



Falmouth Harbour  
Commissioners

## PRESS RELEASE

### Falmouth making waves in renewable energy sector



A pioneering wave energy converter prototype commenced trials in the waters off Falmouth, Cornwall this month (August).

The wave energy device is the first wave energy converter to be built almost entirely from high-density polyethylene (HDPE) - a common yet affordable engineering material. Called Volta, the device was designed by UK-based Polygen Ltd and will continue tests at the wave energy test site, FaBTest, in Falmouth Bay over the coming year.

Volta is the second device to be deployed at FaBTest - the only wave energy-testing site of its kind in England, initiated by Falmouth Harbour Commissioners (FHC). The Fred Olsen Bolt Lifesaver device was commissioned earlier this year following two years at the test facility.

The FaBTest 'nursery' facility enables up to three devices to be deployed and tested concurrently. Wave energy device developers can test components, concepts or full-scale devices in a moderate wave climate on the Falmouth site. The area, which is leased from Crown Estates, has a Marine Licence for testing device deployments on site subject to permits issued by FHC.

Rob Eavis, business development manager, PolyGen, said: "FaBTest was the first choice for PolyGen to test the Volta wave energy converter. The occasional extreme wave conditions makes it an ideal site for us to prove the strengths of our flexible design, whilst the frequent periods of very calm conditions allow us regular access to the device for monitoring and engineering works.

"We are now busy studying the already encouraging performance data, and really looking forward to some winter storms coming through."

The marine operations management of the deployment and mooring of the device was carried out by local engineers, Mojo Maritime based in Falmouth. The assembly and slipway facilities at Marine Design's Ponsharden facility were utilised for the construction and launch of the device. Local companies Sub Marine Services Ltd and Marine and Towage Services Ltd were also involved in Volta's installation.

Richard Argall, technical director, Mojo Maritime, said: "Mojo Maritime was very pleased to work locally on this exciting project. Volta is exactly the type of project for which FaBTest was intended: a low cost development of wave energy technology ahead of more demanding deployment at commercial scale sites. It is a wonderful demonstration by all partners and suppliers involved in responding to the needs of this developing industry."

The operational support of the FaBTest site, as well as on-going monitoring and world leading research, is provided by the Renewable Energy Group from the University of Exeter (based at the Penryn campus), and made possible in part thanks to a £549,000 investment from the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) supported by the Government's Regional Growth Fund.

Professor Lars Johanning, University of Exeter, said: ““Falmouth Harbour Commissioners and the University have continued to drive forward the development of FaBTest. There is increasing interest in the site as it gives developers a real environment to test such devices. It is also conveniently located in Falmouth with access to many of the UK’s leading marine renewable energy experts and marine engineers.”

Julian German, Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture at Cornwall Council and a member of the LEP Board, said: “Marine renewable energy represents a huge opportunity for our economy and local supply chain and FaBTest is helping to cement Cornwall’s position at the forefront of this developing industry. PolyGen is exactly the type of company we are seeking to attract and we wish them all the best with their sea trials.”

For more information about the FaBTest project visit [www.FaBTest.com](http://www.FaBTest.com) or for more information about Volta or Polygen visit [www.polygenlimited.com](http://www.polygenlimited.com)

**Ends**

**20, August 2015**

**Notes to editors**

**Photography:** Polygen’s wave energy device called Volta at the testing site, FaBTest, in Falmouth Bay.

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### **The Government’s Regional Growth Fund**

The Government’s Regional Growth Fund has invested nearly £3 billion to help businesses in England to grow; so far generating over 100,000 jobs.

56 new awards in Round 6 and seven through exceptional RGF support – announced on 12 February 2015, gives £297 million to 63 projects and programmes to create and safeguard thousands more jobs and unlock an additional £1.5 billion private sector investment.

The Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) successfully bid for £13m from round two of the Regional Growth Fund, which includes £6m for investment-ready enabling infrastructure in strategic areas for business growth and expansion, and is delivered by Cornwall Development Company on behalf of the LEP and Cornwall Council.