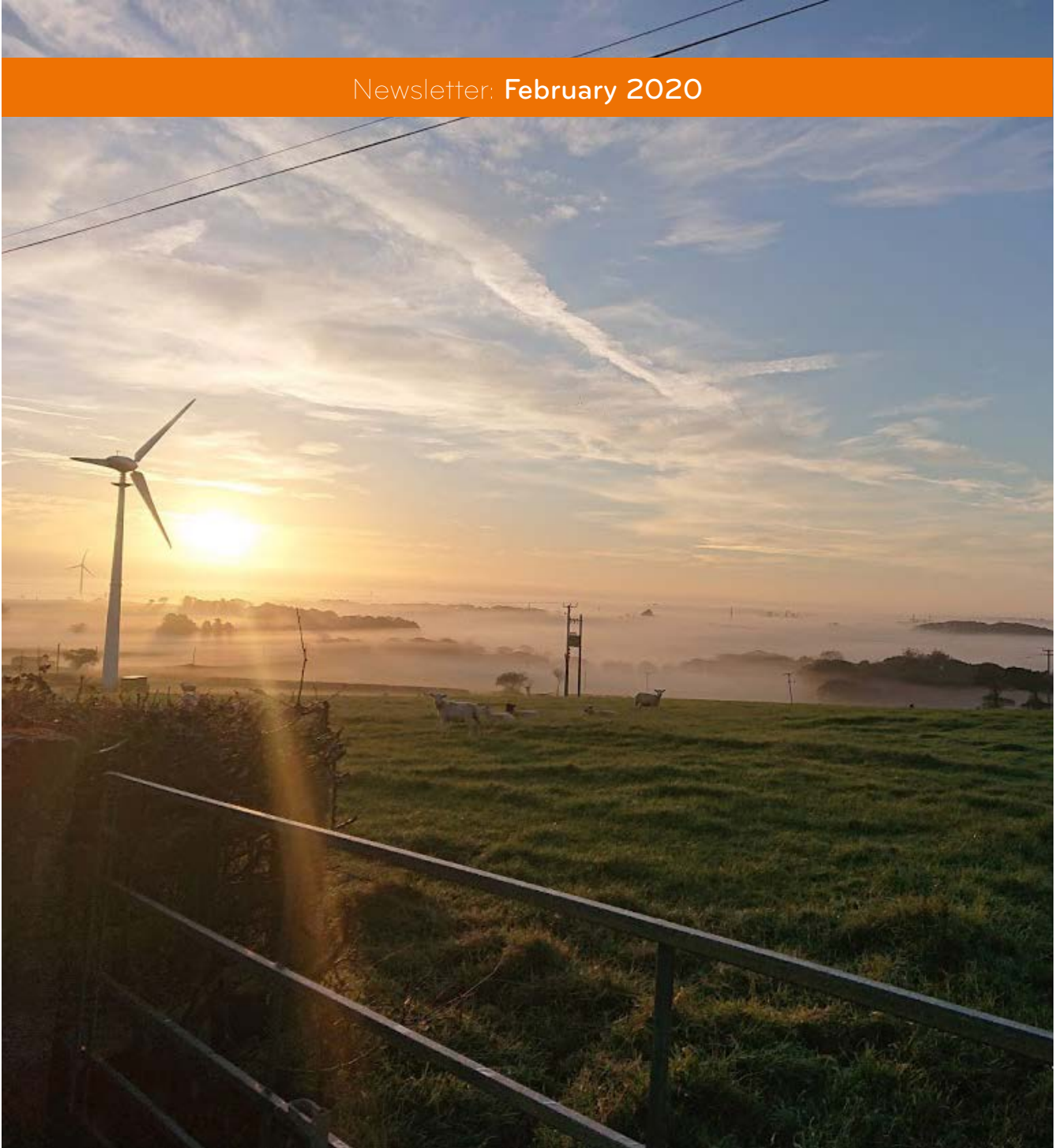




# Natural Generation

Energy for the future

Newsletter: February 2020



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01872 571700  
[www.naturalgen.co.uk](http://www.naturalgen.co.uk)

## Hello from all of us at Natural Generation Ltd, and welcome to our first newsletter of 2020.

We ended 2019 on a high note and this year is looking exciting too. I am very proud to announce that at the end of last year we hit a landmark figure by signing the 500th turbine onto one of our maintenance agreements, making us the clear leader in our field.

So I'd like to say a big thank you to all of our customers and staff for helping us reach this milestone. We know we couldn't have got here without you and we know what we have to do to stay here.

We brought in some new ways of doing things last year which we think are working better for the customer, but we are always looking to improve so if you have any thoughts please do let us know.

We're investing further in our staff and facilities, including moving two of our service bases to improve the time it takes us to reach our customers. In addition to expanding the workshop space at head office, we are relocating and upgrading our Scottish base into a full turbine repair and overhaul workshop, reducing turnaround times on major works, and we have added to our team to improve overall service.

The obligatory G59 upgrade window is open, so we strongly recommend you get in touch to discuss how and when this can be arranged for your equipment before the grants run out.

We rely on your feedback to tell us what we are doing well and what we can do better, so we are sending out a customer satisfaction survey (see later in the newsletter) and I would ask you to take the 5 minutes or so that it will take to complete it to help us improve our service further.

We're opening the doors of our head office on May 6th to allow customers and potential customers to see where we are, what we do and to meet our team face to face. We hope we might see you here.

If there's anything you want to talk about, please pick the phone up. I'll always make time to talk to you.

Thank you, once again, for your continued custom. We never take it for granted.  
Best wishes,

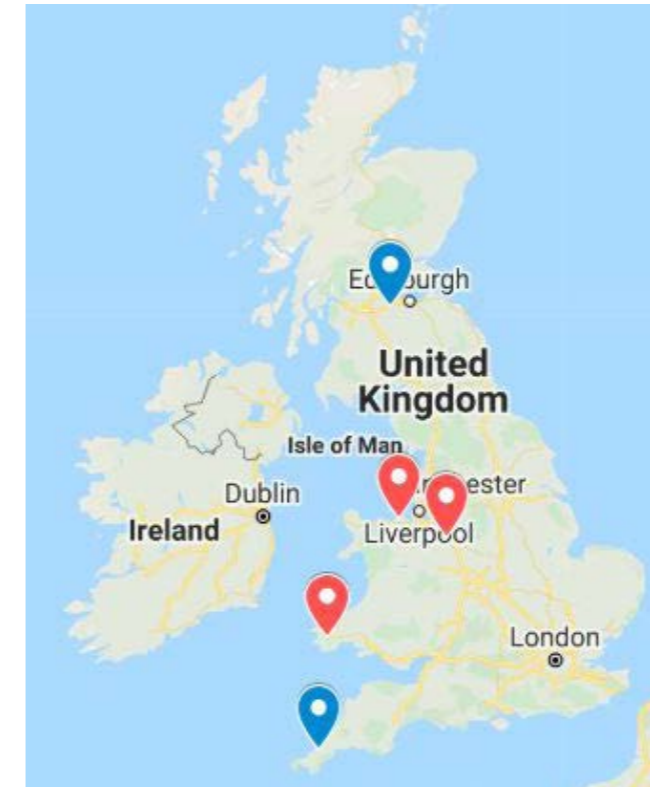
**Ivor Thomson**  
Managing Director



## NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

### New Scottish Workshop and Welsh Service Base

Here at Natural Generation we are always looking at how we can do things better. Recently, we've been taking a fresh look at how we serve the different regions of the UK and have made the decision to change some of our service locations to better reflect the locations of the turbines we maintain.



Firstly, we had outgrown our Scottish maintenance base so we're moving to a larger unit nearby in Bathgate. As well as providing a service location for spares and storage this will become a full service workshop for major turbine works such as bed frame changes, shaft upgrades and other rebuilds. With over 9000 square feet of inside and outside space within a secure fence, this will mean that turbines from the north of England and Scotland no longer need to be returned to our headquarters in Cornwall for work to be carried out. It will also provide office and training space for the Regional Manager and the team of Scottish Wind Technicians.

As a result, the Inverness base will be closing soon but our average time to reach customers in Scotland and the North will drop. Turnaround times for major works will be better too as there will be less transport time required.

At the same time, our Welsh service base is on the move. The main concentration of wind turbines in

Wales is in the windy West so we are moving our base in that direction. We will soon be opening a new unit in Haverfordwest which will act as a focus point for our Welsh engineers and provide a supply of spare parts for their quick access.

In both cases, our goal is to improve efficiency and minimise downtime for our customers. We're excited to be rolling these changes out and confident that our customers will appreciate the difference.

### The Midlands and Southern Region

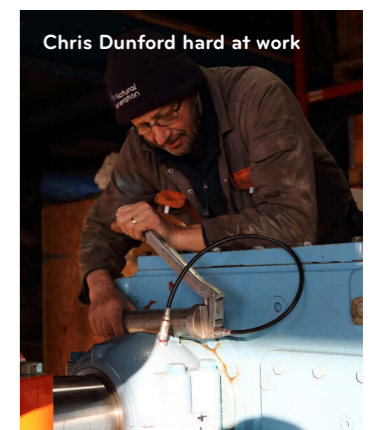
Our Wind Technicians throughout the region were kept very busy in the final quarter of last year, especially given the succession of winter storms that came barrelling in off the North Atlantic.



We have taken on extra workshop space next door to Head Office which has made room for our ever-growing spares inventory, and reduces the number of times we need to move turbines when they come in for major works and upgrades. The team is growing too (see later in the newsletter).

We have had up to 6 Endurance E3120 turbines in at one time for significant repairs, overhauls and upgrades. These have included upgraded bed frames, gearboxes overhauls and new or refurbished blades.

We're very proud of our team of workshop technicians. They have done well to get through such a busy period calmly and with such good humour. The additional space and technicians will help us manage the workload better and avoid bottlenecks from here on.





## G59 Grid Protection Relay Upgrades Grants running out!

**ACTION REQUIRED**

You should have had a letter from us already about the upgrade of the Grid Protection Device(s) attached to your power generation equipment. It is important that you make arrangements for this work to take place.

There are currently grants available for this work, but some of the grant funding deadlines have already passed.

We can simplify the process for you by applying for grants on your behalf.

**This upgrade is a LEGAL REQUIREMENT.**

Please get in touch to discuss the upgrade for your equipment, call us today on **01872 571700**

(It would be a help if you could have your EXport MPAN number to hand. We look forward to hearing from you.)



## TEAM ADDITIONS AND CHANGES



New Wind Technicians



Adrian Voyce



Sarah Nixon

**Natural Generation continues to grow. With over 500 turbines to look after, we have now added to our team of wind turbine technicians with a large intake of new faces in the past few months.**

We have also bolstered the service and procurement teams with the addition of Adrian Voyce and Sarah Nixon. It's a challenge to manage growth smoothly,

but we are very happy with how our new colleagues have settled in to their roles here. The extra capacity allows us to manage our resources better and reduce response times.

We're sad to say that Phil Taylor is leaving us. Nick Kenyon will be taking over as the Regional contact for the North, based in the new Bathgate facility.

## Training, Health and Safety

**We are committed to giving our staff the best tools and training to let them to do their jobs efficiently and safely.**

This is more than simply making sure we are operating legally. Training is part of our commitment to our staff and to making sure they can progress in their careers at Natural Generation.

A happy, valued and well qualified workforce is the best guarantee of top quality service for customers. We actively encourage our staff to consider additional training and in the past 3 months we have provided no fewer than 85 training days on a variety of subjects.

5 of these days were the PPE Safety Course that Chris Dunford attended in the Lake District in December. This now allows us to inspect and certify our PPE gear in-house which will save time and money in the future.

We are unusual in our sector in having committed to meeting the new Wind Turbine Safety Rules by the end of 2020. This underlines our commitment to safety and will allow us to take on projects involving larger turbine types.

## STORIES FROM THE FIELD

### A Christmas Cracker

**The Scotland regional team and their technicians on the ground pulled out all the stops to make Scottish farmer Barclay Hamilton's Christmas a happy one.**

Mr Hamilton's Northern Power Systems turbine developed a communications fault and automatically shut down on 23rd of December. With a windy couple of weeks forecast, the last thing the customer wanted was a turbine out of action over the holiday.

Natural Generation mobilised a team from our Glasgow base on Christmas Eve; by 4pm they had replaced the faulty part and the turbine has been up and running ever since.

Mr Hamilton said "I can't praise Bill Taylor\* and his team highly enough for getting the turbine running again so quickly. I didn't think I had much chance of a fix before the holiday kicked in which would have cost me quite a lot of money in turbine downtime, but they gave me a pleasant surprise".

Natural Generation purchased Northern Power Systems' service contracts portfolio about a year ago so this was the customer's first real experience of us.

"I'm not easily impressed" said Mr Hamilton, "but this was genuinely good service. Thanks to Natural Generation, Christmas got off to a good start."

A Northern Power Systems Turbine, similar to that belonging to Mr Hamilton.

\*Natural Generation's Works Manager for Scotland

If you'd like to know more about servicing and upgrade options for Endurance, NPS, Vestas and other turbine makes, please call us on 01872 571700.





## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

### Nathan Billings, Operations Director

Few people have been involved in the UK's renewable energy sector longer than our Ops Director Nathan Billings. From the early days of commercial scale renewable energy systems in the UK he has been at the sharp end of this fast-moving industry, and now brings this experience to bear on his role with Natural Generation.

Nathan is responsible for managing Natural Generation's service and engineering functions on a day to day basis, as well as planning for the future. It's his job to oversee how we are managing our resources and make sure the company is running as safely and efficiently as possible.

**"One of the key changes we have made over the past year or so is building up our in-house spares-holding and stock systems and we now have over £1m worth of parts on the shelf in our service bases. What that means for me is that we can send our teams with all the parts they need and expect them to finish the job in one go".**

The investment in spares has reduced the mileage per job by almost half, saving us and the customer time and money, and of course that's made a huge dent in our own annual CO2 emissions. "As passionate believers in the power of renewable technologies to reduce the carbon footprint of the human race, we do try to practise what we preach. This is a big step in the right direction."

The remote monitoring and control systems Natural Generation use also help in this endeavour.

**"I had a look through last month's data and in over 96% of cases when a turbine shut itself down, we managed to get it running again remotely while we made arrangements for a team to attend".**

Of course there are times when it would not be safe or sensible to override built in safety systems, but in the case of a minor sensor fault, for example, remote diagnosis can often be the difference between the turbine earning money and sitting idle.

**"For turbine owners, downtime is the killer. Between our monitoring team, regional teams and wind technicians on the ground, we're working hard to minimise it."**



Nathan Billings oversees all of Natural Generation's operations from Head Office

## Customer Satisfaction Survey

As Ivor mentioned in his introduction, we are always trying to improve how we look after our customers.

You can access the survey here...

We'd ask all our customers to take a few minutes to complete it so we can see how we are doing. Thank you in advance for your time. All comments welcome at any time.

## Natural Generation places huge order with Gale Force Design for 50 Endurance bedplates

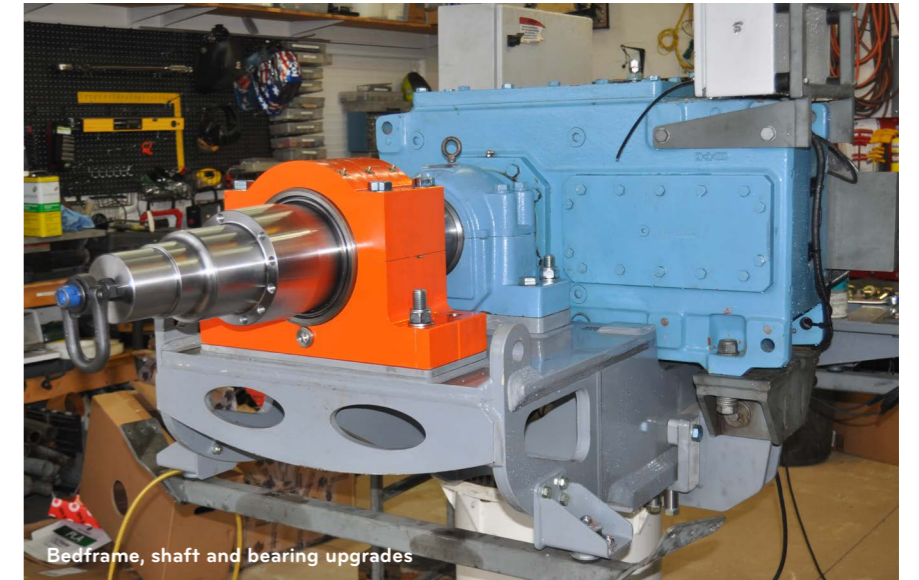
As owners of Endurance turbines will know, one of the common – and major – failures these machines suffer from is cracking of the bedframes.

This is the main structural component which mounts the nacelle onto the tower and to which all the internal equipment is attached. Failures are costly and dangerous of course, but just the risk of a breakage results in machines in built up areas being shut down on a precautionary basis.

With over 200 Endurance machines in the managed fleet, many owned by our parent company Constantine Wind Energy, the decision on supplier was a very important one. After looking at all the available options we have committed to an order with our equipment partner Gale Force Designs for 50 of their upgraded bedframes. The heavy gauge welded design is much stronger than the original box section part, with only a 20% weight increase.

Customers needing replacement bed frames can be confident they are extending the life of their machine long into the future with this top-quality product. While the machine is being rebuilt, it's also the ideal opportunity to upgrade the main shaft and bearings, and deal with any blade issues.

If you would like to know more about the upgrade options for the Endurance turbines, please do get in touch for some advice on your best course of action.



Bedframe, shaft and bearing upgrades

## Remote monitoring options improve again

Natural Generation is unique amongst O&M service providers in the UK's 50 – 500kW renewable energy market in that we provide genuine, active 24 / 7 / 365 monitoring of our customers' solar and wind systems. In fact, we include it as standard in all of our maintenance contracts.

When we say active, we don't mean a smart phone near the bed, we mean human operators on duty 24 hours a day every single day of the year. It may cost us more, but it gives us the edge when it comes to spotting faults early and minimising turbine downtime for our customers.



Natural Generation turbine monitoring specialist

For all of the 500+ turbines we have under maintenance contracts, our monitoring team is able to respond to false and minor alarms whilst watching out for the warning signs of bigger trouble ahead.

If you would like to know more about our remote monitoring service, please give us a call.





### Condition Monitoring Service

Over and above the standard monitoring service, Natural Generation has teamed up with industry leaders Turner Icenl to offer a Condition Monitoring System to wind turbine owners.

Using dedicated sensors attached to parts of the turbine, these systems "listen" for trouble in gearboxes and bearings and detect stresses in bed frames and shafts so that pre-emptive maintenance can be planned and downtime avoided.

This service comes as standard with our Platinum package but is an optional extra with any of our other maintenance contracts.

If you would like to discuss CMS for your turbine, please get in touch on 01872 571700

## WHAT DO NATURAL GENERATION'S STAFF DO FOR FUN?

### Messing about on the river

The estuaries around Truro and Falmouth are famous as some of the most sheltered and picturesque cruising waters in the country, with wildlife and history at every turn. These waters have been important to man since at least the Stone Age and there are many reminders of the industrial history of the area.

When he's not sailing further afield, Andy Neild (Regional Wind Turbine Account Manager for Wales and the Midlands) likes nothing better than to go exploring on the yacht he has owned for a number of years. 'Finesse' is a 31-foot Beneteau Oceanis Clipper which is normally moored off Mylor, near Falmouth. This well-known location gives Andy easy access to the creeks of 'Carrick Roads', as the area is known, whilst being only a couple of miles from the open sea of Falmouth Bay and beyond.

The creeks are havens for wildlife with herons, egrets and kingfishers often spotted above the surface as well as a wide variety of fish below. They can't hide their human importance though, such as when one turns a corner of the Truro River to find large ships using the unusually deep, sheltered waters to lay up whilst awaiting sale or docking.

Andy says that nowhere else on the South Coast gives such a variety of cruising options so close to hand, let alone with so much history and wildlife to enjoy.



Andy Neild's yacht Finesse on her mooring



Ships laid up near Truro awaiting sale or work

## Natural Generation Open Day – 6th May 2020

We're throwing open the doors to customers and non-customers alike to give you a look behind the scenes at our newly refurbished and extended Head Office. See where we are, what we do and how we do it.

In addition to gaining some insight into how Natural Generation came to be the UK's leading O & M provider for the medium-scale wind and solar industry, this is a chance to tour our facility and meet the different Natural Generation teams in a relaxed atmosphere. There will also be plenty of time to network with our other visitors over the course of your visit, during a tea or coffee break or over a delicious complimentary buffet lunch.

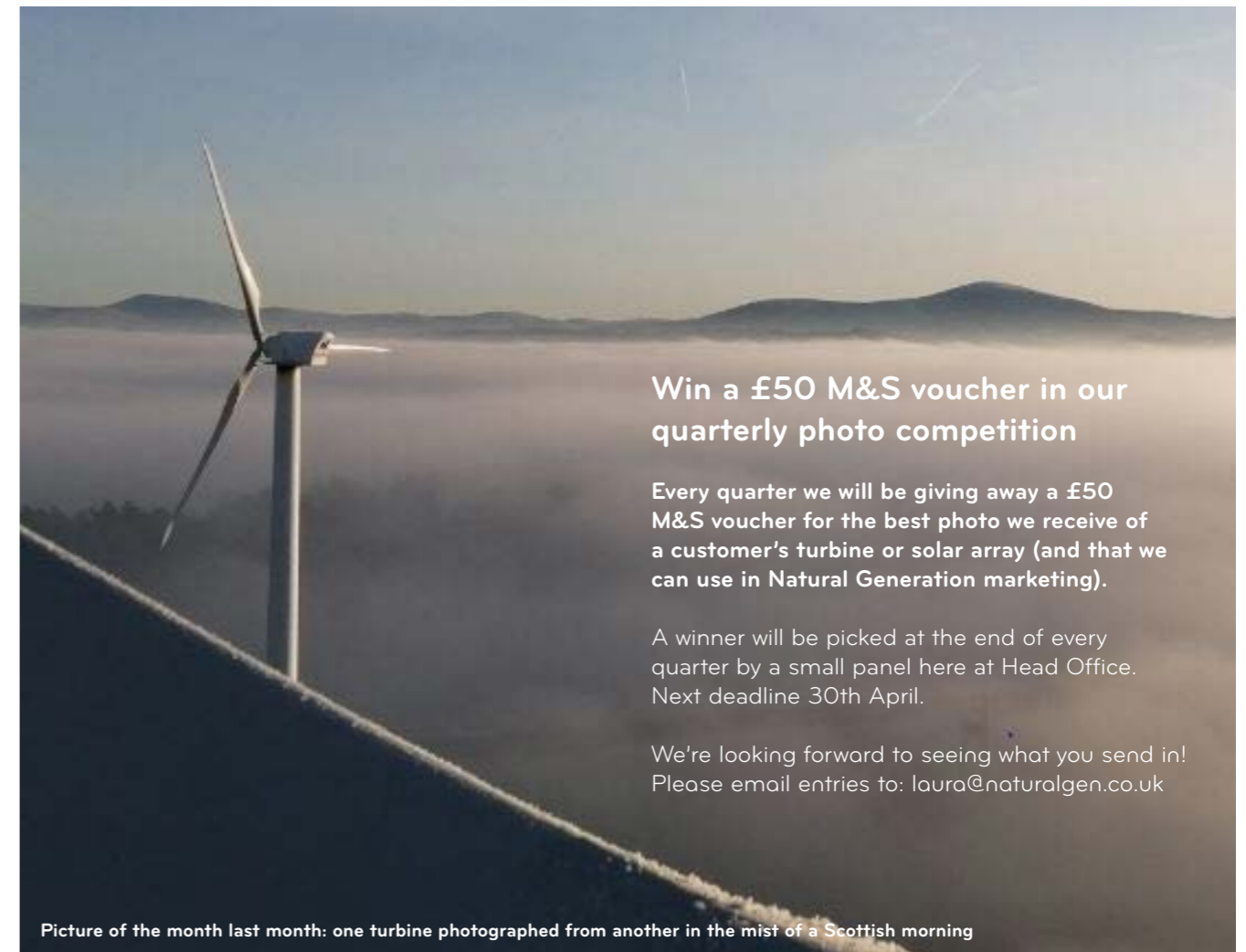
We hope to meet many of you here and spend a fun and interesting few hours together.

We will send a registration form by separate email in the next few days.

## Recommend a friend... and get 10% off a year's maintenance contract

Natural Generation is growing. More customers equals more technical staff equals a better service.

If any customer can introduce a friend that might like to discuss the Operation and Maintenance of their wind or solar system, we are always grateful to be put in touch. If they become a customer we will be happy to give them 10% off the first year of a 5 year maintenance contract when they sign up and give you 10% off your next annual O&M invoice. Please call us for more information.



### Win a £50 M&S voucher in our quarterly photo competition

Every quarter we will be giving away a £50 M&S voucher for the best photo we receive of a customer's turbine or solar array (and that we can use in Natural Generation marketing).

A winner will be picked at the end of every quarter by a small panel here at Head Office. Next deadline 30th April.

We're looking forward to seeing what you send in! Please email entries to: laura@naturalgen.co.uk

Picture of the month last month: one turbine photographed from another in the mist of a Scottish morning

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