Letters for publication, which we reserve the right to edit, must have a full address and phone number. Send to: The Editor, The Scotsman, Level 7, Orchard Brae House, 30 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh EH4 2HS; letterets@scotsman.com; or by fax on 0131-311 7655.

Light work
I read with some dismay the article regarding our electricity supplies. "Renewables now biggest generator of electricity" (The Scotsman, 23 December) in which you state that almost half of Scotland’s electrical demand during 2014 was supplied by renewables.

This statement may sound wonderful, but it is somewhat misleading. Electrical system demand varies over time but it is always there and has to be satisfied, not by intermittent wind, but by a large power stations running night and day. This is achieved by means of large conventional power stations running night and day. There is no alternative.

Covering the countryside with wind turbines and allowing them to take precedence over other forms of generation for grid access doesn’t really help matters. It just means that these large stations have to be running in the background, ready at a moment’s notice to provide 100 per cent backup for erratic and unpredictable wind farms.

This operating regime produces more emissions than would be produced if the stations were running on full load, in fact it has been postulated that this state of affairs goes a long way towards negating any perceived savings made by these so-called green energy sources.

So yes, it can be said that renewables generated the equivalent of almost half of Scotland’s demand but only when the wind blew and this is not the basis for running a reliable and efficient power system.

With Cockenzie being a distant memory and Longannet following suit, we will soon have nothing left to back up and protect our supply system, so instead of singing the praises of renewable energy, Fergus Ewing and others need to do some hard thinking and come up with realistic ideas for keeping the lights on.

ALAN CAWTHERNE
Captains Brae, Twynholm, Kirkcudbright

Blight work
The beauty of a high voltage electricity line is now fully operational. Recent media coverage of these new wind energy projects has affected our landscape. Despite all the evidence, SPN is in the process of developing a similar line of 50 miles to cross part of the area in the spine of Dumfries and Galloway. From near the west coast at Ballantrae to Harkess, just north of Carlisle. They plan to create new sub-stations at Newton Stewart, Glenlee and near Dumfries.

This line will primarily used to carry wind energy from South West Scotland to Cumbria, not for use in Scotland. SPN’s proposal would displace the spine of Dumfries and Galloway. From near the west coast at Ballantrae to Harkess, just north of Carlisle. They plan to create new sub-stations at Newton Stewart, Glenlee and near Dumfries.

This line will be primarily used to carry wind energy from South West Scotland to Cumbria, not for use in Scotland.

Those of us who live under the threat of this line would greatly appreciate any help to make SPN reconsider their actions. They will be detrimental to wildlife, the visual and historical environment and significantly damaging to the tourist industry, which is one of the main economic drivers in the area. These sub-stations will also disturb the stunningly unspoiled ‘natural’ landscapes and rural parishes are an insult to the landscape.

Unfortunately, it will take enormous pressure to convince SPN that the allegedly cheapest option will have lasting ongoing costs, both economically and for the environment, others relying on the apparent good life of experiential satisfaction of individualism and consumerism, are losing contact with the values which sustain us.

It is thus the role of the Church not only to be a voice of conscience, but also to take responsibility for the long-term consequences of this project.

ALICE HOWLIDE
Kirkcudbright

Foodbank
I was astounded to learn that 60,000 people are dependent on food banks, which is a measure of our government’s failure to feed the nation.

It is easy to blame the Government, but the problem is a problem of impression management, the government has the responsibility for people’s right to food.

The Scottish Government is of the food banks are not a beacon for social policy. They require the government to feed their citizens. This is a sad reflection on the feeding of our infants, which are unable to be fed to assist the poverty; assistance for the children, which is the step up to assist the food banks.

It is the responsibility of the Government to step in and prevent people getting hungry and malnourished.

Get a grip on food shortage, and ensure that food banks are not the only place people are queueing for food. Let us tackle the issue of hunger and malnutrition in Scotland.

Lloyd Lenton

Rock on
Your writer is quite right to be hit with the idea of a Christmas charity in order to help all those who are not as fortunate as that which is the case in the next year (29 December).

Let’s get together and support the respective charities that need our support in this time of the year, such as the Scottish Foodbank, RISE Coalition, and the Police Scotland, etc.

GETTING TOGETHER

GREG WATSON