

# Supporters' and Members' Newsletter from Transition Exmouth, July-August 2016

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## **1.Neighbourhood Plan – your input required**

Back in May I sent you all information on the emerging Exmouth Neighbourhood Plan (NP). We all care about the future of our town and I know that some of you are already involved

but this is an update and a plea for all to participate in the consultation process before it's too late; no point in then complaining 'I didn't realise'!

This is not a suitable space wherein to describe our emerging Neighbourhood Plan in detail but Transition Exmouth feels it is important we ensure that it reflects our special approach to development in Exmouth.

For full details see:

<http://www.exmouth.gov.uk/exmouth-neighbourhood-plan/>

Two stages of the consultation have already been achieved: a town-wide survey and ward-by-ward consultations.

FYI, the timetable was to be as follows, but I gather this may have to be revised:

#### 2016, February

- Agree draft questionnaire and process for distribution and analysis
- Consider Ward evidence

#### March

- Prepare programme and presentations for Ward consultations
- Questionnaire Distributed

#### April

- Hold Open Meeting to discuss aims of Neighbourhood Plan

#### May/June

- Conduct First Consultation in each Ward

#### July/August?September

- Complete Analysis of Ward Consultations
- Stakeholder Consultations

#### August/ September

- Prepare draft outline NP

#### October

- Conduct Open Meeting on Town Issues and amend Outline NP

#### November/December

- Conduct Second Ward Consultations

#### 2017 , January/February

- Finalise Draft NP and prepare DRAFT version for Publication

#### March/April

- Statutory 6-week Pre-submission Consultation Period

#### June

- EDDC organises referendum (6 weeks)

#### July

- Independent Examiner

#### September

- Announcement of NP Adoption

## **The Exmouth Vision**

An Exmouth Vision was extrapolated by consultants from the 2126 household surveys returned:

*“Exmouth aims to be a friendly, safe, clean and vibrant town, building on our traditional seaside heritage balanced with an aspiration to be forward thinking we will enable all, young and old, to have a great place to live and visit.”*

As far as it goes, no reason to argue with that!

## **Consultation Results so Far**

I have trawled through the available published results of the consultations. There are a multitude of different opinions voiced, a lot of them, sadly, raising matters that are without the planning system.

In regard to the matters that concern Transition Exmouth:

- Several comments about the need for more recycling facilities,
- Plenty of support for cycling although some that clearly think we have enough of it!
- Many people commented on the valuable natural environment, seafront and elsewhere, stating that we need to protect, extend, and enhance it.
- The ever-more-pressing need for an Integrated Transport-Interchange also gets a look in, and
- A desire for more local, independent retailers.

Amen to all that but there is so far not one comment specifically recognising the threat from Climate Change; and after our eight years campaigning in the town, I am deeply disappointed at that. There are however three people requesting more renewable energy generation to be set against one respondent asking for another petrol station!

My assessment therefore is that to date, Exmouth is behind the national consensus on these vital issues, but you can yet change that by speaking out!

There are significant stages yet to run and your attention is drawn to the forthcoming 'stakeholder consultations'; we do not seem to be included in this category but maybe you are a member of one an included group?

There is to be an Open Meeting and, in November/December, a second round of ward consultations. The details of these will be widely publicised and we urge you to take advantage of them.

## **Noel's Topics**

Following are Noel's suggestions of topics that Transition Exmouth and its colleagues should be raising at Neighbourhood Plan consultations:

The aim should be for all new buildings to be sustainably constructed, and expected to last throughout for the 21st century. They need to be strong enough for the rigours of future climate change, and, wherever possible, not only carbon neutral, but also capable of generating electricity.

1. We need a transport interchange near the railway to enable people arriving by train to access public transport, buses and taxis so that they can get to the suburbs. We also need cycle tracks from there to the main housing areas.
2. We need a shop-mobility facility in the shopping area, so that elderly people who do not have mobility scooters, can collect their shopping more easily.
3. Water harvesting should be installed in new properties, so that rainwater can be collected for washing and toilet purposes. There should be a separate drinking water supply. This is important as climate change will bring heavy downpours and blocked drains could cause flooding.
4. Land needs to be allocated for allotments in all new housing areas. Consideration should be given to areas for wild-flower meadows and nesting for birds and bats.
5. Tourism being our main industry, we should maximise this potential. Exmouth was built in Victorian times as a garden resort in an area of natural beauty. Let us build on this foundation. Devon Cliffs Holiday camp attracts thousands of tourists every year. It has won sustainable awards with web-cams on the sea birds at Straight Point and viewing screens in the camp. It organises children's woodland discovery activities and environmental advice packs in every caravan. The town could develop these ideas much further and market itself as one of England's most sustainable resorts.

6. Exmouth sunshine, winds and wet weather can be an asset for exploring the possibility of the generation of local energy. We already have three solar farm proposals. Solar panels should be encouraged on as many roofs as possible, including public buildings. This would not only be cost effective for owners, but enable them to generate electricity which could be sold to the grid. There are opportunities for enhancing this if Exmouth looks favourably on applications for suitable sites for some wind turbines (such as the Recycling Depot) and also if we really explore the possibilities of tidal power in the Exe Estuary.

7. Plans are in hand for a water sports centre. Another development that was much discussed a few years ago was a Jurassic Coast Visitor Centre. If pursued, this historic information could be enhanced by information about sea birds and migrating birds on the Exe, with camcorders and monitor screens. The modern story of climate change and the way that Exmouth is responding to it could be a main feature also. An all-weather Environment Centre on Queen's Drive would enhance the visitor experience.

8. There is scope for a properly equipped camping and caravan site on the area around the Maer Rd. Car Park. This would have the dual effect of removing caravans from the sea-front and attracting more visitors who appreciate the natural environment. Many of them would use the town restaurants and other facilities.

9. Transition Homes. One way of ensuring that Exmouth makes her mark as a sustainable town would be to allocate land a cluster of sustainable homes providing affordable accommodation alongside allotments similar to those being constructed at Dartington in South Hams. See [www.transitiontowntotnes](http://www.transitiontowntotnes). A special feature could be a scheme for self build affordable homes, with professional advice provided through a suitable training agency or housing trust.

10. If all these features were incorporated Exmouth would be well on the road to be able to market itself as being England's most sustainable holiday resort.

## **2.AGM Report**

Our AGM this year was held on the afternoon of Saturday 2nd July. As before in the Open Door Centre. There were competing attractions elsewhere at the same time but our stalwarts turned up, some coming to our meeting later.

Your officers remain as before but with Rob Masding taking on the membership role (you'll be hearing from him) and Roger Gibson turning his hand to Press & Publicity. Thanks to both of them.

Our subscription for Members remains at £5 plus a commitment to plant a tree, excellent value!

We heard presentations from Noel Harrower on the NP (discussed above) and from Andy Lock on Sustainable Exmouth.

Andy gave us an update on EDDC's progress, or lack of it and explained Transition Exmouth's position that we will not get involved in what, if anything, is to be demolished or built but that we are very interested in securing the best designs for anything that is built and

in ensuring that the highest standards of sustainability are followed. He said that the concept of a negative carbon footprint is relevant here and told us about a number of examples around the country and around the world where these 'Eco-Positive' designs are up and in operation, actually benefiting the environment and saving carbon emissions within building structures. His message was "Why not here?" but he also believes that we need to do more work on precisely how our vision of sustainability should be part and parcel of Exmouth's development.

## **Monitoring & Evaluation**

We finished up the AGM afternoon with a Monitoring & Evaluation session, to be specific, a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) a lot of ideas were forthcoming and you'll be hearing from the Umbrella Group on development of the group over the months ahead.

## **3. Transition Exmouth Sailing Cruise**

In the spirit of minimal use of fossil fuels, we are taking a summer cruise in the 20' Hawk belonging to Exe Sailing Club. Anyone interested, please contact Paul Ives on [paul.ives1@gmail.com](mailto:paul.ives1@gmail.com)

## **4. PassivHus**

The great opportunity I reported on last issue, of having a guided tour around 102 St. Andrews Road, a Victorian house which EDDC are renovating to PassivHus specs, has not materialised YET!

The Mi-Space site-manager was willing many weeks ago, on his own initiative, to take a group of us around the house before it is finished but he then changed his mind and said I had to go through EDDC. In the end I have had to settle for Transition Exmouth's inclusion on a list of invitees for EDDC 'Open Days'. Their schedule has slipped; these might materialise anytime in August. I live in hope and anyone wanting to be on the list for the tour, please contact me ASAP.

## **5. Vegan Food Evening**

My idea for a Vegan food evening hosted by Ash at Plantbased has likewise yet to bear fruit! Watch this space. We shall publicise this widely but anyone wanting to be in on this great evening out please contact me. Be assured that this will be one sociable meal at which you do not have to argue the case for Veganism!!!

## **6. Our Website**

Keen TrEx ers will have noticed that our regular Website <http://www.transitiontownexmouth.co.uk>. Is still down. This is a technical glitch related to our

changing the domain name. Our resident geek Rob is working on it and until normal service is resumed, he has given us a temporary site: <http://www.transitionexmouth.xara.hosting/>

## 7.Green Drinks

Not to be missed, our next knees-up will be on Thursday 4th August at the Park.

<http://www.greendrinks.org/Devon/Exmouth>

## 8.Queens Drive re-re-Development

I hope you will all have seen the Journal article this week (doesn't read the Exmouth Journal? Shame!) detailing the latest twist in this ghastly saga. There is an unanswerable argument now for all to unite behind the call for an independent consultation before EDDC go out to tender again.

I am due to be talking to Exmouth Green Party this Thursday evening at 19.30 in Franklins on the Strand (upstairs). I wasn't quite sure whether I would have anything new to say to them but now, with the news above, Roger Gibson and I have come up with a cunning plan, which I hope to be able to describe. We are inviting in someone with an international reputation and a true visionary approach to be the 'independent' component of any such consultation; we feel confident that only such a visionary can achieve a consensus on the way forward. I believe the GP meeting is open to all so why not come along?

## 9.Social Media and Website

<http://www.transitiontownexmouth.co.uk>.

[@GreenManExmouth](#) continues his tweeting, not always on TE items but always seeking to entertain so be prepared for the bizarre!

Simon runs a Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/ghroups/15416577788/>

and a page: <https://www.facebook.com/transition.exmouth> thanks Simon

## 10.Around the Region

In brief here but I may be able to supply more details or contacts:

### Exeter

#### Transition Exeter AGM and Poetry Evening

Tuesday 26th July, 6.30 pm, The Rusty Bike

AGM 6.30 - 7.30 followed by poetry and music from 7.45 with Adelia, Singer songwriter.

Contributions invited for the gathering eg Poems related to energy, food, travel, planet friendly living, hope, despair, community, seasons, the future, adventure. A fair few possibilities there! More songs would also be great. More info: Gill 01647 24789

### **Exeter Pound Launch £E4.50 note**

Saturday 30th July, 12.00 pm. Custom House, The Quay

The note celebrates the 450th anniversary of the Exeter Canal and shows a historic picture on one side and on the other a contemporary design. The new note will arrive by boat at the Quay, and be received by the Lord Mayor. There will be refreshments in the Custom House to which all EP users are invited, together with an Exeter Pound exchange point.

### **Off Grid Festival**

Thursday 11th - Sunday 14th August, Goffin Land, Exeter

Micro-festival Off Grid returns from 11-14 August on a beautiful natural haven of a festival site just outside Exeter, Devon. Expect 4 days of fulfilling discussion, learning, participation and celebration.

Off Grid Festival is a deep exploration of community living, creativity and consciousness; an intimate environment in which to share skills, trade knowledge, impart wisdom and make a difference.

MUSIC – The best of the local and grassroots. Come watch the pick of the acts each night in our beautiful timber-frame barn

## **11. And Finally**

One request made to me after our AGM, was to hold regular Members' meetings, just like other organisations do. This makes sense and for reasons of convenience and opportunism, the Umbrella Group have decided to initiate these on 1<sup>st</sup> Thursdays starting 1<sup>st</sup> September at the Park Hotel for an hour only 19.00 to 20.00. You can see how our minds work! There is an area to the left of the bar that is little used at this time and you are invited there for a themed discussion; there will be NO business on the agenda. It looks as if the theme for 1<sup>st</sup> September is to be the Exmouth Neighbourhood Plan.