



Blueprint for green driving

Orkney Renewable Energy Forum (OREF) today published draft strategy to get the county ready for the planned 1000 electric vehicles expected on Orkney's roads in the next five years.

Orkney already has the highest proportion of its vehicles being electric of any county in Scotland with around 1.5% of the 10,000 cars being run on clean green, locally generated electricity.

But OREF wants to see this go much further.

Various governments around the world have recently announced bans on new petrol and diesel cars by the mid 2030s. So the question is no longer 'will we go electric', but 'when will we go electric?' OREF called a workshop of existing EV drivers back in March to look at what issues they were having and what needed to be done to be ready for this mass electrification. The results of that workshop and a lot of work since have been drawn together in the draft strategy published today on OREF's website.

The council drew up the first EV Strategy in 2014 at a time when most of the effort was aimed at getting the public sector to take EVs on and enable wider uptake. 'With an estimated 150 EVs now in the county, and 90% of them being in private hands, that push has been successful. Electrifying our transport is now mainly a private initiative.' said OREF Board member Jonathan Porterfield of Eco-cars from Norseman. 'In the past I had to really sell people on the idea of EV, now they are much more likely to come and ask. The change in the last few years has been remarkable, and it is accelerating.'

OREF therefore felt the 2014 Strategy needed to be refreshed and written from the point of view of the drivers rather than the council.

'The Council took some visionary steps back in 2012 when it took on a couple of vehicles and put in some charge points' said OREF Board member Neil Kermode. 'Putting a point outside EMEC and Aquatera's windows at the Old Academy in Stromness gave both companies the confidence to take cars on and give it a go. 'There are now 7 members of staff with EVs coming in daily to the Old Academy and we now know what works.' OREF has sought to find out what else can be done now to further accelerate uptake.

Surprisingly the Strategy calls for charging to be introduced. 'As a way of getting the first cars used the council were told to make the electricity available free'. said Neil, 'but the drivers at the workshop unanimously felt this was now no longer fair when public sector finance is under such pressure. We know we will have to pay one day, so let's get on with introducing a national scheme now, and Orkney could pilot that'.

The Strategy shows how already 80% of drivers charge at home and suggests where further chargers should go (at tourist attractions and the airport). It proposes a model to use on the isles and maps out how the expected development of EVs will mean there may only need to be a few additional chargers in town. It shows how Orkney could help tourism and increase its appeal as a destination for adventurous EV drivers from south and much more.

'A group of EV drivers have written this as a way of plotting to get these quieter, cleaner, cheaper and greener cars in use at the minimum cost and fuss.' said Neil 'We are keen to hear from anybody with an interest about what we are suggesting. If you have a view then we'd like to hear it.'

The document is available on the OREF website at <http://www.oref.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/20171104-Consultation-Draft-Orkney-EV-Strategy.pdf>

Feedback can be left by E-mail (evcharger.survey@gmail.com) or online form before the 4th of December.

Ends

Notes to editors:

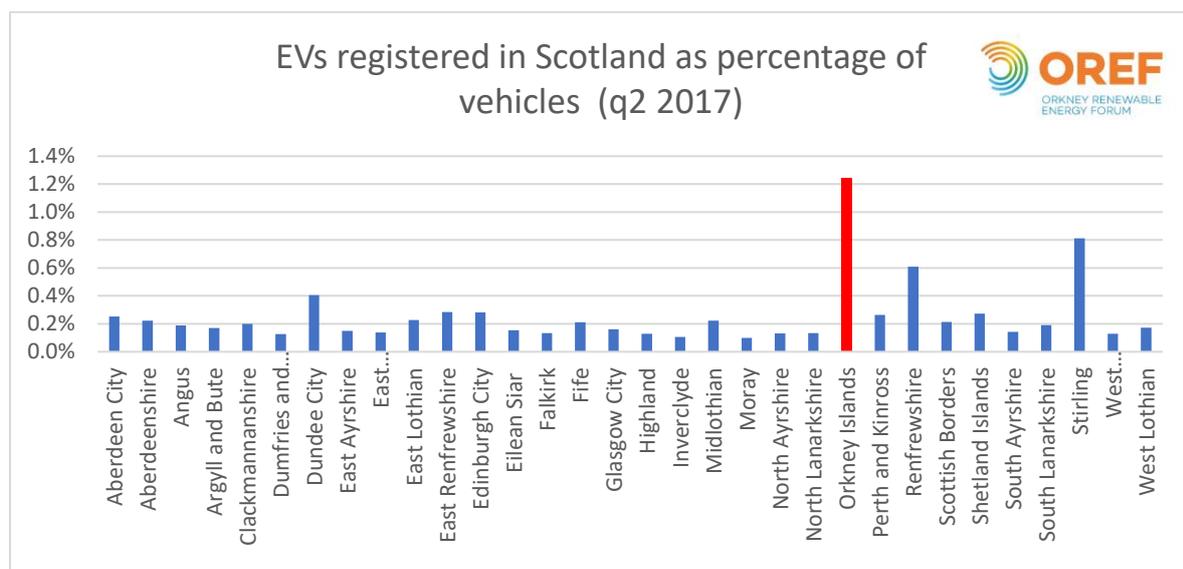
The Orkney Renewable Energy Forum seeks to

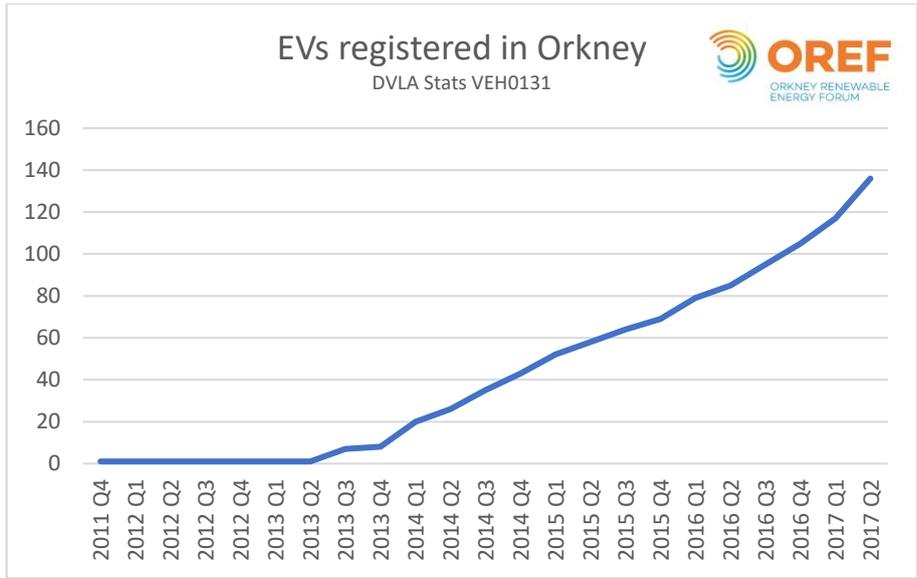
- To encourage the preferential use of renewable energy in Orkney
- To debate the best technical and sustainable options for increasing renewable energy and energy efficiency in Orkney
- Facilitate Research and Development in renewable energy and energy efficiency
- Disseminate information on renewable energy and energy efficiency
- To lobby on the strategic issues affecting the development of a renewable energy sector in Orkney
- To act as a consultative body on issues related to connecting Orkney to renewable energy markets

OREF is involved in promoting EVs because they can be powered from locally generated electricity and are therefore able to be non polluting. The Strategy also shows how they can make Orkney cleaner, greener and quieter requiring little change to the grid and allowing existing renewables to work better.

The launch event at ICIT will be a short presentation with Q&A.

When the last statistics were published on EV ownership Orkney had 139 vehicles registered





¹ Composed from VEH0131 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/all-vehicles-veh01#table-veh0131> and VEH0105 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/all-vehicles-veh01#table-veh0105>

Jonathan Porterfield (07778 298165) and Neil Kermode (079 200 413 55) are available for interview.