



Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter

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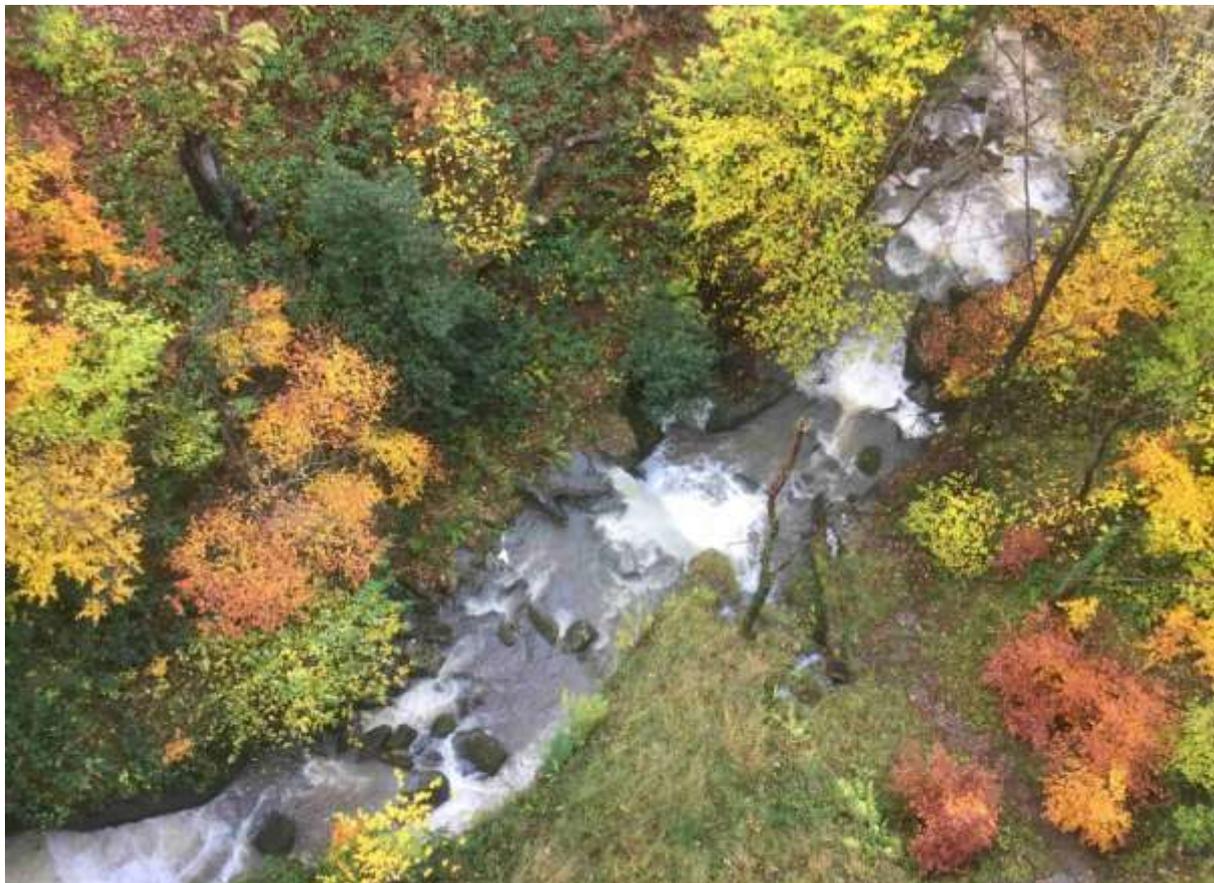
ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS

By Steve Sharp

Hydro schemes update

After the dry summer months and relatively calm September and October to date, we are heading into the autumn and the first period of wilder autumnal weather is forecast for the weeks ahead. Whereas this might not be good news for those planning a half-term holiday in the UK, investors in our micro-hydro co-operative and members of Energy Local Crickhowell should be reassured that the turbines will be turning again and making some much-needed 100% renewable electricity.

The leaves on the trees in Llangattock have been slow to take on their autumn colours this year so I have included my favourite autumn hydro scheme photograph below, which I took in 2018 from the huge viaduct over Nant Dyar, the stream which powers our Blaen Dyar hydro scheme above the Clydach Gorge.





Summer of Fun - Llangattock Woodlanders

By Jackie Charlton

Over the last three years, Llangattock Community Woodlands has encouraged local families to bring their children to the woodland and meadow for free fun and activity. These families, fondly called the Woodlanders, have grown to love the space and use it to freely go where they please, do what they want and enjoy a level of freedom exploring the landscape which is now so often absent in young people's lives.

This summer was made particularly special by the leader of Llangattock Community Woodlanders, James Godding, who organized the activities below with help from Powys County Council's COVID Emergency Fund, created to enable children to enjoy outside adventure and sport.

What the Woodlanders got up to during their Summer of Fun...



High Ropes & Orienteering

The course began with training on low ropes, enabling the group of children aged 8 and above, to become accustomed to kit, techniques and build team partnerships. This was followed by exciting challenges on the 10 - 30 ft wires enjoyed by all and an 80 ft zip wire ride. In the afternoon, the group travelled to the Begwyns and navigated their way in teams, locating clues using maps and features in the landscape.

Alpaca Trekking in the Brecon Beacons

Each participant was allocated an alpaca to feed and lead in the Brecon Beacons National

Park. The event gave participants a chance to gain insight into life on a working farm, ask alpaca questions and explore and enjoy the Beacons whilst leading their alpaca.



Gorge Walking in Waterfall Country

A challenging day of climbing, exploring the gorge and its waterfalls and jumping into the deep pools. In groups, everyone worked together to travel up the river, enjoying many new experiences. All the participants managed to complete the activities.

Woodlanders Funday at the Alder Carr Woodland

Taking place in our woodland and on the meadow, this event invited everyone to explore the Brecon & Monmouthshire Canal on boats, to meet a selection of animals including an armadillo and skunk, enjoy an interactive story telling session, learn and practice archery skills and watch a fire performer; a celebration of the achievements and shared experiences of the summer.



We saw all the young people involved rise to challenges and learn how they could cope with new experiences. Many surprised themselves and sometimes others too with their courage and abilities. The events offered everyone an opportunity to reconnect and share memorable experiences with old and new friends. For many, it was the perfect preparation for their transition to new schools, a chance to meet new people who would be in their school and to have memories shared with those who would not be accompanying them.



BOB'S BEE NOTES

I have heard several people's accounts that honey production this year is dismal yet again. At least the autumn has brought some pollen and ivy nectar into the hives and that didn't happen last year. Last winter, without the good stores needed to support the hives, most colonies that survived were in a poor state.



This year we have seen surplus stores in some supers (honey boxes above the brood box) but not enough to justify getting the honey extractor out to extract the honey from the frames. Cleaning the extractor is messy but we have a plan for the excess rain water used to clean the extractor. We keep the sweet rain water to make mead from the liquid that is collected so that is always worthwhile.

One of my friends from Wiltshire who is a member of the Bee Farmers Association reported a 75% colony loss last winter/spring, so his honey take has been reduced accordingly, as was ours.

As we have been taking split logs from the woodland group's wood store for deliveries we have seen several queen wasps hibernating between the stacked logs. They were dispatched when found and left for bird food in conspicuous places. Wasp nests can be a problem if they have been built near areas of human activity, especially during the autumn when the larvae have stopped giving the worker wasps a sweet drug reward for feeding them before they pupate into the last adult wasps of the season. The worker wasps get very agitated and go looking for a substitute to the drug, hence they eat into ripe fruit or anything else that is sweet to them, including human foods.



Our woodland bees tried to produce new queens this year but unfortunately the weather was not good at that time so the new queens failed to mate. That in turn led to the colonies dwindling and we only have two hives going through the winter. The remains of those bees in the dwindling hives were united to other colonies so we go into the winter with two good looking colonies that are well fed.

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. 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 - Plot Inspections Aplenty

By Sue Cartlidge

Not being able to hold our own summer show this year, LACAS joined in with the Crickhowell Garden Society's Open Gardens Day on 25th September. Several of us met with visitors on arrival, sold them cakes and squash and generally bored them with how wonderful it is to have an allotment. They seemed to be impressed.

Other visitors have included years 4, 5 and 6 from Llangattock Primary School, whose topic of study was "Fantastic Food". We had great fun showing them all kinds of veggies and berries with tasters, as well as some seeds for next year. The school used to have a plot with us but apparently, during the long summer holidays, students weren't able to collect the fruits of their labours and it became neglected, so sadly it wasn't a viable ongoing option.



In lieu of the summer show, the Committee undertook another plot Inspection. Plots were judged by the

Committee throughout the year for quantity, quality and variety of produce, neatness of plot and pathways, effort put in, conformity to the Society's clause regarding sustainable gardening practices, attendance at workdays and other altruistic contributions to the Society and fellow plot-holders. Awards were given to Best Plot of the Year, Best Half-plot of the Year, Best Newcomer, Best Raised or Small Bed and Most Improved over the Year.



No-Fireworks Bonfire Night: Friday 5th November is the date set for this. All welcome – just bring along a dish of your favourite kind to share with everyone else. We hope to have a couple of gas burners so that we can do some soups and there may even be a barbecue if we are lucky.

Apple Day Saturday 23rd October 2.00pm: The Woodland Group will be holding their apple juicing day, this time on the Llangattock Recreation Ground, so bring along your apples to be turned into juice!

At present the allotment site is fully occupied and we do have a waiting list. However, should you wish to get in touch with the Committee for any reason, the email is: llangattockallotments@gmail.com and there is also a Facebook page: Llangattock Allotments – LACAS.

George Stops Being Diplomatic

By George Smith

I really love skiing. I love being outside in all weather. I love the alpine scenery. I love skiing with friends and family. It really is all tremendous fun. A few years ago I went skiing with some friends and we had a really great time, as always. This year I've been asked to go again but the problem is that they are flying.

I've stopped flying. I stopped flying a few years ago but was persuaded to start again to go skiing. But this time I really have stopped, I haven't flown for 3 years.

I have told my friends that I'm not judging them and I would go if we could fill up a vehicle with people or better still go by train. But I am judging them a bit though I am reluctant to admit it, maybe my actions might start to influence them and a snowball may turn into an avalanche (not the most appropriate metaphor I acknowledge).

Surely my friends must see the absurd paradox of their actions contributing in a small way to shrinking glaciers, receding snowlines and poor skiing conditions?

The next people to talk about are my sister and brother in law. They have always enjoyed short weekend breaks, several a year. This normally involves flying to a European destination. Recently they travelled to Dublin for the weekend. They justify this by claiming that because they live in London and use a lot of public transport then their CO₂ footprint is low. This makes sense until you look into it deeper. I think I'm correct in saying that about 79% of our population lives in urban environments and although they don't all have access to public transport, a lot do. It's not just driving that is problematic, it's our western lifestyle; they all eat meat, buy out of season produce and have 4 children. They are both well-educated professionals and have a social conscience.

Please understand that I don't consider myself to be an example of how to live sustainably. My oldest son is currently studying in the USA and has flown out.

People who should know better are still burying their heads in the sand, they need to be told, so I am going to start telling them. When crops start failing due to weather conditions or lack of pollinating insects or arable land is lost to rising seas or any number of other catastrophes brought about by our activities, people no doubt will say 'Oh I didn't think it would really happen' or 'why didn't we do something about this years ago?'

I would imagine that most people reading this would, in general, agree with what I say, so I say to you if you are not already telling it straight to those who ignore the warnings then start now because the effects of Climate Catastrophe are certainly not judgemental, there will be no discrimination, everyone will suffer.

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 Simon Walter if you would like to explore the ways in which you can help: admin@languattockgreenvalleys.org. You can meet our Board of Directors [here](#).

We'd also like to get a few more volunteers involved in monitoring the hydro 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 using the email below: admin@languattockgreenvalleys.org

