



## COMMUNITY FUND 2014-15 OUTPUTS SUMMARY

### 1. Introduction

This report presents Members with information on the key outputs and outcomes delivered through the Community Fund for 2014-15.

### 2. Background

At the Authority Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2014, Members approved grants to the total value of £179,629 for 14 Community Fund projects in Merseyside and Halton.

Key outputs were agreed with the successful applicants based on their evaluated submissions and included:

- Estimated tonnages of materials diverted from landfill;
- Reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions; and
- Jobs (Full Time Equivalent).

### 3. Outputs and Outcomes 2014/15

All 14 projects have been successfully delivered and detailed data has been provided which can be found at Table 1. This snapshot provides information up to the end of October 2015 but outputs will continue to be delivered through behavioural change and the continuation of projects after the Community Funding has ended.

Overall reported outputs were:

- **743 tonnes diverted from landfill;**
- **619 tonnes reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions;**
- **159.8 full time equivalent jobs created or safeguarded;**
- **£74,300 financial savings in landfill costs (based on circa £100 per tonne combined landfill tax and indicative gate fees);**

- **27,891 individuals were directly engaged in the projects;**
- **136,940 further people were reached through engagement with families, community groups, schools, businesses and wider social media;**
- **A minimum of 322 volunteers participated in projects.**

A major impact of the Fund in 2014-15 has been the creation or safeguarding of 159 Full Time Equivalent jobs. The projects engaged more people than anticipated, with a total estimated engagement figure of 164,831 residents and 322 volunteers took part across the 14 projects. Over 743 tonnes of waste have been diverted through the 2014-15 projects. Although this fell short of the anticipated output of 1,096 tonnes it is still a significant achievement and reflects the difficulty of estimating waste diversion linked to the impact of public engagement. Waste will continue to be diverted through projects post the formal reporting period. Over 619 tonnes of carbon benefits have also been achieved in line with the level of tonnage diversion.

### **3.1 Key Added Benefits**

Some highlights from the funding programme are:

- Bulky Bobs issued 481 free furniture packs to vulnerable individuals or families in critical need in the region. 1,272 preloved items were donated for re-use and a Free for All event in Liverpool assisted 60 families with 121 furniture items. Bulky Bobs have also worked in partnership with Granby Toxteth Development Trust (GTDT) on a number of community events and have engaged with 75 support agencies in issuing furniture packs;
- Refurbishment of a disused school hall by Tomorrow's Women Wirral (TWW) using reused and recycled materials to create Inspiration Hall, a new community venue in Birkenhead formally opened in April 2015 by the Mayor of Wirral. TWW worked with the Emmaus Merseyside Community Fund project to source items to fit out the hall;
- A local shop refurbished by Villages Housing Association to create a Reuse and Recycling Shop in Stockbridge Village which held 19 community showroom days. Villages have joined the Merseyside Textile Forum as a result of the project and developed links with Emmaus Merseyside and Sefton CVS through reusing unwanted items;
- 2 Community Shops established by Community Action Wirral. Development of a model for creating community shops and joint

working with Sefton CVS to support their approach. Joint working with Faiths 4 Change to provide resources to support volunteers;

- An upcycling workshop set up in Widnes by Groundwork Cheshire's Project UP, working in partnership with Halton Housing, leading to the reuse of 106 furniture items through 20 upcycling workshops with 15 young people. 18 home upcycling projects developed and completed by 192 residents;
- Engagement with non-speakers of English and distribution of 500 kitchen recycling bins to students in Liverpool to improve recycling performance and awareness by the Granby Toxteth Development Trust 'Making L1578 Even Greener' project. Engagement of a wide range of community and statutory organisations including Bulky Bobs and Merseytravel;
- The Sefton Environmental Network project coordinated by Sefton CVS created 25 Volunteer Champions and received 62 entries from Sefton primary schools for a recycling poster exhibition. The project engaged with 3 existing projects, grassroots organisations and primary schools and reached over 24,000 residents in Sefton;
- Over 30 school and community groups attended sewing skills and textile reuse workshops. Each group created a tree for a 'textile forest' displayed as public artwork in high profile locations in July 2015 through the Faiths 4 Change led Eco Resource Network. A Sew Many Trees resource pack was also created to support additional engagement together with the development of pilot 'Sew Good groups' and how these could be developed in future;
- Engagement with people with special educational needs offering training including creation of garden furniture and bird / bat boxes from reused wood. Development of an outdoor environmental education resource at Larkin's Farm available for school and community visits through the Neighbourhood Services Company project;
- Delivery of an 18 week food waste, textile and furniture reuse awareness programme in Wirral including the training of 39 Community Recycling Champions from across 5 ethnic groups. Links have been developed with other Community Fund projects, including The Children's Food Trust and Faiths for Change;
- Development of a new Recycling Superstore by Emmaus Merseyside providing job and training opportunities to homeless people in

recycling, repair and reuse. A film produced to promote the Superstore recently opened in Seaforth was broadcast on Bay TV. Links have been made with Villages Housing Association, Tomorrow's Women Wirral and the Merseyside Textile Forum through the project;

- Community allotments in Knowsley refurbished with reused materials to support increased local food growing and opportunities to offer new skills to allotment members and to teach the next generation of children the importance of home grown food and recycling;
- 20 Mersey Waste Munchers cookery clubs were supported by the Children's Food Trust to increase awareness of food waste and facilitate behavioural change around food shopping and cooking in the home. 12 new coordinators were trained up to lead cookery clubs;
- Ten arts performance workshops at schools, libraries and youth clubs were delivered by UC Crew in St Helens to educate schoolchildren about waste issues in a non-formal setting;
- Increased networking, sharing knowledge and resources between Community Fund organisations;
- Two organisations joined the Merseyside Textile Forum and worked with members to access textiles for their own projects, develop new outlets for materials and benefited from the experience and skills within the Forum.

#### **4. Behavioural Change**

Several projects were able to provide evaluation of the impact of their activities through audits, surveys and feedback. Some examples are:

##### **The 'Too Good to Waste' project (Wirral Change) reported:**

- 100% of the furniture reuse participants will continue to upcycle outside of the sessions, feel encouraged to upcycle more and will repair an item of furniture if it is damaged;
- 100% of food waste awareness participants have made changes in their home to reduce their food waste and will continue this in the future;
- 100% of textile reuse participants will continue to re-use or recycle textiles in the future and 89% will try to reduce the number of unwanted items in the home, repair damaged items and use creative ways to reuse textiles;

- Project participants also showed improvements in their mental health and overall wellbeing assessments.

**The ‘Making L1578 Greener’ project (Granby Toxteth Development Trust) reported:**

- 77% of respondents confirmed they were using the kitchen recycling bin provided and had done so continuously since receiving it and typically filled it 1.9 times a week, recycling an average 5.7kg per household of dry recyclables per week;
- 94% of respondents from activities aimed at an older demographic were interested in recycling and recycled regularly;
- 71% of Trash to Treasure participants from a diverse demographic recycled and expressed an interest in learning more about recycling, whereas only 30% of Waste Not Want Not participants, including a demographic containing students and recent arrivals into the area showed an interest in recycling.

**‘Sew Many Trees’ (Faiths 4 Change) reported:**

- All 24 participant groups have increased their confidence in living more sustainably, including an increased understanding and knowledge of how to reuse textiles.

**Neighbourhood Services Company Ltd reported on their Larkin’s Farm project:**

- Of 22 adults participating in therapeutic employment positions, 100% said they were more aware of the benefits of reuse and recycling;
- 73% stated they were more aware of the range of materials that could be reused or recycled;
- 54% said that they re-used more waste materials in the home.

**Friends of Halsnead Allotment reported:**

- Allotment users have become more knowledgeable about what can be reused and recycled, have developed new skills and had the opportunity to be creative in their use of secondary materials;
- Schoolchildren have learnt about the growing process and the health and environmental benefits of gardening and growing food.

### **‘Mersey Waste Munchers’ (Children’s Food Trust) reported:**

- 100% of club coordinators attending the training rated it as excellent or very good, 100% reported they had developed cooking demonstration skills for healthy recipes which minimise food waste and 100% were confident of including food waste messages into their new club;
- received 8 returned questionnaires from parents or guardians of participants. They reported that since involvement with the project:
  - 75% reported using their Mersey Waste Muncher recipe and activity pack
  - 100% reported planning meals more efficiently
  - 50% reported chilling/freezing leftovers to eat later rather than throwing away
  - 75% reported passing the waste reduction message on to other family members, friends and colleagues
  - 75% stated that they feel they have reduced the overall amount of food wasted since being involved in the project.

Community Fund organisations also provided feedback from stakeholders involved in their projects:

- **Bulky Bobs**

*“Essential service for those who have been rehomed often after a time of crisis”*  
(referral agency);

*“It has made all the difference to them. People who have absolutely nothing at all have really appreciated the furniture provided by Bulky Bobs”* (referral agency).

- **Villages Housing Association**

*“Engagement and a voluntary commitment with tenants is vital to drive projects such as this one forward. I now regularly donate items to help the project to become financially stable; friends and other family members also donate unwanted items”*  
(Villages Housing Association officer);

*“It’s a great project providing good educational values for all volunteers who participate in the project about how much we actually waste and how we can preserve, prevent and resell without going to landfill”* (volunteer).

- **Community Action Wirral**

*“Helped raise a lot of money and awareness of the charity”.*

- **Faiths 4 Change**

*“It surprised us all when we learnt about the vast shortage of landfill and also the tonnage of textiles that are sent to landfill to every day. The children asked ‘what will happen when landfill runs out?’ They realised that this is an issue that their generation must find a solution to”* (primary school teacher);

*“Making the tree encouraged members of the group, who had not previously worked together, to use their different skills. They bonded in a common cause to use old fabrics and old yarns – each finding themselves inspired by the work of others”.*

- **Neighbourhood Services Company**

The project reported that most participants found the project was well delivered and directly relevant to both the local community and local businesses. Very positive feedback was received on how the project contributed to the expansion of environmental education activities at Larkins Farm.

- **Wirral Change**

*“I have never painted in my life but his course enabled me to be confident enough to handle a brush and the techniques used in painting. Thoroughly enjoyed it. Looking forward to the next course”* (furniture participant);

*“I have gained a lot of knowledge from this course and it has saved me money and time”* (food waste participant);

*“I found it very enjoyable to learn a new skill and plan to display my wall hanging at home and possibly make some more”* (textiles participant).

- **Friends of Halsnead Allotment**

*“Enabled our group to make our allotment an environmentally friendly site where we can recycle, not least rainwater and other commodities but where children can learn the importance of recycling and the effect on the environment”* (allotment member);

*“I am very pleased with how our allotment site has been improved, we have begun to recycle even more and have become more self-sufficient”* (allotment member).

- **Children’s Food Trust**

*“the training made me very aware of waste and I will be more aware of how to include leftovers in everyday meals”* (cookery club coordinator).

## 5. Awareness and Education

MRWA and the Authority’s PR agency DHA Communications provided support to Community Fund applicants to help spread the message about their projects and successes achieved over the year. These included:

- Two communications workshops;
- Community Fund logo and dedicated website presence on the MRWA website;
- Increasing social media coverage through Twitter and Facebook, and;
- One to one support for projects in developing media opportunities.

Most of the 14 projects delivered a range of communications, promotion and publicity through either media releases or outreach and engagement. Between May 2014 and May 2015 there were 65 media appearances for Community Fund projects in 29 publications across Merseyside and Halton and further afield.

## **6. Legacy**

The majority of the projects will be continuing in some form beyond the Community Funding they have received:

- FRC / Bulky Bobs will continue to provide free furniture packages to families living in crisis, as finances allow, and will continue to seek funding opportunities to support the project and meet the high demand for the service;
- Inspiration Hall created by Tomorrow's Women Wirral is available for hire by the community and other organisations and will bring an additional source of income into the charity;
- Villages Housing Association are continuing the Stockbridge Reuse and Recycling Shop and re-investing income from shop sales into the shop to extend activities where possible. Further volunteers have been trained and funds are being sought to secure the facility for residents;
- Wirral Change have secured support from the Community Fund 2015-16 for further engagement with their communities and a focus on textile reuse and repair skills;
- Community Action Wirral will share their experience of developing community shops with colleagues from other CVS organisations in the city region to support and encourage their thinking in developing this type of resource. Development will continue towards opening the two remaining shops in the Donate and Create Change project and to extend the range of services and activities at each shop in the context of local needs;



- Project UP has secured support from the Community Fund 2015-16 to extend its work across Merseyside and Halton to deliver upcycling workshops in all six Districts;
- Granby Toxteth Development Trust has secured support from the Community Fund 2015-16 to continue its work in engaging residents on recycling and waste issues and has embedded this activity into its wider community engagement. Future recycling engagement will include a focus on reducing contamination of dry recyclables collected for sorting at the Gillmoss MRF;
- Sefton CVS through the Sefton Environment Network will create a 2016 calendar showcasing the project and creating a platform for continued messages about waste prevention, reuse and recycling;
- Faiths 4 Change and the Eco Resource Network have piloted 'Sew Good' groups which are resourced to support the growth of textile reuse and repair skills in the community;
- Neighbourhood Services Company will continue to develop the environmental education resource at Larkin's Farm and extend this to Home Farm for the benefit of local schools and community groups;
- Emmaus Merseyside has secured support from Community Fund 2015-16 and will continue to develop the Recycling Superstore. Sales proceeds will support the operation of the new Emmaus 28-bed homeless hostel facility located close to the Superstore;
- The Friends of Halsnead allotments will continue to develop their allotments and reuse of materials, whilst educating local schoolchildren on the benefits of home food growing, reuse, composting and recycling;
- UC Crew will develop commitment contracts with schools and community organisations in future projects to improve buy-in from partners, and;
- The Children's Food Trust will be delivering cookery courses as part of WRAP's Love Food Hate Waste 10 City Challenge.

## 7. Conclusions

MRWA and Veolia have provided small scale grants but the 14 Community Fund projects have delivered large scale benefits to our local communities. These grants have enabled local organisations and communities to reduce the environmental impacts of waste but also demonstrate the social and economic value to the City Region that resource efficiency and community empowerment can offer. Projects have engaged with over 164,000 people to raise awareness of sustainable resource management and to make changes in thinking and behaviours of residents, schools and businesses.

Over 743 tonnes of waste have been avoided or diverted from landfill with the related savings to the Authority in avoided landfill tax and the benefit of reducing carbon emissions. The schemes have made better use of resources, improved local environments, increased volunteering and supported vulnerable families. There have also been added benefits to the City Region economy through increasing skills, creating and safeguarding jobs and by helping families to make financial savings.

Organisations new to the Community Fund can find it difficult to estimate the impact of their public engagement on waste diversion, but this can improve with experience of reporting on this output. Projects have demonstrated their strength and enthusiasm in engaging residents and creating job, training and volunteer opportunities with the positive social impacts this can bring.

Appendix – Some Images of Community Fund 14-15 Projects

Picture: Faiths for Change, Sew Many Trees launch Liverpool, June 2015



**Picture: Emmaus Merseyside Recycling Superstore, Seaforth, Sefton, September 2014**



**Picture: Children's Food Trust Mersey Waste Munchers, Bank View High School, Liverpool, December 2014**



**Picture: Friends of Halsnead Allotment demonstrating reuse of materials, Knowsley, April 2015**



Picture: Wirral Change textiles reuse workshop, Birkenhead, Wirral, February 2015



**Pictures: Tomorrows Women Wirral** refurbishing disused school hall, Birkenhead, Wirral, February 2015 and Inspiration Hall Opening April 2015

