



Ecodyfi's climate action project

extract from report to National Lottery Community Fund, Oct. 2021

The main activities enabled by the Climate Action Boost Funding were the setting up of a shared community e-bike scheme in Machynlleth and a scheme to help identify where homes are inefficient using a thermal imaging camera.

Ecodyfi employed a Climate Officer (Freya Pryce) to work for 2 days per week to set up the thermal camera scheme and the e-bike scheme, and to add impetus to Machynlleth Climate Action and ecodyfi's existing climate-related activities.

This was a new post. The National Lottery Community Fund contribution from the Climate Boost prompted ecodyfi to draw money from reserves so as to extend the duration of this contract to 12 months (ending June 2022).

Shared electric bike scheme

We set up a shared electric bike scheme for the Machynlleth area, aiming to reduce car journeys and improve people's mobility while raising awareness, understanding, and experience of e-bikes. This involved researching and purchasing 1 new e-bike and 2 converted e-bikes, as well as cycling safety gear, pannier racks and a secure bike shed. We opted for a mix of new and converted e-bikes to enable people to try both options before buying their own (if that's what they are inspired to do). Our choices prioritized bikes that would be mainly useful for road riding, but also with the ability to cycle over gravel tracks. This is because we hope the e-bikes could replace car-use, thus reducing emissions (a priority over choosing mountain bikes that are primarily for recreational activity).

These choices, and the design of the scheme more generally, were informed by the very helpful discussions we held with our Mentor Beth Ward of Drosi Bikes, provided through Renew Wales.

Beth is also mentoring Cycle Dyfi in their diversification and development. They converted the two second-hand bikes (donated to Cycle Dyfi for refurbishing and re-selling), and we have contracted them to provide planned maintenance of the e-bikes.



Freya collecting first e-bike from Bike to the Future, Newtown

"I tried out the ebike and it really really helped me get up the hills! I think having an ebike would allow me to go between home and town with my baby on the back, and with heavy shopping - journeys I only do by car at the moment" - Ali

Energy efficiency in the home

We purchased 2 thermal cameras (Flir ONEs) so that people can see where heat escapes from their homes and other buildings. This is a tool to open conversations about energy-efficiency, and has a very practical function of identifying key areas in need of improvement in people's homes. The thermal camera has only just been launched publicly, partly as the weather has only just become cold enough to see significant contrasts between indoors and outdoors.

In the first few days of its launch, there has been significant interest, including from people who have never previously engaged with local climate action. The cameras are being borrowed by individuals, groups of neighbours, youth groups, and schools.

"Just wanted to say thank you for loaning me the IR camera. It was enlightening to find out our triple glazed windows actually loose more heat via their frames than the glazing. I didn't expect that. Thanks for offering such a great scheme & with a great service too. Many thanks" - Dan



The Climate Officer has collaborated with the 'Energy in Buildings' working group of Machynlleth Climate Action to develop the thermal camera scheme.

In conjunction with the thermal imaging camera scheme, the Climate Officer has been supporting a Big Energy Saving Network (BESN) Energy Champion to help people reduce energy bills (target of assisting 100 people October 2021 - March 2022). The Climate Officer assists the BESN Energy Champion with publicising what he offers, and they can refer people to each other's schemes for additional support.

Support for volunteer climate action

In terms of assisting Machynlleth Climate Action, the Climate Officer has produced a 'Machynlleth Climate Action Newsletter', added to the website, relaunched the Biodiversity group and the Energy in Buildings group, and created a 'Climate Conversations' event. These actions have engaged more members of the community in local climate and biodiversity action and brought back to life groups which became dormant during the pandemic.

<http://www.climate.machynlleth.wales/>

The Climate Officer initiated and coordinated an 'Our Community, Our Climate' public event in Machynlleth for when Climate.Cymru toured Wales ahead of COP26.



This was co-organised with other staff and volunteer members of ecodyfi (in part through the Trywydd Iach project - also funded by the National Lottery Community Fund) and by other community volunteers. It became a key part of a day of events from Aberystwyth to Machynlleth campaigning for more/safer walking and cycling routes between all the communities along that route. The event was successful in bringing together over 200 people to engage with what climate and environmental action groups are doing locally, as well as sending messages to the Glasgow event.

The Climate Officer has endeavored to involve parts of the community not previously involved in climate action in the initiatives of this project. One example of this is positive collaboration in the creation of the bike shed from a local business owner (who is offering the space), local builders and a timber yard, a solar energy company, and other community members offering advice and support.

We are inspired to seek help to make sure the e-bike scheme continues successfully beyond this period of funding. For example, we are seeking funding for an e-bike coordinator. Converted e-bikes appear to be the better-value-for-money and more ecological option than brand new e-bikes, as they can utilise a pre-existing bicycle, and you can buy a more powerful battery and motor for your money than in a similar-costing new e-bike. They are also more easily repairable.

We want to expand the thermal camera scheme so that it is able to offer more support to people in improving the energy efficiency of buildings, for example by experienced people being available to offer one-to-one advice and/or a home energy assessment.

<https://www.ecodyfi.wales/climateaction>

