

# Denbigh and District Probus Club – precis of meeting – 2/10/23

by John Barr, President

I welcomed all and commented that we had 28 Members present out of 41.

We had a guest, who had come to check us out ... I hoped that Members present were all on their best behaviour!! And we also had **Gwenno Jones** with us who was our speaker. Welcome was extended to both.

There was also a new Member welcomed to the Club.

We had apologies from eight Members plus three who were not present for medical reasons, so we wished them well.

We had an “offering of thanks” ... I found this which I thought Members might find appropriate:

*Let us **be together**.*

*Let us **eat** and be **vital** together.*

*Let us be radiating truth, and the **light** of life.*

***Never** shall we entertain negativity.*

After the really good meal and the toast to the King, I had some remarks to make:-

- We gave our thanks to Tracey (who has taken over, looking after us from Joanne) and all the hotel staff.
- Once more thanks too to Steve for all the organising. But this month thanks also to ..... who has undertaken the rest of what Steve normally does.
- So ... Birthdays. This month we had ..... None! Does this indicate that, collectively, our parents had pretty dismal Januarys, I wonder?
- Last month we congratulated ..... on surviving 50 years of marriage and this month we have somebody else to congratulate on putting up with the same man long enough to reach her Golden Wedding, who? – none other than the long-suffering love of my life - my wife.
- Of course, we also have a couple whose staying power is even greater than my wife's. This week we have a brace of Members who reach their Diamond Anniversary, and we applauded their achievement.

To maintain the feverish excitement, we then moved on to Club Business:-

- Firstly, I repeated my welcome to our New Member. He introduced himself at our last meeting and it was good to see him with us. I presented him with his Probus lapel badge.

- Regarding next year's Committee, which will be elected at the AGM in November, I was very pleased to report that we have volunteers for all positions. This does not mean that any Member interested in joining the Committee cannot still put themselves forward.
- If anyone has business they wish to raise at the AGM, please give details to our Business Officer by 16<sup>th</sup> October to give time to organise any notices which need to be published in advance of the meeting.
- Then, thanks to our Finance Officer and his assistants for squeezing the readies from you today.
- Last, but by no means least – an update on the new Regalia for which we had the raffle back in August. You may recall that last month I suggested that we might obtain new presidential regalia that is sugar pink with lots of diamante! well, it turns out that the suppliers don't actually offer that option, so Merfyn has just ordered an updated version of the same old stuff and it should be with us soon.

After the break, we heard from Gwenno Jones about how and why Denbighshire County Council are keeping us all in the dark. See Julia's synopsis below.

There were lots of interesting questions, well fielded by Gwenno and we had a Vote of Thanks.

That was all – except to say that our next meeting will be our AGM on 6th of November and we closed with the Toast To The Club.

See you in November!!!

*{Note: All names have been removed except for those of prominent Committee Members and Speakers.}*

Post meeting note from Gwenno:-

"I mentioned that we as the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB are working towards becoming a designated dark sky area through the International Dark Sky Association, we would be very grateful of any letters of support either as a club or any individuals that would like to support our application – the more the merrier! This is a link with some information -

[https://www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/projects/your-sky-needs-you/?fbclid=IwAR27BbkfFgq\\_tskWbzzeg6DA5GG3hOpWpQ-M- iq4cKzUFjP1EgUcODM4o-M.](https://www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/projects/your-sky-needs-you/?fbclid=IwAR27BbkfFgq_tskWbzzeg6DA5GG3hOpWpQ-M- iq4cKzUFjP1EgUcODM4o-M.)"

## **Julia's Synopsis:**

### **Shining a light on the truth about the importance of Dark Skies!!**

At the October meeting of the Denbigh and District Probus Club, members were delighted to welcome Gwenno Jones, Designated Landscapes Dark Skies Officer who is working on the Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places Dark Sky Project which is a collaborative project between all eight Designated Landscapes of Wales.

The project aim is to work with communities and businesses to improve their lighting in order to reduce light pollution, for biodiversity and human health.

Gwenno explained how light pollution has increased by 400% in the last 25 years and is still increasing by about 10% every year. This has a huge impact on biodiversity as more than 60% of our biodiversity relies on dark skies and also a billion pounds a year is wasted in energy costs because of misdirected lights, upward spill of lights and inappropriate lighting.

Artificial lights confuse animals and a variety of species, for example, there is an impact on the life cycle of moths and because of this, there has been a massive decline in the moth population. Light pollution disrupts 65% of our night time pollinators. Bees are meant to sleep at night and recover but lighting disturbance means they do not rest as much and produce much less honey. 150 insects per night are killed by a single street light. Many migrating birds coming in are re-directed by lights and fly into buildings and an untimely death.

Only 2% of the UK population experiences truly dark skies and can see more than 12 stars in the sky. Light can interfere with our melatonin levels and too much light before bedtime and during sleep time can cause migraines and interfere with sleep patterns. Too much blue lighting before sleep, particularly from screens and other devices can have a huge impact.

It was pleasing to hear that 92% of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley currently meets the International Dark Sky Association standards and the project is working towards becoming a designated dark sky area through the IDA.

There are currently 4 dark skies sites in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley – Llangwyfan Carpark, Nannerch, Moel Arthur Carpark, Moel Famau Bwlch Pen Barras carpark and Horseshoe Falls, Llangollen.

Project officers ensure that much work is done with schools to raise the awareness of the future generations who can make a huge difference, via a comprehensive

education programme. Additionally, an all-Wales Dark Skies week is run annually in February half term with multiple interactive events and activities.

Much work is also being undertaken in communities and with businesses, supported by Welsh Government, to improve the lighting in terms of lighting types and direction and shielding of lighting fixtures and fittings.

The colour temperature of lights is also key with white light being detrimental to animals and insects and the more yellowy lighting being preferable. To enhance dark skies, bulbs of 2700-3000 Kelvin (k) are preferred in a warm white.

Following the talk, members engaged the speaker in a question-and-answer session where many topics were explored including movement sensors, accident black spots and lighting, AONB supplementary planning guidance, local lighting hotspots polluting the skies etc