Communications Group meeting (no 3) Thurs 15/11/12 at the Transition Centre

Present: Duncan, Sarah, Penny, Dario   Apologies: Anders, Elinor

Sarah is new to the group. She brings over 6 years' experience in PR with the Carbon Trust and a global tech agency working for brands like IBM and Skype. She is currently doing pro bono PR consultancy for Brixton Energy.

The agenda agreed at the beginning of the meeting:

1. **Newsletter** – Elinor requested that we discuss what 3 main items should be in the newsletter she is preparing
2. **Report on stats of the different channels (website, Twitter, mailing list etc) and work to develop a system checklist and guidelines for new people** – Penny is working on these and wanted to report back
3. **Communications strategy** – continuing the discussion from the previous week.
4. **AOB**: more points about the newsletter, harmonizing the TTB database
5. Setting the **next meeting date**

Actions agreed (more detail in notes session below):

ACTION	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Determine 3 main newsletter items: Duncan to determine his choice of 3 main newsletter items for Elinor and send to her.	Duncan
Brief Elinor on the website and mailbox: Penny to meet or talk with Elinor to ensure that she knows what she needs to for adding content to the website and managing/using the new comms mailbox	Penny
Complete writing of guide to technical systems: Penny to complete the Communications systems briefing slides and send to Duncan for him to see if he has any detail to add. When they are agreed, Penny will send it to Dario for him (as a new user) to see if he can follow it.	Penny / Duncan / Dario
Connect Mailchimp newsletter release directly to the Facebook group: Duncan to review the setting in Mailchimp and see if he can get this working . If it doesn't work, he will send Penny the login details for her to investigate.	Duncan / Penny
Next meeting Thurs 22nd Nov 6.30 – 8.00, Transition Centre in Robsart St, Calendar item created at the meeting. Dario to update item with more detail	Dario
Meeting notes: Penny to send out and upload to website.	Penny

Notes from the meeting discussions:

1. **Newsletter**:
    a. We agreed that we didn't all need to discuss the choice of 3 main items for the next newsletter as requested by Elinor. Penny and Duncan had a quick discussion after the meeting. Penny said that the Transition Network training needed to be advertised by agreed that this wouldn't be a main item. Duncan wanted it to really contain 'news' rather than just advertising upcoming events, but he needs to think about it and will contact Elinor later. **ACTION: Duncan to determine his choice of 3 main newsletter items for Elinor and send to her.**

b. Penny has arranged a session with Elinor over the weekend to go over the website and new mailbox. **ACTION: Penny to meet or talk with Elinor to ensure that she knows what she needs to for adding content to the website and managing/using the new comms mailbox**.

2. **Report on system stats and guidelines**:
   a. Penny is producing a guide to using the different technology systems (later she will add non-technology systems), mapping the different system, how they are used and how many people use them. **ACTION: Penny to complete the Communications systems briefing slides and send to Duncan for him to see if he has any detail to add. When they are agreed, Penny will send it to Dario for him (as a new user) to see if he can follow it.**
   b. **Significant stats are: Newsletter (main mailing list): 1,500; Facebook group members: 241; Website for the month Oct13th/Nov12th: 1016 visits, 829 unique visitors, 77% new visitors, 57 countries; TTB-Active Google group: 66; Twitter 1,640; TTB-Steerers Google group 16**
   c. A note about linking newsletter release in Mailchimp and the TTB Facebook group. Duncan has done this, but it isn't working. **ACTION: Duncan to review the setting in Mailchimp and see if he can get this working . If it doesn't work, he will send Penny the login details for her to investigate.**

3. **Communications strategy**: Starting from the previous week's awareness sketch, we had a wide-ranging discussion which considered various possible ways forward and current or perceived difficulties relating to assessing priorities. Broadly these explore how we can set strategy without considering the organizational aspects and how much we need to know (and agree about) the detail:
   a. 'Aim for the broader audience' – taking this as a starting point, we discussed issues with it, such as that we might need more organizers
   b. Relationship between the priorities for the Communications strategy and TTB's priorities. Yes, the Communications strategy serves TTB's overall strategy, but is also sensitive to specific priorities (such as the lack of reaching a particular group of residents, or the need to attract and retain organizers, or the desire for more people on the newsletter mailout to open the newsletter or come to events). Dario wanted us to stop worrying about this for now and suggested we imagine the two contrasting situations:
      i. Assume we have very few resources – so we only put out (via all our channels) 2 paragraphs per month
      ii. Assume we have lots of people to cover the work – so we do everything we can think of

      By posing these two, he was getting us to distance ourselves from the question of whether we have resources. In this way we could look at the general strategy without thinking about it operationally.

   c. Starting with the two aims: 'Engage Brixton Community' (including lots that still don't know about TTB, though they have lived here a long time) and 'Increase participation'. + 'Effective use of channels'
   d. Another start point: 2 main pieces of work: 'Newsletter and engaging new people', 'Engaging people to do more'. Though these two don't need to be different in practise.

4. **AOB**:
   a. More points about the newsletter:
      i. Simple message
      ii. More news
      iii. Different sections
      iv. One slot per month for each group and rotate (unless the issue is very important)
      v. Strongest story / significant / unusual
      vi. Do most important ones.

b. Harmonizing the database – this is a longer term project. TTB has a main database, but most groups have their own. We would like a single database where people can indicate their preferences and that then notifies the relevant group(s).

5. **Next meeting**: we agreed to have it in 2 weeks but there was no date available that we could all make. So agreed to have it next week, but then another 2 weeks later. Next meeting agreed Thurs 22nd Nov 6.30 – 8.00

Amended flipchart sketch starting with 'Awareness' – photo taken by Dario and now on Flickr