

**Hayle Area Partnership**  
**HERITAGE, CULTURE & ENVIRONMENT DELIVERY GROUP**  
**Held at Passmore Edwards Institute on 1 December 2009**

**Present:**

John Bennett , Chair  
Stuart Walker, Guest Speaker  
Ian Toy

Ray Wyse  
Malcolm Stephens  
Claire Casey, HAPP

**1. Apologies**

Brian Capper, Jim & Nancy Chadwick

**2. Chairman's Welcome**

John Bennett welcomed those present, especially Stuart Walker and expressed disappointment with the attendance which was, no doubt, due to the extreme weather conditions.

**3. Transition Penwith**

An interesting and informative presentation by Stuart Walker, Transition Penwith Core Group member and Transport Group Lead, centred upon what we can do locally to make provision for when the oil runs out and how climate change can be redressed. This was followed by a general discussion the main points raised are given below. The presentation is available for viewing at <http://hayleareaplan.co.uk>.

*Peak Oil and alternatives*

It is important to have alternative sources of power for when the oil runs out or becomes uneconomic to extract. If demand for oil outgrows supply it might lead to rationing and will certainly lead to price increase. It is very difficult to get accurate data on how much known oil there is and how much still be discovered. What is acknowledged is that once it is used it cannot be replaced.

Rationing fossil fuels to make them last longer may postpone the problem from 40 years to perhaps 100 years giving more time to find an alternative energy source. In places which are very dependent upon the oil industry the industry is actively looking at transference of skills, wind farms and harnessing of wave energy.

Without oil will all the multi nationals that use trucks to get goods into Cornwall want to keep supplying the area. If they cease to supply Cornwall then it might be difficult to survive with the present life style. A return to using rail freight and depots could be one answer with sites at Long Rock, Redruth and/or St Blazey and then distribution by truck. Concerns were expressed over the routes of railway lines. Once in Cornwall the main line covers most of the towns however the route to Cornwall has issues for the future with lines being washed away and the Somerset levels being underwater.

A lot of people get confused about peak oil. There is a problem but not a peak energy problem as there are other fuels available for next 300 years for example oil could be extracted from coal. It is a liquid fuel problem.

*Climate Change*

The most dramatic rise in temperature has taken place over the last 30 years. It is recognised that temperature increase needs to be kept to 2°C or less to stop there being a dramatic effect on food, water, ecosystems and an increase in extreme weather events.

Smog in the 1950s was highly visible and people's awareness heightened. This, no doubt, fuelled the argument for the Clean Air Act 1956. To-day with the increase in toxic gases is not visible in the same way as smog and, therefore, people find it easier to dismiss it as scaremongery.

In 1997 figures showed USA as top of the league for carbon emissions with China coming third. China has now taken the lead having had a 102% growth.

### *Issues*

The population is now three times that which the planet can support but do we want to go down the same route as China with family numbers being drastically limited?

It was agreed that there is no such thing as energy for nothing. A change in lifestyle appears unavoidable. Hard choices will have to be made, the younger generation are likely to have more difficulty adjusting, but life can go on without all the things that we have been used to! People who are rich are likely to continue with their life style but the poor are the ones who will suffer. Today people are not interested in peak oil, they want to have their TVs and shops, not second hand goods, everything must be new. A car can last for 15 years but people change them every two or three years.

Should internal flights continue or should air transport be reserved for flights abroad?

With localisation we are losing economies of scale. There will be huge cultural changes where people's disposable income goes down and GNP disappears.

### *Solutions*

**Sustainable energy** has expensive capital costs but is cheap to run. Every village could have its own wind farm which, by putting electricity back into the grid, could then provide funds for village projects. However if renewable energy is relied upon there will still have to be a back up.

Penwith Housing Association is installing ground source heat pumps to provide heating in all new homes. 35% of the population in Penwith are either sick or in ill health and it is thought that this might be linked to the high heating costs.

**Localisation** – The County Supported Agricultural scheme aims to encourage the growth of food locally. It was questioned whether these were really helping to reduce the use of peak oil as, no doubt, they required machinery to operate and would not be fully organic, 80k energy is required to produce 1k for us to eat.. In answer it was said that all the work was done by hand at the Lamorna CSA. Concerns were expressed over following in Cuba's footsteps of digging up town centres to plant crops. This reportedly is strongly supported by the community but propaganda issues raise doubts as to whether the population had a choice.

It was suggested that land lying fallow should be utilized to grow food for Cornwall. However a number of farms of 70/80 acres are no longer viable where they are situated on hills or in valleys and are not good for growing vegetables. Possibly, though, fruit and nut trees could be planted which would provide both food and fuel.

**Change** should be gradual not carried out all in one go. One of the main leisure activities is shopping. Is everything we buy really necessary? We need to look at alternative ways of living. Do we really need to travel to work every day or is more trust needed to enable more people to work from home?

John Bennett thanked Stuart for his presentation and commented that the small audience enabled a frank discussion to take place.

### **4. Any Other Business**

There was no other business

### **5. Date and time of the next meeting**

7.30 pm Tuesday 2 February 2010 – additional meeting on Discover Hayle Map to take place 12 January 2010.

Meeting Closed at 9.00 pm