



Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter

Issue 106
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<http://www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org/>



GOOD NEWS FROM ENERGY LOCAL

Energy Local has announced that they have signed up Octopus Energy as the electricity supplier for new Energy Local clubs so we can now prepare to get the Crickhowell club going. Octopus is a 100% renewable electricity supplier who is well known for good customer service and innovation, so Energy Local will be a great fit for them. There are further advantages for club members with Octopus:

- Small business users can now also be part of Energy Local and business premises can be registered in the same way as households.
- Octopus Energy will consider purchase of electricity from households with small scale PV installations enabling electricity not used by the household, to be used by other club members.

Energy Local has already been in touch with those who have registered interest in the Crickhowell club and are in the distribution area, asking for an update on their situation. Please return their short questionnaire if you've not already done so.

Energy Local and Octopus Energy are setting up and testing the process for switching to Octopus as the energy supplier, and the arrangements for smart meter installation and data handling are being tested by Energy Local with a household in the Crickhowell area. The LGV hydro generator at Cwm Gu has been switched to Octopus in readiness for the start-up of the club.

Energy Local will send further information shortly to those who have registered interest and are in the Crickhowell distribution area ("matched") and the tariff for Energy Local Crickhowell customers will be announced before they are invited to switch to Octopus.

The number of consumer members of the club is limited but there is capacity for a few more. The registration website is [here](#). Small business premises can now be registered for Energy Local in the same way as households by adding the details to your existing expression of interest or completing a new one.

If you want to refresh your memory of what Energy Local Crickhowell is about, further details and links are on the [LGV website](#).

Peter Blood

peter.blood@llangattockgreenvalleys.org

ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS:

By Steve Sharp

Hydro scheme update

There was a lightning strike at Cwm Gu which tripped a fuse but otherwise July was a very quiet and dry month in these parts. Abernant didn't generate any electricity all month and the other schemes stopped and started a few times but the total generation for all five schemes in July was less than 500 kWhs, as follows:

	July (kWhs)	Generation to date (kWhs)
Cwm Gu:	90	246,380
Nant yr Hafod:	120	136,270
Blaen Dyar:	160	87,130
Abernant:	0	97,920
Cwm Saerbren:	100	127,260
Total (5 schemes)	470	694,490

It's a good time of year to carry out annual maintenance, to make sure that the schemes are ready for the wetter months. This will involve greasing, a full strip down of the spear valves and inspection of the runners, terminal tightening and anything else that needs doing.



ALL IN A DAY IN AUGUST

By Jackie Charlton

We thought you might like to see some of the activities we undertook on one August volunteer day when a visitor from the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority also came along. He was the planning officer, undertaking a planning site visit to move our application on. More news on that later... Here are some of the activities:-





These pictures show a sample of one day: making tea, eating cake and sausages, clearing the fallen tree to bring the path back across the canal and finally stripping the willow – well actually sycamore and hazel. The wood cut from the fallen tree will be used for wood fuel for our customers, the sycamore and hazel will be cut down to make charcoal pencils for a local artist. The path will now be used again, making an interesting detour from the canal towpath.

Also on this day in August we almost completed two further wood stores, delivered three loads of wood fuel to customers, made up some brood boxes for the bees and cleared around our alder coppice area, which had become overgrown with brambles. The coppiced alder is growing really well, doing a great job for carbon capture. We don't sit around doing nothing all day!!



Other news in August

At last, our planning application for the compost toilet and green matting has been validated and the planning officer has put up the notices and visited the site. All is looking fine now and we will be ready to start construction in late September.

We are having a mini charcoal kiln on loan for a short while to test out how efficient it is and whether we should invest in our own. This is a great opportunity to find out how much more charcoal we can burn as it has become a very good source of support for our group with a great local business taking all the charcoal we can make. They would take much more if we could just produce it.

The Woodlanders were unable to meet on their normal second Saturday this month but they did make up for it with a “Camp Out” overnight. It was a huge success and more of the same is on the agenda.



Bob Bee notes ~ August 2019 ~



A bad year for honey

This year, most of the colonies that I work with are short of honey to extract. I am blaming this on the weakness of colonies from last autumn because of that hot, dry summer causing the Queens to pause laying. In turn they came through the winter smaller than they should have been.

We did have some early sun this year but as the weather cooled down, our summer was on hold until the second week of June. The bees have made up for it but most of the summer flowers have gone over with just the blossom from Rosebay willow-herb, balsam and now ling heather in bloom.

Where possible, I arrange my hives so that the honey box just above the brood box is partially drawn with beeswax, ready for heather honey to be stored there. The hives selected for a heather crop need to be very strong, with both flying and house bees at a time of year when most colonies are beginning to shut down ready for the winter. In order to affect this, a colony with a new Queen is selected; its work force is boosted artificially by taking additional frames of brood from nearby colonies to fill most of the brood chamber. The adjacent hives are moved away a short distance during the day so that when the flying bees from those hives come home, the only place they can unload their nectar is the boosted hive left in the vicinity.



What I saw when opening the super.

When I had to move my bees to get ling heather honey, these boosted colonies were the ones I would take with me to the moors. As we are only now beginning to process some of the summer honey, I have had supers (honey boxes) stored ready to extract. I took the top off the first box to be greeted by several adult wax moths running about on the top of the frames. This is bad news because they must have laid eggs that in turn rapidly develop into caterpillars that destroy the honey comb by tunnelling through the wax and eating any protein they can find. I have spent most

of the afternoon dealing with that by cutting any damaged comb out and rendering the rest into wax and

honey. Left another week, the house would have been full of moths and no honey. The only good thing is that the chickens will enjoy the caterpillars.



A close up of the damage done by wax moth.

On behalf of Bob the Bee

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. Please email Eric Gower eric.gower@gmail.com for a membership form.

LACAS

By Sue Cartlidge

Since the AGM earlier in the year, our membership Secretary and Chairman have both resigned for various personal reasons, so the LACAS Committee has been a bit thin on the ground. However, Sue Cartlidge has now stepped up and has taken on the role of Membership Secretary. If your green fingers are leading you towards growing your own fruit and vegetables then there are a couple of spaces available on the LACAS field. Just leave a contact email/telephone number on llangattockallotments@gmail.com and Sue will get back to you with further details.

Date for your diary: The LACAS annual show will be going ahead as planned on Saturday 7th September – everyone is welcome. Various community groups will come along and there will be a tea tent with lots of homemade cakes, but of course the real purpose of it all is to provide an opportunity for the allotmenters to show off their fruit, vegetables and produce. The judge this year will be coming along from the Abergavenny Garden Centre.



These recent photographs are evidence of just how productive your allotment could be!

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](#).

Now that we have 5 hydro schemes up and running, we'd also 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@llangatockgreenvalleys.org.

www.llangatockgreenvalleys.org

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