

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

For those of you eagerly anticipating the launch of the new share issue, the wait will shortly be over and you will be able to download the application forms and read the supporting documents on our website, www.torrshydro.org. There are just over 26,000 £1 shares available and the minimum purchase of 250 shares is the same as in the previous 2 share issues.

A number of people have already expressed an interest in buying shares, which is very encouraging. We would especially welcome applications from local residents or those with a strong connection to the area. Many people have moved to New Mills since 2007, and we would like to give them an opportunity to become a part of this ground-breaking local project.

The process is taking a bit longer than we anticipated because the documentation required for new share issues has become a lot more rigorous in recent years. Our original blithe assumption that we could just change the dates and update a few figures in the paperwork we used for our second share issue in 2014 turned out to be hopelessly optimistic, so Directors Esther Jones and Richard Body (both of whom have full time jobs) took on what has turned out to be the mammoth task of completely rewriting the documentation, with input from a number of others who have helped gather the information needed. Our thanks to them both!

PROGRESS SO FAR

After months of planning, the project is now well underway. The work on refurbishing the sluice gate and replacing the wheels that had fallen off was completed at the end of October (thank you LSP!) and the sluice gate is now moving smoothly, as it should. Due to some ingenious lateral thinking, we were able to avoid having to dewater the inlet using a coffer dam and the copious permits and paperwork that would have been required, as we would have been interfering with the flow of the river. Instead, a combination of wedges and clamps kept Archie immobile and the sluice gate was lifted using a steel scaffold so it could be repaired *in situ*.



The river levels in November were "just right", so after a couple of electrical problems had been sorted out, Archie was running well, generating just over 14 MWh in the first three weeks of November before he had to be shut down on Sunday November 22nd to get him ready for the next stage in the project. Our stalwart band of volunteers emptied everything they could out of the engine house and TAS arrived on site the next day to start work.



At the time of writing, the work has been going well and TAS are planning to restart Archie in the second week of December. It is very exciting to see all those weeks and months of planning finally coming to fruition and we are looking forward to having a really up to date system that will take the project "forward to the future".

140 MWh GENERATED!

We “enjoyed” excellent rainfall in October (well, Archie enjoyed it!), with the river being at just the right height for much of the month. It turned out to be Archie’s second-best October ever: he generated 19,562 kWh this year, surpassed only by the 24,694 kWh achieved in October 2008, which was only his second full month of generation and he was practically brand new.

Just before we had to shut down for the refurbishment, Archie passed another important milestone. The 14,117 kWh he produced in the first three weeks of November before the shutdown carried us past another landmark: we have now generated over 140 MWh of clean, green electricity. The work currently underway should set us up nicely for the next 12 years of generation.

HOW DO WE STOP ARCHIE TURNING WHEN WE NEED TO WORK ON HIM?



While LSP was working on the sluice gate, the river was still flowing through Archie as the gate was effectively fully open. Allowing Archie to run free under these conditions would have been exceptionally dangerous so some considerable thought went into ways of preventing this. The drive to the generator had to be clamped to stop the screw turning but still allow the excess water to flow over the top. How was this done? Take a look at the picture!



WHAT IS IT?

Although it looks like a chunk of badly corroded metal, it’s actually a massive tree limb. One of our volunteers had a fine old time trying to extract it from the intake as two of the branches had become firmly jammed into the intake by the force of water coming down the Sett. When he did finally get it loose, the river snatched it off the end of the billhook and it whirled off down the river to end up who knows where. Possibly in the intake down at Stockport Hydro?

Get involved

Archie’s Angels welcomed two new members last month: Chris and Hugh have just joined the group of volunteers who are unable to help on a regular basis but want to do something to contribute to the success of the project. 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!

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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.