

TNB Guidelines: Objectives and Roles of Groups

The following document seeks to clarify the objectives and roles of both the Coordination Group (Section A) and Working Groups (Section B). It also includes some general guidelines (Section C) for the group as a whole.

It is intended to be a 'working document' that will be revised over time. It is the result of a considerable investment of effort by members of the Coordination Group and Working Groups over a period of 3 months to create an organisational model that devolves as much responsibility as possible to the Working Groups.

A. Coordination Group: Objectives and Roles

Aim

To plan the overall policy for TNB as a whole and to coordinate activities across Working Groups (WGs).

Objectives

- To accept legal responsibility for the actions of TNB and answer to the membership and outside organisations for TNB's actions.
- To provide a single TNB contact point for new members and external organisations
- To offer coordination and support across the organisation for the WGs and projects
- To plan, manage and run activities that are deemed to be of value to TNB but which do not, at the time, fit into the plans of the WGs – for example they may be cross-theme activities like a set of 'community visioning' workshops.
- To help initiate, incubate and support new WGs and provide them with appropriate group-wide services
- To provide specialist advice and expertise to WGs where this is available either through people on the Coordination Group, the wider TNB group or by contracting from external organisations for the benefit of TNB as a whole
- To provide a stable organisational structure for the WGs that allow them to flourish

Roles & Responsibilities

1. Policy, Accountability & Legal issues (did we decide to take out 1-4 as in constitution?)

1. Provide a set of formally constituted, democratically elected individuals who accept overall responsibility for running TNB.
2. Provide the formal organisational structure for the group through defined office bearers.
3. Provide defined signatories for TNB cheques.
4. Plan and run an annual AGM – as part of this liaise with rest of the group on nominations for posts and Chair to produce an annual report on achievements.

5. Provide a high level '12 Month Forward Plan for the focus of TNB activities over a forthcoming year – this would include, for example, an overall strategic objective such as “..promotion and raising awareness of TNB to increase membership by x%”) – this can act as a guide for the activities of WGs without, in any way, being restrictive.
6. Manage and maintain a set of 'good practice guidelines' for coordinating the activities of the CG and WGs.
7. Take overall responsibility for all legal matters, for example in ensuring TNB actions are covered by the necessary levels of insurance.
8. Provide suitable legal or contractual structures and documents should we wish to employ people and/or contract services of external contractors.
9. Review suitability and confirm affiliation with third parties.
10. Review the organisational structure of TNB in future in respect to its suitability for new activities eg. creating a community-owned company etc.

2. Membership

1. Appoint a membership secretary to provide a single point of contact for all TNB on membership issues and who will:
2. Create and maintain a register of 'members' and mailing list
3. Keep WGs up-to-date on all matters related to members [and visa versa – WGs to keep the Coordination Group up-to-date on any new members which contact them directly]
4. Provide the 'master member contact list' to WGs on request
5. Provide a single contact point for new people interested in joining TNB – manage process of becoming a new TNB member

3. Projects, Activities & Events

1. Initiate and run activities and events which do not obviously fall within the remit of existing WGs eg. TNB wide promotional day with Seabird Centre, joint event (workshops and social) with all East Lothian 'transition groups', community visioning workshops, skills audit of members etc.
2. Collate and disseminate feedback from attendance of TNB members at events (eg Changeworks Training/ Transition training/ Environmental Forums/training days and events run by other organisations eg Sustaining Dunbar)
3. Maintain a TNB diary of WG and TNB events and other events of relevance to TNB (could be local or national) allowing everyone to plan their programmes and strategy in coordination with others
4. Run 'one off' events to promote TNB
5. Create and maintain a list of all equipment held by WGs and TNB which can be used by all eg 'A' boards. Keep track of who is using this equipment.

4. Internal Communication

1. Send out TNB wide information to 'members' and specific information as required by the WGs to go to all members
2. Maintain 'TNB general pages' of website – keep content up to date
3. Plan TNB wide meetings, coordinate running of these meetings, write up minutes meetings and make available online

4. Plan CG meetings, coordinate running of these meetings, write up minutes meetings and make available to WGs

5. External Communication

1. Initiate contact with relevant individuals and existing organisations working in the local community.
2. Create and maintain a list of all relevant organisations and bodies with whom the WGs and TNB may link [and visa versa – WGs to keep the Coordination Group up-to-date on any new organisations/contacts where contact has been direct]
3. Where appropriate (examples include Scottish Seabird Centre, other local transition groups, SCVO, Environment Link Scotland, Forth Estuary Forum etc) manage the relationship with third parties directly [while other relationships could be managed through WGs, for example the Energy Group could manage the TNB relationship with the Energy Saving Trust.]

6. Publicity & PR

1. Appoint a Publicity Officer to provide a single point of contact for all TNB for coordination and advice on PR/Publicity matters.
2. In coordination with WGs, produce general TNB promotional material – handouts, flyers, leaflets, posters, banners etc.
3. Maintain the TNB website, providing training and support for those who need to post information on it.
4. Create and maintain a list of all intended, attempted, scheduled and previous publicity and PR outlets with copy and publication dates for the use of the WGs
5. Initiate and run publicity activities where they are deemed to be appropriate for TNB wide promotion.

7. Finance

1. Appoint a Treasurer for TNB to manage all financial issues, subject to election by members.
2. Set up and manage a TNB bank account – that allows any significant money raised by any members of TNB to be managed through this account in a fully open, transparent manner as agreed between the treasurer and each working group.
3. Manage monies to allow them to be ring-fenced, where appropriate, for specific WGs
4. Provide a regular statement to CG and TNB meetings on the state of TNB finances and end of year report.

8. Funding

1. Create and maintain a list of relevant funding bodies, contacts and potential funding sources.
2. Coordinate any funding applications being developed by TNB to maximise potential and avoid risks of duplication / competition for funds
3. Where appropriate, write joint applications for funding in conjunction with the WGs
4. Apply for grant funding for general TNB work particularly where outputs will be of relevance to more than one WG and manage project.
5. Administer grant funding through the TNB Bank Account – manage any funding raised specifically by a WG so this is ring-fenced for their use

6. Create a track record of funds being applied for and obtained by the WGs and TNB to help with future funding applications

B. Working Groups: Objectives and Roles

Aim

To undertake more specific activities usually related to a specific theme (eg. Energy, Food, Transport, Local Economy or Re-cycling) and feedback information to the Coordination Group and the wider TNB membership.

Objectives

- To plan, undertake and evaluate a range of activities related to the interests of the group that are compatible with the objectives and ethos of TNB.
- To represent TNB and its interests to other third parties in a themed area (eg. Energy).
- To raise funds to support the plans of the WG.
- To promote the activities of the WG and TNB in general to the local community and encourage new members.
- To manage finances through the TNB Treasurer in line with general guidelines.
- To provide information (through meetings, website etc) to inform potential new and existing members of TNB about activities and meetings of the WG.
- To manage members of the WG and communicate with them regularly (usually via email).
- To provide input into the management of TNB through the Coordination Group.
- To follow the principles outlined in the TNB Constitution and supporting guidance documents.

Roles & Responsibilities

1. Policy, Accountability & Legal issues

1. Where appropriate plan the forward strategy of the group so that it is compatible with the overall 12 month strategy of TNB.
2. Ensure at least one person from the WG is represented on the CG.
3. Feedback WG activities on a regular basis via CG meetings and TNB wide meetings.
4. Discuss any legal or insurance related issues arising from WG activities with the CG with a view to TNB wide guidance on the matter.
5. Actively contribute towards evolving a set of 'good practice guidelines' for coordinating the activities of the CG and WGs.

2. Membership

1. Actively seek new members
2. Keep the CG up-to-date on any new members that have contacted them directly – where appropriate assist CG in maintaining a register of 'members'
3. Ideally provide a single contact person for new people interested in joining the WG.

3. Projects, Activities & Events

1. Plan, initiate, manage and monitor activities and events, often defined as projects, within the WG Theme or team up with other WGs to run joint events.
2. Ensure spending on projects is within available WG project budget.
3. Create and maintain a list of events/ forums/training events/conferences in the local and national area relevant to that WG
4. Run events to promote WG and TNB as a whole (and include in TNB diary).

4. Communication

1. Ensure that the CG, and wider TNB as appropriate, is kept informed in advance of matters at the WG level including (1) any pending key decisions (2) proposed new projects (3) funding applications (4) proposed dates of events; and discuss at CG meetings if appropriate.
2. Manage relationships with appropriate third parties
3. Pass back information on new contacts/relationships to the CG to maintain a log of third party organisations with which we have links. In general it would be good practice to copy in Chair of TNB to significant email exchanges with third parties.
4. Publicise WG meetings in advance allowing the opportunity for the wider TNB membership to attend them.

6. Publicity & PR

1. Liaise regularly with the appointed Publicity co-ordinator on PR/Publicity matters.
2. Produce theme-specific TNB promotional material – handouts, flyers, leaflets, posters, banners etc in coordination with CG and other WGs
3. Manage and maintain WG web pages on the TNB site (and seek training if this is difficult) – or request help to do page maintenance from the CG.

7. Finance

1. Liaise with the TNB Treasurer on all financial issues and agree to not incur expenditure or commitment over £x amount without agreement.
2. Any funds raised should be discussed with the Treasurer (who has a responsibility for transparent financial management) - these are likely to be managed through the TNB bank account.
3. Provide clear information to the Treasurer as to whether monies need to be ring-fenced to a specific WG.
4. WGs to keep written records of all income and expenditure and provide regular updates as agreed with treasurer.

8. Funding

1. Review funding requirements to support WG plans.
2. Develop funding applications as appropriate – and notify the CG of intentions through the CG meetings. If appropriate, write joint applications for funding in conjunction with other WGs and/or CG.
3. Administer funding in discussion with Treasurer through the TNB Bank Account.
4. Manage activities funded by external funders and ensure accountability to funders (and CG kept informed through CG meetings?)

C. General Guidelines for the TNB Group

Coordination & Legal

- There should be an acknowledgement that TNB is a diverse organisation with many interests. In many cases these interests are addressed through separate WGs. However, in some cases WGs may need to compromise in terms of their plans or activities for the benefit of other WGs or the wider TNB group as a whole. For example, it may be better to re-schedule an event for a different date where an existing WG is already running an event at that time.
- WGs could become autonomous over time by setting themselves up as separate organisations in which case TNB is likely to seek close affiliation to them.
- All legal and contractual issues should be discussed with the TNB Chair and usually with the wider CG.

Communication

- Effective coordination across the range of TNB areas will rely on open channels of communication. Where appropriate copy in key members of the CG (or just the TNB Chair) to emails to ensure people are kept aware of key decisions/actions. Likewise, the CG can copy in a named contact in a WG (if not on CG) so they can disseminate information to members of their group.
- Contacting new organisations or partners should, in general, be done in discussion with the TNB Chair.
- All members should try to avoid sending out 'mass emails' (particularly to the whole TNB group) unless this is necessary. Ideally discussions, ideas and notifications can be posted to the Google Groups Forum.

Publicity

- Ensure the Publicity co-ordinator is given advanced warning of the intention to put out a press release – there may be an occasional need to revise the press release before it is sent out.
- Try not to put out press releases that contain potentially sensitive content particularly where it could be perceived as 'TNB policy'. If you want to do this then put this out as a personal communication and strip out references to TNB in the source.

Projects & Activities

- Provide information to the CG and the wider TNB group of proposals for new projects – they may well raise issues around coordination with other groups, legal issues etc. It should be useful to get feedback for those on the CG and the wider TNB group.

Finance

- All financial issues should be the responsibility of the TNB Treasurer. Planned or expected income and/or expenditure should be discussed with the Treasurer.
- TNB seeks to operate a transparent financial process so income and expenditure should be managed through the Treasurer using the TNB Bank Account.