

POLICY PAPER

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

Practical approaches for local government



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The primary evidence base for this paper is the experience of the ten community initiatives that were the finalists for the Big Green Challenge.

NESTA would like to thank the members of the community organisations for the time, effort and enthusiasm they have shown in responding to the numerous requests for information and comment about their initiatives during the Big Green Challenge:

The Green Valleys, Brecon Beacons

Home Energy Service, Ludlow

The Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust

Low Carbon West Oxford

Waste Oil Recycling in Prisons Project

St Bede's Catholic High School, Lytham

Back 2 Earth, Hackney City Farm

Faith and Climate Change in Birmingham

Global Generation, Kings Cross, London

The Meadows Ozone Community Energy Company, Nottingham

This paper was written by Clare Demuth at NESTA and draws on contributions from Peter Capener at NESTA and Jayne Cox, who with colleagues at Brook Lyndhurst undertook the independent evaluation of the Big Green Challenge. In addition valuable feedback was provided by a group of local authority representatives brought together at a roundtable discussion by the Local Government Information Unit.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community-led responses have the potential to contribute significantly to reducing CO₂ emissions – from the smallest rural community to the centres of our big cities. This is the message from NESTA's Big Green Challenge – a challenge prize designed to stimulate and support community-led responses to climate change.

This paper sets out the lessons from that experiment for local authorities. Specifically it argues for the value of community-led responses and makes practical suggestions on how to stimulate and support them. It is particularly addressed to members and officers within local authorities who are concerned about or engaged in tackling climate change.

The wide adoption by local authorities of targets for the reduction of CO₂ emissions per capita by 2011 as part of their performance frameworks places a clear focus on delivering short-term action.¹ Here local authorities need to consider CO₂ emission reduction within the wider community, rather than just within their own operations.

Many local authorities have responded to the demands of these targets by rolling out loft and cavity wall insulation programmes, through partnerships with energy suppliers and through the provision of information and publicity. Many are beginning to adopt area-based programmes that draw in community networks as routes to market, in the drive to increase take-up rates.

But this vital first step will not deliver the deeper cuts in CO₂ emissions that will be required to alleviate the worst impacts of climate change.

That's where the winners of the Big Green Challenge have so much to share. They achieved reductions in emissions of between 10 and 32 per cent over a single year.²

They also showed that when communities act as agents for change in their own right and build a strong sense of collective purpose, they can be

so much more than information networks. Such community-led responses can help change social norms and break down entrenched attitudes: they open up the everyday behaviour of their friends and neighbours to scrutiny and critique; they enable action through practical help; and they provide ideas, role models and support from others within their own community.³

Communities are often also able to 'reach the parts that others can't reach'⁴ – audiences or niche service/product areas that would not attract interest from government or private business. Depending on the community group's relationship with participants, prospects for sustaining change in the long term may also be greater than a one-off, top-down initiative (such as direct marketing or door-stepping).

Creating the conditions within which this depth of change can extend beyond the small number of communities currently taking a lead will be the challenge at the centre of the UK's ability to respond effectively to climate change.

Yet communities face significant barriers when taking a greater lead in defining and delivering their own responses to climate change. These include a lack of internal capacity to turn ideas into action and also the inherent complexity of delivering low carbon solutions. This is reinforced by the lack of confidence many feel in their ability to actually change things, mirrored by a lack of trust amongst key stakeholders in the ability of communities to deliver.

Here local authorities can play a crucial role. By stimulating community-led responses, they can incentivise communities to hurdle these high barriers. By supporting them, local authorities can reduce the height of the barriers so that many more communities can easily get involved and take a lead. Such support can include practical advice, or help in finding it. The stimulus can range from competitions and grants to support for new social enterprises.

We recognise that it is not always possible – or even desirable – to take community success in one area and directly replicate it within another. It is however possible to enhance the conditions within which community leadership can flourish, enabling communities to learn from each other and build partnerships with other key stakeholders to determine which approaches will work best for them.

This paper draws on the experience of the Big Green Challenge and on previous research and practice to provide practical ideas for local authorities to stimulate and support community leadership on climate change. These ideas should both improve the impact of existing carbon reduction programmes and begin to lay the foundation for the deeper cuts in CO₂ emissions that will be required within the short to medium term.

The paper provides guidance for building a local authority's approach to community partnership around climate change. This guidance can be summarised as encouraging local authorities to:

- Draw on their existing strengths and extensive experience and knowledge of their communities.
- Find out what action community-based organisations are already taking and their interaction with mainstream CO₂ reduction programmes.
- Clarify their CO₂ reduction objectives.
- Decide on the balance of priorities between stimulating new community-led action and supporting existing community initiatives, in dialogue with communities.
- Develop and deliver a programme of activities from which it is possible to learn and adapt future plans.

At the core of this approach is the value derived from viewing communities as active partners rather than passive recipients of services. The impact of this can be greatly enhanced with a strong local authority role as convenor, facilitator and 'honest broker', enabling communities to take a lead in the design and delivery of their own responses to climate change.

By working with communities in this way local authorities can help to move community-led action on climate change from a niche activity to the norm.

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INTRODUCTION

NESTA is a UK-wide organisation dedicated to innovation. Our work involves us in research and initiatives that help to harness new ideas and new ways of working to solve economic and social problems.

One of the biggest challenges facing local authorities – as much as the planet as a whole – is finding practical and acceptable ways to cut CO₂ emissions. Such challenges will be even harder at a time of public spending cuts.

That's why we launched an exciting experiment working with communities to find out whether they could help slash CO₂ emissions if they were given the chance to lead and develop responses that made sense to them.

NESTA's Big Green Challenge – a challenge prize designed to stimulate and support community-led responses to climate change – ran from 2007 to 2009, and showed just what a difference could be made when communities were in control. Our winners delivered deeper cuts in CO₂ emissions and more effective changes in community behaviour than most central initiatives.

We believe their successful experiments offer lessons for local authorities that could help you to support communities to achieve similar reductions. That's what this paper is about.

The ten finalists received advice, support and funding from NESTA to implement their winning ideas over a year. And the results were fantastic. Some initiatives cut the CO₂ emissions in their communities by as much as a third, while all managed to do so by at least 10 per cent – in a single year. Their solutions not only delivered short-term reductions, but had the potential to deliver deep cuts that will exceed the UK 2020 target in a matter of years.

Some finalists also established innovative and sustainable ways of organising themselves, and

developed new ways of using micro generation to provide an income to reinvest in sustainable living.

Our evidence suggests that community initiatives can help local authorities deliver on their short-term CO₂ reduction targets, and more importantly, they can help people to change their habits and behaviour in the longer term.

This paper sets out in Part 1 why we think community responses to climate change are valuable, as demonstrated by the Big Green Challenge finalists, and in Part 2 makes practical suggestions, drawing on that experience, as to how local authorities could stimulate and support them, and enable community organisations to overcome the barriers to effective action.

PART 1: THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY-LED RESPONSES

The strategic context for local authorities

Two-thirds of local authorities have signed up to targets to reduce CO₂ emissions in their localities.⁵ Most local targets aim for between 9 and 13 per cent reduction in CO₂ emissions per capita between 2008 and 2011, though some aim lower and others higher.

The local authority contribution to tackling climate change is also part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment.⁶ This performance framework further embeds the need for local authorities to address CO₂ emission reduction within the wider community, not just within a local authority's own operations.

Moreover, the 2011 target requires measures that deliver a big impact quickly. As a result many local authorities have been concentrating on large-scale loft and cavity wall insulation programmes. But we need far deeper cuts than those offered by home insulation if we are to meet our UK and international targets. Technology won't be enough, either. Energy efficiency and carbon reduction programmes depend on people's willingness to make changes in their personal lifestyles to achieve deeper cuts in their CO₂ emissions.

In the short term, community action can help local authorities deliver on their carbon reduction targets, by improving take up of mainstream programmes such as the Carbon Emission Reduction Target (CERT) and Warm Front and spreading the use of key technologies like renewable energy. But, as importantly, community-led responses can help to embed the culture change necessary to support change in people's habits and behaviour.

Specifically, community-led responses can help local authorities deliver cuts in CO₂ emissions by generating a local sense of collective purpose that draws people into the debate and encourages a

more open approach to government messages to reduce emissions. Longer-term success can be enhanced through support for community owned renewables. Building skills and community capacity will also support regeneration and sustainable economic development.

There is often a conflict in national policymakers' minds between a belief in genuinely local solutions and the desire to scale 'best practice' to a national level. Not all local social innovations have the potential to scale nationally, even with the right support. In many cases, they are powerful because of how they work in a specific context, which may be replicable in only some other places, or even not at all. The challenge for national policy is to design an approach that can cost-effectively support a large number of locally tailored projects across the country.⁷ The challenge for local authorities and communities is to identify what is useful and inspirational from projects elsewhere and use that to inform their own solutions.

So, in this paper, we show what can be done when people are fully engaged in finding community solutions in order to demonstrate the benefits of such engagement rather than to suggest that each individual project could be transplanted to authorities across the country.

Learning from the Big Green Challenge finalists

The Big Green Challenge finalists came from a variety of different local communities, a network of faith groups, a secondary school and a prison. Some had originated as informal community groups, all were firmly based in their community and largely led by volunteers from those communities.⁸

Overall impact

The Big Green Challenge finalists were judged against five criteria:

- CO₂ emission reduction.
- Innovation.
- Community engagement.
- Sustainability.
- The potential for the project to be scaled up or replicated.

In aggregate, the ten finalists cut CO₂ emissions by between 1,773 and 2,083 tonnes⁹ over the competition year during a period when they were laying the foundations for more substantive work and much larger further cuts.¹⁰ The winners achieved CO₂ emission reductions of between 10 and 32 per cent over their baselines. These percentage reductions in one year are comparable to or in excess of the percentage reductions local authorities are looking to make over three years.

Their success can be compared with a UK target of achieving a 34 per cent reduction in emissions by 2020. These community-led initiatives have delivered substantial cuts in emissions over a very short time and have the potential to deliver deeper cuts that would exceed the UK 2020 target within their communities in a matter of years.

In terms of community engagement the finalists engaged up to 5,800 people in their work with a total of around 2,000 involved in a substantive way.

They also demonstrated innovation in their approaches, and adopted a range of organisational and management models, some of which could be used by others.

Specific impact

Looking at the experience of the ten finalists we can see how community initiatives can help promote changes in behaviour and lifestyle, reduce CO₂ emissions through the use of micro generation, as well as developing skills that help regenerate the local economy.

Changing behaviour and lifestyle

Social research¹¹ suggests how collective responses can influence behaviour. In particular it identifies three key internal barriers to pro-environmental behaviour, namely agency (I'm only one person, what I do won't make a difference),

social norms (I don't see anyone else doing it) and habit (I did it yesterday so I'll probably do it again today). Developing a collective response so that people feel 'we're in this together' challenges the first two barriers and helps change habits.

The Big Green Challenge initiatives illustrate how community-led activities can promote a sense of collective purpose and make it easier for individuals to change their behaviour.

"As a single person reducing their carbon footprint isolated from everybody else, the effect of that reduction is very minimal and that's very frustrating... As an individual it is difficult to get motivated and that's the key thing about the Big Green Challenge – as a community we can cumulatively make a difference."

Participant, The Green Valleys

Overall, the Big Green Challenge finalists helped individuals to feel more strongly that they should be taking action and that they could make a difference. They also felt more confident about making changes, and found that it was less difficult than they thought it would be.

To achieve this, the finalists worked with their communities in a variety of ways. Some worked directly in their local community:

- The residents of the Isle of Eigg, led by the Eigg Heritage Trust, have directly engaged most of the 38 households on the island and have offered lots of different ways of participating, including setting a voluntary household energy cap.
- Low Carbon West Oxford has worked closely with 35 households to help them make personal commitments to reduce their energy use and hence cut CO₂ emissions and reduce their fuel bills. It has shown how cutting their CO₂ emissions can save money on fuel bills. Regular workshops and surgery sessions give the pilot households an opportunity to say what is or isn't working. New households are recruited to the programme each year and its outreach is expanding.

The value of this kind of approach is that it doesn't just tackle energy use but helps people change their lifestyle: as well as cutting fuel consumption at home, they can see the benefits of doing less driving or flying. This is a more holistic approach than most government-sponsored programmes.

Trained volunteers also provide an effective way of getting the message across as well as providing opportunities for people to improve their skills.

- In Shropshire, volunteer energy surveyors from the Household Energy Service (HES), a community-based energy service company, provide free surveys to identify practical energy-saving measures and estimate the financial savings they could generate.

This kind of service reinforces messages on energy saving and helps people take advantage of government incentives. It could form an effective part of a CO₂ reduction strategy ensuring that top-down messages from central and local government dovetail with the bottom-up person to person advice and support from community-led organisations.

This is also about two-way communications: the finalists were often able to respond to the particular needs of the community they were working with.

- In Nottingham, Meadows Ozone developed an interest-free green loans scheme in partnership with a local credit union for low income households on the Meadows Estate. They publicised the initiative by knocking on every door, rather than just sending a flier. Tenants and home owners use the loans to purchase energy efficient appliances and make energy saving improvements to their homes.

Community Renewables – reducing CO₂ emissions and generating income

Microgeneration schemes, where households generate their own electricity, have the potential to reduce CO₂ emissions and provide an income through the Feed in Tariff (FIT), which can be reinvested. They can also make people more conscious of the energy they use, encouraging them to use less in the future.

Some Big Green Challenge finalists planned micro generation schemes to both reduce CO₂ emissions and earn income to reinvest in sustainable living.

- The Green Valleys uses water from the Brecon mountain streams to power community-owned hydro electric installations. The revenue is being reinvested in community-based carbon reduction projects such as electric bike sharing or community woodlands that provide managed wood fuel. The project has set up an organisational model through networked Community Interest Companies

which enables communities to instigate their own CO₂ reduction initiatives at a very local level. This model could be used elsewhere and with other forms of micro generation.

- Low Carbon West Oxford has set up West Oxford Community Renewables, an Industrial and Provident Society for the benefit of the community. A range of community-owned renewable energy initiatives are being developed, including placing solar panels on the roofs of local businesses through an innovative leaseback scheme. Surplus income is donated to Low Carbon West Oxford to reinvest in community carbon reduction projects. Projects include: tree planting, low carbon food production and consumption, waste reduction, low carbon forms of transport and an eco library to share resources.

This approach fills a gap between the capabilities of individual households and the interests of larger energy companies. From April 2010, community organisations have been able to benefit more widely from the Feed in Tariff (FIT) through which individuals and community organisations can generate energy and sell it to the national grid. Potentially this could both reduce CO₂ emissions and generate income for other activities. Ways of supporting this new kind of social enterprise and the challenges they face are explored in Part 2.

Contributing to skills and economic development

All the finalists developed skills in their community, which had a potential benefit to the local economy.

- Waste Oil Recycling in Prisons – based at HMP Ford, an open prison in Sussex – developed an accredited course for offenders in recycling cooking oil from the prison kitchens into biofuel for prison vehicles.
- Global Generation works with young people to tool them up as environmental advocates working with local businesses. The project also develops urban food growing projects, rooftop gardens and grey-water recycling schemes.
- Hackney City Farm, with its Back 2 Earth environmental project, is pioneering 60 ideas for achieving a 60 per cent reduction in CO₂ emissions across the farm site and in the wider community works with its local authority and environmental educational networks to lay on

courses for local young people.

Some of the Big Green Challenge finalists have created jobs that have lasted beyond the year of the competition. Where communities have developed viable social enterprises, as with The Green Valleys in Brecon Beacons National Park, they have provided work for local contractors as well as creating new jobs, thus contributing to local wealth creation.

Our finalists show how community-led initiatives can contribute in very practical ways to reducing CO₂ emissions.

However we are not suggesting that these projects should be replicated in a way that imposes any particular approach on the community. They do, however, provide useful lessons and pointers to what works. Local authorities can help make this happen when they work with other key stakeholders to identify and lower the barriers to community leadership.

But this should be an enabling role, not one that imposes solutions on an area. The local authority should try to build capacity and confidence in communities, so that the communities can lead initiatives and identify which approaches will work best in their area. Real success will occur when the authority can step back, confident that an initiative led by local people can be sustained with the leadership of the community.

Barriers to effective community-led action

Communities can find it hard to turn ideas into community-led action. Sometimes the problems they face affect all community initiatives. Others may be specific to community responses to climate change. Some of the difficulties will be within the local authority's direct remit, but most will be issues where the local authority is not directly responsible but can make a big difference through its resources, influence and connections.

Barriers facing communities

Lack of capacity to take action within the community including:

- Need for support on organisational issues e.g. setting up an organisation, business planning, employing staff etc.
- Not enough people with the desire to get involved and the skills needed to, for example, develop the organisation, act as volunteers on its behalf or later manage volunteers and staff.
- Lack of revenue funding to support community activities and fund the core organisation.
- Need for increased connectedness and influence – with other community organisations, into the council and with important local and wider stakeholders.

Complexity of taking action on climate change including:

- Lack of specialist knowledge around technical potential of ideas for reducing CO₂ emissions.
- Confusing range of sources of information and guidance on energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- Lack of understanding of planning and regulatory system as it relates to renewable energy.
- Need for 'at risk' work to develop renewable energy projects with no certainty of outcome.
- Unfamiliarity with the commercial approach to seeking investment capital increasingly needed as grants for renewable energy technologies reduce.
- Cultural mismatch between communities and businesses involved in energy efficiency programme delivery.

Lack of acknowledgement and recognition of community contribution including:

- Lack of trust from key stakeholders in communities' ability to deliver.
- Lack of knowledge and understanding of how community activities impact on CO₂ emissions.
- Need for short-term impact to build confidence and maintain motivation.
- Need for positive feedback and local profile for community success in order to feel good about involvement.

PART 2:

THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities have a vital role to play in enabling community-based initiatives to overcome these barriers, and so grow and develop to the point where they can have a significant impact on CO₂ emissions.

To be effective, the evidence from the Big Green Challenge suggests that local authorities' role should facilitate rather than direct initiatives. Communities should be seen as active partners who design their own responses, rather than passive recipients of services. Here we emphasise two aspects to that role: stimulation and support.

Underlying both is partnership, encompassing the authority's relationships with community-based organisations – the importance of both involving community representatives in formal partnerships and treating them as equal members.

By **stimulation**, we mean encouraging communities to get actively involved in tackling climate change – there is value here in having local examples of community leadership to inspire others and building a body of local experience from which others can learn.

By **support**, we mean making it easier for community-based organisations to overcome the barriers to action and growth.

In considering its overall approach, a local authority needs to determine the balance between stimulating new interest and activity and supporting existing community organisations.

Stimulating sustainable community-led responses

Many local authorities already encourage their communities to take an interest in tackling climate change. Their objectives are often broad – to raise interest and make people more receptive to energy-saving messages, to recognise people's ideas and effort or demonstrate the

local authority's commitment to acting on climate change. They want to spread the climate change message and involve a broader range of community organisations than those already committed to environmental action.

For the Big Green Challenge, the objective was to go further and test whether community organisations with the right circumstances and support could develop activities which would make a significant impact on CO₂ emissions in their own right.

A challenge prize like the Big Green Challenge is one way to stimulate ideas, but it is not the only approach. However, the Big Green Challenge does provide some ideas on how to encourage more communities to get actively involved in tackling climate change and to develop sustainable organisations that will have an impact and inspire others.

The characteristics of the Big Green Challenge

The Big Green Challenge aimed to stimulate new ideas widely and enable those organisations that progressed in the competition to develop to the point where they could both have an impact on CO₂ emissions and sustain themselves. It demonstrated that a challenge prize is an effective way to stimulate groups to come up with ideas, but it needs to be aligned with specific kinds of support over time if it is to enable groups to develop to the point where they can make a significant impact.

The process combined a number of essential design features that aimed to maximise participation:

- **An 'open access' approach, with a very open first stage:** which was open to any not-for-profit group, whether formally constituted or not. This helped us find, identify and mobilise new groups, including many without any previous environmental focus and those which were informal at this early stage.

- **A clear outcome, and a clear timetable:** while projects were judged against five criteria there was one clear outcome specified: that applicants make a sustainable CO₂ reduction in their community. Combined with a tight timetable, this generated urgency and momentum. Within these parameters, we did not specify how the financial support offered should be used by finalists.
- **A staged process, with help for the development of ideas and graduated rewards:** this combination of support and small scale financial investment recognised that whilst community-led entrants may care enough about the issue to invest time and resources in the endeavor, there would be limits to the time, potentially skills and financial resources they could commit.
- **Allow for reflection, flexibility and space to innovate:** the principles and ethos of openness, innovation and learning that underpinned the Big Green Challenge were crucial to effectively engaging competitors and providing useful support.

The ten finalists had a year in which to implement their project and demonstrate CO₂ reductions. They had funding from NESTA of £20,000 to assist in this process. (This did not cover or reflect the full costs of project development although some of the organisations also had funding grants from other sources during the year.)

Finalists also had access to a range of partners and expert knowledge, including 20 days of support from business development experts UnLtd. They provided mentoring and coaching, advice relating to project management and delivery, capacity building, basic business plan development and advice on marketing and communications. They also provided or helped groups access specialist legal and business development support for those organisations trying new operating and business models.

The benefits of a competition

The finalists were clear about the positive impacts of being in a competition, although conscious of the downside, particularly the stress involved. However, the evaluation of the Big Green Challenge found that it had given them space for creativity, a sense of focus and urgency, legitimacy and credibility, as well as scale and ambition. There is no doubt that the successful projects were able to rise to the challenge and move further and faster in developing their organisations and activities because they had the

incentive of the prize. The size of the prize (£1 million) was also important in promoting the scale of ambition demonstrated by some of the finalists. The rigorous selection process, the competition criteria and the support provided meant that they thought through and implemented their plans for community engagement and created appropriate organisational structures. The outcome target focused their attention on those activities which were most likely to deliver CO₂ reductions.

There is scope for local authorities to mount a challenge prize competition albeit on a more modest scale.

- Kent County Council has initiated a competition for community organisations with a prize of £10,000 plus sponsorship in kind. The winning organisation will also be given advice and support to develop a project on either carbon reduction or adapting to climate change. They will be given eight months to implement it. Community groups will be visited to make sure their project ideas have merit and are realistic. Those that don't win will be offered advice on fundraising. The Kent competition is intended both to stimulate new groups to get involved and provide the incentive and support for the winning organisation to implement their project.

In a local area, a challenge prize has a number of potential benefits, regardless of the size of the prize:

- **It has a different ethos from a grants process:** it may attract and excite people to join in who would not have done so otherwise and it puts the emphasis on voluntary action rather than the need for grant support (although ultimately organisations fostered through this process are still likely to need some grant funding).
- The local authority can use it to bring **positive publicity** to the activity, the participants and the local authority and can use it to promote activities to tackle climate change to the wider public perhaps using local newspapers and radio, a website and social media to get people involved.
- There is potential to **bring in local businesses as sponsors** of the competition, thereby enhancing their 'green credentials' as well as benefiting the successful project.
- With **limited resources**, a competition provides a rationale for awarding those

resources to one or two organisations, rather than splitting them across a number of groups as tends to happen in a grants process.

If it is possible to employ the full Big Green Challenge model, then our experience suggests that implementing the project for a year, with appropriate advice and support, will make organisations act more quickly and effectively and achieve more to meet the desired outcome than under a grants regime.

But this approach also has its disadvantages. The competitive element may undermine collaboration among community groups and lead to friction. It may be less easy to encourage peer networking. And the competitive element can create a sense of losing, so it is important to build in support for those who are not successful, such as the advice on fundraising being provided by Kent County Council, if groups are not to become dissatisfied and disengaged in the future.

Judging the competition can be resource intensive and must be seen to be objective. Using independent high profile judges can distance the local authority from the decision as well as providing good publicity. Involving local higher education institutions and universities with relevant expertise would also be an option.

Judging on outcomes can be challenging but is worthwhile, as the Big Green Challenge found in assessing reductions in CO₂ emissions derived from recording actual energy consumption. Future challenge prizes may consider using alternative indicators, such as recording the number of energy efficiency or renewable energy measures installed, or undertaking behaviour change surveys before and after the intervention.

Aspects of the Big Green Challenge approach could be used without necessarily running a competition. Its outcome-focused, staged and supported process could be applied to a grants regime as it has already been used in some regeneration programmes.

Each authority will need to consider which approach – running a challenge prize, a supported grants process or working collaboratively with existing organisations – will best suit local circumstances and meet local objectives. In doing so, it is important to consider which approach might develop new ideas and stimulate new interest, as well as engaging existing players.

Supporting community initiatives on climate change

A key lesson from the Big Green Challenge is that to achieve impact, stimulation needs to be accompanied by support. There are a number of practical ways in which local authorities could support community initiatives, building on the Big Green Challenge experience. These approaches will help to lower the barriers so that more communities can participate in tackling climate change and those that are already involved can make a greater impact.

Providing support – the overall approach

Support needs vary according to the degree of organisational development of the group (some may be small informal groups; others more established and legally constituted organisations). They include needs which are common to community based organisations and those which are specific to CO₂ reduction.

Wherever possible, it is more cost effective to use existing support systems, where necessary providing environmental expertise as back up. For the more specialist support needed for potential social enterprises it is worth considering whether county and district or adjoining local authorities could work together to provide it, or whether they can make use of what may be available regionally as well as signposting to national resources.

Providing a key contact within the local authority

For community-based organisations, having a main point of contact within the local authority can make it easier to have their problems addressed, and will facilitate partnership working. A contact officer could offer anything from simple sign-posting through internal advocacy to providing a more individualised advisory role.

In this context internal advocacy may involve addressing sustainability issues within the operations of the local authority and its contractors. For example, two highlighted by the finalists were:

- The local authority as landlord could invest capital for energy efficiency in community buildings.
- The local authority as planning authority could provide guidance and support around micro generation.

Ideally the main contact would be located within the climate change or energy section so that they can then work across the local authority, drawing

in other relevant expertise where appropriate. If this is not possible, an alternative approach would be to provide staff already supporting community and voluntary organisations with the information to support environmental groups, with the expertise of specialist officers as back-up.

Signposting to generic support for community groups and voluntary organisations

The local authority or the voluntary sector (such as a local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS)) is likely to have some resources dedicated to supporting community and voluntary organisations. In two-tier arrangements these are more likely to be at the district level. Typically groups can get support on sources of funding, finance, how to set up an organisation, charities and limited companies, and management committee responsibilities.¹²

Volunteers were crucial to many of the Big Green Challenge initiatives so project leaders need the skills to train and retain volunteers, manage and work with them. The local CVS or volunteer bureau should be able to advise and assist with recruitment. Training may be available through a local training provider. If not, this is an area where the local authority could add value by commissioning appropriate training in partnership with the third sector.

Practically the local authority may also be able to help with meeting rooms, photocopying, printing and other such tasks.

Providing a supportive framework

Within the local strategic partnership (LSP) or specific environmental or other relevant partnership, the local authority has a key role and can influence the extent to which community environmental organisations are represented and taken seriously. At the strategic level if community organisations are to make a meaningful contribution to action on climate change, then it is vital that they participate in the partnership that is determining how best to make those reductions. Otherwise there is a danger that community and local authority actions, rather than being mutually reinforcing, will contradict or undermine each other. In particular, a greater impact will be made on people's behaviour if messages from central and local government dovetail with the personal contact from community-led organisations.

It is equally important that the community contribution is valued. For one Big Green Challenge finalist the most important aspect of their relationship with the local authority was that their experience and views were valued and that

they were involved in policy debates.

Ideally local authorities will reflect this active approach to outreach and nurturing community leadership within their sustainable community strategies, alongside a desire to reach out beyond the local authorities' own operations, as reflected in the adoption of targets for NI186 and 187 and by setting challenging longer-term carbon reduction targets in line with central government aspirations.

A local authority's own policy framework also has the potential to act as a positive driver for community action. The core strategy could adopt positive targets for renewable energy that incorporate the potential for micro generation and community-scale renewable energy development. It should have clear and accessible planning guidance aimed at communities looking to take a lead on establishing renewable energy projects.

Facilitating networking and learning from others

The Big Green Challenge participants highlighted the importance of networks in facilitating action and providing support. Some were based around issues such as environmental education; others provided peer support. The community projects involved in the Eden Forum, an initiative hosted by the Eden Project in the South West to explore routes to a resilient future, also advocated for local, regional and national networks.

"The key benefit of networks is that [they allow] for the members to share ideas and resources, access information and advice, and support each others' work."¹³

The local authority can play a part by bringing together locally active communities and supporting peer-to-peer networking and mentoring. Where local experience is limited, the local authority could support networking with other communities around the country, for example by inviting experienced community activists to come to the area to talk to local communities.

Nationally, a growing number of community networks provide varying degrees of support. These include: Energy Saving Trusts (ESTs) Green Communities Network, Transition Towns, Low Carbon Communities Network, Carbon Reduction Action Groups (CRAGs), Global Action Plan's Eco Teams, the Greening Campaign. See Appendix B for more details.

Where there are specific skills or knowledge gaps that can't be filled through networking or locally

available training, a local authority could consider running or commissioning appropriate training and associated support for community volunteers.

Access to grant funding

Local and national sources of grant funding are already constrained and will become increasingly so with public expenditure cuts. Many local authorities have also replaced major grants with commissioning, leaving less scope to fund the kind of holistic, outcome-focused and varied package of activities that was most successful in reducing CO₂ emissions within the Big Green Challenge.

Small grants can stimulate activity and will help small community groups and volunteers to keep going, but will not on their own engender the scale of activity needed to make a significant impact on CO₂ emissions.

For some finalists, the transition from community group to more formal governance structure was the point at which they most needed grants to cover administrative tasks.

While several Big Green Challenge finalists were developing social enterprises and wanted to reduce their dependency on grant funding they expected that they would continue to need some grant funding to cover core costs.

Many finalists observed that there was increasing competition for a diminishing pot of finance for community-based activity. Against this background, some felt that it was unrealistic to expect communities to deliver social and environmental programmes for less money. Even those finalists who are committed to greater self-reliance need some form of grant funding during their transition, or into the future, to leverage other resources.

We have discussed above specific ways of using a challenge prize on its own or in combination with grants to stimulate activity. There are other ways to help community-based organisations in their search for funding.

Supporting organisations in their search for funding

- **Signposting:** Online resources can help community-based organisations find funding sources relevant to their needs. These include many charitable trusts. Support to find them and apply for grants may already exist within the local authority or voluntary sector. For online resources see Appendix B. Most of the Big Green Challenge participants found additional funding from national programmes,

particularly from programmes focused on sustainability.

- **Alert local organisations to new environmental programmes:** If the programme is particularly relevant, run a workshop to advise potential applicants on how to apply or provide access to some one-to-one advice. For at least one of the finalists their lack of experience in writing bids for energy/environmental funds made the process very time consuming.
- **Local grants:** If there is a local grants programme, work with the body responsible to ensure that the criteria allow for applications from voluntary organisations working on climate change. There may also be scope to introduce the lessons from the Big Green Challenge to an existing local programme about the advantages of an outcome-focused, staged and supported process.
- **Encourage local businesses** to support community organisations as part of their measures to reduce CO₂ emissions, both financially and through pro-bono offer of skills such as legal, financial, marketing or management.

Providing support on monitoring

From a community perspective, monitoring is not just about meeting the needs of funders; it is also about providing good feedback around the impact of the community's activities. This is crucial in maintaining enthusiasm and motivation amongst community members. If the success of a community response is unclear, enthusiasm and motivation may quickly dissipate. A positive emphasis on achievement helps to maintain morale. Monitoring community activity also provides a way of helping the community learn from their experience. However, monitoring can seem daunting and get in the way of doing things, so the need for monitoring must be explained too.

The local authority can play an important role in supporting community action by developing mechanisms for collecting and feeding back information on energy efficiency measures installed or CO₂ savings generated from behaviour change. These include:

- Negotiating with energy suppliers or other local scheme managers around access to information.
- Supporting the community in carrying out

behaviour change surveys.

- Interrogating EST's Home Energy Efficiency Database to glean information of value to the area.

The focus should be on supporting the community with their own approaches to monitoring which is tailored to work for them.

Here local authorities could help by:

- Signposting communities to specialist tools such as EST's community carbon footprint tool or WWF/CAG's community engagement evaluation tool, and providing guidance on how to apply the tools and interpret results robustly. (See Appendix B for further information.)
- Making links with local universities interested in working with communities on monitoring.
- Monitoring the local authority's own CO₂ emissions and making the results available where appropriate to support community carbon footprinting activity, for example school carbon footprints.

It is also important that the local authority monitors its own work with communities on an ongoing basis to ensure that what support is offered to communities remains appropriate and relevant to community needs and interests.

Acknowledging and celebrating success

For the Big Green Challenge finalists, the kudos of being a finalist was important: it provided them with both publicity and status. Their experience illustrates the importance of recognising and acknowledging the community's contribution. Local authority support may also be crucial in building a sense of trust amongst key stakeholders that communities can deliver.

Local authorities can also:

- Provide support and guidance to communities around building local profile and securing positive local media coverage.
- Publicise community projects in the area.
- Run celebration events to promote local examples of community leadership.
- Create opportunities to provide feedback to communities around progress and the positive impact of their actions.

Ultimately, given the reliance on volunteers, if they don't feel good about being involved, they will do something else.

Specialist support for developing social enterprises and community-owned renewables

Community organisations that want to develop into social enterprises need specialist support. With the introduction of the Feed in Tariff (FIT) in April 2010 and the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) in April 2011, grant funding for community renewables will reduce and those tackling climate change will be under increasing pressure to adopt a more businesslike approach to their activities.

Both the FIT and the RHI will pay owners of renewable energy technology a standard price for every kWh of electricity or heat that they generate. This will take the place of the grant funding currently available from central government for the installation of renewable energy technology.

This shift puts pressure on communities wishing to develop a more commercial approach to seeking the upfront capital investment for low carbon improvements. For communities able to take this step, FIT and RHI will provide a significant opportunity for generating an income stream from renewable energy, thereby helping to reduce grant dependency and increase community resilience.

A number of the finalists saw their future as social enterprises, able to raise a significant income stream commercially, particularly through community ownership of renewables and income generated through the FIT. Two projects, in particular, demonstrated that potential over the competition year, The Green Valleys and Low Carbon West Oxford.

Community-led social enterprises could add value beyond renewable energy. Household Energy Service, another of the Big Green Challenge finalists has developed a home energy auditing and energy advice service by training community volunteers. Services such as these potentially provide significant value to local authorities and provide the basis for contractual arrangements with community-led providers.

While the potential is there, community organisations face significant barriers to developing community owned renewables.

Building sustainable income streams

The Green Valleys supports the development of micro hydro schemes by local communities, farmers and land owners in the Brecon Beacons National Park. They offer a range of services including system design, obtaining permissions, installation and complete finance. They are using the income stream from electricity sales from the community-owned schemes to fund further measures to cut CO₂ emissions in those communities. The Green Valleys has adopted the structure of networked Community Interest Companies (CICs). Its business plan calls for investment of £2.4 million with an income from the hydro schemes of £200,000 per year after the third year and after financing loan repayments. This income will double as more hydro schemes come on line in the fourth year. All loans will be repaid after four or five years. They are presently going through due diligence with a number of finance houses for the initial £1.5 million of capital finance.

Low Carbon West Oxford is developing a range of community-owned renewable energy initiatives, including placing solar PV panels on the roofs of local businesses through an innovative leaseback scheme. The Low Carbon West Oxford team has set up West Oxford Community Renewables, an Industrial and Provident Society for the benefit of the community. The team has begun to sell shares through West Oxford Community Renewables to generate income to invest in community renewables, with plans for solar PV systems, small-scale wind turbines and micro hydro schemes in place. The surplus income generated from these renewables is then donated to the non profit organisation, Low Carbon West Oxford which develops local sustainability initiatives. Low Carbon West Oxford's business plan originally called for an investment of £1.4 million over five years with an income of nearly £40,000 per year after repayment of financing loans and shareholder dividends. These figures have now changed significantly in the light of the increased FIT levels and substantial grant from government through the Low Carbon Communities Challenge.

These barriers must be lowered if it is to become a realistic option beyond a few particularly committed and entrepreneurial organisations. The barriers which require central government action are laid out in NESTA's policy paper on community-led responses to climate change.¹⁴

At a local level local authorities could help in a number of ways:

Providing technical expertise

Communities hoping to reduce CO₂ emissions are faced with a bewildering array of opinions, options and hurdles. Local authorities, with their broad remit and convening strength, are ideally placed to ease the communities' path by creating links with specialist expertise from both inside and outside the local authority.

Externally local authorities could:

- Create strong links with external community services like EST's Green Communities and

encourage communities to draw on the training, expert support panel and other services provided.

- Provide a link point for communities needing to deal with regulatory issues, for example abstraction licences from the Environment Agency for hydro schemes.

Internally, local authority officers could provide communities with technical advice around the likely feasibility of renewable energy projects and on dealing with planning issues associated with potential renewable energy projects. Some BGC finalists wanted expert support to help them in the dialogue with local planners and development control.

This kind of support could be crucial at a stage where communities will still be in the risky development phase, taking initial renewable energy project ideas through the negotiation with site owners and the regulatory process. At this

point they will have no confirmation that a project will go ahead but will still have made a significant investment in time and resources.

Brokering partnerships with energy suppliers and other insulation scheme managers

A local authority could become more actively engaged by acting as an ‘honest broker’ in discussions with energy suppliers and local energy efficiency scheme managers. By helping to overcome the cultural mismatch between communities and business, local authorities could help create stronger community partnerships with CERT schemes and potentially help secure referral fees as a source of income for communities.

Forging stronger partnerships between the private sector and communities could also improve the quality and availability of information that can be fed back to communities on the numbers of energy efficiency measures installed in the area and the CO₂ emission reductions that could be attributed to community activities.

Signposting and provision of specialist support and advice on social enterprise

As social enterprises are fundamentally businesses with a social purpose, the specialist advice they require is most appropriately provided within a business advice environment that takes into account the specific needs and issues facing community-based organisations.

Some local business links, funded through the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), already provide specialist support for social enterprises. However where gaps exist, the local authority could work with local partners to ensure that appropriate advice is provided locally, covering organisational form, set-up, business planning, investment and other issues. National resources are listed in Appendix B.

For some Big Green Challenge finalists, legal and financial consultancy support proved essential in setting up the most appropriate vehicle for their needs. They accessed support either through UnLtd or through pro bono arrangements with local businesses. For aspiring social enterprises the local authority could provide or negotiate a limited number of days consultancy support. Such support might form part of a challenge prize or grant-related support.

Local authorities are well placed to bridge the gap between the generic social enterprise support that might be available through business links, and the specific context facing communities wishing to take action around climate change.

For example, local authorities could add value by running training sessions or providing guidance on the new opportunities presented by Feed in Tariffs and the Renewable Heat Incentive and the implications for seeking capital investment. A new government initiative ‘Community Shares’ provides useful information for communities on these issues.

Taking this one step further, a number of local authorities have already set up revolving funds to support capital investment in local energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. (See RDA factsheet on revolving funds referenced in Appendix B). These kinds of intervention are likely to become increasingly important. Local authorities could provide significant value by using their administrative strength and capacity to support the administration of revolving funds in partnership with communities looking to establish community-owned renewable energy projects.

Enabling communities to take a lead in response to climate change

If we are to meet high CO₂ emission reduction targets local authorities will need to play a crucial role. By stimulating community-led responses, they can incentivise communities to hurdle the high barriers in the way. By supporting them, local authorities can reduce the height of the barriers so many more communities can easily get involved and take a lead. Fundamental to this approach is the value derived from viewing communities as active partners rather than passive recipients of services.

The following steps provide a simple starting point for local authority staff looking to engage with communities around climate change, perhaps for the first time.

1. Find out what is already happening in your local area

- What action are community-based organisations already taking to tackle climate change? Are there already good examples to learn from and inspire others?
- Are they already engaged with energy supplier programmes or other local energy efficiency schemes? If so what is working well and what’s not?
- What are the key local community networks and groups, and their relationship to the

local authority and each other? To what extent do they or could they support community groups tackling climate change? The local CVS, Rural Community Council or Volunteer Bureau should be able to help.

These are just some of the ways in which a local authority can act as convenor, facilitator and 'honest broker', enabling communities to take a lead in the design and delivery of their own responses to climate change.

- How strong is community representation on the LSP and is community leadership a key aspect of the Sustainable Community Strategy?

- 2. Talk to key community groups and networks and community leaders:** Review needs and interests. What would inspire or motivate communities to take a lead? How can the local authority support, facilitate, enable this to happen?
- 3. Clarify your local authority's objectives for CO₂ reduction:** Depending on the outcome – behaviour change, renewable energy installation or increasing take-up of energy efficiency measures – different approaches will be needed to support the community's response.
- 4. Decide on the balance of your priorities between strengthening partnership, stimulating and supporting community-led action:** If there is little pre-existing community action on climate change, it may be productive to stimulate action through some form of challenge. If there is already a lot happening, learning how these projects have overcome barriers and how local authority support could enable many more community-led responses to get going and go further, might be the place to start.
- 5. Encourage and facilitate community participation in the design of the local authority's approach:** Refine plans based on feedback from wider community and other key stakeholders – be clear about key responsibilities, in particular establish clear expectations and communications between the local authority and the community.
- 6. Secure corporate and political commitment to your approach** from within the local authority and the wider support of the LSP.
- 7. As you work with your local community to deliver action on climate change** integrate appropriate monitoring and learning into the process so that both the local authority and community can learn from the experience and take every opportunity to publicise and celebrate success.

APPENDIX A: THE BIG GREEN CHALLENGE FINALISTS

- **Faith and Climate Change** brings together a wide range of organisations in Birmingham to address environmental issues in places of worship and in faith communities.
www.faithandclimatechange.wordpress.com
 - **Global Generation's** Living Buildings – Local Links project gives young volunteers opportunities to develop food growing spaces, biodiverse green roofs and plant-filtered grey water systems on office rooftops, school grounds and development sites in the King's Cross area of London.
www.globalgeneration.org.uk
 - **Hackney City Farm** is home to Back 2 Earth, an environmental project which is pioneering 60 ideas for achieving a 60 per cent reduction in CO₂ emissions across the farm site and in the wider community.
www.hackneycityfarm.co.uk
 - **Household Energy Service / Lightfoot Enterprises** is a community-based energy service company that helps households to reduce CO₂ emissions, improve energy efficiency and save money on fuel bills. It operates in Shropshire and the Welsh borders.
Award winner. www.h-e-s.org
 - **Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust.** Residents of the Isle of Eigg are working together to create a green island by generating renewable electricity, installing insulation and solar panels, producing local food and developing low-carbon community transport schemes.
Award winner. www.islandsgoinggreen.org
 - **Low Carbon West Oxford.** The community is working together to reduce CO₂ emissions by working on energy efficiency with 35 households and five businesses each year, by planting trees, and by working on local transport and food projects. The resources to support this work are provided by West Oxford Community Renewables, an Industrial and Provident Society for the benefit of the community that is developing a portfolio of renewable energy projects. **Award winner.** www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk
 - **Meadows Ozone Community Energy Company** is a community-owned energy services company in Nottingham providing local people with advice on energy efficiency and interest-free green loans. Their initiative aims to combat fuel poverty at the same time as reducing CO₂ emissions.
www.meadowspartnershiptrust.org.uk
 - **St Bede's High School** in Lytham is aiming to become one of the first ever carbon-neutral schools by installing renewable energy equipment and creating a green culture throughout the school.
www.easy2begreen.co.uk
 - **The Green Valleys** is an initiative that is developing community-owned micro hydro schemes, and improving the energy efficiency of homes in the Brecon Beacons National Park.
Award winner. www.thegreenvalleys.org
 - **Waste Oil Recycling in Prisons Project (WORPP)** at HMP Ford in West Sussex is reducing CO₂ emissions at the same time as helping offenders to develop new skills.
www.nesta.org.uk/big-green-challenge
- More information on all these projects and on the further 17 projects funded by the Department of Energy and Climate Change to maximise the impact of the Big Green Challenge can be found on the NESTA website www.nesta.org.uk/big-green-challenge

APPENDIX B: USEFUL RESOURCES

Community networks focusing on energy and climate change

Energy Saving Trust's Green Communities - www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/cafe

Climate Outreach and Information Network (COIN) - coinet.org.uk

Transition Towns Network - www.transitiontowns.org/

Low Carbon Communities Network - www.lowcarboncommunities.net/

Carbon Reduction Action Groups - www.carbonrationing.org.uk/

Greening Campaign - www.greening-campaign.co.uk/About.html

GAP Eco Teams - www.ecoteams.org.uk/

Support for Community Renewables

Community Energy Scotland - www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk/

Welsh Assembly Government's Community Scale Renewable Energy Generation Programme - www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/cafe/Green-Communities/Funding-Advice/Welsh-Assembly-Government-s-Community-Scale-Renewable-Energy-Generation-Programme

Low Carbon Buildings Programme (Renewable heat only) - www.lowcarbonbuildingsphase2.org.uk/

E.ON Sustainable Energy Fund - www.eon-uk.com/about/sustainableenergyfund.aspx

EDF Green Fund - www.edfenergy.com/products-services/for-your-home/our-services/green-energy-fund.shtml

Community Sustainable Energy Programme - www.communitysustainable.org.uk/index.jsp

H2OPE - www.h2ope.org.uk/

Energy 4 all - www.energy4all.co.uk/energy_home.asp

Community Renewable Energy - www.core.coop/site/

Other community-focused networks or organisations

Action with Communities in Rural England - www.acre.org.uk/

Association of Scottish Community Councils - www.ascc.org.uk/

BASSAC (membership body for community organisations) - www.bassac.org.uk/

British Youth Council - www.byc.org.uk/index.php

Charities Aid Foundation - www.cafonline.org/

Charities Evaluation Service - www.ces-vol.org.uk/

Community Action Network - www.can-online.org.uk/

Community Foundation Network - www.communityfoundations.org.uk/

National Federation of Community Organisations - www.communitymatters.org.uk/

Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations - www.cemvo.org.uk/

Directory of Social Change - www.dsc.org.uk/

National Association for Voluntary and Community Action - www.navca.org.uk/

National Council for Voluntary Organisations - www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

Ruralnet - www.ruralnetuk.org/

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations - www.scvo.org.uk/

The Voluntary Resource – www.volresource.org.uk/

Welsh Council for Voluntary Action – www.wcva.org.uk/

Smart Resources – www.smartresources.org

Support for Social Enterprises

UnLtd – www.unltd.org.uk charity that supports social entrepreneurs (supported BGC finalists)

Resonance – www.resonance.ltd.uk

Social Enterprise London – www.sel.org.uk

Development Trusts Association – www.dta.org.uk/

Business Link advice for social enterprise – www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1077475650

Social Enterprise Coalition – www.socialenterprise.org.uk/

Social Enterprise Training and Support – www.setas.co.uk/

Co-operatives UK – www.cooperatives-uk.coop/live/cme0.htm

Local Authority support on energy issues

Energy Saving Trust Local Authority support service – www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/business/Business/Local-Authorities

Carbon Trust Local Authority Support service – www.carbontrust.co.uk/cut-carbon-reduce-costs/reduce/public-sector/local-authorities/pages/default.aspx

Grant funding information

Green Communities funding advice and sources – www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/cafe/Green-Communities/Funding-Advice

Funder Finder – www.funderfinder.org.uk

Capacity Builders – www.capacitybuilders.org.uk/

Big Lottery Fund – www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/

Funding Central – www.fundingcentral.org.uk

Sources of Loans

Charity Bank – www.charitybank.org

Co-operative Bank – www.co-operativebank.co.uk

Triodos – www.triodos.co.uk

Additional resources

Energy Saving Trust Community Footprint Tool – www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/cafe/Green-Communities/Guidance-and-useful-tools/Community-Carbon-Footprint-Tool

WWF/CAG Community Engagement Evaluation Tool – www.community-engagement.org.uk/

Community Shares factsheets – www.communityshares.org.uk/factsheets (useful information on community investment, setting up social enterprises etc.)

North West RDA factsheet on LA revolving funds – www.climatechangenorthwest.co.uk/assets/_files/documents/jun_09/cli__1244480020_CLASP_fact_sheet_No9.pdf (useful information on revolving funds for local authorities)

ENDNOTES

1. See www.localpriorities.communities.gov.uk for further information. One hundred out of 150 upper tier and single tier authorities have signed up to the National Indicator (NI) 186 target.
2. CO₂ reductions in the Big Green Challenge year were monitored by CRed on behalf of NESTA. This data provides a conservative estimate of reductions achieved by finalists across the Big Green Challenge year. The emissions reductions achieved, now and in the future, may well be higher than the reductions reported here.
3. See for example the Sustainable Consumption Round Table (2006) 'Communities of interest – and action?' and 'I will if you will' (2006); also Brook Lyndhurst's evaluation of Defra's 'Environmental Action Fund 2005-8' and 'Greener Living Fund'.
4. NESTA (2009) 'Mapping the Big Green Challenge.' London: NESTA.
5. See www.localpriorities.communities.gov.uk for further information. One hundred out of 150 upper tier and single tier authorities have signed up to the National Indicator (NI) 186 target.
6. The assessments draw on evidence from the relevant National Indicators as well as self evaluations, performance information and the views of residents and community groups.
7. See Bunt, L. and Harris, M. (2010) 'Mass Localism.' London: NESTA, for a broader discussion.
8. For a more detailed description of activities see Appendix A.
9. CO₂ reductions in the Big Green Challenge year were monitored by CRed on behalf of NESTA. This data provides a conservative estimate of reductions achieved by finalists across the Big Green Challenge year. The emissions reductions achieved, now and in the future, may well be higher than the reductions reported here.
10. Measuring what a community-led initiative has achieved is not straightforward and in practice it was not possible to capture all the reductions achieved by the finalists in their first full year of activity.
11. For example Darnton, A. (2008) 'Practical Guide: An overview of behaviour change models and their uses.' London: Government Social Research Unit, HM Treasury.
12. National and web-based resources are listed in Appendix B. See for example Community Matters and National Association of Voluntary and Community Action.
13. Eden Forum (2010) 'Community Resilience – Lessons from the South West.' St Austell: The Eden Project.
14. NESTA (2010) 'Galvanising Community-led Responses to Climate Change.' London: NESTA.



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