

# Wind Farms Community Engagement Good Practice Review

---

Mhairi Aitken, Claire Haggett & David Rudolph

IEA Wind Task 28 Meeting, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2014, Blyth



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

# Project Background

---

- Sept. 2013 – Feb. 2014
- commissioned by Scottish Government through ClimateXChange
- Goals:
  - Identification of good practices in community engagement by comparing different international case studies
  - Exploration of impact of different engagement strategies on public acceptance of wind farms
- Focus on opportunities, timing and procedures of community engagement

# Review Process – Methodology

---

- Case studies where public engagement had an impact on the planning outcome
- Scotland, England and Wales
- Denmark, Germany, France and Sweden
  
- Secondary Data:
  - policy documents (local authorities, governmental ...)
  - planning documents (PAC reports, environmental statements)
  - academic articles
  - websites (project developer, protest groups)
  - local media
  
- Primary Data:
  - telephone interviews with representatives from developers, community councils, planning authorities of UK case studies

# Case Studies

<i>Time</i>	Zoning / Pre-Project Stage	Pre-Application	Post-Application	Post-Approval / Construction	Post-Commissioning
<b>Scotland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comments on plans and SEA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-binding pre-application consultation</li> <li>Information provision; public events on site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written comments and representations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community funds depending on developer</li> </ul>
<b>England</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compulsory pre-application consultation, but no standardised approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written comments and representations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information provision</li> <li>appeals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community funds</li> </ul>
<b>Wales</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compulsory pre-application consultations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written comments and representations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information provision</li> <li>Potential appeals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community funds</li> </ul>
<b>Denmark</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public consultations and hearings while developing plans</li> <li>Initiation of projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggestions on content and scope of EIA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public consultation period; written comments, representations and alternatives</li> <li>Non-compulsory citizen meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appeals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefits through various ownership schemes</li> </ul>
<b>Germany</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public display of draft plans</li> <li>Written comments on local and regional development plans</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public display of documents</li> <li>Written comments during approval procedure</li> <li>public hearing</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential financial benefits through (co)-ownership</li> </ul>
<b>Sweden</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early consultation on local plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public hearings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several rounds of public consultation</li> <li>Written comments</li> </ul>		
<b>France</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposal of zones for wind farms</li> <li>Consultations on zone designation</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information provision</li> <li>Public inquiry</li> </ul>		

Tab.1: Key features of the planning systems in case study countries for onshore wind farms

# Case Studies

a)	<b>Name of Wind Farm:</b>	<b>Burton Wold - South</b>
	<b>Developer/Operator:</b>	Infinergy
	<b>Size of Proposed Development:</b>	5 turbine extension to existing 10 turbines (plus another 7 turbine extension) – total capacity: 45.5 MW
	<b>Current Status:</b>	Consented March 2012
	<b>Community Engagement Methods Used:</b>	Information Leaflet; School Visits; Open Days; Adverts and Press Releases; Door-knocking; Website; Freephone number; Freepost address; Comment Cards; Local Energy Organisation
	<b>Points of Interest:</b>	This is an extension of the Burton Wold Wind Farm. The developer adopted a pre-application community involvement strategy despite no legal regulations dictating such a process for a relatively small wind farm.
b)	<b>Name of Wind Farm:</b>	<b>Argyll Array</b>
	<b>Developer/Operator:</b>	Scottish Power Renewables
	<b>Size of Proposed Development:</b>	Initial scheme 1800 MW, up to 300 turbines
	<b>Current Status:</b>	Abandoned at pre-planning stage
	<b>Community Engagement Methods Used:</b>	community liaison officer; public consultation; consultation meetings; steering group (master planning)
	<b>Points of Interest:</b>	The Tiree Community Trust as part of Argyll Renewables Communities Consortium (ARC), and member of steering group in master planning process.

Tab.2: Key features of case studies (examples)

# Findings: Rationales of Community Engagement

---

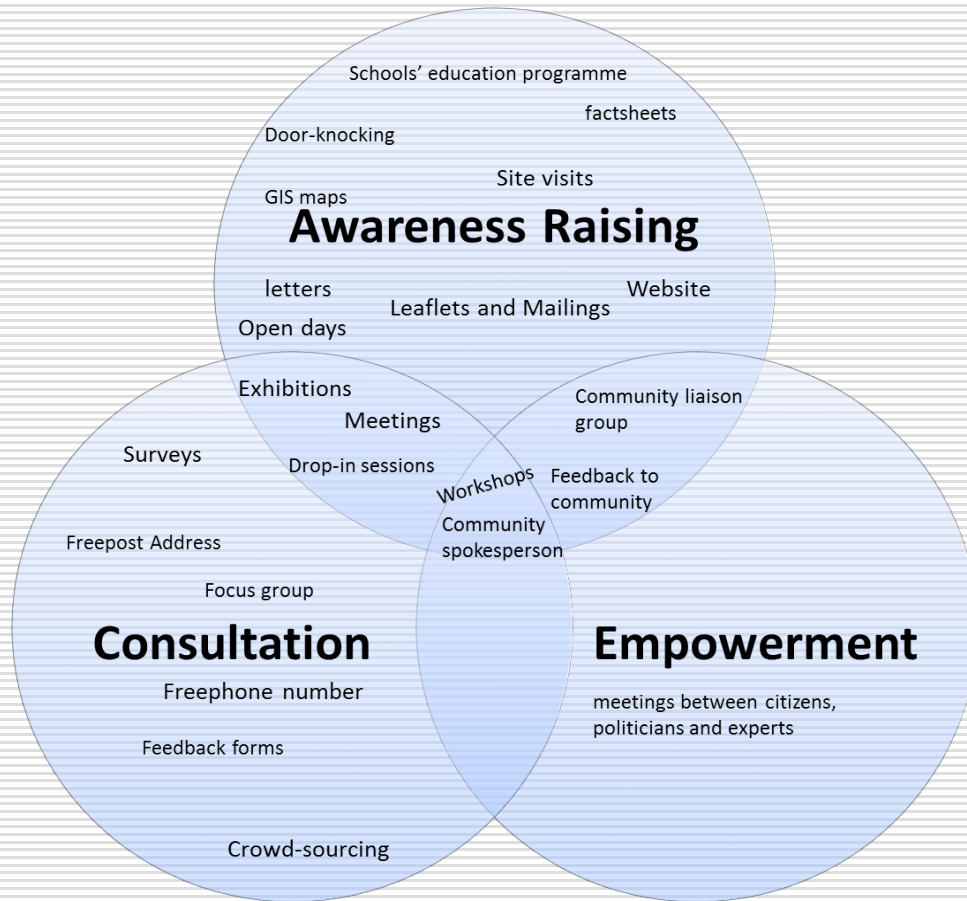
- Public engagement used for different reasons
- *Instrumental* – overcoming opposition and increasing planning success
- *Normative* - legitimising projects and drawing on local knowledge
- *Substantive* - fostering positive relationships with public

# Findings: Stages of Engagement

---

- Usually at pre-application stage in the UK, after key decisions about location and design
- European cases give evidence of public engagement in early spatial planning (designation of suitable areas ...)
- Engagement should be an ongoing and open process based on trust and communication

# Findings: Classification of Engagement Methods



- prevalent methods on awareness raising and information provision
- only a few innovative methods
- mostly 'in-house' guidance
- 'one-size-fits-all' approach inappropriate
- should be tailored to specific location
- different impacts on social acceptance



# Lessons Learnt / Recommendations

---

- ❑ obligation for developers to undertake community engagement
- ❑ How and why responses have been addressed !
- ❑ gathering public responses not only at pre-application stage, but also at spatial planning stage
- ❑ wide-ranging and flexible engagement methods that facilitate ongoing dialogue
- ❑ clearer guidelines for community engagement for wind farms with some autonomy and tailored to the local context

---

Thank you for your attention !

Dr David Rudolph, University of Edinburgh

[drudolph@staffmail.ed.ac.uk](mailto:drudolph@staffmail.ed.ac.uk)