



Llangattock Green Valleys newsletter

Issue 98
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<http://www.llangattockgreenvalleys.org/>

ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS:

By Steve Sharp

Following on from the weekend of heavy rains last month, October has been dryer but with some occasional showers and some beautiful colour in the autumn leaves. These two photographs were taken at the beginning of November at our Blaen Dyar scheme at Llanelly Hill, after a night of heavy rain.



Total generation in kWhs of our five hydro schemes at the end of October was:

Cwm Gu: 168,820

Nant yr Hafod: 105,720

Blaen Dyar: 48,980

Abernant: 56,280

Cwm Saerbren: 53,210

Following Special General Meetings for both hydro Co-ops on 15th October and another 'confirmation SGM' on 12th November for LGV-MH1, Members of both societies voted unanimously in favour of the motion to merge the two Societies. This is predicted to lower the ongoing running costs, lessen the burden on volunteer directors and Members involved in the governance and daily management of the Societies, unify the development activities of the two organisations and spread the risks for all Members between a larger portfolio of hydro schemes. Therefore the Board will seek approval for the merger from the Financial Conduct Authority and we are hopeful that the merger will take place at the end of 2018.



SATURDAY SUCCESS

By Jackie Charlton

The new Saturday Session is a huge success and we now have a Holiday Club too. In October the rain fell and we never thought anyone would turn up but we were wrong. They came along and just ignored the weather in great Welsh fashion. So successful was it that a Half Term Treat was organised for local children and they were supervised by our very own local children's writer, Sarah Kilbride. Nine children aged between 2 and 10 came along for a special story time and environmental journey through our woods.



This month's activity was 'Den Building'. Using any materials they found on site, eight children were seen excitedly looking for the best site for a den; I can't tell you where it is because it's a secret. By midday, they were hungry and looking for sausages. The group will be officially launched in the New Year as Llangattock Community Woodlanders. If you are interested in giving your children the opportunity to come along once a month, please get in touch.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Thank you to everyone who completed our survey last month. They are being collated as I write and thanks to Survey Monkey, all analysed and ready for The Big Lottery Application. If you meant to complete it but forgot, here it is again: [Survey Monkey](#). The Big Lottery feedback from our last application asked us to do a community survey and it has been great to see so many responses.

APPLE DAY in Llangattock Allotments was another great success. The weather was very kind to everyone and loads of apples were turned in to great apple juice. We learnt lots from the experience this year and because everyone had such a good time, we have already started to plan next year's event. We are seriously looking forward to having apples from our own trees bought from the Alder Carr Lottery funds from 2017/18.

We also learnt that everyone loves a BBQ'd sausage, so we will make sure we have many more next year. If you have any ideas for events or gatherings that might attract locals to our woodland or to the Allotments, let us know.



ALDER CARR LOTTERY

The Alder Carr Lottery is something we 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 £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 ~ NOVEMBER



November is a good time to make beeswax products using surplus wax. We have great fun melting the wax in our woodland to make different things including Christmas Angels. These are sold during the period running up to Christmas and will be available at Crickhowell Christmas Fair on 6 December.



The wax is produced by the young bees on eight wax scales that are positioned under each worker honeybee abdomen. Surplus beeswax comes from two sources within the hive:

1. **Cappings:** these are the pieces of beeswax that are sliced off the face of the honey combs so the honey can be extracted by spinning in a honey extractor. The rain water used to wash honey off the cappings is then used to make mead. This wax is usually light yellow in colour and will vary depending what flowers were being worked by the bees at the time the honey was capped over.

2. **Old brood comb:** Every few years we change the old comb for new sheets of hexagon-embossed beeswax foundation that bees use as a guide to produce the cells for brood and honey. Old brood comb gets darker with age as each generation of bees emerges and pathogens can build up in the comb. This old wax is usually dark, because of staining from propolis (the sticky substance bees collect from flower buds to keep the inside of the hive sterile). Melting the old comb in boiled rainwater absorbs some of the dark stain when wax melts from between the cocoons that each generation of bees leaves behind. Recovering this dark wax is a time-consuming task involving several stages of melting, scooping out the old cocoons and filtering the wax through fine mesh to get it as clean as possible. This is the wax we use for making furniture polish and natural beeswax coloured candles.

Llangattock Community Woodlands look to sales of these products to help fund next year's bee budget and we will be having a table at the Christmas Fair in Crickhowell. Various products that are produced by woodland volunteers will be on sale including the beeswax polish, honey, Christmas tree angel decorations, hedgehog homes, Christmas star of David hangings, Christmas cards and plant labels. We also hope to meet some of our supporters who can have a taste of this year's honey and see what we get up to when we go into the Alder Carr wood.



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.

LACAS

By Fran Phillips

The autumn season continued to be busy with water butts being worked on and maintenance plans developed. New members taking over allotments were welcomed and allotments are still quietly being put to bed with winter sowings of broad beans and planting of garlic. Brassicas remain covered.

The highlight of the season has been the harvesting of pumpkins and squash, Apple Day and the annual Big Bonfire – the new marquee was put up in record time and filled with soups, cakes, mulled cider, burgers, hotdogs and all manner of autumn fare. The bonfire was freshly laid and then lit when guests arrived. Despite the weather, the event was nicely attended by friends and families.

The LACAS committee will be losing two of its members and new members are being sought. If you know of anyone who would like to get further involved in a rewarding aspect of the community, please let us know.



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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