



Great Grimsby Transformation – Offshore Winds of Change

Offshore wind played a huge role in the recent Climate Change Committee’s report on recommendations for UK Government on how to tackle climate change; with recommended build out plans of at least 75GW by 2050. But not only does this clean resource provide green power, as an industry it has the power to transform coastal communities across the UK.

My hometown, Grimsby, a declining fishing town in North-East England, has grabbed hold of the unique opportunity that offshore wind as a modern industry brings, reclaiming its maritime heritage and once again taking advantage of the natural assets and geographic position that put the Great into Great Grimsby for hundreds of years.

The offshore wind industry has been rapidly growing in Grimsby over the past decade with firms such as Ørsted, global leader in the industry, playing a key part in the story. Only six years ago the local newspaper reported for the first time about the firm’s huge investment in the Port declaring the creation of around 30 jobs for the Westernmost Rough offshore wind farm. Now in 2019 we are building the world’s biggest offshore wind farms off the Yorkshire coast and they will be operated from our state of the art East Coast Hub in Grimsby. Our facility is the largest operations and maintenance hub of its kind representing an investment of over £14 million and is the place of work for over 300 people - 10 times the figure originally reported. The Hub has already had its first expansion, and having invested a total of £1bn in the region, we have demonstrated our commitment to the town for the long-term.

I’ve grown up in Grimsby, and I can say first hand the town has experienced some challenging times, but out of this has come resilience and willingness to adopt a new industry and adapt to change. And it’s paying off; new career opportunities are becoming available, many of which require skills already held by many in the area. Over 80% of our staff live within an hour’s drive, and this clean tech industry promises long-term well paid roles, and new opportunities for those in the surrounding area.

“Grimsby is redefining itself as an operations and maintenance centre of excellence for offshore wind farms”

With hundreds of highly skilled and diverse job roles already created, and thousands more through the supporting supply chain that has grown around this industry in the region, there is a feeling of positivity and promise for the future as the town is given careers to aspire for once again.

Young people are starting to recognise this exciting new industry with hundreds of applications flooding in for Ørsted’s apprenticeship scheme which launched in 2017, offering an opportunity to get a foothold in the industry and train to be wind turbine technicians. Now in its second year, we’ve welcomed our first female apprentice and our first recruits are taking their first year of training to the turbines offshore.

In the past year the town’s Royal Dock has seen two purpose-built Service Operation Vessels (SOVs) displayed with their home Port ‘Grimsby’ on their hulls, the Edda Passat and Edda Mistral. These vessels demonstrate the innovation in the industry as our wind farms become bigger and further from shore and are our logistics are optimising.



Grimsby has nurtured the industry and the growth felt in the town can be attributed to the entrepreneurship of its people and businesses as the local supply chain made up of micro businesses, to medium enterprises to multinationals have diversified and offered their services and products to the town's new opportunity. Local catering providers Deli-licious, facilities managers Lightowler and shipping agents Carlbom Shipping and Arthur Smith are great examples.

Ørsted is a global company with strong local ties. Since its arrival, Ørsted has become part of the community where it operates its business as the town's biggest inward investor. More than £9m of funding has been made available through the 'East Coast Community Benefit Fund' for the next 20 years for inspirational community projects. Alongside this, Ørsted are also main sponsors for the annual 'Ørsted Great Grimsby 10k' running race with over 4,000 participants and board members on the 'Greater Grimsby Town Deal' regeneration project showing commitment to the town and its future.

Grimsby is redefining itself as an operations and maintenance centre of excellence for offshore wind farms, once again attracting the same global attention it received when it was known as the 'World's premier fishing port'. Delegations from Japan, America, Taiwan, China, Europe and more have been welcomed to Grimsby as the town's knowledge and expertise is golden for countries who are starting their journey in this industry; looking to Grimsby as the model.

Not disregarding the positivity, pace of growth and transformation we have already felt, the offshore wind industry is arguably still in its infancy in the town. Currently, our East Coast operations power just over one million homes with clean energy, by 2022 this number will triple as the world's largest offshore wind farms Hornsea One and Two join the portfolio taking the homes powered figure to over three million. These offshore wind farms have a life span of 25 years and with a pipeline of projects off the East Coast, this new pathway for Great Grimsby promises a bright future.

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