



**POWER**  
Low Carbon Economies



**INTERREG IVC**  
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## ANNEX 2

### Best practice Identified and transferred

Section	Indication of content
<b>1 Title of the best practice</b>	Community Champions
<b>2 Precise theme/issue tackled by the practice</b>	Identification and training of key individuals, who support, advise and enthuse the local community to engage with climate change issues.
<b>3 Objectives of the best practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of key individuals within a community who can effectively facilitate engagement in the sustainability agenda</li> <li>• Providing support and training for these individuals to gain knowledge and confidence in their role.</li> </ul>
<b>4 Location</b>	Country: England Region: Winchester, Southampton
<b>5 Detailed description of the best practice</b>	<p>It is widely recognized that communities will need to play a critical role in helping to meet the government's high CO<sub>2</sub> reduction targets.</p> <p>Key to the effectiveness of community engagement is the 'champion'. The champion is an enthusiastic and dedicated individual living in the community who takes a proactive role in spreading the message and encouraging people to get involved.</p> <p><b>WinACC Low Carbon Champions</b> WinACC (Winchester Action on Climate Change) is a Winchester-based coalition of organisations and citizens. It aims to engage with every household and organisation in the Winchester district in meeting the challenge of climate change and realizing the benefits of low carbon living.</p> <p>WinACC encourages and trains Low Carbon Champions. These champions reduce their own carbon footprint as well as supporting others to do the same. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live or work in the Winchester district</li> <li>• Can influence and encourage others to talk about climate change and the benefits of reducing their carbon footprint</li> <li>• Are keen to allocate some time to this for at least a year.</li> </ul>

The training course is led by WinACC's experienced team and consists of an introductory session with four further sessions providing all the information they need to complete their new roles. These are short two-hour sessions and after five weeks the champions are equipped to take up their new role.

The introductory session allows potential champions:

- to find out about the role of a low carbon champion,
- discuss what matters to the individual about climate change, and their own aims and aspirations
- Identify the experiences these champions would bring to the role, along with the skills they will need
- Learn about the support that WinACC offers.

At the end of the course the new low carbon champions will:

- Understand enough about climate change and its causes to feel able to engage with other people
- Know what people can do to reduce carbon emissions and what they themselves plan to do
- Understand how people change their behaviour
- Understand what is expected of low carbon champions and the practical ways that WinACC will support them.

As the WinACC network relies heavily on volunteer support, these champions play a crucial role in enthusing, motivating and supporting individuals and lead by example.

*Bodies involved / implementation*

WinACC

*Timescale:* the training is carried out over a 5 week period, with continual access to support from WinACC beyond this

*Financial framework*

Although WinACC relies heavily on volunteers it works in partnership with a number of local organisations who support their work:

- Winchester City Council
- Hampshire County Council
- University of Winchester
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sustainable Business Partnership
- Peter Symonds College
- Winchester College
- Winchester and Eastleigh Hospital NHS Trust

**Thornhill Community Energy Champions**

*Origin:* Thornhill Energy Focus, a resident empowerment project began in Thornhill, Southampton on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010. The project is funded by Thornhill Plus You and managed by the Radian Group.

The project gives residents better provision and access to affordable warmth in their homes while reducing climate changing carbon emissions through energy saving and improved efficiency – and it also gives both individuals and the community real opportunities to help each other lead the way in saving energy and reducing carbon emissions.

Michele Exton, Community Energy Efficiency Advisor is actively recruiting residents who want to become Community Energy Champions. These champions are being trained so they have the knowledge and confidence to advise and help other residents and reach more people and continue to advise residents in the long term, helping their community to be prepared to face future energy challenge.

tEC is working with Radian and Thornhill Plus you to deliver a number of community activities including short training sessions for these champions to increase their knowledge and confidence in providing advice and support on: understanding bills; reading meters; grants, loans and benefits available (see 10. Best practice transferred).

*Timescale:* the project is running from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011. After this time the champions will assume the role of Community Energy Efficiency Advisor

*Bodies involved*

- Building Research Housing Group/BRE - Retrofit Reality Dimplex
- The Energy Saving Trust
- tEC
- Radian
- Southampton City Council
- Southern Electric
- Sustainable Homes

*Description of training sessions for Community Energy Champions (CECs)::*

The Energy Saving Trust - provided a one day workshop "Finding out about energy" for 13 residents in March within the first week of the project starting. At this stage, there were no Community Energy Champions and this workshop was used to find out the level of interest in the energy

agenda among residents who had other involvement activities - this workshop along with the project launch was where potential Community Energy Champions were identified and recruited.

Dimplex - provided a workshop in June on night storage heating.

tEC - provided 2 workshops in June and are providing 2 more in the Autumn under the TrIsCo project.

Southampton City Council Energy Efficiency Advisor and Michele Exton (Radian) provided one workshop in June and will be providing another in the Autumn.

Radian – Michele commissioned a simulated central heating demo kit made in-house for one workshop. This was made at no charge as it will be used by other Radian staff.

Michele Exton has given residents training in fitting energy monitors and had 2 demo kits made. Community Energy Champions will visit Radian's retrofit open home and other energy efficient housing in Petersfield, Hampshire

Southern Electric - have provided a workshop in July on the Credanet heating system which are installed in SCC owned blocks in Thornhill. Southern Electric is also providing a tour of their Customer Services operations in Havant.

Building Research Housing Group/BRE - Retrofit Reality – 5 Community Energy Champions will have the opportunity to attend a full day a conference and a tour of their Innovations Park in September.

Sustainable Homes – 3 Community Energy Champions will be attending a full day conference on Resident Engagement on Climate Change in London.

*Financial framework:*

Thornhill Energy Focus project is through the Thornhill Plus You initiative part of the New Deals for Communities, a 10 year central government regeneration programme. The Thornhill Energy Focus project is managed by the Radian Group.

A number of these training sessions were provided for free:

- Dimplex
- tEC offering services under the TrIsCo project,
- Radian have created a simulated central heating demo kit and energy monitor demo kit at no cost as

	<p>they will be used by other Radian staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southampton City Council (SCC) who have pooled resources with Radian</li> <li>• Southern Electric as they sub-contracted to maintain this system by SCC who own the blocks of flats in Thornhill, Southampton which have this system installed.</li> </ul> <p>Others have been at low cost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production of 1 demo electricity monitor kits one at £300,</li> <li>• Cost of mini bus hire for trip to Radian retrofit open home (£250)</li> <li>• £500 for bus hire ( for 5 CECs) to tour the BRE Innovation Park</li> <li>• Train travel to attend conference on resident engagement on climate change in London (approx. £1000)</li> </ul> <p><b>Global Action Plan (GAP)- Eco-Teams</b></p> <p>The GAP EcoTeams programme is designed to help households and individuals make improvements across a wide range of activities including energy use, transport, water, waste and shopping.</p> <p>EcoTeams seeks to change consumer behaviour at the community level through education, training and support. The programme gives practical advice and ideas on how to improve household efficiency, reduce environmental impact and save resources.</p>
<p><b>6 Evaluation</b></p>	<p><i>Possible demonstrated results</i> (e.g. through indicators)  By providing training to these champions and asking for feedback on these courses we can determine whether they have increased their knowledge on how to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>. Furthermore the identification and training of champions should help to establish or build on local networks</p> <p><i>Possible success factors</i>  Not only is this knowledge and information transferred to the champions, as they have a proactive role in engaging with their local community this information can be shared with more people. This technique may be of particular use to those with smaller budgets for community engagement activities.</p>

	<p><i>Difficulties encountered</i></p> <p>Champions may try to take on too much responsibility and not delegate enough of the workload. Voluntary groups may experience difficulties in retaining members.</p>
<p><b>7 Lessons learnt from the best practice</b></p>	<p><b>Michele Exton,</b></p> <p>“As a condition of Thornhill Plus You funding for the entire project, I was required to create a workplan and this has been a very important tool as it has enabled me to budget time schedule activities to ensure I maximise on partner working and sharing of resources and cover as many aspects of the project as is possible. This workplan is dynamic and must remain so as organising the scale and variety of activities as is required by a 1 year project has to be flexible to fit in with partners, other organisations and activities.” <b>Michele Exton Community Energy Efficiency Advisor for the Thornhill Energy Focus Project.</b></p>
<p><b>8 Contact information</b></p>	<p>WinACC: <a href="http://www.winacc.org">www.winacc.org</a>  Chris Holloway: <a href="mailto:chris.holloway@winacc.org.uk">chris.holloway@winacc.org.uk</a></p> <p>Thornhill Plus You: <a href="http://www.thornhillplusyou.co.uk/">http://www.thornhillplusyou.co.uk/</a>  Thornhill Energy Focus:  <a href="http://www.thornhillcommunity.co.uk/energyadvisor">www.thornhillcommunity.co.uk/energyadvisor</a>  Michele Exton, Community Energy Efficiency Advisor (email accessible from site above)</p> <p>tEC: <a href="http://www.environmentcentre.com">www.environmentcentre.com</a>  Helen Farley: <a href="mailto:helen.farley@environmentcentre.com">helen.farley@environmentcentre.com</a></p> <p>Global Action Plan:  <a href="http://www.globalactionplan.org.uk/ecoteams">http://www.globalactionplan.org.uk/ecoteams</a>  Eco Teams website: <a href="http://www.ecoteams.org.uk/">http://www.ecoteams.org.uk/</a></p>
<p><b>9 Other possible interesting information</b></p>	<p>- Various documents (reports, presentations, etc.)</p>
<p><b>10. Best practice transferred</b></p>	<p>tEC held two training sessions for Thornhill Community Energy Champions. These champions are active in the local community and will share this knowledge with others. They will also assist in future community roadshows.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Training Session A : Understanding Energy- Bills, Meters and Tariffs</b></p>

## Understanding Your Energy Bills

What is this bill for?

Is this a real meter reading, or has it been estimated? (E, C, A)

Are there any other charges?

For what period am I being charged?

How many units have I used?

How much does each unit cost?

How much do I need to pay?

Keeping track of your budget plan			
	Before this month	This month	Total
Cost of electricity you have used	£178.32	£19.40	£197.72
Your payments	£198.00	£12.00	£210.00
Balance			£12.28

Your monthly Electricity payment	
Net budget plan	£12.00
VAT @ Energy Rate	£0.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>£12.60</b>



Location: Thornhill Date: 24<sup>th</sup> June 2010 Participants: 8

The session focused on helping the champions to understand their utility bills, read gas, electricity and water meters in the homes and have up to date information about the energy efficiency of household appliances.

Attendees benefitted from increased knowledge that could be shared with others. 100% of attendees would recommend the training to other residents and have gained the confidence to advise other residents on the topics covered in the session.

### Training Session B: Grants, Loans and Benefit checks

#### Grants, loans and benefits

##### Session B

- Warm Front – inc. look at website
- Insulation grants
- PUSH
- Home Improvement Agencies
- Renewables – loans (pay as you save) and Feed-In-Tariffs (FITs)
- Benefits advice
- Best electricity tariff – inc. internet search



Location: Thornhill Date: 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010 Participants: 6

The session focused on providing information and advice on grants, benefits and funding available for energy saving measures in the home such as free or discounted loft and

cavity wall insulation, Warm Front Grant (of up to £3,500) for replacement of failed heating systems.

Attendees felt they had increased their knowledge and understanding of what grants are available to help them reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and make their homes more energy efficient. One attendee was particularly interested in how solar panels work and the amount saved through the Feed-in Tariff (FiT).

100% of attendees would recommend the training to other residents and have gained the confidence to advise other residents on the topics covered in the session.