

Transition Town Kingston – core group meeting Tues 26 September 2023, 6.30 - 7.50 at the Spring Grove

NOTES – approved as accurate by CG for publication, 31/10/23

Present: Damon (DHD, chairing), Marilyn (MM, note-taking), Marcus (MO), Peter (PM), Paul (PMc), Hilary (HG, who was welcomed back), Toni (TI), Maya (MF, later).

Apologies: Janine (JM)

1. **Last meeting's notes** were agreed by the few CG members who had been at the meeting as accurate and OK for **MM** to publish. **Matters & actions arising** or ongoing were discussed later.

2. Updates

TTK events/projects,

- **Energy Group** (PJM, DH-D) energy advice and monthly EG meetings were ongoing, DHD had done/would be doing some talks on heat-pumps

- **Abundance** (TI) had been harvesting and had done well at Surbiton Farmers Market. **PMc** would inform TI how to deposit Abundance funds in the TTK bank account and use Open Collective for future deposits, funding and expenses (see **#3** for more on project group contributions to TTK general fund).

- **Canbury Community Garden** (MM) had recently harvested their hops for Park Brewery to make a v local beer.

- **KE News** (MM) was almost ready, any news before it goes (**All**)?

- **Repair Café** (RCK) was going well, relations with Library v positive with an extra textiles upcycling event for Green Libraries week coming up on 5/10. A4 posters were being distributed around the borough in libraries and community notice boards, and MM had lots of A5 fliers for display wherever possible (**All**). RCK news was kept up to date on the TTK [website](#) and in [Repair Café Project group notes](#), Monthly brief project meetings on Zoom would continue, drinks after Saturday RCKs at the local pub would be suggested...

- **Recycling Minds:** JM had emailed update from the Recycling Hackathon which “went very well and we had 6 groups discussing how we can tackle several recycling issues.

- food waste & redistribution food mapping

- green mapping

- lobbying & a north kingston recycling point

- creative art with waste

- disposable vapes & stopping sales

Bob Bollen will be providing updates at our Recycling Minds Meeting”

Other groups & orgs: there were updates on

- **RBK** - DH-D had been a waste marshal, helping with recycling at **Kingston Carnival**, and recommended this as a future TTK sustainability activity, perhaps with collaboration with K Uni.

- **The Kingston Hive** – **PMc** would be attending on behalf of TTK their open day on Sat 30/9, MM had provided a selection of fliers for PMc to take and leave afterwards at The Hive.

- **KEF** (DH-D) had arranged for local green groups to meet RBK CEO on Th 5/10 – **HG** would attend on behalf of TTK, **PM** would attend for EG - no other reps needed. 27/9 was Tereizie's deadline for RSVPs and booking a suitable room.

- **The Climate Coalition** (MM) – a reminder that we are members and TCC is a useful source of info and campaigning news. They had asked members to talk to their MPs about climate and had been amongst the 100s of signatories to a recent letter to the PM on his backtracking on green commitments. MM would continue to attend meetings (one due on 27/9) and send selective summaries (see **Appendix**) and TCC updates as and when.

- **Transition Together/Vive** – a potentially useful source of Transition experience, know-how, occasional funding, and events. **CG members/MO** can see what's on offer and sign up to whichever groups interest them at <https://vive.transitiontogether.org.uk/spaces>

3. Business matters continued from previous meetings (see August's Notes)

- **Insurance** – MM pointed out that if an activity with any risks was not listed in our policy it ran the danger of not being insured if a claim was made, so it was in the interests of **project group leads** to communicate this info to **PM**, who would be discussing the level of detail needed with the insurance broker.

It was agreed that the TTK general fund would continue to self-insure / bear the risks of loss or damage to our possessions rather than increase our premium to cover them, and the onus would be on **All** to look after them carefully, ensure their safety etc. **MM** would draft something for the website/constitution about this policy for the benefit of all project groups, current and potential, It was noted that we could not offer cover to projects and activities that were not represented in the CG. An umbrella Transition insurance had been mooted by TT but it seemed unlikely to happen given the difficulty of drawing lines re inclusion/exclusion and oversight, even just for TTK, let alone the entire Transition network.
four us .

- **Business / income planning**: Could TTK be more business-like, less hand to mouth, ad hoc drifting? **MO** would research the options, how other T groups managed their finances and forward planning, whether any employed anyone, how they ensured a regular income etc. (Vive link

<https://vive.transitiontogether.org.uk/spaces> could be a start). (There is a Support/Donate button on [Home - Transition Town Kingston \(ttkingston.org\)](https://vive.transitiontogether.org.uk/spaces) but it's not v fruitful.)

- **Project contributions to the general TTK fund** (for shared expenses such as insurance, storage, memberships etc) were confirmed at 10% p a, and there was some discussion on when and how this was to be done – DHD proposed annually at the beginning of the financial year and there were no objections [but on 2nd thoughts MM suggested that we return to this decision, as the end of the financial year was surely better as that was when PMc had to get TTK accounts for the previous year in order for the AGM and when funders often required reports on how we had spent funding?

- **Changes to TTK constitution** to enable quorate meetings as the CG expanded [a nice problem to have!] – the options had been presented in an earlier Appendix and this meeting agreed to go for the simplest amendments: to delete the maximum CG size to allow for further expansion, ditch the % needed to be quorate at meetings, and instead to require a minimum attendance of 3, to include at least 2 CG officers (chair, deputy, note-taker) and requirement that notes t b taken and circulated. CG meetings had all been quorate this past year so this did not seem to be the problem it has sometimes been in the past, and it was in members' interests to attend. **MM** would draft a change to that section of the Constitution and circulate it for confirmation at the next CG meeting and then at the next AGM.

4. **Resources**, nothing urgently needed apart from secure **storage at SWTC**. **DHD, PMc & HG** would form a WG to survey the earmarked under-stairs space, discuss with STWC, and research possible furniture/construction options. **MF** offered to help if any construction (side wall, door) required and feasible. **MM/PM** to measure sizes of stuff (gazebo, suitcase, table, portfolio carrier...) needing storage, which needed t b secured from being given away, moved or lost by STWC.

5. **AOB: Christmas celebration** – MM suggested that it would be good for CG and TTK volunteers (RCK, CCG, Abundance, EG...) to get together for drinks and nibbles one Tuesday evening in December at the Spring Grove, to celebrate, get to know this venue for CG monthly meetings and Green Drinks,. Other suggestions welcome, for discussion and booking at October meeting.

6. **Dates of next meetings**: 31 Oct, 28 Nov...

We were not joined by anyone else for **Green Drinks** at 7.30, so the meeting continued and then more general conversation – on the costs and benefits of a degree, local nature, bats and bird life...

Appendix: The Climate Coalition Zoom meeting, 27/9, selective summary and some interesting links, info and arguments, **MM**

The meeting included TCC's response to the UK Government's net zero shift, Helen Meech, TCC's new Executive Director, introducing herself and an interesting presentation from Becky Willis, University of Lancaster, on research on MPs and their attitudes to climate science, constituents' concerns, lobby groups

etc. There was much concern about the government U-turns on fossil fuels, climate etc, with more open letters, petitions etc on the way, e.g. on the Rosebank oil field decision - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KYYs1xnPaJe-PJkiMsXi_HjiniRHm7R6e0tfEIMK2vwg/edit - + election strategies, more asks for TCC members and their members. The meeting was recorded and I will forward that and other TCC news as and when,

- Michelle Singleton of UNISON shared a document they are working on: **False Narratives on New Oil - and gas licences**

What's the problem? Despite committing to a policy of reducing oil and gas Rishi Sunak announced 100 new licences to drill for both. It should be obvious you can't reduce something by having more of it.

Narrative 1: It will increase our energy security because we will not need to import from elsewhere (i.e., Russia).

Rebuttal: This is a deliberate false narrative because current law means that we don't get to keep the oil in the UK. All the oil taken out of Rosebank by the Norwegian energy giant Equinor would be sold on the global market. Unless the Government was to nationalise the fields, it will have no control over where the output goes so it won't necessarily come to us.

Narrative 2: Increasing our supply will make energy cheaper than buying it from others.

Rebuttal: See above - the current lack of control of it being sold on the open market means we cannot control the price – plus renewable energy is much, much, cheaper so if the government were serious about the household price of energy it would invest more to scale up renewable options.

Narrative 3: If we don't do this then another country will anyway so why not us?

Rebuttal: This narrative has been rejected by – among others – the Tory chair of the Climate Change Committee, Lord Deben, who noted “we can't ask other people to restrain their production if we don't do it ourselves”. Somebody must show international leadership in tackling climate change. Looks like it won't be the UK.

Narrative 4: If we cease fossil fuel production too quickly there will be an energy gap and a jobs gap before renewables can catch up.

Rebuttal: This is perpetuating a misconceived 'cliff edge' narrative that fails to acknowledge the word 'transition'. If there is a cliff edge, it's delaying the transition until we absolutely have to stop fossil fuel production immediately to avoid climate catastrophe, so the challenge is to implement the transition to renewable energy and the associated new jobs in renewables as rapidly as possible to avoid that situation.

- **Takeaway actions from the presentation by Becky Willis**, University of Lancaster, on research on MPs and their attitudes to climate science, constituents' concerns, lobby groups etc. at <https://green-alliance.org.uk/publication/sustaining-the-political-mandate-for-climate-action/>. Can we do some of these via our social media, newsletter etc?

- Promote ongoing dialogue between scientists and MPs (use local university climate scientists?)
- Make constituents' views known to MPs (not just the usual suspects)
- Engage the public more widely (I.e. the “non-branded”)
- Pay attention to social and distributional implications
- Localised strategies are important}
- Consider the impact of protest (violent disruptive protest can alienate MPs who dismiss them as “shrill” and “hysterical”)
- Focus on lobbying – challenge the lobbyists

- **Other recommended resources / info:**

- Hope For The Future - <https://www.hfff.org.uk/mps>
- <https://www.carbonbrief.org/quest-post-how-discourses-of-delay-are-used-to-slow-climate-action/>

- **A TCC webinar** coming on Th 12/10 at 11am, details to follow.