

Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter



Issue 36 – February 2013

THE 2012 ENERGY AUDIT RESULTS ARE IN, with the average annual energy use per household coming in at **15,434kWh** – up 2,544kWh on 2011's figures. The increase is partly due to 2012 having a particularly cold start and a pretty awful summer, which meant we all used more heating and more hot water. But the good news is this figure is still **significantly under the UK average**, which Ofgem says is around 19,800kWh. So, how much energy does your household use? If you don't already know, why not sign up to our online Energy Audit and see how you compare with our local average. To get started, simply go to www.llangattockgreenvalleys.co.uk and click on the **Register** button.

Meanwhile, congratulations to **Paul Devey**, winner of the beautiful hand-turned oak bowl that was last month's Energy Audit prize. This month we've got another great incentive to sign up – a basket of gorgeous **handmade beeswax goodies** donated to us by **Tirion** – otherwise known as Llangattock's very own Kerry Needs. Perfect for gardeners and anyone with dry or chapped skin, the hamper includes 3 pots of skin balm (in Natural, Lavender and Rose Geranium), a lip balm, a foot massage bar (great for dry heels!) and a pack of 3 beeswax candles.



This month's Energy Audit prize is a real treat: a basket of Tirion's lovely handmade beeswax goodies, worth £20. Tirion products are available at The Old Rectory Hotel, Llangattock, Black Mountain Gold in Crickhowell, Ty Cam Gallery in Talybont, Talgarth Mill, Erwood Station and the monthly Llangynidr and Talgarth farmers markets. Or email mail@tirion.co.uk

And finally, LGV added another award to its trophy cabinet on 31 January, when it was named runner-up for the Green Award at the **Wales Council For Voluntary Action Annual Third Sector Awards Cymru 2013**. The awards recognise the thousands of hours of voluntary work put in by individuals and organisations across Wales to help their communities, so it was a real honour to make the shortlist.

L-R: LGV directors Simon Walter, Michael Butterfield, Steve Sharp and Jackie Charlton with awards presenter Jason Mohammad of BBC Wales and Jonathan Levy, Chief Operating Officer of Class Telecommunications, who sponsored the awards.



MEMBERSHIP – LGV's current membership tally is **255**. To find out more about joining visit www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org.

ALLOTMENTS (LACAS) – Snow scuppered last month's planned **Wassail** – and with the weather still uncertain they're holding off setting a new date for now. We'll keep you posted.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT – The Litter Pickers' smart new signs will be in evidence next month on roadside verges following litter picks, thanks to **Timbercraft's Adrian Stahl**. Adrian generously made and donated 18 sturdy stakes for the signs, saying it was his bit towards the community effort. **1st Crickhowell and Llangattock Scout Group** have also been doing their bit, joining the Litter Pickers for a sweep of the common land below the Beaufort road, from the cattle grid to the B4560

junction on Saturday 2 February. Heavy snow in January meant cancelling the Thursday 24th pick, but over the whole month the team collected 13 bags and put in an impressive 27.5 volunteer hours. And finally, copies of the **Litter Pickers' Annual Report** are now available from Pete Bates – call 01873 812073. **Next litter picks:** Thursday **21 February** and Saturday **2 March**, meeting at 9.30am by the playing fields entrance on Park Drive.

RESIDENTIAL – The **thermal imaging camera** has been doing the rounds and the good news is that the homes we've visited are all pretty well insulated and draughtproofed, so on the whole, a reassuring result. Oh – and the answer to last month's conundrum: what were the bright yellow blobs on Simon's image? Sparrows! This face of Simon's house is slated and it seems the birds spend the night tucked up behind the slates.

Meanwhile, if you're thinking about **solar PV**, there's never been a better time to take the plunge. Based on the current 15.44p Feed-In Tariff and the latest panel prices available through Reach For The Renewables, our group-buying club, you can expect **excellent returns of up to 13.9%** for 20 years (based on our standard 4kWp/16-panel domestic scheme).

PLUS we now offer **IntellyPower** – a nifty piece of kit designed to maximise the benefits of solar PV by automatically directing any surplus electricity to heat your hot water. For all our latest information and prices visit www.rftr.co.uk, email info@rftr.co.uk, or call us free on 0800 206 1915 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm).

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS – Some good results here: the Community Hall continues to reap the benefits of the **air source heat pump** installed through Green Streets. In 2012 the hall used just 4,373kWh of energy for heating, which works out at **less than £500** for the year. In addition, the school and community hall reported a combined **12% reduction in electricity consumption**. And thanks to the school's new boiler and heating system, they cut their year- on-year gas consumption by a whopping **27%**. Plus the school's PV system continues to provide them with free renewable electricity and bring in a nice little income, with Feed In Tariff earnings now totalling **£3,500** since January 2011.

WOODLANDS – The **felling season** is in full swing, with volunteers busy at both the Dan y Graig and Ty Mawr woodlands. Meanwhile, down on Canalside, the group has built an **otter holt**, using logs and brash so it blends in seamlessly. Otters have been seen in the area and otter spraint has been found on the towpath, so the volunteers are hoping the cosy holt will get some use. The group also has a new volunteer: James joined the group after completing a month on a Mandatory Work Activity scheme; he's made a big contribution already and is eager to get involved in all the group's projects. If you'd like to find out more about getting involved, go to <http://lwgw.btck.co.uk/> or email woodlands@llangattockgreenvalleys.org

MICRO-ENERGY GENERATION – Good news here, with the feasibility study for **Nant-y-Hafod** showing that a 13kW scheme is possible. We will begin the process of placing the scheme into the design and planning/permission stage in the coming weeks. Plus we've secured funding from the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund to help carry out feasibility studies on **12 potential new micro-hydro schemes** in the region, with six to be completed before 31 March and six before the end of April, with the hope that a significant number will prove to be viable.

COMMUNITY-SCALE ENERGY GENERATION – A big month for us and our partners The Glanusk Estate, as it's **decision time** on whether we proceed to the working up stage for the anaerobic digestion facility. This stage will take several hundred thousand pounds to mature, so we need to be confident that we have a bankable scheme.

YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU!

Llangattock Green Valleys Community Interest Company has come a long way since we signed up our first member in October 2010. We are now seeking support for the Board from our membership base of 255. If you have the talent, experience, knowledge and time to move our organisation forward then we'd love to hear from you. We need motivated volunteers for positions on the Board and to provide support for other tasks. You would be giving your time to develop a sustainable future for Llangattock, including reducing carbon emissions, promoting community-scale renewable energy solutions and maintaining a healthy, thriving village. Please contact us at info@llangattockgreenvalleys.com

For more information on all our activities and to become a member of LGV visit www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org.