

# NEWSLETTER 38 – WINTER 2020

## Hostels update!

Having decided to open the hostels in September and following lots of Covid preparations by the hostel managers, we have again been forced to close the hostels. The two week “firebreak” in Wales ends on 9<sup>th</sup> November. However, a month long lockdown in England plus the likelihood of a more restrictive travel regime in Wales will make it impossible for us to run the hostels as planned during the winter months. We will continue to keep the situation under review but at this stage we have decided to keep the hostels closed to all visitors until March next year. Many thanks to those wardens who have volunteered to cover a week(s) during this period, but as the hostels will be closed there will be no need for a warden until March of next year.

The hostel managers will continue to visit the hostels for essential maintenance work and other Trust members should be able to visit for specific work related tasks which are expected to be permitted under any lockdown regulations.

## Your chance to attend a Trust Open event without leaving your home!

Many of us have become familiar with Zoom meetings during the Covid crisis. The Trustees have continued to have regular Trustee meetings using Zoom during the lockdowns which have prevented us holding our normal meetings at the hostels. Unfortunately we had to cancel this year’s AGM and have not held any open meetings at the hostels since November last year. Although we have tried to keep members updated through our newsletters we have decided to augment this by holding **an open meeting via Zoom on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November beginning at 10am**. It is expected that the meeting will last approximately one and a half hours.

The meeting will not follow the same format as our normal hostel open meetings. We will outline recent development and forthcoming projects such as the installation of a shepherds hut at Ty’n Cornel and update attendees on other recent developments. However, we also intend that members and other users of the hostels will have the opportunity to engage with those of us who run the hostels and the Trust by asking questions and participating in discussions. Details of how to access the meeting will be sent to you a day or two in advance.

**If you are interested in joining us let Colin know [huwscol@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:huwscol@hotmail.co.uk)**

**We would love you to attend - either to just listen or to participate**

## New bedding

The Trustees have taken a decision to stop using sheet sleeping bags at the hostels. The traditional sheet sleeping bags have been a feature of the hostels since the start and were inherited from the YHA when they decided to modernise. Our decision was partly a result of the changes required because of Covid and the difficulty of ensuring that other bedding was not potentially contaminated. In addition fewer and fewer current hostel users are familiar with the correct use of sheet sleeping bags so we would need to have taken the decision fairly soon anyway. The new arrangements will mean that the pillow case, bottom sheet and duvet cover will be changed after each use.

## Dolgoch update

Quite a lot of effort has gone in to preparing Dolgoch for operating in the new “Covid world”.. Additional Covid compliant cleaning materials were bought. The books, maps and children’s games were moved into the barn as was a high proportion of kitchen utensils. The idea being to limit the amount of cleaning that would be required in between bookings. We do not yet know what

conditions will apply when we open the hostels again next so we hope that not all of this effort has been wasted.

We are still planning to get the electricity supply upgraded. This will improve the lighting and will allow us to run a fridge, at least during the warmer months. We are hoping that a local contractor close to Llanddewi Brefi will visit when conditions allow. We also plan to get a quote for installing an LPG fueled combi boiler to supplement the solar hot water system.

## Ty'n Cornel Update

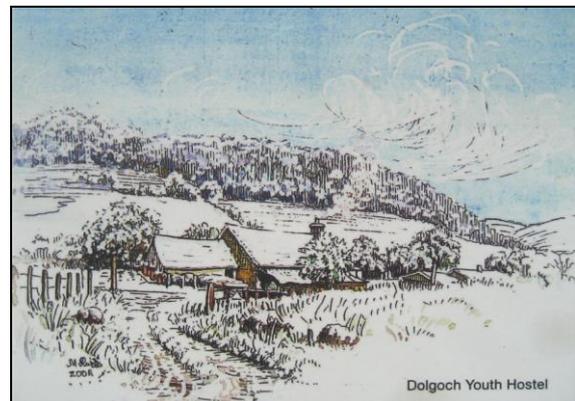
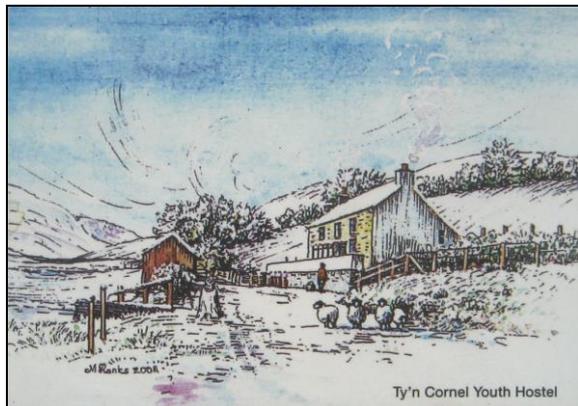
At Ty'n Cornel too the hostel has been prepared for operating under Covid conditions. The hostel actually looks a lot tidier without so much stuff! When it can be put back, it will certainly be worth being selective about how much is re-instated, particularly in the kitchen.

Progress is being made towards the shepherd's hut. A local architect visited the hostel complete with his theodolite and is drawing up plans to be submitted for planning permission. The decision was made to power the hut fully with electricity and Western Power have quoted to give us a second 100 Amp supply to allow for the needs of the hostel, the shepherd's hut and future requirements such as electric car charging. Local tradesmen are being asked to quote for the associated ground work.

The water has recently been tested at both hostels, and the samples complied with all the relevant standards. The hawthorn hedge alongside the camping ground is currently being laid by a local craftsman.

## Hostel Christmas cards for sale

*Cards featuring our two hostels are for sale again this year. The wording inside is 'With Best Wishes for Christmas and New Year'*



Pack of 5 cards – chose Dolgoch OR Ty'n Cornel = £4  
Pack of 10 cards – chose Dolgoch OR Ty'n Cornel = £7.50  
Pack of 10 cards (mixed) - 5x Dolgoch AND 5x Ty'n Cornel = £7.50  
Post order to: Nicky Price, 31 Thompson Street, Ynysybwl, Pontypridd, Rhondda, CF37 3EN.  
Email order to: price.nicky48@yahoo.co.uk

Phone order to: Nicky Price on 01443 790681

*(Please include your delivery address and exact requirements with your order)*

If paying by cheque please make cheque payable to: EWH

If paying by Bank Transfer make payment to: Sort Code: 404643 Account No: 51253182 and include reference 'Xmas & Surname' as appropriate.

## Dark Sky information

Geoffrey Williams, our Elenydd Dark Sky Coordinator, tells us it is hoped that the whole of the Cambrian Mountains, including the two hostels, will become a Dark Sky area. He goes on to say ‘Objectively astronomy is the best way you could possibly spend your time in the lockdown. Why not learn at the Open University’s Galaxies, Stars and Planets course? **This is free online** and consists of 8 hours of tuition over 4 weeks, teaching about the scale of the Universe. The course can be accessed by copying the following link into your web browser.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/science-maths-technology/galaxies-stars-and-planets/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>

## “Help the Hostels”

The Trust is always keen to get more members involved in helping with running the hostels and the other tasks that are so vital to the continued success of the Trust. (Most of the individuals who are doing these tasks and fulfilling key roles have been doing them for a number of years and are well into our 60s or older. The Trust is in a strong position financially but will only continue if “the torch can be passed on.”

The managers for both hostels, Colin Hughes (Dolgoch) and Richard and Janet Hollins (Ty’n Cornel) would particularly like to hear from members who would like to get involved in the practical side of running and maintaining the hostels.

For a number of years we have tried to get someone to fill the role of Marketing Officer. This role is becoming increasingly important as the hostelling market is becoming more competitive and social media marketing more prevalent.

If you think you would be interested in any of these roles or in helping the Trust in any other way please contact Marilyn [barglam@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:barglam@yahoo.co.uk)