

## Sailing Close to the Wind with BWEA's Chairman Alan Moore

Alan Moore has worked in the electricity generation industry for more than thirty years in a wide range of roles. As MD of National Wind Power and Director of Renewables for RWE Innogy for six years, he was responsible for many pioneering initiatives including WindWorks, Juice, and the construction of North Hoyle, the UK's first major offshore wind farm. He is a member of the Distributed Generation Coordination Group and has been Chairman of the BWEA since early 2003. Recently retired from full-time employment, he works as a consultant and non-Executive Director of several companies working in the UK renewables industry, and is Co-Chair of the DTI's Renewables Advisory Board.

BWEA spoke to Alan to find out his thoughts on various aspects of the wind industry, and to hear what life is really like after retirement.

### What do you consider to be the top three priorities for you as Chairman of BWEA?

First of all, putting the wind industry on the front foot in its dealings with the media, the public, Government and our opponents. Too often in the past we have been reacting rather than taking the lead. Our Embrace campaign is the high profile side of that objective, but much more is going on behind the scenes.

Ensuring that the RO Review arrives at the correct conclusions to ensure that the onshore and offshore wind industry, the marine technologies, and renewables in their entirety are able to prosper and grow in a commercial and regulatory environment that gives confidence to developers, financiers and other stakeholders.

In the short term we have some particular challenges with offshore



BWEA Chairman Alan Moore © npower renewables

wind which deserve especial attention if it is to flourish.

### What do you see as the biggest challenges for the wind industry in delivering its share of the 2010 target, as laid out in the recent National Audit office report on renewable energy?

We need to be seen to delivering substantial generating capacity. Onshore, whilst it isn't easy, consents are coming through. However it is taking longer and longer to move from consent to construction: we have to reverse that trend. Offshore, where BWEA and the NAO believe half of our 2010 capacity will come from, the reasons for building delays for Round 1 have to be understood and dealt with, and for Round 2 there is much to be done to make the investment risks financeable and to satisfy our wide range of stakeholders.

For both sectors, grid capacity presents major challenges. In nationalised industry days, the CEGB built major transmission lines to wherever the power generation was, be that Dounreay, Anglesey, Pembroke or the Aire Valley. In the future much of our energy will come from renewables in similarly remote spots, onshore and offshore. We need a regulatory regime which recognises that this infrastructure is for the good of the nation (and the consumer!).

### What is your vision for the wave and tidal sector out to 2010 and 2020?

The recent allocation of £50 million is a tremendous incentive for this sector which I believe is set to follow wind on its way to commercial reality. The learning which wind

can share with the marine sector is already bearing fruit - I have direct experience of that. Some devices are out front and deserve much credit for that. The additional funding will enable them to get pre-commercial clusters of devices in the water and we shall soon learn who will be the winners - and let's be frank, who will be the losers. However we need to recognise that there are more than fifty devices in development and there has to be room for some of these to come up on the rails; research funding is available at this stage for them. So, by 2010 I expect to see perhaps half a dozen pre-commercial devices in the water some with 2-3 years operating experience. While my crystal ball is just as murky as most, by 2020 I hope we will see our first gigawatt of marine devices, wave and tidal, contributing to our renewable generation. But the industry has much to do to achieve these visions. The very positive attitudes I see within the companies and Government persuades me that it can be done. The trade associations will play a lead role in representing and guiding the emergent companies.

### 79% of people in the UK support wind energy, but there is still a vocal minority out there who oppose the technology. What would you say to a person who lives near a proposed wind farm development and is in two minds about the scheme?

The first thing I'd say is "Go and visit a real wind farm, and make up your own mind! Talk to the local people". In my experience that normally provides the most positive evidence. I remain convinced that the underlying reason behind most objectors' arguments are related to the visual aspects of wind farms; most of the (often ill-informed) additional arguments are spurious and used simply to bolster their visual objections. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder - and there are very many who regard wind turbines as elegant - so we don't need to be too defensive. I could spend all day answering this question - and on occasion I have done so! - but the other powerful

argument I use is this: I believe that climate change is an enormous threat and it's happening right now. Solving the problem will require many actions but few, if any, can be taken as quickly as building wind farms. If in twenty years time we have developed a better answer, that's fantastic. We can take down the turbines and you'll hardly know they've been there (few other solutions can say that, with the exception of all-important energy efficiency). Let the next generation make that decision; meanwhile wind power is the best option we have today - and we can't wait!

**Microgeneration is gaining increasing political and public support: what is your vision for small scale wind?**

I'm really pleased to see that micro-generation is gaining ground in all its forms. I think a significant move was made when Ofgem told the Distribution Companies that "business as usual is not an option". Much has been put in place prior to this year's Distribution Price Review to encourage small scale distributed generation. We all know that in cost terms small wind can't compete with large scale wind farms. However they work in different markets. Microgeneration directly displaces end user consumption where energy prices are several times wholesale prices. Together with ROCs which can now be aggregated,

At the annual BWEA Regatta © npower renewables



the income stream looks potentially attractive. I anticipate that electricity supply companies will be working with turbine manufacturers to provide integrated 'green energy packages' to a niche market within the domestic and commercial retail sector. Of course this means that wind turbines will be very close to buildings and I think the most successful devices will be those that are both elegant and quiet.

**What part of your job as a Chairman of BWEA have you enjoyed the most (and what part have you least liked if any)?**

That's easy! The most enjoyable part has been working with so many likeable, enthusiastic and well-motivated people in the industry and Government - and of course inside BWEA and its Board itself. You know who you are!

It has given me great pride to see the Association nearly double in size so that we have been able to fund and recruit a team, led by Marcus (who deserves special mention!) which is able to contribute energetically and expertly in every area of the wind and marine business. Although not directly linked to my Chairmanship, during this period I have seen the enormous influence that the RO's introduction has made on the industry and the building of the first large offshore wind farms. Nobody can say it's been boring! Finally, and I do claim some credit for this, the Association's move to embrace the marine technologies was a good move at the right time and I have enjoyed getting that initiative into being. Oh!... and the BWEA Regattas of course!

What have I least liked? Nothing immediately springs to mind. Perhaps the relentless need to deal, over and over again, with the myths and ill-informed commentators but that's part of the job!

As most already know I intend stepping down as Chair at the Board elections in May. Having retired from the 'day job' at npower renewables

last year I recognise that I am getting further from the cutting edge. I believe that the Chair must be totally familiar with day-to-day issues so that judgements can be made about priorities and lobbying stances - that's not easy over an internet link. So I shall be happy to pass the baton on to my successor, whoever that may be, confident that they will be working with a great team of people - the best! - and leading a great industry whose time has come.

**"If he's not working or sleeping, he's sailing!"**

**In addition to being the Chairman of BWEA, you have several other Directorships and Chairmanships; can you give us a key list?**

- Co-Chair of DTI's Renewables Advisory Board.
- I was at the DGCG, but it has just completed its work and dissolved.
- Chairman of the COWRIE offshore wind fund board.
- Non-executive Board Member of Ventus VCT Ltd (subsidiary of Climate Change Capital).
- Non-executive Board Member of MPI Ltd (ex Mayflower Energy).

**And lastly, is there anything you would like to add?**

For the last eight years my life has been entirely driven by the wind. As my wife would have told you "If he's not working or sleeping, he's sailing!". Well, after May, although not disappearing from the scene completely, I'm hoping to rearrange my priorities. Who knows, Maggie might be able to say "When he's not sailing or sleeping, he's working!" □