

Northern Ireland Highlights 2020/21

NORTHERN IRELAND HIGHLIGHTS 2020/21

Working for Northern Ireland

The Crown Estate manages marine and land assets in Northern Ireland. This report provides a summary of the highlights and main developments for the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Our long-term success relies on our relationships with all of our stakeholders, from our customers and partners through to the communities we serve. We aim to bring a partnership approach to these relationships to achieve the best outcomes for everyone. Building strong collaborative relationships is also central to understanding our stakeholders' needs.

The 2020/21 financial year has been a year dominated by COVID-19. We are acutely aware of the pressures the pandemic has put on our stakeholders and society in general, and of the resulting economic challenges some of our customers and operations in Northern Ireland continue to face. Our approach has been to maintain a dialogue with our customers and partners during this difficult time to help navigate the operational challenges brought about by the pandemic.

A more detailed account of our UK-wide operational response relating to our customers and stakeholders can be found on page 36 of our latest Annual Report online at: thecrownestate.co.uk/Annual-Report-2021

Areas of responsibility

We are responsible for managing Northern Ireland's seabed out to 12 nautical miles. Our interests therefore include renewable energy, telecommunications, power cables and pipelines. In addition, we hold the rights to the resources on the continental shelf, such as natural resources and offshore energy, but excluding fossil fuels. We also manage around 65 per cent of the Northern Irish foreshore and riverbed and as such, have interests in aquaculture: oyster, mussel and seaweed cultivation, as well as coastal interests including commercial ports, recreational harbours, marinas, jetties, wharves and slipways.

We manage the rights to deposits of gold and silver, known as Mines Royal. There is one Mines Royal lease in place in Northern Ireland, along with a further thirteen Mines Royal option agreements with five companies.

Working in partnership

Our approach to asset management in Northern Ireland is grounded in a partnership approach which sees us collaborate with a diverse range of organisations to share knowledge, data and expertise. This includes the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), the Department for the Economy (DfE), industry and a wide range of partners.

The Offshore Wind Evidence and Change programme formally launched in December 2020 with a charter signed up to by 26 organisations. It is a pioneering programme led by The Crown Estate in partnership with the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. The programme will gather data and evidence to drive forward the sustainable and coordinated expansion of offshore wind to help meet the UK's commitments to low carbon energy transition whilst supporting clean, healthy, productive and biologically diverse seas.

To provide oversight and direction we have established a programme steering group which includes for Northern Ireland the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the Department for the Economy. Members provide their expertise and resources to identify, support and deliver strategic research and data projects. Over a five-year period, these projects will provide essential insights to help the sector better understand and address cumulative environmental impacts and interactions with other industries and activities, both around the coast and offshore.

We continue to support on the development of the Department for the Economy's energy strategy.

Tidal

There is currently one project seeking to develop and make use of tidal stream resources of Northern Irish waters, DP Marine Energy Limited with DEME Blue Energy at Fair Head (100MW), currently under Agreement for Lease from the 2012 Northern Ireland Leasing Round.

Coastal estate

We continue to work with partners and communities along our coastal interests in Northern Ireland on a number of projects. During the year we granted a long lease to Northern Ireland Electricity Networks on lands adjacent to the Kilroot power station to assist in the power station's existing operations and its long-term future management.

The Aquaculture industry in Northern Ireland is well established and demand continues to develop mainly bivalve (mollusc) cultivation, for example a new lease has been agreed for the cultivation of oysters on trestles in Larne Lough.

Mines Royal

In our role as the manager of rights to deposits of gold and silver, we consider applications from responsible parties for extraction and mining, and where appropriate grant options or leases. Flintridge Resources' underground gold mining operation in County Tyrone received planning permission in 2015. After a period of care and maintenance, and following a capital injection, underground mining is scheduled to resume shortly. Dalradian Gold's planning application for the Curraghinalt Project, which is located in the counties of Tyrone and Londonderry, was submitted in November 2017. It has been announced that the planning application will be the subject of a Public Local Inquiry.

Sharing knowledge

The Marine Data Exchange (MDE) is a publicly accessible free data archive for anyone who is interested in the marine space. It stores, manages and shares offshore survey data collected by our customers. The MDE holds two terabytes of offshore survey data collected in waters off Northern Ireland, covering a variety of survey campaigns, including environmental monitoring and tidal resource assessments, from offshore wind and tidal stream projects. 65% of this data is publicly available to access and download for free. The database has been recently redeveloped and can be accessed online at: thecrownestate.co.uk/MDE

Financial highlights (unaudited)

£1.7m

Revenue by activity 2020/21

£20.8m

Property value by activity
as at 31 March 2021

The Crown Estate in Northern Ireland

	The Crown Estate N. Ireland Year ended 31 March 2021 £m	The Crown Estate N. Ireland Year ended 31 March 2020 £m	The Crown Estate Total Year ended 31 March 2021 £m	The Crown Estate Total Year ended 31 March 2020 £m	The Crown Estate N. Ireland Increase/(decrease) from prior year %	The Crown Estate N. Ireland Percentage of Total %
Revenue	1.7	2.0	452.8	476.0	(15.0)	0.4
Gross Surplus	1.7	2.0	341.9	389.4	(15.0)	0.5
Property value	20.8	19.8	13,696.2	12,522.1	5.1	0.2
Capital Investments	-	-	78.9	458.5		
Capital Receipts	-	-	148.5	356.5		

Revenue by activity	The Crown Estate N. Ireland Year ended 31 March 2021 £m	The Crown Estate N. Ireland Year ended 31 March 2020 £m	Property value by activity	The Crown Estate N. Ireland Year ended 31 March 2021 £m	The Crown Estate N. Ireland Year ended 31 March 2020 £m
Aquaculture	0.1	0.1	Aquaculture	1.4	1.3
Cables/pipelines	0.7	0.6	Cables/pipelines	5.9	5.4
Coastal	0.8	1.2	Coastal	13.2	12.9
Minerals	0.1	0.1	Minerals	0.2	0.1
Renewables	-	-	Renewables	0.1	0.1
Total	1.7	2.0	Total	20.8	19.8

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