

Press release

Glenrothes MP visits Markinch Biomass Power Station to understand RWE's hydrogen plans



Swindon, 4 August 2022

Local Glenrothes MP Peter Grant recently visited Markinch CHP biomass plant to understand the exciting development opportunities between RWE and Scottish gas distribution company SGN. The partnership is to investigate the feasibility of supplying green hydrogen for heating Scottish businesses and homes, produced at the power station site.

The visit follows a recent agreement between the two companies to look at how green hydrogen produced from renewable power sources can be used as a replacement for natural gas in Scotland's gas distribution networks.

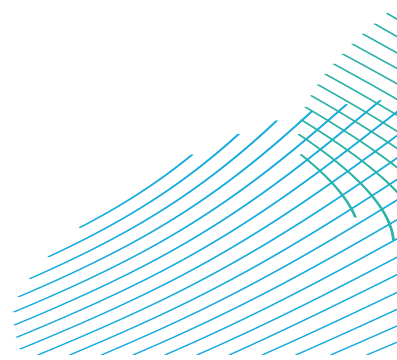
As part of the agreement, a feasibility study will be conducted over the coming months into a 100-megawatt (MW) electrolyser at RWE's Markinch CHP biomass plant. This could produce green hydrogen from local and grid connected renewable energy, to connect into SGN's gas network in Fife. It would build on the work SGN is already undertaking in Levenmouth on their world-first H100 Fife demonstration project, which is seeking to supply hydrogen as a zero-carbon fuel for heating and cooking to local homes through a new distribution network.

During the visit, local MP Mr Grant had the opportunity to hear more about the plans and how this could deliver low-carbon fuel for heating to homes and businesses in Fife, as well as delivering new investment in local energy infrastructure.

Speaking following the visit, MP Peter Grant said: "It was great to visit Markinch Power Station to hear from RWE and SGN about plans to investigate the development of green hydrogen production at the site, and how this innovative new technology could provide green gas to local homes and businesses in the future. Scotland is leading the way in the development of future renewable energy sources, which presents opportunities for investment and jobs in these exciting new sectors."

Steve Boughton, RWE Director Hydrogen Development, added: "It was fantastic to welcome Mr Grant to the plant to discuss our future hydrogen plans. Hydrogen will play an essential role in the pathway to net zero, particularly in industry and homes which are hard to decarbonise. The project with SGN perfectly demonstrates a collaborative approach for the decarbonisation of domestic and business gas networks, and to help Government achieve its ambitions for 10GW of hydrogen production."

RWE's 55MW Markinch Combined Heat and Power Biomass Station is fuelled by 450,000 tonnes of biomass fuel per year, 90% of which is made up of recovered waste wood and 10% from sustainably managed forests. Since 2019, RWE has been working in partnership with the Scottish Government and Fife Council in running the Glenrothes Energy Network, which sees the power station provide 100% renewable heat to local homes and businesses in Glenrothes town centre, via the local district heating scheme.





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SGN delivering Hydrogen and decarbonisation

SGN has a leading role in decarbonising gas. In 2010, it connected the first biomethane plant to gas network and is now spearheading a whole-system transition of Great Britain's gas networks to hydrogen. It believes changing the gas supplied through our networks to green gases like hydrogen, will allow people to continue to enjoy instant heat and control over their heating while taking a natural and pragmatic step forward towards net zero. A low carbon gas network integrated with the electricity network can also deliver an energy system that's resilient and flexible helping meet energy demands that vary significantly throughout the year.

SGN is delivering the world's first hydrogen neighbourhood on the east coast of Scotland – H100 Fife – which is part of the BEIS evidence base for hydrogen and will deliver a hydrogen neighbourhood for up to 300 customers in 2023. The gas company has secured £29.9m funding to determine whether Great Britain's transmission networks can be repurposed for hydrogen gas. It has also set out a transformational and accelerated pathway to 100% hydrogen for Scotland's gas networks targeting one million homes by 2030, and kick-started studies in London and Edinburgh to design hydrogen visions for our capitals. In addition, SGN is carrying out critical projects to help decarbonise industry with hydrogen, including in the port of Southampton and surrounding areas.

RWE leading the energy revolution

RWE is one of the world's leading renewable energy companies, and is responsible for supplying almost 15% of the UK's electricity. The company is at the forefront of driving green innovation and delivery at pace and is committed to investing £15 billion in the UK to deliver a new green energy infrastructure up to 2030.

RWE has a wealth of knowledge and experience in the development of hydrogen projects across Europe, including involvement in GET H2, NorthH2 and AquaVentus. It is committed to playing a full part in the delivery of this emerging technology in the UK, and at the same time creating skilled green jobs. Furthermore, the company has ambitions to develop floating wind in the Celtic Sea, and an initial 100MW hydrogen plant in South Wales; it also supports the UK Government's ambition of achieving 10GW of Hydrogen production, with a minimum 50% green hydrogen target

