

Education and Skills Development Programme – 2024 update

Funded by ScottishPower Renewables' Beinn an Tuirc 2 Windfarm Community Benefit Fund, the programme has continued to deliver Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) activities and increase awareness of the career and training opportunities available within the Mid Argyll and Kintyre area. Here are some of the highlights from the last 18 months:

STEM Activity Workbook (April 2023)

- The resource sets out to encourage young people's interest in STEM beyond the school environment, helping them identify where STEM skills and concepts influence our everyday lives through a series of activities and low or no cost challenges. The workbook was distributed to 190 P7 pupils via their primary school.



MAK (Mid Argyll and Kintyre) STEM Fest February 2024 Machrihanish Airbase

- Over 140 S2 students from Lochgilphead, Tarbert and Campbeltown were brought together to take part in MAK STEM Fest. This was a STEM focused careers event, aiming to keep the interest of Stem subjects alive and strong by highlighting the abundance of stem opportunities in their local area.
- Fourteen education establishments/employers/organisations came together to provide the students with 6 practical workshops (each student took part in one) and eleven "market place" stands showcasing STEM careers and education opportunities in Argyll and Bute.
- The teachers feedback highlighted a higher level of engagement from the students and that this was likely due to taking them away from their school environment and into a unique and local venue. Great effort was also made to ensure students with additional educational needs were included in the day and put provisions in place that the schools requested.



Chloe Burnett from Tarbert Academy – *"It was cool to see the different jobs you don't normally see. There were lots of outdoor jobs, not just sitting in an office."*

Noah Dawson - *"engineering workshop-it was fun and interesting to learn about all the things and joining stuff together. It taught me about what I want to be in the future because I was already thinking about engineering, so this has helped."*

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Stars 2024 Machrihanish Airbase May 2024

- We ran 3 workshops engaging directly with 75 students from 6 different primary schools. The students got stuck in with the construction of the Mars Rovers and trying to get them moving over the rocky surfaces.
- In the "Expo" we were able to engage with all of the attendees, which totalled 250 students. We had some positive conversations with students who had not been in the workshops, discussing their love of science and what they would like to do in the future.



Tarbert Academy Careers event March 2024

- We attended a whole school careers event at TALC in Tarbert hosted by the Developing the Young Workforce team. All students from the secondary school attended throughout the course of the day.
- We were able to show the students that there is a wide range of STEM related jobs in Argyll and Bute.

Summer Shows August 2024

- We once again returned to the three annual summer shows in the Mid-Argyll and Kintyre area. These once again proved a great chance to take STEM resources out into the community and engage with people of all ages, raising awareness of what we do to encourage STEM skills development amongst young people in the local community. A set of fun, free and engaging STEM challenges and resources were available to engage with.



Workshops delivered in September 2024 to the S1 students:

- We engaged with all of the S1 students (164) at the three high schools in Mid Argyll and Kintyre. The workshop challenged students to generate electricity using sources of wind, water and solar energy. Students looked at the way speed, distant and angle altered the electricity output.
- The staff and students enjoyed having a practical workshop where they could investigate renewable energy – these sparked interesting conversations about the best types of renewable energy for this area, and why we see so many wind turbines and solar panels in particular.

Moving Forward October - December 2024

Having recently completed all school workshops for our target area, we are now focussing on the following activities until the end of the year:

- Draft 1 of the next workbook is underway with an aim to print and distribute in March/April 2025
- MACC Base at Machrihanish has been provisionally booked for Wednesday 26th February for 2025 MAK STEM Fest.
- We are liaising with schools to make arrangements and will soon be contacting local STEM employers and educational organisations for support in both market place attendance and workshop delivery.
- We are working closely with Developing the Young Workforce again this year for both supporting this event and providing ongoing advice in many areas.
- We are currently planning the content for the 2025 workshops.

We would like to ask the Community Council that if they would like to attend MAK STEM Fest and/or recommend local organisations and companies for us to invite, then please do let us know.

Education Officers, Katie and Suzy, remain open to invitations for attendance at any community council meetings (either online or in-person) to present, discuss or share updates on project activity going forward. Feel free to get in touch with them using the contact details on our [website](#).