

Sheffield Local Exchange Trading System

Newsletter May 2014

Hello everyone and welcome to the May newsletter. This mailing includes the following:

- **Your May directory and User Guide**
- **Your statement**
- **Your invitation to our Open Forum meeting in July**

Statements and User Guides are sent out by post only. Everything else will be sent as email attachment unless we don't have an email address for you or you have expressly asked to receive paper copies.

Membership/Publicity

Membership numbers are quite low at the moment, with no new members this quarter. We badly need someone (perhaps more than one person) to take on the role of co-ordinating our publicity efforts. Remember that the more people we can encourage to join, the more skills and services we will potentially be able to offer everyone. In the meantime if you know of somewhere you could leave a small pile of our postcards (e.g. libraries, churches or community centres) do get in touch and we'll arrange to get you some postcards. And do encourage people you know to join.

Due to the Tour de France and other events, the Green Fair is not happening this year. This has been our main publicity channel over recent years, so it is important that we find other outlets to share information about LETS. We haven't had any response to our suggestion of having a stall at Peace in the Park, so unfortunately we won't be doing this event this year. However, we are hoping to get a group of people together on the weekend of **July 26th/27th** to hand out our advertising postcards in Endcliffe Park when the Tramlines Music festival is happening. If you would like to join this group please do let the office know.

As we noted in the February newsletter, we need fresh blood on the Co-ordinating Team. Most of us have been a part of running the scheme for many years and would be glad to hand on the baton or at least share it out! LETS cannot grow and develop without new members and new energy. We are glad that Anne Barr has been co-opted on to the team and hope that one or two others might join us too.

Our annual **Open Forum meeting** will take place on the afternoon of **Saturday 12th July** at 2pm. This is your opportunity to come and help us decide the way forward for Sheffield LETS. Please do join us and have your say. The meeting will be followed by trading and socialising.

Trading

Quite a lot of trading has been taking place this quarter, albeit between a small group of keen members. If you are one of these people, how about trying to arrange a trade with someone you haven't yet traded with, especially if they are a new member? It's often easier to trade with people once you've made that first move. And if you haven't yet traded with anyone, don't be shy - pick up that phone, or get on your email and get in touch with someone. Remember - it's quite all right to spend your stones before you've earned any. The system won't actually work

unless approximately half the membership are in "commitment" (minus figures)! All we ask is that you try to stay within 500 stones in either direction. Ideally every member would be frequently trading in each direction, passing through zero a lot. But in practice this doesn't usually happen and some members find themselves building up a large plus balance. If that's the case with you how about trying the following:

- Look carefully through the directory and see if you can find something you might need or would like to treat yourself to.
- See if there's anything you might like to treat a friend or relative to
- Donate some of your surplus stones to the Hardship Fund. This is a fund which can be used to help other members who are currently needing to spend a lot of stones, perhaps because of illness or disability.

And if you are one of those people whose balance is rather large in the minus direction, how about trying the following:

- Write a brief paragraph for the newsletter introducing yourself and what you'd like to offer.
- Look down the list of requests and see if you can respond to any of them
- Get in touch with the Co-ordinating Team to see if there are any jobs you can do for the scheme itself (you'll be paid 5 stones per hour).

If you are finding it difficult to offer things due to ill-health etc. do get in touch and we'll see if we can help with a small grant for the Hardship Fund.

Yahoo Group

Are you on the Yahoo Group yet? If not, how about joining? This will enable you to get in touch with the others on the group if you have a one-off offer or request (particularly good for that glut of strawberries coming up in June...). And those of you who are already on it – how about using it a bit more! If you're unsure of how to use it, do get in touch and we'll offer a quick refresher.

Recent events:

The trading event at Strip the Willow on Saturday 12th April was well attended. Downstairs is the reclaimed wood section selling planters etc or other items made to order using pallets and other wood sources. The café is upstairs with a comfortable sofa. Apologies to those who could not make it because of the stairs. We will make sure that next event is in an accessible venue. Anne Barr arranged future trades. Kate Billington gave details of the Folk event held in conjunction with tramlines. It was suggested we arrange a group to distribute publicity postcards. on Saturday 26th July. Mark, Catherine, Chrissie Mills, Rosie Bahr and Kris Williamson also came along.

Maggie (582)

Next mailing: August 2014

Deadline for newsletter inclusions: Monday 28th July (by post) or Wednesday 30th July (by email).

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