

Transition City Lancaster

Reflections on progress 2008 - 2010 created by AGM 2010

The Transition members at the AGM characterised the first 18 months of Transition City Lancaster as a time of growing and intense activity over a broad range of areas. There were many, many highlights for transition members but they fall into some clear themes:

- Overall it is clear TCL members spent a lot of time in talks, films, café events and training sessions, getting to know about transition in a broad way and learning more about both local and national/international responses to the challenges of Peak Oil and climate change. Despite the difficult nature of what we were finding out, many of us (over 40%) rated these as the highlights of the year
- Active outdoor and practical events engaged others who found walks, visits and making of preserves as well as the activities of Fruity Corners had been the things they most remembered
- The launch figured in about 20% of responses as something really memorable and for some, inspirational
- Campaigning and canvassing work, whilst being less prominent amongst the activities (unless you count the launch?) was a clear highlight for some, covering the market stalls and stalls/talks at Lancaster University, Lancaster+Morecambe College, and at schools
- Contact with the wider Transition movement through the launch speakers, Rob's visit, Shaun Chamberlain, Steph ?? also provided some of the main highlights of the year, impressing on us all just how much we were part of a world wide movement

The nature of TCL, the way it is organised into groups, the opportunities to meet others and make friends and a sense of developing within a supportive community was also pinpointed as a highlight. Which is quite a tribute to all of us!

Community links was not mentioned as a highlight but a close look at the events people enjoyed shows strong links with venues such as the Storey, the Gregson, the Dukes and St Thomas's as well as the Friends. We have made new friends with the market stallholders, the University Green Shop, Lancaster + Morecambe College, the Interfaith group, the Adult College, the Library, Radio Diversity, gardeners and foragers to name just a few. As a result one or two of the highlights mentioned were not Transition events at all, just wonderful signs that Transition is becoming embedded in the community life of Lancaster.

The range and number of events mentioned as highlights – over 40 in about 20 months, without counting group or network meetings, is testament itself to a huge amount of hard work by a dedicated core of people, many of whom also served on the Steering Group. Over time the

number of people involved has widened which is heartening when we look at the things TCL people are keen to do next year

Projections 2011 and beyond

The suggestions for how Transition should progress were whole heartedly outward looking, reflecting a strong desire to get many, many more local people understanding what we are doing, involved and contributing to the way we develop.

They fell into a number of clear areas, reflecting current concerns as well as those already covered by our groups. The suggestions are summarised below but really deserve to be read and considered in detail as an indication of the confidence TCL members feel about our place in the Lancaster community and our influence on its future.

Enterprise and community economy: more social enterprise, business network, local currency, community wood supply
arts/media storybook, regular newspaper, drama, news column
future of Lancaster – baseline on local situation created, city council has transition policies, huge community engagement,
wider and more inclusive membership – start health group, transition streets or hubs, mini Lancaster Transitions groups, family involvement, transition kids, wider socio-economic group involved
education – education road show for schools/community groups, create transition school, school groups, Saturday morning skill share, supported self study groups, news column on 100 mile meals, volunteer skill share in schools
travel – car club, 20 mile limit, meet with road hauliers, cycle opportunities, electric bicycles for hire, 555 Sunday bus reinstated, bypass cancelled
energy – mass renewables, locally owned energy/wind company, major conference, sustainable building project, community heating, “greener” offices info
food – university allotment site, bigger food fortnight, 50% local food eaten by transitioners

Finally there were a couple of suggestions to be taken on by everyone in TCL – give support where it is needed and let’s have another big event/conference like the Launch. 2011 will be an exciting year!

Caroline Jackson from AGM notes Nov 2010