

Airtricity invites you to discover the power of wind at Slieve Divena Wind Farm

Northern Ireland's Cheapest Home Electricity Supplier hosts family fun day for Global Wind Week, Saturday 19 June 2010

The community of Co. Tyrone is being invited to discover the power of wind this coming Saturday, 19th June 2010, when Airtricity – Northern Ireland's newest and cheapest home electricity supplier – hosts a Family Fun Day at Slieve Divena Wind Farm. The event, which is based at Kelly's Inn Hotel in Ballygawley and is open to the public from 11am to 3pm, will provide the local community with an opportunity to experience the wind farm and the benefits of wind energy up close.

This weekend's Family Fun Day at the 12-turbine Slieve Divena Wind Farm coincides with this year's Wind Week 2010, the annual UK-wide celebration of wind energy, which runs all this week and promotes wind energy as a clean, infinite, non-fossil fuel energy source. The Slieve Divena Family Fun Day is being hosted by Airtricity and its parent company SSE (Scottish and Southern Energy plc), Northern Ireland's largest generator and developer of renewable energy.

This Saturday's Slieve Divena Family Fun Day promises an entertaining and informative event for all ages. Visitors will be invited to embark on escorted site tours of Slieve Divena where they will experience energy made better by SSE at close range, and explore how a wind turbine works from inside the base of a turbine. Young visitors to the wind farm will be invited to 'touch a turbine' and leave a painted handprint on the base of a turbine to mark the occasion.

Shuttle buses will operate to and from the wind farm every 15 minutes, departing from Kelly's Inn at Ballygawley. Visitors to the wind farm are advised to wear sensible footwear and prepare for all weathers. Free parking will be available at Kelly's Inn (no access will be permitted at the wind farm to private vehicles.)

Other family fun activities at Kelly's Inn will include a free barbecue and refreshments, face painters and balloon modellers, and bouncy castles. A highlight of the event will be exciting, fun and interactive science and magic show presentations that will spark imaginative learning among all ages.

Visitors to the event will also be able to register to switch to Airtricity and save up to 14% on their home electricity costs – equivalent to 7 weeks free home electricity or a typical annual saving of £95 on their NIE Energy bills*. The company, which already supplies electricity to Northern Ireland businesses, is the first energy supplier to enter the market since Northern Ireland's domestic electricity market was 'opened' to competition in 2007. Visitors who want to make the better switch to Airtricity at the Slieve Divena Family Fun Day are advised to bring a copy of an electricity bill, a current meter read, and their bank account details with them.

The Slieve Divena Wind Farm is located just off the Omagh Road in Garvaghy, Co. Tyrone. The 30MW wind farm, which comprises 12 Nordex 2.5MW turbines, was completed in March 2009. The wind farm produces enough electricity to power over 16,000 homes and will prevent the release of between 27,000 and 65,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide each year.

The energy generated by SSE for Airtricity at Slieve Divena will help ensure that Northern Ireland meets its targets of 12% renewables by 2012 and the EU's mandatory 20% reduction in carbon emissions.

Each of the wind farm's 12 turbines is fully automated and can be operated remotely. They are variable pitch, variable speed machines which makes them more efficient and quieter. The turbines produce power in winds from 5mph to 50mph.

Editor's Notes:

1. *Households in Northern Ireland can now save £95 annually with Airtricity on their electricity bills. Customers with an annual electricity bill of £676 (inclusive of 5% VAT, based on typical annual consumption of 4,500 kWh) who switches to Airtricity's SmartSaver Online 14% electricity discount (eBill and Direct Debit) will pay just £581 – saving £95 annually.
2. Airtricity's up to 14% discounted electricity rates are based on comparison to regulated NIE Energy standard Quarterly-billed Home Energy rates (Domestic 24hr), valid to 30th September 2011. Up to 6% discounted SmartSaver Standard rates apply after introductory rate expires. No Standing Charges apply to Domestic 24hr rates. A cooling off period of 10 days applies before registration is finalised.

About Airtricity & SSE:

Airtricity is a wholly-owned division of the Top-30 FTSE 100-listed company SSE (Scottish and Southern Energy plc) Group, the broadest-based energy utility in Great Britain and Ireland, supplying electricity and gas to 9.35 million homes and businesses.

Airtricity is the first energy utility to enter the Northern Ireland domestic electricity supply market offering the most competitive discounts of up to 14% on NIE Energy electricity rates. Airtricity has been supplying over 10,000 business customers in Northern Ireland since 2002. In the Republic of Ireland, Airtricity supplies 200,000 customers with cheaper electricity. The company was named the Republic of Ireland's most reputable energy company in the recent Ireland RepTrak 2010 study.

SSE operates 6 wind farms powering Airtricity in Northern Ireland and is the No.1 renewable energy generator and developer in the region with 182MW in operation, in construction or with consent for development. The company operates a further 18 wind farms across the rest of the island, with an all-island total of over 700MW of renewable generation in operation, in construction or with consent for development.

SSE Renewables is responsible for the development and construction of SSE Group's portfolio of renewable energy projects in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Great Britain and Europe, including onshore and offshore wind, hydro, marine, biomass, and solar. SSE is the leading generator of renewable energy in the UK and Ireland, with over 2,200MW of renewable electricity generation capacity and a portfolio of over 15,000MW of renewable energy projects in construction, with consent or in development.