



A Green and Healthy Future for Frome

Final Evaluation Report

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The National Lottery Community Fund



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In accordance with ethical guidelines on confidentiality, direct quotations from participants included in this report are attributed to pseudonyms.

Executive Summary

Section 1

Introduction

A Green and Healthy Future for Frome (GHFF) is a climate and health action programme in Frome, Somerset supported by the Climate Action Fund (CAF) through The National Lottery Community Fund. The programme commenced in March 2021 and ends in February 2023. The objective of this interim report is to evaluate the impacts of the development phase of GHFF to date, in support of a further full award bid to the CAF.

As well as using quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the outputs and outcomes, in GHFF the evaluation role serves a central feedback and learning function over the course of the programme. Critically for GHFF's objectives, evaluation serves as a channel through which community voices are given agency and knowledge networks for systemic change are built.

Section 2

Frome

Frome's progressive local politics, its diverse community networks and social enterprises, and engagement in issues of environment and sustainability make the town uniquely placed to make climate action and health-related initiatives a success.

Section 3

Frome Futures

Receiving 300 responses, the town-wide *Frome Futures* survey established a baseline for attitudes, perceptions and behaviours relating to health and wellbeing, climate and community in the town, against which the impact of the GHFF may be gauged as the programme continues.

Levels of personal wellbeing were found to be relatively low across survey participants in relation to regional and national averages.

Participants were largely pro-environmental in their attitudes and behaviour, although perception of the link between health and looking after the environment was less clear. Challenges remain around promoting sustainable travel and transport, low-carbon home energy systems and reduced meat eating. Issues around cost and time implications of shifting to greener behaviours, as well as perceptions of efficacy are key barriers to personal health and planetary care. Nevertheless, responses suggest an acceptance and receptiveness to actions to reduce carbon emissions and improve the environment

Section 4

Healthy Homes

Healthy Homes resulted in a wide community engagement in accessing home energy advice and support – with **more than 21,000 engagements** through text messages and letters to Frome Medical Practice (FMP) patients, energy advice sessions, webinars, training and volunteers.

These engagements led to **863 referrals for energy efficiency measures** among Frome area residents corresponding to an estimated minimum annual carbon emission reduction of 47,995 kg, and a minimum annual **energy bill saving of £146 per household**.

An additional £139,395 in financial interventions resulting from CSE advice—in the form of grants or other one-off support—have been issued to 124 households in the Frome area, with recipients benefitting from an average of £1,124

each. All together, the total financial impact of the *Healthy Homes* scheme including **bill savings and other interventions comes to £158,032 in benefits to Frome area residents.**

Section 5
Cycle Together

Increased cycle use among *Cycle Together* participants, with **53% reporting that the scheme had led them to cycle more and 44% saying that they now cycle more instead of using a car.** This was accompanied by a significant progressive increase in cycling confidence following participation in the scheme.

Section 6
Choosing Wisely

The annual carbon footprint of Salbutamol inhalers prescribed by Frome Medical Practice has been reduced by 111,460 kg CO₂e since the start of the *Choosing Wisely* programme. This corresponds to a **61% drop and an increased rate of reduction** in comparison to FMP's impact before the partnership in GHFF, which has continued through 2022.

Section 7
Green Community Connectors

Green Community Connector training sessions have resulted in **an increase in the proportion of surveyed participants confident in their knowledge of how to reduce their carbon footprint from 65% to 94%.**

Similarly, there was an **increase in those who feel confident in their knowledge of the links between low-carbon living and health from 45-81%.**

Meanwhile, the proportion of those surveyed **confident in their ability to talk to others about making healthy lifestyle choices and living in an environmentally friendly way increased from 42% to 69% and 36% to 76% respectively.**

This increase in confidence is demonstrated in the total number of yearly **conversations about making healthy choices, which increased by 69% to 44,831** (at the higher range estimate) 6 months after completing the training. Similarly, **talks about making environmentally friendly choices increased by 40% to 38,717.** In total, almost **20,000 more conversations per year** were generated in the community as a result of the Green Community Connector Training;

Section 8
Future Shed

Future Shed has hosted over 1,500 attendances through meetups, activities, coaching, training and outreach events, shaping the community-led health and climate action, creating **new 'networks of action' and initiatives.**

Three significant network groups have emerged from *Future Shed* activities, with **275 participants:** the **Frome Food Network;** a **clothing and textile reuse network;** and a **health and wellbeing network.**

Section 9
Storytelling

Storytelling reached around **13,000 households** in Frome with a newsprint wraparound for the Frome Times imagining a Green & Healthy Frome in 2030.

The sold-out **Health & Climate Conference brought 150 people together from across the country and 40+ organisations** to connect, share & inspire action on climate and health in Frome and beyond.

52,164 people reached across Facebook and Instagram. 1,000 views of mini-films capturing the GHFF programme strands.

Section 10

Towards a
Green and
Healthy Frome

In the context of intersecting climatological, ecological, economic and public health crises—the GHFF programme emerged at a critical moment, when its emphasis on initiatives that address the interrelations between climate, health and society holds significant potential for community mitigation and adaptation.

The climate-health-related, behavioural, socioeconomic and systemic outputs of the development programme demonstrate the impact of the green and healthy, community-led approach. The level of engagement, cumulative ripple effects, and emphasis on formative evaluation all demonstrate the potential for further development and impact.

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1. Introduction

The climate emergency is the most important public health challenge of the 21st Century, increasingly responsible for illness and death around the world.¹ In addition to direct threats from extreme events, climate change is also increasingly affecting many social and environmental determinants of health—clean air, safe drinking water, nutritious food, and secure shelter.² Marginalised groups, including those affected by poverty or discrimination are often most vulnerable to these effects.³ In the UK, recent examples of flooding, extreme heat, drought and wildfires—directed at infrastructure, services and governance built for a temperate climate—have brought home the reality of what has previously been seen as a problem for others elsewhere.

The climate emergency intersects with a range of current socioeconomic and political crises in the UK, including the energy crisis, food security and growing wealth inequality - all of which also have a bearing on human health. Climate action is only effective insofar as it addresses the inter-related social and economic problems that affect people's day-to-day lives. Health is therefore a potentially powerful connective thread for communities engaged in building a low-carbon future.

Supporting a range of impactful community-led initiatives that recognise the links between climate change, people's health and socioeconomic [in]equity, the GHFF partnership aims to be a beacon for healthier, more cohesive communities, and an exemplar for systemic change towards a low-carbon future. While the scale of the crisis at the global or national level can often appear overwhelming to us as individuals, the GHFF programme is based on collective action at the community level. The overarching aim of the programme is to develop a new model for a low-carbon, healthy, vibrant community, built on a unique partnership between medical practice, local governance, and community enterprise.

Taking the climate-health link as our core principle, GHFF's primary objectives are outlined in Table 1. Funding for the programme from The National Lottery Climate Action Fund was secured and work commenced in March 2021.

¹ Climate and Health Alliance (2021) [Real, Urgent & Now: Communicating the Health Impacts of Climate Change](#).

² UK Faculty of Public Health (2009) *Sustaining a Healthy Future Taking action on climate change*.

³ Royal College of Physicians/Lancet (2017) [Lancet Countdown 2017 Report: Briefing for UK Policymakers](#)

Table 1 – A Green and Healthy Future for Frome: Objectives

Climate	Supporting Frome citizens to reduce carbon emissions towards net-zero
Health	Improve health and wellbeing across the community.
Community	Citizens are supported through the cost of living crisis and a strong community leads on actions that address the climate, health and social equity.
Systemic impacts	Community-led climate & health benefits inspire action, collaboration across the community, health and public sector, and continue to attract resources in Frome and across the UK.

1.1. A Green and Healthy Future for Frome

GHFF comprises a range of initiatives in key areas that support people to lead greener, healthier, lives (see Table 2). In partnership with the Centre for Sustainable Energy, **Healthy Homes** supports Frome residents to make their home a warm, healthy environment by providing advice on energy efficiency, insulation, bills and financial support. **Cycle Together** allows Frome residents to borrow an electric bike (ebike) for four weeks, improving health whilst reducing pollution and congestion. At Frome Medical Practice, **Choosing Wisely** supports patient access to low-carbon treatments and healthier life-style options as alternative prescriptions for appropriate health issues. Meanwhile, **Green Community Connectors** training gives participants the opportunity to explore the climate-health win-win, to learn about the support in Frome to achieve this and how to signpost to this in the community. At Edventure: Frome, **Future Shed** is a space for supporting knowledge-sharing and networks of action for green-healthy initiatives and enterprise. Finally, **Storytelling** builds community engagement and wider knowledge-sharing about the overall programme and its events through multiple media.



Table 2 – A Green and Healthy Future for Frome: work packages

Healthy Homes	Frome Town Council	Low-carbon energy, energy efficiency, effective insulation, draft-proofing
Cycle Together	Frome Town Council	Active, low-carbon, low-pollution travel
Choosing Wisely	Frome Medical Practice	Inform healthy lifestyles, reduce hospital admissions, optimise low-carbon medication, reduce problematic polypharmacy.
Green Community Connectors	Frome Medical Practice	Supporting knowledge-sharing networks of health-climate co-benefit
Future Shed	Edventure Frome	A space for supporting knowledge-sharing and networks of action for green-healthy initiatives and enterprise
Storytelling	Edventure Frome	Building community engagement and wider knowledge-sharing through multimedia

1.2. Evaluation

This report represents a key output of the research and evaluation role of GHFF, which draws together each initiative of the programme. Making evaluation an operational—as opposed to retrospective—function enables GHFF to benefit from continuous feedback and learning, informing the development of each initiative and maximizing impact. Such a reflexive approach responds to the challenges of community engagement - understanding what works, what does not work, and promoting grassroots innovation. It also acts as a channel through which community voices can be heard and assume leadership in addressing problems of health and climate at a local level. Robust analysis of key health and climate-related outcomes through qualitative and quantitative data informs ongoing and future initiatives. Communicating this knowledge effectively across diverse community networks, academia and government, the role provides evidence and tools for effective action in other settings. In doing so, we also engage critically with systemic issues that contribute to the climate and health emergency and offer examples of effective policy alternatives.

A range of methods of data collection and analysis are used to evaluate the outputs and outcomes of the GHFF programme across the six main delivery strands. This process was carried out by a dedicated Climate Action Researcher/Evaluator, employed by Frome Town Council. Two individuals have been employed in the role since the start of the programme in April 2021, with the current person responsible for the function in-

post since April 2022. The evaluation strategy for GHFF was established at a moment when the National Lottery's Climate Action Fund was at an early stage of implementation. At this time, support and resources for programmes receiving funding were still being developed.

To assess the implementation, outputs and outcomes of each work package, quantitative and qualitative data was collected using a mixed methods approach. These data were obtained from various primary and secondary sources. Primary collection methods include online surveys (using Survey Monkey), focus groups and participant observation at events. Secondary collection methods include the use of existing databases and data collected by partner organisations, such as OpenPrescribing, the Centre for Sustainable Energy or the Office for National Statistics.

1.3. This report

The following section situates the GHFF programme in the local context of Frome, arguing that the town's progressive local politics, diverse community networks and social enterprises, and engagement in issues of environment and sustainability make it uniquely placed to make climate action and health-related initiatives a success.

Section 3 outlines the results of the town-wide Frome Futures 2021 survey, which established a baseline for attitudes, perceptions and behaviours relating to health and wellbeing, climate and community, against which the impact of the GHFF may be gauged as the programme continues.

In the proceeding sections (4-9) are the respective evaluations of outputs and outcomes from each of the GHFF work packages in turn. Each section introduces the work package in question, outlines the key insights from the data collected, and summarises the outcomes and lessons for future practice.

Section 10 reflects on the development phase of the programme, drawing on insights from focus groups and discussions. A Green and Healthy Story of Change is presented, which summarises this report in the context of a comprehensive *how, what* and *why* of the programme. This framework is used to inform planning, allocation of resources and ongoing formative evaluation. The story outlines the rationale and principles for the programme and highlights the headline impacts so far.

2. Frome in profile

Frome is a market town in Somerset, South West England, with a population of 26,203. The town has a rich industrial history of textile and woollen cloth manufacture and dyeing, metal foundry and printing. However, significant structural economic changes led to significant loss of manufacturing jobs by the turn of the millennium. Nevertheless, Frome is located in a region of significant extractive industry (although employment in this sector is relatively low for the town itself), with a number of nationally significant quarries supplying limestone for construction via rail and road. More recently, Frome's economy has been service-based, and much of the working population commutes to larger conurbations in the region, most notably Bath and Trowbridge (FTC 2016). A growing number of independent retailers, cafes, restaurants, and a large monthly independent market cater to the town's growing status as a leisure and tourism destination. Nearby attractions include the Mendip Hills, Stonehenge, Longleat Safari Park, Centre Parks and Glastonbury.

According to the Office of National Statistics' 2011 Census, car use as the main method of transport for commuters in Frome is high at 71.9%, compared to a 62.7% national average. Of those Frome residents who also work in the town, more than half (55.4%) travel by car or van, although 38.2% travel by foot. The town has a train station which has a direct route to London Waterloo, although public transport use is significantly lower than the national average (3.8% compared to 12.5%). Those who travel to work by bicycle or on foot are more likely to live and work in Frome than those who out-commute (see FTC 2016).

Frome is a predominantly 'White British' town, with only 6.3% describing themselves as non-White British in the 2011 census, well below the national figure of 9.5%. Notable non-white communities include Polish (who account for 1% for the county of Somerset) and a small traveller community. Five percent of Frome residents live in one of the 20% most deprived areas of England, with the areas of Frome Trinity, Cork Street and Nunney Road most notable. Just over 1 in 10 households are officially in fuel poverty and, compared with Somerset, Frome has a relatively high proportion of children and people aged 60 or over in income poverty. In recent years, the town has seen significant increases in the incidence of violence and sexual offences, up from 20% for the year ending May 2016 to 34.8% for the year ending August 2022. Antisocial behaviour accounts for 20% of all reported crimes⁴. Hospital admissions for self-harm among young people in 2016 were more than 50% higher in Frome than the England average.

⁴ Police.UK <https://www.police.uk/your-area/avon-somerset-constabulary/frome-town/?tab=overview>

Situated within the local government district of Mendip, Frome has an unusual recent political history. The town elected a coalition of independent candidates to all 17 of its town council seats in 2015, displacing the previously dominant succession of Conservative and Liberal Democrat councillors. Following subsequent elections in 2019 and 2022, IFF councillors have continued to occupy all the town's seats. While affiliated to the Independents for Frome (IFF) political party, the movement that brought about this transformation explicitly rejected party politics as inhibitive to fair decision-making (Macfadyen, 2014). The 'flatpack democracy' model of transforming local politics has since gained national attention and has been replicated in a number of locations across the country. Key components of this radical approach include increasing community engagement in decision-making, including participatory budgeting, and a highly ambitious green policy and practice.

In December 2017, Frome Town Council unanimously agreed to become a 'single-use plastic'-free council. And in December 2021 the town declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency, having committed to becoming a net-zero carbon town by 2030. The council also facilitates a community Climate Action Group, and participates in the national Great Big Green Week.

Frome has a vibrant network of community groups, social enterprises and initiatives with a wide range of objectives, including health and wellbeing, sustainable transport, education, poverty alleviation and environment. Many of these organisations are actively supported by grants from Frome Town Council as part of their annual work programme. Active groups include food co-operatives, a food bank and mobile community kitchen, a renewable energy cooperative, a community fridge and larder, a 'library of things', allotment associations, conservation, green space and 'Friends of...' groups.

The town also has a strong cultural scene, including independent art galleries and book retailers, an independent cinema, two theatres, and an international music venue.

There is a growing schedule of annual events and festivals, including Frome Festival, Frome Carnival, Frome Children's Festival, Frome Agricultural and Cheese Show, Frome Walking Festival, Frome Lit Fest, Frome Kindness Festival and the Frome International Climate Film Festival.

3. Frome Futures 2021

The objective of the Frome Futures survey was to gain a baseline understanding of perceptions, attitudes and behaviours towards health, climate and the relationship between the two. The online survey was first conducted in August 2021, and was designed to enable a cross-sectional evaluation of the impact of *A Green and Healthy Future for Frome* as the programme developed. In order to allow a sufficient time interval for comparison, the survey is planned to be repeated in the early stages of the subsequent phase of the project (subject to funding) in the spring of 2023 and again in 2026.

The survey was designed to collect data on specific categories of indicator:

1. Personal health and wellbeing;
2. Perceptions and attitudes toward health and climate;
3. Behaviours in respect to health and climate;
4. Levels of community connection and engagement.

The survey was sent to residents in Frome via social media channels from Frome Town Council, Frome Medical Practice and Edventure-Frome. Flyers including a link to the online survey were also posted in prominent public locations in the town.

People were also informed that they could fill out a paper survey if they wished. Respondents were offered the chance to enter a draw to win a £100 food voucher at a local store if they completed the questionnaire.

A total of 303 surveys were completed, just over 1% of the population of Frome.⁵ Just over two-thirds of respondents were female (67.5%), 32% were male, one person preferred not to say (0.4%) and another stated that they preferred to self-describe but did not provide further detail (0.4%; n = 283). Respondent ages ranged from 18-25 to 76+, but a large majority of participants (71%) were between 46 and 75 years of age. The median age was in the bracket 46-55 (n=283).

Annual household income before tax ranged from less than £10,000 to more than £75,000, with the median falling between the bracket £30,000-£39,000 (n = 234). This is above the national UK average based on estimates from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Household Finances Survey of around £29,900 in 2020 (ONS statistics; www.ons.gov.uk); however, 39 people selected the option 'prefer not to say' and 8 didn't know, meaning that the average could have been higher or lower than this.

⁵ Frome population 28,559 (2021 Census)

3.1. Personal health and wellbeing indicators

The survey assessed respondents' personal wellbeing using the ONS4 tool. This widely used tool consists of four measures rated on a scale of 0-10 between 'not at all' and 'completely' in respect to 'life satisfaction', feelings of life being 'worthwhile', 'happiness' and 'anxiety' (see Table 3).

Table 3 - ONS4: Four measures of personal wellbeing

Measure	Question
Life Satisfaction	Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
Worthwhile	Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?
Happiness	Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
Anxiety	How anxious did you feel yesterday?

Of those surveyed here, average self-reported scores for three out of four indicators of personal wellbeing were markedly lower than regional and national averages. At an average score of 6.6 out of 10, respondents' assessment of their life satisfaction was 13% lower than the regional (Mendip District) average. Similarly, feelings of life being *worthwhile* levels among participants from Frome (6.9/10) were 8% lower than the wider Mendip District average, while the average score for *happiness* (6.8/10) was 8% lower. Meanwhile, at an average of 3.8 out of 10, there was low average anxiety in our sample according to Government thresholds (mean = 3.8 out of 10) (see Figure 1).⁶

In addition to the ONS4 measures, a series of further questions were asked relating to health satisfaction, community belonging, and loneliness. Asked to rate satisfaction with their health on a scale of 0-10, respondent's mean satisfaction was 5.7 out of 10. In response to the question of the strength of community belonging felt by participants, 65.2% answered that they felt a 'very strong' (18.8%) or fairly strong (46.4%) sense of belonging. The latter results were similar to the England average in 2020 (63%; Community

⁶ Data from Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey – Personal Wellbeing <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/qualityinformationforpersonalwellbeingestimates> [accessed 11-11-2022].

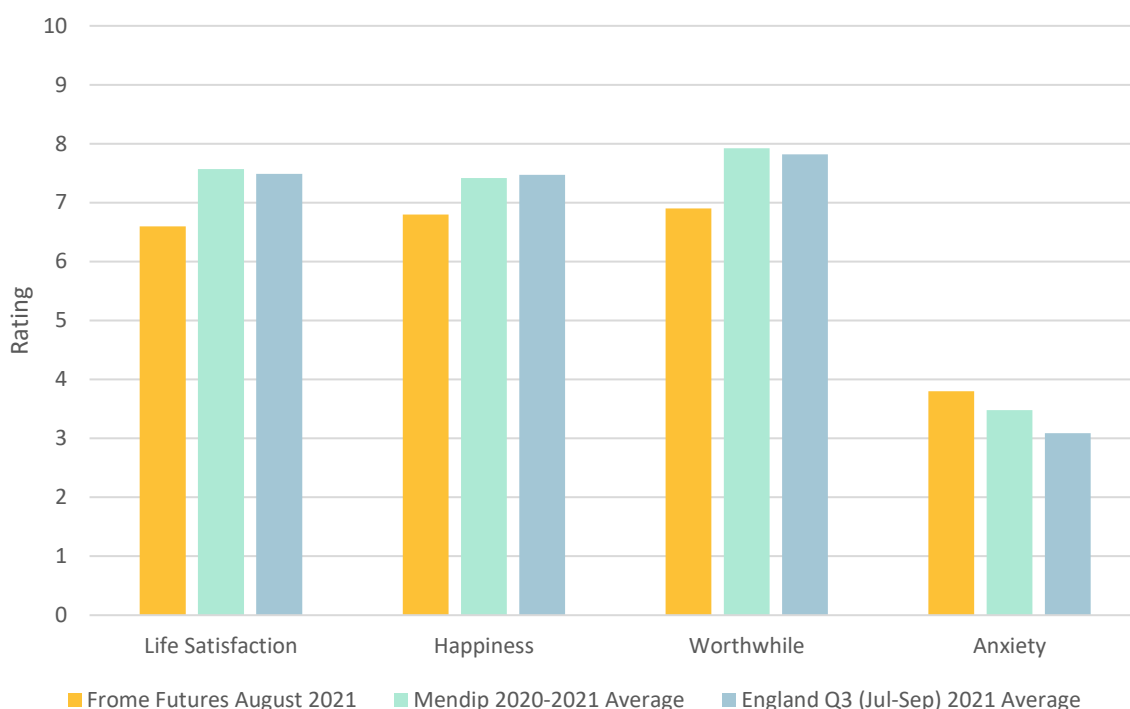


Figure 1 - Frome Futures: ONS4 Personal Wellbeing Average Scores

Life Survey 2020). Meanwhile, only 5.5% answered that they felt a ‘very weak’ community belonging, 7.2% answered ‘fairly weak’ and 22.2% felt neutral (n=293).

Asked how often they felt lonely, 19.1% said they never felt lonely and 38.9% ‘hardly ever’. However, 34.8% reported that they felt lonely ‘some of the time’, and the proportion reporting feeling lonely ‘often’ or ‘always’ was 7.2%. These results on loneliness were higher than the average in Great Britain, where 5.0% of adults said they felt lonely ‘often’ or ‘always’ in a survey carried out between April and May 2020 (Opinions and Lifestyle Survey 2020).

3.2. Pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours

To assess the significance of climate and health for Frome residents, survey participants were asked about the strength of their agreement or disagreement with a series of statements concerning environment and health issues. Participants were largely pro-environmental in their attitudes and behaviour, with around three quarters of respondents agreeing that they were ‘concerned with environmental issues’, and only slightly fewer agreeing that they were ‘environmentally friendly consumers’. At the same time, around 80 percent of those surveyed disagreed with the suggestion that being seen to have an environmentally friendly lifestyle is embarrassing, and a similar proportion were not concerned about friends and family perceiving them as concerned with the environment (see Figure 2a).

The link between health and looking after the environment was slightly less clear. The proportion of respondents agreed with the statement ‘*Looking after my health is separate*

from looking after the environment' (32% agreed or strongly agreed) was similar to those that disagreed (39% disagreed or strongly disagreed), while 29% did not agree or disagree (n=293). Many people recognised the positive link between living in an environmentally friendly way and health, with strong agreement with the questions 'Living in an environmentally-friendly way can be good for your health, too' and 'Raising awareness of health benefits is an important way to promote environmentally-friendly living' but the perceived role of the Health Service in focusing on environmental issues was not clear (see Figure 2b).

We asked survey respondents about their frequency of one-off or regular pro-environmental decisions. These included headline behaviours with low and high environmental impact actions relating to four behavioural domains, namely, domestic energy use, waste behaviour, transport, and eco-friendly shopping.

As far as possible, we selected behaviours that link to the Green and Healthy programme, including active travel, having climate conversations, and making home energy improvements. However, to promote survey completion, we also included behaviours that did not directly link to the programme (for example, installing energy-efficient light bulbs). This was in response to feedback from the pilot survey which included a narrower range of options: respondents reported feeling that their pro-environmental



Figure 2 - Pro-environmental attitudes and self-identity (a); and the perceived link between health and the environment (b). Total respondents = 300.

choices were not being captured, which caused them to feel demoralised and lowered likelihood of survey completion.

It is also interesting to consider a broad range of behaviours since many may be indirectly affected by the increased focus on healthy low-carbon living promoted by the Green and Healthy programme in Frome. There will of course be other external influences on public awareness of environmental issues, including increasing frequencies of environmental disasters, COP meetings, and increased overall media coverage of the climate crisis; however, this will be taken into account in follow-up surveys to allow for attribution to our project as far as possible.

The baseline responses for one-off behaviours (Figure 3) showed that certain pro-environmental actions were already common amongst Frome residents. For example, 95% of respondents reported that they had installed energy-efficient light bulbs in their household, while 79% had signed a petition on an environmental matter. However, other results indicated potential directions for the Green and Healthy Programme, including the high number of people who had never changed to a green bank (73%), installed low-carbon heating (67%) or a renewable energy system (82%), and who could yet switch to a renewable energy supplier (29%, n = 293-297).

For regular behaviours (Figure 4), recycling was ubiquitous, in line with or greater than in the UK, where 89% of people say they regularly recycle (WRAP 2020), and almost everyone (96%) said they save energy at home. Of particular interest to the Green and Healthy project at this stage is the number of people who never speak to family and

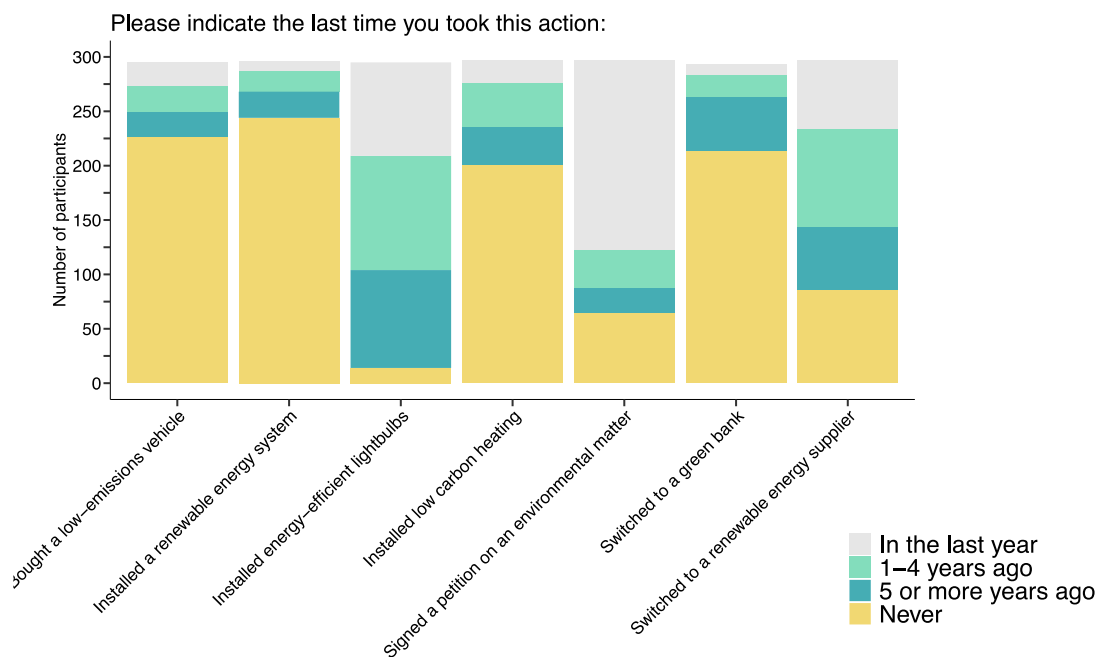


Figure 3 - Frequency of one-off or low-frequency pro-environmental behaviour types

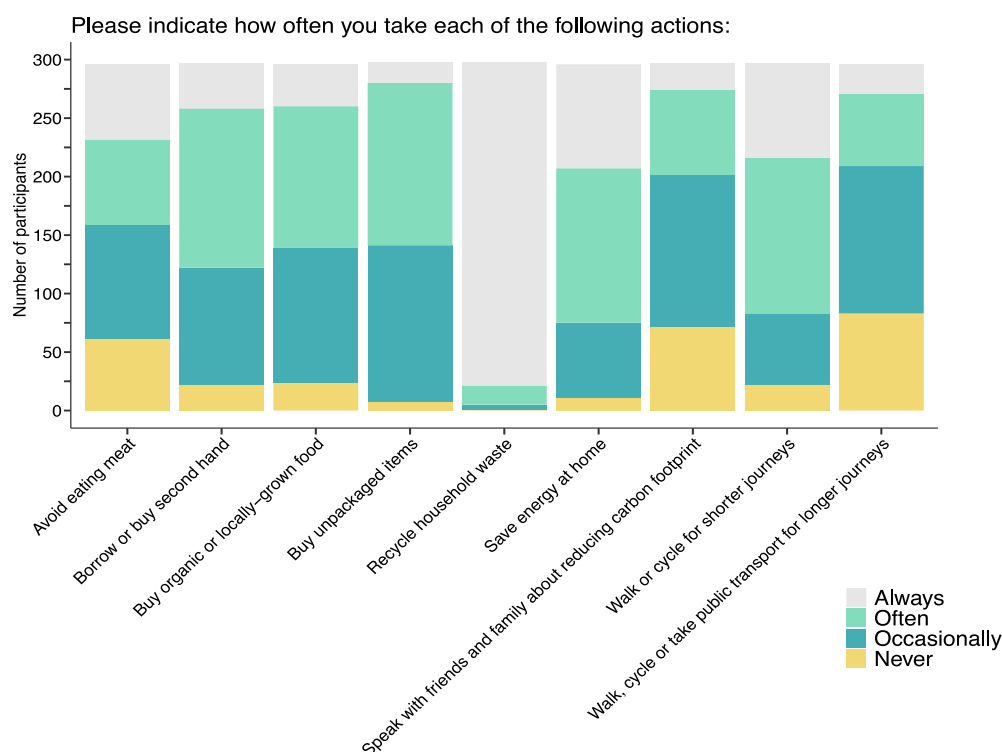


Figure 4 - Frequency of 'regular' pro-environmental behaviour types

friends about reducing carbon footprint (24%); never (28%) or only occasionally (43%) walk, cycle or use public transport for longer journeys (>3 miles); and never (7%) or only occasionally (21%) walk or cycle for shorter journeys (<3 miles; n = between 293 and 297).

3.3. Barriers to personal health and planetary care

Responses to questions asking about barriers to personal health care and environmentally-friendly behaviours show that both are accorded a high level of priority for participants, with only 3% and 4% of 303 respondents stating that personal health and planetary care was not a priority for them respectively (Figures 5 and 6). The strongest barriers for planetary care were financial considerations (22%) and disillusionment/disempowerment *"I don't feel like my actions will make any difference"* (21%; Figure 5). The strongest barriers for personal health care were an inability to continue efforts *"I start but I can't keep up"* (26%) and time constraints (25%; Figure 6).

'Other' barriers for looking after health commonly included low mood or depression, inability to access healthcare in a timely way due to overstretched health services, and having young children. Other commonly-specified barriers for looking after the planet were the lack of easily available or affordable options such as un-packaged groceries and public transport, or having family in far-flung locations as a requisite for air travel. Several people mentioned being part of a system that is inherently environmentally-damaging, a perceived lack of political action, and feeling overwhelmed by polluting activities at a global scale.

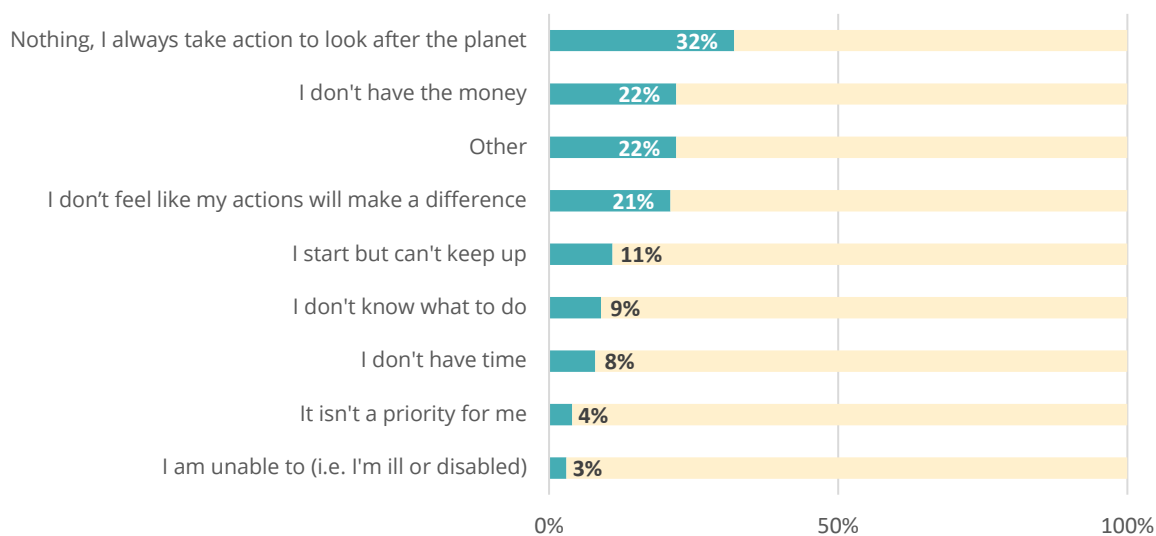


Figure 5 - Barriers to planetary care (b) behaviours. Blue bars show the proportion of participants that responded to each answer in a 'tick all that apply' question (n = 303).

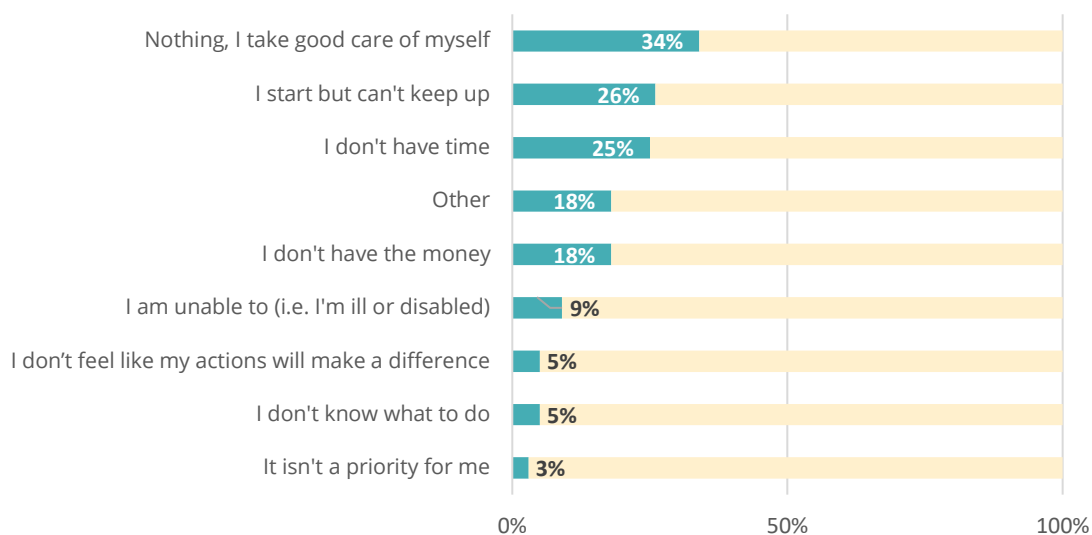


Figure 6 - Barriers to personal health behaviours. Blue bars show the proportion of participants that responded to each answer in a 'tick all that apply' question (n = 303).

3.4. Level of engagement within the Frome community

In the last three years, 52% of 283 participants had attended or taken part in local community groups or networks in Frome or elsewhere (e.g. choirs, neighbourhood groups, sports groups, talking cafes), while the remaining 48% had not.

Of 142 people who listed the groups they were part of, 11 were members of Sustainable Frome, 9 had attended Extinction Rebellion groups and 4 people had attended both. Other commonly listed groups included choirs, Frome's 'Neighbourhood Networks', baby cafes, sports groups and Frome's Men's Shed.

3.5. Summary and lessons for future practice

The town-wide Frome Futures survey established a baseline for attitudes, perceptions and behaviours relating to health and wellbeing, climate and community in the town, against which the impact of the GHFF may be gauged as the programme continues.

Levels of personal wellbeing were found to be relatively low across survey participants in relation to regional and national averages, suggesting that the community would benefit from initiatives aimed at improving resilience to key drivers of poor health.

In their attitudes and behaviours in relation to pro-environmental issues and consumption, participants largely identified positively, and few were concerned about how those attitudes and behaviours were perceived by others. Although understanding of the link between health and looking after the environment was less clear, these responses suggest an acceptance and receptiveness to actions to reduce carbon emissions and improve the environment.

Challenges remain around promoting sustainable travel and transport, low-carbon home energy systems and reduced meat eating. Issues around cost and time implications of shifting to greener behaviours, as well as perceptions of efficacy were key barriers to personal health and planetary care.



Frome Futures 2021: lessons for future practice

In order to establish long term change in community attitudes, perceptions and behaviours and understand any correlations with the GHFF programme, one of the aims of the evaluation process was to repeat the Frome Futures survey after one year. However, a subsequent review of this aim concluded that a one-year interval would be insufficient for any meaningful trends to be established, and the survey was deferred.

The second survey is planned to be distributed as part of the ongoing CAF full award programme *Green and Healthy Frome* in spring 2023 and again in the winter of 2025-2026. Most of the survey questions from the first survey will be repeated, to establish any nascent longitudinal trends. However, following a review of objectives with programme partners at Plymouth University, the survey will be restructured with supplementary questions where necessary. Questions will be amended to remove ambiguity, link more directly to the programme aims and initiatives as they have developed.

It should be acknowledged that those most likely to respond to this survey are those predisposed to respond positively to climate and 'green' issues. Such groups typically intersect with a more socioeconomically privileged demographic, which paradoxically overlaps with greater average carbon footprint. Given these asymmetries in the source of carbon emissions and capacity to enact behavioural changes, there is both a moral and instrumental argument to focus on more privileged groups. For example, it is often impossible for those in poverty to make lifestyle changes or material improvements to their environment due to economic constraints.

Moreover, as deprived communities are least responsible for the emissions that cause the climate crisis, it is morally questionable that they should shoulder the burden of making such changes. At the same time, wealthier socioeconomic groups have both sufficient time and money to take actions in response to the environmental crises that are a direct consequence of unequal wealth distribution in a global carbon economy. It is therefore arguable that focusing on such groups holds greater potential for generating meaningful action and change on climate.

Nevertheless, such an approach must acknowledge that deprived groups are more vulnerable to climate and health risks. Any programme of action must therefore promote marginalised voices first, as well as ensuring that the benefits are distributed in a just manner. For the Frome Future's survey, this means expanding its reach as far as possible by making it available through a variety of media and promotion through community groups and networks.



4. Healthy Homes

Healthy Homes is a partnership between Frome Town Council, Frome Medical Practice (FMP) and the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE).⁷ *Healthy Homes* aims to help Frome residents access knowledge, resources and support to ensure that they live in a warm, healthy environment.

Homes account for over 20% of carbon emissions nationally and it is estimated that 26 million households will need energy efficiency improvements to enable the UK to meet its net-zero carbon commitment. At the same time, cold homes are a significant health risk linked to a higher chance of pneumonia and other respiratory illnesses as well as exacerbating existing illnesses such as asthma, diabetes, arthritis, depression and anxiety. Insulating homes and reducing energy use also has financial benefits for households through reduced energy bills and for local economies through skilled job creation.

The objectives of the *Healthy Homes* initiative are:

- To improve the health and wellbeing of Frome households identified as being at risk of fuel poverty and susceptible to cold related illness.
- To reduce carbon emissions whilst maintaining a healthy temperature in homes.
- To increase Frome's resilience by training local people to provide their community with energy efficiency support.

Healthy Homes and CSE held monthly energy advice drop-in sessions around Frome. Accessible locations were chosen and advertised through Frome Town Council's communications channels. Where more in-depth advice was needed, contact details were taken so that a CSE adviser can follow up by phone.

Meanwhile, the project team organises activities across the town including: five webinars open to the public covering issues such as how to reduce energy usage at home, heat pumps, and whole house retrofit; Energy Essentials training, provided by CSE to people working in public-facing roles in Frome to enable them to

⁷ CSE offer an independent energy advice service aimed at improving the energy performance of homes, reducing fuel poverty and carbon emissions.

signpost to the service and provide basic advice; and links to Somerset Retrofit Accelerator pilot, virtual Open Homes, discounted retrofit plans for able-to-pay households.

Healthy Homes utilises the unique partnership with Frome Medical Practice to maximise the benefits of the initiative for those that need it most. Drawing on FMP's knowledge of patients most at risk of poor health outcomes, and their role as a trusted messenger in the community, *Healthy Homes* information was integrated into patient communications. Links to further support were included on the FMP website, and in letters and text messages to COPD and Asthma patients.

Healthy Homes information was also added to the waiting room entrance screens, and on the Medical Practice's website and social media. A CSE banner was also displayed outside the front of the practice during vaccination clinics. FMP and Health Connections Mendip keep their own Social Media channels updated with *Healthy Homes* information and events. Leaflets were left with the practice reception, Health Connectors and the Home visiting team, and updates were shared with Medical Practice staff through monthly GP/clinician team meetings and newsletter.

4.1. Evaluating Healthy Homes

A number of streams of information were collected as part of the *Healthy Homes* initiative. Two types of basic quantitative data were collected by the team. Firstly, a log of energy advice drop-in sessions and events were maintained by the lead team at Frome Town Council, recording the number of people who have received advice and the number of referrals to CSE. Secondly, a log of all information sent to patients via letter and text message was maintained by Frome Medical Practice.

As part of the partnership the CSE themselves maintained a database of referrals to their own energy advice service from the BA11 (Frome area) postcode, which was shared with the *Healthy Homes* team on a quarterly basis. The database contains information on each person referred, the nature of their enquiry, and the subsequent actions taken. This includes details of financial interventions, such as directing to benefits, grants, vouchers, discounts and advice on behavioural changes with an impact on energy costs. The non-financial impacts of measures undertaken were also recorded by the advisor, such as the ability of individuals to 'keep the house warm', 'switch energy suppliers' or levels of worry. Onward referrals to contractors for energy-saving measures were also recorded, detailing the types of installation proposed for the house in question. This information was used to estimate impacts on carbon emissions and the financial savings for householders, using figures researched and modelled by CSE for BEIS National Household Model.

Table 4 - Healthy Homes - key engagement outputs

288	28	6,118	15,346
People received energy advice at Healthy Homes events.	Events including drop-in sessions at various locations and bookable phone sessions.	Letters sent to at-risk patients by Frome Medical Practice.	Texts sent to at-risk patients by Frome Medical Practice.
100+	10	5	165
Attendances at 5 Healthy Homes public webinars (also available as an online resource)	People trained through Energy Essentials training.	Volunteers trained as Frome Energy Advice Champions	Winter Warmth packs donated.

Four short telephone interviews were conducted with individuals who had received support from CSE. These interviews were aimed at understanding in greater depth the impact of the support received in respect to the energy efficiency of their homes, financial outgoings, health and wellbeing.

4.1.1. CSE energy advice referrals

In the year following the commencement of the partnership with *Healthy Homes* in April 2021, CSE received 582 referrals to its energy advice service from the Frome area (BA11), over four times the number of referrals in the previous year. By the end of September 2022, the total number of people who had been directed to the service stood at 863, suggesting the increased rate of referrals is being sustained as the project has continued. By extrapolation, we can conservatively estimate that the partnership with *Healthy Homes* will have resulted in around 800 more Frome households accessing home energy support from CSE by the end of the GHFF programme in March 2023 (Figure 7).

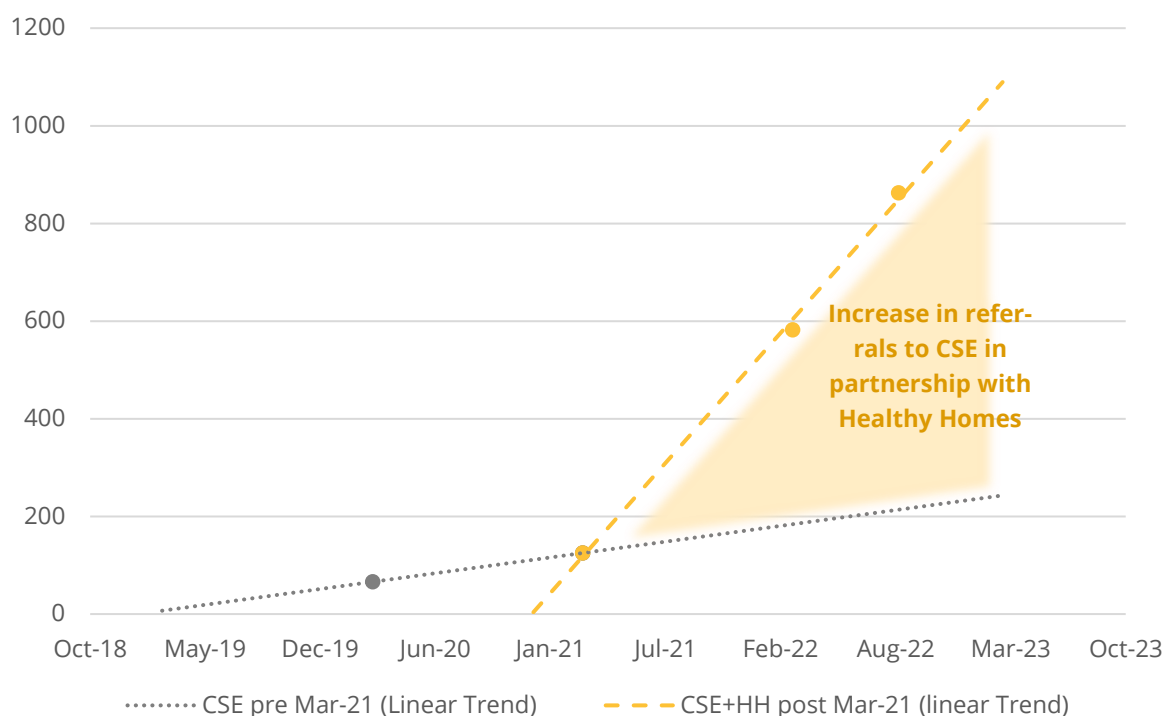


Figure 7 – Cumulative trend of CSE advice referrals from Frome area before and after partnership start with Healthy Homes.

Referral cases include general energy efficiency advice, support dealing with suppliers/metering, access to support schemes such as the Priority Services Register and Warm Homes Discount, and referrals to paid-for services. A total of 127 cases logged by the end of September have led to referrals to contractors for grant-funded retrofit work. These referrals have been for a range of energy-saving measures, most prominently cavity wall insulation, loft insulation top-ups, new heating systems and boiler upgrades.

The accuracy of carbon and cost-saving figures resulting from these referrals has a high degree of contingency due to: (1) the complex and variable nature of existing heating and insulation installations among individual households, making generalisations and comparisons difficult; and (2) resource constraints on CSE and *Healthy Homes* that limit capacity to capture this complexity in data collection. However, should the measures from all the referrals be installed, they will lead to an estimated minimum annual carbon emission reduction of 47,995 kg, and a minimum annual energy bill saving of £146 per household (Table 5).

Table 5 – CSE referrals for energy efficiency measures for Frome Area residents since *Healthy Homes* project commencement (as of September 2022): number, carbon emissions and energy bill savings. (Based on the figures researched and modelled by CSE for BEIS National Household Model.)

Measure	No. of Referrals	Average Modelled Carbon Emission Reduction (kg)	Total Estimated Carbon Emission Reduction (kg)	Average Energy Bill Saving	Total Estimated Energy Bill Saving
Cavity Wall Insulation	37	642	23,754	£245	£9,065
Loft insulation top-up†	34	172	5,848	£66	£2,244
New heating systems**	20	1,552/160*	?	£?	£?
Boiler upgrades‡	14	321	4,494	£122	£1708
Internal wall insulation	7	1018	7,126	£390	£2,730
New loft insulation	7	343	2,401	£131	£917
External wall Insulation	2	1200	2,400	£459	£918
Solar PV	2	444	888	£320	£640
Double glazing	1	897	897	£343	£343
Floor insulation	1	187	187	£72	£72
TOTAL (should measures be installed)	127		47,995		£18,637
Per referral			378		£146

NOTES

†Assumed 50% of carbon reduction from full new loft insulation (conservatively, as a relatively low level of existing insulation is required to warrant a top-up).

*From Oil/Solid Fuel

**Most cases for which sufficient data was recorded were neither to replace oil or solid fuel systems, but to upgrade old gas central heating systems. Generally, due to diversity of heating systems and circumstances among individual cases and resource limitations on CSE data collection, it is not reasonable to estimate the total CO2 or cost savings for installing new heating systems from these referrals.

‡Carbon and cost savings for boiler upgrades estimated as ½ of the savings for cavity wall insulation for properties on mains gas.

Meanwhile, an additional £139,395 in financial interventions resulting from CSE advice—in the form of grants or other one-off support—have been issued to 124 households in the Frome area, with recipients benefitting from an average of £1,124 each. This includes benefits claims, vouchers, discounts, and grants including ECO scheme grants of up to £5,000 for insulation and new heating systems.⁸ All together, the total financial impact of the *Healthy Homes* scheme including bill savings and other interventions comes to £158,032 in benefits to Frome area residents.

In follow-up interviews, Frome area householders who had received advice from CSE revealed that they were motivated by the need to improve their home’s energy efficiency and were interested in financial support available. Having received support in the form of home energy surveys, grants, discounts and vouchers, recipients were able to make material improvements to their energy system, making their homes warmer and more cost and carbon efficient. Householders reported positively about the difference these measures had made to their levels of worry about costs and health relating to heating and insulation in their homes (see Table 6).

Table 6 – CSE Energy Advice Recipients –Interview Reflections

Question	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2	Interviewee 3	Interviewee 4
Why did you seek help from Healthy Homes?	Came to Energy Advice café in June. They didn’t have central heating and wanted to see if there would be any help/ funding available to have one installed.	Came to one of the Healthy Homes energy advice sessions as they had an old, inefficient back boiler. They also wanted to find out more about cavity wall insulation.	Booked one a Healthy Homes phone appointment for advice about their old house with solid fuel heating. They wanted to upgrade the heating system and find out more about other retrofit options.	Unemployed and in financial hardship so came to one of HH energy advice sessions to seek advice on lowering their energy and water bills.
What support did you receive?	CSE referred for a grant funded central heating installation which was completed after a swift survey in August. The client is also applying to	CSE referred for cavity wall check which in the end didn’t need filling (filled in the past already). Eligibility was confirmed for a grant to replace	Wasn’t eligible for funding and opted for £200 retrofit survey. The surveyor was very thorough, and the	CSE were able to help and apply for water bill discount resulting in £312 saving on water bill on their behalf. Also received £49

⁸ The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is a government energy efficiency scheme in Great Britain to help reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty.

Question	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2	Interviewee 3	Interviewee 4
<p>How has it helped you improve your home?</p>	<p>Mendip for Safer Home Grant for new windows as signposted by CSE.</p> <p>Their home now has an efficient heating system. There was no heating before.</p>	<p>the old boiler with a new, and lot more efficient gas combi boiler which was installed in the summer.</p> <p>The new gas boiler will increase the efficiency of the client's heating system from 70% to 90%.</p>	<p>report was received recently.</p> <p>-</p>	<p>pre-payment meter voucher.</p> <p>"It didn't long term, but it helped when I was desperate."</p>
<p>What effect has it had on your life financially?</p>	<p>"Difficult to say."</p>	<p>The boiler has only been installed so it's difficult to say how much money will be saved at this stage but there will definitely be a saving.</p>	<p>Gave them options to consider and potential savings if measures were to be installed.</p>	<p>Significant saving on my water bill (£312) which they were not aware was available before speaking to CSE and a prepayment meter voucher £49 which was very helpful at the time.</p>
<p>What effect has it had on your health and well-being?</p>	<p>Hasn't had the heating on yet but is happy and relieved that their family can now heat their home in winter. Less worry and health risks associated with living in an unheated home.</p>	<p>Less worried about bills and heating and happy about having a warmer home.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>"I still worry about bills as I'm unemployed, but I really appreciate the help I received."</p>
<p>Quote</p>	<p>"Thank you for what you are doing. It really is a lifeline."</p>	<p>"I'm less worried about winter and increasing energy bills now I have a more efficient new heating. It's a big weight of my shoulders."</p>	<p>"[Gave] us an idea of the scale of work, [...] retrofit options [...], and potential costs and savings associated. It's great value for money."</p>	<p>"It's good to know there is a service to reach out and help when needed."</p>

4.1.2. Healthy Homes events

A total of 255 people have so far received energy advice (as of September 2022) across 17 *Healthy Homes* events, including drop-in sessions at Frome Library, ASDA, The Town Hall and bookable phone sessions.

Energy advice sessions were also held at the towns Job Centre, and the Bridge Café in the Trinity area of Frome. The Bridge Cafe is run by volunteers drawn largely from the local church and supports a diverse community providing affordable food and drink and hosting Citizens Advice Bureau sessions.

During Covid-19 restrictions, five webinars enabled over 100 further people to ask questions and receive advice on home heating and insulation efficiency (also available as an online resource).

Energy advice drop-in sessions welcomed people with wide-ranging concerns regarding their energy use and efficiency. Several people visiting the drop-in sessions simply had a conversation and/or picked up information leaflets, while others were referred to CSE for further immediate support.

Healthy Homes also works with Fair Frome, an independent charity that supports residents experiencing poverty and deprivation, who signpost residents to energy advice sessions and the CSE helpline. From November 2022 *Healthy Homes* staff and volunteer Energy Advice Champions hosted fortnightly energy advice sessions at Fair Frome.

Healthy Homes Events: Case Examples

One drop-in visitor was signed up to the Priority Service Register, given information leaflets and advice on their energy bill, and supported to receive a £250 grant from the Local Authority. Another, living alone in a draughty house with a poor EPC rating, was referred to CSE who were able to support them with multiple phone calls and advice over several home energy management issues, as well as signposting to other services including the Citizens Advice Bureau and befriending services.

For one parent living in a 1700s home with a low EPC rating and no loft insulation, in receipt of various benefits, a drop-in session with CSE was a chance to speak to an informed energy advisor who was able to refer them to a Local Authority for a £250 support grant, and to a specialist for first-time loft insulation to reduce bills and keep their home warmer.

4.2. Summary and lessons for future practice

The partnership between *Healthy Homes*, Frome Medical Practice and the Centre for Sustainable Energy resulted in a wide community engagement in accessing home energy advice and support – with more than 20,000 engagements through text messages and letters to FMP patients, energy advice sessions, webinars, training and volunteers.

These engagements led to 863 referrals for energy efficiency measures among Frome area residents corresponding to an estimated minimum annual carbon emission reduction of 47,995 kg, and a minimum annual energy bill saving of £146 per household.

An additional £139,395 in financial interventions resulting from CSE advice—in the form of grants or other one-off support—have been issued to 124 households in the Frome area, with recipients benefitting from an average of £1,124 each. Altogether, the total financial impact of the *Healthy Homes* scheme including bill savings and other interventions comes to £158,032 in benefits to Frome area residents.



Healthy Homes: lessons for future practice

- CSE database accessibility

Given the complexities of individual cases for home improvement energy measures, the structure of the CSE database, and resource constraints on CSE to collect sufficiently detailed information, many of the carbon and cost saving figures are based on a number of assumptions and caveated accordingly. Greater accuracy in evaluating the impact of the initiative might be achieved if the database could be restructured to gather more specific information relating to the objectives of Healthy Homes. If possible, a dedicated advice telephone line and operator allocated specifically referrals from the scheme would enable this.

- CSE Data sharing and confidentiality

The original premise for this project was to overlay data held by the CSE on energy performance of households in Frome (EPC Register) with patient data at the Medical Practice to identify patients living in uninsulated homes who were at risk of cold and damp related illness, to provide targeted support. It quickly became apparent that this type of data sharing could not be supported by the Practice due to GDPR concerns, so the EPC element of the project was removed and instead information was shared with all patients.

In order to allow the project Evaluator to contact people for interviews, a check box was added to the CSE referral forms for the Healthy Homes drop-ins, where people could agree to their contact details being shared with Frome Town Council for evaluation purposes.

For any project involving data sharing, understanding GDPR legislation and individual organisations' data policies is key so data can be shared safely and legally.

- Energy advice sessions: repetition

A key learning has been repetition of activities on a regular basis, and repeating messages through different channels. All messages are more effective when repeated, and over time we found people were coming to drop-in sessions with pre-prepared questions. The overall number of referrals increased over time as we built up the project.



5. Cycle Together

The *Cycle Together* scheme supports people to cycle more and reduce dependency on car use through free electric bike (ebike) loans and cycle confidence classes.

The initiative is premised on the health and environmental benefits that arise through exercise, reductions to greenhouse gas emissions and harmful outdoor air pollution when vehicle use is replaced by cycling.

Cycle Together participants were loaned an ebike for four weeks and offered six hours of group cycle confidence classes and maintenance advice from a qualified instructor. The objectives of the classes are to enable people to ride safely and confidently beyond the loan period. Meanwhile, the group format enables peer support and social benefits, creating a more positive experience and long-term enthusiasm for cycling.

5.1. Evaluating Cycle Together

Cycle Together participants were asked to complete three surveys: a pre-participation survey prior to taking part in cycling confidence classes and the ebike hire period; a post-participation survey immediately following the end of the ebike hire period; and a follow-up survey six months after participating in the scheme. This approach was aimed at understanding pre-existing behaviours and perceptions among participants in relation to cycling and vehicle use and the subsequent impact of their participation in the *Cycle Together* scheme. The surveys included questions aimed at obtaining quantitative and qualitative data, the analysis of which is summarised in the below sub-sections. Closed survey questions with a choice of answers provide numerical data relating to respondent's cycle and vehicle use before and after participating in the scheme. Open survey questions allowed respondents to provide more detailed responses on their own experience of the *Cycle Together* initiative. This more qualitative data is analysed thematically, enabling a discussion of the different kinds of benefit promoted by the scheme and opportunities for further development.

A total of 93 people have taken part in the scheme and around 4,000 miles have been cycled on loaned ebikes. More than three quarters (77%) of participants surveyed were motivated by the opportunity to try out an ebike. Around half (53%) saw the scheme as an opportunity to be more active, and just under 50 percent wanted to increase their cycling confidence. Other significant reasons for participation (more than 25% of respondents) were health, connecting with nature and socialising (Figure 8).

Motivations to participate in Cycle Together

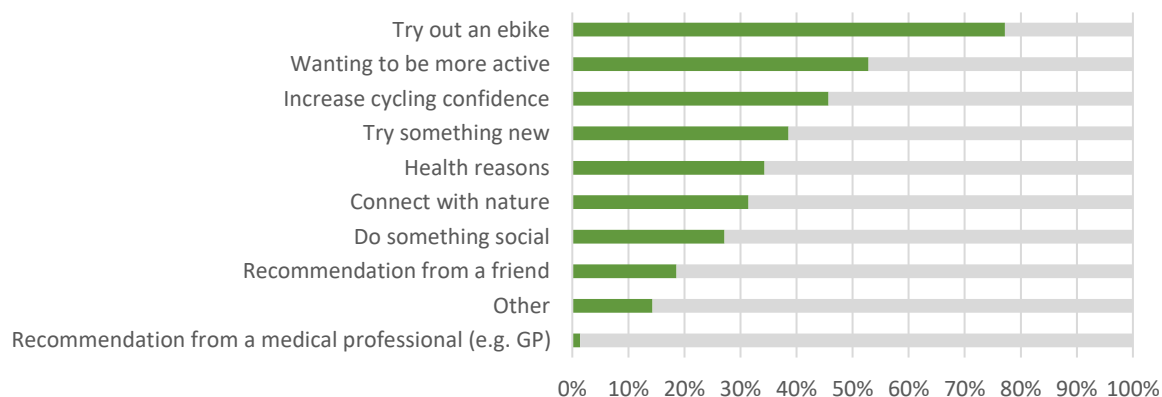


Figure 8 - Cycle Together: participant motivations

5.1.1. Attitudes and behaviours: cycle and vehicle use

More than 85% of respondents used a car on at least one day per week. The modal number of days per week that respondents used a car was five (19% of respondents), and the most common average time spent driving was 30-60 minutes (41%). Both of the latter figures correspond to the working week and the high proportion of Frome residents whose place of work is outside of the town. However, whilst significant (at 40% of respondents), commuting to work was not the most prevalent reason for car use among those surveyed. Shopping and running errands (63%) and visiting friends and family (49%) were the most common car uses, corresponding to the relatively high proportion of respondents whose average journey times are relatively short at less than 30 minutes (30%) (see Figure 9).

Cycle access was relatively high, with more than three-quarters of respondents to the pre-participation survey reporting that they had access to a bicycle, either through borrowing or ownership. Out of the 56 respondents, three (5%) said that they have access to an ebike, with the majority (57%) using a pedal-only bicycle. When asked to select from a list of uses for their bicycle, the most popular were for 'physical exercise' (18 respondents) and 'shopping/errands' (10 respondents) (see Figure 10).

However, by comparison with car use data, cycling as a mode of transportation was relatively low (see Figure 10). When asked whether they had cycled in the last seven days, 24% of respondents to the pre-participation survey answered positively, with around half saying that they had not. The most common number of days cycled on average per week was one, and most journeys by bicycle were under 30 minutes.

Following participation in *Cycle Together*, around three quarters of respondents (73%) stated that they thought they would cycle more, and only 7% said that there would be no change in their cycling frequency. In the follow-up survey six months later, the proportion of those who reported that they had actually increased their cycle use was 53%. Meanwhile, just over half of respondents (56%) in the post-participation survey

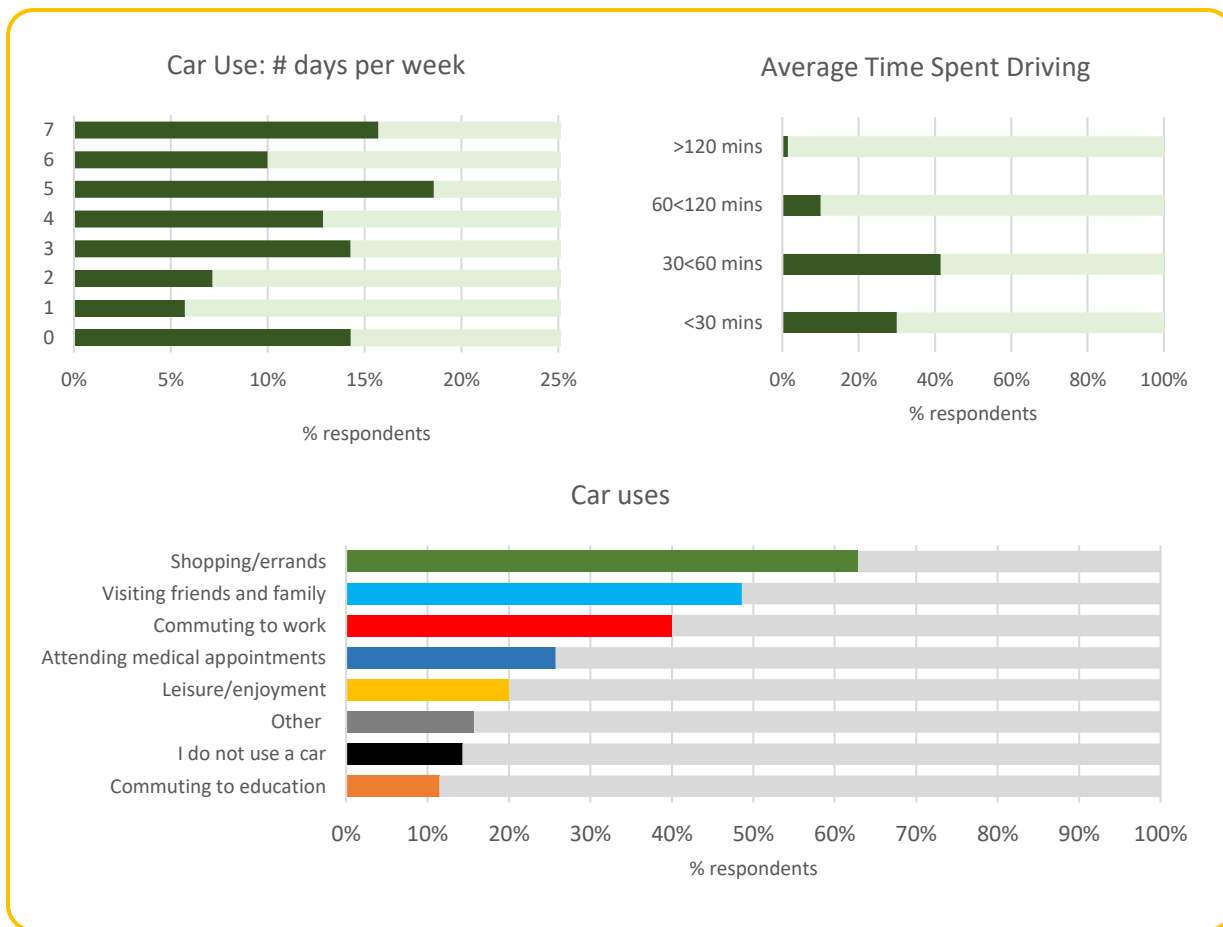


Figure 9 - Cycle Together pre-participation survey: car use behaviours

anticipated that their cycle use would increase relative to their car use, and a further 35% were unsure that such a change would be made. After six months, the proportion of respondents to the follow-up survey who reported that they cycle more instead of using a car was 44% (see Figure 11).

Over the same period, respondent’s reported confidence as cyclists show a progressive and significant increase from pre-participation to post-participation, and again by the time of the 6-month follow-up survey.

Prior to taking part in the scheme, 30% of respondents felt that they were either ‘not very confident’ or ‘not at all confident’ when riding a bicycle. The latter figure was reduced to 19% percent of respondents immediately after participating, and to 12% among respondents to the 6-month follow-up survey. At the same time, the proportion of those whose confidence levels were ‘quite confident’ or ‘very confident’ rose from 52% of respondents in the pre-participation survey, to 65% immediately after participating, and 77% of those completing the 6-month follow-up (See Figure 12).

While these figures show a clear trend towards improved cycling confidence, the relatively low response rate to the follow-up survey should be considered when attributing significance to changes after 6-months.

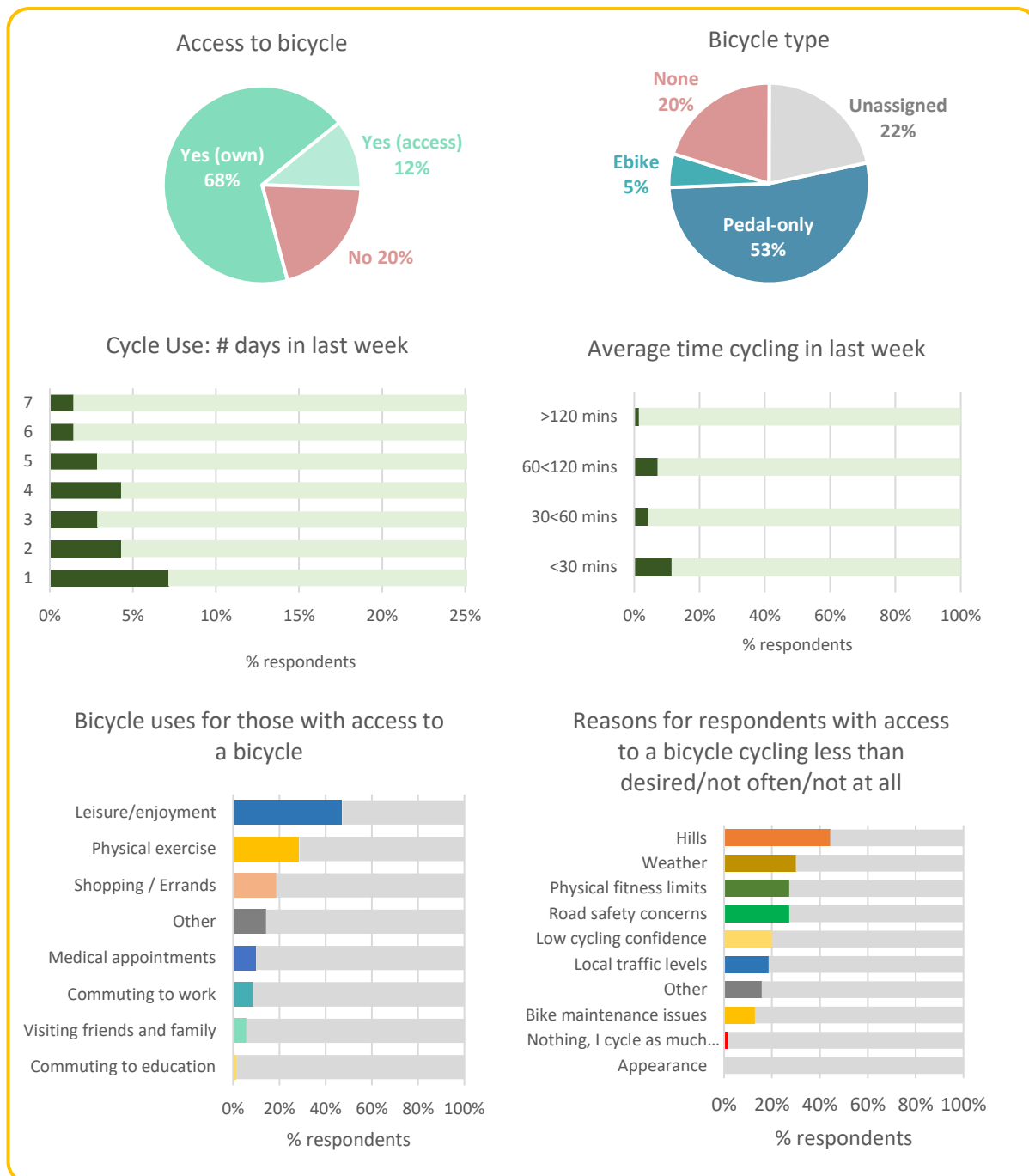


Figure 10 – Cycle Together pre-participation survey: cycle use attitudes and behaviours

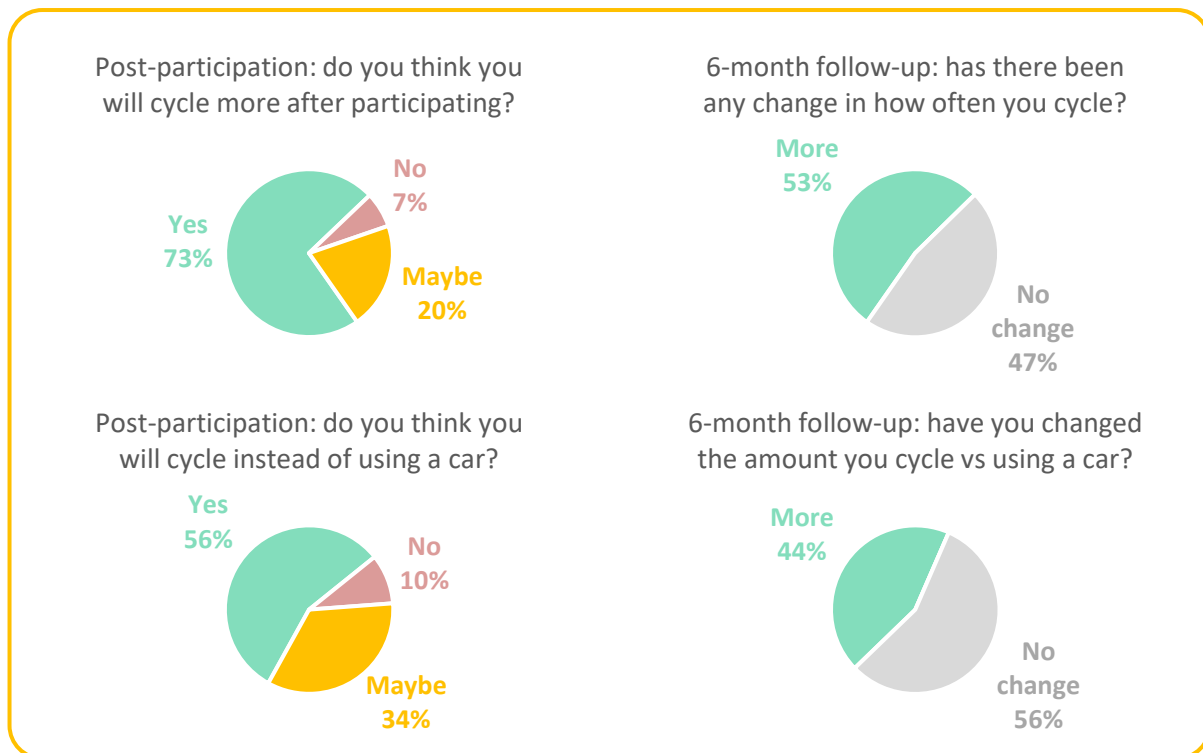


Figure 11 - Cycle Together: cycle/car use after participating (responses as of 10 February 2023)

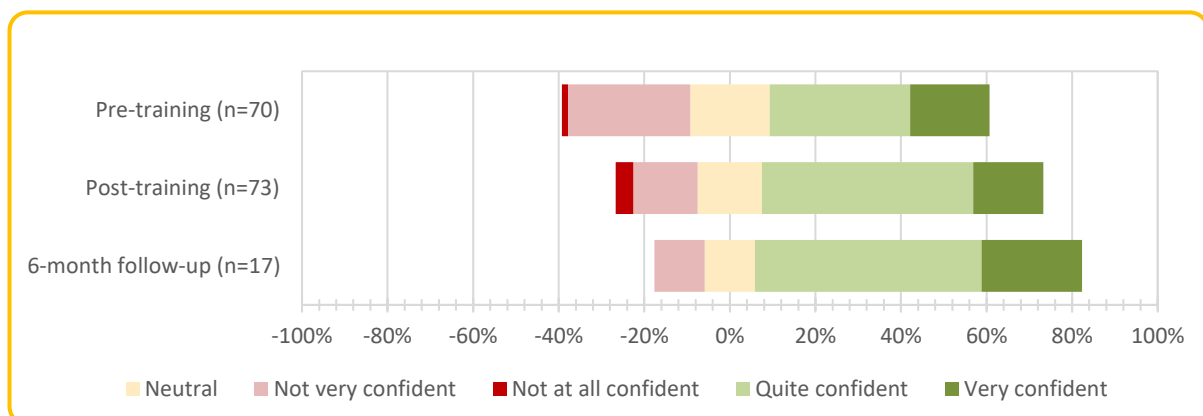


Figure 12 - Cycle Together participants' cycling confidence pre-participation, post-participation and 6-month follow-up surveys (responses as of 10 February 2023)

5.1.2. Participant reflections

As well as establishing changes in attitudes and behaviours towards cycle and vehicle use in relation to health and climate objectives, the post-participation and follow up surveys also asked open-ended questions aimed at understanding how participation in the *Cycle Together* scheme benefited the respondents. The main questions analysed here are:

- Is there anything you particularly enjoyed about the *Cycle Together* scheme?
- What was the main benefit of *Cycle Together* for you?
- Is there anything you would change?

Relevant textual extracts of the written responses to the above questions were categorised and collated into themes and sub-themes. These themes were mapped according to their significance in terms of the proportion of respondents who cited them in their answers to the surveys.

Responding to the question of the 'main benefits' of participating in the *Cycle Together* scheme (see Figure 13), the most frequently cited theme (41% of respondents) was that taking part enabled participants to 'try out' or 'test' using an Ebike, often with a view to exploring options for purchasing at a later date. Three participants stated in the survey that they had subsequently purchased an ebike.

The second most prominent theme among respondents (19% of those surveyed) was the health benefits of using the ebike. In particular, participants said that they had benefited in terms of their physical health (19%) and mental health (2%) by spending more time exercising as a result of taking part.

Increased cycle confidence was also frequently cited by survey participants, with 17% stating that this had been a main benefit of taking part in the *Cycle Together* Scheme.

A similarly prominent theme was the 'Ebike Benefits', or the features of the ebike that were beneficial to the participants, that were cited by 17% of respondents. In particular, the physical ease of cycling was repeatedly cited, most commonly in relation to the power assist feature and its usefulness in cycling up hills. The benefits of the ebike in relation to the speed and distance that could be attained were also frequently cited factors.

Among the other major themes that characterise participant's perceived benefits were: 'enjoyment' of taking part in the scheme (11%); being in the 'outdoors', the countryside; exploring or fresh air (11%); and the positive benefits to climate and the environment, in particular reduced car journeys and carbon emissions (8%).

The theme cited by most respondents when asked if there is anything they particularly 'enjoyed' about participating in *Cycle Together* relates to the organisation of the scheme (29% of those surveyed). In particular, people enjoyed the guidance that was received by the instructors in the cycle confidence classes (11%) and the group rides that were led by the instructors (11%). The ebikes themselves were also a major aspect of enjoyment among respondents (21%), again focussing on the assistive features and the distance that could be cycled. The opportunity to test an ebike was also cited as something that respondents particularly enjoyed (16%), while 11 percent of *Cycle Together* participants responded positively to the 'community' benefits of meeting people, building relationships and time with family (see Figure 14).

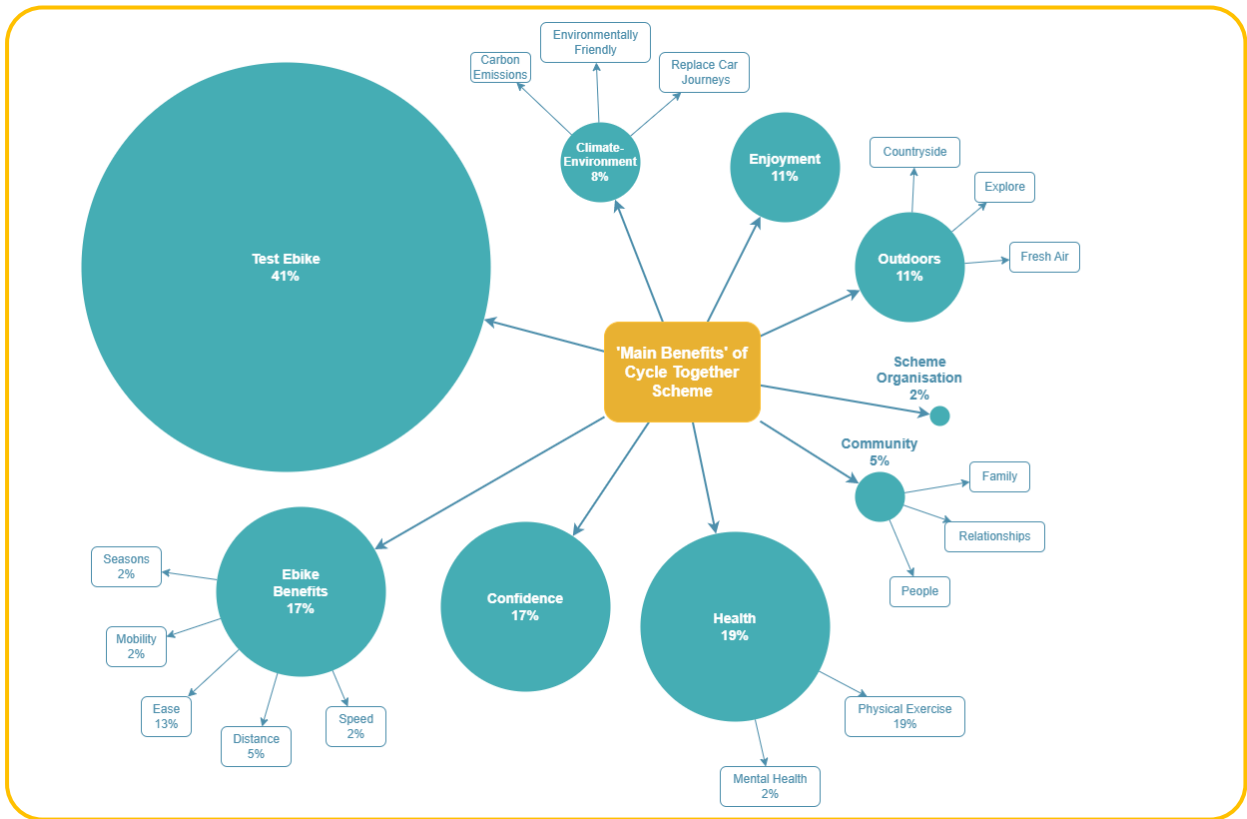


Figure 13 - 'Main Benefits' of Cycle Together scheme: thematic map

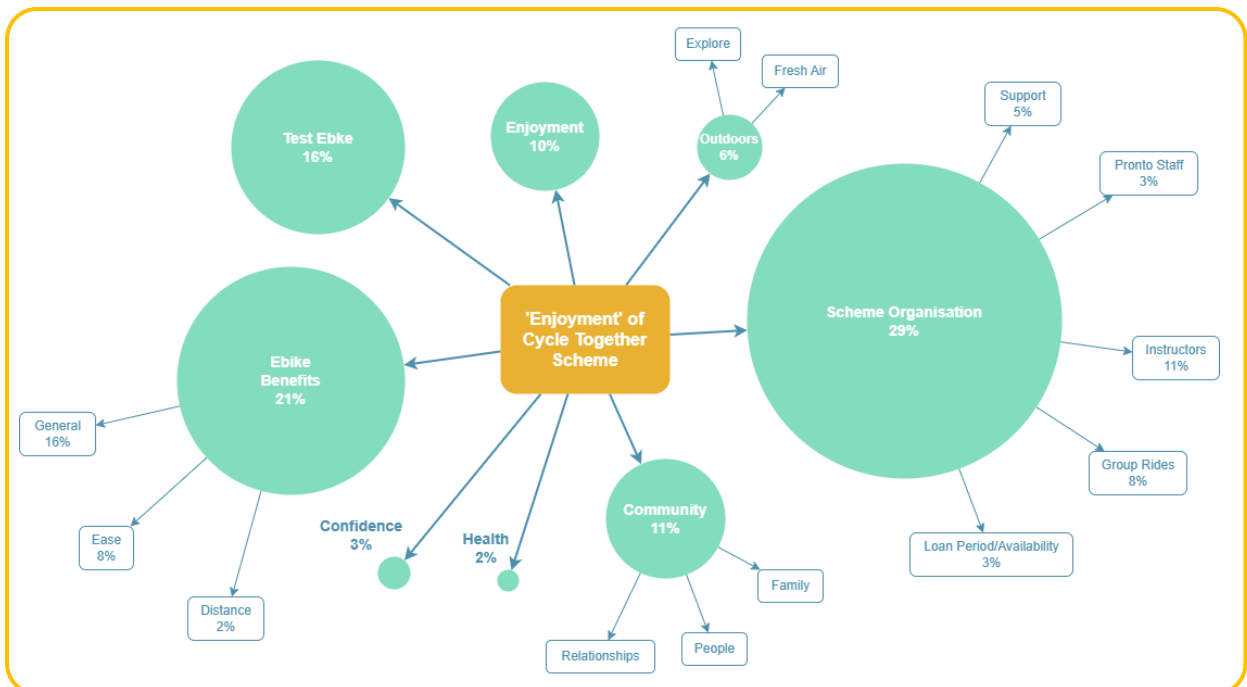


Figure 14 - 'Is there anything you particularly enjoyed about the Cycle Together scheme?': thematic map

Finally, when asked whether they would recommend any changes to the *Cycle Together* scheme, the majority of responses related to the organisation of the scheme itself (35% of respondents). In particular, the most common comment was that the opportunity to loan the ebike for a longer period of time (than the 4-week period offered) would be desirable (17%). A further area of proposed improvement relates to the organisation of the cycle confidence classes and group rides (11%), with respondents suggesting that more opportunities to join and greater notice would be beneficial (see Figure 15).

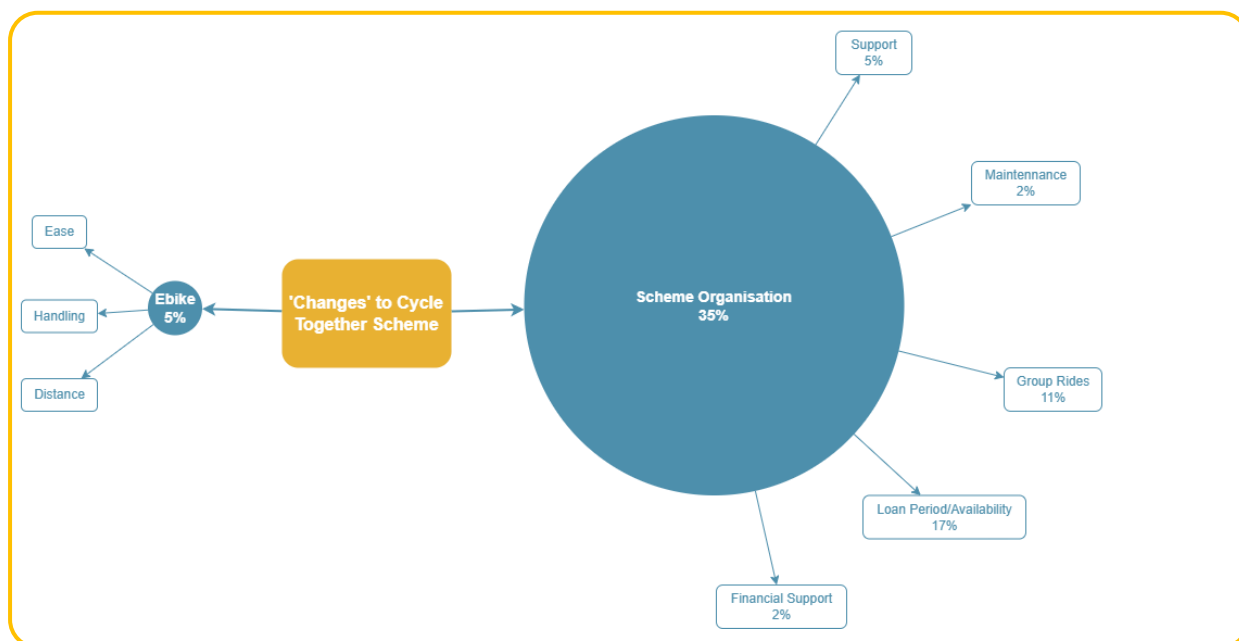


Figure 14 - Would you make any changes to the Cycle Together scheme: thematic map



5.2. Summary and lessons for future practice

Increased cycle use among *Cycle Together* participants, with 53% reporting that the scheme had led them to cycle more and 44% also saying that they now cycle more instead of using a car. This was accompanied by a significant progressive increase in cycling confidence following participation in the scheme.

Cycle Together: lessons for future practice

- Cycle confidence class attendances

Measures should be put in place for cycle confidence instructors to record the number of attendees at each session.

- Survey participation

Low uptake of 6-month follow-up surveys across the programme suggests participation fatigue after an individual completes two online surveys. Given the importance of establishing longer term impacts on attitudes and behaviours, consideration should be given to either omitting the post-participation survey or making this survey a feedback form to be completed voluntarily upon returning the ebike from loan. Measures should also be put in place to send a reminder email to potential respondents to complete the follow-up survey.

- Survey questions

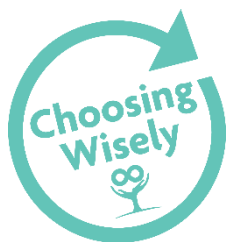
Meanwhile a key lesson for the survey questions is repetition and rigour in respect to the question wording and the measures and indicators that they are aimed at evidencing.

In particular, the transposition of ONS4 personal health and wellbeing questions into the *Cycle Together* Survey, without amendments to the question wording that explicitly refer respondents to their participation in the scheme, means that the answers cannot reasonably be used to evaluate the impact. These questions are most effectively used in the Frome Futures survey, where the larger sample size and longer time interval will provide more insightful data.

Furthermore, some questions on car and cycle use were worded differently across the pre-, post- and follow-up surveys, making comparisons problematic. These surveys will need to be reviewed in light of these learnings and updated for future use.

- Qualitative insights

Need to capture health impacts as a result of *Cycle Together* in interviews.



6. Choosing Wisely

The health and care system in England is responsible for at least 4% of the country's carbon footprint and 25% of the UK's public sector emissions - greater than the annual emissions from all passenger aircraft departing from Heathrow airport.⁹ A quarter of the NHS's total carbon footprint is related to medications, and in primary care, prescription medications are the largest contributor towards climate change.¹⁰

Across the wider NHS, major sources of emissions include the NHS estate (15% of the NHS' total carbon emissions), with primary care producing 167 ktCO₂e in 2019 (roughly equivalent to double the annual emissions of the Cook Islands in the South Pacific). Road travel and transport contributes a roughly similar proportion to the NHS carbon footprint (14%) and the supply of medicines, medical equipment and all other parts of the supply chain make the remaining two thirds of the NHS' total footprint.

Decarbonisation drives are underway across many of these contributing sources. Sustainability is one of three Frome Medical Practice (FMP) core values, with the Practice Manager and Senior GPs aligned behind a green approach to patient care. The practice has a history of concerted effort and leadership in this area, with FMP GPs instrumental in developing the Green Impact for Health Toolkit for the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP). FMP has also won the NUS RCGP Green Impact Award four times (the first in the country to win gold in 2019).

Frome Medical Practice has made reducing the quantity of prescribed medication a key aim in reducing their carbon footprint. Over the past decade, the practice has also pioneered a Social Prescribing and Care Navigation team (Health Connections Mendip). Social prescribing is a way of actively connecting people to activities, groups and services that can improve their health and wellbeing. This team directly supports patients via one-to-one and peer support groups to navigate their care and community-support

⁹ https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/field_publication_file/sustainable-health-social-care-appleby-naylor-mar2012.pdf

¹⁰ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2020/10/delivering-a-net-zero-national-health-service.pdf>

options. They've also established and maintain a detailed directory of local groups and resources that enable people to connect to activities that will support their health and wellbeing.

6.1. Approach

The Green & Healthy Future Programme enabled Frome Medical Practice to resource senior clinician time and a communications strategy to enable green-health approaches to be prioritised.

Below are summarised the three major workstreams:

- **Supporting patients to switch or reduce medications:** wherever a greener alternative exists or where healthier lifestyles would have an equally beneficial effect. The practice has prioritised a number of widely prescribed medications for medication reviews, including inhalers, antidepressants, and painkillers.
- **Healthy lifestyle advice and alternatives to medication:** ensuring that there is a strengthened and joined-up approach to raising patient awareness of the importance of these changes, and that the range of measures that can support healthy lifestyles are comprehensive and easy to access
- **System changes involving the whole practice team:** embedding these approaches in practice medication review templates for clinicians, to prompt discussions with patients and ensuring that pharmacy technicians engaged to support patients to switch medications are well equipped with resources.

6.2. Evaluating Choosing Wisely

For the development phase of GHFF, the evaluation of *Choosing Wisely* on the programme aims is focussed primarily on the impact of switching patients to low-carbon asthma inhalers on Frome Medical Practice's carbon emissions. The data to assess this was obtained from the OpenPrescribing (OP) database, which collates prescription data from the NHS GPs, including FMP.

6.2.1. Low-carbon asthma inhalers

Propellants in Salbutamol metered dose inhalers (MDI) make up 3% of the NHS' overall carbon footprint. Frome Medical Practice's aim is to encourage prescribing of salbutamol products associated with lower carbon emissions, resulting in a significant reduction in carbon emissions. These efforts have focused on: (1) switching to lower-carbon reliever inhalers with a lower volume of hydrofluoroalkane (HFA) propellant gas; and (2) switching to lower-carbon preventer inhalers, which contain no HFA gas.

Salbutamol reliever inhalers contain HFA 134 as their propellant, a powerful greenhouse gas with 1,300 times the warming potential of CO₂. The *Choosing Wisely* team aimed to switch patients from Salbutamol (GENERIC) to Salamol inhalers, which entails no change in the active ingredient or the inhaler mode of use. This makes the switch a

relatively uncomplicated one that does not necessitate patient consultation unless requested.

The process started with a review of all patients on Salbutamol (GENERIC) inhalers. Patients on this inhaler type could be using Ventolin Evohaler, which has 28.2 kg CO₂e per inhaler. Other types of Salbutamol MDI inhaler that could be dispensed under this prescription are Salbutamol CFC free Inhaler 100 microgram, which contains 25.2 kg CO₂e per inhaler and less frequently, the Salamol CFC-Free Inhaler 100µg (11.95 kg CO₂e per inhaler) or Airomir 100 microgram (9.7 kg CO₂e per inhaler). At a national level, a Salbutamol (GENERIC) prescription would be dispensed as the inhaler with the greatest carbon impact, the Ventolin Evohaler 100µg (28 kg CO₂e), 81.5% of the time.

After the review identified patients who could switch from a higher carbon inhaler to a lower-carbon alternative, these patients' prescriptions were changed from Salbutamol (GENERIC) to specifically Salamol CFC-Free Inhaler 100µg (11.95 kg CO₂e per inhaler). A letter was sent out to inform patients that the next time they picked up their prescription, their inhaler would have been prescribed as a Salamol inhaler, which might look slightly different but contain the same drug and be very similar to use. A text was also sent to patients with mobile phones.

Inhaler switching and carbon footprint

Longitudinal data for FMP from OpenPrescribing database was used to calculate the carbon impact of switching from Salbutamol to lower-carbon inhalers. In particular, the rate at which low-carbon prescriptions were being taken up by patients at the practice can be compared over time, and correlated with key systemic interventions as informed by insights from the Practice team.

Another key moment can be identified as corresponding to the start of the GHFF programme and the *Choosing Wisely* initiative in March 2021. Having already established a programme of sustainable practice, including decarbonising prescriptions and the employment of a pharmacy technician to enable these changes, the GHFF partnership acted as leverage for further systemic changes.

Thus, as the Practice's Senior Partner related in an interview, FMP's role in GHFF's successful bid for TNL CAF development funding enabled the argument to be put forward to the practice partners that they had "agreed that we were doing this, so this is what we are doing." This debate informed the subsequent decision to switch from the procurement of Ventolin Salbutamol inhalers to Salamol, resulting in the steep drop-off in the carbon impact per inhaler and the overall carbon footprint.

In the two years prior to the start of FMP's partnership in the GHFF programme in March 2021, the practice had reduced prescriptions of Salbutamol inhalers by 28% in 2019-2020 and 24% over 2020-2021, with respective yearly carbon emissions reductions of 88,358 kg CO₂e and 53,991 kg CO₂e. By December 2022, the annual carbon footprint of

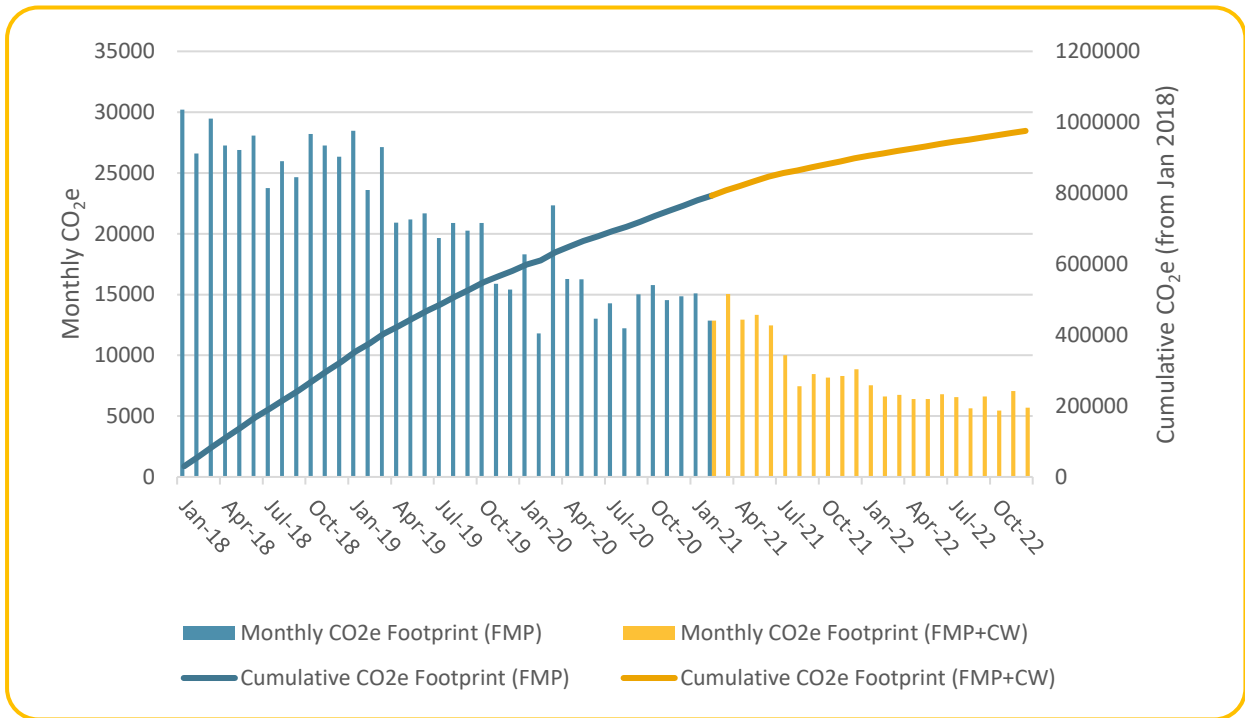


Figure 15 - Frome Medical Practice: total monthly and cumulative carbon footprint from salbutamol inhalers before and after partnership with GHFF (source: OpenPrescribing.net).

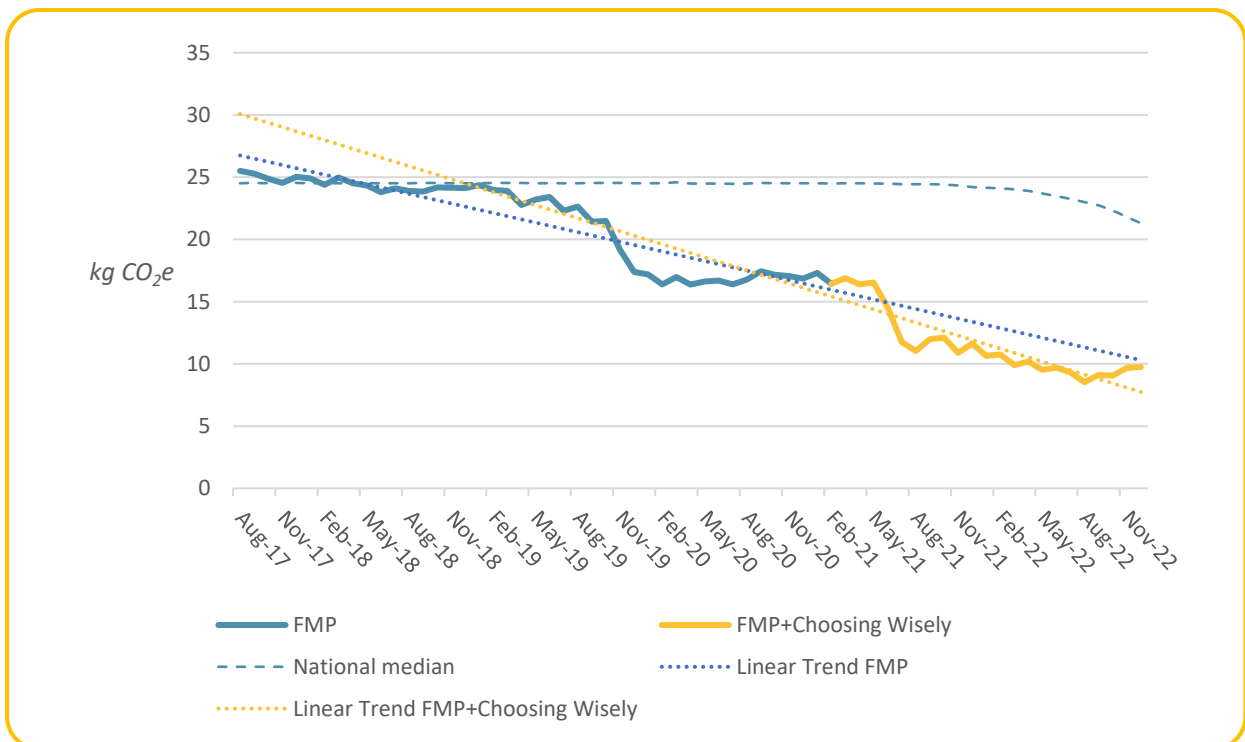


Figure 16 - Frome Medical Practice: average carbon footprint per salbutamol inhaler before and after partnership with GHFF, with linear trendlines showing change in rate of CO₂e reduction (source: OpenPrescribing.net).

Salbutamol inhalers prescribed by Frome Medical Practice has been reduced by 111,460 kg CO₂e since the start of the *Choosing Wisely* programme. This corresponds to a 61% drop and an increased rate of reduction in comparison to FMP's impact before the partnership in GHFF, which has continued through 2022 (see Figures 16 and 17).

Figure 16 shows the successive reductions in total monthly carbon footprint from salbutamol inhalers and the cumulative savings. Rather than any reduced effectiveness, the levelling off in the rate of change towards the end of the programme indicates approaching saturation in the number of FMP patients who are able to switch to inhalers with a lower carbon footprint. This fact is reflected in the projections for the ongoing *Green and Healthy Frome* programme, and the shift toward other objectives for carbon reductions and health outcomes in the *Choosing Wisely* initiative.

6.3. Summary and lessons for future practice

Frome Medical Practice's partnership in the *Green and Healthy Future for Frome* programme can be characterised in terms of enabling a concerted focus on new activities to reduce the practice's impact on the climate. The impact of *Choosing Wisely* as part of the GHFF programme cannot therefore be properly considered in isolation from many of the practice's pre-existing and ongoing initiatives that share similar aims and impacts. The resources to deliver the initiative therefore extend beyond the scope of GHFF, making attributing impact to the programme challenging. As discussed in Section 10, however, we can say with certainty that these many projects have contributed to a culture around sustainable approaches that have enabled change.



So far, the evaluation of *Choosing Wisely* has focused primarily on the carbon impact of inhaler switching, with FMP's leadership of the initiative partnership with GHFF correlating to a significant increase in the rate of carbon reductions from Salbutamol inhalers.

However, the scheme has significant potential for generating outcomes that can be assessed relating to other activities. In particular, the evaluation of the impacts from supporting patients to switch or reduce medications may be expanded to FMP's work on antidepressants and painkillers.

Similarly, the cumulative impact of *Choosing Wisely's* role as a trusted messenger, in social prescribing and promoting lifestyle advice as alternatives to medication, may be subjected to both quantitative and qualitative evaluation. Here, in clinicians' work to link patients to the other GHFF initiatives, in particular *Green Community Connectors*, *Healthy Homes* and *Cycle Together*, there is scope for building the evidence for the benefits of a climate-health linked approach.

Choosing Wisely: Further outcomes and insights

Direct impact

- 14 hours of training and knowledge sharing among FMP clinicians.
- 120 outreach meetings, events and communications relating to *Choosing Wisely*.
- Hosted knowledge sharing event in March 2022 with Chair of Royal College of General Practitioners plus members of the Greener NHS team.
- Presented at Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh COP26 Legacy series talks with Green Health Connector in April 2022.
- September 2022 *Sustainability Workshop* with NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board, with knowledge and insights from *Choosing Wisely* and GHFF shared with board members to inform their sustainability agenda.

Indirect impact

- Promotion of healthy lifestyles both at population level and more targeted individual approach. Information sharing of winter support locally to all adults with 2535 patients so far recorded as having accessed this lifestyle and community support
- Networking through RCGP overdiagnosis and optimal testing groups and learning has helped refine our approach to testing and shift in focus from reducing individual tests to working to ensure that travel to the surgery and consumables are minimised.
- Working with local hospital to enable local patient testing and reduce burden of travel to outpatients in Bath. In January 228 bloods taken on behalf of the hospital saving 5016 car miles equivalent to 60,192 miles of travel saved. Equivalent to 8 cars taken off the road based on typical mileage of 7400 per annum.



7. Green Community Connectors

British adults have consistently ranked health and the environment as among the top three issues facing the country in recent years (often above immigration and Brexit). More than four in five (82%) are concerned about climate change. A quarter (25%) see climate change as one of the biggest threats to their health, on par with accidents/injuries and mental health problems.¹¹ Yet, when it comes to taking action, more than half (55%) of people say that they never or only rarely talk with family and friends about climate change, and only a small minority (around 1 in 10) say they do so often.¹²

Drawing on the approach of Health Connections Mendip's Community Connector training, *Green Community Connectors* provides training and support for residents of Frome and the surrounding area to become *Green Community Connectors* (GCCs). Accessible free of charge, one-hour training sessions by Frome Medical Practice explored how to take positive steps that make a difference to climate, health and wellbeing (see Box 1). Bespoke training was also offered to groups, organisations and individuals in the community. The scheme was promoted at public events, in local press, in *Future Shed* sessions and at other FMP events including talking benches and talking cafes. In addition, Medical Practice staff signposted the training to patients and among colleagues.

Recognising the value of social relationships in connecting people to the information and help they need, participants learn what support is available in Frome and are given the confidence and resources to act and share this knowledge at street level. By sharing tools that advance understanding of carbon footprints, highlighting the importance of the links between health and climate, or signposting the network of support available in Frome to improve health and wellbeing, GCC's aim to inform transitions to low-carbon, healthier futures among individuals and the community.

¹¹ <https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/articles-reports/2021/06/04/environment-once-again-top-three-priority-british->

¹² <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/public-perceptions-of-climate-change-and-health-september-2021>

7.1. Evaluating Green Community Connectors

Participants were invited to complete online surveys immediately before and after completing the Green Community Connector training, and a further 'follow-up' survey was sent after six months. The surveys focussed on: how the training has affected trainees' confidence in their knowledge relating to climate, health and community support available; and how they have used this knowledge in conversation with their community. In

Box 1 – Green Community Connector session content (one-hour version)

1. Definitions: What is our carbon footprint and what is a community connector?

- Defined a community connector as someone who:
 - Builds local knowledge then passes it on
 - Shares individual key messages
 - Shares key messages however they choose (such as via conversations, social media, making personal changes)
 - Is part of a much larger community of 1,800 community connectors
- Explored what a carbon footprint is and how it can be measured

2. Topic: A Green and Healthy Future

- Had an open floor to give the opportunity to discuss the win-win links of community health and planetary health
- Made connections between the importance and co-benefits of caring for our climate and caring for our health

3. Signposting: How to put this into action and conversation

- Shared the key signposting information, where people could direct family, friends and others to find out more and the most up-to-date information
- Discussed different types of signposting (for example whether talking to someone at the bus stop compared to a good friend)
- Explored what makes a good conversation
- Encouraged attendees to role play different examples

4. Conclusion and questions - What are your takeaway key messages?

- Gave people a chance to summarise their own key take-away points
- Gave participants the opportunity to set 'signposting' targets or individual targets.
- Answered questions

We ensured that the training had a diverse mix of receiving information, interacting with the trainer and other participants and reflecting, to suit a range of learning styles.

July 2022, a focus group discussion was held at Frome Town Hall, and interested *Green Community Connectors* were invited to reflect on how the training has impacted on their attitudes, daily lives and relationship with the community.

Since March 2021, 209 individuals, including 17 different organisations, have participated in *Green Community Connector* training sessions, held in various locations in the local area and virtually by video call. In becoming *Green Community Connectors* with *A Green and Healthy Future for Frome*, these participants also became part of a much larger community of 1,800 within the original 'Community Connectors' scheme. A total of 94 people also receive regular updates and news relating to the scheme's aims through newsletters.

7.1.1. Participant Surveys

Those taking part in the scheme cited many reasons for wanting to become a Green Community Connector. Some were already Community Connectors and wanted to expand the support they were able to provide (11%), or were healthcare professionals and wanted to improve their ability to talk to patients about the links between health and low-carbon living (15%). The most common reason for joining the scheme was to improve the ability to talk to others about living in an environmentally friendly way (54%) and knowledge about how to live in an environmentally-friendly way (47%).

Knowledge confidence

Surveys of participants before and after training showed that *Green Community Connectors* felt more confident in their knowledge and their ability to talk to people about reducing carbon footprints, and the link between climate and health.

The proportion of respondents to the pre-training survey who indicated that they were 'quite' or 'extremely' confident in their *knowledge of how to reduce their carbon footprint* was 65%. Immediately following the training, the latter group had increased to 88%, and after 6 months the proportion of respondents who felt confident in their carbon footprint knowledge had grown to 94%. Similarly, the proportion of those who felt confident (either 'quite' or 'extremely') in their knowledge of *the links between low carbon living and health* increased from 45% to 85% in the post-training survey. In the 6-month follow-up survey, the latter figure was slightly less at 81%, which nevertheless translates to an 80% increase in the proportion of surveyed participants who felt confident in their knowledge of the climate-health link after completing the training.

In terms of confidence in *ability to talk to others about making healthy lifestyle choices*, there was a similar increase in confidence, from 42% to 80% after training. However, in the 6-month follow-up survey, confidence levels in the latter respect appeared to have reduced slightly to 69%. This is a trend that is mirrored in each of the four questions on knowledge confidence, in particular with the proportion reporting that they are 'extremely confident' appearing to tail off and more responses in the 'neutral' category. Thus, those 'quite' or 'extremely' confident in their *ability to talk to others about living in*

an environmentally friendly way more than doubled from 36% to 76% in the post-training survey. However, the latter proportion was slightly reduced to 75% in the 6-month follow-up survey, and the number of those ‘extremely confident’ was reduced to zero (see Figure 18-19).

The significance of the above data comparisons between the pre-training, post-training and follow-up surveys should be interpreted in respect to the relatively low response to the latter (16 surveys), which could mean that confidence levels among participants might be higher or lower than indicated. Nevertheless, notwithstanding a significant general increase in knowledge confidence, the above results indicate the importance of continued engagement and further peer support for trained *Green Community Connectors*. This function continues to be carried out via the mailing list, and the work package will include a regular ‘Green Café’ for maintaining support among the cohort as part of the ongoing Green and Healthy Frome programme.

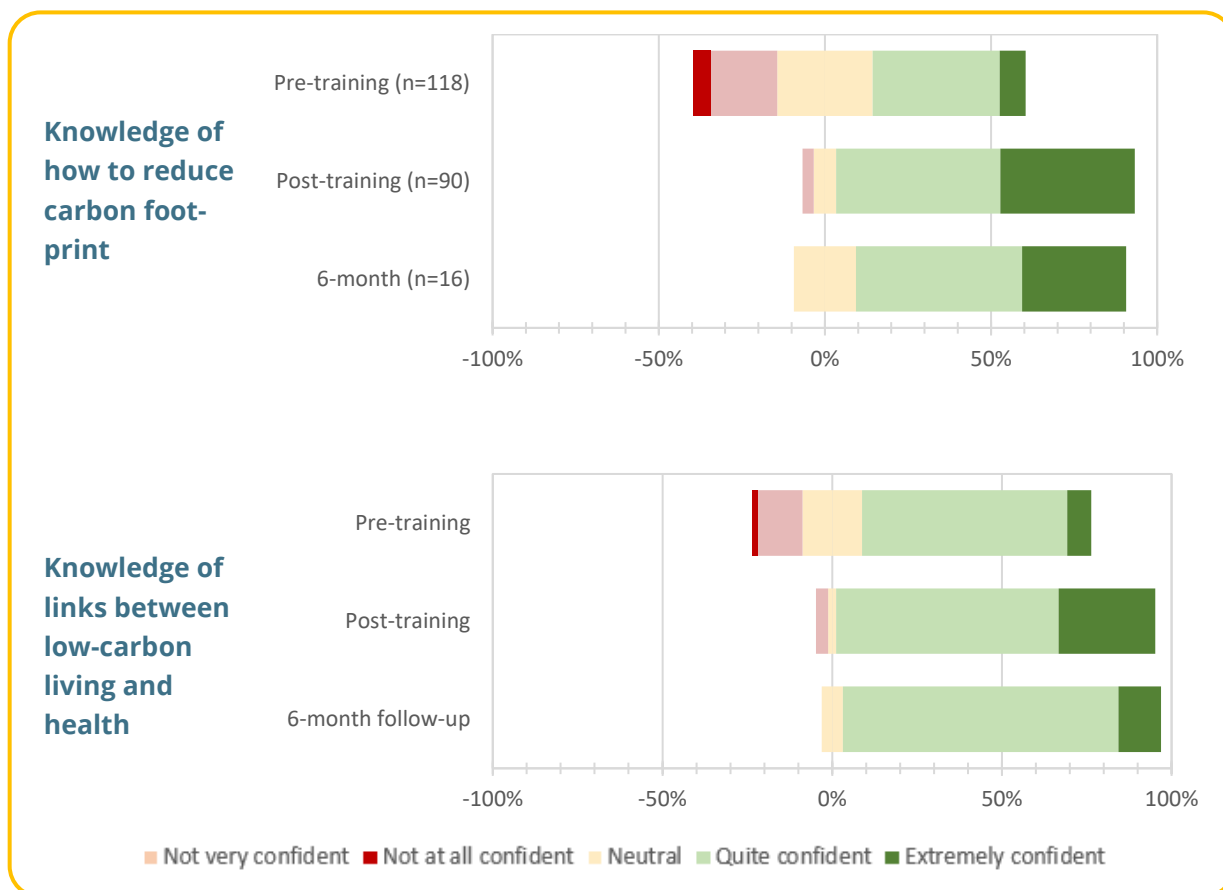


Figure 17 – Green Community Connectors’ confidence in their knowledge – pre-training, post-training and 6-month follow-up surveys.

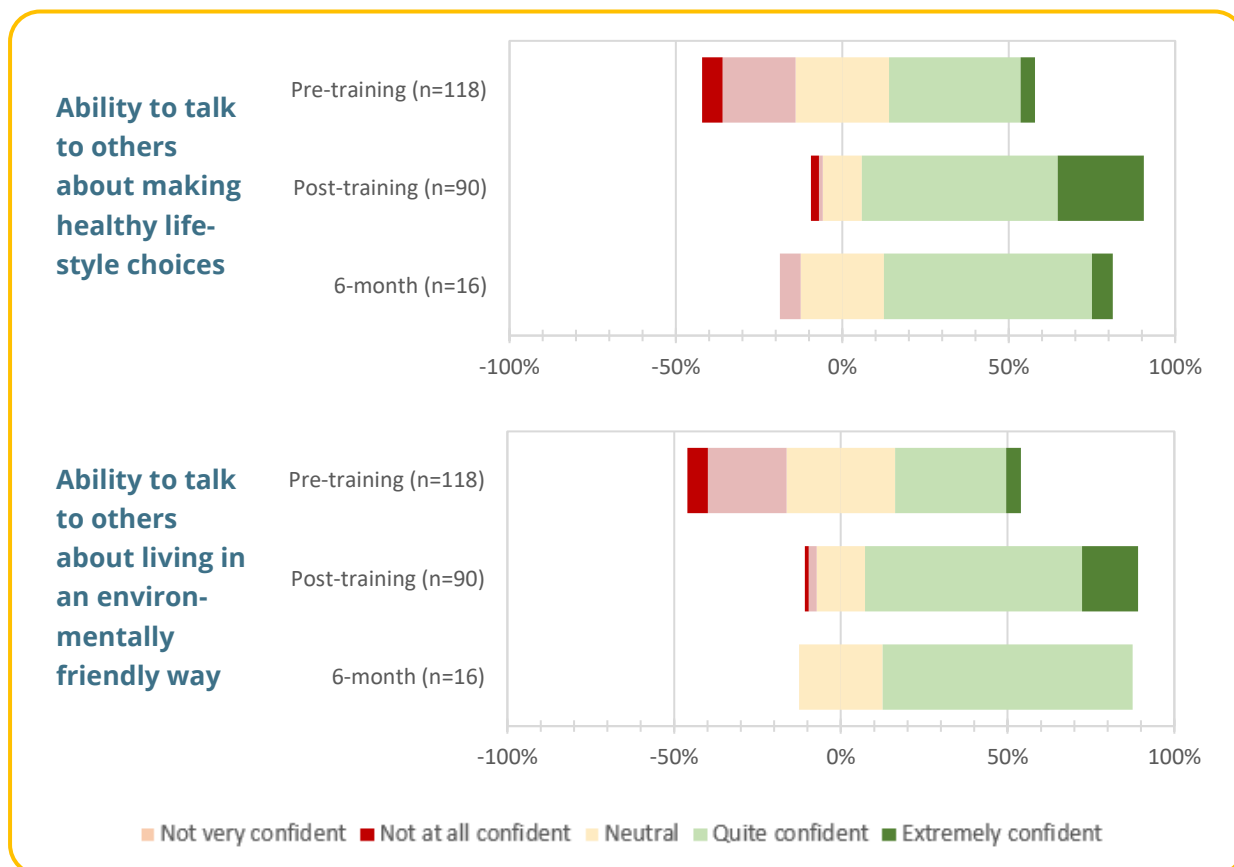


Figure 18 - Green Community Connectors' confidence in conversational ability - pre-training, post-training and 6-month follow-up surveys.

Conversations

The pre-training and 6-month follow-up surveys asked respondents to indicate how often they initiated conversations about making 'healthy' and 'environmentally friendly' choices in a typical week, with a view to gaining an understanding of the impact of the *Green Community Connector* scheme on knowledge sharing within the community. The results indicated a positive correlation between the training and the number of conversations being held. In particular, the proportion of people having any conversations at all about 'making healthy choices' increased from 70% to 82%, and those having such conversations on most days of the week (4-6 times per week and above) more than doubled from 15% to 32%. Meanwhile, the fraction of those having no conversations about this subject was reduced from 27% to 19% (See Figure 20).

Meanwhile, change in the number of conversations initiated about making environmentally friendly choices was less pronounced, with the proportion of respondents indicating that they had such interactions on most days per week on average (4-6 times per week and above) increasing by 16%. Nevertheless, there was a significant reduction, from 32% to 13%, in those having no such conversations, mirrored by a similarly large increase (from 48% to 69%) in respondents having 1-3 talks with people about green decision-making in a typical week (Figure 21).

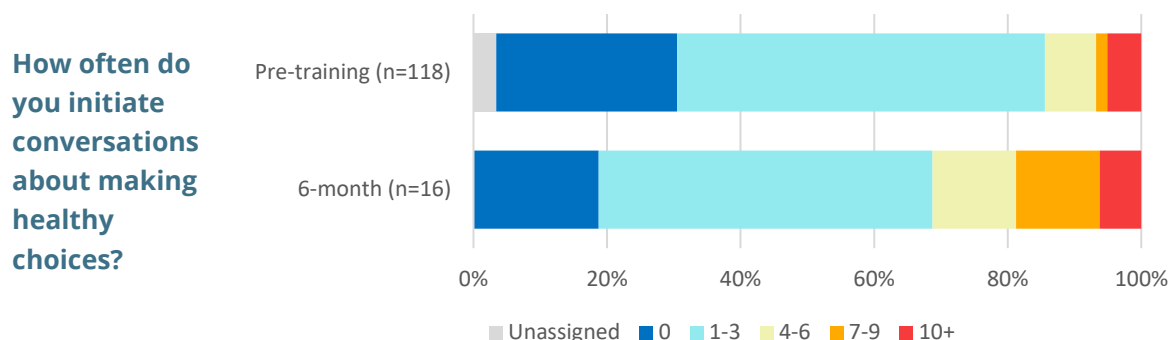


Figure 19 - Green Community Connectors' conversations about making healthy choices – pre-training and 6-month follow-up surveys.

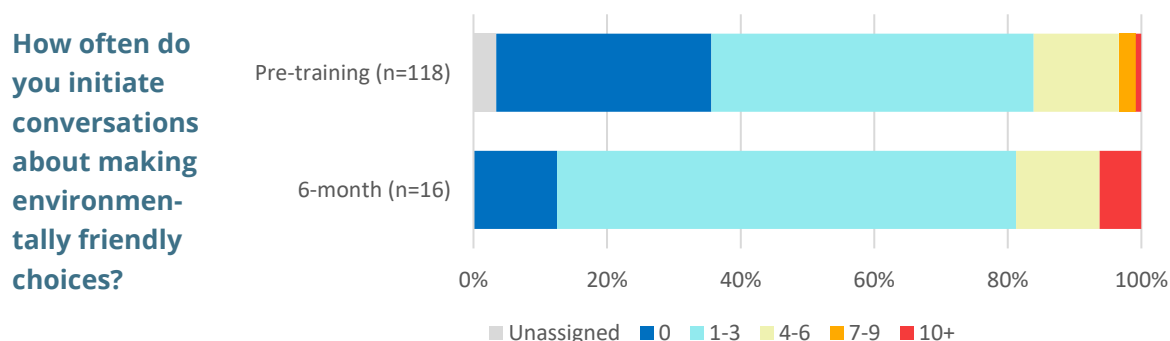


Figure 20 - Green Community Connectors' conversations about making environmentally friendly choices – pre-training and 6-month follow-up surveys.

By extrapolating the above data on conversations in a typical week, the total number of conversations initiated by survey participants over a single year can be estimated at the lower (i.e. 1, 4, 7 and 10 times per week) and upper numerical ranges indicated (i.e. 3, 6, 9 and 12, with the latter estimated as a similar increment above 10). From this calculation, we can further infer the increase in the number of conversations engaged in by the wider cohort of 209 *Green Community Connectors*.

If we take the lower extent of answers in respect to *making healthy choices*, therefore, the total number of conversations can be estimated to have increased from 16,118 to 27,170 per year – an increase of 11,052 or 69%. Assuming that respondents engaged in conversations at the upper end of the range in the answers given, the number increased from 31,222 to 44,831 conversations per year – an increase of 13,609 or 44% (Figure 22). Similarly, the lower estimate of conversations on *making environmentally friendly choices* comes out at an increase of 6,067 per year, or 45%; while the upper estimate would imply an increase of 11,086 per year, or 40% (Figure 23).

Community conversations about making healthy choices

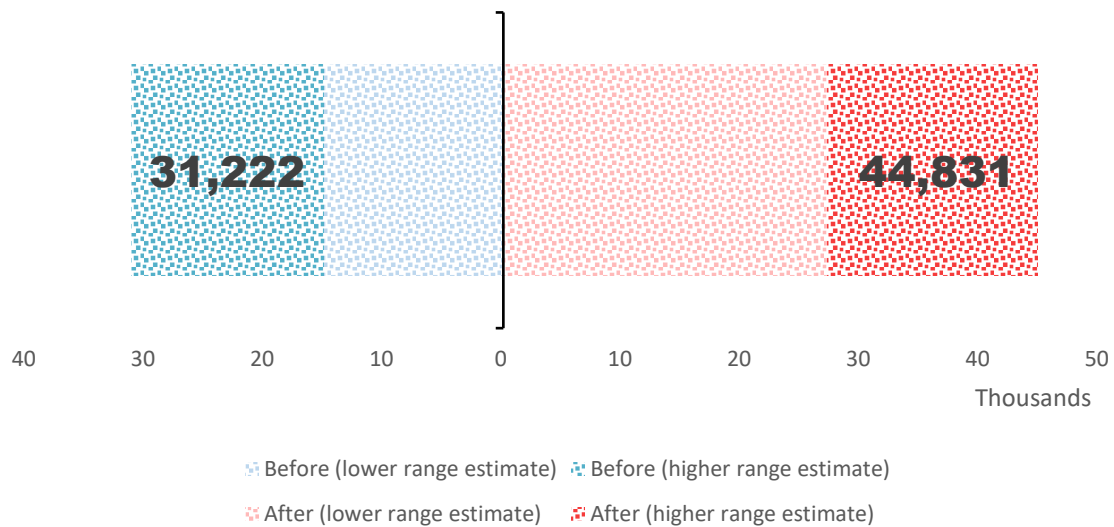


Figure 21 - Estimated yearly community conversations about making healthy choices extrapolated from pre-training survey and 6-month follow up survey.

Conversations about making environmentally friendly choices

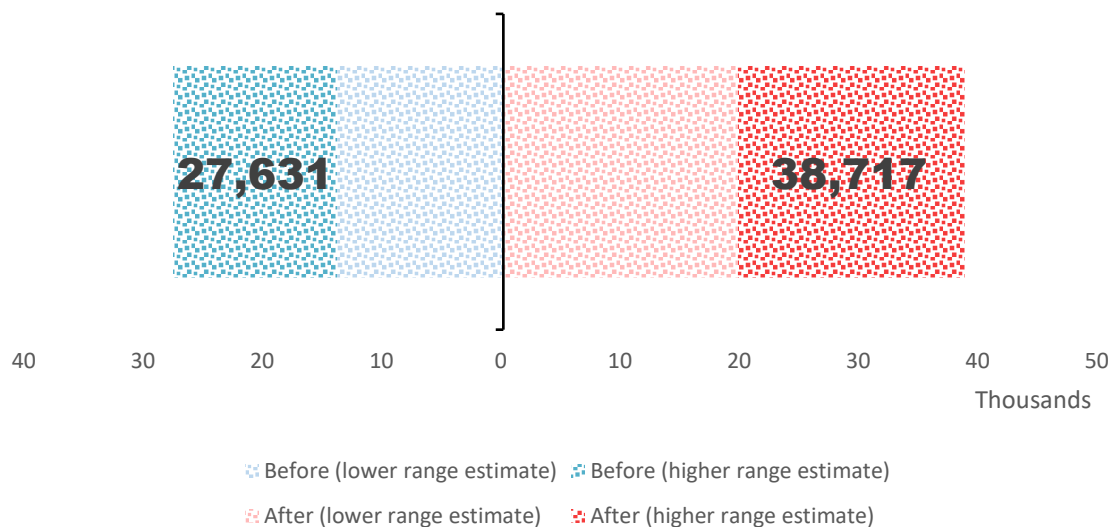


Figure 22 - Estimated yearly community conversations about making environmentally friendly choices extrapolated from pre-training survey and 6-month follow up survey.

In open responses to the follow-up survey, respondents gave insights into how the Green Community Connector training has affected their daily lives and been used in conversations with other people, as detailed in Table 7.

Table 7 – Green Community Connectors follow-up survey responses



7.2. Summary and lessons for future practice

Green Community Connectors has shown the power of the relationship between knowledge and action on climate and health. Supporting this relationship through the training sessions, the results demonstrate the potential for meaningful change in the way health and climate issues are perceived and responded to throughout the community.

As detailed in this chapter, an increase of 80% in the proportion of participants who feel confident in their knowledge of the links between low-carbon living and health has been accompanied by a 79% increase in those confident in sharing and signposting this knowledge to others. This increase in confidence is demonstrated in a 32% increase in the proportion of respondents reporting to have at least 4 conversations per week relating to making healthy choices.

Green Community Connectors: lessons for future practice

- Training content

Following partner feedback, two moments of involvement and discussion were introduced (rather than just questions at the end of the training) with the feedback from surveys reflecting an improvement.

Following early pilot feedback, the structure of the training evolved from an emphasis on climate facts and data-heavy slides to a broader, open discussion around the interconnectedness of our health and the health of our planet plus discussions on having difficult conversations.

87% of respondents in the post-training survey said that they were satisfied with the training (with the remaining 13% being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, n=90), participants had suggestions for how to improve the scheme. These included more group discussion, annual update conversations and including a second session to go into more detail for some of the topics covered in the training.

- Participation

Initially attendance was low at online sessions. To address this there was a move to in-person outreach, joining groups in the community and meeting them where they were. Bespoke sessions meant that participants were in a trusted setting.

In-person training was developed that could be delivered without internet connection (following requests for outdoor training during Covid lockdowns). The Green Health Connector had a presentation folder with the presentation slides printed on paper to allow for outdoor sessions.

The length of the training was shortened to maintain participant engagement and encourage take up of the training session in time-short settings.

- Surveys

Initially online surveys were sent out for participants to complete in advance of attending the training. In light of a low response rate, the approach was adapted to in-person completion before the training, which resulted in higher completion rates.

Low uptake of 6-month follow-up surveys across the programme suggests participation fatigue after an individual completes two online surveys. Given the importance of establishing longer term impacts on attitudes and behaviours, consideration should be given either omitting the post-participation survey or making this survey a feedback form to be completed voluntarily upon completing the training. Measures should also be put in place to send a reminder email to potential respondents to the follow-up survey.



8. Future Shed

Future Shed, managed by Edventure Frome, offers practical support for initiatives and enterprises consistent with GHFF's climate-health focus through building networks, connecting people and ideas, signposting and start-up coaching.

Future Shed facilitates workshops and training, outreach and ideas events and a weekly '*Future Shed Friday*' session.

Future Shed Fridays offer free coworking space at Edventure's base in Frome, one to one coaching and enterprise start up and development. Themed meet ups have created a space to connect and build relationships

8.1. Evaluating Future Shed

Future Shed participants were periodically asked to complete an online survey relating to their experience of taking part in meetups, activities, coaching, training and other events organised by the initiative. Surveys were completed by 42 *Future Shed* participants and attendees (see Table 7). In addition, testimonials from participants were frequently collected, which informed much of the qualitative insight detailed here, alongside insights from the cross-strand focus group held in October (see Section 10).



Three networks of action focusing on Food & Growing, Clothing & Textiles Reuse, and Health & Wellbeing—detailed in the below sections—now meet monthly at Future Shed. These themes emerged from the GHFF launch event in April 2021—where 250 ideas of how to take green-health action were put forward—and developed from Ideas Events in our community throughout 2021.

Future Shed has collaborated with others to support initiatives. In particular, the Frome Seed Library, which is one of few in the UK to be part of a public library. The initiative has also supported Frome Families 4 the Future, a community network creating and campaigning for action on green issues, and initiated outreach conversations to local organisations including sports clubs, care homes, garages the agricultural society, arts organisations and other businesses.

Table 8 - Future Shed: key engagement outputs

1,543	373	275	1,600^{hrs}
<i>Future Shed</i> attendances (including Health and Climate Conference)	Attendances at 20 workshop and training events	Members of active <i>Future Shed</i> network – incl. Food, Health & Wellbeing, Textiles	Volunteers for <i>Future Shed</i> activities
360	200+	416	100
Volunteer hours for Frome Seed Library	Attendances at 'Sprouts' children's gardening club with Frome Seed Library	Attendances at 12 outreach events	Participants in 3 'Ideas Events'
53^{hrs}	128	46	95
informal support sessions to individuals for ideas and ventures	Connections between participants and volunteers to develop ventures	Green & Healthy ideas, ventures or projects coming forward	Sessions of 1:1 coaching and support for those ventures

Table 9 – Future Shed participant surveys: example responses

How has your participation with <i>Future Shed</i> affected your CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY?	How has your participation with <i>Future Shed</i> affected your development or PARTICIPATION IN GREEN/HEALTHY ENTERPRISE OR INITIATIVES?	If you are developing a green/healthy enterprise, what is the IMPACT you hope this will have (or is already having)?
<p>I feel more connected and able to initiate positive change in the community</p>	<p>I've joined <i>The Wild Bunch</i> in Frome for their environmental work in public spaces</p>	<p>A hub for supporting and connecting local farmers and producers and be a go-to place for the public to find local food to buy.</p>
<p>Having the opportunity to meet and network with like-minded people has helped me feel more integrated into my new community.</p>	<p>It has given me an outlet for promoting and encouraging a greater awareness of textile sustainability with like-minded people.</p>	<p>Educating local families on our local spaces and encouraging them to engage in science more widely. The support I've had from <i>Future Shed</i> is allowing me to carry out this work more effectively and make my business more sustainable.</p>
<p>It's a really valuable group for connections to people with similar hopes for food, the environment, farming and the climate [...] I've had a passion for food for many years and at last I've found a group that shares this and wants to make tangible changes. It's really exciting to be part of that community.</p>	<p>I've got to write for [an] online food newsletter. This has meant I have met other [people] involved in initiatives like <i>Wild Frome</i>. I did an article on the initiatives [...] helping wildlife and I know new people joined some of them [as a result].</p>	<p>Help me to figure out how/where my project can take seed within the existing local ecosystem of community projects and social enterprise</p>

8.1.1. Frome Food Network

The Frome Food Network (FFN) emerged in Autumn 2021 from a summit of stakeholders involved in the surrounding food landscape. The event, supported by GHFF, explored the collective barriers between what we currently have and a greener, more equitable, and more sustainable food town. Organised by *Future Shed*, the *Future Proofing Frome's Local Food Network* event brought over 40 key community stakeholders together. Participants formed the Frome Food Network.

FFN's aims are to invigorate the local (food) economy; help make local food a more 'shared' experience; and present narratives around regenerative and other nature-friendly farming methods, connecting climate change with food resilience and healthy eating.

Monthly meetings were held at *Future Shed* from November 2021 to January 2023 (10 sessions) to grow the network, create the aims and vision for the network and move forward.

Future Shed supported the network with:

- 3 x Marketing training sessions for food producers
- Designing and printing publicity
- Promoting through GHFF, *Future Shed*, Edventure and partner social media platforms
- Co-hosting and planning outreach meets
- Mentoring in growing the network and organisational structure
- Connecting to other networks and organisations in Frome and surrounds
- Coaching from Edventure staff in setting up and development

Frome Food Network has since:

- Presented at GFHF Health & Climate Conference to a room of 35+ delegates
- Started a What's App group with over 50 members
- Maintained a newsletter to the network of 130+ Wallfish Journal subscribers.
- Organised a pop-up *20-mile menu* dining event with Frome Food Hub, September 2022
- Organised a pop-up stall at The Frome Independent market, October 2022
- Helped local, sustainable food products get into shops
- Teamed with *Future Shed* to offer marketing training support to growers and food initiatives
- Helped inform a community harvesting initiative
- The formation of a neighbouring food group
- Helps to pair chefs with schools
- Connects producers to local routes to market

FFN has now developed into a collective of 130 local stakeholders, each seeking to benefit from the shared knowledge, access, and resources of the group.

"The inspiration and connections we are making here [at Future Shed] are empowering us with more options and knowledge. It's invigorating - giving us a sense of what's possible to do with our work [hosting an online farmer's market], and reminding us that we don't have to do it all ourselves. Running what we do and our ideas for doing new things past other Future Shed members has been a boost - we're encouraged to hear that other folks think our work is helping the community and is worthwhile - so we've got the energy to do more of it"

Rowan and Harriet

In Focus: Declutter Frome - mental wellbeing, reduce, recycle

One community member came to a Future Shed session seeking help with their idea for a de-cluttering social enterprise. They had never been to Edventure before - but saw a post on social media and wanted to find out more. This individual was already passionate about the mental health improvements that de-cluttering can bring people, but had not even considered the environmental impacts that come with shifting people to consume less, to share resources, and to be more energy efficient. The health and climate agenda completely shifted their focus. Following individual coaching through Future Shed, this participant pitched their revised and well researched project at our 'break-out' session at our Health & Climate Conference. They have since planned a pilot town-wide declutter project focusing on health and climate benefit, as well as gaining the courage to create a TEDx talk on the subject.

8.1.2. Clothing & Textile Reuse Network

The 'Everyone Needs Pockets' clothing and textile reuse network emerged from a focused *Future Shed* Friday session on textiles and fast fashion, an industry with one of the highest carbon footprints.

Over subsequent meet-ups and events, Everyone Needs Pockets has grown into a network of over 90 people, with an active core group of 20-30. It is an inclusive group of people and enterprises whose focus is addressing clothing and textile sustainability. The group makes, remakes, repairs, repurposes clothing and textiles, and researches local and global textile sustainability issues, focussing on:

- Carbon emission reduction
- Raising awareness of the harm of the clothing and textile industry and waste
- Mental health and wellbeing by making and repurposing textiles
- Gathering as a social and sharing network
- Creating connections and solutions
- Support individual and group ideas and projects

Everyone Needs Pockets Clothing & Textile Reuse Network has since:

- Created a display of reused and repurposed clothing, repaired clothes and sustainable textiles in Frome Library as part of the Health & Climate Conference
- Hosted a stall at the Village Green at The Frome Independent as part of Secondhand September, celebrating weaving, repurposed and repaired clothing.
- Taken part in a plastic-free event as part of the Great Big Green Week in September 2022
- Created a webpage as part of *Future Shed* and started an Instagram page.
- Planned a craft activity as part of the Frome Families for the Future plastic free eco Xmas event in November 2022.
- Started monthly Mend & Repair Your Clothes session in partnership with SHARE How To (Library of Things).
- Held film and social evenings researching the local impact of textile waste.
- Hosted talks and networking events.

'It's wonderful. Being starved during the pandemic, it's lovely to be around other creatives. It's delicious! I'm going to be buzzing after this. Talking with like-minded people, you know you're not alone [...] Connecting with others about fashion, textiles and sustainability, rather than 'going it alone'.

Sarah Holden, clothing reuse participant

In Focus: Health & Wellbeing Network

This network has grown steadily through 2022, with a network of more than 60 participants, and meetups happening monthly. Key to this network are the connections between community practitioners and public health systems in looking at health-climate actions in and with the community.

- In September, the network organised and hosted a 'Be Radical & Rest' day-long event as part of the town's Great Big Green Week activities.
- Out of an ongoing discussion about ecoanxiety, what needs there may be in Frome, and what support exists in the network to support mental wellbeing, a meeting was organised with Watch, the mental health charity in Somerset, who attended GHFF's Health & Climate Conference. A special session on ecoanxiety was held in November. The session was attended by 14 people from a cross section of complementary practitioners, activists, researchers, the Green Community Connectors and a new GP from Frome Medical Practice.
- Participants have also spent time using the *Imaginarium* tool to envision future need and opportunity.

8.1.3. Future Shed Coaching

Most one-to-one coaching sessions organized through *Future Shed* with mentors at Edventure were focused on developing an idea and fund raising for green-healthy initiatives or ventures. Most feedback survey respondents found the coaching helpful, in particular in relation to giving “direction to pursue [...] fundraising” and planning next steps following an idea. When asked how *Future Shed* coaching affected the development or participation in green/healthy enterprise or initiatives, respondents emphasised the benefits of focusing on structure, planning and prioritization of tasks. As a result, there was a high level of satisfaction with the coaching experience, with all respondents indicating that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with how helpful the process had been for their purposes. Nevertheless, about half of respondents indicated that follow-ups or subsequent coaching sessions would have been beneficial.

8.2. Summary and lessons for future practice

Future Shed has hosted more than 1,500 attendances though focused themed meetups, activities, coaching, training and outreach events. These engagements have shaped community-led health and climate action, creating new ‘networks of action’, projects and initiatives for positive change.

Future Shed Fridays have created a welcoming and inspiring weekly space for hosting the community for meetups, growing ideas and taking action, and crucially connecting people together creating a wider stronger community.

Three significant network groups have emerged from *Future Shed* activities, each with more than 70 participants: the Frome Food Network; a clothing and textile reuse network; and a health and wellbeing network; with more groups in the early stages of development.

Future Shed has supported individuals and small groups with coaching in development and fundraising to bring new ideas and ventures to fruition. Participants have also accessed training to support skills, in areas such as marketing and social media.

Future Shed: lessons for future practice

Participants have a good age range diversity, but there is more scope to work with young people. Similarly, a focus on new opportunities for partnership working—e.g. through existing Frome organisations and businesses—would contribute towards equality diversity and inclusion.

A review of evaluation approach should allow more time for qualitative evaluation of the outputs and outcomes of *Future Shed* and the initiatives and networks that emerge from it.

In particular, in-depth interviews with participants and network members will reveal how *Future Shed* has impacted on their daily lives in respect to climate, health and community.



9. Storytelling

Storytelling serves two main purposes: (1) to raise awareness about our project and the activities we offer within the local community; and (2) to share our learning beyond Frome and inspire other communities to take action.

We shared our story through different mediums including social media, newspaper, events and outreach including a national conference, mini-films and toolkits.

9.1. Digital and social media

As of August 2022, our Green & Healthy Future platforms had **850 followers** across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, 22% increase since August 2022. Since launching, over **52,164 people** (paid and organic) have been reached across Facebook and Instagram, a 226% increase since August 2022 (Figure 24).

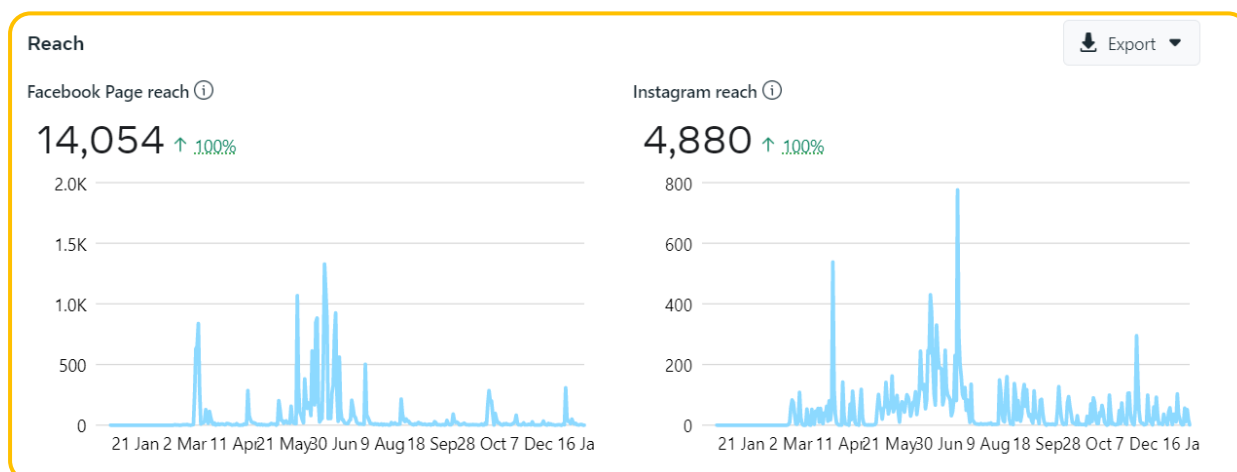


Figure 23 - Storytelling: Facebook and Instagram Reach

Most followers are women and the largest age group within our followers is 35-44 year olds. On Facebook, 35.8% of page likes came from people living in Frome. The Instagram page had a more localised audience, with 53.7% of followers living in Frome. Outside of Frome, most followers came from surrounding areas, such as towns in Somerset and Wiltshire, Bath and Bristol (Figure 25). As well as a regional and national audience, the programme had a global social media reach, with followers from countries including the USA, Italy, Australia and Germany.

In June 2022, a series of mini-films were made to capture the GHFF project strands. These have had 1,000 views across YouTube & Instagram. In 2022, the GHFF website was accessed by 2,231 people who were visiting for the first time. Most (1,337) website visitors accessed the site directly, followed by those who did so by searching on a search engine (478) (e.g. Googling 'Green & Healthy Future'). On average, the site had 186 visits from new users per month, with peak traffic coinciding with the time of the

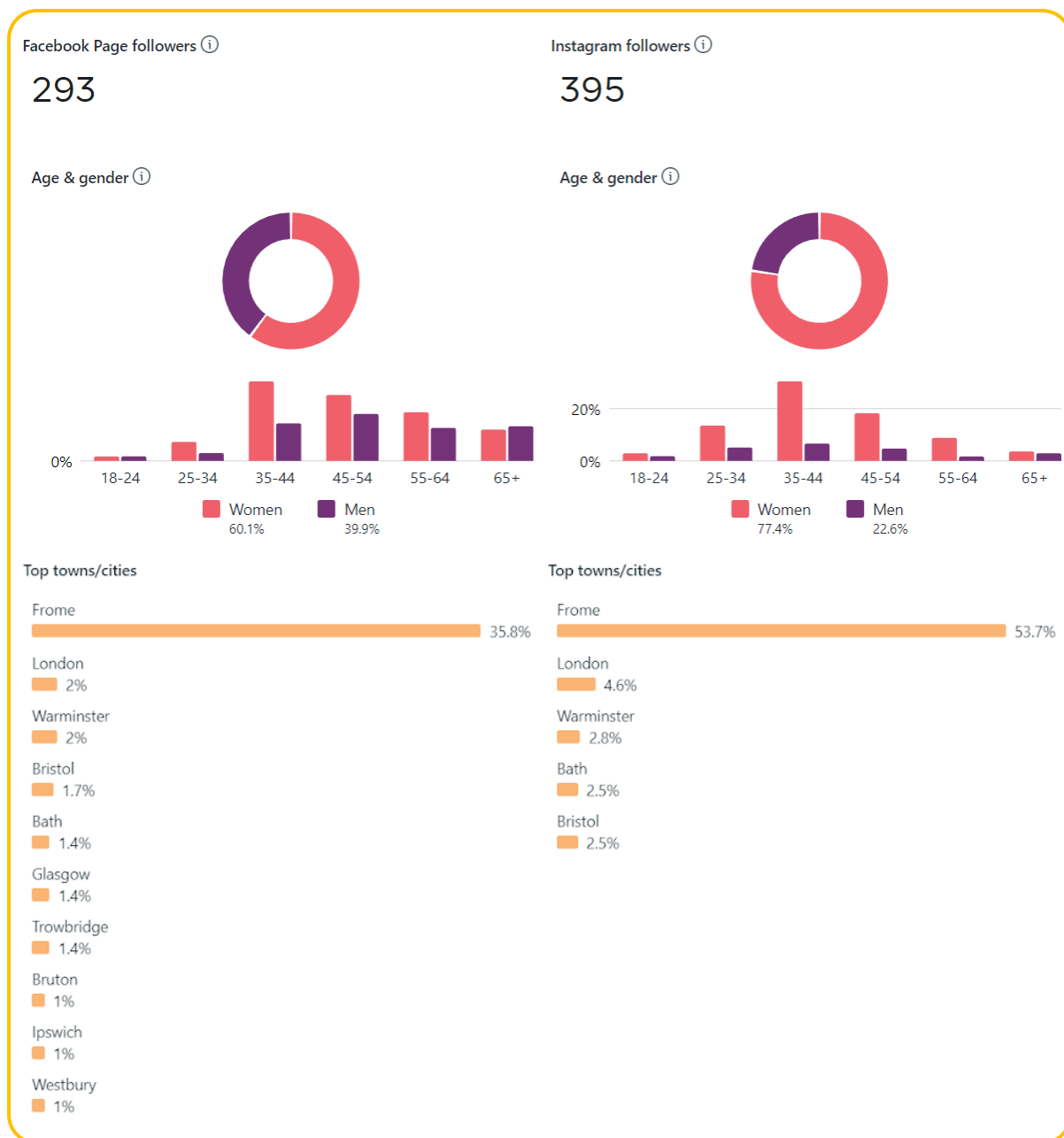


Figure 24 - Storytelling: Facebook and Instagram audience

Health & Climate Conference. Pages for each of the project strands were viewed frequently whilst blog posts generally received the least page views. The website would benefit from creating some SEO-led blog content to gain new visitors to the site. The 'Access our Toolkits' page was the 12th most viewed page (216 times) on our website from 57 pages, suggesting that many website visitors are looking for inspiration from our programme.

9.2. Print media

9.2.1. A take-over of the town newspaper

During the COP26 fortnight, *Storytelling* partnered with local paper the Frome Times, for a wraparound in which members of the community contributed articles, artwork, letters and poems to envision how the town might look in 2030. This reached **13,000 homes** in Frome and proved to be an engaging method of storytelling. It is still used as an entry-point to discussions about the programme. Press releases have also been made to Frome Times on a semi-regular basis for events and updates about the project.



9.2.2. Toolkits

In the Spring of Year 2, *Storytelling* created a series of toolkits with the aim of recording and sharing learning from the GHFF programme with other communities looking to take similar action. These written booklets were officially launched and distributed to attendees at the Health & Climate Conference and made available as downloads on the GHFF website. Downloads have been requested by healthcare professionals, town councils and environmental organisations from Sheffield to Cornwall.

In January 2023, to coincide with the end of the Development Phase of the project, the toolkits were updated with statistics and learnings from recent events and activities (see Box 2).

Box 2 - GHFF Strand Toolkits infographics

The infographic grid contains 18 individual panels, each representing a different toolkit or initiative. Each panel is structured as follows:

- In brief:** A short summary of the initiative.
- Why?:** The reasons for the initiative, often including statistics or specific goals.
- How?:** The methods and processes used to implement the initiative.
- Outcomes & Insights:** Key results, statistics, and learnings from the initiative.
- Checklist:** A list of practical steps or considerations for others looking to replicate the initiative.

Key statistics and data points from the infographics include:

- Choosing Wisely:** 5,016 miles of carbon saved; 219 hospital admissions reduced.
- Cycle Together:** 4,000 miles cycled; 33 people taking part.
- Future Shed:** 250+ people engaged; 1,400+ people engaged in activities.
- Green Community Connectors:** 80% of people say they have more friends and family to support climate change.
- Storytelling:** 100% of people engaged with the programme.
- Healthy Homes:** 127 homes visited; 863 people engaged.
- Frome Medical Practice:** 150+ people engaged; 127 homes visited.

9.3. Conversations

Engaging with the community through various outreach events, *Storytelling* was used for participation, sharing knowledge and future thinking through creative and imaginative activities. Community events have included:

- Children draw the future
- Rodden Meadow Picnic
- Children's Festival
- Glow in the Park
- Frome Seed Swap
- Family Fun Day at Victoria Park
- How To 2022
- Frome International Climate Film Festival

9.3.1. Health and Climate Conference

On Friday 15th July 2022, a sold-out national Health & Climate Conference was held in Frome, organised by *Storytelling*. A total of 162 bookings were made despite high rates of Covid-19 infections at the time, across a diverse range of backgrounds and sectors. A total of 43 organisations were represented including community groups, healthcare (NHS and holistic), environmental, local government and business.

We were keen to involve the local community and 60% of attendees were from Frome. Elsewhere, attendees hailed from nearby towns in Somerset and Wiltshire, and further afield including London, Newcastle and Cornwall.

Ripple Effect

The conversations, knowledge sharing and networking that took place at the Health and Climate Conference organised by *Storytelling* resulted in ripple effects with significant institutional and systemic implications.

Such effects are demonstrated by the engagement of medical practitioners from beyond the town in the activities of the *Green and Healthy Future for Frome* programme.

In particular, having presented at the Conference, the Chief Executive of the NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board organised a board visit, including the Regional Director for NHS South West, to Frome Medical Practice for a Sustainability Workshop to learn more about the initiatives being put in place as part of the programme.

The example of GHFF was subsequently used in a series of videos produced by NHS Somerset on their 'Green Plan Commitment' to address issues relating to climate and health.

9.4. Micro-influencer

In October 2022, *Storytelling* agreed to participate in a micro-influencer experiment with Glimpse; a social media agency contracted by the National Lottery to support CAF projects. The aim of the experiment was to connect with a local micro-influencer - generally defined as someone who has a social media following between 3,000-100,000 - and co-create content that promotes the project. The project connected with a local health and wellness coach who, in January 2023, attended our *Future Shed* session on community supermarkets with Frome Food Network. The micro-influencer recorded a video which was shared on Instagram accompanied by copy about what they had learned and experienced. However, due to an issue with music access rights, it proved impossible to create a collaborative post. Nevertheless, valuable insight was gained into new ways to engage with the community and reach new audiences.

9.5. Summary and lessons for future practice

Storytelling reached around 13,000 households in Frome with a newsprint wraparound for the Frome Times imagining a Green & Healthy Frome in 2030.

The sold-out Health & Climate Conference brought 150 people together from across the country and 40+ organisations to connect, share & inspire action on climate and health in Frome and beyond.

Meanwhile, the *Green and Healthy Future for Frome* programme was cited in two of the Climate Action Fund (CAF) cohort learning resources on training and partnership, and referenced on the CAF blog as an example project relating to energy efficiency.

In January 2023, towards the end of the Development Phase, communications staff from the three partner organisations met to discuss and reflect on the effectiveness of the cross-partner communications for the GHFF project. Key lessons were from this process were as follows:

- The GHFF brand helped to identify strands as part of a wider project which had dedicated funding - this was especially useful to FMP, as it helped explain that NHS resources or money were not being spent on activities that were outside of providing core healthcare services.
- Social media is constantly changing with algorithms currently favouring video content and staff had limited capacity to create this type of content.
- All three partners have different voices - FTC and FMP are trusted authorities with distinct tones which are factual but can be limiting - GHFF & Edventure are able to provide more opinion and emotion (e.g. excitement behind movement building) which can facilitate more engagement.
- The conference was a good example of the partners working together, it gained a lot of social media traction on the day, especially on Twitter where there is a strong presence of medical and climate professionals.

Storytelling: lessons for future practice

The amount of time needed to effectively manage social media platforms was underestimated.

Capacity has been a challenge throughout, especially when our Events & Marketing Lead reduced to 8 hours after having front-ended the role to focus on planning the conference.

Capacity of the communications teams for all partners was a challenge, especially at Frome Medical Practice where they only had one team member working on all comms for the whole organisation for one day per week. This meant opportunities for conversation were missed, especially at a national level for climate and health.

Communication teams often worked in silo and prioritised their own events. This was due to several reasons including, lack of capacity, and possible concerns around organisational identity and ownership.

Setting up dedicated social media channels has really helped us to unify the project comms and share updates and events from across the strands, however opportunities remain to further develop cross-partner communications.

The style of storytelling is likely to have limited who we were engaging with. There are opportunities to better incorporate EDI policy into *Storytelling* and reach more of our community.

More emphasis is needed on how GHFF is seen within town, as something people recognise. There is a balance of promoting the project as a whole and individual events/ strands but currently there is not a strong enough connection between these.

We need solid local research on storytelling e.g. interviewing local people to share their stories of Health & Climate in Frome. There could be opportunities to better involve local people in our *Storytelling* going forward.



10. Towards a Green and Healthy Frome

In August 2022, the Green and Healthy Future for Frome team met to reflect on the preceding two years, during which the development phase of the partnership was delivered. The theme of the focus group session was ‘a story of change’, drawing on a commonly used framework that explains how change happens through projects. A ‘story’ or ‘theory’ of change is a shared, logical plan (or review) of the difference a project wants to make and how.

A story of change can help to guide the development of evidence-based programme strategies, informing project monitoring and management and providing a framework for evaluation and impact assessment. Stories of change are commonly framed by a series of key questions: the who, how, what and why. Respectively, these questions refer to the people who matter, the principles on which the action is predicated, the activities that will be delivered, and the difference that will be made to a given objective. Thus, developed collaboratively, they can also help ensure clarity of purpose among a team or partnership, and a shared vocabulary that enables coherent and effective communications.

This chapter addresses each of the above key questions in turn, drawing on the discussion in the cross-strand focus group. It concludes by reflecting on the GHFF journey and how the ongoing *Green and Healthy Frome* programme can be more impactful through the lessons of this evaluation.

10.1. Who: the people who matter

Recognising the global nature of the rapid changes to the material environment being brought about by climate breakdown—as something that affects all of us—and the challenges this poses for human health, the question of who matters for the *Green and Healthy Future for Frome* programme could perhaps be answered simply as *the community* of Frome and surrounding parishes. However, the inequitable nature of exposure to the health risks associated with climate breakdown between different socioeconomic, cultural, racial and gendered (among others) groups in Frome paints a more complex picture of community. This heterogeneity has had moral and ethical implications, both for how benefits of the GHFF programme should be distributed and the capacity of different groups to contribute.

Consequently, difficult questions of accessibility, inclusion and diversity have been forefront in the development of the GHFF programme. Part of this discussion has been

about acknowledging that, as one team member stated, “we are all part of this community [and asking] ‘where do we fit’”, while recognising the privileged role occupied as employees within the partnership. Yet while some frustration was voiced at lack of staff time for outreach and the inability to connect with parts of the community, team members emphasised the importance of having the institutional capacity to engage people. Frome Medical Practice and Frome Town Council, for example, serve the majority of Frome’s population. “We’ve all got a big reach as organisations” argued one team member, “I know it’s not perfect and there’s always questions of inclusivity, but I think we’ve probably got a wider reach than most [...] in terms of who we can bring into the room.”

Another way of broadening engagement was to target organisations in order to reach a wider cross-section of society:

With *Healthy Homes* for example [...] when we started doing the energy essentials training we were training up people who are already in public facing roles. For example, [CSE] trained up someone in the Job Centre and there have been quite a few referrals through there of people who might not come to the Town Hall or might not come to one of our events. So, there is a way of dispersing the message that way.

The GHFF initiatives were similarly able to draw on Frome Town Council’s role in supporting pre-existing community groups. For example, *Healthy Homes* linked with Fair Frome to offer energy advice sessions to people accessing the town’s food bank.

Nevertheless, significant energy has been invested in reflecting on the programme in terms of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and identifying where improvements can be made for the ongoing programme from March 2023. From an EDI focus group in October 2022, a number of key groups, organisations (see Table 7) and new ways of widening engagement were identified:

- Considering the youthful nature of climate activism, the older demographic represented by participants in GHFF initiatives (with very few below age 30) was identified as a particular area for development, with potential for engaging students at Frome College highlighted.
- Moreover, it was estimated that 80% of participants in the programme’s activities have been female. This poses important questions for how stereotypes around gender roles can be challenged through participation in the initiatives. We might ask how disrupting norms around what it is possible for men and women to enjoy/learn/do can benefit community health in the context of the climate crisis. In *Cycle Together*, for example, gendered norms around physical and road competence have been identified as potential factors affecting the disparity in engagement.
- Recognising that people with sufficient time to engage with initiatives like GHFF are those with a sufficiently elevated socioeconomic status, there was a discussion in the cross-strand focus group regarding the makeup of the board and the

potential for paid community spaces. This concept was incorporated into the bid for full award funding from the CAF and will represent a significant step towards the goals of EDI.

Table 10 - Groups for consideration in ongoing programme

Those with disabilities	Self-employed
Football Club	Under-30's
Anglers Association	Men
Socioeconomically deprived	Surrounding Rural Parishes
Businesses	Students
Tenants (private and social housing)	Non-'White-British' ethnic groups

As the GHFF programme has progressed, there has also been a growing awareness of varying engagement along cultural lines, particularly between urban and rural, as well as between traditional working class communities and those associated with the recent decline of industry and the growth of Frome as a commuter town and a tourist destination. While the latter group might be seen as adequately represented, both rural agricultural and urban working class communities have been more difficult to reach. Through Frome Town Council, linking in with Frome's Neighbourhood Networks to deliver a 'street level' project was identified as an opportunity to increase engagement across the community as part of the ongoing programme. Similarly, connecting with the Local Community Networks to be established in the surrounding parishes as part of the change to a unitary authority in 2023 was highlighted as a significant prospect.

On a more practical level, the focus group also identified a need to make materials available in different forms as a part of the *Storytelling* role. Such stories, it was argued "can incrementally broaden reach, gain traction across the community" including those who might be said to be more conservative, or less environmentally conscious. While the use of social media, toolkits and mini-films were seen as key elements of the programme's success, a lack of regular presence in traditional communications, such as the Frome Times newspaper or on local radio, was also highlighted.

10.2. How: principles and investments

Aside from EDI (discussed in the above section), and the formative function of evaluation as a central strand of the programme (discussed in Section 1), GHFF was founded on four key principles:

- Harnessing the power of the inter-relationships between climate and health
- A commitment to challenging norms and normalising alternatives
- Being community led
- Working in partnership

Each of these principles were prominent in the focus group discussion, as outlined below.

10.2.1. Climate-Health Win-Win

For many participants, particularly in *Future Shed* and *Green Community Connectors*, recognising the relationships between climate, our material environment, and health and wellbeing has been significant to engagement. One strand leader described it as a “light-bulb moment” for many, and a “key term that joins everything together.” Contrasting with prominent discourses around climate change that emphasise, for example, the threat of sea-level rise or food and water crises, the shift in emphasis towards a more positive message about health and wellbeing was seen as a key motivation. As one team member reflected:

A lot of what people hear on the news is what you’ve got to give up around climate change. But actually giving that positive message about what you will gain by doing these things: health, wellbeing etc, steps away from that negative narrative. For example, plant-based whole food diets make you feel better.

Another related an anecdote about a *Cycle Together* participant whose partner complained that being green is difficult, to which they replied “no, you can just go out on the bike and you’ll feel better!” This insight “had come directly out of the project making that link visible.” Meanwhile, in delivering *Healthy Homes*, the climate-health emphasis helped understanding of the chain of effects between challenges facing the NHS, long term health conditions and having a healthy, warm, energy efficient home.

In general, there was a sense that leading with the health aspect has enabled more conversations than would have taken place had the emphasis been more on climate change. Such an approach creates opportunities, because “climate change is too big for people to wrap their heads around.” The GHFF programme, and particularly *Green Community Connectors*, created a time and space to think and explore the climate health link in more detail.

10.2.2. Normalising alternatives

Maximising engagement and the impact of the GHFF programme has involved a process of trying to come to terms with the diversity among the community, in terms of socioeconomic status, culture, gender and other characteristics, so that entrenched norms might be challenged and alternatives made possible. The emphasis on the climate-health link and the commitment to telling stories and sharing knowledge in ways that recognise the diversity of world views and interests, was highlighted as key to making incremental but significant inroads in this respect. As one team member reflected:

Until the person who said that they never would, suddenly realises that they’re the only person not doing it. And you never have to get them to

back down as such, but they just start doing it. So, it's how you shift that culture, so that it's what you see – it's what children see you doing that they do, not what you say is a good idea but don't do yourself [...] If there's oat milk on the table and that becomes what you normally do, then people drink oat milk. But if it's only cow's milk on the table and you have to make a special fuss and people go 'I don't know what you're talking about', then you might socially not bother to try and change things. But once that norm is broken, then actually the norm is broken.

Another stated that for the GHFF team, "breaking norms is an idea that the project has been built on. The more small steps you can take to break the norm, the easier it is to pull people with you." In this regard, the role of partner organisations as being 'trusted messengers' was a significant factor.

10.2.3. Community-led

The notion of being *community-led* is common in grant funding discourse and projects such as GHFF. In practice, the extent to which an initiative can be considered 'top-down' or 'bottom-up' can be thought of in terms of a continuum. Thus, community engagement has gradations: between compliance-based, public knowledge deficit models at one end; and co-productive initiatives in which the rational basis for action is established at the grass roots of a community, at the other; with many different approaches in between.

For the GHFF team, there was a sense that the various initiatives enacted over the course of the preceding two years can be placed at various points on such a spectrum, depending on the nature of the activity and the way in which it was framed at the beginning of the partnership, among other factors.

Future Shed, for example, was the least defined at the outset and thus the initiative that the community had the most power to shape. Established as a supportive space to connect, exchange ideas and knowledge, *Future Shed's* ethos was to "open the door and say, 'what would you like to do?'" From this has emerged a series of networks around food, textiles and health and wellbeing, with the climate-health link a foundational principle for action, that have brought together hundreds of community members. The Frome Food Network, for example, emerged out of Frome Town Council's food strategy, but was taken up by community members with the support and mentorship provided through *Future Shed* and Edventure.

Other strands, however, like *Cycle Together* and *Healthy Homes*, were to a greater extent defined and set out by the strand leads at Frome Town Council. Both of these initiatives are based on experts sharing knowledge, skills and experience with the community, so that they might be able to reduce their carbon footprint, reduce costs and improve their health and wellbeing. As one team member related:

For *Cycle Together* [...] the hope was always that the previous participants would opt to become volunteers to lead rides. But capacity hasn't allowed me to start that off. But that could be where there's a community element of it. Or maybe that's where the Bike Project will fill that in next time [in the full award programme], enabling it to be more of a community-led scheme. But the five-weekly cycle that *Cycle Together* is [currently] on makes it really hard to change it.

Healthy Homes, meanwhile, was seen more as "more 'for the community' than community-led. But it has been adjusted according to how the community has reacted to the events" – such as relocating the Energy Café locations and engaging with key organisations like Fair Frome and businesses for training offers. *Green Community Connectors* has similarly taken community feedback and had two or three versions, including shorter and online offers, to increase accessibility for diverse needs. As another reflected:

We as a project team look at the context of what we see happening in our community and we try to read that. Then we basically open some doors where people can be very active in voicing what they want to happen, or how they can respond. And then we assess and collect feedback and shape our activities. In that way it is a kind of community-led process, where we are kind of filtering and adjusting and managing that within a wider context where we know we can be effective.

Beyond questions of top-down or bottom-up, therefore, there is a sense of being adaptive and looking for opportunities to engage wider publics. There was also an emphasis on the importance of building on pre-existing networks and initiatives, asking "how we can amplify and support and disrupt, in a way, things that would possibly be already happening in the community [...] How can we support that and make it more impactful, make change happen faster, rather than just doing our own separate thing or imposing something."

10.2.4. Partnership

The nature of the partnership between three organisations with such a significant reach, bringing together trusted authorities in Frome Medical Practice and Frome Town Council, and a well-respected community interest company, was seen as a major strength of the GHFF programme. FMP's involvement, in particular, has been noted as unique for a project of this type and strategically important to emphasise the health aspect.

Beyond the partner organisations, building relationships across the community has been vitally important. Nevertheless, the strength of governance between the partners and the pre-existing relationships established among patients, businesses, residents, and community groups has been key to engaging an audience for the idea of a Green

and Healthy Future. There has been a sense of “organisations coming together to make a difference, amplified by their different audiences/reach.”

10.3. Conclusions

The GHFF programme commenced in March 2021, as the UK Government began to ease coronavirus restrictions in England following a third national lockdown. However, while the vaccination programme was underway, a further wave of infections meant that it would be July 2021 before legal limits on social contact would be removed in England. By December 2021, a surge in the Omicron variant of the disease meant that some measures were reintroduced, ending in February 2022. These events had implications for the delivery of the work-packages, making it necessary to implement contingency plans for engaging community members in a safe manner, causing some delays and impacting on the types of data that could be collected as part of the evaluation.

Meanwhile, tensions in Eastern Europe, with the Russian military build-up on the Ukrainian border in early-2021, threatened an energy crisis that would have serious economic consequences for Europe and the United Kingdom. When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, gas deliveries to Germany through the strategic Nord Stream 1 pipeline were reduced, precipitating an international gas supply squeeze that was particularly felt in European gas prices. These geopolitical events would have severe socio-economic implications for communities in the UK, as energy bills have increased exponentially. As a result, inflation rates of almost 10%, compared to the Bank of England’s target rate of 2%, have come close to reaching a 40-year high. As wages have failed to keep up, those most vulnerable to rises in energy, food and fuel price rises face growing financial pressures, with serious consequences for public health and wellbeing.

At the same time, our national health and social care services face severe staff shortages following decades of under-investment. Still dealing with the ongoing demands of the Coronavirus pandemic, depleted medical practitioners now face increasing pressures from the impact of climate change on communities. The growing incidence and intensity of extreme weather events, particularly heatwaves and extreme cold, is resulting in more hospital admissions, often during periods of already-high demand. Moreover, the cumulative effect of threats to physical health and financial pressure is multiplied by the impact on mental health and wellbeing, increasing the overburden on the NHS and healthcare providers.

In this context—of intersecting climatological, ecological, economic and public health crises—the GHFF programme emerged at a critical moment, when its emphasis on initiatives that address the interrelations between climate, health and society holds significant potential for community mitigation and adaptation.

Over the course of the two-year development programme, the outputs and outcomes of each work package detailed in this report represent significant progress towards

achieving the aims of reducing carbon emissions, improving health and wellbeing, supporting community resilience and informing wider systemic change.

The level of engagement from Frome residents, during a challenging time for many, demonstrates the potential for expanding the programme further. The ripple effects, through which engagement with GHFF initiatives has led to systemic, institutional change and the growth of community-led networks of action are further examples of the possibilities for continued development. The emphasis on evaluation and formative learning, culminating in this report, has proved to be invaluable for understanding how the approach to climate and health has been successful and where improvements can be made.

Meanwhile, the hundreds of thousands of pounds in cost savings, thousands of tonnes of carbon emission reductions, and significant shifts in community knowledge, attitudes and behaviours summarised in the Story of Change below reveal the impact of the green and healthy approach.

In late 2022, the *Green and Healthy Future for Frome* partnership began the process of submitting its bid for a 'full award' from the National Lottery's Climate Action Fund, with a view to building on the development phase with a three-year programme of action linking health and climate in Frome. To reflect the contemporary and critical nature of the climate, ecological and social emergency, and the need for immediate action, the term 'future' was dropped from the programme name.

The *Green and Healthy Frome* programme secured full award funding from the National Lottery's Climate Action Fund in early 2023. The prominent role given to formative evaluation and understanding the impact of the programme was a crucial aspect of this successful application. Beyond retrospective assessment of the success of the initiatives, this process will help to ensure that the lessons of the development phase—and those learned as the *Green and Healthy Frome* programme progresses—will continue to inform ongoing practice.

Table 11 - A Green and Healthy Future for Frome - Story of Change

Why? The problems we are addressing	How? Principles & investments	What? Activities that create change	Outputs Measures and indicators	Outcomes The difference we make
<p>Climate Human-induced climate change caused by greenhouse gas emissions, including more frequent and intense extreme events, is causing widespread adverse impacts to nature and people (IPCC 2022).</p>	<p>Climate-Health 'Win-Win' Recognising interrelations between: ourselves, our health, the planet, its climate, and environment: socioeconomic and cultural plurality and inequality.</p>	<p>Healthy Homes Enabling people to improve their home energy efficiency for greener, healthier and cost efficient living.</p>	<p>Energy advice cafe Energy Efficiency Grants Energy bill Efficiency measures Warm/dry homes</p>	<p>Climate Supporting Frome citizens to reduce carbon emissions towards net-zero</p>
<p>Health Climate change is increasingly impacting many social and environmental determinants of health. Many activities detrimental to health also contribute to climate change, while those which benefit health can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p>	<p>Equality, diversity and inclusion Diversity of messaging channels/media Partnerships with existing community groups that support diverse interests.</p>	<p>Cycle Together Providing access to active, low carbon, affordable transport.</p>	<p>Home visits by Energy Advice Champions; community energy advice; retrofit assessments; text/letters to at-risk FMP patients; energy advice training</p>	<p>Health Improve health and wellbeing across the community</p>
<p>Community The climate emergency intersects with a range of current socioeconomic and political crises in the UK, including the energy crisis, food security and growing wealth inequality - all of which also have a bearing on human health. Growing social isolation reduces community resilience to these problems.</p>	<p>Normalising alternatives Building social acceptance for policies and behaviours that support a green and healthy Frome.</p>	<p>Choosing Wisely Enabling patients to connect with greener, healthier choices via the Medical Practice, and sharing learning.</p>	<p>Cycle confidence classes; ebike loan; bike maintenance classes; businesses/schools/events into stalls; affordable refurbished bike sales; sustainable transport event</p>	<p>Community Citizens are supported through the cost of living crisis and a strong community leads on actions that address the climate, health and social equity.</p>
<p>Systemic Social and economic policy and practice at national, sub-national and local levels fails to sufficiently acknowledge the interconnected nature of problems around climate, health and community. Efforts to address any one issue in isolation are likely to be ineffective and may be detrimental to other areas of concern.</p>	<p>Community-led Supporting/facilitating networks and spaces of engagement. Normalising organisation and collective agency.</p>	<p>Green Community Connectors Inspiring & connecting people with green & healthy opportunities</p>	<p>Low-carbon asthma inhalers Reducing admissions Green social prescribing Communications</p>	<p>Systemic Community-led climate & health benefits inspire action, collaboration across the community, health and public sector, and continue to attract resources in Frome and across the UK</p>
	<p>Partnership Working together across local government, business, medical practice (FTC-Evventure- FMP), delivery partners and the community.</p>	<p>Future Shed Supporting knowledge-sharing and networks of action for green-healthy initiatives and enterprise.</p>	<p>Trained GCC network Knowledge confidence Behaviour change Communication skills</p>	
	<p>Formative Using evaluation to feed into a cycle of improvement in the way that we deliver the programme objectives and inform systemic change.</p>	<p>Storytelling Telling stories of change, inspiring and getting people involved.</p>	<p>Future Shed participants through meetings, activities, coaching, training and outreach events</p>	
		<p>Evaluation Evidencing the value of the linked climate-health approach. Giving voice to the community through their engagement.</p>	<p>Future Shed participants Connections/networks of action Initiatives/enterprise</p>	
		<p>Evaluation Evidencing the value of the linked climate-health approach. Giving voice to the community through their engagement.</p>	<p>Re-launch GHF; short films; social media; Frome FM regular slot; monthly newsletter; press-releases; double page spreads in Frome Times; billboard campaign.</p>	
			<p>13,609 more conversations (+69%) in the community per year about <i>making healthy choices</i></p>	
			<p>1,500+ Future Shed participants through meetings, activities, coaching, training and outreach events</p>	
			<p>13,000 households reached by Frome Times Green and Healthy Frome 2030 wraparound</p>	
			<p>Yearly interim Evaluation Reports Final Evaluation Report</p>	

Measure types (legend): + Engagement ● Cost □ CO2e ♥ Health ☉ Attitudes/behaviours