Transition Cambridge hub meeting 21 July 2014
Present: Toni (chair), Anna, Dave, Jennie, Nicola and Liz (shared minutes)
Apologies: Oscar, Meg, Jade, Jacky. Also send minutes to Cropshare.

Actions from previous meeting

Many actions are complete (yay)...
• NB groups need to remember to say ‘everyone welcome’ in meeting announcements on the website. Also remember to thank partner organisations in our events/activities.
• Meg was going to see if there were any garages available locally - but Andy Rankin at Midsummer Energy has kindly offered cupboard space so we don’t need this any more
• Gazebo - worked well with the new spare parts which Anna ordered. However it kept slipping out of the feet/sockets on the ground (which were from the other gazebo) - Anna to order new gazebo feet in an appropriate size.

Round up of groups and projects

Community garden is fine. People came to the last garden session. They’re thinking of applying for a grant.

Café went well on 3 July (the last one before the summer break). Big big thanks to CB1 and their people. ‘Long distance cycling’ was a very popular theme - the café was so full that some people couldn’t get in. Also the projector isn’t happy in hot weather. Thus it was quite stressful for Anna. We need a bit of a rethink on the café - Anna wants to step back, and we could find another suitable venue - central, free, enough space, preferably café not pub….Suggestions, please!

Cambake (report from Meg) is looking at premises in Akeman Street (a bakery + shop + flat). There’s baking equipment there, but the place has been empty for about 6 months and would need a substantial overhaul; volunteers could do some of the work. Meg’s had offers of substantial investment. There’s a 2-bed flat upstairs, which could be rented out - it would need a kitchen added. Ivan and Meg are leading. Jennie could possibly run the café. The business plan needs to add up. Meg’s doing a stall at Fulbourn and maybe Apple Day at the Botanic Garden. She’d like to hear about other stalls we’re doing - they are always on the Transition events page of the website. Liz will let her know about Food, Garden and Produce on 13-14 September.

Admin group is forming - 4 people replied to the call-out in the bulletin. They could deal with the TC gmail account, possibly bulletin and updating the website. Anna’s dream for it is to meet every Monday and do the bulletin, which could become a full-on newsletter once a month and a listing of events for other Mondays. Other groups need to play a role in central Transition admin. Maybe a list of things to do could go on the Admin page.

Cropshare will come to hub meetings - this will help with communication and coordinating events. They got £2k of their grant application (for wheat seeds and raised beds) but not the money for the compost toilet aka Crapshare. Their harvest party on 30 August will include workshops and people may be able to camp at the farm.

Website - Clara has been away. We think it needs to go live soon, even if it’s not ‘perfect’. We may need to mend important pages for the first week, then remove old pages.

Liberated Feast - Jennie’s time of ‘One year in Transition’ is now finished - though the group will continue meeting up. They organised ‘One day in Transition’ in Bristol - several Bristol/regional people came. She’ll do a blog post about her experiences over the year - lots of highlights, including building benders…
The next Feast is on Sunday 16 November at St Paul’s - she’ll work with the Humanitarian Centre who will launch their report about global food security and provide speakers. She’s also hoping to do a local food market. St Paul’s prices will go up - they have a new coordinator.

Energy forum on Thermal Comfort in Older Homes was very successful - 50+ people, and good feedback. Not a straightforward thing - some of the feedback was ‘it’s more complicated than I thought’. Margaret Reynolds is doing a session on solid wall insulation in October, as part of the CCF Open Eco Homes follow-up. Nicola will put these on the TC website.
- The topic of CHP (Combined Heat and Power) with Cernunnos went well - they were nice people and not too commercial. Energy group might invite them to speak at an event. Will decide on topic for the next forum.
- Community energy - quiet at the moment, Nicola will reactivate.
- The stall at the Big Weekend (Sunday) was v busy - aims: to raise awareness of TC and what we do; some stall-people talking about this, others more focused on home energy. The stall fee was £57 for the two days.
Stalls are important - and how we engage with people is too...

Possible skillshare re stalls - call it ‘public engagement’

Permaculture - 4 people went to the London Permaculture Festival - lots of good workshops, many of which clashed. About 10 people went to permies in pubs in June, the next is Thursday 31 July. The Convergence is on 12-14 September; there’s a 2-week course in Norwich soon, and (maybe) demand is building for a 2-day intro to permaculture course in Cambridge, when the organising energy is there.

Media group (report from Oscar) has been trying to function on a basic level, in the face of some small obstacles (eg needing to move home). The media group’s next open meeting will probably be in September, and hopefully there will be four people by that point instead of the three we have worked with this far.

Food group - stalls at Arbury Carnival (‘food glorious food’) and Big Weekend (Saturday) (squash plants + cropshare veg + skillshare) were successful - tho’ there may be a need for clearer messaging (see above, under Energy Group). Two new people came to the last meeting - Maggie (used to be part of Suffolk organic gardeners) and Fernando Garcia Dory, artist working at North West Cambridge Development project on sustainability things http://www.nwcambridgeart.com/artists/fernando-garcia-dory/ - he has an interesting background.
Current/ongoing:
- Rock Abundance project - Rebecca’s plan to swap and share allotment surpluses - first stall is on 26 July at Rock Road library.
- Sustainable Food City - second version of Food Charter is nearly complete; work’s being done on food poverty
Future plans:
- Social at Plough and Fleece, Fen Ditton 29 July.
- Stall at Food, Garden and Produce on 13-14 September
- Fermented food workshop on 4 October at Willow Farm.
- Apple Day at Botanic Garden on 26 October (Fruit Harvest Project)

Skillshare - CCF’s Perfect Summer’s Day had a good number of attendees; Transition people shared skills (Anna - making bunting, Foxy - making seed redistribution devices, Liz making jam, Andrew - fixing bikes). Skillshare group had a social last Monday - first one ever...was good.

Growing Spaces - more people are interested, and they’re looking for more spaces. Toni’s had lots of meetings re potential collaborations.
• She’s having an informal meeting with the council about the grant application.
• She’s meeting the Abbey People trustees in September and there are potential spaces. The community orchard is now becoming a forest garden, and there’s potential for a container/shed to provide workshop space. [http://cambridge.shapeyourplace.org/east-barnwell-community-orchard-do-ya-dig-it/#.U85LKkAUqSo](http://cambridge.shapeyourplace.org/east-barnwell-community-orchard-do-ya-dig-it/#.U85LKkAUqSo)
• She’s also meeting council people about community gardens in social housing.
Definitions: ‘A Growing Space is any public space where anyone can go and harvest the produce’. A community garden may be larger, and have different areas (eg for playing, for wildlife). A growing space probably only needs one person to look after it, a community garden needs a group, and community backing, plus people who have an interest in/skills to work with the community.
• Big Dig open day 20 September - CCF (Nicole) and Ann M not wanting to do it this time - would need 3 community gardens. Toni will contact Charlotte. It’s good for gardens which need more people. [Rebecca took this on and turned it into a Community Garden Open Weekend.]

**Possible skillshare on setting up a community garden**

• Empty Common - question - how do projects ‘join’ Transition?
Anna received a request from Charlotte to become a TC project and have space on the web site. We discussed what is required to be a TC project. We agreed you have to:
  • Understand and work in line with TC aims
  • Liaise with the hub - by sending a rep of some kind to the hub or one of the sub-groups
  • Be reported in the annual report and make a presentation at the AGM
  • Try to avoid event clashes and contribute to TC as a whole.

**Hub meeting admin**
Since we never finish by 8.30pm we will advertise the meeting in the bulletin as going on to 9pm (done for the next one).

We will put the minutes online henceforth - this is appropriate for transparency even though hardly anyone reads them. They aren’t really a good way of showing people what we do as they are a bit too dry. We say what we have done/are planning but typically nothing about why and how well it goes. The annual report is more useful for this, and the AGM - or maybe the blog or a transition e-zine (e.g. monthly)?

**More Transition Media**
It would be good to have a monthly/quarterly e-zine with personal stories from people who have taken part. We should also encourage more people to contribute to the blog. We should not ask them to write a blog entry - just to write a couple of paragraphs about their experiences. Short is good! Dave J. used to do this for the permaculture group but rather than put it on the group page it could go in the blog with a link from the group page. The media group will edit if required.

We could also contribute stuff to Transition Network and Transition Free Press more often.

Also, we need more pictures of what we do! If people want a photographer for an event they can ask the media group for help. Or they could ask for a TC reporter.

**Nicola will add a point about photography to the TC resources pages about running a stall or an event.** This is both to remind people to take photos and to make sure people are happy to be in them, and to be extra careful of taking photos with children or vulnerable adults in.

**Planning for the AGM (20th October)**
The FMH room is booked and paid for. Each group must send a rep to deliver a report - we will do the same as last year because it worked well. Each group has a 5 minute presentation only to say what has happened and we will use this to prepare the annual report. This year we would like each group to say something about how the group activities contribute towards TC aims.

**Anna and Martin have the accounts in hand** - these will be ready in good time and presented.

The list of groups will be those in last year’s annual report plus the media group. We also need to make a list of members - Nicola will send out a request to each group, the same as last year.

At the September meeting we will work out how the workshop bit of the meeting will go and appoint a facilitator. In the meantime Nicola will prepare an event page with a provisional agenda.

Toni said something like ‘To me, the AGM is one of the highlights of the year because you get a wonderful vision of the whole of Transition, when you put together what is happening in all the groups.’

**Transition Birthday Party 26th July**
The picnic is pretty much self-organising. We should invite our group members. Two things:
- We need to make new people welcome so if anyone is sitting on their own someone should go and say hello and draw them in
- The orchard people have kindly allowed us to use their space but we must be respectful of it. That means no boisterous play that could damage the trees or land (esp wildflower meadow) - we can do that outside the orchard on Midsummer Common. However, if anyone has boules or petanque equipment that would be fun (and there’s a boules pitch).

**Change Cambridge**
Antony Carpen is organising an event called Change Cambridge for 13th September. This will be aimed at bringing together local volunteers from different groups, especially young people and probably with a focus on digital media. We have been asked to facilitate (maybe Helen H?). He would like to make sure TC is represented, preferably by some of our young and enthusiastic members. There will be a small attendance fee, probably £5. If this is a problem for anyone then TC will fund it.

**Lewis Herbert**
Lewis Herbert, the new leader of the council, has been in touch since the local elections. It would be good to organise a meeting between him and members of the various transition groups. We want to be sure that any contact is cross party (Lewis Herbert is Labour) and cross-TC-group.

We heard some of the ideas proposed by groups.
- We need very cheap storage space and free central meeting spaces
- Want Cambridge to be more up front about its climate strategy, and to report publicly on progress - showing exemplary leadership to businesses and other councils
- We want the council to plant fruit trees rather than ornamental trees (but there is a plan for 2000 apple trees).
- Bristol Council has given access to its rooftops free for solar panel investment - could Cambridge do that too?
- More help with community gardens
- (more points still to come)
Mill Road Depot Project
The Mill Road Depot Project had a successful initial meeting on 3rd July. The idea was to get together groups who might have an interest in community facilities on the depot site, were it to be developed. There were a wide range of groups with exciting ideas. The Argyle Street Housing Co-op was well-represented and there were reps for the homeless and from a circus skills group and arts groups we knew little about, as well as Cambridge Sustainable food, Outspoken Delivery and others. Nicola facilitated an Open Space style session but has pulled out now. So it is up to Kati, Hugh and the others to take it further. They are planning the next meeting at St. Phillips on Thursday 24th.

Other news
The Cambridge Lakes project is looking more imminent. They had a planning meeting recently.  http://www.camlakes.co.uk/
The K1 Co-housing project has applied for outline planning permission. This is a significant step forward and we offer our support and best wishes.

Next meeting
Will be Monday September 15th at Anna’s, 7pm till 9pm