



"The most important piece of the puzzle though is teamwork. Teamwork and having a curious and collaborative mindset are the most valuable commodities we have in the O&M Hub. Almost 18 months on from a significant change to the working arrangements for a lot of colleagues, things are beginning to settle down. Across the site in Great Yarmouth, the Greater Wash mindset is shining through. Although we have separate shareholders across the Dudgeon and Sheringham Shoal Offshore Wind Farms, we have the support of common facilities, vessels and resources, which is a great starting point."

Sheringham Shoal update from Great Yarmouth O&M Hub

In September 2022, Colin Galer became the Plant Manager of the Sheringham Shoal Offshore Wind Farm, and in a recent interview for this newsletter, he said:

"Having been part of the original Sheringham Shoal team during construction, commissioning and early operations and maintenance, it is a great pleasure for me to now have full responsibility for the wind farm as we enter the second half of the asset's design life. Taking this position comes with a steep learning curve and no time to 'settle in'. There is a lot of work to do and the time to do it is now!"

"The key deliverable is to continue to maximise value from the asset whilst ensuring SAFETY is our number one priority. This means continuing to perform critical and highly valuable preventative maintenance whilst maximising production with a mindset of 'zero harm' to people and the environment."

"The new operational model for the Greater Wash centres around an outlook of continuous improvement, taking all opportunities to deliver such improvements. Working with experienced and professional contractors to deliver campaign-based scopes and specialist work is key to the overall delivery. 2023 will see a main component exchange project which will feature the use of a Jack Up Vessel and up to 3 or 4 additional Crew Transfer Vessels for most of this summer, together with multiple other visitors to site. It is going to be a very busy summer."

Colin Galer concluded by saying: "I am proud to be part of such a competent and committed immediate and extended team in Great Yarmouth. I see great improvement potential for both these assets as we continue working from the Equinor O&M Hub in Great Yarmouth" 



 Colin Galer at the 2022 Sheringham Shoal Community Fund celebration
Image: Steve Norris Photography

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In Examination – Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Extension Projects

Since 2018 Equinor has been progressing the development of the Sheringham Shoal Extension Project (SEP) and the Dudgeon Development Project (DEP) as the operator, and an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for both projects was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) in September 2022.

In October 2022 PINS confirmed that it had accepted the DCO application for Examination and, following the Preliminary Meeting held at Blackfriars Hall in Norwich, the Examination process commenced on 17 January 2023. It will continue until 17 July 2023 and full details of this process can be found on the PINS website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/Eastern/Sheringham-and-Dudgeon-Extension-Projects/>



The route of the proposed onshore cable corridor through Norfolk

Attending the second series of the Examining Authority (ExA)’s Public Hearings in Norfolk at the end of March 2023, Equinor’s Project Director Kari-Hege Mørk said:

“This is the first time that two separate offshore wind farm projects – the Sheringham Shoal Extension Project and the Dudgeon Extension Project – have been brought together in a single Development Consent Order application, which introduces an additional level of complexity into the Examination.”

At the end of the Examination process, the ExA has three months to write a report on its findings and make its recommendations to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, who will then determine the Development Consent Order, hopefully by early 2024

Creating opportunities....

The rapidly developing offshore wind energy industry is creating an exciting range of opportunities for businesses, communities and individuals across East Anglia, of which these are just a snapshot.

... for UK and international employment



Georgie Woolf began her role in the Equinor Graduate scheme for the Mechanical Engineering team in September 2022, working on Offshore Wind, based at the Great Yarmouth O&M site. She said:

“The Great Yarmouth team were so welcoming and the supportive nature of Equinor’s company culture made it very easy to settle in. I have now started my second rotation for Equinor in Business Development at the London office, which has been a great fast-paced experience.”

Georgie has visited Norway at various times whilst working in the UK, and as from April 2023 she will be living in Norway, working with the Equinor team in Oslo, for her second rotation.

... for skills, training, apprenticeships and work experience

Work experience visits play an important role in many students’ decision making processes regarding their future career directions, and two students from East Norfolk VI Form College and one from St Dominic’s 6th Form, London were able to enjoy a work experience week at the Equinor O&M Hub in late 2022.

As well as visiting the warehouse and the control room, the students went aboard the Service Operations Vessel (SOV) Esvagt Njord during its bi-weekly port visit, learning more about the working routines and on-board life of the offshore technicians who work from and live aboard the vessel on a 2 weeks on/2 weeks off basis.



Students (from L to R) Martha, Daisy and Kate with Michelle Falk Poulsen, Chief Officer and Second in Command of the SOV ‘Esvagt Njord’

... in the local economy and its supply chain



Tidal Transit’s ‘Ava Sofie’

Tidal Transit’s crew transfer vessels are purposed-designed for the offshore wind farm industry, and its growing fleet of vessels is in high demand from many of the offshore wind farm developers and operators working in the UK’s coastal waters.

Based in North Norfolk, Tidal Transit has been chartering its vessels to the Sheringham Shoal Offshore Wind Farm since 2012, and its latest charter contract started in April this year which sees its vessel ‘Ava Sofie’ sailing from Great Yarmouth to support maintenance work in the Sheringham Shoal field off the coast of Norfolk.

Commenting on this latest charter contract, Tidal Transit’s Leo Hambro said: “I was recently asked what has been the impact on our business of working with Equinor and its wind farm assets. As at the end of 2022, the Sheringham Shoal Offshore Wind Farm had accounted for 29% of our charter days across our fleet, so this is a commercial relationship which has made a significant contribution to the growth of our business.”

... for tourism

The Sheringham Shoal Offshore Wind Farm Visitor Centre was opened in the Sheringham Museum building in 2011. It is situated on the seafront in the North Norfolk seaside town of Sheringham, from where there are impressive views of the wind farm on a clear day. Over the last 12 years it has become a much-visited tourist attraction and education centre



From the Norfolk Stakeholder Manager’s diary



A look at the range of presentations given and events attended to be found in the diary of Equinor’s Norfolk Stakeholder Manager Susan Falch-Lovesey indicates the wide spectrum of Norfolk life to which Equinor and the Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farms are contributing.

January 2023: Little Barningham Parish Council Meeting – many of Norfolk’s Parish Councils in the villages along the onshore cable route of the proposed Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm Extensions Projects (SEP and DEP) have been keen to learn about the cable construction works. Accompanied by colleagues Jason Sparks and Nigel Tompkins, Susan provided a project update and presentation for Councillors and local residents.

February 2023: Hethel Innovation Algae Innovation Platform – seaweed farming could become an important industry for Norfolk over the coming years, so Susan’s presence at this event helps develop an understanding of the way in which offshore wind developers/operators and tomorrow’s North Sea seaweed farmers can become good neighbours.

March 2023: Norfolk and Suffolk Skills and Careers Festival – this Festival was attended by around 7,500 students, many of whom were keen to learn more about offshore wind energy career opportunities. Susan joined colleagues from the offshore wind energy sector (East Wind) to outline some of the many possibilities now available in Equinor for Norfolk’s young people.

There will be more extracts from Susan’s diary in future editions of this newsletter

Community Funds Update

STEM initiative expands

The Dudgeon Community Fund introduced a new pilot funding programme – the Dudgeon STEM Skills and Employability Fund for Younger People – in late 2022, aimed at supporting groups of younger people in the Great Yarmouth, North Norfolk and Breckland regions of Norfolk to achieve their STEM skills and employment aspirations.

Numerous reports on skills gaps in Norfolk have highlighted groups of young people and young adults, aged 30 years and under, which are underrepresented in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) education and training initiatives. These groups include women and girls, young adults struggling to access work, early school leavers and those leaving care.

Grant applications for a highly innovative range of STEM based projects were received by Norfolk Community Foundation on behalf of the Dudgeon Community Fund; these included:

- providing an entry route into STEM subjects through creative media
- sixth form workshops covering seasonal related STEM topics including a dye garden in springtime, remanufacturing tourist industry plastics over the summer and solitary bee cocoon sessions in the winter
- setting up a tree nursery and wildlife meadow for learners with additional needs
- an Aspirations Project for vulnerable groups including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

The grant awards for the STEM for Schools Programme for the 2023/24 academic year will be announced in May/June 2023.

www.norfolkfoundation.com 

Grants continue for North Norfolk projects


The Sheringham Shoal Community Fund was established in 2010 and by the end of 2022 it had awarded grants of £1,107,915 to 122 community projects in North Norfolk.

During 2022, a project which had received funding support from the Sheringham Shoal Community Fund in 2020 was finally launched.

Wheelyboat 'Poppy' is a wheelchair accessible small ferry boat, operated by volunteers from the Norfolk Charitable Trust, which enables less-able members of the community to access the beautiful marine environment of Blakeney Harbour. Poppy made 23 trips during 2022 taking passengers around the harbour, and during 2023 the Norfolk Charitable Trust is planning to operate an expanded timetable offering over 63 possible trips.



■ Wheelyboat Poppy in Blakeney Harbour
Image: Alban Donohoe

Further grant applications will be considered at the May and November 2023 grants panel meetings. www.norfolkfoundation.com 

Contact details and more information:

Equinor is the operator of both the Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farms, and the Operations and Maintenance base for each wind farm is located at:

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Sheringham Shoal is owned by Equinor, Equitix and Green Investment Group through Scira Offshore Energy Limited

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Dudgeon is owned by Equinor, Masdar and China Resources through Dudgeon Offshore Wind Limited.

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