

This is a brief review of the year 2010-11, which opened with a very successful Ecofair. The Ecofair, hopefully the first of many, was a success both in terms of revenue (a small net gain for Sustainable Thornbury) and, more importantly in terms of the interested generated in the wider community. Since the Ecofair involved a lot of work to organise, it was reluctantly decided that there would not be a repeat in 2011. However, an Ecofair for 2012 is currently being planned for.

The membership secretary (Derry Jordan) instigated a membership survey as a way of determining what members felt Sustainable Thornbury should be doing. Only fifteen people responded, some of this group expressed the view that they did not want to be involved in campaigning (particularly negative campaigning). Respondents do not have much spare time to help with projects, feel that monthly meetings are too long, could be run at other times (i.e. not evenings) and are not free enough in terms of agenda.

To try to make meetings more interesting, we have tried to include talks and discussions as part of our monthly meetings and we have tried to keep the agenda quite flexible in response to the membership survey. Talks have included both external speakers – e.g. Ian page: Peak Everything, Sophie Nioche: Wind farms – and internal speakers – e.g. Maggie Jeffery: Hearts and Minds, Heather Luna: preparing businesses for change. The inclusion of such talks has increased the attendance at meetings and has resulted in their being a focus for informal discussions in the group.

Following the strategy meeting, some new groups were formed. The waste group has begun to look at the broad issue of waste, which includes updating the waste catalogue on the website. The workshops group, which has been led by Margaret Pinder have run several workshops following the interest shown by attendees at the Ecofair. The initial workshops – remake and remodel your clothes and make your own hotbox – were well-attended, successful events. The latest set of workshops offered on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May had less attendees than we anticipated, but even so one of each workshop was run (wormeries and composting, Bicycle Maintenance, Make your own toiletries, herbs for healing). There is a food preservation workshop planned for the 16<sup>th</sup> of July, which we hope will have wider appeal. In addition, there is a small group of people in a bottled water group, who have been looking into encouraging people to carry their own re-usable bottles for refilling. This group is quite small, perhaps because many people feel uncomfortable with campaigning.

In addition, a re-economy group has been set up by Heather Luna to look into ensuring we have a robust local economy in the years to come. A group from UWE have been looking into the feasibility of studying Sustainable Thornbury's effectiveness as an organisation. If this goes ahead it will, we hope, give us some insights on how we could improve what we do and how we do it. We should not forget groups which already existed – such as the Grow your own food group, which has been kept going successfully by Marion Stevens.

As an organisation, Sustainable Thornbury has responded to consultations on the core strategy and on the selling of Lodge farm. Following the Lodge Farm consultation, the council will wait for two years to decide what precisely it will do with the site and in the interim it has rented out the land. Bob Dale and a small team have been in contact with the council about Lodge Farm and are planning to gauge opinion of people nearer lodge farm in public meetings prior to deciding on the best course of action to take.

We ran our last Give it Away, Take it Away day in September 2010. The reasons we decided not to have another day of this type are various, some mentioned below. Direct support from SITA is not possible on a Sunday, which is the only day the car park can realistically be used. The support from SITA the following Monday was not as we had hoped and it was quite difficult to gain access to the site to dispose of the inevitable waste. The crowd control aspect of the day has become a bit of an onerous task and at the last GIATIA day it proved difficult to stop people taking objects direct from other's cars and volunteers would rather not be put in this position again. On a positive note, SITA are looking into providing areas at sort it centres where people can leave usable objects for others to take away. Whilst this is in the very early stages it is a positive step forwards.

All in all, I think we've had a successful year, with various activities being started and some of them completed.

I'd like to thank all the members of the committee for all the work they've put in over the past year – Bob Dale (Treasurer), Freddie Keey (Secretary), Derry Jordan (membership secretary), Alan Pinder (publicity), Margaret Pinder (press officer). Thanks also to everyone who has given their time to support Sustainable Thornbury's activities – hopefully you will all be willing to continue.