

Ynni Ogwen community hydro scheme

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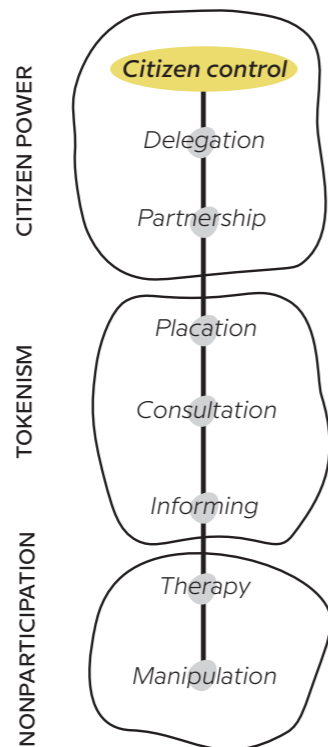
LOCATION
Bethesda, UK

TIME PERIOD
In 2016



THE PROJECT

The Ynni Ogwen community hydro scheme project that this case study focuses on takes place around the Ogwen riverbed, which is located in the same valley as Bethesda. Beyond providing electricity, it aims to create economic, environmental and social benefits with a focus on transferring community assets, **buying new assets to create income and projects that make their community stronger, more sustainable and resilient.**



the members benefitting from the scheme live locally in Gwynedd. In this project, we must highlight the importance of PO's guidance: it was essential to have full time staff committed to setting this up.

RESULT

Ynni Ogwen community hydro scheme has partly reached its targeted impact. Although the hydro generator has been constructed and is generating electricity, Ynni Ogwen is still working on the final stages of setting up a direct power supply to the homes of the scheme's members. The project has also **allowed to raise awareness in the community regarding environmental matters, history, language, and culture.** Reactions to the hydro scheme are overwhelmingly positive. Some were initially worried it would be ugly, but **the design complements the natural environment.** There has been a very positive reaction from the users of the energy scheme.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SPACE

Geographically, Bethesda is a fairly remote town - located in the Ogwen valley, it aspires to be considered the gateway to Snowdonia National Park, and is a 15 minute drive from Bangor, the nearest major city. Its relatively **weak public transport infrastructure** and visitor amenities contribute to its sense of remoteness. Moreover, this feeling of remoteness also comes from its **economic inferiority.** In fact, income levels rank Gerland ward within the top 50% most deprived in Wales. Ogwen is in the top 30% most deprived.

role in the project was to guide its development, and to assist community volunteers in setting up Ynni Ogwen as a community benefit association to take leadership over the hydro scheme.

ROLE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY & METHODS USED

The community hydro scheme, which this case study focuses on, began in 2016. It will combine community and environmental benefits by harnessing the power of the river Ogwen to supply local homes with electricity. PO was the lead organisation. It is publicised through educational visits, newsletters, annual general meetings, and there is a strong sense of ownership amongst the members. In 2016 the community share offer was opened, and £500k was raised in 2 months to fund the construction of the hydro. **85% of**

INITIATION AND ACTORS

The project has been **launched by Partneriaeth Ogwen which is a place-based regeneration organisation** that is committed to Circular Economy principles. PO's



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Bethesda, Wales, United Kingdom

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