



## NEWSLETTER 8 APRIL 2020

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### **Chair's Report: Lesley Hinds**

I think it is important to acknowledge that this is a very strange and worrying time, as individuals and in our family and friends' groupings. The next few weeks are highly likely to be increasingly challenging, and in these circumstances it is important for us all to take care of ourselves in whatever way we think best.

It is a honour to be the Chair of ECSC and with such a dynamic and resourceful group of people, please make sure to look after yourself, and the people around you, as the Covid-19 pandemic unfolds, so we can be in the best shape possible to build things up again when the time arrives.

### **AGM**

Thanks to all the people who remotely participated in the AGM. Some have suggested we might want to do this in future years? Thanks to Energy4All for setting up the remote process for the AGM.

### **ECSC Board**

- Kate Studd stood down from the Board and our thanks to her for all her hard work.
- Drew Murphy was re-elected to the Board.
- One space is available on the Board, please e-mail [lhinds568@gmail.com](mailto:lhinds568@gmail.com) if any members are interested in applying for a co-opted place.
- The City of Edinburgh Council have replaced Councillor Karen Doran, as one of their Board members, with Councillor Lezley Cameron.

### **Motions**

All 6 motions were approved. This included approval of last year's AGM minutes, Annual Accounts, re-appointment of Auditors and funding agreed for Community Benefit.  
Member Shares of 5.49% paid

Keep Safe

Lesley Hinds, Chair: Edinburgh Community Solar Co-operative



Councillor Lezley Cameron

## ECSC Phase 2

Covid-19 has necessitated a pause in construction of Phase 2, the construction of which was already underway at Craiglockhart Leisure Centre and Bankhead Road Services Depot. At Bankhead approximately half the solar PV has been installed and at Craiglockhart the scaffolding has been put in place but no further work has been possible.

The position on the Phase 2 share offer remains unclear but it is unlikely to be launched before the end of April and will be launched when appropriate in terms of both Covid-19 restrictions and outstanding issues.

After much lobbying from Community Energy England over recent weeks the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has passed The Feed-in Tariffs (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Order 2020. It was signed electronically by BEIS minister Kwasi Kwarteng and came in to force on 31st March. It gives community FIT projects with an Ofgem eligibility date (i.e. the date by which installations must be completed, commissioned, MSC certified and registered with Ofgem's FIT register) that falls between 1st March and 31st March 2020 at least an extra six months to complete and register which must happen by the final deadline of 30th September 2020. This will allow us to sell electricity to the grid at a higher than normal price once construction is completed at the Bankhead and Craiglockhart sites.

## Community Benefit Fund

In the 2018/19 year, ECSC paid out £13,083 to various community benefit causes and an additional £6,400 was allocated to the Community Benefit Fund at March's AGM. Due to underspends in previous years, this leaves over £20k available for allocation once the lockdown is over. Applications to the Community Benefit Fund are welcomed with full details of how to apply available on our website. Applications are restricted to users of host buildings until approximately September 2021.



Work in progress at Bankhead before the shutdown

Photo from Energy4All

## Finances

In the 2018/19 financial year, ECSC made a gross profit of £6,432 on a turnover of £210,448 which is an increase on the 2017/18 financial year's profit of £5,076 on a turnover of £215,474.

Our full accounts for the year are available on the FCA's website at: <https://mutuals.fca.org.uk/Search/Society/27624>

All 24 of our host buildings are currently closed for the foreseeable future and we would therefore expect to see a decrease in revenue in this financial year as a result of a much larger proportion of the generated electricity being exported to the grid rather than sold to Edinburgh Council at a more favourable rate. The board are working to establish what the impact will be and will review the budget once this is understood. We are also investigating whether any Covid-19 related government support might be available to Edinburgh Community Solar Co-op.

## Generation in 2019-20

Solar generation was down only by 2.4% based on the budgeted output (the production figures relate to the period 1st Oct – 30th Sept). This was due in part to a few of the buildings having works undertaken including: Blackhall, Canal View and Dean Park re-roofing work. These buildings have been switched off for a period of time over the summer. Currie HS has experienced an electrical issue with a couple of the systems on the roof which have been addressed. We now plan to commence a 5 year electrical testing and maintenance programme which will see all buildings checked within this time limit. This is addition to our tactile inspections which the council has requested are completed on an annual basis which checks the fixings of the panels on the roofs.

If anyone has any particular questions, please get in touch.

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Craighall Day Centre. Maintenance can include washing the panels. Dirt, possibly from aphids on tree leaves, was recently (after photo) cleaned off these panels at Craighall Day Centre.

## **Liberton Primary School**

In February ECSC was saddened to hear news of a fire at Liberton Primary School and the resulting upset and difficulties this caused for pupils, staff and parents alike. The part of the school most significantly damaged was unfortunately a part that hosted a number of our solar panels and at present we believe approximately half of the panels at that site have been damaged. The site has therefore been temporarily decommissioned and we are continuing to work with Edinburgh Council, our insurers and other organisations to determine the next steps forward.