

## 2 Background to BREESI

**The problem.** Greenhouse gases (eg carbon dioxide CO<sub>2</sub>) have warmed the earth's atmosphere causing our climate to change. If nothing is done to limit this heating effect, the very future of humanity on earth will be threatened. Carbon dioxide comes from burning fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas).

**The answer (Well, a key part of it anyway)** Change from reliance on fossil fuels for electricity generation, heating and transport. Move to renewable energy sources.

**What renewable energy sources?** There are several, including wave, tidal and geothermal, but wind and solar power are readily available and the most widely used renewable energy sources in Northern Ireland. *(see more information on renewables, local examples, data and their pros and cons in the appendix)*

**Who is doing anything about the problem?** For some time after the Industrial Revolution (when fossil fuel use grew dramatically) no-one realised the problem existed. The overwhelming scientific evidence for climate change and its causes has eventually led people and governments to action to try to prevent further damage.

**What is being done?** The 26th United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP 26) in Glasgow this November (2021) was to be a significant time for the nearly 200 participating countries to agree a global strategy to restrict the temperature rising more than 1.5°C above pre industrial levels.

**What is being done locally?** A decision was taken to encourage electricity generation from renewables by providing subsidies in the form of Renewable Obligation Certificates. This encouraged the development of many wind turbines (both single and grouped in wind farms) and many installations of photovoltaic (PV) panels (on dwellings and in groups in solar farms). Northern Ireland has achieved 45% of electricity generated from renewables.

The Energy Strategy due for release later this year (2021) is expected to have a target of NI reaching net zero by 2050, ie the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> released (emitted) will equal the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> absorbed (sequestered) in various ways.

**What has this to do with Drumlin Co-op and the BREESI programme?**

Drumlin Co-op came into existence when citizens who recognised the need for and benefits of clean energy invested financially to purchase and install its six turbines. As a community owned Co-op, emphasis was always placed on community benefit – especially education about the value of renewables and the ways to use them. BREESI is Drumlin Co-op's primary school education programme

**What can any one individual do?**

- ✓ Find out more about the problem and how it can be solved.
- ✓ Get others involved. Share what you know with other people.
- ✓ Grasp opportunities like BREESI if that is possible for you or your school.
- ✓ Change what you do to reduce your energy use and to be more energy efficient.
- ✓ Get working together with others in a community energy project.