

Report on the second meeting of the Communiversity of Wales Low-carbon Initiatives Learning Exchange Network

September 30th 2010

Lammas EcoVillage, Tir y Gafel, Glandwr, Pembrokeshire, SA34 0YD (AM) and The Old School, Hermon, Glogue, Pembs, SA36 0DT. (PM)

Attendees:

Name	Organisation	email	
Dr Steve Harris	Science Shops Wales/University of Glamorgan	srharris@glam.ac.uk	Chair
Gareth Ellis	The Green Valleys	Gareth.Ellis@breconbeacons.org	
Chris Blake	The Green Valleys	chris.blake@thegreenvalleys.org	Presenter
Michael Butterfield	Llangattock Green Valleys	michaelbutterfield@hotmail.com	
Ben Ferguson-Walker	Ynni'r Fro	ben@swea.co.uk	
Dan McCallum	Awel Aman Tawe	dmccallum@awelamantawe.co.uk	
Mary-Ann Brocklesby	Awel Aman Tawe	maryannbrocklesby@yahoo.com	
Paul Christie	Moelyci Environmental Centre	paul.christie@moelyci.org	
Usha Ladwa-Thomas	Climate Change & Water Division, Welsh Assembly Government.	Usha.Ladwa-Thomas@Wales.GSI.Gov.UK	
Jane Davidson AM	Welsh Assembly Government		Minister for the Environment, Housing & Sustainability
Adam Kennerly	HES/ Light Foot Enterprises & Cwm Harry Land Trust	adalek66@yahoo.co.uk	
Phil Jenkins	CwmClydach Communities First	phillipjenkins@btconnect.com	
Keith Jenkins	CwmClydach Communities First	jenkinskeith@btconnect.com	
Paul Wimbush	Lammas Low-impact Initiatives	paul.wimbush@lammas.org.uk	Presenter
Jasmine Saville	Lammas Low-impact Initiatives	jasmine@gourmetorganic.co.uk	
Cris Tomos	Cymdeithas Cwm	Cris.Tomos@cavs.org.uk	

	Arian	
Bill Davies	Cymdeithas Cwm Arian	Swemd@btinternet.com
Helen Nelson	Cynnal Cymru/Sustain Wales	helen@cynnalcymru.com

Apologies:

Peter Davies, Andy Rowland, Ben Dineen, Grenville Ham, Paul Allen, Lis Burnett, Jenny Carlisle.

1. Morning Session, 10.00 - 12.30. Communiversity site visit hosted by Lammas.

The meeting convened at 10.00 in the car park at Lammas. **Steve Harris** welcomed the participants, provided overview of the agenda for the day, and gave a brief introduction to the Communiversity/Learning Exchange concept. He explained that the day's agenda had been organised by himself and **Usha Ladwa-Thomas** on the basis of resolutions made by the group as a whole at the first network meeting (in Swansea on April 14th 2010) and through subsequent correspondence by email. The morning session would be a typical Communiversity activity - a guided and interactive visit to a site of a low-impact/low-carbon initiative - and the afternoon a more formal learning exchange/discussion, to be joined later in the afternoon by **Jane Davidson AM**, the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for the Environment, Housing and Sustainability. A unifying theme for the day's activities would be the opportunities for, and obstacles to, 'scaling up' from the community to the regional and national levels.

Paul Wimbush then provided a guided tour of Lammas EcoVillage. Participants were provided with a brochure setting out the aims and objectives of the project and a site map. The tour began with a viewing of the Community Hub building (currently under construction) which is funded by a DECC Low-Carbon Communities award. There was a discussion of various aspects of site infrastructure. Visits were then made to several individual plots within the ecovillage, viewing ground works, horticulture and a variety of low-impact building techniques. Participants were able to question Paul and other Lammas residents as the tour progressed, and there was much lively discussion and dialogue.

At the conclusion of the tour participants travelled to The Old School, Hermon for lunch and the afternoon Learning Exchange session.

2. Afternoon Session, 13.30 - 16.45. Learning Exchange hosted by Cymdeithas Cwm Arian.

Steve Harris opened the session by thanking Paul Wimbush and the Lammas team for enabling an excellent visit to the project, and observed that there were many interesting conversations taking place during the tour. Steve then outlined the agenda and timetable, welcomed Jasmine Saville and Bill Davies to the group, and thanked Cymdeithas Cwm Arian for hosting the afternoon's activities.

2.1. Scaling-up Low-impact Development - The session began with a presentation by **Paul Wimbush** of Lammas on 'Potential for the scaling up of low-impact development in Wales' (see Appendix 1 for Paul's presentation notes). Paul suggested that by taking advantage of the

Author: Dr. S. R. Harris, Science Shoppe Wales

t (LID) in Wales

opportunities offered by TAN6 Wales could theoretically accommodate 15-20% of its current population making low-impact livelihoods in rural areas – Wales now has the right policy context and such a plan is affordable. He identified an number of social, cultural economic and political barriers to such developments, pre-eminently (a) shortage of suitable land, which should not only be available and affordable but also south-facing and preferably located in or near other ‘clusters’ of LID; and (b) distortion of land and food prices by UK and EU agricultural subsidy regimes, resulting in a ‘non-level playing field’ in rural development for would be LID entrants.

In the discussion that followed Paul’s presentation **Chris Blake** and Paul raised the case of New Zealand, where removal of agricultural subsidies has resulted in initial economic upheaval but eventual stabilisation – however, this could be seen as a special case due to NZ’s geographical isolation. **Mary-Ann Brocklesby** suggested that it might be better to focus discourse around the topic of rural livelihoods rather than simply agriculture, as sustainable development cuts across sectors. She suggested that ‘portfolio livelihoods’ and ‘social sustainability’ might be useful terms to move the debate on to more fruitful ground. She noted that much of the emerging interest was from communities wishing to develop projects near or around existing LID initiatives, demonstrating that social sustainability is an integral part of the equation. **Michael Butterfield** said that for him the main issue was to move any such developments away from dependency on state grants. Paul responded by briefly discussing an ecovillage in the Czech Republic which was receiving EU support comparable to an agricultural subsidy.

2.2. Scaling-up the TGV model

Chris Blake of The Green Valleys (TGV) then presented his ideas on ‘Building sustainable communities across Wales’ (see Appendix 2 for Chris’s presentation notes). He noted that TGV was built on a business model with ‘scalability at its heart’, the aim being to create community income streams through social enterprise. In the case of TGV, this opportunity was provided by the failure of the market to support community microhydro generation schemes. The principle challenges to scaling up were identified as (a) a shortage of capital finance; (b) the need for partnerships with large landowners (such as Dwr Cymru and the Forestry Commission); and (c) the need for some aspects of the Green Valleys approach to be rolled out as ‘franchises’ on the basis of a ‘renewable energy plus community income’ scheme.

2.3. The session then moved into a phase of general discussion around the theme of ‘scaling up’.

Emission reduction targets as drivers for scaling up

Responding to Chris’s presentation, **Adam Kennerly** suggested that important drivers for such a scaling-up are embedded in governments’ emission reduction targets and obligations, which offer opportunities for social enterprises to stake out unique territory in terms of e.g. carbon sequestration schemes, but that it is important to establish robust evidence to support claimed outputs for such schemes. He felt that the evidence base for carbon savings is currently weak. **Chris Blake** responded that carbon reduction in itself does not motivate community groups, but that improved social cohesion, improved quality of life and

FITS & ending grant dependency

money do, and that there is a need to emphasise these positive motivating factors when communicating around the issues under discussion. He did however note that quantification of carbon reduction/sequestration might well be useful in leveraging the kind of financial inputs required. **Adam Kennerly** noted the need to restructure and focus third sector efforts in this regard.

Michael Butterfield explained that Llangattock Green Valleys has adopted the goal of becoming ‘carbon negative’, and that what initially seems rather a dry aim can be easily linked to the social benefits it brings. He reiterated his opinion that ‘grant culture’ was insufficient to drive scaling-up, and that it could not happen without private enterprise, citing ‘rent-a-roof’ schemes with robust reversion rates as a paradigmatic example while noting the need to establish a careful balance between public and private benefit around e.g. FITS¹ payments. Michael said that ‘each community has its (potential) cash cow’ and communities should ‘get on with it’, that is move quickly into action on renewable schemes which could bring community income. He noted that all projects represented at the meeting (apart from Lammas) had a renewable energy ‘cash cow’ and questioned why other communities in Wales were not rising to the challenge. Michael also suggested that whilst Government had identified communities as having a role to play in delivering on carbon reduction targets, subsidies were only provided to the commercial sector. Community motivations were not simply about carbon savings but also about better schools, lower bills, etc. He suggested that funding for communities was available from private sector companies such as British Gas. **Dan McCallum** noted his agreement that it was difficult to put a value on carbon reduction measures, that carbon foot printing techniques are problematic, and that there is much uncertainty surrounding methods for community groups to link with the private sector. **Chris Blake** suggested that the central issue around scaling-up is how to harness revenue for communities – with FITS currently so generous there was potential for many communities to bring in up to £30 000 per annum.

Social inclusion issues

Mary-Ann Brocklesby offered her view that there is an urgent need for more partnerships within the third sector, and that in terms of sustainable development and renewable energy the sector needs to become more self-critical. This is because these initiatives are still largely failing to engage with low-income communities. New engagement methods are required – and it should be noted that social enterprise is not all, and not intrinsically ‘good’. **Michael Butterfield** responded that in his view community income (‘cash cows’) should be prioritised over social inclusion. **Mary-Ann** responded that if such an approach was adopted, social inclusion would simply disappear from the agenda.

Lack of cohesion & strategy in Third Sector

Adam Kennerly suggested that a first step in building links between social enterprises was the use of triple-bottom-line accounting methods. In his view a major barrier to such developments, however, was that the third sector in Wales as a whole had no coherent plans to take advantage of the current

¹ Feed-in Tariffs Scheme

advantageous renewable energy subsidy situation on a short timescale. He said that the sector needs to take control of lines of communication, noting that there is a gap between Government and grass roots and so it can be difficult for grass roots organisations to scale up their work. **Michael Butterfield** responded that third sector organisations involved in community-level microgeneration etc. should cut their links to grant funding then roll their model out through advisors – while noting that planning to do so is not cost-free. **Adam Kennerly** reiterated that in his view there was a clear need to generate a coherent sector-based plan that could be presented to government.

Problems with the 'policy implementation layer' **Phil Jenkins** observed that he and his colleagues were working in a socially deprived area and that it was clear to him that there was a huge gap between top-down initiatives on renewable energy and SD and levels of understanding and engagement with such issues in Wales's poorest communities. **Jasmine Saville** observed that experience from Lamma and its networks had highlighted the difficulty of dialogue with the 'policy implementation layer' of the state (local authorities, agencies etc.) on issues relating to the 'One Wales, One Planet' scheme², partly because of the 'silo-based' organisational culture of such organisations. Jasmine said that the LID (low-impact development) community needs to develop better communication techniques while acknowledging that civil servants etc are moving into the unknown in attempting to deal with such issues. Simply altering or adjusting bureaucratic procedures might not be sufficient, actors in the policy implementation layer need to be supported to develop new concepts and a new vocabulary.

Social inclusion and employment **Paul Christie** said that social inclusion – in terms of creating training and employment opportunities – had always been top of the agenda at Moelyci, with one scheme resulting in 80% of participants getting into jobs. This agenda had initially been greatly supported by state-backed initiatives to support the development of an Intermediate Labour Market in Wales, but in recent years the bureaucracy associated with such schemes had become increasingly complex and difficult to access. Accordingly, organisations such as Moelyci had decided they would think very carefully before tendering for contracts in the current ILM round. However, their experience had confirmed that skills are the key to social inclusion. **Mary-Ann Brocklesby** agreed that an 'enabling environment' was essential for community-level sustainability initiatives to flourish.

Is there a need for a national community renewable energy agency? **Helen Nelson** raised the question of whether there was a need to identify investment funds, find suitable sites and provide expert advice and that this may point to the need for a national community renewable energy agency to enable communities to work in a coordinated manner to take full advantage of FITS. **Cris Tomos** suggested that the Irish League of Credit Unions³ provides an example of such a coordinating agency. He also suggested that more advantage could be taken by communities of Section 106 agreements, which allow a local planning authority (LPA) to

² 'One Wales: One Planet' is the Welsh Assembly Government's Sustainable Development Scheme for Wales, which sets out WAG's vision of a sustainable Wales and the priority attached to sustainable development. It was officially launched in May 2009.

³ <http://www.creditunion.ie/>

enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner in association with the granting of planning permission. Such agreements are typically used to ensure the provision of services and infrastructure for community benefit.

Michael Butterfield suggested that it was time to ‘stop talking and start installing infrastructure’ as it was this was the way to convince communities of the benefits of low-carbon initiatives.

Keith Jenkins responded that gaining permissions and funding for a microhydro scheme at CwmClydach had already taken six and a half years, and that this was mainly because of difficulties with the ‘middle’ or ‘policy implementation layer of the state. **Phil Jenkins** agreed that there is an urgent need to remove bureaucratic barriers such as state-aid regulations – as experienced by CwmClydach in connection with their DECC LCCC award - and to link renewable energy and SD to social inclusion issues.

Third sector cohesion initiatives

Adam Kennerly said there is a need for ‘collective intelligence’ to broker relationships between government and community. Various networks and forums – such as Local United, National Alliance and the Community Energy Practitioners Group – already exist at a UK level but they have no democratic mandate, and, from the government point of view, no common voice. He also informed the meeting of the newly formed UK Communities and Climate Action Alliance (a paper on the Alliance is available from Adam). **Usha Ladwa-Thomas** observed that Cynnal Cymru was intended to fulfil such a role for Wales; **Helen Nelson** responded that this was so in theory but in practice a lack of resources made it very difficult for Cynnal to actively pursue such a role. **Cris Tomos** noted that there had recently been discussions around the formation of a national union of community workers. He went on to suggest that there is an urgent need to ‘scale down’ before scaling-up – i.e. a need to fully engage with local communities around SD and energy issues and develop local action plans with widespread community support. Such a local action-planning process, facilitated by the local development NGO Planed, had been essential to the development of Cymdeithas Cwm Arian. **Usha Ladwa-Thomas** reiterated her view that it was clear that there could be no single, one-size-fits-all response to the evident gap between top-down policy and bottom-up community activism. **Ben Ferguson-Walker** said that Ynni’r Fro⁴ is focusing on county-level action. He agreed that Section 106 agreements could be used more widely to support community renewable energy schemes, and pointed out that TAN 8⁵ also highlights the need for delivering community benefit. Ben said there was a need to put resources ‘close to the people’.

Role of the Minister

At this point **Jane Davidson** AM joined the meeting. She introduced herself and outlined her ministerial role within the Welsh Assembly Government, which includes sustainable development, environment, climate change, energy and fuel

⁴ The Welsh Assembly Government’s Ynni’r Fro Programme uses European Structural Funds to provide support and funding to encourage the development of community scale renewable energy schemes across Wales.

⁵ ‘Welsh Assembly Government Planning Policy Updates: Technical Advice Note (TAN) 8: Renewable Energy (2005) which sets out advice for on- and offshore renewable energy planning, design, technologies and monitoring.

Summary of discussions so far

poverty – most if not all of the issues of concern to the Learning Exchange Network.

Welcoming the Minister, **Steve Harris** gave an outline of activities earlier in the day and summarised the discussion so far, including the following points:

- Challenges around unequal access to subsidies and barriers to land use;
- Difficulties of building up a common language between policy makers, civil society and private sector organisations
- Bureaucratic and ‘implementation layer’ barriers; for example the complexity and inaccessibility of the ILM framework and difficulties with LA planning departments;
- FITS present great opportunities but not all community sector organisations are ready to become social enterprises;
- Each community should seek one or more reliable income streams to ensure long term sustainability;
- One size does not fit all: some community initiatives require ‘scaling-down’ to engage with grassroots whilst others now need scaling up;
- Social capital is takes different forms in different regions of Wales
- The need to foreground social justice issues in thinking about low-carbon initiatives.

More on umbrella organisations & the need for an independent voice for the sector

The discussion continued. **Michael Butterfield** asked the group to consider what the sector should do over the next few years – it is his conviction that communities will buy in to SD actions when they see renewable energy infrastructure in place and energy being generated – this would open channels of communication. **Paul Wimbush** said that he was impressed by the example of the Irish League of Credit Unions – and that he thought an independent voluntary/community sustainability sector alliance would have a lot to offer to Wales, especially perhaps if Cynnal Cymru could act as a facilitating and umbrella organisation. Paul suggested that it was often difficult for Cynnal to act independently of the Assembly Government, its principal funder. He also agreed that there is a lack of an overall plan for such a sector, and suggested that the Learning Exchange Network could work on such a plan that set out a vision – but then reflected that in his opinion to be effective in Wales such organisation would have to begin at the regional level, as different regions have different needs. **Chris Blake** asked for clarification: ‘What is the problem we’re trying to solve?’

Mary-Ann Brocklesby agreed with the need to have impact at a regional level. She asked ‘What are the main skills and competencies which can be brokered at a regional level?’ suggesting that if these can be identified it should be possible to build a framework of key SD/community renewable energy skills and services which can then be delivered through a diversity of local organisations. **Michael Butterfield** reiterated his view that commercial partnerships would be essential to any scaling-up – such partnerships could deliver actual jobs – but he also saw a need for expert advice to guide such interactions and felt that

social enterprises were not the answer. **Dan McCallum** said that he saw the main priority for the community sector as being to actually implement their proposed renewable energy schemes. In his opinion, the ‘tipping point’ for scaling-up would come once schemes are built and operational, and thus visible to communities. He offered developments in Scotland as supporting evidence for this view, explaining that once the community sector has gained concrete experience in energy generation, it is enabled to talk to commercial organisations from a position of strength. In Scotland, the organisation Community Energy Scotland⁶ had been crucial in scaling-up and speeding-up the development of community renewable energy schemes. He agreed that it was essential to get the commercial sector to partner with transition schemes. **Adam Kennerly** suggested that there is currently a 2-3 year ‘window of opportunity’ in which to work out how community sector efforts can scale up. He cited Cylch, the Wales Community Recycling Network,⁷ as an excellent example of a coordinating body that has an influential and respected collective voice. Helen Nelson suggested that Carbon Capture Cymru (C3, a Cylch-hosted project) might possibly play such a role, agreeing that a ‘Cylch for the community energy sector’ was urgently needed. **Gareth Ellis** said that in his view what was needed to support scaling-up was a ‘route-map to success’. Experience at The Green Valleys suggested four key stages: (1) ideas and visioning; (2) needs analysis; (3) action planning; and (4) implementation. He said that skills become important from stage 2 onwards, noting that there was a large time-lag between policy proposals and actual implementation on the ground, and that some kind of ‘instruction book’ could be very useful to guide community organisations through sometimes lengthy and challenging processes. He also suggested that for Stage 4 it was necessary to link with commercial partners and identify policy barriers.

WAG as an enabler for Third Sector development

Jane Davidson said that she was well aware that there are critical issues of pace and scale – and that experience showed that in some cases having government as the lead can exacerbate these issues. This is because governments necessarily focus on process and mechanism. However, this characteristic can also be an advantage; the development of LID policy in Wales as a result of the Lamma planning appeal was a good example of this. She agreed that Cylch-like organisation or function was needed to help build capacity, while reminding participants that the Welsh Assembly Government has no powers with regard to energy generation, the portfolio being retained by the Westminster government. **Jane Davidson** identified Ynni'r Fro as one available channel to be used by community groups. She said that such groups had ‘a duty to be opportunistic’, suggesting that the WAG could act as broker for direct proposals from community schemes to large energy companies, who were currently exhibiting great interest in the renewable energy opportunities offered by the Welsh landscape. Companies also have duties to deliver on their targets for CERT⁸ and CESP⁹.

⁶ <http://www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk/>

⁷ <http://www.cylch.org/>

Cynnal, SDC and the Climate Change Commission for Wales

In response to questions **Jane Davidson** then discussed the situation in Wales following the UK government's decision to withdraw support from the Sustainable Development Commission. She noted that the SDC has a policy and advocacy function – acting as a critical friend to government - while Cynnal Cymru is a networking forum. It was possible that these two discrete functions could be brought closer together and enabled to be 'much more active'. The Climate Change Commission for Wales might then act as a 'delivery mechanism – a role made easier by the appointment of an independent chair of the commission.

Organising community renewable energy

Jane Davidson stated that the Government has developed an overall strategy to address climate change and that there is now an urgent need for every community in Wales to develop a renewable energy plan. **Cris Tomos** responded that what is needed are a multiplicity of local action plans developed through participatory processes – an approach which is tried and tested and has proved its worth. He thought practically this would involve the formation of 'hubs' of 6-8 communities – and noted the need to address issues of training and education within such plans. **Michael Butterfield** noted that he thought it important to develop a culture around such efforts, within which succeeding generations would find efforts to establish the sustainability and resilience of local communities as perfectly normal and common-sense. He then reiterated his views as to the necessity for partnership with commercial organisations, to which **Chris Blake** responded that community groups need to be strong and cohesive to be able to work well in such partnerships. **Mary-Ann Brocklesby** stated that Awel Aman Tawe will have a replicable model for community renewable energy schemes by the end of 2011 – but that scaling-up from that model is going to take time. What is needed are 'packages' tailored to the needs of community groups which can also give leverage in negotiations with commercial partners.

Agreement on need for a common voice

Adam Kennerly noted that the Learning Exchange members engaged in the foregoing discussions had been 'violently agreeing' with each other for some time around the fact that the community sector groups represented at the meeting have the skills to deal with issues of pace and scale. He suggested that there were two important questions arising from this convergence of opinion:

(1) If we have the talent, then how do we concentrate and apply it – 'where is our collective voice?'

(2) What is our plan – do we need a 'Zero Carbon Wales', perhaps developed in collaboration with CAT?¹⁰

Paul Wimbush agreed that the sector would have a stronger voice if it spoke as one. **Chris Blake** said the sector needed a common voice that could make concrete proposals, while **Helen**

⁸ The Carbon Emissions Reduction Target 2008-2011 (CERT) requires certain gas and electricity suppliers to meet a carbon emissions reduction target in domestic properties.

⁹ The Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) has been created as part of the UK government's Home Energy Saving Programme. It requires gas and electricity suppliers and electricity generators to deliver energy saving measures to domestic consumers in specific low income areas of Great Britain.

¹⁰ Referring here to the 'Zero Carbon Britain 2030 report developed by the Centre for Alternative Technology, Machynlleth, Powys. See <http://www.zerocarbonbritain.org/> '

	<p>Nelson suggested that what was needed was a ‘focused body’. Michael Butterfield said a ‘master plan’ was needed, but that it should be remembered that developing such plans requires resources.</p>
Proposal for commitment to emission reduction targets	<p>Jane Davidson reminded participants of the enormous challenge represented by the Assembly Government’s commitment (in the WAG Emissions Reduction Delivery Plan) to reduce Wales’s CO2 emissions by 3% each year.¹¹ She suggested that the community SD & renewable energy sector’s collective voice could be greatly strengthened if it could demonstrate the sector’s commitment and ability to contribute 0.5% of the required reductions per annum. Coordinating action and producing evidence for this level of emissions reductions would provide a clearly defined role for any new body formed to represent the sector in Wales.</p>
Funding joint action	<p>Dan McCallum said that such a body could be funded through member subscriptions, funds which would become more readily available once income started flowing from community generation schemes. He asked the Minister whether any pressure could be brought to bear on the large energy companies to allocate resources to support community schemes, possibly through an umbrella organisation. Cris Tomos said that there are schemes in Europe and Scotland which already do this kind of thing, harnessing a national fund to finance community sustainability initiatives. He suggested the need for a ‘Welsh Green Investment Bank or Fund’. Michael Butterfield reminded the participants of the importance of anaerobic digestion (AD) in the renewable energy mix, and outlined the interest of large energy providers in partnering with communities such as Llangattock on AD schemes. Jane Davidson said that much progress had been made on the principle of diverting organic waste from landfill to AD, and there was great scope for working with Local Authorities in this area.</p>
Moving forward	<p>Adam Kennerly said there was an urgent need to decide whether the sector would adopt a diffusionary or ‘driving harder’ approach to scaling up. Dan McCallum responded that in actuality it would require a mixture of both approaches, and that much could be learned from work carried out in Scotland with Development Trusts. Mary-Ann Brocklesby observed that the sector in Wales does not yet have enough to show in the way of tangible impacts. Phil Jenkins agreed that the most important factor was that community renewable energy schemes should be seen to be working, while Chris Blake hoped that it wouldn’t take a year to get some concerted action underway.</p>
Further clarification of targets	<p>Michael Butterfield asked for clarification and quantification of the 0.5% pa target – what would this mean in terms of CO2e saved and Megawatts generated? Jane Davidson replied that the Climate Change Commission would be able to provide the appropriate figures. Paul Wimbush enquired as to whether such figures included consideration of landscape services (e.g. sequestration), Jane Davidson replied that yes, she thought such figures went beyond simple calculations, and that she would ask the WAG Climate Change team to look at the numbers concerned. She offered to include a statement that offering the half percent target for the community sector in her forthcoming speech</p>

¹¹ See <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/desh/publications/101006ccstratdeliveryemissionsen.pdf>

Land-use and climate change

launching the Climate Change strategy, if that would help motivate the sector. She suggested that Cynnal Cymru might then feed back the actual numbers (Megawatts) to the Learning Exchange group through the Climate Change Commission.

Dan McCallum noted the usefulness of TAN 8 and Ynni'r Fro, and asked the Minister if there were any targets attached to TAN 6, and any plans to deal with the emissions from subsidised industrial agriculture. He noted that in Scotland legislation enabled the allocation of income from one turbine in a commercially-developed large-scale wind farm for community benefit. He also noted that taking advantage of current opportunities would mean securing land swiftly, suggesting that the group consider a community benefits scheme which could house a “national funding pot” for financing renewable energy developments. **Paul Wimbush** added that a real bottleneck to LID is land availability, as people want to settle in or near LID ‘clusters’ such as North Pembrokeshire or the area around Machynlleth. **Jane Davidson** directed the group’s attention to the report on land-use and climate change¹² authored for WAG by Professor Gareth Wyn-Jones of Bangor University. Among other things this report calls for a reduction in livestock farming in Wales. However, there had been no formal response to the report from the Minister for Rural Affairs. She suggested that the findings from the report would be fed in to the deliberations of the Climate Change Commission for Wales, and that some of these issues should also come under consideration during planning processes.

Enabling dialogue with Local Authorities

Jasmine Saville reiterated her concern with issues of policy implementation by Local Authorities. She suggested that LA officers need more training and capacity building before they will be able to open up meaningful dialogues on SD and energy issues with community groups and activists. **Michael Butterfield** suggested this was already happening to some extent, offering an example of Powys LA officer travelling with his organisation to look at renewable energy initiatives in Denmark. **Paul Christie** agreed that the example of Cylch was highly relevant to the present discussion, explained how helpful they had been to Moelyci. He said that it was his experience that the inspiration and drive for community projects generally comes from one or two key people. **Michael Butterfield** said that any common voice for community sector SD/energy initiatives had to be able to clearly articulate and demonstrate the link between community energy and community (socioeconomic) sustainability.

Resolutions arising from the discussion

Adam Kennerly attempted to summarise his understanding of, and conclusions from the afternoon’s discussions by making a proposition: a group should be formed from among the participants to (1) ‘do the numbers’ around a 0.5% emissions reduction commitment; (2) develop a ‘Zero Carbon’ plan for the community sector, broken down into regions – and mentioned that CAT might be commissioned by the UK government to do some of this work; (3) that there should be Welsh community sector representation in the ‘Green New Deal’ discussions with UK

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See <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/drah/publications/100310landuseclimatechangeagroupreporten.pdf>

	<p>government, therefore the group should nominate someone to represent them at the upcoming UK Community Climate Alliance meeting.</p>
Developments at the UK level	<p>Jane Davidson outlined her understanding of developments at UK level, where the Minister concerned (Greg Barker) at the Department of Energy and Climate Change was convening a Ministerial Oversight Group. She offered to take inputs from the Learning Exchange to the Ministerial Oversight Group, and that outcomes from this group could be channelled to the community sector in Wales through the WAG Climate Change and Water team. The UK Minister had expressed interest in the WAG Arbed scheme¹³. However, there were fears that Wales would be marginalised in any UK level policy discussions – so every effort should be made to feed in views from Wales where possible.</p>
Discussion closes	<p>Helen Nelson concluded the discussion by saying how positive she thought the afternoon had been. Her conclusion was that it was desirable and feasible to form a body to represent the community renewable energy/SD sector – but she cautioned that Cynnal Cymru would require additional resources if they were to be asked to support such a venture.</p>

Steve Harris then drew the meeting to a close and thanked all participants.

¹³ Wales' Strategic Energy Performance Investment Programme – see <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/energy/efficiency/arbed/?lang=en>
Author: Dr. S. R. Harris, Science Shoppe Wales

Potential for the scaling up of low-impact development in Wales
Ideas for a sustainable future, Paul Wimbush

If we notionally divide land in Wales into three altitude zones, we have:

The Productive lowland – including urban areas, the vast majority of horticulture and a considerable portion of dairy/ meat production: comprising approximately 40% of the land¹ area and being between sea level and 150 meters above sea level.

The Mountains - 27% of land in Wales is above 300m and is largely mountain/ moor, with some coniferous forestry.

The Hills - 33% of land in Wales (approx 693,000 Ha)¹ is between 150 and 300 meters above sea level. Considered as marginal agricultural land, this land is largely permanent pasture/ rough grazing with some forestry/ woodland (largely coniferous).

I am interested in the potential for this latter zone (the hills) to be transformed from rye grass and sheep monocultures into a band of bio diverse forest gardens/ eco-smallholdings.

If half of this land (nominally that with a southerly aspect) was dedicated to low-impact smallholdings (of an average 3Ha size), then we could create approx 115,000 new eco-holdings, accommodating approx 414,000 people².

16.5% of the land directly supporting 14% of the population living sustainably³
Land previously considered uneconomical by virtue of being too steep, too poor or too high would, through permaculture practices, be transformed to a mosaic of habitats and productive ecosystems supplying fresh produce, crafts and skills to local towns and villages. These regions would become reserves for wildlife and biodiversity and also play a key role in stabilising the climate by absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and locking it into biomass.

Supporting Factors:

Planning provision for such a transition now in place.⁴

On-the-ground examples being constructed.⁵

Self-funding and self-motivating grass roots movement.⁶

Climate change and prospect of environmental/ social/ economic instability

Inhibiting Factors:

Current agricultural subsidy system financially props up the current status quo, perpetuating the dominant position of agri-business in the landscape.

Current agricultural subsidy system masks the true cost of food production (for example in terms of carbon pollution, biodiversity loss, soil depletion) creating cheap mass-produced food and distorting the market.

The nations sense of identity (social and landscape) inhibits change.

Denial of the prospect of climate change and of environmental/ social/ economic instability

1 Land area figures taken from <http://www.aber.ac.uk/gwydd-cym/modiwlau/pynciaullosg/AgrilnWales.pdf>

2 Back of an envelope calculations based on 3.6 people per household (the Lammas average), and being is somewhat higher than the national average (2.3) due to the predominance of young families

Prifysgol y Cyfreddin Cymru, The Communiversity of Wales – Meeting September 30th 2010

3 Back of an envelope calculations based on Wales population being approx 2,900,000

4 One Planet Development, TAN6

5 www.lammas.org.uk

6 Set up costs between £50,000 and £100,000 per smallholding

Appendix 2: Notes for Presentation by Chris Blake, The Green Valleys

The Green Valleys - building sustainable communities across Wales

Our mission is to create carbon neutral, financially secure, and sustainable communities. Our principle means of achieving this is to help communities realise the benefits of Feed-in Tariffs through micro-hydro generation.

Background - The project started with a handful of committed individuals developing their own micro-hydro systems and has now developed into a community owned social enterprise that develops, installs and finances systems for long term community benefit. The key to The Green Valleys success has been to work with community groups in a flexible way, empowering local action to help them realise their goal of a long term revenue stream for community benefit whilst also meeting Government targets for renewable energy. TGV is a social enterprise. It is constituted as Community Interest Company committed to developing community ownership of renewable energy generation. TGV is owned by its members (it doesn't have shareholders) and these members include individuals and a number of local groups.

NESTA prize winners - In January 2010, The Green Valleys (TGV) were joint winner of NESTA's Big Green Challenge securing a prize of £300,000. Unlike the other Big Green Challenge finalists who build capabilities within one community, TGV was conceived to be an "enabling organisation" – providing support to a wide range of communities. We are using the NESTA prize money to build a sustainable business building community owned micro-hydro schemes in and around the Brecon Beacons National Park but see the opportunity to roll out this model across upland Wales.

TGV's experience of delivering micro-hydro schemes -Developing micro-hydro schemes requires a multi-disciplinary team that is expert in hydrological, mechanical, electrical, and civil engineering as well as an understanding of ecology, habitats, and bio-diversity. For community schemes you need to add experience of community engagement, business planning and the legal frameworks to constitute local groups. TGV has assembled a team and has experience of all stages of the process within its current area of operation in and around the Brecon Beacons National Park.

Significant barriers - For landowners and community groups wishing to exploit the many hundreds of small hydro assets in Wales there are some significant barriers: affordable and accurate feasibility studies, expert guidance through the planning process, affordable system design and installation, finance. TGV's mission is to overcome these barriers and make community owned hydro schemes a practical reality.

Market failure and the role of social enterprise - now that Feed-in Tariffs have replaced capital grants as the principle means of funding renewable energy schemes can we expect the private sector meet the growing demand? There are two reasons why the answer is "no". Firstly, micro-hydro installers in Wales can be characterised as being either large companies only interested in 100+kW installations, or a small number of one-man bands unable to offer an integrated service of design, planning, construction and finance that community schemes require. Secondly, the private firms, unsurprisingly, do not make community ownership and environmental enhancement their principle objective. Many firms offer "free electricity" to landowners with the developer keeping all of the generating and export tariffs.

Only a social enterprise such as The Green Valleys, a not-for-profit organisation with a commitment to maximising community ownership, can ensure that the

financial benefit of Feed-in Tariffs is used to build financially sustainable communities and not distributed to shareholders.

From The Green Valley's own experience and from the support and encouragement of other organisations, landowners and communities there is a clear need for the service which TGV has developed across all upland areas of Wales. If successful we would contribute significantly to meeting renewable energy generation targets, create jobs, and provide a 20 year income stream to communities in upland regions, and help to develop the manufacturing and export potential of a growth industry. What does TGV need to do to be able to operate across Wales?

Staff resources - we currently have just 3 FTE (1 FTE seconded short-term by the National Park) to oversee all processes and operations. In the long-term the TGV model is self-sustaining but up to another 3FTE would be needed to support an expansion across Wales over the next 2 years.

Partner organisations - TGV plans to work with partner organisations in, for example, North Wales to deliver our Wales wide vision. TGV has developed an outline partnership with Sustainable Gwynedd Gwnaladwy. SGG would provide the local landowner and community liaison, the construction management and maintenance but use TGV procedures, designs, legal structures, and financing. These partnerships will need managerial and admin support as well as the development of training courses.

Supportive landowners - a community group's involvement in a micro-hydro installation requires landowners that are willing to support community buy-in. We will need to promote to this model to willing private landlords and to develop our existing understanding with Dwr Cymru and the Forestry Commission for the development of community owned schemes.

Investment capital - in addition to extending the existing £500k loan facility with Finance Wales we will need raise additional investment capital to develop the schemes. This can be a blend of investment capital from individuals, landowners, some organisations for a fixed return or a profit share. But we are also provide an opportunity for charities and grant giving organisations (and corporate bodies wanting to meet CSR obligations) to invest in both community renewal and renewable energy.

Supply chain - there is not a well established and scalable engineering industry supporting the micro-hydro industry in Wales. Development capital, grants, or other industry support may be needed to ensure that we can build Wales' capabilities in a vital green growth industry.