

Transition Town Kingston Annual General Meeting, 2014 - 15

Friday April 17th 2015, 7.00pm

Kingston Workmen's Club, 25 Old London Road, Kingston KT2 6ND

MINUTES

Present: Fiona Quinn (FQ, chairing); Hilary Gander (HG, treasurer); Marilyn Mason (MM, secretary, note-taker); Toni Izard (TI, management team); Nic Fearon-Low (NF-L, management team); Des Kay (DK, management team); John Fellowes (JF, management team); Anne Beales, Chris Beales, Justine Glynn (HUG), Caroline Hutchings, Jeannette James, Peter Mason (TTK Energy Group), Cath Mukhopadhyay (Parkfields) and family, Amisha Patel, David Baggott, Keith McMahon (Kingston Beekeepers), Mary Graham (River Mummy), Alison Fure, Simone Kay + a few guests who hadn't registered.

1. Welcome: FQ opened the AGM and welcomed those present.

2. Apologies for absence had been received from Martin Birley, Chas Warlow, Rosemary Addington, Victoria Windling-Gayton.

3. Minutes of last year's AGM were approved.

4. TTK Treasurer's report, 2014 - 2015 (HG, see separate accounts at

<http://ttingston.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/TTK-Income-Expenditure-2014-15.pdf> and <http://ttingston.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/TTK-Balance-Sheet-2014-15.pdf>)

5. Reviews of the year 2014 - 15

5.1. TTK activities during 2014 - 15

NF-L reported on the broader TTK activities, which had begun with the 2014 AGM and 6th birthday party, film show and launch of "Growing Together" on Friday 11 April.

We ran a programme of open TTK management team meetings throughout the year, inviting people to come and meet the management team and join in. One of these, on 8 July, focused on the TOPO proposals for the Old Post Office.

On 6 February TTK hosted a successful event at the Workmen's Club, "Energy for the future - is policy fit for purpose?" Around 70 people turned up to hear Energy Secretary and local MP, Ed Davey and Duncan Law of Biofuelwatch debate on wide range of energy issues facing the local and wider community.

On 2 January TTK held a New Year celebration, this year at the Riverside Vegetaria in Kingston.

TTK continued to play a variety of roles across the wider Transition community as well as in the local community in 2014-15. During the last year we supported a number of activities, events and campaigns either through promotion and/or direct participation. These included:

- Surbiton Food Festival which ran from 3 -18 May, with Kingston Permaculture at Knollmead hosting the opening
- Free publicity workshops for local green organisations held on 8 and 28 May
- Recognition from London in Bloom when the judges visited TTK's foodie planters in Surbiton (part of Urbanfarmacy's River of Herbs) on 18 July
- Support for Kingston Food Festival's community stall in Memorial Gardens, Sat 2 - Sun 3 August
- Through August and into September volunteer refreshments and fundraising at All Saints, Kingston Market Place
- 2015 kicked off with support for the Rubbish Dieters 'Love your Bin' campaign
- Engaging the local community to participate in the Kingston Mini-Holland cycling proposal consultation through to when it closed in February
- Participating in the London Climate Coalition march on 21 September 2014 and the Time to Act climate march on 7 March 2015

Meanwhile, in June TTK treasurer and founder member, Hilary Gander, became a Kingston Councillor and Opposition spokesperson on Environment and Transport.

In the second half of the year TTK revised its newsletter, following positive support from members to continue with it. We (mostly FQ) also worked on designing and building a new website - see #6.

5.2. TTK project and group updates, 2014 - 2015

- **Abundance:** HG reported that she was "babysitting" the project, as previous coordinator Elise had moved away. Abundance volunteers harvested fruit that would otherwise have been wasted, and did occasional fruit pressings, which were always very popular. They would like to do more next year but needed more volunteers and a new coordinator.
- **Energy Group:** Peter Mason reported that they had used their recently acquired thermal camera to take images of around 20 houses this year, and hoped to streamline the process so that they could do more next winter. They had liaised with the Council about a loan the Council was applying for, for solar PV for schools. The EG had joined the umbrella organisation Community Energy England. Damon's wi-fi operated thermostat had been funded to produce production prototypes, so progressing well. The EG was working with Smart Communities on local energy audits, and were hoping to run a discussion on nuclear power later this year.
- **Inner Transition:** there was no one available to give a full report but JF reported that following on from a series of workshops on non-violent communication Lucy Harrison had more recently hosted some sessions on de-cluttering. [Post-meeting: some TTK members including some of the original Inner Transition group members have been more engaged in other 'inner'-oriented local groups, e.g. the Quakers and Kingston & New Malden Mindfulness Practice Group.]
- **Urbanfarmacy:** FQ reported that she had acquired a poly-tunnel but was still looking for a space for it. Urbanfarmacy's plant displays had helped win a London in Bloom award.
- **Stitch in Time:** MM reported that she and Toni had continued to run their stitching sessions at Welcare till the end of 2014, but despite the good venue take-up had dwindled to almost nothing, so they had put the project into hibernation. In the 4 years of these sociable sewing workshops, they had helped fix a wide range of clothes and everyone who took part had learnt something. But a workshop that had been novel and useful 4 years ago was perhaps less so now, with other similar workshops around and a lot of sewing skill instruction on, e.g., YouTube. SiT would still turn out occasionally on request (and Refugee Action Kingston had already requested a session for this year), and/or we could hand on our kit to a similar project, and/or eventually subsume SiT into a wider skill-sharing project.
- **Kingston Green e-Directory:** MM reported that web-based Green Directory continued, and was updated as info and requests came in. Those present were urged to use it (cards were available at the AGM and there was a link from TTK website), and to let the editors know of enterprises that should be there or deleted because they no longer existed. JF added that if there was a willing volunteer, the directory could be actively managed to be more informative for users, and the criteria for entries, which were currently very inclusive, could be tightened up. The Directory was TTK's Business Action Group's only current project - they had run green-business-focused events in the past and could do so again if there were ideas for events and volunteers to run them.

5.3. Other community group news

- **KUTLETS:** DK and Simone Kay reported that KUTLETS meetings at Kingston Environment Centre had evolved from trading meetings into socials with food to share and that all were welcome. Sim also recommended the Raw Food workshops being held at KEC.
- **Kingston £** had now gone electronic after last year's trial of paper money.

- **Knollmead:** Simone Kay reported that Knollmead would be participating in this year's Surbiton Food Festival in May. Visitors and volunteers were always welcome at the Permaculture Reserve at Knollmead on the last Sunday of every month, and she thanked Brian Shindler for driving work at the site forward, e.g., on a new pond.
- **Kingston Environment Centre:** DK reported that KEC was now fully operational in New Malden, and had had some recent successes in getting funding. They were busy creating their own garden as well as the Hogsmill Community Garden, where volunteers were always welcome.
- **TOPO:** Peter Mason reported that the first phase of the TOPO campaign to get community space in the redevelopment of the Old Post Office site, initiated by Jean Vidler of Kingston Environment Centre a couple of years ago, was now all but over. The TOPO consortium had not got everything they had asked for but had got community use of the 2 upstairs floors of the Old PO building written into the current planning application, and that included one lovely large room with potential for events, including TTK events such as this AGM, exhibitions, rehearsals etc, + several smaller spaces suitable for meetings or offices. The ground floor was earmarked for a cafe/restaurant, probably at a commercial rent, and both the other listed buildings on the site would also be conserved and brought into use. The new owner (subject to planning permission) developers St George had been much more communicative and positive than previous owner Hammerson. TOPO now awaited developments. If planning permission was given, others would have to take on the next phase, managing and using the community spaces - but it would take at least 2 years to get to that stage. The TOPO website and Facebook page lived on, and that was where any future news would be reported. TOPO Prospectuses were available at the meeting.
- **Ham United Group (HUG):** Justine Glynn reported that HUG events continued, including green films on the last Thursday of every month at Ham Library - all were welcome to go along.
- **Ham Hydro:** Justine also updated on Ham Hydro's planning application to install an Archimedes screw energy generating system at Ham Weir, which was now approaching the final stages and a decision, with a very finely balanced Richmond Council meeting the previous evening. Ham Hydro had been asked for further information before a decision could be made.
- **Parkfields Forest Garden:** Cath Mukhopadhyay reported that volunteers were always welcome at this North Kingston project, and also recommended her Forest School to anyone with children.
- **Save the World Club:** DK and Mary Graham reported that its main current work was Young Place-Shapers, for which they had 3 years' funding - they were working in RBK's parks contractor Quadron on various planting projects, including one in Canbury Gardens.
- **Global Justice Now:** Jeannette James explained why the World Development Movement had changed its name and logo, and that its current remit included clean democratic energy for all, and agro-ecology and control of local food (against control by large corporations such as Monsanto) in the poorer South. There were leaflets available at the meeting, and Jeannette also recommended the TED talk on agro-ecology at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iKtrwdsvlko>.
- **Kingston Beekeepers:** Keith McMahon had a stall at this meeting and would also be at Surbiton Food Festival in May and the monthly Surbiton Farmers' Market.
- **River Mummy** (Mary Graham) had just begun trading and had a stall at this meeting offering tasters and seasonal preserves. Mary had begun by making her own Christmas gift hampers and this had developed into this new business selling her home-made preserves made from as local and as seasonal produce as possible.

- **Biodiversity:** Alison Fure alerted the audience to threats to local nature reserves and biodiversity from development and changes of status. There would be a Kingston Biodiversity Network meeting at the Quaker Meeting Centre on the evening of May 11, all were welcome.
- **Kingston Environment Forum:** MM reported that TTK was well represented in KEF, which was part of the Council's Strategic Partnership and included many other local green groups including representatives concerned with bio-diversity. KEF had taken over the work of the lapsed TTK Council Group, i.e. talking to Kingston councillors, staff and Kingston Strategic Partnership about local environmental matters - this year mainly on Kingston's mini-Holland cycling proposals and Kingston's waste and recycling plans.

6. TTK announcements

- **The new TTK website**, revamped and redesigned, was now up and running and all were invited to use and browse it and send web-editor FQ their comments.
- A new group, "**Friends of TTK**" was launched, and local sustainability groups and projects sharing TTK aims and principles but wanting to remain independent were invited to become Friends of TTK. FQ described the benefits to Friends, which included: mutual support and sharing; their own pages on TTK website, to edit, update and promote opportunities and events; publicity for Friends' projects etc via TTK newsletter; access to useful website resources for Friends only; a voice in the community via TTK membership of Kingston Environment Forum. TTK would benefit from: wider support in Kingston, and wider awareness of peak oil and climate change and what we can do about them locally; more participation in each other's events and projects; a bigger local voice; Friends' donations (suggested amount £15 p a) towards TTK running expenses such as the website.

In response to questions, it was stressed that TTK's own projects would continue as before to use the TTK bank account and insurance, the TTK logo, website, newsletter etc. For "Friends" there would have to be shared values and an approval process, and Friends would use their own logos, bank accounts, insurance etc. Details of the process were on the TTK website, and invitations would go out.

TTK affiliations/memberships, e.g. to Kingston Environment Centre and KUTLETS, would continue, and might become reciprocal.

7. Nominations/elections to management team 2015 - 2016

There were no new volunteers or nominations. Members of the current management team - DK, MM, FQ, JF, HG, TI, + NF-L who had volunteered during the year - were present, willing to stand, and were unanimously elected. Other interested members would always be welcome to come to management team meetings.

8. AOB

- **Minor changes and updates to the Constitution** were presented by MM and accepted by the meeting. The amendments were to 6.1 (about making collective management team decisions on funds), 6.3 (setting practical upper and lower numbers on management team), 8.6 (making it clear that TTK would hold any amount of funds for TTK groups for as long as needed), 8.10 (clarifying the process for handing on TTK projects), and 11.3 (using the new terminology of "Friends" in place of "affiliates"). The amended Constitution can be read at <http://ttingston.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TTK-constitution-with-amendments-agreed-2015.pdf>.
- DK announced that **Biofuelwatch** (Duncan Law of BW spoke at our Feb energy event) would be demonstrating at the AGM of Drax plc on Wed 22nd April protesting at the impacts of burning biomass and coal, and calling for the power station's closure.
- JF recommended the **Transition Network 2015 conference**, Sept 18 - 20, in Devon. He added The Transition movement now had well over 1000 initiatives in some 45 countries –

the conference is a chance to share experiences/ideas and be inspired by what others are doing in some very different settings across UK and the world.

- DK thanked MM for the organising she had done for TTK, and MM responded that all the management team worked hard and did whatever they could.
- **A brief presentation** from FQ on this year's theme "Eat, Drink and be Merry: Made in Kingston", focusing on developments in From the Ground Up:- Steph had handed it on to FQ, who had turned it into a social enterprise and was now planning growth, with more frequent pick-ups, more hubs, more training, more products from local food producers. Volunteer helpers always welcome, and FQ was also looking for a trainee manager.

Formal business was followed by **TTK's 7th birthday celebration** and all present were invited to "eat drink and be merry", to share the TTK birthday cake, and chat to fellow-Transitioners. Local honey and preserves were for sale and there were strawberry plants to take away.

APPENDIX - Treasurer's report, 2014 - 2015

Draft approved by the management team in May 2015, confirmed as accurate at the 2016 AGM on 18/6/16