



## Newsletter No 31 – March 2016

[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 [survey](#) reported in the Guardian found that more than 1 in 9 under 16s in England had not set foot in a park, forest, beach or any other natural environment for at least 12 months. The figures were even more alarming when Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities were surveyed: just 56% visited a natural environment at least once a week, compared to 74% of white households. For once, the North came out well in this survey: 78% of children living in the north-east got into nature at least once a week, compared with only 62% in London. (But then, there is more 'nature' in the north-east than in London, I suppose.) Parents' enthusiasm for green spaces was a huge factor in ensuring that children visited natural environments, as you might expect.

I was reflecting on this whilst accompanying a group of young parents and small children around a farm whose mission is to help people access and enjoy natural environments. We fed chickens (and even stroked some) and fed some very noisy pigs. It was of course very wet and impossible to prevent everyone becoming plastered in mud: some parents dealt with this cheerfully whilst others admitted to being phobic about soil and couldn't even touch their children's mud-splattered clothes. Now of course I can understand the dismay at having to do yet another load of washing; but how is it that we have become so distanced from earth, the source of our food and of all terrestrial life? And does it matter?

As David Orr, the writer of 'Ecological Education' said, " If we don't love it, we won't save it." But to love nature you first have to get to know it. The barriers, according to the article, are 'fear, space, tech and time'. So all power to conservation trusts and charities that help children to explore and enjoy

nature, take away the fear, give them the space, get them away from their phones, and work with schools to make time in the crowded curriculum for experiences which are just as important as English, science and maths. One regular young visitor to the farm said, "When I first started coming, I was out of my comfort zone. But now this is my comfort zone!"

But a cautionary note from one of Willy Russell's TV plays I saw many years ago: on school field trip, one girl says to another: "Oh look, there's a kingfisher!" "Don't tell Miss," says the other. "She'll make us write about it." CW

## **TTB Talk : Basic Income**

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March. 7.00 pm  
St John Ambulance Hall, Rax Lane, Bridport.

As part of our regular series of talks and film shows, Caroline Walker will give a talk, followed by discussion, on:

### **Basic Income: what impact could it have on community resilience?**

More and more people on all sides of the political arena are talking about the idea of a Citizens' or Basic Income. This is an income unconditionally granted to everyone, without means test or work requirement - a form of minimum income guarantee. In a world where there are no longer enough full-time jobs, the idea of paying everyone a basic income to every citizen as a right will promote cooperative working, creativity, adult education and flexibility in the labour market.

For more information about Basic Income, follow [this link](#).

Entry £3.00 or 3 NETs, less if you can't afford it.

## **St Mary's School Edible Garden project: Crowdfunding works**

TTB would like you to pass on their thanks to the tremendous support given for the Edible Garden project at St Mary's school. We raised over £2,500 through crowd-funding, direct donations to the school and a sponsored dress-up-as-a-vegetable day at school. As well as the open-handedness of the many donors, we were able to offer rewards generously donated by River Cottage, Hive Café, Davy's Locker, New Milton Cider, Charmouth Dragon, Trill Farm, Bridget's, Out of the Box, Fruits of the Earth, Lime Tree Deli, Dorset Blue Vinney, Leakers, Framptons, Macsorsons, Furleigh Estate, and Lyme Bay Winery. The Town Council has also made a £500 award. The money will go to continuing to employ a part time gardener, running gardening and cooking clubs at the school, supplying the kitchen with fresh organic produce from the school's allotment, and running community-building social events around the cob pizza oven at the school.

Before half-term the pupils showed support to retain their edible garden by dressing up as different fruit and vegetable and donating £1 to the cause. The winners received a golden carrot award (see photo)



We are presently running a family gardening club on a Wednesday 3.15, throughout the growing year; where for the gardener's work contribution, they will receive fresh produce to take home. The money raised will also allow the school to employ the school cooks in running cooking sessions for a whole class in the summer term.

HOME in Bridport is proposing that Bridport should lead the way in following a good diet, especially the young and the old. The cook Amanda Downes, as part of government food standard guidelines, is introducing fish on the school meal menu soon- another great link up with local whole sale fish monger Davy's Locker. If you want to be involved in the project, please contact the school office on 01308 423065 or [email Sarah](mailto:sarah@homebridport.org)

### Inside COP, Outside COP - Raja Jarrah writes

In November last year, as local residents Kit Vaughan and I gave a talk in



Bridport on what to expect from the UN climate conference in Paris, aka COP 21, which we were both going to attend. We were asked to come back again and tell us how it went. And this we did, at the Bridport Arts Centre, in an evening that culminated with a showing of Naomi Klein's "This Changes Everything".

Whether COP21 did change everything remains to be seen. Kit and I told our stories from two different angles: one from inside COP21, involved in directly tracking the negotiations and engaging with delegates, the other from the outside, with the groups from civil society that were watching at a distance and staging different forms of protest.

The state of emergency and security clamp-down in Paris had, rather than stifle protest, led to a new level of ingenuity as people contrived new ways to make their voices heard without breaking the law (too much). The example was set on the weekend before the COP when, instead of the planned march, an ocean of shoes was laid out in Place de la République – an eloquent and moving tribute that received worldwide media coverage.



Inside the COP, where you had to have official permission to hold an event, organisations staged everything from theatrical set pieces to more spontaneous expressions of dissent. Outside the COP, people were bolder. There were “climate games” disrupting business as usual all over the place – flash mobs invading the foyer of the bank BNP Paribas, or dying on the steps of Notre Dame, or assembling en masse on the platform of a metro station while their colleagues headed off for an action in the opposite direction.

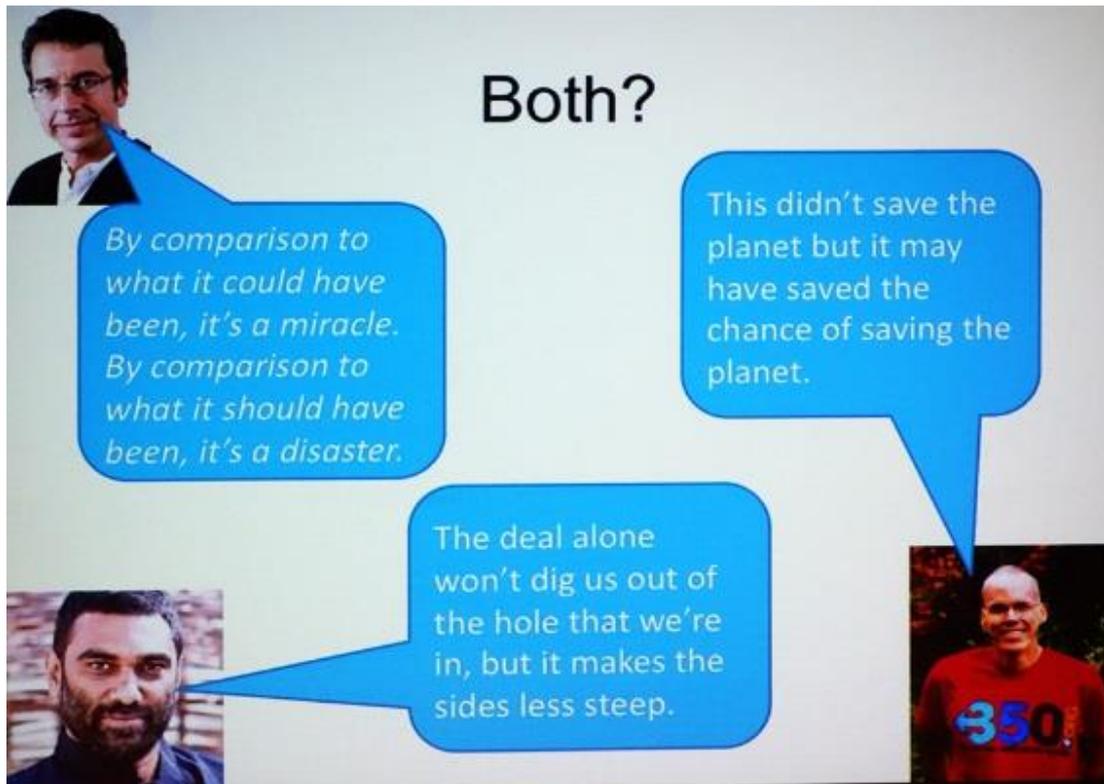
A big march had been planned for the end of COP, which was to involve encircling the conference site at Le Bourget with a “red line” of inflatables. This had to be cancelled, not only because of security concerns, but also because the organisers did not wish to draw even more police to the neighbourhood, which has a high Moslem population already experiencing unwelcome intrusion and animosity following the Paris attacks. Instead, a creative way was found around the law, which prohibited the congregation of more than two people proclaiming a political message. Supporters were organised into buddy pairs, who trained on non-violent direct action together, and were to convene at a predetermined location as thousands of separate couples.

In practice the event did not turn out to be quite so clandestine, as French police had (unsurprisingly) got wind of the plan and (surprisingly) decided to authorise it on the eve of the event. But it was no less dramatic for that - at



the stroke of noon on 12<sup>th</sup> December at the Arc de Triomphe, an estimated 20,000 people silently and simultaneously donned red attire, open red umbrellas, held aloft red flowers and unfurled a long red line banner. Minutes later, at a pre-arranged signal, the silence was broken and an exuberant crowd snaked its way to the Eiffel Tower in full carnival mode.

## So Good Cop or Bad Cop?



So at the end of the day was the outcome of this COP a good one or a bad one? On the positive side it reaffirms the need to keep well below 2 degrees of global warming, and expressly mentions the aspiration to aim for only 1.5 degrees. It reiterates the intention to mobilise \$100 billion annually for adaptation, and aims for more. It also talks about achieving a zero carbon world, requires all countries to set ambitious targets for achieving that, and to periodically review them. On the negative side, countries are not expected to make their revised commitments to cutting emissions until 2020, by which time we may be irrevocably on a path to way beyond 2 degrees. And any country that does not do comply with what's been agreed faces no sanction, beyond perhaps a collective tut tut tut.

Opinions are divided about whether all this was truly a diplomatic breakthrough, or just the usual climate doublespeak (say one thing, do another) albeit more convincingly dressed up this time.

Certainly we in Britain have reason to view such international declarations with some scepticism, as we witness our current government dismantling the renewable energy sector and going full steam ahead on fossil fuel extraction. But with every country now on record as supporting the transition away from fossil fuels and towards 100% renewable energy, we can and must demand bold action in that direction. The rest is up to us.

### **TTB at Bridport Community Fair: Alexandra Gurini reports:**

Fortuitously, Transition Town Bridport had wisely reserved an indoor 'pitch' in the town hall as part of the community market, otherwise we may not have had a presence due to the typical British weather.

Sam and I were manning the TTB stall which was in a good position, with Sarah adjacent, promoting the St. Mary's Edible Garden and crowd funding, and Anne on a LETs stall. We had a very steady flow of visitors throughout the morning and into the afternoon, possibly due to the weather being extremely wet. Not to say that was the only reason that people had been attracted by the Community Market. There was a reasonable amount of curiosity mainly from local people but also from those in nearby surrounding areas.

The newly revamped display boards seemed to attract some interest and these also acted as a prompt for discussion. Lesley had certainly done a great job with them. Of the people I spoke to, approximately 50% had already heard of TTB and were interested in hearing further information, also taking a hand-out leaflet. People also asked if we had a website and seemed keen on hearing about local events and talks though signing up for the newsletter. There was particular interest when 'Open Eco Homes' was discussed and a number of people were keen to visit the 2016 event to see some ideas and would look out for the advertising leaflets.

The majority of people were already taking the very basic steps to be 'greener', with some going a stage further having had wood pellet boilers and solar installed and also signing up to renewable energy providers. Of those who hadn't heard of TTB, most wanted to know what we represented and engaged in conversation on their efforts to save energy.

The discussions also revealed that the Bridport community is highly enthusiastic in supporting local traders and food producers or indeed are keen growers themselves. The St Mary's Edible Garden was also attracting attention and it was very easy to steer people in Sarah's direction so she could explain more about her wonderful project.

It was apparent that the majority of interest was from those over the age of 40 but hopefully projects such as Sarah's will encourage and maintain awareness in the younger generation.

The 'word' is definitely 'out there', people genuinely care about the environment and are extremely eager to do their part, so that collectively everyone can really make that difference.

## No Fracking Way! Demo at Lyme Regis

On 31st January on a wet and breezy day about 100 people met on the sea front at Lyme Regis to show their opposition to fracking in Dorset and in the wider world. Aply led by Tracy and Simon and entertained by songs from Sam, we walked to the Pilot Boat pub where had some welcome hot coffee and listened to some great speakers (not all of them human – well done Ged!).



Photo from Facebook page of Frack free Lyme Regis

## News from Linda Hull, Communities Living Sustainably

CLS is holding a celebration event on 17<sup>th</sup> March at Bridport Arts Centre. Keynote speaker, Rob Hopkins of Transition Town Totnes. The event is by invitation only.

## Open Eco Homes Weekend 2016

We are planning to run another EcoHome event in September. Are you someone, or do you know anybody, who has taken steps to save energy, water or resources in your home? It doesn't have to be grand designs, or earth berms, or self-built zero-Carbon - we are particularly keen on homes with simple and inexpensive measures, draught-proofing, thermal curtains, monitoring electricity use, LED lights, cling film double glazing, growing your own vegetables, cycling or water- saving. If you can show some of these, talk about them and are willing to be a host, please get in touch at [admin@transitiontownbridport.co.uk](mailto:admin@transitiontownbridport.co.uk).



### Green Drinks!

Green Drinks in March falls on 17<sup>th</sup>, the same night as the CLS event (see above) that several usual Green Drinkers will be attending. We'll come on to the Tiger after the event!

## GETTING INVOLVED

**Contact** [admin@transitiontownbridport.co.uk](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](#).

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. If you have any events of a local and eco-friendly nature that you would like us to advertise on our website or in the newsletter, 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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