

# TRANSITION NEATH INAUGURAL EVENT

**Venue:** Tuesday May 5<sup>th</sup> in Neath Town Hall 7pm – 9pm

**Attendees:**

Emma Knight	Neath Transition
Neil Wagstaff	Neath Transition
Andy Jenkins	Neath Transition
Kat Pickett	Resident
Richard Pickett	Resident
Veryan Waltus	Resident
Angharad Griffiths	Resident
Ceri Williams	Resident
Adrian Williams	Resident
Jonathan Tier	Resident
Jude Bailey Murfin	Resident
Jan Jones	Resident
Brian Jones	Resident
Carol Edgley	Resident
Terry Brightwater	Resident
Jay Brightwater	Resident
Bryan Rowe	Resident
Cllr Peter Rees	NPTCBC
CllrSheila Penry	NPTCBC
Cllr John Miller	NPTCBC
Gail Devine	Go Green for Health – Groundwork Caerphilly
Nadia Bogden Kingsman	NPT CVS
Roseanne Hennessey	Keep Wales Tidy
Norma Greene	Cynefin – Merthyr
Kathryn Britton	Cynefin - Neath
Rachel Moses Lloyd	Evening Post

**Apologies:**

Alli Sparkes  
Gareth Brooks  
Chris Davies  
Gemma Nesbitt  
David Edwards

**Objectives:**

To create a Neath Transition action group to steer Neath towards becoming a Transition Town.

The group, consisting of four likeminded people, have held five meetings, attended a conference in Cardiff and visited Vetch Veg in Swansea in order to kick start a Transition group in Neath.

With support from the Cynefin Place Coordinator a venue, refreshments and materials were procured in order to hold an Open Space event to garner interest and attract members to the group.

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## Open Space Event



### Itinerary:

1. Welcomes & Introductions
2. Transition Town Videos
3. Community Conversation
4. Prioritising
5. Break Away into thematic groups
6. Prioritising top 3 Projects
7. Feedback
8. Allocating Volunteer Leaders
9. Closing Remarks
10. Networking

Attendees were invited to sit in a circle, Andy & Kathryn introduced the evening and gave an overview on Neath Transition and Transition Towns; an introductory video was shown.

A community conversation was instigated and the attendees were invited to shout out their ideas for themes and projects for the group. Twelve themes were suggested with a further sixteen sub-themes branching off each theme.

Attendees were given 3 dots and invited to prioritise the themes in order to establish break away groups. The top 6 themes were then allocated a table in order to further discuss each topic. NB: Transport was joint sixth, it was decided that Transport would be prioritised at the next meeting.

### Priority Projects:

1. Education x 9
2. Community Spirit x 8
3. Renewable Energy x 8
4. Local Economy x 8
5. Green Spaces x 7
6. Food Growing x 6
7. Transport x 6

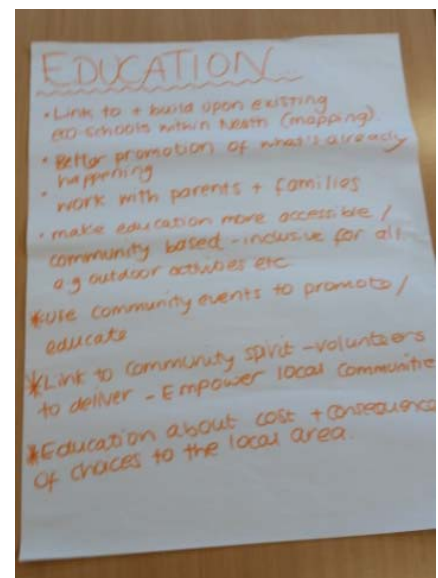
Following a 40 minute debate each table was asked to prioritise 3 action points to take forward and do some research on before the next meeting. If no one took ownership of a theme it was archived.

### Education

1. Community Events/promote/educate – Anne Marie Gillespie
2. Create an environment for volunteering – Kathryn Britton
3. Educate about costs/consequences X

### Community Spirit

1. Newsletter/Contacts/Activities – Jude Bailey Murfin & Emma Knight

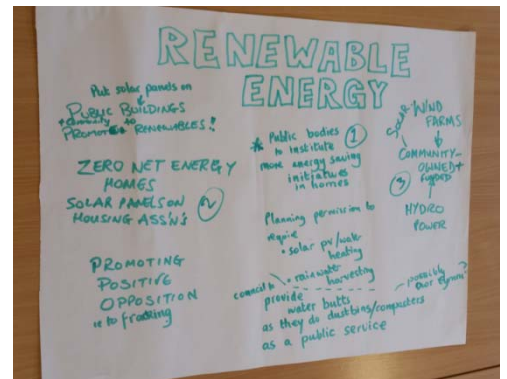


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2. Surrogates – Bryan Rowe
3. Street Network/Twinning – Emma Knight

## Renewable Energy

1. Public bodies encourage more energy saving – Neil Wagstaff
2. **Zero Energy Homes X**
3. Community Owned Energy – Terry Brightwater



## Local Economy

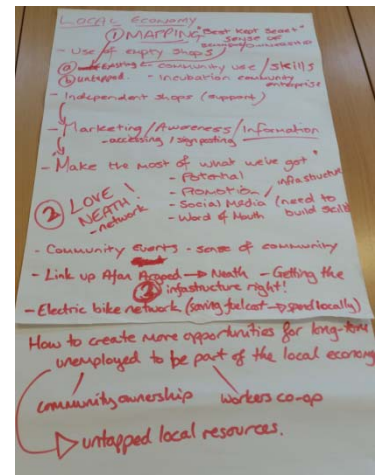
1. Mapping – Existing & Untapped – Andy Jenkins
2. Getting it out there/ Love Neath – Emma Knight, Terry & Jay Brightwater
3. **Build on the Infrastructure X**

## Green Spaces

1. Claiming Back Land – Richard Pickett
2. Community Orchards – Richard Pickett
3. Encouraging Use – Friends of the Gnull! – Adrian Williams

## Food Growing

1. 'How To' Workshops – Kathryn Britton & Roseanne Hennessey
2. Herb Boxes – Emma Knight
3. Using local producers & G.Y.O. Meals – Jonathan Tier, Kat Pickett & Jude Bailey Murfin

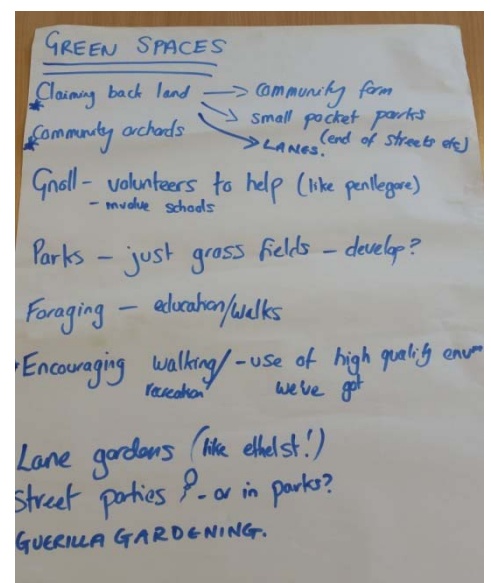


## Key Factors:

There was a lot of negativity leading up to the Open Space Event from some local Councillors who saw it as a 'Green Party Manifesto'. Room hire was refused and some members were ruthlessly scrutinised. It is interesting to note that members consist of cross-party associations and neutrals.

## What Went Well:

The open and inclusive nature that the evening was delivered by a variety of facilitators meant full audience participation. Attendees were keen and readily took ownership of projects, themes and issues.



Support was offered from some partners and officers in attendance with both Communities First and Keep Wales Tidy agreeing to take forward actions.

## What Could Have Gone Better:

- The negativity in the room from the Councillors that attended was almost tangible, with them viewing events as a Council bashing opportunity, which was not the case. Their only agenda on the evening was to deride all suggestions and dismiss any initiatives as being unachievable.

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- What may have been a better option was to ask residents which thematic topic they would be interested in being involved with instead of looking for individuals.

## **Next Steps:**

Regular meetings will be held on the first Tuesday of the month early evenings, commencing on Tuesday June 2<sup>nd</sup> 6.30 venue tba. The first meeting will be an opportunity for attendees to feedback on their action points and forward plan the next steps

## **Comments:**

**Andy Jenkins** - "Good night, well done to all the organisers"

**Emma Knight** - "Excellent team effort, our page likes have more than doubled since yesterday"

**Neil Wagstaff** - "It was great to get home and see all the likes rolling in and getting positive notifications and feedback"

**Roseanne Hennessey** - "It was great to see so many people supporting a great initiative and it looks promising that so many people are supporting this project which has every opportunity of being successful"