



Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter

Issue 79
February 2017

<http://www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org/>

ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS:

By Steve Sharp

Hydro – MH-1 and MH-2 updates:

The dry winter continues and both LGV's operating hydro schemes have had some technical issues, so the generation of both schemes has been significantly lower than in January last year, when generation was close to maximum for the whole month.

The total generation figure for Cwm Gu (MH-1) at the end of January was about 75,000 kWh. The scheme was inoperable for about a week because of repeated tripping of the miniature circuit breaker and an apparent fault in the level sensor at the intake. These issues have now been resolved but we have commissioned a mechanical service of the turbine and spear valves.

Our construction company, TGVH, now has sufficient flow data and has commissioned a hydrology company to write a report to support an application to NRW to raise the HoF notch. We understand this process is likely to take another 2 months.

We are pleased to announce that the construction phase has just begun at our third hydro scheme, Blaen Dyar (MH-1), which is near Llanelli Hill, above the Clydach Gorge just outside Abergavenny. This scheme is likely to take about 5 months to complete and so should be operational by the middle of this year.

In MH-2, generation at Nant yr Hafod was also hit by the lack of rain and there was a problem with the spear valve which affected the generation capacity. The scheme is back operating and a mechanical service has been arranged to ensure the scheme can run at full capacity again. The total generation figure at the end of January was about 55,600 kWh.



Image: Nant yr Hafod (by Penny Hallas)

The lease for Cwm Saerbren has been completed and we will start building Cwm Saerbren and the other MH-2 scheme, Abernant, later this year.

The forecast is for more dry weather in the Brecon Beacons for the near future.

HYDRO Artists in Residence:

We're delighted to welcome Leona Jones and Penny Hallas as HYDRO artists in residence. Both explore themes of energy, industry and the environment in their artworks: they find the mini hydro sites, processes and ethos hugely exciting and are intrigued by the challenge of how to represent this in their artwork given that hydro electric systems are by their very nature largely hidden from view.



*Image: Leona Jones at Blaen Dyar site pre-installation
(by Penny Hallas)*



*Image: Penny Hallas at Blaen Dyar site pre-installation
(by Leona Jones)*

The initial research phase of their work will be to follow installation at the Blaen Dyar site and gather material related to hydro technology and the landscape in which it is situated. This will include sound recordings, film, photography, mapping and drawing, which they hope to develop into finished artworks at a later stage.

www.pennyhallas.co.uk and www.leonajones.co.uk

NEW FACEBOOK PAGE

By Tricia Dorée

LGV's Facebook page has now been up and running since November last year. Liking and sharing our page is a quick and easy way to keep up to date with current news in between the monthly newsletters and helps to promote the great work the group is doing to a wider audience. With the construction work of Blaen Dyar happening over the next few months and artists in residence engaged, we will be adding new content on a regular basis. If you haven't already visited the page, please do so by following this [link](#), and liking and sharing it with your friends. Many thanks for your support!



LGV VOLUNTEERS NEEDED PLEASE! CAN YOU HELP?

We are looking for a number of people who would like to get involved at Director and non-Director level. Please get in touch with Andrew Fryer if you would like to explore the ways in which you can help:

andrew@wernwatkin.fsnet.co.uk



LLANGATTOCK COMMUNITY WOODLANDS

By Jackie Charlton and Bob Needs

Alder Carr woodland and with Canal & River Trust

This month we have worked well along the canal at Llangynidr and have completed a third of the coppicing which the Canal & River Trust invited us to undertake as part of their major works. One local resident took the trouble to thank the volunteers working across the canal from her house as she now has an un-interrupted view across to the opposite side of the valley.



It also means that people who use the canal will also have great views too, but that is not all we have been doing this month. At the Alder Carr woodland and meadow, contractors have been in and levelled out the ground ready for a new stock fence to separate the important alder woodland area from the



meadow. This will enable us to develop both areas separately, use grazing to improve the meadow and provide seating and working areas for volunteers as well as enabling a safe site for the bees.



ALDER CARR LOTTERY

Don't waste your money on the Lotto!

Get better odds with the **LLANGATTOCK COMMUNITY WOODLANDS**

Alder Carr Lottery and help generate funds for woodland activities and environmental management.

LCW now runs a small lottery which has the potential to raise over £1000 for environmental measures and equipment each year.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

£4 per month buys you a lottery number – annually the numbers are entered into a draw for a chance to win a cash prize each year. Some of the money generated goes into the prize fund and the rest goes into the woodland fund. Llangattock Community Woodlands is run on a voluntary basis and is a charity and company limited by guarantee. All profits will be passed back to the charity. If you would like more information or you would like to ask any questions please email jackiecharltonlgv@gmail.com or andrewgpeach@gmail.com for more information.

The **Alder Carr Lottery** is registered under the Gambling Act 2005 and has a Small Society Lotteries Registration Certificate. Registration No: LN/201600367



Charter
for Trees, Woods
and People

We are almost at the end of the first year of the Woodland Charter and new project ideas are on the way from the Woodland Trust.



BEE NOTES FOR FEBRUARY

February is a month where we can see the daylight lengthening and snowdrops showing the first signs of spring. So far this month the temperatures have gone from freezing with snow, to 12°C and wet. Last week I saw a Queen buff tail bumblebee feeding on winter box flowers and a lone honeybee just looking to see what was about when she detected the aroma of melted beeswax as I was treating the wood of my cider press. Most honeybee Queens will have started to lay eggs by now and evidence of this can



be seen on the monitoring board we have under the wire mesh floors of our colonies; on occasions I have found actual eggs that have somehow fallen through the brood and mesh floor.

The woodland bees have suffered another loss; this time it looks as if there were not enough bees present to maintain the temperature and most of the honey surrounding the brood was crystallized ivy honey that is very hard and difficult for the bees to liquefy by adding water to it, especially if it is freezing outside of the hive. For some time now I have taken to feeding my bees after the heather honey has been removed with special inverted sugar feed for bees. This is sometimes mixed with the ivy nectar and that helps stock up the colonies' stores to see the bees through to the spring.

Any liquid feeding should be done before the temperatures drop below about 10°C so that the moisture in the liquid can be evaporated and the sugar turned into stores. As a rule, fondant is placed above the bee cluster as that can be eaten by the bees without having water added. We found evidence of dysentery in this dead colony and that is possibly because the ivy nectar had fermented when the bees were unable to evaporate the liquid because it was too cold.

Monitoring of the Varroa mite continues, with the results noted so we will know which colonies will need special attention when they are opened in late March or April, depending on the weather and temperatures. The mead you made the year before last should be ready to try now, so enjoy it with friends during this cool, dark, time of year.

Bee Bob



LCW Trustees are justly proud of the commitment and enthusiasm of all our volunteers. We meet regularly every Tuesday and you can find information on where and when we meet on our website www.lcwg.btck.co.uk. If you are interested in environmental management, green wood crafts or bee keeping then please do get in touch. Visit our website or email Eric Gower eric.gower@gmail.com for a membership form.

LLANGATTOCK AREA COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

By Odette Wills

"Lovely fresh fruit and veg. and a great community spirit" (LACAS member, 2017 survey)

Our plots are going fast but we still have some available. The latest survey of our members showed that apart from the tasty produce, many allotment holders valued the outdoor exercise and social aspects of having a plot.



This month we held a fruit tree pruning workshop; Colin a local expert demonstrated how to effectively prune both apple and pear trees. The volunteer team then spent the morning tidying up the orchard, learning all the rights and wrongs of fruit tree care.

If you'd like to join us in growing your own fruit and vegetables in beautiful surroundings call Phil on 01873 811537 or 07977 731309 or email gibsons@uwclub.net for more information or to come and view.

Pictures: Bonfire night, one of the many social allotment events each year and the apple pruning workshop.

PLEASE ASK US!

If anybody would like to look at LGV's finances or discuss our schemes, please contact us and we will be very happy to help. We are proud to be operating a transparent and successful Community Interest Company.

To find out more about us or to become a member,

please visit www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org

Follow us on Twitter! [@LGVcic](https://twitter.com/LGVcic) and

Like and share our new [LGV Facebook Page](#)