



torrshydro

Shareholder Newsletter
Issue 2
Summer 2009

Celebrity News: Archie* Hits the Big-time!

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Riding Bicycles

By Amanda Whewell

See page 2 for more on local artists we have inspired.

New Directors

As most of you will be aware, four new directors joined the Board at the 2008 AGM. Four of the five original directors were reappointed whilst Dr Till Geiger stood down for personal reasons. The directors are now: Richard Body, Simon Clayton, Mary Cohen, Maggie Cole, Will Griffin, Esther Jones, Lorrie Marchington and Sean Whewell.

At the 2009 AGM three directors are required to stand down, but will be eligible for re-election.

* In a poll for Torrs Hydro, “Archie” was chosen as the public’s preferred name for our reverse Archimedes screw turbine.



Government Recognition

Torrs Hydro was featured by the government as a case study of community action to address climate change in July.

The *UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009*, published by the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC), sets out how the UK will produce 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020. The strategy correctly states that this vital transformation “cannot be done without individuals, businesses and communities playing a role.” Torrs Hydro was featured as a case study showing how grassroots organisations have taken a lead in implementing renewable energy schemes.

Use [this link](#) to read or download the strategy document from the DECC website; the case study is on page 165.

Down By The River

The main landscaping and safety features around the site were completed early in 2009. Fencing has been erected around the site, stone walling protects the original mill walls and there are steps down to the tailrace end of the turbine.



Two picnic tables were placed near Archie so people can enjoy a rest in the Torrs Riverside Park. These have hosted all sorts of activities from family picnics to a fashion shoot. The original wheel pit stones from Torr Mill were used to build an amphitheatre overlooking Archie, which is used by visiting school groups.

In January 2009 leaping salmon were carved in a sycamore tree by local artist and chainsaw maestro Simon O'Rourke. This was funded by the Environment Agency, hoping that we will soon see salmon as well as trout leaping up the fish pass. The Environment Agency monitor fish in the rivers, and in May a brown trout of approximately ten inches was recorded.

Inspiring Artists

As part of the Derbyshire Open Arts Exhibition weekend in May, when local artists displayed their work around the town, Amanda Whewell placed two wonderful pieces crafted from river debris found on Archie. [Follow this link](#) for more details of her work. Hopefully she will have time to decorate Archie again during next year's event. Chris Smith of [Twenty Trees Photography](#) in Hayfield put Torrs Hydro on the map with his amusing design of a metro map for New Mills.

AGM 2009

A date for your autumn diary: the Torrs Hydro New Mills Limited Annual General Meeting will be held at 1100 on Saturday 28th November 2009 at the Revival Church in New Mills. (This is the same venue as last year.)

All shareholders will be very welcome to attend. The AGM documentation will be sent to all shareholders a few weeks before the meeting.



The Bigger Picture

The *UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009* was just one of a number of initiatives published by the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) to cautious approval. The DECC also set out its UK Low Carbon Transition Plan plus low carbon strategies for industry and transport. Most commentators were supportive but made the point that urgent action is required to achieve the planned target of 15% of all UK energy from renewables by 2020. Perhaps the [10:10 initiative](#) is a suitably urgent grassroots action...



Torrs Tours and Other Visits

We have been delighted to host a variety of visits since the plant opened. Many visitors have an interest in setting up their own Hydro scheme: Transition Buxton, Saddleworth Parish Council, Groundwork Nottingham, Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPE), Exmoor National Park, Energy4All, Workers' Education Association (WEA), University of the Third Age (U3A), Sustainable Bakewell and Settle Hydro, the second scheme to be implemented by [Water Power Enterprises \(H₂OPE\)](#) who were responsible for our scheme.



In response to the massive public interest the scheme has created, we are holding a series of open afternoons over the spring and summer. These Torrs Tours occur on the last weekend of the month and are widely advertised.

Schools are showing particular interest. When we hosted a large visit from Lady Manners School, we were able to coordinate speakers from New Mills Heritage Centre and the Environment Agency to enrich their time with us. Next year we will produce educational resource packs for schools; a variety of materials will be developed to meet the needs of a range of abilities and age groups.

A student From Manchester Metropolitan University is researching a full lifecycle assessment of carbon in the scheme for his MSc in Environmental Management and Sustainable Development. Visits from Manchester and Salford Universities are planned for the new academic year.

It's clear that there is an enormous amount of interest and support out there. During the visit by the Exmoor National Park Authority and the Exmoor Trust, Archie McIntyre (a park trustee) said, "There is no doubt that the advice they offer is of great value to similar projects being planned across the country. Their organisation and achievement is most impressive."

"Weir Not Worthy" - Torrs Hydro in the Press

["New Mills' Torrs Hydro has been praised by the government."](#)

Following the publication of The UK Renewable Energy Strategy. [Buxton Advertiser 23/07/2009.]

["The UK's first community-funded hydroelectric scheme, Torrs Hydro is generating green energy as well as interest in H₂O power."](#)

[The Ecologist Magazine 01/07/2009.] Worth seeking out for the picture of Richard Body disguised as the Greek god Poseidon.

"A SERIES of free tours in New Mills will show how renewable electricity is generated at the UK's first community-owned hydropower plant." [Buxton Advertiser 09/04/2009.]

"Weir Not Worthy" Following a successful visit by Exmoor National Park Authority and the news that the National Council for Voluntary Organisations will make Torrs Hydro a case study. [Glossop Chronicle 12/03/2009.]

"Harness the Flow: How a 12 tonne screw could herald a renewable energy revolution."

[The Guardian 25/03/2009 Society: Green Energy Supplement.]

["Tree carver's fish and chips"](#) Simon O'Rourke creates the leaping salmon. [Manchester Evening News 24/01/2009.]

"A contemporary reworking of an ancient discovery has resulted in an innovative hydro scheme in the Torrs Gorge..."

[Derbyshire Life January 2009.]

["New Mills hydro first is a beacon:](#) OVER half of a New Mills supermarket's electricity needs look set to be provided by hydro power." [Buxton Advertiser 11/12/2008.]

["Co-op opens Britain's first hydro-powered store"](#)

[The Guardian 03/12/2008.]

["Rivers can generate electricity and cash"](#)

[Sunday Telegraphy 04/11/2008.]

Teething Troubles & Technical Glitches

We have been delighted by the interest shown in our pioneering scheme but inevitably it has not all been plain sailing. We were very surprised to be issued with noise abatement order from High Peak Borough Council Environmental Health Department at the start of May, as the result of a complaint from a member of the public. The low rainfall in March, April and June resulted in low water levels and it appears that when Archie generates at below about 18kW, there is an unexpectedly high degree of turbulence in the tailrace and a low frequency booming noise.

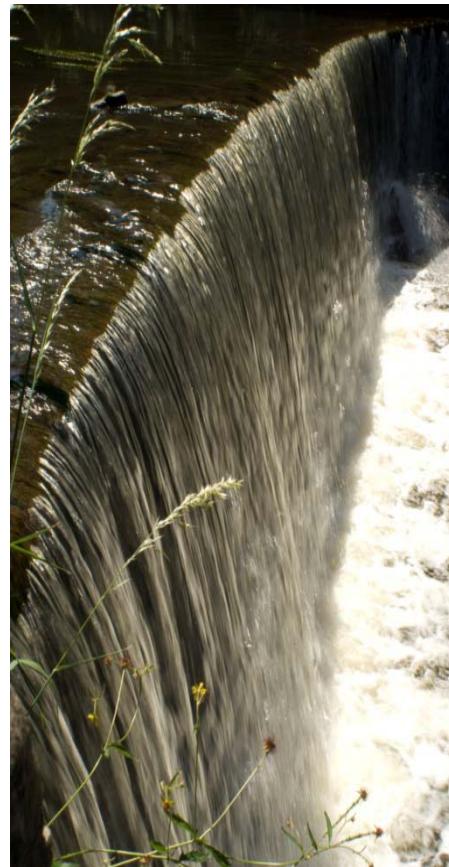
We are working closely with the council, Water Power Enterprises (H₂OPE) , Ritz Atro (the manufacturers of the turbine) and academics from Sheffield University to remedy the problem. We also plan a number of improvements to the plant to address reliability and control issues. Unfortunately the abatement order, these reliability issues and the driest spring for five years reduced the power that Archie was able to produce. Resuming efficient operation is the top priority for the board of directors and we expect to report positive news on this at the AGM.



Unfortunately another problem that we face is vandalism. Whilst Archie is a pretty robust character, roof slates go missing with annoying regularity. In June the police caught two local youths and suggested that "restorative justice" be used. The police believe that this keeps young people out of court but is an effective deterrent. We are considering approaching the local planning authority regarding planning permission for a more vandal-proof stone clad roof when funds permit.

It's Your Plant: Have Your Say

We receive many emails each week from people as far away as Idaho and New Zealand, who want to know more about Torrs Hydro.



The Directors want to know more about how you, the shareholders, feel about the company. Please complete the questionnaire attached to the email and do send us suggestions for topics you would like to discuss at the AGM.

We hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter and value the benefits that an electronic format can bring: hyperlinks to related articles, no post and packing costs, no paper to recycle and no CO₂ emitted for printing and delivery.

Final Words

Despite the teething troubles, Archie has now produced over 165 000 kWh of clean green energy, offsetting around 120 tonnes of CO₂ compared to coal or gas fired electricity generation. Everybody involved with the scheme should be proud of this achievement.