



**Just Transition:
Ramsay Keay**

Just Transition



Berwick Bank Offshore Wind Farm is driving the transition to a net zero future, but it would not be possible without our highly skilled team. As part of our new Just Transition job series, we are talking to team members who have made the move to renewables from a previously high-carbon role.

Just Transition: Ramsay Keay

Job title: Senior Project Manager

Length of position: 3 years in total at SSE. 5 months in SSE Renewables

Ramsay Keay joined SSE just over three years ago. Like many in the north-east of Scotland, he had previously carved out a successful career for himself in the oil and gas sector. After more than a decade Ramsay wanted to find a role that provided not only job security but would provide him more opportunities for the future. Extensive research into the different industries identified opportunities he could move into, and Ramsay found the renewables sector would offer the career opportunities and security he wanted for both himself and his family.

Tell us a bit more about your previous role in the energy sector?

Having grown up in the north-east of Scotland, there was a natural progression for a lot of people to go directly into the oil and gas sector. My interest and passion lay in design and construction, and I really fancied myself in a 'Grand Designs' type

role, and so I started my career as a quantity surveyor.

Despite this, I was, perhaps inevitably, lured into the oil and gas industry with a promise of a good reliable wage, and entered a role within commercial management. My skill set was highly transferable and in demand by the oil and gas sector at the time, so I spent the next 5-10 years focusing on the commercial/contractual side of the industry.

Why did you decide to make the switch to renewables?

Like many people, COVID-19 brought about several changes in life and so I had to evaluate my next steps. The oil and gas industry is turbulent and in the future, there perhaps won't be the same career opportunities and job security there once was.

While career progression is important, I also have a young family, so job security is vitally important to me. I also had to consider that at 40 years of age, I still have a good 25 years of my career left to grow. At some point, I would also like to live abroad so looked for new a transferrable industry that may one day provide such opportunities.

Renewables stood out as an opportunity to gain what I needed in terms of security, pay and opportunities to diversify. Although a relatively new industry, there was no doubt that the expansion and development of renewables would be needed well into the future, and certainly within the lifetime of my career. My transferrable skills were also perfectly aligned to add value.

What does your current role involve on a day-to-day basis?

I am currently the Senior Project Manager for the design and delivery of the Berwick Bank Offshore Wind Farm, as it navigates through the development and construction phases. I work alongside a multi-disciplinary team to ensure the wind farm is designed and built in accordance with our approved specification.

What skills have you been able to transfer from oil and gas to renewables?

The ability to work within large, diverse, and multi-disciplined project teams to deliver a common objective. Project management and delivery can be complex with multiple challenges to overcome and stakeholders to satisfy. Both industries face the same types of challenges.

Throughout my career within oil and gas, I developed my skills in maintaining

project timelines, understanding construction activities and working within budgets. These were very much transferable.

One of the most important approaches I brought with me, was a flexible attitude to my work, as well as the knowledge that a working project does not care what weekend plans, I might have, so my ability to prioritise and maintain project timelines has been key.

Why was it important to you to transition to a low carbon role?

The high carbon roles I started my career in were all beneficial in their own ways. Every role has provided me with a new challenge and allowed me to expand my knowledge and experience.

The move to a low carbon job allowed me to feel like I was making a difference in the world, and so a great deal of job satisfaction was available to me that I hadn't previously experienced. Being part of SSE's net zero ambitions is a great motivator, as is the knowledge that I am leaving a legacy behind.

Any advice you would give to others considering making the transition from a high carbon to low carbon role?

Do your research! Identify what you want to do, be clear in your rationale for making the switch, and make sure your skills match the roles being advertised, as well as having a personal interest in the area you want to transition into.

If you make the move, you will see there is a broad mix of traditional low carbon and high carbon personnel, this provides a fantastic opportunity for knowledge transfer and a growth mindset.

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