

# One Planet News

## Newyddion Un Blaned

A newsletter for all current and prospective One Planet Developments

### Newsletter 2019/2020

### Welcome to One Planet News! Croeso i Newyddion Un Blaned!



Welcome to issue two of One Planet News. I hope you found issue one an interesting insight into our pioneering One Planet community. If you missed the first issue, you can download a copy here:

<http://www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk/opd-newsletter-issue-1-winter-2018-19/>

This second issue focuses on events since the last issue, with some great articles from some of the key figures and professionals within the community. An interview with Cassandra Lishman of Plas Helyg, a piece from Pete

Linnell of 'Grow Your Own Home' along with information on an exciting new book by David Thorpe. I hope you enjoy this issue, please contact the One Planet Council if you have any feedback or suggestions for future issues. *Suzanne Pearton-Scale* (editor)

### News from the One Planet Council

The One Planet Council continue to promote and develop the One Planet Development Policy. Council members attended the following events and gave talks about OPD:

- Oxford Real Farming Conference, sharing a stall with the Ecological Land Cooperative
- Forest of Dean District Council (England)
- Oriel Myrddin Gallery, Carmarthen, "The Building Project" exhibition
- "Low Assets, Low Impact" gathering in Llandovery regarding groups/communities/ecovillages

Media interviews in April 2019 to BBC Cymru were held following publicity around Cllr Huw George's comments on OPD. We also provided comments to the Pembrokeshire Herald, who wrote a supportive article, and produced a press release with the OPC's response to the Councillor's concerns (see page 7).

The OPC continue to write position statements on relevant issues:

<http://www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk/position-statements/>

The OPC have published a new set of FAQs on the website and continue to hold public meetings.

<http://www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk/faqs/>

### How can you help promote or support the One Planet Development Policy and the One Planet Council?

<http://www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/One-Planet-Council-leaflet.pdf> (translation into Welsh currently underway).

<http://www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk/ways-you-can-support/>

## "I love taking from the waste stream!"

An interview with Cassandra Lishmann at Plas Helyg, by Suzanne Pearton-Scale

I visited Cassie at Lammas, she and her family of five were one of the first households that applied for Policy 52 planning permission (a pre-cursor to One Planet Development Policy). I was really interested to hear her story and experiences of living self-sufficiently and sustainably for ten years. The family have proudly built all their buildings themselves. Upon arriving I was immediately impressed with the way in which Plas Helyg is embedded into the landscape, and clearly uses traditional and sympathetic methods of building and growing to honour the surroundings they live in.



Roundhouse workshop  
with living roof



Permaculture growing area

The family shares a hydro system and a spring with other residents, giving them power and water. Cassie recounted that for many years they used a solar shower or a bucket shower that Cassie's husband Nigel invented, in which to bathe. She was very proud that recently after much saving, they had invested in a complete solar thermal system which provides the family with their hot water for their newly installed shower. They are completely off-grid with only a telephone connection, they have reed beds for grey water and two composting toilets. They produce around 25% of their own food, 100% of water, electricity and heat.

Plas Helyg consists of 3 ancillary roundhouses and 2 cob greenhouses, all built by hand by the family, with the help of many volunteers along the way. Cassie and her family are yet to build their main dwelling due to financial restraints, however Cassie is proud of the fact that everything built to date has been "*hand-to-mouth*" with no savings and 3 children, one of which has a disability. Cassie highlights the view that "*you don't have to have a wodge of cash*" in which to succeed on a One Planet Development. Cassie's building methods and principles are admirable and very much in keeping with the 'One Planet' ethos. In addition to more



Cob greenhouse

common low impact methods of making cob using sub soil, using local timber, as well as lime plaster and straw bales; Cassie exclaims "*I love taking from the waste stream!*". She does this by sourcing boards made from recycled bale wrappings, wool, insulation made from recycled plastic bottles, and reclaiming polystyrene found in skips to use as floor insulation. The most recent building is an ancillary building made of spruce and milled cedar and using cordwood techniques. The roof is made of wood shingles, the insulation is made of waste plastic bottles and all of the hardwood windows are second hand. Cassie crowdfunded to begin this



Roundhouse stable

build 3 years ago and she intends to complete it this year. If you would like to get involved you can by booking on to her workdays via [www.plas-helyg.co.uk](http://www.plas-helyg.co.uk).

Cassie's willow work provides nearly all the land based income for the household. She is a specialist in willow varieties, coppicing and weaving. She passes on her skill through teaching workshops and being part of projects in schools and community settings, for example working as a Creative Practitioner in Lead Creative Schools and for Arts Care, where she teaches people of all abilities willow weaving and felt making using her own land based products. Each summer from 2012-2019 Cassie has lead cob and cordwood workshops, as seen in Plas Helyg's cob greenhouses, stable and eco-pod.



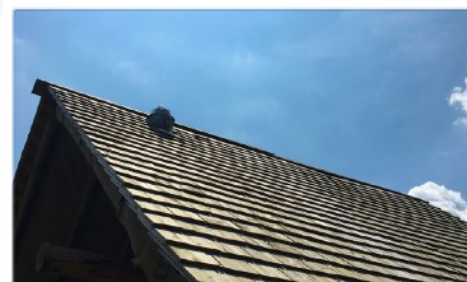
Cordwood techniques



Eco pod

Cassie is training to become a medical herbalist at present, as she admits that the willow work is becoming more physically challenging as she gets older. She describes that in the early years she relished the physicality of the work, but now she wants to enjoy her space, and start to wind down the heavier work as much as possible. Becoming a medical herbalist will be less demanding upon her and allows her to continue to have an income as she gets older. This is a fine example of how One Planet practitioners can evolve and adapt their enterprise to ensure the continuity of the site.

I asked Cassie what she felt were the positives and negatives along her journey. She expressed that this way of life is her personal philosophy, as she wants to live lightly and *"not be a parasite"*. As long as she can feed her children healthy food, have access to clean water, and have the freedom to design her work and living space she was very content. Cassie described the only negative of her personal situation was having to work with other people within an *"unclear management structure"*. She stated that when a community such as Lammas has shared resources, it's important to have a clear management strategy. She believes that Lammas was essentially the 'guinea pig' as the precursor of the OPD policy: *"many mistakes made by Lammas have been learned from and corrected in the new policy... but at Lammas itself, with the decision making process is still in disarray even after 10 years, it isn't an easy way to live"*. Cassie also felt that money has been a major barrier at times, and having family on hand to help with kids would have been a great benefit. However, Cassie firmly stated that *"I would do it all again...just maybe do it a little better!"*.



Wood shingle roofing



Timber frame barn

Cassie's ethos is about hard graft, commitment, and paying as you go. This ethos is important to highlight to all those looking at the possibility of this way of life, demonstrating that it's accessible to all. With the right mind-set and skills almost anyone can achieve a 'One Planet Life'.



## Events 2019

### OPD Moot 30th March 2019 Next moot : 22nd Feb 2020

The OPC Moot was held on Saturday 30th March 2019 at Dan y Berllan near Whitland. It was a relaxed day together catching up on each other's news, sharing a lovely lunch, welcoming some new OPDs to the community and checking out progress on Chris and Erica's plot. There was also a discussion of OPD monitoring, resulting in publication of a template monitoring form on the OPC website and a suggestion to share between us the spreadsheets that some people have set up to capture their own spending (for EFA) and land-based income. Everyone is busy at this time of year but it was good to be able to take a few hours out together on a nice day.



### One Planet Open Week 2019 July 22-28th

The 2019 open week was even more successful than 2018! 17 OPDs opened their doors to visitors from all over the UK many of which visited numerous sites during the week. The OPDs participating ranged from the more mature sites such as Maes Melangell and Plas Helyg in Glandwr Pembrokeshire to the more recent OPDs such as Parc y Dderwen Pembrokeshire and Ty Coed all the way up in Denbeighshire North Wales.



Feedback was very positive, visitors commented that they appreciated the chance to view a variety of OPDs large and small, established and new in one week. A successful way to engage with the wider community and promote the policy. Well done to all involved.

### Autumn Gathering October 19th 2019

The Autumn Gathering was held this year in the Nurture Centre in Carmarthen, a departure from our usual choice to hold the Gathering at an established One Planet Development site but easier for people to arrive by public transport.

We discussed a range of topics including updates on the OPC's activity this year, congratulated some recent successes, and set some priorities for the year ahead. Of particular note were an upsurge in interest in community or small-group OPD, further interest in developing the Produce Label Scheme, and interest from English council areas in taking on OPD as a local policy.



In order to promote and encourage more positive and educated understanding of the One Planet Development Policy, the OPC have created a set of FAQ's on the website: <http://www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk/faqs/>. This has sections for potential applicants, planning officers and the general public.

The hope is that by creating FAQs, better understanding can be achieved. With an increasing following of the policy, both in the media and in communities it is important to have clear answers to potential questions that regular arise.

Examples of such FAQs are; "Do I have to be completely self-sufficient?", "How much money do I need to make to cover my Minimum Income Needs?", "Why is this an exception to the usual policy against new developments in the open countryside?", "Isn't this just an easy way to get a new eco-mansion in the countryside?". Please contact the OPC if you have any further suggestions FAQs that you think may be of use.



## "Low Assets : Low Impact"

A gathering 11/12 May 2019, Llandovery  
by Pete Linnell



A number of new social media groups revealed the existence of a cohort of potential OPD and eco village builders in possession of some capital, but not sufficient to buy enough land to realise their dreams alone. This led to a proposal for a get together, to include skills and knowledge sharing by theorists and practitioners of various styles of community building and formats of established LID/OPD in a communal context. We began with an historical perspective of intentional community in the UK, from James Dennis co-editor of *Diggers and Dreamers* giving us a pictorial tour of UK 'big house communes'. The main message being that it has been done, with great success. We also learned that a commitment to overcoming conflict is the heart of living in community. Robert Morris shared some of his expertise in co-operative project financing, including the trick of establishing a new co-operative house in London without using any of their own money. Robert explained the basics of tiered co-operative legal structures and financial tools including loan stock. There is plenty of ethical investment money to be had by credible groups backed by real assets.

Saturday afternoon was a sharing exercise, designed to uncover any issues or fundamental beliefs which could become barriers to effective group development. The "Priorities, Expectations, Realistic Concerns and Hopes" task explored each others responses for common ground and/ or any hard line where no compromise was possible. We found that even within groups of four, there were few even forming mutual agreeable pairings. I think that this more than anything else revealed the value of the PERCH exercise in determining what areas of belief/ knowledge, praxis may need to be compromised if people are ever going to be able to work together. Towards the end of the session three larger clusters did emerge, but served mostly as discussion platforms seeking compromises. As a transferable tool to be deployed fairly early in a group forming process, and bearing in mind that for each participant this weekend the members of their eventual project group were not necessarily in the room; this was the most useful practical take away. I also want to be clear that those who did the preparation in advance got the most from this session: maybe next time?

On Sunday, a presentation from David Thorpe about larger scale more mainstream OPD projects rooted in Community Land Trusts, with a local example in Llandovery area; Cynefin CLT. This scheme is already attracting potential investors and the favour of some in the local administrations. Tao Wimbush joined us to share his thoughts and feelings about the formation and development of Lammas. We learn that no amount of rule making or decision processing will fully prevent folks disagreeing as a scheme develops in time. Any village community will have families or groups of neighbours who fall out from time to time, so no great shock that this can happen in an eco-village. As an intentional village community however, there is a founding assumption of shared purpose from which to build resolution or practical accommodations.

We were delighted to be joined by Erica and Chris of Rhiw Las who shared their process from attempting various ways of forming a group to eventually buying land and then splitting it into four separate freeholds whilst also making a joint OPD application. As "buy to split" was the single most popular option from the event. Perhaps the main take away from this is that if no one party has enough funds to purchase larger blocks of land then some sort of up front legal agreement, or a great deal of trust, will still be needed. This suggests there is a role for an independent group, a not for profit, to set up and raise capital for purchase of land to be sold on, very much as the infamous woodland sub-dividers do, but without the mark up. This could be very light touch, just a vehicle to buy, split and pass on; or it could be more engaged like ELC. A couple of million should be sufficient as a start up fund- which of course gets used over and over again.

Grow Your Own Home wishes to thank all those who gave their time and efforts to make this such a valuable weekend. Expressions of interest in another run of this workshop, please email to [events@gyoh.org.uk](mailto:events@gyoh.org.uk).

# "One Planet Cities"

by David Thorpe

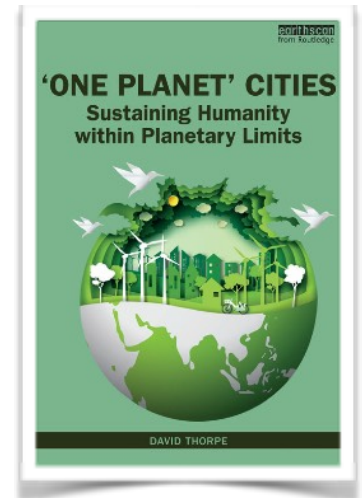
This book addresses the crucial question of how the essential needs of the growing human population can be met without breaking the Earth's already-stretched life-support system. Utilising interviews with key players and case studies from across the globe, David Thorpe examines all aspects of modern society through the critical lens of the ecological footprint and relevant supporting international standards and indicators. This book will be of great interest to practitioners and policymakers involved in governance, administration, urban environments and sustainability, alongside students of the built environment, urban planning, environmental policy and energy.

## Towards the One Planet City

How can the essential needs of the growing human population be met without breaking the Earth's already-stretched life-support system? This is the question I set myself to answer with my new book, ['One Planet' Cities: Sustaining Humanity within Planetary Limits](#).

It is linked to my new [campaign for cities to declare an ambition to reduce their ecological footprint](#), beginning in Wales, as a response to the twinned climate and extinction emergencies, which I am running with the Global Footprint Network. It is also a key textbook for a new [postgraduate certificate in #OnePlanet Governance](#) at the University of Wales Trinity St David, that civil servants and other students can take as distance learning from anywhere in the world, and gain CPD points. I want to train the next generation of civic leaders in how to save the world.

Although I started my work before Kate Raworth's Doughnut Economics came out, it builds on it and the work of the Global Footprint Network, whose president, Matthias Wackernagel, was extremely helpful during its writing. It is based on interviews with a great many urban leaders around the world and webinars with them that I have conducted during my time as curator of the sustainable cities collective web forum, as well as much supplementary research. It's also a follow-up to my previous book [The One Planet Life](#), which is a manual for what individuals and households can do to reduce their ecological footprint and live lightly on the earth. At the end of that book there are twenty case studies, the last ones being set in cities.



*"This collection is a mosaic of challenges and strategies, examples and ideas that point the way to further research."* -- Margaret Robertson, Lane Community College, USA

*"David Thorpe's fascinating book is packed with ideas and inspiration; a gifted storyteller drawing together the strands of a new and hopeful collective story."* -- George Marshall, founder of Climate Outreach, UK

For more information visit: [www.routledge.com/9781138615106](http://www.routledge.com/9781138615106)

**NEW OPD'S 2019:****Land at Cryn-Fryn:**

Prospective OPD application Penwuch, Ceredigion. January 2019.

**Parc y Delyn:** Prospective OPD application Cilgwyn, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. January 2019

**Baradwys**

Prospective OPD application Clunderwen, Pembrokeshire. May 2019.

**Parc y Dderwen**

Prospective OPD application Llangolman, Pembrokeshire. May 2019.

**LINKS:****One Planet Council**

[www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk](http://www.oneplanetcouncil.org.uk)

**Practice guidance**

<https://gov.wales/one-planet-development-practice-guidance>

**TAN 6:**

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/tan6-sustainable-rural-communities.pdf>

**OPC OPEN MEETINGS**

Check our facebook page for future events/meetings:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/oneplanetcouncil/events/>

# One Planet in the Media

## Here's the links to coverage about One Planet Developments in 2019:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-48084556>

<http://pembrokeshire-herald.com/56945/council-criticised-over-delays-to-one-planet-developments/>

<https://www.tenby-today.co.uk/article.cfm?id=125571&headline=Self%2Dsufficient%20smallholding%20is%20helping%20the%20environment&sectionIs=News&searchyear=2019>

<http://www.tenby-today.co.uk/article.cfm?id=126480&headline=Couple%20express%20frustration%20over%20refusal%20recommendations%20for%20their%20%E2%80%98one%20planet%20development%E2%80%99%20application&sectionIs=news&searchyear=2019>

[https://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/you/article-7407819/Weve-turned-21st-century-totally-self-reliant-wilds-Wales.html?fbclid=IwAR2mt7HkoPajS1uyvNhucUUQYk6Ddyba9rVjVx6Q\\_9EuHjpDGEIT2-I1A](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/you/article-7407819/Weve-turned-21st-century-totally-self-reliant-wilds-Wales.html?fbclid=IwAR2mt7HkoPajS1uyvNhucUUQYk6Ddyba9rVjVx6Q_9EuHjpDGEIT2-I1A)

<https://www.itv.com/news/wales/2019-09-05/living-off-grid-could-this-be-an-answer-to-the-climate-crisis/?fbclid=IwAR03RV6YqdCiXJ2qHPrEQCY-dAmdHDvWRMBpo-VlmfyMltD3g6hSfipayw4>

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-48084556?fbclid=IwAR0Mwf1oZZOemrJvwKPA5zm2vDbWKKaYzTBunghTuD\\_7X9uwr8YEdIi0JgQ](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-48084556?fbclid=IwAR0Mwf1oZZOemrJvwKPA5zm2vDbWKKaYzTBunghTuD_7X9uwr8YEdIi0JgQ)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-48621886>

<https://www.rtpi.org.uk/briefing-room/rtpi-blog/one-planet-development-the-opportunities-and-challenges-of-a-living-countryside/>

<https://www.netmums.com/netmums-voices/matthew-watkinson?fbclid=IwAR3ebveS019ykAWMCMJ3wUQUv1wOw8lMe7VoyQF2-INc2ReHw5iOvBdjLXo>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7123827/Essex-family-Pembrokeshire-Wales-live-self-sufficient-eco-farm-Beeview-Farm.html>



**ONE PLANET COUNCIL**  
Supporting One Planet Developments