

WP4 | CASE STUDY Report: [The Transition Movement]

Theme [ssh.2013.3.2-1][Social Innovation- Empowering People, changing societies]
Project Full Title: "Transformative Social Innovation Theory project"
Grant Agreement n. 613169

transformative social innovation theory



This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 613169

Suggested citation:

Longhurst, N. and Pataki, G. (2015) WP4 CASE STUDY Report: The Transition Movement TRANSIT: EU SSH.2013.3.2-1 Grant agreement no: 613169

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to all the interviewees and other participants within Transition Network, Transition Town Totnes and Transition Wekerle for their collaboration and co-operation. Their generosity with their time and willingness to share their thoughts and reflections on the development of Transition were invaluable in the development of the case.

Date: 31 March 2015

Authors: Noel Longhurst, György Pataki

Contact person: Noel Longhurst (n.longhurst@uea.ac.uk)

transformative social innovation theory

Table of contents

1 Introduction to The Transition Movement.....	6
2. Methodology	9
2.1 Researcher relations to the case.....	9
2.2 Methods.....	9
2.2.1 Overall methodology	9
2.2.2 Interviews.....	10
2.2.3 Participant observation	11
2.2.4 Document reviews.....	12
3 Analysis of transnational network(ing)	13
3.1 Transnational networking: <i>The Transition movement</i>	13
3.2 Aspects of ‘innovation’ and ‘change’ of the transnational network(ing)	19
3.2.1 Relation with social innovation.....	19
3.2.2 Relation with system innovation.....	20
3.2.3 Relation with game-changers.....	22
3.2.4 Relation with societal transformation.....	23
3.2.5 Relation with narratives of change	25
3.3 Aspects of empowerment and disempowerment of the transnational network..	25
3.3.1 Governance	29
3.3.2 Social learning.....	32
3.3.3 Resources.....	33
3.3.4 Monitoring and evaluation.....	34
4 Local initiative 1: [Transition Town Totnes]	34
4.1 Overview of development in the local initiative.....	34
4.2 Aspects of ‘innovation’ and ‘change’ of the local initiative.....	38
4.2.1 Relation with social innovation.....	38
4.2.2 Relation with system innovation.....	39
4.2.3 Relation with game-changers.....	40
4.2.4 Relation with societal transformation.....	40
4.2.5 Relation with narratives of change	40
4.3 Aspects of empowerment and disempowerment of the local initiative.....	41
4.3.1 Governance	41
4.3.2 Social learning.....	45
4.3.3 Resources.....	46
4.3.4 Monitoring and evaluation.....	47
5 Local initiative (2): [Transition Wekerle, Hungary]	48
5.1 Overview of development in the local initiative.....	48
5.2 Aspects of ‘innovation’ and ‘change’ of the local initiative.....	56
5.2.1 Relation with social innovation.....	56
5.2.2 Relation with system innovation.....	56
5.2.3 Relation with game-changers.....	57
5.2.4 Relation with societal transformation.....	57
5.2.5 Relation with narratives of change	57
5.3 Aspects of empowerment and disempowerment of the local initiative.....	58
5.3.1 Governance	59

transformative social innovation theory

5.3.2	Social learning.....	61
5.3.3	Resources.....	61
5.3.4	Monitoring and evaluation.....	62
6.	Synthesis of case study	63
6.1	Condensed time-line	65
6.2	Aspects of 'innovation' and 'change'.....	67
6.3	Aspects of empowerment and disempowerment.....	68
	List of references	71
7.	Annex 1: Bibliography of materials.....	72
7.1	Primary sources.....	72
7.2	Websites.....	73
7.3	Secondary sources	73
	Annex 2: List of interviews	74
	Annex 3: List of meetings and events attended.....	75

transformative social innovation theory

1 Introduction to The Transition Movement

This case study describes the emergence and development of the Transition movement (TM) since the launch ('Great Unleashing') of the Transition Town Totnes (TTT) project in September 2006 in the town of Totnes in Devon, UK by Rob Hopkins and Naresh Giangrande. TM is a citizen led social movement that is intended to address peak oil,¹ climate change and the global economic crisis. The movement primarily consists of a network of place based Transition Initiatives (TIs) where local participants collaborate on projects which are intended to enhance 'local resilience'. A Transition Initiative involves groups of activists who organise various projects within a locality, the overall purpose of which is contribute to the transition towards a more localised, post-fossil fuel society. The primary focus is to encourage a community based form of experimentalism in developing a wide range of activities whilst also promoting a shift in people's values and behaviour.

Since the launch of Transition Town Totnes the Transition model has spread across the UK and internationally. The Transition model can best be understood as a set of values, principles and processes which can be utilised to establish a set of projects that contribute to the core aim of building community resilience. Originally articulated as 12 steps (Hopkins, 2008), these have more recently been reworked into a more flexible set of 'ingredients' (Hopkins, 2011). Fundamentally, the 'Transition' approach is an optimistic and constructively engaging form of community activism which positions itself as distinct to confrontational forms of environmental activism (Hopkins, 2014). To become an 'official' TI, representatives of an initiative are required to sign up to a specific set of 16 principles that ensures that they will protect the overall ethos aims of Transition. This allows them to use the branded materials and access to a certain set of resources and support. This distinction provides a key mechanism to distinguish the boundaries of the movement as a whole. Within this report the term Transition movement is used to refer to all those formal Transition Initiatives which self-identify themselves with the network. In April 2014 there were 1120 initiatives in 43 different countries. There are also initiatives that are inspired by – or share similar objective to – the Transition movement that have not become official TIs. Indeed, Hopkins (2014) has argued that it doesn't really matter if initiatives are called Transition if they are working to fulfil its objectives.

The TM is relevant as a case study of transformational social innovation for a number of different reasons:

- It offers a particular model of social change that has 'diffused' extensively over the last eight years and which has explicitly transformational ambitions.
- It has a very specific philosophy of social change based on community action acting as a stimulus and inspiration for other actors (government, businesses) to change.
- It provides an experimental space for other forms of social innovation to be tested. These can also diffuse in their own right, both within and beyond the Transition Movement. Examples of this diffusion include local currency projects, community energy companies, and food/horticultural based initiatives.

¹ Peak oil relates to the proposition that global production levels of oil have reached their maximum possible rate and are going to enter a period of sustained decline, within severe consequences globally.

transformative social innovation theory

Two other important components of the wider movement are relevant to the case study. The first is the Transition Network (TN). This was established in 2007 as a UK registered charity with the explicit aim of growing movement and supporting the establishment of new TIs. It was initially set up as a response to the wave of enquiries and requests for support that followed the establishment of TTT. TN has played a critical role in the overall development of the movement and inevitability has evolved itself over the years since its inception. Having been first established by TTT activists it remains based in Totnes where it shares an office building with the staff and volunteers of TTT. One critical role that TN fulfils is managing a set of resources on which TIs can draw including:

- Providing advice and support to both new and established Transition Initiatives.
- Designing and delivering training courses.
- Hosting and developing the Transition Network website which acts as a repository of resources, news and advice.
- Supporting the development of National Hubs in countries other than the UK
- Organising Transition conferences.

The other important element of the TM that has emerged in recent years are National Hubs (NH). These are nationally based entities that support the development of TIs within a specific national territory. In some cases the NH is managed by an existing Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). In others it is self-organising, sometimes from the representatives of various TIs. In terms of a formal relationship with TN, some NHs have a Memorandum of Understanding which sets out specific roles and responsibilities on both sides. However, not all National Hubs have entered into a formal agreement with TN. Since 2012 National Hubs have been meeting annually to discuss the overall development of the TM. Their growth and development reflects one aspect of the internationalisation of the movement and they have been taking an increasingly active role in shaping the wider Transition movement. In 2014 a hub representative was elected onto the TN board in order to ensure that the hubs had a formal representative and voice.

In terms of the scope of this case study, the ‘network’ consists of the global movement of formally recognised Transitions Initiatives but also includes the Transition Network and the National Hubs.

Local Initiative 1: Transition Town Totnes, UK

Transition Town Totnes was the first Transition Initiative launched in September 2006 and has been selected because it is the longest running Transition initiative and is seen somewhat as an exemplar. It is also the location of the Transition Network who share an office building with TTT. Both TN and the wider movement emerged from TTT with TTT activists involved in supporting the development of the wider movement.

Local Initiative 2: Transition Wekerle, Hungary

“Climate-friendly Wekerle” (later “Transition Wekerle”) is the first Hungarian sustainability initiative (launched in 2008, then re-named in 2011) explicitly inspired by the international Transition movement. It has been selected for a case study as the first grassroots transition initiative in Hungary that has been considered as an exemplar for subsequent initiatives in a similar vein. It is therefore a good example of how the innovation has travelled and been established in a different context.

transformative social innovation theory

transformative social innovation theory

2. Methodology

2.1 Researcher relations to the case

The lead case researcher (Longhurst) was undertaking ethnographic research in Totnes when Transition Town Totnes was first established in 2006. During this time he undertook participatory, collaborative research on the Totnes Pound currency and food projects as part of PhD research (Longhurst, 2010; 2011). Longhurst also drafted the first set of researcher guidelines for the TN which stipulated that research should be mutually beneficial to both the researcher and the initiative under study. These have recently been revised and updated but retain the overall ethic of reciprocity. Since leaving the field, Longhurst has no longer been directly involved in Transition related activities but has remained a sympathetic but 'critical' friend.

Patakai, the Hungarian local manifestation researcher, has been involved in grassroots, civil society organisations working on the sustainability agenda for a long time. For almost a decade, he has been collaborating with one of the leading figures of the 'Transition Wekerle' initiative within the Hungarian green movement, although there has been little direct collaboration in more recent years. Though the researcher himself has not been doing research on Transition Wekerle some of his research fellows have already conducted case study research on this initiative and some of them partly coached the initiative at some point in time.

Pataki has long been involved in participatory research, particularly participatory action research working in interdisciplinary teams of researchers and together with local community members. Consequently, the principle of reciprocity in research is an evident requirement to fulfil in any research projects the present researcher is being involved. Pataki adopts a role as a co-creator of knowledge and action, for the benefit to and together with local community members; always trying to balance pragmatism with a critical stance (incl. self-reflection). In this sense, local participants are never treated as research object or subjects but knowledgeable research partners who are ready and able contributors to co-creating new knowledge and action.

2.2 Methods

2.2.1 Overall methodology

The overall research methodology broadly followed that stipulated in the *TRANSIT Methodological guidelines for case studies Batch 1*. One specific strategy was to gather and draw upon both primary and secondary literature before the interviews were undertaken. This rationale for this approach was that much of the history, values and approach of the Transition movement had already been documented. Using the documentary evidence to address the research questions first meant that the interviews could focus on those aspects which were not covered in the literature. The participant observation strategy was intended to shed light on different aspects of the movement, particularly within Totnes, as well as provide insights into the everyday nature of what Transition

transformative social innovation theory

entails. Selection of interviewees was made through a process of identifying those who were identified as having significant knowledge about the key research questions and some snowballing based on their recommendations. In particular knowledge of the evolution of both the network and local manifestations was sought.

2.2.2 Interviews

Transnational case

Four interviews were undertaken with key members of the Transition Network, all of whom have been involved since its inception and have played significant roles in the development of both the organisation itself and the wider movement. Three of the interviewees also had involvement in the development of Transition Town Totnes although the interviews focused primarily on the network level.

Table 1: Transnational interviews

Name	Role
Rob Hopkins	Co-founder of Transition Town Totnes and of Transition Network.
Ben Brangwyn	Co-founder of Transition Network
Naresh Giangrande	Co-founder of Transition Town Totnes, founder of Transition Training, and involved in Transition Network since its inception.
Peter Lipmann	Co-founder and Chair of Transition Network

Transition Town Totnes

Eight interviews were undertaken relating to Transition Town Totnes. These were all undertaken with individuals who are currently active within TTT with the exception of Pru Boswell who was the 'external' actor. They included two current paid members of staff, a trustee, and volunteers who had long standing involvement in TTT.

Table 2: Transition Town Totnes interviews

Name	Role
Carole Whitty	Current Trustee of TTT. Previously involved in Education group.
Wendy Stayte	Longstanding involvement in food and growing based Transition activities.
Fiona Ward	Longstanding involvement in economic projects as part of Transition. Also leader of REconomy project and employed by Transition Network.
Mary Popham	Works on energy and housing projects within TTT.
Frances Northrop	'Transition in Action' project officer, the main day-to-day point of contact for TTT.
Hal Gilmore	Works on REconomy and Transition Tours. Also a qualified Transition Trainer.
Sally Croft	Accountant for TTT and TN also a trustee of TTT.
Pru Boswell	Former mayor and current Town Councillor.

transformative social innovation theory

Transition Wekerle

Two informal interviews were undertaken with the leading figure (Tracey Wheatley) of the Transition Wekerle case (altogether approx. 2 hours), plus one formal interview (following the interview guide) with her (in English) recorded (approx. 3 hours) and a follow-up interview after her reading the first version of the case (approx. 2 hours). In addition to this and another formal interview was undertaken with the Transition initiative Kecskemét (another Hungarian transition case which was inspired by Transition Wekerle and mentored by Tracey) recorded (in Hungarian) (approximately 2 hours). Selection of interviewees was based on the following considerations: (i) key informant of the case under study, (ii) key informant who has an influence beyond the case upon the unfolding of transition movement in Hungary, (iii) good, mutual trust-based connection to the key informant, (iv) using participant observation to decide whom else to interview: one that can be judged most active in the role of mentoring other transition communities and leading figure of another transition case in Hungary.

2.2.3 Participant observation

Transition Network

A single, prolonged episode of participant observation was undertaken with the Transition Network. This was attendance at the four day National Hubs meeting in September 2014 in Denmark. This was a closed meeting that brought together representatives from 20 different countries and staff from Transition Network to discuss a number of key issues surrounding the growth of the transnational movement and make decisions about the priorities for the coming year.

Transition Town Totnes

Eight different participant observation events were undertaken as part of the TTT case. These included public talks, meetings, a Transition tour, and a day spent in the TTT office assisting with day-to-day tasks.

Table 3: Participant Observation events for TTT case

Event	Details
Alternative economics talk by Donnie Maclurcan	Talk by Donnie Maclurcan on his forthcoming book 'How on Earth?' Organised by the REconomy group of Transition Town Totnes and Schumacher College
'Edible Totnes' volunteer session	Volunteer gardening on edible Totnes project.
Transition Tour	Organised walk around Totnes looking at the various TTT projects. Organised specifically for 'Transition pilgrims' who visit Totnes to see the work of TTT.
Transition Drinks	Drinks for TTT staff and volunteers which follows the Transition Tour on a Friday.

transformative social innovation theory

Caring Town Totnes meeting	A meeting bringing together various people involved in 11 - 18 year olds in the town to discuss the problems they face and explore possible collaborative projects.
Meeting about the Mansion House	Working group meeting to discuss the future of the Mansion House a community building in Totnes currently owned by Devon County Council. TTT are part of a working group exploring whether it can be taken into community ownership.
Positive Money public talk by Ben Dyson	A talk jointly organised by TTT and Schumacher College by Ben Dyson from the organisation Positive Money.
TTT offices	A day spent in the offices doing voluntary work.

Transition Wekerle

Two participant observations were undertaken. First, attending a meeting where two activists were reporting back from the Copenhagen transition hub meeting and there was a subsequent discussion on establishing a “Hungarian Transition Hub”. Four activists plus the participant observer were present in an informal setting. The TRANSIT project was briefly introduced and notes were taken about the report the two activists presented and the subsequent discussion on the issue of hubs. Second, a meeting of mentors who participate in a project financed by the Norway Grant was attended. This project aims at mentoring and knowledge sharing among 14 transition initiatives in Hungary. Again, the TRANSIT project was briefly introduced, then extensive notes were taken about the discussion (mentors were reflecting upon each transition initiative and their work). Furthermore, this project granted access to the present researcher to all their internal documents, including mentors’ reports, self-evaluation of local initiatives, etc.

2.2.4 Document reviews

Transition Network and Transition Town Totnes

A wide range of documents were reviewed for the Transition Network and Transition Town Totnes cases. These included the websites, books, strategy documents, reports, academic literature annual reports and accounts. Details of these can be found in Annexe 1.

Transition Wekerle

The following documents were used as secondary sources in the preparation for the case study of the Hungarian local manifestation:

- Tarnai, M. (2010) Klímabarát Wekerle – egy fenntarthatósági kezdeményezés. (in Hungarian) Mimeo.
- Mester, Zs. (2013) Átalakuló Wekerle. (in Hungarian) Draft report, “Katalizátorok helyben – kisközösségek átalakulásban” Norway Grant project No. NCTA-2013-4182-M2.

transformative social innovation theory

3 Analysis of transnational network(ing) ²

3.1 Transnational networking: *The Transition movement*

The aims, goals and visions of Transition

At its essence, the Transition movement (TM) is a social movement consisting of individuals who mostly come together voluntarily in place based communities (Transition initiatives) to work on projects and activities that relate to the broad goal of achieving a transition. A recent definition of the vision of a transition, from the perspective of the TM is

...about the changes we need to make to get to a low-carbon, socially-just, healthier and happier future, which is more enriching and more gentle on the earth than the way most of us live today. In our vision of the future, people work together to find ways to live with a lot less reliance on fossil fuels and on over-exploitation of other planetary resources, much reduced carbon emissions, improved wellbeing for all and stronger local economies. The Transition movement is an ongoing social experiment, in which communities learn from each other and are part of a global and historic push towards a better future for ourselves, for future generations and for the planet. (Transition Network, 2014)

The movement as a whole then consists of a network of Transition Initiatives which have the overall aim of:

...actively and co-operatively creating happier, fairer and stronger communities, places that work for the people living in them and are far better suited to dealing with the shocks that'll accompany our economic and energy challenges and a climate in chaos. (Transition Network website)

Transition therefore is a model of community mobilisation that is intended to stimulate the emergence of projects that contribute to enhancing local economic resilience, partly through the development of parallel forms of infrastructure and through enrolling other actors (from ordinary citizens to political leaders) to work towards the overall goal of a transition.

The initial emergence of the Transition movement was very much motivated by the issue of 'peak oil'. Rob Hopkins was teaching Permaculture in Kinsale, Ireland, when he met Colin Campbell, a retired geologist who was a peak oil activist, part of a disparate 'outsider' movement arguing that global supplies of oil and related hydrocarbons were close to the point of maximum supply before entering an inevitable decline with profound consequences for humanity, particularly in the energy intensive global North. Influenced by these arguments, Hopkins worked with his students to develop an "Energy Descent Action Plan" for Kinsale which detailed how the town could adapt to life with less oil. This work provided the seeds for the Transition model, and following his return to the UK, Hopkins launched the Transition Town Totnes project in September 2006, along with another peak oil activist Naresh Giangrande. Since its inception, Transition has also positioned itself as a response to climate change, arguing that it is an approach that is relevant to both. Most recently, Hopkins (2014) positions Transition as a third alternative economic strategy to either 'Austerity' or the 'Green Deal' in other words "local resilience as economic development" (Hopkins,

² Research undertaken by Longhurst

transformative social innovation theory

2014). This increased focus on the economic justification and implications of Transition is one of the important ways in which the overall movement has changed since its inception.

In its current form, Transition can be seen to operate on at least three important levels: The first relates to the transformation of the beliefs and values of the participants themselves (sometimes characterised as ‘inner transition’). Secondly, the local initiatives work to strengthen the resilience of their specific locality, often characterised in terms of community or local economic resilience. This has emerged as an important concept within the movement. Thirdly, these initiatives are intended to act as a catalyst for wider change, by providing a form of community based leadership that empowers other actors to act:

The vital role that we need to perform at the local level is to lead by example, to get started without waiting for permission from anyone and show what’s possible: to model it in practice. (Hopkins, 2014)

This overall approach allows the Transition model to exist with a certain degree of ambiguity. It has what Hopkins describes as ‘edges’. An example would be the relationship between the Transition approach and more traditional forms of confrontational environmental activism. A core value of the Transition approach is that it attempts to cultivate a disposition of ‘engaged optimism’ where engagement with ‘mainstream’ actors such as local councils is actively encouraged. However, the extent to which Transition should engage in more oppositional forms of activism is an issue that remains open to debate both within and beyond the movement.³

Another important ‘edge’ is the relationship between ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ Transition, reflecting attention to both the manifestation of individual projects that attempt to create new systems of provision or services, and the way in which Transition also attempts to shift the values or beliefs of participants. This attention is reflected in the influence of eco-psychology on the core ideas of the movement, and in one of the mottos: that Transition is an approach that engages with ‘head, heart and hands.’ Whilst there is inevitably difference between how much participants are willing to engage with the processes of inner transition it was widely recognised as a critical element of the overall process and its integration with the more practical elements of Transition was perceived as one of the innovative elements of Transition. It is partly for this reason that Hopkins (2014, 64) describes how he now views Transition as a cultural process:

When we started Transition in the place I live, we thought of it as an environmental process, but now, after several years, we see it as a cultural process focused on what it will take to nudge the culture of a place to be best prepared for times of great uncertainty and change.

Therefore, whilst Transition aims at multi-faceted socio-technical transformation, it aims to do this through engendering a process of cultural change amongst both its immediate participants and the wider constituency who come into contact with the movement.

Evolution of the Transition movement

Following the establishment of TTT Transition Initiatives began to appear spontaneously, first in the UK, and then in other countries. Rob Hopkins describes the spread as like mycorrhizal fungus which pops up in places that you don’t expect

³ E.g. Cutler and Chatterton (2008)

transformative social innovation theory

An early example of that was in 2006, before there was any book out or anything, there was a video on You Tube of somebody in New Zealand in their local village hall, giving a talk about Transition and then someone put it up on You Tube, it was brilliant and they totally got it and understood the whole, it's like I'd never spoken to them, I didn't know who they were, they'd just got it from bits of blogs and bits of this, that and the other.

Interview with Rob Hopkins

The Transition movement has expanded over the last 8 years. There are now over 1,000 local initiatives across several continents and likely to be others doing work that is inspired by Transition which are not formally registered. That said, it is not also clear how many initiatives have slipped into 'hibernation'. The spread of the Transition model was facilitated by the internet and in particular the *Transition Culture* blog⁴ that Rob Hopkins wrote daily for the first couple of years of TTT and which developed a significant following and profile. Other social media such as You Tube, Facebook and coverage in 'old' media also contribute to spreading the model. Rob Hopkins attributes some of the success to the fact that it filled a vacuum in terms of a community based response to the "game changers" of peak oil and climate change:

I say it grew into a vacuum because there wasn't anything else, if people wanted to have a response to climate change or to peak oil, other than hunkering down with four years' of toilet roll and baked beans and firearms, there wasn't anything.

Interview with Rob Hopkins

The spread of the model was also facilitated by a Transition Training 'world tour' which, in late 2008 and early 2009, visited 7 different countries in 4 months, delivering a number of training sessions. The training team of Transition Network was established in order to pass on some of the principles and practices of Transition, whilst also providing a modest income stream for Transition Network. There is a perception, amongst the core activists at least, that it spread through the English speaking world first, before the ideas were translated into other languages, normally by volunteers who set up websites and translated key documents such as the primer into their native tongue. The first national hubs were established in Ireland and New Zealand in 2007. Since then over 20 hubs have been established and the hubs have emerged as a distinct level and set of actors within the overall movement. Since 2012 there have been annual meetings of the hubs, organised and supported by TN, which seek to support collaborative work, and explore their role their role in the movement and relationship with TN. Indeed, exactly what a national hub actually 'is' is something that is still under discussion, and was considered at length at the most recent hubs meeting in Denmark in September 2014. Whilst they are playing a growing role in the governance of the Transition movement as a whole (see section 2.3.1) the hubs also play an important role in the further spread of initiatives within their own specified territories. One important aspect of this international diffusion of the transition model is the different way in which it is being re-embedded in different territories. So for example, in Brazil it is being used as a community development tool within the *favelas*, a very different context to the primarily middle class community activist context of the UK:

⁴ Transition Culture (<http://transitionculture.org>) was ended as a standalone blog in 2013 and Rob Hopkins now blogs as one of several bloggers on the Transition Network website.

transformative social innovation theory

for some reason, this methodology, this practice is being taken up in the most bizarre and unusual circumstances that I could never, ever have imagined. Like there's like a rubber tapping community in the Amazon Basin that are using Transition approach as a way to think about how to make their community sustainable now and into the future.

There's groups in favelas in Brazil that are doing the same and then there's people in Los Angeles and some of the richest, most affluent of Western culture who are equally attracted in Santa Barbara. I remember one of the trainings, Transition Palm Springs, California, it's where Ronald Reagan retired to, ...blue rinse, golf club membership, Republican. It's like: what the hell is Transition doing there?

Interview with Naresh Giangrande

Whilst the movement is still spreading internationally the Transition Network Draft Strategy (2014) suggests that some older initiatives are struggling to maintain momentum. There are experiences of burn out and difficulties in getting new people involved which are not uncommon in community based activism. This has in part led to the creation of the *Transition: Thrive* training which is intended to support the ongoing development of existing initiatives as well as the development of further guidance to support the continuation of groups. Naresh Giangrande ascribes some of the problems to the way in which Transition has to engage with the dominant economic system and culture. He suggests that there are three categories of initiative: Those that are thriving and active, those that are 'ticking over' and those that have entered some kind of hibernation. Another important phenomenon is that of doughnut initiatives – TIs where there is project activity but no longer a core group that provides co-ordination across activities (See section 5.1).

One way in which the movement has evolved has been in terms of the increasing complexity of the network and sub-networks as they have developed over the years since the inception of the movement. In terms of understanding the relationship between the key different 'levels' of the movement, the Transition Network has developed the image contained within Figure 1 (below), which focuses on three specific levels: local initiatives, regional / national networks, and the Transition Network itself. It is worth quoting Hopkins and Lipman (2009, 13, emphasis in original) at length to explain the relevance of the image:

Various scales of initiatives emerge organically like spores in a petri dish at scales that feel most appropriate to them, guided by the Purpose and Principles of Transition, then network together in ways that feel most useful, creating the networks between each other they feel to be most productive. These are represented by the **circles of varying sizes within the main circle, larger ones** representing regional initiatives, and the **smaller circles** individual local initiatives.

Transition Network Ltd, in this context, becomes **the white encircling ring** surrounding the individual initiatives. It functions, in some ways, like a cell membrane, enshrining the Purpose and Principles common to the wider Transition Movement, and acts as a catalyst which keeps the circle expanding as the number of initiatives it contains grows. In biology, a cell membrane is created by the nucleus and the other contents of the cell, but it also defines the identity of the whole and grows with the cell. The role of the Transition Network Ltd then becomes to continue this catalysing function, to continually review and,

transformative social innovation theory

collaboratively, refine what Transition means, as well as enabling the maximum amount of networking.

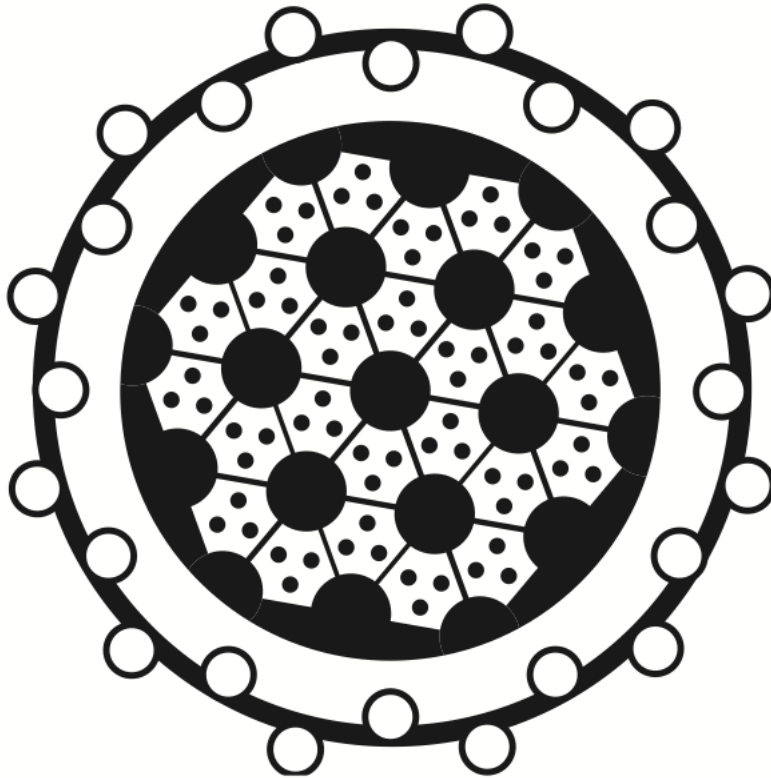


Figure 1: Diagram representing the Transition Movement

In terms of the direct Transition movement, one way to conceptualise it is as a multi-dimensional network that consists of individuals who subscribe to the broad ambition of a transition. Within the overall movement individuals can be part of one or more group or sub-network:

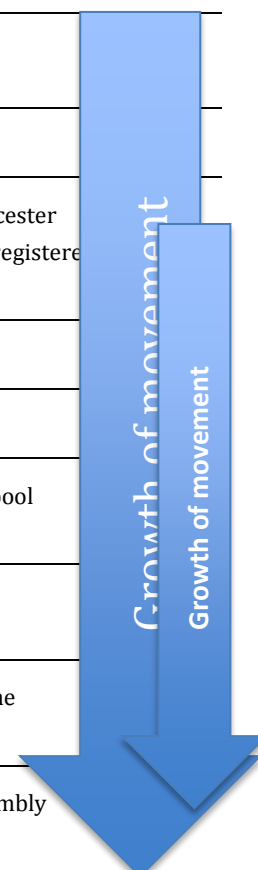
- A participant within a specific transition related project (normally geographically organised under the umbrella of a particular Transition Initiative).
- Member of a theme group (e.g. energy)
- Member of the 'core group' of a specific formally recognised Transition Initiative (the core group is responsible for the overall co-ordination of a TI).
- Trustee/Board member of a Transition Initiative (if a legally constituted organisation)
- Part of a formal regional Transition network
- A member of a formally organised National Hub
- Formally connected to Transition Network Ltd, either as a volunteer, member of staff or Trustee.
- Other associated networks, e.g. the network of academics who collaborate with the movement.

transformative social innovation theory

As this illustrates, the movement essentially consists of networks of individuals co-operating and working together in particular defined contexts, each which has its own specific set of 'rules' but which also embodies the wider Transition aims, values and processes.

Table 4: Time-line for development of Transition movement

Year / period	Important activities/changes/milestones in transnational networking of Transition Movement
October 2004	Rob Hopkins shows the film <i>The End of Suburbia</i> to a group of permaculture students in Kinsale, Eire and invites Colin Campbell in to speak to the students. The perceived threat of peak oil leads them to develop an Energy Descent Action Plan.
June 2005	Kinsale 2021: an Energy Descent Action Plan (EDAP) launched at conference in Kinsale.
2005	Rob Hopkins moves to Totnes and begins collaborating with Naresh Giangrande, another peak oil educator, on what a better version of the Kinsale EDAP might look like.
Sept 2006	After several months of preparation the Unleashing of Transition Town Totnes is held. 400 people attend a meeting at the Civic Hall in Totnes.
Nov 2006	Life after Oil Course held at Schumacher College. One attendee, Ben Brangwyn offers to help set up some kind of support organisation, which became Transition Network.
October 2007	First Transition Training event held in Totnes.
2007	First non-UK 'hub established in Republic of Ireland, followed by New Zealand.
2007	First Transition conference held in Stroud. Conferences have since been held in Cirencester (2008), London (2009), Devon (2010) and Liverpool (2011). Transition Network is registered Company Limited by Guarantee
2008	Transition Handbook is published.
2009	Transition Network is registered as a charity
2011	Transition Companion published. First informal meeting of Transition Hubs at Liverpool Transition Conference
March 2012	In Transition 2.0 Film Launched
2013	<i>The Power of Just Doing Stuff</i> published. Intended as a more 'mainstream' version of the Transition story.
July 2013	Rob Hopkins attends an event convened by the French President at the National Assembly in



Paris to discuss alternatives to economic growth.

3.2 Aspects of ‘innovation’ and ‘change’ of the transnational network(ing)

3.2.1 Relation with social innovation

Overall, the concept of social innovation does not appear to be a term that is widely used within the Transition movement, nor within the Transition Network. In fact there was some difference in opinion in relation to the connection between Transition and innovation. Hopkins suggests that Transition is actually a form of cultural innovation:

But over time it feels more and more like a cultural process because it’s about how do you shift the culture of a place, to be best prepared, to be most resilient in those times of uncertainty? And that looking at it as a cultural thing, I think is really interesting so for me it is a kind of a cultural innovation, there’s that analogy when we met and I did the thing with the, drew the mycorrhizal fungus, that actually it’s an innovation but part of its innovation is that it has this inbuilt sense of, in the first book that we call let it go where it want to go, it’s not like a Coca Cola franchise where you kind of let it go but you're clinging onto it desperately all the time and shaping what it is.

Interview with Rob Hopkins

Some other interviewees were more sceptical about the extent to which innovation was the right term to apply to Transition. For example, it was pointed out that certain aspect of Transition was the rediscovery of ‘lost’ disciplines and practices, through a process of ‘reskilling’:

[Innovation] doesn't in my mind sufficiently reflect the fact that in a lot of cases we're relearning what we've lost, it's not an innovation, it's a relearning, stuff around being hard wired for collaboration rather than competition, doing things around that, is that innovation or is that relearning some things that we've forgotten?

Interview with Ben Brangwyn

However, there was a general agreement that perhaps the most innovative aspect of Transition – and similar to the TRANSIT definition of social innovation – was the way in which it brings together different elements, its synthetic quality:

I think Transition is an innovation in that it’s a new synthesis of different things that have arisen in response to a particular set of challenges...So that felt like an innovation to me, creating that space, bringing in stuff from eco psychology, from a social enterprise, a whole very porous approach to bringing in from all different kinds of approaches.

Interview with Rob Hopkins

No. of initiatives

152

750

964

1120

transformative social innovation theory

Broadly, speaking this synthetic quality can be seen most clearly in the way that it brings together a set of ideas and narratives with a set of organisational processes in order to create an experimental space for new projects to emerge. Whilst the combination of these two important 'sides' of Transition is innovative, as a *narrative* and as a process of *community organising*:

- It is an *innovative narrative of societal change*. The Transition model is itself a narrative about how societal change can be facilitated by community mobilisation. To justify this approach it integrates a wide range of ideas including for example system thinking, permaculture and eco-psychology. In particular it attends to both outer (systemic) change and internal (personal) change. These ideas are materialised in books (mostly) authored by Rob Hopkins, on websites, in films and in other documents and forms of media.
- It is an *innovative process of community organising and engagement*: There is a great deal of attention to process within the Transition movement. The organisational practices inform not only how a Transition initiative itself should be organised, but also how projects should be managed and are reflected throughout the movement as a whole. There is also a focus on how meetings should be facilitated so that they are productive and engaging, drawing on a number of technologies including 'Open Space', 'fishbowls', 'World Cafes' and participatory decision making techniques. A further important aspect of the way in which Transition brings together elements in this dimension relates to the way that Transition pays attention to the 'inner' side of Transition. Therefore, Transition events are often sensitive to the emotional wellbeing of the participants and have a different 'feel' to conventional ways of meeting and organising.

Both the Transition narrative and the processes of organising are themselves synthetic, bringing together various ideas (in the case of the narrative) and techniques (in the case of the organising). However they are also combined to create experimental space for practical projects to emerge. Understood in this way, a Transition project can be identified not simply by designation, but because it embodies certain values and ideas and is organised in a particular way. Furthermore, these different elements of the model reinforce each other, so the ideas and principles of Transition get reproduced by the outputs of projects (e.g. documents, events), which also continue to carry the practices and also produce narratives and ideas (explicitly often in the form of visions of the future). Thus the narratives, processes and projects are self-reinforcing. Understood in this way, it is possible to perceive the way in which the different elements of Transition have diffused. Transition ideas can permeate into wider discourses (including the general spread of the idea and the 'model'). Transition practices can be adopted and used in different contexts, and Transition projects themselves can be replicated or scaled up.

3.2.2 Relation with system innovation

The leaders of the Transition movement tend to believe that it is explicitly focused on system innovation and system change, recognising that in this respect it is extremely ambitious and, in the words of Rob Hopkins, "Trying to change everything." [Interview]. This ambition is reflected in the fact that fundamentally, Transition – at least in the eyes of key advocates – is seeking fundamental societal change (see section 2.2.3) and this is anticipated to occur through a process of system change. Fundamentally, Transition initiatives are trying to change multiple systems – food, energy, transport, economic – so that they are more localised and, it is argued, resilient. Each local manifestation is therefore likely to have projects which touch on a number of different 'systemic'

transformative social innovation theory

domains and within which projects are attempting to either shift the extant system, or build a new parallel form of infrastructure.

The Transition model has a very explicit model of systemic change which contains a number of key elements. Firstly there is the role of visions. The role of visions and positive narratives has always been central to the Transition approach, and is one way in which it attempts to differentiate itself from other forms of environmental activism. It is hoped that positive visions of what a post-carbon society might look like will act as a means of enrolling participants to contribute to the development of Transition related projects. Consequently, the production of these positive visions is also a key part of the practical work of Transition. Energy Descent Action Plans and similar kinds of documents therefore represent a collectively produced vision of what a particular locality might look like during and after a process of Transition. More generally, positive stories of change are an integral part of the discourse of the movement as a whole.

A section important aspect of the model is that it is fundamentally a model of citizen led change, that “local action can change the world” (Hopkins 2014). The Transition movement often invokes the idea of ‘unleashing the genius with the local community’. In doing so, the mechanism of change is expected to operate at multiple levels. Firstly, there is the practical work that involves the reconfiguration of local systems, such as local energy or food projects. If successful these are intended to change the materiality of local infrastructure in a direction that resonates with the Transition approach. Secondly, there is change at the level of the individual members of the community. In this sense, many kinds of Transition projects can be understood as forms of behaviour change intervention. For example, *Transition Streets* a model of collective, street-by-street action to work with neighbours in order to understand and reduce your energy consumption. This attention to individual change is also reflected in the Transition model’s attention to processes of inner change. Here then, it is argued that unless there is a shift in values and culture then there is little point in simply building new ‘green’ infrastructure. Transition aims to ‘change the stories that people have inside their heads’ (Interview with Peter Lipman). The third ‘level’ at which Transition attempts to influence change is at the wider societal level. Whilst it places a great deal of emphasis on the potential of citizen led change, it also recognises that this is unlikely to precipitate complete and utter transformation. Therefore the work of Transition Initiatives is supposed to give other actors in the system – those with potentially more influence and control, particularly in relation to the economic and political systems – the courage to act. At its heart then, the Transition model of change sees systemic change as being precipitated by changing people and in a way reflects the way that the model brings together insights from addiction theory and eco-psychology with a systems based approach.

The Transition model has always been explicit about the fact that it was intended to be an experimental process, with a ‘cheerful disclaimer’ that there was no guarantee that it would work, but that it was better to do something rather than nothing, in the face of the perceived threats of climate change and peak oil. As the movement has grown so too has the model evolved. This is perhaps not surprising, as it has been likened to a form of open source software insofar as it can be used and adapted (Hopkins 2014, 49).

transformative social innovation theory

The Transition model was first set out as '12 steps' in Hopkins' (2008) *Transition Handbook*. The purpose of these 12 Steps was to guide the establishment of a Transition Initiative and steer it towards the production of an Energy Descent Action Plan (EDAP). The notion of '12 steps' resonated with the ideas of a recovery from 'addiction' to oil and the psychological insights that informed the first iteration of the model. The *Transition Handbook* was followed up with *The Transition Companion* (2011). This redefined the process of Transition in a much less prescriptive way. Instead of 12 steps the approach is inspired by pattern language and instead offers a set of 21 'tools for transition' which can be adopted and combined in a more flexible way as 'ingredients', organised under four broad headings: Starting out; Deepening; Connecting; and Building.

Box 1: The Twelve Steps of Transition (see Hopkins, 2008)

1. Set up a steering group and design its demise from the outset
2. Raise awareness
3. Lay the foundations
4. Organise a Great Unleashing
5. Form groups
6. Use Open Space
7. Develop visible practical manifestations of the project
8. Facilitate the Great Reskilling
9. Build the bridge to local government
10. Honour the Elders
11. Let it go where it wants to go
12. Create an Energy Descent Plan

Several of the tools in the 'Building' category relate to the economic side of Transition, a dimension that has, for various reasons, become increasingly prominent in recent years. Firstly, Transition has positioned itself as a solution not only to peak oil and climate change, but, since the global economic crisis of 2008, also to economic instability. Thus, as noted above, Hopkins (2014) positions the local economic resilience proposed by Transition as an alternative to either austerity or capitalist led Green Deal strategies. Secondly, increasing attention has been paid to the viability and effectiveness of TIs and their projects. There has been a growing recognition that the effectiveness and longevity of Transition Initiatives and projects can be limited by a reliance on voluntary labour. There has therefore been an increasing focus on the potential of social enterprises, co-operatives, community own businesses and other forms of micro-enterprise that enable transitioners to earn a livelihood whilst also contributing to the Transition. This shift is reflected in the emergence of the *REconomy* project which explicitly focuses on the economic side of Transition. Best understood as a 'spinout project' of Transition as a whole, it has worked with some UK initiatives (including Totnes) on issues relating to local economic resilience.⁵

3.2.3 Relation with game-changers

As already mentioned, the Transition movement positions the model as part of the solution to addressing three different game changers: climate change, peak oil and the global economic crisis.

⁵ See <http://reconomy.org/> last accessed 17 May 2017.

transformative social innovation theory

These game changers are all very important in terms justifying the rationale for why the Transition model is necessary and relevant. What is notable is the way in which the emphases on these has varied over time as the movement shifts the way in which it is perceived to respond to specific problems.

As detailed in section 1 the Transition model was first developed as a response to the perceived threat of peak oil. In its early phase TTT and its activists became key actors within the peak oil social movement. In this sense they were important in producing the discourse around peak oil and 'raising awareness' around this particular game changer. In the first iteration of the model, there was an emphasis on 'educating' people in relation to the issue of peak oil, e.g. through showing of films such as *The End of Suburbia*. The first Transition Handbook had a significant section on peak oil and the implications of it, arguing that it made some kind of 'energy descent' inevitable, with the choice only relating to how this might unfold. The Transition model therefore used the idea of depleting hydrocarbons as an opportunity to build a better world. The Transition Handbook argued that Transition was a response to both peak oil and climate change, two issues that were often treated separately.

In the first few years the Transition movement formed close links with other elements of the peak oil movement, for example writers such as Richard Heinberg and peak oil forums such as the [now dormant] *Oil Drum* website.⁶ During this period Rob Hopkins himself became a key figure in the peak oil movement and whilst direct causality is very difficult to prove, it seem likely that the growth of the Transition movement did contribute to the wider spread of the discourse around this particular game changer. For example, some UK local councils made statements around peak oil, and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Peak Oil and Gas was formed in June 2007. In recent years the peak oil movement appears to have declined and Transition has also reduced the focus it places on peak oil. Whilst Transition has always positioned itself as a solution to climate change the dominant focus has shifted from peak oil to the global economic crisis and the way in which this has manifested itself in the UK over the last few years as a programme of economic austerity. Positioning Transition as a solution to the economic crisis not only ties in with the focus on localisation and economic resilience but also reinforces the argument that it offers a different approach to economic development, one which is ecologically sound and an alternative to consumer capitalism.

3.2.4 Relation with societal transformation

The Transition movement does have clear objectives for contributing towards a societal transformation. It is the end goal for many of the activists to achieve some kind of transformation to a post-capitalist, post-fossil fuel world. In essence this is a fairly radical vision, arguing for the end of what one of the interviewees called the "industrial growth complex". This would be replaced by more localised, convivial and personal forms of economic exchange, of the kind envisaged by more radical approaches to community economic development. Various aspects of consumer capitalism, such as the promotion of individualism are critiqued within Transition discourses.

⁶ <http://www.theoil drum.com> Archived in Sept 2013.

transformative social innovation theory

Whilst this vision of societal transformation is clearly held by some Transition actors – including those at the centre of the network – it is actually something that not actually always made explicit. In other words, the goal of a post-capitalist societal transformation is not often articulated as the end goal of Transition. Instead such goals are normally couched in relation to the economic resilience of a particular locality, or, more recently, in relation to the wellbeing of the community. The fact that this overall aim is not widely articulated means that Transition initiatives can work with a range of partners on projects without seemingly being seen as some kind of insurgent force that is trying to destabilise current forms of social order. Indeed the disjunction between some of the everyday activities that are supported by Transition initiatives and the systemic activities have led some critics to question whether Transition is able to achieve the kinds of transformation that it seeks. This relates to a wider set of criticisms of the model's approach to change, and whether it does not fully recognise questions of power and politics. In responding to these critiques, Rob Hopkins argues that activities like community gardening are like a 'gateway drug' which draw people in to seemingly innocuous activities before radicalising them (interview). However, this on-going disjunction – between the unthreatening presentation of Transition and its ultimately radical goal – is one of the interesting tensions within the movement as a whole.

The process of societal transformation is envisaged to occur through the processes outlined in 2.2.3 notably through the spread of the model and the various ways in which it attempts to influence actors and stimulate a cultural shift as well as a shift in socio-technical systems. More recently network actors have become interested in the 'Theories of Change' that underpin the model and which inform its potential to stimulate societal transformation. In July 2013 a "Transition Network Learning Day on Theories of Change" was held in Bristol in which various theories of change were explored, including systemic theories such as resilience theory and sustainability transition theory; theories relating to community engagement and resilience, and; theories relating to personal change such as psychosynthesis models of the human psyche. The breadth of theory is again a reflection of the ambition of change which Transition is attempting to stimulate and a recognition that different 'levels' have different mechanisms. More recently, at the Transition Hubs meeting in Copenhagen in September 2014, there was also interest in a deeper exploration of the theories of change that can support the Transition model, including a multi-level perspective (MLP) analysis of the development of Transition in Israel.⁷ Whilst not all Transition participants are interested in exploring these issues, this thread of activity does suggest that some within the movement are seeking to find ways models that show how Transition Initiatives can link to wider processes of societal change. In part this may be motivated by the fact that it has become evident that Transition projects can struggle in the face of pressure from the incumbent systems, particularly the capitalist political economy:

I think there's a real tension between making things work in the world, in the systems, particularly in the capitalist system as we know it and making them work now so setting up the Transition businesses/enterprises that have to work within a capitalist model or else they're not going to survive and at the same time, thinking "This isn't quite the solution", so working in that kind of messy, change way that the reality is you need to, people need to create jobs and earn a living today and here and now but at the same time, can't be so idealistic as to create enterprises that just don't work within the present model. So it's how

⁷ The MLP is one of the theoretical approaches which underpinned the original TRANSIT project framework.

transformative social innovation theory

the vision fits in with the messy everyday reality of the here and now and that's a real tension that exists everywhere.

Interview with Naresh Giangrande

3.2.5 Relation with narratives of change

Narratives of change are a very important part of Transition. As already suggested, the model itself *is* an innovative narrative of change, offering a particular story about how citizen led change can contribute to economic resilience and wellbeing and how such a change is urgent and necessary. In this sense it part of a wider narrative of change that calls for a similar large scale transformation in the way that society is organised such as which also often emphasise the need for cultural change.⁸ Similarly, on the economic side, whilst not always explicit, the Transition narrative of change has affinities with post-capitalist or degrowth narratives of change (e.g. Jackson, 2011).

The articulation of a positive narrative of change in the form of stories about Transition in action or visions for the future has always been seen as an important element of the Transition approach, and one of the main factors that can enrol new participants. This remains a key focus, and at the network level there has been a recent focus on ensuring that the story that “People within and beyond Transition movement hear a clear, consistent and compelling story of Transition that inspires them to act, connect and experiment.”

The production of place specific narratives of change are also an important part of the Transition approach. A central aspect of the Transition model of social change is that positive visions of a (post-carbon) future are an important part of realising the transition towards them. This is reflected in the early emphasis on the development of Energy Descent Action Plans (EDAPs) that provided a forward-looking timeline for how a transition might take place. They are seen as key elements of the Transition process, offering inspiration and an indication of what a future society might look like.

3.3 Aspects of empowerment and disempowerment of the transnational network

Enrolment of actors

At the level of the transnational movement the focus is on supporting the emergence and survival of new initiatives. This is mostly done by providing resources, support and information in a reactive way especially via the Transition Network website, which in a sense operate as the hub of the whole movement. In the year between March 2012 and March 2013 the website had 403,280 visits, 1,182,360 page views and 13,690 downloads. The e-newsletter was distributed to 15,000 people in March 2013. The internet and various forms of communication channel have helped the

⁸ See also Joanna Macy's call for A Great Turning. <http://www.joannamacy.net/thegreatturning.html> Her deep ecology thinking has been an influence on the Transition model.

transformative social innovation theory

Transition movement to grow. Transition Network has a 'web strategy' and, in keeping with its own values and approach, favours open source software over proprietary.

In terms of pro-actively encouraging new initiatives, this occurs primarily through the production and circulation of information and stories relating to Transition. It was noted above, that *Transition Culture* – Rob Hopkins' personal blog – was important in diffusing the idea of Transition in the first few years. Rob is now one of several bloggers who write on the TN website. The model is also promoted through old media including books and films and news items about Transition on Radio, TV and in newspapers, despite the fact that TN has only ever issued one press release. Social media is also used to promote the movement and model including You Tube, Twitter and Facebook.

Co-operation with other partners

Beyond Totnes, there are a number of connections between Transition and other movements and organisations. Clearly, there is a certain degree of complexity to this and connections with other actors can occur at any given level of sub-network detailed in section 3.1 above. Further, often these connections are interpersonal. Despite this, a few overall trends can be observed.

Firstly, the Transition movement has strong overlaps with the permaculture⁹ movement. Many of the principles of permaculture have been incorporated into the Transition approach, and Rob Hopkins is a trained permaculture teacher. Despite this, he sees them as separate and complementary movements. To date, there have been few formal links between the movements although there were some discussions about collaborating on conferences in 2015. However, there is no doubt that at an informal level there are significant overlaps, for example, several of the National Hub representatives at the 2014 Copenhagen meeting had a background in permaculture. Other important affinities include links with the wider peak oil movement, although this movement has declined in prominence in parallel with both the salience of the issue, and with Transition's own emphasis on it. The Chair of TN, Peter Lipman is co-founder of the "Communities and Climate Action Alliance" (CCAA) a movement of community based approaches to climate change of which Transition is a part.

Ben Brangwyn one of the key actors within the movement, suggested the term 'Transformational Change arena' to describe the field in which Transition operates. He cited example of other movements such as *350*, *Positive Money*, and *Incredible Edible* as operating within this context. Similarly, then, collaborations with NGOs that work to achieve systemic transformation can also be observed. For example the *new economics foundation* and the *Soil Association* (a charity support organic production) in the UK where Patrick Holden, the former Director, was critical in supporting Transition in its early years. Likewise in some other countries (such as Sweden) NGOs have played an important role in the diffusion of the model, particularly where they have played a role in the establishment of the National Hub.

⁹ Permaculture is an ecological design approach that is often, but not exclusively, used with a focus on food production (Mollison, 1997).

transformative social innovation theory

A Transition focused academic network has also emerged and has collaborated with TN on a number of different projects.¹⁰ TN also collaborates with Schumacher College and Gaia University on educational courses.

Impact of Transition

Overall impact

The impact of Transition is so multi-faceted that it is very difficult to measure. The impact that being involved in Transition has on the participants would need to be investigated in detail, either through quantitative surveys or more in-depth qualitative studies. This depth of research only happens in rare occasions, often where such analyses are a condition of the funding (see *Transition Streets* behaviour change project for example). The overall impact of the movement has been the spread of the model and the uptake of it by actors in many countries. What the impact of this has been, in the immediate locality and further afield, is less clear. From the data that has been gathered some broader tentative impacts can be observed which can be related to the three main areas of innovation:

Discursive impacts (Impact of the discourse of Transition)

One dimension of impact relates to the way in which the ideas that are espoused by the movement have had a wider impact. Some tangible examples include:

- The most obvious impact of the discourse is the spread of the movement itself.
- Contributing to the publicization of the issue of peak oil, particularly in the second half of the 2000s.
- Promoting the concept of a societal 'Transition' e.g. UK Low Carbon Transition Plan was influenced by Transition movement according to Bridges (2012).
- Making an argument that communities can make a contribution to solving environmental problems, influencing funders and governments and being held up as a positive example in environmental literature.
- Contributing to the broader discourse around the sustainability of capitalist development and possible alternatives.
- Promoting an ethic of experimentalism in the face of complex societal problems.

Impact of organisational practices and culture of Transition.

The impact of the way that Transition has attempted to pioneer new forms of organisation and a different kind of organisational culture may have had some observable effects for example:

- It is possible that the way that Transition runs its events has influenced participants to take these processes and values to new contexts. For examples, participants at a *Caring Town Totnes* meeting spoke of how the way it was organised was liberating and more open than the conventional organisational cultures that they were used to.

¹⁰ <http://www.transitionresearchnetwork.org>

transformative social innovation theory

- Transition actors see similarities in the way that other movements have developed, e.g. Incredible Edible and the Grow-it-Yourself movement in Ireland, suggesting that they have been inspired by the Transition model and are following a similar model.
- Pioneering a different kind of conference which again might influence participants, e.g. the use of open space and ‘unconference’ type approaches.

Impacts of innovative projects

The projects are the focus of Transition and are in a sense where the impact is supposed to take place. Again the impact of specific projects is difficult to ascertain.

- The impact of the movement as a whole has been to create space for various kinds of sustainability experiment to emerge. Some of these have then travelled across different Transition Initiatives. Others have spun out into separate organisations. The impact of any one of these particular projects would need to be assessed in a case by case basis.
- The movement has created some larger projects which have become well known and examples of social innovation in their own right. For example Brixton Energy or the Bristol Pound community currency.
- Transition initiated energy projects in the UK playing a role in the growth of the community energy sector in the last decade.
- The UK’s top 20 Transition orientated social enterprises combined to turnover £3.5m and employed over 100 people (2013).

Empowerment

Empowerment here is understood as the aspects of Transition that encourage participants to get involved and contribute towards the overall goals of the movement. There are a number of overlapping aspects to this. Individuals and activists are empowered by the *narrative* of the model which is a positive articulation of the efficacy of civic involvement and community activism, suggesting that it is possible to reconfigure local systems and stimulate wider change. As one interviewee noted, the adage ‘Think Global, Act Local’ resonates with the Transition movement. It offers a ‘big’ vision of societal change that can be achieved through the culmination of lots of small, local actions. This encourages people to both establish Transition Initiatives and to participate in them. Empowerment also occurs through the provision of tools in order to organise the initiative and the various sub-projects. This is a dimension of empowerment that is very much at the TN level and is manifested in various guide, handbooks, advice and instructions. Empowerment also occurs through adherence to subsidiarity and collective decision making where possible. The recent power shift towards the national hubs is reflective of a process of empowering them to take a greater role in the direction of the movement.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the empowerment is the way in which it provides an experimental space for new ideas and projects to emerge, where people can follow their own interests:

I think it presents a context, it gives a context within which people say things like, “I’ve wanted to do this project for 15 years and now finally I feel I can do it”, [which creates] a

transformative social innovation theory

context within which people feel they can have a go at things. I think there's a study that I remember reading about a few years ago, that showed that the more solar panels get put on roofs in a town, the more people want to install solar panels, there's like a positive reinforcement that starts to build and I think there's an element of that as well, people can see things going on around them, that sense that the things are changing and things are moving is very addictive, so I think that's part of it, your project sits in the context of other projects that are also moving forward, so if you're involved with Totnes Renewable Energy Society, you can see that Transition Homes is moving forward, you can see that ATMOS is moving forward, you can see the food hubs moving forward, you've got Totnes Pounds in your wallet, you feel there's something connected that's moving, I think that's one side of it.

Interview with Rob Hopkins

Transition gives the participants the permission to experiment. It does this by embracing the possibility of failure and not placing excessive demands on the success of projects and providing a supportive collective space for experimentation. One interviewee also suggested that by combining the inner and the outer it also provided a space for different kinds of participation and both 'masculine and feminine energy' which is also empowering.

3.3.1 Governance

3.3.1.1 Internal governance

The Transition movement is internally governed by the Transition Network Ltd, a registered charity in the United Kingdom. When it was first set up, following a meeting between Rob Hopkins, Ben Brangwyn and Peter Lipman, who subsequently became the chair, in Bristol in 2007, the core aim of the Transition Network was very simple: "This looks like it might be a useful idea, can we help it spread?" (Interview with Peter Lipman). As noted above, the establishment of the Network was in part a response to the unexpected level of interest and enquiries about Transition that had been directed to the Totnes project and Rob Hopkins in particular as the Transition idea spread:

It has changed because Transition Network originally was set up, its founding thing was to protect me because at that time, the first time I met Ben [Brangwyn] and I gave a talk he said, "You look like a man standing underneath a tsunami" and that's what it felt like. So that was what Transition, Ben's role was, "You fend that off", so Transition Network was built initially as an organisation around giving me some protection.

Interview with Rob Hopkins

In a recent strategy document TN outlined four key roles that it fulfils within the wide movement:

1. Holding the Transition Source Code.
2. Catalysing and supporting the spread of Transition internationally.
3. Co-ordinating and Supporting the National Hubs Network.

transformative social innovation theory

4. Acting as the UK National Hub.

Transition Network undertakes a number of network specific activities in its aspiration to be a 'catalyst' for the Transition movement (Hopkins and Lipman, 2009):

- **Training** Training has always been an important part of the Transition model. Transition Training was one of the ways in which the model originally diffused internationally. TN oversees the training activities of the movement including accrediting trainers and expanding the training function via 'train the trainer' activities.
- **Communication** e.g. via the website.
- **Media** Supporting the development of the two Transition films. Publication of Transition related books (in partnership with Green Books).
- **Tools** Providing a suite of resources that can be used by TIs. Providing guidance on the steps that can be taken by different TIs.
- **Consulting** A separate company does Transition consulting, including Oil Vulnerability Analysis – a tool developed early on in TTT.
- **Research** Co-ordinating and supporting research into the Transition movement. There is separate research network which involves academics sympathetic to the Transition movement.
- **Events** Organising conferences and other one off events
- **Providing support** especially at the national and regional level

These roles and aims outline the way that TN attempts to support the development of the movement whilst also maintaining some kind of control over the core tenets of what Transition entails. TN attempts to ensure that Transition is a non-prescriptive process, for example one of the principles set out in the first handbook was 'let it go where it wants to go'. Hopkins (2014, 48) emphasises the diversity of practice that this allows to flourish:

The Transition approach is self-organising and people led. It looks different everywhere it emerges, yet is recognizably Transition. You'll find it in Bellingham, Bologna, Bristol and Brazil. It's a social experiment on a huge scale. It's also great fun. And it really doesn't matter whether you call it Transition or not.

However, it is clear that there are some boundaries to the experimental space that is created, and there is a certain degree of structure and prescription within the core texts and guidelines on how to run a TI and which allow things to be recognisable as 'Transition' related (Alloun and Alexander, 2014). For example Hopkins and Lipman (2009) outline seven core principles of Transition:

1. Positive Visioning
2. Help people to access good information and trust them to make good decisions
3. Inclusion and Openness
4. Enable sharing and networking
5. Build resilience
6. Inner and Outer transition
7. Subsidiarity: self-organisation and decision making at the appropriate level

The 'boundaries' of Transition are maintained in a number of ways including through the principles that the official TIs are expected to adhere to, and the Memorandum of Understanding

transformative social innovation theory

that National Hubs are encouraged to sign up to. Policing the boundaries of what constitute 'Transition' has become a key role of the TN, what is described as protecting the 'DNA' or 'Source code' of Transition. Overall, the principles and guidelines are intended to give a certain degree of flexibility but keep initiatives true to the overall ambition of Transition.

The Transition Network has itself evolved significantly since its inception in 2007. What started as a fairly loose group of activists who functioned in a fairly reactive way, has become more professionalised, strategic and internationally focussed in more recent years:

We've become much more strategic about how we work, we've taken the time to step back and really think about how we work and what we want to do and what our priorities are because for what we're, our ideas and our plans were a very small organisation. Funding has become much more kind of figured out, we've become more mature as an organisation, we have different roles and different jobs.

In the early days Ben [Brangwyn] would come in with an idea one morning and we'd all go, "Yeah, great, let's go, let's do it" and so we were like a business start-up, you have to ride by the seat of your pants and to some extent reaction or pro-act and just suck it and see and put it out.

Interview with Naresh Giangrande

In 2012 TN undertook an internal review, in 2013 adopted a new staff structure, and in 2014 published its first formal strategy. The appointment of Sarah McAdam as delivery director in 2013 is also illustrative of this growing professionalism and organisational maturity whereby staff roles are more specialised and formalised. However, despite these changes, TN continues to embody core Transition values, such as alternating between 'doing' and 'being' meetings as a way of attending to the wellbeing and personal resilience of its employees. As an organisation it attempts to embody many of the principles that are advocated within the wider movement, as well as adopting the same kinds of organisational practices that are associated with Transition.

I think we've had in Transition Network, we've had ongoing enquiry into being and doing and how we can model and actually embody the principles of balance that we seek to create, in terms of a healthy culture and how do we do that in transition.

Interview with Naresh Giangrande

Whilst decision-making is ultimately the responsibility of the board, it does operate by a principle of subsidiarity. As they have risen in prominence the National Hubs have become increasingly involved in decision-making leading to a kind of 'power shift'. A 'hubs representative' has now been elected onto the board and TN attempts to involve them in decision terms of its own work and priorities such as the development of its recent strategy. A number of hubs 'working groups' have been established including 'What is a hub?' and 'Decision making'. These involve groups of hub representatives and TN staff working collaboratively on key issues over the course of a year between the Hubs meeting. For example, a working group of the national hubs has developed a new decision making process that was used at the Copenhagen meeting that is based on participatory principles. Whilst the relationship between TN and the hubs is still evolving, it is evident that TN is ceding a certain degree of control to the Hubs.

transformative social innovation theory

3.3.1.2 External governance

TN is established as a charity under UK law and is therefore subject to governance by the Charity Commission. This involves the submission of an annual report and accounts which are available publically. Beyond this there is not much specific external governance, apart from adhering to the various laws of the countries in which TIs participate.

3.3.2 Social learning

The Transition Network uses the terms *learning community* and *learning network* to describe the movement as a whole. This is in keeping with the experimental, collaborative nature of the movement which has a strong focus on experiential learning via the project activity:

We use this term, “A learning network”, quite a lot and so I think that learning network comes through the training, that the training is always trying to reinvent and add new things into the training. It’s what we try and do with the website, there’s the editorial stuff that I do, I just try and gather people’s stories and experiences, the conference that we do, getting all those people together and trying to distil out what people have learned, the films that we made, again just built off people’s stories, a lot of what I do is really being a kind of story-teller in residence, gathering up those stories and putting them out in different ways.

Interview with Rob Hopkins

A key role of TN is therefore to act as the hub of this network, particularly through the website where the blogs and monthly updates provide news on the experiences of other Initiatives. Recently the blogs have had a monthly topical theme such as ‘impact’ or ‘health’. Other forms of media such as the *Transition Free Press* – a quarterly newspaper that contains news of Transition related interest. These different channels are used to not only to celebrate the successes of the movement but sometimes the failures too, such as some Transition Initiatives that have experienced developmental problems such as Oxford and Brighton.

Another important aspect of the learning within the movement has been the Transition Training. This was established fairly early on in the movement’s history and has been a key way in which knowledge about how Transition should be enacted is passed on to new participants. One way in which the training capacity of the movement is increased is via the training of trainers, especially in countries where Transition is growing and which enables more training to be delivered within that territory. As well as the practicalities of setting up TIs and projects, the training also covers group dynamics as well as the inner aspects of Transition. In recent years further training courses have been developed. In 2012 a new course *Transition: Thrive* was developed to cater for longer standing initiatives that need guidance on how to sustain or further develop their initiative. This sits alongside *Transition: Launch*, the training that new initiatives are encouraged to send core group members to. Other courses that have been developed include *Resilient Food Systems*, and the *Art of Wellbeing*.

A further aspect of learning is the way in which particular projects learn from each other. Like a lot of the learning within the Transition movement this is informal, but can definitely be seen within

transformative social innovation theory

the Transition currencies where the experiences of the early models has informed the later ones (Longhurst, 2011). The experiences of different initiatives is also shared through the Transition Network website which has a 'project sharing engine' which allows initiatives to share their projects via a widget. It also hosts the Transition Social Reporters who blog about Transition.

Another relevant sub-network is an academic network that has developed with a strong affiliation and interest in Transition. This actively supports academic research into Transition related topics and activities with the intention that it should somehow contribute to the overall aims and objectives of Transition. From a very early stage Transition attempted to encourage a reciprocal rather than exploitative relationship with researchers who were seeking to access TIs for the purposes of their academics interests. TN also collaborates with Schumacher College and Plymouth University on an Economics for Transition Masters degree, and with Gaia University on a Leadership in Transition diploma.

3.3.3 Resources

As has already been mentioned, TN provides a lot of resources for its members via the Transition Network website and the other materials produce. These resources primarily take the form of knowledge and guidance relating to how to instigate Transition related activities. Transition also provides a recognisable 'brand' and access to a supportive network of likeminded activists. Beyond this, the Transition movement is primarily resourced through the unpaid labour of volunteers who run the TIs, the projects which they instigate and some of the transnational networking activities. Some TIs – such as TTT – have managed to secure funding for their work which provide some paid capacity. Since its inception TN has been able to secure funding to provide it with a core staff capacity. Funding started with a grant from Tudor Trust, a UK based charitable trust who supported the early development of the network. Following the internationalisation of the movement the funding is now more international in its nature and TN sees itself as operating in a global 'market' for funding, focused on supporting the spread of Transition to other countries:

The funding is pretty much, our primary funding comes from organisations that are very, very globally focused and want us to deal with and deal with things at a global level and were initially attracted to us because we have a global focus.

Interview with Ben Brangwyn

Whilst the funding that TN receives is mostly used for its own staff and operating costs, some funding does flow down from it to other parts of the Network. For example, there has been a pot of 'capacity building' funding which has been distributed to some of the National Hubs. Some funding is also attached to specific projects such as in the case of REconomy. The issue of funding has always been a significant one and one that is a recurrent issue raised by both TIs and the Hubs. However, some of the network actors are not convinced that it is simply a matter of throwing more money at the movement in order to make it work:

When me and Pete [Lipman, TN chair] went to America, we went to this big funding event in New Orleans, one guy came up and said, "What would it take to make Transition really grow and happen everywhere? I'd say billions of dollars" and we said "No, more like millions of dollars because it's not something that you can just throw money at", it's not like

transformative social innovation theory

a campaign where the more money you throw at it, the bigger it's going to get, it's something that if you threw a load of money at it, you would just as likely kill it as make it grow.

Interview with Rob Hopkins

This was echoed by interviewees who pointed out how money can change the dynamics of relationships, and that not all the project activity necessarily needs a great deal of funding.

3.3.4 Monitoring and evaluation

Within the Transition movement as a whole, monitoring and evaluation is something that is often carried out at the project level, e.g. the Transition Streets project in Totnes that worked on a street-by-street basis to support residents in reducing their energy consumption. Transition Network itself does carry out some monitoring and evaluation. Examples include feedback from participants on training courses, monitoring website usage, and carrying out some surveys. There is an awareness within the organisation that there is a need to gather evidence of the impact of the work and they have been collaborating with the University of Oxford on a Monitoring and Evaluation framework for low carbon community groups which will provide a more structured approach for collecting and making use of qualitative and quantitative feedback.

4 Local initiative 1: *[Transition Town Totnes]*¹¹

4.1 Overview of development in the local initiative

Overall the development of Transition Town Totnes can broadly be delineated into two different phases. The first phase covers the period from the launch up to the production of the Totnes EDAP (2010). During the first phase the project broadly followed the original 12 steps that are set out in the *Transition Handbook*. The second phase reflects how TTT has evolved since this initial phase, what one local activist called the “13th Step”. Part of this involved focusing efforts on what have been described as ‘catalyst projects’, those projects that have the potential to have wider impacts and support a range of other activities. Examples include the Totnes Pound local currency and ATMOS (see below). One important development during this phase is that the founders have generally stepped back from day to day involvement in TTT and are now either involved primarily in projects or within Transition Network. One interviewee perceived that the height of local interest in Transition locally was 2009/10 and it has now entered a new phase of stability and maturity where it is seen as part of the local establishment, along with the local councils etc.

¹¹ Research undertaken by Longhurst

transformative social innovation theory

Table 5: Time-line of the development of Transition Town Totnes

Year / period	Important activities/changes/milestones in local initiative
October 2004	Rob Hopkins shows the film <i>The End of Suburbia</i> to a group of permaculture students in Kinsale, Eire and invites Colin Campbell in to speak to the students. The perceived threat of peak oil leads them to develop an Energy Descent Action Plan.
June 2005	Kinsale 2021: an Energy Descent Action Plan launched at conference in Kinsale. Over following months 500 copies were sold.
2005	Rob Hopkins moves to Totnes and begins collaborating with Naresh Giangrande, another peak oil educator, on what a better version of the Kinsale EDAP might look like.
Sept 2006	After several months of preparation the “Unleashing” of Transition Town Totnes is held. 400 people attend a meeting at the Civic Hall in Totnes.
Nov 2006	Life after Oil Course held at Schumacher College. One attendee, Ben Brangwyn offers to help set up some kind of support organisation, which became Transition Network.
Nov 2006	Energy Open Space in which the Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC) was first mooted.
May 2007	First phase of the Totnes Pound local currency launched.
Nov 2007	TRESOC registered as an Industrial and Provident Society.
2009	Transition Streets project launched
2010	TTT receives funding as part of the UK government funded <i>Low Carbon Communities</i> programme.
May 2010	Totnes Energy Descent Action Plan (EDAP) is launched
Jan 2011	Frances Northrop appointed as Transition in Action manager
2012	TTT involved in campaign against opening a Costa Coffee outlet in Totnes
October 2012	Totnes Local Economic Blueprint launched
Sept 2013	REconomy Centre opens
Oct 2013	‘Totnes Welfare Conference’ held which initiates the Caring Town Totnes project.
Oct 2014	Part of ATMOS site purchased for 1 Totnes Pound and contract signed with strong element of community control over the design and development.



transformative social innovation theory

Transition Town Totnes currently lists the following areas of *Theme group* and associated projects:

- Building, Housing and Energy
 - Good Energy Partnership
 - Harberton Energy Savers
 - Keeping Totnes warm
 - Open Eco-homes and Eco-Homes Fair
 - Planning Action Group
 - Transition Homes
 - Transition Streets
 - Energy Descent Action Plan
- Education
- Food Group
 - Food-Link project
 - Food Hub
 - Follaton Forest Garden
 - Gardenshare
 - Incredible Edible
 - Nut Tree Planting
 - Seedy Sisters
- Free Skillshare project
- Inner Transition
 - Mentoring and Wellbeing Group
 - Transition Support Group
- Play Group
- Totnes REconomy Group
 - REconomy Centre
 - Totnes Local Economic Blueprint
 - Local Entrepreneur Forum
 - Totnes Pound (local currency)
- Transition Streets Project
- Transition Town Totnes Arts Network
 - Halle-LOO-jah Compost Loo Competition
 - House About
 - TTTAN Upcyclopedia
 - SPARC Recyclopedia
 - TTT Film Club
 - TTTAN Monthly Moots
 - Arts Resource Database
- Transition Tours
- Transport (Traffic and Transport Forum)
 - Cycling group
 - Dr Bike

Whilst these projects and theme groups vary in their levels of activity, the above list provides a sense of the breadth of activity in which Transitioners are involved locally in Totnes. In addition to these, TTT staff and workers are involved in a number of collaborative activities which are not specifically badged as Transition projects but which benefit from its support. Most significant of these are ATMOS and Caring Town Totnes. ATMOS is a project on which TTT and Totnes Development Trust have collaborated for several years, with both Rob Hopkins and Frances Northrop currently trustees. It originated following the closure of the Dairy Crest milk processing plant in 2007. A plan emerged to take the site into community ownership and develop it for the collective benefit. The culmination of a long period of campaigning and negotiation led the purchase of part of the site for one Totnes Pound in October 2014. There are plans to use a Community Right to Build Order under the Localism Act in order to trigger a referendum relating to the development of the site. ATMOS representatives claim that this is precedent setting. The other significant project in which TTT is a current partner is Caring Town Totnes. The original seed for this area of work came from the *Totnes and District Economic Blueprint* (2012, see below) which identifies Health and Care as a sector which could be targeted for local economic

transformative social innovation theory

development intervention. Subsequently, a Totnes Welfare Conference was held in 2013 which brought together various partners to discuss how they could work collaboratively to build a 'town that cares' in the face of austerity and cuts to welfare provision. The positive reaction of participants led to a follow-on conference, the Totnes Health and Welfare day in March 2014 which gave rise to the name Caring Town Totnes for the embryonic network. It is now developing activities in a number of directions including discussions about taking the Mansion House into community ownership, focusing on collaborative work in specific areas of health and care and exploring the possibility of taking on a local commissioning role in the future.

Both ATMOS and Caring Town Totnes indicate a shift away from it being framed as primarily an environmental movement towards other priorities, particularly well-being, justice, and economic resilience. This shift mirrors a similar change in the overall Transition discourse. Of these, perhaps focus on the economic dimension of resilience is most prominent and there are a number of different dimensions to this. Firstly, TTT has been involved in the REconomy strand of work that has been developed by the Transition Network. As a result it has produced the *Totnes and District Economic Blueprint* (2012). This was a project which explored the local economic potential of a number of different sectors: Food, Retrofitting, Renewables and Care and Health. A second strand of this work is the REconomy Centre. This functions as an incubator for social enterprises and micro-enterprises and other start-ups. The third dimension of the focus on the economic dimension relates to an increased focus on asset based development. At least, two specific projects reflect this approach. The first is the ATMOS project which is a community owned site that is going to be developed into housing and a range of other usages and which has been developed with the support of TTT activists and is infused with Transition values and principles. Secondly, TTT representatives are involved in discussions about the transfer of the Mansion House building into community ownership. Currently owned by Devon County Council this has long been a hub of community activity. The Mansion House project also links to a final economic theme, using Transition model as a response to austerity. As noted in Section 2, this is a narrative that has developed since the economic crisis of 2008 but it is being put into practice with the Totnes initiative.

The above projects illustrate a number of other subtle shifts that have occurred in TTT over the last few years. Firstly, it is far better networked with existing organisations across the town. The REconomy Centre, Economic Blueprint, and Caring Town Totnes are all representative of network outputs. At least in part this is down to the personal networking of the project manager and her own conviction that Transition needed to be better integrated with other partners, although of course this has always been key principle of the model. As part of this partnership working there has been, in recent times, less explicit branding of Transition activities. This is in part a response to a localised backlash against Transition, and therefore reflects one way of attempting to reach out to a wider constituency, and an increased sensitivity to how Transition might be perceived by those who are not convinced by its aims or objectives. It also reflects a more relaxed approach to Transition where, as Hopkins (2014) himself has argued, it doesn't matter whether activities are actively branded as Transition. There is a sense then, that there is a looser network of projects working around Transition based themes and which adhere in some way to the overall goals of Transition but which do not actually formally identify with it, despite often receiving practical

transformative social innovation theory

support from the Transition team. However, the extent to which activities should be 'claimed' as Transition is something which is still being debated internally within the local group.

4.2 Aspects of 'innovation' and 'change' of the local initiative

4.2.1 Relation with social innovation

As will the national network actors, the local transition actors who were interviewed did not explicitly identify what they did as social innovation, and as with the network actors, there was a certain degree of scepticism towards the term. However, some actors could identify what Transition does as a form of social innovation (defined in the terms of TRANSIT). In exploring what was innovative about Transition there were some themes that again corresponded with perceptions from the Network level. Perhaps at the overall level there was the view that the innovative aspect of Transition is the way that it brings various things together, (new and old) in a new way. The innovation is in the combination of different elements. Secondly, the organisational practices were seen as being particularly innovative – Transition as a novel process of community organising. There are a number of elements of this. Firstly, it explicitly attempts to bring together people in an atmosphere of positivity and openness. Transitioners often talk very positively of the way in which they run their meetings and events in comparison to the conventional or mainstream way of running activities (e.g. conferences, workshops, meetings, etc.). The way in which activities are managed is underpinned by the Transition idea of 'unleashing the collective genius' of a given community.

A second dimension of its perceived 'innovativeness' is that way in which it creates space for experiments and projects. E.g. The Transition narrative give encouragement and permission for people to establish their own projects – or get involved in other ones – based on their own interests whilst a set of organisational processes and tools support the development of projects. Many of the original projects emerged from open spaces or workshops that were explicitly designed to stimulate new ideas. For example, the community owned Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC) emerged from a TTT open space. Similar events are still taking place such as the local entrepreneurs forum. Thirdly, the projects themselves provide space. This is particularly the case with the REconomy Centre but will also be the case with ATMOS and the Mansion House, should the latter enter community ownership. TTT has a project itself also provides practical support, both through the paid support but also through the core group. The existence of this local network of supporters and likeminded people gives both practical and emotional support for the emergence of new initiatives. However, as noted above, it appears that these days there is a looser affiliation of projects to the Transition idea.

The third aspect of innovativeness that emerges from the data is the innovativeness of some of the projects that have been established locally. There is the perception locally that some of these have been particularly ground-breaking. For example, the Totnes Pound local currency was the first paper based local currency in the UK. TRESOC has pioneered an Industrial and Provident model of community ownership that is specifically focused on being economically self-sustaining. Similarly, one of the interviewees argued that TTT is pioneering in terms of some of the work it is doing

transformative social innovation theory

around local investment models and discourses of entrepreneurship. So innovation also takes place at the level of local projects.

4.2.2 Relation with system innovation

Like their national counterparts, local Transition activists in Totnes generally subscribe to the idea that Transition is about systemic change. Similarly, this change is envisaged to take place at multiple levels, with multiple systems, and through multiple processes, mirroring the extreme ambition of the overall Transition narrative. At least three processes of (attempts) at systemic change exist.

Attempts at local system change are manifested through local projects. For example, the Totnes Pound is an attempt to influence the local economic system. Food projects like the Food-Link project which seeks to support local producers and link them to local retailers and markets are attempts to shape the local food system. In most cases the idea of what constitutes a 'local' system is left vague and not specifically defined however, it reflects the strong geographical imaginary of systems that underpins the Transition model as a whole. Therefore the idea that these local systems exist – and can be influenced by local activities – is a strong element of the model. Attempts to build parallel local systems is therefore very much part of the process of system innovation.

A second dimension of system change relates to the way that projects travel and get replicated elsewhere. The Totnes Pound is a good example of this. The first iteration of the Totnes Pound – launched in 2007 – literally consisted of a few hundred printed complements slips being put into circulation locally. Other Transition Initiatives followed with their own currency projects including Stroud (2008), Lewes (2009), Brixton (2009) and Bristol (2012). One of the most interesting aspects of this diffusion is the way that model itself has developed through this process. Through the interpersonal networks of activists the Brixton project was able to collaborate with new economics foundation and other currency activists. This led to the development of a 'pay by text' function to complement the paper based currency circulation. The Bristol project has developed the model further, collaborating with a local credit union and Bristol City Council. Now some of these developments are shaping the Totnes model which was re-launched in 2014 and now offers the pay-by-text feature. This kind of project diffusion can be seen in other areas of activity and is a way that the Transition activists perceive their potential impact on wider systems.

A third dimension of systemic change relates to the changing of people. Several interviewees see this as perhaps the most important and fundamental dimension of system change. I.e. changing people is the key to changing systems. There are different ways that the two dimensions are seen to relate. Firstly, many projects can be seen as attempts to change people. For example, the Totnes Pound attempts to change individual consumption patterns, Transition Streets, tried to influence domestic energy consumption. Here then people get changed through their participation in projects. However, there is also the aspiration that this is a deeper form of change which relates to their broader values and worldviews. There is an implicit belief that this kind of cultural change can lead to wider system change. However, as well as influencing local participants there is also the aspiration that the work will influence other actors e.g. politicians and other decision-makers.

transformative social innovation theory

4.2.3 Relation with game-changers

Like the wider Transition movement, TTT has interacted with three specific game changers, peak oil, climate change and the global economic crisis. These form an important part of the Transition narrative and provide the underlying rationale for the model. As a local organisation TTT is responsible for raising awareness around these issues through the showing of films, arranging of talks and the more general discourse that surrounds Transition. As these get reproduced locally they contribute to the wider reproduction of these narratives.

4.2.4 Relation with societal transformation

As discussed in section 3.2.4 the narrative of Transition as a whole definitely has the goal of supporting a broader process of societal transformation. What this looks like will vary from transitioner to transitioner, shaped by their own beliefs, values and visions. It was suggested that at the transnational level there is a gap between what is quite a fundamentally radical vision of societal transformation – towards some kind of post-capitalist society – and the day-to-day discourses of Transition that are generally more restrained. This gap is also evident in the local Transition discourse, where the fundamentally radical implications of achieving a full Transition are rarely fully articulated and instead the discourse about change relates primarily to the effects on the locality. The question of how far this process can go before it does meet some kind of opposition or resistance. Certainly TTT has experienced some resistance to its activities (See section 4.3.1.2 below). Such concerns also feed into the current reflections within the movement on processes and theories of change.

So, at the level of TTT, there is not much emphasis on the goals of societal transformation. Whilst the game-changers clearly relates to processes that are occurring at a global scale, the transformative discourses produced by TTT very much focus on local change. This is in keeping with the use of place based emotional attachment as a mechanism for encouraging involvement in the movement.

4.2.5 Relation with narratives of change

As discussed in section 3.2.5, on one level the Transition is itself an explicit narrative of change. It provides a particular rationale and model for how change can take place. More generally, it is a part of a wider movement which argues for the need a societal shift towards a more ecologically sustainable future. It therefore contributes towards this broader narrative through both its own work but also by links to the wider movement, for example, through public talks, publicising issues etc. Transition initiatives also produce specific localised narratives of change, visions of how change can take place within a specific locality. The use of positive visions of the future is one way that Transition attempts to distance itself from more negative forms of environmentalism.

Transition Town Totnes has produced two significant narratives of change since its inception. The first is the Totnes Energy Descent Action Plan (EDAP). EDAPs have been an important part of the Transition model. The first Kinsale project was an EDAP – a specific strategy for how the town could adapt to a future where liquid hydrocarbons were more expensive and scarce. The process

transformative social innovation theory

starts with the creation of a vision and then the process of achieving that is mapped out using the technique of 'backcasting'. In first iteration of the Transition model the creation of an EDAP was one of the 12 steps and was intended to guide the ongoing Transition. An EDAP for Totnes was published in 2010 called *Transition in Action* which provided a vision for Totnes and District in 2030, articulating a vision of a powered down, re-localised future for the locality. Produced through a collaborative community based process, this provides a vision for change across a number of different domains including food, energy and housing. Central to the document is the use of imagined timelines which describe various steps towards the achievement of the overall objectives. The EDAP was produced as a hard document and a website. However, despite the original intentions, the EDAP is not directly being used to steer Transition activity.

The more recently produced *Totnes and District Local Economic Blueprint* is another narrative of change, relating to the re-localisation of key sectors of the economy in the Totnes district. This has been produced in collaboration with a number of other local partners including the South Hams District Council. Unlike the EDAP, the Local Economic Blueprint is currently shaping the work that TTT does, especially around Health and Social Care and the REconomy work which it emerged from.

4.3 Aspects of empowerment and disempowerment of the local initiative

4.3.1 Governance

4.3.1.1 Internal governance

Structure and roles

At a local level Transition Initiatives have a fairly well defined ideas around internal models of governance although there can be a certain degree of complexity. They are first established by a group of local activists who undertake the first few steps of establishing an initiative. However, once established, this group is supposed to dissolve itself and be replaced by a core group that consists of representatives of the various different thematic groups that have emerged. Some of the key dimensions of governance are outlined below.

Core group

The core group is a central element of the governance arrangements of the Transition model, intended to provide a loose co-ordination body across the range of activities that a TI is undertaking. In Totnes the core group meets monthly and has been sustained throughout the existence of TTT. The role of the core group is to:

- Set the strategic direction for the organisation and agree the evolution of the organisation, as well as co-ordinating its activity.

transformative social innovation theory

- Provide the capacity, resources and funding to implement the aims and objectives of the organisation
- Support all participants, including volunteers and paid staff
- Agree communication to build coherence

Theme groups

Theme groups focus on a particular theme, and hold meetings and events to discuss projects and activities relating to that particular theme. Theme groups vary in the way in which they operate and engage with participants and the wider public.

Projects

Projects represent the level of where the actual hands on activity of Transition takes place. In some cases, projects can end up 'spinning out' of the initiative and becoming a standalone organisational entity in itself, albeit one which still adheres to the overall goals of the Transition. This is certainly the case with some Totnes projects, for example the Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC) which has since evolved into an Industrial and Provident Society with its own membership. TTT is also constituted as a charity and therefore is required by law to have a Board of Trustees who are responsible for ensuring that it fulfils its charitable duties, as well as ensuring that it meets its various financial and legal obligations, e.g. employment law. TTT trustees have the following roles:

- To agree an annual budget and ensure that the legal, financial and HR and other requirements are met, in particular to maintain accounting records, and to produce annual accounts and an annual report.
- To review the match between the charitable purposes and the organisation's activities and to regularly review the governing document.
- To consider the future sustainability of the organisation – balancing what is needed now with what will be needed in the future, actively considering options relating to diversification and income generation, ensuring that funding strategies comply with good practice and ethical considerations.
- To ensure that the funding/financing strategy is implemented effectively.

TTT currently has six trustees. Interviewees suggested that at times there might be some ambiguity between the role of the Trustees and the Core Group and that this was something that still needed to be explored further. Whilst there are documents that do guide the work of TTT (such as the Local Economic Blueprint) there are no detailed strategic plans.

Decision-making is therefore distributed across the various local networks of TTT. In a sense it is true to the model that it aspires to provide of shared community based leadership. However, within this structure, it is evident that power not necessarily distributed evenly. An important element of the Totnes initiative is the role that paid staff play in the organisation and how these fit into the governance structures. In legal terms they are managed and accountable to the Trustees to the charity, who are also responsible for their welfare and their employment. In practice – like the volunteers, and in keeping with the broader Transition ethic of 'following the energy' - they have a certain degree of freedom to pursue their own interests and priorities. This appears to be true of the current iteration of TTT where the project manager, Frances Northrop, is credited with having

transformative social innovation theory

a significant influence on the way that TTT has evolved as an organisation in the last few years, both in terms of the emergence of a deeper form of collaborative partnership working and in terms of the substantive activities. In some ways this echoes the way in which Hopkins, Giangrande and other activists such as Sophy Banks, played an important role in shaping TTT (and the wider Transition movement) in the early years. Therefore, whilst Transition initiatives are ostensibly 'leaderless', experience in Totnes would suggest that the presence of capable, charismatic 'social entrepreneurs' is important for Transition initiatives to develop their activities.

Enrolment and partnerships

As a model, Transition is explicitly geared towards community engagement, and has a number of tools and technologies in order to facilitate this. Many of these have been adopted over the years as part of TTT. A significant proportion of the Transition model, both in the written guidance and in the Transition Training is dedicated to how to organise effective meetings and public events. Interviewees were very clear that there is a very specific way of running Transition events, from meetings, to consultations to conferences. A strong part of this Transition ethic, is to create an environment that empowers the participants and allows them to contribute in a way that is meaningful to them. For example, TTT has used open space techniques to arrange the exploration of particular issues. Open public meetings are therefore one way in which members of the public are encouraged to engage with Transition. Members of the public are enrolled by the various project activities which advertise their events in various ways, such as posters, the TTT website and email newsletter. It is also possible to volunteer more generally for TTT, and a volunteer coordinator works to fit volunteers with opportunities that suit their interests and skills. There are two important elements to the discourses that are used to enrol people to participate in Transition activities. The first relates to the strong way in which local initiatives such as TTT draw heavily on place identity in order to try and motivate participation. It positions itself as a conduit for people who care passionately about the future of their locality. A second more subtle shift has been a shift towards a focus on wellbeing as a motivator for involvement. A discourse relating to improving the well-being of people within the locality is perceived as being more inclusive than one that relates to environmental objectives, where the goals may not be shared. It also enable engagement with a broader range of groups. This shift can be observed in both the Caring Town Totnes project and the Local Economic Blueprint.

In terms of working with other partner organisations, collaboration varies from project to project. There are some partners which do cut across activities or are more well-established. TTT has developed relationships with all three levels of the local authority government: Totnes Town Council, South Hams District Council and Devon County Council. Engagement with local authorities has always been an element of the Transition model, however, relations have sometimes been strained, particularly with the Conservative dominated South Hams District Council. Relations have been better with the Totnes Town Council, which has formally designated itself as a Transition Council and which counts some Transitioners amongst its elected members but which has less statutory powers. Relations with Devon County Council have improved in recent years and were consolidated through the interpersonal relations of a Trustee. This in fact is true of many of the network connected TTT, both in relation to local authorities and other organisations, that they are often based on interpersonal relationships. Another organisation which has had close ties with TTT since its inception is Schumacher College. This is a small educational establishment based on the nearby Dartington Trust estate which focuses on 'transformative courses for sustainable

transformative social innovation theory

living'. There are significant overlaps in the interests of Schumacher College and Transition and it has provided support in a number of ways. Schumacher students often end up participating in Transition projects in some ways and there is a history of collaboration around public talks and courses. Indeed, the local presence of Schumacher means that TTT is able to draw on a wide range of international speakers.

Empowerment

There are some different aspects to the empowerment that an initiative such as TTT produces. At a basic level it provides an opportunity for the ordinary public to get involved in activities and feel that they are making a contribution towards addressing the economic and environmental issues that it is seeking to address. Secondly, it provides a supportive context in which people can launch their own projects and activities. It does this in a number of ways. Overall, it creates space for new projects and initiatives to emerge. The experimental ethic and the acceptance of failure give people the confidence to try out new ideas, as does the network of supportive people that are associated with TTT. Furthermore, it creates specific spaces for initiatives to emerge. Meetings and events such as the local entrepreneurs' forum, and physical spaces such as the REconomy centre are also important for supporting new initiatives. TTT staff and volunteers also provide support for new activities.

Relationship with Transition Network and wider Transition Movement

As might be expected, the relationship between TN and TTT has changed over the years too. A number of people who started as volunteers/activists for TTT have ended up working for TN. However, most of them are no longer directly involved in the running of TTT including TTT founder Rob Hopkins. He took a decision to step back a few years ago and now he only participates in a few specific projects. Whilst the two organisations share an office building, they are generally separate organisations now although inevitably there are still some interactions. Totnes is one of the local participants in the REconomy strand of work and so there is interaction in this area of work. Totnes also remains important as the symbolic capital of the Transition movement, attracting a regular stream of Transition 'Pilgrims'. Such is the demand, TTT put on regular tours, and as part of this, Network staff will sometimes be called upon to provide some insight into their work. Staff at both TN and TTT are aware of the importance of the relationship between the two, with TTT staff feeling the responsibility of being the 'exemplar' which is often perceived to be furthest advanced in its Transition, and TN staff, wary of accusations of favouritism:

I think for some people may be in Transition, there's a sense that Transition Network can sometimes be a bit Totnes-centric but I think almost the opposite is true because although there's lots of really great stuff that's happening here, I think we're so mindful of that, that we almost downplay what's happening in Totnes actually because there's always that mindfulness about we don't want to disincentivise and have everyone else feeling like "we can never be as good as Totnes" or "Totnes are just ahead on this, that or the other", so we deliberately downplay it and try and big stuff up from everywhere else and try and make, so actually it feels like there's quite a lot of stuff happening, that people more widely wouldn't know about and then maybe if Transition Network wasn't in Totnes, people would be able to hear more about.

Interview with Rob Hopkins

transformative social innovation theory

4.3.1.2 External governance

Like other Transition initiatives TTT is loosely governed as an official member of the Transition Network. In practice this does not really involve any direct exercise of control and, as discussed above, TN and TTT have grown further apart over the years. The other principle mode of regular external governance is the regulation of the organisation as a Charity. This involves the submission of annual accounts and an annual report to ensure that the organisation is remaining true to its original charitable goals. A more interesting form of informal governance that has influenced the direction and activities of TTT relates to local resistance to its presence and activities. Going back to its origins there have always been some dissenting voices who have publicly criticised the initiative, for various reasons, but often because of questions over its legitimacy and representativeness. A recent example of this was during what is known colloquially as the “Costa campaign” in 2012. TTT and the Totnes Town Council combined to organise a campaign against plans to open a Costa Coffee outlet in Totnes, citing the desire to protect the existing small, independent retailers. Ultimately this campaign was won, but it did result in a ‘backlash’ against TTT, from those who wanted to see a Costa in Totnes and those who challenged TTT’s right to speak on behalf of the wider community. A group called *Take Back Totnes* was formed by a local resident and a local radio station played a role in criticising TTT. A Facebook page and online petitions were created in an attempt to give visibility to the discontent. This is not the first time that TTT has received public criticism locally. Back in the early few years there was a Blog called *Transition Town Watch* established by a local resident who primarily objected to Transition’s position on peak oil.

Much of TTT’s discourse is framed around the idea that it is working on behalf of the whole, wider community, yet in reality it is a special interest group which is primarily embedded in a particular socio-cultural worldview. Such incidents expose this tension. The Costa backlash led TTT activists to reflect on how they are perceived by the wider community. In particular, there is now a greater sensitivity to the fact that TTT is often seen as representative of the green / alternative incomers who have been drawn to the area since the 1970s (see Longhurst, 2013). The effect of this immigration has been to contribute to the gentrification of the town, sometimes provoking hostility amongst those who consider themselves to be indigenous. Furthermore, some people object to the green / alternative identities for Totnes that projects such as TTT produce and perpetuate. TTT has become more sensitive to these negative perceptions and they appear to have influenced the lower profile working and more extensive networking that has occurred in recent years.

4.3.2 Social learning

Although the whole Transition process is explicitly framed as an experiment, learning within TTT is mostly informal and unstructured, taking place at an individual level. Participants within projects and activities are clearly learning experientially, in many cases as an explicit intention of the activity. For example, ‘Reskilling’ has been a constant theme of Transition with local programmes in Totnes that continue in its present form, offering the ability to learn new skills that are deemed relevant for building a convivial and resilient future. Those involved in the running of projects and groups also learn from the experience of doing so. How this is shared though varies from person to person. For example, one interviewee discussed how she tends to put some of her

transformative social innovation theory

own learning into an annual newsletter that she writes. At an organisational level there are not many formalised learning processes. The model itself does promote the process of taking stock and reflecting on progress and in the past public events have been held which ask 'How are we doing?' Internally, there are periodic away days which provide the space for reflecting on what has been going on and what might be learned from the experiences of participants. For example, the recent away day in November 2014 discussed 'values and principles' of TTT, 'external perceptions' and 'volunteering'.

4.3.3 Resources

Transition initiatives are generally volunteer run entities. TTT has been an exception in some regards in that it has attracted external funding from early in its existence and has continued to be able to attract funding to enable it to employ some paid staff. Table 1 details the income and expenditure for the last 3 years

Table 6: Income and Expenditure for TTT for the last three financial years

Financial year end	Income	Spending
31.08.2013	£151,441	£108,559
31.08.2012	£146,610	£146,610
31.08.2011	£1,008,371	1,008,371

In the early years and initial donation from a benefactor helped to seed fund TTT allowing it to employ a bid-writer who then secured future funding. Grant funding has been secured from a number of different places. Some financial resources have come via TN but most are secured by the work of TTT staff and volunteers. The general perception amongst activists is that the resources are important, particularly for holding the centre together. A paid project officer does mean that a number of different projects can be pursued. The grants that have been attracted have tended to be linked to specific projects. For example, the Transition Streets project. In some cases, such as this one, an original grant can lead to further funding being attracted. How important grant funding is depends on the specific project. Some, such as the garden sharing initiative, can be run without significant financial inputs. Other projects require more financial resources, such as the Transition Homes project.

Fundamentally though, Transition Town Totnes is a volunteer based organisation, dependent on time given by its members. A small stream of revenue is generated through donations from local supporters. There was a general perception that more resources would help the organisation to develop further and deliver more activity. Sentiments such as these are the reason that Transition as whole has developed a greater focus on how Transition focused enterprises can be developed and the role of projects such as the REconomy Centre and the Local Entrepreneurs Forum. The REconomy centre is actually interesting because it is pioneering a gift economy model whereby the users pay what they can afford, and also practically support the day-to-day operations of the centre, e.g. by cleaning or contributing in other ways. In this respect, the centre is trying to put 'new economic' values at the heart of its own operation, as well as trying to support the development of other enterprises. The REconomy centre also illustrates the way in which

transformative social innovation theory

resources flow to the initiative through forms of partnership working and via the networks that TTT is entangled within.

4.3.4 Monitoring and evaluation

TTT is required to undertake financial reporting as part of its legal status as a charity. Annual accounts are therefore submitted to the Charity Commission and are available for public scrutiny. Monitoring of impact is only linked to specific streams of finance and the 'outputs' which are attached to that particular funding. The level of information required varies from fund to fund. There is some informal processes of self-evaluation which overlap with the processes of learning described in the previous section, but these are not particularly regular or institutionalised. There was a feeling amongst some interviewees that more self-evaluation and reflection would be a good thing for TTT, however there was also the recognition that, like a lot of community based organisations, its capacity is limited. Recently, plans have been developed to work on an evaluation framework with the new economics foundation which will enable TTT to capture its outputs across various activities.

5 Local initiative (2): [Transition Wekerle, Hungary]¹²

5.1 Overview of development in the local initiative

Officially “Transition Wekerle” (in Hungarian: “Átalakuló Wekerle”) was formally recognised in 2011. However, the ‘transition story’ in Wekerle started much earlier. Briefly, four major stages might be described in the story of Transition Wekerle: (i) a two years long ‘take-off’ period (2007-2009) characterised by activities small in number and scale, (ii) a period (2009-2011) of the Green Shoot Club (in Hungarian: “Zöld Hajtás”) institutionalised formally within an existing local NGO of a long history (Wekerle Club), (iii) a period in which ‘transition’ was explicitly called for as characterised by the operation of the Transition Wekerle Organising Circle (in Hungarian: “Átalakuló Wekerle Szervezői Kör”) reaching to the official recognition in 2011 as a transition initiative, and (iv) a period that started with organising a local forum for all stakeholders deliberating on ‘transition identity’ in 2012.

Table 6: Time-line of development of Transition Wekerle

Year / period	Important activities/changes/milestones in local initiative
2007–2009	Take-off period: small-scale, informal, individually led, non-institutionalised green activities.
2009–2011	Period of the Green Shoot Club: operating as part of the Wekerle Club, locally legitimised and institutionalised. Period of growth and gaining momentum.
2011	Transition Wekerle officially launched: well-known nationally, considered as exemplar transition project in Hungary.
2012	Local forum: aiming for making explicit a “transition identity” for all through open dialogue.

Transition Wekerle (TW) cannot be understood without paying special attention to the particularities of the local context. First, therefore, some of the historical background of the Wekerle housing estate will briefly be introduced. One of the main lessons from the historical account is the significance of an existing highly networked community, a village-like situation in the midst of Budapest where everyone knows everyone else and newcomers can hardly avoid becoming members of the community.

¹² Research by Pataki

transformative social innovation theory

Context: The Wekerle housing estate

The Wekerle housing estate is a particular urban residential area in Kispest, one of the districts of Budapest, the capital of Hungary. A very unique Wekerle housing estate built between 1909-26 is one of the earliest, most unified, and attractive examples of garden cities in Europe (Nagy 1994). Positioned in the boundary zone of the city across main urban roads (Pap 2014) it is a historical heritage, the result of the garden city movement in early 20th century Hungary. It provided quiet modern homes of 20 thousand people where the vernacular design advocated by leading enthusiasts of peasant culture was allied to a program of social housing (Crowley 1995). In fact, the housing development set modernised lifestyle patterns and technical innovation in material culture, clearly influencing lighting, electrical appliances, modernised forms of water supply and heating (Sári 2010) as well as socio-economic features of the community (Fürstand 2008). This neighbourhood is named after one of the prime ministers of Hungary, Sándor Wekerle who initiated this urban development for housing for local workers and clerks. The development followed a wider European urban development pattern: the high degree of organisation and community planning as core ideas of the garden city movement are now providing the basis for sustainable development and the New Urbanism movement (Miller 2002).

50,000 trees were planted in Wekerle and 16,000 fruit trees were planted in the backyards (4 fruit trees per apartments), instead of fences, red currant bushes were planted, so the neighbourhood has become characterised by a high-level of food production (fruits, horticulture). Beyond having a particular type of architectural character, the social dimension of the neighbourhood has also become significant. One of the oldest non-governmental organisations (legally an association) was founded here (in 1910), known as the “Wekerle Társaskör” (Wekerle Club). Wekerle Club is still alive and well focusing upon the preservation of the cultural heritage of this special housing estate.

Grassroots green activities (2007 – 2009)

The Wekerle Club and another local NGO, called Hungarian College (in Hungarian: Magyar Kollégium) began running a spring and an autumn public event for the local community. Some of the green-minded activists also started to organise local public events, inviting families to play with environment-related games and taste organic products. These activists were local residents who had already operated small-scale green actions, including a distribution point for organic vegetable boxes (at the home of Daniel van der Lek) and another distribution point for organic dairy products (at the home of Tracey Wheatley and István Ferenczi). This period has served as a gradual engagement with more and more local people who are open to the environmental cause. Moreover, the green-minded locals also started to invite environmental organisations to the community events (e.g. Association of Conscious Consumers, Bicycle Kitchen (Bringakonyha Budapest), SZIKE – an environmental NGO providing composting and gardening assistance). In a sense, this constituted an opening up of the public space beyond community organisations and broadened the local green agenda with wider environmental issues and expertise.

transformative social innovation theory

Green Shoot Club is formed (2009 -2011)

A major step in making more visible and organised the informal green initiatives undergoing in Wekerle was the launch of a new club. Within the Wekerle Club a new initiative has started in 2009, called “Zöld Hajtás” (Green Shoot). The origins of this initiative can be traced to a public speech by the then president of the Wekerle Club in which he stressed the importance of environmental issues. The speech was heard by a local resident who has worked for the green movement in Hungary and been engaged in the informal local green actions. This provided an impetus to propose to the Wekerle Club a new initiative for raising awareness of environmental issues among local people. The proposal were well received by the board of the Wekerle Club who agreed to provide an institutional home (organisational structure, resources, publicity) for the new grassroots initiative. The other element of this story of enabling the green initiative to go was a preceding complete change in the board of the Club, which became more open and tolerant to alternative perspectives. The then newly elected president of the Club, though described an interviewee as a “typical patriarch,” was also very supportive of the green cause. He proposed to start a green club within the Club, offered opportunities to write in the local paper and invited one of the green initiators (Tracey) to the board. The Club thus provided a “structure to join into and resources to be used.”

The initiators of the Green Shoot club were the instigators of the small-scale green actions while some members of the Wekerle Club also joined and assisted environmental awareness raising and dissemination activities. Most of the members were young intellectuals in their 30s with children who typically attended the Waldorf primary school in Kispest. The leading role was taken by Tracey Wheatley (born and raised in Scotland but living for years in Hungary and already well-known in the Hungarian green movement). At that time, she was working for a national eco-political NGO, called “Védegylet” (“Protect the Future”) where she was involved in international projects, one of them particularly relevant to the story, a project on Globalisation and Climate Justice. When organising the programme of a “summer university” for raising awareness on globalisation and climate justice, she asked one of her Scottish friends for advice on contemporary topics to cover. This was the way the idea of Transition and the link to the transnational Transition movement has been established. A Hungarian born Transition activist (Mr. Ervin Menyhárt) living in Coventry, UK was invited to provide a presentation at the summer university as suggested by the international centre of the Transition movement. The project also provided an opportunity to arrange an international study trip whereby five activists of Protect the Future (incl. Tracey) had been trained by different international NGOs, including Seeds for Change (facilitation skills training), People and Planet (direct democracy training), Transition Bath (Jenny MacEwean, Transition Launch training). This was how the Transition idea travelled transnationally to the Hungarian local setting of Wekerle.

The connection between the project of Protect the Future and Wekerle was established through a proposal to the Wekerle Club to start together a “Climate-friendly Wekerle Programme” (CFWP) which Tracey took responsibility for. The main focus of the programme was how to translate the global issues that Protect the Future was concerned with (climate change, peak oil, etc.) to the ‘language’ of local people and to make them practically comprehensible and actionable. At the start, CFWP was a cooperation between “Protect the Future” and the local group (Green Shoot), Tracey being a kind of bridging actor. As another

transformative social innovation theory

connecting (or networking) move, the Wekerle Club has liaised with the “Klímabarát Települések Szövetsége” (Alliance of Climate-friendly Settlements), an NGO initiated by concerned scientists and consisting of a number of other Hungarian settlements. Both connections (Protect the Future and Alliance) provided direct links to academic resources. Not being an independent local government, Wekerle Club became the first ‘supporting member’ of the Alliance in 2009. Note that the Wekerle Club was considered as a very strong local association, but one that does not have particularly strong relationship beyond the neighbourhood (with the exception of Győr, another Garden City in Hungary). Wekerle was considered as a really isolated neighbourhood even within Kispeszt, so it constituted an unusual dimension to the Wekerle Club becoming directly in touch with organisations and resource persons pursuing global agendas. In a sense, this may be considered as a culture change due to bringing a global agenda into the neighbourhood.

The core group (“inner circle”) of the Green Shoot, consisting of committed and proactive local residents who had already in mind the Transition idea, developed a three year plan, like a project plan with objectives to reach, with the final aim to be accomplished by the third year to become an official Transition initiative. So the idea of a “Transition Wekerle” was already there in the minds of few people who were sympathetic to grassroots ways of organising. Their slogan was “Climate-friendly Wekerle, People-friendly Wekerle” (in Hungarian: “Klímabarát Wekerle, Emberbarát Wekerle”). Their plan was introduced to the board of the club that endorsed it. Notable components of the 3-year plan were to develop stronger links with the local council (local government of Kispeszt), establish working programmes (run for and by local people) so as to finally make sense and give substance to a sustainability transition.

The members of the inner circle knew each other beforehand. They were all local residents, educated intellectuals and active citizens, to some extent connected to the green movement in Hungary. Their initiative needed visibility that was provided by the Club and the public events organised in the neighbourhood. The so-called Wekerle Days produced visibility, exposing local people to the work of Green Shoot. Their strategy was to engage people with simple tasks to assist in public events and talk to people about simple issues, like shopping locally. A number of engagement activities were undertaken including, evening discussions with film showings, Open Space Days, Green Saturday for Families, knitting circle, etc. All were events where local people could meet, spend and enjoy time together. More and more people were turning up, coming to help and contribute. The process was designed and deliberately kept as open and participatory as possible in order to enable people to come up with their own ideas. Gradually, as they felt secured and empowered, local people has started to do more and more serious things: e.g. from helping in the self-organised buffet to initiating community gardening and seed exchange of local plant and vegetable varieties. So projects were initiated by the new members joining the activities of the club. Projects like home insulation, local vegetable food boxes, community gardening, greenways development, bicycle self-repair, etc. according to what particular people were personally committed to and enjoying (“garden fanatics”, “bike fanatics”, etc.).

Under the leadership of different core group members, some of the projects gained their own momentum and grew into influential, standalone neighbourhood projects. One of them was the energy efficiency programme which has grown from a small-scale insulation initiative to a widely recognised project which works with local architects in order to combine cultural

transformative social innovation theory

heritage conservation with improving the energy efficiency of homes. Under the leadership of Daniel van der Lek, this project has also contributed to the modernisation of the local urban development regulatory plan; in a sense, reaching out to systemic changes at least at the level of local government. Similarly, food issues have been taken up and developed from providing distribution points for organic products and produce through a broader engagement of different local stakeholders to a local food strategy. Four pillars have characterised the so-called “Mi Kosarunk” (“Our Basket”) initiative (under the leadership of Gabi Schneider and, later, Gabi Wesley): (i) revitalisation of the local farmers market (now populated by many family farmers of the closer surrounding area); (ii) easy access to organic food products; (iii) self-provisioning via garden cultivation in Wekerle; and (iv) an idea – not yet fully successful – to engage more family farmers through their relatives serving as distribution points being local residents in Wekerle. In addition, attention of local resident-activists turned to school kitchens and ideas on how to make reforms with regard to public catering in school. This was the so-called “menza-story” explained below.

This was a phase of Transition Wekerle (though still not called officially as a transition initiative) that reflected a period of successful momentum. It is difficult to represent quantitatively what was achieved but it may be described as “growing from one newspaper article to being six or seven people writing articles in local magazines.” Or, “from taking one or two stands on local public events to something like 23 local projects running” at the same time. With the institutional support of the Wekerle Club and the visibility gained, the grassroots initiative started to gain momentum. Another important factor in the story relates to familiarity with community. For example, Tracey being one of the English teachers in the neighbourhood has got to know the local political elite (members of the local council) through teaching their children. Furthermore, being a mother of a child under three, one enjoys what it is called in Hungary the “playground experience” reflecting the way in which parents of young children taking their children to the playground become friends. Other activities contributed to this community building, such as the “Kismama Klub” (a club for mothers with newborn babies). All this activity means that one can have a very wide set of contacts because one knows people locally. In this sense, Wekerle can be seen as a very well connected local networks of people, a village-like neighbourhood.

From being a CFWP to becoming a Transition Wekerle, involved two years of pretty intensive work. The leading role was taken by Tracey Wheatley who took responsibility for strategy, tried to keep the ball running and keep other people focused over time. Moreover, there were others who took the initiative and lead for specific issues or projects as mentioned before: Daniel van der Lek the energy efficiency leader, Gabriella Schneider and Gabriella Wesley local food issue leaders. Other local resident-activists played important roles in, for example, organising local sales, including flea market and garage sales (Zsuzsa Debreczeni) and festivals with a wider scale and scope (Eszter Tichy). There were also others who were always around to support and take lead if necessary, including Péter Benczúr, István Ferenczi, Ágnes Kozma, Juli Retek, Ildikó Valner, etc.¹³

¹³ Under the homepage of the Wekerle Club (see at http://www.wekerletelep.hu/zold_hajtas) as well as under the blog of Transition Wekerle (see at <http://atalakulowekerle.blogspot.hu/>), one can follow the various programmes of Transition Wekerle.)

transformative social innovation theory

It should also be mentioned here that the relationship to the local council and local administration has also changed during the period. It has turned out to be a good tactical move to enter into local urban development planning and particularly taking up a constructive role as facilitator or mediator in local conflicts between residents and officials. Beyond their expertise in energy, food, etc., applying facilitation skills and mediating local conflicts has brought respect and, over time, trust for the grassroots activists from local council officials. Particularly good relationships have been established with the director of the Green Office and the manager for green areas and gardens (the 'Chief Gardener') employed by the local government. In a sense, the culture of cooperation and dialogue that was more 'naturally' the case among local residents has been extended as a new feature between local residents and local government at least in some areas of public concern (such as green areas and environmental issues).

The formation of Transition Wekerle (2011)

After 2 years, the Green Shot club had become established and while the 'mother organisation,' the Wekerle Club had supported the greens and, to some extent, changed itself during the period, tensions had started to emerge and grow. Conflicts emerged between some of the actors and among the very different groups of people who were involved. The young initiative (Green Shoot) had become bigger and wider than the parent one (Wekerle Club). In a sense, it seems 'natural' that a process of separation got underway. Their differences in terms of dynamism, gender, age, and worldview were significant. In a sense, the situation was characterised as "two gangs fighting" – one that is more conservative, patriarchal, formally organised, the other being informal and fluid, radically democratic (anarchistic) 'hippy-like'. Tensions of control became an issue particularly when projects were funded by external sources. The work culture was also very different: the Wekerle Club put emphasis on legality, formal and transparent procedures, while the Green Shoot club was reluctant to accommodate to any bureaucratic expectations or following formalities, instead they preferred free communication, flexibility, informal ways of solving emergent problems, etc. The working approach of the latter group was considered by the former as akin to "being from the Balkans" (a very disdainful label in Central Eastern Europe) and they were characterised as 'weird hippies.' Whilst the organisational structure and resources of the Wekerle Club played an enabling function for the transition initiative, over time its constraining effects become more evident towards a grassroots logic of action (or way of organising). The tensions come down to the different ways of how people organise (organisation vs organising) and communicate. One might also risk to say that in a more matured civic culture where tolerance towards differences and skills for non-violent communication are practised widely there may be a better chance to turn tensions into productive conflicts that provide seeds for creativity and positive change.

The unfolding process of separation from the Wekerle Club resulted in the CFWP being formalised as a Transition Initiative in 2011. A core group of about 10 actors, who called themselves as the Transition Wekerle Organising Circle (TWOC), completed the self-evaluation criteria of the international Transition Network (TN) and were able to successfully achieve formal recognition. Members of TWOC identified themselves as the main organisers of Transition Wekerle. They seemed to be the ones who really felt Transition Wekerle as their own child, while readily accepting the significant contribution of others. They all felt it important to make Transition a priority community issue for Wekerle. These local resident-

transformative social innovation theory

activists have similar social backgrounds in the sense of being ‘progressive intellectuals,’ pursuing and searching for a sustainable lifestyle, having a family with young children. They also share an attitude of learning to work with all kinds of people.

A significant step that the core group took was to organise a local forum in 2012 that explicitly discussed the idea of transition and brought together for a dialogue all those local resident-activists and local stakeholders (e.g. local councillors, director of Green Office, etc.) who shared a mind-set that looked beyond any single issues. The core group has deliberately created a space for meeting for all local projects and actors to engage in dialogue with each other. The forum was designed with the aim in mind to assist all actors embracing the idea of sustainability transition.

Transition Wekerle also entered into a phase where networking and collaborating beyond the neighbourhood were taking more time and energy. Tracey and István have become “transition trainers” (participating in 2013 in Grenoble, France in an official training by Sophie Banks and Naresh Giangrande from Totnes). In a sense, the core actors of the Transition Wekerle have become ‘diplomats’ who have been taking Wekerle to other communities in Hungary. New transition initiatives have started to emerge in other Hungarian settlements, e.g. Transition movement Kecskemét (in Hungarian: MÁK, in the small town of Kecskemét, Central Hungary), Transition Hosszúhetény (a small mountain village in South-West Hungary). Currently, a project is under way, hosted by Protect the Future and coordinated by Tracey, that involves 14 grassroots, community initiatives aiming at knowledge sharing, coaching, mentoring financed by a Norway Grant.¹⁴ This ongoing project, called “Catalysts on the spot – small communities in transition” (in Hungarian: “Katalizátorok helyben – kisközösségek átalakulásban”) is a new type of development in the history of TM in Hungary in the sense of attempting to join forces and establish links among different initiatives across the country and spread the idea of sustainability transition.

An international turn has also started to emerge in this phase of the story: a few people who are involved in Transition Wekerle or Kecskemét have started to think about initiating a Hungarian Transition Hub in line with unfolding organisational changes in the international transition movement. Actors in the Transition Wekerle story, particularly Tracey seems to have a leading role (project coordinator, trainer, mentor, catalyst at the same time) in all of these new development (kind of upscaling initiatives).

At the same time, Transition Wekerle has experienced a new phase. It has become a doughnut initiative, where most of the projects still exist and are ongoing, but there has not been a functioning a core group since November 2013. Tracey Wheatley judges the situation as “the content stayed but the capacities disappeared.” The projects initiated and run by local residents are going on (“content stayed”) but there is “no centre” anymore where every project gravitates towards; meetings regularly held every two weeks have stopped. The meetings were important in the sense of providing a secure space for sharing, discussing, nurturing, and incubating ideas, energising each other, and strengthening the feeling of self-efficacy (“capacities disappeared”). Tracey, one of the leading figures, has turned her energies towards the Norway Grant project while still keeping an eye on international development in the

¹⁴ see http://www.vedegvlet.hu/index.php?page=pages&page_id=166.

transformative social innovation theory

transition movement (e.g. the hub issue). As mentioned, other leading figures have moved abroad or experiencing difficulties in their families – so energies have been turned to other directions. Although Transition Wekerle is one of the 14 initiatives that is involved in the Norway Grant project it is one that is able to share a lot of experience and learning through the engagement of its core actors with other community initiatives in Hungary. This development may constitute the next significant phase in the story of Transition Wekerle (or TM in Hungary) to be analysed later. It seems difficult to clearly state what happened and what has caused this situation since the explanation may lie in a complex coincidence of different events ranging from some core members' moving away from Hungary or experiencing difficulties in family situations to unexpected changes in the broader social context. Here, only the latter will be expanded upon since it may contribute to a better understanding of the significance of the context any particular transition initiatives embedded in.

The “menza story”: the challenge of trying to change systems

The strong focus on food within Transition Wekerle ‘naturally’ turned to the issue of school kitchens, i.e. the issue of public catering in schools. Parents all over in Hungary experiencing the problem of food in schools in terms of quality of food and the healthiness of dietary opportunities in schools. In Wekerle, some of the concerned parents formed a project group called “Kispesti Civilek a Közétkeztetésért” (KCK, in English: “Citizens of Kispest for Public Catering”). This group has enjoyed professional expertise of parents having legal, economic, communication, and other professional background that enabled them to carry out a proper research on public catering. As they explored the situation, they also disseminated their findings through all kind of channels including press and social media. However, the findings were not in line with the interest of the business company who has a monopoly over public catering in Kispest and, with the assistance of the local government, they threatened the active parents (KCK) with law suits of high compensation for causing harm to their business reputation. The amounts they threatened the parents were in the range of the value of whole apartments those parents owned in Wekerle. This has become known as the “menza-story” and had a massive impact on people's life.

From a local perspective, it seemed fun, constructive, and visionary to take actions to change eating habits, diets, and food service in schools for health and sustainability. However, on the other side, it is a ‘big business’, ‘big money’ in an oligopoly market where local governments and big food corporations are on both sides of the market, parents and children are disempowered. Local creativity tried to enter in an area of real conflict of interest and big money. Energy has been lost, personal livelihoods have been threatened. Even the ombudsman for educational rights (an official working in the ministry for education) had advised the parents to stop their actions since legally the situation is ambiguous and they risk being litigated with unforeseeable consequences. It is clear that in our modern societies the legal system is much more easily accessible for the resourceful, such as corporations, than for single citizens. In this setting, it turned out to be impossible to change the system of food as regards to public catering in schools. Parents had given up their initiative and been silenced. A Sustainability transition in public catering has yet to be initiated.

It might be noted that at the same time the broader Hungarian societal dynamics has been experiencing an authoritative turn mainly by the central government of Hungary (which ‘trickled down’ to other levels of state administration). Local initiatives, civic engagement,

transformative social innovation theory

grassroots actions were no longer seen as the locus of creativity and innovation, in contrast, they were, and still are, regarded as unnecessary, even harmful activism in the growing sea of paternalism and patriarchy represented by the current government of Hungary as well as most local governments. Hungary is currently experiencing a phase of centralised development being hostile to any local citizen activism, be they green or solidarity movements for/to marginalised groups. Funding has either dried up or become politicised. This has no direct bearing on Transition Wekerle, however, it reveals important wider societal patterns that indeed influence all local initiatives, including Transition Wekerle. In this sense, the words of Tracey is not only characterising the feeling of Wekerle's but most of the civic activists' in Hungary: "...everybody has started to slow down, feeling of insecurity prevails..." in the sphere of civic organising in Hungary.

5.2 Aspects of 'innovation' and 'change' of the local initiative

5.2.1 Relation with social innovation

No explicit use of the term innovation was experienced in studying the case. It seems that local participants are not framing what they have been doing, or achieved, in terms of innovativeness or 'social innovation.' Terms, like "change" and "community" are mentioned and used much more often. Even the project title of the Norway Grant project is telling in this respect: "catalysts" and "communities in transition" are the expressions applied. This conveys the message that the community-building component of these initiatives is the focal one. The narrative in Hungary seems to be more of a "community" focused one than an "innovation" driven.

However, all these initiatives can rightly be considered as bottom-up social experiments that trigger changes in people's everyday actions, behaviour, and routines. Transition movement in Hungary seems to follow a strategy to establish social space for experiential learning (learning by doing) and, by doing, changing behaviour patterns and, consequently, changing awareness, attitudes, and values. (Social space = "fixed points" where local residents can meet, discuss, and enjoy being together in an informal setting.)

5.2.2 Relation with system innovation

'Creative changes in the microcosm of people' is what one interviewee suggested seems to characterise the Transition initiatives in Hungary. It is still an open question how to upscale local initiatives (one experiment seems to be the Norway Grant project) and reach out to the broader system level.

Note that during the last parliamentary elections in 2014 many local activists from different transition initiatives, including Transition Wekerle, have turned to national politics by joining the green party (called "Politics Can Be Different", in Hungarian: Lehet Más a Politika, LMP). It seems the result is paradoxical: resources (esp. human resources) have been drawn away but,

transformative social innovation theory

at the same time, some candidates managed to get seats at local councils (incl. one of the key figures in Transition Wekerle). This has clearly politicised the Transition movement in Hungary. It remains to be seen what other implications will ensue in the near future.

5.2.3 Relation with game-changers

No direct relation can be detected in general. A more indirect relation is however detected: leaders of the Transition Wekerle (and other transition initiatives in Hungary) are well aware of the global challenges of climate change, peak oil, demographic issues, biodiversity loss, etc. and they understand their role partly as "translators" of global challenges to a language that is comprehensible to local people. In this effort, they deliberately avoid doomsday messages and stress local issues (such as food, community life, etc.) within the reach and agency of local residents.

It seems that people are open to particular things that capture their imagination, e.g. food box system (a success story in Transition Wekerle). That kind of things inspire people. Definitely, the "inner circle" of Transition Wekerle has an awareness of global environmental challenges. They brought in, translated and showed many films. Not problems to be solved but positive changes to achieve - this is a message that can be considered to have importance in terms of inspiration, impetus, and motivation.

5.2.4 Relation with societal transformation

It is believed that 'transition' (i.e. social change) has a very positive, a bit 'kitsch-like,' image or character and people just like the general positivity of it. It is an idea of social change that 'life can be better.' Very simply just start doing it - in a sense this is very naive but effective by inviting people doing something they themselves are inspired to do (always wished to do but never had the space or agency to carry it out). One might even claim that it is a psychology of social change: avoid 'guilt-trip,' promote a better life that things can be better.

However, currently Transition Wekerle is facing a situation where "everybody is having so many difficulties that it is hard to keep any coherence, the wider society is in real stress in Hungary." It seems that they are well aware that one "cannot ignore for a long time the broader context" characterising society at large.

5.2.5 Relation with narratives of change

It is a positive narrative of change (see above): life can be better, we can make it better. It is not at all a doomsday message, in contrast, it is a message of positive agency of local people and communities.

To the question of "what should change?" the response was an example about food: it should be changed what we eat and how we eat. It seems that real-life issues such as the food question

transformative social innovation theory

constitute the entry points for narrating change that is necessary. Issues like access to local food, the credibility of food sources, local shops, growing your own produce, etc. link easily with people everyday experience. "Being in the local market is enjoyable" - again a positive way of finding an entry point for changing behavioural patterns (where one goes for shopping), it becomes a "lived through experience" (you hang out in the market, bump into people you like, have a laugh, etc.)

The local market is considered as providing a particular type of 'market experience' which enhances community cohesion ("people talk with each other"), a sense of reason for being in the community, and a sense of support to each other.

What is believed and claimed to be supporting long-lasting change is the possibility for creating local businesses which contribute towards people livelihoods and towards further change. Unless people are able to devote time to community-building small-scale projects no system change can be expected. In this sense, there seems to be a narrative of 'community economy', a localised and decentralised market economy populated by small-scale businesses and social entrepreneurs.

5.3 Aspects of empowerment and disempowerment of the local initiative

Local residents were empowered in a sense that they could join the transition initiative by pursuing small-scale projects out of their own motivation. One could see them "taking responsibility." The Green Shoot Club could manage to capture the imagination of a growing number of local community members and engage them in an active dialogue by supporting them to carry out their favourite project ideas. Furthermore, the participatory ethos of the initiators has been manifested in the creation of social space for deliberation, free discussion and feeling of self-efficacy (see their Open Space initiative, among others). The 'inner circle' of Transition Wekerle constituted a 'secure group to work in.'

The Wekerle Club by providing a structure to join played an enabling role for the start of the transition initiative (the Green Shoot Club). Empowered the leading figures ("inner circle") of the initiative to enjoy its organisational resources, including dissemination possibilities that contributed to the visibility of the transition initiative among local residents. Later, however, the formal organisational structures and culture of the Wekerle Club became more and more constraining. Tensions emerged between the well-organised, well-planned, conservative members of the Wekerle Club and the informal, grassroots ethos of the leading figures of Transition Wekerle.

The village-like character of Wekerle estate has provided a physical and social space for building and maintaining a well-connected community of local residents that enabled a strategy deliberately developed by capitalising on local networks.

The broader social context and changes in political practice in Hungary has negatively influenced the general atmosphere around grassroots initiatives and discouraged aspiring to system changes

transformative social innovation theory

5.3.1 Governance

5.3.1.1 Internal governance

To understand the internal governance dynamics of the Hungarian local manifestation of this Transition Town initiative the following important dimensions are highlighted:

- Leadership (individual and group leadership),
- Engaged local residents,
- The role of the local NGO (Wekerle Club).

Leadership

Individual leadership relates to the role of Tracey Wheatley. The story cannot be told without emphasising her key strategic role (keeping the ball rolling, assisting others to keep focus), initiating change in the community, in the local NGO, and connecting Transition Wekerle with the global movement as well as other transition initiatives in Hungary. Her leadership style, whilst being transformational, can be characterised as highly democratic and participatory. Her skills to motivate, inspire, enable, facilitate, train, and manage conflicts contributed significantly to the route the Transition Wekerle story has taken.

However, leadership depends upon followers. In this sense, individual leadership was unfolding within a group of committed fellows, the so-called "inner circle." Group leadership was practised by the core group of the Green Shot Club and, later, Transition Wekerle. This group of approx. 10 called "Transition Wekerle Organising Group" constituted a coherent group of people meeting regularly to strategize and reflect upon issues and steps. This way of working is highly personal in the sense that its effectiveness depends upon the personal commitments and relationships among the core members.

Engaged local residents

The engaged citizens of Wekerle have contributed to spread changes all around the community of Wekerle estate by pursuing a number of different projects targeting everyday behavioural routines while also raising awareness and enhancing local agency in many aspects of everyday living such as food provisioning, energy use in homes, etc. So patterns of internal governance were characterised by a gradual process of getting more and more engaged people (who typically "started with something and slowly doing so much more"). The core group kept people together and gave joint direction to them while let them do what they enjoy. This constituted a coherent process managed by the core group to make local people capable to do things.

The Wekerle Club

Furthermore, in the internal governance Wekerle Club has also played a significant role. It provided a structure that the transition initiative could join in (incl. co-opting the individual

transformative social innovation theory

leader in the board of the Club). The importance of providing a formal, legal structure cannot be underestimated since raise funding requires trustful and legally accepted structures and visibility can also be enhanced by relying on established channels of communication that are effectively reaching out to local residents. However, as was emphasised above (describing the story of Transition Wekerle) the grassroots organising ethos of the core group and the formal organisational logic of the Club has also created tensions finally resulting in the separation of the two at least at the level of individual actors. Internal governance cannot anymore be said to be smooth or synergistic but more compartmentalised or conflict-ridden.

Note furthermore that due to the fluidity of organising, it is not easy to tell where is the line between internal and external governance (e.g. at the earlier phase of Green Shoot club operated as part of the Wekerle Club, however, later, definitely from the time of an officially endorsed TM initiative, the role of Wekerle Club might be said to belong more to issues of external governance.

5.3.1.2 External governance

As mentioned several times above, links to the Wekerle Club, as a formal organisation, at some point turns to an issue of external governance, where different work cultures and identities make the previously enabling organisation a constraining factor.

Grassroots initiatives always have something to do with local political structures. The Transition Wekerle story has activities that are related to the local council. The core group was deliberately took responsibility for some of the contentious issues stretching the relations between the local council and local residents. This responsibility was strategically focused upon facilitating discussion on urban development issues in a participatory way. Due to the effectiveness of this facilitation work different quality of contact has gradually been developed with the local council ("finding the good within the bad"). By initiating this mediation process in local conflicts between residents and local council and through these being participatory processes never experienced before in this relationship, the core group has managed to establish an image of being constructive and cooperative not only towards local residents but the local council.

Two different constraining external dynamics were detected in the case of Transition Wekerle. Since much time is usually required to be devoted to any grassroots initiatives, the availability of time may become a crucial issue. Time is usually consumed by work and family. So conditions of working, the flexibility of work time, etc. can be a constraining factor for individual commitments if they are inflexible, put a high toll on individuals in terms of time commitment. Unfortunately, in this respect Transition Wekerle has experienced increasingly unhelpful circumstances.

Family dynamics will also influence personal commitments (different stages of family life cycles with different commitments to family and consequently different opportunities to be an engaged citizen). Again, in this respect many unforeseen changes limited the agency of members of the core group.

transformative social innovation theory

As was mentioned, the broader societal dynamics unfolding in recent years in Hungary was influencing the culture of governance as well as legal and financial possibilities not at all in favour of local, grassroots, citizen initiatives.

5.3.2 Social learning

Individual learning: a lot of individual people (local residents) have learned how much they can really do. This might also be called capacity building and empowerment (gained confidence, strengthened their self-efficacy). A substantive aspect of learning was mentioned: “we have learnt that we need both content and capacities.”

Context of learning: personal networks are very important, people like being together with each other and if social space is provided for them to meet and discuss they have a chance to join forces in actions they all enjoy. The social spaces, referred to as “fixed points,” are important (e.g. local market, local cultural centre, etc.) – a physical space where it is easy to collect and spread information, to meet people, to find help and support (this is a significant resource to be capitalised on).

Social learning: Transition Wekerle by pursuing a participatory ethos pushed cultural change in the way people work, how they organise, how information flow is channelled. An important achievement as a lasting impact seem to be that people still there involved in transition projects and in dialogue with each other

5.3.3 Resources

Resources were mostly provided locally (space for events, wine from local wine shop, etc.). The most important resources are human capacities and networks – as already mentioned. There was a suggestion that financial resources were not that important: “the money you need you can get it anyway” (some projects, e.g. composting, energy efficiency improvement, were funded partly by the Local Council of Budapest). However, for an initiative characterised by an informal way of organising, many times money received created problems of how to spend and especially how to fulfil reporting expectations of the bureaucratic rules of funders.

There is a perception that most of people involved were people with young kids. Specifically, women with kids under three years old were the backbones many what they have achieved in transition.

It was mentioned that a kind of partial “voluntarily unemployment” is supportive to such initiatives, breaking out from conventional workplaces and having more flexible time (“better to be a teacher for two days a week and having more free time for community work”).

transformative social innovation theory

One further important resource that was discussed was the skill of process management. A grassroots, participatory initiative needs people who can facilitate the process and are able to work with and resolve conflicts.

5.3.4 Monitoring and evaluation

Not much can be said with regard to monitoring and evaluation with regard to the case of Transition Wekerle. It might be claimed that to some extent these functions were built in the way the initiative operates. Regular meetings of the core group means “lots of self-reflection in the process” that was said to be enjoyed by most of the people.

The Norway Grant project might be said to constitute another level of monitoring and evaluation. Within this project the catalysts and mentors of the 14 local community initiatives frequently meet and discuss the achievements of each initiative and report also through diaries available to the project management team. These are the resources built in that may facilitate immediate improvements during the project lifetime.

6. Synthesis of case study

The Transition Movement and Transformative Change

The Transition movement has expanded considerably since its emergence in Totnes in 2006. For many actors within the network, it has the ambitious objective of contributing towards a systemic transformation towards a post-capitalist, low carbon society. As part of its narrative it offers the rationale for this, drawing on three key game changers: peak oil, climate change and the global economic crisis. To achieve this transformation it offers a model of positive community based activism, where participants establish Transition Initiatives that begin to build parallel structures within their communities which will contribute to local economic and community resilience and the re-localisation of the economy. More specifically it combines an innovative narrative of change with a novel set of organisational processes to support activists in creating localised experimental space for new kinds of grassroots projects to emerge. All three aspects (narratives, organisational practices and projects) have the potential to have wider societal influence.

One of the key change mechanisms that the model is based upon is the argument that this form of community leadership will enrol other actors such as businesses and politicians who will then marshal their resources and influence towards the objective of a multi-systemic transition. It is for this reason that the TM advocates and cultivates an open and engaging approach to its activism (“a party not a protest”) and seeks to work with other partners where possible. The movement argues, and attempts to demonstrate, that grassroots community action can make a significant impact in terms of stimulating change. Another important element of the model is that notion that a successful transition can only be achieved if people also undergo an ‘inner transition’ away from individualistic consumer identities and behaviour, towards a more co-operative and convivial way of life. The transition approach therefore links system change with processes of cultural change.

In the last nine years the model and the network have both evolved. The movement itself has internationalised and new actors such as National Hubs have emerged which play a role in establishing Transition Initiatives in their own countries. This process has been supported by the Transition Network who play a critical role in holding the movement together and empowering activists to establish and sustain initiatives. The model itself has also been refined and there has been some recent work to try and deepen the theories of change that underpin it. In part this seems to be because there is a recognition that changing local systems is difficult and problematic. A shift towards more focus on the economic sustainability of transition projects and initiatives has also occurred in recognition of the fact that a reliance on volunteer labour alone limits the potential for more widespread change. Fundamentally, the Transition model seeks system change through behaviour and value change at a number of different levels and sites.

However, it is clear that whilst Transition has not yet managed to stimulate widespread systemic change – either at a local or higher scale – it has certainly had some impacts, although these can be difficult to trace and untangle. Certainly some of the key ideas about the rationale and process for a Transition have been influential. The Transition movement helped

transformative social innovation theory

publicize the issue of peak oil and has also played a role in promoting the idea of citizen led action as a potentially effective strategy for moving towards a low carbon society. The organisational principles and processes of Transition certainly have an influence on those who participate but it is less clear whether these have been translated into new organisational contexts. Finally, the local projects definitely have multiple forms of impact, both locally and otherwise, but these would need to be explored on a project by project basis.

Relationship between the transnational network and local manifestations.

Totnes and Wekerle are both local instances of TIs within the wider Transition movement but there are clear differences in relation to the relationship to TN and the movement as a whole. As TTT was the first TI, the crucible of Transition, and also the origins of TN then it is not surprising that TTT retains a potentially unique position within the overall movement, widely known as its 'home'. It is clear that operationally TN and TTT have become increasingly distinct over the last few years, and yet the fact that they are both located in Totnes (in the same building) means that there is inevitably still connections between them. The role of TTT as the exemplar initiative within the movement is something that both Network activists and TTT participants are aware of and all of them collectively feel the responsibility of trying to ensure that it is able to meet the expectations that this entails. Indeed, many of the network staff are still involved at the project level of TTT. There is also a sense that the Network and TTT remain close in terms of where the Transition model has got to in terms of its own evolution. For example, the focus on sustainable enterprises as reflected in the REconomy work which has been enhanced by the fact that Totnes was one of the local initiatives that received support under the national REconomy programme. However, this can be also seen in other areas such as the positioning of Transition as an alternative to austerity, and a more relaxed approach as to whether projects and initiatives are formally branded as 'Transition'. The causality is not clear to establish, but it is evident that TTT and TN continue to influence each other in subtle ways.

Wekerle is different because it represents a good example of how other Transition initiatives have emerged internationally, and therefore provides a good example of how this particular form of social innovation has 'diffused'. This process, often starts with exposure to the core ideas and narratives around the model, which in the case of Wekerle came through existing interpersonal networks. As has been the cases in many countries, these ideas were picked up by an existing environmental NGO and effectively became a way of developing a new strand of work, however there was still a sense that the Wekerle initiative was citizen led. Following this exposure the processes and practices of Transition occurred, both through engagement with Transition materials and then through the formalised training that is offered by Transition Network. As the first formally recognised TI in Hungary, activists from the Wekerle initiative are now playing a role in further diffusing the Transition model, both through the Norway Grant project, titled "Catalysts on the spot – small communities in transition," and through the embryonic plans for a formalised National Hub. The case therefore provides a window into the way that the movement has spread through a process of self-organisation and support from the Transition Network.

Whilst there does not appear to have been any direct connections between Wekerle and Totnes – apart from the training of Hungarian activists by Totnes based trainers - there are

transformative social innovation theory

similar in that they are both exemplars in their respective countries and both have supported the further development of the movement within their respective territories. Both also have provided the experimental space for a wide range of different experiments to emerge, in both cases some of which have become well established. However, there are also some important differences. Whereas Totnes has managed to sustain an active core group – supported by a small paid staff – Wekerle has become a ‘doughnut’ initiative, without participants who are willing to undertake a co-ordinating role. Without further research into this it is difficult to understand the nature of this phenomenon. However, it is evident that the day-to-day practicalities of running community based organisations cuts against the ethic of enjoyment and following ones’ passions that is at the heart of the Transition model. Therefore it might not be surprising that participants tend to gravitate towards the project activity that engages them, rather than get involved in co-ordinating activities or other administrative processes. In the case of Wekerle there is also the ‘divorce’ from the Wekerle Club that might have had an effect in reducing the capacity of the organisation to co-ordinate across its activity. The evolution of TTT was different in that it grew into a charitable organisation, developing a board of Trustees that could oversee the development of the whole organisation. Another important difference in this respect is that TTT has been able to secure a regular stream of financial resources that enable it to have a small staff team. This team is able to play a role in the overall co-ordination of the initiative, not least through organising meetings and facilitating regular communication between the different activities. Wekerle, like a lot of Transition initiatives, has been dependent solely on volunteer resources, which limits the capacity for co-ordination.

6.1 Condensed time-line

Table 7: Condensed time-line

Year / period	Important activities/changes/milestones in transnational networking of Transition Movement	Important activities/changes/milestones in transnational networking of Transition Town Totnes	Important activities/changes/milestones in transnational networking of Transition Wekerle
2004	Rob Hopkins shows the film <i>The End of Suburbia</i> to a group of permaculture students in Kinsale, Eire and invites Colin Campbell in to speak to the students. The perceived threat of peak oil leads them to develop an Energy Descent Action Plan.		
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kinsale 2021: an Energy Descent Action Plan launched at conference in Kinsale. Over following months 500 copies were sold. • Rob Hopkins moves to Totnes and begins collaborating with Naresh Giangrande, another peak oil educator, on what a better version of the Kinsale EDAP might look like. 		

transformative social innovation theory

2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After several months of preparation the Unleashing of Transition Town Totnes is held. 400 people attend a meeting at the Civic Hall in Totnes (Sept). • Life after Oil Course held at Schumacher College. One attendee, Ben Brangwyn offers to help set up some kind of support organisation, which became Transition Network. 		
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Transition Training event held in Totnes. • First Transition conference held in Stroud. Conferences have since been held in Cirencester (2008), London (2009), Devon (2010) and Liverpool (2011). • Transition Network is registered • First non-UK 'hub established in Republic of Ireland, followed by New Zealand.as a Company Limited by Guarantee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRESOC registered as an Industrial and Provident Society. • First phase of the Totnes Pound local currency launched. 	Take-off period: small-scale, informal, individually led, non-institutionalised green activities (Until 2009)
2008	Transition Handbook is published.		
2009	Transition Network is registered as a charity	Transition Streets project launched	Period of the Green Shoot Club: operating as part of the Wekerle Club, locally legitimised and institutionalised. Period of growth and gaining momentum (until 2011)
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Totnes Energy Descent Action Plan (EDAP) is launched • TTT receives funding as part of the UK government funded <i>Low Carbon Communities</i> programme. 		
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition Companion published • First informal meeting of Transition Hubs at Liverpool Transition Conference 	Frances Northrop appointed as Transition in Action manager	Transition Wekerle officially launched: well-known nationally, considered as exemplar transition project in Hungary.

transformative social innovation theory

2012	In Transition 2.0 Film Launched	TTT involved in campaign against opening a Costa Coffee outlet in Totnes Totnes Local Economic Blueprint launched	Local forum: aiming for making explicit a “transition identity” for all through open dialogue.
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Power of Just Doing Stuff</i> published. Intended as a more ‘mainstream’ version of the Transition story. • Rob Hopkins attends an event convened by the French President at the National Assembly in Paris to discuss alternatives to economic growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REconomy Centre opens • Totnes Welfare Conference held which initiates Caring Town Totnes work. 	
2014		Part of ATMOS site purchased for 1 Totnes Pound	

6.2 Aspects of ‘innovation’ and ‘change’

None of the three case study elements showed any significant evidence of the concept of social innovation being used as self-identifier or a discourse. Indeed, there was some scepticism across all three cases as to whether innovation and related discourses are the right terms to describe what the Transition movement is, and what it does. That said, the Transition model does seem to fit the TRANSIT definition of social innovation insofar that is a new ‘model’ of organising that is fundamentally social in its ends and its means. One of the main innovative aspects of the model is the aggregative effect of combining a range of ideas, discourse and narratives with a sets of organisational processes in order to create a set of locally manifested projects. The Transition model is innovative, not only the way that it combines various elements within these categories but also in the way that it combines across them, leading them to become self-reinforcing.

The innovativeness of the model is similar across the two local manifestations. Both have created a localised experimental space that has allowed a range of different projects to be launched across a number of different domains. The development of these projects has involved engaging with a variety of local actors, including local political administrations. In both cases there has been an emphasis on ‘catalyst’ projects – those which it is hoped will support a wider ecology of complementary projects, and there is some evidence that the projects are having some subtle effects on local systems. For example, in Wekerle there was the impact on the local urban development regulatory plan whilst in Totnes the Caring Town Totnes project is an ambitious effort to build a different form of social care provision from the bottom up. In other cases, whilst the projects clearly have positive effects on the participants, it is difficult to establish the systemic effects, either because it is currently too subtle or because the effects are entangled with other initiatives and programmes. For example, in Totnes, food related projects are part of a wider set of activities that extend beyond Transition

transformative social innovation theory

Town Totnes and which constitute and replicate a strong local food culture. However, the effects of the local initiatives both extend beyond their immediate localities. In the case of TTT, it spawned the whole Transition movement. In a similar, but smaller way, activists from the Wekerle initiative are facilitating the spread of Transition ideas throughout Hungary. Projects have also travelled and been replicated, such as the example of the Totnes Pound given above. However again, it is difficult to argue that at this stage any of the wider effects could be considered as systemic to date.

One of the interesting parallels that cut across all three is a questioning of whether the conventional Transition model of change – based on the manifestation of successful local projects – is enough. As discussed in section 3.2.4 there has been some work undertaken at the network level to further develop the ‘theory of change’ that underpins Transition, to try and deepen the understanding between the practical manifestations of projects and the wider societal change to which it aspires. Within the local manifestation of TTT the local process of change appears to have shifted towards an emphasis on asset based community development. In both Totnes and Wekerle there are also entanglements with local politics. In Totnes, the relationship is closest with the Town Council, where former Transition activists are now elected and which has officially adopted the status of a Transition Council. Similarly, in Wekerle several Transition activists have entered national politics. However, this is not necessarily a straightforward pathway. Some interviewees in Totnes spoke of their desire to try and avoid being too closely associated with the UK Green Party and remain open to other political affinities. There are also questions about the extent to which Transition should get involved in campaigning, lobbying or other forms or more ‘traditional’ green activism. Again, is something that appears to be debated across the movement, with the opportunity for local initiatives to adopt these strategies as they see fit. As Rob Hopkins put it Transition is able to ‘hold ambiguity’ and create a space to explore issues as they arise, including the role of activism.

As has been noted, questions around the potential of the Transition model to achieve substantive change is something that has been debated since the beginning of the movement with critics suggesting that the strategy of building parallel infrastructure will not succeed when it comes up against political opposition or threatens vested interests. This certainly seems to be the case in Wekerle in the case of the “Citizens of Kispest for Public Catering” food project where the activists who were trying to reconfigure the school food system met fierce opposition from the incumbent business interests. Similarly, in Totnes, there was significant local opposition to proposals for two wind turbines near Totnes as part of the TRESOC project that emerged from TTT and which many TTT participants actively supported. Both of these illustrate the point that system change is fundamentally political and fraught with potential conflict which can undermine the generally positive engaging approach to system building that Transition promotes.

6.3 Aspects of empowerment and disempowerment

The whole Transition model is geared towards encouraging and empowering communities to contribute towards enhancing their own resilience. Different processes of empowerment occur at different levels. TN plays an important role in supporting the development of new initiatives by providing useful resources, training and access to a network of likeminded initiatives which offer a sense of a community and being part of a wider larger movement. The

transformative social innovation theory

case study illustrates how the emergence of Wekerle drew on this kind of empowerment and has then in turn led to the further emergence of initiatives. The overall growth of the movement is therefore through a process of semi-structured self-organisation which attempts to support the emergence of new initiatives whilst retaining some kind of boundary over what Transition actually entails.

At the local level Transition supports the empowerment of local participants to engage in the kind of activities in which they are interested. It does this in a number of ways: By explicitly encouraging an experimental ethic where it is OK to fail; By using different kinds of organisational processes to allow new ideas and projects to emerge (open space); By having a broad remit which allows participants to follow their own passions and interests; By providing access to tools and advice about how to successfully organise and deliver projects, again with attention paid to process; By providing publicity and local communication that can help attract support for projects. In both the cases of Wekerle and Totnes it is clear that this process has empowered people to engage with a range of different projects and activities. In some cases these projects have been time-limited, in others they have developed into stand-alone organisations. Whilst the overall effect and impact of these activities requires further investigation, it is clear that the model does create a supportive process of community involvement in practical sustainability activities, a kind of experimental space.

A second important similarity in the two local cases is the importance of inspirational leadership in terms as a factor which empowers people and encourages their co-operation and participation. The role of Rob Hopkins has played as an eloquent spokesperson and charismatic leader of the Transition movement has been noted in other analyses. Before the internationalisation of the movement he played a similar role in the development of TTT. In more recent times, the leadership skills and networking ability of Frances Northrop appears to have been significant as a factor in the on-going development of TTT. Whilst in Wekerle, the personal leadership skills and personality of Tracey Wheatley were significant in the development of the initiative there. What this suggests is that whilst the Transition model promotes processes of collective leadership and participatory decision-making, the role of skilled social/civic entrepreneurs seems important in terms of implementing the model, particularly in the enrolment of partners and participants. More generally it is clear that individual skills, values, and networks can shape the way in which different projects or initiatives evolve.

Across all aspects of the case a lack of resources and the risk of burnout to volunteers can be disempowering. The experience of confronting larger social systems also constituted a disempowering experience for activists in Wekerle and was also raised at the transnational network level. Whilst the model is rooted strongly in an optimistic reading of the potential of civil society actors to stimulate systemic change, there is also a recognition that existing power structures, particularly economic and political, can be an impediment to the successful achievement of the goals of the project. In Hungary this is compounded by a current political elite which is highly suspicious of citizen led initiatives.

An interesting parallel across Totnes and Wekerle is that both have experienced conflict that is rooted in cultural tensions. In Wekerle this was manifested in the growing conflict between the conservative, traditional and patriarchal Wekerle Club and the more radical / anarchistic

transformative social innovation theory

members of Green Shoot club which consisted of the post-materialist middle classes. In Totnes the most recent example of this was the 'backlash' over the anti-Costa Coffee campaign that had been co-ordinated by TTT activists. At the root of this resistance to Transition was an antipathy to the wider 'alternative milieu' that it is seen by some to represent and which is not wholly welcome by all aspects of the locality. Therefore resistance occurs from those who question Transition's legitimacy in terms of speaking on behalf of the whole community. Indeed this points to a tension within the model itself: that it is predicated on the usage of a strong place based notion of community and justifies itself in terms of acting in the best interests of this community. However, whilst the Transition does contain some flexibility, there are still some 'hard' boundaries in terms of the underlying rationales and the kinds of approaches that are appropriate. Those who do not subscribe to these beliefs may therefore feel unrepresented by Transition activism, and may feel that it does not speak for them. It is perhaps for this reason that the key discourses, at least in Totnes and at the Network level, appear to have shifted towards 'wellbeing' and 'economic resilience' which are potentially more widely acceptable terms around which coalitions of actors can be organised.

transformative social innovation theory

List of references

- Alloun, E. and Alexander, S. (2014), 'The Transition Movement: Questions of Diversity, Power and Affluence' *Simplicity Institute*, Report 14g.
- Crowley, D. (1995). The uses of peasant design in Austria-Hungary in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. *Studies in the Decorative Arts*, pp. 2-28.
- Fürstand, A. (2008). *Térszintaktika a településkutatásban* (Doctoral dissertation, Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem).
- Hopkins, R. (2014) *The Power of Just Doing Stuff*, Green Books / UIT, Cambridge.
- Hopkins, R. (2011) *The Transition Companion*, Green Books / UIT, Cambridge.
- Hopkins, R. (2008) *The Transition Handbook*, Green Books, Totnes.
- Hopkins, R. and Lipman, P. (2009) *Who we are and what we do*, Transition Network, Totnes. Available from: <https://www.transitionnetwork.org/resources/who-we-are-and-what-we-do>
- Jackson, T. (2009) *Prosperity without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet*, Routledge, Abingdon.
- Longhurst, N. (2013) 'The emergence of an alternative milieu: conceptualising the nature of alternative places.' *Environment and Planning A*, 45(9), 2100 – 2119.
- Longhurst, N. (2012) 'The Totnes Pound: A grassroots technological niche' in *Enterprising Communities: Grassroots sustainability innovations*. Edited by A. Davies. Bingley: Emerald, 163 – 188.
- Longhurst, N. (2010) *Twinned with Narnia? Exploring the construction of a Countercultural place*, PhD Thesis, Department of Geography, University of Liverpool, Available from: [https://www.academia.edu/813442/Twinned with Narnia The postcapitalist possibilities of a countercultural place](https://www.academia.edu/813442/Twinned_with_Narnia_The_postcapitalist_possibilities_of_a_countercultural_place)
- Miller, M. (2002). Garden cities and suburbs: at home and abroad. *Journal of planning history*, 1(1), 6-28.
- Mollison, B. (1997) *Permaculture: A Designers Manual*, Tagari, Tyalgum, Australia.
- Nagy, G. (1994). *Kertvárosunk, a Wekerle* (The Wekerle Estate). Budapest.
- Pap, Á. (2014). The relationship between the built cultural heritage and the local identity–actor-centred geographical analysis based on Budapest case studies (Doctoral dissertation, University of Szeged).
- Sári, Z. (2010). The connection between construction projects using standard plans and the change in lifestyle. *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica*, 55(2), 467-494.
- Transition Network (2014) *Transition Network Draft Strategy*, available from: <https://www.transitionnetwork.org/news/2014-07-02/transition-networks-new-strategy>

7. Annex 1: Bibliography of materials

7.1 Primary sources

- Brangwyn, B. (2014) 'Ben Brangwyn on the scaling up of Transition internationally' available at <https://www.transitionnetwork.org/blogs/rob-hopkins/2014-01/ben-brangwyn-scaling-transition-internationally>
- Brangwyn, B. (2014) *National Hubs meeting Copenhagen 2014 – Working Groups actions for 2014/5 (and what happened during 2013/4)*.
- Brangwyn, B. (2014) *National Hubs meeting Copenhagen 2014 – Hubs status reports*
- Brangwyn, B. and Hopkins, R. (2008) *Transition Initiatives Primer*, Version 26. Available at <https://www.transitionnetwork.org/resources/transition-primer>
- Giangrande, N. (2013) *Transition Network Research Network Working Paper 1: Resilience, Transition and Theories of Change*, Prepared for the Transition Network Learning Day on Theories of Change, Bristol, July 3rd 2013.
- Hopkins, R. (2014) *The Power of Just Doing Stuff*, Green Books / UIT, Cambridge.
- Hopkins, R. (2011) *The Transition Companion*, Green Books / UIT, Cambridge.
- Hopkins, R. (2008) *The Transition Handbook*, Green Books, Totnes.
- Hopkins, R. and Lipman, P. (2009) *Who we are and what we do*, Transition Network, Totnes. Available from: <https://www.transitionnetwork.org/resources/who-we-are-and-what-we-do>
- Northrop, F. (2014) *Frances Northrop on 'Healthy Town Totnes'* available at <http://www.transitionnetwork.org/blogs/rob-hopkins/2014-05/frances-northrop-healthy-town-totnes>
- Northrop, F. (2013) *How we did it: Totnes local enterprise incubator*, available at <http://www.transitiontowntotnes.org/2013/09/how-we-did-it-totnes-local-enterprise-incubator/>
- Pimantel, F. (2014) *National Hubs meeting Copenhagen 2014 – Main report*
- Transition Network (2014) *Transition Network Draft Strategy*, available from: <https://www.transitionnetwork.org/news/2014-07-02/transition-networks-new-strategy>
- Transition Network (2013) Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 13 <http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Showcharity/RegisterOfCharities/CharityWithPartB.aspx?RegisteredCharityNumber=1128675&SubsidiaryNumber=0>
- Transition Town Totnes (2013) *Totnes and District Local Economic Blueprint*, Transition Town Totnes, Totnes. Available from: <http://www.transitiontowntotnes.org/groups/reconomybusinessnetwork/economic-blueprint/>
- Transition Town Totnes (2014) *Notes from Transition Town Totnes away day: values and principles*
- Transition Town Totnes (2014) *Notes from Transition Town Totnes away day: fishbowl discussion*
- Transition Town Totnes (2014) *Notes from Transition Town Totnes away day: volunteers*
- Transition Town Totnes (2013) *Totnes: 'A Caring Town' conference* available at <http://www.transitiontowntotnes.org/2013/11/totnes-a-caring-town-conference/>
- Transition Town Totnes (2013) Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2013 available from <http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Showcharity/RegisterOfCharities/CharityWithoutPartB.aspx?RegisteredCharityNumber=1138865&SubsidiaryNumber=0>

transformative social innovation theory

Transition Town Totnes (2010) *Transition in Action, Totnes and District 2030: An Energy Descent Action Plan*, Transition Town Totnes, Totnes.

7.2 Websites

<https://www.transitionnetwork.org>
<http://www.transitiontowntotnes.org>
<http://www.transitionresearchnetwork.org>
http://www.wekerletelep.hu/zold_hajtas
<http://atalakulowekerle.blogspot.hu/>

7.3 Secondary sources

Aitken, G. (2012) 'Community Transitions to Low Carbon Futures in the Transition Town Network (TTN)' *Geography Compass*, 6(2), pp. 89 – 99.

Feola, G. and Nunes, R.J. (2013) 'Success and failure of grassroots innovations for addressing climate change: The case of the Transition Movement' *Global Environmental Change*
[doi:10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2013.11.011](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2013.11.011)

Feola, G. and Nunes, R.J. (2013) *Failure and Success of Transition Initiatives: a study of the international replication of the Transition Movement*, Walker Institute for Climate System Research, Research Note 4, University of Reading. Available from: http://www.walker-institute.ac.uk/publications/research_notes/WalkerInResNote4.pdf

Heiskanen, E., Jalas, M., Rinkinen, J. and Tainio, P. (2015) 'The local community as a "low-carbon lab": Promises and perils' *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 14, 149 – 164.

Hobson, K., Hamilton, J. and Mayne, R. (2014), 'Monitoring and evaluation in UK low-carbon community groups: benefits, barriers and the politics of the local.' *Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability*. DOI: [10.1080/13549839.2014.928814](https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2014.928814)

North, P. and N. Longhurst (2013). 'Grassroots Localisation? The Scalar Potential and Limits of the 'Transition' Approach to Climate Change and Resource Constraint.' *Urban Studies* 50(7): 1423 - 1438.

Scialom, F. (2014) 'Embodying Economic Change: De-Growth and Localisation Practices in Totnes, United Kingdom' Masters Thesis, Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology, Leiden University, Available from:
http://www.transitionresearchnetwork.org/uploads/1/2/7/3/12737251/embodying_economic_change_by_florence_scialom.pdf

Seyfang, G. and A. Haxeltine (2012) 'Growing grassroots innovations: exploring the role of community-based initiatives in governing sustainable energy transitions.' *Environment and Planning C*, 30, 381 - 400.

transformative social innovation theory

Annex 2: List of interviews

Transition Network interviews

Name	Role / purpose of the interview	Date and location	Interviewer	Duration
Rob Hopkins	Co-founder of Transition Town Totnes and of Transition Network.	17/09/14 (Totnes, TN office) and 24/09/14 (Skype)	Noel Longhurst	90mins
Ben Brangwyn	Co-founder of Transition Network	17/09/14 Totnes, TN office	Noel Longhurst	90mins
Naresh Giangrande	Co-founder of Transition Town Totnes, founder of Transition Training, and involved in Transition Network since its inception.	17/09/14, Totnes, TN office	Noel Longhurst	85mins
Peter Lipmann	Co-founder and Chair of Transition Network	16/12/14, Skype	Noel Longhurst	44mins

Transition Town Totnes interviews

Interviewee	Role / purpose of Interview	Date and location	Interviewer	Duration
Carol Whitty	Current Trustee of TTT. Previously involved in Education group.	19/09/14 Totnes	Noel Longhurst	131mins
Wendy Stayte	Longstanding involvement in food and growing based Transition activities.	19/09/14 Totnes	Noel Longhurst	53mins
Fiona Ward	Longstanding involvement in economic projects as part of Transition. Also leader of REconomy project.	18/09/14 Totnes	Noel Longhurst	36mins
Mary Popham	Works on energy and housing projects	27/11/14 Totnes, TTT offices	Noel Longhurst	56mins
Frances Northrop	Transition in action project officer	27/11/14 Totnes, TTT offices	Noel Longhurst	56mins
Hal Gilmore	Works on REconomy and also does Transition Tours	28/11/14 Train to London	Noel Longhurst	56mins
Sally Croft	Does the finances for TTT and TN also a trustee of TTT	09/12/14 Skype	Noel Longhurst	56mins
Pru Boswell	Former mayor and current Town Councillor	12/12/14 Telephone	Noel Longhurst	20mins

transformative social innovation theory

Annex 3: List of meetings and events attended

Meeting and events	Purpose of attending	Date and duration	Attending from the research group
Annual Transition Hubs meeting, Vig and Copenhagen, Denmark.	Attending this meeting was intended to provide insight into the current state of the transnational network, the issues it is facing and the priorities	09/09/14 12/09/14	Noel Longhurst
Alternative economics talk in Totnes co-organised by TTT, Public Library, Totnes.	Talk by Donnie Maclurcan on his forthcoming book 'How on Earth?' Organised by the REconomy group of Transition Town Totnes and Schumacher College Example of a typical event organised by TTT	17/09/14 1930 - 2100	Noel Longhurst
Edible Totnes volunteer session, Steamer Quay, Totnes.	Example of volunteer food related project	18/09/14 1730 - 1830	Noel Longhurst
Transition Tour, Various sites around Totnes	Tour given to Transition pilgrims – those who visit the town to see TTT in action. Various projects visited	19/09/14 1400 – 1700	Noel Longhurst
Transition Drink, King William VII pub, Totnes	Drinks with Transition staff and volunteers that follow the Transition Tours sometimes	19/09/14 1815 – 2000	Noel Longhurst
Caring Town Totnes meeting, Methodist Church Hall, Totnes	Workshop type meeting arranged as part of the Caring Town Totnes work that TTT is involved in	26/11/14 1000 – 1300	Noel Longhurst
Meeting about the ownership of the Mansion	Working group meeting to discuss the future of the Mansion House	26/11/14 1400 – 1500	Noel Longhurst

transformative social innovation theory

House,
Mansion
House, Totnes

Positive Money Talk by Ben Dyson, Methodist Church, Totnes	A talk jointly organised by TTT and Schumacher College by Ben Dyson from the organisation Positive Money.	26/11/14 1930 – 2100	Noel Longhurst
---	---	----------------------------	-------------------

Transition Town Totnes offices	A day spent in the offices doing voluntary work, observing the day to day life of TTT and talking to staff and volunteers.	27/11/14 0930 – 1730	Noel Longhurst
--------------------------------------	--	----------------------------	-------------------
