COMMUNITIES LIVING SUSTAINABLY: BEHAVIOUR CHANGE LEARNING SUMMARY

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About Communities Living Sustainably

Communities Living Sustainably (CLS) is a £12 million programme funded by the Big Lottery Fund. Twelve communities in England have received up to £1million to help deal with the potential impact of climate change and build the sustainability and resilience of their local community. The programme will run for five years, with these communities providing inspiration to other communities across England and sharing what they have learned with each other.

The Groundwork UK Learning Partnership

The Groundwork UK Learning Partnership is made up of five organisations each with expertise in tackling climate change and helping communities to live more sustainably. The partnership comprises Groundwork UK, The Energy Saving Trust, The Federation of City Farms and Gardens, The New Economics Foundation and Building Research Establishment (BRE).This partnership has been brought together to encourage and support the funded local communities to capture and share any learning from their projects.

Key Findings

This learning summary shares information about the work CLS projects are carrying out around capturing behaviour change up to October 2014.

Using locally relevant messages, practical action, pledges and follow-up contact help vulnerable groups to make greener choices. Factors identified by the CLS projects to promote greener behaviours emphasised the importance of relating messages to the local context to develop awareness and understanding about climate change. Saving money, particularly in relation to energy efficiency and providing free services and products delivered through trusted intermediaries were important hooks to support the adoption of greener behaviours. Using pledges and follow up visits, peer pressure and membership of or volunteering for environmental organisations were identified as ways to reinforce behaviour change.

Case Study: Manor House PACT, London
The PACT home Visits have been successful in encouraging the local community to adopt pro-environmental behaviours. The home visit works with the resident to collate information about their energy use and property. This is followed by advice about energy and water saving behaviours and measures which could be implemented and the installation of practical solutions such as draft proofing measures, or tap inserts. To date 518 home visits have been conducted, with residents committing to a total of 2,437 energy and water saving pledges. Three months later residents are re-contacted to confirm if they have implemented pledged changes. To date 83 per cent of clients visited state they have stuck to their pledges with 90 per cent of people stating that the initial visit changed the way they use energy in their homes. A resident that received a home visit stated: *"The Energy Advisor helped me make some changes to my flat and to think about how I can use less energy and water. I was really surprised when my next quarterly bill was down by almost £50 - these savings will make a real difference to my family"*

Common stakeholders and groups of people who are vulnerable to climate change can be identified across the CLS programme. Assessing whether the programme has supported change should be done in reference to these groups. Those vulnerable groups most frequently identified are: long term unemployed or people on low incomes; people in fuel poverty; older people; and people affected by extreme weather. The specific geographical focus or partnership base of some CLS projects has led to the identification of additional, specific vulnerable groups. This segmentation and targeting provides a valuable additional frame of reference for understanding the impact of different interventions and approaches to supporting the impact of behaviour change among vulnerable groups.

The CLS programme is providing the opportunity to develop and test bespoke tools to capture behaviour change in communities. Projects have developed methods to capture baseline environmental behaviour information which is tailored to their project needs. These are either administered as online or paper-based surveys or developed as engagement tools to encourage pro-environmental behaviour change after capturing a measure of current behaviour. One example is outlined below.

Case study: Personal Carbon Impact Tool (PACT), Irwell Valley Sustainable Communities, Salford

The PACT tool is an engaging web-based tool to capture household-level information on behaviour and use of resources developed by Irwell Valley Sustainable Communities and project partners WSP Group. Rather than being primarily a way to measure carbon for the purposes of tracking the impact of the project, this tool uses the carbon measure as an engagement tool. At the end of this 10 minute process, individuals are presented with a calculation of their carbon footprint, a pie chart breakdown and commentary on how they could reduce their impact.

The tool is formed of six sections, covering the topics of:

- **Home:** Establishes how many people live in the house, the source of energy (including green electricity, Combined Heat and Power) and the age of boiler, estimated monthly expenditures by type of fuel and water usage. Behaviour information is captured in terms the tendency to turn off lights and closing curtains in winter. Heating timers and radiator thermostatic values measures are recorded.
- **Spending:** Estimates of spending are captured for the home (improvements, furniture, electrical / electronic equipment), consumption items (supermarket food, drink, eating out, clothes, cosmetics, services, and other goods) and pets. Behaviour information in terms of: food (frequency of meat consumption, consumption of fresh or pre-cooked meals, seasonal food consumption) and waste & recycling (typical bin size, frequency of recycling, composting).
- **Transport:** Model of transport is captured in terms of car use (how many cars the family used last year), public transport (use for a daily commute, estimate of miles), and holiday flights.

The first screen of the PACT presents the tool to the user as a savings calculator supporting them to save money whilst benefiting the environment. This reflects the behaviour change theory underpinning the project.

"We wanted to focus on money saving in the tool as this was quite a strong element of the feedback in the development of the tool. Our evaluation team felt quite strongly that if we just talked about carbon footprint that wouldn't be as engaging as cash."

The WSP Group has derived the carbon calculations from Defra, European Commission and other emission factors identified from research. Spending information on energy is converted into carbon in this methodology, and whilst this is an approximation, it is felt by the tool development team that this encourages people to input the information and is more accurate than asking people for meter readings.

A pop-up guide is available throughout which explains why a question is being asked and relates it to the scale of impact on the carbon footprint.

From the initial survey results, the average East Salford resident's carbon emissions were estimated to be 6.3 tonnes per year made up pretty equally of energy, spending and car travel . Public transport and plane flights made a much smaller contribution to carbon emissions. These results provide a guide to the areas of behaviour that the project need to target. Initial behaviour findings included 30 per cent of respondents appearing to leave their heating running all day even if they're not in. The tool can be accessed at http://www.wsppactcalculator.com/

The CLS Climate Change Network will follow the progress of these projects and continue to publish its findings. To be added to the mailing list please email **helen.phillips@groundwork.org.uk**

Federation of City Farms & Community Gardens

bre

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