

ADBA Northern Ireland Conference 2025

Tagline: Unlocking Biogas to Energise Northern Ireland's Future

Date: Tuesday, 23rd September 2025

Venue: ICC Belfast

A one-day conference to identify how the current impasse affecting the biogas industry can be overcome and agreement reached on what is needed to rapidly scale the industry to meet the enormous potential that exists in Northern Ireland.

09:15 – 10:00 Arrival, Registration & Networking Breakfast

- Light breakfast, exhibition opens, informal networking

10:00 – 10:15 ADBA Opening Remarks

- **Chris Huhne**, Chair, ADBA
- **Charlotte Morton OBE**, Chief Executive, ADBA

10:15 – 10:45 ADBA Policy, Market and Public Affairs Update

- **Gareth Mottram**, Policy Lead, ADBA
- **Cameron Ball**, External Affairs Lead, ADBA

10:45 – 11:15 Opening Keynote Address

- **Andrew Muir MLA**, Minister for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland Executive

11:15 – 12:00 Session 1 – Unlocking the Potential of the Biogas Sector in Northern Ireland

- What is holding the sector back in Northern Ireland?
- Why the opportunity is too big to ignore
- Laying the groundwork for renewed momentum and practical delivery

Confirmed Speakers:

- **Jonathan McFerran**, Team Leader, Green Growth Team, DAERA (Confirmed)
- Senior speaker, consultant
- Speaker tbc from **Firmus Energy**

12:00 – 12:30 Coffee Break, Exhibition & Networking

12:30 – 13:00 Session 2 – Local Pathfinder Projects Breaking Down the Barriers: Delivery in Action

- Real NI projects breaking through barriers
- How they've tackled planning, finance, or feedstock challenges
- Lessons for others looking to move forward

Confirmed Speakers:

- **Martin Doherty**

13:00 – 13:30 Session 3 – Planning, Policy & Nutrient Management: Clearing the Way

- Where policy and planning are stalling progress – and how to fix it
- Lough Neagh: how AD can support recovery and nutrient management
- Planning solutions that work for both developers and regulators

Confirmed speakers:

- **Stephen Robb**, Renewables Editor, Irish Farmer's Journal
- **Jack Blakiston-Houston**, Director, BH Estates
- **Dr Gary Lyons**, Senior Scientific Officer, AFBI

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch & Networking

14:30 – 15:30 Session 4 – International Best Practice: Solutions That Could Work Here

- Three international or GB case studies
- Focused on real delivery: what NI can adapt
- Sector support, incentives, and integrated systems
- A Biogas Roadmap for Northern Ireland?

Senior speaker to be confirmed from **Firmus Energy**

15:30 – 16:00 Session 5 – Financing the Future: Making AD Investable in Northern Ireland

- Investor insight: the business case for biomethane: what makes a viable AD project?
- Public funding and blended finance opportunities
- Tools to support business planning and risk reduction

Speakers: Investors, developers and financial experts

Potential Speakers:

- Senior representative, developer
- Senior representative, funding
- Senior representative, investor
- Senior representative, finance

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee Break, Exhibition & Networking

16:30 – 17:00 Session 6 – Optimising AD Plant Performance: Maximising Output & Efficiency

- Reducing maintenance downtime and improving efficiency
- Advances in monitoring, automation and AI for AD plants
- Managing feedstocks and digestate for long-term stability

Speakers: AD plant operators, engineers and technology providers

Andrew Brown, Technical Support Manager, ADBA

- Senior representative, regulator
- Senior representative, operator

17:00 – 17:30 Closing Roundtable – The Sector Speaks: Priorities for Progress

- Key reflections from the day
- What do we need next – from ADBA, government, finance, and each other?
- Live capture of agreed actions or sector statement

17:30 – 18:30 Post-Event Drinks Reception