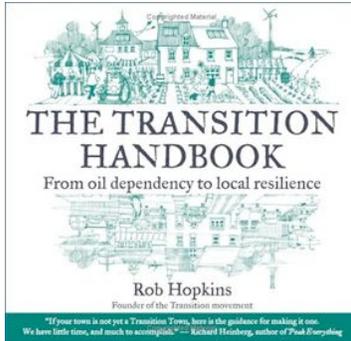


Transition Town Letchworth Initial Presentation to NHDC Environmental Panel



Transition Town Letchworth is a grass roots group of residents who want to see more action to build community level sustainability in Letchworth whilst tackling climate change.

TTL had identified in its written submission to the panel six areas where we would like to see NHDC taking action to address climate change. In the small slot we have tonight we have decided to talk on three of them but are happy to take questions on the other areas made in our written submission which were Waste; Management of Community Spaces; and Community Energy and Renewables.

Sustainable Travel Town Plans



We believe every town in North Hertfordshire should have a sustainable travel town plan.

For those towns who do not have a town council to produce this plan an appropriate forum should be set up to undertake this exercise.

TTL would be happy to contribute to the development of a sustainable travel town plan for Letchworth and has already undertaken some detailed work in regard to developing a safe cycling network.

Last year TTL partnered with Sustrans on a bid to the Police and Crime Commissioners Fund for a project to use an innovate modular road planning kit around school entrances and on school routes to explore if different road layouts could encourage more children to switch to sustainable travel modes. The bid did not receive funding because “the project clashed with existing initiatives”, which appears to have been the sustainable travel plan initiative. We would like NHDC to work with us to try to access funding for this project, which should deliver both local solutions and valuable experience and learning which can inform all sustainable travel town plans.

Low Carbon Homes



Councils can put carbon emissions targets into local planning policies which require performance beyond the lowest acceptable standards contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

TTL would like NHDC to ensure that the most ambitious emissions targets possible are introduced swiftly through appropriate local planning policies to ensure:

- a) that all new homes are required to meet the maximum energy efficiency standards allowed under the National Planning Policy Framework, rather than the minimum as is currently the case. The Policy Playbook, which is regularly updated, by the UK Green Building Council, is a resource for Local Authorities on how to drive sustainability in new homes.
- b) that new homes built on council owned land are demonstrably Zero Carbon Homes and can maximise their electricity generation potential. The government has announced that they intend to ban gas boilers in new build by 2025 and zero carbon homes should be the norm by this date.

Town Planning



There are six reasons why NHDC need to review the way forward for the local plan:

- The council is now under new leadership with new councillors.
- The declaration of climate emergencies both locally and nationally.
- The revised housing need figures for North Hertfordshire, with 4,100 less homes required than when the local plan was drafted.
- New clarity from the government on sustainability standards which local authorities can require, as documented in the policy playbook.
- The incompatibilities of some of the proposed housing sites with sustainability criteria set out in the latest HCC Transport Plan.
- The inspectors continuing concerns with the local plan.

We would like NHDC to:

- a) Reduce the amount of housing in the submitted local plan to not exceed the revised housing need numbers, focusing on reducing the amount of housing planned on the least sustainable sites.
- b) Be prepared to revisit the local plan to see if a more sustainable plan could be achieved by planning for a new town rather than expanding existing towns.