

Transition Chichester: Annual Report

January –December 2011

Transition Chichester has had an extremely busy year, with several major events taking place. Contact has been established with a number of local bodies and TC's profile has been raised considerably in the Chichester area. Numbers on the TC email list have risen from 250 to close on 450.

1. Projects and Focus Groups

Existing projects and focus groups have flourished and several new projects have been initiated. There are several other new projects in the pipeline.

Reports on the following projects were given at the AGM.

Community Orchards: Ellie Garwood

A community orchard of 25 fruit trees was planted in Oaklands Park in November. 25 more fruit trees will be planted later on and a wildflower garden will be created. There was an excellent turn out at the event including members of TC, Chichester Rotary Clubs and the District Council.

The Tchi: Keir Watson

70 people have now signed up to the community currency scheme. There have been a number of new developments, including a Re-skilling programme, where people passing on skills receive a Tchi, and Tchi gangs, where a number of people get together to carry out a larger job, like constructing a greenhouse. Home-made goods such as canvas bags and insect hotels are also available.

Re-skilling: Julia Sander

Re-skilling is linked to the Tchi scheme. There have been re-skilling sessions in bread-making, cordials, fruit bottling, raised-bed gardening and bike maintenance. Monthly re-skilling sessions are planned for next year.

Heart and Soul: Jacky Garstin

The Heart and Soul group meets regularly and seeks to develop inner resilience. A workshop on the writings of Joanna Macy was held in June. The Wilderness area the group created for the Green Fair generated a lot of interest and more than 80 people hung leaves on the Tree of Gladness.

Grow Your Own: Sarah Clark

Grow your Own meets regularly to exchange gardening tips and share food. A very successful Plant a Potato Day was held in March. 400 seed potatoes were given out at the Market Cross and there were reports of good potato harvests later on.

Wastebusters: Rhiannon Thompson

The Wastebusters project is working to reduce waste, particularly food waste, and linked up with the Chichester Nursery and Family Centre. Regular sessions have been held with Mums and

children on healthy cooking. A Swap Shop was organised at the Nursery on December 9. Further activities are planned for the next term.

Swap Shop: Marian Foat

3 successful Swap Shops for the free exchange of goods have been held this year, and another is planned for January 28, 2012. They have generally attracted over 200 people. Very little has been left over at the end. The Fairtrade Café at the Swap Shop has been well patronised.

Garden Share: Ruth Valerio

There are now three matches in the Garden Share scheme. Now that the first matches have been made, the scheme is likely to gather in momentum. More help is sought as there are only 3 people working on this project at the moment.

Energy: Matt Damper

Reducing energy consumption is at the centre of the Transition movement and the Energy group has several ideas for projects, including loaning energy consumption measuring devices to TC members and other people, and using a thermal imaging camera to detect heat loss. Forming Transition Streets is also a possibility, where neighbours get together to improve energy efficiency in their homes.

Local Food Directory: Rosemary Moon

TC has just taken on a new project, trialling a toolkit created by Ben Messer of Food Matters. The toolkit aims to give people the skills to create a local food map of their area. A small group of people have formed a Hub which will study the tool kit. They will then train a larger group of volunteers who will interview producers and retailers to find out where local food can be obtained. A grant of £500 will be made available when the first stage of the project has been completed.

The Buzz: Sue Gilson

The Buzz, TC's newsletter is produced 4 times a year and has done a lot to enhance TC's image locally. Sue is always keen to receive contributions from TC members.

Community Garden: Mark Hobson

This new project has been set up with the help of the Chichester District Council, who have made a piece of land at the side of Priory Park available for a community garden. This project is just getting off the ground and will shortly be publicised in the area.

Chichester in Bloom: Anita van Rossum

TC was invited to participate in this year's Chichester in Bloom competition. Anita presented the organisers with an edible garden in an old pan, on the strength of which TC was awarded a Certificate of Excellence.

New projects

Walled Garden: TC is negotiating with the Boys' High School about restoring the derelict garden in the school grounds. This will be a challenging, but very exciting project.

Green Library: TC has inherited a large number of books from the shop Living Nature. A portable bookcase is being constructed and TC members will be able to borrow books at film evenings from January onwards.

Primary School Orchards: Orchards are to be planted in 2 Chichester primary schools in the Spring.

2. Events

Two major events took place this year, a **presentation by Rob Hopkins**, founder of the Transition movement, which was given to a sell-out audience of 185 in the Assembly Room, Chichester on April 6. This was also attended by members of Transition Worthing and Transition Town Havant, with whom useful links were made.

The other important event was the **Changing Times Green Fair**, held in the Assembly Room on Saturday October 9. The fair was attended by over 700 people. Each TC project had its own stand and 15 other local organisations were present. The event was sponsored by Wileys, The Woodhorn Group, Better Tomorrows and the Chichester Community Development Trust. A number of local organisations contributed generous prizes for the raffle. There was a wonderful atmosphere and it was felt that the event had really put TC on the map locally.

3. Links with other organisations.

Useful links have been formed with City and District Councillors and discussions were held with a number of prospective Councillors at the time of the local elections in May.

TC also had a stand at a number of local events: St Georges' Parish Fair, the Amnesty International Concert during the Chichester Festivities, the District Council's Get Active event and the Annual Parishes Meeting.

TC participated in the consultation process for the proposed Shopwhyke Lakes Development and also held discussions with the Chichester Society before submitting a response to the Local Development Framework. A member of the TC Hub also meets regularly with the Board of the Chichester Community Development Trust.

A number of TC members have given support to the 20's Plenty Campaign. TC has also formed links with the Chichester Community Car Club.

4. Awareness-raising

Monthly film shows and talks at the Bassil Shippam Centre have attracted audiences of 50-60 people, many of them new to TC. In addition to our newsletter The Buzz, a monthly column, World of Transition, has appeared in the Chichester Observer over the past year.

5. Funding

A grant of £500 was received from the City Council for planting orchards in primary schools. A further £500 was donated by the Chichester District Council to the Community Orchard Project. This project was further funded by all three Chichester Rotary Clubs.

We are now working with the Fundraising Hub of the VCACD (Voluntary and Community Action Chichester District). They are advising us on how to apply for funding, and have allocated a volunteer fund-raiser to work with us for one day a week over the next year.