



# Generate interest in hydro power

**HISTORY** buffs can visit one of the country's first working hydro electric power stations as part of 2009's Heritage Open Days.

Mary Tavy hydro electric power station is the biggest renewable energy site belonging to South West Water and produces one third of its renewable energy, serving 2,500 properties with green energy.

There has been a form of hydro power generated at Mary Tavy since 1932. During the last 75 years, the primitive mill wheels have gradually been replaced with the latest

technology.

Mary Tavy is now a highly effective hydro electric power station, with six turbines and a combined capacity of 2,610 kilowatts.

The turbines are powered by river water, collected in two reservoirs on Dartmoor then sent via gravity down two pipelines to feed the hydro turbines.

Energy manager Alan Burgess said Mary Tavy was a fascinating example of how hydro electric generation had developed through the decades and he hoped everyone would enjoy the tour.

The free tours of Mary Tavy hydro electric power station will take place on Thursday, September 10 when visitors will be taken around the turbine hall to hear the story behind the historic operational plant.

Places on the tours are limited to ten per tour and must be pre-booked. The 45-minute long tours will take place at 9.30am, 10.30am, 11.30am, 1.30pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm.

To book a place, contact South West Water's communications team on 01392 443020.



● Engineer Karl Jones gets ready for the visitors at Mary Tavy power station  
 Picture by James Bird

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# Town to put youth top of its agenda

A PLEA for better facilities for young people was this week issued by the mayor of Tavistock.

The call was sparked by a request from a member of the public, who contacted the town council regarding a piece of unused land in the Meadows.

The area, alongside Plymouth Road, was previously used as a nine-hole pitch and putt course, but in recent years it has been out of service.

Debate over its future purpose this week prompted mayor Mandy Govier to urge a change in Tavistock, regarded as 'elderly', as opposed to Okehampton, which had put youth facilities at the top of its agenda.

Mr G Ford, of Plymouth, wrote to the council this summer to ask if members would consider allowing him to erect his giant garden railway on the land.

Mr Ford said: 'The railway is at present based in my back garden, which only family members and close friends have had the pleasure in visiting. 'The railway contains

many exclusive features in rolling stock, some of which can't be found anywhere else in the world.

'This summer I have drawn up plans to create new structures on a massive scale, one being the River Tamar road crossing, along with some large viaducts.

'I feel this railway would bring more visitors to Tavistock, making it not only profitable for myself but also for the local community.'

The request was put to the council's properties committee, which met on Tuesday. But it throws up a question mark over how best the piece of land should be used.

The town's BMX club, Tavi Riders, has also expressed an interest in it, after the club was refused permission to use land at the council-owned Bannawell play area.

Cllr Govier said the council was 'duty-bound' to talk to the BMX club first.

She said: 'Tavistock is deemed not to be for young people at all. We have plenty of facilities

for the elderly but there are not as many for younger people.

'If we want young people to grow up here and not get into trouble, we have to provide facilities for them.

'Okehampton has plenty of facilities for youngsters that we just don't have.'

But Cllr David Whitcomb said: 'I was quite excited by this railway — it's a breath of fresh air.

'I know a lot of people are concerned that young people have facilities, but a development of very expensive flats has just been built opposite there. If I was going to be looking out over a BMX track I don't think I'd be very happy, but I don't think I would be upset about a model railway.'

Cllr Whitcomb said he understood the desire for a BMX track but did not think the area was suitable visually, as it was at the entrance to the town.

Cllr John Sellis said he thought the railway was 'quite a good idea' but he was concerned about security in the

area.

Cllr Debo Sellis said anyone buying a luxury flat opposite the Meadows had to accept that they would be living by a community area that was there for everyone.

She said she would like to see the Meadows as 'a hive of activity' and asked if there was any other unused land available.

Works superintendent Wayne Southall said the old pitch and putt site was 'just about' large enough for a BMX track.

'The old bowling ground, next to the Rose Walk, is an area that could be developed for something like a model railway,' he said.

Cllr Brian Trew, chairman of the committee, said that as the council had agreed in principle the idea of the BMX track, Tavi Riders should be considered before the request by Mr Ford.

The committee agreed to contact the club before any further discussions took place regarding the old putting green.

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