

Transition Town Kingston – core group meeting

Date: Tues 29 August, 6.30pm, at Spring Grove

NOTES (actions in red)

Present: Marilyn (MM, chairing and note-taking), Paul (PMc, treasurer), Peter (Energy Group), Toni (TI, Abundance), Janine (JM, Recycling Minds)

Apologies had been received from Damon (DHD); Hilary (HG), Marcus (MO)

1. **Last meeting (June) notes (attached)** were confirmation, with some minor amendments, and approved for publishing (**MM**). Some matters and actions arising were considered at the meeting.

2. **Main business of this meeting, Money:**

- **Bank account and connection with Open Collective.** PM explained how OC (<https://opencollective.com/transition-town-kingston>) worked and its benefits in terms of clarity, openness, and transparency - expenses were itemised and receipts uploaded, donations could be made to specific projects, OC was visible to all... Though income and outgoings still went through TTK bank account and then had to be distributed as relevant amongst the various OC projects/collectives, PMc was content to carry on doing this extra step. Did other projects, e g, Abundance, Recycling Minds... need an OC section? Would they use it?

Revenue planning (anything more ambitious, e g a business plan, was deferred till MO could explain and assist). Those present agreed that **project groups should contribute** (and budget for) 10% from their income and funding awards to TTK towards general expenditure, such as printing, storage, insurance, new banner/flag, Christmas celebration... RCK would transfer £100 of their recent Resilience Fund award, which had included an element towards general expenditure/TTK resilience, and CCG would transfer £10 from their recent Transition Together donation to the general fund (**PMc** to arrange). [Maybe for small occasional donations an annual calculation and contribution would be appropriate? To discuss later.]

A **Support Us/Donate button** on the website and in KE News to encourage donations, preferably small regular ones that would help towards regular outgoings and demonstrate support to potential funders in future. **PMc & MM** to work on this. Could we make donations look more exciting, i e, not just for insurance? Could they be linked to specific projects in OC - or is that too much choice, too many steps for potential donors?

- **Insurance** (the policy, such as it is, is filed at <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1WzYtk8f8azLf6stqFRhipo2fcxfjWDTW>). When and why did we choose this particular insurance policy or had we just drifted into it - no one present could answer this. Had our activities and needs grown and changed since original choice? Why, e g, do we have cover for employees? JM's recent Q about insurance for the Waste Hackathon had raised what was covered and what wasn't, whether the policy was fit for TTK needs, and whether there were better alternatives. Though essential PLI was covered, the policy did not seem to list the TTK

activities/projects covered, which could cause problems if a claim was made, or insure TTK's possessions (which include some valuables: RCK's PAT, Abundance's juicer, EG's thermal camera), So, some clarifications were needed, both from us and from the insurance company, Aviva:

- **A full list of TTK activities** with an informal assessment of risk, insurance needed. **PM** to contact **All (project leaders/ CG)** to get the info from them to make a full list. JM's Recycling Minds to be included as a TTK project.

- **The policy:** **PMc** to contact the insurers to find out what activities were covered and how much it would cost to insure certain possessions and what the excess would be, info that would allow the next CG meeting to decide whether it was worth it or not, i.e., should TTK reserves carry the risk of loss or damage? (Those present thought it probably wasn't worth extra insurance, though the onus would then be on us to keep careful track of any valuables.)

3. Other updates:

- **Project group reports** had been emailed ahead of the meeting - see Appendix 1. Those present agreed that it would be reasonable for Abundance to seek donations towards the expense of ULEZ, and **TI** was requested to keep accounts of donations and ULEZ expenses, as the last CG meeting had agreed to help towards this expense

- **KVA volunteering event in July** - **TI** reported that it had gone well, was a useful networking event, and worth attending.

- **Other groups, local and beyond:** (See some updates in Appendix 2)

- **Hackathon, 16 September** - **JM** asked **All** to share ads on social media.

- **Green Libraries Week**, 1st week of October - Kingston Library would be offering a clothes repair/alteration/upcycling session on the evening of Thursday 5 Oct. **MM** was looking for volunteer stitchers, had had a few expressions of interest, and **TI** offered to help on the evening. Repair Cafe could provide a couple of sewing machines and some sewing kit. Could be a useful collaboration with other sewing groups and an opp for all to bring fliers and publicise.

4. AOB:

- Possible constitutional / **core group issues and options** arising from growth of CG and/or adopting more projects (See Appendix 3) were deferred for discussion at next meeting. We were quorate at this meeting, so numbers may turn out to be a non-problem?

- **TTK fliers** - **All** to check if they have any and how many. When we need some, it will be a relatively small expense and they do arrive quickly. To consider later - when printing a new supply, do we need to change anything, e.g., our logo, text, add QR code...?

5. Dates of upcoming meetings: 26 September, 31 October, 28 November.

Usual Tuesday meeting date for December is Boxing Day bank holiday so maybe not!

Christmas/New Year celebration - maybe some kind of informal celebration for supporters and volunteers, to be decided later.

GREEN DRINKS followed, when we were joined by Divya Venkatesh and later by Angela and Paul Druckman. There were introductions, we sent a video message to Hilary, and there were some, inconclusive, discussions of AI (curse or benefit to groups like ours?), whether our phones were listening to us, and Twitter/X (was it time to leave, though we follow 361 users and have 1199 followers, and it is a useful way to get news straight onto the TTK website home page),

APPENDICES

1. TTK project updates

KE News, MM

Deleting other green group sections seems to have passed without protest, and KEC is keen to continue as co-owners of KEN. I've also begun cutting content still further by transferring quite a lot of the general info in grey boxes to the website, e.g. on climate, gardening for wildlife. Whether anyone will click through to find the info is a moot point, but static stuff is better on a website than in a newsletter, IMO.

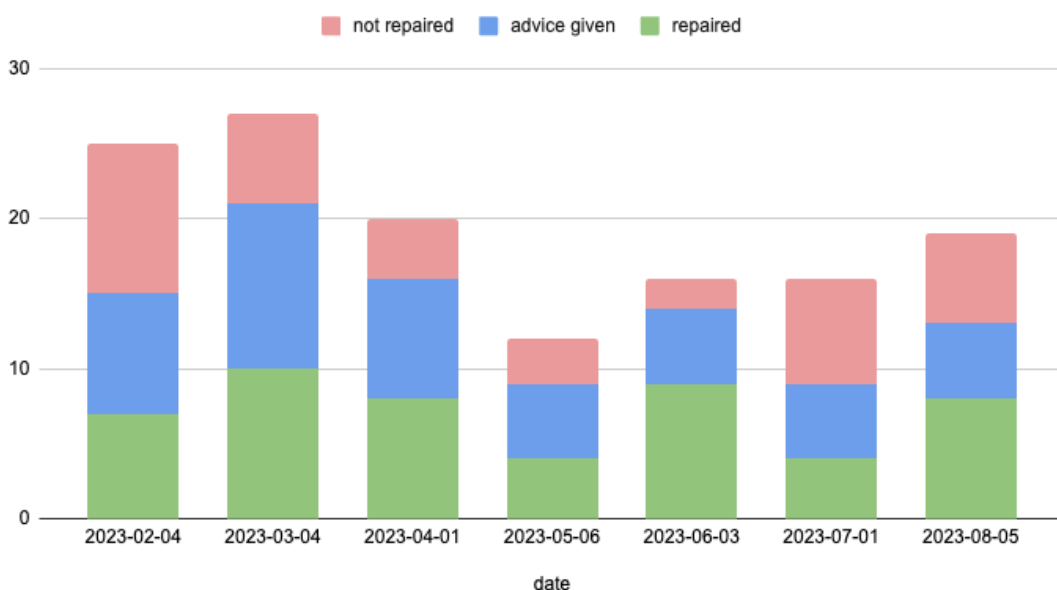
Abundance, TI

The harvest season is now in full swing. Started on 12th August. Have collected over 100k of eaters and nearly 200k of cookers so far. New collaboration with New Era Community Projects – have delivered 75k of cookers and 16 eaters to them so far. It's great to be able to pass on large amounts of fruit to a place where they are needed and hopefully used, although means no money generated for TTK. Hoping to do a juicing activity at Surbiton Farmers Market 16th September which will raise a little money. Also wondering how the CG feel about me asking the tree owners within ULEZ zone which I harvest if they would like to contribute towards the Ulez costs?

Repair Café Kingston, MM

RCKs have continued monthly, with data for our 1st 7 months below, thanks to Paul. Notes from our monthly Zoom project group meetings FYI at <https://www.ttkingston.org/ttk-repair-cafe-project/>. Journalism student Philip filmed August RCK and interviewed a volunteer on the day and MM afterwards in Canbury Community Garden (he may also make a video about Food projects in Kingston). He will share his video in due course.

repaired, advice given and not repaired



Canbury Community Garden - We still have more visitors than regular volunteers, but Canbury Community Garden is well used, currently by the Muddy Toddlers play group, a monthly Turkish families get-together, a couple of schools, GoodGym, Kingston Hive growing flax and natural dye plants for a craft project, Canbury Community Chicken Collective (the hens are very popular with younger visitors), a group of local refugees via RBKares... - quite a range of beneficiaries in the wider community. A Sunday gardening session will be part of Kingston's Sustainable September and we have attended one meeting of the new Good Food Group (see below). Edibles have been slow to get going this year with few surpluses likely, but we have been giving away compost to locals as we have more than enough for our needs. I was interviewed by a journalist from free local glossy syndicate, for a feature on community gardens. We remain grateful to Transition Town Kingston for its support, e.g., PL insurance, the TTK bank account, occasional funds, and space in the newsletter.

2. Updates from other groups

TCC, August: ALL-COALITION MEETING email

If you missed the July all-coalition meeting (August one cancelled), you can [watch the recording back here!](#) TCC was joined by Jamie Clarke from Engaging Climate, who is leading the evaluation for Great Big Green Week, as well as Zero Hour, who updated on the [Climate & Ecology Bill campaign](#), and Power For People, who shared information about the [Community Energy Revolution campaign](#) and the Local Electricity Bill.

Food Growing group meeting, The Hive, 31/7/23, convened by Ruth Dawson of Voices of Hope and KVA, MM

Interestingly wide and diverse community gardens represented, some new to me + a few food re-distribution projects - New Era, KEC, Square 1 cafes, STWC.... A feeling that the time (cost of living, climate change) was ripe for expansion of community food growing, and the usual proposals - a list, a map, new growing hubs anywhere and everywhere - but not enough attention IMO on our capacity to run more growing hubs and on involving the very local community in these projects, ideally with the initiative and all the workforce coming from them, not us (remember CRED!). Abundance wasn't there tho' probably should have been - there is now a WhatsApp group.

Transition Together

Keep in touch with TT via <https://vive.transitiontogether.org.uk/>

London/SE Transition Hub - keep in touch by joining the [London & SE WhatsApp group](#) or [London & SE Facebook Group](#). Did anyone get to the TT London gathering on 22/7?

This year's Sustainable September will be the natural environment. If you are running any events that you would be happy to be promoted as part of Sustainable September, please fill in [this](#) form to register your interest and get onto the RBK calendar of events. MM has offered a Canbury Community Garden Open Afternoon on Sunday 3rd, and wonder if any other TTK activities would be suitable - Abundance maybe?

Kingston Carnival on 3rd September, but no Green Zone!

3. CG/TTK internal matters

Still to discuss: CG numbers and being quorate, questions from MM

We had to cancel our July meeting because Chair and both note-takers couldn't be there, and we know from experience how hard it can be to make any progress if key CG members (e.g., chair, treasurer, secretary/note-taker) are absent. Without being elitist or exclusive about meetings, it's clear to me that if, say, all the project group reps turned up they might be quorate under our current rules and could have a nice chat, but without any of the "office-holders" they couldn't make any decisions and probably wouldn't record the discussion...So, given that we have just recruited more members to the CG, should we:

- Change the upper limit in the Constitution, or abandon an upper limit, and let the CG expand democratically and organically (as and when, e g, new volunteers and new projects emerge), amend the TTK constitution and accept the ensuing difficulty of being quorate? Maybe adding that a chair, treasurer, secretary/note-taker must be present to be quorate?
- Move to a CG + model, with CG responsible for managing and co-ordinating events and activities, and therefore essential at meetings + project group leads and other stakeholders always welcome to come, contribute and vote, but not essential for being quorate?
- And/or should we have a special status for co-optees until the following AGM when they can be confirmed and the Constitution altered to match numbers?
- Any other ideas on how to be quorate/democratic while getting on with necessary business?

Storage at The Circulatory, MM has identified and discussed with Des and Eric at STWC, a spot under some stairs that would do TTK nicely though it needs a side wall, a door, and a lock of some kind + fixings, hinges etc. Peter can help build it, if necessary, but we think progress will be slow.