

## ShowCase

### Seeding Sustainable Communities

**Topic:** Sustainability  
**Organisation:** Peterborough Environment City Trust  
**Location:** Peterborough (East of England)  
**Dates:** March 2005 to March 2008  
**Budget:** £300,000  
**Website:** [www.living-sustainably.org.uk](http://www.living-sustainably.org.uk)  
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### Overview

Seeding Sustainable Communities was a three-year project that sought to introduce environmentally friendly behaviours to new home owners, using the move to a new house as a catalyst for further behavioural changes.

Run by Peterborough Environment City Trust, the project's staff visited new residents to conduct a short Community Survey, before presenting them with a free Sustainable Living Welcome Bag. This bag contained information about environmental issues, information about the local community, and free environmental goods, such as energy efficient light bulbs and Ecover products.

The project also arranged environmental events and activities within the communities, in response to the interests expressed by the residents.

### Results:

950 Community Surveys were conducted on the Hampton and the Sugar Way Estates. Evaluation surveys conducted six months later showed:

- 100 per cent of residents had made lifestyle changes
- 70 per cent had implemented 5 changes or more
- 75 per cent used their car less frequently for short journeys

## 1. BEHAVIOUR

- Increase pro-environmental behaviours amongst residents in new housing estates over a three-year period
- Measured behaviours included:
  - Energy and water efficiency
  - Waste prevention
  - Sustainable travel
  - Eco-purchasing
  - Use of local wildlife reserves

## 2. CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- Face-to-face doorstep survey with residents (Community Survey)
- Consultation with partner organisations who supply or promote environmental services to target communities
- Meeting with local Residents' Associations
- Advice and support tailored to residents' interests and motivations

## 3. THEORY

- **Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour:** Two core factors for specific behaviours – intention and habit. Both influenced by attitudes, social factors and values.

## 4. INSIGHT

- Residents value face-to-face visits and personalised support and information
- Providing products allows immediate behaviour change

## 5. EXCHANGE

- **Motivators:** Role models; Awareness; Access to resources; Personalised, face-to-face information; Continued support and engagement; Provision of free products
- **Barriers:** Perceived expense; Lack of appropriate facilities or space; Inconvenience; Restricted access to resources

## 6. COMPETITION

- Social housing residents – Low prioritisation of environmental issues
- Consumer-driven industries and retailers encouraging people to buy, spend and consume

## 7. SEGMENTATION

- Original target audience – New homeowners living in postcodes PE7 and PE2
- Target audience later broadened to include people living in houses no more than 10 years old

## 8. METHODS MIX

- Home visits, using doorstep surveys to facilitate conversation
- Free Sustainable Living Welcome Bag, containing information and products to enable immediate behaviour changes (e.g. energy saving light bulbs, cloth shopping bag, vegetable seeds)
- Local events and workshops
- Sustainable Living Champions – Acted as community role models and promoters of sustainable living
- Links with Sustrans and Energy Saving Trust – Provided personalised travel guide and Home Energy Checks to interested residents