

## **Update for Marlborough Area Board from Transition Marlborough – May 2019**

### **Climate Emergency**

It is a sign of the times that we can simply copy and paste the first sentences of the report to Area Board in March and for them to still be true:

*“Since the last Transition report to the Area Board seismic shifts have occurred in public awareness and activity around climate change, plastic pollution, biodiversity depletion, food security and sovereignty, trust in political processes and the urgency that is required in taking effective action to address them all. The IPCC report, Blue Planet, Greta Thunberg and the school strikes for climate, and Extinction Rebellion have all been key drivers in that shift.”*

Momentum is certainly gaining and media coverage balance is shifting. Wales, Scotland and the Labour Party have all since declared a Climate Emergency and there is a strong push now for the UK Parliament to be the first national parliament to declare too.

Wiltshire Council is bringing together a committee to take their own declaration forward. Transition Marlborough is inviting an alliance of other Transition, Climate Action, Environmental and Social Justice groups across the county to support the council in their goals once that committee is established. That will be informed by what was learned by our members and friends who attended the Climate Emergency conference in Lancaster on March 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **The Bee Roadzz Project**

Permaculture Magazine and Bee Craft magazine have now published articles about the project and we have already had interest from the British Bee Keepers Association schools liaison lead as a result. Our sister project in Swindon has had lots of positive media coverage with representation at Swindon’s Ecofest and mural painting of the project logo at Penhill Haven. Work has also begun on a new community bee-friendly garden at Mildenhall Village Hall as a contribution to the project.

### **Introduction to Permaculture course**

Five of the planned twelve sessions of this year’s course have taken place. The group is smaller than usual but all participants are learning much and giving us very positive feedback. Interestingly, once again, most participants are not actually from Marlborough but from Devizes, Swindon, Calne and other local areas. This is something we will seek to address for the 2020 course.

### **Film Nights**

We continue with seasonal free film nights hosted at the Community and Youth Centre.

Thursday May 2<sup>nd</sup> saw a screening of ‘Down to Earth’ - currently on a national tour and following one family’s journey, over 5 years, to live with indigenous communities around the world to capture the wisdom of ‘The Earth Keepers’ and inspire a more sustainable way of life. (This report was written before the screening so an evaluation of the event will come in the next report)

### **Local Sustainable Food Network**

In a bid to start small and build slowly, the first aim of this budding new project is to make creative use of the town's used coffee grounds (of which there are large quantities owing to the numbers of coffee outlets, cafes and restaurants in Marlborough). It is a nutrient-rich, organic product that is heavy and bulky to dispose of through usual waste management routes and could be much better utilized than disposal in landfill. Three avenues are currently in the early stages of research: distribution for home composting, making fuel briquettes / 'logs' and use as a growing medium for mushrooms.

### **Transition Swindon**

We are supporting moves in Swindon to bring together a wide range of existing community and environmental projects and groups under the umbrella of a new 'Transition Town'. A meeting in Swindon is planned for mid-June to take this forward with a speaker from the national Transition Network presenting the compelling case for becoming a Transition Town. It could be an important step for Swindon and very encouraging for us in Marlborough to have the presence of such an alliance on our doorstep.

Our '**Transition Healthcheck**' analysis was very successful. We reflected on and celebrated all that has been achieved by Transition Marlborough over the years, how we are developing now and highlighted areas of needed development. This has fed into an international project to analyse the 'health' of Transition across the globe.

The healthcheck tool could be easily adapted for use by any community group or public-facing organization to examine purpose, structure, effectiveness, group culture, activity, public engagement, goals and progress. We are happy to share it with anyone who is interested.

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