



Top Tips for the Neighbourhood Convening Host

Being a Neighbourhood Convening Host (Initiator) is the most important piece to the success of Transition Streets as you'll be the catalyst to bring the group together. Your job will be to invite your neighbours to apply to the Sunshine Coast Transition Streets Pilot Project. Applications for this pilot are assessed and adopted based on neighbourhood commitment and availability of funding.

How do I get my neighbours to join?

Hosts from St Albans UK and Guelph Ontario Canada, have shared their experiences and offered some tips about being the catalyst to invite your neighbours and bring new start-up groups together. We hope this might be helpful. The initiators have all adopted slightly different approaches to recruiting neighbours. These include:

- **Knocking on the doors of all neighbours in both directions.** *You can begin by talking to neighbours you already know. Having some people involved who support what you are doing is useful and helps give you confidence. Talking to people face to face is important – ask them to talk to their neighbours.*
- **Contacting neighbouring households by email.** *Is there already an email list or a local newsletter?*
- **Leafletting the whole street** using the Transition Streets leaflet with the name and contact details of the Neighbourhood Convening Host included. People were invited to come to an informal meeting at the initiator's house to find out more. *You can download and print Transition Streets leaflets from our website.*
- **Talking to local groups.**

Some ideas to think about when inviting people

Each street, building complex or neighbourhood is individual and different; what works in one area may not work in another. Some initiators used the Transition Streets leaflet; others did not, relying more on personal contact. Between them they offered these reflections on their experiences of recruiting people:

- Inviting people to a 'no obligation to join' preliminary gathering with refreshments helps
- Showing a short video of Transition Streets at a preliminary gathering can provide a useful focus

- The initiator's own enthusiasm for Transition Streets is crucial
- It is important that initiators have a good understanding of the overall aims of Transition – *perhaps you've attended a Transition Awareness Raising event, or a Transition Café or viewed the Transition films (you can watch Transition 1:0 & Transition 2:0 videos on our website) or read the Transition books etc.*
- It helps if the initiator knows how many people they are aiming to recruit (this may partly be determined by the size of likely meeting spaces)
- Setting a deadline by which things have to be done helps, e.g. arranging a date for a preliminary social meeting means that the leafleting has to be done by then
- It's important to include people you don't know already
- There is, however, no obligation to invite people who may cause problems with group dynamics and the smooth running of the group
- You need to accept that you can't persuade everyone about the issues and the need to change behaviour
- You need to be persistent – it takes time and often more than one contact to get people involved

Once your street or neighbourhood is adopted, a Sunshine Coast Transition Streets Pilot project coordinator will contact you and will be on hand to support you and facilitate the first orientation meeting. You can decide if the same neighbour will host each week, or ideally, it will be shared amongst the group, rotating for each monthly session.

Why would I want to host?

We realize that opening up your home and making the initial contact with your neighbours can be scary. But being a host opens up so many possibilities for you and your community. You get to be the change you want to have in your neighbourhood. You are not alone. Your coordinator will be available for support.

Here are some reasons to host:

- Meet your neighbours
- Co-create action in your community
- Its social and fun and it makes a difference
- Create a vision of what you want for your neighbourhood with the people that actually live there.

To find out more, or download a Transition Streets leaflet, visit our website:

www.sunshinecoastintransition.wordpress.com

Do you have questions? Email ttsunshinecoast@gmail.com or phone 604-886 8769

