

Get ready for Spring

Garden Share – help with the launch

The November newsletter gave details of work to establish a Garden Share scheme in Stratford, led by Mike Rolfe. The idea is a simple one: to match would-be food growers with garden owners who are willing to share some of their garden or allotment.

The details of the scheme, based on experience from other Transition Towns which have set up similar projects, have now been sorted out, and there will be a meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 26 January at Friends Meeting House, 37 Maidenhead Road, Stratford, to finalise arrangements ahead of the public launch of the scheme at the Town Council's Public Meeting on 3 February (see next column).

If you would like to help to develop and run the Garden Share scheme, please come to the meeting on 26 January to hear more and contribute your ideas. And please get in touch with Mike Rolfe at michaelrolfe@ntlworld.com or phone Transition Stratford on 01789 298503 if you:

- have a spare part of your garden or allotment which you would be willing to share with another Transition Stratford supporter
- would like to grow your own food but don't have access to land to do so.

Helping more people to grow their own food

Transition Stratford is working with Stratford upon Avon Town Council to explore ways of meeting the needs of local people for land to grow their own food.

Over 100 people have expressed interest in renting an allotment, but the Town Council—which is legally responsible for the provision of allotments in the town - does not itself own any suitable land. Discussions have taken place with local landowners about the possible use of plots as allotment sites, but to date it has not been possible to secure any additional land.



The Town Council has now called a Public Meeting on Wednesday 3 February at Stratford Town Hall, starting at 7.30 pm. The meeting will discuss how people's interest in growing their own food can be met in other ways. Transition Stratford will be presenting its Garden Share scheme, which would enable people to grow food by sharing a part of someone else's garden or land. Transition Stratford will also be helping with discussions about ways in which land might be made available on temporary leases.

Other questions for discussion include how new gardeners might be helped with tools and whether experienced gardeners could help those less experienced to develop growing skills. If you can contribute ideas or help, or if you want to grow food yourself but don't have access to land, then come to the meeting on 3 February.

Dates for your diary

Tues 26 Jan @ 7.30pm:
Garden Share planning meeting, Friends' Meeting House, 37 Maidenhead Road, Stratford upon Avon, CV37 6XT

Sat 30/Sun 31 Jan:
Introduction to Permaculture course, Whichford (contact Dave Passingham, davepassingham@hotmail.com)

Wed 3 Feb @ 7.30pm:
Public Meeting on helping people grow their own food, Stratford Town Hall, Sheep Street, CV37 6EF

Fri 5 Feb @ 7.15 pm:
Film Friday "Koyaanisqatsi", Lifeways Therapy Centre, 30 Albany Road, CV37 6PG

Wed 10 Feb @ 7.30pm:
Transition Stratford Steering Group - venue tbc (contact Barbara Cooper for update, barbaracooper@108shipston.freeserve.co.uk)

Sat 13 Feb @ 9.30am
Transition Shipston Energy Open Space, St Edmund's Church meeting room, Shipston-on-Stour, CV36 4AS (contact Dave Passingham, davepassingham@hotmail.com)

22 Feb - 7 March:
National Fairtrade Fortnight (see the Fairtrade Foundation website at www.fairtrade.org.uk)

Getting energetic about energy

Since the Transition Stratford Open Space meeting on energy in early October, work has been gathering pace to develop practical local initiatives. The Transition Stratford Energy Group met just before Christmas to hear about progress.



A workshop to promote **sustainable energy for historic buildings** in Stratford is being organised by Transition Stratford, the Stratford Society and Stratford Town Council. The aim is to run the workshop in late spring, bringing together technical advice from local authority officials, historic

buildings specialists and businesses for the benefit of those who own or are responsible for historic buildings and other older properties.

The **energy from food waste** project team has met to map out ideas, and has drafted a survey to be used to find out how much local food waste might be available for generating energy. Next steps will be to put together a plan for the survey – and carry it out.

Outline arrangements to offer free **home energy checks** have been agreed with Act on Energy, the local Energy Efficiency Advice Centre. A survey form has been drafted, and is being discussed by the project team. Next steps will involve finalising the survey form and developing training for volunteers who will carry out the home energy checks. The process will start with pilots in the spring.

For more information about these projects and other ideas to promote sustainable energy, contact Energy Group convenor Hugh Chatwin (hughchatwin@btinternet.com) or phone Transition Stratford on 01789 298503.

Act local – think global

December's General Meeting heard a graphic account of the impact of climate change on communities in the developing world from Margaret Gardener of Practical Action—see December's transition news for details of Margaret's talk.

The Transition Towns initiative puts a strong emphasis on action to achieve local resilience, but we have recognised that this cannot be at the expense of turning our backs on the wider world. Right from the beginning, Transition Stratford has included in its objectives a commitment to social justice in developing our responses to climate change and peak oil.

At its January meeting, the Transition Stratford Steering Group decided to make this commitment more explicit, with an emphasis on actions that might benefit poor communities in developing countries. As a starting point, we are discussing with Practical Action how Transition Stratford can

give support to Practical Action's work with communities which are already affected by climate change.

The Steering Group also discussed some other ideas, including how we can support Stratford's Fairtrade Town initiative, which is currently planning its contribution to the national Fairtrade Fortnight, to run from 22 February to 7 March.

Please let us have your ideas about how we can include support for communities in the developing world as part our vision for Transition Stratford. And if you'd like to get involved in local Fairtrade activities, contact Roger Matthews on 01789 298503.



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