

Transition Town Chichester Annual General Meeting January 20, 2026

Present: Jenny Cole, Jacqueline Garstin, Sue Gilson, Claire Wilton, Cate Matters, Debbie Carter, Tom Broughton, John Leslie, Jan Davies, Colin McKenna, Paula Chatfield, Anna Glanville-Hearson, Jan Sander, Julia Sander, Phi Wells

NOTE: TTC did not hold an AGM In 2025 as the arrangements to become a charity needed to be finalised.

1 Charitable status and closing Company Limited by Guarantee

TTC was awarded charitable status on August 4 and is now a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

Trustees of TTC: Debbie Carter, Jenny Cole, Annabelle Glanville Hearson, Colin McKenna, Cate Matters, Julia Sander, Phil Wells

A new governing document has been agreed and will be uploaded onto the website. It has taken some time to finalise the new financial arrangements, but a new Charity Account was opened with the Cooperative Bank in November, and the Company Limited by Guarantee was closed in December.

Issues raised

- A question was asked about membership of TTC. Our governing document states that a membership scheme is optional, but can be created if it were thought to be beneficial to the organisation. The difficulty lies in the fact that TTC's activities are open to the general public with no need to sign up to a membership scheme. This point needs further discussion and will be reviewed at a future date.
- The input of non-trustees to the organisation was also raised. To be inclusive it was felt that everyone involved in TTC activities should feel part of the decision-making process. Trustee meetings should be held quarterly and open to all to attend. Dates should be publicised on the website calendar
- The question of how to get TTC better known was raised. We have headed some high-profile events and activities in Chichester over the years, but few residents seem to know about us. We need to have a clear idea of our purpose so that we can explain it to others. Our core focus should be on local issues where we can make an impact and get people involved, rather than national/ international issues. Each group or project should develop a 'narrative' so that its purpose is clearly understood. A working group should be set up to look at this issue.

2 Financial report

The major source of our TTC's income is grant funding. We made a number of successful applications in 2024 as follows:

- National Lottery Community Fund: £19,000
- Sussex Community Foundation: £5,000
- Share Prosperity Fund: £1800
- National Garden Scheme: £1500

We have used these grants for expenses and have just over £10,000 left. This is enough to cover expenses for most of 2026, but we need to start actively fund-raising now. Now that we are a charity, a far greater number of funders will consider us.

A grant of £1500 from the City Council was received by the C3G group (Climate Change Group) to cover expenses at the Adaptation to the Climate event in November 2024.

We receive around £600 annually through the *Local Giving* scheme (regular donations from individuals). Some revenue is raised from donations at event and sales of produce. The Community Hub receives sufficient money in donations for refreshments to cover room hire and to make a small surplus.

Expenditure

Administrative costs such as accounting and insurance amount to around £2000 annually. Other major expenses are payments to contractors managing community gardens and communications and venue hire for various events.

3 Reports from projects / activities

Climate Change Group (C3G)

The Climate Change Group held a very successful event in October 2024 on the subject of Adapting to the Climate. Monthly meetings with a guest speaker on climate issues are held in conjunction with the U3A. In November a morning workshop with Tony Whitbread, former CEO of the Sussex Wildlife Trust as main speaker. In future C3G plans to link with other groups both locally and nationally to have a greater impact.

Communications and website

The monthly Newsletter and Shout-Outs were thought to be excellent – thanks were given Comms Officer Cate Matters. The recent system of sending email notifications of activities on the calendar is very useful although not everyone is receiving them. C3G lectures are all on You Tube but get very few viewings, so they need to be publicised.

Action point: Find out how notifications of activities can be received.

Community Hub

This takes place every week on Friday mornings and has proved to be an excellent meeting point for people involved in TTC activities and a good way of attracting new people to the organisation. A variety of activities have been organised: poetry readings, art workshops, film showings and many more. Donations from those attending have been sufficient to cover room hire and refreshments.

Events

In June, the Tree Wardens hosted an event in the Oaklands Park Community Orchard. Despite the wet and windy weather, the event was well attended and useful contacts were made. In November we collaborated with Just Stop Oil to host an evening where Jonathon Porritt presented his latest book, “Love, Anger and Betrayal”. This meeting attracted a wide range of people and interests, and Jonathon’s talk was followed by lively discussion.

Food for Friends

Fortnightly sessions were held throughout 2024 for local refugees to come together and share their cuisine. This scheme was very popular with refugees living in The Park Hotel where they were unable to prepare their own food. However, since then, many of the original refugees have moved on or have settled in the community. Another problem was finding suitable premises where food could be prepared. As new funding would be needed to continue the scheme, it has been decided to close the project for the time being.

Greener Screen

For the third year running, TTC has collaborated with the New Park Cinema to arrange a Greener Screen programme showing environmental films. The films are shown weekly over a six-week period and records show that a total of over 600 people attended the films. The film was accompanied by an exhibition on Fast Fashion in the New Park Cinema bar, which was seen not only by cinema audiences but by the hundreds of people who use the centre each week. The exhibition was also shown at the Graylingwell Chapel. The cinema is keen to hold a Greener Screen event next year.

Grow Chichester

The Community Gardens and Orchard are managed by Ed Bowring, our therapeutic horticulturalist. Three weekly sessions are held, two in Bishops Palace Garden and one in Oaklands Park. Wednesday mornings focus on social inclusion and gardening for health and include volunteers recommended to us by mental health charities and social prescribers. One session involves volunteers from the Chichester Centre at Graylingwell and people living in independent supported living. The Saturday session is open to all, in particular those who are in regular work and cannot attend during the week.

New initiatives this year are monthly sessions for children who are home educated, and sessions for young people recommended by The Young Person's Shop in South Street. We have had a lot of visitors, including Jess Brown Fuller, our local MP and representatives of other groups hoping to set up community gardens or orchards.

Repair Café

Repair Cafe has been held monthly at the Friends Meeting House at the same time as the Community Hub. Sewing, jewellery and crockery repairs have been carried out, but only one electrical repairer has been available, which has been difficult. The project is under review, and it seems likely that Repair Café will in future be held at the Food Bank.

5 Future plans

Planning meeting: There was insufficient time to discuss the questions arising from this meeting, so a planning meeting will be arranged in the near future.

Issues to be discussed:

- How to manage the input of non-trustees in TTC's activities
- Possible membership scheme
- How to tell our story
- Developing current projects and possible new initiatives
- Weekend or early evening meetings which people in work can attend