

## Small Change Big Difference week - survey results and analysis

### Survey results:

- 1) **Did you actively take part in Small Change Big Difference (SCBD) week after you registered interest?**

Yes – 88%  
No – 12%

#### Summary:

Most of our respondents were councils that took part in the week by submitting information to us on their actions to include in the campaign. A small number of councils felt that they were not given enough notice to take part in the week, or that a lack of resources was a barrier.

#### Recommendation:

The dates for any future campaign should be widely circulated far in advance and interest gathered. Clear information about what taking part would entail, and the level of resources councils would need to commit should also be supplied.

- 2) **Did you plan any action specifically because of the campaign?**

- 67% - We planned activities because of the campaign
- 23% - We incorporated activities already planned to take place into the campaign
- 10% - Both

Most of our respondents planned activities because of the campaign, but some also chose to incorporate existing activities. Allowing councils to incorporate their existing programme of work made the campaign inclusive and non prescriptive. It should be made clearer to councils that this option is available and exactly what 'taking part in the campaign' entails.

- 3) **What do you feel the benefits were of taking part in the week? (you may choose more than one answer)**

- 48% - opportunity to showcase work that your council is doing to combat climate change
- 48% - it provided an opportunity to communicate with residents about the services available to them locally
- 40% - opportunity to be showcased on the LGA's website
- 36% - it raised the profile of the role of councils in the fight against climate change

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- 28% - Other (see summary below)
- 28% - opportunity to hear what other councils are doing to combat climate change
- 0% - I do not think there were any benefits

## **Summary:**

Councils indicated that the campaign was a useful promotional tool that helped to focus existing efforts on communications to residents, and that councils appreciated the opportunity to have a case study appear on the LGA website.

Some councils chose to use the week to focus on businesses or the council itself. There was a feeling that being part of a national initiative encouraged councils to focus their own campaign work. The amount of councils that felt it promoted the role of councils in general could be increased as this was one of the main aims of the campaign.

## **Recommendation:**

As councils appreciated the opportunity to promote their existing work, this part of the campaign should be strengthened through improving the assistance given to councils, and how the week is promoted. This could be through promotional materials provided in advance, or advice on how to work with the local media, residents or partners.

The web presence of the campaign could also be developed, so that it has more prominence across the LGA group and is easy to navigate around case studies.

The campaign should also strengthen how it increases the profile of councils in the fight against climate change. This could be done with assistance from Public Affairs and media colleagues, through organising an event such as a Smith Square debate which would attract wider interest. The publications which we launched during the week e.g. 'From Kyoto to Crodyon' also served this aim, but could be linked more strongly to the campaign and to the councils taking part so they felt part of this message.

## **4) What would you like to see changed about the way the campaign was run?**

This question was open for councils to suggest changes. Common themes that emerged from the answers were:

- More materials to be provided for councils to use during the week. These to be provided far in advance.
- More clarity about the campaign's aims in general
- National press / PR, better publicity in general.
- A joined up approach across councils – i.e. a common message to use
- Changing the name of the week – the name is used often and for a wide range of messages. One authority also pointed out that it implies that small changes are all that are needed to reduce human impact on climate change. This is a message the public have heard many times before, so loses some of its impact.

## **Recommendation:**

The campaign to be built upon to make it more joined up, targeted and with clear aims and objectives and materials available to help councils take part.

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The campaign this year was non prescriptive in that it did not recommend any specific actions from councils, but allowed them to develop their own ideas to fit in with existing programmes of work. Whilst this meant that councils needed less resources to take part using an existing event or scheme, some felt that they wanted more direction from the LGA with suggestions for events or who to target.

The varied actions also meant that the national aspect of the campaign was weakened as there was no consistent message. As one respondent commented: “It needed to be a more joined up programme – allow each council to do their own thing, but with a common identity and more importantly some agreed key messages/themes”.

**5) A few councils requested further materials to help with their local campaign such as logos, posters and leaflets. What materials would be useful for us to provide you with if the campaign was run again next year?**

The most popular requested items were:

- logos
- posters
- leaflets
- reusable bags
- items that can be given out to residents (e.g. thermometers, canvas bags, light bulbs, badges etc.)
- press releases
- information on good websites, resources etc that councils can direct residents to.

The need to provide councils with more materials was a strong message from respondents. A logo for the campaign and leaflets and posters that councils can make their own should be made available a few months in advance. These could be provided and distributed by the Energy Saving Trust (EST), working with regional EST offices.

Some of the materials suggested to be given out to residents would be costly to produce by the LGA, and the benefit of them should be carefully considered. Some advice for councils on where to get products such as these cheaply could be prepared for free. Tips on working with local media could also be prepared for free by the LGA media team, as could a fact sheet on useful resources for councils and for residents. These resources would help make councils feel they were supported by the LGA in their campaign.

## **Resourcing the campaign across the LGA group and in partnership with EST**

In 2010, the campaign should draw on resources from the LGA group and EST as partners so that the role of the LGA is clearly defined and our efforts can be focused on using the week as a tool for raising the profile of councils in climate change. Suggested roles:

- LGA – coordination of the campaign including publicity and regular contact with councils taking part. Working with media and public relations colleagues to create a national platform for the campaign and feeding this back to councils.

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- EST – producing leaflets, posters, a logo etc that can be circulated to councils taking part (they already have many of these resources). Involve their regional offices.
- IDeA – assistance with providing guidance to councils on good practice and resources available to them. They could also run an event which shares good practice etc among sustainability officers. Running a leadership academy on climate change and feeding the training and feedback from these into the campaign.

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