

Transition Town Letchworth

Risk Management Policy

Reviewed by Trustees 24th April 2018



1 Introduction

1.1 Transition Town Letchworth (TTL) undertakes a number of activities to meet its objects of:

The promotion of the conservation, protection and improvement of the natural environment and prudent use of natural resources for the benefit of the public in Letchworth and the surrounding area by advancing education and raising awareness of climate change, resource scarcity, peak oil and economic resilience; promoting individual, community and organisational commitment to a reduction in CO2 emissions, energy saving, reducing reliance upon carbon emitting energy sources, and increasing resilience to resource scarcity.'

1.2 There are a number of risks that could impact on TTL's ability to meet its objectives and this policy identifies how the following risks are to be managed:

- Members Liability
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding
- Reputation
- Financial
- Conflict of Interest

2 Members Liability

2.1 TTL has been set up as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which is an organisation with limited liability. If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. Anyone who runs activities for TTL will be encouraged to be members so that they have the protection of limited liability.

3 Health and Safety

3.1 Transition Town Letchworth has no employees and is run by volunteers. TTL will obtain public liability insurance of at least £5 million to cover both TTL volunteers and members of the public who participate in TTL events and activities.

3.2 TTL when obtaining its annual insurance should explicitly check that all activities TTL routinely runs will be covered by the insurance and whenever TTL start new activities confirmation should be obtained that this is covered by insurance or the insurance should be extended to cover the activity. TTL will only run events which are covered by public liability insurance.

3.3 The limitations of cover should be understood by anyone arranging activities, for example,

number of attendees or type of activity that is insured, and the activity should be arranged to ensure compliance with the insurance cover.

Risk Assessment

- 3.4 TTL will undertake and regularly review risk assessments for all of its activities. TTL are required by our insurance to conduct a health and safety risk assessment before commencing an activity.
- 3.5 The first step of a health and safety risk assessment will be the identification of all potential hazards, including who could be hurt and how they could be hurt. The controls required to mitigate each hazard should then be identified. The control statement could be a note that no specific controls are required because the risk is unlikely and only has minor consequences or it could be a description of controls that are already in place or need to be in place.
- 3.6 Controls need to mitigate a risk to an acceptable level. Acceptable means that the controls will make it highly unlikely that there will be a major injury resulting from the activity, one whose effects will last beyond a few days, and unlikely that even a minor injury will occur. Once this process is completed the risk assessment should be reviewed by TTL Trustees. The activity can only go ahead if TTL Trustees are satisfied with the risk assessment and that the proposed controls will reduce any risk to an acceptable level.

Example of a hazard in a Risk Assessment

Hazard	What could happen	Who could be hurt	Control
Gazebo blowing away in high winds	Serious injury if poles hit a person.	Member of public or volunteer	If the day is breezy, weights must be placed on four legs, or legs must be pegged down if on grass. If day is very windy – gazebo shows signs of moving even when pegged down - then gazebo must be taken down and not used.

4 Safeguarding

- 4.1 TTL is not registered as a charity working with children and its members are not CRB checked. Children taking part in any activity must be under the care of their responsible adult and volunteers must not accept responsibility for any children. Parent must decide to what extent they will allow their child to participate in any event.
- 4.2 If a lost child comes to a volunteer at an event then they should be looked after by at least two volunteers and attempts made to locate and contact their responsible adult. If the situation is not resolved quickly the police should be contacted.
- 4.3 No photographs will be taken of a member of the public's children at events and volunteers permission will be asked before taking photographs of their children.

5 Reputation

- 5.1 TTLs ability to attract volunteers and influence is linked to TTLs' reputation. Any volunteer undertaking a TTL activity must behave in a dignified manner and any interventions TTL make should be considered and evidenced based.
- 5.2 TTL is non-political, it is an independent charity whose interest is in influencing and undertaking activities locally to reduce the carbon footprint of Letchworth residents. TTL can campaign and influence local decision making but the organisation cannot be associated with a particular political party. Our registration as a charity and our insurance (see Appendix A) sets boundaries on the extent that TTL can campaign.
- 5.3 The charity commission states that “charities can campaign to achieve their purposes. But a charity can’t:
 - have a political purpose, or
 - undertake political activity that is not relevant to the charity’s charitable purposes

Trustees must not allow the charity to be used as a vehicle for the expression of the personal or party political views of any individual trustee. Charity trustees must carefully weigh up the possible benefits against the costs and risks in deciding whether the campaign is likely to be an effective way of furthering or supporting the charity’s purposes. They should think about what laws may apply to their proposed methods of campaigning and political activity.”

- 5.4 When deciding how to approach a campaign TTL trustees will take into account Charity Commission guidance (see Appendix B for the Charity Commission checklist for deciding whether an activity is appropriate) and ensure that all proposed activities are lawful.

6 Finances

- 6.1 TTL must ensure that there are sufficient funds to finance its activities. TTL has a number of regular expenses for routine activities, for which the treasurer should plan, and which do not require specific authorisation. Any new spend of £50 or more should be taken to the trustees meeting for approval, smaller spends can be agreed with the treasurer. The treasurer will advise when funds are low and trustees will put in place appropriate remedial financial measures if this occurs.

Reserves Policy

- 6.2 TTL are legally required to state, in their Annual Accounts, a Reserves Policy and the level of reserves held at that time.
- 6.3 TTL’s activities are funded through events which either have a price or a suggested donation. Regular activities are organised with the aim of making a small profit, the activities contribution to TTL running costs. For projects which require significant funding grant requests are made and the project only goes ahead if funding is obtained. All of these income streams are uncertain.
- 6.4 TTL needs to have sufficient funds for insurance, website maintenance and future events to

which we have committed. The Charity Commission also recommend considering the likelihood of unexpected expenses (e.g. replacement of fixed assets) and having some reserves to meet these.

- 6.5 TTL reserves policy is therefore, TTL will hold minimum reserves to cover the annual insurance and website maintenance plus an additional £150.
- 6.6 The Trustees will review this policy on a regular basis, in accordance with the Charity Commission's guidelines.

Financial Controls

- 6.7 TTL must have adequate financial controls in place to prevent inappropriate use of TTL funds. The TTL bank account must have oversight by at least two trustees.
- 6.8 TTL trustees will undertake an annual review, at a Trustee meeting, of their financial controls using the Financial Controls checklist provided by the Charity Commission. This process will be minuted and any actions that result will be tracked at subsequent Trustees meetings.

7 Conflict of Interest

- 7.1 If there's a decision to be made where a trustee has a personal or other interest, this is a conflict of interest and in this situation to comply with their duty to act in the best interest of the charity they must declare this interest.
- 7.2 A conflict of interest could arise if the charity is thinking of making a decision that would mean a trustee could benefit financially or otherwise from the charity (either directly or indirectly through someone they are connected to), or a trustee's duty to their charity competes with a duty or loyalty to another organisation or person
- 7.3 Trustees have a legal requirement to declare a conflict of interest immediately. Trustees will be asked to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest at the start of each Trustee meeting.
- 7.4 Once a conflict of interest is identified it could be addressed by finding an alternative way forward which doesn't involve the conflict of interest (particularly if the issue is serious). Otherwise, appropriate steps will be taken to manage the conflict (if it's less serious), which will usually mean that the person affected doesn't take part in discussions about the issue.
- 7.5 In the unlikely situation that most or all of the trustees share the conflict of interest, the issue is considered serious and there is no alternative way forward or it will involve giving a new benefit to a trustee the Charity Commission will be asked to authorise the decision in advance.
- 7.6 A written record of the conflict of interest (type of conflict, trustees affected, trustees who withdrew from discussion and decision making, the discussion and resolution) shall be included in the minutes of the meetings.
- 7.7 Any payments to Trustees which are for goods and services they have directly provided should be noted in the accounts.

Appendix A: Information Relating to TTL Insurance

- A1 The activities which we have informed and got agreement that are covered by our insurance company are:
- a) Monthly group meetings
 - b) Films and talks
 - c) Garden and allotment projects (using hand tools and no tree work)
 - d) Stalls at events
 - e) Group visits
 - f) Plant and produce swaps
 - g) Workshops
 - h) Visits to give talks / demonstrations at local schools
 - i) Apple pressing
 - j) Managing a garage sale
 - k) Cover for a thermal imager lent out to people who attend a training as a part of a community thermal imaging project, where the camera is worth just over £2000
 - l) Cycle maintenance workshops
 - m) Litter picking
- A2 Our insurance covers us for events with up to 100 attendees, we would need to extend our cover if we plan an event with more than this number of attendees.
- A3 Our insurance provides public liability cover at any particular event of £5 million. Public liability cover provides insurance for claims from the general public or volunteers.
- A4 There are a number of excluded activities identified in our insurance but ones that are of particular note are:
- a) Holding events featuring staging erected by TTL or PA systems that are overhanging or require rigging
 - b) Organising or taking part in demonstrations, marches or parades linked to political, lobbying or activist groups.
 - c) Running a motorised float.
 - d) Any role where there is frequent and/or intensive contact with children and/or vulnerable adults.

Appendix B: Campaigning and political activity: a checklist for trustees

1. What is/are the objective(s) of this campaign?
2. How would this campaign or political activity further or support the purposes of the charity?
3. Are any of the objectives of this campaign outside the purposes of the charity?
4. Are any of the activities party political?
5. How likely is it that the campaign would achieve its objective(s)?
6. Is all campaign material factually accurate?
7. What evidence is there to support the answers to questions 2-5 (eg beneficiary consultation, a credible evidence base)?
- 8a. What other activities could the charity undertake that would achieve the same objectives?
- 8b. In what ways would these other activities be more or less effective than campaigning?
- 9a. What would be the duration and financial cost of the campaign?
- 9b. Would campaigning become the charity's only activity, and if so, for how long?
- 10a. Would the campaign be undertaken in partnership with other organisations?
- 10b. If so, how would financial and partnership arrangements be managed?
- 11a. What risks would the charity be exposed to in undertaking this campaign?
 - Risk of acting outside charity's purposes/misuse of charity funds?
 - Breach of legal/good practice requirements on campaigning?
 - Costs and benefits?
 - Risk of failure to meet objectives?
 - Financial risk?
 - Reputational risk?
 - Risk to independence?
 - Unintended consequences?
 - Other?
- 11b. How could these risks be mitigated?
12. How would the charity monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign?