

## **TRANSITION TOWN KINGSTON (TTK) VISIONING DAY, MAY 2009 – FULL REPORT**

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### **PART 1 – The Visioning Day**

The event was held on Saturday 30 May 2009 at All Saints Church, Kingston, 11am-4pm.

It consisted of several displays, posters, a town map and sheets with post-it stickers/colour pens inviting comment from members of the public on their attitudes and aspirations for the future in Kingston (see appendix for questions asked). There was also face painting and refreshments.

About 20 volunteers helped organise and run the day. The event clashed with the FA Cup Final and fine weather outside; still, over 100 people came to look and around 60 people contributed, with over 300 suggestions/points received.

### **PART 2 – Compilation of comments**

See Appendix 1 for full comments as originally worded.

#### **WHAT PEOPLE LIKE**

- The river (x9), esp. early morning, its wildlife (x2)
- Green spaces/ Royal Parks (x6)
- Friends (x4)
- Local community/friendly folk/market traders (x4)
- the Market Place/pedestrianised area/market/historic buildings (x4)
- the Rose Theatre (x3)
- proximity to London (x3)
- proximity to country/Surrey (x2)
- Transition Town Kingston!
- Flat, good for cycling

### WHAT PEOPLE LIKE TO DO

- Leisurely dining/chatting with family/friends (x7)
- relaxing outdoors/picnic (x2)
- Gardening, growing your own (x2)
- feed the swans and ducks
- rowing,
- cycling
- eating in garden

### WHAT PEOPLE WANT

- Local/organic food (x22): more allotments (6), incl. turn golf courses into arable land (2); kids growing food in school grounds (2); cafes /bars/market vendors selling local organic/allotment produce (2); forest gardens/fruit trees (2); roofs of flats with compost sharing; push council; convert pony paddock; add organic fruit and veg to market; proper local market; edible roof/nut trees; polytunnels
- Better recycling (x19), incl. more public recycling bins, garden waste recycling (2) – better facilities in blocks of flats (2) & compost we can buy back; recycling bins inside supermarkets; plastic bag recycling boxes around town; garden centres to reuse or recycle plastic pots (like Chessington GC); advice/help on disposing of electrical goods/batteries; composting starter packs; in schools with awards; more can recycling near seating area
- Cycling facilities (x17): more/safer/clearer/longer lanes (8), more racks (3), fewer cars (3), more bikes in park/Wimbledon Common (2); link between John Lewis and Canbury Gardens; 4-year olds on bikes and parents with kids on trailers
- Environmental education (x7): education at all levels; curiosity about economy after oil; eco-science at all schools; a green ‘czar’ for each school with GCSE in allotmenting; schools open to whole community for creative, intellectual and physical pursuits; family learning to reskill community, grow food, cook, preserve, eco-build, bike fix
- Vegetation/flowers/trees/green space in centre of town (5), incl. hanging/wall gardens on buildings, trees
- Public transport (5): more buses (2), more trains, free buses
- Less litter/pet mess (5): more bins (2); more emptying of bins (2); engage Thameside bar and restaurant owners; litter laws & consequences for not cleaning up after pets;
- Community centres (4), incl. an eco-centre on Raven’s Island (2); a cornerhouse community arts centre on every corner
- Amusements for young children (4): areas to play safely (2); amusements; events at the Rose to cater for the local community and kids
- Nature/biodiversity/wildlife (4): stop using herbicides on golf courses and encourage more wildlife; extend and develop Hogsmill wildlife corridor so it joins up with other green spaces and the Thames;
- Just enough money (3)
- Local independent shops (2)
- Enough time (2)
- Murals and mosaics (2)
- Alternative currencies (2), barter, Freecycle, swap shops, freeganism, credit unions should flourish and help regeneration

## Visioning Day May 09 - Results

- Solar energy (2): more solar panels; PV roof, solar hot water
- Pale roofs reflecting the sun
- An evening bus service after Rose performances to Walton on Thames
- A sustainable society
- Keep families together
- Valuing and respect for children and young people
- An end to war
- An end to poverty
- People appreciating their wonderful lives.
- Stress-free (or at least stress-reduced) life!
- Working hard but not all the time
- Positive news
- Free phone calls
- Not being a subsistence farmer!
- Free and safe outdoor activities without pollution.
- Working a 3 day week
- Helping my neighbours
- communal garden schemes/clubs
- Link people to tangible projects
- Kingston to join no-carrier-bags initiative
- More advice on domestic energy efficiency... and cheap loans. Energy advice centre?
- Outdoor swimming pool!
- Organic waste collection for biogas production
- More street parties and bbqs
- Car-free weekends
- Training to get young people in work
- More disabled areas for wheelchair users.
- Put down taxes
- Building more houses, flats or shelters for the homeless people
- Annual drain clearing to reduce flooding
- Carers should be paid more.
- More freight by rail. Reintroduction of small safe freight handling at local stations.
- Non-perishable goods sent by canal.
- Less electricity use for a few days
- An interplanetary transport hub
- A path from Lower Marsh Lane to Kingston Road through sewage works area
- Slow everything (free time, happy people, car-free)
- Restore, repair, recycle, reuse
- Carbon neutral buildings
- Diverse communities
- Co-housing projects
- Shared cars
- more hemp fields – food, fibre and fuel;

## Visioning Day May 09 - Results

- Beehives
- Wood for local energy needs
- More use of the river in all ways – timber, leisure, transport, hydroelectric power = renewable energy
- Make Tudor Estate and allotments a conservation area
- Thames clean enough to swim in
- More use of Canbury Gardens, particularly the bandstand – practise there, perform there
- Trees and shrubs to delineate property
- Better pedestrian link, John Lewis to Canbury Gardens
- Everyone could swap their car for a motorcycle

### WHAT PEOPLE DON'T WANT

- Road traffic/congestion (x9): cars (5) ; cars in the park (2); short drives to school; heavy >20 tonne lorries
- Traffic fumes (x3)
- Noise pollution (x3): aircraft
- Speeding cars and bikes (x3): 20 mph limits in ALL built-up areas; speeding bikes in park
- Restrictions on cyclists (x2): 'Cyclists dismount' signs (New Malden roundabout); Bentalls carpark
- Criminal activities (2)
- Asphalt and uninspiring building design
- Pigeons
- Canada Geese (use their eggs & fat)
- Shops filled with carbon-hungry unsustainable goods
- The CEO of RBK
- Fire-escape gardening (dangerous)
- The A3
- Brick and concrete walls
- Beer and drinks (cf. facilities for families)
- Spitting in street
- Developers ruining other parts of Kingston
- Student noise and vandalism.
- The uni bus service if it's not used
- 4 wheel drives in the centre
- The bouncy castle and other amusements using the church grounds

### SOLUTIONS TO THE RECESSION

- Follow France! Bail-out investment in green energy
- Free public transport for all
- Monetary reform – no more interest charges on loans to green economy and social enterprises/businesses, just a reasonable administration fee. End to debt-based money.
- Help homeless by building new flats or shared accommodation instead of taking up the money for road works. Please help people get back the life they deserve.

- Home insulation and energy saving products for our homes. Goods that support fair trade and sustainable development in poor countries.
- Spend money on moving to a service economy and a steady-state economy. Let's live off the profit not the capital!
- Local food; urban agriculture; community projects and education; alternative power – experimental labs[?]; massive community brainstorming
- A proper engineered renewable energy system with storage
- You cannot spend out of recession, you have to economise
- “Peace, retrenchment and reform” (Gladstone). Peace: stop spending money on nuclear weapons. Retrenchment: spend less on politicians' moats. Reform: electoral reform for more honest politics.
- Save money and your environment – recycle out of recession
- Reduce, repair, recycle
- Buy recycled goods
- Spend money on creating jobs in insulating homes, fitting more efficient boilers, developing clean fuels, less polluting industries
- Change focus on creating local jobs in view of boosting immediate community
- Move away from consumer society. We're citizens, mums, best friends as well as consumers. We need to value nature intrinsically – not just a resource.
- Springy shoes to walk about
- Government should publicise the grants available for solar photovoltaic electricity panels. Govt should also put free insulation into every home, thus creating many jobs. WE should pressurise them to do it.
- We should spend more on lessons, classes that teach how not to spend more than you need to. Frugality, budgeting etc.

### **PART 3 - Possible outputs from the Visioning Day**

- **Web page** on TTK site, inviting feedback
- Web **forum thread** for discussion
- Newsletter summary
- Press release before next big TTK event OR linked to a public consultation
- Summary poster(s) for future TTK events to sum up community aspirations
- Summary for Kingston Environment Group (20 Oct); Bruce McDonald; Derek Osbourne; Councillors; Planners and other relevant council officers

### **PART 4 – Take-home messages (in order of prevalence) – what Kingston people want out of life:**

1. More local, organic food (creative ideas)
2. Better recycling facilities (creative ideas)
3. Better facilities for cyclists (creative ideas)

4. To enjoy the river and green spaces
5. Less traffic/congestion/pollution (creative ideas)
6. To enjoy leisurely eating/chatting with family and friends
7. Broad, inclusive environmental education (creative ideas)
8. A new, green economy (creative ideas, esp. retrofitting homes)
9. More vegetation in town centres (creative ideas)
10. Better public transport (creative ideas)
11. Less litter (creative ideas)

### **Possible implications: How people define quality of life**

#### Community

- *The top embodiment of 'the good life' was a leisurely meal with family or friends.*
- *Many people said what they valued about Kingston was their friends or 'local people', showing the importance of community to them.*
- *Many people wanted broad, inclusive environmental education, including practical advice on growing food, saving energy and recycling*
- *Some wanted better amusements for young children, and community centres*

#### Food and resource use

- *More local food was the single most popular aspiration*
- *Better recycling was the second most popular aspiration*

#### Transport

- *Better cycling facilities was the third most popular aspiration.*
- *Many people wanted less traffic/congestion/pollution.*
- *Many wanted better public transport*

#### Landscape and nature

- *The river and green spaces were Kingston's most cherished features.*
- *Many wanted more vegetation in town centres.*
- *Many wanted less litter.*
- *Some wanted better conservation of nature; some valued the market place and other historic buildings*

#### Economy and work

- *Many saw the need for a new green economy. No-one thought we could simply spend our way out of recession.*
- *Despite the fact that we lured people off the shopping streets, **no-one** mentioned the shops in their list of favourite things, nor did they talk about the night-life (pubs, bars, restaurants, clubs).*

### **Possible projects related to findings**

#### Community

- *Big lunch type gatherings; fun family education events/courses*

## Visioning Day May 09 - Results

- *Community mapping exercises:*  
<http://sites.google.com/site/communitymappingandplanning/>

### Food and resource use

- *Challenge everyone to grow something for the food festival next autumn*
- *Competition to monitor weight of personal contribution to landfill*

### Transport

- *Roadwitch type projects: organise traffic rearrangement for trial cycle priority days...;*

### Landscape and nature

- *Celebrations of the river/parks; RBK permission for guerrilla gardening in areas of environmental paucity...; celebrity litter picks....*

### Economy and work

- *Brainstorming on green economy; surveys of recently unemployed...*

### **How to quantify positive progress?**

## APPENDIX 1 – all original comments

Each bullet point is one person's contribution: 176 in all.

Some contain multiple points/suggestions, so >300 views received.

Number of contributors not counted – probably ~60

Comments with an asterisk have been moved from a section believed to be in error

### What do you like best about Kingston?

- The river; the open spaces; the Rose Theatre; the Market Place; friends
- My friends
- River; near to London; near to country; Rose theatre; all my friends; the market/pedestrianised area
- I like the river; sometimes we feed the swans and ducks or we just go and sit with friends and love a picnic
- The market traders are great characters
- Transition Town Kingston!
- The river, especially early in the morning
- Market vendors are very good
- River ambience. Balance of local community with proximity to London and Surrey green spaces.
- Green space; blue space; flat, good for cycling; friendly folk
- River; closeness to London; Royal Parks;
- I love the Rose and see most of the plays
- The river and its wildlife is lovely and I have very good friends here
- Rowing, relaxing outdoors, spending time with friends
- \*Please preserve riverside walks and parks

### What's your vision of the good life?

- A sustainable society for my children and friends
- Time, and just enough money
- Enough time to spend with family and friends without worrying about money
- Sharing food and wine with some good friends in my sunny garden
- Not importing food from China. "Locally grown" reigns.
- Seeing everyone recycle
- Let social services give people a chance with their children, instead of taking them away from the parents that do actually love, and would do anything for, their kids.
- A civilised society values and respects its children and young people
- Gardening; an end to war; an end to poverty; safe cycling; people appreciating their wonderful lives.
- Stress-free (or at least stress-reduced) life! Working hard but not all the time. Positive news – no additional negativity from our background lives!
- Free buses and phone calls for all



## Visioning Day May 09 - Results

- Alternative currencies, barter, Freecycle, swap shops, freeganism, credit unions should flourish and help regeneration
- Not being a subsistence farmer!
- Free and safe outdoor activities without pollution. Some money left at the end of the month despite having children.
- Working a 3 day week; growing my own veg; long dinner times and chats into the evening; helping my neighbours.

### **What would you like to Add or see More of...**

- \*Brighten up the dull areas – murals (low cost and eco-friendly paints of course); flowers and plants make all areas a happier place to be
- 65 buses
- More public recycling bins – all bins should be of this type.
- Trains
- Communal garden schemes/clubs
- Link people to objective [=tangible?] projects
- Separate bikes from cars = have roads designated for bikes only.
- Mosaics like the one under the railway bridge by TGI Fridays and outside Evans – they are great
- Decent/safe cycle paths
- Local independent shops
- Cafes and bars selling local organic produce
- Kingston to join no-carrier-bags initiative
- More advice on domestic energy efficiency... and cheap loans. Energy advice centre?
- More litter bins on footpaths. More emptying of litter bins along Thames.
- Outdoor swimming pool!
- Local allotment produce for sale in market place
- Hanging and wall gardens on our buildings, from small to large
- Organic waste collection for biogas production
- Green in the pedestrianised centre of town
- Advice/help on disposing of electrical goods/batteries
- Better facilities in blocks of flats to collect garden refuse and other recyclables (Richmond Road opposite Fern Hill)
- Street parties and bbqs
- Garden waste recycled to compost that we can buy back
- Recycling bins INSIDE SUPERMARKETS so customers can recycle on the spot. Make them think about packaging. GERMANY DOES IT!
- Car-free weekends
- Can plastic bags be recycled? If so put some plastic bag recycling boxes around town
- Cull Canada Geese that are decimating our green areas and eat their eggs, use their fat. The problem is the solution.
- More cycle racks in Kingston market place
- Different programme events at the Rose to cater for the local community and kids

## Visioning Day May 09 - Results

- Engage bar and restaurant owners on Thames to clear rubbish on Thames Path.
- Are garden centres green? Hardly any reuse or recycle plastic pots (Chessington GC does.) Their suppliers won't use biodegradable ones.
- Trees
- Get more activities for training places to get young people in work and more disabled areas for wheelchair users.
- More solar panels!
- Government to put down taxes and get more money for building more houses, flats or shelters for the homeless people and stop all crime that is around Kingston.
- Easier recycling!
- More bike lockup rails. There are many already but these are often full during peak shopping hours.
- Curiosity! How to run a local economy after oil?
- Education at all levels.
- \*Drains should be cleaned at least once a year especially after autumn leaves which block drains. This would avoid flooding.
- \*Carers should be paid more. They only get £5 per hour- they have responsibility and work all hours. (Employed carers especially council)
- \*Community centres
- \*Recycling in my block of flats; use roof of flats as an allotment; shared composting for whole building
- \*20 mph limits in ALL built-up areas.
- \*Please allocate more allotments for residents of Kingston
- \*Let's go back to the bartering system
- \*Create more play areas
- \*An eco-centre on Raven's Island – for everyone
- \*More allotments please
- \*I would like to see more cycle lanes and that they are longer so people can keep away from traffic

### **What would you like to see LESS of?**

- [Goods on roads:] Reduce maximum lorry weights to 20 tonnes. More freight by rail. Reintroduction of small safe freight handling at local stations. Non-perishable goods by canal.
- [Waste:] More recycling at home. Composting starter packs. If everyone considered less electricity for a few days, that might help.
- Driving short distances to school
- Aircraft noise
- Polluting fumes from lorry engines
- My daughter wants to cycle in the road and I'm terrified! Fewer cars.
- Asphalt and uninspiring building design
- Noise and smoke pollution
- Congestion; traffic fumes; speeding – cars in general

## Visioning Day May 09 - Results

- Pigeons
- Shops filled with carbon-hungry unsustainable goods
- Of the CEO of RBK
- \*Fire escape gardening is all well and good but it MUST be easily accessed in an emergency. How would you feel if someone died because of your plants?

### MAP COMMENTS

- Encourage more bikes in the park
- Ban bikes in the park or introduce a speed limit
- Ban cars in the park
- Hear hear!
- I'd like to see less cars and more public transport
- A paved cycle lane across Wimbledon Common
- An interplanetary transport hub
- Turn Coombe Hill golf course into arable land!
- Stop using herbicides on golf courses and encourage more wildlife
- Get rid of the A3
- Lots of free allotments here (Kingston Road) [actually not any more] – call council and keep pushing them
- Local food growing to meet Kingston's needs – scrap golf
- More land for allotments (Surbiton cemetery area)
- If land unused council takes it over for temporary allotments
- There is farmland here (Chessington) used as pony paddock. This should be used as arable land growing local food crops for local people. i.e. farmers markets
- Hogsmill. Extend and develop this wildlife corridor so it joins up and networks with other green spaces and the Thames.
- A path from Lower Marsh Lane to Kingston Road through sewage works.
- Get rid of 'cyclists dismount' signs and let cyclists ride (New Malden roundabout)
- More school kids growing food in school grounds and providing food for school dinners and snacks
- All schools to learn eco-science and growing food and healthy eating
- A green 'czar' for each school with GCSE in allotmenting
- Schools that are open to all of community for creative , intellectual and physical pursuits
- More fruit trees, biodiversity, wildlife, free time, happy people, grow your own, car-free, SLOW EVERYTHING
- Less Bentalls carpark banning cyclists
- More buses, bikes
- Restore, repair, recycle, reuse
- No cars
- Carbon neutral buildings; diverse communities; co-housing projects; less road use by cars, shared cars; more cycle routes, more cycles on roads; forest gardens; more hemp fields – food, fibre and fuel; beehives; polytunnels; wood for local energy needs
- Keep green spaces
- Keep Richmond park exactly as it is – it's lovely

## Visioning Day May 09 - Results

- More use of the river in all ways – timber, leisure, transport, hydroelectric power = renewable energy
- More recycling in schools – separate and recycle rubbish – eco-awards
- Make Tudor Estate and allotments a conservation area
- More litter bins on footpath, more frequently cleared litter bins on hot summer days
- Thames clean enough to swim in
- Family learning to reskill community, grow food, cook, preserve, eco-build, bike fix
- More use of Canbury Gardens, particularly the bandstand – practise there, perform there
- Too much noise
- More play areas for young areas to play safe
- Trees and shrubs to delineate property, less brick and concrete walls
- Please clarify cycle paths, especially at junctions around the station and with Canbury Park Road
- More green space in town centre
- Add more cycle storage (town centre and by river)
- Want to see less criminal activities
- Instead of beer and drinks other amusements for small children and to stop spitting in street
- Keep the market, add organic fruit and veg
- Improve area between John Lewis and Canbury Gardens, better pedestrian and cycling link
- Safe cycling for families, i.e. 4-year olds on bikes and parents with kids on trailers
- They have already ruined this area (by river – location unclear) – stop developers doing the same to other parts of Kingston
- Extend the cycle lane (King Charles Road bridge at Surbiton) – so annoying you have to walk the bike over the bridge [but now done]
- Proper local market, encourage local shops.
- A community centre for education and recreation on Ravens Island
- Litter laws and cleaning up your pet! Consequences for not cleaning up after your pets.
- Keep the historic buildings and celebrate Kingston's history (market place)
- An evening bus service after Rose performances to Walton on Thames
- Student noise and vandalism. Lose the uni bus if it's not in use or get a smaller one or get them on bikes
- Ban 4 wheel drives in the centre
- More can recycling near seating area
- Get rid of the bouncy castle and other amusements using the church grounds. This church green should not be misused in this way, the greens should be like the lawns at Hampton Court
- Everyone could swap their car for a motorcycle
- A cornerhouse community arts centre on every corner
- PV roof, solar hot water
- Nature
- Pale roofs reflecting the sun; edible roof; nut trees; lots more local food

**Can we spend our way out of recession? What should we spend on**

## Visioning Day May 09 - Results

- Follow France! Bail out investment in green energy
- Free public transport for all
- Need monetary reform – no more interest charges on loans to green economy and social enterprises/businesses, just a reasonable administration fee. End to debt-based money.
- To help people that are homeless by building new flats or shared accommodation instead of taking up the money for road works. Please help people get back the life they deserve.
- Home insulation and energy saving products for our homes. Goods that support fair trade and sustainable development in poor countries.
- Spend money on moving to a service economy and a steady-state economy. Let's live off the profit not capital!
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- No! We need to move away from consumer society. We're citizens, mums, best friends as well as consumers. We need to value nature intrinsically – not just a resource.
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- Government should publicise the grants available for solar photovoltaic electricity panels. Govt should also put free insulation into every home, thus creating many jobs. WE should pressurise them to do it.
- We should spend more on lessons, classes that teach how not to spend more than you need to. Frugality, budgeting etc.