

## Transition Town Kingston 2012 -2013 Annual General Meeting

Held at the Richard Mayo Centre, Kingson

Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2013, 4.30pm

Chair: Lucy Harrison

Steering Group Attendees: Liz Darley, John Fellowes, Hilary Gander, Lucy Harrison, Toni Izard, Marilyn Mason, Brian Mulley, David Randall, (Des Kay volunteered for on-the-door duty)

Other attendees: Mrs R Forrest, Hilary Booth, Julie Blythe, Stephanie Hofielen, Mark Varney, Simon Alderwick, Peter Mason, Suriam Halti

### 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Lucy Harrison welcomed attendees. There were no apologies for absence.

### 2. MINUTES OF LAST YEAR'S AGM FOR APPROVAL

Marilyn Mason asked if there were any amendments to the minutes of the last AGM (at [ttkington.org/pdfs/TTK-AGM-Minutes-2012.pdf](http://ttkington.org/pdfs/TTK-AGM-Minutes-2012.pdf)). As there were none, the minutes were approved.

### 3. TTK FINANCE REPORT

Hilary Gander presented the 2012-13 Income & Expenditure Report and Balance Sheet.

A £500 grant was received from RBK for the Transition Tolworth greening project and a £250 grant also from RBK made to Stitch in Time for maintenance and repairs. Additionally £20 had been raised from seed sales from Transition Tolworth and £915 from members to set up the Kingston Community Energy Industrial Provident Society. Other regular donations and fund-raising from coffee morning totalled £492.17. Significant items of expenditure included £185 for insurance, £165 for new leaflets and £85 to hire the hall for the Biodiversity Event. Other expenditure was covered by specific funds raised e.g. Transition Tolworth leaflets. The accounts had been checked by Karol Smal, an accountant, and reviewed and signed by Martin Birley.

### 4. REVIEW OF TTK ACTIVITIES 2012 – 13

Members of the management team and the various TTK project groups have organised a range of events during the year from April 2012 to March 2013.

**MAY** brought a flurry of events loosely under the Paint the Town Green umbrella. Volunteers from TTK & Kingston Environment Centre (KEC) were active at Kingston's May Merrie, the Ham House Sow and Grow event, Seething Sports Day, Alpha Road Fun Day, and the Smart Communities celebration at Fernhill School.

In **JUNE** TTK and Save the World Club co-organised the Kingston Rio Connection event, part of a national debate organised by the Stop Climate Chaos Coalition. Our own Hilary was a panellist.

Toni was on stage at the Kingston Food Festival demonstrating how to cook a 3-course vegetarian meal in 45 minutes. TTK & KEC members also contributed to London Green Fair.

In **JULY** TTK hosted a talk by ex-Reuters journalist Patrick Chalmers, "Nightmare on Fleet Street."

This gave an insight into where power lies and how democracy could be reshaped by citizen journalism. Meanwhile TTK & KEC members were also involved in the London Permaculture Festival.

In **AUGUST** Kingston's Olympics role pleased many TTK members, for its community togetherness and its celebration of zero-carbon transport (cycling). We applaud the organisers and note how good it felt to stop the traffic. Kingston Kitchen ran jam- and pickle-making workshops at King's Cross for the Capital Growth scheme, and then at the Hounslow Community Farming Association site for allotment volunteers (Toni's first time making these using a camping stove!).

TTK participated in Think in Kingston in **OCTOBER**: the theme was Money. We showed and discussed excerpts from the film "Inside Job." We joined KUTLETS in hosting a discussion "Beyond Money" – exploring possibilities raised by the gift economy, credit unions and LETS schemes. We also supported a meeting on participatory budgeting. Apple Day & Harvest Extravaganza was held at Kingston Market House: a joint effort initiated by KUTLETS. TTK's Abundance set up their juicing equipment and invited passers-by to lend a hand, turning surplus apples from Knollmead and elsewhere into fresh juice. Visitors also got to taste homemade fruit cakes, and vote for a range of traditional apple varieties. TTK and KEC organised a panel discussion and displays on "Living Landscapes" at Kingston Workmen's Club. The theme was the need to help pollinators and other

## Transition Town Kingston 2012 -2013 Annual General Meeting

wildlife by careful natural planting. Outcomes include some useful resources on [www.greener.kingston.org.uk](http://www.greener.kingston.org.uk) and a new project, Urbanfarmacy.

In **NOVEMBER** Kingston Kitchen ran its annual Christmas cookery workshops, teaching people how simple it is to make their own delicious Christmas cake, pudding, mincemeat, marzipan and various sweets and lemon curd to give as gifts.

In **DECEMBER** TTK Energy Group hosted a very informative talk on "Energy efficiency – whole house strategies" by experts Marine Sanchez and Inigo Harrion from greentomato energy.

In snowy **JANUARY** TTK sent a representative to the first full meeting of nearby Transition Cobham (TC), to share our early experiences and encouragement. TC founder Stephanie Giacometti had joined a TTK meeting in December.

In **FEBRUARY** TTK worked with Save the World Club and the Energy We Can Afford campaign on a very well attended panel discussion in Market House, including local MP Ed Davey, on "Energy we can all afford?" We were invited to speak to sixth-form students at Hollyfield School about what we do and the science behind it. The response was enthusiastic – several students have since become From the Ground Up volunteers.

In **MARCH** TTK again participated in Paint the Town Green, a celebration of all things green around the borough. We helped with planning and organising the festival as members of Kingston Environment Group, and offered a range of events and activities, including Green Open House as in 2012 and with RBK and Kingstonfirst's help promoted a business switch-off and a schools green assembly.

### ANNUAL ROUNDUPS FROM GROUPS AND PROJECTS

2012 saw **Abundance Kingston** (now in its second year) send out teams of volunteer harvesters to pick and redistribute unwanted fruit to local charity groups and the public between August and October. Despite a bad year for fruit trees (due to a very wet spring), another five private trees were added to the Abundance map and the group harvested some 70 kg of apples and pears. The introduction of set days for picking and distributing fruit has helped streamline the service, with volunteers able to plan their commitment in advance. A number of successful community juicing events took place at the Environment Centre, which reduced the need for storage, and the group's year culminated in the Apple Day celebration. We're hoping for a much higher yield of fruit in 2013!

The **Cambridge Road Estate Diggers** community-gardening project was wound up in September after two growing seasons, due to low community take-up and competing plans for the site. We celebrate the efforts of all who took part, and the colour and trees it added to the area.

Since 2011 the **Energy Group** has had a few projects. With One Norbiton and local councillors we promoted the upgrading of loft insulation in the Cambridge Road Estate, under the CERT scheme for council-owned properties. As a result 40 homes now have loft insulation to modern standards. In early 2012 the group took part in a trial thermal imaging of selected houses, initiated by Kingston University's Smart Communities Project.

In early 2013 the group formed a micro-generation company named **Kingston Community Energy** (KCE). This aims to raise funds by a share offer and use them to install solar PV on community buildings in Kingston; financial modelling shows that the building user can receive very cheap electricity and investors can get a good return through the Feed-in-Tariffs. KCE is in discussions with ten property owners, including RBK which has a large property estate, and has the support of local councillors and our two local MPs. The group has succeeded in qualifying for free professional help (mainly legal) through CarbonLeapFrog.

Plans for the next year: (1) Securing agreement with property owners, and raising the funding, to install about 100 Kwp of solar PV. (2) Sourcing an infra-red camera so that the group can roll-out a programme of thermal imaging of homes for interested residents. (3) Investigating the addition of RHI-qualifying technologies, such as heat pumps, to what KCE can offer.

More detail was available on a poster displayed at the meeting.

**From the Ground Up** (FGU) goes from strength to strength as Kingston's only community organic food scheme. We moved into two new spacious indoor venues: the Surbiton YMCA and the 1st Kingston Hill Scout Hut on Park Road, Kingston. Always on the hunt for local organic produce, FGU is selling salad greens and plants from Ealing and seasonal vegetables and eggs from Hounslow, in addition to preserves from Long Ditton, honey from New Malden and healthy cakes (gluten-/dairy-free) from Kingston. We are breaking records in order numbers and size, and welcomed our 350th new registrant of the FGU Shop. FGU has a growing pool of dedicated loyal volunteers including students from Hollyfield School in Surbiton. FGU was also busy producing a new video, participating in the Kingston Food Festival

## Transition Town Kingston 2012 -2013 Annual General Meeting

& Surbiton Festival, and was profiled in a local publication comparing local box schemes (we scored very well, thank you).

Coming up: the ten-mile supper club; a possible new hub at Hollyfield; more local organic produce; and, hopefully, more customers. Come and join us on this journey.

The new **Inner Transition Group** has met regularly since December. We've been studying "Nonviolent Communication," challenging habitual patterns of expression to enable more open compassionate exchange without judgement or conflict. TTK's regional blog for the Transition Network (<https://www.transitionnetwork.org/stories/guest-blogger/2012-10/seeking-centre>) in the autumn also touched on the 'inner' dimension.

The long-awaited exit of **Kingston Environment Centre** from its premises near the Kingfisher finally came in March, and the organisation has a temporary home in New Malden. TTK thanks the old building, and the KEC team, for all the happy memories at the old site, and looks forward to many further fruitful collaborations.

**Kingston Green e-Directory** is gradually growing. The website has three editors who continually add suitable enterprises. We welcome recommendations from TTK members to make the Directory more comprehensive and hence useful. (Cards available at this meeting)

**Kingston Kitchen** has been out and about quite a lot this year – see Events. We are keen to continue and expand this project to demystify and encourage cooking. Toni will run courses on requested topics, so contact her through our TTK website.

The summer fruit crop at **Kingston Permaculture Reserve** (KPR) at Knollmead was dented by poor weather and parakeets, but still substantial. We've been liberating overgrown fruit-tree areas and planting a productive understorey, using currant and gooseberry cuttings. We've also been exploring fruit-management techniques such as grafting: 28 apple rootstocks have been grafted with scions kindly donated by RHS Wisley, including locally-propagated varieties and Pitmaston Pineapple which won the flavour contest on Apple Day. New produce includes Shiitake mushrooms, while the tree nursery is growing almonds, walnuts, quince and cranberries. KPR is one of Britain's more established forest gardens and its various yields are of increasing interest. We still meet monthly (at least) on the last Sunday afternoon of the month.

We'll inoculate more mushrooms logs, and graft plums and almonds this summer. On Sunday May 26th we warmly invite everyone to our 21st Birthday Party and BBQ.

**Save the World Club** (SWC) has new premises in a wonderful, naturally-lit, loft-type warehouse space at Park Works, 16-18 Park Road, Kingston KT2 6BG, where we continue our mosaic workshops and develop our reuse and upcycle projects.

**Stitch in Time** was awarded a small grant of £250 in 2012 from Kingston Council, for sewing machine repair and maintenance, of which we have £50 left for ongoing spares and maintenance. We've had to move out of KEC and dispose of a lot of donated materials, and are currently based at Kingston College for our monthly "make-do-and-mend" sewing workshops. We've also taken stitching out into the community a few times during 2012-13 (see poster at this meeting). More detail was available on a poster displayed at the meeting.

**Transition Tolworth** (TT): a small group from the TTK management team took part in a Tolworth "Your Money Your Choice" event in the summer of 2012. Residents could choose which of a range of local community projects to award Council funds to – and TT was awarded £500 for its community garden project. Local residents have enjoyed watching the garden grow, and some have joined in. More detail was available on a poster displayed at the meeting.

The last few months has seen the launch of **Urbanfarmacy** in Kingston with a new website and Chelsea Fringe projects. Over the coming year we are looking to expand the range of growing sites on [Urbanfarmacy.org](http://Urbanfarmacy.org) and start to develop new growing sites for skin care plants, food and wild flowers, in collaboration with a range of local community groups, and supported by a number of practical workshops.

The TTK management team has met monthly since the April 2012 AGM, coordinating much of the aforementioned with countless small contributions. The team channels community news through its

## Transition Town Kingston 2012 -2013 Annual General Meeting

website (~700 visitors per month), newsletter (474 subscribers) and Facebook page (290 members). We also produced a new leaflet in the summer. Earlier this year the management team decided its meetings should be open to anyone who wanted to come along, and have since had some welcome participation and ideas from beyond the core team. TTK is also working with other community groups to regenerate the old Post Office into a rich community hub. Volunteers (especially Marilyn) have sold teas, coffees and cakes throughout the year at All Saints Church.

### APPRECIATION

It was with sadness that this year saw the loss of two dear supporters and friends of TTK, and particularly of From the Ground Up: Penny Manners and Arthur Howarth. They will be greatly missed.

To all those who have given their time and dedication to realising the vision of Transition Town Kingston for 2012 - 13, we thank you.

### 5. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

Marilyn Mason proposed changes to TTK Constitution by the current management team in order to make procedures and membership more flexible for future management teams. The changes were approved unanimously as highlighted below:

*From*

6.3 The management team should include a representative from every active project group, and appoint a Chair (or co-Chairs), a Treasurer, a Secretary/Note-taker, and other officers considered necessary, and these or their deputies should be present at management team meetings. A quorum for these meetings should be 2 thirds of the team. The management team may co-opt members to ensure balance, representation from every project group, and sufficient officers to carry out its duties.

*to*

6.3 The management team should **aim to** include a representative from every active project group, and appoint a **chair** (or **co-chairs**), a **treasurer**, a **secretary/note-taker**, and other officers **as and when** considered necessary, and these or their deputies should be present at management team meetings. A quorum for these meetings should be 2 thirds of the team. The management team may co-opt members to ensure balance, representation from every project group, and sufficient officers to carry out its duties.

*And from:*

8.2 While a group exists it should have a representative in the management team to have a say in and assist with the overall direction and co-ordination of TTK activities, to share project updates with the team, and ensure the free flow of information and knowledge around the TTK network.

*to*

8.2 While a group exists it should **try to** have a representative in the management team to have a say in and assist with the overall direction and co-ordination of TTK activities, to share project updates with the team, and ensure the free flow of information and knowledge around the TTK network.

### 6. STEERING GROUP 2013-14 ELECTIONS

The existing steering group stood down and the following TTK members put themselves forward to form the steering group for 2013 – 2014: Marilyn Mason, Hilary Gander, Elise Barron, Toni Izard, John Fellowes, Liz Darley, Julie Blythe, Jean Vidler, Fiona Quinn, Lucy Harrison, Des Kay,

### 7. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE / NEXT STEPS

Liz Darley led the group in a guided visioning of how Kingston will be in the year 2030. Responses were collected and will be reviewed at the first new steering group meeting.

These are the ideas collected in:

- More people walking and cycling
- Wild flowers, guerilla gardening
- Little cars on electric motors
- Charity shops and internet 'fronts'
- TOPO transformed into a vibrant community hub
- More pubs/restaurants and social spaces
- More local tourists walking
- "Hang in there it will go your way"
- More edible plants in parks and hedges
- Less noise
- More greenery

## Transition Town Kingston 2012 -2013 Annual General Meeting

- Mini herb gardens
- Slower pace of life – bumbling
- More seating
- Surbiton pedestrianised
- More activity in general
- More shops selling second hand goods
- Bumping into familiar known people ☺
- Absence of McDonalds
- Made decorations – streets more colourful

### 8. AOB

Peter Mason thanked Hilary Gander for all her hard work over several years as treasurer and Marilyn Mason thanked Toni Iazard (Kingston Kitchen) for providing the delicious refreshments for this event. There being no other business, the AGM closed at 5.30pm.

Members had a chance to mingle amongst the project displays during the break for refreshments. From the Ground Up had a stall and held a raffle for an organic vegetable box. David Randall had prepared a project display sheet on TOPO (The Old Post Office).

There followed over an hour of delightful music and wit on an environmental theme provided by Gaia Cabaret (aka Peter Horton).