

Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter

Issue 41 – September 2013



WELCOME TO THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER! This month's big news is the launch of our very first **co-operative share offer**, on 30 September. The share offer gives you a chance to join the UK's growing co-operative energy movement by investing in two local community micro hydro schemes at Llwmws Farm on Hillside, and on the Cwm Gu stream, just outside Crickhowell.



The proposed site for the intake on the Cwm Gu stream, near Crickhowell.

Photo: TGV Hydro Ltd

The two schemes are on track for completion in summer next year, and together they'll generate an estimated 208MWh of renewable electricity a year – enough to power 57 average homes.

Through Feed-In Tariff payments and selling electricity back to the national grid, they'll also produce a healthy income, with a **projected return for members of 5% per annum**, averaged over the 20-year life of the project. We also anticipate authorisation under the Enterprise Investment Scheme, which offers 30% tax relief and would further boost the rate of return for qualifying members to 8.1%.

To find out more about this exciting opportunity, drop by the LGV stand at the LACAS Open Day this Saturday, 14 September, where you'll be able to speak to the directors and learn about micro hydro from our special display.

Plus, make sure you come along to the **share offer launch** at The Old Rectory Hotel, Llangattock, on **Monday 30 September, from 7-9pm**. And if you can't make that date, there's a second meeting at The Old Rectory on **Thursday 3 October, from 4-6pm**. We look forward to seeing you!

ENERGY AUDIT – LGV Directors will also be rolling out the new **Energy Audit questionnaire** at the LACAS Open Day on Saturday. It's very straightforward and takes only takes a few minutes to complete, so do drop by the LGV stand and fill one in. The questionnaire has been compiled by Bath University PhD student Maddy Stow, who is investigating the impact of community energy projects on the way individuals use energy. Her work and what we do match perfectly and we hope the questionnaire will assist her research and give us some useful insights, too.

In the meantime, thanks again to all the people who've joined our **online Energy Audit**, plus a quick reminder: please check your figures when you enter them each month. If your usage or generation graphs show massive negative figures or weird jumps, chances are there's an error in your entries. To correct this, simply go into **Edit Meter Readings** tab, skip to the **Last page** and check your figures. If there is an error, you will need to work out the maths yourself as the system is not quite clever enough to redo the calculations. If you need help, or have any questions about the online tool, check out the FAQs or email admin@llangattockgreenvalleys.co.uk.

ALLOTMENTS (LACAS) – This Saturday, 14 September, sees the ever-popular **LACAS Open Day**, with a host of **stalls, delicious hot food, country skills demonstrations** and – new this year – a **dog show**. Open to pet owners living within a four-mile radius of the allotments field, dog show entry is 50p per class, or £1 for three classes, with plenty of fun options to choose from for both children and adults. *Please note: no puppies under 16 weeks, and dogs must be on leads at all times.*

Despite the cold spring, it's been a great growing season at the allotments, so expect a truly magnificent display and some fierce competition in the various fruit and veg categories. **Gates open from 2pm**, with tickets available in advance from The Old Rectory, The Horseshoe, The Vine Tree and Webbs. Price: £2.50 adults, £1 children (kids under five go free). For more details call Phil (01873 811537) or Jed (01873 810132). *Please note: disabled parking only on site.*

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT – Llangattock Litter Pickers had another busy month in August, with three volunteers clocking up 32.8 hours and an impressive 180.3 miles to help keep our community looking spic-and-span. Together they collected **14 bags of litter**, with 83% of that being sent for recycling. **Next litter picks:** Thursday **19 September** and Saturday **5 October**, meeting at 9:30am by the playing fields entrance on Park Drive.

WOODLANDS – Woodland Group members will be out in force at the LACAS Open Day this weekend, demonstrating **hurdle making** and other **woodland skills**. They'll also have the results of their Greenwood Crafts project on display, including a brand-new Woody Deer (the prototype Woody was snapped up by a very keen buyer at the Royal Welsh Show).

The Group will also be out and about on Sunday morning, 22 September, for a canal-side **litter pick** between Bridges 113 and 119 as part of Tidy Wales Week (16-22 September).

Meanwhile, members have been busy with various environmental projects, including a **Day & Night Hedgerow Survey**, carried out earlier this month as part of the Keep Wales Tidy (KWT) Long Forest community hedgerow project. Under the guidance of KWT's Rachel Palmer and Becky Clews-Roberts of The Mammal Society, volunteers conducted the hedgerow survey and assembled 'footprint tunnels', which were placed under hedges overnight in a bid to learn more about local small mammal populations. The ingenious footprint tunnels (as used on BBC2's *Springwatch*) do not trap visiting animals; instead, furry visitors simply walk over a strip of non-toxic paint, leaving behind identifiable footprints on the paper floor.) The woodland group plans to continue using these tunnels in the run-up to hedgehog hibernation.

Following the survey, the volunteers enjoyed a meal together at The Old Rectory before taking part in a **bat walk** along the canal, led by Dr Jane Sedgeley of the Vincent Wildlife Trust. Six species of bat were identified with the aid of bat detectors, with the very small Lesser Horseshoe bat and Whiskered bat both using the canal-side hedgerow and tree lines as safe flight paths.

Anyone interested in doing further surveys of hedgerows and the wildlife they support can get guidance and kit to do this through the Long Forest project, and LGV has a new bat detector with a recording facility available for loan to groups it supports.

To find out more about the Woodland Group and its many activities, go to <http://lcvwg.btck.co.uk/> or email woodlands@llangattockgreenvalleys.org.



Woodland Group members and other volunteers assemble small mammal footprint tunnels as part of a Day & Night Hedgerow Survey carried out in Llangattock earlier this month.

Photo: Rachel Palmer, Keep Wales Tidy

MICRO-ENERGY GENERATION

We've almost completed flow gauging on two of our four Phase 2 streams, **Nant yr Hafod** and **Blaen Dyar**, and we've started gauging some streams with micro hydro potential near Trefil as well. Planning and permitting is now expected on the Phase 1 Llwmws Farm and Cwm Gu streams in March next year, with construction starting soon after to allow commissioning by next summer.

We're still awaiting decisions from landowners on **three other potential micro hydro schemes**, but we expect to have firm decisions on these by the end of September. Legal agreements for the four hydro schemes that form Phase 2 are with our solicitors and if all goes well, we're hoping to submit the pre-application for permitting for these schemes at the end of this month.

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