

NEWSLETTER 50 – WINTER 2023

Waste Collection

Ever since we took over the running of the hostels we have been responsible for disposing of the waste generated by hostellers. This has been managed by a combination of encouraging people to take rubbish and recycling home with them, using local recycling centres and the wardens taking bags home with them when they leave. Changes to waste collection regulations now mean that all hostel waste is classified as commercial waste. We are now required to purchase special refuse sacks from Ceredigion County Council for both recycling and general waste. Due to their remoteness the Council will not collect directly from the hostels but have suggested drop off points nearer to Tregaron and Llanddewi Brefi. A further complication is that they do not collect weekly, requiring us to store waste on site. We have not yet worked out the practicalities but plan to implement the new arrangements early in 2024.

Dolgoch

Overnight bookings have recently tailed off after a very busy summer and autumn, November bookings were particularly weak. At this stage it looks like we will have a similar level of overnights to last year for the year as a whole (April 2023-March 2024) at around 1,900.

November Work party. We had a very enjoyable and successful work party at Dolgoch in early November. So much more important than the massive amount of work that we got through was that 14 EWH members and friends spent time together socialising, sharing communal meals and enjoying the hostel. At times it felt like a bit like something from the pages of Helen Maurice Jones' "The Spirit of the YHA"!

As to the work done,

Andrew Phillips hired a tipper truck which we used on Friday to ferry several loads of "grey" timber from the Nant yr Huwch forest with the kind permission of the forest management. A rough estimate suggests that we brought around 12 cu m of reasonable quality timber down which, with the new, more efficient stove, should give us about 8 -9 months of fuel.





Inside we did some painting and lots and lots of cleaning, as well as a spot of cleaning windows!

We also managed to fill several dust bins with kindling which should last us through the winter period.

Future developments

Electricity upgrade. We are still waiting for the purchase of the paddock from NRW to be completed. NRW insist that this must take place before any groundwork can commence. However, we have had a meeting with another potential installer who is interested in the project. He will provide us with a quote early in 2024 and we hope to move forward with the project in the first half of next year.

New stove. The new wood burning stove certainly throws out lots of heat and is keeping the common room nice and warm in the early winter period. It is also very easy to light and much more efficient than our old stove. We are, though, still experiencing smoke problems when the door is opened for refueling. The installer has proposed moving the flue to the top of the stove from the current rear position and breaking into the chimney breast to join the chimney flue. We plan to have this work done in January.

Army work on the track. Following their visit in October the army caused quite a bit of damage to the track. They have promised to repair this by filling in the pot holes but have as yet not done so despite several follow up emails. The track will probably need to be resurfaced at some point as each year there seem to be more and more pot holes to fill in!

Ty'n Cornel

Overnights

2023 has been another successful year. Total overnights currently stand at 936, significantly higher than the 2022 total of 828. 2023 has been our best year since 2009. Much of the increase is undoubtedly due to the new shepherd's hut. The hut has been booked on 44 nights since it opened in April, and it has also been used to house the warden when the hostel has been filled by a large group. There were 810 overnights in the hostel building and camping ground – a very respectable total, despite a slow start during the cold winter.

Maintenance and improvements

Bill and his team cut the hedges in the autumn. The hedge to the south of the barn (between our yard and the farmer's yard) had grown very tall, and it was a big job to cut it back. The grass on the camping ground has recovered well after last year's excavations.

Richard and Janet repainted all the gloss paintwork in the kitchen – there is a lot of it. They also added a much-needed rain gutter over the door of the shepherd's hut. Most of the duvets were sent away to the laundry for washing – each duvet is marked with dates to enable us to keep laundering up to date.

The fire alarm, emergency lighting, and portable appliances were all tested in September, and the water supply passed the Council's tests. It is proving difficult to get the electrician back to complete repairs to the water heater for the washbasins.

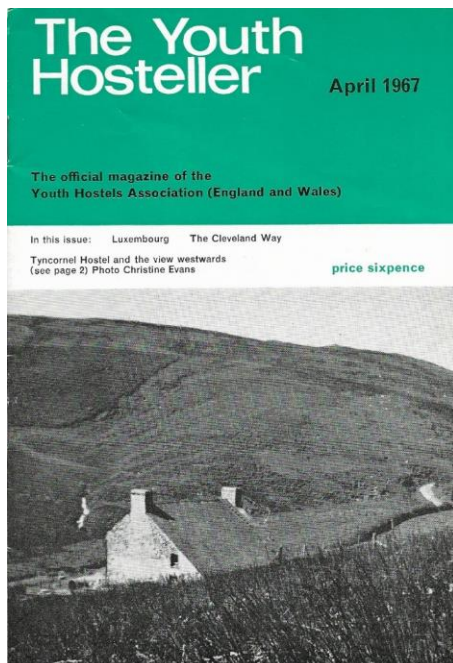
Richard is approaching builders for quotations for replacement of the front porch. There has been no further progress from the Council on repairs to the track to Soar y Mynydd chapel. However, the repairs to the main hostel track have made travel much easier for hostel traffic.

“Tyncornel Opens” article in 1967 YHA magazine

When YHA opened “Tyncornel” hostel in April 1967, the new hostel was heavily publicised in the *Youth Hosteller* magazine. There have been photocopies of some of the content at the hostel for many years, but we have recently acquired an original copy of the April 1967 issue, which provides additional detail and clarity.

The issue shows clearly that YHA was proud of its new creation. The front cover carried a photo of the hostel and the hills opposite. The Editorial spoke of the importance of the “*Elenith*” region, and it closed with a remark that *Tyncornel is what the YHA is really all about*. A main article by Christine Evans described how the hostel had been created from an empty ruin through the efforts of volunteers. Its opening sentence is “*Tyncornel is the baby of the YHA, having opened only this Easter, but already its appeal as the most remote hostel in England and Wales has whetted the appetite of many a keen hosteller*”. Another important sentence explains that *a great deal of hard work went into planning the hostel to make it easy to clean and simple to run* – they certainly got that right.

Christine's article ends by saying “*In summary, at Tyncornel we have a hostel which the YHA and in particular South Wales Region are proud to open, and I hope I will see you there sometime*”. Christine (later Christine Robinson, with her husband David) played a leading role in the running of the hostel for several years in the 1960s and 1970s. Many of us were eventually able to meet them when they returned for Ty'n Cornel's 50th anniversary celebration in 2017.



Front cover of the April 1967 issue, and a photo inside the issue.



Left: Christine Evans in 1967. Right: Christine Robinson speaking at Ty'n Cornel's 50th anniversary in 2017.

Open meeting

We intend to hold an open meeting for members on 24th February. As last year, the meeting will be held via Zoom which will give more members a chance to attend. Further details will be sent out nearer to the time.

Warden's training

Our next training weekend for prospective wardens will be held on 19th-21st April 2024. We currently have a good number of wardens but there is always a regular turnover as some wardens retire and new ones come on board. If you think you might like to warden then why not get in touch with Frances Passey (frances.adelaidecottage@gmail.com)

Colin Hughes (huwscol@hotmail.co.uk) (On behalf of the Trustees)