



# Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter

Issue 93  
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<http://www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org/>

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## ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS:

By Steve Sharp

April was another very wet month in Wales and our five hydro schemes have all generated decent amounts of electricity. Total generation in kWhs at the end of April for our schemes was approximately:

Cwm Gu:	163,230
Nant yr Hafod:	101,630
Blaen Dyar:	42,890
Abernant:	49,220
Cwm Saerbren:	28,470

The joys of warm Spring sunshine and gardens full of blossom, birds and bees have been balanced by less rain and a significant slowing of our hydro schemes since the end of April, with some schemes stopping completely for the first time for many weeks.

At Cwm Gu, we held a site meeting with the Fish Officer from NRW and TGVHydro employees to agree and plan for the necessary changes at the intake, i.e. reduction in the size of the hands-off flow notch and creation of new fish passes below the intake wall. It is not thought that salmon would swim this far upstream but there is a chance that small brown trout may live this far upstream. The proposed minor changes now need to be agreed and signed off by NRW and, disappointingly, this could take until the end of the summer. However, we are hopeful we should be able to carry out the work before the heavier Autumn rains come again (no works within the watercourse can take place between 15<sup>th</sup> October and 15<sup>th</sup> May, so careful management of these works will be critical).

A date for your diary: the hydro AGMs will be held in Llangattock on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June this year, from 6.30pm (MH-1) and 7.30pm (MH-2) – we hope to see many investors there.

## USE LOCAL POWER AND CUT YOUR BILLS

By Peter Blood

Llangattock Green Valleys (LGV) aims to create an [Energy Local](#) Club in the Crickhowell area (see December Newsletter “Now the electricity flows both ways”). This will enable club members to access a lower unit cost for renewable electricity generated locally and at off-peak times, through special tariffs provided by the supply company, Co-operative Energy. LGV members have been sent an email with details of the scheme but if you missed it here are the key features:

Club members benefit from a cost incentive to use electricity when power is available from local micro hydro schemes, the Cwm Gu LGV site and eventually others. The generators then receive an increased price from Co-operative Energy for electricity generated that is used locally. A Time of Use Tariff also applies, that encourages customers to use more electricity at off-peak times. The more a club member can shift electricity use to either when local generation is available or to off-peak times, the more savings are made. Further details are on the [LGV website](#).



*Image: Cwm Gu intake point*

Domestic customers who are supplied from the substation in Crickhowell can register their interest at [energylocal.org.uk](http://energylocal.org.uk). When we have sufficient interest, members will be invited to form the club and switch to Co-operative Energy, the electricity supplier for the project. Member numbers are limited to ensure consumers involved will benefit enough to make their involvement worthwhile.

The club is being publicised throughout the Crickhowell area so register interest now and get in at the beginning and please tell your friends!

You can email the LGV directors involved, Peter Blood and Andrew Fryer, at [Crickhowell@energylocal.co.uk](mailto:Crickhowell@energylocal.co.uk)

## LACAS

By Sue Cartlidge

The beginning of the growing season has got off to a fine start with plot inspections and reviews being undertaken on 1<sup>st</sup> May, with a view to making sure that the plots are being cultivated by their respective plot holders. Final inspections are being carried out on 31<sup>st</sup> May to check progress.

Many of the plots are looking well-cultivated and LACAS are delighted to welcome a number of new and enthusiastic members to the allotments. We can now look forward to some fantastic produce despite a seemingly wet and cold start to the year. The orchard has never looked better and the trees have been full of beautiful blossom. We are hoping that lots of pollination has taken place for a great fruit harvest.

The Chicken Co-op goes from strength to strength...nine chickens laying 7-8 eggs per day. The "girls" are benefiting from allotmenters' brassica cast offs!

LACAS - Llangattock Area Community Allotment Society is out to Lunch: this summer we are again participating in The Big Lunch on the Allotment site on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June from 12.30 onwards. The Big Lunch is the UK's annual get-together for neighbours. Every year since the idea began in 2009, millions of people stop what they're doing and get together with neighbours in a nationwide act of community and friendship. All comers are welcome - the only thing you have to do is bring a dish of your favourite food to share with all the other Big Lunchers, and perhaps something to sing on the BBQ which will be available. There may be a treasure hunt, boules, volley ball and who knows what else to amuse! (As if the Lunch was not attraction enough!).

More details about Big Lunch events nationwide can be found on

[www.edenprojectcommunities.com](http://www.edenprojectcommunities.com)

Mowing has begun on the allotment field, but there's always plenty of maintenance to do - keeping bracken and brambles in check, weeding the communal area and general tidying up, so a communal work party weekend has been arranged for 9th/10<sup>th</sup> June.

For any queries about the Big Lunch, contact Sue Cartlidge on 01873 812008 or [chiro.sue@btinternet.com](mailto:chiro.sue@btinternet.com) and for queries about allotments contact Phil Gibson on 01873 811537 or [gibsons@uwclub.net](mailto:gibsons@uwclub.net)



## SUMMER!!

By Jackie Charlton



Last month the picture was snow! This month we have bluebells and they are absolutely magnificent. A picture never gives you the smell of the sun on bluebells and the scent is just so rich. We will be clearing the bracken for the first time this year once the flowers and leaves have died back at the end of June. This will be done again late August to weaken the bracken which takes important nutrients from the



soil when the bluebell bulbs begin to grow underground in August. We will have to do that for at least two years to rid the slope of bracken for good. Last year we planted about 100 trees in the woodland and up the slope. They are growing well and we can now see the branches above the protectors. The trees were just 'whips' when planted but have benefitted from a good site.

The apple trees are really good, bought from a local Welsh supplier and giving us a truly Welsh orchard with a mixture of cider, sweet and cooking apples. Stakes were made from hazel coppicing done during the winter.

## ALDER CARR LOTTERY

As mentioned last month **Llangattock Community Woodlands** has been running a small lottery for the last 12 months. We raised nearly £300 though and are looking to raise more this year. This fund paid for all of the apple trees and we will celebrate the apples on the annual Apple Day in October.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to the Alder Carr Lottery and we will be looking for more people to join during this year. Please do consider helping us out with a small contribution and the all important element of becoming a WINNER!!

For more information please contact [jackiecharltonlgv@gmail.com](mailto:jackiecharltonlgv@gmail.com) or [andrewgpeach@gmail.com](mailto:andrewgpeach@gmail.com).

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

## EVENTS AT ALDER CARR 2018

Next event date to be confirmed will be a joint event to celebrate volunteering on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal in conjunction with Canal & River Trust. CRT has an annual BBQ for volunteers and this year suggested joining with LCW to thank all our volunteers.



### BOB'S BEE NOTES ~ It's all about the Queens



The colonies I have access to have now had their first inspections of the season. From this we will have a good idea of how the bees survived the winter and also some idea of how long it will take for the colonies to build up in numbers after the erratic start to this season. I have heard reports of huge colony losses throughout the country and indeed with beekeeping friends locally.

The first swarms have been collected in Gwent but as far I know not in this area. Scout bees have been investigating the bait hives in my garden for the last week so I would not be surprised if a swarm arrives into one of those in the very near future. Even I have had losses, thankfully limited. One very small colony that I thought may have got through the winter had it been mild has been lost, possibly another that was very weak when I looked last week. This was the experimental late mating nucleus hive we returned from the hills last September/October but we may still save that colony by adding brood from a strong colony at the next inspection.

In some apiaries there have been nice surprises with large colonies needing to have 'supers' given above the Queen excluder. We do this because bees need to store nectar away from the brood area where the Queens are requiring laying space. The largest of these is on the West slopes of the Skirrid Mountain, where the Queen was laying in two brood boxes with a crown board between the boxes. This means the Queen had to get through the two inch diameter hole in the crown board in order to have full access to both boxes. There are now two supers above a Queen excluder and the crown board has been removed from between the boxes. Because of the icing sugar dusting we did late last year, combined with 'Sacrificial Drone' removal this

year, we have low Varroa numbers in most colonies. We managed to get some nice photos of the Woodland bee colonies last Tuesday, showing how the Varroa mites are removed on the drone larvae, also photos of a Queen, a Drone, capped worker brood and pollen storage in the brood comb.

Good Beekeeping!

## ***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](http://www.lcwg.btck.co.uk). If you are interested in environmental

management, green wood crafts or bee keeping then do get in touch. Please email Eric Gower [eric.gower@gmail.com](mailto:eric.gower@gmail.com) for a membership form.



is looking for exceptional future leaders aged 14–17 with an interest in making a real difference to reducing the impacts of climate change to take part in our one year training programme to create a new generation of environmental leaders starting in September 2018.

This exciting opportunity is open for registration now. Participants will carry out activities including:

- **Training and learning** – both face to face and online training sessions covering various topics on sustainability, environmental leadership and green careers
- **Mentoring** – from a member of staff at the Centre for Sustainable Energy
- **Work placement** – a work placement at a professional organisation affecting local or national energy policy such as local authorities, governmental agencies, or environmental and landscape planning bodies
- **Local projects** – running simple low carbon projects such as a school eco-day or green week, providing local home energy advice, energy auditing, carrying out desk based renewable energy studies, making a short film or many more
- **Residential course** – a four day summer school to meet other participants and take part in workshops, talks and activities

Bright Green Future is managed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE), an established and respected energy charity with a huge range of experience in delivering projects that support people to reduce their energy use, providing resources to help community energy projects to develop, researching impacts of energy policy and much more. CSE staff will be on hand to support and mentor participants throughout the duration of the programme.

For more information and to find the application form please visit: [Bright Green Future](#) and follow [@BrightGrnFuture](#)



*Bright Green Future is part of a Big Lottery funded project called Our Bright Future, aimed at empowering young people to lead progressive change in their communities and local environment. See [www.ourbrightfuture.co.uk](http://www.ourbrightfuture.co.uk) for more details.*

## Bright Green Future

It's your world. Step up and be heard.



## 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: [andrewfryer70@gmail.com](mailto:andrewfryer70@gmail.com). You can meet our Board of Directors [here](#).

Now that we have 5 hydro schemes up and running, we'd like to get a few more volunteers involved in monitoring the schemes and taking readings. This would only take around an hour or so once every 6-9 weeks. If you are interested in helping, please contact Simon Walter [admin@llangattockgreenvalleys.org](mailto:admin@llangattockgreenvalleys.org).

## PLEASE ASK US!

If anybody would like to look at LGV's finances or discuss our schemes and projects, please contact us and we will be happy to help. We are proud to be operating a transparent and successful Community Interest Company. You may also find useful answers to our [frequently asked questions](#) on the LGV website.

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

[www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org](http://www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org)

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