

Small Practical Project Ideas



Guide

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Small practical projects help show people in your community that a group working toward a Transition can make things happen. In this document, you will find ideas for small practical projects you can carry out during your group's Initiating phase.

It is better to undertake larger practical projects a bit later once you have a Core Group in place (see [Moving to a Core Group](#)). Larger projects also carry a risk as they can be more complex and you don't know if you have the capacity to do them. Therefore, it's best to start by doing something small and easy.

The ideas mentioned below are all real-world projects that Transition groups have carried out. These activities are really useful for when you are first starting out, and they can also be done at any time. A lot of the following projects involve re-skilling, which is one of the central ideas of Transition. Since the 1960s many people in westernised societies have gradually lost skills that were once commonplace. Most people who grew up during the '40s and '50s learned, almost routinely, how to garden, repair things, look after small livestock, and generally make do with little. A central aspect of Transition is to reverse this loss of skills and re-skill people so they can do more things for themselves.

Energy

- Host draught-busting workshops, such as those held by [Transition Belsize](#).
- Offer energy advice sessions.
- Organise a Green Doors event, where people open up their houses so people can visit and see what they are doing to live more sustainably.
- Run an Eco-Fair or sustainability event that showcases ideas for saving money, water, energy, and waste.
- Set up a solar panels club, then you can negotiate a discount for a bulk buy of solar panels or other good energy products.
- Offer low energy lighting audits for shops (done in Totnes in early days).
- Organise a mass signing-up to green energy companies.



Food Growing

- Plant trees and bushes in urban spaces.
- Grow food in unexpected places, as brilliantly modelled in the work of [Incredible Edible Todmorden](#).
- Set up a community garden like [Transition Newton Abbot](#) who converted a piece of waste ground owned by the council into a food-growing space.
- Acquire land for a community allotment, as [Transition Town Forres](#) in Scotland did as one of their first activities.
- Set up a [garden share scheme](#) where you link committed, enthusiastic growers with local garden owners who are happy to share their space and see their gardens being used more productively.
- Guerrilla gardening: go out and plant vegetables in unused community spaces.
- Host a [seed swap](#), where people can bring surplus seeds and swap them with others.
- Organise a bulk buy of fruit trees or other plants, so that people can get these plants cheaper.
- Organise a [Permablitz](#), where people get together and do a load of work on each other's garden to get it ready for growing.
- Gather and press apples at harvest time.
- Set up a Vegetable Growers Group Project to get more people growing more food by pooling knowledge and resources.

Educational

- Arrange [Transition Launch training](#) in your area.
- Arrange [permaculture training courses](#) or other training courses.
- Organise a 'pretend' [local currency](#) for a day.
- Set up a Transition book-reading group.
- Set up discussion groups on Transition topics.
- Offer a "Questions and Answers" session where local gardeners and growers can answer questions.
- Run gardening courses like urban food growing, vegetable growing workshops, or building a bug hotel.
- Promote workshops for making local foods like cider, beer, bread, cheese, and so on.
- Offer cooking workshops like Cook SMARTER (Save Money And Reduce Time, Energy and Resources) which looks at how to buy, prepare, and cook food so as to save money as well as reducing your carbon footprint.
- Organise something like [Macy Mondays](#), a peer support group for coordinators.
- Explore Joanna Macy's body of work, [The Work That Reconnects](#).
- Host [Climate Cafes](#) or conversations, where you meet locally to talk about Transition topics in an informal environment.
- Do something outdoors – foraging and cooking wild food, a local history tour, a money-raising bike ride, learning about local wildlife.
- Visit local community food growing projects.
- Start a [Transition Streets](#) project.



Community Improvement

- Offer a regular skill-shares event, where people share any of their skills, like gardening, fixing things, knitting, preserving, mending, preserving, upcycling, songwriting, low-energy driving, cooking and so on.
- Set up a regular [Repair Cafe](#), where people who have skills help others to repair clothes, electrical items, bikes and so on.
- Organise bike repair and maintenance workshops.
- Run a clothes swap event or book swap event.
- Get Transition books and DVDs into your local library.
- Host a clear-up day in your community to clean a neglected area.
- Set up a reuse scheme - Finding Homes for Pre-Loved Items.
- Offer an [Upcycling](#) Workshop, where you take something no longer in use and give it a second life and new function.
- Organise a Free Shop or monthly Free Market, where people bring stuff to give away for free. These can be a useful alternative to Christmas Fairs.
- Set up community buying groups for food, energy, and so on.
- Initiate a sharing scheme to cut waste, store less, and build community spirit by sharing tools, baby gear, gadgets, fancy dress, and so on; set up a [Library of Things](#).
- Set up a harvest share scheme that collects fruit in and around your community that people can't or don't harvest and put it to good use.
- Organise a [car sharing scheme](#).
- Set up a bike pool, where you share bikes within your local community.
- Initiate a local market stall for selling local goods.
- Promote local [vegetable box schemes](#).
- Get involved in local [LETS schemes](#), [fairshares](#), [time banks](#); or set one up.

Some people offer events that include lots of the above ideas. Like a monthly Sustainable Saturdays event where people can come together and meet, socialise and share ideas.

Related Resources

[Moving to a Core Group](#)
[Developing Practical Projects](#)



References

[50 community service ideas](#)

[Car sharing scheme](#)

[Climate Cafes](#)

[Community Service Project Ideas](#)

[Fairshares](#)

[Garden share scheme](#) - Wikipedia

[Incredible Edible Todmorden](#)

[LETS schemes](#)

[Library of Things](#)

[Local currency](#) - Wikipedia

[Macy Mondays](#)

[Permablitz](#)

[Permaculture training courses](#)

[Repair Cafe](#)

[Seed swap](#) - Wikipedia

[Time banks](#)

[Transition Belsize](#)

[Transition Launch training](#)

[Transition Newton Abbot](#)

[Transition Streets](#)

[Transition Town Forres](#)

[Upcycling](#)

[Vegetable box schemes](#)

[The Work That Reconnects](#)

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