



Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter

Issue 85
August 2017

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

ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS:

By Steve Sharp

Hydro – MH-1 and MH-2 updates:

There has been some unexpected and unusual good hydro news this month! Firstly, we have had some periods of rain and both Nant yr Hafod (MH-2) and Cwm Gu (MH-1) generated some small amounts of electricity last month.

At Cwm Gu, TGVH have repaired the hole which had appeared at one side of the intake and they are continuing to flow gauge at the Hands-off flow notch, to provide additional data to support our NRW application. They are also flow gauging at Nant yr Hafod, as part of a wider project to collect data to support a change in the way HoF notch sizes are calculated.

Last week we completed and commissioned Blaen Dyar (MH-2), our third hydro scheme which is located at Llanelly Hill, on the south side of the Clydach Gorge near Brynmawr. In the first couple of days there was just enough water to start the turbines turning before the water level dropped again.



Image: Blaen Dyar from the viaduct

We have started work at Abernant (MH-2) and this is progressing well; the penstock pipe has been delivered and joined and work has begun on the intake. This scheme is just south of Builth Wells and there was no export capacity in the electricity Grid in the area, so the scheme size was restricted. However, we were informed last week by Western Power that a wind farm in mid-Wales has failed to obtain planning permission and so the Grid capacity allocated for that scheme has been released and we have been able to take advantage of this, so the Abernant scheme no longer needs to have an Energy Management System and we can export all the electricity generated by the scheme to the Grid.

We have also started preparation work at our final scheme, Cwm Saerbren (MH-2), which is located in a wooded area outside Treherbert, a village at the top of the Rhondda Fawr valley in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The 700 metres of 280mm penstock pipe will be delivered in the next couple of weeks and will then be joined and dragged into position and work will also begin on the concrete intake structure.

LACAS summer show

When: Saturday 9th September 2pm–6pm

Where: Llangattock Allotments, Hillside Road, Llangattock.

What's happening: Produce competitions, dog show, raffles, BBQ, tea and cakes, plant and produce stalls, live bees, children's activities & much more.

Keep up to date: www.facebook.com/llangattockallotments



For any LACAS queries, do contact Phil Gibson on 01873 811537 or gibsons@uwclub.net



PICNICS AND BBQs

By Jackie Charlton and Bob Needs

LCW took on the Alder Carr woodland to provide open access to woodland sites for everyone. This month (well, actually July as well) we managed to do that. At the end of the school term Llangattock Church in Wales Eco Club had their summer picnic in the meadow and took full advantage of the open space to eat, roam and play. They enjoyed their afternoon and will be coming back during the next school year to help us out with small projects.



For the more grown up amongst us, the LCW summer BBQ was a great success and we managed a sunny day in between the wind and rain. The site landscaping is now finished. This was a great way to say thank you to all our volunteers who invited friends and family along to see what they do every Tuesday. There was also some interest in getting new

volunteers enthused and coming along too, especially those who look after grandchildren who are looking for different things to do together.



We take Health & Safety very seriously at LCW, so we were delighted when Canal & River Trust offered support. They provide us with equipment to help keep volunteers safe but they also come along and audit what we do. This month we had our audit and inspection and we not only ticked all the boxes but were praised for making sure we keep good records and maintain safety on our weekly agenda. The next bit of support is updating our training on the barge. We had training about 4 years ago but have new volunteers and would like to make more use of the barge during the winter months.

LCW get bat and bird boxes donated regularly and we had quite a pile of boxes just waiting to be put up this year. They are now in place and if you walk along the canal between bridges 115 and 114 in Llangattock and look across to our Alder Carr, you will see lots of boxes for both bats and birds on the trees.

These two pictures show a queen bee being clipped and numbered so we can clearly see her in the colony. It was fascinating to see and because we now have children's suits, Millie was able to watch very closely how this was done. You can just see her small hands as she closely watches Bob working.



New Website Launch

You can now visit our website. Go to <http://llangattockwoods.org.uk>. It is looking really good and any comments would be gratefully received. Still more to do as it is work in progress but we are quietly pleased.



ALDER CARR LOTTERY

Llangattock Community Woodlands have been advertising the Alder Carr Lottery for several months now and would really like to see more members. For more information, please contact jackiecharltonlqv@gmail.com or 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



Woodland Charter new project ideas are on the way from the Woodland Trust.



Bob's bee notes August

2017 Queen rearing experiment

The experiment is to see if the Queens mate with drones in our colonies. I will be able to tell if this has happened by examining the offspring of the new Queens in our hives next year using morphometry (measuring parts of the bees to determine their heritage). For the last three years I have been surveying local colonies of bees to see what types of honeybee are in this



area using this approach. This year I have found a colony kept in a remote location in the hills nearby that show as being 97% native bees. Others in the allotments and Llangattock Community Woodlands that are unrelated to that colony are showing similar native bee results. I am hoping to get some new Queens reared and mated in August and early September this year. I have been getting the equipment and bees ready for the last few weeks and will be delivering training to our budding bee keepers in Llangattock.

I know of 19 colonies of bees in the immediate area of Llangattock that consist of a mix of honeybee races including native bees. As the native honeybee in this part of the world has evolved since the last ice age by surviving amongst native flora and fauna, I would like to see if it is possible to try and select from these local native bees and produce some Queen

bees to head some of the local colonies this year.

I am planning to use a system for rearing the Queens known as “the Cloake Board method”, named after a NZ beekeeper called Harry Cloake. The Cloake board works by tricking the colony into thinking they have no Queen so they will produce Queens from any genetic material available to them that is of the correct age. The hive with the Cloake board is set up in my garden ready to go anytime once I start the timetable off. We have drones ready in two unrelated small colonies, one of which has no Queen so the worker bees are hanging onto the drones until they get a Queen mated. Most established colonies will have thrown out their drones by now as they are a drain on the resources of the colony once they have a new Queen in the hive.

We start by building a colony up in strength so that the young bees emerging from their cells are well fed, so they are able to produce ample royal jelly to stock the new Queen cells that are produced. This will be done locally and hopefully the result will be new virgin Queen cells which will be placed into mating hives. There are several different stages to go through before achieving this but the hives at LCW and the allotments should benefit as a result. All our budding bee keepers will see an experiment which could prove very rewarding for them but also give our bee colonies strong native bees.

Good beekeeping.

Bee Bob



LCW Trustees are justly proud of the commitment and enthusiasm of all our volunteers. We meet regularly, every Tuesday.

If you are interested in environmental management, green wood crafts or bee keeping then please do get in touch by emailing Eric Gower eric.gower@gmail.com for a membership form.



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

You can meet our Board of Directors [here](#).

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.

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:

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