

September 2010

PACT (Penrith Action for Community Transition) is a transition town group formed during 2008, aimed at developing a coordinated local community response to the twin challenges of peak oil and climate change.

PACT is made up of an enthusiastic group of volunteers, committed to making a real difference in Penrith and the surrounding area.

Here's our latest **PACT Action Update**:

Over the last 12 months PACT has continued to expand its activities in Penrith and the Eden area, seeking to broaden the community-based transition which we're starting to make.

Here are just some of the things we're now getting up to:

Food

Regular meetings of PACT's **Food Action Group** have been held throughout the year, usually on the 1st Friday of each month at The George Hotel in Penrith. However for our July meeting we were invited by Nick Jones to The Watermill, Little Salkeld. During a lively discussion we decided that we should celebrate Lammas-Tide (loaf-mass) at the watermill by building an outdoor wood-fired bread oven or 'cob', which we did under Niall Wildewood's direction.

The oven has been a great success, receiving lots of interest from passing visitors to the Mill during the 3 firings so far. More firings are due to take place over coming weeks, and anyone interested is welcome to join us (details from PACT / Peter Dicken).



Leading on from this we intend to build more wood-fired cob ovens in villages in Eden. Again anyone interested in this project can contact Peter or any member of the PACT Food Group, or e-mail food@penrithACT.org.uk. Our idea is to provide a community resource and education facility, preparing for a future when grid fuel supplies might not be as secure as they currently are. In the meantime the ovens provide a focal point for pizza parties and fund-raising events.

Other on-going projects include further investigation into local food producers, especially organic suppliers, and from where food might be obtained – e.g. farm shops, Vista Veg, Farmers' Markets etc. We are also looking at orchard mapping, advice swapping for vegetable growing, and 'greening Penrith' by offering our services to help plant useful (fruit bearing) trees in odd patches of public land around the town.

Resources & Waste



PACT's Resources & Waste Action Group's Plastic-Bag-Free campaign continues, the results of a trader's survey having been publicised in the local press in June 2010.

PACT members surveyed retail outlets in & around Penrith, to determine traders' current use of disposable bags, and their attitudes towards trying to reduce or eliminate them.

The survey of retailers found that Penrith shops give out > 6 million disposable plastic bags annually, and that 89% of Penrith retailers provide disposable plastic bags. That's roughly one plastic bag per day every day of the year for every member of the Penrith community! The vast majority of plastic bags (around 5 million) stem from the major supermarkets in the town, with the smaller retailers between them contributing another 1 million.

Of the 110 retailers surveyed, 71% had tried limiting disposable plastic bags, and 70% were prepared to take part in a campaign to limit or replace disposable plastic bags.

The encouraging results of the traders survey, coupled with the strong support demonstrated by the shoppers' survey in 2009, have persuaded the Resources & Waste Action Group to work towards undertaking a pilot to assist traders to go plastic-bag-free. The Group is currently preparing a funding application to seek resources for this pilot project.

The results of both the traders' and shoppers' surveys will be promoted at a **Plastic-bag-free Awareness Day** in Penrith's Market Square on **Saturday 2 October** from **10.00 am to 3.00 pm**.



Members of RAW will be asking shoppers to sign a **petition** asking Government to put a compulsory levy on plastic bags, and also doing a **bag-swap** giving away reusable cotton bags in exchange for plastic ones.

Any volunteers to help on the day would be very welcome - please contact Deborah Garnett on tel. (01768) 212343 or e-mail plastic-bag-free@penrithact.org.uk.

Buildings & Energy

Eco Eye:

Also as part of last year's Home Energy Fair, 10 'Eco Eye' energy monitors were obtained by PACT's Buildings & Energy Group for use by the local community. These measure and cost a household's use of electricity, and help to identify areas where savings can be made.

The units can be lent out by PACT free-of-charge for periods of about 1 month – if you're interested please contact Peter Ward c/o PACT or e-mail energy@penrithACT.org.uk.



Contact PACT on-line at www.penrithACT.org.uk

Energy Descent Action Plan ('EDAP')

As a key part of the transition process, PACT is in the early stages of starting to develop its own '**Energy Descent Action Plan**' (or 'EDAP') for Penrith & the surrounding area. The aim of the EDAP is to lay out a vision of where we want (need!) to be in the future in terms of carbon emissions and energy usage, and then work forwards to find practical local solutions to achieve that overall goal.

The process starts with the awareness raising which PACT has been concentrating on over the past couple of years, and should lead into a much broader engagement with the local community – the EDAP can only be developed and implemented if the community has a real sense of involvement and ownership throughout this process.

The **EDAP Action Group** would welcome input on this from anyone keen to be involved – please e-mail EDAP@penrithact.org.uk.

Education

The PACT **Education Action Group**, has continued to meet, and is developing ideas for initiating projects with local schools.

The intention is to start simply by identifying one project in one school, and in this we're helped by the support of Hunter Hall School which is keen and sympathetic to the idea. They already have plans such as their school vegetable garden which would be an excellent example of transition in action, growing food locally as well as providing a very visual educational activity.

Anyone interested in getting involved with transition education in whatever way, do contact the group at education@penrithact.org.uk.



Penrith South End Road

PACT continues to monitor the situation with the South End Road site in Penrith, and has engaged in positive discussions with Eden District Council to put forward ideas for alternative and more sustainable uses for the site.

Here's Peter Dicken's recipe for **oatcakes**:

120g medium oatmeal (I use Mornflake Organic)
275g warm water or 50/50 water and milk at blood heat
½ tsp salt
1 tsp yeast

Directions:

Stir together and left for about an hour in a warm place by which time it should be bubbling.

Heat a frying pan or griddle - something with a thick base is best, say 8-10 inches diameter- over a low to medium heat. Give it a wipe over with grease.

Pour on about 1/3 - 1/2 mixture and give the pan a shake to distribute it evenly.

The underside will be done when the edges begin to lift from the pan slightly and the top changes from a light to a deeper colour - you will notice that it has a 'set' appearance. This can take any length of time, but somewhere around 5 minutes makes the best product to my taste with not too much colour yet still firm.

Turn the oatcake over with a spatula or fish slice and bake for a further couple of minutes just to dry it out.

Slide out onto wire cake rack to steam.

Repeat until the mixture is used up - I find this make 2 thick oatcakes, which is my favourite texture, whereas commercial products tend to be thinner, broader and usually paler, with less bite as the mixture contains at least 50% white wheat flour.

Fry or grill when ready to use.

Especially good with a full English breakfast, or spread liberally with your favourite spread!



Contact PACT on-line at www.penrithACT.org.uk

Crosby Ravensworth Anaerobic Digester



PACT has been working with the Crosby Ravensworth community as they seek to obtain funding to buy a share in a community **Anaerobic Digester**.

This ambition is to buy an equity stake in a 1 MW plant, and use the annual dividends to progressively turn the Parish into a low carbon sustainable community. This would be achieved by investing in a district heating system, installing insulation in domestic and community buildings, and by installing appropriate micro technologies (solar power, PV cells, bio mass) throughout the Parish to reduce the community's reliance on oil and LPG.

The community is also looking to improve public transport and explore the potential for a car sharing scheme. In the final phase of the project a minimum of 15% of the annual dividend would be invested in helping other communities benefit from this technology.

2 grant applications have been submitted as follows:

- The first to Fells & Dales has successfully raised £9,500 to enable some of the pre planning permission work to be undertaken; this grant is from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
- The second grant application has just been submitted to the Rural Low Carbon Challenge Fund and seeks to raise £500k to fund the community's equity stake - we have successfully navigated the first hurdle and have got through to the last 22 candidates, the results of the final selection will be known on the 17th September (see the PACT web site for details)

Anyone who are interested in knowing more about this project please contact Peter Ward at peter.j.ward@hotmail.co.uk.

Vitality of Penrith

Colleagues might have heard about this Eden District Council initiative designed to engage the community in the revitalisation of Penrith.

Following a review of the strengths and weaknesses of the current structure, it has been agreed to reorganise how this important committee works. There is now a small executive committee and a number of 'task & finish' groups that will take forward specific programmes of work.

The whole will be accountable to the local community, and take suggestions from the community on which projects should be progressed. 4 champions have been appointed to act as a focal point for this work:

- Adrian Lockhead (Eden Arts) - Culture & Art
- Bob Clark (CEO CREA) - Economy
- Colin Maughan (Editor Herald) - Marketing of Penrith
- Peter Ward (the current Chair of PACT) – Environment & the Public Realm

This is a great opportunity to place transition town principles at the heart of the Council's agenda, so please do step forward to contact PACT with ideas and offers of help.



Transition Network Conference 2010

During June Nigel Jenkins represented PACT at the 3 day global 'Transition Network' conference in Devon.

This was an extremely vibrant event celebrating all things transition, bringing together representatives of similar groups from all around the world to share collective ideas and enthusiasm for a more sustainable world.

Perhaps the truly global spread and energy of transition can be summed up by the title of one of the many dozens of workshops which took place over the weekend: ***'Is Transition Following the Football Model? – invented in England & perfected in Brazil!!'***

Contact PACT on-line at www.penrithACT.org.uk

PACT @ the Penrith Show

PACT had an awareness raising stand at the annual Penrith Show in July, aiming to provide some engaging activities and information on various aspects of transition and sustainability.

The stand was based around a yurt as a wet weather contingency, and included a home-made bicycle powered bubble blower (ably engineered by Chris Cant) which generated considerable interest.

On the stall we also had a quiz to win a veg box from the local Vista Veg scheme, a display of recycled items, and information about the Crosby Ravensworth Anaerobic Digester project.

A short film of the day can be seen on the PACT website.



PACT Talks

PACT recently gave a transition talk to the Penrith & District branch of the Soroptimists, to explain the background to peak oil & climate change and introduce PACT's activities so far.

Given enough notice to plan, PACT is very willing to give similar talks to other local groups on a range of transition topics – do get in touch if you'd like to hear more!

PACT Steering Group

PACT's '**Steering Group**' meets regularly and is far less formal than the name suggests! There are evening meetings twice monthly in Penrith throughout the year, and these have generally been held in the Bluebell Bookshop or occasionally The George Hotel.

Members of PACT and any others interested are very welcome to sit in on these meetings, to find out more about how the group operates and to contribute your own ideas. Do contact PACT if you'd like to find out more.



PACT's 2010 **Transition Calendar** certainly proved popular, it's even hanging in the Transition Network HQ office down in Totnes.

In response to popular demand the 2011 calendar will be available shortly – **please do buy your copy!**

After covering printing costs any proceeds will go towards PACT's funds to help our transition projects.



PACT (Penrith Action for Community Transition) is a Transition Town group formed during 2008, made up of an enthusiastic group of local volunteers. PACT is working to promote a coordinated local community response to the twin challenges of peak oil and climate change, aiming to help develop a far greater resilience for Penrith and the surrounding Eden Valley.

Join the Transition!

www.penrithACT.org.uk


Contact PACT on-line at www.penrithACT.org.uk



NEWS EVENTS NEWS EVENTS NEWS EVENTS NEWS

PACT has held a number of successful events over the past year including film showings, bring & share food events, talks and awareness raising campaigns.

PACT's next event is as follows:

	<p>'PACT Two Years On' – Bring & Share event</p> <p>7pm Monday 27th September 2010</p> <p>Friends Meeting House, Penrith</p> <p>No charge - all welcome!</p>
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PACT needs you! There are many different ways in which you can give your support:

- spreading the word and getting your friends to join so your (very low!) membership fees help towards PACT's events and promotion of the transition message – details and membership form available on the PACT website
- joining one of the specific Action Groups, and giving a little of your ideas & enthusiasm to support work on their projects
- offering your time for general administration as PACT develops, including giving out fliers, manning stands at shows, local litter picking, etc.
- and many more.....!

Want to get involved with any aspect of PACT? - why not also visit our website to find out more details of the group's latest activities:

	<p>www.penrithACT.org.uk</p> <p>The PACT website continues to develop, and will hopefully become central to communicating and promoting the group's activities – <i>please do take a look!</i></p>
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PACT members also aim to continue to do litter picks in Penrith, in an effort to improve the image of the town and as one small step on the road to local community transition.



All volunteers very welcome!



Contact PACT on-line at www.penrithACT.org.uk