

Media Release

On behalf of Energy & Sustainability Centre IOM (ESC)

---FINAL: UPDATED BY MMC ON MARCH 24th, 2022---

Zurich support Manx charity Energy & Sustainability Centre (ESC)

ESC aims to help IOM work towards achieving 2050 net-zero targets

Zurich on the Isle of Man are supporting a new initiative to help the Island achieve its climate change commitments.

The Energy & Sustainability Centre (ESC) is an independent, not-for-profit, Isle of Man charity led by earth scientist and Chair of the Manx Geological Survey, Dr Dave Quirk; former MHK, Ralph Peake; and environmental specialist John Boucher, who has a Master's degree in sustainable energy.

Dave Quirk thanked Zurich for their support, and went on to explain the mission and vision behind ESC's 'empowering a green future' motto. He said: "The climate crisis creates both global and local challenges. There is widespread public support for Isle of Man Government's 2050 net-zero targets. ESC welcomes the Government's view that the private and public sectors, and the wider community, must work together to achieve those targets. On the way to 2050, there are many important choices and decisions to make about technological, regulatory, planning and finance options. ESC – with our Manx background and a wealth of scientific and energy industry experience – aims to play a part in providing information and objective advice to support people in making the right choices. For example, there are steps which can be taken now which will reduce energy costs immediately whilst it is probably best to wait with others until the direction the Isle of Man takes with power supply is determined."

While the challenges ahead can seem daunting, he added, if the Isle of Man acts swiftly there are significant benefits to the economy and society. "ESC believes that the public and private sectors must work together to build a strong, commercially viable, renewable energy sector. In addition to the environmental benefits achieved by reducing dependence on fossil fuels, it also helps secure the Isle of Man's future as an international business centre. Companies are looking to access green electricity, not just to meet their climate pledges but also because prices are stable and the source is secure. New investment will flow to the Island if it can offer its own sustainable power."

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He continued: “Several forward-thinking island communities are already making this happen – Orkney, El Hierro and Samsø are all excellent examples of both the value and the pride that comes from home-grown renewable energy projects. With this in mind, one of ESC’s priorities is to facilitate discussion about the different low-carbon options and solutions.”

One of the ways ESC will do this is through educational, animated video films. ESC is in the process of creating two, short, educational videos, both sponsored by Zurich. One is about climate change, the other is a vision of the Isle of Man entirely powered by renewable energy.

Bruce Pearson, CEO, Zurich International Life, said: “Sustainability is a major focus for Zurich, both locally and globally across the Zurich Insurance Group. The Energy & Sustainability Centre is an important initiative which we’re proud to support. The videos will help to get the message out about the Isle of Man’s commitment to net-zero emissions, as well as provide an optimistic vision of the future to inspire the whole community to play a part in reaching our 2050 targets.”

Further information is available at www.energysustainabilitycentre.im

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

About Energy & Sustainability Centre IOM (ESC)

- An independent, not-for-profit, registered Manx charity.
- ESC is solely funded by private sector donations and receives no financial support from the Isle of Man Government.
- The charity’s objectives are endorsed by a number of political, academic and environmental leaders, including Chief Minister Alf Cannan MHK; Professor Peter Bridgewater from the University of Canberra and Sheffield Hallam University; and Leigh Morris, CEO of Manx Wildlife Trust.
- The ESC team are:
 - **Dr Dave Quirk**
Chairman of the Manx Geological Survey. He has a PhD in geology and is a specialist in energy and natural resources working as Visiting Scientist at DTU (Danish Technical University), a world leader in energy technologies. Dave has 35 years’ experience in the energy industry, including working for Shell and the UK Oil & Gas Authority. He has published and presented widely on natural resources, climate change and the energy transition.

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- **Ralph Peake**

As a Member of the House of Keys from 2015-2021, he has been closely involved in Government action on climate change. This has ultimately led to a historic bill committing the Isle of Man to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Prior to that he ran his own business for 25 years, specialising in energy efficient lighting and control systems. He is also a Member of the Chartered Management Institute.

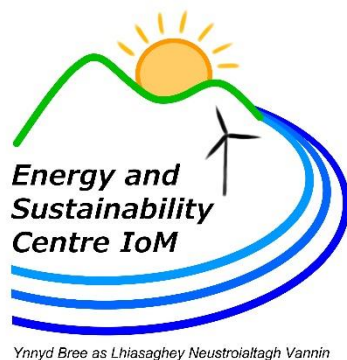
- **John Boucher MSc**

He has an MSc in sustainable energy and is a specialist in environmental protection. He previously worked in the oil industry as a research geoscientist and director of a small exploration consultancy firm. He has been an active member of various geological societies. John is a co-author of several papers on climate change mitigation.

IMAGES & CAPTIONS



ESC team members (left to right) John Boucher, Ralph Peake and Dr Dave Quirk.



Energy & Sustainability Centre (ESC).

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