former state.

The work at Long Haven Bay has also now finished and site restoration has been undertaken.



Converter Station Site Access

NorthConnect recognises that access to the Fourfields converter station site and the surrounding area is of great value to the local area, and that there may be concerns regarding restriction to this access during and after the construction works. NorthConnect has taken on board feedback received during the consultation process, and taken account of this in planning the construction programme.

Between now and construction, due to commence in 2019, survey work will continue on site. This will not affect access to the Stirling Hill Path Network.

The safety of all users, especially during construction periods, is of paramount importance. To ensure safety, access during periods of construction work will be managed in line with the relevant Health and Safety, and Access legislation through consultation with Aberdeenshire Council and local user groups. The 450m path that bisects the Fourfields site will be closed for the majority of the construction works. It will then be rerouted around the converter station prior to reopening. Access to the core paths around the site may be closed for a few hours at a time during the initial ground works, for example if blasting is required. Short sections of path to the south and east will be closed during onshore cable laying.

All path closures and diversions will be publicised in advance and alternate route signposted. Path closures will be minimised as much as possible.

The construction phase will see the creation of a shelter and interpretation panels, which will be maintained over the lifetime of the project and a 540m increase to the current path network. This equates to an investment of over £150,000 in an important local recreational amenity.

Marine Cable Installation

Marine projects require detailed survey work to help develop the best possible design whilst minimising any potential impacts. The proposed cable route is around 665km long; that's equivalent to the distance between Peterhead and London.

Laying a cable over such a distance will require us to work closely with all those who have the North Sea as their place of work, as well as their playground, and one of those key groups of people is the UK's fishing fleet, particularly those based in and around Peterhead.

In order to understand the types of fishing activity undertaken, as well as the species caught and the amount of time spent in the area where we are seeking consent for the cables, we undertook two days of drop-in sessions in Peterhead's Fishermen's Mission at the end of January. In addition to those days we have been busy visiting harbours and gathering information from skippers directly, which will continue. If you happen to know of someone we have not yet managed to speak to, please direct them to:

www.northconnect.no/consultation/uk.

We have also been asking fishermen about their experience of cable protection – that's what is required in areas where the cable can't be trenched into the seabed, for example at a pipeline crossing or where the sea bed is very hard.

