

Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter



Issue 65 – November 2015

ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS:

Hydro Update:

I never thought I'd say these words but, finally, we have some decent rain!

Cwm Gu's turbine was in full swing when we checked last weekend, which is great news. The intake reservoir was pretty full and a lot of leaves and twigs had fallen in the area, which needed clearing away.

Can you spare an hour or so each month? to help us record the meter readings and carry out occasional checks and clear leaves and twigs at the intake point of our two operating hydro schemes. If you are able and willing, during the week or at weekends, please let Steve Sharp know (stevesharp.lgv@btinternet.com or 01873-810013). No prior knowledge or great level of fitness is necessary, as we'll give you full training and support, so we very much look forward to hearing from you.

Having secured the necessary planning permission and licences, we have been in discussions with various parties about the construction of our second MH-1 scheme, **Blaen Dyar**.



This photo was taken at our new **Nant yr Hafod** scheme last weekend, shortly after the hydro scheme had been commissioned. Nant yr Hafod is the first scheme in our MH-2 Co-operative, so we're particularly pleased to have sorted out some problems with the electricity meter and transformer before the rains arrived.

Talks continue to progress well with the landowner and various organisations re **Abernant**, the planned micro-hydro scheme near Builth Wells. We hope to get a lease agreed and signed soon and to start construction of the scheme early in the New Year.

We have also started discussions with a community group near Treherbert, with a view to taking on and constructing their planned micro-hydro scheme in our MH-2 Co-op. Three LGV directors will be visiting the site and meeting with members of the group later this week and we look forward to reporting further on this in the next newsletter.



Hot on the heels of the UK government's announcement last month about changes to the pre-accreditation process for FITs, the UK Treasury has now said that, as from the end of November, all community energy projects will be excluded from Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS), Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS) and Social Investment Tax Relief (SITR), reversing some of the commitments the government made in March this year. We have taken advice and believe that this new announcement shouldn't affect MH-1 subscribers or MH-2 SEIS subscribers, but the change will affect many community groups like LGV and the MH-2 board is considering ways to ensure MH-2 EIS subscribers will be able to claim tax relief on their investments.

PV Update:

If anyone has some ideas on how to move this forward, please do make contact. We would be delighted to have some help! Many thanks, Andrew - andrew@wernwatkin.fsnet.co.uk.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT – LLANGATTOCK LITTER PICKERS:

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

November litter picks: We are litter picking this Wednesday 18th (9.15am) and as usual on the 1st Saturday of next month (5th December) of the month, meeting at 9.30am.

Note: We had 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 and 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 Wales this month 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, cartons 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 election 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.



LACAS (Allotments):

'Allotmenters' have been benefiting in recent weeks from large quantities of well-rotted manure being delivered to their plots by local farmer Phil Smith at Cwrt Isaf Farm in return for donations to The Lwazi Food Programme Campaign, set up by his daughter-in-law, which helps provide meals for vulnerable school children in hunger-torn Zimbabwe. It's a great initiative and you can read more about it [here](#).



LLANGATTOCK COMMUNITY WOODLANDS

Winter orders have been coming through thick and fast for wood fuel since the last newsletter. LCW are on target to set a new sales record this year although the weather at the moment means felling for wood fuel next year is causing concern. If you would like wood please contact us through the website www.lcwg.btck.co.uk for your orders.



Include these other items with your First Aid kit when you get ready to battle zombies...



At LCW we take health and safety very seriously for our volunteers. The work volunteers do is often hazardous and requires good, sound risk assessment. That is why LCW have a dedicated Woodland/Volunteer Manager funded by the Welsh Government to manage and support our volunteers every week. But he can't do everything (even if he thinks he can!!), so

we look to volunteers to take on special responsibilities whenever we can. LCW have four volunteers in the group who can deliver First Aid support.

At the end of October, Jonathan Stedman and Tony Worcester completed a full day's First Aid training specifically targeted to activity in isolated conditions. Although our woodlands are close to villages or towns they are still isolated. So we keep our volunteers updated with First Aid training and provide specialist support which means our volunteers can work with confidence.

In January LCW are planning to give some very basic training in bee keeping on woodland sites. Bob Needs (yes Jed's brother) is a very experienced bee keeper who joined LCW as a volunteer recently. He is very keen to share his vast knowledge and experience with volunteers at LCW and help us expand our Trees and Bees Project. Watch this space for more details.



LCW Trustees are justly proud of the commitment and enthusiasm of all our volunteers. If you are interested in environmental management, green wood crafts or bee keeping then please do get in touch. Visit our website lcwg.btck.co.uk or email eric.gower@gmail.com for a membership form.



We are actively looking for an additional Trustee for LCW. Would you be interested? A gap has arisen to look at the future financial sustainability of the group. We have been extremely successful over the last five years in gaining support and funds to take a small group of enthusiastic volunteers to the point we are at today which is an organisation with a turnover exceeding all expectations but needing a strategic approach for the future. If you think you can fill that role we would be really delighted to hear from you. Please contact jackiecharlton@msn.com for further details.

MEMBERSHIP:

To find out more about joining please visit Llangattock Green Valleys.



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: andrew@wernwatkin.fsnet.co.uk

PLEASE ASK US!

If anybody would like to look at our 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.

**For more information on all our activities and to become a member,
please visit www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org
You can also follow us on Twitter [@LGVcic](https://twitter.com/LGVcic)**

If you'd like to see your photographs in the next newsletter send them to:
admin@llangattockgreenvalleys.org