



Hafod Elwy Hall: Overall Winner of the Green Snowdonia

Location: Bylchau, Hiraethog, Denbighshire, LL16 5SP

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What do we do?

Our business, Hafod Elwy Hall, is located on the Eastern side of Snowdonia, we offer bed and breakfast and evening meals. We have five rooms, of which we let no more than 3 at a time. We average approximately 60% occupancy during the season. Our ethos is to offer high quality accommodation (we achieved 5* grading in 2007), whilst reducing the impact on the environment to a minimum.

In 2007 we won the Green Snowdonia Tourism Awards 2007 and the Arena Network Wales Business and Sustainability Awards, Climate Change Category.

Why did we go 'green'?

Over the past two years we have undertaken an ambitious programme of environmental improvements based on the realisation that greening the business would be good for the environment, good for the business and good for our pockets, a real win-win situation. It all started in summer 2006 when we had the Green Dragon assessor to visit, a super chap who had the most infectious enthusiasm. During our conversation we sounded ideas off each other and as he left I was already planning how to put some of them in to action. My character is very much of the 'if it's worth doing you should do it now, not next week, and do it well' variety.

Where did we start?

Following that meeting with the Green Dragon assessor, I embarked on some significant research into the many technical unknowns associated with a programme of environmental improvements. The two projects which were considered to yield the biggest reductions in the carbon footprint of the business, but which would also require significant investment, were the installation of a wind turbine and the conversion of the heating system from predominantly oil-powered to wood.

Hafod Elwy's 5kw turbine, supplied by SEGEN. Grants were obtained from Arena Network and the DTI. Electricity is sold back to the National Grid. Estimated payback time is 8.5 years. The chimneys in the three main downstairs rooms were lined and clean burn efficient wood stoves fitted. A thick layer of loft insulation was installed in the whole roof space. Next the floor boards were lifted, room by room, and 100mm kingspan boards were fitted between the joists. The total cost of insulation was under £2,000. The wood stoves and chimney lining together came to about £5,800.

External lighting at Hafod Elwy is solar powered