

# Guardbridge to front geothermal research

**ENERGY:** Project to explore feasibility of heating buildings using water from rocks underground

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Geothermal energy could heat homes and businesses around Scotland with a green energy centre in Fife at the forefront of research.

St Andrews University's Guardbridge Energy Centre, on the site of the former paper mill, is to investigate the feasibility of heating buildings using warm water recovered from sedimentary rocks deep below the ground.

The university is lead partner in a Scottish Government-funded project.

This largely untapped resource could provide significant amounts of renewable heat for Scotland, helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with a low-carbon heat source.

Dr Ruth Robinson, the lead for the geothermal feasibility project at St Andrews University, said: "Extracting geothermal heat from sedimentary rocks is similar to getting drinking water out of the ground, except in this case the water is warm enough to be used for heating.

"This feasibility project will investigate if there is a business case to explore for geothermal heat, and if feasible, the technological developments arising out of this project could be used for similar projects across Scotland."

The team of collaborators working on the project with the university are part of a group called Fife Geothermal, and include the British Geological Survey Ramboll Town Rock

Energy Ltd, Fife Council, and Resource Efficient Solutions Ltd.

The award to the Guardbridge project has been made from the Scottish Government's Geothermal Energy Challenge Fund, supported by the Low-Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme, the first strategic intervention established under the new European Structural Funds programme.

Councillor John Wincott, sustainability champion for Fife Council, said: "Reliable, secure and affordable energy is important for Fife both for our communities and for business.

"Crucially, heat makes up over half the energy we use, so Fife Council is keen to support work to find local sources of renewable heat.

"Fife looks a good area for geothermal heat – that is basically hot, wet rocks – that could potentially supply the heat source to provide hot water and heating to local homes and businesses."

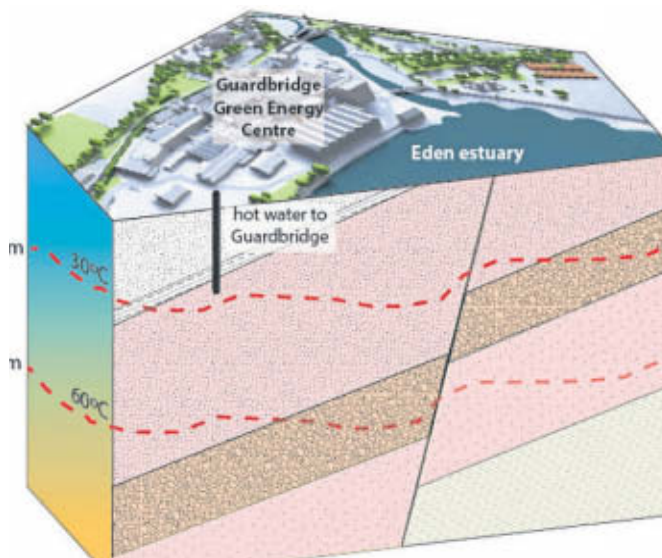
St Andrews University is investing £25 million at the former paper mill at Guardbridge to generate power through clean biomass and pump hot water four miles underground to St Andrews to heat and cool its labs and residences.

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**Councillor John Wincott, sustainability champion for Fife Council, says the local authority is keen to support work to find sources of renewable heat.**





The former paper mill at Guardbridge which now houses St Andrews University's energy centre.

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