

Meeting of Community Councils to discuss Teifi / Tywi link

Including: Pylon, Wind Farm(s) and Sub-station Proposals

24/06/25 - Minutes of meeting

Attendees:

Llanfair Clydogau and Cellan Community Council

Dave Bartholomew (meeting chair)

Llanfihangel ar Arth Community Council

Angela James

Llanllawddog Community Council

Andrew Rees, Havard Hughes

LLandyfaelog Community Council

Nicola Jones

New South Law

Mary Smith (guest)

Apologies

Simon Aldridge (Llanfair Clydogau and Cellan Community Council)

Roger Daniel (Llanfair Clydogau and Cellan Community Council)

Gary Thorogood (Lampeter Town Council)

Agenda.

- Green Gen response to second consultation feedback
 - Standing item, review/discussion of any received
- Recent call to Scottish Government for a pause to energy infrastructure developments from 53 Highland Community Councils (<https://www.inverness-courier.co.uk/news/take-that-to-government-and-crack-on-53-community-coun-384768/>)
- Discussion with Mary Smith from New South Law on the recent court actions taken by Green Gen against Teifi/Tywi link landowners
- Proposal to extend future meeting invitations to Tywi valley Community Councils

Green Gen response to consultation feedback:

No response(s) to the feedback given by councils to the second consultation have been received from Green GEN.

Llanfair Clydogau and Cellan Community Council

It was noted that Llanfair Clydogau and Cellan Community Council are drafting a letter to Green Gen to ask when feedback can be expected and in what format it will be given. The council are also proposing an invitation to Green Gen to present locally. This is not a request for a further consultation but a specific presentation on their reaction, and response, to the feedback.

It was also noted that Llandyfaelog Community Council are similarly trying to arrange a meeting with The National Grid to discuss the current situation/plans for the proposed Llandyfaelog Substation.

Recent call to Scottish Government for a pause to energy infrastructure developments from 53 Highland Community Councils

This action is noted. The situation in Scotland is different to the current situation in Wales, as Scotland is further advanced with many power distribution and generation projects already completed. There are however more applications for generation plans and for large-scale battery storage facilities under consideration. This move appears not to be a move against any particular proposal but is in response to the rapid scaling of infrastructure, and the increasing impact infrastructure projects are having on the Scottish countryside and local communities.

It was noted that Wales is behind on its national Net Zero targets (although Ceredigion have already reached 110% energy production against its energy use) and that whilst undergrounding pylons 'where possible' is the stated position of Welsh Government they appear minded to continue progression towards the Net Zero target.

Discussion with Mary Smith

A summary was provided by Mary Smith, New South Law, with expertise in public law, human rights, and civil liability, reflecting concerns reportedly expressed by approximately 300 landowners and occupiers.

Consultation Concerns

Questions were reportedly raised about the clarity and legal accuracy of information provided during consultations. Some residents felt unclear about the implications of proposed access agreements and the overall process. Additional concerns were noted about the timing of consultations and legal notices and unannounced visits to properties, which in some cases coincided with peak farming periods, such as lambing, when stressors are high and engagement with formal processes is especially difficult.

Landowner Engagement

Feedback suggests some landowners experienced Green GEN's approach as adversarial, particularly where access agreements were sought without tailored explanation or negotiation. There are concerns about individuals being asked to sign complex legal documents without the opportunity for independent legal advice.

Legal and Regulatory Issues

It was reported that Green GEN, as a licensed Independent Distribution Network Operator (IDNO), may not be fully recognising responsibilities under public law, including data protection, equality, and human rights obligations.

Insurance

Concerns were raised about whether the insurance documentation provided in relation to land access adequately addresses environmental liability, disease spread, and other risks relevant to the proposed works.

Use of Legal Powers

Concerns had been raised that, in the lead-up to the summons, some Green GEN representatives may have been following prepared scripts, which was felt to limit the scope for meaningful engagement.

Concerns were also raised about inadequate notice under sections 172 and 174 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, and that some notices may have caused confusion by implying Green GEN already holds compulsory purchase powers, which it does not. This may have been compounded by earlier correspondence referring to statutory powers before the IDNO licence was granted.

Farmers and business owners expressed concern about reliance on statutory powers without practical engagement to ensure workable access arrangements, including around liability, biosecurity, disruption, timing, and legal and regulatory compliance.

Reports also highlighted surveyors entering land without prior knowledge or consent and the risks this poses.

There is broader concern about the lack of case law or specific regulatory oversight of these powers.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Community groups and advisers are understood to be encouraging Green GEN to pursue ADR before taking legal action. This is seen as a proportionate and kinder approach, particularly given community sensitivities and the mental health risks faced by agricultural workers - one of the groups most at risk of suicide – and the additional pressures they are under from subsidy reform, proposed inheritance tax changes, and disease risk etc.

Planning and Progress

It was suggested that relatively few survey access licence's may have been signed to date, and that progress on environmental and technical surveys may be limited. Some of those who have signed have reportedly raised concerns about non-adherence to licence terms.

Professional Standards

Green GEN is understood to have voluntarily signed the May 2025 professional Code of Conduct published by RICS and CAAV. It is hoped this, alongside professional support for landowners and the emphasis on Green GEN's obligations, will lead to improved engagement practices.

Next Steps

Expert working groups are being established to support access to reliable public information. Community councils may wish to gather local data on potential impacts to support responses during planning or consultation phases.

Where surveys have taken place, landowners may now request copies under the Code and, where appropriate, share them voluntarily with councils to support informed and lawful local scrutiny.

It is noted that this summary reflects thematic concerns reportedly raised by individuals and does not represent a formal position or legal opinion.

Proposal to extend future meeting invitations to Tywi valley Community Councils

It was agreed that invitations to this meeting are extended to all community councils affected by the Teifi / Tywi link.

General Discussion and AOB

It was noted that although each council attending these meetings is concerned with the communities (and issues/developments) within its council boundaries, and can only comment/act in the interests of its constituents, this forum gives an opportunity for each council to consider the 'bigger picture' and how that may impact local events and developments within its boundaries (there may be factors which impact across parish and county boundaries). It was noted that currently the only entities which may be taking a full 'end to end' view of the proposals are Welsh Government, Green Gen and Bute Energy (power generation projects).

Llanfair Clydogau and Cellan Community Council

With respect to undergrounding costs, it was reported that there are more companies now entering the market to provide services which may serve to force undergrounding costs down.

Next Meeting Tuesday 29th July at 7.30pm.