

Global Underwater Hub

Powering the Celtic Sea: Aligning Industry & Investment

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Global Underwater Hub, Bristol



Global Underwater Hub
is the leading trade and
industry development
body for the UK's
underwater sectors.

Owned and governed by industry, Global Underwater Hub represents, promotes and supports all sectors of the underwater industry. As the UK's underwater industry organisation, we support our member companies by enabling access to market opportunities, expertise, contacts and specialist support to accelerate market growth and build value.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Conference overview

The Celtic Sea is entering a defining new chapter in the UK's clean-energy transition, driven by a dedicated focus in the UK's south-west. With The Crown Estate's Offshore Wind Leasing Round, the region is set to unlock up to 4GW of floating offshore wind capacity across three project development areas, driving requirements for thousands of components and the mobilisation of substantial asset days across marshalling, construction and installation.

By establishing one of the world's most significant new floating wind markets, this first phase lays the foundations for long-term commercialisation in an area assessed to have the potential to accommodate substantially more capacity in the decades ahead. The awards to Gwynt Glas, Equinor and Ocean Winds in 2025 marked a major milestone as they enter detailed development and supply chain planning.

Against this backdrop, the UK's Contracts for Difference Allocation Round 7 (AR7) has further accelerated momentum across the wider renewables landscape. Announced in early 2026, AR7 delivered a record-breaking 8.4 GW of offshore wind capacity and, crucially, supported a development-scale floating wind project in the Celtic Sea through Erebus.

Together, the Celtic Sea leasing awards and the scale of AR7 mark a turning point for industry readiness, investment appetite and regional economic opportunity in the area. The supply chain challenge is now both urgent and exciting. The UK must mobilise new manufacturing capability, port infrastructure, fabrication capacity, skills programmes and innovation pathways to deliver the next generation of floating offshore wind at commercial scale. It must also concentrate this in an area close to these projects, but relatively removed from existing relevant supply chains which predominantly are situated in the north-east England. The Celtic Sea's emerging projects, combined with the national uplift in renewable contracts, position Bristol and the wider south-west as critical hubs capable of shaping the future of floating wind deployment.

Welcome to this conference, which convenes industry leaders, innovators, investors and policymakers at exactly the right moment. Today's discussions will explore what must happen next, spanning infrastructure, finance, technology and collaboration, to ensure that the supply chain is ready to capture the full economic and industrial potential to deliver the Celtic Sea.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

- 08:30 – 09:00** **Registration, coffee & networking**
- 09:00 – 09:10** **Welcome from Neil Gordon, Chief Executive, GUH**
- 09:10 – 09:20** **Market update from Lewis Scorgie, Market Intelligence Analyst, GUH**
- 09:20 – 09:35** **Cluster update and masterplan from Steve Jermy, Chief Executive, Celtic Sea Power and Chair of Celtic Sea Cluster**
- Session 1** **Investment & Infrastructure | Moderated by Neil Gordon, GUH**
- 09:35 - 09:50** **Verdeep Dost, Infrastructure Investment Director, The Crown Estate**
- 09:50 – 10:05** **John Chaplin, Director External Affairs & Special Projects, The Bristol Port Company**
- 10:05 – 10:20** **Jonathan Bryers, Investment Manager, Offshore Wind Growth Partnership**
- Pat McInerney, Commercial & Finance Director, Gwynt Glas**
- 10:20 – 10:50** **Panel discussion**
- 10:50 – 11:10** **Coffee & networking**
- Session 2** **Supply Chain & Service Providers | Moderated by Lewis Scorgie, GUH**
- 11:10 – 11:25** **Michael Hook, Business Development Manager, GWEC**
- 11:25 – 11:40** **Sam Athey, Managing Director, Partrac**
- 11:40 – 11:55** **Philip Strong, CEO & Technical Director, Reflex Marine**
- 11:55 – 12:10** **David Saul, Chief Consultant, Astrimar**
- 12:10 – 12:40** **Panel discussion**
- 12:40 – 13:40** **Lunch & networking**

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Session 3

Innovation & Sustainability | Moderated by Simon Cheeseman, Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult

13:40 – 13:55

Koan Hughes, Marine Scientist, ARC Marine

13:55 – 14:10

Robert Greenwood, Managing Director, Quintham

14:10 – 14:25

Lars Johanning, Professor of Ocean Technology, University of Plymouth

14:25 – 14:40

Karrie Schnetler, Marine Licensing Case Manager, Marine Management Organisation

14:40 – 14:55

Ian Armstrong, Director, Pulcea

14:55 – 15:25

Panel discussion

15:25 – 15:30

Closing remarks from Neil Gordon, Chief Executive, GUH

15:30 – 16:00

Coffee & networking

16:00

Event closes

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Confirmed speakers

Delegates to the **Powering the Celtic Sea Conference** on Tuesday, 24 February will hear from representatives of the following organisations.



Speaker biographies



Neil Gordon

Chief Executive

Global Underwater Hub

Neil is Chief Executive of the Global Underwater Hub (GUH), the UK's leading industry development body for the subsea and underwater sectors.

An internationally recognised industrial leader, Neil works at the intersection of industry, technology, and policy to position the UK as a leader in the Blue Economy, supporting the energy transition, offshore renewables, defence, and advanced marine technologies. With over 35 years' experience, he began his career as a commercial diver before progressing into senior leadership roles spanning operational delivery, technology deployment, and supply chain development across international markets.

Appointed CEO of Subsea UK in 2011, he led its transformation into GUH in 2021, establishing a unified, UK-wide strategic voice for the subsea supply chain and a trusted partner to government and industry.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



Steve Jermy

Chief Executive at Celtic Sea Power and
Chair of the Celtic Sea Cluster

Steve is CEO at Celtic Sea Power and Chair of the Celtic Sea Cluster. The Cluster's mission is to make the Celtic Sea the best place in the world to develop floating offshore wind (FLOW).

His offshore experience includes diving, fishery protection, offshore aviation, underwater operations, and sea command. He worked for Mojo Maritime Ltd and James Fisher Group plc, on FLOW, wave and tidal energy installation, before leading the international sale of the Wave Hub project in Cornwall, and setting up Celtic Sea Power.

Steve is a Fellow of both the Nautical Institute and the Institute of Marine Engineers, Scientists and Technologists.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



Verdeep Dost

Infrastructure Investment Director
The Crown Estate

Verdeep is responsible for infrastructure investment at The Crown Estate, with a focus on supporting the construction of new port and supply chain infrastructure for the offshore wind industry. The aim is to deliver financial, social and environmental value for the nation through The Crown Estate's £50m Supply Chain Accelerator and £350m Supply Chain Investment Programme.

Prior to joining The Crown Estate, Verdeep worked in infrastructure and private equity funds, deploying over €3.5 billion of capital in sectors including renewable energy, utilities, transport and digital infrastructure

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



John Chaplin

Director External Affairs and Special Projects

The Bristol Port Company

John is a Chartered Engineer and Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers. After working in consultancy and contracting, John joined The Bristol Port Company in 2000. He was promoted to the position of Director of Engineering in 2003 and subsequently to the Director with responsibility for External Affairs and the delivery of major schemes.

John has managed an extensive range of projects for the port. He is the Port Company's agent on various national and regional bodies and represents the port in its dealings with neighbours, central and local government and stakeholders, including Highways England, Network Rail and National Grid.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February

Speaker biographies



Jonathan Bryers

Investment Manager

Offshore Wind Growth Partnership

Jonathan Bryers joined OWGP as interim Investments Manager, to design and implement investment processes and coordinate financing strategies for high-impact projects aligned with the Industrial Growth Plan.

Jonathan has over 27 years investment and innovation experience, mainly in the energy and sustainability sector working for firms such as 350 Investment Partners, Guinness Ventures, IP Group, Carbon Trust Investments, Collier Capital and Flemings Investment Management.

Jonathan holds an MSc in Environmental Technology (Energy) from Imperial College, London, an MA in Japanese Area Studies from SOAS, London University and an MA in Business Studies/French from the University of Edinburgh.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Panel Contributor



Patrick McInerney

Commercial and Finance Director
Gwynt Glas Offshore Wind Farm

Patrick is responsible for financial and commercial aspects of Gwynt Glas. A chartered accountant by profession, Patrick has prior experience in the renewables industry across the Mergers and Acquisitions space encompassing both onshore and offshore developments.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



Lewis Scorgie

Market Intelligence Analyst
Global Underwater Hub

Lewis joined Global Underwater Hub after graduating with an MSc in Management from Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen. Since then, he has engaged in key research and analysis projects, including insightful industry-wide business surveys, supply chain mapping and producing targeted intelligence reports highlighting the market opportunities across all underwater sectors.

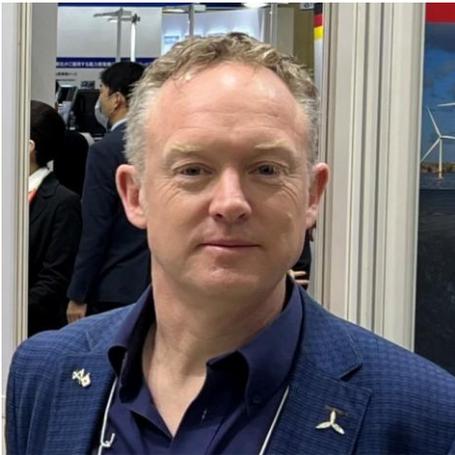
Lewis is skilled at obtaining, interpreting and analysing data across all facets of the underwater sectors to allow members and GUH to realise the value offered by industry.

A key part of Lewis's role involves the daily management of Global Underwater Hub's Market Intelligence Platform. This comprehensive, interactive online system offers GUH members exclusive access to sought-after strategic industry information on projects across the underwater industry, both in the UK and overseas.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



Michael Hook

Business Development Manager
GWEC

Having previously worked as a Helicopter Engineer early in his career, Michael has spent over a decade in the renewable energy industry working with technology start-ups in roles ranging from front-line offshore operations, Project Management and General Management.

His experience includes time at SCHOTTEL Marine Technologies, where he supported the market development of the Swift Anchor, underscoring his appreciation for the critical role of moorings and station-keeping solutions in floating offshore wind.

In 2025, Michael joined Griffin-Woodhouse (GWEC) focused on business development, where he works with partners to accelerate commercial growth, innovation and supply chain capability in the floating offshore wind sector.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February

Speaker biographies



Sam Athey

Managing Director
Partrac

Sam is a co-founder of Partrac which was set up over 20 years ago. Partrac is known for its focus on technical excellence, quality and strong HSE culture. In 2009, Sam led the company to support the offshore wind sector at various points in a wind life cycle from initial site investigation, wind resource, construction and now deconstruction for some of the early projects.

The company's clients benefit from its metocean and offshore wind experience, coupled with a proactive, client centred approach to project delivery. In 2024, Partrac completed the successful delivery of metocean and wind resource campaigns for the Celtic Sea on behalf of The Crown Estate in the United Kingdom.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



Philip Strong

CEO and Technical Director
Reflex Marine

Philip Strong is the CEO and Technical Director of Reflex Marine, where he leads the development of innovative offshore technologies focused on floating wind anchoring and marine transfer. With 40 years of experience in offshore energy, Philip has worked across deepwater drilling, subsea operations and marine engineering, including senior roles with BP.

He is the originator of Reflex Marine's JAVELIN anchor and has overseen its progression from concept to full-scale field testing. His cross-sector experience underpins Reflex Marine's technology roadmap, which now includes modular and hybrid anchoring concepts for floating offshore wind applications in complex seabed conditions.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



David Saul

Chief Consultant

Astrimar

David is a Chartered Engineer and Fellow of the IMarEST with over 35 years' experience working in the oil and gas industry, mainly focusing on new technology delivery and improving reliability of subsea equipment. On leaving bp in 2025, he took up the role of Chief Consultant with Astrimar, based in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. Astrimar is a leading expert in the design and analysis of innovative engineered solutions and the provision of reliability, integrity, sustainability and technology assurance for the energy industry

David Co-chairs the IOGP subsea CCS Expert group and was previously bp IOGP representative on its subsea committee.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Moderator



Simon Cheeseman

South West Programme Manager
Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult

Simon Cheeseman is an experienced programme manager, having worked in both the private and public sectors.

Working within the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult's Business Development Directorate, Simon leads the Catapult's Celtic Sea floating wind programme, which is addressing policy, technology and supply chain challenges with a sharp focus on developing marine autonomy and dual innovation with Team Plymouth.

Prior to working with ORE Catapult, Simon was the Marine Programme Manager for the Energy Technologies Institute based in Loughborough, England.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



Koan Hughes

Marine Scientist

ARC Marine

Koan joined ARC marine nearly two years ago as a marine scientist, bringing a diverse international background across reef restoration, aquaria, and marine survey, alongside an MSc in Applied Marine Science from the University of Plymouth.

As part of the Marine Science and Engineering team, his work focuses on offshore surveys, research and development, and supporting the delivery of nature-inclusive solutions at scale for offshore renewables.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



Robert Greenwood, MNM AFNI

Managing Director
Quintham

Robert leads Quintham in the UK, focusing on practical coexistence between commercial fishing and offshore industries. A Merchant Navy Medal recipient, he brings hands-on fishing experience, safety instruction and policy representation to technology-led solutions that change behaviour and improve outcomes.

Robert helped pioneer online safety management for fishing vessels and software that enables fleets to support offshore wind and cable projects. He has contributed to internationally used training standards (STCW-F) and is a respected industry voice.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



Lars Johanning

Professor of Ocean Technology
University of Plymouth

Professor Lars Johanning is a leading researcher with international recognition in the field of ocean technology with a focus towards offshore renewable energy and decarbonisation. He is Chair in Ocean Technology at the University of Plymouth and holds the role as Associate Head of School (Research).

Lars advised ORE Catapult as member of the Research Advisory Group (RAG), provided expert advice within the Mooring Standards Committee to the IEC/TC114 and provided the technical lead in the development of the EU Ocean Energy Strategic Roadmap within the Ocean Energy Secretariat.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



Karrie Schnetler

Marine Licensing Case Manager
Marine Manager Organisation

Karrie Schnetler is a Marine Licensing Case Manager with the Marine Management Organisation, specialising in the offshore wind development process across all phases. Based in the south-west, Karrie has developed a strong interest in the emerging developments within the Celtic Sea.

She brings extensive expertise in marine regulation, effective stakeholder engagement and the delivery of clear, pragmatic regulatory guidance throughout the project lifecycle. Recognised for her analytical approach and professionalism, Karrie provides trusted insight into marine licensing processes and the evolving regulatory landscape for offshore renewable energy.

Powering the Celtic Sea

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Speaker biographies



Ian Armstrong

Director

Pulcea

A 1982 graduate in Ecological Science (Wildlife & Fisheries Management) from the University of Edinburgh, Ian spent most of his career working in the international salmon farming industry where his contributions included assisting the RSPCA Assured welfare scheme for 23 years.

A proven capability for successfully delivering innovative solutions within collaborative partnerships led to his formation of Pulcea to research novel applications using Hydrogen Peroxide (H₂O₂) with marine physicist Ian Jamieson.

Pulcea's research has invented a novel methodology for mitigating underwater noise in the Offshore Wind Farm (OWF) industry, one which has the potential to be deployed at significant depth.

Future events from Global Underwater Hub

Global Underwater Hub organises a series of events throughout the year, bringing together businesses to discuss key industry topics. Full event information, including booking details and calls for abstracts can be found on our website at www.globalunderwaterhub.com, where you can also sign up to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

Marine Energy Conference

Tuesday, 10 March 2026 | [GUH, Newcastle](#)

This conference will explore the latest advancements in wave and tidal energy, an area of great opportunity for the UK. During the first part of the day, attendees will gain firsthand insight into new technologies, industry trends and an overview of the market opportunity.



Moorings and Anchors Conference & Workshop

Thursday, 19 March 2026 | [Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh](#)

The third edition of this popular annual conference will provide an engaging platform for delegates to explore the key elements of the life cycle of mooring systems which are critical for offshore projects in multiple sectors.



Offshore Structural Integrity Management

Wednesday, 22 April 2026 | [The Chester Hotel, Aberdeen](#)

This conference will explore the harsh offshore environment, managing the structural integrity of fixed, floating and subsea structures is a key requirement as owners consider their future, be it to safe and continuous late-life production, re-use for energy transition applications such as carbon capture or preparing for decommissioning and removal.



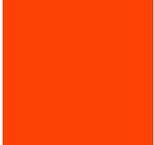
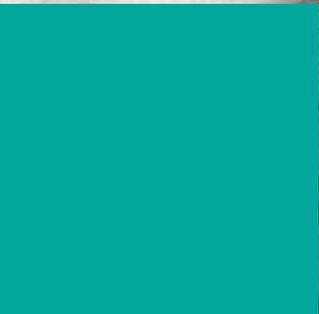
Led and governed by industry, Global Underwater Hub is helping to transform the UK's underwater industry into one of the largest and fastest-growing industries in the country, accelerating the drive to net-zero and creating high value jobs and exports.

With offices in Aberdeen, Newcastle and Bristol, Global Underwater Hub is well placed to support its members across the United Kingdom.



Access. Connect. Grow.





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