

Transition Chesterfield AGM 2017

Secretary's report on activities July 2016- July 2017

Potato Day



Our ninth annual potato day on 28 Jan 2017 at the Pavements was a fantastic success. Over 40 volunteers helped and we sold 37 varieties of seed potatoes, 15 varieties of peas and beans, 10 varieties of alliums plus other types of seeds, green manure etc. Nibbo Nosh gave away free samples of potato dishes, and we had a very busy seed swap. Toby Perkins, MP, officially opened the event. Over £1,500 in pre-orders were taken before the event and surplus potatoes were sold or donated to around 35 schools

and community groups. In future Potato Day will be a joint event with Inspire with profits evenly split. Big thanks to Steve Sansom who organised and everyone who helped.

Inspire Community Garden



A demonstration organic community garden set up by volunteers from Transition Chesterfield which formed a separate charity in 2016, goes from strength to strength. In the last year the group have planted fruit trees, built

and planted a poly-tunnel, raised beds and a fruit cage, built a pond, composting toilet, several donated sheds and greenhouses and a pizza oven. They have started running weekly workshops on organic gardening, wildlife gardening and permaculture principles, and are harvesting superb quality produce which is taken by volunteers or donated to the community. Particular thanks to all the volunteers who turn up to help in all weathers.

Repair Cafes



For the last two years we have been running a bi-monthly Repair Café at Monkey Park where people can get broken stuff repaired for free, diverting waste from landfill. A dedicated group of volunteer fixers have

managed to fix or advise on a whole range of items including tools such as lawnmowers, electronic items such as laptops, printers and radios, household furniture, and clothes with broken zips. Not all items can be fixed as sometimes the cost of new parts can be prohibitive but sometimes it's also good to know that something is beyond repair and should be replaced. The project also got a mention in the Guardian newspaper! Many thanks to Margaret Hersee for organising and all our volunteer fixers.

Abundance

There are hundreds of fruit trees in Chesterfield where fruit goes to waste. Abundance Chesterfield is a project to harvest the fruit and distribute it free of charge to tree owners, schools, nurseries, homeless shelters and communities. Surplus apples were collected in summer/Autumn 2016 and pressed into juice at the Brampton Food Festival in October. Many thanks to Katy Martin and all the volunteers who helped pick and press apples. Katy has now handed the project over to Alison Cowley and Polly Bentley who will be running it this year and who have been busy contacting volunteers and developing new distribution channels for the surplus fruit including Food Banks and community centres.

Seed swap



Seed swaps are free events where people bring any spare fruit, vegetable or flower seeds to swap for free, an excellent way to get unusual and hard to find varieties or to extend the variety of vegetables grown. Seed swaps were organised at the Brampton Food Festival/Chatsworth Rd Festival in Oct 2016 and at Potato Day in Jan 2017 and is now permanently based at Inspire

Community Garden. Big thanks to Martin Baxter for organising.

Divestment



Transition Chesterfield is one of 14 groups across Derbyshire campaigning to get the Derbyshire Pension Fund to dis-invest from fossil fuels. The Fund has nearly £300 million invested in fossil fuel companies. In March 2017 representatives from the campaign handed in over 1,000 signatures to the Chair of the Pensions and Investment Committee and presented the case for divestment including the significant financial risk.

Fracking and Renewable Energy



Transition Chesterfield has been working with anti-fracking groups from across the region to oppose fracking which threatens our targets for climate change and has many local environmental risks. In July 2016 we organised a public meeting on fracking with speakers from Frack Free Nottinghamshire. We have supported groups, meetings and protests in Marsh Lane, Eckington, Staveley and Sheffield. In July we submitted a detailed objection to an INEOS application for an exploratory well for fracking at Bramblemoor Lane, which if it is approved would be the first in

Derbyshire. The image above (courtesy of Colin Harrison) shows the height of the drilling rig relative to the Crooked Spire. In February 2017 we organised a public meeting "*Renewable Energy: Keeping the Lights on*", with speakers from Community Energy England and Sheffield Renewables.

Planning

We have submitted detailed objections to planning applications for Walton Works (Feb and Dec 2016) and the new Lidl (April 2017) focussing on poor walking/cycling access and lack of energy efficiency/renewable energy measures and made a presentation to the Borough Council Planning Committee on Walton Works (Jan 2017). In May 2017 we submitted a complaint to Chesterfield Borough Council about their failure to provide safe and adequate walking and cycling access to the new leisure centre, problems of which are ongoing. Thanks to Roger Green who is checking the planning applications on a weekly basis.

Publicity and Meetings

Thanks to Steve Sansom for managing the website www.transitionchesterfield.org and training sessions for volunteers, Chris Brooks for managing the twitter account @transitionchez and Chris and Ed Brooks for updating our facebook page.

Lisa Hopkinson (Secretary), August 2017