

Annual roundup 2013



Welcome to another year of development for the Llangattock Green Valleys family. We started on the journey in 2008 in Llangattock Community Hall and we have continued to grow and develop as more people have got involved as members – and now also as subscribers to our recent share offer. New projects emerged and new organisations have developed and matured.

To summarise where we are this year, our annual report covers Llangattock Green Valleys CIC, LGV Ventures CIC and now LGV Micro Hydro (1) Co-operative Limited, the new baby in the family, with LGV Micro Hydro (2) Co-operative already in gestation. For our Annual Accounts, please click on the links, where you will find a full set of accounts for [Llangattock Green Valleys](#) and [LGV Ventures](#).

Llangattock Green Valleys is still committed to its original goals – becoming a Carbon Negative Community by the end of 2015, building a community-owned asset base and supporting other community organisations to become more sustainable. Every month this year has brought new challenges, and priorities have shifted. We recognise the increasing price of energy, the retreat of the public sector from supporting communities and the recession, which reinforces LGV's original objectives to radically improve the way Llangattock and the surrounding communities work.

We are trying to understand Llangattock's energy use and get residents and businesses engaged, focusing on energy efficiency, energy generation and saving money. This is achieved via our Energy Audit and thermal imaging work. A number of households have been feeding data in since the original NESTA Big Green Challenge project and are now doing so to the LGV online Energy Audit. This year we have started to expand this, inviting an academic to give us new insights into energy consumption and energy saving. More people and households are always welcome to get involved! Go to the website langattockgreenvalleys.co.uk to sign up and see the latest results.



Early on in the year we had a setback. The decision by the Glanusk Estate not to develop an Anaerobic Digester plant was a disappointment. LGV Ventures' Board had invested a great deal of time, money and emotional energy assessing the feasibility and development of an Anaerobic Digester. The LGV Board realised that continuing to work on a project to project basis on central government initiatives such as the Community Led Network Revolution and the Local Energy Assessment Fund was consuming our resources, energy and enthusiasm with not very much benefit to members, as was the case with working with Powys County Council. As a consequence, consolidation and prioritisation was inevitable.

The market place for domestic renewables and insulation work cooled as the Solar FITs were reviewed and reduced and the Green Deal replaced the panoply of grants, leading to confusion. The launch of the Renewable Heat Incentive for homes was delayed yet again, and many off-gas grid houses are still waiting for progress on this. The splits in the Westminster coalition on Energy Policy also made it increasingly difficult to know what to do. As a result, many organisations working in this environment have gone to the wall or reduced their operations – but we are still here!

So, we had a spring-time wobble – and given the personal investment of time and energy by the Board, we could have easily lost our way and ambition. I must personally thank them all for the astonishing efforts in keeping the flame alive. Guided by Michael Butterfield, we switched our resources and focus onto Micro Hydro schemes and have developed a production line of potential sites which are analysed and crafted into prospective schemes with our long-term partners TGV Hydro Ltd. We decided to use the Co-operative model to finance these, in order to spread the benefits between the landowner, the share offer subscriber and the community, with the schemes returning the valuable risk capital to LGV Ventures CIC.

In September, LGV Ventures CIC launched that snappily named baby Llangattock Green Valleys Micro Hydro (1) Co-operative Limited and by the end of November the scheme was fully subscribed, having raised £270,000. Welcome and thank you to all the subscribers to the share offer! We have learnt a lot in this process and are planning a fleet of such Co-operatives in 2014. The original two micro hydro schemes will be built by the Autumn of 2014, to keep us even more occupied than we are now, and the next Co-operative will be launched in February 2014, to allow us to develop a further four schemes.

Since 2008, Llangattock Green Valleys has been involved with and has helped a number of other organisations: the Llangattock allotments (LACAS), Llangattock Community Woodlands and Llangattock Litter Pickers. These organisations have gone from strength to strength as separate entities. However, we can see in the future that these existing and new partnerships will become more significant, as the micro hydro schemes start to deliver financial benefits which will provide an opportunity for local community groups to apply for funding. In the last year, Llangattock Litter Pickers, a foster child which has existed within Llangattock Green Valleys CIC, decided to become a separate, autonomous entity. To find out what they have achieved and what their plans are going forward, please visit the LGV website.

It can't be emphasised enough that our journey to date would not have been achieved without the generous support of our funders. These include British Gas, with their money for Micro Hydro, Ynni'r Fro, a Welsh government scheme backed with EU money, the Brecon Beacons Trust and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund. At LGV, we realise that our ambitious plans and tight timescales mean we are sometimes a challenging organisation to work with, but we do think we deliver good value to our funders in achieving their aims where they match with ours, and we thank them for having confidence in us.

What a journey! The board have completed another year of hard work, much voluntary time, emotional highs and lows and frustrations. As chair, I'd like to give big thanks for their patience, mutual tolerance and steady responses to the tidal wave of e-mail.

For those members who feel they want to help, what can you do? The answer is:

1. Get involved in the Energy audit – llangattockgreenvalleys.co.uk
2. Sign up to our newsletter at llangattockgreenvalleys.org
3. Ask your friends to sign up as LGV members
4. Subscribe to our share offers if you can, in the Micro Hydro Co-operatives
5. Follow us on Twitter (@LGVcic), and
6. Pass on this update, as this helps us build up our supporter network.

And we are always interested to speak to people who would like to get involved as Directors or volunteers – just pick up that phone! 0800 206 1915. All the information you may wish to access after reading this report is on our website, including 2013 newsletters – llangattockgreenvalleys.org.



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