

# **Brent Sustainability Forum**

## **Terms of Reference**

*Working towards a Sustainability Strategy & Action Plan for the London Borough of Brent*

### **1.0 MISSION**

To build a platform for the understanding and implementation of sustainability principles and plans by promoting the sharing of ideas, information and priorities across all the stakeholders in the Borough.

### **2.0 GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1** The Brent Sustainability Forum will be an open and dynamic platform for the gathering of information on sustainable practices, resources and ideas.
- 2.2** At the event that launched this initiative on the 14th of November 2007, participants stressed the need of promoting commitment and leadership within the Forum.
- 2.3** At Brent Council we envisage a Forum that will be guided by a core group whose members, besides representing key sectors in the Borough, embody such characteristics.

#### **The Forum will work:**

- 2.4.1** To raise the understanding and profile of sustainability in the London Borough of Brent at all levels
- 2.4.2** To use the forum both as a means of communication and as a provider of key tools for the implementation of a sustainability strategy and action plan within the London Borough of Brent
- 2.4.3** To represent all sectors of the Borough and to steer actors and activities within the Borough towards sustainable practices
- 2.4.4** To identify priority areas and entry points for communication and action strategies

### **3.0 DEFINING THE SCOPE OF SUSTAINABILITY - FOUR AREAS FOR THE BSF**

The Brent Sustainability Forum will focus on the delivery of measurable outputs and specific outcomes. In this sense, it will have to determine the nature and scope of the working plan that it aims to undertake. In other words, it must justify at all times what it aims to achieve and how it plans to achieve it.

At the launch event of the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, the following main areas were identified:

### **3.1 PARTNERSHIPS**

The purpose of this theme is to link the BSF to the Local Strategic Partnership, feeding into the LAA, Community Strategy and Council policies and projects related to sustainability. Likewise, in order to reach and expand the range of action it is crucial to acknowledge the key role of Public and Private Partnerships. This Forum will facilitate the consolidation and creation of partnerships on the basis of their contribution to the sustainability framework and to the short, medium and long term deliverables described in the appended programme (Appendix 2).

### **3.2 EDUCATION ELEMENT**

The four workshops carried out at the BSF Launch event all identified **education** and **training** as a main resource for the understanding and implementation of sustainable practices. It is under this view that the council aims to concentrate on the development of strong linkages with programmes such as Building Schools for the Future.

### **3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

The environment theme is a central task for the Forum as it refers to the quality of the urban environment, energy efficiency, CO2 and waste management as well as behaviours and lifestyles.

### **3.4 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

The Forum will explore different ways of communicating to different audiences by using simple and practical examples.

### **4.0 MEMBERSHIP**

Membership of the BSF will be open to groups, organisations and individuals with residency or activity in the Borough who will declare his or her interest in sustainability information sharing and practices.

### **5.0 DECISION MAKING**

The Sustainability Forum will not be a decision making body. Its role is to act in the best interest of the local community and make clear recommendations to enable these interests be realised throughout the lifetime of the Forum.

**5.1** The Forum will always seek to work by consensus; however final recommendations of the Forum will be via a majority vote if there is a major disagreement.

**5.2** Only formal members of the Forum will be able to vote on major decisions.

**5.3** Sometimes it will be necessary for the main Forum to break up and form smaller working groups who will come back to the main group with the outcome of their discussions and recommendations. These may become sub-groups or theme groups of the Forum.

**5.4** Members will declare any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest arising from any position they may hold outside of the Sustainability Forum and may be asked by the Chair to withdraw from particular discussions. Any member of the Forum can challenge another member if they feel that they have not declared a conflict of interest.

**5.5** The Sustainability Forum will accept the principle of collective responsibility for all recommendations the group makes.

## **6.0 CORE GROUP**

**6.1** Given the size of the BSF group, and the diversity of backgrounds and angles of each of the members, it is proposed that an executive or core group leads the Forum in its establishment and progress. Since members are not yet familiar with each other, it would be difficult to arrange elections at the initial stage of the Forum, hence it is proposed that a core group is nominated on the basis of interest & enthusiasm for sustainability issues, previous experience in terms of sustainability activities and/or experience of running groups and ability to chair and oversee forums.

**6.2** The Core group shall consist of a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 15 members. Prior to meetings a full briefing will be given to the core group by Brent Council and any other facilitators in order for the former to discuss the contents on the Agenda, minutes, etc and make any amendments or additions deemed necessary. Brent Council will be responsible for making the preparations prior to meetings and can arrange training for the core group on specific issues in order to suit core member's requirements.

**6.3** The core group shall comprise of representatives from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. It is an aim that at least 25% of the core group is made up by representatives of Brent's voluntary and community sectors.

**6.4** Brent Council will be part of the core group as a facilitator of all activities. All the logistics, administration work and resources for this Forum to function and hold activities will be provided by Brent Council.

**6.5** Depending on membership and the needs of the Forum, smaller more focused sub-groups or theme groups could be formed to tackle more specific themes or areas. Two organisational structures are proposed, one simpler structure for the short term and a second more long term structure incorporating sub-groups to focus on particular themes, issues or projects.

**6.6** The first task of the Core Group will be to develop a list of priorities and a programme to address them within a fixed time scale.

## **7.0 CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

**7.1** The Forum will be chaired by a member of the Sustainability Forum.

**7.2** In the initial stage, a Chair and Vice-Chair shall be nominated to lead on the Forum's discussions and programme.

**7.3** In the long term, it is proposed that the role of Chair and Vice-Chair rotates amongst core group members. The Chair & Vice-Chair will be elected by members of the Forum for a 12 month period.

- 7.4 The Chair may at their discretion delegate tasks to other members of the Forum when the chair is absent.
- 7.5 The Chair will ensure that meetings are run fairly, constructively, follow the specified agenda and that all present can have their say.
- 7.6 The Chair will have a casting vote equal to all other members of the Group. The chair will act to give direction, guidance and where necessary seek external advice for the group in all matters relating to the Forum and its initiatives to allow the group to make informed decisions.

## **8.0 AGENDAS, NOTES AND PAPERS**

- 8.1 The Sustainability Forum meetings will be serviced by Brent Council officers who will arrange and organise agendas, minutes, supporting documentation, stationery, course bookings, payments, report on project progress etc.
- 8.2 Whenever possible the meeting's minutes will be emailed or posted to members within 7 working days.
- 8.3 All action points, decisions and recommendations arising from the last meeting will be signed off at the beginning of the next meeting.
- 8.4 Agendas and relevant supporting documentation will be emailed or posted to members at least 2 weeks prior to the date of the next meeting.
- 8.5 An online forum will be set up so all information is available electronically.

## **9.0 PREPARATION FOR AND CONDUCT AT MEETINGS AND MEETINGS RELATING TO THE FORUM**

Ground Rules are attached.

## **10.0 IMPARTIALITY**

- 10.1 Members will keep an open mind during the process of discussions, negotiation and recommendations.
- 10.2 The Forum may decide whether to advise the wider community of the Forum's work & findings.
- 10.3 If a group member is asked to speak publicly about the Forum's work, they should make prior arrangements to check the accuracy of what they want to say with the Chair.

## **11.0 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**

- 11.1 Forum members will make sure that they provide the wider Brent Community with accurate information.
- 11.2 The Forum can be provided with question and answer sheets to make sure that people are not given misleading or inaccurate information; which can only serve to confuse people on what are important issues.

## 12.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

12.1 Some sensitive / commercial information seen, discussed, agreed, documented or reviewed at Sustainability Forum meetings or other meetings relating to the project where members may be present should remain strictly private and confidential. Of particular concern is commercially sensitive material (such as tender prices, project costs, fees, quotes, contact details etc) which must remain confidential at all times.

12.2 Again the Chair must be approached and briefed if third parties are involved in discussions with members of the Sustainability Forum.

## 13.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

You can obtain further information from:

Contact:	Organisation:	Tel:	Fax:
Ines Carvalho	Brent Council	020 8937 5326	020 8937 5301
Jeff Bartley	Brent Council	020 8937 5535	020 8937 5301
Information on the Forum is available online, via the Brent website		<a href="http://www.brent.gov.uk/greenbrent.nsf">www.brent.gov.uk/greenbrent.nsf</a> or e-mail <a href="mailto:environment@brent.gov.uk">environment@brent.gov.uk</a>	

## GROUND RULES

### What Makes a Good Meeting?

1. Constructive discussion.
2. Fair Chair
3. Not a free for all.
4. Openness, Honesty, Trust.
5. Listening, Respect, Treating people as equals.
6. Publicity.
7. Agenda/Time/Venue/Subjects/Papers.
8. One person speaking at any one time.
9. Friendly/Welcoming.
10. Saying and doing what we say.
11. Staying positive.
12. As little repetition as possible.
13. Meetings should start and finish on time.
14. Turning off all mobile phones and beepers prior to the start of the meeting.
15. Attendees should stay for the entire meeting unless they have a good reason to depart.
16. Members should where possible give prior apologies when they are unable to attend.
17. Members should endeavour to attend a majority of meetings to keep abreast of developments and changes.

### Before a Meeting...

1. Read minutes and papers.
2. Clear Agenda/Venue/Time - organise transport.
3. Be prepared – talk to others.
4. Provide a crèche or cover child care costs.

### After a Meeting...

1. Recognise what was talked about, and what decisions were made.
2. Confirm that you have gained knowledge/understanding of the issues.
3. Pass knowledge on to other members.
4. Analyse discussion, and your contribution.

### What is Unacceptable at a Meeting?

1. Bad, racist, sexist or abusive language.
2. Being disrespectful.
3. Shouting, and talking over others.
4. Being unprepared.
5. Being negative.
6. Keeping people in the dark i.e. withholding information.
7. Spreading false rumours
8. Being late.
9. Aggressive gestures and intimidating behaviour.
10. Being patronizing.

## Terms of Reference and Ground Rules

Please sign below, to confirm that you agree to the ***Terms of Reference*** and ***Ground Rules*** and will follow these rules whilst part of the Sustainability Forum.

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Position (where applicable):</b>	
<b>Address or Email:</b>		<b>Post Code:</b>	
<b>Phone:</b>		<b>Fax:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>			
<b>Sign:</b>			

## APPENDIX 1

### Themes for Workshops, Possible Case Studies and Pilot Projects

#### Themes for Workshops, Seminars & Training:

- Sustainable Travel & Transport
- Getting Resources: Funding & Volunteering
- Increasing Efficiency: Energy, Waste, Water & You (businesses, voluntary organisations & residents)
- Raising your profile: PR, Communications & Awards\
- Climate Change  
Climate Change Strategy  
Climate Change Training (i) for staff & (ii) for community champions  
(run these together, or independently or in parallel?)
- Writing a Sustainability Policy
- Taking advantage of the Sustainable Communities Act

#### Possible Case Studies:

- (1) **“Get to know” sessions**  
Introductory sessions for members to present their work & initiatives to other Forum members (10 minute slots for members)
- (2) **Sustainability in Wembley Stadium**  
A talk & tour of the sustainability features in and around Wembley Stadium
- (3) **Town Centres**  
A talk and tour of sustainability initiatives & case studies in Brent’s Town Centres
- (4) **A Forum of the Forums**  
Hold a joint working day or review of other similar sustainability forum experiences in London and across the UK

#### Possible Pilot Projects:

- (1) **Sustainable Lifestyle Centre**  
Develop an education centre to promote “green living” or “sustainable behaviours & lifestyle” in Brent, using the Welsh Harp Environment Education Centre as the starting point.
- (2) **Streetwatchers Green Zones Project**  
Develop a “Green Zones” Project to implement in Brent’s neighbourhoods in conjunction with Streetwatchers and the Streetcare Team.

- (3) **A “Sustainable Day Out in Brent” Programme**  
Develop a pilot programme for a day out to demonstrate sustainability in action to people. This would incorporate sustainable travel to a series of sites in Brent that demonstrate sustainable technologies, sustainable behaviours, sustainable living – such as sustainable social housing scheme, sustainable community facilities, environmental education activity, sustainable shopping trip, etc.
  
- (4) **John Kelly College wind turbine project**  
Accompany the design development & installation of a wind turbine being implemented by a local school.

## APPENDIX 2

### Brent Sustainability Forum

#### 12 Month Programme

A Programme of milestones and activities is proposed as set out below. A few other training events and site visits are in discussion which will be added to this list at a later date.




Activity	Purpose	Dates
<b>Newsletter Issue 1</b>	Report on news, events and work developed by the Forum and feature member's profiles	<b>Early Jan</b>
<b>Preliminary meeting of core group members</b>	Discuss and amend Forum Terms of Reference and organisational structure	<b>26 Feb 2008</b>
<b>BSF Introductory meeting no. 1</b>	Sign off terms of reference and introduce first theme – Sustainable Travel & Transport	<b>27 Feb 2008</b>
<b>Climate Change Training</b>	A free course for members on the key climate change issues and how to communicate these to different audiences	<b>14 March 2008</b>
<b>Newsletter Issue 2</b>	Report on news, events and work developed by the Forum and feature member's profiles	<b>April</b>
<b>Quarterly meeting no. 2</b>	Proposed theme: Team building exercise & brainstorm Project proposals	<b>15 April 2008 5 - 7pm</b>
<b>Report to Partners for Brent (LSP)</b>	Report on progress, share findings, gain support for Forum initiatives & feed into LSP's work on sustainability issues	<b>7 May</b>
<b>BSF Webpages go live</b>	Provide an online Forum with information and opportunity for members to stay up to date and input	<b>June</b>
<b>Participation in Sustainability Weeks</b>	Reception being organised in Brent Museum to recognise initiatives such as the Sustainability Forum	<b>5 June</b>
<b>Core Group meeting no. 2</b>	Review and detail project proposals	<b>3 July 2008</b>
<b>Quarterly meeting no. 3</b>	Project proposals: Final review & selection	<b>23 July 2008 5 - 8pm</b>
<b>Newsletter Issue 3</b>	Report on news, events and work developed by the Forum and feature member's profiles	<b>Late July</b>
<b>Report to Partners for Brent (LSP)</b>	Report on progress, share findings, gain support for Forum initiatives & feed into LSP's work on sustainability issues	<b>To be confirmed</b>
<b>Mid Year Review</b>	Monitor progress & performance and review aims, objectives & programme	<b>August 2008</b>





































<b>Quarterly meeting no. 4</b>	Proposed theme: Getting Resources - Funding & Volunteering	<b>20 Nov 2008 5 - 7pm</b>
<b>Newsletter Issue 4</b>	Report on news, events and work developed by the Forum and feature member's profiles	<b>Late November</b>
<b>Report to Partners for Brent (LSP)</b>	Report on progress, share findings, gain support for Forum initiatives & feed into LSP's work on sustainability issues	<b>To be confirmed</b>
<b>End of Year Review</b>	Monitor progress & performance and revise aims & objectives	<b>Late December 2008</b>
<b>Annual conference &amp; Quarterly meeting no. 1 (2009)</b>	Showcase sustainability initiatives of local residents and/or groups & showcase any Forum	<b>19 Feb 2008</b>
<b>Newsletter Issue 5</b>	Report on news, events and work developed by the Forum	<b>Late February 2009</b>
<b>Quarterly meeting no. 2 (2009)</b>	Increasing Efficiency - Energy, Waste, Water & You	<b>23 April 2009</b>
<b>Report to Partners for Brent (LSP)</b>	Report on progress, share findings, gain support for Forum initiatives & feed into LSP's work on sustainability issues	<b>To be confirmed</b>
<b>Quarterly meeting no. 3 (2009)</b>	Potential activity: Pilot "Sustainable Day Out in Brent"	<b>22 July 2009</b>

## APPENDIX 3




### Brent Sustainability Forum

#### Programme of Short, Medium and Long Term Deliverables

Short Term (0-6 months)   
 Medium Term (6-12 months)   
 Long Term (12-18 months and beyond) 

Establish the ground rules of the Forum in the form of a Constitution or Terms of Reference.			
Produce a directory with biographies of members & “get to know” events (what interests each member) promoting the formation of relationships & team-building.			
Develop a Communications Strategy & Articles & PR			
Investigate funding – produce funding directory for members to tap into			
Apply & support applications for funding Apply & support applications for awards			
Research & develop / produce information packs (sustainable events, fair-trade, waste & recycling, sustainable business)			
Link with other local groups that have developed works / projects to come speak & share experiences			
Provide in house or on-site training for businesses & staff to understand;			
Commissioning baseline work to measure sustainability in Brent Council;			
Develop training sessions to develop expertise, explore sustainability issues, brainstorm project ideas and partnership possibilities; this could be in the format of an “Away Day” session.			
Link with volunteering opportunities to enable members to tap into			
Establish a link with London Leaders Programme – Invite some of these to speak or get to know what they are developing			

**The ultimate aim of the Forum, will be to**

Develop a strategy to integrate into the Sustainability Community Plan for the Borough.			
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