

Conference Speakers



Noel Thompson,
Presenter, BBC Northern Ireland.

Noel Thompson is the presenter of BBC Radio Ulster's Good Morning Ulster programme. He also anchors the popular Spotlight Special discussion programme on BBC1NI. He is a two time winner of the Royal Television Society's Presenter of the Year Award, and is the recipient of an honorary Master's degree from the Open University. He was educated at Campbell College in Belfast and St Catharine's College Cambridge.



Karen Doyle,
Relationship Director, Ulster Bank Corporate & Institutional Banking.

Karen joined Ulster Bank Corporate and Institutional Banking in 2005 and has worked in the energy and infrastructure sector for the past 10 years. During her time in UB she has been involved in the project financing of a number of landmark Irish wind energy and other renewable projects including Mayo Power and Dublin Waste to Energy. Previous to joining Ulster Bank she worked for AIB Capital Markets, within the Inward Investment team. Karen has a BComm Int and an MBS in Finance from UCD and was previously a lecturer for the MSc in Renewable Energy Finance run by Dublin City University.



Peter Baillie
Managing Director, Energia Renewables

Managing Director Energia Renewables with a 26% renewable market share in Ireland. Vice chair of NIRIG. Led 2015 €125m financing for 95MW Meenadreen windfarm Financing a portfolio of 72MW 5 windfarms in NI currently. Completed 10 windfarm development acquisitions in NI and ROI since 2008. Sold a majority share in 10 operating windfarms to Irish Infrastructure Fund in 2012. Led first IPP financing in Ireland at Huntstown Power Station, Dublin. Joined Viridian 1989, 26 years experience in utilities. Qualified chartered Accountant



Kevin Hegarty,
**Wind Energy Programme Manager,
The Strategic Investment Board Ltd.**

Kevin works for SIB and is currently seconded to NI Forest Service seeking to commercialise their potential for wind energy. Forest Service manages approximately 5% of the land area of NI with forests in many remote upland areas. Like forestry organisations in other regions NIFS is seeking to commercialise its potential and Kevin is leading this programme. Kevin has nearly 20 years experience working in the public, private and utility sectors. Previously Kevin has worked for DoE Planning Service before moving to the wind industry working for Airtricity and ESB in GB & Ireland and for EON in North America. Kevin's experience primarily is in project development, policy, turbine procurement, financing and M&A.



Maf Smith,
Deputy Chief Executive, RenewableUK

Maf Smith is the Deputy Chief Executive of Renewable UK - the trade and professional body for the UK wind and marine renewables industries. Formed in 1978, and with over 500 corporate members, RenewableUK is the leading renewable energy trade association in the UK. Prior to joining RenewableUK Maf worked at grid and regulatory consultancy Xero Energy, and for much of this time was seconded to the Department of Energy and Climate Change to work on Electricity Market Reform. Between 2006 and 2011, Maf worked as Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Scotland for the Sustainable Development Commission, acting as advisor and scrutiny body to the Scottish Government. Between 2002 and 2006 Maf was Chief Executive of Scottish Renewables.

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“Future Opportunities for Renewables in NI”

NIRIG Policy Workshop 2016
Wednesday 27th January 2016 › Hilton Hotel, Belfast

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Conference Speakers

8:00am Registration, Tea, Coffee & Exhibition Viewing

Session 1: “Keynote Session: "Policy and Regulation For The Future" Chair: Rachel Anderson, NIRIG Chairperson & Communications Manager, RES

9.00am	Brendan Heneghan, Interim CEO, IWEA	"Opening Address"
9.10am	Rachel Anderson, NIRIG Chairperson & Communications Manager, RES	"Welcome Address"
9.20am	Angus Brendan MacNeil MP, Chair of Energy and Climate Change Committee	"Safe-Guarding UK Sustainable Energy"
9.40am	Jenny Pyper, Chief Executive, NIAUR	"Regulating for a Future-Proofed Electricity System"
10.00am	Chris Stewart, Deputy Permanent Secretary, DETI	"Energy and the NI Economy"
10.20am	Questions & Answers	
10.40am	Tea & Coffee	

Session 2: "The Changing Context of Renewables" Chair: Neasa Quigley, Partner, Carson McDowell

11.10am	Fiona McCandless, Chief Planner, DOE	"Decentralised Planning: The First 9 Months"
11.30am	Gerry Hodgkinson, Transmission Planning Manager, SON	"Transforming the Grid"
11.50am	Nicholas Tarrant, Managing Director, NIE	"Connecting Renewables – Progress and Future Challenges"
12.10am	Questions & Answers	
12.30pm	Lunch	

Session 3: Panel Session: "Policy & Politics For Generation Renewables" Moderator: Noel Thompson, Presenter, BBC Northern Ireland

2.00pm	Rachel Anderson, NIRIG Chairperson & Communications Manager, RES	"Generation Renewables - The Story so Far".
2.10pm	A Panel of Politicians and Policy Experts	
3.00pm	Questions & Answers	
3.20pm	Tea, Coffee & Exhibition Viewing	

Session 4: "Financing for Post 2020" Chair: Invited

3.40pm	Karen Doyle, Relationship Director, Ulster Bank Corporate & Institutional Banking	"Financing Future Wind Projects in NI"
3.55pm	Peter Baillie, Managing Director, Energia Renewables	"Looking to the Future of Renewables Financing - An Industry Perspective"
4.10pm	Kevin Hegarty, Wind Energy Programme Manager, The Strategic Investment Board Ltd	"Developing Wind Farms In NI Post 2020"
4.25pm	Maf Smith, Deputy Chief Executive, RenewableUK	"Closing Address"



Rachel Anderson,
NIRIG Chairperson & Communications Manager, RES

Rachel Anderson is RES' Communications Manager for the UK and Ireland. RES has been at the forefront of wind energy development for over 30 years and has successfully delivered more than 10GW of wind energy capacity worldwide. Rachel joined RES in 2007 and is responsible for public affairs in Northern Ireland and Scotland alongside providing strategic support for communications and community relations across RES' portfolio of projects. Rachel holds a BA from the University of Sheffield and is member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations.



Brendan Heneghan,
Interim CEO, IWEA.

Brendan has recently stepped in to IWEA to run the business on an interim basis due to the departure of Kenneth Matthews and will take up the role of interim CEO on 1st February 2016. He has been involved in wind energy since 2003, when he joined ESBI, having previously worked for CRH. In 2006 he joined Wind Prospect Ireland, and became a Director of Wind Prospect Ireland in 2011. He joined the IWEA Construction Safety Group in 2011, and was elected Chairperson of this Group in 2014. Brendan is a Chartered Engineer and during his thirteen years in the industry has project managed the pre-construction and construction of numerous wind farms throughout Ireland for various industry leading developers, has worked on wind farm projects in Scotland and Wales, and has provided technical support to a number of Wind Prospect Group's international businesses..



Angus Brendan MacNeil MP,
Chair of Energy and Climate Change Committee

Angus Brendan MacNeil was elected MP for Na h-Eileanan an Iar in 2005. During his time in Parliament he has worked on a variety of issues including mobile phone connectivity and fuel poverty as well as taking a keen interest in the Nordic and South American countries. He has previously served as party spokesperson on transport, constitutional reform and Scotland. He is currently deputy spokesperson on Foreign Affairs for the SNP and was recently elected Chairman of the influential Energy and Climate Change Committee for the 2015-2020 parliament.s.



Jenny Pyper,
Chief Executive, NIAUR

Jenny Pyper joined the Utility Regulator as Chief Executive on 1 November 2013. Jenny is a BSc Honours graduate of Queen's University, Belfast who joined the NI Civil Service in 1985. She was appointed to the senior civil service in 2004 as director of energy policy in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment where she managed policy and legislative responsibilities in relation to the electricity, gas and renewable energy industries in Northern Ireland. She moved to take up the post of director of regional planning and transportation in the Department for Regional Development. She was promoted to deputy secretary in the Department for Social Development in July 2011, with responsibility for urban regeneration and community development.



Chris Stewart,
Deputy Permanent Secretary, DETI

Chris, who is an Environmental Health Officer by profession, joined the NICS in 1987 from local government, and worked in a range of policy posts in DHSSPS. In 2000 Chris transferred to OFMdFM on promotion to the SCS. Over a six year period he held a range of policy posts in the fields of: human rights; good relations; children's policy; EU policy; and regeneration of former security sites. Chris transferred to DETI. In 2006 to take forward the Review of Public Administration, combined with the role of HR Director. This was followed by a brief second spell in DHSSPS earlier this year, working on healthcare transformation.' Chris joined DETI on 1 August 2014.



Neasa Quigley,
Partner, Carson McDowell

Neasa has considerable experience in the Energy and Natural Resources sector. As well as being the joint head of corporate and commercial department at Carson McDowell she also heads up the Energy Team which is consistently ranked top in Chambers Guide to the Legal Profession. Chambers' Independent Guide to the Legal Profession describes the team as “one of the strongest transactional teams in Northern Ireland,” and is praised for its “evergrowing knowledge.” Neasa led the NI legal advisory team to Bord Gáis Eireann on the sale of its energy business and is currently advising on several project financings and acquisitions and disposals in the renewable energy sector.



Fiona McCandless,
Chief Planner, DOE

Fiona McCandless, MRTPI was appointed Chief Planner in April 2014 becoming responsible for the overall leadership, management and delivery of the Department's planning responsibilities. Since April 2015 Fiona is also Deputy Secretary for the Department's Road Safety & Vehicle Regulation Division and the Driver & Vehicle Agency. Fiona provides advice and support to the Minister and the Northern Ireland Assembly on the wide range of work and activities undertaken by the Planning & Road Safety Group. She is a graduate of Queen's University Belfast and worked in a number of public sector posts before joining the Department of the Environment in 1998.



Nicholas Tarrant,
Managing Director, NIE

Nicholas Tarrant is Managing Director of NIE Networks since December 2014. Prior to that he held a number of senior roles in ESB, most recently having responsibility for managing ESB's power generation business. He has also worked as a Partner with Greencoat Capital, the investment advisor to ESB's Novusmodus €200m cleantech fund.