



# TRANSITION CHEPSTOW

*Acting today for tomorrow*

## February 2021 Newsletter



### Plastic Free Chepstow

Chepstow was the first community in South Wales accredited as a Plastic Free community by the campaigning group Surfers Against Sewage in June 2018. Since then, we have continued to make progress, especially in the fight against plastic litter but also the use of single-use plastic.

While over the last year our progress was limited to a few community litter picks when it was possible, we are looking forward to being able to resume activities in 2021.

There are exciting new initiatives, from the Welsh Government's support for the [development of a circular economy](#) to the move to make better use of scarce resources and to severely limit our use of fossil fuels.

We are hoping to hold a consultation in the next couple of months to see who would like to get involved and how we can support local businesses both to recover after the pandemic, but also to reduce their use of single use plastic and to make sure we dispose of waste in a safer way.

Unfortunately recently it feels that there has been an increase in the amount of litter being dropped in our communities, including, sadly, quite a few items of PPE.

Some activities that you can get involved in over the next two or three months will include Spring Clean Wales, raising awareness of the continued use of unnecessary plastic packaging by supermarket chains, celebrating local plastic free champions and taking part in a citizen science project involving Surfers Against Sewage and the University of Plymouth to track and monitor changes in litter on our streets and in our countryside.

To get involved, please get in touch at [plasticfree@transitionchepstow.org.uk](mailto:plasticfree@transitionchepstow.org.uk) or on Facebook ([Plastic Free Chepstow](#)).



### Keep Chepstow Tidy

Many thanks to those who joined us on our Community Litter Picks in November and December.

In November our clean-up in Thornwell attracted 19 volunteers and resulted in a massive 13 bags of general waste and 11 of recycling. Then 22 volunteers, including a number of children, gathered in Garden City on a glorious December day and collected 10 bags of rubbish and 8 of recycling. As usual, the majority of the litter we collect comes from eating and drinking on the move - crisp packets, sandwich wrappers, bottles and cans. Sadly, we are not allowed to meet under the current coronavirus regulations, but will be out again as a group as soon as this is possible. In the meantime, if anyone would like to borrow litter pickers to go out individually or as a family please get in touch with Paul at [litter@transitionchepstow.org.uk](mailto:litter@transitionchepstow.org.uk) or send us a message on Facebook ([Keep Chepstow Tidy](#)).



[TransitionChepstow.org.uk](https://www.transitionchepstow.org.uk)



## Transport Group maintains pressure to progress road improvement

The Congestion Free Chepstow campaign by Transition Chepstow is ongoing in order to improve traffic flow and road safety, decrease road congestion, and reduce associated air pollution hazards to health and carbon dioxide emissions.

Following the two packed public meetings on the controversial issue in April 2019 and January 2020, the vigorous efforts of *Transition Chepstow's Transport Group* to expedite the many lines of action are ongoing:

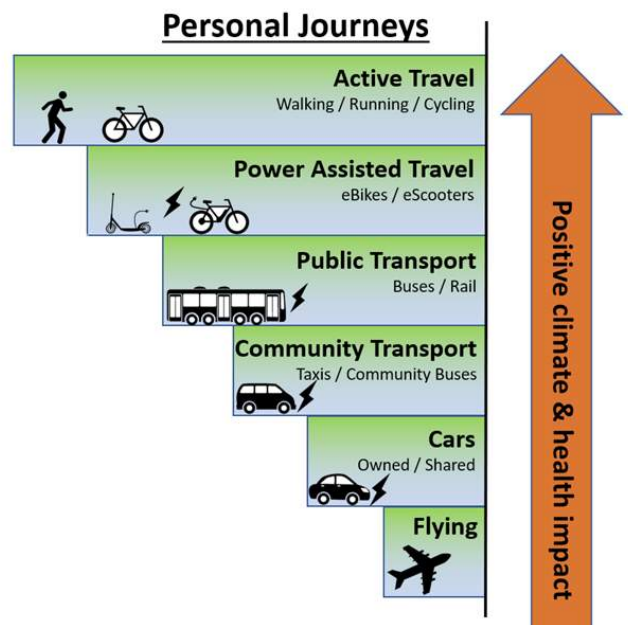
- Completion of the white line dual lane road markings improvements to the notorious bottleneck [High Beech Roundabout](#) (HBR) access junctions at the A48 eastwards and A466 southwards roads, are regrettably yet to come to full fruition. This is despite the *Transport Group* having provided a comprehensive, carefully detailed and valid explanatory rationale to the relevant highway authorities for the requisite simple and cost-effective road improvement proposals.

- [Major reworking](#) of the HBR also progresses with meetings with Welsh Government. With the coming elections to the Welsh Parliament, we would urge you to contact candidates to ensure their support of this project which is the only viable short-term solution.



*Transport Task Group measuring the A48 eastwards HBR access junction to validate the white line dual markings road improvement proposal*

- An electric bike scheme is being launched in Chepstow in the spring to allow local residents to trial electric bikes on the Chepstow hills and encourage more people to purchase them. To assist in the scheme or to borrow bikes please contact [transport@transitionchepstow.org.uk](mailto:transport@transitionchepstow.org.uk)
- We are considering various Car Share Schemes from sharing or journeys to enabling residents to hire cars from other residents to reduce the number of cars on the road. Electric cars will also be part of this mix. If you have experience of car share schemes or would like to get involved, please contact [transport@transitionchepstow.org.uk](mailto:transport@transitionchepstow.org.uk)
- The Transport Group has been busy working on Wales first sustainable transport strategy for a town (possibly the first in the UK) which will guide the way we plan for the future. The following pictogram represents the types and number of journeys that could be made.



Whilst the worst of the traffic HBR congestion has noticeably been alleviated during the pandemic restrictions, the current and planned housing developments in Chepstow and its environs indicate that this is likely to be only a temporary respite. Hence the urgency of the matter remains a top priority requiring political pressure if there is to be a rapid resolution to this unacceptable situation.





### Tim Melville elected RSA Fellow

The work of Transition Chepstow is being recognised nationally after its Coordinator, Tim Melville, was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts, Manufacturing and Commerce (RSA). The RSA has very prestigious Fellows including Richard Attenborough and Tim Berners-Lee from 80 countries around the world. Tim was nominated for the work he has done for the environment - particularly Chepstow becoming the first Plastic Free Town in South Wales and preparing the first sustainable transport plan for a town in Wales, possibly for the UK. He was also nominated for his work as a magistrate and work in educating young Bahá'ís and their friends through innovative events which are now best practice nationally.

Tim said 'It is a tribute to the important work Transition Chepstow is doing in combatting climate change locally, as many things we are doing are having a national impact. The work of Transition Chepstow is important and great fun - what we can do is only limited by the number of volunteers so please take this opportunity to get involved by visiting our website or if you have an idea that is a burning passion you want to do, write us at [info@transitionchepstow.org.uk](mailto:info@transitionchepstow.org.uk)'.

### Community Projects Officer

closing date Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Chepstow Town Council undertook to declare a Climate Emergency in late 2019 and has more recently agreed to carry out a Whole Place Plan. They now wish to employ an experienced Community Projects Officer to work with the Council to deliver their priority projects focusing on environment and wellbeing. Find more details on the [Town Council website](#).

### Air Pollution Hazards to Health

The recent publication of the [Clean Air Plan](#) by the Wales Senedd government is indicative of the growing major importance of air pollution in the causation of adverse health hazards to the lungs, heart and other body organs. The *Health and Consciousness Group* coordinator, Dr Peter Evans, urges everyone to ensure that their views are submitted before the consultation deadline ends on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

Remedial positive and effective action to reduce gaseous and microparticulate pollutants is certainly long overdue and necessitates the determined efforts of all concerned individuals and allied public health, medical and environmental campaigning groups.

### Nature isn't Neat Project

[Nature isn't Neat](#) is a Monmouthshire County Council project that aims to raise awareness about the importance of pollinators, the actions that we can all take to support them, and how these can have a positive impact on other important issues such as reducing the decline in other wildlife and mitigating the impacts of climate change. A key part of the work of Nature Isn't Neat has been changing the way the County Council manages its grassland on verges, open spaces and parks to create space for nature. MCC are inviting feedback from local people on changes in the management of green spaces - there is a [survey for adults](#) and one for [children and young people](#).

In Monmouth a dozen volunteers have started to monitor specific green spaces, and MCC would like more volunteers to help to measure the impact of changes to cutting elsewhere in Monmouthshire. If you want to help MCC understand if it is providing more flowers for pollinators and other changes to green spaces that benefit a variety of wildlife, please contact [Nature Isn't Neat](#) - it involves visiting a location once a month and counting flowers and insects for 10 minutes.



### Want to learn more about Transition?

This is an open invite from Transition Salisbury, for 8 weeks of Transition Training delivered by Naresh Giangrande, co-founder of successful [Transition Town Totnes](#).

Launch Online is packed with imaginative ways to delve into the practice of setting up, running and growing a Transition project. It is also useful for people who have recently become involved in a Transition group and want to develop the essential skills and insights to help their Transition Group become a success.

This is a unique opportunity to engage live, online, with people who have been at the heart of the Transition movement from the beginning. As the sessions are live and interactive, you can question, explore, and consider what has worked and what hasn't, how others in your position have approached and created Transition groups, and what made them thrive.

**Wednesdays @ 6.30pm - 8pm (via Zoom)**

03/02 - Introduction to Transition

10/02 - Why do Transition?

17/02 - Creating a Positive Vision

24/02 - Community engagement & Practical Projects

03/03 - Effective Groups

10/03 - Networks and Partnerships

17/03 - Inner Transition

24/03 - Creating a Global Learning Organisation

[Register here](#) to take part.

### The 'What Next?' Summit

hosted by Transition Network 3<sup>rd</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> March

The [What Next? Summit](#) will build community power across the UK by bringing together hundreds of community activists already making change happen. It will be a space to empower us to create our own future, tap into our imagination, make new connections and share knowledge to build a stronger movement. Hosted by [Transition Network](#) and [CTRLShift](#) the summit will make space for learning, reflection, the building of relationships and concrete pathways of action.

Each week will have a different focus, following the flow of *What Is? What If? What Next?* There will also be a Summit Fringe happening throughout to enable you as participants to host the important conversations you want to have.

For more information and to register for the events, visit [What Next Summit](#).

### Eden Project Virtual Community Camp

5 weeks from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Applications are open until **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021** to people across the UK, the camp is free to attend and is an immersive mix of practical activities, workshop sessions and networking opportunities. It's suitable for people at any level of experience in community projects, or complete beginners. You might already be involved in your community in some way, or have a motivation to get something started, or need a boost in some way - you'll get lots of ideas during the camp either way!

There is an opportunity for participants to receive a certificate confirming completion of a Prospect Awards Endorsed Programme in Creative Community Leadership.

If you or somebody you know would benefit, you can find the full information and application here: [Virtual Community Camp](#)

### Consultation on Litter & Fly-tipping Prevention Plan for Wales

The Welsh Government is currently consulting on its new [Litter & Fly-tipping Prevention Plan](#). The document provides an overview of the current position in Wales in relation to littering and fly-tipping, the measures they have already introduced to address these issues and what they believe needs to happen next.

The consultation closes on 22<sup>nd</sup> April and a wide range of views would help shape policy development. If you have any views on the plan and the actions proposed, then please share them by using the web form on the [consultation page](#).

