Minutes from Transition Town Meeting, 24 Feb 2008
4-6pm Mary Geddes’ house

Present: Ben, Nicky, Beck, Anna, Mary, Naveen, David, Martin, Kerry, James

Names of people who have agreed to do something are in **bold**.

**Article for Cambridge Matters and press releases**
Meeting started with Kerry telling us about a short article she had written for Cambridge Matters. **Naveen** took a photo of us all to go with the article and will send it to Kerry. The deadline for Cambridge Matters is 27 Feb. At the end of the meeting Kerry read out the article, and everyone agreed that it was good. Mary told us that Ben Brangwyn has also sent us a dummy press release which we could maybe use in the future.

**The Criteria to start a Transition Town**
Mary took us through the criteria.

1. an understanding of Peak Oil and Climate Change as twin drivers (to be written into your group's constitution or governing documents)
   
   David summarized what this meant and we agreed that we generally understood it from watching the films.

2. a group of 4-5 people willing to step into leadership roles (not just the boundless enthusiasm of a single person)
   
   There are 14 of us currently. There was some discussion about what was meant by “leadership roles”.

3. at least two people from the core team willing to attend an initial two day training course. Initially these will be in Totnes and over time we'll roll them out to other areas as well, including internationally. Transition Training is just UK based right now, but that's going to have to change – we're working on it.
   
   Several of us would like to attend and Mary has been in contact with Ben Brangwyn about the possibility of organizing a training near here. He said that there would need to be 18 people to run it up here. Cost is approx. £80-90 per person and it’s two days.
   
   **Mary** will contact other towns nearby that have started the transition town process in order to get enough people to run it. She also offered £500 to fund people that wouldn’t otherwise be able to do it. Thank you Mary!

4. a potentially strong connection to the local council
   
   Kerry is already in good contact with various people working for the council.

5. an initial understanding of the 12 steps (see below)
   
   Several of us have read the document, but we didn’t discuss the 12 steps much as this meeting.

6. a commitment to ask for help when needed
   
   Mary read out the help that would become available when we were a fully fledged transition town – we look forward to receiving this help.

7. a commitment to regularly update your Transition Initiative web presence - either the wiki (collaborative workspace on the web that we'll make available to you), or your own website
   
   Ben and Anna are willing to work on this. We have to wait to get web-space from the transition town people. We’re not sure when in the process this will happen.

8. a commitment to write up something on the Transition Towns blog once every couple of months (the world will be watching…)
   
   Corrina has said she is willing to do a blog.

9. a commitment, once you're into the Transition, for your group to give at least two presentations to other communities (in the vicinity) that are considering embarking on this journey – a sort of “here’s what we did” or “here's how it was for us” talk
   
   Not discussed (but I’m sure several of us would be happy to do this)
10. a commitment to network with other communities in Transition
   Mary told us about the Transition Towns conference in Cirencester on 11-13 April, and she and Anna expressed an interest in going.

11. minimal conflicts of interests in the core team
   We discussed what this meant, and decided that it would only become apparent with time, but there was a general commitment to working through whatever conflicts came up.

12. a commitment to work with the Transition Network re grant applications for funding from national grant giving bodies. Your own local trusts are yours to deal with as appropriate.
   Not discussed.

13. a commitment to strive for inclusivity across your entire initiative
   Not discussed.

14. a recognition that although your entire county or district may need to go through transition, the first place for you to start is in your local community.
   We talked about the issues of starting a transition town movement in a city with quite a large population (120,000ish). Most of the successful transition towns so far have been with smaller communities (12,000ish). We also discussed whether we are a hub or an initiative according to the definition given in the transition town primer. Probably we are organizing ourselves as an initiative at the moment. If there are really lots of people interested we could always form smaller local groups later.

15. and finally, we recommend that at least one person on the core team should have attended a permaculture design course... it really does seem to make a difference
   Kerry is already attending a Permaculture introductory course. At least 5 members of the group are interested in doing the full design course (time/cost permitting).

Discussion of whether we need to be an incorporated body
David says that we don’t need to be an incorporated body to get a bank account, and suggests we should save our energy for other activities at the moment. However this is clearly considered important by the transition towns people. Do we need to be one to register with them as a transition town movement? Nicky agreed to find out from Ben Brangwyn, and what the benefits of doing so are.

Nicky and Beck also agreed to look into possible constitutions (which we would presumably need in order to be an incorporated body). For this we would also need a mission statement, and Naveen and Anna agreed to look up what mission statements for transition towns already exist, and to bring along a suggested mission statement to the next meeting.

Martin and David agreed to look up bank accounts, and the Coop bank and Cambridge Building Society were suggested.

Kerry can offer expertise on becoming a charity should we decide to do that sometime in the future.

Our name
David pointed out that Cambridge isn’t a town, and suggested that we call ourselves “Transition Cambridge” – everyone agreed.

Bringing together all the Transition-related groups in Cambridge
Beck is already doing this as part of her work with the Cambridge Programme for Industry. She is organising a meeting where members of the different groups are going to be invited to meet each other. There are very many such groups. Beck, Ben and Mary agreed to form a list of these groups,
that we could send an e-mail round to let them know about what we are doing. Anna mentioned that it would be really useful to have a green web-hub with all these groups listed.

**Awareness raising activities**
David suggested we should think through what public awareness raising events we would like to do. This can form a large part of our next meeting.

Various activities were suggested, including films shown by Cambridge Cycle Cinema, and possibly piggybacking on the Cambridge Arts Cinema climate change film-making competition “Grains of Sand”, and other events.

Ben has been in contact with the Magnificent Revolutionary Cycle Cinema, who would need to make it a whole day event as their equipment is hard to move around and takes time to set up. Harambi might be able to run activities for children, possibly for free (Kerry volunteers with them so can find out). We are not sure if the cycle cinema charges to run events.

We will need venues for events – **Anna and Mary** agreed to get some prices and info on availability/space etc for potential venues in Cambridge (Shilpa from Cambridge Carbon Footprint is a good source of info on this). David said that Cotto restaurant, a new local organic restaurant, are interested in being a venue (and not necessarily selling food/drink at the same time).

**Insurance**
If we are organising events we will need to get insurance. David says this is easy to do.

**Fund-raising**
To run events we will need some money. An obvious grant to apply for is the coop grant which is up to £500 and apparently quite easy to get. **Nicky and Naveen** said they would look into this. Kerry has already received one of these and can show us the application that she submitted. Kerry also told us about the Sustainable City Grants (up to a few thousand pounds) - next deadline is June, so we should start working on an application at the end of April. **Ben** suggested a local group that raises funds with their events (called?) – they usually raise funds for a specific group, but occasionally for groups like ours – he will look into this.

**Pledges from interested people**
David pointed out that lots of people are already interested in what we are doing, and some of them have pledged skills/resources for our use. We need to keep track of these offers. For now, people should send these offers to David or bring them to meetings. Eventually we could put them into a database.

**Chairing future meetings**
We agreed it would be useful to have a chair for meetings. Who the chair is can revolve around the group (only those who want to), and can be decided on the day of the meeting to take account of how people are feeling at the time.

**E-mail for the group**
Ben has already set up an e-mail for the group, **ttcambridge@googlemail.com**. We hope eventually to have an e-mail and web-space with a suitable domain name from the transition town people.
Contact list for group
In his last e-mail Ben made all our e-mails visible so we can contact each other. Mary checked that most of the group check their e-mail regularly. We also all filled in our phone numbers and Mary has this list.

Ben’s leaving in August
Ben let us know that he will be moving to London in August, but until then is keen to be active in the group.

Next meeting date: Tuesday 18th March, 7pm, venue to be confirmed. Ben suggested the Hut, he will see if it’s available. Finding a time was quite difficult, and not everyone could make this time. We need to see how many of the people who weren’t there can make it.

Items for agenda of next meeting (to be added to)
Ben is happy to create the agenda for our meetings.

- Awareness-raising events – what do we want to organise.
- Transition town training – enough people in the area?
- Reporting back on whether we need to be an incorporated body, mission statement, constitution, how easy it is to get a bank account, fund-raising