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## Three quarters of Scots back wind farms, says new poll

**BWEA Press Release**   
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### Celebrity champions join ordinary Scots as national pro-wind campaign launches

A new survey conducted by leading research agency NOP World today (Mar 22) revealed almost three-quarters of Scots (73%) agree wind farms are necessary to help meet the country's current and future energy needs.



And Scots-based celebrity champions – including Franz Ferdinand lead singer Alex Kapranos, top actor Brian Cox, celebrity chef Nick Nairn, legendary broadcaster Magnus Magnusson and Changing Rooms designer Anna Ryder Richardson - added their backing for wind power.

The popular support for wind was unveiled at the launch of the Scottish Embrace the Revolution campaign, which gives a voice to the large majority of Scots who back wind power.

The poll result challenges myths put out by the anti-wind lobby of a vocal minority movement against wind power.

The launch, at Our Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh, was hosted by Scottish Renewables and the British Wind Energy Association, and coincided with a high-profile exhibition of striking wind farm photography by the leading agency Magnum.

Other findings of the poll, which interviewed nearly 850 people in regions across Scotland, revealed that:

- More than half of Scots (52%) agree the appearance of wind turbines is unimportant
- Nearly half of Scots (49%) disagree with the statement that wind farms are ugly, with nearly a quarter (23%) saying they are neutral
- A majority support wind power in every Scottish region

The Scottish-based celebrities joined champions of the previously-launched UK campaign, including Guy Berryman from Coldplay, designer Wayne Hemingway, architect Lord Foster, TV presenter Kevin McCloud, and Chris Tarrant among the list of wind champions.

### **High profile supporters said:**

Brian Cox, Hollywood actor commented: "If we are serious about tackling climate change and securing our energy sources for the future we must harness the great power of the wind. Scotland is well placed to lead the renewables revolution, let's not stand in its way."

Alex Kapranos, lead singer of Franz Ferdinand said: "Our modern lives depend upon easy access to huge resources of energy. We're going to run out of fossil fuels so need to find an alternative resource. It's unlikely that we'll run out of wind so we may as well use that."

Magnus Magnusson KBE, writer and broadcaster said: "The wind is pure energy, raw and restless, an endlessly sustainable natural resource. Let's hug it, let's harvest it. Wind turbines, elegant giants of engineering, can harness that wild energy for our own purposes, subject only to appropriate environmental considerations. Scotland is the hall where the winds of the world meet in boisterous play - so let's make use of it. We in Scotland are on the threshold of a renewables revolution. Embrace the Wind, Embrace the Revolution!"

Nick Nairn, celebrity chef, said: "Scots should take this opportunity to welcome renewable energy and the battle against climate change, knowing that by doing so we are benefiting not only ourselves, but a much wider global community. Wind turbines should be celebrated not scorned, and welcomed as a secure investment in Scotland's future."

At the launch today, Scotland's youth added their pledges of support, when pupils from Ardrossan Academy lined up to join the Embrace campaign. The Ardrossan pupils will hope to see wind power at first hand, with their school planning to install a wind turbine in the school grounds to power heating and lighting. Ardrossan is home to an onshore wind farm owned by renewable energy company Airtricity, who support the pupils in their venture. Also pledging support for wind power are local champions up and down the country.

Kintyre community worker Stuart Irvine, former Secretary & Treasurer of the Clyde Fisherman's Association for Carradale and Chairman of the Carradale Harbour Users Group, commented:

"My experience of the development of wind power has been extremely favourable from a number of points of view. Firstly, they have not invaded the local scenery to anything like how people had imagined. The wind turbines have been strategically and tastefully placed in positions that do not detract from the natural beauty of Kintyre. The noise level is low, and in fact, the presence of the turbines has become a visitor attraction.

"The economy of Kintyre has been extremely fragile for a number of years due particularly to the large down-turn in commercial fishing. The presence of wind farms has contributed significantly to local commerce through the tourist trade."

Also, Councillor Margaret Munn from Ardrossan South Ward, said: "Wind energy is not something new, windmills have been used as a source of energy for centuries! I believe everyone has to take responsibility for our planet, and we know that by reducing emissions of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, we are reducing global warming.

"Indeed in my own area of Ardrossan, a wind farm has recently been built and it has been welcomed by the local community. Instead of criticism, there is only praise! They see the wind turbines as being pleasant to look at, elegant on the horizon, and some people say it has a calming effect on them!

"The turbines enhance the landscape, and children are fascinated by them and want to learn more about how they produce energy. The developer, Airtricity, has now funded energy lessons for the local schools. We even have tourists walking around the turbines, enjoying the peace, and the view from the hill."

John Hunt, farmer and landlord of Dun Law Wind Farm, BSc in Agriculture and a Nuffield Scholar, said: "I helped RES develop the Dun Law Wind Farm which was commissioned in August 2000. 26x660 kW turbines are spread at roughly 300 metre intervals throughout the central half of my grazing land. In these four years, there has never been the slightest sign of any disturbance, or any other hazard to the well-being of our livestock. In fact, both the sheep, of all ages, and any cattle we have had on the place, seem to positively like them. Typically they will shelter behind them at times, and lie in the hot sun.

"Myself, my staff and all our local contacts feel these turbines are aesthetically beautiful, as do 95% of all locals and visitors. I myself am planning to build a farmhouse to live in only 500m from the turbines.

"We farmers know that climate change is on us now and is progressing rapidly. Market and climate issues mean we must make our next shift urgently now. There are many renewable energy options available, but only wind power is already up and running in the short term, and at the moment is the most user-friendly of all the powers. So for the world's sake, and your own self interest, embrace wind now - we have little time left to waste."

Maf Smith, Chief Executive of Scottish Renewables, said: "The results of this poll reinforce what we already believed true – that ordinary Scots are strongly behind wind power, despite the claims of the vociferous minority anti lobby, which have been given a profile well beyond their credibility.

"Scotland will be able take a major slice of the 35,000 jobs that will be created by the Renewables industry in the UK by 2020. But this will only happen if we stand firm, let wind lead the way and deny a small but noisy minority the opportunity to dictate energy policy in Scotland.

"A lot of negative things are being said about wind energy, mainly by people with an axe to grind. But the fact is the wind industry expects 2005 to be a year of delivery. By the end of the year Scottish Renewables anticipates that 679MW of wind power will be operating in Scotland. This amount of capacity will save 1.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide every year, enough to fill Hampden Park 1153 times if you were to put a lid on it .

"That capacity will also provide enough power to supply the equivalent of 380,000 homes with electricity annually. This is an achievement worth shouting about, and the results of the poll show Scots appreciate this.

"Scotland already has all the natural attributes you could wish, with 25% of Europe's wind resources on tap. We are the Saudi Arabia of wind power. All we need now is the will to maximise wind's potential.

"The poll shows the popular support we have, and we urge ordinary Scots to sign up for the Embrace campaign, and hammer home the message that wind is the future."

Alison Hill of the BWEA, said: "Scotland has the best wind resource in Europe and ensuring we remain at the heart of the renewables revolution, led by wind power, is essential for us to meet our renewable and climate targets and develop new industrial opportunities for Scotland.

"Wind power is the most economically viable renewable energy technology available today and this opinion poll, like so many others, shows it is being developed with the support of the vast majority of Scots."

Scots can pledge support for wind at [www.embracewind.com](http://www.embracewind.com) and get their name on a turbine. The web site is also a source of factual information on wind power.

For more information on wind power go to [www.scottishrenewables.com](http://www.scottishrenewables.com) and [www.bwea.com](http://www.bwea.com).

[Click here](#) to read what Scottish celebrities have to say about wind power