

Update for Marlborough Area Board from Transition Marlborough – January 2018

The Bee Roadzz Project

(The presentation will give more detail about this project)

A collaboration – originally with Pewsey Environmental Action Team – to establish and support the creation of bee, and other pollinator, -friendly habitat as continuously as possible between Pewsey and Marlborough. The Marlborough Downs farmers of ‘Space for Nature’ have taken it on board wholeheartedly and will be extending the project across the Downs towards Avebury, Broad Hinton and Wroughton.

We aim to include as many individuals, community groups, schools, local politicians, farmers and landowners as possible and to create and document a model for a project that can be replicated in other areas. Although the groundwork has been going on for some months, a launch is planned for April with a variety of awareness raising activities for people to get involved with.

Air Pollution & Transport

This continues to be a major concern for the community of Marlborough as evidenced on Wiltshire Council’s own air quality monitoring website:

http://www.wiltshireairquality.org.uk/?site_id=WIL9&view=latest

The screenshot shows the Wiltshire Council Air Quality website. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links: Home, Air quality news, About air quality, Download data, Air quality reports, and Know & Respond alerts. The main content area features a map of Wiltshire with several monitoring sites marked with colored circles (1, 2, 10). To the right of the map is a gauge showing a pollution index of 10, labeled 'Very High'. Text next to the gauge states: 'The maximum pollution level measured across Wiltshire is: Very High (Index 10)'. Below the gauge, it says 'Last updated at 10th January 2018 15:00:00'. Further down, there is a section titled 'Find out the air pollution for the next 5 days' with a link to 'View the air pollution forecast for Wiltshire on the Defra UK-AIR website'. At the bottom left of the map area, there is a dropdown menu to 'Select a monitoring site:'.

(screenshot taken January 9th 2018)

Dr. Sam Page has been in touch with Peter Nobes, Senior Public Protection Officer in Wiltshire Council's Environment department. He says that the PM monitor is giving false readings because it is measuring water vapour as well as other particulates because the heating mechanism is broken. The monitor is now disconnected. We are eager to know when it will be back in working order. Increasing numbers of local residents are taking note

of the monitoring results and it is important, when they are voicing concerns, that they are responding to accurate data.

A recent BBC2 documentary showed how air pollution was reduced by between 10 and 20% in a busy Birmingham street for one day, by adjusting the traffic flow to avoid stopping, starting and idling, suspending parking bays and replacing them with tall shrubs, and persuading children to walk to school. We are confident that a 20mph speed limit within the AQMA, in response to the metrocount data and the installation of the promised 'no idling' signs at the bus stops in the High Street and outside local schools will help this situation in Marlborough considerably.

Members of Transition Marlborough continue to lobby Wiltshire Council about the issue and supportive members of the Town Council are proposing and supporting a broad, systemic traffic assessment for the town. This will enable modeling of possible solutions to a complex problem that includes parking, public transport, public health, air pollution, road safety and traffic flow. Marlborough Town Council have agreed to write to Wiltshire Council in support of the Feasibility Study for the Marlborough Rail Link. We look forward to the County's response. We are pleased to see that cycle route signs have been installed at several locations around town. The promised works around the Beechcroft site will apparently require additional funding. We look forward to the implementation of this valuable pedestrian and cycle link connecting St Margaret's Mead to the retail park and, eventually, to St John's School.

Film Nights

Four film nights are planned for 2018, all hosted at the newly refurbished Community and Youth Centre.

- Thursday February 1st, 7.30pm
 - As we head into Spring – we'll be screening the award-winning and action-inspiring documentary 'Tomorrow'
- Thursday May 3rd, 7.30pm
 - As we head in to high Summer – our theme will be 'Energy'
- Thursday August 2nd, 7.30pm
 - As we head towards the Autumn harvest season – our theme will be 'Food'
- Thursday November 1st, 7.30pm
 - As we head towards the winter – our theme will be 'Reflection'

All events will be free entry with voluntary donations welcomed to cover costs.

Introduction to Permaculture course

Permaculture is a design system that can be applied to all aspects of living although it is most commonly recognized as a way of designing gardens and food systems. It closely observes how natural systems flourish and demonstrates the application of the same principles wherever human design strategies are practiced. Now in its 7th year and running over 12 Saturday mornings between March and October, this well-evaluated introductory course is open for bookings now. It covers the ethics, principles and design tools of permaculture, low energy living, caring for soil as a living system, understanding renewable energy, managing garden pests through supporting biodiversity and much more. It is facilitated by, and hosted in the homes of, local permaculture practitioners and students.

Repair Café

As more people start to question and change their relationship to 'stuff', Repair Cafes are taking off all over the world. <https://repaircafe.org/en/> In an effort to prolong the life of possessions, prevent or postpone unnecessary new purchases and reduce waste and landfill, these events bring together menders of all persuasions with some café-style refreshments, maybe a little live music and a friendly and convivial meeting space. There is an inspiring example in Eastcott in Swindon and Transition Marlborough are planning to replicate it in Marlborough in early March.

Networking with other local groups

We are continuing to forge partnerships with other local community-building and environmental groups, to share and support each other's events and activities and create a more connected public face for the local contribution to the global movement towards a more resilient and sustainable future. These groups include ARK, local gardening clubs, Marlborough in Bloom, Space for Nature, Hungerford Environmental Action Team, Sustainable Devizes, Swindon Climate Action Network, Incredible Edible Swindon and the members of the now disbanded Pewsey Environmental Action Team. We are also becoming more active contributors in the regional Transition Network and Permaculture groups and sharing our progress with others in the Southwest for mutual support and encouragement.

Prepared by Milly Carmichael

Chair – Transition Marlborough

Contact chair@transitionmarlborough.org for more information on any of these topics