

Caithness & North Sutherland

REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP

NDA

HIE
Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Supporting Communities and Growth

The Highland Council
Community Development
Partnership

The Scottish
Government

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Caithness Regeneration Conference 2008

Caithness can rule the waves! –that was the message from First Minister Alex Salmond when he attended the Caithness Regeneration Conference on 29th September. Over 150 delegates attended the conference to hear about the progress being made by the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership as well as the ambitious plans for the future of Scrabster Harbour.

Speaking after the conference John Thurso, MP said “I can see and feel a growing sense of confidence that we can meet the challenges and that our goal of creating a successful, modern, mixed economy is achievable. It will only happen if we move forward together and show a united Caithness front in meeting our objectives.”



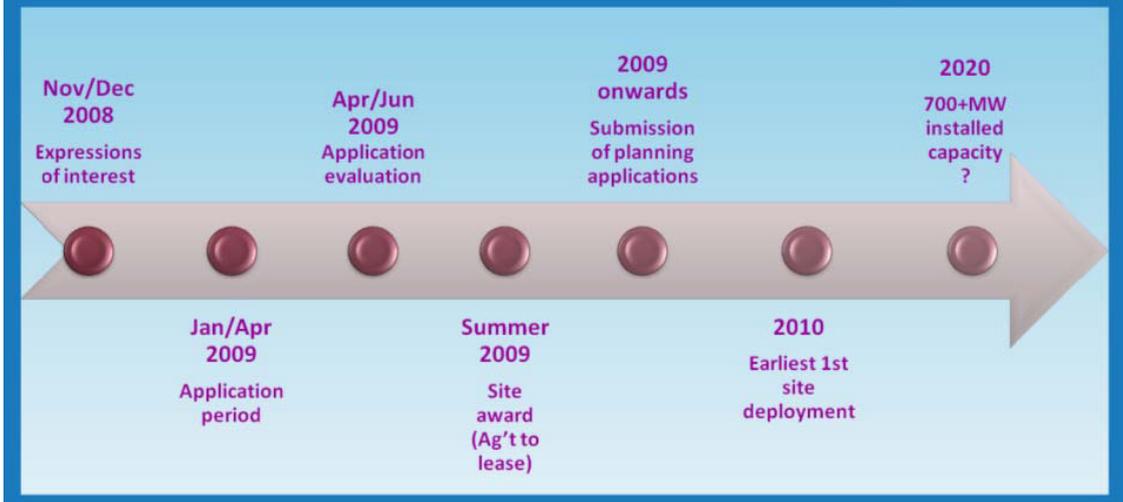
To listen to the First Minister’s keynote speech click here:

www.caithness-partnership.org.uk/CRCvideo.asp

Potential of Pentland Firth unlocked: The Crown Estate announces procedure for first UK commercial marine power site

The Crown Estate outlined, at the Caithness Regeneration Conference, the application and consent procedure for wave and tidal energy projects in the Pentland Firth – the first UK marine power site to be opened up for commercial-scale development – with the aim of generating more than 700MW of energy by 2020.

Timescales for delivery



For further information: www.thecrownestate.co.uk

Regeneration Partnership Action Plan prioritised

At the Caithness Regeneration Conference on 30th September this year we showed for the first time a prioritised version of our Action Plan, featuring a small number of high priority actions to be pursued. These can be summarised as follows:

- Scrabster Harbour
- Wick Harbour
- Pentland Firth Tidal Energy
- Engineering
- John O' Groats
- Food & Drink
- Inward Investment
- IT Connectivity
- Transport links

Eann Sinclair, Programme Manager for the Regeneration Partnership, said "The prioritised action plan is at an early stage, but there is a need for us to get on with the delivery of projects. Our top priorities are featured on the new Partnership website and we are asking for feedback on whether people feel these are the right projects to be targeting. The plan will continue to evolve but it is crucial that we concentrate on high priority projects because a lot of these will be enablers for future economic activities."

To see the Action Plan Snapshots:

www.cnsrp.org.uk/downloads

Scrabster Harbour Trust and HIE prepare for new markets



An industrial park is being planned as part of a new wave of expansion at Scrabster Harbour to capitalise on a clutch of exciting new opportunities coming on stream.

Scrabster Harbour Trust and HIE are working together to realise the ambitious plans for further expansion of the port to ensure it becomes one of the lunchpins of the current major push to diversify the north economy.

Scrabster Harbour Trust had previously announced plans to modernise the existing oil tanker berth and to build a new deepwater quay. It now intends to lay out a 30 acre industrial park to exploit its proximity to the oil and gas fields in the Atlantic Frontier and to the Pentland Firth.

For further information:

www.hie.co.uk/Default.aspx.LocID-0finewlzh.RefLocID-0fihiesvg008.Lang-EN.htm

Appointment of inward investment manager

Fiona MacPherson, a lawyer with extensive international experience in various sectors has been appointed to the post of inward investment manager with the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership. Fiona, who has Caithness connections, is returning to Scotland to take up the two-year contract after spending 20 years working in the USA, latterly with Scottish Development International.

For further information

www.hie.co.uk/default.aspx.locid-0finewlyl.RefLocID-0fihiesvf003.Lang-EN.htm

Contract awarded to investigate Firth grid connections

Consultants Xero Energy have been appointed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and the Scottish Government to identify options for renewable energy producers in the Pentland Firth, to connect energy supplies to the grid.

For further information www.hie.co.uk/default.aspx.locid-0finewlyo.RefLocID-0fihiesvf003.Lang-EN.htm

HISEZ to lead on developing social enterprises in Highlands & Islands

A three year contract to develop and promote social enterprises in the Highlands and Islands has been won by The Highlands and Islands Social Enterprise Zone Community Interest Company (HISEZ CIC). The contract will help deliver the Scottish Government's new strategy – "Better business: a strategy and action plan for social enterprise in Scotland."

For further information www.hie.co.uk/default.aspx.locid-0finewlxq.Lang-EN.htm

Tidal Energy Data Survey

A new survey is being carried out for HIE by Aquatera from Stromness. It will draw together current data relevant to marine energy developments in the Pentland Firth, helping identify any gaps and underpinning future survey work.

For further information <http://www.hie.co.uk/Default.aspx.LocID-finewm0u.RefLocID-Ofihiesvg008.Lang-EN.htm>

North Highland Regeneration Fund goes from strength to strength

Small businesses and young companies often find it difficult to raise money to fund growth. The North Highland Regeneration Fund (NHRF) was established by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) to provide loan funding complementing other existing sources of funding for small businesses. The scheme is designed to pump-prime both the start-up of new ventures and the growth of existing businesses as part of the drive to replace the jobs which will be lost in the Caithness & Sutherland area as the Dounreay nuclear plant is decommissioned.

Set up, just over 18 months ago, the body responsible for the fund has held discussions with 67 companies/individuals and this has resulted in loans of £531,000 being awarded to assist 13 different companies. This equates to a projection of 91 jobs being secured and potentially the creation of a further 70 new jobs. The NDA has provided a total of £1M in funding for the scheme with a further £500,000 being invested later this year.

A further 12 companies are in the process of being evaluated for loans with a projected loan value of £486,000 estimating security of a further 26 existing jobs with a further potential for 49 new jobs. The NHRF work with Highland Opportunity and HIE to maximise the opportunities and provides confidence to others to lend or invest.

For further information www.nhrf.co.uk

North Highland Regeneration Fund

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Fund Context | What can the Fund do for you? | How does the Fund Work? | Eligibility & Decision Criteria | Governance & Board of Directors | News & Events | Documents & Publication strategy | How to contact us

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Caithness Chamber of Commerce

The rejuvenation of the Caithness Chamber of Commerce has been boosted by financial support from HIE. The funding has been provided to support a new Chief Executive for the Chamber, and it is hoped that an appointment will be made before Christmas. Local businessmen Peter Body and Stephen Sutherland are carrying out the roles of interim Chair and Vice-Chair respectively.

For further information: www.caithnesschamber.com

Dounreay site looks at potential spin out businesses

Services currently provided in-house by DSRL have the potential to prosper beyond site closure as stand-alone businesses. Potential spin-outs identified so far include the non-nuclear analytical laboratories, the training department and the occupational health department. DSRL is working closely with HIE and other key organisations to develop business cases to support the commercial potential for the area in the long term.

Support shown for Developing Decommissioning Supply Chain

Almost 100 representatives from the supply chain have Strategy showed a commitment to helping the NDA shape its proposed Supply Chain Development. Workshops were run by an external facilitator and used an electronic voting system to obtain some quantitative data on a number of questions raised in the document. The workshops then saw lively discussion on a number of issues including: entry into the marketplace and the existing processes and applications.

For further information www.nda.gov.uk/stakeholders/newsletter/supply-chain-development-support.cfm

Nuclear Bursary programme offers up to £4,000

The National Skills Academy for Nuclear in partnership with the NDA and Serco are rolling out a second round of Bursary awards. The scheme is aimed at quality individuals on programmes of study relevant to the nuclear industry, and includes foundation degrees, honours degrees and master degrees. The programme provides financial support to students and aims to attract a broader mix of new entrants into the nuclear industry and wider science and technology agenda, leading to increased diversity and opportunity. Of the 26 students already successful in their Bursary application in May this year, 8 of them came from Scotland with 7 in the Caithness area.

For further information: www.nuclear.nsacademy.co.uk

Development of Wick Marina

Wick received a major confidence boost this week, following news that a £576,000 funding package has been secured to install a marina development in the town's harbour.

The deal has required complex negotiations between the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) which is providing the vital funding conduit. The Crown Estate has provided around half the total sum to the project's applicants, Wick Harbour Authority.



For further information www.wickharbour.co.uk/newsletters/Newsletter_2A.pdf

For further information please contact:

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