



Green Objectives and Projects 2008 – 2009

The Biomass

The aim of the project is the installation of a biomass heating system to reduce our dependence upon LPG specifically but fossil fuels more generally. We anticipate that this will bring savings, at current price levels, of between £35k and £40k per annum.

By installing the 250kw biomass fuelled boiler we can replace the hotel's current 4 LPG boilers which provide heat to the hotel's leisure area (including swimming and spa pools); two restaurants; 10 bedrooms and conference facilities.

Initially, one or two LPG boilers will be maintained to cope with the peak demand for heat from the hotel. However, to reduce the frequency of their use alongside the biomass boiler we will also be installing a 3000ltr accumulator tank.

The existing boiler house and adjoining building have been converted to house not only the boiler but also a fuel bunker. As this provides very limited storage capacity (approximately 27m² of chip) we have utilised space in Birch Hill Wood for additional wood storage. This enables us to store up to 8 weeks demand of chipped fuel, whilst also allowing the storage of wood prior to its processing into chip. We will be able to hold a twelve month supply of round wood on the site.

We are keen to build supply relationships locally such as The National Trust mill at Coniston, local saw mills at Millom and Thwaite; local forestry and tree service companies such as Nomad Specialist Tree Services, Ambleside Trees Services as well as larger forestry and forestry co-product companies such as UPM Tillhill and AW Jenkinson. These suppliers can provide us with both chip and wood for processing.

We have also developed close links with both the Forestry Commission Regional Woodland Officer and Cumbria Woodlands' Rural Development Officer with a view to the ongoing sourcing of timber for processing.

Our long term goal will be to rely upon wood fuel processed on site. With this in mind three members of our team have been through LANTRA's 'Ignite' wood fuel training course. We have a number of local forestry contractors and biomass system operators with the necessary equipment (Heizohack chippers) to process wood to the required standards.

We have taken a conscious decision to enable safe access for the purposes of demonstrating the various processes of taking virgin wood and converting it into heat for the hotel. There is a safe viewing area in the wood processing/storage areas at Birch Hill Wood; viewing panels into the on-site fuel bunker and safe access to the main boiler for

guided visits from any interested parties. The on site use of log fires also provides an opportunity to view the progression of wood as a fuel source, from its simplest form to a modern energy efficient system.

We always intended to publicise both the contribution the biomass boiler makes to our on site energy and also the reduction in green house gas emissions achieved by our use of the system via an on site computerised display in the hotel reception, site visits and our own website.

Biodiversity

As a tourism facility situated in the heart of an area of outstanding natural beauty Langdale must balance the requirements of its visitors with the sensitivities of the many diverse species and habitats on site. With a view to achieving this and in keeping with our commitment to ongoing environmental improvements the Management Team have developed a Biodiversity Management Plan for the Estate in conjunction with and with great assistance from students from Lancaster University Environment Centre.

The project required a Graduate Consultant to undertake a detailed survey of the Estate to identify key species and habitats resident within the estate's boundaries; to establish the significance of each of these locally and nationally with reference to the Cumbria and UK action planning process; and to develop a Biodiversity Management Plan to preserve and enhance the nature conservation interest of the site, whilst considering the interests and requirements of the Estate's visitors and shareholders.

The project involved a number of surveys which were carried out for birds, butterflies, bees, amphibians, reptiles, vegetation and mammals. The site was divided into two areas, the first, the main estate comprising the hotel, restaurants, lodges and the country club, the second being Birch Hill Wood and Elterwater grassland, 4 hectares of woodland and 1.6 hectares of grassland which was previously grazed by sheep.

The survey results show that the site contains 27 species of birds, 4 species of butterfly, 3 species of bumblebees, 3 different plant communities and 8 species of mammals. Of these, 5 species and 2 habitats are listed under national and local biodiversity action plans; marsh tit, spotted flycatcher, song thrush, house sparrow and common pipistrelle, oak - birch woodland and developing grassland and have been incorporated in a Langdale biodiversity action plan.

The diversity of species present on site is varied; birds show a modest number of species whereas other groups such as the butterfly do not. Management of the site can change the existing structure into a more habitable one to maintain or increase the current level of biodiversity. A reduction in shrub layer of the woodland and the introduction of new plant species to the grassland will provide more habitats for butterflies whereas the removal of non native shrubs and the planting of native ones will provide more food resources for birds and mammals. Carrying out suggested management strategies proposed by the Management Plan will help develop diversity richness within the estate, especially those that will benefit the species listed on the Langdale Biodiversity Action Plan.

Conclusions drawn from the Biodiversity Management Plan confirmed that the Estate presents a moderate level of biodiversity across the groups of species surveyed. From the species found on site, marsh tit, spotted flycatcher, song thrush and house sparrow have

been listed in the National Biodiversity Action Plan, with song thrush also being listed in the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan. Birch Hill Wood and Elterwater grassland also contain habitats that are listed in both Cumbria and National Biodiversity Action Plans. The Biodiversity Action Plan for Langdale Estate should incorporate all these species and habitats along with the 4 species of butterflies due to their populations being locally low.

The Plan suggested a number of management strategies designed to maintain the established species and increase those that lack diversity. Carrying out some vegetation management within both sites will develop diversity richness and in some cases may attract species of special interest such as orchids and butterflies. Where species listed on the Langdale BAP currently reside, effort should be taken to maintain their populations. We hope to build upon the Plan by introducing the maintenance of data and knowledge relating to the Estate and use this for future site management and ecology work within the surrounding area.

Donations to Impact – large scale re-use at work!

Article from the Gazette this Friday – numbers so far – 50 TV's, 800 pillows, 400 duvets, 17 chest of drawers and 34 chairs.

Home-working Pilot Scheme

As the most significant employer in the valley we need approximately 200 people to make the Estate function. We offer 70 staff live in accommodation. However, with rising fuel and food costs, travelling to Langdale can be a barrier to employment. We actively offer and champion flexible working – we find that offering our teams the opportunity to work flexibly within our 24/7, 365 days a year business a revelation! In many cases it means that parents can juggle child care much better, the work-life balance can be managed and our people are happier for it. It's also great for business in every sense. On the back of this existing policy and with advancing technological innovation we have embarked on a pilot scheme for home-working. Our non-Executive Director, employed full time as a Manager at BT collaborated in the early stages of the proposal. We have had the benefit of a (feasibility study) conducted by BT.

As a management team we are committed to the ethos of flexible home-working and as such have invested in the appropriate software at a cost of £2,700, hardware at a cost of £3,200 and installation costs of £4,900. Total investment to date £10,800. Installation will take place in the week commencing 19th January 2009. Once the pilot is complete we will be able to offer home working schemes to a number of our people where appropriate and where they choose to take up the offer.

The home-working scheme is also the subject matter of a dissertation being undertaken by our very own Conference Co-Ordinator. Langdale are supporting Jackie in her 2 year MA degree but her project proposal, based on the concept of home-working will bring real value to the debate and to the future of sustainable work at Langdale.

Others and Add Ons

- We have formulated a continuing policy of re-cycling vast tranches of equipment from our Lodge Inventory. To date recycled savings are in the region of £21,000

(from November 2007 when our records began). Items such as toasters needing repair, pans requiring a deep clean or bread boards that could do with planing all get special treatment – and are returned to Lodges rather than being donated away or skipped. Items which can't be re-used or re-cycled are donated to local charity Impact and also to a charity supporting Romanian Orphanages.

- In 2008, again with the help of a student consultant from Lancaster University Environment Centre, we refurbished and re-advertised Birch Hill Wood as a Nature Trail. Our collaboration with Lancaster University has been enormously successful and we have been privileged to have worked with dedicated students in the field.
- We continue to collect via our Lodge owners, donations for Man at the Top – so far donations amount to £143,000.

And the Green Story so far – things we started to do going back to 2006 and stuff we continue to do.

Water

- Installation of Hippos to 125 toilets
- All new bathrooms have aerators and low flush WC
- Sensors on public urinals
- Installation of UV system in the pool – reduces water, energy and chemical use.
- Removal of 'double' air baths from hotel rooms during refurbishment (2)
- Replacement of 'double' air bath with standard air bath and shower in lodges

Energy

- Energy awareness stickers for all PC's
- 'Intelliplugs' installed wherever possible.
- Installation of 'electrisave' in Gateway
- Hotel T.V.'s replaced with units fitted with energy efficient slumber modes.
- Lodge T.V.'s not left on stand by.
- The size of kettles in guest bedrooms have been reduced – they boil quicker whilst using less energy and water.
- Room lights no longer left on for guests arrival
- Air baths have been replaced with either showers or feature baths (without power) in 9 hotel rooms.
- Foil reflective panels have been installed behind most hotel bedroom radiators.
- Installation of low energy lighting around the estate and hotel
- Reflective film installed in pool hall to stabilise temperature and reduce energy consumption
- Sun pipe installed in lodge 38 as a test
- 5 energy efficient boilers on test in lodges
- Gas optimisers fitted to main hotel boilers
- Removal of all patio heaters from site
- Key card required to activate lights in 17 (2008) & 18 (2009) refurbished rooms
- Additional insulation added to 17 (2008) & 18 (2009) refurbished rooms
- Better quality (higher Tog rated, natural) duvets introduced across site.

Recycling/waste management

- Recycling facilities extended. Paper, glass, cans, plastic, cardboard, fluorescent tubes, ink cartridges, mobile phones, batteries and soap.
- Additional lodge guest recycling centre introduced summer 2009
- Waste kitchen oil recycled for bio-diesel.
- Offices and restaurants encouraged to recycle
- Plastic recycling in staff canteen
- Recycling bins in all conference rooms
- Incinerator purchased to reduce traffic in valley & land fill
- Advertising print material is via Badger Press (CBEN gold) on recycled paper
- Pencils and pads purchased for conference rooms are manufactured from recycled materials
- Bags for newspaper deliveries are now a reusable bag made from recycled material.
- Newspapers continue to be charged for, free newspapers are generally wasteful, people take a paper with no intention of reading it
- Lodge small wares recycled within the estate.
- Redundant furniture donated to Impact Housing Association.

Wildlife

- Bird & squirrel feeding station at Gateway
- Ongoing placement of bird boxes
- Stamp collection for Albatrosses
- Gun powder leaflet promoting Red Squirrel conservation
- Butterfly Garden
- Elterwater Hall wildflower meadow
- Native wildlife hedge
- The world's largest bat box
- Restoration programme for nature trail
- Development of a biodiversity management plan in conjunction with Lancaster University
- Active Grey squirrel and mink control programme which has seen a significant increase in the Red Squirrel population which continues to grow and is closely monitored.

General

- Establishment of an Environmental Team (inc main board member)
- Staff training
- Diesel storage facility removed
- Introduction of concentrates for hotel cleaning, reducing chemicals and packaging
- Guest toiletries have been reduced and are provided in recycled packaging
- Toilet tissue is sourced from sustainable forestry
- Registered fax machines with FPS to reduce unwanted faxes

- Registered ex-employees with MPS to reduce 'junk' mail
- Towel reuse notice in all bathrooms
- Hire bikes provided on site.
- Participation in Cumbria Green Business Forum; Cumbria Business Environment Network; The Green Tourism Business Scheme; and ENCAM Green Key award.
- Transportation – provision of buses for weekend cleaning staff from Kendal & Workington; active car sharing groups; travel outside the county is via rail wherever possible
- Participation in a Carbon Footprinting Exercise with Lancaster University
- Installation of a charcoal fired oven in the restaurant kitchen with locally sourced fuel supply.
- Commitment to purchasing Fairtrade products
- Family rooms have child friendly books on environmental issues.
- Communication to guests includes options for arrival by public transport
- Donations to the Lake District Tourism and Conservation Partnership
- Working with Friends of the Lake District and the National Park Authority to promote local bus services.
- Providing information to all visitors on how they can make their visit an environmentally sensitive one