

TTK 2022-3 AGM

April 25 from 6.30pm at the Spring Grove, followed by 15th birthday party at 7.30pm



DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Core group members Damon Hart-Davis, Toni Izzard, Hilary Gander, Peter Mason, Paul Mackay, Marilyn Mason (chairing) + supporters John Fellowes, David Gander, Maya Farebrother, Marcus Oxley, Janine Martin.

1. **Welcome** and thank you for coming from the Chair. AGMs are essentially a yearly opportunity to account to our “members” for how we are spending our funds. TTK’s concept of membership has always been quite loose and open, and includes donors, volunteers, project leads, founders, core group members... - so if those present were wearing any of those hats, we hoped they would find the annual reports interesting and, should anything come to a vote, they would be welcome to vote.
2. **Apologies for absence:** none had been received
3. **2022 AGM Reports** had been confirmed previously by everyone (all TTK core group) present at last year’s AGM, so no time was spent on re-confirming these, which would be dated and published as an accurate record at https://e-voice.org.uk/ttkingston/files/index?folder_id=45277988.
4. **Chair’s review of the TTK year April 2022 - April 2023 (MM)**

When we first got together as a core group in January 2022 we decided to give TTK a year in which to either revive and thrive, or to call it a day and take our projects and funds to another local green group - and this time last year we were just a few months into our revival; but in January 2023 we congratulated ourselves on successfully working through this make-or-break year and decided to keep going.

This year’s review and project reports are a tale of activities, new and old, and also of handing on some of our commitments, ideas and start-up projects to others, in itself no bad thing and which frees us up to re-focus on core sustainability activities and projects that other local groups don’t undertake. For those unfamiliar with TTK and the Transition movement our ethos and activities are spelt out quite well in our flier - and if we had to generalise about our projects, I think we could say they tend towards the useful and practical in the face of the climate crisis and rising energy prices - we grow and harvest food, we repair stuff, we advise on energy and other sustainability issues, we encourage green responses to local consultations, we occasionally campaign. If this all sounds a bit serious and worthy, I should add that these are often sociable and fun too.

The core group (CG) has continued to meet monthly on the last Tuesday (apart from December 2022) at the Spring Grove pub followed by Green Drinks hosted by Damon, for which thanks. The core group plans and oversees joint activities and projects, and all our projects are represented at meetings to share news and reports on their activities and to ensure that TTK funds are shared and allocated wisely and fairly. The downside of that is that all the current CG have tasks and responsibilities, and it would be useful to have a few more members “without portfolios” who might bring fresh ideas - and the time and energy to

implement them (always the hard bit, IMO), or take on new projects or events, or deputise for some of us occasionally - so volunteers very welcome. We may have a bit of a reshuffle in May at our next ordinary meeting, but we know we have room for more core group members who can give us a bit of time at least once a month; we do rely on CG members turning up so that we are quorate - so a very big thank you to all the current CG as all our meetings since January last year have been quorate and for most of them all members were present, which has enabled us to make decisions and push on.

TTK continues to provide insurance for our activities and projects a bank account for project funds, both very important and useful, and we continue to welcome and offer support to new project proposals that fit in with our sustainability ethos.

Working with others: Understandably, Council-hosted Covid recovery subgroup meetings that we were involved in dwindled last year as things got back to near-normal post-Covid, but TTK members carried on participating in the Green Business Recovery group, as well as in other meetings planning a Climate Emergency Centre, now, we are pleased to see, established as a green community hub at The Kingston Hive, next to Kingston Station.

We maintain contacts with other local groups such as Kingston Environment Centre and Save the World Club, as well as the newly revived Kingston Environment Forum (KEF), and with the wider Transition Network (though we don't currently have the capacity to participate in their training or planning sessions, useful and refreshing though they may be) and The Climate Coalition, where we learn a lot from other green organisations and try to participate when we can in their national events such as the Great Big Green Week. We attended a KVA-hosted "Meet and Greet the Councillors" event in July, and soon after local elections last year made ourselves and our concerns known to all the Councillors.

We continued to advocate a Library of Things in Kingston, and added funding for this to our applications for the Repair Café project, though the plan had to be slimmed down in the face of the escalating cost of installing the commercial Library of Things, and our funding applications were unsuccessful.

Individually, core group members have attended **consultation events** about and responded to the Council's Town Centre plan, Kingston's new Local Plan, and Thames Water's proposals, and, though collective responses have largely proved to difficult to make in time for deadlines, the Energy Group have managed a couple of group responses. Although we remain broadly supportive of **conservation and biodiversity**, and sustainable travel and biodiversity corridors across Kingston, we haven't collectively been very active on these.

We were very pleased to welcome the new **Climate Action team** of Council Officers, an important and positive development for our borough. One result last year was the revival of Kingston Environment Forum, which is both a useful networking and information-sharing forum for green groups, and one that could take back on some of the overarching and local networking activities that somehow landed in TTK's or my lap (as previous chair of KEF) while KEF was dormant. We are also very pleased that Damon from our core group is chairing KEF and working closely with Terezie and other members of the Council's Climate Action team.

GreenZone and Sustainable September 2022: we played an active role in planning this joint environmental event in the Market Place last September, running a stall and hiring the Market House for talks and workshops which we organised. All the hard work and planning meetings probably couldn't be justified by the outcome - small-ish audiences in the Market House with too many distractions going on outside at the same time, not all of them particularly green. During the rest of the Council's Sustainable September we offered a well attended Eco-Homes Open Weekend.

Handing over some of our start-ups / ideas/Green Maps for Kingston: Paul from the core group has been working on mapping key green sites around Kingston Borough to support a green community, and is now working with Kingston Environment Forum and the Council's Green Business initiative to publish this. Our attempt to compile a list of green volunteering opportunities ran into the common problem (one that we share) of these groups being far too busy to provide us with the information requested, and we have finally given up trying to keep our Green e-Directory up-to-date as well - a frustrating endeavour when neither consumers or green enterprises update us and which will be more accurate and current when run by the Council's Green Business team. Updated Information from both these sources will feature in the Green mapping project. Similarly the Kingston Green History project is evolving into a free-standing web-resource.

5. More detailed project reports:

- Repair Café Kingston (DH-D and HG)

This is a brief report on how the first three monthly sessions went. Back in the mists of 2022 the idea of helping people fix things rather than throw them away started to form, to help people save money, resource consumption and reduce their carbon footprint. The idea was discussed in TTK meetings and possible volunteers seemed very keen. So MM in particular put in a lot of legwork researching what schemes might be available, and what was already going on nearby that might be relevant. One of us had already had dealings with [The Restart Project](#). In the end we decided that we would follow the [Repair Café](#) template as [Repair Café Kingston](#) (RCK).

We picked a time (the first Saturday of each month) not to clash with nearby events. Then, with quite a lot of effort from paperwork and finding a venue and whole bunch of volunteer repairers, we were ready to go, with thanks to volunteers and organisers, and Maya especially - and many thanks for seed funding from John Lewis (and TTK funds), and to Kingston Library for being a keen and patient host! With some trepidation, not knowing if we'd be overrun or ignored, we set the first RCK for 4th February, and there have now been three RCKs: February, March, and April (yes, even on April Fools' Day!).

We like visitors to [book](#) if possible, which helps us gauge demand and avoid long queues. When booking a ticket a donation can be made too, as well as on the day in cash and electronically.

Our repair categories are textiles, electrical appliances and tech, and other/triage, and that broadly matches the space and tables we have in the library. More than a quarter of the items that come to RCK are fixed. For about another half of the items, we can offer advice instead. In February and March there were 25 and 27 repairs attempted; in April fewer visitors attended (20) which we assume was due to the Easter break.

Repairs fully completed each month were respectively, 28%, 37% and 40%. We understand that 25% is a typical percentage for Repair Cafés. If we look at repairs part-completed / advice given, where typically the visitor goes away very happy with the progress made / information received, the percentages reach 60%, 78% and 80%. We seem to be achieving similar rates to similar groups and are avoiding items going to landfill and/or having to be replaced. Fixes have been as simple as a chewed plug on an otherwise fine vacuum cleaner, also teddies and other toys, and even a record player.

Financially, we need to keep an eye on donations to cover our running costs. And there will be more capital expenditure such as for a PAT and a Zettle reader (both currently borrowed). But in general, so far, all seems manageable. We are fortunate to have the support of the council, who have provided some publicity (mainly via social media) and the use of Kingston Library for free. Further, outgoings have been kept to a minimum by asking volunteers to bring along some tools themselves. We have acquired two sewing machines and purchased some basic supplies (eg sewing threads) and we ask visitors to bring anything else needed for their repair (eg electrical fuses, zips). We supply biscuits and tea / coffee for visitors and buy a snack for any repairers and other volunteers who want it; this outlay is broadly covered by our cash and Zettle donations from happy punters. In all, in true Transition Town tradition, we operate pretty economically and sustainably and do not require much funding, though we are looking at further sources of funding — for if we had to relocate to bigger premises, for example, where we could have to pay for hire.

More, including graphs of our repair rates, at <https://www.earth.org.uk/Repair-Cafe-Kingston-report-to-TTK-AGM-2023.html> (and of course on the TTK website).

Questions and comments:

- JM suggested that the Co-op might provide free refreshments for Repair Café, which we would look into.
- MM added that the skill-sharing (stay, watch and learn), increasing resilience element was also important to our repair café, and also that ongoing advice from other RCs was proving very useful as we all shared similar issues. RCK needed a more formal safeguarding policy for the purpose of applying for grants, though we had the right kinds of guidance and house rules already

- Energy Group (PJM)

- Have met every month, now migrating from Zoom to face-to-face meetings in the Town House at K Uni
- Welcomed active new members in Marcus Oxley, Mark Handley and Bob Dean
- Delivered talks on aspects of retrofitting homes at the Green Zone event in September
- Hosted well-attended Open House weekends, again in September
- Helped Tamesis Club install solar PV before the rush to PV started
- Damon has successfully enrolled in doing a PhD at UniS on problem of retrofitting current housing stock
- Visited the successful Reading Hydro generation project; made contact with ex-Ham Hydro directors
- Thermal camera has been out diagnosing heat-loss problems in about 20 homes
- Patrick has continued to lobby KoT's planning dept to get requirement for house-wide thermal upgrades included in planning permissions for extensions, etc.
- Marcus prepared an excellent response to the EA's consultation on its forthcoming flood mitigation project, pointing out the benefits of including hydro-generation in weirs being modified, including Teddington weir.
- Responded on energy efficiency and local generation to KoT's consultation on local plan
- Supported Marcus's response to Thames Water's water abstraction project at Teddington
- Patrick spoke on The Problem of Retrofitting in the Urban Room
- Domestic energy support surveys for Thinking Works by Bob Dean
- Damon closely involved with the Council's planning of the Efficient Homes Show coming up in May

- Kingston Environment News (MM)

Regular updates on TTK projects feature in Kingston Environment News, which continues as our monthly (and only) newsletter, shared with Kingston Environment Centre; we have 64 contacts on our contributors' list and the newsletter goes out at the very end of every month to around 670 subscribers. It's a good way for us to publicise TTK activities and also to share local green activities, campaigns and consultations, partly in an effort to pre-empt duplication or everything happening on the same day, but we don't always succeed in that or get much input from our partner, KEC, or other local green groups, and so tend to fill the news gap with updates from elsewhere. Some readers like this, some don't (there is very little feedback), but the contents list with its anchor links enables them to click through to the items that interest them and ignore the rest.

MM advised all to read K E News to keep up with what others as well as TTK were doing in Kingston!

- Canbury Community Garden, (MM)

Our records don't coincide with the TTK year - they run from January to December and depend on volunteers logging hours worked and harvests, so they are highly inaccurate, though quite interesting. Our annual end of year tot-up of harvests and volunteer hours for 2022 was: crops 22.27 Kilos and 152 gardening hours, down from last year. + an estimated 240 chicken care hours with roughly 150 eggs as our reward. It's not bad for amateurs with limited time, but we could do more with more volunteers and better weather! We are very grateful for the occasional visits of GoodGym who are young and fit enough to do a lot of the heavy work very quickly, to our lead gardeners and volunteers, however occasional, to TTK for the security of their insurance policy and bank account, and to Cllr James Manthel for a top-up towards the new chicken coop, installed earlier this month, from his ward funds. We offered Open Days during Capital Growth in April (but with no visitors because of bad weather) and Transition Together London events in May.

The Muddy Toddlers group that plays in the Garden has also suffered a bit from the weather, + lack of volunteer leaders and a lot of churn as toddlers grow old enough to start nursery school, and they are now meeting monthly for outdoor play - but maybe this is the right schedule when there is so much more going on now than when they started. Their organiser Fiona has been very good at getting funds for more play equipment and towards the nice new easy-to-clean coop for our chickens, whose 4 or 5 year old wooden coop was falling to bits and increasingly difficult to clean. They also got a nice new shed from the Council's

Community Garden Infrastructure fund for their ever-growing collection of outdoor toys, which also has the useful H&S function of keeping toddlers out of the Garden shed with all its sharp tools.

We generally have more visitors than volunteers, many attracted by the chickens, who have only just been allowed out of their run again after yet another long avian flu “flockdown”. Visits from Educare Small School have been sporadic, but resume again on a more regular basis next month.

- Abundance (TI)

Abundance had its least active year for many years due to multiple reasons, such as:

Weather: hot and dry so many trees dropped a lot of their apples early, thereby reducing the harvest

Covid effect: seemed people were still choosing to err on the safe side and avoid unnecessary contact as we had very few people contact us, even our usual annual regulars

My own personal problems related to health and bereavement which limited my availability.

Overall Abundance harvested 265 kilos of apples.

We donated around 40 kilos for free distribution outside Surbiton Wholefoods, gave 20 kilos of seconds to a very grateful stable and the rest were juiced at 2 local community events, namely: The Green Zone in Kingston Market Place on 25th September and The King's Soup event in Claremont gardens on 16th October.

We trialled an interesting new idea at the Green Zone whereby people were encouraged to ‘pay with a promise’ rather than money. The idea was that through discussion we identified the actions people were already doing to reduce their environmental impact and from there we helped them to identify a next step they could take. In many cases they initially felt they were doing everything possible and could not see anything more they could do, so this conversational opportunity was very useful in helping them to move on in their sustainability journey. So having identified an achievable next step, they then made a promise to take this new action and wrote it down on a card which they took away with them as an aide memoire. We have no way of knowing the real effect of this approach, but it felt a very positive way for TTK to engage with the public and focus on its core aim of helping people to live more sustainable lifestyles. Pleasingly, I recently met someone who recognised me as the woman who had made him promise and I was delighted to hear that he had risen to the challenge and stuck to his promise and was now using public transport to travel into Kingston several times a week, rather than travelling by car. Good man! I am keen to pursue this approach again next season.

- Recycling Minds (HG)

Recycling Minds is a group set up by Janine Martin who created [SunrayRecycle](#). Having worked - and won awards - for encouraging and facilitating the recycling of multiple plastic items that would otherwise be treated as waste, Janine wanted to kick-start borough-wide conversations about improving recycling. The first meeting was at the Sunray Community Centre on 21st July 2022. It was decided the main focus would be:

- to help make Kingston's website regarding recycling more informative, hopefully with an interactive map
- to collect more items that Kingston Council cannot yet recycle
- to work out how we can enhance outside events to incorporate better recycling and more sustainable packaging that can be reused or recycled better

Recycling Minds brings together local individuals and organisations who are passionate about reducing waste (Sunray Recycle, TTK, Save the World Club, Kingston Environment Centre, The Hive), and companies who specialise in recycling or who are incorporating recycling solutions into their business model (Genuine Solutions, The Co-op). Members of Kingston Council's Climate and Environment teams attend to discuss RBK's strategy and plans, RBK's Waste Reduction Officer being the main contact. Local councillors and students of environmental management at Kingston University attend from time-to-time and RBK's waste contractor has attended once - and they have a standing invite.

Meetings are held every couple of months and are held in locations across the borough including Genuine Solutions' offices and KEC. Conversations often start with discussions about reducing waste (rather than recycling it) and members such as Save the World Club are of course influential as their work to help create a circular economy.

The latest actions undertaken by members of the group are:

- some members of the group took part in a separate meeting with the Council to contribute suggestions for the future service design of the borough's waste and recycling service, which is being recommissioned
- some members are working on a People's Assembly on Recycling to engage more local residents in being part of the solution
- some members are planning activities to highlight and improve recycling at Chessington Fun Day in July

The Council has the following initiatives ongoing:

- '[Kingston's Efficient Homes Show](#)', hosted by Kingston College and Kingston University, with support from Kingston Environment Forum (KEF) and Hollyfield School
- 'Eat Like a Londoner', Kingston is joining [ReLondon's](#) London-wide campaign till March '24 – billboards, Facebook, YouTube – how to cook, workshops, recipes aimed at reducing food waste
- Eco-Refill Kingston is joining [Pupils Profit's Eco Refill](#) scheme in the summer or autumn term. Three schools will be enrolled.
- Reusable Nappies Kingston is to run three events (summer onwards) in support of the [Real Nappies for London voucher scheme](#)

NB The South London Partnership Zero Waste Map <http://southlondonpartnership.co.uk/place/slp-zero-waste-map/> exists!

Recycling Minds has been adopted by TTK and Hilary Gander is chairing it this year.

6. TTK Treasurer's report, April 2022 – April 2023 (PMc)

Paper copies of the accounts were available at the meeting, were summarised by PMc, and are now filed at https://www.ttkingston.org/files/?folder_id=47855747. It was noted that again this year some of our surplus was not TTK's but was funds held for Kew the Transition until they got their own bank account.

A few comments and questions:

- MM made her usual caveat that though our reserves looked healthy, our lack of regular income meant that these had to cover ongoing expenses such as insurance (and possible storage charge, reminded DH-D) etc, and so should be spent carefully.
- MO asked about our "business plan" and whether we had plans to increase income streams, a good question that we should return to in core group meetings - TTK had so far relied on ad hoc funding and donations for particular projects and capital expenditure with some success, but was this the best model for our future?
- There were some useful suggestions of other funding sources, including Kingston Charitable Foundation (formerly Love Kingston), ? Kingston Chamber of Commerce or individual local businesses...

7. Looking forward and 2022 – 23 core group

Current CG members were willing to continue serving for which many thanks. Reviewing admin matters and comms, reshuffling responsibilities and acting on issues arising from the AGM would be dealt with in upcoming CG meetings. We hoped to continue flourishing and contributing to Kingston, perhaps with the help of new ideas and energies from a few more volunteers in the CG who would be

very welcome.

Coming up soon were:

- Perhaps more participation in Transition network events and training (for which they had acquired funding); [Transition London weekend coming up 11-18 May](#), with TTK's Canbury Community Garden and other Kingston green projects participating on Friday 12th;
- a funding application for Repair Café Kingston;
- The Climate Coalition's Great Big Green Week, 10 - 18 June, with one talk at the Library "Keep Cool and Carry On" (DHD and MM) scheduled for that week, and possibly another on heat-pumps (PJM) at The Kingston Hive if they could schedule it;
- the Council's Sustainable September when we would offer Open Homes again but probably not get involved in other organising unless anyone in the CG wanted to take this on; a funding application for Repair Café Kingston;

8. AOB

HG mentioned that after years of TTK advice the Cornerhouse in Surbiton was going to install solar panels.

The AGM closed with applause and thanks all round and was followed by a celebration of 15 years of TTK with drinks and nibbles, chat, and a rousing chorus of "Happy Birthday" to TTK. Thank you to Damon for organising this part of the evening.

Approved for publication at TTK core group meeting, 30/5/23, for confirmation at the 2024 AGM.