



OCTOBER 2015 - NEWSLETTER

Dear All

Llangattock Litter Pickers October litter picking results, November scheduled litter picks & news

November litter picks: We are litter picking as usual on the 1st Saturday (7th November) of the month, meeting at 9.30am.

We are also out litter picking on the following weekdays during November; meeting time in brackets:

Monday 2nd (9.15am), Tuesday 10th (9.15am) & Wednesday 18th (9.15am)

Note: We have BBC Wales out with us on the litter pick on Tuesday 10th November recording material for use on both BBC Radio Wales and television. The material will be used in November as part of the coverage on Deposit Return Scheme which we have provided an update on further on in this newsletter.

All our litter picks meet at Park Drive (Llangattock) with equipment provided. Please send us an email in advance (michaelbutterfield@hotmail.com) to confirm if you intend to come along so that we can plan the routes to litter pick and put out enough road safety signs beforehand.

Please note that it is essential that you bring a fully charged mobile phone with you, in case of emergencies - unfortunately if you don't we won't be able to use your help that day.

October results: October saw Llangattock Litter Pickers' efforts rewarded with 18.5 bags of litter/4 tyres from 76.6 miles of road side verge, country lanes, canal tow path and community areas. Just 35.5 hours of volunteer time were needed to achieve these results and the entire litter picking patch was again covered in October with 67.2% of the litter recycled.

The litter pick on the 1st Saturday of the month in October saw the group find spent cannabis plants disposed of on the roadside verge on the B4560 some 400 yards back from the cattle grid at Garnlydan. Sadly, this is not the first incident of this kind that we have had to report into Dyfed Powys Police in 2015 and thanks to them for kindly attending within an hour of calling them to collect the plants to appropriately dispose of them.

In October we welcomed two new volunteers to the group in Kathy Corlett and Phillip Thomas, both of Llangattock.

Level of litter at Garnlydan: We are trying to establish whether or not Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC) is taking a proactive or reactive stance following reporting of levels of litter. We issued a freedom of information request to BGCBC in relation to the level of litter found at



Garnlydan. Sadly we received an unsatisfactory response from the Authority with no data provided. We have raised a complaint into this matter with BGCBC and wait to hear back from them.

Deposit return scheme in Wales: It is welcome news that Keep Wales Tidy has adopted a positive position on the merits of the introduction of a deposit return scheme here in Wales following approval by their Board of Trustees since our last newsletter. There will be press coverage in the month of November in Wales promoting the push in Wales for such a system to be adopted as a means of reducing drink related litter such as metal cans, plastic/glass bottles, carton and single use drinks cups.

September saw us carry out an in depth analysis into the level of drink related litter we collected during that month. Over 75% of the volume of litter we collected was drink related. This equated to 45% of the overall weight collected. So as you can see it is a real issue needing to be tackled both locally and nationally but it cannot be done unless we have policy intervention hence our involvement in attempting to achieve intervention to begin to bring about the much needed change.

We're hopeful that at least two political parties will be carrying through with a commitment in their 2016 Assembly elections manifestos supporting the introduction of such a scheme here in Wales.

With us pushing for an amendment to the current draft of the Environment Bill (Wales) for inclusion for provision of a Deposit Return Scheme here in Wales. Scotland is fortunate that they have such provision through the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

Alcoholic drink related litter: We have been aware for some time that the level of alcoholic drink related litter that we as a group find whilst out litter picking on roadside verges is alarming. In October we carried out an analysis of this particular type of litter and it just confirmed the issue in facts and figures. We have raised this matter with both the Police and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed Powys Police and also with the local Neighbourhood Police Team. We believe it is naive to think that all the alcoholic drink related litter is coming from passengers from vehicles travelling through the patch that we pick litter from, hence the reason for bringing this real issue to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

Fly tip prevention follow up project on the Hafod Road: Sadly we were unsuccessful in our application for funding from the Welsh Government to install further preventative measures to curtail the fly tipping over the steep embankment on the Hafod Road. We remain committed to the removal of existing fly tips over the steep embankment and are planning removal of them in 2016.

Fly tipping incident on Llangattock Mountain: A resident in the community contacted us to report a fly tip located on the C136 road some 400 yards down heading towards the Ffawyddog from the junction with Beaufort Road. The resident took the 8 black bags fly tipped back to their property. We contacted the Waste Awareness Officer for Powys County Council to attend to collect and



investigate as to whether or not there was evidence contained within the bags to establish who fly tipped the bags. We are pleased to say that the officer informed us that there was evidence contained within the bags that linked the offence to someone living in the Ebbw Vale area. The officer has duly written to the person via a Section 33 letter and as yet has not had a reply. We will keep you updated on this matter as Powys County Council now has finally got an effective enforcement policy and so we are looking at Powys County Council to take the appropriate action in relation to this matter.

Flower troughs and wild flower verges: Following on from the success of the existing flower troughs that are currently placed in the community, we were approached by a number of residents from the Lime Trees Avenue and Tan Derwen area of the village asking if we would consider placing flower troughs in that part of the community. We wrote to all residents in both areas mentioned in July and we were pleased at the response with support and volunteers coming forward to look after the flower troughs. We can now inform you that we have placed eight new flower troughs in these areas with two further flower troughs also placed elsewhere in the community.

We are thrilled that the wild flower verges are still giving a wonderfully colourful display at the three locations on Beaufort Road. Given the success of these three wild flower verges we are looking to expand our planting programme in 2016 as a means of increasing the habitat for pollinators whilst improving the visual aspect of the verges and reducing the on-going maintenance of verges.

Finally we wish to reassure the community that we carry out all of the work at Llangattock Litter Pickers through the dedication and commitment from our volunteers without whom we would not have been able to bring about the difference the group has achieved in and around Llangattock over the past six years. We carry out our work with the support of Powys County Council and have a comprehensive insurance policy covering our work.

Regards

Pete, Rollo & Michael
on behalf of Llangattock Litter Pickers