

Transition news

November 2010

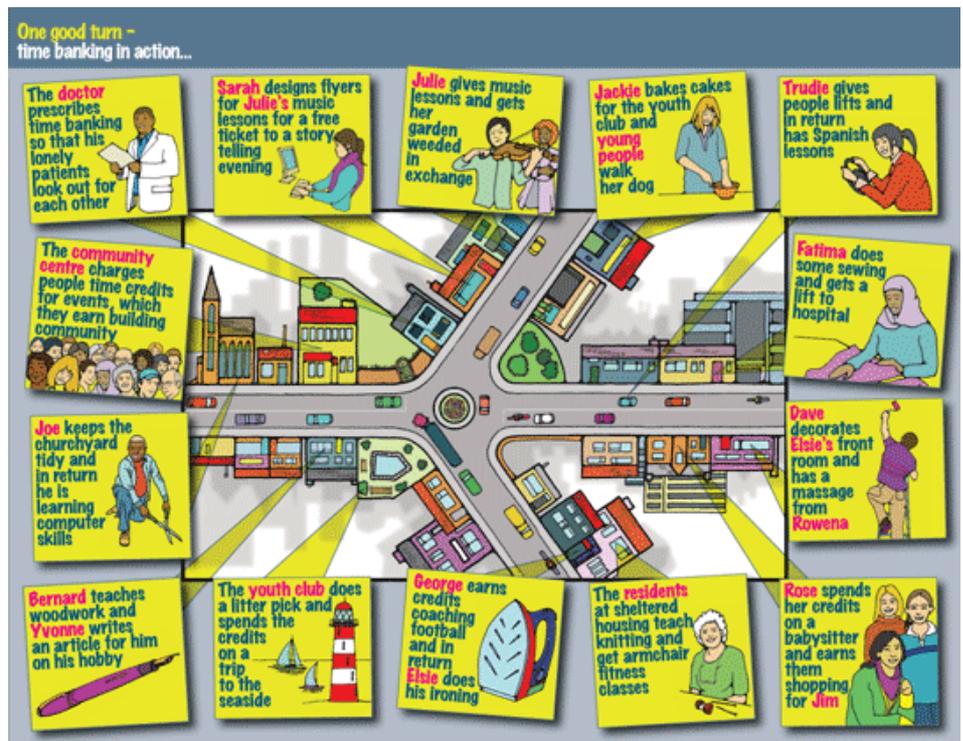
Towards a more resilient local economy

As global economic turmoil continues, Transition Stratford is encouraging local debate on how community trading could help to strengthen the non-market economy of mutual support made up of family, friends, neighbours and community.

A well-attended public meeting on 24 November heard from local representatives of the two main community trading systems - Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS) and Time Banking - about how their schemes work and how they might operate in Stratford.

Fourshires LETS was represented by David Morton and Tracy Lean, who explained that the scheme has around 80 members in the North Cotswolds area and has its own unit of exchange – the "Stone" – with which members trade skills and services. A wide range of services - including babysitting, hairdressing, massage and help with shopping, gardening and DIY - is offered through a printed directory which is updated annually. Members also meet face-to-face at monthly social gatherings at which goods such as jams and chutneys and unwanted clothes can be bartered and tools and equipment offered for loan.

Unlike LETS schemes, which are wholly volunteer-run, Time Banks are generally co-ordinated by paid Time Brokers who are responsible for recruiting members and matching up offers and requests. Joanna Goldie, a Time Broker with North Cotswold Community Time Bank, explained that time banking has a strong focus on community building and can include organisational as well as individual



members. In the North Cotswolds area, for example, the National Trust and some local charity shops "pay" their volunteers with time credits, which they can exchange for services offered by Time Bank members.

Discussion at the public meeting focused on how a community trading system such as LETS or a Time Bank could help to create a more resilient alternative economy in Stratford, and also how such a system might interact with existing volunteer schemes. What do you think? Have you been involved in LETS or a Time Bank in the past, and if so what do you think they might have to offer local people? To contribute your views, or to find out more about LETS and Time Banking, please contact Barbara Cooper on 01789 298503 or by e-mail at admin@transitionstratford.com.

Come to the Community Forum

There will be another opportunity for you to put forward your views on the local economy on Monday 6 December, when the Stratford Community Form will have as its main topic "Revitalising the Local Economy in the Town".

The Community Forum is a quarterly public meeting led by Warwickshire County Council and Stratford-on-Avon District Council to engage members of the public in council activities. Transition Stratford will be there with our stall, so please come along to say hello and contribute to the discussion. The meeting will be held at Welcombe Hills, School, Blue Cap Road, Stratford CV37 6TQ, starting at 6.30pm.

Powering ahead on community-owned energy

A meeting to be held in Stratford on Wednesday 8 December will consider proposals to establish a Community Benefit Society - a form of co-op - to raise money for investment in local renewable energy projects.

The meeting will continue work started at a successful conference organised by Transition Stratford in June, which looked at a number of potential projects in south Warwickshire, including the installation of solar photovoltaic panels on the roofs of public buildings.

The proposals are part of a wider movement across the country in which local communities are working together to develop more sustainable sources of energy. Contact has been made with a number of other groups, including Tutbuty Eco Power in Staffordshire.

The meeting will take place at St Gregory's Hall, Henley Street, Stratford upon Avon CV37 6QW, starting at 7.30pm. For more information, please contact Barbara on 01789 298503 or at admin@transitionstratford.com.



Have a happier Christmas - put me in someone's stocking!

Fed up? Stressed? Broke? Surely there must be more to Christmas than this!

That's why Transition Stratford is inviting everyone to Have a Happier Christmas – by dropping in to The Buzz Café, St Gregory's Hall, Henley Street any time between 10.00 and 3.00 on Saturday 18 December. Not only will you be able to take some time out for coffee, mince pies and a chat with others from Transition Stratford – why not solve your Christmas present problems as well?

There'll be geese, goats – and of course the traditional donkey – all in the form of Practical Presents from Practical Action, the Warwickshire-based

development charity. The idea is simple: choose a present that will change lives in some of the world's poorest communities and send a gift pack explaining what's being achieved as a present to friends and relatives. Transition Stratford has teamed up with Practical Action to offer presents and gift packs to take away. Prices are reasonable – and they will make a world of difference.

What else? Over to you! Do you have any tips to share with others? You could have your own ways to avoid wasting food, reducing packaging, taking time out with others, having a good time. Send your ideas and advice to us at admin@transitionstratford.com.

Dates for your diary

Fri 3 Dec, 7.00pm: Film *Friday Grow your Own Lifeways*, 30 Albany Road, Stratford upon Avon CV37 6PG. Film free, refreshments £2

Sat 4 Dec, 7.00pm: One Planet Action seasonal celebration, Dormer Conference Centre, Dormer Place, Leamington Spa CV32 5AA. Admission £3.

Mon 6 Dec, 2.00pm: Sustainable Energy for Historic Buildings meeting, Stratford-upon Avon Town Hall, Sheep Street, Stratford upon Avon CV37 6EF

Mon 6 Dec, 6.30pm: Stratford Community Forum, Welcombe Hills School, Blue Cap Road, Stratford upon Avon CV37 6TQ

Wed 8 Dec, 7.30pm: Community Ownership of Renewable Energy (CORE) meeting, St Gregory's Hall, Henley Street, Stratford upon Avon CV37 6QW

Mon 13 Dec, 7.30pm: Transition Stratford quarterly general meeting, St Gregory's Hall, Henley Street, Stratford upon Avon CV37 6QW

Sat 18 Dec, 10.00am - 3.00pm: Transition Stratford Christmas drop-in, Buzz Café, St Gregory's Hall, Henley Street, Stratford upon Avon CV37 6QW

Sat 22 Jan 2011, 7.30pm: An Evening of Poetry and Music organised by Transition Town Leamington, Newbold Comyn Arms, Newbold Terrace East, Leamington Spa CV32 4EU. Admission free, all welcome.

Contacts

Officers

Facilitator: James Pavitt,
james@nettlesoup.co.uk

Treasurer: Roger Matthews,
rogermatthews@108shipston.freeserve.co.uk

Secretary: Barbara Cooper,
barbaracooper@108shipston.freeserve.co.uk

Group representatives

Energy: Hugh Chatwin,
hughchatwin@btinternet.com

Food: Joy Godwin,
malone.godwin@gmail.com

Other Steering Group members

Joan and Peter Burgess,
pandjburgess@waitrose.com

Lila Morgan, abmorgan@ntlworld.com

Shelagh Sandle,
shelagh@queenbeecottage.co.uk

Vacancy

There is a vacancy for a co-opted member of the steering group, which meets monthly. If you would be interested in joining us, please contact Barbara Cooper on 01789 298503 or admin@transitionstratford.com for details