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# Community Engagement & Sustainable Development

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# Community Engagement and Sustainable Development

November 2007



Welcome to the second edition of CESD News, the monthly newsletter for participants in the Community Engagement and Sustainable Development (CESD) research project. Each issue will have updates on the research project, stories from the organisations involved and opportunities for networking between participants. Our big news is that we have now over **thirty** organisations signed up to take part providing a research pool of over 40 projects.

We are getting very positive feedback from those involved; as one participant noted "*The tool has really helped me get my head around evaluation*".

IN THIS ISSUE WE INCLUDE A FEATURE ON PROJECTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

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### 1. Message from CAG

"CAG Consultants are delighted to continue to be involved in this work, the development of this tool has been an exciting journey from the start. We can't hope to have all the answers, but this research will help us to become better informed about what can work. Thought applying this knowledge we can all step up to the climate challenge through more effective work with communities."

Emma Cranidge,  
Director CAG Consultants  
[www.cagconsultants.co.uk](http://www.cagconsultants.co.uk)



### 2. Behaviour change

It's worth checking out the Defra web-site:

<http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/government/task-forces/behaviour-change.htm>.

This is a comprehensive site that promotes and supports policymakers deliver sustained behavioural change. It has links to key papers as well as case studies. There is also a comprehensive overview of the key issues in behaviour change and their implications for policy makers and practitioners.

### 3. Celine Horner, Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland

“Nine of the Irish organisations that have signed up to use the CESD tool are part of the Local Authority Demonstration Programme, which is funded by the National Waste Prevention Programme and administered by the Environmental Protection Agency. The LAPD Programme provides funding, training, and technical support from the Clean Technology Centre in Cork to Local Authorities to implement prevention and resource efficiency programmes.

Ireland has gone from an almost 100% reliance on landfill in the early 1990s to the achievement of national municipal waste recycling in 2005 -eight years ahead of schedule. If the transition from landfill to recycling was a turn around, moving from recycling to prevention is a culture shift.

The turnaround was achieved in no small part by Local Authorities who proactively engaged with their publics and provided improved infrastructure for recycling. LAPD Programme calls on Local Authorities to assist in bringing about the required shift to Prevention. Participating local authorities are working with a range of organisations from factories to schools and from shopping centres to farms. By achieving prevention in these organisations the programme will build a diversity of case studies that can be replicated and a network of local authority prevention experts.

Mindful that we were getting into the nebulous territory of attitudinal and behaviour change we decided to trawl experts in field. We contacted Dr Anna Davies, of Trinity College Dublin, who has done some research on attitudes and actions with regard to waste management in Ireland, and it was through her that we heard of the WWF CESD tool.

Although there are differences in the statistics that are available for Ireland we are hoping that the CESD tool will prove useful in charting the changes in attitude that result from the intervention of the local authorities involved in the project, we are also looking forward to fruitful engagement with other projects taking part in the research”.

### 4. Monaghan County Council Local Authority Prevention Demonstration Project (LAPD)

LAPD involves many sectors of the community in County Monaghan, Rep. of Ireland. The project is funded by the Irish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Monaghan County Council focuses on preventing waste at source. The project team is working with a number of sectors public sector institutions, agriculture sector, households, businesses and schools.



Prevention is usually defined as the most desirable form of waste management but in County Monaghan the project team is taking a more holistic approach, defining it as any action taken to limit harmful environmental effects. So some resources have gone into energy and water management.

Considerable progress has been made on developing prevention policies in three hospitals in the County, on farms and in houses. Less progress has been made in the business sector, but it is hoped that grants from the EPA for the Cleaner Greener Production Programme will help some businesses particularly manufacturing in County Monaghan deliver prevention projects.



The project team has identified barriers to prevention including: a lack of understanding of the issues, lack of flexibility in working practices, central procurement and disposable nature of a lot of products. However a number of incentives have been identified including: financial incentives – prevention pays, feel good factor and better working environment.

The LAPD project will continue in County Monaghan until end of 2008 and it is hoped that at that stage prevention will be part of an integrated approach to environmental protection in County Monaghan.

For more information contact [noconnor@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:noconnor@monaghancoco.ie) or visit [www.monaghan.ie](http://www.monaghan.ie) and [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)

#### 5. Sustainable communities – skill shortages



The idea of a sustainable community has come a long way since it was first mentioned by John Prescott in 2003. (In Sustainable communities: Building for the future). This report set out how the government planned to tackle the need for more affordable housing and improve the quality of urban and rural neighbourhoods, within the framework of sustainable development.

The following year the Egan Review defined sustainable communities as those which “met the diverse needs of existing and future residents, their children and other users, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice.

They achieve this in ways that make effective use of natural resources, enhance the environment, promote social cohesion and inclusion and strengthen economic prosperity.”

A number of professionals are involved in ensuring sustainable communities, but a recent study (Mind the Skills Gap, a report from the Academy for Sustainable Communities) identified a gap in the number of skilled workers.

The report noted that organisational culture must evolve, and that talented people need a supportive organisation. It also identified a lack of generic skills among the sustainable communities workforce, especially project management and financial management. Too few organisations had well-qualified staff with a range of generic skills needed to deliver sustainable communities.

### Contact details

If you have any comments about the newsletter, are interested in finding out more, or would like to submit a case study for a future issue, please email [sheila.colman@virgin.net](mailto:sheila.colman@virgin.net).

We also hope to include all the contact details for the projects, if you don't want us to include you, please let us know. Thanks.

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