

Transition Willesden: Constitution

-Version 1, agreed on 12 March 2013

Transition Willesden is a local Transition initiative affiliated with the Transition Network. It covers the Willesden and Dollis Hill area and surrounding streets in the London Borough of Brent.

Our core purpose is to mobilise and facilitate community action in order to respond effectively and positively to the twin challenges of climate change and peak oil.

1. AIMS

The aims of Transition Willesden are:

- a) To raise awareness in the Willesden area about the issues associated with the challenges of peak oil and climate change, and the consequent need to develop a low carbon, sustainable, collaborative, resilient future through ethical, social, cultural, economic, environmental and community action;
- b) To provide the membership, other groups, and individuals with the encouragement and support necessary to make the transition to a low carbon, sustainable, resilient, ethical future.

Transition Willesden shall pursue these aims by:

- a) Supporting and encouraging local and community action on peak oil and climate change;
- b) Supporting and working with people and groups already engaged with these issues such as the National Transition Hub, other Transition Initiatives and similar community-led initiatives;
- c) Engaging with other organisations, including statutory, voluntary, faith-based and business, where appropriate.

2. WORKING PRINCIPLES

- a) We do this work because a world using less energy and resources will be more resilient, more abundant and more pleasurable than at present.
- b) We work together because we know that together we are greater than the sum of our parts. We work in a collaborative way because we get better results for less effort.
- c) We work in a way that is consistent with our aim to reduce carbon use.
- d) We encourage all members to take action, share responsibility and provide leadership.
- e) The core group or working groups may ask a member to cease an activity on behalf of Transition Willesden if it harms the aims or working ethos.
- f) We trust that those who step forward have good intentions and will make good decisions. We give autonomy and support to those who wish to be part of Transition Willesden.
- g) We are accountable to ourselves and to each other in keeping with the Transition Willesden aims and principles.
- h) We are transparent in everything we do.
- i) We don't have a blueprint. We believe in multiple paths, ideas and possibilities. We think questions are as important as answers. It's fine to make mistakes and learn from them.
- j) We are open to working with everyone who supports basic human rights. We welcome diversity and see it as a strength. We avoid categories of "them and us".
- k) We recognise that we are all teachers and learners. We value both the professional and the practical.

- l) We give what we can and ask for what we need.
- m) Individually and as a group we work on the things we enjoy so that we do them well.
- n) We work with a natural momentum, driven by our passion and positive approach.
- o) We all consider the effects of our actions on our public reputation.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- a) Transition Willesden recognises our members as people who have their contact details included on the Register of Members, either by signing up on the website or by otherwise agreeing to become members.
- b) All individuals who are in agreement with the stated aims will be admitted without reference to race, wealth, politics, religion, sex, disability, age or sexual preference.
- c) All members shall support and uphold the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted and proclaimed by United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948.
- d) A member shall cease to be a member if he/she resigns, or is requested to resign by a unanimous vote of the Core Group.

4. NOT FOR PROFIT

Transition Willesden shall not trade for profit. Any surplus funds shall:

- a) Be deposited in a general reserve for the continuation and development of Transition Willesden; or
- b) Subject to a formal resolution of the Transition Willesden general meeting, be paid, in part or in full, as payment to any member in return for services rendered, for reasonable wages, bonuses and repayments of expenses, interest on money borrowed, or reasonable rent on premises let to Transition Willesden; or
- c) Be donated, in part or in full, to another organisation or community group in pursuance of the aims of Transition Willesden.

5. CORE GROUP

- a) Transition Willesden will have a Core group of no fewer than four members.
- b) It will include the roles of Chair and Treasurer, and should include representatives of each action group.
- c) At least two members of the Core group should have completed the two day Transition Training course organised periodically by the Transition Network;
- d) A member shall cease to be a member of the Core group if he/she resigns, or is requested to resign by the other members of the Core group.
- e) The group should meet at least six times a year and publish a record of the meeting on the Transition Willesden website;
- f) The group will convene a general meeting at least every 12 months, giving 21 days notice, which will be open to all members of Transition Willesden
 - i. At which the Core group will be formally dissolved and a new Core group will be democratically established.
 - ii. At which the annual reports of the Functional Roles and any appeals against expulsion by Transition Willesden members must be considered.
- g) The Core Group will :
 - i. Share information about the activities of Transition Willesden Groups and Projects;

- ii. Recognise that it is everyone's responsibility to ensure the free flow of information and knowledge around the network.
 - iii. Provide content for external and internal communications, including the Transition Willesden website and newsletter;
 - iv. Oversee the group's finances, operate a bank account, and buy or sell any assets needed for the achievement of the group's objectives
 - v. Encourage action groups and projects to form as needed, in order to deliver the aims of Transition Willesden in a positive and concrete way, and dissolve when the need is gone;
 - vi. Support the groups and projects where needed;
 - vii. Be responsible for the content and efficient running of key Transition Willesden events
- h) The strategic responsibilities of the Core group are
- i. To consider the strategic direction of Transition Willesden and to try to remove obstacles to its growth and development;
 - ii. To review the finances of Transition Willesden periodically to make sure there are no financial impediments to future success;
 - iii. To safeguard the Transition Willesden public image;
 - iv. To negotiate with the wider community, other Transition Initiatives, Brent Council and other local green groups;
 - v. To work with the Transition Network to further the aims and ideals of the Transition movement as a whole;

6. GROUPS AND PROJECTS

- a) An action group exists when four or more members of Transition Willesden agree to work together on a specific theme.
- b) A Group should have more than one coordinator, and preferably more than two, so that the workload and decision making processes are shared and collaborative within the Group.
- c) A Group or Project should face inwards to create trust and friendships, outwards to bring in new members and keep growing.
- d) A Group should have regular meetings that are open to wider participation; an online presence, which reflects the aims, events, and energy of the group, and which is kept up to date and maintained and monitored regularly; and a clear public link between its work and the central core of Transition Willesden.
- e) A Group should have aims and objectives about where it is going, how it would like to get there and how it fits into the wider context of Transition.
- f) A Group should weave in Transition thinking so that it is at the heart of every event and activity (eg climate change mitigation, preparing for peak oil, building community, creating resilience etc) whilst at the same time being aware that events, skill sharing and projects which are fun, useful and social are likely to be best way to attract newcomers.
- g) The Group coordinators should consider carefully:
 - i) The wellbeing of the group and group members as this is an integral part of the journey; and
 - ii) How wellbeing needs to thread through all of the transitioning process as a primary aim and all activities of Groups and Projects.
- h) Principles on fundraising for projects:
 - i. Projects for which funding is sought need to be agreed with the relevant Transition Willesden group(s).

- ii. The project must support the aims of Transition Willesden and be in line with the other principles and be designed to deliver on key objectives of the group/s.
- iii. Funds raised will be held in the Transition Willesden bank account and administered by the Core group.
- iv. The Core group and the action group will both hold copies of the budget for the project and account for it publicly and regularly.
- v. The action group who developed the project are responsible for monitoring the project, expenditure, budget, process and outcomes.
- vi. If anyone in Transition Willesden does not agree that the project is in line with Transition Willesden aims and principles then that person can take the project to the Transition Willesden Core group for discussion and resolution. If the core group cannot resolve a disagreement, then it should be taken to an agreed mediator or mediation group. If agreement still cannot be reached, or if no mediator can be agreed upon, then the problem shall be put to the whole membership at an open meeting. At any such open meeting, requiring 21 days notice, the dispute shall be resolved by majority vote and the outcome considered binding.

7. RECORDS

- a) Transition Willesden shall keep a register of members.
- b) Transition Willesden shall keep minutes in which the dates, times and places of meetings of the Core Group, as well as AGMs, along with decisions reached during those meetings and members present at those meetings, are noted for all members to refer to.

8. INDEMNITY

Every Member of Transition Willesden shall be indemnified out of the assets of Transition Willesden against all losses or liabilities incurred by him/her in or about the execution and discharge of the duties of his/her office, except to the extent that such losses or liabilities shall be attributed to either:

- a) Fraud or other matters in respect of which such person concerned shall be convicted of a criminal offence; or
- b) Negligence; or
- c) Actions knowingly beyond the scope of a specific authority or limit thereon on the part of such person.

9. CHANGES

Changes can be made to the aims, principles, organisational structure, rules in this constitution where necessary at a Core Group Meeting where all Core Group members have been given seven clear days prior notice of the change proposed and the date, time and location of the meeting.

10. DISSOLUTION

In the event of winding up or dissolution of Transition Willesden, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, the assets remaining shall be given or transferred to some other not for profit organisation chosen by the members and having aims similar to those of Transition Willesden.