



# Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter

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



## ENERGY LOCAL CRICKHOWELL is in business

By [Peter Blood](#)

Households in the Crickhowell Energy Local Club are now being switched to Octopus Energy. Those who have registered their interest have already had messages from Energy Local. Some households are not switching immediately because they are waiting for current contracts to expire and will switch later. Once a premise is switched, Octopus will arrange for a Smart Meter to be fitted prior to moving to the Energy Local tariff and locally generated electricity.

Back in August, Octopus arranged for me to have a Smart Meter fitted and although I'm on a standard Octopus tariff, this enables them to test their Energy Local data systems. The installation went well and I can view my consumption via my account on the Octopus website, so no communication problems at my location. I'm told that the installation engineers will check the signal strength before starting work in locations where it is known to be weak.

As we announced in the last newsletter, Octopus Energy will consider the purchase of electricity from households with small scale PV installations, enabling electricity that is not used by the household to be used by other club members. We are therefore seeking more consumers to take part in the scheme: full details are available [here](#), and on the associated "How it works" link, which shows the tariffs. You can register interest at [energylocal.org.uk](http://energylocal.org.uk), where there is yet more information. Small business users can also be part of Energy Local and business premises can be registered in the same way as households.

## ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS:

By Steve Sharp

There was quite a bit of rain locally in the first part of August but very little from then on. Generation and rainfall for the month was as follows:

August	Generation (kWhs)
Rainfall (mm)	126
Cwm Gu:	4,410
Nant yr Hafod:	2,580
Blaen Dyar:	2,820
Abernant:	1,170
Cwm Saerbren:	8,640
<b>Total (5 schemes)</b>	<b>19,620</b>

We've carried out some standard maintenance tasks this quarter on all our schemes apart from Cwm Saerbren, including stripping down and greasing the spear valves.

We signed a new 2-year Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Octopus Energy for the Cwm Gu scheme this month, which replaces the old Co-op Energy PPA. We also activated the PPA with Co-op Energy for Cwm Saerbren and have agreed a 5-year Meter Operator contract with SMS Plc, who will install a new half-hourly meter at the scheme shortly.

It was announced recently that The Midcounties Co-operative, owner of Co-op Energy, has agreed a strategic partnership with Octopus Energy, the company behind the new Energy Local Crickhowell initiative. This is likely to have some effect on the LGV MH2 Co-operative but we expect the changes to be positive ones.

As part of the deal, the Co-op Energy brand will be retained and Octopus Energy will take on ownership and responsibility for the management and supply of energy to the 300,000 plus customers currently supplied by Co-op Energy, Flow and GB Energy.

The partnership will also see the creation of a joint venture between the two organisations to develop the community-generated energy market in the UK. Co-op Energy is the UK's largest buyer of community-generated energy and Octopus Energy was the first supplier to launch a smart export guarantee tariff under the Government's new approach to renewable energy.



## Such a busy September

By Jackie Charlton

Lots of things have happened this month. We surpassed 1500 volunteer hours during August which means, should we continue in this way, we will have done more than 2000 volunteer hours by the end of the year and I suspect it will be much more than that.

We supported LACAS at their annual show and had a very successful day selling our honey, as mentioned below. This crop was waiting in the wings to help us out this year, as we knew the hives were small and needed help to increase numbers. We don't want to deplete their stocks this winter and already they need extra feeding.



Stand at LACAS with observation unit



Children inspecting the Queen bee



Typical of the dormouse to make a centre hole in the hazelnut

**Exciting news: this little hazel nut shows evidence that we have dormice on the site. Dormice like to nest in newly-coppiced hazel and this little nut was found tucked in the middle of a hazel tree we coppiced last year.**



The charcoal kiln ready to burn

We have also taken delivery of a super charcoal kiln, on loan to us from Sirhowy Community Woodland Group. LCW has this on long-term loan to test out and assess whether it will help us to produce more charcoal, to keep up with the demand from Natural Weigh in Crickhowell.



Finally, we'd love to see you at the **Annual Apple Day** event to be held from noon to 4pm at the Alder Carr meadow in Llangattock on **Sunday 20th October**.

**Directions:** Head south through Llangattock on Hillside Road, cross the canal, past Beacon Park Boats and follow the lane around a 90° left bend. The Alder Carr Meadow is about 200 metres further along, on the left hand side.

## ENTRY FREE

- ❖ Bring your apples to be pressed and take home your own apple juice – please bring your own bottles or containers
- ❖ Enjoy a grilled sausage & bread roll with apple sauce for £1.00
- ❖ Observation bee hives and examples of other woodland crafts



## Bob Bee notes ~ September 2019



We have had a late harvest this year, mainly because of the knock on effect of last year's heat wave and then the late start to summer this June. When I say "harvest", we have to take that word with a pinch of salt because in Llangattock so far there is only one beekeeper I know of



that has any local honey – and that is not me. The woodland bees are doing well but the honey we had is from previous years and had been in store and forgotten about after our move from the previous site. I have about 70 lbs of honey from my bees on the Skirrid, which is of course near Abergavenny, but because of the late start I didn't expect a great harvest, although there has been heather in bloom this year. Our honey extractor has been at full pelt over the last few weeks and we sold about 28 1lb jars at the LACAS show this month.

As it happens, we have other interesting events coming up this year very much to do with bees. Our bees are responsible for pollinating apple blossom as they are about in relatively large numbers early in

the year compared to bumble bees and other pollinators. Bumpers have to start off with just a Queen bee doing all the work until her first brood is flying and helping with pollination. This means there was some apple blossom open on good weather days the bees could pollinate, which means this year we will have apples to crush on Apple Day celebrations to be held at the Alder Carr site on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October.

We are now feeding our bees, as they don't have enough stores collected from the late summer. We are seeing the bees working hard on good days but there are just not enough flying bees to provide for the young inside the hives and store honey as winter food supplies. Supplementary feeding must be completed this month as some effort is required to evaporate the water from the sugar/water mix, so that it doesn't ferment when stored around the brood nest. The bees have been building new wax comb throughout the summer as we convert from old brood frames, which are full and often grubby, to the new, clean, larger 14"X12" frames.

We hope to see you at the Alder Carr site on 20<sup>th</sup> October where the bees will be on display with some of the other products they are responsible for producing.

### ***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.lcw.btck.co.uk](http://www.lcw.btck.co.uk). If you are interested in environmental management, green wood crafts or bee keeping, then please do get in touch. Please email Eric Gower [eric.gower@gmail.com](mailto:eric.gower@gmail.com) for a membership form.



## **LACAS**

By Sue Cartlidge

It did not rain and the allotmenters managed to set up marquees in preparation for the Annual Show on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September.

Entries to the produce tent were slightly fewer this year but there was no lack of customers for the tea tent and the barbeque. The Judges of the Produce Show were Ian McDonald and Gavin Trinder from the Abergavenny Garden Centre and they said they were most impressed with the



allotment site, as well as the quality of the produce in the competition.

The Woodland Group and Kath Crocco with her produce stall were most welcome and the kids were entertained by Ann Gibson. Sadly there was no dog show this year but we are hoping to restart it for the Annual Show next year.

The allotments have welcomed a number of new members this year and should you wish to join the waiting list for a plot, contact Sue Cartlidge in the first instance on

[llangattockallotments@gmail.com](mailto:llangattockallotments@gmail.com)

## Date for your diary:

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November: LACAS No Fireworks Bonfire Night Do** – we will be building the bonfire in the afternoon from 2.30 then lighting up at 6.30pm. The usual burgers, sausages, soup and other delicacies for your delight will be on offer.

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

Now that we have 5 hydro schemes up and running, we'd also 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](mailto:admin@llangattockgreenvalleys.org).

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