

TT Directors' Report 1/8/21-31/7/22

Directors' Report

for the Period 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022
for

Transition Tynedale Limited

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

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Legal and administrative information

The information below forms part of the Directors' Report.

Status	Transition Tynedale Limited is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 9 July 2012
Directors	Stuart Page Jane Brantom Jan Ashdown Lowri Potts
Secretary	Stuart Page
Treasurer	Megan Payne
Company number	08135495
Registered address	10 Market Street Hexham NE46 3NU
Web address	http://blog.transitiontynedale.org/
Bankers	Lloyds Bank PO Box 1000 Andover BX1 1LT

Directors' Report

Structure, governance and management

Transition Tynedale Limited is run entirely by volunteers. Members elect a Board of Directors who take overall responsibility for the organisation. Decision-making is often devolved to project teams or working groups, who are responsible for determining the best way to achieve the specific project or group objectives, and performing risk assessments. All financial aspects are overseen by the Board of Directors.

Transition Tynedale Objects

For the period covered by this report and accounts the Objects of Transition Tynedale Limited were:

To build resilience and sustainability into our local community by:

- a) creating, supporting and encouraging local solutions to the global problems of climate change and biodiversity emergencies;*
- b) raising awareness of the issues associated with the climate change and biodiversity emergencies and the need to develop a local low carbon, sustainable future through ethical, social, cultural, economic, environmental and community action;*
- c) supporting and working with other Transition Towns and similar community-led initiatives; and*
- d) engaging with individuals and organisations, including statutory, voluntary and business where appropriate.*

Summary Report

The reporting year of 01 August 2021-31 July 2022 saw a return almost to pre-Covid normality, with all restrictions on social mixing removed. TT was finally able to resume 'normal' activities.

Over the year we were sorry to see Ariane Baty step down as a Director. Many thanks go to Ariane for her very welcome contribution to TT. That left us with a below-quorum number of 2 Directors for the remainder of the year, although we are now very pleased to be able to say that we have recently (February 2023) co-opted Jan Ashdown and Lowri Potts as Directors.

Our established projects progressed well over the year (see below), particularly Hexham and Prudhoe Space for Nature, Edible Hexham, the Community Garden, and Community Orchards.

Looking forward, our aim remains to consolidate and grow our established projects, and where possible to explore new project areas and facilitate their development. Particularly we would like to be more active in the areas of waste avoidance and minimisation, green energy availability and uptake.

The following presents summary reports on our projects and activities (updates include activities up to December 2022)

Hexham Space for Nature (HS4N)

Hexham Space for Nature joined Transition Tynedale in 2020 and has been active in trying to change the way that we manage our parks, gardens and open spaces to benefit wildlife.

Sele, Abbey Grounds and Hexham House

Volunteers continue to tend to the 'woodland' border on the top wall of the Sele park, to enhance areas of long grass which the County Council (NCC) continues to manage as meadow, by planting wildflower plugs, and have established a new 'wild' edge to the wall bounding the Sele and Abbey Grounds. In Hexham House grounds a group of volunteers have transformed the neglected long border, and a difficult to manage shady area known as the Glade, with new donated planting.

In 2022 HS4N volunteers took part in Hexham Hidden Gardens to promote their work, and of wildlife friendly gardening, especially in Hexham House grounds.

The relationship with the County Council is good, and officers have agreed that HS4N should develop plans for the Sele (new tree planting, redesigned grassland management etc.) which can be consulted on in 2023. These are underway.

Cemetery

HS4N made several recommendations to the Town Council (HTC) in 2022 for changes to management which would improve biodiversity at the Cemetery. These have not been taken up, but it is hoped that we will be able to pick up this conversation in 2023. The grassland opposite the cemetery continues to be managed as a meadow and species diversity is increasing year on year.

Other sites in Hexham

In 2022 HS4N was approached about the use of funds available to improve biodiversity in Hexham. They recommended that Northumberland County Council invest in a machine which could cut and collect long grass, as this would transform their ability to create and manage meadows where there was once close mown grass. This they did, and the machine was delivered in November 2022.

This will help NCC to manage the long grass areas we have jointly established in the Sele, at Priestlands and the long-established area at Highford Park. In addition, NCC has agreed to take on the meadow cut of the HTC managed grassland opposite the

cemetery (see above). HS4N are now identifying suitable areas in other parts of Hexham for this treatment, including at Tyne Green, Hackford Park and Shaws Park.

On Burswell Avenue, residents were assisted to plant ground cover plants in recently established tree pits around the line trees growing on the road. HS4N were also approached by a resident on Hall Orchard and have now gained permission from NCC to create a new woodland border along this walk. However funds and a design are needed before we can proceed further.

Hexham Town of Trees

HS4N is leading on the production of a Hexham-wide Tree Strategy, inviting landowners and other stakeholders to get involved in its writing, and eventually to sign up to its principles and conclusions. Principles are now drawn up and the Civic Society and the Town Council have both signed up. These principles are being used to guide the work on the redesign of the Sele Park, including the planting of a replacement avenue of trees (see above).

Guided walks

In 2022 we ran a short series of informal guided walks to help people learn a bit more about the nature in our own town, from the grassland ecology of Highford Park to the bird song around the reservoir.

Hexham Swift Heaven

The swift project continues to progress with more swift boxes being manufactured through the men's shed project. Survey and monitoring will continue in 2023.

Edible Hexham and Community Garden

The Edible Hexham planters have been demonstrating what can be achieved in a small space growing herbs, chives, small greens and even tomatoes. We were delighted that for the second year, one resident was able to make green tomato chutney from one of our planters near his home.

During 2021 and 2022 we researched and produced both the 'Edible Hexham Trail' and 'BUZZ', a booklet of easy recipes using produce from the planters. We launched these at a market stall in April 2022 and had another stall for Heritage Open Days 2022 ('Eating for England' Theme). A great addition has been the recipe plaques on the planters with a QR code that people can download onto their phones.

We were successful in being awarded Community Chest funding via NCC with funding for three new reservoir planters which we hoped would solve our watering problems. However seven weeks in the summer of 2022 with no rain at all made us realise that they need to be topped up at least once a fortnight with a hose from an easily accessible water supply. Such a supply at all our locations to date has just not been possible, so we have been granted extra time to think about how we can resolve this problem. We are grateful to a volunteer at Sele Gate who has helped us with watering over many weeks.

We are delighted to have recruited two new volunteers with much expertise to help with regular Edible Hexham work.

We were pleased to secure the involvement of Grow Hexham in the community garden, which brought an injection of cash and regular support for garden activities from Grow Hexham staff. TT's 'Rake and Cake' (2021) and Grow Hexham's 'Fun in the Garden' (2022) both helped raise awareness of the garden. We are hoping the support of the local council will strengthen the case for keeping the garden as a community asset.

Prudhoe Space for Nature

PS4N is now a member of the Prudhoe Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Party Group, an initiative set up by Prudhoe Community Partnership in November last year following two Prudhoe Goes Green events.

PS4N's projects to date include work on the creation of a Community Wildlife Garden and Orchard in the centre of the town - which we began in August last year – and the management of a piece of amenity grassland with the aim of increasing its biodiversity.

The Community Wildlife Garden is a considerable undertaking, but the site has already been transformed from being one of scrub and dumped waste to one where hedging, spring bulbs and a small orchard have been planted, and with other habitat areas soon to be developed to benefit wildlife.

We are also about to begin work on planting up the empty garden bed in front of the Prudhoe Co-op to make it pollinator friendly. The central location of this bed guarantees lots of passers-by and the information board which will be installed there will have regular updates on what to look out for in terms of plants and pollinators both in the bed and further afield as the year progresses.

Plant swap

We held our annual plant swap stall at Hexham Farmers' Market on May 14th.

Apple pressing

There was another fantastic morning of collecting, pulping and pressing local apples at the Farmers Market in early October. Thanks to all who brought apples along, pulped and pressed apples, drank the juice and give donations. One wonderful person even composed and sang a song for us! It just shows how much we can grow locally and how much joy it can bring.

Transition Tynedale Talks

Transition Tynedale talks began during the Covid-19 lockdowns, as we adapted our approach to account for social contact restrictions. We hosted further well received talks on Zoom over the reporting period: Swifts - the birds you can help; Dark Skies; Tyne Rivers Trust.

Orchards

The three orchards have been pruned at Tyne Green, Acomb First School and in Karbon Homes' The Gaps field at Acomb. The newest one, in The Gaps, is just one year old and is looking fine in spite of some heat and drought in the summer – possibly in part due to the wool daggings that were used as mulch around the bases, preventing too much evaporation of moisture.

We continue to look for opportunities to network with others who are active with orchards in the area, and we have engaged in events around Northumberland where leaders of Community Orchards or private owners to come and discuss their experiences of planting, growing, outreach and harvesting.

With Grow Hexham we held a 'Fun in the Orchard' event at the Tyne Green Hexham Community Orchard. It seemed to go very well: 120+ visitors over the 3 hours (just based on the number of cups used!), with huge amounts of apple juice made too.

Other activities

TT and HS4N both had stalls at the Hexham Net Zero Fairs in March and Oct 2022.

Future project areas

Energy

This has not been an active area for TT for a number of years now, largely due to us simply not having enough capacity to identify and progress suitable project ideas. But beyond TT there's a lot going on, with community energy projects in the Tyne Valley, and talk once again of the Hexham hydro scheme. Something very much on our radar for next year's activities.

Waste

Avoidance, reuse, recycling – again this is an area where TT has not been active for some time, and again that's down to resources. For the coming year we will be looking at what we can do in this area, particularly with community based activities like repair cafes.

Thanks

Finally, we thank our members for their annual membership fees, every little helps. We give special thanks to all the project leaders, communication helpers and volunteers from all projects for their continuing time and dedication. We cannot deliver local solutions without you!

Stuart Page, Jane Brantom, Lowri Potts, Jan Ashdown
Transition Tynedale Directors

13 March 2023