

## Three Transition Town's Energy Saving Challenge (3TT Challenge)

You are being sent this email as you signed up expressing your interest in participating in the 3TT Challenge. Thanks for signing up.

Last time we ran the challenge participants enjoyed it, saved money and reduced their impact on the environment. We'll be sending an **email update** regularly to keep participants informed and it'll also be available to download on the website we've set up for the 3TT Challenge.

In this note we:

- tell you about the challenge,
- invite you to our launch event on 21st January where **Paula Owen** formerly from the **Energy Saving Trust** will be speaking
- ask you to supply us with some information so we can assign you to your nearest local neighbourhood team.

### The 3TT Challenge

Three local Transition Towns - Kentish Town, Dartmouth Park and Tufnell Park are setting up a team based energy saving challenge. **Our aim is to use energy meters to get a better understanding of our home energy use, and to identify ways to reduce it. Over the course of the year we'll be finding new ways to achieve low carbon home comfort, and to cut our energy bills AND the contribution our homes are making to UK carbon emissions and pollution from fossil fuels.**

Each participant will be part of a team of 5 – 10 households. We'll be asking you to tell us how much electricity and gas you've used every 4 weeks. We'll be allowing everyone to see how much energy each team is saving. But the data will be anonymised. Over the course of the one year challenge we'll arrange a number of get-togethers and trips to see some inspiring examples of what can be achieved **in terms of low carbon home comfort and reduced energy bills and carbon emissions.**

Participants in the 3TT Challenge are being organised into teams to compete to reduce their electricity and gas consumption over a year. There will be eight weeks of "base-lining" in January – February, followed by 44 weeks of attempts to reduce energy consumption.

**We'll be asking you to provide us energy usage measurements either by:**

\*entering data into Google forms  
(<http://www.google.com/drive/start/apps.html>) or

\*through Owl Intuition monitors (for electricity) which automatically submits the energy usage data online without users having to read it for themselves and Google forms for gas. We've negotiated a fantastic discount on the Owl intuition monitor (see below for more details).

Manual Measurements will be made every four weeks. Results will be processed and the leader board updated.

**All of this will be explained at our launch meeting.** After that there will be get-togethers over the year, bringing everyone together to allow participants to discuss progress, be stimulated with new ideas and suggestions on how to cut their energy use.

Project leaders from the three **local Transition Groups**

- **Prashant Vaze** is analysing the data
- **Pamela Edwards** is organising group meetings and training
- **Ian Grant** is in charge of communications and newsletter
- **Dan Sofer** is in charge of the website and technical issues

### **Team Roles**

**We are looking for people in each neighbourhood grouping to act as team-leaders helping their team-mates measure energy use and complete forms and generally encouraging their team.**

**Getting started – launch day, 7.30pm 21st January. Week-end session at 2pm on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>, Corks & Forks, Swains Lane N6**

There is a meeting on 21 January 2013 at The Lord Palmerston, Dartmouth Park Hill to kick off the challenge, assign roles, along with a talk from a **national energy expert** (see below). **We hope you can make this meeting, but you can still take part even if you can't make the date, and we'll also be running a Surgery Session on the 16<sup>th</sup> Saturday afternoon with tips on using your energy meters and a chance to ask individual questions and meet other participants.**

### **Paula Owen kicks off Energy Challenge**

**Paula Owen** the renowned energy researcher, broadcaster and entrepreneur will be speaking about how we use electricity in our homes and how this has changed over the past forty years.

**She'll be speaking at 7.30 Monday 21st January at The Lord Palmerston - 33 Dartmouth Park Hill, London, Greater London NW5 1HU.**

While working at the Energy Saving Trust, Paula developed government's official household carbon calculator. She researched and wrote: The Rise of the Machines, Ampere Strikes Back and Elephant in the Living Room. These publications did much to aid the understanding of the role the residential sector plays in the increasing energy demand within the UK over the last four decades.

In 2011, she launched eco action trumps - a fun and accessible life style changing tool in the format of the popular 'top trumps' card game.

## **Getting started - What we want from you?**

1. Please email back to confirm you're still interested and that this is the email address you'll be using
2. Tell use how you want to report electricity usage back to us.
3. Tell us your address and post code so we can assign you to your most local team of 5 to 10 participants.
4. Let us know if you would be prepared to lead a team (of 5 – 10 people). We'll explain what this involves, but it's basically helping people read their electricity and gas meters and chivvy them along over the year.
5. Please do invite interested local friends, family or neighbours to participate too. It's best to have different types of contestants some already committed to helping the environment and others less so. Some of our best savings were from people who'd been invited along by energy / green enthusiasts and were curious to learn more.

## **OWL home energy monitors special deal**

For those that want to buy their own monitors, the three transition towns have agreed a bulk discount deal for **one third off with OWL, the intelligent wireless monitoring company for the OWL Intuition-e (£40)**. The **OWL intuition** outputs information on energy usage online so you can read results on the internet or on smart phones. For those that already have an old style Owl monitor, an upgrade is needed for the "Network OWL" (£29.99): <http://www.theowl.com/products/intuition.html>

Please contact Dan Sofer: [d@sofer.com](mailto:d@sofer.com) with your discount order or come to the meeting on 21st January to find out more about these smart meters – how they cut the core of recording your energy use and make it easier to send in your readings for analysis – while also respecting and safeguarding your privacy. We also have some monitors we can loan to participants that Camden Council bought at the time of the last challenge.

## **Energy Challenge website**

An Energy Challenge website has been created: <http://nlet.org.uk/>

You'll be able to find details of the challenge and sign up for the OWL Intuition-e. And also pass the web address to friends and neighbours who may be interested.

## **Lessons from our previous home energy monitoring project**

Within the three groups there is experience of the previous energy monitoring project, the HiCan Home Energy Metering Project, which successfully tested the project model we will be using in a shorted 3 month project involving 22 households.

Individual energy savings achieved there ranged from 11% from baseline to a staggering 57% (where top floor storage heaters had inadvertently been left on 24/7 for a few months! All the teams except one managed to reduce their electricity use, and the winning team achieved an impressive 29% overall home energy savings - with obvious monetary and environmental benefits.

Each contestant had to attach a small sensor and wireless transmitter around the wire near the electricity meter which sends information to the display unit which tells them their power use either in kW or pence per hour. The display units had batteries and could be carried around from room to room.

We also used simple plug in meters to monitor the performance of individual appliances, with surprising and interesting results. At the start of the programme, each contestant was asked to complete a spreadsheet about their home and household, and to fill in information from their standard electricity supplier meter every fortnight, picking the same time and day.

The first two readings – a fortnight apart - were used to establish a baseline use for their household. The real time display meters and plug in meters were then provided after week two, with readings then being taken every two weeks. Participants shared their discoveries and achievements through email and at regular get-togethers, with a mix of neighbourly encouragement and friendly competition to establish our local energy saving champions.

At the end of the programme, a number of people opted to retain their meters to carry on monitoring energy use and sharing ways to improve their home's energy performance with others from the programme. The competition aspect was of interest to some people and it had the effect of galvanising effort. Three workshop events and one eco-home visit were held over 12 weeks.

This time around .....our present Transition communities challenge will include a lot more automation (recording of data to a site, which can be anonymised, but also available to the individual participant through a web password or app) and will allow more time for feedback, group-work and to institute some of the home energy use lifestyle changes the metering process opens up for us.

<http://nlet.org.uk/>

