

TRANSITION MONTPELIER

July 2009 - Newsletter 2

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Introduction

Hello everyone

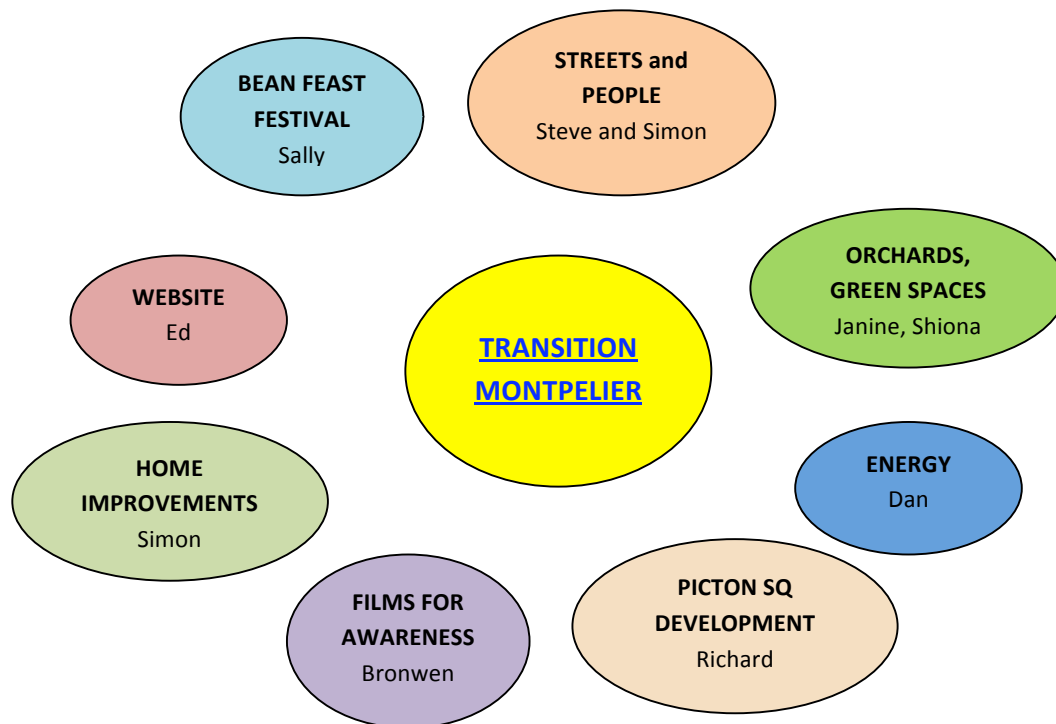
We had our second open meeting last week, July 15th at The Fairfield Resource Centre.

Despite the opening of the new Harry Potter film, Bristol City playing Ajax at the Gate, various school plays and the Ashley Vale Allotments Association AGM we still had an excellent turn out. Thanks to all who came and contributed.

The theme of the meeting was Moving Things On, as in continuing the excellent start we feel we made last month. As the graphic below shows, this is exactly what we are doing with a number of clear interest groups now setting up and working independently of the core team including two new ones, Films for Awareness and Energy.

Take a look through the following summary for more information on all of these, contact the named person if you want to get involved and let's work on Montpelier's Transition, together.

All the best and see you in the neighbourhood ☺



(Diagram illustrating how Transition Montpelier is emerging)

Announcements:

1. The next Bean Feast meeting will be on Tues 21st July, 7pm at 89 St Andrews Rd.
2. We are delighted by the Health Centre's interest in Transition Montpelier and the subsequent support offered in the last two weeks with placing a Montpelier Park consultation display in the waiting room and participating in the Academy of Urbanism tour. We look forward to developing this further.
3. Lost property. The following items were unclaimed at the end of the last meeting. 2 mugs, 1 tent!
4. Next meeting: More action! Late September / October

Academy of Urbanism – Best Neighbourhood Award 2010

St Pauls and Montpelier were assessed this Wednesday by The Academy of Urbanism for the Best Neighbourhood award 2010.

Various top architects dropped into the area to see what the two areas (but one nomination / neighbourhood) was all about. We think we did a pretty good job.

Dan did the Montpelier part of the presentation supported in person by Albany Residents (Pete and Jane), Montpelier Conservation group (Tony), Sally J and FNCG (Julie). Montpelier Park (Shiona) and Montpelier Art Trail (Sharon) provided written support, Sidz and Mark Simmons sent in photos of the Street Parties. On the tour we met Sid Sharma (Thali), Richard (Farm shop) who provided coffee and biscuits, and Cherie from the Health Centre. It was a great team effort. Well done all.

Presentations were also made by Chris Chalkley (PRSC) and Penny Germon St Pauls Unlimited.

There's no prize money, but it was a really interesting morning. Cllr Bev Knott (Lib Dem - Care and Neighbourhoods) mentioned the increased devolvement of budget to neighbourhood level that the council are proposing so learning about what other groups in the ward are doing, and building links with them felt particularly important.



A Montpelier Community Energy Efficiency Programme

danweisselberg@yahoo.co.uk

I am doing an MSc in Architecture, Environment and Energy and just finished an assignment What could encourage Community Energy Efficiency Programmes (CEEPs) in Bristol? I found and strongly believe that community groups have a major role in improving domestic energy efficiency. With a "strong bottom" and 3rd party support, the Top-down Bottom-up approach can really work and build community. Transition Montpelier is really well set up to do this. Let's go for it! (Dan)

Energy Efficiency facts

Residential buildings = 26% of CO2 emissions

50% heat loss in a typical home - walls and loft

Action = More efficient homes, behaviour change,

CEEPS

Different types: Voluntary, Sponsored or community owned

HES is really exciting model, have a look. We can do this in Montpelier

Really can lower energy consumption (30 -40%) and CO2 emissions

Alleviate fuel poverty, save people money by informing neighbours of grants

TOP DOWN

Government want all Britain's homes insulated by 2020.

Millions of £ from Energy Co's insulation to low-income and elderly householders

BCC has different grants for homeowners

MIDDLE / 3rd PARTY SUPPORT IN BRISTOL IS EXCELLENT

Through Centre for Sustainable Energy specialist communities training and some funding is available. Checkout Green Communities. Some employees even live in Montpelier!

BCC can possibly supply Energy domestic monitors to a group like ours. These really help.

PROVEN SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE INCLUDES

Support from local energy advice agency – (CSE)

A clear, shared strategy – (TRANS MONT ENERGY)

Advice from trained community members – (Green Communities / Energy Saving Trust)

Visible indicators of energy use - (metering) – BCC?

Funding – Referrals possible from Good Energy and CERT energy company schemes

BOTTOM UP – (THE VISION ADAPTED FROM DISCUSSIONS AT THE MEETING)

We form an Energy team (let me know if you are interested), we will meet soon

Design a programme for rented and homeowners emphasis on lower income streets

Make a link with energy provider, (as ethical as possible)

Set up training from CSE / Green Communities

Run the programme this autumn

We visit neighbours and encourage local uptake of grants `across Mont' and into St Pauls etc

Publicise at Bean Feast, Albany Green etc

Trans Mont get funds from referrals. Where these funds can go will be an incentive.

This reduce energy use and CO2 emissions, build community and its resilience to PO and CC

More insulated, warmer homes throughout Montpelier

IF WE CAN BUILD A TEAM, THIS CAN WORK, BE REWARDING AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Picton Square/The Streets group

Steve Meek: stevemeek999@gmail.com

Richard Radford Mill: richardrmf@hotmail.com

The 'Streets/Picton Square' Group was very well attended. Discussion was almost entirely about 'Streets' and all attenders voiced their views on the problems they see as important. Montpellier Beat Officer Simon Humphrey and PCSOs Clare and Kim attended the first session and made very useful comments.

Comments from attendees are summarised:

parking both sides of the road in parts of Richmond Rd should be stopped - road too narrow for emergency vehicles (twice)

Coburg Rd would be better without a pavement as it is so narrow.

Bins are permanently on the pavement in Coburg Rd and Lower Cheltenham Place causing obstruction.

Large Van/ live in vehicles parking in St Andrews Rd attracting offensive notes from residents: some of the owners in fact are residents. One person is parking multiple large vehicles in Falkland Rd and repairing them in the street. Appears to be running a business.

Parts of Upper Chelt Place too narrow for vans to park. Church goes obstruct pavement below the park on Sunday evening.

Richmond Rd and lower part of York rd feeling effects of commuter parking increasingly this year.

Residents parking Scheme suggested and 'show of hands' showed majority support.

Also in St Andrews Rd - parking on pavements obstructs buggy users.

Simon Humphrey, Beat Officer said they enforce pavement parking on the basis that it must be possible to get a double buggy past on the pavement and emergency vehicles through the road. Action will be taken otherwise. They accept that if these conditions are met then having wheels on the pavement appears to be accepted by the community. There are areas in the UK that have a white line down the pavement which delineates how far onto the pavement is acceptable to park. The group did not discuss this further.

Agreed: we heard lots of problems, we need to meet and discuss solutions - which will be different in different roads.

Note from Living Streets Bristol: to report obstructive parking where double yellows not present - contact police, Simon.Humphrey@avonandsomerset.police.uk

To report parking on double yellows - official advice is to contact council parking services - don't bother - they log the call but take no action if not a bus lane. If persistent problem, contact your councillor (jon.rogers@bristol.gov.uk).

To report bins blocking pavement - aled.williams@bristol.gov.uk

Feel free to copy your email to Steve Meek at: livingstreetsbristol@googlemail.com

Area Green Space Plan - Ashley, Easton and Lawrence Hill (affecting Montpelier)

The aim of the Plan is to deliver the standards and policies set out in the Council's

Parks and Green Space Strategy while ensuring that the significant investment anticipated for local green spaces is directed with help of local stakeholders and communities.

The Ashley, Easton and Lawrence Hill Area Green Space Plan will set the foundations for green space provision for the next 20 years and decide where different types of facilities and space - such as children's playgrounds, sports pitches, young people's facilities, dogfree areas, toilets and park keepers - are to be located. It will also identify if any green space is no longer needed and can be used to fund improvements to other spaces.

The next sessions will focus upon the spaces in Montpelier, St Pauls and St Werburghs on Wednesday 5th August - 7pm – at St Werburghs Community Centre, Horley Road, St Werburghs, Bristol, BS2 9TJ

The aim of the sessions will be to discuss improvements to open spaces in each specific area. There are currently 147 people on the waiting list for an allotment at Ashley Vale and we must think about future food provision within the city. This would be an ideal opportunity to state all pieces of land are kept for food growing. Shiona is going on behalf of Montpelier Park group and joining her would be a great opportunity for others to help establish the Green Spaces team.

Montpelier Park Update

Shiona MacPherson: shiona_macp@hotmail.com

Most excellently, Montpelier Park has been accepted as a candidate for funding from the Community Cashback scheme, so we need lots of votes from us all and our friends to keep up the pressure!

Please vote at: <http://cashback.cjsonline.gov.uk/cc.asp?area=1&mode=vote>

And pass it on!

Montpelier Park is a community resource, and apart from the children's play area, is currently in a state of neglect with considerable drug and sex litter problems. We want to encourage more people to use the Park, so it feels safer. We believe the best way to do this is to improve the visibility of all areas, and provide activities for a wide variety of people.

Local residents have driven the project, and strive to ensure all have a voice in its outcome. Following an extensive consultation, a Community Proposal was drafted in August 2008 incorporating questionnaire results, creative discussions and strategic principles. This was submitted to the Council in September 2008.

In February 2009, Bristol City Council agreed to initiate a formal project, and allocated an initial £47k from housing development funds. A Parks Department public consultation on three alternative designs is underway, and a final consultation is due in September. Work is due to start in March

2010, and we are currently investigating further funding opportunities to ensure the best possible design can be delivered.

Thank you to everyone who completed feedback forms on the Council's three alternative designs for Montpelier Park; over 80 have been received so far, and the Parks Department have been very impressed with our community's level of enthusiasm. Dan and Richard very kindly organised a display of Park plans in the Montpelier Health Centre; hopefully this has helped develop links between the Transition Montpelier group and this important community resource.

The final consultation phase on Montpelier Park will start at the Montpelier Bean Feast on 12 September, where the final draft design will be unveiled and project managers and landscape designers from the Parks Department will be available to discuss their ideas and our responses to them. That consultation is likely to close in early October, when any amendments can be made and planning permission applications can hopefully start.

Green spaces group

Building on conversations at the last TM meeting, a Green Spaces group has been proposed to look at/after all Parks and green corners in Montpelier. This could include both managing the redevelopment of Montpelier Park, pressurising the council to improve Albany Green, and identifying smaller patches of green space in the area that could be (re)claimed with suitable planting. As a longer-term goal, perhaps we could pressurise the council to purchase more land to be converted to green space, as the current greenspace:people ratio for the area is very low. Rather than more blocks of soulless one-bed flats, couldn't we have community gardens and orchards? If you are interested in these ideas, or have others in the same vein, it would be great to get together at the next Transition Montpelier meeting.

Film club action:

Bronwen Morgan: bron@cal.berkeley.edu

A break-out group for 'The Age of Stupid: a Film Club and Beyond?' was held at the most recent Transition Montpelier. Inspired by the 100+ attendance at a showing of Franny Armstrong's documentary 'The Age of Stupid' by Sustainable Bishopston recently, we discussed the idea of showing this film multiple times in the Montpelier/St Paul's area during the autumn. The idea would be for the film to act as a catalyst for discussions of climate change and peak oil issues right across the community – noting that sometimes the Transition meetings tend to attract a relatively homogenous group of people that contrasts with the diversity of the neighbourhood we live in.

The discussion had three dimensions. First, we discussed targeting a really wide range of different audiences, working with different local groups to reach them, and showing the film in different spaces at a wide range of times and day and night, always with a slot for discussion at the end.

Secondly, the film tends to generate both anxiety and energy on the part of people who watch it, so we talked about ways to provide information and channels for that energy so the experience leaves people feeling positive and linked up with channels for 'what to do next'.

Finally, we talked about what might flow from this in the future – some suggested more films, another suggestion was to explore the possibility of people in our communities making their own mini-films as a response to the issue. This would be especially valuable if the documentary turns out to alienate or sideline some of the different audiences who see it, and there might be possibilities here to link up with the work on the Bristol Ecoshow that Transition Bristol is supporting city-wide (<http://www.transitionbristol.net/2009/07/17/latest-new-on-bristol-ecoshow/>).

Anyone interested in brainstorming venues and link groups, giving contacts, helping to contact groups, lending resources (see <https://indiescreenings.net.s3.amazonaws.com/howto.pdf>) or getting involved in any way at all, please contact Bronwen Morgan (bron@cal.berkeley.edu).

Home Improvement workshops

Simon Lewis: ask@nakedgreenbuilders.com

Simon will run a series of workshops at The Workshop, 14 Richmond Road over the coming months at which people can build skills and knowledge required to improve and understand the performance of their home. The workshops will be approximately 2 hour and be can be tailored to those attending. A risk assessment will be undertaken and a disclaimer will need to be signed.

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Workshop 0 - Wednesday 29th July 2009, 7pm

Aspirations for workshop

How to use...

How to fit...

Building principles...

How to fit...

- please bring a mug... for tea
- practical skills... time on tools
- engaging a contractor...

How to use...

- tool box... workshop rotation

- open toed sandals... health and safety
- risk assessment and disclaimer...

Building principles...

- reuse, reduce, refuse, recycle
- turn it off, turn it down, maintenance and improvement
- sweeping out the corners of the monastery

Workshop 1 - Saturday, 1st August 2009, 10am

Draught proofing

How to use...

- hammer & nails
- screwdriver & screws
- cross cut & mitre saws.

How to fit...

- vinyl draught strip
- letter box and door brush
- expanding foam filler

Building principles...

- air infiltration
- thermal stratification
- cross ventilation

Workshop 2 - Wednesday, 12th August 2009, 7pm

Insulation

How to use...

- hammer & nails
- screwguns & drills

- ripping saw & jigsaw

How to fit...

- loft insulation, floor insulation and wall insulation
- pipe and cylinder lagging

Building principles...

- convection, conduction, radiation and condensation
- thermal mass & u-values
- vapor control

Workshop 3 - Saturday, 15th August, 2009, 10am

Water

How to use...

- wrench
- grips
- seat cutter

How to fit...

- drop valve toilet & retro fit low flush syphon toilet
- change a tap washer
- fit a water butt

Building principles...

- Stop taps and service valves
- Potable, rain, grey and black water
- compost and the carbon cycle

Workshop 4 Wednesday, 26th August, 2009, 7pm

User Control

How to use...

- inferred thermometer
- humidity meter

- common sense

How to fit...

- thermostatic valves
- locating and destroying filament light bulbs
- stand by, washing machines & fridges

Building principles...

- energy
- temperature differential
- turn it off. turn it down, maintenance and improvement

Workshop 5 Wednesday, 2nd September, 2009, 10am

Natural materials - Lime

How to use...

- Sourcing
- mixing and applying...
- Painting...

How to fit...

- lime mortar & lime render
- lime wash
- hemcrete

Building science principles...

- breathability
- hygroscopic
- ventilation

Workshop 6, Saturday 5th September

Greenroofs

How to use...

- neighbours

- planning permission

- building control

How to fit...

- epdm rubber membrane to FLL greenroofing standards

- extensive & intensive planting

- rainwater harvesting

Building science principles...

- reducing rain water

- biodiversity & food

- evapotranspiration & the urban heat island