

Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Community Newsletter



Mike Leach, technician at Pen y Cymoedd



Cronfa Gymunedol Fferm Wynt
PEN Y CYMOEDD
Wind Farm Community Fund CIC

Reflecting on recent challenges, looking to the future

Welcome to the latest edition of the Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Community newsletter.

It has been a challenging year for everyone in different ways, but Pen y Cymoedd and the Community Fund has remained a constant within the local area; providing funding support for projects in the communities in which the Wind Farm is rooted.

Throughout the pandemic, our team at Pen y Cymoedd has kept the 76 turbines turning, while ensuring that employees and contractors stayed safe and healthy. Meanwhile the Community Fund team has worked throughout to continue to support community

groups and local businesses, including providing emergency funding to projects helping those most in need during these difficult times.

The emergency Covid funding aimed to protect cash flow and support new or diversified pandemic-related projects. During 2020, the Fund supported 40 businesses and community groups with Covid survival funding of £378,966, and a further 28 groups with funding of £193,898 for pandemic support related projects.

Later in the newsletter, you'll hear first-hand from some of the local community groups that have benefitted from the Fund, as well as

from our ecologist who has been monitoring some of the amazing creatures that live on site.

What's inside:

- Glynneath Training Centre - Growing and Learning Project
- Latest Micro Fund awards update
- Meet the rare European Nightjar nesting on site
- Hear from Kate Breeze, Community Fund Executive Director



Community Fund Focus

More than ever, the past year has highlighted the value of community spirit. At the very heart of the Fund's purpose is the aim of supporting and growing the outstanding work that goes on - usually with little fanfare - at grassroots level.

With an annual budget of £1.8 million until 2043, the fund offers a real and significant opportunity for local people to invest in themselves and their ideas - building on opportunities and challenges in their communities.

One example that encompasses the ethos of the fund, is Glynneath Training Centre's O Dan yr Awyr (Under the Sky) growing and learning project. It is a fantastic showcase of education, partnership working and sustainable community living.



Glynneath Training Centre: O Dan yr Awyr (Under the Sky)



This project, based in the upper Neath valley and led by Glynneath Training Centre, secured a £194,258 Vision Fund award over four years to promote community food growing. The funding aimed to help the charity deliver an ambitious and multi-faceted 'food movement'.

Part of the appeal of this project from a funding perspective is its truly community-led nature, and its aim to champion existing growing spaces and encourage the creation of new ones. This involves community members working collaboratively and building partnerships with local authorities, community organisations, planners and private land-owners to turn disused land into productive community gardens.

The project is also delivering green learning activities to schools, nurseries, community growing groups and allotments, as well as growing volunteering opportunities and offering horticultural courses and workshops for the community.

Pre-Covid activities

Following the initial funding injection, the project got off to a flying start by immediately establishing a base at Glynneath Allotments where volunteers could meet and attend workshops. Early activities included building partnerships with four local primary schools and collaborating with volunteers from the National Autistic Society to carry out a litter pick in Glynneath.

After this strong start, the project was paused at the end of March 2020 due to lockdown and planned activities were placed on hold. However, from August 2020 onwards, activity started again. Some recent highlights include:

Working with partnership schools

The team has been working with partnership schools to carry out groundwork and general gardening; weeding planters and planting spring bulbs, cutting back trees and shrubs and reshaping a willow dome.

YGG Cwmnedd has been involved with the project from the very start, carrying out a range of activities including a recycling challenge, a cemetery planting session and projects at the allotments.

A teacher from YGG Cwmnedd said: "Being part of the O Dan yr Awyr Project has provided us with so many wonderful opportunities for learning and improving our school spaces. We have been able to participate in community activities, as well as socialising with the other schools. Being outdoors is an important part of the curriculum in addition to promoting well-being."

Community garden plot at the allotment

The team has also been working on the community garden plot at the allotments. This has been no mean feat and has included trimming fruit bushes and taking hardwood cuttings, clearing weeds and brambles, levelling off paths and working out the layout for new beds in the polytunnel.

So, what's next?

The team's priority now will be catching up with the partnership schools and the Community Enhancement Group to plan activities moving forward - including additional street planters, wildflowers and trees.

It looks set to be a busy few months and the Fund is absolutely delighted to have been able to support such a wonderful grassroots project that is making a marked impact in the community.





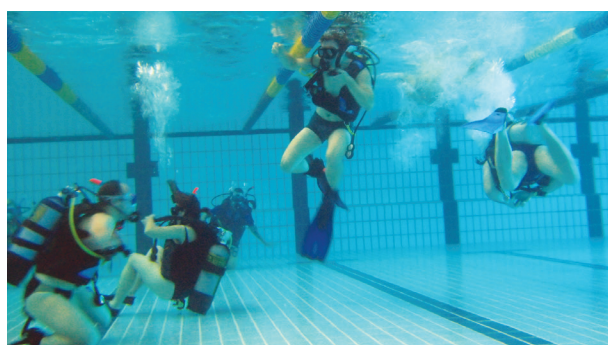
Funding update

In March 2021 alone, the Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Community Fund Board agreed support for 16 businesses through the Micro Fund (to a total value of £52,266), 18 community groups through the Micro Fund (to the value of £58,141) and seven Vision Fund proposals (to the value of £90,988 in grants) and £60,000 in loans.

Among the projects to benefit are:

Area: Rhondda Fawr
Project: Cwmparc Community Association
Amount: £21,280

The 'Funding our Future' project will enable one new staff member, a Family Activity Development Officer, to get people safely back into the facility, make connections with partners across the top of the Valley and facilitate work with schools.



Area: Afan
Project: Welsh Diving
Amount: £3,000

The project will support costs to offer scuba diving for children in the Afan Valley at the local pool.

Area: Neath
Project: Sew Sew Happy
Amount: £2,636

Funding will enable a sewing club to be established in Aberdulais, which will create opportunities for individuals in the community to socialise through sewing. It will also offer specific classes such as family sessions, youth sessions, beginner sessions and drop in sessions.



Area: Afan
Project: Tonmawr RFC
Amount: £5,000

Funding will enable the investment in facilities for shared community use.

Area: Cynon
Project: Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council
Amount: £4,090

Repairs and updates to the old fire station building owned by the Community Council, to enable the continuation of the gardening group based there as well as the community shop selling plants and supplies that was opened during lockdown.



Area: Cynon

Project: Our Aberdare Business Improvement District

Amount: £25,000

With an initial focus on improving the look and feel of the town centre, they hope this will help community spirit, engage businesses with the BID by demonstrating impact immediately and help the town look and feel ready for summer as lockdown lifts.



Area: Rhondda Fach

Project: Nova Coaching

Amount: £1,375

Funding offered start-up costs for Laughter Yoga to community groups and individuals, as well as life and career coaching.



**Get your application for funding in now!
Deadline Monday 16th August.**

If you're working to strengthen communities or run a business in the upper reaches of the Neath, Afan, Rhondda and Cynon Valleys (economically, socially, culturally or environmentally), you might be eligible for financial support from the Community Fund.

For more information on the fund and how to apply, either check out the Fund website or get in touch with the team - full contact details can be found on the back cover.

Micro Fund Community + Business

One-off grants up to £5,000
Closing date: Monday 16 August 2021

Vision Fund grants and loans

Grants of between £5,000 and £150,000+
Contact the team to discuss deadlines.

Vattenfall update: powering a green recovery

A word from Dan Wills, project manager, Vattenfall



As we begin to glimpse sunnier skies ahead, it's an apt time to look at the ways in which we as a nation might now focus on re-building a greener future. As a father of two living locally, I wonder how we can move faster to build a fossil fuel free future.

Covid demonstrated how easily disrupted the systems and processes underpinning our economy are and how

global supply chains and millions of jobs can grind to a halt in the blink of an eye.

The 'great global pause' has meant a total rethink around the way the world operates but, rather than hoping for a return to normal, now is an opportunity for a radical change.

It's clearer than ever that the renewable energy sector will be a key part of a green recovery, not just creating millions of employment opportunities, but also contributing towards global net-zero targets.

There is a wide ranging consensus that several million green jobs could be unlocked within the UK in this decade alone, if sectors such as ours are scaled up and a renewed focus on renewable energy generation is sought.

As we look ahead to the new normal, it is our hope that we see much more innovation in renewable energy - to kickstart a truly green recovery.

Protecting nature and wildlife: monitoring European Nightjars

Vattenfall is committed to protecting nature and biodiversity

We have a programme of monitoring and habitat management going on all year round at Pen y Cymoedd to ensure we continue to support local wildlife.

Our local ecology expert, Mike Shewring, has been monitoring wildlife and habitat at Pen y Cymoedd since 2013, starting work well before the first turbines were installed. Mike has extensive experience of the wide range of amazing species on site, including bats, honey buzzards, water voles and a wide variety of butterflies and moths.

We caught up with Mike to hear all about the work he has been doing to find out more about the rare European Nightjars living on site.

"There is no doubt that out of all the species at Pen y Cymoedd, the European Nightjar is my favourite. This is primarily because so little is known about this highly secretive nocturnal bird.

"Nightjars are migratory birds, wintering in sub-Saharan Africa and migrating in spring to breed in locations across northern Europe. But it is more commonly found in southern heathland areas within the UK.

"We have established that there are at least 10 male birds living on site, making this a significant population within the region. We believe there are only around 300 Nightjars in Wales.

"The Nightjars love feeding on the extensive moth population living at Pen y Cymoedd, which they catch using their incredible frog-like mouth. We have been working to understand more about the behaviour of these birds, such as feeding habits and migratory routes, for example using radio tag data.

"The Nightjar is a declining species, so we need to do everything we can to understand and help protect the birds we have on site, and help ensure we preserve this amazing and unusual bird for future generations."



Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Facts



76 turbines
228 MW



power 15% of
Welsh homes

Produces enough electricity to power 15% of Welsh homes annually (188,000)



Battery@PyC

stores energy in case of power outage



£220m
invested

£220m invested in Wales during construction



Operational
since 2017

Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Community Fund Facts



4 valleys (Neath, Afan, Rhondda, Cynon)

£1.8 million community fund per annum

£6.9 million funding allocated to date

56 local jobs created and over 140 safeguarded

For every £1 invested, £0.47 is generated in GVA for the Welsh economy



Emergency Funding

68 Covid Grants and Loans awarded totalling £572,864
£20,000 in emergency grants given to local charities during the flooding of spring 2020



Micro Fund

Total of 321 grants awarded
239 community groups supported
82 businesses backed
£979,665 awarded



Vision Fund

Total £5.3million awarded
78 projects supported

A word from CIC Executive Director, Kate Breeze

Many of you will already know Kate, recently appointed as Executive Director for the Community Fund Community Interest Company (CIC), either in her previous role as interim Executive Director, or before that in her role as Programme Administrator.

We asked Kate about the future of the CIC and how you can get involved.

“As a team, the Pen y Cymoedd Board, Michelle Noble (Enterprise Support and Finance Officer) and I all want to see this fund achieve real impact now and long into the future.

We are challenging ourselves to be innovative with the funds in order to provide the greatest benefits possible in the most areas. That is why we are offering loans or loan grant mixes, where appropriate, in order to allocate the funds as widely as possible.

We are targeting our efforts to reach those groups/individuals who don't normally engage with mainstream funders but who have interesting, innovative ideas for benefiting their community.

This could be directly with a community project or indirectly by creating a business, and maybe

jobs, based in the area of benefit. The team is excited to continue to be able to look at new and different opportunities. We want to know what you think – so if you have any comments or ideas then please get in touch.”



Afan Lodge Now Open

Serving breakfast, lunch, dinner and drinks – seven days a week. Why not try the new Afternoon Tea? Brand new for summer 2021!

The Lodge was taken over by the PyC CIC in 2019, and following some refurbishment works was relaunched after the initial lockdown in the summer 2020, and has recently re-opened following lockdown.

So if you haven't had a chance yet to experience the hospitality of Lloyd and his team, then book your table now.
→ Visit www.afanlodge.wales or call 01639 852500.



Introducing our new Pen y Cymoedd Ambassadors

As a CIC, we are aiming for far greater reach with the local population so that, over time, we can significantly broaden our reach within communities. To help with this, we have assembled a new group of ambassadors who can tap into the people and voices on the ground, help us join the dots, and seek out ideas and innovation.

These are people who have real knowledge of their community, the issues and opportunities, and have an established online presence or regular connection with their communities in other ways. Our ambassadors will provide informal feedback and act as a link between the CIC and communities, promoting the fund opportunities to provide support at grassroots level.

→ You can read more about the ambassadors on our website.

Get in touch



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If you would like to find out more about anything in the newsletter or how to apply for a grant – then please get in touch in one of the following ways:

→ Visit: www.penycymoeddcic.cymru

→ Email: enquiries@penycymoeddcic.cymru

→ Call: 01685 878785 / 07458 300123 / 07458 300117

→ Follow us on Twitter: @PyCCCommunity

→ Write to: 6 Aberdare Enterprise Centre, Depot Road, Aberdare, CF44 8DL