



Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter

Issue 94
June/July 2018

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

USE LOCAL POWER

CUT YOUR BILLS



Energy Local
Crickhowell

Get cheaper, greener electricity and support your local economy.

Energy Local Crickhowell is a new community project that could reduce your electricity bill while supporting renewable energy in your area.

Join the club at energylocal.org.uk

Information: Llangattockgreenvalleys.org.uk

ENERGY LOCAL CRICKHOWELL:

By Peter Blood

We now have more than half the number of expressions of interest required to form the Energy Local Crickhowell Club. **The initial number of members is limited.** We will continue to take expressions of interest to enable the club to expand as more generation becomes available, but

**to be in at the beginning register your interest as soon as possible,
we recommend by Thursday 19 July 2018.**

Some questions and answers:

Sounds too good to be true: local green energy and lower bills. How is it done?

Club members who use renewable energy from generators connected to the Crickhowell substation are charged for this at a lower rate, and the owners of the generators receive all that money. In this way you will be supporting local renewable generators.

How do I use local renewable energy?

When local renewable energy is available it is shared equally between all Club members using energy at that time. The website shows you visually when this energy is available, so you know when you can use it. If there is not enough to go around the balance of your supply comes from the grid in the normal way.

How does the supplier know to bill me for local renewable energy, and how much?

You will be provided with a new smart meter, installed free of charge, which will tell you and the supplier, how much energy you have used in each half-hour time interval.

Can I save money when there is no renewable energy available?

Yes, electricity from the grid is supplied on a time of use tariff so if you shift some of your use to low cost times you'll also save money.

Is the club open only to members of Llangattock Green Valleys?

No. Anyone who is supplied from the Crickhowell electricity substation can join the Crickhowell Energy Local Club, so tell your friends. Llangattock Green Valleys is the local community organisation working to establish the Club. The Club will be a Cooperative within the Energy Local family.

So how do I join?

Go to energylocal.org.uk and click on the Crickhowell Club.

Then what happens?

As soon as we have sufficient people to form the Club you will be invited to a meeting to answer any questions and to outline the next steps.

For further information see:

[Energy Local's YouTube video](#)

Llangattockgreenvalleys.org

ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS:

By Steve Sharp

There was little rain in May in Wales and June has been even dryer to date, so ice-cream sellers have been smiling but very little electricity was generated by our hydro schemes. Total generation in kWhs at the end of May for our schemes was approximately:

Cwm Gu:	163,537
Nant yr Hafod:	102,061
Blaen Dyar:	44,092
Abernant:	50,644
Cwm Saerbren:	31,422

We have applied to Welsh Government for 100% relief from business rates for Cwm Gu, as a community-owned hydro scheme, and all MH-2 schemes will also benefit from this decision.

We have received a pre-app response letter from NRW concerning the new fish easement at the Cwm Gu intake. NRW has indicated that they are happy with the revised design and so we have submitted an application for a minor variation with this design and we have just heard that this has been accepted. We have therefore programmed to do the work next month.

The boards of LGV MH-1 and LGV MH-2 have sought advice and have had discussions concerning a possible merger between the two Co-operatives. The directors of both boards think a merger would be in the long-term interests of the Societies and is likely to result in considerable savings in terms of ongoing costs and management time. It is likely that a formal vote on a merger proposal will be put to Members of the two Societies in October this year. If passed, the merger would probably take place at the end of 2018.

LACAS Community Working Party 9/10 June

By Sue Cartlidge

And goodness did the party work! The whole allotment site was given some care and attention with strimming and weeding, empty plots were partially cleared and covered over to prevent further weed growth and the new raised beds and community area were given a thorough weeding as well. Two dead trees in the orchard were disposed of on the "wildlife pile", where we hope that some hedgehogs may eventually take up residence.

The containers where we keep the mower and other equipment were cleaned and painted, now looking as good as new – almost – considering they have served us well over the last 9–10 years.

The highlight of the whole weekend surely had to be the construction of Bob's Benches: the picture shows some benches round the old oak tree, which were constructed from heavy planks left over from repairs to the canal. Nothing like a bit of recycling.



Huge thanks are due to everyone who turned up for the work party to help maintain the fantastic space that is the Llangattock Area Community Allotment Society.

Meanwhile, allotmenters are beginning to reap the delicious fruits of their labours in spite of the late spring and the lack of rain lately.



If you would like to take on an allotment, please contact Phil Gibson on 01873-811537 or gibsons@uwclub.net.



CANAL & RIVER TRUST TO THE RESCUE!

By Jackie Charlton



Twice this month we have asked for some help from Canal & River Trust, our partners at the Alder Carr Woodland, and on both occasions they came to the rescue. After the beautiful bluebells comes the awful bracken. This year it has grown like triffids on the march. The only



way to keep the bracken at bay it is to cut it twice in the year, once in June and then again in October. Well, we had two brush cutters and two strimmers operated by fellow CRT volunteers but the bracken defeated them. They managed an area, which is great, and we will now watch with interest how this works against the bracken which will now remain uncut. The brave volunteers suffered from the biggest influx of horseflies ever experienced on this site too. So, with the triffid bracken came the horsefly master race!!

The second day of rescue came from two intrepid tree surgeons. We had a hanging ash tree which was diseased and damaged right over our new shelter. LCW volunteers had managed some of the branches but then we were left with a hanging stem about 12 inches in diameter, not huge but would still cause serious injury and damage if it fell, so a different tactic was needed. Here is a photo showing the

dexterity of amazing tree surgeons at work.

PLEASE ASK US!

If anybody would like to look at LGV's finances or discuss our schemes and projects, please contact us and we will be happy to help. We are proud to be operating a transparent and successful Community Interest Company. You may also find useful answers to our [frequently asked questions](#) on the LGV website.



Wildlife Notes



The group look out for different flora and fauna each week and try to keep a record. For the last few weeks I have asked volunteers to keep an eye out for basking slow worms. Well, we didn't see any slow worms but we did see an amazing sight whilst having a photo taken with our new sign, a grass snake which was in the region of 650 cms long. We disturbed the grass snake by the canal bank and then watched it swim across the canal to the other side, slither out and onto the towpath. What an amazing sight!

We have also been invited by BBC Wildlife Magazine to contribute to a regular 'volunteering in the environment' article, so we have submitted our information and will await publication with interest.

ALDER CARR LOTTERY

The Alder Carr Lottery is something we now want to promote to support small projects in **Llangattock Community Woodlands**. We raised nearly £300 last year and three people won prizes at the end of the year – 1st prize of £50 and two prizes of £25 each. We are looking to raise more money this year, so if you would like to support us and perhaps be a happy winner, please get in touch.

For more information, please contact jackiecharltonlgv@gmail.com or andrewgpeach@gmail.com.

The **Alder Carr Lottery** is registered under the Gambling Act 2005 and has a Small Society Lotteries Registration Certificate. Registration No: LN/201600367



BOB'S BEE NOTES ~ JUNE



“A swarm in June is worth a silver spoon”

That was last year's quote, very different from this year. I have only heard of six swarms and casts (virgin Queens with some worker and drone bees) locally, a very unusual low number of swarms for this time of year. It could be put down to the weather conditions; the snow and cold spell we had in March this year was very different to last year.

Although there have been few swarms this year, there was great excitement in Llangattock when an old Beach tree with rotten roots fell over the footpath. Two days after the tree fell down, bees were seen flying from a hole that had been home to a wild colony of bees for some years. As the photograph shows, I was able to cut a slot in the opposite side of the tree to the hole to extract what was left of the squashed colony. The massive honey comb collapsed as the tree hit the ground. The bees were shaken into a small box with bits of salvaged honey and brood comb as well as some of the new comb. The surviving bees had already begun to make new comb after the tree fell from vertical to the horizontal position. I eventually found the Queen but she was dead. The brood had been capped over and indicated the brood was more than eight days old but sadly no eggs or larvae, meaning the Queen had not laid for the last eight days. To make sure the bees were going to survive, some genetic material they could make a Queen with was needed, so I cut a piece of beeswax with a few young larvae from one of my hives and put that in with the bees. I will inspect that box in a few weeks' time to see if a new Queen has emerged and mated.

The other bee news is that the woodland group now has five colonies of bees after we made another two boxes up from one of the colonies that were trying to produce a new Queen. The Queen cells were put into hives where the Queens have emerged from their cells and now only have to fly and mate. We saw two of the Queens when we inspected the colonies, so let's hope for a long summer and we may get some honey later this year.

Good Beekeeping!

Bee Bob



LCW Trustees are justly proud of the commitment and enthusiasm of all our volunteers. We meet regularly every Tuesday and you can find information on where and when we meet on our website

www.lcwg.btck.co.uk. If you are interested in environmental

management, green wood crafts or bee keeping then do get in touch. Please email Eric Gower eric.gower@gmail.com for a membership form.



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: andrewfryer70@gmail.com. You can meet our Board of Directors [here](#).

Now that we have 5 hydro schemes up and running, we'd like to get a few more volunteers involved in monitoring the schemes and taking readings. This would only take around an hour or so once every 6-9 weeks. If you are interested in helping, please contact Simon Walter admin@llangattockgreenvalleys.org.

To find out more about us or to become a member, please visit:

www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org

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