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Western Joint Branch

Technical Lecture

Chasing the Wind: A New Class of Renewable Energy

Presented by: Nick Williams and Mike Mackay (DRIFT Energy)

Date: Monday, 14th of September 2026

Time: Refreshments at 18:15, lecture starts at 18:45

Venue: Duncan Room, BRLSI, 16-18 Queen Square, BA1 2HN, Bath, [///delay.shapes.dollar](http://delay.shapes.dollar); (and online).

Organiser: Western Joint Branch RINA/IMarEST

Contact: secretary.wjb@branches.imarest.org

About the Presenters:

Nick Williams CEng MIMarEST is a Senior Marine Systems Engineer. He leads the design and development of the mechanical, electrical and hydrogen systems onboard DRIFT Ships. His earlier career has spanned the commercial and defence sectors of the marine industry. He has spent time at an operational ferry company in the asset management department, and at a leading engineering consultancy working across the full lifecycle of ship design from concept and functional design through to in-service design changes and support.

Mike Mackay BEng MRINA is the Head of Vessel Design, he is responsible for whole ship designs within DRIFT. He has experience in major offshore maritime projects, spanning both the private and defence sectors. He initiated his career at Devonport Dockyard, where he contributed to advanced naval projects, later moved into concept design in Bristol on the development of warships and novel submarine technology integration before joining Fraser Nash in consultancy, leading a number of R&D projects within defence and commercial sectors.



About the Talk:

DRIFT Energy is developing a new class of renewable energy. DRIFT Energy Harvesting Ships harness wind power through sails, and generating electrical energy from turbines pulled through the water, and using this power to produce green hydrogen onboard.

Nick and Mike will introduce the MVY Energy Harvesting Yacht, DRIFT's first-of-class 60m vessel, and discuss how it is being developed to maximise power production and vessel performance. Free from the constraints of grid connections and onshore planning, the MVY is designed to operate as an off-grid, distributed hydrogen production plant — sailing to optimal wind conditions using DRIFT's proprietary routing software, and delivering stored green hydrogen to ports around the world. The talk will also cover the regulatory approach taken to certify a novel ship design of this complexity, addressing the challenges of bringing a first-of-class vessel — combining sail propulsion, underwater energy harvesting turbines, and onboard electrolysis — through classification and approval, and what this means for the wider adoption of mobile, sail-powered renewable energy platforms.

Registration:

We will be running this as a hybrid event - [Click Here to Register](#)



CPD Certificates will be sent to the email address used to register.



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