

Community Investment Grant Scheme 2017- 2020

Funding Report

Organisation:	Transition Stroud
Date of reporting period:	1 st October 2018 to 31 st March 2019
Name of contact:	Erik Wilkinson

Please explain what you have spent the grant money on



1.INTRODUCTION

Over the last six months (1st October 2018 – 31st March 2019) SDC grant funding has contributed to the funding and support of new initiatives and current Action Group work. This has been done in a number of ways – paying for venues to meet; meeting insurance costs; publicity leaflets; funding the purchase of stock for our annual potato day; paying for travel expenses to key meetings; paying for halls for film shows and short term contract work on the website and newsletter. Wherever possible the SDC grant funding has been used to underpin costs and money is returned to Transition Stroud through donations from the public to see our films; asking for contributions to room costs or charging for what we can sell - tickets; potatoes or our SOS cook book..

All these activities contribute to Transition Stroud's (TS) purpose of – *"Inspiring Action for a Sustainable Future"*. TS continues to be the organisation that local people join to set up a community sustainability initiative -and never before has this been more relevant and needed.

The Context

Stroud Carbon Neutral 2030

Transition Stroud welcomes Stroud District Council's pledge to "do everything within the Council's power to make Stroud District Carbon Neutral by 2030", including the commitment to set out a Plan of Action for reaching carbon neutrality across the district by 2030, and for adaptation to try to deal with the impacts.

Like the Council, we believe that the 2030 target will only be achieved by working in partnership across community, public and business spheres.

To help set this in motion, we have submitted a number of early contributions to the Council, including:

- A paper on scoping and delivery of a Carbon Neutral 2030 Plan of Action
- A proposal for a for a 'stakeholder mobilisation' workshop
- A note on potential partnership arrangements
- Comments on the SDC Local Plan Emerging Strategy

We look forward to seeing the Council's road map of early steps and contributing further.

We are also organising a 'SkillsGain' workshop to support and help local residents wishing to start a local climate action group, and have produced a briefing on resources and good practice.

Finally, we have started to work on a new Transition Stroud strategy, which will focus on contributing to achieving the vision that "by 2030 Stroud district will be carbon neutral and local communities will be resilient".

2. NEW INITIATIVES - these are funded through our Facilitation Fund to which the Community Investment Grant (CIG) makes an important contribution. CIG funding has contributed over the last six months to the:

- Production of the "7 Days to Change the Planet" film to help engage young people in sustainable lifestyles. This 12-minute film highlights 7 ways ("7 Days") in which people and organisations in the Stroud Valleys are making a positive difference. The film's purpose is to motivate youth engagement with Transition Stroud and promote sustainable lifestyle choices. The film <https://youtu.be/HFJv4UvthCM> is designed in such a manner that each of the 7 Days can form the starting point for its own local social-media-based campaign.
- Subsidising the purchase by young people of stainless steel water bottles to replace single use plastic bottles TS Stroud Valleys Action on Plastic (SVAP) signed up to the national Refill scheme and engaged more than 40 retailers and civic organisations who are now displaying the catchy blue Refill Stroud logo in their windows. Under this scheme, the public is invited to fill up with tap water for free. The free national Refill app for Smartphones shows participating businesses on an interactive map. In order to increase awareness of the scheme, SVAP purchased 200 stainless steel water bottles with the Refill Stroud name and the national Refill Logo, plus the sponsors' names. A number of these were funded by TS and sold at a subsidised price to young people.
- Developing sustainability resources for parents. The "Little Green Feet" project seeks to engage young children in fun activities that start to build their awareness of the importance of sustainability, whilst providing parents with practical carbon reduction ideas to build into their everyday lives.

In addition funding helped start up of the new TS Culture Shift Action Group

The vision for Culture Shift is to bring together environmentally aware creators and performers in the Stroud area with the following intentions:

- To use creativity to engage with people who might not otherwise take an interest in climate change and sustainability.
- To inspire people to feel able to make a difference, to encourage engagement and optimism, to uplift and enable.
- To use creativity to increase resilience, overcome loneliness and foster a sense of community.
- To create alternative narratives to growth and consumption and present them in an accessible way.
- To empower people through creativity and creative engagement, to help people develop skills that will also serve for active engagement in issues around climate change e.g. public speaking, and increased confidence about raising climate change issues.
- To raise awareness of Transition Stroud and attract new members to the local transition movement.
- To create new work for these purposes and to support each other in promoting relevant events and performances.

In addition funding helped start the TS Lift Share Group

The aim of the Lift share project is to:

- Decrease the congestion in and around Stroud.
- Decrease levels of air pollution.
- Raise awareness of both of these issues in relation to excessive car use.
- Make it easier for people to connect to consolidate journeys.
- Help create a more cohesive community through carsharing.

This is achieved through a Facebook page where lifts can be requested and offered. The aim is to also bring people together at an event - and TS will support and fund this.

3. CURRENT INITIATIVES- the Community Investment Grant (CIG) makes an important contribution to providing underpinning support to TS action groups : CIG funding has over the last six months:

Helped support and fund the TS Community Energy Action Group.

The work of the action group has evolved and expanded over the last six months to include actions intended to contribute to the achievement of the SCN2030 commitment, and supporting new local community 'carbon neutral' groups in Horsley and Randwick. These activities are in addition to the original 'identify-encourage-enable' (I-E-E) approach to project development.

More specifically, the CEAG has:

- Developed a Memorandum of Understanding setting out the complementary activities that would be expected of the action group and Gloucestershire Community Energy Cooperative (GCEC) when working together to develop community-owned renewable energy projects in the Stroud District. The MoU has been signed by Transition Stroud and GCEC.
- Submitted a note to the Lido working group on inclusion of an assessment of cost-effective heating options in business plan development.
- Submitted a note and participated in a site visit about the potential eco-refurbishment of St Laurence Church.
- Contributed to thinking and discussion of potential local carbon projects in Horsely and Randwick Carbon Neutral groups.
- Started working on actions arising from a discussion of a paper on 'How to help unlock the flow of low carbon projects across the district?' The group is focusing on four main topics - neighbourhood planning, building public support, developing viable community energy business models, and identifying potential sites and projects.
- Continued to build knowledge and capacity within the group, for example, through attending REGEN workshops on community energy and organising case study visits.

Notes on agreed actions and discussion papers about the action group's role are available on the TS website at <https://www.transitionstroud.org/action-group-on-community-energy/>.

Fred Barker - Group Coordinator.

Helped support and fund the TS Textile Group. The group has been meeting at least monthly and some months fortnightly to mend clothes and learn new skills from each other such as making Christmas decorations, preparing for the Trashion Show, restyling/upcycling and swapping clothes. A textile group trip to see beautiful embroidery work at Ruskin Mill took place in November 2018 and a further one to London V & A in January 2019 for an interesting Fashioned from Nature exhibition, which included material made from mycelium, citrus peel, pineapple waste, yeast and sugar, also work by various companies to use less water and chemicals in fabric construction. We learnt about the Guppyfriend wash bag which we subsequently bought and showed to the group. It collects microfibres from clothing and prevents it entering the watercourse. The Trashion Show took place on 9th March 2019 where an audience of 45 saw garments made from rubbish and clothes that had been mended and upcycled modelled by members of the group. Many items of clothing have been saved from landfill.

Clare Sheridan - Group Coordinator.

Helped support and fund the TS Your Health Your Planet Action Group. The “Your Health; Your Planet” action group aim is to develop a community who are empowered to take actions that improve their own health, contribute to the resilience of their community and the sustainability of the planet. Over the last six months we have run two events:

1. “The Power of Local” accessing our community resources - 30th October 2018. This included:
 - a 10 minute video from Local Futures around Globalisation and Local Economies.
 - 3 Local Health Speakers came to share their knowledge and passion; Action for Happiness, Down to Earth Community Gardening and Projects in Stroud and Richard Lupo Environmental Wellbeing Consultant.
 - Discussion around information from speakers and what action we can take with this new information.
2. Personal and Planetary Wellness - . 26th February 2019. A talk and Q&A with Judy Barber, local plant-based nutrition expert which explored what’s motivating dietary change and what hope it offers for Earth’s increasingly fragile ecosystem.

Other action from YHYP:

YHYP Facebook page is being used as a platform for individuals to post and promote their local events and information around health.

Resources are now being uploaded onto TS website under YHYP tab, for people to view and access after the YHYP events. All with the purpose of raising awareness of climate change, finding life purpose and using visual aid to support wellbeing!

Beth Richardson - Group Coordinator

Helped support and fund TS Stroud Valleys Action on Plastic.

- We continued monthly SVAP meetings with live facebook feed of parts of the meeting.
- In October we went on a litter pick in central Stroud along parts of the canal and wooded park land with a group of 20 residents. We sorted some 15 bags of rubbish into recycling and non-recycling and took them to the tip. More litter picking sessions are planned.
- We held a pilot session in November sewing shopping bags from recycled fabric. The bags will be made available for free at the entrance to local supermarkets to encourage people that don’t usually use fabric bags to switch from plastic. Several supermarkets have already given permission for a bin to be placed near the entrance, including Sainsbury’s and the Cainscross Co-op. The group will also be a befriending group once we start meeting on a regular basis and we will encourage people who are isolated or lonely or who suffer from mental health issues to come and join us.
- We helped Stroud Book Festival to publish a pledge to go single-use plastic free for the November 2018 festival.
- We talked to pupils at assembly at Thomas Keble School about plastic and how to avoid it.
- We were invited to give a talk to Rodborough Scouts about plastic and how to avoid it.
- In December we visited a local recycling firm (BPI) together with three Stroud District Councillors in order to forge relationships, discover if we can work together on local recycling and to find out what action was taken following a plastic pellet spill in to the river Frome some months ago.
- We took part in another ‘Shoppers Revolt’ action at several local supermarkets together with Stroud Greenpeace in order to highlight the plastic packaging problem and urge supermarkets to take action.
- We continued to sign up local businesses to join us for the plastic-free community accreditation (Surfers Against Sewage), including Slimbridge Wetland Centre and Snowbusiness. We met with Renishaw who have expressed a keen interest.
- Our #RefillStroud stainless steel water bottles are on offer in 2 village shops and we have donated 50 bottles to people who volunteer for Stroud Valleys Project and who would otherwise not be able to afford an item like this.
- In February we organised a talk by Tricia Watson, Waste Manager at Veolia and Simon

Pickering, Chair of the Environment Committee at Stroud District Council to speak about polymers, what can and cannot be recycled, local recycling & food collection schemes.

Claudi Williams -SVAP group coordinator

Helped support and fund the Stroud Annual Potato Day (in partnership with Down to Earth

Stroud Potato Day was held on Saturday 2nd February - for the first time at Stroud Farmers Market. The emphasis of Potato Day is on community and growing locally - with spuds sold as single tubers to encourage children and first time growers.

We had 27 varieties of potatoes and sold virtually all - the left overs going to Stroud Valley Project shop. At 20p per tuber (£2.00 for 11 tubers) we covered our costs of £337.50 and made a good profit: £428.75. £200.00 went to Transition Stroud. £200.00 went to Down to Earth for on-going costs of the organisation.

It is hoped to build on the popularity of this February event and develop the community growing and seed saving message for local sustainability and resilience.

Jane Brown – Potato Day coordinator

Helped support and fund TS Edible Stroud.

Edible Stroud volunteers are still working on the bay area next to platform 1 at Stroud Station. With thanks to grants from Transition Stroud, Crossfield Institute and GWR we have built 3 large raised beds. We've filled them with soil from the Bisley Community Composting Scheme. We have also planted out donated plants in beds one and two and will now be getting soil for bed three – it takes about eight car loads of soil to fill a bed. Then we will be looking for more plants such as soft fruits (not raspberries), herbs, flowers and vegetables. Whatever is good for wildlife, good for people and looks attractive.

We continue to maintain our other Edible Stroud sites at the maternity hospital, The Lake at the Lawn and our Edible Forest Garden at Stratford Court Playing Fields where we have planted fruit and nut trees, soft fruits, herbs and flowers.

Josie Cowgill – Group Coordinator



Helped support and fund the TS Repair Cafes

Over the last six months we have run:

2 repair cafés in Nailsworth.

5 pop up repair cafes at Atelier in Stroud

Nailsworth repair cafe celebrates its 5th birthday in April 2019.

Nailsworth RC averages 24 items per session with 82% successful repairs. We achieve a much higher

repair rate than the average of 50% because we have some very good experts in electronic diagnosis and repair.

The pop up events at Atelier in Stroud are focused on particular type of repair. Despite this, it's often the case that people will turn up with an unexpected repair that hasn't been booked in. We seem to cope with that well, keeping tools for most eventualities. The Atelier setting is more socially interactive, less heads down and intensive than Nailsworth - which is usually very busy.

Both events operate on a donations basis - these are split between TS (for insurance costs), the community workshop (effectively rent) and publicity, tools and materials.

We have a pool of 16 repairers to draw on. Repeated appeals for more repairers, but very little response. Very keen core group who turn up to every event.

We've expanded into doing leatherwork repairs and have built up tools and supplies accordingly.

We do need to train at least one repairer to be qualified to use PAT test equipment as we've lost Jeff from the Nailsworth group.

Advertising is via various Facebook groups, through posters and flyers in Stroud and Nailsworth, local print newsletters and Radio Gloucestershire.

Paul Hofman coordinator

Helped support and fund TS Eco Open Homes

On the 3rd and 10th November 2018 Transition Stroud ran its regular Eco Open Homes event. This is where home owners open up their homes to inform others of the benefits and costs of investing in a range of low energy/sustainability initiatives such as external insulation; triple glazing; floor insulation; solar thermal; internal insulation; pellet boilers – and more! This time it was spread over two days over two weekends with an optional cycle tour around the homes. The leaflet gave a detailed understanding of what is 'good' and what people should be looking for in improvements as well as listing examples. Organiser Tim Martel gave an introduction on both days explaining the approach of how to go about improving your home, what to look for, and how to avoid moisture risks. Probably the most visited property was a Passivhaus new build in Whiteshill.

Organised by Tim Martel, Architectural Technologist and Passivhaus Designer.

Helped support and fund the "Footpaths programme".

This is a programme of six integrated workshops on food, waste and transport and energy so that a group of individuals can reduce their and their family's carbon footprint. A group of eight individuals completed the modules.

Yvonne Dignon coordinator

4. CIG - HELPING FUND KEY ELEMENTS OF TRANSITION STROUD'S WIDER ENGAGEMENT

TS film evenings:

Transition Stroud has begun to show a new format, more focussed style of film evenings based on video clips rather than films. This allows us to select from a plentiful and much wider range of video clips online and allows us to make shows that can be focussed and relevant. It also avoids quite an expensive licence needed to show commercial films.

In November we showed "Climate Change Films with Impact", which introduced a series of generally uplifting, thought provoking videos, occasionally in a humorous way. There were clips from NASA, Andy Burnham's Mayoral Summit in Manchester, Kevin Anderson of the Tyndall Centre and Al Gore. There were also some slides showing what people can do themselves.

In February we had another film on "Climate Emergency" supporting the District Councils vote to become Carbon Neutral. Clips from Attenborough and Thunberg had been in the national media recently. One of the key points was a quote from David Attenborough, "If people really understood what is at stake..." which was followed up with a 10 min explanation of all the areas of impact. The show introduced what government can do, what the District Council can do and what individuals can do, giving examples of government policy and individual mobility. At the end TS Director Fred Barker introduced ongoing work with the District Council and further discussion groups and we were very fortunate that Simon Pickering (Chair of the Environment Committee) was there to give his thoughts and ideas as well.

TS Newsletter

Most of Transition Stroud's work is carried out volunteers within action groups or at TS Director level. There are ten TS Directors with two of whom are paid for freelance work - on our newsletter and social media. Our newsletter is now published monthly rather than bimonthly and there are now agreed aims:

The purpose of the TS newsletter is to engage with the readership in a conversational and participatory way – so that readers feel interested and positive about the articles within it and the social opportunities offered by the editor to meet up. The underlying aim is to mobilise the TS newsletter network to take action such as joining an action group; campaigning or changing their behaviour. On this basis the newsletter seeks to increase the number of people who receive, open and respond to the newsletter articles and the social opportunities offered

To that end the style of the newsletter has evolved; there have been social events offered to readers (we met in the Ale House at the end of December) and new features have included occasional articles on the history of Transition Stroud and new ideas for sustainability

TS Stroud Community TV (SCTV).

SCTV builds communities in Stroud's locality by encouraging, curating and sharing short films that are either made in the Stroud Valleys, about the Valleys, by people living in the Valleys, or on issues impacting local life.

During this period, SCTV has developed and held "This Is Stroud" as part of the Stroud Film Festival (Lansdown Hall, 22 March). This was a celebration of the Stroud Valleys communities in film, and involved the instigation, encouragement and finding of 25 short films from overwhelmingly local, often young film-makers. We showed films developed by organisations as diverse as Rush Skatepark, Stroud Foodbank, Gloucestershire Young Carers, Access Gloucester, Boss Morris and Meningitis Now.

SCTV has produced the Transition Stroud film, 7 Days to Save the Planet, in conjunction with young, local film-maker, Sam Judd. This involved participation from, amongst others, Star Anise, Forest Green Rovers, and Duffle Vintage.

SCTV has provided opportunities for events and film-making experience to a number of local young film-makers, photographers and musicians. We have established a link with Stroud College to build on this.

We have continued to share films with the communities of the Valleys. We have now shared upwards of 3600. A large proportion of these have direct relevance to TS's aims in sustainability and community building, and all of them provide opportunities for local film-makers to add to the sense of identity and place of the Valleys, to build their skills, and to add to the Valleys' unfolding future.

Our website renewal continues, and we have further film projects in planned.

Dmytro Bojaniwskyj, Director SCTV

TS Social Media profile

Similarly with our Social Media presence. The TS Director responsible has developed a framework for regularly updating the website; linking readers to key papers that Transition Stroud has published and informing on the ongoing developments regarding Stroud Carbon Neutral 2030.

Workshops on setting up Local “Climate “ Groups

Transition Stroud as part of our contribution to Carbon Neutral Stroud 2030 wants to encourage climate action groups to form within Stroud District. To that end we have developed a workshop that provides information on good practice in setting up climate action groups. It will facilitate discussion about the benefits and challenges of forming groups and seeks to identify how TS and SDC can provide support. In addition we have produced a briefing paper on resources available to new climate action groups.

Please explain how this funding has helped your organisation

As explained above, the CIG funding has been critical to the community actions that TS has encouraged and enabled - and to the profile that it has developed in the community. We would particularly highlight:

- The funding that TS has helped to support new action groups that contribute to our key aim of “inspiring action for a sustainable future”. For example there is currently an embryo Transport Group that has met once and is due to meet again soon. Transition Stroud has been able to support and fund the venue costs and provide support and publicity through the TS newsletter and the support of Transition Stroud Directors.
- The funding that TS has helped to sustain established action groups and develop key networks. For example the TS Community Energy Action group now has a network of key members who have links with GFirst; Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire Community Energy Cooperative. These links and networks will be critical to delivering Stroud Carbon Neutral 2030. Another example would be TS's membership and contribution to the Stroud Town Council Cultural Strategy group – so we can promote sustainable cultural events and bringing in key speakers to Stroud who can address sustainability issues. In addition we have met with the University of Gloucestershire to see how we might work in partnership to access the skills and enthusiasm of their students..
- The funding has helped provide the stability for Transition Stroud to respond positively to Stroud District Council's Climate Emergency Declaration. TS has put forward a number of papers to SDC on partnership models; on how to support the development of new climate action groups. We have engaged with Randwick climate action group and Horsley Energy group.
- The funding has contributed to a sustainable model of funding. Transition Stroud currently receives its main funding from two sources – Stroud District Council and monthly direct debit contributions for a number of supporters. In addition TS seeks whenever possible to raise funds from the public at public meetings and events. This partnership funding model between Stroud District Council and TS supporters has much to recommend it as we jointly move to deliver Stroud Carbon Neutral 2030.
- The improved website which is clear and engaging. This has gone hand in hand with an improved social media profile which has enhanced recognition within the community. Figures as of 8/4/2019 - are up on the September 2018 figures:

Facebook

Total Page Followers : **1003**

Total Page Likes : [1012](#)

Twitter (taken on 8/4/2019)

Tweets: [4978](#)

Following: [952](#)

Followers: [2003](#)

Likes: [753](#)

- Helped provide a prompt and positive response to good ideas and requests for funding
The TS Facilitation Fund provides funding and support for new ideas, groups or individuals who need small amounts of funding.. As outlined above, projects funded from the Facilitation Fund include the “Seven Days to Change the Planet” video; the subsidising of water bottles for young people to reduce single use plastic and the project to develop resources for parents to engage young children in fun activities that start to build their awareness of the importance of sustainability.

SUMMARY

Transition Stroud is making a positive contribution to creating a sustainable, resilient community as is demonstrated in the report above. This will become even more important as Stroud District Council seeks to engage its population in Stroud Carbon Neutral 2030. The current ten volunteer directors have a strong commitment to the work that we do and the group has a range of valuable skills. The SDC Community Investment Grant provides important facilitating funding to allow all our activities to take place. The voluntary Directors of Transition Stroud would like to thank SDC for our continued funding.

Erik Wilkinson Transition Stroud Coordinator

Thanks to Fred Barker and Bryn Brown - and the TS action group leaders who contributed updates on the work of their action groups.