



## Transition Belper News – Late October 2011 - Issue no 2

### Welcome

A warm welcome to 35 new subscribers who signed up at the recent Discovery Days events. Please feel free to forward this to any friends who may be interested in what we are doing – using the link at the bottom of this email give your friends the opportunity to subscribe if they wish. The system we use ensures your email address is never visible to anyone else and is quite secure. If you feel Transition Belper is not your bag you can also use the link at the bottom of the page to automatically unsubscribe.

### Supporter survey

We'd like to know more about your interests and what you can contribute to our aims – or indeed whether you just wish to be kept informed – so have devised a simple survey to help us plan meetings and activities around your interests. We invite all subscribers, old or new, to complete our [survey](#)

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### Transition meeting

- **Thursday 3rd November** – Transition Belper meeting from 7.30pm at Strutts, Derby Road, opposite Babington Hospital. There will be a review of the Discovery Days. an overview of the Groundworks Draughtproofing Scheme (see below) and planning for the Christmas Fair on 4th December. The themes are likely to be energy, love food – hate waste and food sourcing

### Energy Group meeting

- **Thursday 10th November** – Belper Cottage Project, opposite the bus station (car parking at the rear) from 7.30pm. The first meeting of the Transition Belper Energy Group where we'll have a look at energy use and carbon emissions in Belper and start to look at how we can have a significant impact in the coming years. We'll also go into more details of the Groundworks

Scheme and outline the proposed Energy Expert Neighbour Scheme. If you're coming along please bring your annual energy use and cost figures – broken down into electricity (kWh), gas (kWh), oil (litres), wood (kg) etc. Alternatively you can complete our [energy survey](#) and we'll feed the figures into the meeting. We are also looking at ways of feeding back to you with an estimated energy rating and tips for improving it.

## Green Drinks

- **Wednesday 16th November** - The Tavern, Derby Road from 7.30 - informal discussions of the hot topics and a chance to share a pint with like-minded people

## Christmas Fair

- **Sunday 4th December** - we'll have a stall in King Street as part of the wider Christmas Fair. More details to be discussed at the meeting on 3rd November. To volunteer please contact [Ian Jackson](#)

## Transition working with Groundworks to help 'off gas' properties

Over the summer months most of us saw our electricity prices go up by around 12% and gas by almost 15% – but spare a thought for those who have no access to mains gas. The average dual fuel bill in Belper is now around £1,333 per year with £765 of this spent on gas cooking, heating and fires. Using other fuels for cooking and heating dramatically increases the cost. On top of spending £568 on lighting and appliances those 'off gas' households will need to spend another £400 plus using their electric cooker and at least £668 on fuel for their heating and hot water system. The average energy bills for these households will be at least £1,688 and could be as much as £2,767.

Of the alternatives for heating and hot water, a wood burner – with a back boiler – is the cheapest but even seasoned wood went up in price by 22% over the summer. There was some good news for those with oil heating as prices fell by around 6% although winter price rises in this sector are common. Smokeless fuel is more expensive than either oil or wood but nothing like as costly as using electricity which, at around 14.5p per kWh, is almost three times as expensive as gas.

Is it any wonder then that households without gas are far more likely to be 'fuel poor' and need to spend more than 10% of their income on energy to adequately heat their homes?

Through Groundworks Derbyshire, Transition Belper have a limited amount of draught-proofing, radiator reflector panels and low energy light bulbs which volunteers will fit free of charge to qualifying 'off gas' houses. Transition's volunteers will be trained for this by Groundworks and can also give energy saving tips and advice as well as pointing the way towards subsidised measures such as loft, cavity and solid wall insulation, replacement boilers and heating controls and renewable energy.

### How you can help

**Volunteer to fit draught-proofing** and radiator panels and give out basic energy saving advice. Full training will be given by Groundworks – either half day or evening. There's enough material for about 20 houses so an estimated 60 hours of work between all the volunteers.

**Volunteer to help identify 'off gas' houses** and help deliver leaflets. This could be through networking with your neighbours, knocking on a few doors to try and identify any streets that don't have gas and then delivering leaflets to any streets identified.

To volunteer please contact [David George](#)

## The Derbyshire Eco Challenge

Looking for a greener lifestyle, and a more sustainable home? Join the Derbyshire Eco Challenge, and start making a difference now with six months of eco saving tips. The ECO Challenge will be focusing on a different topic each month until March 2012, providing tips which will help you reduce your energy bills and carbon emissions, and sharing ideas which are better for the planet, for your local

community and hopefully for your pocket. Sign up to the [Derbyshire Eco Challenge](#) by 31 October to be in with a chance to win an energy monitor worth £85.

## Plant to soak up carbon

Research by Sheffield University as part of a wider project looking at carbon emissions in Leicester has found that carbon captured in the soil is more than 12kg/m<sup>2</sup> in allotments compared with 7 or 8kg/m<sup>2</sup> in pasture and arable land. This means that if a 100m<sup>2</sup> field was turned into allotments Belper's carbon footprint would be reduced by about 5 tonnes.

Above ground, unsurprisingly, trees capture the most carbon – at a rate of around 27kg/m<sup>2</sup>. Shrubs capture 11 to 13 kg/m<sup>2</sup> whilst for plain or herbaceous gardens the figure is less than 2kg/m<sup>2</sup>. So, if every household in Belper planted a fruit tree an extra 270 tonnes of carbon would be captured – and there would be all that delicious fruit to enjoy.

## Discovery Days Winners

The Discovery Days competitions – to estimate the number of houses powered by the hydro turbines on the day were won by **W I Tucker** who correctly estimated 144 at Milford and **Jenny Hollyoake** who was spot on with her estimate of 160 at Belper's East Mill. 59 people entered the competition including 35 who signed up to the mailing list – a big welcome to you all. We do hope you'll find something of interest to you in what we are doing.

The winner of Transition Belper's and the International Polar Foundation's Arctic prize draw competition was Masie Churchill from Belper, who won the cuddly polar bear by correctly answering the question "Many scientists believe the Arctic will be completely free of sea ice in summer by .....?" Her answer being: "By the middle of the century".

All the feedback suggests a very busy and positive weekend was enjoyed by all.

## Contact

The trustees of Transition Belper are:

Chair – [Ian Jackson](#)

Secretary – [Richard Keighley](#)

Treasurer - Alan Foord

Core Group - Craig Scott

Core Group - [David George](#)

Trustee - Mick Hepworth

Or you can contact us via the Transition Belper email address: [info@transitionbelper.org](mailto:info@transitionbelper.org)