

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Twelve years and 1,364 MWh since he first produced electricity in August 2008, Archie is beginning to show his age. The sluice gate is getting a bit “sticky” and his control system is far from state of the art. Earlier this year the Directors commissioned a full review of the plant from Hallidays Hydropower and the report and recommendations are now in. In addition to renovating and reinforcing the sluice gate and upgrading the control systems, they argued very strongly that we should take advantage of the opportunity to simultaneously install variable speed.

Over the last few years, we have been building a contingency reserve to cover repairs and outages and expect to cover just over half the cost of the proposed renovation using existing funds and grants, with the remainder coming from either a loan or increasing our number of shares (the Board’s preferred option). Our shareholders agreed and approved raising the limit on the number of shares issued from 126,000 to 150,000 at a Special General Meeting on Saturday September 19th. This has the added benefit of opening up our membership to new shareholders; many people who are interested in green, local energy generation have moved to the area over the last decade and this is a great opportunity for them to become involved in the project.

The planning for the project is moving along nicely. The sluice gate improvements are being undertaken by a local company, LSP, and as soon as we pin down the last few details we will be able to order the control system. Archie will be out of action for a few days while the work is carried out and if all goes to plan the work will be completed by Christmas.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

The next step will be an official share offering. The Board are currently putting together the necessary documents and we expect to start sending these out to existing members at the end of October. Please do talk to friends and neighbours about this; we especially want to encourage local people to get involved in our “friendly neighbourhood green energy scheme”, so new members and small shareholders will have priority if we get close to the 150,000 limit. And of course, if you would like to buy a few more shares yourself....

FY 2018/19 AGM

As you have probably noticed, we are currently living under a number of restrictions that are wreaking havoc on everyday life. Many of you will, like me, be learning to use Zoom for what would normally be social gatherings, which of course includes our AGMs and other meetings (which are now sadly without the coffee/tea and homemade cake that we normally enjoy on these occasions). Our AGM went ahead as planned on Saturday July 4th, however, and the Minutes and a link to a recording of the meeting were circulated to all our members a couple of weeks later. In addition to the usual financial business and Archie’s annual performance and maintenance review, we now have a full complement of nine Directors: Doug Brown and Dave Cooper were both re-elected and two new Directors, Nick Metcalfe and Jan Szechi joined Tony Ashton, Richard Body, Michael Brueck, Mary Cohen and Esther Jones on the THNM Board. Thank you all who sent in proxy votes to make it official!

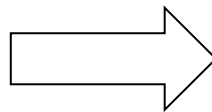
KEEPING ARCHIE RUNNING

Unfortunately, the indicator on the website is no longer talking to the equipment at the site. This is yet another of the things that will be addressed as part of the upcoming refurbishment project described above. Archie has indeed been running this year, however, even though the sun came out towards the end of March so he had a little break in April, May and June. The plentiful rain in July meant that we had to wait till the river dropped before Archie could cope with the amount of water in the river, but then he went on to send over 9,000 kWh to the Co-op to keep the frozen peas and ice cream in the chiller cabinets cold. After a brief rest in the first half of August he generated another 5,376 kWh in the last 5 days of the month and finished the financial year by turning in his fourth best September figure ever, 10,318 kWh, to give us a grand total of just over 136 MWh for the 2019/20 year. At the time of writing, Archie was turning merrily, as the above photo shows!



There has been a lot more foot traffic going past the site than usual this year. In addition to walking groups and others visiting New Mills for the first time, many local people “discovered” the Torrs during lockdown as they (and their dogs) took their approved 60 minutes of exercise, with parents and children alike spending a lot of time looking at Archie and reading the signage. The dogs were not so interested....

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE!



Before.....

..... and after some TLC from Archie's Angels!

Archie's Angels are a group of volunteers who want to be more involved with the project but are unable to sign up to help on a regular basis. Every so often, Mary decides the site needs a bit of attention and puts out a call to gather a work party to do some clean-up in and around Archie. This could be weeding, cleaning the fish pass or the inside of the engine house, or maybe touching up the paintwork a bit. If you are interested in joining the Angels, please get in touch with Mary (mary@torrshydro.org). The more, the merrier!

GDPR

Torrs Hydro do not pass your personal identifiable data to any third party. You are receiving this newsletter because you have asked us to keep you informed, or you are a member of the society and this is part of your membership benefits.

If you have any comments/queries/suggestions for improvements, please email the newsletter editors, Directors Jan Szechi (jan@torrshydro.org) and Mary Cohen (mary@torrshydro.org). You can also send a letter to us at 90 Market St., New Mills, High Peak SK22 4AA.