



POSITION PAPER: IMPACT OF PROPOSED LOSS OF TBG PREMISES

1st December 2016

This paper presents the situation faced by Transition Bro Gwaun (TBG) in light of the proposal by Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) to demolish their current building, Transition Cafe, 32a High Street, Fishguard, to develop the Chimneys Link Road scheme.

1. TBG's Achievements

- TBG contributes the equivalent of **over £250,000 per year to the local economy** of Fishguard and the surrounding area through its surplus food project and café, its community wind turbine and other initiatives [Appendix D].
- TBG is playing a significant role in **building a stronger community** – acting as a community hub for local activities, providing a meeting space for many local community groups, and developing initiatives on **town regeneration**.
- TBG creates **employment opportunities** - currently employing 2 staff, a number of sessional workers and a consultant. It also provides **work experience placements** for young people, and hosts **workshops and training courses**.
- TBG's **volunteers** have undertaken 22,500 hours of community work over the last 4½ years. At least 25% of those **volunteers have a range of health, welfare and/or learning difficulties** - the project offers a positive opportunity for them to gain confidence and learn new skills.
- Transition surplus food Cafe contributes to PCC's obligation to meet Welsh Government's **Waste Strategy for Wales, Towards Zero Waste**, and **The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act** by preventing 25 tonnes since June 2013 of good food from being wasted (equivalent to net saving of 50 tonnes of CO2).
- Transition Cafe has a footfall of over **750 customers each month** to its cafe (9000 a year); of those, a significant proportion are **visitors to the area**, providing a greater economic contribution to the **local economy**.

This significant contribution to the local economy will be threatened if TBG is not able to find suitable premises. Further details are in sections 2 - 7 and in the Appendices.

TBG asks PCC to:

- Consult with TBG for the timescale of planned demolition of 32a High Street
- Consider TBG's suggestions for finding new premises, detailed in Conclusions (section 7) below.

2. Current premises:

TBG currently leases its premises in Fishguard from the building's owners, the Co-operative supermarket. The building is due to be demolished in the next financial year as part of the Chimneys Link road scheme in Fishguard.

Acknowledging the significant role that TBG plays, PCC officers suggested the Ship and Anchor public house (presently owned by PCC) could be offered to TBG on a peppercorn lease. However the building is in a serious state of dilapidation. The PCC surveyor has estimated the cost of making the building safe and fit for use to be £300,000. This is beyond the means of TBG.

3. Community Development and Town regeneration:

A key aim of the Transition Movement is to build community well-being and resilience, harnessing local support and resources to develop sustainable projects.

When TBG took on the lease of the empty and dilapidated Co-op building in 2012, a large proportion of the cost of renovating and refurbishing it (approximately £23,000 in cash and in kind) was gifted by local tradespeople and organisations. Over subsequent years, supporters have continued to donate resources to maintain, equip and run the project.

Volunteers have given in excess of 22,500 hours over the past 4½ years, equivalent to an economic benefit alone of over £145,000.00 - this amount has been used for match funding for successful grant applications.

TBG supports local initiatives, taking part in many community activities, providing local organisations with a free venue for their meetings and social events, making meals and buffets for community functions and providing community workshops and training, (Appendix C)

TBG has also set up Transition Re-distribution of Food (TROF) which enables a number of other local organisations to receive and make good use of surplus food for charitable purposes.

And in March, with the help of funding from the Town Team, TBG hosted a conference on Community led town regeneration, and will continue to develop ideas emanating from this.

4. Economic value

TBG's activity makes a significant contribution to the local economy - currently estimated to be over £250,000 per year. (Appendix D lists the details).

Of particular note are the following

- A significant number of visitors come from across the UK and further afield, to visit the area specifically because of their interest in Transition Bro Gwaun and its low carbon projects – most notably its innovative surplus food project and its community wind turbine, the first in Wales. These visitors contribute to the wider local economy through retail spend and on accommodation and hospitality.
- Abergwaun community wind turbine is presently producing 600,000 units of electricity per annum. The profit available for community benefit is relatively small

until repayment of loans by 2022, after which it is predicted to be approx £40,000 per annum. This will be used to support local groups and entrepreneurs in developing sustainable projects to benefit the local economy and employment opportunities.

- The 11 tonnes of food diverted each year by TBG from landfill will have reduced costs for retailers and the local authority by approximately £30,000 per year (based on findings from WRAP), and saved approx 28 tonnes of CO2 emissions.

5. Environmental and promotional value

TBG is widely known for its success in developing low carbon community projects and so is visited by individuals and groups from across the world wanting to learn about its initiatives. It is also regularly asked to give presentations to local groups and to larger events e.g. the Climate Change Commission for Wales; the Transition Network's International conference; a WRAP conference; Food Values event hosted by Aberystwyth and Bangor Universities.

TBG have also contributed to research and development programmes undertaken by the University of East Anglia, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Oxford University and Cardiff University and contributed to the Westminster Food and Nutrition Forum conference on Food Waste Policy in the UK.

TBG features in the book '21 Stories of Transition' which was launched at the International Climate Conference in Paris in December 2015, and has received a considerable amount of coverage in the press, and on national TV and radio. Transition Cafe was recently voted Welsh runner up in the Observer Food Awards in the 'Best Ethical Restaurant' category.

All these initiatives create publicity and contribute significantly to promoting and raising the profile of this area and its environmental credentials.

6. Work experience and employment:

TBG has provided work experience, training and employment opportunities for many local people, particularly for the young, disabled and unemployed as follows,

- Placements through Jobs Growth Wales, Careers Wales, Future Works, Pembrokeshire college, two High Schools, the Young Service, and the Probation service .
- PAYE Employment for 2 people and sessional employment for 10+ people and a consultant
- WRAP and Food Hygiene training courses for volunteers, staff and local people
- TBG has enabled one young employee to gain an NVQ in Customer Service.

7. Conclusions

Many of the past, current and future achievements and benefits that TBG has brought to this community will be under threat if no alternative and appropriate premises are found.

This issue has been brought about by the County Council's decision to progress with the gyratory one-way road system in Fishguard.

TBG has the following suggestions to resolve this issue:

- PCC offers a long-term (30 years) lease on the Ship and Anchor building, once it has been made structurally secure by its current owners, PCC.
- PCC assists TBG to secure affordable accommodation, possibly in partnership with other community initiatives in the area. TBG has been approached by other community organisations interested in partnering to find suitable shared premises.

Produced by Transition Bro Gwaun Trustees - December 2016

APPENDIX A: Projects that TBG has enabled and contributed to the successful establishment of:

- 2 phases of an allotment project
- Established a community wind turbine in partnership with a local farmer.
- Establishing a successful surplus food project and cafe, with associated training, employment and volunteering opportunities
- Production of long life shopping bags to promote sustainable lifestyles.

APPENDIX B: Future projects that TBG is actively developing, in association with other organisations:

- Continuing development of Surplus Food Project and to expand focus on food waste in the home
- Develop TROF – a scheme to re-distribute surplus food to other local community groups
- Strumble Head Tidal Flow project (tidal energy generation)
- Greening Fishguard and Goodwick
- Green Tourism project for North Pembrokeshire
- Local Entrepreneur Forum, to promote local sustainable entrepreneurship supported by community investment and resources

APPENDIX C: Community services:

TBG provides many local voluntary and other organisations with a free venue for their meetings and social events. These include:

- A regular upcycling sewing group, craft groups and a Buddhist group
- Play and upcycling craft activities for children during the school holidays

- Welsh language drop in sessions – provided in partnership with Menter yr Iaith
- The Dyfed Powys community police team hold monthly sessions in the café
- A meeting place for organisations such as the Fishguard Farmers Market, the Heritage Centre group, the Festivals Committee, the Community Forum, Hiraeth Hope Croeso Abergwaun community sponsorship scheme.
- A venue for social functions of local organisations e.g. Lions group, RNLI, Sea Trust, Allotment group, WI groups
- A collection point for hard to recycle plastics for Pembrokeshire Care, Share & Give

In addition, TBG organises or takes part in 20+ community events each year, including; Aberjazz; Fishguard Folk Festival; Fishguard Agricultural Show; Fishguard Carnival; Pembrokeshire County Show; Seedy Saturday; Fishguard Cawl Crawl; Fishguard Autumn Festival; Light Night; Fictional Food Festival The Really Wild Festival; Cookery workshops and demonstrations; Storytelling sessions.

APPENDIX D: Estimate of economic value of TBG’s activity per annum:

Interest payments to local investors in Abergwaun Community Turbine	£13,000
Surplus from ACT for community benefit (rising to £40,000 after repayments of loans by 2022)	£4,000
Employment: 2 staff + sessional workers + consultant + on-costs	£55,000
Volunteering £145,000 over 4 years	£36,250
Project management: Trustee & others contribution	£20,000
Work placements: 4/year @ £500/placement	£2,000
Cafe sales	£18,000
Café customer retail spend when visiting Fishguard: 25% customers = 2250 x £20	£45,000
Training courses: 10 courses at £ 300/course + meals	£5,000
Food diverted from landfill 11 tonnes (savings to both retailers and to local authority, based on findings from WRAP)	£30,525
Health & Wellbeing: difficult to quantify but approximately	£20,000
Organisational visits: 1/month for average 10 people + meals	£2,000
Local conferences, meetings and outreach work	£2,500
Spending by those visiting as a result of publicity & promotion: newspaper & media coverage, presentations at international & other conferences	£15,000
TOTAL	£268,275