

A photograph of two young girls on bicycles. The girl in the foreground is wearing a pink and black helmet, a blue shirt, and a yellow safety vest. She is looking towards the camera. The girl in the background is wearing a purple and white helmet, a light blue long-sleeved shirt, and a yellow safety vest. She is looking towards the camera. They are both on purple bicycles. The background is a blue wall with a mural of a city skyline and a large, stylized sun or moon. The text "HOW A MOVEMENT OF COMMUNITIES IS COMING TOGETHER TO REIMAGINE AND REBUILD OUR WORLD" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

HOW A
MOVEMENT OF
COMMUNITIES
IS COMING
TOGETHER TO
REIMAGINE
AND REBUILD
OUR WORLD

21 STORIES OF TRANSITION

HARVESTED BY ROB HOPKINS

“What the Transition movement does incredibly well is small-scale experiments which are practical, which resonate with local people, which look as if they’re doable, and that can engage people at a practical and meaningful level. It connects up the big issues and the local issues and shows you that change can happen at a local level”.

Julian Dobson, author of *‘How to Save Town Centres’*

“I was deeply disturbed and sad about the state of the natural world and society. Getting involved with Transition Pasadena has meant going from despair to community and being able to follow a passion and get help with it. It changed my relationship to the problems”.

Laurel Beck, Transition Pasadena

“We don’t need governments to show us how to make the changes we need, but we do need governments to work with us to create the conditions within which change can flourish, scale and be embedded at a societal level”.

Peter Capener, Bath & West Community Energy



We produced this book as the Transition movement's contribution to COP21 (the 21st 'Conference of the Parties'), the United Nations' climate change negotiations in Paris in December 2015.

We invited Transition groups to send us the stories they'd like us to share. From those, we selected the stories that make up this book. They represent the experiences of people from all around the world who have stepped up. We offer these 21 stories in the hope that regardless of decisions taken by world leaders, at COP21 and subsequently, they will inspire you to step up too.

We hope also that this powerful and heady taste of what is bubbling up from the ground will enthuse decision-makers with new courage, new ideas and new possibilities.

Something brilliant and historic is already underway, and our message to the Obamas, Camerons and Merckels of this world is that *it's already happening* without them, and they need to support and enable it, but even if they do nothing, it will continue to grow, because it's the future.

The future is being written now, and these stories offer inspiration and clear direction, whether you're reading this before, during or after the talks in Paris.

Rob Hopkins, Transition Network
October, 2015

21 Stories of Transition

How a movement of communities
is coming together to reimagine
and rebuild our world.

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Special thanks to Peter Yeo and Roger Ross.

SEIZE

THE OPPORTUNITIES
THAT PRESENT
THEMSELVES

BE CREATIVE
PLAYFUL AND OPEN

INVEST IN YOUR
COMMUNITY

CARE

AT THE CENTRE

ENABLE
COMMUNITY

OWNERSHIP OF ASSETS

THE TRANSITION
MANIFESTO 2015

REBUILD

SUPPORT
EACH OTHER

KEEP TELLING GREAT
STORIES

YOUR LOCAL ECONOMY
MATTERS
SUPPORT IT!

CELEBRATE OFTEN

WEAVE

YOUR COMMUNITY
TOGETHER

TURN NEEDS INTO
OPPORTUNITIES

LIVE WITHIN LIMITS

BE 

ENTREPRENEURIAL

REIMAGINE



TRANSITION IS
SOMETIMES REFERRED
TO AS "HOPE WITH ITS
SLEEVES ROLLED UP".

*"Hope" caravan in Place Louis Morichar,
Brussels (part of a project by Karin Vincke).
Photo: Jane Brady*

WHEN HISTORY CALLS US TO STEP UP...

What an extraordinary time to be alive this is. The systems that are meant to support and provide for us, and to enable us to flourish and thrive, are failing us spectacularly. This is increasingly self-evident to people, wherever they are within those systems. Yet all over the world, in creative, passionate and brave ways, and motivated by a tangible sense of what's possible, people are coming together and creating something else. Something so much better.

There is a global movement, driven not by think tanks or political parties, but by communities. It signposts a global movement towards resilience at a local level. This book will dazzle you with tales of personal responsibility and cooperation, and the idea that the changes required to re-imagine a positive future are not only top-down but also bottom-up. Grassroots movements are literally growing the foundations for a more positive, fairer, inclusive future that begins within the local context.

This book contains inspirational stories from around the world of people who stepped up. We present it in the hope that regardless of decisions taken by world leaders, it will inspire you to step up too. We hope also that this powerful and heady taste of what is bubbling up from the ground will enthuse decision-makers with new courage, new ideas and new possibilities. The future is being written now.

AN INVITATION

We invite you while reading, to seek out the familiar in these stories. The people in them aren't superhuman, or heroes. They are just people like you, who stepped up because these are times that demand that we do so.

This movement is almost certainly already underway somewhere near where you are, and if it isn't, perhaps you might gather a few people and get it started.

As a citizen, we'd like to invite you, if you are inspired by the possibilities this booklet has placed into your hands, to have 10 conversations with neighbours, with work colleagues, or with friends. Tell them what it was in these stories that moved you, that you found interesting, and see how, together, you might support more of this stuff to happen.

As a decision-maker, we'd like to invite you to consider what positive steps you might take to reimagine your role as being a community enabler, clearing the path for more initiatives such as these, supporting them in whatever ways you can.

IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT CARBON

It is vital that our leaders cut carbon at the scale demanded by climate scientists. But while the Transition movement started as an experiment in how to cut carbon, it has evolved into so much more. In our 21 stories you will read of 39 communities in 15 countries who have achieved the following in just a few years. These figures barely scratch the surface of the actual impacts, nor do they capture the deeper shift from despair about the future to hope that runs beneath them.

As you read these stories, consider some of the less tangible aspects of building community resilience. What figures might we have put here for the number of relationships built, the increased sense of belonging people feel to the place and people around them, or the number of new skills learned?

Between them, our 21 stories have...

INSPIRED
18,527
HOURS OF
VOLUNTEER
INPUT

RAISED £5,435
IN PLEDGES TO
SUPPORT NEW
EMERGENT
ENTERPRISES

PUT £1,032,051
WORTH OF
COMPLEMENTARY
CURRENCY INTO
CIRCULATION

CREATED 43
NEW SOCIAL
ENTERPRISES

HARVEST TIME
AT TERRA CSA,
LUXEMBOURG.
SEE PAGE 22.

Photo: Transition Luxembourg

SUPPORTED
19 FARMS

SAVED 21
TONNES
OF FOOD
FROM
LANDFILL
PER YEAR

HARVESTED
OVER 500KG
OF FRUIT AS
WELL AS
VEGETABLES
FOR OVER 550
HOUSEHOLDS
PER WEEK

LED TO 74,196
MORE MILES
BEING WALKED

SAVED
1,352,277
MILES
OF CAR
TRAVEL

RUN 13 SEED
EXCHANGE FAIRS
A YEAR

WORKED WITH 350
SCHOOL CHILDREN
LEADING TO
IMPROVEMENTS
IN SCHOOLWORK
AND HEALTH

BEGUN WORK
ON BUILDING
PROJECTS WITH
A VALUE OF
£5,150,371

PRODUCED
17,800 MWH
OF RENEWABLE
ELECTRICITY A
YEAR, SAVING
7,450 TONNES OF
CO₂ ANNUALLY

RAISED OVER
£13,155,104.88
FOR INVESTMENT
IN RENEWABLE
ENERGY

LED TO 131,049
MORE MILES
BEING CYCLED





10 THREADS THAT RUN THROUGH OUR STORIES

As you read through our 21 Stories, a small sample of what thousands of Transition groups, and a far greater number of other community activism groups are doing around the world, you may notice certain threads or common themes running through them. Given that similar stories can be found in towns, cities, villages, organisations, universities, schools, faith groups and businesses around the world, what might some of those threads be? While all our stories tell of the journeys towards personal and community resilience, here are 10 other threads that we've also noticed. The changemakers in these stories are:

Reclaiming the economy

Around the world communities and movements are building a new economy, rooted in fairness, equality, inclusion, a recognition that we live in a world of limits. As communities we can set about bringing assets into community ownership, inviting community investment, supporting local currencies, playing our role in creating a vibrant economy that works for everyone.

A TRANSITION
WORKSHOP WITH
ARCHITECTS AND
PLANNERS AT
LUXEMBOURG
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY.

Photo: Rob Hopkins

Starting local

Place matters in each of our stories. Local is the scale where tackling the huge challenges we face becomes possible. It's the scale where we can feel involved, and can make a difference. These stories show communities starting where they are: celebrating their place's distinctiveness, its quirkiness, its culture, and building the future from those foundations. It's a shift we can already see underway in the explosion of local food, community energy and cooperatives. It's the future.

Sparking entrepreneurship

Where are the best places to look to for the creativity, the innovation, the flavour, the taste, the community, the future of the new economy? Our stories tell of new enterprises being born, being imaginatively supported by local people, offering new opportunities for local investment, and thinking ambitiously about their role in reimagining the local economy. How might you apply entrepreneurial thinking to the challenges your community faces?

Reimagining work

Including qualities like enjoyment, self development, a sense of belonging and dignity in the work we create are essential to making life meaningful and fun. What we see in Transition are people and projects that deliberately meet material needs while also creating a positive experience, one where how we do things is as, if not more, important than the things themselves.

Stepping up

As our communities unravel and our economies serve the interests of fewer and fewer people, we often hear people say "why

doesn't someone do something about this?" The expectation is often that change is something that starts somewhere else, generally initiated by those we elect. But as you're about to see in our 21 stories, people and their communities are stepping up, coming together to take a more active role in shaping their own future.

Crowd-sourcing solutions

All of these stories tell of solutions and activities that were only possible because people came together to create them. They could not have emerged from one person working alone. By coming together, finding ways of working together, inviting ideas, being emergent and flexible, the solutions emerge clearly.

Supporting each other

None of the stories you are about to read happened by magic. They emerged from people working together in groups, usually as volunteers, in their spare time. As you will see, this is not without its challenges. Each group finds its own strategies and approaches for looking after each other, for giving each person the support they need. Paying attention to this is a key aspect of success.

Reskilling

Another strong thread running through these stories is an openness to re-skilling, to noting that people and groups may not have all the skills they need to achieve what they want, but are open to learning them. You will read about people who never ran a business before learning how to do it, groups realising they need help in resolving conflicts, communities recognising that they need to understand how the planning system works.

Whole new career paths can open up for people, who find themselves doing things that they would never have dreamt of.

Nurturing a caring culture

Why do people do this? For all the groups featured in these stories, the motivation for getting involved, for taking action, is rooted in caring. Care for their friends, family and neighbours, for their community, their place, for the wider world around them. It's there in creating dignified work with a Living Wage, it's there in voluntary projects and new businesses, in projects to help nature, old people and children. It's there in how we take care of the living world. People bring that desire to care to every one of these projects, as you are about to see.

Telling sticky stories

Few of the stories here tell of people doing what's expected of them. As changemakers, they have all paid some thought to creating a story that people will tell each other, that become infectious. The town that prints its own money. The village that uses seed diversity to rekindle its indigenous language. The food market that reconnects the producer to the buyer in a way that enables new conversations and relationships. The stories you'll read here are so sticky, you'll soon be sharing them with your friends...



**40KW SOLAR
INSTALLATION ON
LYCEE THÉODORE DECK,
THE FIRST LYCEE EN
TRANSITION IN FRANCE,
UNGERSHEIM.**

Photo: La Commune d'Ungersheim



**HEADING TO A
SWOP SHOP AT
THE LOCAL SCHOOL,
GREYTON, SOUTH
AFRICA.**

Photo: Candice Mostert



**JAM-MAKING
WORKSHOP RUN
BY TRANSITION
KENSAL TO KILBURN,
LONDON, UK.**

Photo: Jonathan Goldberg



**TRANSITION WORKSHOP
IN LUXEMBOURG.**

Photo: Transition Luxembourg



21 STORIES OF TRANSITION

1. The Million Miles Project
2. The rise of community energy
3. REconomy in Luxembourg
4. EcoCrew Environmental Awareness Programme
5. The rise of local currencies
6. The Pasadena Repair Cafe
7. Fishguard's Surplus Food Cafe
8. The Casau Community Garden
9. Caring Town Totnes
10. Zarzalejo Futuro
11. Lambeth Local Entrepreneur Forum
12. Transition Town Media's Free Store
13. Aardehuis Project Olst
14. Greenslate Farm
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16. Compagnons de la Terre
17. Harvesting Rainwater in São Paulo
18. Crystal Palace Food Market
19. Transition Streets in Australia
20. Scaling up Transition in Peterborough
21. Ungersheim, Village in Transition





Photo: Julian Paven

THE MILLION MILES PROJECT

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT A BOTTOM-UP, CITIZEN-LED APPROACH COULD ACTUALLY MAKE A SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT ON LEVELS OF CAR USE AMONG A MOSTLY RURAL POPULATION? TRANSITION BLACK ISLE SET OUT TO FIND OUT.

Group: Transition Black Isle, Scotland.

Local population: c. 13,000

Group started: 2009

Other projects: Two community gardens (Loch na Mhoid and Culbokie), an annual Potato Day, practical gardening skills sessions, a bicycle hire enterprise, Black Isle Active Travel Map, community wind energy project, 3 food markets at different locations.

Project aim

The aim of the Million Miles project was simple: to cut car travel by a million miles (1% of the current total) through promoting greener alternatives. This was done through 3 main approaches: 1) Active travel (walking and cycling), 2) Greener car travel and 3) Public transport.

Background

The Black Isle is a peninsula in the Scottish Highlands bound by the Cromarty Firth and the Moray and Beauly Firths. Many of its residents work in the nearby city of Inverness, resulting in high levels of car use, and the resultant levels of carbon emissions. When it was announced that the Kessock Bridge, the peninsula's main connection to Inverness, needed repairs which would halve its capacity for cars, Transition Black Isle decided to use it as the opportunity to try and do something about the levels of car use.

About the project

The project was funded through the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund, and co-ordinated by Peter Elbourne and Marion McDonald. It was launched on 28 August 2012 and began with a baseline survey to get a clear picture of the current levels of transport use before work began. Over the next 3 years it ran a wide range of events and workshops with the support of the local authority and a wide range of other organisations and authorities.

The project was intentionally designed to last 3 years, in recognition of the degree of sustained consciousness-raising required to shift travel habits, possibly one of our most entrenched behaviours.

Activities included:

Active Travel: Community cycle trainers, 471 cycling events such as Bike Buses to get children to school and Dr Bike sessions, loans of folding bikes, supporting applications for cycle paths, Black Isle Bike Fest, a cycling conference, downloadable route cards and a travel map.

A 'slow cycle club' in Cromarty, aimed at improving GP, proved particularly popular.



Message for COP21

Local groups are best placed to devise and run campaigns to change behaviour, cut carbon emissions and create community cohesion. To do this most effectively they need improved national and regional transport policies.

Marion McDonald, Million Miles Project Manager

Greener Car Travel: Energy efficient driving training courses, highland.liftshare.com liftsharing website, journey-matching.

Public transport: Bus vouchers, out-and-about events, bus bike racks.

Achievements and legacy

In the end, the project led to a reduction of 1,352,277 miles, saving 718 tonnes of carbon a year, but it achieved much more besides.

Outcomes

- 5,369 people attended 471 events over 30 months
- 600 people attended a Black Isle BikeFest
- led to 74,196 more miles being walked
- 44% of respondents stated they were now cycling more
- 131,049 more miles cycled as a result of the project
- Black Isle Travel Map delivered to 8,300 households
- Lift Share scheme now has 726 members, 23% of people now lift share more.

As well as the impacts of the work itself, there was also a longer lasting legacy. The active travel map and route guides are still widely available, many villages

have new bike racks, the highland.liftshare.com website continues to be used, the volunteer cycle trainers are still busy, Transition Black Isle continue working with other groups to try to improve the infrastructure for cyclists, and Black Isle Bicycles now exists as a social enterprise, renting out bicycles and promoting cycling.

Challenges

One of the key challenges the team faced was how to measure the less tangible impacts of the project, for example the harder-to-measure benefits of an active lifestyle, and the many positive changes people experienced other than just carbon reduction. Anecdotal evidence shows that during and after the scheme, a deeper cultural shift in attitudes towards lift sharing took place.





THE RISE OF COMMUNITY ENERGY

ENERGY GENERATION IS SOMETHING DONE BY HUGE ENERGY COMPANIES, RIGHT? WRONG. COMMUNITY ENERGY IS ONE OF THE KEY WAYS COMMUNITIES CAN START TO TAKE BACK CONTROL OF THEIR ECONOMY, AND THEIR ENERGY SUPPLY.



Community Energy Groups: Over 5,000 in the UK, many more elsewhere.
Amount raised from community share offers plus commercial finance: £13,155,104.88
Amount of electricity generated: 17,800 GWh, enough for 4,000 homes
Amount of CO₂ saved: 7,450 tonnes of CO₂.

Context

Around the world, the idea that communities install, own, and enjoy some of the benefits of renewable energy is growing fast. In Germany over 50% of renewable energy being installed is in community ownership. In the UK alone, over 5,000 community groups have set up community energy schemes since 2008¹. Many of these have been Transition groups, and the schemes they have come up with have varied widely in terms of size.

Community energy around the world

In Japan, the Fujino Electric Company has inspired another 40 communities to start their own energy companies, and in Belgium, many Transition groups are involved with community energy to varying degrees. For example while Champs d'énergie originated mostly from Gelbressée en Transition, Ferréole pre-dates Liège en Transition, but now has many connections to the group. Our next story includes a community energy co-operative in Luxembourg.

Why it matters

This surge in community energy projects is a powerful story. They offer the potential for greater democratic control, for shared benefits and for greater active participation of

the community which can, in turn, lead to infrastructure and cultural change². Decarbonising our energy system requires decentralised renewables, which leads us to far greater opportunities for community investment and involvement. And it brings people together, and creates opportunities for conversation, for parties, for relationships. And it's change people can see happening around them, which means the changes we need to make don't seem so far off and impossible.

Some UK examples:

Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint, Keymer, Ditchling Transition started HKD Energy. They have:

- installed 307 solar panels on Downloads School Sports Centre
- generated 80,000 kWh of electricity per year, saving 42 tonnes of carbon per year
- raised £100,500 in shares from local people, with 83% of the investors living within a 4 mile radius of the school.

Bath and West Community Energy, which emerged from Transition Bath and Transition Corsham:

- have installed 3MW of solar PV in their own community energy projects
- have supported the installation of 3MW of other community energy groups solar PV
- are in process of supporting the development of a further 10MW of other community energy groups solar PV
- have raised and helped raise £10 million through community shares for their and their partners projects
- have re-distributed £65,000 of profits back into local carbon reduction and fuel poverty projects over the last 2 years.

“Not many years ago we were a few enthusiasts from Transition Bath sitting round a table with a great idea. Now only four years later we have been recognised as one of the leading community energy companies in the country”. BWCE's Peter Capener on receiving 'Community Energy Organisation of the Year at the Community Energy Awards

Brixton Energy, which grew out of Transition Town Brixton, has:

- installed 134.24 kW of solar energy across 3 schemes
- raised a total investment of £182,000 from local people through three share offers
- Saved around 1275 tons of CO₂
- Benefitted from 290 hours of volunteer input.

They are currently planning Brixton Energy 4, bringing the electricity (solar-generated!) back to Electric Avenue, one of the area's best-known streets.

“This project means a lot to us and our residents as it brings with it valuable work experience for some of our youth as well as an investment opportunity for residents and local investors alike”.

Mary Simpson, who has lived in Brixton Hill for 26 years

West Solent Energy Co-operative, started by members of New Forest Transition, have:

- raised £2 million in shares from local people
- installed a solar farm that will generate approximately 2.5 GWh each year will save approximately 1,000 tonnes of CO₂ each year.

Transition Malvern Hills' Malvern Energy Co-operative's

first project was installing solar panels on the Malvern Cube (the town's youth centre). A 30kW solar array was installed, and most of the energy generated is sold to the Malvern Cube at a reduced rate.

Transition Bro Gwaun

(see p. 40) are part of a 50:50 joint venture with a local farmer for a 225kW wind turbine which will:

- produce around 528,000 kWh per year
- save around 290 tonnes of CO₂ per year.

Once the loans from local people that made it possible have been paid off, revenue will go into a Low Carbon Local Development Fund which will support a range of local projects.

The Ouse Valley Energy Services Company (OVESCO)

was formed in 2007 by members of Transition Town Lewes. It's first project was installing 545 solar panels on the roof of the local Harveys Brewery. Since then, with the support of over 250 shareholders, they have:

- put up 5 solar installations with a capacity of 191 kWp, with an annual output of 185MWh
- saved 110 tonnes of CO₂ per year
- raised £441,000 of community investment.

They are currently working on a 5MW solar farm, and through the UK Government's Peer Mentoring Scheme have supported 20 neighbouring communities to replicate their model.

“This just makes sense. I learned about solar panels and wind turbines twenty years ago so I've always had an awareness for clean energy and the benefits it can bring. So it's fantastic to see it happening on my doorstep, and to be able to be a part of it”.

Fay Gordon, resident of Loughborough Estate, Brixton and Brixton Energy investor

“

Message for COP21

Validate and nurture local action through the policies, rhetoric and personal action you take, start by looking to your own community(ies) and get involved in change, to whatever level or in whatever way is feasible.

Peter Capener, Bath & West Community Energy



Members of Totnes Renewable Energy Society. Photo: Jane Brady

¹ Department of Energy and Climate Change (2014) Community Energy Strategy, full report: <http://tinyurl.com/nw6ecba>

² Capener, P. (2014) What is Community Energy & Why Does it Matter? Community Energy England. <http://tinyurl.com/p4d7sc8>



BATH AND WEST
COMMUNITY
ENERGY'S
INSTALLATION
ON LEWIS HOUSE
IN BATH.

Photo: GB Sol



INSTALLING ONE
OF BRIXTON
ENERGY'S SOLAR
SCHEMES.

Photo: Jonathan Goldberg



RECONOMY IN LUXEMBOURG

IN THE COUNTRY WITH THE WORLD'S SECOND HIGHEST PER CAPITA GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AND AMONG THE HIGHEST PER CAPITA GHG EMISSIONS, A NEW COLLABORATIVE ECONOMIC MODEL IS EMERGING BASED ON THE RECONOMY APPROACH AND CO-OPERATIVE VALUES. AND IT WORKS.

3.

Group: Transition Luxembourg (National Hub).
Local population: 543,202
Year Started: 2014

Background

Transition is a relatively new arrival in Luxembourg (it started in 2011). Initially emerging from, and supported by, Centre for Ecological Learning Luxembourg (CELL), the groups are founded on the idea that collective action induces concrete and significant systemic change. Transition Luxembourg, the recently established national hub organisation, now receives funding from the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure to support its rolling out of the Transition approach across the country.

The Cooperatives

So far, three new co-operatives have emerged through the work of Transition Luxembourg:

EnerCoop: Founded in 2013, through Transition Minett (South of Luxembourg), it has so far installed a solar project of 26,000 kWh/year – a second one of similar size is in development. These projects are funded through share launches, raising €50,000 for each project through shares costing €100 each. For the first project, they all sold out in a matter of weeks. Under Luxembourg's laws, these are the largest individual installations for which you can get a guaranteed feed-in fee (which is vital for such projects). They are committed to being "100% green, citizen-led and local", and working with local enterprises to obtain services and source equipment that is produced and assembled as local as possible (such as sourcing their solar panels from Germany rather than China).



A SOLAR PROJECT INSTALLED BY ENERCOOP.

Photo: Transition Luxembourg

Terra: In early 2014, three friends who wanted to start a Community Supported Agriculture scheme close to Luxembourg city were struggling to find land. They put out a call to see if anyone had land, and were offered a beautiful site overlooking the city, and two months later they started growing, a sequence of events described by Transition Luxembourg co-ordinator Norry Schneider as “miraculous”. A year later, and Terra have 153 members who received a weekly box of vegetables, as well as 84 ‘co-operators’, who support the group.

KiloMinetto: Began in 2015 and promotes local production through a Transition house that will open soon, with a shop, restaurant and bar that will also be serving as a meeting point and support space for Transition initiatives, and as an incubator for local food enterprises in the area.

The role of Transition

According to Norry, if Transition hadn’t taken root in Luxembourg, probably none of the above would have got started: “It is the positivity and positive storytelling that Transition brings which inspires people to take action, and which creates the willingness of people to share and to network”.

The three co-operatives very much share a sense of having the same roots, seeing themselves as part of the same family, each giving the other profile and publicity.

ONE OF TERRA'S
CO-FOUNDERS,
MARKO
ANYFANDAKIS
HARVESTING
TOMATOES.

Photo: Peace Advocate Photography



“

Message for COP21

Trust the citizens. Usually our leaders don't do it; they buy services from large enterprises because those are serious guys and they know how to do things, and they don't look locally for resources, knowledge or networks. Trust and empower citizens to undertake sustainable local projects, and give some power back to them.

Norry Schneider, Transition Luxembourg




A photograph of a rural landscape at sunset. In the foreground, a large, leafy tree with small orange fruits stands on the left. To the right, a simple wooden greenhouse with a transparent covering is visible. Several chickens are gathered near the greenhouse. The background features a line of trees and a sky with soft, orange and pink clouds from the setting sun.

WHAT IS RECONOMY?

Like Transition, REconomy is about building community cohesion, ecological sustainability, and resilience by transforming local economics. How? By creating the conditions for new economic actors and relationships to emerge –local entrepreneurs, cooperatives, investors, supporters of all kinds, community ownership and accountability, complementary currencies, gift circles, sharing libraries. Everyone is included.

www.reconomy.org

Photo: Peace Advocate Photography



CHESADECK
RINQUEST, AGED
5, INSISTED ON
PLANTING HIS
OWN FRUIT TREE
WITH CHARITY
GREENPOP.ORG.

Photo: Candice Mostert



4.

ECOCREW ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME

WHAT KIND OF A ROLE
COULD TRANSITION
PLAY IN COMMUNITIES
RECOVERING FROM
THE PAST IMPACTS OF
APARTHEID, A PRESENT
WHERE ITS YOUNG PEOPLE
NEED SUPPORT, AND
THE FUTURE DEMANDS
OF CLIMATE CHANGE?

BUILDING AN
OUTDOOR
CLASSROOM
AT GREEN PARK,
RECLAIMED FROM
BEING THE MUNICIPAL
DUMP BY GREYTON
TRANSITION TOWN
AND ECOCREW.

Photo: Marshall Rinquest

Group: Greyton Transition Town, South Africa.

Local population: 2,780.

Year Started: 2012

Other projects: South Africa's first plastic bag-free town, Incredible Edible Greyton, Air Miles Forest (local carbon/flights offsetting), a Community Natural Building Programme, River Bank Clear-ups, Bartering system, Trash to Treasure Festival (at the town dump).

Background

Greyton Transition Town is the first official Transition group in Africa, initiated in December 2012 by Nicola Vernon, who said "as a driver for social integration it's the best I've encountered in 30 years of working in social welfare". Greyton is a beautiful town, visited by many tourists, but like many places in South Africa, one that still bears the scars of apartheid.

As Nicola says:

"The Group Areas Act of the 1950s declared some of the town's people, those with a darker skin than the others, to be 'coloured' and therefore to be removed to the outskirts of the town where they were placed cheek by jowl in mean little houses on a rocky slope with little soil".

The division this caused is still visible today. Many residents suffer from poverty, poor education, unemployment and deprivation. Greyton Transition Town is unusual in being resourced by some of the profits of two businesses it has established, an EcoLodge, offering affordable accommodation, and a vegetarian/vegan restaurant. While the GTT team run projects with universal appeal, much of the focus of their work is on environmental and humane education in local schools.

About the project

Their EcoCrew environmental awareness programme, co-ordinated by Marshall Rinquest, offers children between 8 and 18 years outdoor activities both during and after school.

Activities include:

- Claiming back and rehabilitating a large section of the municipal dumpsite, turning it into a Green Park, planting 500 trees as part of the Greyton Fruit Forest, and building an outdoor classroom using 'Ecobricks' (plastic bottles packed with non recyclable plastic waste).
- Learning about permaculture and creating organic food gardens in all six local schools, the produce enabling the schools to give good meals to their poorest students.
- Setting up 'Swap Shops' in local schools: spaces where children and their parents can bring clean, dry, recyclable waste and receive vouchers, which they can exchange at an on-site shop, to purchase essentials such as clothes, toiletries, blankets and school clothing.
- Collaborating with other organisations such as The Two Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town to participate in a 'penguin waddle' along the coast to raise awareness about

the plight of African penguins and Greenpop, a national tree planting charity to support their work in South Africa (replanting an ancient milkwood forest on the south coast) and in Zambia (to help reforest part of the country devastated by illegal tree felling).

- Setting up a trial humane education programme aimed at inspiring empathy in children for themselves, their friends, parents, teachers and the environment.

As well as the schools, Greyton Transition Town is able to do what it does due to a wide range of partnerships such as with Greyton Conservation Society, Greenpop (a national tree planting charity), local council and regional government.

"I was always more conscious about these issues than my peers, and I wanted to pass that on. The kids we work with respond in the same way. They now think twice about what they eat and what they throw away".

Marshall Rinquest



Message for COP21

Anything is possible if you just put your mind to it. We are always persistent in what we do. Whoever you are, as an individual, you can make a change, people will see, people will follow, because it's about the way you do these things.

Marshall Rinquest, Greyton Transition Town



**RIAAN STRYDOM,
GREYTON
TRANSITION
TOWN VOLUNTEER,
TEACHING
ECOCREW
YOUTH ABOUT
PERMACULTURE.**

Photo: Nicola Vernon

Achievements and legacy

Like many Transition groups, they could always do with more people, more manpower, but still what the group has achieved is remarkable. As Marshall Rinquest puts it: "People on low incomes come to our fresh local produce barter table and they can connect with people and see how we can assist each other as people, not saying "I'm black and you are white", or "I am rich and you are poor", but seeing beyond that line as humans. It's not just a place where you can barter, it's a space where you can see what we have in common".

Teachers report better grades, improved behaviour, less bullying, truancy and detention amongst not only the eco-crew members but the whole school. Parents report healthier, happier, more respectful children. The children feel motivated, hopeful and more confident. The school and teachers have started looking beyond matric to a point where

their students can actually become leaders and motivators for a better, more humane and environmentally conscious society.

"Most problems with historically disadvantaged children in South Africa stem from their lack of hope. They are not motivated to study when there is so little opportunity – only unemployment or a low paid job as a waiter, gardener or domestic help. All our children now have the EcoCrew to aspire to, it gives them hope and has lifted the whole school".

Rodney Cupido, Head of Emil Weder High School

Outcomes

- In two years the number of children participating in the eco-crew programme has grown from 70 to 200
- This is expected to reach 350

by the end of this year

- Funding has been found for two full time and one part time member of staff.

Future plans include an eco-village within the town, with natural building approaches, renewable energy and an integrated community at the heart of its design.





Photo: Jane Brady

5.

THE RISE OF TRANSITION CURRENCIES

HOW TRANSITION CURRENCIES ARE
REIMAGINING MONEY AS “WONDERFUL
INVITES TO US ALL TO STEP INTO A
BETTER FUTURE”.

Number of Transition currencies: 11 in 5 countries, many more in development.
Amount of Transition currencies currently in circulation: £1,032,051

Background

Local currencies aren't a new idea. They have been a feature of life back through the centuries, and around 2,500 such schemes, in a variety of forms, exist throughout the world today. Although they take a variety of forms, the basic idea is to enhance the 'Multiplier Effect', the observation that money spent with local businesses circulates more times and leads to greater benefits for the local economy. The Brixton Pound calls itself "money that sticks to Brixton". They are 'complementary currencies', running in parallel to national currencies, rather than a replacement.

'Transition Currencies' in the UK

What are increasingly referred to as 'Transition currencies' began with the **Totnes Pound** in 2007, initially modelled on an 1810 Totnes Pound banknote. That, in turn, drew its inspiration from previous alternative currencies such as the Wir and the Worgl from the 1930s, and Ithaca Hours and Berkshares (both from the US), more recent manifestations of the idea.

The Totnes Pound, in turn, inspired the launch of the **Lewes Pound**, initially as a One Pound note, and then in a full set of denominations which included a £21 note. This was followed by the **Stroud Pound**, and then by the **Brixton Pound** in London. The Brixton Pound was the first to also feature a Pay-by-Text system, enabling people to use Brixton Pounds on their mobile phones.

The Bristol Pound, launched in September 2012, represented a major leap forward for the concept. It generated massive media interest, and was hugely supported by Bristol City Council, with the new Mayor of the city, George Ferguson, announcing he would be taking his full salary in Bristol Pounds. Since then it was also announced that local people can pay their Council Tax in Bristol Pounds and can use them on the city's buses. Thanks to a deal with Good Energy, customers can also now pay their energy bills with Bristol Pounds, and will soon also be able to use them to buy train tickets.



Launch t-shirts. Photo: Brixton Pound



"People ask why we have a £21 note in Totnes. My response to that question is 'why not?'."

Rob Hopkins


"We have the seminal Brixton Pound £10 note featuring David Bowie. It's possibly the world's most famous local currency note".

Michael Lloyd-Jones at the Bristol Pound



JEREMY DELLER,
WINNER OF THE
2004 TURNER
PRIZE, DESIGNED
THIS £5 NOTE TO
CELEBRATE THE
BRIXTON POUND'S
FIFTH BIRTHDAY,
DESCRIBED
BY CHARLIE
WATERHOUSE OF
THE BRIXTON
POUND AS "THE
MOST AMAZING
CURRENCY
NOTES EVER
PRODUCED. NO
EXAGGERATION".

Photo: Brixton Pound



EX-BANKER
TURNED ACTIVIST
MEHUL DAMANI
DESCRIBING
THE DESIGN OF
THE BRIXTON
POUND AS A
REFLECTION OF
THE DIVERSITY
AND VIBRANCY
OF BRIXTON.

Photo: Brixton Pound



THE LAUNCH
OF GREZ EN
TRANSITION'S
LOCAL CURRENCY
'LES BLES',
APRIL 2015.

Photos: Michèle Vander Syp



Message for COP21



*Transición in Querétaro's 'Kuni' currency.
Photo: Transición in Querétaro*

We believe the evidence is clear; achieving a low or carbon negative society requires localized, more transparent economies based on local ownership. The Bristol Pound is a powerful systemic driver that shortens supply chains, reducing dependence on the fossil fuel intensive transport infrastructure. It also sends a message about what the economy is there to serve. It's empowering, democratic and delivering change here in Bristol.

Ciaran Mundy, Bristol Pound

The level of media coverage generated by the launch of the Bristol Pound led the Bank of England to publish a statement clarifying its legal understanding of local currencies. It also led to the formation of a Guild of Independent Currencies to support the increase in interest from elsewhere. The **Exeter Pound**, created through a coming together of Transition Exeter and Exeter City Council (for who the successful launch of an Exeter Pound is their second highest economic priority), launched in September 2015. As well as the usual suite of notes featuring well-known local characters, they also launched a £15 note to celebrate the coming to Exeter of the Rugby World Cup.

More are in the pipeline as the idea becomes increasingly mainstream. The Kingston Pound is coming soon, with schemes also emerging in Plymouth, Hull, Oxford, Liverpool, Cardiff and Southampton, although interestingly, few of those of formal links to local Transition groups.

At the time of writing, the Brixton Pound just released an extraordinary £5 note designed

by Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller to celebrate the 5th anniversary of its launch (p.33).

The global spread of Transition currencies

The idea is spreading internationally too. Liege en Transition in Belgium launched '**Le Valheureux**'. Grez en Transition, also in Belgium, launched **Les BLÉS**, and Transición in Querétaro in Mexico launched the **Kuni** (Kuni means "to knit" in Otomí indigenous language), a local currency whose notes are circular, and very colourful! Montreuil en Transition near Paris called theirs the '**Peche**' (named after the peaches which the town is famous for growing), and Vilanova en Transición in Spain launched a Transition currency called **La Turuta**. There are no doubt many others we haven't yet heard about too.

Why Transition currencies matter

The rise of local currencies is a powerful story. In a time where money feels out of control, something done to us by others, something that shuts down possibilities rather than opening them up, local currencies are ours.

The Bristol Pound issued a new suite of notes in July 2015, and on tiny writing on them it read "Keeping money out the Cayman Islands (a well-known British tax haven) since 2012". The story of the rise of local currencies is a story that is only just beginning.

Outcomes

Amount of local currency in circulation (where data is available):

- Bristol Pound, £800,000
- Totnes Pound, £13,800
- Brixton Pounds, £150,000
- Lewes Pound, £20,000
- Stroud Pound, £7,000
- Les BLÉS, £2,500
- Le Radis, Ungersheim (p. 86) £6,600
- Number of businesses in Bristol accepting the Bristol Pound, 850.



The 2015 new issue of Bristol Pound notes from an exhibition poster: PAPER Arts

“The pounds Sterling in our pockets are monochrome, dull and in thrall to history and hierarchy - designed to remind us that ‘our’ money isn’t really ours at all. Brixton Pounds are the exact opposite. Joyous and empowering, they remind us that we can all make positive decisions about our spending, and make a real difference to the community around us. They’re wonderful invites to us all to step into a better future”.

Charlie Waterhouse, Brixton Pound designer

“It’s easy to imagine such notes being fetishized as audiophiles do vinyl”.

Dan Crane, New York Times, August 9th, 2015



Photo: Sylvia Holmes

6.

PASADENA REPAIR CAFE

"I CAN'T BELIEVE THE GUY WHO BUILT THE
MARS ROVER JUST FIXED MY ELECTRIC SHAVER!"

Group: Transition Pasadena, Los Angeles, USA.

Local population: 139,731

Year Started: 2010

Other projects: Throop Church Learning Garden (winner of the Mayor's Green City Award for Urban Nature 2013), Free Food Garden, 'Low Energy Living is Fun' workshops, 'Mulch for the People', 'The Work That Reconnects' workshops, Fruit Trees in Public Places, Cool Roofs, 'Just Doing Stuff Town Fair.'

Background

In 2010, Therese Brummel, cofounder of Transition Pasadena, heard about a Repair Cafe in the Netherlands and thought it was something that could work well in Pasadena, a suburb of Los Angeles. In June of that year, Transition Pasadena ran its first Repair Cafe. Transition Pasadena works on a "build it and they will come" basis, with members with ideas for good projects finding that the interest, support and enthusiasm generally comes in behind their ideas.

"I was deeply disturbed and sad about the state of the natural world and society. Getting involved with Transition Pasadena has meant going from despair to community and being able to follow a passion and get help with it. It changed my relationship to the problems".

Laurel Beck

Repairing tools ... or community?

The Repair Cafes are generally run at a different venue each time, and there are between 9 and 10 each year, and the number of items being brought for repair increases each time. Greg Marquez from the group talks of how the most important function of the Cafes



isn't the repair of things, it's the creation of community.

According to Greg: "I announce to those waiting for tools to be sharpened that they are sitting in the story telling chair, which in most cases is all that is needed. People launch into personal stories that draw smiles and much needed empathy from those nearby, making the fulfilling of this often neglected area of our lives as important as a sharpened pair of scissors".

How does a Repair Cafe find its repairers? According to Sylvia Holmes, "we just ask. There's the San Gabriel Valley Hackers, people who work at the nearby CalTech (California Institute of Technology) ... they come. People just know people. We make it fun".

Wider connections

The Repair Cafe also has a close relationship with the local Time Bank. People earn Time Dollars while repairing things, and someone from the Time Bank sits with a laptop and records transactions during the day. According to Laurel Beck from

the group: "You feel part of a community that is getting on and doing things, and recycling. There's a sense of welcome. A different sense. No-one wants anything from you. People just come together and help each other. There's a welcome. We're glad to see people when they turn up with their broken stuff".

Outcomes

Since inception in late 2010: 4676 volunteer hours in the gardens, 500 kilos of fruits and vegetables harvested, 2670 volunteer hours for Repair Cafe 831, volunteers (major projects only), 2638 public attendees, 20 projects (mostly ongoing), 32 planned workshops, 30 ad hoc workshops, 9 film screenings, 65 steering meetings, 400 subscribers to newsletter, 360 Facebook Likes and Followers, 2 retreats and 3 study groups.

"Our planet needs help, and Repair Cafe is a small event. Yet much can be accomplished in many localities by as few as two people; repairer and repairee. Energizing the

sense of belonging and becoming more fully one's self within the community is crucial to mobilizing our individual energies”.

Greg Marquez, Transition Pasadena

Group culture

As Sylvia Holmes from the group told me, “We’ve learned to be careful about how many ideas we have because they’re a lot of work”. Transition Pasadena periodically consider whether a more formal approach to governance would help with conflict resolution and the management of their wide variety of projects, but so far the group embraces a horizontal structure with no leaders or followers – everyone’s ideas have equal weight. “Our strong bond gives us the strength to pursue projects we’re passionate about”, says Sylvia, adding “It can be a bumpy road, though we seem to make it”.



**REUSEABLE
SIGNAGE –
CHALK ON
BLACKBOARDS.**

Photo: Sylvia Holmes



“

Message for COP21

It can transform a relationship to serious problems to something empowering that actually enriches your own life. That's reason alone to get involved. You get permission to do meaningful work, with support, and it's fun!

Laurel Beck, Transition Pasadena

THE SURPLUS FOOD CAFE

THE CAFE THAT SEES GOING OUT OF BUSINESS AS A SIGN OF SUCCESS, AND WHOSE DAILY MENU IS DETERMINED BY WHAT LOCAL BUSINESSES THROW AWAY.



Photo: Transition Bro Gwaun

Group: Transition Bro Gwaun (Fishguard), Wales
Local population: 3,419
Year Started: 2008

Other projects: The TBG shopping bag, bike maintenance, new allotments, a 225kW community wind turbine, regular stall at local farmers market.

Background

Every year the UK throws away 15 million tonnes of food and drink, half of which was perfectly edible when thrown away. Over a million people now rely on food handouts and Food Banks.

Two members of Transition Bro Gwaun (TBG) were visiting local shops looking for food waste

to feed pigs, and realised how much perfectly good food was being thrown away, and that that presented a huge opportunity.

The seeds of an idea

TBG's Ann Bushell began thinking that there was a potential business opportunity in looking at this 'waste' in a different way, and the idea of the Transition Community Cafe/Surplus Food Project was born. The local Co-operative supermarket manageress pointed out an empty building opposite, owned by the Co-op, which had become a local eyesore, and suggested the group apply to take it on. Their first question was whether a cafe serving food harvested from local surplus was something the community wanted. So in a local pub, they ran two meals, invited the community and then asked them to fill out

a questionnaire afterwards. The overwhelming feedback was "we'd like a cafe please, with low cost meals".

"This project is more than just a way of reducing food waste. It's an experiment – an attempt to put carbon reduction, sustainability and community resilience at the heart of a social enterprise and to make it a viable business suitable for a low growth, sustainable society. It depends as much on non-monetized 'income' e.g. from gifting, community exchange, reusing and recycling, and volunteering as it does on financial income".

Transition Bro Gwaun

Work then began to turn the derelict old budget off licence into a thriving community cafe. The community rallied around to help, a local builders' merchant donated thousands of pounds worth of supplies and many local volunteers offered their time. The idea of a cafe serving surplus food hit a nerve, and the group started attracting lots of press coverage. They presented the idea at Hay Festival's Future Green Dragons event and won, bringing a prize of £10,000 home with them.

About the project

The cafe opened in June 2013, staffed by a mixture of 25 volunteers and a small number of paid staff. Perfectly good food is collected from local shops and businesses and used in the cafe. Any that can't be used is sent to a biodigester or used for animal feed. The cafe's chefs need to be flexible and to think on their toes. One week they might get a mass of leeks, and on the week they were interviewed for this book, they had just been given 160kg of bananas!

As well as providing quality and affordable meals, the cafe plays an important role in providing training opportunities for local young people. Many of their volunteers have gone on to get jobs afterwards in an area where opportunities for work experience can be hard to come by.

Challenges

It's not a project without its challenges. Some local cafes have expressed the concern that the Surplus Food Cafe might undercut them. As Chris Samra, one of the TBG's Trustees puts it: "what we are trying to get across is the idea that we need to change agendas, and that means everyone re-evaluating how they operate in the context of climate change, which can be challenging. What we serve is so different to most cafes anyway that we're not really a threat".



Message for COP21

If world leaders came to the cafe for a visit, we'd show them all the entries in our Visitors' Book which tell how excited people get about what we're doing – how a simple, small, community project can be so effective in changing attitudes, modelling a new approach and enthusing people to do something similar – and that people think there should be lots more initiatives like ours.

Chris Samra, Transition Bro Gwaun

They have to deal with people's expectations of what 'surplus food' will look like on a plate. Also, if they are donated 40 bottles of sugared fizzy drinks, do they serve them because they are a high-carbon food that it's a shame to waste, or bin them because they are unhealthy? Their commitment to serving healthy food means that they don't serve burgers and chips, which excludes some of their potential audience.

Achievements and legacy

The cafe offers affordable meals for everyone in Fishguard, but it also produces food parcels for people in actual food poverty through the local food bank scheme, and also through the local Credit Union. Unlike most new enterprise models emerging through the Transition movement however, the Surplus Cafe is one that is happy to design for its own demise. As Trustee Tom Latter puts it:

"Already we are seeing local businesses giving us less food, as they become more aware through working with us, they produce less waste. We like that idea of working our way out of business, that the ultimate sign of success for us would be that we can't

function anymore. That would be a success".

Outcomes

The Cafe strengthens the local economy and improves social capital by providing training, employment and work experience opportunities for local people, particularly the young, the disabled and the long-term unemployed. It also:

- prevents an average of 600 kilos of food going to landfill each month
- makes carbon savings of 21 tonnes per year.

"For me, the key learning has been the range of people you can involve in a project that is visible and which makes common sense to people. You can have all the awareness-raising meetings in the world, and you just get all the same people turning up. But the people who come and work here as volunteers come from a huge range of interests and backgrounds – many just enjoy the social interaction".

Chris Samra



8.

THE CASAU COMMUNITY GARDEN

A COMMUNITY PROJECT
WHICH LINKS THE LOSS
OF DIVERSITY OF SEEDS
WITH THE LOSS OF LOCAL
LANGUAGES.



Group: Salies en Transition,
France.

Local population: 5,500

Group started: 2012

About the project

The Salies en Transition group began through a series of meetings at the local bar where heritage varieties of seeds were exchanged. The group started holding a series of 'trocs', Seed Exchange fairs where people were invited to bring along heirloom varieties to exchange. They have now held 13 of these, where over 80 varieties of seed are distributed. People travel from a considerable distance to visit the exchange events. The names of plants are displayed in French, in Latin, and in Béarnais. People are encouraged to speak in Béarnais with older people who still speak it on hand to help out.

As well as the trocs, Salies en Transition has also created a garden "Lo Casau" in a 3000 square metre site of a former railway station, on land made available by the Mayor. They have placed 30 old wooden containers, given by a local organic kiwi producer, and grow a range of local and unusual varieties of fruit and vegetables. They use a technique called 'lasagna gardening', using layers of different mulching materials which is a great way of maintaining moisture in beds and making productive use of organic matter! They also have a 3,000 litre water tank. The water comes from the roof of the old railway station.

The garden makes use of organic methods, crop rotation and mulching. Four of the beds are cultivated by a local school for hyperactive children. A school that offers vocational training for young people with special needs also grows vegetables in the garden. Salies en

Transition also placed 4 wooden containers at an elderly home, as therapeutic project. The garden is seen as modelling diversity: of plants, of generations, of needs and abilities, of languages.

Outcomes

To date, the group have:

- Organised 13 Seed Exchange Fairs
- Preserved 80 varieties of vegetables
- Involved over 150 people.

Context

Diversity is important to Transition groups, one of the distinguishing features of resilience. Salies en Transition are the first group to connect the erosion of diversity in terms of seeds with the loss of indigenous languages. It is estimated that one language dies every 14 days, and that by 2100, nearly half of the 7,000 languages spoken in the world will have been lost. Following the French Revolution, regional languages were outlawed, with Parisian French being imposed nationally and Béarnais, related to the language d'Oc, was banned from schools.



Message for COP21

**When you use
the knowledge of
the citizens, then
you can change
the world.**

The Salies en Transition group





CARING TOWN TOTNES

WHEN TRANSITION USES
ITS 'POWER TO CONVENE'
TO BRING TOGETHER THOSE
PROVIDING CARE TO REIMAGINE
A DIFFERENT APPROACH.

Group: Transition Town
Totnes, England.

Local population: 8,500

Group started: 2006

Other projects: Nut & fruit
tree plantings, Transition
Streets, Draughtbusting,
Inner Transition, Transition
Homes (a development of
25 houses), Local Economic
Blueprint, Local Entrepreneur
Forum, REconomy Centre,
Skillshares, Open Eco Homes
& Eco Homes Fair, Transition
Tours, TTT Film Club.

Background

There were three initial sparks that brought Caring Town Totnes to life. The first was Transition Town Totnes' (TTT) 2012 Local Economic Blueprint, which identified the potential benefits to the local economy of adult social care done in a different way. The second was a strong belief that building resilience starts with personal resilience, and that deep cuts to local authority and NHS spending were hitting this really hard.

The last was a workshop run by Devon County Council (DCC) called 'Tough Choices' which invited public thoughts on where the funding axe should fall. Participants were given a list of different services that could be cut and given stickers to put on the ones that felt most dispensable. The workshop was attended by Frances Northrop and Carole Whitty of TTT, and was the only one of the workshops run by DCC in which participants refused to participate, such was the outrage.

About the project

After discussions with a range of people in the town about the effects of the cuts and how a local response might be helpful to the County Council as an alternative to "salami slicing" budgets, Carole and Frances met

with Phil Norrey, CEO of DCC, interested in the potential of looking at the possibilities of co producing solutions. One of the first outcomes from this meeting was the initiation of a programme within DCC to appoint Locality Officers in three towns, including Totnes, through the secondment of a senior officer, to give support and make the introductions needed to enable the work on the ground.

This led to the 'Caring Town Conference' attended by representatives of 60 organisations in the town who provide health and/or social care in some way. It was met with huge enthusiasm, with people being asked "if Totnes were the most caring town it could possibly be what would it look like?"

This was followed by a mapping of what was already happening, which enabled people to see where they fit and to make new connections.

Three things emerged that people most wanted to see: 1) a network that facilitated people coming together, 2) a central point in town that provided a home to some services and signposting to others, and 3) a needs assessment of what people most wanted.

Shortly after the event, a Health and Welfare Day brought together all the groups in one place. From the outset, this was not a TTT project but one to which TTT contributed its skills, experience and processes ;we were the catalyst organisation but recognised our need to work in close partnership with other local groups and organisations in order bring about sustainable systems change.

Caring Town Totnes received some funding via the UK government's 'Our Place' which enabled an operational plan to be created. This also enabled the creation



Message for COP21

Being able to find solutions to large, and seemingly intractable problems benefits hugely from collaboration, between those providing services and those in receipt of the respective service. While it's vital that we respect professional knowledge, it is important that those in decision making roles remain informed about how life is for most people, who are often the experts of their particular need. This way resources can flow better and there is a reciprocal relationship rather than people being 'done unto'. We have learned the importance of being able to develop relationships with a diverse range of organisations and to adapt our language and processes to a wide range of contexts in order to bring about sustainable and systemic change at both institutional and community levels.

Frances Northrop, Transition Town Totnes

of the Needs Analysis, which began with a public consultation facilitated by Encounters Arts. Visitors were invited to reflect on the questions “what makes you well, and what makes you unwell?” The majority of responses were less to do with physical illness, rather focusing on stress, worry and finance.

One of the key insights of Caring Town is the breaking down of the barrier between the ‘vulnerable’ and everyone else. The reality is that we are all vulnerable, at different times and to varying degrees and so we all benefit from there being a supportive community around us.

The role of care in economic regeneration

Caring Town recognises the interconnection of food, health, local economics and so on. “We don’t currently value caring as a thing that’s critical to us as a society”, Frances says. Plans are now underway for setting up ‘Caring Town Services’, a broker for care service commissionings and a marketplace for people with personal budgets and self funders. Another strand has been the pursuit of public ownership of the Mansion, a community education centre in the town, currently held in trust by DCC which also hosts the library and a nursery run as a social enterprise. The intention here is to establish the central point for information for Caring Town members to be able to signpost local residents to what they offer.



“Caring Town Totnes is also about creation of livelihoods where people live, and the fact is that at the moment the respect given to people who provide paid and unpaid care isn’t very high. We don’t value caring as a thing that’s critical and increasing respect for carers is a fundamental part of this”.
Frances Northrop

“One guy who works for a local institution came to our fourth meeting and I asked him if I could put him down as a rep for his organisation, and he said ‘oh no, they don’t know I’m here, I come here for respite! It’s all negative where I am - I come here and it’s full of positivity!’”
Frances Northrop



Totnes Library

What
keeps
me well

GATHERING THE
COMMUNITY'S
THOUGHTS ON
WHAT MAKES
THEM WELL AND
UNWELL, TOTNES
HIGH STREET.



10.

ZARZALEJO FUTURO: FUTURE SCENARIOS

POLITICS IN SPAIN IS CHANGING PROFOUNDLY. WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN TRANSITION MEETS THE 15M MOVEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF A MOUNTAIN VILLAGE IN THE CENTRE OF SPAIN?



WORKING ON
BEEHIVES NEAR
ZARZALEJO.

Group: Zarzalejo en Transición, Spain.

Local population: 1,500

Group started: 2010

Other projects: Car share scheme with over 100 registered members, awareness scheme about community-owned renewable energy, a Community Supported Agriculture scheme with 26 families, local oral history project, OASIS social transformation.



Message for COP21

If COP21 leaders came to visit us, we would thank them for coming to visit a real project, happening on the ground. We worry that often our leaders lose contact with what's happening at the local level. One of the key questions they have no answer to is how to make change contagious. We are showing here how that is possible. What we are doing here needs support rather than all the resources going to huge, out-of-touch projects.

Veronica Hernandez-Jimenez, Zarzalejo en Transición

Background

Remarkable changes are underway in Spain. The impacts of austerity and the economic situation are being acutely felt across the country: unemployment is running at 27%, nearly 40% in some places. One in three children in Spain are at risk from poverty. Evictions are widespread. At the same time though, something remarkable is stirring, and Transition is one part of that new emerging story.

There are now around 50 Transition initiatives in Spain, and one of the most influential of those is Zarzalejo en Transición. Zarzalejo is a small village in the mountains near Madrid, and they have done a lot of work to inspire the communities around them to take a similar approach.

Madrid, like Barcelona, has seen a huge political shift which began with the 15M movement (Movimiento de los Indignados) in 2011, the massive movement which occupied public squares across the country. Now, 4 years later, Madrid and Barcelona's governments are run by those who came through 15M, and like many places, Zarzalejo's council is now managed by a citizen's group. This is a shift which has opened up huge possibilities.

According to Juan del Rio, co-ordinator of the Spanish Transition Network: "Zarzalejo en Transición has been probably the most important local Transition initiative in the central region of Spain. It has also catalysed and inspired other initiatives and projects in the same town and region".

About the project

The group has co-ordinated many different projects, the Future Scenarios project being the most recent one. Thinking about the past and the present, the group is convening people from across the community to reimagine and to dream the place they'd like Zarzalejo to be in the future.

This project is based on former ones like Oasis (which brings young people together, around

a set of activities which involve dreaming the future and social transformation, but combining it with practical activities), Zarzalejo Cuenta (a compilation of local history), and previous working groups from Zarzalejo in Transition (Food, Environment, Transport, Local Resources, Culture and so on).

Drawing on the many partnerships that the group have already created with local government and other progressive associations (including Creasvi, Puentes4D, ObservatorioCulturayTerritorio and others), the group are now expanding the future scenarios work to include a lot more people from the village, to create a tangible, real and sustainable vision of the future for Zarzalejo.



THE OASIS
VISIONING
PROCESS
UNDERWAY IN
THE SQUARE IN
ZARAZALEJO.

Photo: GSA Madrid

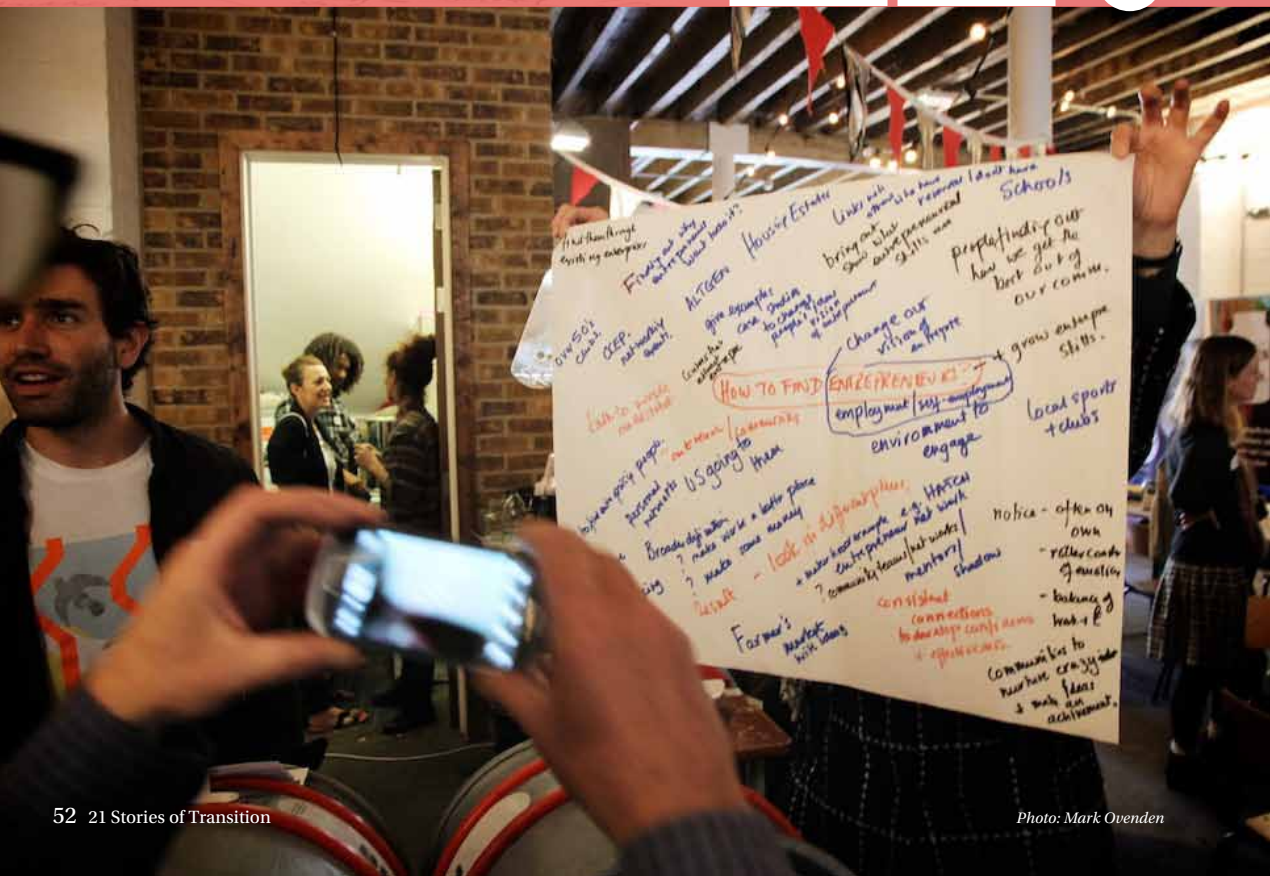


HOW? Do we Create

THE LAMBETH LOCAL ENTREPRENEUR FORUM

AN EVENT WHICH BEAUTIFULLY MODELS WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE WHEN A COMMUNITY GETS BEHIND ITS CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS AND CHANGEMAKERS.

1.



Group: Transition Town Brixton, London, England.
Local population: 66,300
Group started: 2007
Other projects: The Brixton Pound, Brixton Energy, Remakery Brixton, a Wholefood Buying Coop, Community Draughtbusters, REconomy Project, including an Economic Evaluation of Brixton.

Background

Lambeth's Local Entrepreneur Forum (LEF) drew its inspiration from the Totnes LEF, a Transition innovation which began in 2012. It's a simple idea, an invitation to the community to get behind its entrepreneurs, and to support them in a variety of ways. Investment in a business need not be money, it can be offers of space, support, mentoring, website design, dog walking, massage, and many other things too. A LEF is an event designed to maximise the offering of such support, a community gathering around its changemakers.

About the project

The Totnes LEFs have thus far raised over £70,000 in support for emerging local businesses, while also building a strong community of innovative entrepreneurs. The Lambeth LEF presented 5 new entrepreneurs to the community and invited their support and investment, in whatever sense people chose to interpret that word.

They included local food business The Grain Grocer; Spiral, who work with young people to give them access to work experience that develops real skills; Library of Things, a tool/other stuff library; Remakery Brixton, our re-use centre including training, workshop hire, business development and more; and Kitchen Table Projects, who showcase and incubate artisan food producers.

Impacts

What was really striking was, for an event about local business, just how moving it was. While the posters for the event had said "good ideas need investment", anyone attending left with a very clear sense that making the new economy a reality requires a lot more than just hard cash. As one person said afterwards, "there was a lot of love in the room, if love's the right word". Many of those pitching used the word "love" in their reflections about how it felt to pitch to the LEF.

"We leave with a lot more friends, and a sense that people do support and see the value in what we're doing and there is that spirit of generosity that can come out when the space is created for it".

Hannah Lewis: Remakery

For those pitching, the support went way beyond money. Colin Crooks, who compered the pitching session, spoke of "seeing people light up as they offered support", of the magical sense of warmth created. "It's tapping into a fundamental human value", he said, "and this (the LEF model) is just a way of rehearsing what we've always wanted to do, to support people in our community. Everyone wants to do it, I think we've just forgotten how".

Tom Shakhli, Manager of Brixton Pound, said "it was really nice to see people responding to each others' generosity".

Outcomes

- 5 enterprises pitched
- 140 people attended
- £1,150 worth of cash pledges
- at least £4,335 of in-kind value pledges
- Library of Things subsequently exceeded their crowdfunding target of £12,000.



Message for COP21

Local and positive is where it's at. We need to re-imagine the way we do everything, including global change. Top down doesn't provide locally appropriate solutions nor real engagement in culture change. So find ways to resource the local change-makers who are building positive projects that have the potential to engage 7-9 billion people in building the post-industrial, post-capitalist, post-cheap-energy paradigm".

Duncan Law, Transition Town Brixton





"We were just sat down afterwards and saying "well that was amazing, let's go to loads of these, but I don't really know where I would go now, because I think it's probably quite exceptional, I've never seen another one!"

Emma Shaw: Library of Things

Photo: Mark Ovenden

Group: Transition Town Media, Pennsylvania, USA.

Local population: c. 5,000

Group started: 2009

Other projects: Media Happiness Week, promoting 'Yardens' (gardens in yards): Community Supported Agriculture scheme: supporting people to grow food, to cook, bottle and can: strong Inner Transition group: bike repairs: participation in local planning issues: building links to local business community.

What is a Free Store?

The FreeStore opened June 1, 2014. People bring things they no longer need or want that would otherwise go unused or end up in a landfill, and other people can then take it, without paying. In an annex rented from the local Methodist Church, visitors can help themselves to anything in the shop, and also donate things for other people. For the group it is a project, with over 20 active volunteers, that connects people and shifts their thinking. "People talk to each other differently in the Store", they say.

While a Free Store helps those in need, it is not a charity and feels completely different from the nearby Food Bank, where giving is a one-way street. The Free Store is a place for community exchange, where people can relax and have conversations. Volunteers talk about the delight of the moments when the uninitiated come to the counter to ask how much something costs, and are told it's free.

The Free Store grew out of a Swap Group organised by Transition Town Media, an online space where people could offer things for free. The group found that of all their projects it had the biggest reach, connecting many people in new ways.

How it works in practice

You might imagine that a Free Store would be emptied pretty fast, but with their approach of "bring and take only what you can carry", they have far more donated goods that they are able to fit on the shelves of the Store. This abundance, in turn, leads to more partnerships and networking, as conversations arise with other organisations who are able to make use of books and household items for the groups they serve.

"The Free Store connects people and shifts their thinking".

Sari Steuber, Transition Town Media

Impacts and legacy

Every day at the Store is full of stories about how this approach affects people. One day a woman came in with two small children, clearly in distress, in the middle of a court case to escape an abusive partner. She had left the family home with nothing. "You mean I can just have these plates? And these glasses? These books for the kids? Does this toaster work? Can I have that too?" It was a lifeline when she most needed one. Every day brings stories like this.

It's a place where every day synchronicities occur. People find the lid to a pan they love that has been lidless for 30 years. People make new friends. People experience what its co-ordinators call "a compassion-building exercise".

Outcomes

- 85 volunteers
- 4,000 Facebook followers
- open 5 days, 23-33 hours/week (fewer in winter)
- 2 hour shifts, 2 persons per shift
- in past year, over \$8,000 was put into the Free Store's donation jar which more than covered their expenses for the year.



FACEBOOK POSTS FROM THE FREE STORE INCLUDE:

"THANKS FOR THE FREE CANVAS. MADE MY OWN MASTERPIECE LOL"

"BIG THANKS TO THE PERSON THAT DONATED THIS ACUPUNCTURE MAT. I USE IT TO HELP MY CHRONIC PAIN".



TRANSITION TOWN MEDIA'S FREE STORE

A SHOP WHERE
EVERYTHING'S
FREE? HOW MIGHT
THAT BRING A
COMMUNITY
TOGETHER, AND HOW
MIGHT IT SHIFT
ATTITUDES TOWARDS
CONSUMERISM?

12.

“

Message for COP21

Please keep in mind that people want to do the right thing. They want to do things that help each other. Programmes to tackle climate change should be inclusive, promoting self help, spontaneity, an improvisational approach. Come and volunteer at the free store. Dust some shelves, flatten some cardboard. Another world is possible, it just takes some imagination. And some funding would be nice!

Sari Steuber, Transition Town Media

Challenges and group culture

Opening a Free Store is not without its challenges. While for many people a sharing, collaborative culture feels natural and exciting, for others it can raise feelings of discomfort. A Free Store is a place where people came face to face with their unconscious assumptions about ‘stuff’, about value, and about their own attachments. According to Julie, a volunteer at the Store, managing people who abuse the system, and whose experience of consumption is rooted in scarcity and fear, can be a real challenge, as well as an opportunity for discussion and insight.

Transition Town Media’s Core Group pay a lot of attention to strategies for managing their, and their volunteers’, burnout. Their meetings use Check-ins at the start of meetings, and other strategies for good communication, as well as alternating between Doing (task-focused) and Being (process-focused) meetings. They recognise that the volunteers at the Free Store also need strategies for burnout, and plan to bring those Core Group tools to the Free Store group.

Legacy

Organisers tell of a very conventional, later middle-aged suburban woman whose hair dryer broke. She told staff at the Free Store, “the ‘old me’ would have gone out and bought 2 new ones. The ‘new me’ is in here asking if anyone has one”. Free Stores have also emerged in Transition communities from Berlin in Germany to Crediton in England, and they are spreading. In a world where people increasingly measure their identity in the context of their relationships to consumer goods, we may be seeing a lot more Free Shops.



A TYPICAL DAY IN THE FREE STORE. NOT AS BUSY AS SOME BUT A VOLUNTEER AT THE DESK, PEOPLE SHOPPING, PEOPLE CHATTING, ETC.

Photo: Emma Medina-Castrejon (taken by cell phone)



AARDEHUIS (EARTH HOUSE) PROJECT OLST

A KEY WAY TRANSITION GROUPS
CAN INCREASE THEIR IMPACT IS BY
WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
OTHER GROUPS OR PROJECTS.
AARDEHUIZEN PROJECT IS A
GREAT EXAMPLE OF THAT.

13.





Message for COP21

It's high time building regulations and building education reflected the urgency for zero carbon building and housing!

Paul Hendriksen, Transition Town Deventer

Group: Transition Town Deventer, the Netherlands.

Local population: 98,510
Group started: 2008

Other projects: Repair Cafes, Inner Transition group, Edible Deventer group (local food security projects and events) community energy company, 'Groene Golf' (Green Wave), a centre - with 97,000 square metres of grounds - a hub for practical sustainability and local resilience, REconomy events.

About the project

The Aardehuizen Project is a housing development of 23 houses and a Community Building, the first ecovillage project in the Netherlands. The original idea was for them all to be Earthships (buildings with walls made from tyres packed with rammed earth), but after 12 were built, they switched to straw bale walls, given the labour-intensive nature of Earthship construction. Most of the materials used in the construction were sourced from within 50 kilometres, including reclaimed materials such as tyres and scrap wood, as well as straw, cob and earth plasters. The building work was completed during the summer of 2015.

Working in partnership

The initiative began life two years before Transition Town Deventer (TTD) became a reality, but the two projects have been intertwined since then. After a long search for a site, land was found in the neighbouring municipality of Olst, and a partnership was formed between the Municipality, a social housing provider (who financed the building of 3 of the homes), a recycling company (who provided recycled building materials) and the ecovillage group themselves.

TTD played a central role in partnering with the project, for example they have:

- Organised information events about the project
- Used their extensive networks to generate interest in and support for the project
- Run workshops on rocket mass heaters
- Brought facilitation and group skills to help the project's meetings and organisational culture
- The Aardehuis Project has operated as TTD's 'Sustainable Building & Cohousing Group'.

Achievements and legacy

The development has been a huge success, and an inspiration to many thousands of people. Over

1,500 people have worked on the scheme as volunteers, and it is regularly visited by organisations, businesses, other municipalities and nascent ecovillage groups. Many of those then leave with ideas for other projects, what Paul Hendriksen, who is involved in both TTD and Aardehuis calls a "ripple effect".

The Aardehuizen Project, as well as creating beautiful ecological homes, has also spawned several spin-offs:

- The bulk-buying of solar panels for the scheme was opened to local people, so over 80 homes in Olst now have solar energy
- The local economy has been boosted due to the construction work
- A collective of eco-carpenters has been formed
- Thanks to the trust built up with the Municipality, the group has been invited to take over a hectare of ground close to Aardehuis to create an edible landscape
- There will soon be a public natural play area near the project
- Another eco-cohousing project has been set up in Olst and will start building soon
- In 2012, thanks to the project Olst has won the regional contest 'Most sustainable village'.

Outcomes

- Build time - 4½ years
- Built by 40 residents and 1,500 volunteers from 27 countries
- Total cost €5 million
- Most building materials from within 50km of the site
- 100% of energy needs met onsite.





**VOLUNTEERS BUILDING
AN "EARTHSHIP" WALL
(TYRES PACKED WITH
SUBSOIL).**

Photo: Vereniging Aardhuis





GREENSLATE COMMUNITY FARM

A FORMERLY DERELICT FARM
IS BEING TRANSFORMED
INTO A COMMUNITY FARM,
PROVIDING A MEETING PLACE,
CARING SERVICES, AN INCUBATOR
FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISES, GOOD
FOOD AND SO MUCH MORE.



Group: Billinge & Orrell
Transition, England.

Local population: c. 10,000

Group started: 2009

Other projects: Billinge
& Orrell Renewable Energy
Hub (BORE), Billinge &
Orrell Allotment & Gardening
Association, a Community
Builder's Yard, Upcycling
Point and Toolbank,
Community Bakery
& Community Grocery.

Background

Billinge and Orrell in Transition began in 2009 as an offshoot of the now largely dormant Wigan Transition Town. It's a suburb of Wigan with a population of about 10,000 which has, over the last 40 years, changed from being semi rural to now being semi urban. It has gone from 4 butchers, 3 greengrocers and 4 bakeries to now just 1 butcher and a Cooperative supermarket. As Mandy Wellens-Bray, one of the group's founders put it:

"It had become more of a commuter place. I could see the community fragmenting, people turning their backs on each other. They don't talk the same anymore. I could feel the community going, and I felt we needed to step in".

About the project

The group have done many of the kinds of things Transition



Message for COP21

As communities and individuals, we can change the world. Just give us the opportunity. Put the opportunities in local people's hands.

Mandy Wellens-Bray, Billinge & Orrell Transition

groups do, such as Seed Swaps and starting new allotments. The group also had their eyes on a 30 acre farm owned by the local Council which had stood empty and neglected for 20 years. It took 4 years of what Mandy calls “nagging” to persuade the Council to finally make the site available to the community using an Asset Transfer and a 25 year lease, as well as to provide them with set-up funding. Greenslate Farm was born.

With the Council closing many of the care services it formerly provided, Greenslate Farm was imagined as a ‘Care Farm’, which led to funding from Wigan Council via their Community Investment Fund (The Deal) and UnLtd, providing a range of services to people in need, from those recovering from addictions to adults with additional needs. A range of therapeutic activities are laid on at the farm which, in part, cross subsidise other aspects of the farm, such as the market garden.

Impacts

The 30 acre farm was neglected, covered in nettles and thistles, so first arrivals were 6 large black pigs who cleared land for 40 allotments and a market garden. 18 acres of former barley field are now a regenerating woodland which is being coppiced and infilled with new plantings. A polytunnel has gone up. Old farm buildings have been repurposed, and there is now a schoolroom and a shop onsite. Several other social enterprises

have also spun off from the farm, a community energy company, vegan catering wagon and a charcoal maker.

Billinge & Orrell in Transition felt strongly that their success would depend on the creation of a Hub, a place where people could meet. Now it exists. “People come, they relax, they have conversations, they say ‘wouldn’t it be great if...’ and that’s where change starts,” Mandy says.

“It’s the thing that has blown us away with this project. People come down at weekends, during the week, and they are just thrilled to get stuck in. The amount you can do with volunteers is amazing”.

Mandy Wellens-Bray

Outcomes

- 7350 volunteer hours during first 8 months
- £575,574 in grant funding support from various agencies and funders.

Looking forward

Future plans include a new, L-shaped, load-bearing strawbale building which will be host to a professional kitchen, a community bakery, a cafe, a shop area and a dairy as well as two small offices. Funding is now in place from Public Health England and Power to Change (a Big Lottery funding stream), and work will start soon. It will be built by volunteers

from the local community as well as those from the Recovery Partnership, people recovering from drug and alcohol addictions. They are also looking into the creation of genuinely affordable housing in an area where there is very little. In 2016 the group plans to host a regional REconomy gathering, in order to continue promoting a wider culture of entrepreneurship in the area.

Challenges and group culture

As a group which combines volunteers and paid staff, burnout is always a risk, and balancing time and energy well is vital. The group found Transition Network’s Health Check³ very useful, and are arranging “nurturing swaps” with other local groups, where they visit each other to be supported and taken care of. Monthly meetings are informal, starting with a Check-In and including shared food.

“This is fantastic. I would never want to leave the area now. I just know that if anything goes wrong in my life, doesn’t matter what it is, there are now so many people I can turn to, to help me get through the bad times. I just love coming down here, the difference it gives from my normal working life...”.

Greenslate Farm volunteer

³ See <http://www.transitionnetwork.org/blogs/rob-hopkins/2015-02/have-you-done-transition-health-check-yet>



Group: 1000 Bruxelles en Transition, Brussels, Belgium.

Local population: 1000
Bruxelles: 177,000, Alhambra
c.10,000

Group started: 2013

Other projects: Repair Cafes,
regular film screenings,
Free Market (Gratifieria)

Background

Alhambra is a neighbourhood in the centre of Brussels. Its population tends to be ex pats and tourists, although there are some Belgians too. It is an area that has suffered for years from being a red light district, with prostitution an unwelcome fact of life for local residents: with kerb crawling and some of the other unpleasant things that go with that. "It's not a place you'd walk, and if you had to, you wouldn't stop", says Sébastien Mathieu, one of the group's founders.

About the project

In 2014, the local municipality decided that in an effort to stop kerb crawlers, they would block off some streets in the middle, preventing people from driving through them, forcing them instead to get out and walk. In some streets, the blocks were just ugly blocks, and the 1000 Bruxelles en Transition group felt they could do better. So they began a discussion with their public officials about making a garden instead. "The 'yes' came fast", says

Sébastien, "they recognised it as a good idea, but we had to get all the paperwork done, and then the committees and their processes took a year and a half".

The garden was designed with the Neighbourhood Committee and an architect, to include 13 raised beds within a fenced area. Materials were gathered from across the city, and the municipality provided the compost. Over two weekends, residents came out and built the garden. Each of the beds is managed by a different family.

According to Sébastien:

"Each family with a bed decides what goes into it. We have 13 beds and 13 different ways of thinking about gardening - 13 different styles in each garden. Some in a line, others in a big mess, some flowers, some vegetables, all super different. There are only 2 rules: you can't already have a garden somewhere else, and you can't use pesticides".

Impacts and legacy

The garden has had a big impact on the people living in the neighbourhood too. Previously, children couldn't play in the street, but now within a few minutes of someone starting to work in the garden they are joined by a few kids wanting to help out and to chat. And what about the prostitutes who frequented the area? "The garden has never been about being against the girls", says Sébastien.

"We took the opportunity to turn the blocks into something nice. But we don't see them any more close to the garden. They've moved on".

The Potager has become an attractor for social activity.

"From the first day people stop to ask questions, to have discussions", Sébastien continues. The group are clear that they see the Potager as the first of many. They are already collecting names of other families or individuals who would like to garden one of them, and when they have thirteen, they'll start another garden.

Outcomes

- 10 very active people
- big meetings attract 20-30, for some events 200-300
- on Facebook the group have 2000 friends.

"Could we have done this project before Transition came into our lives? I don't think we would. It's one year and a half we've all been talking about Transition almost every week, and it's very quickly changed a lot of things in our lives. For me, I stopped working a full week and now work three and a half days a week. I would never have done that if I was not thinking about Transition and about the future".

Sébastien Mathieu



Message for COP21

We are ready for change. We have already started it where we live in our neighbourhoods, and it's great!

Sébastien Mathieu, 1000 Bruxelles en Transition



POTAGER ALHAMBRA

A BRUSSELS NEIGHBOURHOOD EXPERIENCING THE DAILY IMPACTS OF BEING A RED LIGHT DISTRICT RESPONDS BY CREATING A NEW FOOD GARDEN!







“It changed the street enormously because before it was never a street that you would walk by or stop in, and now I get to stop here and spend several hours a week taking care of my little plot of land. And even for the people who are not part of the group, it changed the perception of what a neighbourhood is. We see a lot more people smiling and stopping by to chat and spend some time here”.

Sébastien Mathieu, 1000 Bruxelles en Transition

Photo: Rob Hopkins



LES COMPAGNONS DE LA TERRE

IN LIÈGE, NEW LOCAL FOOD ENTERPRISES ARE BEING CONSIDERED IN THEIR WIDER CONTEXT, THAT OF A 'FOOD BELT' AROUND THE CITY, A JOINED-UP LEARNING NETWORK OF MICROFARMS.



Group: Liège en Transition, Belgium.

Local population: c. 195,576

Group started: 2011

Other projects: Le Valeureux – a local currency scheme, Ceinture Aliment-terre ('Food Belt'), a market stall, food purchasing groups.

Background

Liège en Transition kicked off in November 2011, and Christian Jonet, one of its founders, recalls that the amount of interest at that point was “nearly overwhelming”. Several groups emerged, and projects started getting under way. “The food group began by visiting each other’s gardens”, says Christian, “but soon some of us began to get more ambitious in



All photos (these and following pages): Liège en Transition

terms of the kind of change we wanted to bring about”.

About the project

And so Ceinture Aliment-terre was born (French for “food belt”). It recognised that meaningful change, on the scale of Liège, needed to be systemic change, and that required thinking more entrepreneurially and professionally. In a city with a long heritage of industry and steel production, much of the land within the city is too contaminated for growing food, so the idea was to reconnect the city with its peri-urban land, and to use a revitalisation of local food production to reimagine the local economy. The region has lost many of its small producers in recent years as intensive agriculture has grown.

Working with a number of partner organisations, Ceinture Aliment-terre began with a huge launch event, supported by the Regional Government. The event asked the question “how do we manage, in 25-30 years, to transform the local food system to make it more democratic, local and ecological?” Two strands to its work were identified, firstly creating “new intelligences” around food production, new models and thinking, and secondly creating real projects and new infrastructure on the ground.

Achievements and legacy

Several new enterprises are already emerging, one growing mushrooms on coffee grounds, one producing seeds, and the launch of a collaborative shop run by its members is being

studied. A pilot project of Ceinture Aliment-terre, the new cooperative Les Compagnons de la terre (‘Companions of the Earth’) has created two food gardens. One, at Ecotopia, a 10 acre (4 hectare) site on the edge of the city, already home to a group of artists, a Montessori Nursery School and a Community Supported Agriculture scheme, is already providing enough food for vegetable boxes for 40 families a week. A second garden, at a small ecological and pedagogical farm, is also underway. At present both are run by volunteers, but by the beginning of 2016 the cooperative plans to have created 3 paid jobs. The project brings in a steady flow of volunteers who haven’t previously been involved in Transition. In 2016, they plan to add a 74 acre (30 hectare) site too.

Their aim is to create 20 quality local jobs within 5 years, a model which, if replicable across the region of Wallonia, could create 44,000 jobs. This could generate €3.9 billion by feeding 3.5 million people on one third of the area's agricultural land.

Future plans

Les Compagnons de la Terre are nothing if not ambitious. Inspired by Vin de Liège, a co-operative which raised €2 million in shares to start a vineyard, the group have just launched their own "call for citizen investment". Each share costs €250. If they reach €100,000 by the time of COP21, their regional government will double the amount. "You need to be ambitious", Christian says, "we are happy to have big ambitions, to raise great hopes, because we want to make big change". By July 2015 they had already sold €50,000 worth.

Their vision is for Liège to be surrounded by microfarms of 3-4 hectares (8-10 acres), creating many jobs. Being extremely democratic, the structure was conceived in a way that it cannot be sold to a corporate buyout, but rather is retained for the common good. Les Compagnons de la Terre feels like the beginning of something very remarkable.







“

Message for COP21

We need to move beyond the idea that there is, as Margaret Thatcher put it, “no alternative”. We want to show that the alternative can be serious, professional, and a real substitute to the economic model that exists now. This can create jobs and it can feed people.

Christian Jonet, Liège en Transition

Photo: Liège en Transition





Photos: Isabela Maria Gomez de Menezes

HARVESTING RAINWATER IN SÃO PAULO

RESIDENTS OF TWO VERY DIFFERENT
NEIGHBOURHOODS COME TOGETHER TO
LEARN TO SAFELY HARVEST, FILTER AND
STORE RAINWATER IN THE FACE OF THE
WORST DROUGHT ON RECORD.

17.

Groups: Transition

Brasilândia and Transition
Granja Viana, São Paulo,
Brazil.

Local populations:

Brasilândia (c.266,000),
Granja Viana (c.50,000)

Groups started: Brasilândia
2010, Granja Viana 2009

Other projects: Water and
Preservation group, Zero
Waste, Barter Fair, Food
security group, Sustainably
Health group, Art and Culture
group, Group of Urban
Forest people (Brasilândia):
EcoFeira (weekly market
of local and organic food),
AUescambAU (Barter fair),
CinePapo (cinema, popcorn
and socialising), Caronetas
da Granja (car sharing), 'My
waste is my business' group,
spicing your memories
group, Our Daily Bread group
(Granja Viana).

Background

São Paulo is a city suffering from a chronic water crisis, what some are calling "hydric collapse" as the city experiences a record three year low in rainfall, with 2014 being a record-breaking drought. And due to deforestation around the city, when it does rain, it can turn into violent torrents that end up not filling reservoirs but causing other problems. This has made life for people in the city extremely difficult. Brasilândia is well known as a favela (slum) whilst Granja Viana is a middle/upper class area. These two very different neighbourhoods within São Paulo (population c.12 million) are home to two sister Transition groups.

About the project

Isabela de Menezes of Transition Granja Viana (TGV) says this relationship with Brasilândia came about after residents there heard about the TGV Barter/Exchange Fair and wanted to do

one too. Since most residents in Brasilândia don't have many material possessions they got creative and offered services for things instead e.g. a massage in exchange for some seedlings. Back in July 2014, when Brazil was still hurting from the World Cup, many people (outside the mainstream media) were talking about an urgent need to tackle the imminent water shortage crisis. Isabela decided to speak to all her neighbours to make them aware of the crisis and to share knowledge about the importance of storing rainwater.

This was not always an easy task in her neighbourhood as all the homes have internal water storage tanks and many did not see the water crisis as an urgent cause for concern. Her intention was to change people's perceptions of water – that fresh water is a finite and vulnerable resource, that it's much better to reduce the use of fresh water by using captured rainwater for things which don't require pure water such as washing the floor, watering the plants etc.

Life in Brasilândia was very different, with residents sometimes going without water for up to ten days. In the favelas, very few of the homes have water storage facilities. People get their water direct from the pipes so if no water is flowing through the pipes then they simply go without. As a result, many people in Brasilândia took matters into their own hands by building their own water collection systems but these did not filter or close the water tank properly and as a result many people were getting seriously sick with dengue fever and other illnesses.

"People were getting dengue fever and other diseases because they were storing water without filtering it first, without the right knowledge. In addition, if

water tanks aren't closed properly, mosquitos lay their eggs on the water which encourages the spread of dengue. That's why here in São Paulo, we now have a dengue fever epidemic".

Isabela de Menezes, Transition
Granja Viana

For Isabela, the time was ripe to do something about it, to start running workshops. The first two ran in November 2014 in both Granja Viana and Brasilândia and were led by Professor Edison Urbano who has created a system which safely filters and stores rainwater straight from the roof. Soon, Isabela's husband Guilherme also learnt how to assemble these systems and started assisting friends and neighbours and being part of the workshops.

"Brasilândia is very creative. They have this amazing capacity to do things their own way, to manage and adapt things to their own environment. Transition Brasilândia continues to change and evolve because sometimes group members get a better job their financial position changes and they leave for another neighbourhood. Old members leave and new ones come in – this also keeps them creative!"

Isabela de Menezes,
Transition Granja Viana

Impacts and legacy

After the success of these workshops, more have taken place and more are planned. On Isabela's street in Granja Viana, nearly every house now has a water harvesting system. The street has become a test pilot which has now spread to other streets in the neighbourhood. The next workshop, which is being run in partnership with The Rotary Club, will install a system



**HANDS-ON
RAINWATER
HARVESTING
WORKSHOP RUN
BY TRANSITION
GRANJA VIANA.**

*Photos (this page and next):
Isabela Maria Gomez de Menezes*



in a local school. The plan is then to roll this out to all the schools in Granja Viana. They have also invited builders, developers and contractors to the workshop so that they can take the ideas away and replicate them in their own communities.

In Brasília, a water harvesting system has been installed in a community centre. In the height of summer when there was no water flowing to their homes, Noêmia, the centre's leader witnessed many children going to the centre to take a bath!

A project and funding proposal in conjunction with six partner organisations (including World

Resources Institute and Transition Brazil) is in the final planning/ fund raising stage for a Brasília test pilot project which will enable at least 30 residents to attend workshops and then generate income via installation and maintenance services. The impact of the project will be monitored and evaluated through indicators and continuous contact with the community. Project results will be published as a first step to development of an Adaptation Project Manual in Urban Communities in Brazil.

Overall the aim is to reduce the community's vulnerability and increase their capacity to adapt to a water crisis.

“

Message for COP21

Our main message is that water falls from the sky and it's FREE. It's terrible that the country doesn't use this resource. We would show them how poor houses and middle class houses and upper class houses can learn the importance of this resource and use it in a positive way. And also how beautiful and creative we can make it.

Isabela de Menezes,
Transition Granja Viana



CALLUM OF
MARGOSA
COOKING HIS
SRI LANKAN
CURRY.

Photo: Karen Jones

18.

CRYSTAL PALACE FOOD MARKET

AN AWARD-WINNING URBAN FOOD
MARKET WHICH “STANDS AS A
POWERFUL REMINDER ABOUT WHAT
CAN HAPPEN WHEN PEOPLE DARE TO
PUT A DREAM INTO REALITY”.

Group: Crystal Palace
Transition Town, London,
England.

Local population: 12,432

Group started: 2011

Other projects: Patchwork
Farm, the Palace Pint, Palace
Trees, Palace Preserves, 7
community gardens including
the award-winning Westow
Park, Palace Power, Local
and Fairtrade, Bugs Club,
Handmade Palace, Palace
Pick-up, Transition Kids,
Transition Babies, Green
Drinks, Skillshares, Group
bike commutes.

Background

A question arose at Crystal Palace Transition Town's (CPTT) 2012 AGM. “How could we bring more local and sustainable food into Crystal Palace?” From the subsequent discussion, the idea of a food market was mooted, and Karen Jones and Laura Marchant-Short, supported initially by Rachel de Thample and Joe Duggan, stepped up to try and make it happen. For the first year they held weekly planning meetings and conversations about how the market should be, and visited other markets. One of those was the Growing Communities market in Hackney, one of their key inspirations. They talked to founder Kerry Rankine who has run it for 10 years.

As Karen tells it:

“She said ‘you do know you have to be mad to do this?’ She looked me in the face, and said, ‘hmm, yes, you do look mad enough.’ She asked us four questions which

we now tell everyone who asks us how to start a market like this: 1) “Who are you going to do it with?” 2) “What do your community think?” 3) “What networks are you part of?” 4) “What are your principles?”

The principles the market was founded on are:

- supporting small sustainable farmers
- supporting local food producers
- promoting local growing
- promoting community
- creating local employment.

Through contacts in the CPTT group, a site was offered by the owners of a local recording studio/ cafe and an existing second-hand market, which was decided to be perfect. Laura and Karen didn’t need to go looking for businesses, the initial stallholders approached them, drawn by the market’s clear principles. All the farms supported are either organic or biodynamic, and local food businesses commit to moving “towards organic” over time.

The market opened on May 11th 2013. On the day, as Laura puts it, “we were so scared, and we were run ragged”. It started well, but then over following weeks, takings began to fall away. It was tough but they stuck with it, the traders stuck with them, and then the takings began to rise. Laura and Karen worked as volunteers for the first year, an approach which was clearly unsustainable. “We were working all hours to run the market, but I couldn’t afford to buy anything at it!” Laura recalls.

They now both earn the London Living Wage for their work on the market.

Traders pay 10% of what they take, calculated on a trust basis. As Laura puts it, “there’s always a way to work with people, because we want people to succeed”. 13 new enterprises have begun because of the market, and Laura and Karen often provide mentoring and support to traders. This is a fundamental part of the culture of the market.

“You have to be clear what you are from the start and you have to be bloody minded and support each other and your stall holders. We will fight for our stallholders. Once you’re in here you’re part of a family. We fiercely look after each other”.

Laura Marchant-Short

As Karen puts it: “People are used to not being helped. People are used to people saying “no you can’t do that,” and making people feel bad for some reason. We don’t make people feel bad. If they’re scared, we’ll sit with them and help them. People have these funny blocks in their heads. What they need is someone to hold their hand through the blocks. Then you watch people blossom”.

Ongoing challenges included managing windy days, and managing those who didn’t like the idea of an organic market. But they have persisted, running the market every week whatever the weather. And they’ve found that people turn out in any weather.

“It’s like your local pub. You come here on a Saturday and you always know you’re going to see someone you know and want to talk to. It’s the highlight of my week. Last year I was made redundant, and this was my lifeblood, being more involved, putting in more volunteer hours with the stall and with the gardens”.
Robyn, The Patchwork Farm

The market has a number of anchor businesses who are there every week: meat, fish, 3 vegetable & fruit sellers, a baker, the Grain Grocer (see the Lambeth LEF story), local cheese, british charcuterie, raw organic dairy, a local deli, herbs and bee friendly plants, as well as Handmade Palace & the Patchwork Farm (see pages 84-85). Handmade Palace gives local artists (15 each week) the chance to sell their creations in exchange for just a 10% commission. The rest of the stalls rotate, so as to give more businesses the chance to participate, including community stalls, alcohol, cakes, gluten free produce, street food, pasta, condiments, organic beauty/ health products.

“We want the children in our community to grow up thinking this is normal. There are three year olds walking around the market like they own the place, and they do! They have never known anything different. It only takes a generation to make a change”.
Laura Marchant-Short

Group culture and managing burnout

Given that organising a market can be stressful and exhausting, what kind of support do Karen and Laura get? How do they manage the risk of burnout? “At the end of each market we sit and talk to each trader when they come to pay. We ask “how did it go for you?” We listen to their stories. Then we go and sit and have a cider and discuss the day”. Support comes from many directions. As Laura puts it, “the community loves us, they are so pleased with it. We also have the whole of Transition Town, this big network of people”. Transition Town Crystal Palace meetings make use of a number of Inner Transition tools such as Check-Ins and affirmations which celebrate what different people in the group have done.

**“I live 4 minutes away.
This is my community.
I buy my flour from 37 miles
away, how local do you want
it? I like to keep it local.
Local, local all the way”.**
Chas of Chas & Momo Artisan
Bread Bakers

Achievements and legacy

The quality of what they have produced has not gone unrecognised. They were awarded Time Out magazine’s ‘Locals’ Choice’ award in 2014, and were runners up in the BBC Good Food Awards in 2015, as well as being recently named as ‘Best Market in the UK’ by loveFOOD.

“

Message for COP21

Encourage people to take the initiative and give them the tools to do so. You might be surprised what they can achieve. It is possible to create bottom up infrastructure that can deliver locally sourced sustainable food on a significant scale. Over the long term, we can make changes that can have significant impact on the carbon footprint of food in an area. We are doing what we can. Are you?

Karen Jones and Laura Marchant-Short, Crystal Palace Transition Town





KATE WILKINSON,
LOCAL RESIDENT
AND GLASSHOUSE
MANAGER AT
CHELSEA PHYSIC
GARDEN, RUNNING
A WORKSHOP
ON POTTING
SEEDLINGS AT
THE PATCHWORK
FARM STALL.

Photos: (this page) Guy Milnes,
(next page) Patchwork Farm map: Ursula McLaughlin



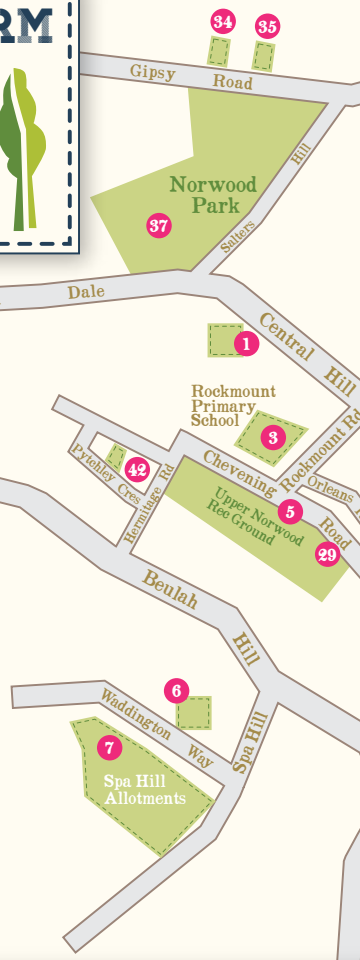
The market has also enabled CPTT to build many connections and partnerships. For example, waste food from the market goes to the Salvation Army lunch club, and a weekly collection for the local Food Bank has resulted in half a tonne of food being donated so far. And what of the future? Are they planning to franchise the market, expand it across London? Karen says no. "This is just the right size as it is now. Of course there's always change, but at the heart of it, we're looking after our own community. We want to stay sane!"

Outcomes

- Turnover: Weekly spend is now around £10,000, meaning that £510,000 is spent on local food, much of it organic, in Crystal Palace each year
- Started with 12 stalls, now have 23
- 13 new business startups
- 14 farms are supported by the market.



- ☆ apples
- ☆ aloe vera ☆
- ☆ apple chutney
- ☆ bramley apples ☆
- ☆ cabbage
- ☆ courgette seedlings ☆
- ☆ herbs and salad
- ☆ sweetcorn seedlings ☆
- ☆ quinces
- ☆ wild garlic ☆



- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 The Permaculture garden | 9 Karolina's garden |
| 2 Rachel's windowboxes | 10 Grape & Grain tipsy garden |
| 3 Rockmount Primary School | 11 Kalina's garden |
| 4 Crystal Palace food market  | 12 Crystal Palace Park Museum |
| 5 Anne's front garden | 13 Karen's garden |
| 6 Laura's garden | 14 Maberley Road allotments: Khorla, Adrian, Bob Brown |
| 7 Spa Hill allotments: Ambrose, The Conrad Family | 15 Mark's garden |
| 8 Edible garden | |



SEASONAL LOCAL PRODUCE FROM SE19 & VERY NEARBY

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 16 St John the Evangelist | 25 Sarah's garden | 34 Paula's garden |
| 17 James Dixon Primary School | 26 Vanessa's garden | 35 Eve's garden |
| 18 Laura's front garden | 27 Tim's garden | 36 Sue's garden |
| 19 Mehul's garden | 28 Malcolm's garden | 37 Norwood Park |
| 20 Clare's window box | 29 Imran's garden | 38 The Little Escape |
| 21 Jean's allotment patch | 30 Lorraine's garden | 39 Antenna Cafe |
| 22 Winsford Gardens | 31 Lyn's garden | 40 Vanessa's garden |
| 23 Sydenham Garden Resource Centre | 32 Maureen's garden | 41 Fiona's garden |
| 24 Sylvia's back garden | 33 Renae's garden | 42 Caroline's garden |



Photo: Tricia Hogbin

19.

TRANSITION STREETS

COMMUNITIES IN 2 AUSTRALIAN CITIES SUPPORT EACH OTHER TO CUT CARBON EMISSIONS, SAVE MONEY, AND BUILD COMMUNITY IN UNEXPECTED WAYS.



Photo: Karen Whitelaw

Groups: Transition

Newcastle, Transition Banyule (Melbourne), Transition Streets Kingston Pilot (Melbourne), Australia.

Local population: 308,308 (Newcastle), 118,306 (Banyule, Melbourne), 151,686 (Kingston, Melbourne).

Groups started: 2008

(Newcastle), 2009 (Banyule), 2014 (Kingston).

Other projects: Transition

Newcastle: Nourishing Newcastle Urban Tucker Stall, Transition Newcastle Pantry, Transition Newcastle Skills Hub, Fair Share Festival, film nights and other awareness raising events. Transition Banyule: Banyule Bike Train Tour, Banyule Edible Garden Tours, Banyule Urban Orchard, monthly veggie swaps and awareness raising events.

Background

Transition Streets is a great example of what happens when you have an international network of thousands of groups around the world, and one group creates a great resource to share. In late 2010, Transition Town Totnes developed Transition Streets, which it describes as a “tried-and-tested, award-winning (it won the Ashden Award for Behaviour Change in 2011) behaviour-change project to cut energy use and strengthen your neighbourhood”.

Participants meet 7 times in each other's homes, looking one week at energy, the next at food, then water and so on. In Totnes, 500 households got involved, on average cutting their carbon emissions by 1.3 tonnes and saving participants around £600 a year per household. In follow-up research, the most common benefit reported was feeling more connected to neighbours and to community.

The idea spread fast. There is now a US version created by Transition US which is now being used in 12 communities. Transition Belgium created a French-language version. It is also emerging in Italy, France and Sweden, as well as in individual communities elsewhere. The story of its emergence in Australia offers a useful insight into how Transition spreads and grows.

Working together

Melbourne and Newcastle are 1000km apart, but have both played an active role in the emergence of Transition Streets. Transition Newcastle (New South Wales) heard about Transition Streets and decided to create their own version, initially calling it 'Transition Streets Challenge' but later dropped the 'Challenge' part because feedback indicated some people felt it suggested competition. Their version of Transition Streets was piloted on 5 streets and very well received.

Initially Transition Newcastle received some funding support from their local Council for design and printing, and a local water authority also helped out. Meanwhile, 1000km away in Melbourne (Victoria), a resident of Kingston (a suburb of the city) saw a screening of the film *In Transition 2.0*, which included mention of Transition Streets. Inspired, he obtained a copy of the *Totnes* version and set about trying to adapt it to the Australian context. He then found that Transition Newcastle had already created a local version and were thinking about how to make it more widely available. He also discovered that Transition Banyule, also in Melbourne, were interested in Transition Streets. Rather than work in isolation, they decided to share their experience in order to create a generic Australian version.

Created collaboratively by Transitioners in Newcastle and

Melbourne, the national workbook was completed in early 2015. Working together, the groups were each able to draw inspiration and ideas from working together.

Impacts and legacy

In the evaluation of the initial pilot in Newcastle, participants rated themselves more highly after the program than before it in terms of their:

- Understanding of sustainability
- Motivation to, and knowing how to, reduce their environmental footprint
- Relationships with their neighbours
- Feeling part of a community which is trying to become more sustainable.

Transition Newcastle was highly commended (a runner up) for Transition Streets at the 2013 NSW Sustainable City awards. They have found that some of the impacts were not those anticipated.

In one street, the relationship between local residents and a student house on the street hadn't been the easiest, the students keeping different hours and having different ideas of acceptable noise levels. Transition Streets brought them together, and one of the things that emerged was that many residents felt vulnerable walking home at night, given that the area had high rates of mugging and street crime. The students were able to play a more active role in keeping an eye out for people, who were then able to feel safer.

As one participant wrote, "an overall sense of safety was created... in one instance the students ran out of the house to protect a neighbour who was about to be assaulted". It's the kind of unexpected spinoff that can arise from the simple act of getting neighbours to sit down and meet each other which Transition does so well. Spinoffs that go way

beyond carbon. They have now run it in another 6 streets and are preparing to expand it.

"And you realise how everybody's trying to do their best with what they're doing. And then you find that someone's doing this and that and, 'Oh I haven't thought of doing that. I should try that'".

Transition Streets participant, Newcastle

In Banyule, the group emailed their list and 60 people attended an event to learn more, and of them, 58 signed up to take part. Many of those people then went door knocking on their streets to try and gather interest. In the end, they decided that the best approach would be to bring people together not as streets but as neighbourhoods.

"Transition Streets has had an impact not only on people who are just learning about sustainability, but also on people who have been involved for years. Many of the streets are inspired to take collective action such as a bicycle-powered film night, a street garage sale, regular cooking afternoons and erecting scarecrows in a shopping strip to promote local food sources".



Photo: Graeme Stuart

Challenges and group culture

Running Transition Streets in both places has not been without its challenges. Trying to recruit people to do it has been tricky, with the approach of

doorknocking being problematic, and it being difficult to frame the invitation in a culture with high levels of climate scepticism. In suburban areas there is often a very individualistic culture, people don't tend to have much to do with their neighbours. The groups in Melbourne and Newcastle are taking a pragmatic approach to spreading Transition Streets.

Reflecting on its future direction Graeme Stuart of Transition Newcastle suggests: "Hang in there and let it go where it wants to go. We're looking at changing from how it was originally envisaged, to using it in schools, and various other settings. It's about keeping going and being willing to adapt and to give things a go". Another challenge has been supporting those people facilitating the groups, to prevent burnout. In Banyule, part of the Council's

funding was used to pay a skilled facilitator, enabling the facilitator to work with those convening Streets groups, supporting them in how to run and group, how to deal with difficult people and so on. Many found this very useful. Convenors also met each other as a kind of support group, to share challenges and issues and to offer each other support.

The Australian version of Transition Streets is being made freely available through a Creative Commons licence. "It's not a good business model", says Graeme, "but it's much more consistent with our values!"

“

Message for COP21

"It's time. We cannot keep leaving our children to respond to the challenges of climate change. It's time to stop worrying about short-term interests and to start focusing on long-term impacts. It's time to show real leadership in the transition to a low carbon, more sustainable future".

Graeme Stuart,
Transition Newcastle



LEARNING
BREADMAKING
THROUGH
TRANSITION
STREETS.

Photo: Graeme Stuart

THE WATSON STREET
TRANSITION STREETS
GROUP CREATING A
NEW GARDEN.

Photo: Graeme Stuart



20.

SCALING UP TRANSITION IN PETERBOROUGH

WHAT KIND OF THINKING
AND PROCESSES MIGHT
ENABLE A COMMUNITY
TRANSITION INITIATIVE
TO REALLY SCALE UP
ITS IMPACT?



CELEBRATING THE
PURPLE ONION AT
THE PURPLE
ONION FESTIVAL.

Photo: Transition Peterborough



Message for COP21



Group: Transition Town Peterborough, Canada.
Local population: 78,698.
Group started: 2007
Other projects: Kawartha Loon (local currency), Purple Onion Festival, Dandelion Day, Greenzine, Transition Skills Forum, 25% Shift Local Food Taskforce, Local Food Month.

Background

Like many Transition, and other changemaking initiatives around the world, Transition Town Peterborough (TTP) has been giving some serious thought to how it might scale up its impacts and its ambitions. As a group founded in 2007, but built on REconomy principles long before the term 'REconomy' was even used, entrepreneurship has always been at the heart of what they do. As founder Fred Irwin puts it:

"Our general thinking is that it's so important to do the ecological part, and the social part, both very very important and intimately connected. But unless you can

Localise as much of your economy, as fast as you can. It cuts your carbon footprint in food, it supports continued business in your community, you build community resilience and strength with people helping each other, communicating with each other. You change peoples' thinking, so that they think more locally, they act more locally. This may fly in the face of what economists want to hear about growth but it's absolutely necessary in these transition times.

Cheryl Lyon, Transition Town Peterborough

keep your economy running and people employed in the delivery of your essentials of life, you cannot adapt to climate change and you won't have a resilient community. For example, building local food security creates more jobs and cuts carbon emissions".

The group's magazine, 'Greenzine', now in its seventh year, is distributed to 5,000 households from 50 distribution outlets across the greater Peterborough area. Self-funded by advertising, it enables Transition thinking and ideas to reach a wider cross-section of the community. All of TTP's projects, from their very popular annual 'Purple Onion Festival', to Local Food Month and the Transition Skills Forum, are about broadening the group's impact and appeal.

Steps to scaling up

TTP is focused on "changing ideas and world views, and the creation of practical demonstration projects". But given the relatively small all-volunteer group, and their strong desire to scale up their impacts, they have decided it would be most skilful to focus their energy on the following:

Embedding local money:

Approaching the City Council to see if they might take over running of the local currency the Kawartha Loon, accepted by more than 110 businesses. At the moment it is backed by the \$60,000 thus far exchanged for the currency. If it were backed by the City's estimated \$30 million deposits, the reach and impact of the scheme would increase hugely.

The 25% Local Food Shift:

Working with students of the two local post-secondary institutions and a number of not-for-profit partners, including Farms at Work, TTP has published research showing that a 25% shift in spending towards locally produced food would benefit the local economy, in 10 years time, by \$400 million Cdn a year. Having a robust economic case hugely helps making the case for intentional localisation

Broadening the group's communications:

Through the Greenzine, the group is always seeking ways to reach more people. A recent shift in messaging "scale" in the

Greenzine was the move from a Buy Local publication in support of locally-owned businesses, to a consumer magazine with Living Locally as the theme printed on each page and with one quarterly edition dedicated to the adaptive changes required to Live Locally. The magazine is also carries a strong positive message, a sense of what could be achieved. As TTP's Cheryl Lyon puts it, "we don't want the catastrophe to do the work for us"

Reskilling: this is a very successful TTP initiative (in terms of reach). In its seventh year, the Transition Skills Forum invites citizens to host sharing a broad range of resilient and adaptive skills e.g. bread-making, edible wild foods, green building etc. The Forum has been run from the beginning as socially inclusive pay-what-you-can policy of \$5 Cdn or KL's (the local currency) and is sponsored by the local Trent University's students' sustainability association.



Photo: Transition Peterborough

Following the publication of TTP's '25% Local Food Shift' study, there was a major shift of focus in the City and County Economic Development Strategy, away from trying to attract bigger businesses into town and toward 'building a local economy'. In spite of offering no suggestion as to how it might achieve this, nor any money to support the work, for TTP, this shift in language signals a real breakthrough. "We believe we definitely had an influence," says Fred.

"We can start things and fail like no other organisation can. We're all about entrepreneurship, but we're also about taking risks that no-one else will take. They first have to sit and write a project for funding. We now have enough money in the bank, after 7 years, that we can risk \$1,000 and start something".

Fred Irwin, Transition Town Peterborough

Group culture

Other key elements of scaling up are good group culture, and skilful hosting of volunteers. The group have mastered the art of Board meetings that are fun, and which also allow room for flexibility. As Cheryl puts it, "we support each other by living in ambiguity." But the group recognises they could bring more to embed some of the Inner Transition approaches to their work: "It's something we need to take more seriously", says Cheryl.

In terms of volunteers, each Greenzine includes a very clear ask, inviting people to volunteer in very specific roles. For many young people, being able to put such experiences on their CV has done a lot in terms of making them more employable.

Scaling up does not aim at making TTP bigger but at having the message of transition through the interrelated eco-social and economic impacts of climate change understood and acted upon in adaptive, positive and constructive ways throughout the community and by many different groups, not just TTP.

Impacts and legacy

The group's approach is starting to have an impact. Cheryl Lyon from the group talked about a presentation she recently gave to the City Council's invitation for public input into the municipal budget. "I said 'I don't want this, that or the other expenditure in the budget. What I'm proposing is that you think differently, and that every item that comes forward for the budget be looked at from the point of view of whether it create a resilient community that is adapting to climate change.'"

UNGERSHEIM, VILLAGE IN TRANSITION

TRANSITION IS A PROCESS
LED BY, AND OWNED BY,
COMMUNITIES. BUT WHAT
MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE IF A
MAYOR DECIDES TO RUN
WITH THE IDEA AND REALLY
MAKE IT HAPPEN?

21.



AN AREA OF LA COMMUNE
D'UNGERSHEIM'S
'HELIO PARC 68', THE
LARGEST SOLAR PROJECT
IN THE ALSACE REGION,
LOCATED ON A FORMER
MINING WASTE SITE.

Group: La Commune d'Ungersheim, France.
Local population: c. 1,972
Project started: 2011

Background

Ungersheim is a village in the Alsace region of France, close to the borders with Germany and Switzerland. For many years it was dependent on mining potash, used to make potassium for fertilisers and salt for use on roads in winter. The mining closed down around the turn of the century. It is an area renowned historically for its rich pastures, the village emblem being 3 clover leaves. Jean-Claude Mensch, Mayor of Ungersheim, first heard about Transition in 2011 when he hosted a visit by an organisation called the General Assembly of the Citizens of the World, at which the film *In Transition 1.0* was screened. He recognised it as what he calls "a different, inclusive and fraternal economic model". It led to a conversation in the Commune along the lines of "we're already doing a lot of that, let's become a Transition town". And so they did.

Achievements to date

The list of achievements, and the sense of what can be achieved when local government throws an extra something behind the implementation of Transition, is impressive. The Commune have embarked on 21 key initiatives, including:

- Introducing more participative democracy
- Becoming a Fair Trade town
- Forming a citizens forum about renewable energy and campaigned for the closure of the nearby Fessenheim nuclear power station
- Launching a local currency, 'Le Radis' (the radish)
- Mapping the biodiversity of the

area in an 'Atlas of Biodiversity'

- Returning a former waste heap created by mining to nature
- Installing a 120m² solar thermal installation at the swimming pool
- Installing a wood biomass boiler which also heats the pool and several adjoining buildings
- Changing all the public lighting in the village to low energy bulbs, leading to a 40% reduction in energy use, as well as turning some street lights off after midnight
- Assessing all public buildings for their energy consumption
- Making land available (land owned by the Commune) to a PassivHaus co-housing project of 9 homes, Eco-Hameau Le Champré
- Completely banning all pesticides and herbicides in public areas
- Replacing all cleaning products in public buildings with eco cleaning products
- Buying a working horse to help with local food production, and also to act as a 'bus' to take local school kids to school
- Changing the catering arrangements so that the local primary school now serves 100% organic meals (much of it sourced locally, see below), every day, including snacks
- Starting a food preservation business, canning locally-produced food so as to extend its availability.

It's a story that has attracted national and international attention, as well as inspiring many communities around Ungersheim to start their own Transition initiatives. As well as some of the above, a few key projects really stand out.

Helio Parc 68

This is a 5.3MW solar installation, the largest solar project in the

Alsace. The site is a former mining waste site owned by the Commune, which has been cleared and levelled and transformed into what will become a business park, with the thousands of solar panels, the biggest single solar installation in the Alsace, mounted on structures that could, as some already have, been fitted out as industrial units.

Les Jardins de Cocagne

The Commune has made available an 8 hectare site that it owns to Les Jardins de Cocagne, an organic gardening enterprise which works with unemployed young people. The gardens produce 64 varieties of vegetables, provide 250 baskets of food for local families each week, and run stalls at 5 markets every week. They recently erected a wind turbine built by local school children and course participants. Currently under construction is a beautiful complex of buildings built by the Commune, using local timber, straw, clay and timber shingles which will be leased back, rent free, for the processing and storage of food grown on the farm. The farm supplies the now-organic primary school among other things, a great example of what they call "short circuit", shortening the distance between grower and consumer.

'La Semaine Solaire'

At the Mayor's invitation, a Greenpeace group from Switzerland recently worked with a group of teenagers from the local Lycée, mapping every roof in the town, analysing elevations, size and so on, concluding that if every roof that could take solar PV were to do so, they would meet 77% of the town's energy needs.

It was a project that had a huge impact not just on the young people involved, but also on the Greenpeace activists. Most of their work has been around saying no to things, campaigning and resisting, and this shift into taking practical



LOCAL
SCHOOLCHILDREN
NOW TRAVEL TO
SCHOOL BY HORSE
POWER, A MAGICAL
EXPERIENCE.

Photo: La Comune d'Ungersheim



BEAUTIFUL FOOD
PROCESSING/
STORAGE
CENTRE UNDER
CONSTRUCTION AT
LES JARDINS DE
COCAGNE USING
LOCAL TIMBER,
CLAY AND STRAW.

Photo: Rob Hopkins

steps was something that touched them deeply. This also coincided with the school launching its new 40Kw rooftop solar PV installation, which the students helped to put in place.

“The Transition concept, which addresses the vital physical and psychological needs of the inhabitants, is the key to the solving our challenges. A village, a neighbourhood of 2000 to 5000 inhabitants, is the right scale. From acorns grow oak trees. The programme we elaborated can easily be reproduced elsewhere. We need to stand together, be daring and in anything we do, put people first”.
Jean-Claude Mensch

Reflections

Blazing such a pioneering trail hasn't all been an easy process. As Jean-Claude Mensch puts it, “changing behaviours while being confronted with immense consumerist pressure, amplified by the harassment of advertising, is not a simple task. At every step, we bumped into violent reactions, often of the lowest level. With the support of the citizen movement, by giving civil society a voice and the ability to contribute, we are gradually opening up the way to Transition. Voters seem to agree with our approach by giving us a majority for 27 years now”.

Like many areas of Transition, the edge between Transition and local government is just that, an edge. Can it be said that Transition should never be initiated by a Mayor or local government?

Given the urgency for change, it is clear that we need to see Transition happening everywhere, and very rapidly.

A key factor in being able to do this is having inspiring, replicable solutions that people can point to, and can relate to. To be able to do this at a local authority level clearly takes a pretty remarkable person, but in Jean-Claude Mensch we have that. Being able to point to Ungersheim, where the Mayor and the Comune are making so many amazing things happen is very powerful, and worthy of being our final story. Ungersheim truly represents a ‘place of possibility’.

We'll leave the last word to Mr Mensch: “This commitment has a positive impact on our economy, on our jobs. It guarantees a healthy tax balance through the use of renewable energy, it ensures the survival of our ecosystems. But most of all, we establish solid ties between the inhabitants through a re-discovered well-being”.



Jean-Claude Mensch. Photo: La Comune d'Ungersheim



Message for COP21

If world leaders visited Ungersheim, I would show them that community excitement is the yeast and also the spearhead of Transition, generating the capacity to take back your destiny in your own hands, what we call resilience. I would show them our achievements in this village, made possible via the reorientation of public policies and citizens' real sense of ownership. It's about stopping superfluous and useless expenses while addressing people's real needs, and thereby building a more fraternal economy.

Jean-Claude Mensch





“It’s more than a garden, it’s a new place in the neighbourhood where we can stay and have a few words with the neighbours, people you normally pass by. We are seeing all different people talking to each other, all ages, from children to old people. It’s a social meeting point”

Sébastien Mathieu, 1000 Bruxelles en Transition

“We create more wealth because less money leaves Bristol and gets lost in complicated global financial systems. Sterling isn’t loyal; it goes wherever it can make more of itself, accumulating in tax havens, in big executive pay packets or with distant shareholders. Bristol Pounds stay working on the ground for us. They stick to Bristol creating stronger communities and a greener economy”.

Ciaran Mundy, Bristol Pound

“Transition is about caring: caring for the Earth, caring for each other. It comes from a place of love. It’s also about creation of livelihood where people live, and the fact is that at the moment the respect given to people who care isn’t very high. We don’t value caring as a thing that’s critical. Increasing respect for carers is a fundamental part of this”.

Frances Northrop, Caring Town Totnes



HOW A MOVEMENT OF COMMUNITIES IS COMING TOGETHER TO REIMAGINE AND REBUILD OUR WORLD

This book celebrates local action and the myriad of possibilities that it can unlock. Millions of people are already taking the kind of personal steps that world leaders continue to debate in order to reduce the world's carbon emissions.

As you will see from these 21 stories from 39 communities in 15 countries, these communities are finding themselves better connected, happier, more fulfilled, and also feeling like they are making a meaningful and measurable difference to their community, to their own lives and to the world. Welcome to the world of Transition.

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