



Home-made bubble mixture is tested and shared with the community by our Youth Group at our Play Day at Cotswold Crescent August 2024 – see page 13



## Transition Chipping Norton Impact Report March 2024 - March 2025

**Building connections and inspiring hope...**





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Community Play Day August 2024

# Overview

In our second year as a charity, we have been building on our strategy of listening to the needs and wishes of local people, and developing projects and activities to suit their interests. We have been paying particular attention to those who are least able to be heard by policy makers and helping to build strong connections.

As always, our focus is on sustainability - how we live, our local environment, and how we interact as a community - working to ensure that everyone’s needs are supported as far as possible both now and in the long term; physically, socially and mentally.

This year we have developed more opportunities for young people to be active and adventurous, supported families with additional needs, created social occasions to reduce loneliness, connected people with activities in the countryside, joined actions with other local interest groups, helped generate debates and campaigns for change, and built a bridge of communication with local and district councillors.

We have run seed and plant swaps, upcycling and repairs, offered clothes and other items for exchange, supported the Rusty Rider Bike Clinic to mend bikes and increase confidence to get back into riding, created seed bombs, propagated plants , helped reduce food waste....

In all we have run or supported **195 events and activities** this year and clocked up an impressive **2200 hours of volunteer time**. It has been a busy time, and *fun* too -

We think this says something about the people of Chippy, as much as our determination to provide the necessary supporting “glue”!

## • Finances

This year as well as basic project costs we were able to secure some multi-year funding to support a salary and ensure the projects we are offering will be longstanding. Thanks to Oxfordshire Communities Foundation and CAG Oxfordshire for these!

**Thanks to our funders we will continue to offer all of our events and activities free of charge to ensure cost is never a barrier to taking part.**



We are grateful to CAG Oxfordshire and WODC for granting us special funding to run our Magical Maasai Community Day (see photo above)

To Sovereign Network Group for supporting our youth projects and mental health support

To Clarion Futures and the iWill Network for supporting or Intergenerational Youth Social Action campaigns

To the Rotary Club Trust for supporting our collaborative summer youth sessions

To Chipping Norton Town Council for providing us with some unrestricted funds so we can respond more quickly to local needs

To the Transition Network who supported our Youth Camps

And to Oxfordshire Communities Foundation for supporting our work with families and young people for improving mental health through connections to nature, and a further grant for supporting wellbeing in the community.

This all adds up to a healthy £49,200 of grant income this financial year.

Looking to the year ahead we have also secured funding from OCF for supporting community connections, from CAG Oxfordshire for Great Big Green Week, Cash for Kids for youth work, and Travis Perkins for our Summer Play Day 2025 thanks to an application by Cottsway, ensuring that plans for the next year are already under way.

“Transition Chipping Norton is an invaluable resource and connection for communities. I have loved getting the chance to meet some of the young people living in Chipping Norton. The work creating a sense of community and getting young people out into nature can only be a good thing. I look forward to hearing what they do next!”

Tatiana Bell, Nature Recovery Officer WODC

**With this funding we have...**

## ● Increased our Youth Activities

We have been keen to support and promote connections between young people and one another, with a wider community and with decision makers to ensure their voices get better heard, both now and in the future. We are youth led, which helps us tailor our support to suit those who are not in school, suffer with anxiety, have SEND or autism and help them develop as amazing individuals.



### We have run year round – in all weathers!:

- 15** Evening Youth Sessions at The Town Hall
- 20** after school Youth sessions at Cotswold Crescent Play Area
- 12** weekend Youth sessions at Cotswold Crescent Play Area
- 4** Community Days with Youth Volunteers
- 5** Residential Camps
- Supported **5** Remix sessions at Glyme Hall
- 3** Summer Youth Provision sessions at Glyme Hall

**A total of 59 youth sessions, totalling 165 hours, 390 volunteer hours**

**PLUS 5 camps, totalling 23 Days 18 nights**

**Providing food / cooking activities with every single session run**

Engaging with over **180** young people throughout the year



Learn2Sustain volunteer / Town Councillor Tash Whitmill is cooking up some mischief at the park youth project. (Photos above)

“Coming to the youth group has given me a reason to be out of the house. I don’t cope in school where I am told what to do all the time. Here they make things fun and I’ve made friends and done things I wouldn’t of done otherwise.”

13 year old youth member

It has been brilliant to see young people grow in confidence, increase their skills, and feel inspired to think up their own projects, including planning a Christmas Crafts Session for the community at the Town Hall.

Youth led cooking and crafts at the Town Hall Youth Project (Photos below)





## • Connected teens with other local organisations

All of our work is inspired by listening to what people tell us they are interested in...We seek to strengthen connections with other organisations to widen experiences and to help needs and opinions be heard.



Those keen on green woodworking made this rounders bat with local bodger, to use at the park (above)



Summer joint Youth Provision with Clare O Hara from The Theatre (left and below)



When children at the youth session asked for trampolines in the park, we teamed up with Nicole from YouMove/WODC to provide sessions for trampolining and Boogie Bounce.

We linked in with the Skate Park Campaign so youngsters could help influence possible designs, and connected to local provision for children with autism to spend time with animals. (Above and right)

TCN is community-focussed and always looking at ways to collaborate and work with others to build a communal approach to learning how to work with nature and by supporting younger people to find their own ways to have a more sustainable future.'  
Cheryl Huntbach Local Area Co-ordinator



This year our Youth Provision collaborated with :  
Kev's Bushcraft; The Bushcraft Show; Woodland Ways;  
Chipping Norton Town Council; The Theatre; The Branch;  
Chipping Norton Community Church; WODC; YouMove;  
Nature Enabling Interdependence Growth and Happiness; Into the Forest; CN Community Orchard; Oxfordshire Discovery College; CN Skate Park Campaign Group; MOR Bakery



## • Organised 5 Residential Youth Camps

From mini camp experiences in the local park to 3 or 5 nights away camping in a different county we have made sure there has been something to suit all confidence levels, interests and needs.



We brought our camp to the park so **EVERYONE** could enjoy the camping experience

With thanks to funding from Transition Together who believed in our vision for creating opportunities to think higher, further, deeper than “normal life” sometimes allows...



“That was the best weekend of my life! I did so much cool stuff that was new!”  
Youth member after Bushcraft Show Camp (Photos below and left)

Youngsters take part in workshops, help run sessions, enjoying the freedom of open spaces and different peer groups to try new things...OHEC, Beacon Festival at NEIGH animal Sanctuary. Photos above and right



“The impact of their work with young people particularly has shone through from the evaluation work we have done together, increasing the wellbeing and sense of connection for young people locally as well as building a sense of connection with nature, making a real difference to their lives.”  
Jane from WISH @ The Cherwell Collective



- **Provided opportunities for Skills Development and Youth Volunteering**

Through workshops, camps and connections to other individuals and organisations active locally.



“Taking part in things like this has given me more confidence to try things even when they are outside my comfort zone. It has definitely made me want to do more.” Youth member August 2024



Youngsters got the opportunity to prepare and serve food, including catering for Ray Mears’ Banquet of 115 people, helping prepare paella for 450 people (photos left and above)



“I’ve enjoyed helping younger kids join in – I remember how anxious I always used to be and I think they can relate to me. It feels good, knowing that I’ve gained skills I can share” Youth member, December 2024



Members of the youth group suggested, planned and bought resources to run workshops in the Town Hall for all ages in the community to come together for crafts, refreshments and a warm welcome. (Photo above)

Young people were given opportunities to learn and then share skills like archery, axe throwing, paracord crafts, pole lathing and willow basketry. (Photos above and right)





## • Created new projects and new volunteering opportunities for adults

Including:

- Rusty Riders Bike Clinic for the mechanically-minded
- Repair Cafes where our repairers are aged from 18 to 83
- Swap shops, where a range of skills are needed
- Volunteering on our youth projects



“Community connections are so needed at the current time, and having an environmental focus is an additional benefit. Please keep up the great work you are doing!”  
Community member

**43%** of our members said they have **learned new skills** and become **more active in the community** through our projects

## • Offered Training and Connection with other Networks: developing ideas, sharing good practice:

- 2 x 2 day Youth Leadership Retreats with Oxfordshire Youth
- 1 day Youth Conference
- 3 day Transition Together Assembly in Wilmslow
- Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership
- Wellbeing Alliance
- SNG Youth Network



Photo left: 120 people from groups across England and Wales joined 3 days of sharing aspirations for change

Photos: above: Olly (18) our youngest of 10 new volunteer repairers; below : The Rusty Rider volunteer team



“I would like to help start something similar in my own area.” TCN member, North Oxford

## • Collaborated with...

The Theatre Chipping Norton; The Branch; CN Town Council; Kev's Bushcraft; CN Community Orchard; CN Green Gym; CPRE Oxfordshire; WODC; Deddington Environment Network; Barford Environment Network; Sustainable Kirtlington; Sustainable Wychwoods Action Group; Biodiversity Bloxham; Southill Solar; CN Larder; MOR Bakery; Evenlode Catchment Partnership; Cotswold Order of Druids; Rollright Stones Trust; Woodland Ways; Farm ED; Oxfordshire Youth; Let's Ride; Breeze; MuW Craft Café; Oxfordshire Play Association; Oxford Doughnut Economics Collective; YouMove; Transition Together



## • Hosted discussion groups

To connect people across communities and develop ideas we:

Supported **21** sustainability-themed People Planet Pint meet-ups

Hosted **12** fireside groups for adults to join together in conversation

Delivered **4** Thriving Communities workshops

Organised **6** meet-ups with marginalised groups to discuss local transport proposals and create a communication “bridge”

Hosted **1** Climate Talk with Councillor Pete Sudbury

Managed **9** online themed discussion groups

“The Fireside Group is really key to building local friendships and so a community of action. I have found the advice I have received at these groups very helpful and emotionally supportive.” Survey comment March ‘25



Home / Closed consultations / Chipping Norton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Chipping Norton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

**86% of our community said TCN has helped them meet new people**

We are always looking for ways to bring diverse members of the community together and create strong communication links with policy makers, ensuring that the voices of those more vulnerable are able to be heard and people feel listened to and empowered.

“I really have had so many knock-on effects from your gatherings it really is a marvellous thing – Thanks for all your hard work!”

TCN volunteer March ‘25



Our Doughnut Economics workshops got people thinking about how everyone in the community can thrive without using more resources than the planet can sustain.





## ● Promoted Practical Action for people of all ages

Reducing waste, saving items from landfill and helping  
create a cultural shift to more sustainable living through:

3 Repair Cafes with Clothing Swaps,  
4 General Swap Shops with upcycling crafts

8 Rusty Riders Bike Clinics

48 items repaired including 22 bicycles

65 kg of clothing upcycled

155 packets of seeds swapped

140 Plants swapped

40 seed bombs created and passed to the Mayor

16 car boots full of clothing upcycled or swapped

94kg of food waste reduced



**61%** of our members said TCN  
has helped them **understand  
more about environmental  
issues** and **50%** said they felt  
**able to make a difference**



"I found participating and supporting the repair cafes a great  
opportunity to help the community learn how to make more from less  
and I also appreciated learning how easy it is to make fabulous soup !"  
New volunteer Feb '25



Clockwise from top; Repair  
Café, Clothing Swap Shop,  
Rusty Riders volunteers,  
seed bombs made and  
passed to the Mayor to cast  
at the cemetery





## • Supported people's Mental Health and Wellbeing

We have provided:

- An online forum of peer support and signposting for **19** families
- **12** wellbeing walks for parents and carers
- A relaxing Spa Day for **12** parents and carers to build resilience in the run up to Christmas
- Support at **16** parenting meet ups
- Connections and support to other activities and services within our network and elsewhere in the community for families and individuals to gain long term resilience
- A night out at the Theatre for **9** carers and those dealing with bereavement



"I feel so much more positive and can help others feel more positive now too. It is a great feeling"

Quote from a member March 25



"I have made changes to my life I wouldn't have had the strength to do without this support-network. Being connected with other parents like this has made so much difference.."

Quote from a member Feb 25

Photos from top: Nature crafts; wellbeing walk; Group Spa Day  
Cotswold House Dec'24; Coffee, craft and chat meet ups  
fortnightly; Repair Café Craft gathering Oct '24



**67%** of our members said TCN has helped them increase their sense of well-being and enjoyment of life



**THE THEATRE  
CHIPPING NORTON**

"It has been brilliant working with Cara and Transition Chipping Norton in support of our Mental Health Parent Group this year.

The parents we support are either in crisis or have made a conscious choice to set aside their own needs as an individual in order to support the high needs of their children so this rare opportunity to focus on themselves was very special and healing. "

Clare O Hara, Head of Community, The Theatre



- **Connected people to community events, local groups and projects**

We now have 180 members on our Whatsapp interest groups whom we keep informed about relevant activities happening locally, introducing them to new activities and projects and enabling sharing of ideas.

“The connection through you to people who work in companies who were looking for opportunities to do team building days/ workshops has been brilliant and we would love to build on this and have more of such opportunities.” Anne Millar Southill Solar

**55% of our members said they have discovered new places as a result of our work**



“The TCN programme and ethos is really inspiring and has helped me to shape activity in our village Community Action Group.” Community member



Photos: Left: Chippy TC Skate Park Day; Middle: Chippy Community Orchard Apple Days; Top right: Community Bonfire night, nature crafts and Solstice gathering



“I’ve got to know the area much better and feel welcomed at so many things .” Community member



“Transition Chipping Norton is involved in so many activities, they are connecting different people and groups which otherwise would not know about each other. There are constant wonderful new ideas and interesting projects happening. They are really welcoming, positive and it feels easy to fit in to their activities (even when there are new skills to learn.” New volunteer, Spring 25



## • Expanded our Summer Play Day

To include 14 different stalls of activities, each representing local organisations offering support to people in the community. With young people and new community members stepping up to help out, it was a unique way to get people mixing, chatting and having fun together



“It was amazing to see how much is done for the community. Fantastic work and lots of happy kids. What rich support, loved being part of it and very happy to help out again, whenever I have a free day. Inspiring...”

Community member August 2024



**82% of our community said they feel more connected with the community as a result of our work**



Activities included: smoothie bike; 2<sup>nd</sup> hand clothing swap; plant and seed identification; up-cycling clothes and tie-dye; DIY bubble making; make a toilet-roll bird feeder; hook-a-duck; Connect 4; crafts; face painting, create a story stick, drama workshops.

Many thanks to: Oxfordshire Play Association, Ribberty Rabbit Crafting CIC, Seedbed Theatre, St Mary's Church, Homestart, Cottsway, Replenish, Community Action Groups Oxfordshire, Home Ed Community; TCN Learn2Sustain Youth Group, The Theatre CN





## • Connected families and individuals with the local environment:

All of our projects link with other organisations to ensure people can be as well-connected with the wider community as possible. We support our different groups on Whatsapp, enabling forums where ideas and common interests can be shared.

“My 5 year old grandson has also enjoyed school holiday activities”  
Community member



**57%** of our community said they feel more connected with nature as a result of our work

Our Cotswold Foragers Whatsapp Group now has 85 members, sharing recipes, eco ideas and organising walks together



Photos above – Japanese art of “tataki zome”

Photos left and far left- Cotswold Foragers on a mushroom identification walk, and picking elderberries



Left: A group outing to heritage crafts day at the Rollright Stones, August ‘24

Below: A guided farm outing organised by Deddington Environment Network June ‘24



“For our family, having an interesting outing arranged, that we can join has been lovely - and we wouldn't have done it otherwise. We need time to connect, or at least not be in an argumentative state and Transition, with Cara gently proactively leading us, made that “  
Community member





## • Connected communities across cultural divides with our Magical Maasai Day

In May we planned 5 different community events in three different locations to draw together 150 people of all ages from all backgrounds in song, dance, feasting and ancient cultural traditions. People had time to share activities and ideas, and reflect on their lives, shared values and how we impact the lives of others.



"It has been amazing to see so many people here – some who have never visited the Stones before, all coming together!"

Starting with a game of football with the youth group in the park, and "I've just been slide tackled by a Maasai!" complained one teen, whilst rubbing her hip and grinning...Followed up with pasta, rhubarb crumble and custard, all cooked by the youth group over the fire pit in the park.



Traditional music, dancing and discussions followed, with parents joining in and asking the important questions like how do the Maasai brew beer, and what were their medical practices like.



A history lesson courtesy of the Rollright Stones Trust was next, drawing people into the nearby countryside, then dancing and singing performed by the Maasai, and a local Circle Dance group gathered us all to join in traditional community circle dancing.



More feasting followed, with the Chippy Community Larder providing some of the food and a unique way to link up with different community members...

"Every time someone recalls this day, they smile at the memory – it has had such long-reaching effects." Cara Hedges, Projects Manager, TCN.

...and the storms held off until sunset. A truly magical day!







Visiting Maasai tried out the new play equipment at Cotswold Crescent and spread their sense of joy with the community

The work you do is fantastic and you are a force of nature when it comes to delivering for the people you work with!

Sam Claxton, Oxfordshire Youth

### Contact us:

If you like what you have seen here and would like to find out more, or you have skills or resources to offer ***please get in touch...***

[office@sustainablechippingnorton.org](mailto:office@sustainablechippingnorton.org)

[youth@sustainablechippingnorton.org](mailto:youth@sustainablechippingnorton.org)

Or send a message to 07517 144828 - we would love to hear from you

Next Steps – watch as we rebrand to Sustainable Chipping Norton over the next few months – this means our Facebook pages and web pages will be changing too but you can find us on:

[www.sustainablechippingnorton.org](http://www.sustainablechippingnorton.org)

A heartfelt thank you to all of our volunteers, supporters, collaborators and funders – we couldn't do this without you!

