

Llani in Green Town Project

Llanidloes has been chosen to take part in a Low Carbon Communities project! It involves three towns in Powys that each take action to reduce the carbon footprint of the town and thus strive to be a Low Carbon Community. Those three towns are Llanidloes, Rhayader and Talgarth. The main aim of the project is to develop a community owned, renewable energy scheme. The project is run by Severn Wye Energy Agency (SWEA) using Rural Development Plan money.

This scheme provides a focus and aims to engage the community. It will encourage further action to reduce carbon emissions, reduce fuel poverty and cut business overheads by improving energy efficiency in buildings and hopefully promote other renewable energy systems. The project will culminate with a conference which will be open to all, but aimed primarily for Powys communities.

LLES is currently considering an overhaul of the Community Centre, installing a wood fuel boiler, solar panels and vastly improving the energy efficiency of the building. It is centrally placed, owned and run by the community, and is ideally situated to be a focus of the project. We have had to abandon hopes of developing a hydro scheme, after several possibilities have come to nothing, or don't fit within the project timescales.

We have also approached Potters about the possibility of having a Community Wind Turbine on the Landfill site.

LLES is re-launching the Home Energy Service. We have obtained some Smart Meters to go hand in hand with the surveys, and we are awaiting the outcome of a funding bid to acquire an infrared camera, which can very visually identify heat loss from a property.

We will need volunteers to help with the home energy surveys, and also to join us in making things happen. Please contact us if you would like to help with this worthwhile scheme, we provide training and advice.

Contact Diana Berriman on 01686 411131 or diana@lles.co.uk

Smart Meters

LLES has bought 6 Efergy monitors for use within Llanidloes households. Efergy monitors are simple, clip-on smart meters which tell you how much electricity you are using at any given moment, both in terms of watts and pence.

They are in two parts – one part clips onto the incoming main from the meter box, the other is a display unit kept in the house. The display unit is portable, so you can take it from room to room to see the effects of different appliances. The device reacts almost immediately to an appliance being switched on, giving an instant reading. So, for example, you can compare different appliances, see what the 'resting' reading of the house is, when everything is off and you're on your way out / going to bed, and see the cost of leaving things on unnecessarily.

I have trialled one of these meters for a month, and it becomes a little obsessive. It's more interesting than it sounds, and is great for reducing energy use, or showing others in / visitors to the house the cost of leaving things on.

Talybont on Usk carried out a trial with 10 households in Spring 2008, the results of which make interesting reading. ('Exploring the psychology of Smart Meters' – If anyone wants to see it, contact Diana 07899 766123. One of the householder comments was about how invisible electricity is, and by the time the bill arrives you've no idea how you've used the energy. It's not like the oil level going down in the tank, or the pile of wood diminishing. The Efergy monitor allows householders to see their current, actual consumption of power during their everyday activities. It puts a value to the use of electrical appliances. Over the period of the trial, 9 out of the 10 households taking part reduced their energy use, mainly by being more aware

of where power was being used and therefore more careful. The trial showed that these smart meters can help people reduce their electricity consumption.

LLES will be circulating these Efergy monitors around households linking in with the Home Energy Service where possible.

If anyone would like to have a go with an Efergy meter, please contact *Diana* 01686 411131 / 07899 766123.

LLES Summer Party
Sunday 23rd August 5-9pm
At Dol-Llys
Come and welcome the Zero Carbon Caravan
Bring food and drink to share.

2010 Llanidloes Green Festival

Preparations for the 2010 Green Festival are already under way. The likely date is the weekend of 8th and 9th October. Potential speakers are currently being contacted, and funding is being sought from as many sources as possible. Music will play an important part of the weekend, including street buskers performing alongside the market stalls that will be set up.

The market street will be left open to traffic as some local shops have complained that the road closure has a detrimental effect on their business. A number of children's events are planned, including, Art and Poetry, Vegetable growing and making bug boxes or wormeries. Local community involvement will be an important emphasis for the 2010 Green Festival. *Colin Penfold*

THE FUTURE OF LLES

In 2002 at LLES's first public meeting, Sir John Houghton spoke about Global Warming to a packed audience of well over a hundred people. Sir John is our President and Mick Bates AM, Peter Harper of CAT and Dr Andy Scrase are patrons. A main aim was to raise awareness of climate change and encourage energy saving. We have done that through numerous talks over the years on various topics with excellent speakers, stalls promoting energy efficiency, and talks to Rotary clubs, WI's, Young Farmer's clubs, church groups and in the local schools. We have also inspired several other groups to start similar activities in different towns. We have run an Ecoteam group and our Home Energy Service has encouraged people to cut their carbon footprint. That is still ongoing. We have had two successful Open Eco Homes days and two very popular Green Fairs.

Another aim was to promote renewable energy and help Llanidloes become a low carbon community. That has not been as successful, but it has not been for want of trying: numerous efforts and feasibility studies looking at Anaerobic Digestion, Combined Heat and Power, Hydro schemes etc have for one reason or another proved unworkable. Now we are part of the Low Carbon Communities Project and we are working on getting a community renewable energy project going in the near future.

Where do we go from here? I feel LLES is at a crossroads and needs a new direction and new energy. We need feedback on what we are or are not doing, new ideas and suggestions for the way forward. Could we become an umbrella group for transition town initiatives? So much is already going on in Llanidloes... We need new ideas, new board members, and volunteers to help with energy surveys. Above all we need to be more in touch with you, our members. What do you think?

Please come to a meeting on Wednesday 16th September in the Great Oak Cafe to discuss these issues and help us find a way forward. So much has been achieved, let us go forward, not back. There are huge challenges ahead – let's join together to meet them.

Gwen

Feedback to gwenprince@cooptel.net

ZERO CARBON CARAVAN COMING TO LLANI

The conference of world leaders in Copenhagen in December is crucial to getting an agreement to avert dangerous climate change.

Groups of people from different parts of the UK and Europe are cycling and getting lifts on yachts to reach Copenhagen to lobby world leaders for the all-important Climate Change talks there in December. A group from Wales will be visiting Llanidloes en route from 23rd to 25th August, and several people have already offered accommodation.

We plan to welcome them with a bring and share party at Dol Llys on Sunday 23rd August. Come and meet them and offer your support. Other events are being planned. We will keep you informed... *Gwen Prince*

Book Review

'Confessions of an Eco-Sinner: Travels to Find Where My Stuff Comes From' by Fred Pearce

Fred Pearce, the senior environment writer for *The New Scientist*, has travelled the world to find out where the everyday "stuff" in his house originated from. If you have ever wrestled with the dilemma of eating green beans from Kenya, or buying cheap T shirts for your growing children, this is the book for you. It explores the worlds of gold, coffee, and (British) strawberry production; over-fishing in Mauritania, prawn cultivation in Bangladesh, palm oil, sugar, bananas, cocoa beans, and many other debates and topics and sub sections along the way. Pearce takes a necessarily critical look at world water use, particularly in the developed nations, and is hard on himself too:

"My total water use ... is 100 times my own weight every day. If everyone in the world had the same requirements as me, then that would work out at 13,000 cubic kilometres of water, which is only slightly less than the total amount of accessible water flowing down the world's rivers in a year."

Pearce is an interesting writer; he highlights the issues, yet leaves you to make up your own mind. Even though I have read the account of the Kenyan green bean grower, and see the need for this farmer to get some return for his crops, I still cannot bring myself to buy his beans. But I now see this trade in a whole new light.

While you read this book, the nagging issue of air miles and carbon footprints are in the back of your mind, but Fred Pearce deals with this issue as well, and how he tries to alleviate it. This leads to a fascinating chapter on carbon offsets. I recommend this book to everyone who believes they have a social or green conscience. When I read it I could not stop talking about it to any one who would listen, and I hope you enjoy it as much as I did. *Kevin Carey*

LLES MEETING

Wednesday 16th September

Great Oak Café

**Please come and give
your feedback, ideas & suggestions.**

World Environment Day - 5th June 2009



LLES held a stall under the Town Hall to mark World Environment Day. We gave away native trees and PowerDowns in return for completing an Energy Saving Trust Advice Card. This entered them into a draw to win an Eco Kettle.

The winner of the kettle is Angela Morgan, Severn View, who was delighted to receive her new kettle.

We also sold cakes, and had lots of information available for people to take away. It was a busy morning and lots of people called in to see us. Many thanks to Jules from FreeTree, SWEA and the LLES members who came along to help.

Diana Berriman



Llani Car Club

We are now in our third year. We have three cars and 19 members. Shortly we will be replacing one of our vehicles, the Peugeot estate, probably with a small fuel efficient car. At our recent AGM, I was struck by the value some of our members have got out of the club. 6 members do not own a car, they rely solely on the club. The three cars covered 23,659 miles in the last year, which is twice the average mileage driven by one person in one car.

Clearly the Car Club is part of the low carbon solution. It is also part of the solution to the credit crunch, why? because it is pay as you go motoring, you have no overheads, if you don't use a car you pay nothing. Personally we now do one third of the mileage we used to do and are saving £2000 a year by not having a car, also there are no more unexpected bills and I am no longer a full time taxi driver for the children.

If you would like to give the car club a try ring me on 01686 412961. *Andrew Capel*

The Llanidloes Allotment Action Group

As its name suggests, the LIAAG was formed to try and advance the case for more allotments in Llanidloes. The allotments currently provided by the council are fully subscribed, and other allotments (such as those near the Rectory) are similarly full and in any case insufficient to meet demand.

You can help! If you are interested in having an allotment, apply to the council and join the LIAAG. We'd also like to hear from you if you have a parcel of land of a couple of acres near Llanidloes which you would be prepared for people to use as allotments.

Contact Meg on 411383 for more information.

Chris Leech

Trefeglwys Community Shop

When the thriving village shop closed in 2008, it was much missed by the majority of people living here. A public meeting last summer showed enthusiasm for a community shop and right away a steering committee was formed.

Over the past year this group has worked steadily, fund raising, identifying a property and applying for planning permission, with professional input from an architect. The planning process has proved to be long and complex, but ultimately permission was granted and following tenders, building work is due to start to transform what is to date, Mantles garage, as soon as completion on the purchase of the property is reached.

The sale of petrol and diesel fuel will continue and as well as the shop providing groceries and local produce, the site will be shared by a local florist. There will also be a workshop space for rent. The shop will be owned by the village and a team of volunteers will be involved in working with the managers. The aim is to open for business fully by the

autumn, though fuel sales will be continuous during the building alterations.

Chris Penfold

Llanidloes Outreach Group



Members of Llanidloes Outreach Group, which is affiliated to Ponthafren at Newtown, have been attending the gardens at Dol-Llys Hall. We are sharing an allotment and have planted a variety of vegetables which are now beginning to crop.

On the 2nd July we harvested five full bags of potatoes which were planted by the group and also were able to pick some of the mange tout peas and lettuce. More of these are still growing and other vegetables will soon be ready before long.

Some of the group prefer to just come and sit on the garden benches and enjoy the sunshine and birdsong. Others like to help with the various tasks around the garden which always need attention. *Bronwyn Strugnell*

People paid for supplying power

BBC News 12 July 2009

Households that contribute electricity to the National Grid are to receive payments under a new government scheme. Towns and villages will be encouraged to generate their own power with wind, water and solar energies, and then be paid for how much they produce. Called clean energy cash-back, schemes already operate in 19 European countries including Germany. But critics warn that small-scale production is expensive and projects may require government subsidy.

At present, anyone in the UK who feeds electricity into the National Grid can get a reduction on their fuel bills through smart meters. But ministers hope that the promise of cash in people's pockets will encourage them to seek new ways of generating their own power.

In Germany, whole towns have grouped together to buy wind turbines, build biomass plants and erect solar panels on all private houses. They are then paid a guaranteed fixed price for every kilowatt of energy they produce - a higher sum than for electricity made from fossil fuels in traditional power stations. Three wind turbines can make £15,000 a year for a single village.

Since so-called "feed-in tariffs" were introduced in Germany, some 400,000 homes, particularly in the sunnier south of the country, have installed solar panels. But the government has had to subsidise such projects in order to keep them viable.

At present, only about 2% of Britain's energy comes from renewable sources, but the government has pledged to increase that to 15% within the next 12 years.

LLES Comment:- We hope this scheme will be a help in our endeavours.

Events around the UK (Summer 2009)

Big Tent Festival - Falkland Estate, Fife, Scotland

25th-26th July

<http://www.bigtentfestival.co.uk/>

Big Green Gathering - near Cheddar, Somerset

29th July-2nd August

<http://www.big-green-gathering.com/>

Climate Camp Scotland

3rd-9th August

http://climatecampscotland.org.uk/?page_id=116

Climate Camp Wales - Methyr Tydfyl

13-16th August

<http://climatecampcymru.org/>

Please contact Gwen if interested in visiting this event.

Off-Grid Transition Festival – Somerset

20th-23rd August

www.sunrisecelebration.com/off-grid

Ludlow Green Festival

29th-30th August

www.greenfestival.com

Climate Camp England

27th Aug-2nd Sep

<http://climatecamp.org.uk/?q=node/468>

Swindon – The National Self Build and Renovation Store

23rd-25th October Big Green Home Show

<http://www.buildstore.co.uk/mykindofhome/>

Courses in Green Technology

LILI - Low-Impact Living Initiative

LILI is a non-profit organisation whose mission is to help people reduce their impact on the environment, improve their quality of life, gain new skills, live in a healthier and more satisfying way, have fun and save money. They run a huge range of courses from biodiesel, rocket stoves to installing your own Solar Hot Water system.

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

BTCV- British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

Conservation holidays or volunteer on projects around the UK and abroad – learn how to construct a dry stone wall, lay a hedge, coppicing etc.

<http://www2.btcv.org.uk/display/home>

Felin Uchaf - Pwllheli, Gwynedd

An Educational Centre for exploring ways of living and working in Creative Partnership, with each other. Environment Courses and workshops in stone carving, green oak timber framing, cob, straw bale construction, thatching, building with lime.

<http://www.felinuchaf.com>

Ty Mawr

Courses in lime plastering, thatching, dry stone walling. Sells range of lime products.

<http://www.lime.org.uk/>

Places to Visit

Eco-Home and The Create Centre – Bristol

Demonstration eco-home and resource centre.

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Environment-Planning/sustainability/create-events.en>



Earthship Brighton

Tours available twice per month on Sundays. 9th and 16th August, 6th and 20th September, 11th and 18th October. Training courses run in building earthships run September and October

<http://www.lowcarbon.co.uk/earthship-brighton>

West Wales Eco Centre- Newport, Pembrokeshire

Free entry to old converted schoolhouse which demonstrates renewable energy technologies in action. They also have an extensive research library, Information Centre and Energy Advisors to help you decide how you can reduce your carbon footprint. There is also a garden area where you can relax.

www.ecocentre.org.uk

Brithdir Mawr Community

Visit a sustainable community in Wales that lives off the grid. You can attend courses, volunteer, or just visit the centre and camp in July and August

<http://www.brithdirmawr.co.uk/>

The Greenwood Centre Telford

The Centre promotes sustainable living through a wood based economy by running courses in woodland management and related activities. The site has one of the UK's most energy efficient timber buildings, a vegetarian whole-food cafe, a retail outlet for coppice products, displays of coppice tools, coracles in all stages of construction and of course woodland walks around the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.

<http://www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk/>

To find other sustainability centres around Britain visit

<http://www.earthcentrenetwork.org.uk/members/ECN/home.html>

Websites

onehundredmonths.org: Started in August last year, this website gives monthly updates on climate change news and actions you can take to help avert dangerous climate change. It is now month 89. Do sign up.

stopclimatechaos.org: A coalition of more than 100 groups with 11 million supporters including the WI, Church groups, trade unions etc. An upbeat site that keeps you informed of campaigns and news.

rainforestsos.org : Rainforests that are the lungs of the planet are being destroyed at a rate of the size of a football pitch every second. Prince Charles has launched a project that campaigns to save them.

greenpeace.org.uk: Greenpeace have bought a plot of land in the path of the proposed new runway at Heathrow. They want as many people as possible to sign up to be a part-owner (no money involved) to delay the legal process of acquisition. Join the 'airplot'!