

Community Recycling Champions Project Synopsis.

Project Objectives

1. To recruit a team of volunteer community Recycling Champions in each of the City's identified Low Performing Areas
2. To provide training and support to community Recycling Champions so that they are able to effectively carry out their role
3. To raise community understanding of the importance of recycling and the broader environmental issues
4. To reduce the amount of waste going to landfill sites through increased participation in recycling schemes and increased recycling tonnage
5. To reduce the overall amount of waste generated by Cambridge City households

Methodology

Funded through the Cambridge City LSP, the project will be the responsibility of a dedicated Recycling Champions Coordinator who has been appointed for a period of two years, commencing July 2009.

The drive to recruit Recycling Champions will be conducted in two ways – a general invitation for anyone who is interested across the City; and more targeted interventions aimed at recruiting champions specifically from identified Low Performing Areas.

The first areas to be targeted will be King's Hedges and Abbey. Both have been identified as Low Performing Areas and both have recently had a number of community recycling points installed servicing local houses and flats. Opportunities are therefore already in place in these areas for achieving improved levels of recycling prior to the roll out of the blue bins in November. The fact that the recycling points were installed as the result of a consultation process indicates that there may already be a willingness and openness on the part of some discreet communities (e.g. blocks of flats) to recycle more.

Focusing on smaller areas initially also allows limited resources to be targeted more effectively, thereby improving the chances of a positive outcome.

Once established in these areas, the Recycling Champions scheme will be rolled out across the remainder of the City, although additional focus will remain on Low Performing Areas.

Residents recruited onto the scheme will be provided with training and an introductory pack containing information about the scheme, guidance on recycling issues and a 'contract' of commitment with the City Council. It is important to stress that individuals recruited will not be employees of the Council and will be working in a purely voluntary capacity within their own community.

The City Council has a Volunteer Policy that will be broadly applied in respect of the duty of care that needs to be exercised. Recycling Champions, however, will not be undertaking roles that the policy was intended to cover.

As a distinction, 'Volunteers' as envisaged by the policy are people who represent and work directly for the benefit of the Council and under its direct supervision.

Community Recycling Champions, on the other hand, will be representing and working for the benefit of their own community, with guidance and support provided by the Council.

All Recycling Champions will be asked to attend an initial training event which will cover reduce, reuse, recycle and composting, together with an overview of what the project is aiming to achieve. Once trained, each individual will be asked to commit to a period of activity within their own community that will assist in achieving project outcomes. That activity may include leaflet drops, displaying posters, face-to-face contact with neighbours, presentations to community groups and attending local events. Recycling Champions will be provided with identification that will 'authenticate' their role and any support material required.

As a part of their 'commitment', Champions will be asked to keep a log of activity, which will be submitted to the Recycling Champions Coordinator at the end of each month. When collated, these logs will provide important information in respect of progress of the project and therefore the likelihood (or otherwise) of success. They will also inform need for any further intervention in identified communities, and the future direction of the project in terms of what approaches are working or not working.

The Recycling Champions Coordinator will maintain a database of the details of all Recycling Champions and will be responsible for providing ongoing support, advice and assistance. This support will include the production of a quarterly newsletter, and the facilitation of Champions' meetings where experiences can be shared.

Management Information

Success of the project will be measured using the following criteria, collated on a monthly and rolling basis.

- Number of Champions 'recruited'
- Training provided
- Hours of Champion activity
- Number of people contacted/residents spoken to by a Champion

Additionally, broader measures will be in place in respect of the wider management of the project:

- Resolutions achieved (i.e. where issues are raised by community members and successfully resolved either by the Champion, Coordinator or other party)
- Production of a quarterly newsletter
- Ongoing costs via a budget spreadsheet

Progress of the project will be fed back to the Waste Strategy Officer via a quarterly report submitted by the Recycling Champions Coordinator and the completion of the Cambridge City LSP quarterly project monitoring form.