



One Planet Council Autumn Gathering Report

September 2014



Around 50 people travelled from within Wales and from other parts of the UK to attend this first One Planet Council annual gathering, held at [Green Apple](#) John Hargraves small holding in South Pembrokeshire.

Hoppi Wimbush from the Lammas Eco Village welcomed everyone on this gloriously sunny day. First to present was Stefan Cartwright, outgoing acting secretary of the One Planet Council (OPC). His talk began with some background to how and why the OPC emerged. Back in September 2013, speculation was rife about whether the planning policy, adopted by the Welsh Government in 2011 was going to deliver results. It became clear that organised support for both applicants and policy wasn't there and it wasn't going to come from top down. And so the One Planet Council emerged.

In the 10 months since its inception this independent voluntary body has worked diligently to create more favourable conditions for applicants: A comprehensive website is now online with useful resources for applicants and planners. This includes a new database of specialist [support services](#) for applicants. Regular [monthly meetings](#) held at the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David in Carmarthen have created momentum and action. More people

are coming forward to contribute. The OPC are becoming more widely recognised for their work and as a result there is increasing public awareness of One Planet Development (OPD). A well-moderated [Facebook page](#) is active. A CPD [training course](#) has been organised to run for planners on Friday 8th, and for applicants on Saturday 9th May 2015. The team delivering the course includes the principal author of the guidance (James Shorten), and also the Ecological Footprinting expert who put together the footprinting tool which accompanies it (Bill Knight). In addition, Mark Waghorn, an experienced eco-architect based in Wales, will cover Zero Carbon Buildings.

Other priorities for the OPC are a more comprehensive Welsh language version of the website, and a promotional film about One Planet Living. We are seeking to raise £3500 to pay for an experienced translator and to produce the film. [Donations](#) / fundraisers welcome!

Erica Thompson, who has helped steer the OPC from early on, was introduced as the next acting secretary.

Sustainable living author and OPD advocate David Thorpe was next up.



David, talked about the challenges for OPD as part of the bigger picture here in Wales. With a general election forthcoming in 2015 there needs to be a concerted effort to keep OPD on the national planning agenda, as and when it comes up for review. He then spoke of the potential for using Ecological Footprint Analysis (EFA) to help Wales become more sustainable. The fact that OPD practitioners are required to record their outputs using the EFA tool is significant. He explained how researchers will be able to analyse this valuable data in order to demonstrate how reduced impact living is not only necessary but achievable.

Both David Thorpe and Jane Davidson, former Welsh environment minister have accepted an invitation to become patrons of the One Planet Council. David's new book 'The One Planet Life' is released this Autumn.

Next up was Tao Paul Wimbush from the Lammas Eco Village. Next year will be Lammas's fifth year and we heard how as a group they are meeting their basic needs. Tao spoke of the exemplary OPD applications already submitted and those in the pipeline. As far as we know there are currently [six applications](#) awaiting decisions from Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and four at pre-application stage. Tao then shared his vision for a short film about



One Planet living which he is seeking to make. he has a good script and the people and places to make it work. Funding is required and crowd-sourcing seems to be the way to go.

The morning session finished with John Hargraves giving a guided tour of his organic small holding. John showed how he was transforming a former garden nursery into a haven of bio diversity and food production.

After lunch participants were invited to introduce themselves, many of whom were involved in a new OPD application or who were planning to do so. This broadly representative group included planners, builders, farmers, architects.

This was followed by five short presentations.

Dan and Sarah Moody from Nant-y-Cwm farm in Caerphilly shared their news about life on an OPD site post planning approval. Dan told us how planning was conditional on addressing a number of requirements within a given time frame, e.g., laying a hard track. While beginning to satisfying these

requirements and notifying the council, they are still waiting for the council to acknowledge their work.

Architect [Mark Waghorn](#), introduced his work and his interest in low impact building. He talked of the benefits of OPD applicants working with competent specialists and how architects can support self-builders to create a home which will meet building regulations.

David Thorpe spoke of the new OPC guide to making a management plan and how it is available to [download](#) from the One Planet Council website

Erica Thompson, from Rhiw Las, a new four household OPD project in Carmarthenshire, shared her experiences in finding people to join the project and how they arrived at a collective approach to ownership and management.



Vicky Moller spoke of her good experience living and sharing resources in a small neighbourhood within the farm estate once belonging to self-sufficiency author John Seymour. Vicky is exploring the possibility of collectively purchasing a farm and then sub-dividing it for OPDs. This could provide a viable option for those trying to find land. Vicky is interested to hear from anyone with ideas in making this work, including those who may wish to be part of the investor group. She can be contacted [here](#)

Chris Coller from [Woodlands.co.uk](#) talked about owning woodland and how this family run business are committed to supporting others find and manage woodland.

Small discussion groups followed to further explore what had been shared. The day closed with a large group discussion and some traditional dancing to

lively Celtic music. One theme which emerged was the importance of getting to know the local community and cultural history as an important step on the road to making an OPD application. And if you don't already, learning to speak Cymraeg, or at least having go, is worth the effort, not least a joy.

Cofion cynnes,

Stefan Cartwright



ONE PLANET COUNCIL
Supporting One Planet Developments

AUTUMN GATHERING

Saturday 13th September 2014 – 12 till 5pm
with music afterwards into the night

**Come find out the practical realities
and possibilities for low-impact living
in Wales and show support for the work
of the One Planet Council.**

**Held at Green Apple, John Hargraves'
sustainable organic smallholding in
Pembrokeshire. Talks & group discussion
in the undercover nursery. Guided tour of
the site. Kids activities. Refreshments.
Bring lunch to share.**

Further details: www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk