

## Transition Chesterfield AGM 2018

### Secretary's report on activities Aug 2017 – July 2018

#### Potato Day



Our tenth annual Potato Day in Jan 2018 was an outstanding success with queues stretching to Tesco before it was opened by the Mayor, Maureen Davenport. A band played 'Happy Birthday' as the Mayor cut the anniversary cake. Over 50 volunteers helped and we sold 40 varieties of seed potatoes, plus peas and beans, alliums, plus other types of seeds, green manure etc., gave away free samples of potato dishes, and had a very busy seed swap. Over £1,400 in pre-orders were taken before the event and surplus potatoes were sold, or donated to schools and community groups. This was a joint event with Inspire with profits evenly split. **Big**

thanks to **Steve Sansom** who organised and everyone who helped. Next year 26 Jan 2019!

#### Inspire Community Garden



A demonstration organic community garden which formed a separate charity in 2016, had another excellent year, improving the facilities with an extra poly-tunnel and greenhouse, staging, solar lighting and decking around the caravan and pond. There were weekly workshops ranging from fruit tree pruning, bumblebees, seed saving to home made curries. They continued to forge good links with the community with lots of working parties and mutual support from local health charities. They are continuing to harvest superb quality organic produce, with some donated to the food bank. They also organised successful plant sales.

**Particular thanks to all the volunteers** who turn up to help, even in extreme weather!

#### Repair Cafes and war on waste



This is the third year of regular Repair Cafés at Monkey Park where people can get broken stuff repaired for free, diverting waste from landfill. During 2018 we decided to run monthly events which have improved take-up. Items for repair are mainly electronic and electrical but include torn clothing, broken furniture and garden tools. We also advise on places for further help. Our team of volunteer fixers has slowly expanded but we can always take on more people. The project got covered in a double-page spread in the Derbyshire Times! **Many thanks to Margaret Hersee** for organising **and all our fixers**. In 2018 we also organised a well attended visit to the Veolia Materials Recovery

Facility and had a talk from Chesterfield Borough Council on plastic waste recycling.

#### Seed swap

Seed swaps are events where people swap for free any spare fruit, vegetable or flower seeds, 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 in Oct 2017 and at Potato Day in Jan 2018 which were very successful. It is now accessible and permanently based at Inspire for organising. **Big thanks to Martin Baxter** for organising.



## 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 for free to tree owners, volunteers and the community. Apples were collected and distributed in Autumn 2017 and the surplus pressed into juice at the Brampton Food Festival in October. **Thanks to Chris Brooks** this year we have a new motorised apple press constructed out of an old washing machine!. **Many thanks to Alison Cowley and Polly Bentley** who ran the project and developed

links with Food Banks and community centres.

## Divestment



Transition Chesterfield is one of 21 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 August 2017 **Darryl Cowley** from the campaign presented the case for divestment, including the significant financial risk, at a meeting of the Pensions and Investment Committee. In late 2017 we issued a press release with the latest figures on the Pension's fossil fuel holdings. In March 2018 we attended a Derby City Council meeting where there was a majority vote to support divestment.

## Fracking and fossil fuels



Transition Chesterfield has been working with Chesterfield Climate Alliance and local anti-fracking groups to oppose fracking due to its environmental risks. We submitted objections to an INEOS application for an exploratory well for fracking at Bramley Moor Lane, attended the Planning Committee meeting in Matlock and made a statement at the Planning Inquiry in Chesterfield in June 2018 (see left). If approved this would be the first fracking well in Derbyshire. We also ran a screening of documentary

'The Bentley Effect' in November 2017 which included a live streamed interview with the Director. In September 2017 Transition Chesterfield also joined a protest at Chesterfield Railway Station in protest of withdrawal of funding for electrification of the Midland Mainline.

## Planning and communications

Following the Borough Council's failure to respond to a complaint about the lack of a safe and adequate walking and cycling access to the new leisure centre, we took the case to the local Government Ombudsman. This prompted some action and the Council are in the process of resolving some of the issues. We submitted an objection and spoke at a Planning Committee meeting about a proposed development near Sainsburys which has no safe walking and cycling access. **Many thanks to Roger Green** who is checking the planning applications on a weekly basis. **Big thanks to Chris Brooks** for managing the twitter account @transitionchez and **Chris and Steph Fatcher** for updating our facebook page.

Lisa Hopkinson (Secretary), August 2018