



CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT

15th May 2018

Southall Transition has been in existence for just over four years. We are neither a registered charity, nor a commercial company, but a not-for-profit voluntary group with a constitution and a steering committee answerable to this Annual Meeting. In order to have a Bank Account we have had to ensure we have Office Holders in the form of a Chair (myself), Secretary (Heenal Ghedia) and Treasurer (Wendy Ho) and a Steering Committee.

Our purpose as defined in its constitution is:

“To initiate and implement initiatives which seek to build environmental and economic resilience in Southall, leading to greater self-sufficiency and wellbeing for people and the wider environment, particularly in response to the challenges posed by peak oil, climate chaos, and economic instability.”

In our constitution we speak of five ways we hope to achieve our purpose, and I propose to organise this Annual Report around these five:

- **Raising awareness.**
- **Articulating a vision.**
- **Developing a framework.**
- **Engaging and building networks.**
- **Initiating and implementing projects**, in cooperation with others wherever possible, that involve local people in food-growing, tree-planting, enjoying nature, sustainable transport and energy, addressing waste and recycling, and other areas that are in line with our aims.

2017-2018 Achievements

- **Fareshare** – last year we stated that we hoped to see a local hub and collection point established in Southall, but despite having put in a lot of work from our side, in terms of sorting out a potential site and volunteers, and helping with fundraising, there has not much progress as Fareshare have not see much uptake or interest from local groups.
- **Bixley Field** – this project continued from 2016-2017, to see a formerly overgrown and litter-filled canalside area cleaned up and transformed, in partnership with a large number of groups including The Metropolitan Police, Greenfields & Havelock Children's Centres, Artists from Wimbledon College, Hope for Southall Street Homeless, Ealing Council's Park Ranger Team, The Hanwell & Norwood Green Orchard Trail Group, The Canal & River Trust, The Tree Council, Belvue School and Groundwork. In July 2017, the 'Water Donkey', a ½ size replica of a canal boat, designed by artists Rosie Potter and Kirstie Reid, was installed on site, followed in August by a foraging and jam-making event, and finally on 22nd December the project was

completed with the installation of an interpretation sign board. The project has successfully transformed a previously dangerous area into a place of beauty.

- **Plastic Paradise** – we had a film show and lively, well-informed discussion in September 2017. At the time serious interest was expressed in helping Southall shops reduce their plastic usage. Since then public opinion and government action have moved forward considerably, partly through the BBC Blue Planet 2 series demonstrating the devastating effects of plastic pollution on marine wildlife.
- **Incredible Edible Southall:** On Saturday 7th October 2017, we worked with several organisations and numerous volunteers to transform formerly overgrown sections of frontage outside Southall Community College and Southall Sports Centre on Beaconsfield Road. The end result was a tidy frontage and the creation of Southall's first roadside edible garden. We have interest from other organisations, including schools, in further Incredible Edible gardens, and hope to see more in this space during 2018-2019.
- **On Yer Bike:** 11th November 2017: More and more Londoners are getting on their bikes ... to get fit, save money, reduce traffic pollution. Southall Transition member Sanjay Syngal suggested we have an event focusing on cycling, and we partnered with several organisations who are cycling experts:
 - London Cycle Training – help for the hesitant cyclist
 - Dr Bike – bring your bike for a free health-check and basic repairs
 - Sustrans – a leading British cycle charity, with advice ... and for fun a Disco Bike!!
 - Cycle Quiz – discover fun facts, amazing data and helpful hints ... and win prizes
 - Have a go ... on a tricycle or a folding bike in the safety of the car park!

The weather was very poor on the day, so attendance was lower than hoped-for but we have a stream of visitors take part and a number of bikes were fixed.

- **Southall Orchard Project, Phase 3, Jubilee Park:** In Feb-March we worked with Allenby Primary, Dormers Wells Infants and Dormers Wells High Schools as well as local volunteers, some of whom worked incredible hard – particularly when we discovered part of the planting area had concrete just below the surface! Despite challenges, the planting was a great success, and the orchard was officially declared 'open' by Cllr Simon Woodroffe, the Mayor of Ealing, who also planted a 'Mayoral Damson Tree'. The event was attended by Virendra Sharma, MP for Ealing Southall and local councillors, including Lady Margaret Ward councillor, Swaran Padda.

Having looked at our major achievements during 2017-2018 I want to pay particular thanks to all the members of the steering group, without whom none of this would be possible. As Chair I am conscious that my other commitments mean I haven't always pulled my weight, so I am very grateful to Martin, Kailean, Heenal, Wendy, Andre and most of all Mani who has been, once again, the driving force behind so much of our work and the fundraising that has made it possible. I think it's fair to say that all of us are somewhat overstretched, and I certainly feel that unless we see more of Southall Transition's supporters prepared to take a lead, to organise events and to contribute to the running of our group, we won't be able to continue at the level we are. That would be a huge shame, because the needs for environmental transformation in Southall are greater than ever, and we have the potential to have a really catalytic impact on attitudes and actions.

Dave Bookless
Chair, Southall Transition
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