



## Newsletter No 26 – February 2015

[www.transitiontownbridport.co.uk](http://www.transitiontownbridport.co.uk)

**Transition Town Bridport** - a project working to bring together the people of Bridport to plan a life beyond dependence on oil, to reduce the carbon footprint of the town and to make it resilient to change.

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### From the Editor:

A recent short film by Adam Curtis ([find it here](#)) suggested that the way the world is presented to us by the media results in a general confusion and feeling of helplessness in the face of conflicting and incoherent stories. We end up, according to Curtis, just saying "Oh dear!" with no idea of what to do or how to make sense of it all. And that, he says, is 'just how they want you to feel'.

I was struck by this whilst looking at [the arguments for a Citizen's Income](#), put forward by the Green Party. I feel it is fundamentally a good idea with many potential benefits. But then I saw in the Guardian that [a think-tank has worked out it would hit the poor](#) (unless it was means-tested). Since then the Green Party has countered that the scheme investigated by the think-tank was not quite the one they were advocating: result? I feel confused.

I remain convinced, however, that there should be some sharing out of wealth and was impressed by a [talk given by ex-IMF financial expert Michael Kumhof](#) where he suggested that by revisiting the Chicago Plan and, as a spin-off, generating a Citizen's Dividend to be given to everyone (with the proviso that it should primarily be used to pay off any debts), you could effectively wipe out the deficit and put the nation's finances on a surer

footing. It seems such a good idea: why is no-one taking it up? Confused again.

Oil prices have tumbled recently (see ['Has Oil really Peaked'](#) below) giving rise to yet another round of contradictory comments: it's a good thing, prices will fall, people's money will go further, people will feel better off; also it will put pressure on Russia (good thing or not?); also it will make fracking less profitable and therefore maybe slow down the rush towards what is seen in many quarters as a fraud and a scam. On the other hand, no, it's a bad thing: it makes investment in renewables less profitable, it encourages us to burn more fossil fuel, thus increasing CO2 emissions. So confusing!

In the face of all this I think Transition has a great idea, which is, do what you can locally, and personally. What does TTB do? Show people around your home, helping them to decide on energy-saving measures; create a community garden; teach useful skills to young people; take young parents to local farms to learn about food; support a local school with a vegetable patch and celebrate the cook who provides great meals using home grown produce. We can sit debating the complexities for hours, or we can do something small, local, personal, and meaningful. 'Turning to each other' (that phrase keeps coming up!) is, I would suggest, a useful response to the confusion that surrounds us. Much better than "Oh dear!"

CW - editor

## St Mary's School Allotment

Mrs. Farmer, the Head teacher at St. Mary's school, reported the results of the change to school cooked lunches recently at a meeting with members of the HOME Project. 96% of the Key Stage 1 pupils (age 4 - 6) are now taking school meals, beautifully cooked by Amanda Downes and her assistant Mel Hayter. These meals are free, following new Government requirements that all Key Stage 1 pupils are provided with a hot lunch. Staff are also enjoying the freshly-cooked food, although they are so busy it is usually while they are marking books. Amanda has worked hard to source all the ingredients from local providers.



Amanda and Tia in the garden.

Photo Lottie Welsh

Soon the growing season will start again and Tia (funded by an Awards for All grant) will continue to manage the polytunnel and raised beds and provide produce for the kitchen. She needs all the assistance she can get from volunteer families. - Sarah

## TTB calls it a day on Bridport Transition Skills courses

Three years ago our TTB launched a scheme to run training courses for unemployed youngsters in Bridport, teaching them how to use hand tools and the basics of plumbing, household electricity, woodwork and metalwork, as well as advice on how to get started with apprenticeships.

TTB called for anyone who had hand tools they no longer needed to donate them to the scheme, and the response was overwhelming, with most of the tools we needed being given to us within weeks. The five-day courses were run by professional craftsmen who volunteered their time, and during the next two years six cohorts of trainees went through the course. Several went on to study courses at Weymouth or Yeovil having been given a practical taster.



John Lewis, who took over the running from Ian, has battled against difficulties contacting potential students through the Job Centre, funding and paperwork for months. Recently the workshop at North Mills has been repurposed, so is no longer available for our courses, and TTB has reluctantly had to abandon further courses, and distribute the tools. Many thanks to John, Ian, Jim, Malcolm, and Dave who ran the courses, and the various visiting speakers, as well as Magna who provided overalls.

Some of the tools have been taken by Emily Gainsford, who works at the Quay school in Poole for children who are unable to attend mainstream schools. Being able to work with hand tools will provide an enriching experience to the pupils' curriculum.



The remainder have been donated to Tools with a Mission, a charity which aims to help set up businesses in Africa and enable people to gain skills with hand tools. For more information visit their website <http://www.twam.co.uk/index.html>



## Converging Climate Walk across Britain in 2015

"Dear Friends of Transition Town Bridport,  
I thought you may be interested in participating in a climate/Eco walk next year. Your ideas on how we may make it successful would be highly appreciated. A group of us got together for the People's Climate March this 21 September in Presteigne, Wales, and the walk was born.  
For the Earth Community,  
Douglas

If you are interested in organizing or being part of a Bridport or West Dorset contingent, get in touch through [their website](#)



### STIR to Action Workshops

Starting this month, Stir will be running six workshops dealing with building communities, sustainable lifestyles and alternative ways of financing and organizing social enterprises. See the [STIR website](#) for more details.

Communities Living Sustainably (CLS) are offering to fund up to four places at some of the workshops. See [here](#) for more details.

### Give away, don't throw away!

None of us likes to throw stuff away to landfill, and so it's a good idea to try to give it away to someone who might need it, by using the local online [Recycle4free](#) scheme or by joining [Streetbank](#) where you can also make offers and ask for things you need.



### Win a Hamper!

Did you visit any EcoHomes last year, or in 2013? If so we would welcome your feedback seen in retrospect. It will help us plan this year's event and give us an idea whether it has inspired anybody, Just fill in [this survey](#), and you have a chance to win a £25 voucher for local food. It should take you less than 10 minutes.

(Hamper not included!)

### Climate week 2-8 March

Various events will be happening in Bridport and Dorchester, and TTB will be running a stall in a CLS event. Please see the [CLS website](#) for details.

## Draught Busters Courses in February/March

Two more courses will be run in the Chapel in the Garden, East Street, from 10:00 to 1:00, as part of Climate week.

**28 February** \_ draughtproofing windows and doors using professional gap-stopping strips which are available to buy at cost price

**7 March** Curtain workshops – how to line curtains with thermal materials to make them cold-stoppers. You will notice the difference straight away.

To book your place, [email admin](mailto:admin) or ring Chit Chong on 07970486188

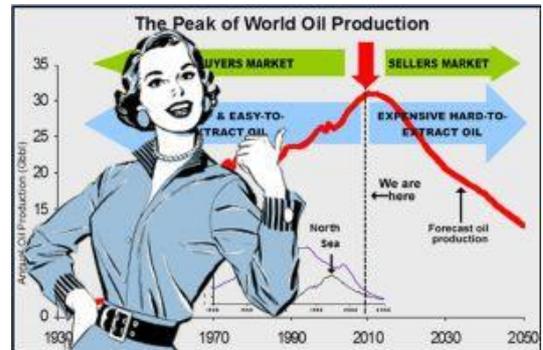
## Skills sharing initiative – reminder:

Don't forget we have an impressive group of people with a wealth of knowledge on many topics who are willing to share information and advice.

*(I know, I took advice and got a very reasonable quote and great service from the solar PV installer recommended. Ed.)* See the table on [TTB website](#):

## Has Oil Really Peaked?

Central to the idea behind the Transition Movement is that oil supply has peaked, and future petroleum will be from difficult, expensive and dangerous wells with a higher risk of environmental disaster – drilling in the Arctic, in deep water (remember the Deep Water Horizon and Exxon Valdez?). Either way the price of oil is likely to go up. So why has the price of oil fallen from \$115/barrel to under \$50/barrel in six months? The answer is partly due to supply and demand, and partly political. In the last few years the high price has encouraged companies to invest in developing new oil fields, including shale oils in the US. American shale oil is booming, producing almost as much oil as Saudi Arabia. Iraq and Libya have increased production, while Saudi Arabia continues to pump to retain their market share.



*Transition Agony Aunt from [transitionnetwork.org](http://transitionnetwork.org)*

Demand has fallen (or rather its rate of increase has slowed down) due to slow global growth, and some increases in efficiency. This has resulted in a temporary glut of oil. In the past, OPEC has reacted to falling prices by reducing supply. However the US oil shales can only be economically fracked at above \$90/barrel; Saudi Arabia may be keeping the price deliberately low to kill off the US rivals, and perhaps to harm Russia and Iran.

Oil prices have always been very volatile, as much to do with politics as supply and demand, and most writers confidently predict it will be back above \$100 within a year. Despite the bubble of US shale, oil has peaked and the long term trend of the price is upwards.

In addition the threat of international action on carbon emissions has made many companies reluctant to invest in new fields. We need to leave 60-80% of known reserves in the ground to avoid catastrophic climate change, and we should use the remainder to build a sustainable future.

**Sam**



## Green Drinks!

Come to our monthly gathering (third Thursday of the month) and enjoy the craft ales and free sandwiches while talking over local, national and international green issues. Solve the problems of the world one sip at a time.

Back Room at the Tiger, Barrack Street (off East Street)  
Next dates: 19<sup>th</sup> Feb and 19<sup>th</sup> March from 8pm

## Talks and Meetings

We plan to have a series of talks and or films with discussions based around transition issues, in the WI hall at 7.30 on the first Thursday of the month. Tentative bookings include:

5 March, on Waste.

6 April, The Circular Economy, with Caroline Walker

Please watch your inbox for details nearer the time.

## GETTING INVOLVED

**Contact** <mailto:admin@transitiontownbridport.co.uk> and you will be added to our mailing list and/or put in touch with the group or activity you would like to join. If you are receiving this you are already on the mailing list, but if you'd rather not be, just [tell us](#).

**Join:** From the website, [www.transitiontownbridport.co.uk](http://www.transitiontownbridport.co.uk) you can [download a membership form](#) and sign up as a registered/voting member.



[Join our group](#) on Facebook and chat with us. Our Facebook page contains links to local events and interesting videos.

Come along to any event /workshop. Check out our What's On section [here](#), and/or on our website.

If your local group wishes to collaborate with TTB on any project, or has ideas and energy for a new project, just [let us know](#). We are very keen to expand the pool of active people for the above projects and to get other strands going. Please [get in touch](#) if you would like to help.

We expect our next newsletter to be published in mid April. If you have any events of a local and eco-friendly nature that you would like us to advertise on our website or here, please contact us and we'll see what we can include. NB We do not use our mailing list other than for our own regular mailings.

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