



Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter

Issue 76
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<http://www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org/>

ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS:

By Steve Sharp

Hydro – MH-1 and MH-2 updates:

The autumn rains materialised too late to allow any generation at Cwm Gu last month, although the turbine is now generating well. Flow gauging has started at the intake point with the hope that we'll be allowed to raise the Hands Off Flow notch next year, to increase the volume of water flowing through the scheme.

Rent negotiations and the necessary legal work have been completed with Sustrans and its sister charity RPL and so construction is due to start at Blaen Dyar before Christmas, subject to the weather. We have received an updated quotation from our construction partners TGVH and are in discussions with our advisers Sharenergy about raising additional funds which are needed to be able to complete this scheme.

In MH-2, there was again some generation at Nant yr Hafod last month and the total generation figure at the month end was 47,723 kWh.

The landowner lease is almost ready for signing for the Cwm Saerbren scheme. We have secured a storage area near the turbine house and access for construction traffic has been agreed across a railway line. It's expected that construction of this scheme will start in the first quarter of next year.

TGVH and the DNO have issued updated quotations for the Abernant scheme and we have signed the contracts and paid a deposit to both suppliers. Construction is scheduled to start on this scheme in the summer of 2017.

Finance Director role:

We are still looking for a new Finance Director. If you have finance experience and might be interested in taking on the role from Mike, please contact Steve Sharp on

stevesharp.lgv@btinternet.com for more information.



LGV VOLUNTEERS NEEDED PLEASE! CAN YOU HELP?

In addition to the new Finance Director role, 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



LLANGATTOCK COMMUNITY WOODLANDS

By Jackie Charlton and Bob Needs

Llangattock School visit to special woodland site

Llangattock Church in Wales primary school year 4 Eco Club visited Llangattock Community Woodland last week (15 Nov). Their visit coincided with the LCW training day delivered by the Open Air Laboratories (OPAL) network, which is a UK-wide citizen science initiative that allows you to get hands-on with nature, whatever your age, background or level of ability. OPAL develops activities and resources, including national surveys, allowing people to get closer to their local environment while collecting important scientific data. OPAL leader Barbara Brown, the Community Scientist for South Wales for the Museum of Wales, said that “LCW volunteers are now well placed to contribute to the national database and also share their training with local groups and schools”.



The year 4 Eco Club helped to survey trees after volunteers of Llangattock Community Woodland had undertaken more serious training in the morning, surveying trees and understanding and identifying tree disease. This will enable volunteers to assess whether any of our trees have been attacked by predators or air born disease. Additionally we are now able to call ourselves citizen scientists too and link into the OPAL website to record any environmental changes or activities which can contribute to national knowledge through the OPAL database. So much can

be analysed this way, providing evidence-based research material to environmental scientists across the UK.

UPDATE We have an update on the Alder Carr clog making research. One of our volunteers found some information in a local history book bought at a car boot sale: In 1902, a young Mrs Pritchard remembers the clog makers taking up residence in Grosmont Cottage in Llangattock. They cut alder wood from a local woodland close to Llangattock Park. This might well have been our woodland.

Volunteering

If you would like to come along as a volunteer and find out more about charcoal making, bee keeping, moth surveys, wood processing or woodcrafts, please e mail

huw.lloyd@hotmail.co.uk We meet regularly every Tuesday and you can find information on where and when we meet on our website www.lcwg.btck.co.uk



The Woodland Trust was so impressed with all our tree stories and the way they had been collected that they have asked for LCW to write a BLOG!! This will be shared across the UK and will help to put our group on the map. If you have a tree story, you can send it to me at jackiecharltonlgv@gmail.com.



Bee notes for November

Cold, wet, windy November, this is the time to move bees to new sites for over wintering. The harvest is in, any honey taken is in storage containers, be it jars, cut comb boxes or buckets. The bees have filled their frames with honey and pollen ready for the dearth of deep winter. They will need about 40 pounds of honey to see them through to the spring; because of the recent mild winters we have taken to giving them a bag of bee fondant (similar to cake icing but especially formulated for bees) that is placed immediately above the brood nest. Bees that move about the brood chamber during mild periods of weather are using up energy and letting heat out of the brood cluster and the effect of this is more stores consumption, so bees die earlier than they normally would, hence the fondant to help keep them going.

Llangattock Community Woodland bee group recently relocated the bees from Jarrett's Wood to the Alder Carr in Llangattock, (the new woodland site we are developing by the canal). The new apiary site was cleared of brambles and fern some weeks before the move and then small trees and low branches in the clearing were cut to allow good ventilation, because of the surrounding wet woodland. A new wire fence will run along the edge of the field so the hives were sited well back from it, should any inquisitive animals try to investigate what they are. The original hive stands were also relocated so the hives are away from any damp in the ground.



We had a surprise when we found one of the colonies appeared to have died out since the last inspection. One of the beekeepers moving the hives noticed wild honey comb on the outside of a super (honey box). The comb had some pollen in a few cells but was attached to the side of the box that was some distance from the hive entrance. As there was no activity around the entrance, I opened up the hive only to find a small clump of dead bees

and an apparently dead Queen bee. This was an unmarked Queen – our Queen was marked on her thorax and had clipped wings to prevent her flying.

What could have happened? Did a cast with a virgin Queen land on the side of the hive, start to draw new honey comb, eventually got inside, killed the original Queen then failed to mate? It was late in the year so there were no drones. We can only guess but the colony, although full of good stores and mostly freshly drawn brood frames, was defiantly dead. I removed the Queen and put her into a glass tube in my pocket for further investigation under a microscope. When we returned to the Alder Carr for the usual lunch time sausages, I took the tube from my pocket to show other woodland group members what a Queen honey bee looks like. To my amazement, she was moving about inside the tube. The warmth of my body had revived her. She is now in my fridge awaiting a dissection to see if she was a mated Queen or not.

Bee Bob



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 www.lcwg.btck.co.uk or email Eric Gower eric.gower@gmail.com for a membership form.

Llangattock Area Community Allotment Society

By Phil Gibson

PLOTS AVAILABLE NOW

Fancy growing your own fruit and vegetables in beautiful surroundings?

We currently have 4 plots available. Call Phil on 01873 811537 or 07977 731309 or email gibsons@uwclub.net for more information or to come and view.



A sample of the produce grown on Plot 5 in 2016

COMMUNITY RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Eleanor Sullivan and I am a student at Cardiff University studying for a Masters in Spatial Planning and Development. I am currently in the process of completing my dissertation which is the last stage of my degree.

I have decided to base my dissertation on community renewable energy projects, and more specifically the barriers/issues that they face, both practically and politically. This will then enable me to assess whether these barriers can be overcome, to allow community renewable

energy projects to be scaled up, and reduce energy consumption in a sustainable and achievable way across the UK.

I would be very grateful if you could take the time to complete a short questionnaire, which will form part of the data for this dissertation. To fill in a questionnaire, please use the following link: <https://goo.gl/forms/9NypXE1YExC5bS7B3>

The survey is anonymous and will take no longer than 5 minutes to complete. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me using the following email address: sullivanef@cardiff.ac.uk

Thank you for your assistance.

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.

To find out more about us and to become a member,

please visit www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org

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