



## Annual Report – August 2024

*It has been a successful year for Transition Chesterfield (TC). New partnerships forged, new events, new skills learned, new volunteers involved and new people hearing about the Transition movement for the first time.*

*Our membership currently stands at 96, up more than 50% from 63 in March 2023. Followers on Facebook increased from 1,105 in August last year to 1,400 currently.*

*Below is our report on individual project activity since our last AGM in November. We have included express thanks to those who have led projects, but we want to thank everyone who has participated this year. If people don't turn up, then we are nothing.*



### **Abundance**

At least 15 individual and group picking sessions. New volunteers have joined and new orchards contacted. There was a big collection of apples from Hardwick Hall with experience of learning how to prune in their apple orchard. Four Apple Pressing days were held – at Inspire Community Garden, Staveley, Hasland and Apple Day at Monkey Park (which included mini cooking skill-shares). In addition, there has been distribution of spare food to food banks around Chesterfield year-round.

**Thank you to Alison Cowley and Polly Bentley for your efforts and enthusiasm. Thanks also to Margaret Hersee for organising the Apple Pressing Days and to all volunteers.**

### **Crafters Bazaar**

Another successful Crafters Bazaar was held in May 2024. The sun shone! 58 people booked stalls, but with cancellations/no-shows we had 44 stalls filled on the day. We asked stallholders and customers to fill out questionnaires on the day and received a lot of positive feedback. We held 3 skillshares in the Hub for the first time this year, these were well attended and successful. Plans for 2025 depend on the progress of Chesterfield market regeneration. We are considering mini-Craft Bazaars in community halls as a contingency. **Big thanks to Sheila Curzon, Gillian Bown and Ann Birks for their seamless organising.**



### **Eco Homes**

We supported a Marches Energy Advice event at the Assembly Rooms in February to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes. We hope to organise an online workshop on solar PV/batteries as part of a Derbyshire-wide programme between 14-27 October.



Wirksworth Community Land Trust have also offered TC a long-term loan of their thermal imaging camera.

### Climate Emergency

Many of the activities are Derbyshire-wide campaigns that Lisa Hopkinson conducts on behalf of TC eg Divest Derbyshire, Better Buses Derbyshire, Cement and Carbon Storage projects. Lisa was part of a Friends of the Earth led coalition campaigning on climate action in the run up to the East Midlands mayoral election. The coalition produced a 10 point climate action plan and met with many of the candidates. Chesterfield Borough Council (CBC) now hosts a quarterly Climate Change Forum. TC has been represented at all meetings and provided input into the Forum's Action Plan.



**Thank you to Lisa Hopkinson for all of her work on Climate Emergency and Eco Homes.**

### Eco Hub

26 sessions were held at The Hub since November 2023, funded by CBC's Community Fund. These included themed public drop ins (eg Keeping Warm, Growing, Home Energy Advice, Repair Cafe), presentations and discussions (eg Natural Flood Management, Tree Replanting, Green Mapping) and 4 Climate Conversations workshops. The project has generated over 500 volunteer hours provided by 36 different people. The total number of participations in the Eco Hub to date is 415. The Eco Hub has brought together volunteers from across the individual Transition projects with time to get to know one another better,



share our knowledge and experience and try out some new activities together. New volunteers have joined. EcoHub activities have also raised the profile of TC and of environmental issues in the local area and strengthened TC's reputation as a voluntary organisation committed to practical ways to reach net zero. Students from Chesterfield College joined the Climate Conversations sessions. Work on a TC Green Map has spun out from the Eco Hub and the output will be shown at the AGM. **Thank you to**

**all Eco Hub volunteers, each of whom have made a unique contribution.**

### Littersorters

LitterSorters have met for 7 sessions since Nov 2023. We continue to collect, count and record waste from the walk-cycle routes around Queen's Park. An infographic to celebrate the first anniversary of the project in March 2024 was produced (shown). Walk Derbyshire made a video for their website to promote our group's activity as being a great example of walking





with a purpose. In July we were joined by several volunteers from Chesterfield Litterpicking Group. We continue to get support from CBC Green Spaces team and DCRT. **Thank you to Kathy Farr/ Peter Gray for leading the sessions, and to all Littersorters.**

### **Planning/Active Travel**

The Tupton Business Park (Woodall Homes Development) appeal was granted but the Planning Inspector clearly supported the review mechanism. The inspector acknowledged the need for improved walking/cycling infrastructure connecting to the development. We welcomed the planning application for a new Derbyshire Rail research and innovation centre at Barrow Hill, which will provide local training and jobs in sustainable transport. We continued to publicise our walk of fame/shame series through the newsletter.

In June, we wrote a joint email with Cycle Chesterfield and the Ramblers to ask Derbyshire County Council to consider an Active Travel Masterplan for Chesterfield. Volunteers from TC led six walks as part of the Chesterfield Walking Festival, promoting local infrastructure.

**Thanks to Lisa Hopkinson for her continued efforts.**

### **Potato Day**



Our most successful year yet. More pre-orders than ever before and more potatoes sold. Most varieties sold out on the day and we had very little surplus - hence little or no waste. We now have two co-ordinators, hence the project is more resilient, and some new ways of working which are making the planning more efficient. As we are now charged for hire of shop units, we consolidated into one unit (having used 2 in recent years) but we made this work and plan on only one

unit in future years. **Huge thanks to Steph Dillon and Alastair Meikle for their sterling work and thank you to all volunteers.**

### **Repair Café**

A monthly Repair Café has been held on the third Saturday of each month, plus a pop-up event in June on Vicar Lane. We have gained more repairers but lost our dedicated PAT tester. There has been a drop in visitor numbers, which is concerning. Two volunteers are involved in Project BREW (Beyond Recycling of E-Waste) with Restart Group, looking at re-use options available at local recycling centres. The aim is to report for International Repair Day in October.



**Many thanks to Ann Birks and Wendy Pinchbeck for organising monthly Repair Cafes and to all our repairers and volunteers.**



### **Skill-share**

Ten skill-share workshop events were organised as part of a grant from Derbyshire Voluntary Action: jewellery making, green cleaning, making thermal curtain linings, bike maintenance, craftivism, bread making, fabric upcycling, cyanotype printing, walk leading & composting. Workshops were advertised as open to all in the community. In total there were 70 participations in the 10 workshops. This involved over 40 different people taking part in one or more workshops, the majority of which were non-members. Three further mini skill-share workshops took place alongside the Crafters Bazaar in May and there were 20 participations on that day. A few people have indicated that they will help with various tasks to ensure Skill-share continues. There is some funding still to be spent from the DVA grant. Two mini composting workshops are planned for Staveley Fruit & Flower Market in August.



**Thank you to everyone who has led or organised a Skillshare workshop this year, it really is appreciated.**

### **Seed Swap**



Seed Swap was popular at Potato Day and at the gardening events at the Eco Hub, where a number of donations were received. Lizzie Henshaw has had to step back due to work commitments. Andie Cooper recently held a Seed Swap stall at an Ashgate Road Co-op Sustainability Event and has kindly agreed to take a lead on Seed Swap going forward.

**Thank you Lizzie and Andie for taking the lead and to everyone who has donated seeds.**

### **Final words**

Sadly, earlier in the summer we learned that Colin Harrison, former Secretary of TC had died. He made a huge contribution and will be missed.

A huge thank you to **Sheila Curzon** for all of the work done on social media, **Lisa Hopkinson** for the monthly marathon involved in compiling our newsletter and **Alastair Meikle** for maintaining our website.

**Karl Deakin**  
**On behalf of the Transition**  
**Chesterfield Committee**  
**Nov 23-Aug 24**