

Summer 2023

Community Newsletter

Eryri Visual Impact Provision (VIP) project



Project update

Hello and welcome to our latest community newsletter. So far, 2023 has been a critical year for the Visual Impact Provision (VIP) project in Eryri National Park.

It is great to now be on site in Garth, after the project team moved from its previous offices at Trawsfynydd substation. The new compound will house a project information centre where we hope to invite the community in the future.

We are glad to see so many of you taking an interest in our Community Grant Programme, with successful applications coming in from throughout the project area. We are now preparing for the next application window which opens in October.



Steve Ellison
Senior Project Manager,
National Grid

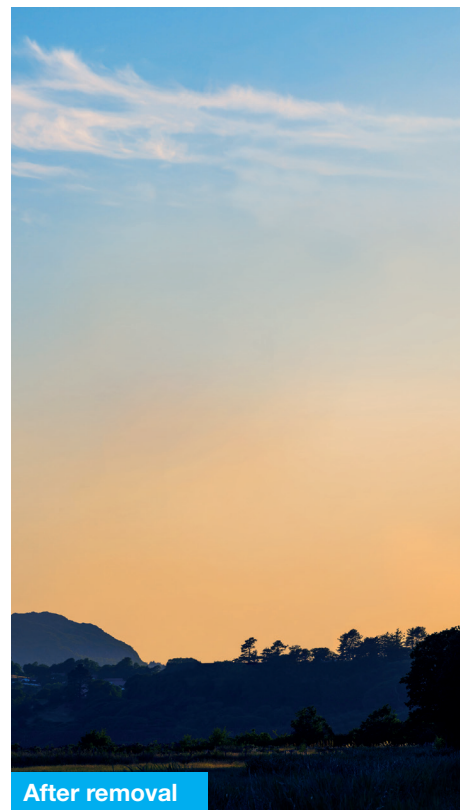
Since our last newsletter, you will have noticed we are also a lot more visible in the Llandecwyn area as our teams have been working on creating the entrance for our new site there and the location of one of our tunnel headhouses. Thank you for your patience and cooperation during this vital stage of the project.

Our focus now turns to preparing the Garth site for the arrival of the tunnel boring machine (TBM) early next year, which will be used to excavate the tunnel under the Dwyrdd Estuary.

Over the autumn term, we will be heading to schools around the local area, with exciting opportunities for youngsters to take part in workshops based on science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM). They will also be given the important task of suggesting a name for the TBM – more about that inside.



As it is today



After removal

nationalgrid

Tara Traws, helo Garth

After 14 months of working from our offices at Trawsfynydd substation, during July, the Eryri VIP team moved into its new compound at Garth, near Minffordd.

The new compound, which is located at the bottom of Quarry Lane where it meets the back lane, will comprise of 64 office units to house the 150 members of the team who will eventually be

working on the project at the peak of its activity from 2024-2026. There will be meeting rooms, a kitchen and canteen and other welfare facilities including a project information centre where we hope to host community groups in future.

The offices at Trawsfynydd will now be removed and the site returned to its original appearance within the substation.



Third Community Liaison Group meeting

We held our third Community Liaison Group meeting in June, continuing our pledge to keep local groups up-to-date with the project's development, and providing an opportunity for local representatives to provide feedback to the VIP project team.

The meeting took place at the Community Hall in Talsarnau, attended by representatives from a range of organisations including Cyngor Tref Penrhyndeudraeth, Cyngor Cymuned Talsarnau, Cyngor Cymuned Maentwrog, Cyngor Gwynedd,

Eryri National Park Authority, Ysgol Talsarnau & Ysgol Cefn Coch, Cymdeithas Eryri, Meirionnydd Ramblers and North Wales Wildlife Trust.

The session covered the progress of the project over the past few months, including the work to establish the project's main construction compound in Minffordd, as well as the smaller compound at Llandecwyn and the programme of ground investigation works that has begun on and around the Dwyryd Estuary.

Traffic management at Llandecwyn

During May and June, our teams worked on creating the entrance for our site and the location of one of our tunnel headhouses in Llandecwyn. This required the need for temporary traffic lights located close to where they are currently positioned on the A496 opposite the water treatment works.

These access points are known as 'bellmouths', which refers to the shape of the entrance – they are very wide to allow safe access for vehicles to enter and exit the site.

The traffic management measures are due to be removed early this autumn and we'd like to thank you for your patience and cooperation while they were in operation.



In the Community...

Llandecwyn 10k gets an electrical boost

In June this year, National Grid's Eryri VIP project and its main contractor, Hochtief UK, supported the popular Llandecwyn 10k race that starts and ends right next to the project's eastern site compound.

National Grid's Senior Project Manager Steve Ellison ran the race for the second year in a row and Hochtief UK provided volunteer marshals for the course which has a fearsome reputation as being particularly challenging in places.

The team helped set up the site so that participants and organisers could use the facilities on site as well as sponsoring the trophies. Local civil engineering contractors, Jennings were also on hand to make sure that the area was safe for the public to use. Well done to all!



Steve Ellison, National Grid; Ben Davies, Hochtief UK; Cllr Lisa Birks, Talsarnau Community Council; Carwyn Richards, 10k organiser

Seeing the wood for the trees

Earlier this year, teams from National Grid and Hochtief UK working on the Eryri VIP project, joined the Snowdonia Society and Woodland Trust for a volunteering day in Maentwrog.

The teams, more used to engineering than arboriculture, helped to remove tree guards in Coed Llennyrch and Felenrhyd, a rare, Atlantic oak woodland and one of our largest woods in Wales.

After a rewarding and productive session, the intrepid sleeve removers were treated to a site visit through the woods and up to the farmhouse which is in the process of being renovated to become a volunteer hub.



Representatives from National Grid, Hochtief UK, the Snowdonia Society and Woodland Trust in Maentwrog.

Celebrating Welsh culture at the Eisteddfod

National Grid is proud to have sponsored the National Eisteddfod of Wales this year and team members from the Eryri VIP project enjoyed a fantastic day out experiencing all that the festival has to offer.

The Eryri VIP team was joined on the day by colleagues from other National Grid projects and departments across North Wales, as well as from Hochtief UK, our lead contractor on the Eryri VIP scheme. The group enjoyed a guided tour, invaluable networking opportunities with friends, stakeholders and with representatives from the energy sector in Wales, talks and activities at the Science and Technology Village... as well as a few of the musical and culinary delights available on the Maes.



As many local people will know, the Eisteddfod is a prestigious annual event that celebrates Welsh culture, language, and arts. This year the festival was held in Boduan near Pwllheli, with the hosting area spanning from Aberdaron in the west to Abergwyngregyn in the north and Penrhyndeudraeth at the eastern end.



Community Grant Programme

The Community Grant Programme is aimed at community organisations and charities in areas where National Grid's work is impacting on local people through our site activities – supporting projects which will benefit communities in the local area.

Could your group benefit? If you know of a project that meets our criteria, we'd love to hear from you. Check out our website for more information on who can apply and how to do it – www.nationalgrid.com/responsibility/community/community-grant-programme.

Porthmadog Juniors Football Club

When their pitch became infested with crane flies, making it almost impossible for members to train, Porthmadog Juniors decided to apply for funding towards buying portable LED lighting and also to repair their pitch. The football club subsequently received almost £10,000 from National Grid for pitch repairs and new lighting, which will boost training and reduce hire costs for the 130-member volunteer run grassroots club.



Steve Ellison, National Grid, with players and coaches from the Club

Penrhyndeudraeth Memorial Hall

Penrhyndeudraeth Memorial Hall has received over £10,000 from National Grid for building repairs and renovation, after cracked metal guttering and patches of damp had led to concerns that the much-loved community building could deteriorate quickly. Refurbishment will improve the hall's condition and ensure it can continue to serve the local community for future generations.



Eloise Frank, National Grid, with representatives from the Memorial Hall

What's coming next?

As part of our engagement with schools in the area, we have an exciting opportunity for Key Stage 2 schoolchildren to do a very important job – naming our Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM).

The Eryri VIP project requires highly specialist engineering skills and equipment, and we want our next generation of budding engineers and scientists to be part of this journey with us. In the autumn, we will be holding STEM workshops at the primary schools closest to our project area. These workshops will use hands-on activities and experiments to explain a little bit more about our project and its challenges. In particular, the

workshops will look at our TBM's epic job of boring beneath the Meirionnydd landscape.

The first job for our budding local talent will be to think of a suitable name for the TBM. It is the tradition to name TBMs after famous women; in this case maybe a woman who has left a lasting legacy on Welsh STEM, design, history or culture, or a woman from mythology whose name holds special significance for us here in Wales. Pupils will be asked to make their suggestion along with a reason why they think that name should be chosen.

Look out for news about the winning name in the next edition of the newsletter!

Get in touch

We're committed to providing updates throughout construction and will be sending regular newsletters to keep local people updated about our progress. However, we're always keen to hear from you.

Please get in touch by calling **0330 134 0051**

by writing to **Freepost VISUAL IMPACT PROVISION**

or by sending an email to visualimpact@nationalgrid.com

You can find out more about the project on our dedicated website: www.nationalgrid.com/eryrivip



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