

Community Skills for Climate Change

Transition Chesterfield

°Climate east
midlands



Background to the Community

Transition is an international movement aiming to empower local communities to work towards reducing dependence on oil and implementing climate change mitigation through local groups developing their own initiatives.

Transition Chesterfield (TC) was started in 2008 by a few people who were very concerned about the looming problems arising from 'peak oil' and climate change. The group has now grown to incorporate over 500 people wanting to provide a community response to these problems, creating a network and support for a solutions-based approach.

Their previous activities have included events aimed at passing on knowledge and raising awareness, bringing the community together, with skill-share workshops and resources to mitigate the problems

being faced. Activities have included film screenings, harvest swaps, 'swishes' (swapping clothes and other items), potato days and eco-homes open days, to name but a few. As part of this project TC have facilitated cycle awareness by maintaining the community's bikes with a view to promoting sustainable transport.

The group is continually growing and learning, and plans to reach even more people to try to have more of a positive influence in future.

Project Aims

TC's Fossil Fuel to Pedal Power (FFtPP) aimed to provide cycle training and pedal-powered solutions for Chesterfieldians to reduce fossil fuel use and tackle local and global CO₂ emissions, as well as encouraging healthy living and practical, sustainable transport.

Skills acquired from cycle mechanic training were to be cascaded to the public through cycle mechanic workshops, run alongside Bikeability

Project Fossil Fuel to Pedal Power

Grant
£7653

(road training) sessions, while bike building training was to be undertaken to enable some members of the group to learn the skills to construct cargo bikes. The group also wanted to create a mobile pedal-powered demonstration unit that could be used in events around the area to promote and advocate cycling to the people of Chesterfield as a climate-friendly form of transport that is both enjoyable and works.

All of these facets of the project aimed to break down barriers that restrict the use of pedal power for personal transport and local cargo movements.



www.climate-em.org.uk/projects/community-skills

Community Skills for Climate Change

Transition Chesterfield

Achievements

- TC now have 3 fully qualified bike mechanics.
- 60 people attended 3-hour bike mechanics workshops.
- 48 Bikeability cycle training places filled.
- 7 town events have been attended where cycling has been promoted, through information and demonstration. All of these events have included a free Dr. Bike service – offering people bike checks with adjustments and repairs.
- 6 people have taken part in a load carrying (cargo) bike building project, involving further professional training in brazing, welding and workshop skills. The result? A completed cargo bike and another one on its way, and the skills and know-how to build more!
- 2 bikes have been re-homed through the project – finding new owners.

As well as building a bike, TC have been building an exceptionally strong team to go with it.

The above has encouraged people to get their old bikes out their shed, get them into working order, and most importantly, start to use them.

Impact on the Wider Community

There has been a lot of interest from the public to the FFtPP project. Demand for the bike mechanic workshops was much greater than was originally expected and what started as 6 weeks of Monday nights was extended by 3 weeks to accommodate an extra 19 people, and even more could have been added.

The group had a lot of support from people to run the project including displaying posters, offering a garage for the cargo bike project, gas cylinders to keep them warm whilst building the cargo bike, finding venues, spreading information, admin and organising,



and help locating all sorts of things required to make the project a success. Many people also put a lot of time into the events that were run throughout the rest of the year.

There has been a lot of local and regional media interest, with articles in papers and other publications (including the Derbyshire Times and S40 Local), with interviews broadcast through local and regional radio stations (Peak FM and Radio Sheffield) supporting the work promoting cycling that TC have been doing.

Overall, this project has offered the people of Chesterfield a source of information, hopefully inspiration, and the demonstration of practical ways to use pedal power for providing fun transport solutions.

There have been so many benefits they cannot all be listed here, but some examples are ...

A lady hadn't ridden her bike for 40 years and due to this project has got back in the saddle. A gentleman who thought he could not ride due to a disability had a go on a different kind of bike that TC showed him at an event, and he was off, riding around! One of the biggest achievements of the whole project has been that TC has shown that cycling is fun!



Community Skills for Climate Change

Transition Chesterfield

Challenges Faced / Lessons Learned

The administration of the project took a considerable amount of time and dedication on a volunteer basis from all members of the group and it has been their passion and enthusiasm for the project which has ensured its success. All involved say that it has been thoroughly worthwhile.

Organising the Bikeability training proved to be one of the main challenges, both in terms of logistics and communicating with potential participants. Some people originally expressed interest at events then failed to reply to a number of emails. Arranging for a group, such as the Guides or a home-education group, a family or like minded friends proved much more successful. Relying on emails alone seemed to offer limited success in planning.

The project really got off the ground just as it was approaching the winter months, which as any cyclist would know, is not the best time for promoting this form of transport! This created a lull in people wanting to attend the Bikeability training.

In the Future

A lot of people have had their appetite whetted for pedal power in Chesterfield which has an expanding cycle network. The Chesterfield Cycle Campaign has been working very hard to help extend this in conjunction with the local and district councils. The number of people having cycle related skills and interest in pedal power is on the rise thanks to this



project. More people can be seen riding around on interesting and practical pedal-powered transport solutions, whilst having fun, inspiring others, staying healthier, and, most importantly, reducing their carbon footprint.

A lot of time was spent looking at how a new social enterprise might come out of the project. A clear path has not yet been found, but may yet arise if further assistance becomes available. The main difficulty seems to be affording a unit to house the project. With such space, TC would then be able to offer not only a community bike workshop but also add other elements, such as bike recycling which would involve diverting unwanted bikes from the tip and

putting them back into use as either whole bikes or using them for parts. The group is continuously on the lookout for opportunities! And ... whatever happens, TC will continue its work on mitigating climate change and cycling will continue to be a major part of their future activities.



Community Skills for Climate Change Transition Chesterfield

°Climate east
midlands



Contact Information

Project Leader

Andy Holdaway

E: adholdaway@yahoo.co.uk

T: 01246 210704

To contact Transition Chesterfield

E: hello@transitionchesterfield.org.uk

Useful Web Addresses

Transition Chestefield

www.transitionchesterfield.org.uk

Transition Network

www.transitionnetwork.org

Chesterfield Cycle Campaign

www.chesterfieldcc.org.uk

Wheely Fun Wheels

www.wheelyfunwheels.co.uk

Climate East Midlands

www.climate-em.org.uk

Groundwork East Midlands

www.eastmidlands.groundwork.org.uk

Planning for Climate Change

www.planningforclimatechange.org.uk

www.climate-em.org.uk/projects/community-skills