



NEWSLETTER 60 – AUTUMN 2026

Successful AGM and anniversary celebrations

We had a very successful AGM on Saturday 27th June. As usual our generous hosts, Y Talbot, allowed us free use of their meeting room (as well as providing complementary teas, coffees and biscuits!) Just over 30 members attended the “live” meeting while several attended via a Zoom link set up and managed by Aidan and Sophia Yorath.

In her Chair’s report, Marilyn noted that our long standing trustee, Dave Matthews, was not seeking re-election. Marilyn noted that Dave had served as trustee for 14 years but his connection with the two hostels went much further back. Dave was one of the people involved in the setting up of Dolgoch as a hostel 50 years ago. Dave also acted as Treasurer for EWH from 2016 until last year and in this role his hard work and meticulous and painstaking attention to detail made him an excellent treasurer. Everyone thanked Dave for the huge contribution he has made to EWH both as trustee, treasurer and one of the original ‘founders’ of Dolgoch.



Our Treasurer, Malcolm James, in his report noted that EWH remains in a very healthy financial position and will be able to fund the planned investment in the hostels over the next few years.

Following the AGM, the majority of those attending moved on to Dolgoch where the celebrations took place for Dolgoch becoming a hostel 50 years ago and EWH coming into existence 20 years ago. We even had two celebration cakes to commemorate the occasions.



Legacy

EWH has been left a generous legacy by Brenda Warner, late of Ewerby near Sleaford, Lincolnshire. Steve Griffiths, who knew her well, writes,

“Brenda was a lifelong cyclist never owning a car. She was a long-time member of the Rough Stuff Fellowship (RSF) who also benefitted from her will. By profession a commercial artist and her drawings often featured in the RSF magazine. She did the Towy track several times in the days before Llyn Brianne when it was a major off-road challenge. Brenda left the YHA when they allowed hostellers to arrive by car although she had stayed at Ty’n Cornel not long after it opened. A very keen camper and Bothy user she was still riding into her 80s. Riding with her was always interesting as she was extremely knowledgeable about the countryside. She was very impressed with the work done to save two of the Elenydd hostels and had plans to stay which sadly never materialised.”

In addition to Brenda’s legacy, we have also received a number of generous donations in memory of Don Snoad, a member of EWH and a visitor to the hostels. Don was a strong supporter of the Elenydd Wilderness Hostels. His sister asked for donations to Parkinsons and the Elenydd Wilderness Hostels and a number of his friends have sent us donations.

Thank you very much Brenda and Don. Your generosity is very welcome and will be used to improve the hostels.

Dolgoch

Overnight numbers – The year has got off to a promising start. The year to date April-August showed just under 1,090 overnights, a 6% increase over the same period last year. July was particularly strong at 271, 20% up on July 2025 and only narrowly below the post Covid “bounce” that we experienced in 2023. Perhaps due to the amazing summer, we have seen a big growth in the number of campers compared with last year. Campers at our hostels get an amazing deal compared with most other camp sites as they are able to use all of the facilities of the hostel including the kitchen and cosy common rooms all for £10 per person.

Wild flower meadow? – Our environmental officer Lisa Tomos, has developed plans for restoring the field close to the car park as a traditional meadow. As part of these plans Lisa organised a grass cutting and raking day at Dolgoch in August. Lisa says,

“There are many ways to give nature a helping hand, but restoring a wildflower meadow is next level stuff! Traditional meadows, managed by cutting and removing a hay or grass crop, have become extremely rare. They are important for pollinators and other insects, diverse grasses and flowering plants, fungi and soil carbon. By cutting the grass each year in late summer, plants will have set seed. Removing the crop takes away nutrients, allowing more wildflowers to thrive over time.

The plan was to mow half of the field following advice from the West Wales Wildlife Trust's Doug Lloyd. We want to reduce any shock to wildlife such as barn owls. So on the 22 August Rhys



Thwaites Jones and I arrived at Dolgoch ready to start work. Colin also joined us. Rhys got stuck in with the strimmer whilst Colin and I raked, collected and removed the grass. It was hot work and we had to stop for water a few times.

We finished the job in about three and a half hours, and the cool interior of Dolgoch never felt more welcoming!

We'll repeat the cut and remove operation next August, and I'll be monitoring the meadow for changes in the coming years. Many thanks, diolch yn fawr i Rhys a Colin for all your hard work. Thanks also to the Trustees for supporting this plan. Let's hope we can welcome back more wildlife in future years."



Electricity – Members who attended the post-AGM celebrations at Dolgoch were able to experience the newly installed electricity system. The response was overwhelmingly positive, as has been the reaction of wardens and visitors. There are a small number of “tidying ups” to complete before the system is officially signed off (and we pay the final bill!) These are expected to be completed this month. The real test of the system from a users point of view will be faced over the coming months as the days get shorter. The system has been designed so that we will be able to monitor how much electricity is generated and how much is used and we will be able to switch off sections e.g. the power sockets, fridges to conserve power . It will be an interesting winter! We are also in the process of getting a final quote for the gas water heater. This will allow us to use the pre heated water from the solar system, which, even in winter , can heat up the water by a measurable amount.

Tidying up – Following the electricity work, and in preparation for the AGM celebrations, a dedicated group of members and friends did an amazing job cleaning and decorating the hostel. We were able to take advantage of the good weather to paint sections of the outside walls, including those of the annex and patio areas which get a real battering from the winter weather. Inside, we were able to repaint the common room and kitchen, both of the toilets as well as the corridor and cleaning room. We also enjoyed a couple of enjoyable shared evening meals. Many thanks to Ed, Richard, Dee,Di, Stan, Mary, Bill, and Malcolm. Only the upstairs to do now!



Ty'n Cornel

Ty'n Cornel has had another busy summer. On 5th September, there are 833 overnights for the calendar year (including forward bookings), and 731 of those overnights have already occurred. We're hoping to exceed last year's total of 850 overnights – there are plenty of weekends still available for booking. We have had a wide variety of visitors. The organization Pegasus Ultra Running used the hostel as a checkpoint for a 50 mile marathon in August, and there has been a steady trickle of visitors walking the Cambrian Way. The visitors included a nest of baby swallows in the lower barn.

The spring that feeds our water supply has kept flowing through the long summer drought. Since 2015, the spring water has been captured underground – all of the available water is captured into a pipe, and the supply is much more reliable than in the days when the water emerged into a surface stream. In May, Mike Boothman and Richard re-dug some drainage channels above the spring, to keep contaminated surface water out of the water supply. Water samples passed the Council's tests in August.

Maintenance work has continued throughout the summer – painting, cleaning, cutting grass. A dedicated grass-cutting weekend in August was attended by Bill Hine, Flic Eden, Kieran O'Hagan, and Ed Bick. They cut the grass in the garden and Richard has cut other areas throughout the year. Steps are being built to provide easier access to the “hovel”, which now serves as storage for e-bikes. The hostel's electrical installation had its five-year inspection in April. The hedges will be cut in October.

The [Tir Natur](#) re-wilding project is steadily gathering pace on nearby land. Over the summer, a small herd of Belted Galloway cattle has joined the existing herd of ponies. Many more grazing animals will be needed to make any impression on the hundreds of acres of overgrown grass. The organisation holds regular open days and work parties.



Walkers resting at the Pen y Gurnos trig point, and afterwards back at the hostel.



Baby swallows in the lower barn.

Trevor Fishlock

In July, our former president Trevor Fishlock died. Trevor attended some of the early EWH meetings and AGMs and was very supportive of the hostels. Trevor led an amazing life as an overseas correspondent for The Times and later the Telegraph. Reading his obituary in The Times (14th August) it is amazing that he had any time to support small organisations such as EWH. Trevor moved to Wales from England and he was a passionate supporter of the Welsh countryside.

Winter booking?

Do not forget that the hostels are usually less busy in the winter months and have their own attractions, including cosy evening round the fire side. Why not book a couple of days and help to support EWH? At present the hostels are free for Christmas!

Welsh translation

We need to update the Welsh version of our website to make it consistent with the English version. If anyone is interested please contact Marilyn or Colin.

Events calendar

When	What	Further details
7 th -8 th November 2026	Dolgoch work party	huwscol@hotmail.co.uk
12 th – 14 th March 2027	Warden's training weekend	frances.adelaidecottage@gmail.com
26 th June 2027	AGM	barglam@yahoo.co.uk

Membership

If you are not yet a member why not join us? EWH will only survive and prosper if we have a continuing inflow of new people. Even if you are not able to help in an active way there are a number of jobs that can be done remotely including a grant applications officer and marketing roles. To become a member the easiest route is via our website <https://www.elenydd-hostels.co.uk> or send an email to our membership secretary email members@elenydd-hostels.co.uk

Colin Hughes huwscol@hotmail.co.uk (On behalf of the Trustees)