

# Transition Town Berkhamsted

## Regenerating Berkhamsted, Naturally



### What we do

We are taking action so the town in which we live remains a vibrant place, both for now and into the future. We are making the town able to carry on regardless of external shocks, such as recessions, commodity price rises and climate change. We encourage stronger social networks and a more robust local supply chain via vibrant local commerce.

TTB is part of the transition movement (the [Transition Network](#)), with over 1000 similar grass roots initiatives spread over the world. It is a not-for-profit organisation, with the majority of work done on a voluntary basis by people who care about the long term future of our town and our planet.

Berkhamsted will be an example of what is possible, to help others get over their inertia, leading the way from high-carbon to low-carbon.

### Why

Berkhamsted is a lovely town, with a strong community spirit, powered by the many generous residents giving up their time to contribute to the myriad of community groups. In spite of this, there is great pressure to increase the town's population, and the underlying infrastructure is strained.

We are not isolated from the outside world. Unprecedented uncertainty and dire risk face us in the form of the changing climate, scarcity of resources and financial volatility [2013 Global Risk Report, World Economic Forum]. While these seem remote to our small town, we believe we should not be complicit in their increasing likelihood and should do what we can to protect our community from these dire and unprecedented threats.

We recognise that we can meet these threats head on while re-energizing the town and building a real shared sense of what it is to be part of Berkhamsted. A visionary, long-term approach is required.

### Berkhamsted when we're done

When we have achieved our aims, Berkhamsted will be a place:

- That has a vibrant community life and town centre, where residents are proud to live here and feel a strong connection to Berkhamsted and its history; its roots;
- That is largely self-sustaining to the extent of not materially feeling the effects of a energy, food or water shortage or economic depression;
- That consumes less energy (for electricity, transport, food and everything else) than it produces;
- Where the natural environment around us is also thriving and can be enjoyed;
- Our children are happier to be out and about and safer doing so;

Stewardship will then be the main focus of TTB once the above is made real.

## What are we going to do to achieve this?

The mission of TTB is built on three pillars – to **Act**, **Inform** and **Engage**.

- **Act:** Take practical action on Energy, Transport, Waste, Food, Local Economy and Water in order to support our community and future well-being.
- **Inform** on the challenges we face, the possibilities available to address them and the benefits of doing so.



- **Engage** with other community groups (such as schools, businesses, council, churches and local charities) to catalyze and collaborate on projects and initiatives to help move us towards the long-term future that we all want for the town, its surrounds and its residents.

To build on this and to recognise that Berkhamsted is not alone, we also work with the wider Transition Network to influence policies at a regional, national and global level. We will also look to the wider network for inspiration, training and advice.

## How we plan to go about it

Overall, the steps we will take to move to where we want to be are:

- Improve the community feel in Berkhamsted by bringing community organisations together (regular networking meetings and the formation of the so-called Berkhamsted Community Group or BCG, and via the B-Hive) and promoting community events and initiatives (such as Berkofest).
- Build a good relationship with the influential groups in the town, via the formation of the BCG plus offering our assistance to get some practical projects off the ground (such as a car-share scheme with businesses; assisting with transport for the schools), while ensuring as far as possible that projects are devised and owned by other organisations.
- Continue to raise awareness and knowledge with talks, films and other media.
- With this awareness in place and good links formed, engage in a visioning event where the town can get together and put some serious thought into where they want to be in 10-15 years. Ensure there are providers of relevant services available at all events to help attendees see the practical next steps.
- Help embed the realisation of that common vision in the fabric of the activities in the town so that it is realised without direct involvement of TTB.
- Be there in the background to assist and ensure that the vision is met without undue compromise.
- Start taking visible steps outside of the above to help people get over their inertia and provide an opportunity for like-minded people to take practical action.
- Publicise what we are doing to the Transition Network and more widely so it can have an effect beyond the borders of the town.

To achieve the above, we will also need to continually learn and enhance ourselves and our group, learning to support each other effectively, be really good facilitators of meetings, build relationships, methods of enrolling more people systematically.