Minutes of the meeting of the Transition Cambridge Food Group
The Geldart, Ainsworth Street
15.7.2009

Guest: Ida Engström

Apologies: Dave Fox, Martin Roach, Pippa Vine, Kim Warren

1. Minutes
The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

2. Matters arising
i) No response had been received from Hilary, who had offered to help with designing Food Group publicity material. Rowan offered to try to contact her again, perhaps through Anna McIvor, who had given the group her details initially. Some discussion arose about the design of the current leaflet. It was felt that the umbrellas perhaps didn't immediately suggest food, and looked a bit like the Legal and General logo. The barrow of vegetables image was suggested instead. It was suggested that an A4 sheet, folded in three looked more substantial than a flat A5 sheet, could perhaps include more information, and took up less space on stalls. The number of copies needed, and the font size were also discussed.

ii) Rowan read out a list of suggestions which had been offered during Environment Week. These included food-related outings, guerrilla gardening, cookery classes, green gyms, grey water usage, and recycled water containers, and promotion of a company called Real Seeds, a social enterprise selling heirloom varieties of seeds, not hybrids. It was suggested that a discussion about grey water usage could be started on the website, and perhaps a workshop could be arranged. A link to the seed company would be included on the website. It was suggested that the list could be put on the website, and offers for help to action the ideas be invited.

3. Garden Share scheme
Another possible pairing was reported. The need for another administrator if Age Concern was involved was discussed. It was thought that older people were likely to want to phone not email, and during the day, not in the evening, although publicity could specify that calls should be after 6pm, or an answerphone could be used. It was agreed that another request for help with the scheme should be put into the Transition Cambridge bulletin.

4. Events
The Food Group had had a presence at the Big Weekend on Parker's Piece on 12 July, having been involved by the BBC's Dig In project. No tables or other equipment had been provided, although Kim had brought two folding chairs, and a selection of vegetables from her allotment. There was no sign to indicate that the people on duty were part of the Food Group, and not the BBC. It was agreed that a portable sign, with some kind of stand, should be acquired for other occasions such as this. The design was discussed, and it was suggested that Naveen (a carpenter) might make one. Jacky reported that someone called Clare Collier had enthused about setting up a community growing space on a piece of land on Histon Road. She agreed to contact her to discuss the idea, and try to involve her in the group's work. A discussion about finding small parcels of land for growing food arose, including trying to get Council agreement in advance on procedure for utilising unused land. It was pointed out that land for allotments was actively being sought already, and that many pieces of unused land were only going to be available on a short-term basis, and people would probably not want to invest effort in land which they would only have for a short time. Ivan agreed to talk to Dave
Fox and Ceri about Council policies for unused land. A schoolteacher had expressed an interest in talking to the group about possibilities for expanding her school's current vegetable growing. An ethnic community group had also expressed interest in liaising about the allotment which they had set up, and expanding their members' knowledge about food-related matters. Phillipa agreed to follow up the contacts, and try to establish exactly what was required.

The Open Space event on 5 July had not been as well-attended as hoped, with only 30-40 people there. It had clashed with the Wimbledon men's final. Some food-related matters had been discussed. The sheets from the event had been put on the Transition Cambridge website, and Jerry agreed to have a look at them, and note any which could be followed up. A woman had expressed an interest in setting up a stall at the Farmers' Market which would sell excess produce from local gardens and allotments. Ceri agreed to try to contact her, and see if the group could help with the project. A woman from WRAP had also attended, and might be able to give a talk on food waste.

5. Possible grant opportunity
It was noted that Lush (a natural cosmetics company) sometimes offered grants to groups doing work for the environment. It was suggested that money could be asked for to enable group members to complete the Transition training course, to run the Grow Your Own course, and/or to pay for display boards. Other suggestions could be emailed to Nicola or Phillipa. Ivan agreed to look at the application form and website, and Rowan agreed to help with an application. Ceri reported that £500 could be quite easily got from the Co-op by filling in a simple form. Up to £5,000 could also be applied for, though the application for that was more complex. The idea of having a Food Group fund-raiser was brought up.

6. Omitted items
Items 7-8 on the agenda were not discussed. Publicity had been covered under Matters arising, and there was nothing to report about EERA and preserving food.

7. Permaculture
Ceri had made contact with Janet Holden, but had not heard from her again. It was thought that someone called Hannah Thoroughgood, known to Ivan, might be interested in helping the group. Ceri agreed to contact her.

8. CSAs / food co-operatives
It was reported that there had been interest in CSAs at the Rosie Cox talks. Kirstin Glendinning had offered to talk to the group, but it seemed that it would be a practical presentation, rather than a theoretical one, and some interest in a scheme would be required to make it worth her while coming to speak. It was agreed that interest within Transition Cambridge for CSAs should be gauged, with a notice put into the bulletin asking for expressions of interest. Ivan agreed to do this. Nicola had attempted to find out about the CSA being set up at Wimpole Hall, but had not received any information.

9. Activities in Sweden
Ida gave an account of the work of the farmers' market with which she was involved. It ran every Saturday from August to October, and also twice at Christmas and three times at Easter. 20-30 farmers attended each time. Farms had to be within a 250km radius of Stockholm (where they were held), though most were closer than 100km, and could employ no more than 10 people. A wide range of products were sold. A small amount was charged for the hire of the stall, but otherwise all profit went to the farmer. She worked on a farm which grew vegetables, and where bees were also kept. It had a monthly scheme where vegetables were
delivered to groups of 15 or so people. She was very interested in the garden share scheme, which she thought she might try to establish in Sweden. The Transition movement existed in Sweden. There was some discussion of the policy of the Cambridge market to only allow one supplier of a particular commodity to have a stall.

**Next meeting**
The Geldart room would be booked for 7.30pm on 29 July. Jason agreed to chair.

14. **AOB**
(i) The Food Programme on Radio 4 had reviewed a number of films about food.
(ii) Marlene Taylor from WRAP had offered to come and talk to the group.
(iii) A visit to the Hackney project (Growing Communities) was suggested. Phillipa agreed to try to find out whether such a visit would be possible, and what it might involve.