

# What's involved?

## What is it?

BGF is a one year environmental leadership programme that will challenge you to step up, be heard and take action based on your core values.

Bright Green Future is part of a much bigger forward-thinking social movement called Our Bright Future that supports young people to lead progressive change in their communities and local environment. There are over 30 projects that form Our Bright Future, working with hundreds of young people across the UK.



BGF is a unique opportunity for you to learn more about sustainable energy, environmental decision making, urban planning, and how to run a project that will make a positive difference in your local community.

As a result of taking part we hope you'll be inspired and empowered to go on to have genuine influence on creating a more sustainable future for our planet. We're looking for motivated and reliable young people who:

- Care for the environment and have an interest in sustainability.
- Are enthusiastic about gaining new skills and knowledge.
- Are able to create and participate in a local project.
- Are willing to commit time outside of school to the BGF programme.

As a Bright Green Future participant we are asking you to make a one year commitment to the programme. Activities will be carried out on top of your normal school/college work. It will be a challenge that we hope you will find rewarding and fun. You'll finish the programme with more knowledge, confidence and skills to be able to make a difference, both in your local community and by influencing the way important decisions affecting local and global issues are made.



Get inspired to make a change ...

## Training

The training programme will help you to improve your knowledge and understanding of sustainability and energy, and how decisions on these issues are made. Most of the training is done online, but you'll also attend workshops in person. Training topics will cover things like:

- How are communities planned and built, and how you can influence that.
- Environmental values and leadership.
- Fossil fuels, carbon emissions and renewable energy and energy system transition.
- Local solutions to global problems.
- How to run a successful environmental project.

The first face to face event will take place at our kick-off training day in Birmingham in Autumn 2019 which focuses on urban planning and environmental systems.

The main face to face element will be our four day summer school (more on that below) which takes place at the amazing Centre for Alternative Technology in late July or early August 2020.



### Kick-off event

This day will focus on how the planning process can meet the challenge of climate change and how future planning choices will need to adapt in a changed environment. You'll be working together with the other Bright Green Future participants to put your new knowledge into action.

## Local projects

As part of the programme we'll help you to set up and run at least one project in your local area, focused on reducing carbon emissions. This will provide you with a really valuable experience and help you to make a difference in your community.

The amount of time you'll need to run a project depends on what you choose to do and how you want to do it, but most would need a few hours of your time every week over the course of a few months. We'd love to help you to come up with your own ideas, or we can suggest things based on your interests.

### A few examples of projects participants have run so far ...

- Cutting down waste in the school canteen.
- Setting up an eco-club or running an environmental awareness day.
- Carrying out energy audits to see how much energy buildings are using and how they could reduce it.
- A small tree planting project.
- Setting up a wildflower garden.
- Reducing single-use plastics.
- Giving advice on saving energy to neighbours.
- Lightbulb swap.
- Meat-free week.

## Work placements

The programme involves work placements and shadowing professionals who work in environmental jobs. You can really get to grips with what it's like to work in the sustainability sector and enhance your future career prospects. Past host organisations have included:

- Environmental charities
- National governmental agencies
- Landscape planning agencies
- Local councils, particularly environmental management or planning departments
- Town and city councils

Work placements will usually take place over five days during school holidays, half-term breaks, or in time already allocated by your school or college so that they don't interfere with academic work. If you have permission from your school you could do placements over a longer period of time, for example one afternoon per week when you have free time.



## Summer school

You'll take part in a 4-day summer school at the Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales; it will be jam packed with talks, discussions and practical activities. This is a great opportunity to meet other people who are taking part in Bright Green Future, learn lots more through hands on activities, be inspired by amazing guest speakers and generally have your mind blown!

Summer school will take place at the end of July or early August in 2020, with exact timings to be confirmed soon after you start the programme.



## Mentoring

Throughout the programme you'll be paired up with a member of the Bright Green Future team who will give you support and help you to get the most out of the experience. Your mentor will be on hand to provide ideas and direction for running your local project. You will need to keep in regular contact with them so that they know how you're getting on and can give tips and guidance. This can be a phone call or email every month or so, or more often while you are doing your local project or need some extra support.

You will also have two regional mentor meet-ups throughout the programme so your mentor can offer you face to face advice.

Meet the team ...



Roy



Megan



Ellie



Graham



Charlie



Dan



Rachel

## Your time commitment

To get the most out of Bright Green Future you will need to spend a decent chunk of time outside of school working on it, but we don't want it to compromise your school or college work; we'll ensure that activities don't take place when you're insanely busy e.g. during exam periods. We want the projects you do to be fun and for you to be able to fit them around the other things you already do.

This will give you a rough idea of what your time commitment across the year might look like.

Kick-off Event	6 hours (plus travel to Birmingham)
Mid-Point Event	2 days
Mentor Contact	Minimum of 10 hours across the year, including two regional meet-ups
Webinars	Approximately 4 x 1 hour sessions
Online Training	4 x 2.5 hour modules
Local Project	Minimum 3 days organising and running the project
Work Placement	5 days (continuously or spread out)
Summer School	4 days (plus travel to Centre for Alternative Technology)

We estimate a minimum commitment of 18 days is required. (For more detail on what you'll be doing see the schedule on the next page.)

## The BGF team

The Bright Green Future team all work at the Centre for Sustainable Energy (cse.org.uk), an established and respected charity that has been working to address climate change and fuel poverty for 40 years. We have a lot of experience in delivering projects that help people reduce their energy use, develop community energy projects, influence others to make a difference to their local area and much more.

## Schedule

September 2019	Kick-off Event in Birmingham: Town Planning Workshop, Fuel Poverty Workshop, along with programme and mentor introductions.
October 2019	Online Training Course (Unleash Your Potential: Sustainable Futures) starts. Your first Regional Mentor Meet-up will happen between October and December 2019.
November 2019	Your first webinar, involving Q&A with an expert in an environmental field, will happen this month.
January 2020	Deadline for submitting a plan for your local project.
February 2020	Your second Regional Mentor Meet-up will happen between February and June 2020.
March 2020	Mid-point Training Weekend to explore the wider aspects of sustainability. Webinar 2.
May 2020	Webinar 3. Mentor review. Your mentor will be in contact with you throughout the programme; this month they will ensure you are on track to graduate from the programme in September 2020.
July 2020	Deadline for submitting your local project poster – a poster summarising your local project. Your last webinar will happen this month
July/August 2020	Four-day summer school at the Centre for Alternative Technology, Wales. Date to be confirmed. The residential involves speakers, discussions, presentations, group work, walks, campfires and toasted marshmallows. Online Training Course ends. Mentor Review: check in to see all elements of the BGF programme have been completed (including local project and work placement). You can then receive your Learning Passport and references and join the Bright Green Future alumni network.
September 2020	Graduation! That's a wrap on your BGF programme.
BGF+	On top of the core elements of Bright Green Future, you are invited to attend a variety of external conferences, training events and workshops during the programme. This aspect of the programme helps you to explore your interests further and take part in opportunities that you wouldn't necessarily know about through school. BGF will fully fund your attendance to these events.

## Frequently asked questions

### **What do I get at the end?**

As well as the experience and knowledge you will have gained, you'll get a learning passport detailing all the training, projects and activities you've done, and what you achieved, which you can use to help you to apply for university courses or jobs. You'll get a reference from us and will be recognised as an official fellow of Bright Green Future, and you'll also join the Our Bright Future alumni network.

### **Will this help me to get into university?**

We hope so! Universities are really keen on seeing applicants who have done more than just your academic subjects at school. Taking part in extra-curricular activities can really make you stand out against other candidates. As a Bright Green Future participant you're demonstrating that you're conscientious and forward thinking, which are qualities that universities like to see in their students. And you'll have a heap of extra skills, more knowledge, and greater confidence from having taken part.

### **Can I find my own work placement?**

Yes, we actively encourage you to find organisations you're interested in working at; we can then approach them on your behalf. But not to worry if you're not sure where to start, as we can provide guidance and inspiration and also have a list of organisations that we have partnered with previously and can match you up with.

### **Are all the elements compulsory?**

Yes, if you're signing up to BGF you're committing to attending and completing all elements of the programme, be that watching webinars, completing your local project or coming to summer school.

### **What if I can't make all the webinars?**

We'll try to make them at the most convenient time possible, but webinars will be available to view after they are broadcast live.

### **Will I have to travel?**

Most of what you do will be in your own area, so you can work at home, at school or wherever you prefer! There are three face-to-face training sessions (the kick-off event, a mid-point training weekend and the summer school in July/August) so you'll need to be able to travel to come to those, but we'll cover your travel and accommodation costs. You might also need to travel for your work placement, though ideally we'll find an organisation in your local area so you don't need to go too far.

### **Will I receive help with doing my projects?**

Yes, your BGF mentor will be able to help you and will be available at the end of the phone or via email. We would also really encourage you to get some friends involved in running your project with you, and we may be able to link you up with a local group or a community organisation for extra support.

### **Can I come up with my own project ideas?**

Of course, we'd really love to hear your ideas! We're looking for projects which really make a difference to your chosen community, with a focus on reducing carbon emissions.

### **I don't know what I want to do after school yet, can I still take part?**

Of course! The programme will help you to explore some ideas you may not have thought about before, and we really hope that it will be the start of a career in the environmental sector. You'll learn how to make a positive impact to the environment whatever career path you decide to take. We hope that what you gain from the programme will be useful and will help you plan your future no matter what you're studying.