

Community Sustainability Initiatives

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Project Overview

- Origins
 - Big Lottery; Transition Harborough
- Project scope
 - Adaptation and Mitigation
- DMU Roles
 - Action Research
 - Monitoring and Evaluation
- Project Activities
 - Original and in practice



Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Challenges

- Focus on countable change
- Implementation in voluntary sector – time, value?
- Validity
 - Measuring change in a complex system?
 - Claiming and apportioning credit?
- M&E impacting on delivery
 - “What gets measured gets done”

Intended Outcomes

Outcome 1	Improve knowledge and skills on sustainable living amongst the local community, and increase public support and participation in activities to improve local sustainability
Outcome 2	Bring about practical action and behaviour change to reduce the environmental impact and carbon emissions of local households, businesses and schools
Outcome 3	Increase the resilience of the local community to environmental change, through increased community use of local natural resources and assistance for vulnerable people to manage changes in the local environment and increasing food and fuel costs.
Outcome 4	Establish local enterprises that harness local resources and increase local trade to sustain and develop the local economy.
Outcome 5	Preserve and improve biodiversity throughout the community, including public and private spaces and the River Welland.
Outcome 6	Improve and disseminate knowledge across UK communities on how to improve sustainability in an average-sized UK market town, targeting Market Towns in particular

Outcomes and Indicators

- Six intended outcomes
- Up to three Indicators for each
 - e.g. Carbon emission savings; no. household energy efficiency interventions; no. volunteers taking part; no. people reporting learning
 - Including estimate of how much over five years of project

“Indicators are signs that the change or difference is happening and they help you to see if your project is being effective” Big Lottery

- Indicators or Targets?

Research Aim

Evaluate the impact of Sustainable Harbborough during its first two years

Consider influence of distinct aspects of project:

- Partnership
- Local approach
- “Enabling” approach
- Professionalisation
- Market Town setting

Methodology

Complementary Methods

- Outcomes and Indicators
- Capacity Building (Middlemiss and Parrish 2010)

Data Sources

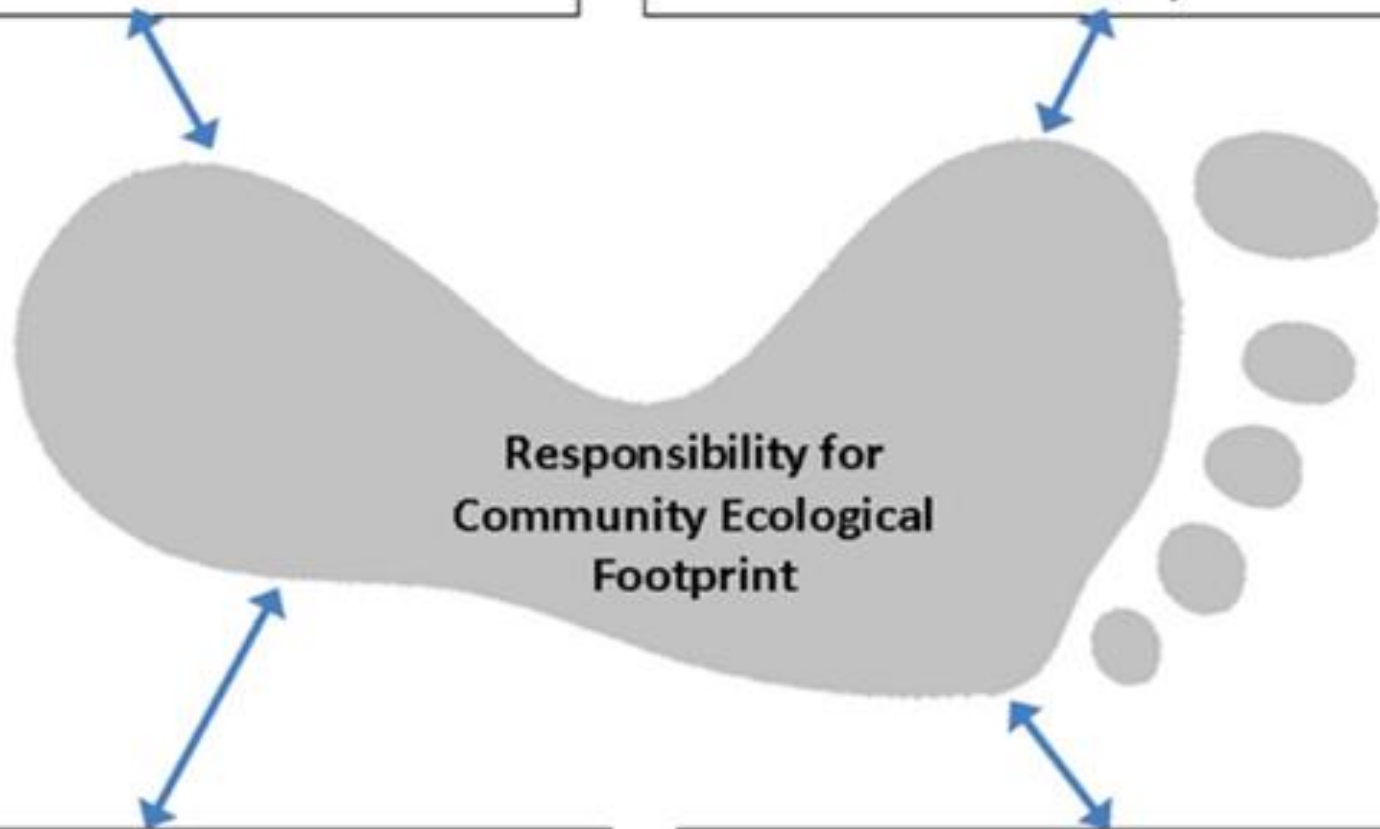
- Project documents
- Action Research meetings (quarterly/monthly)
- Interviews with project team and board

Cultural Capacity

Legitimacy of sustainability objectives in light of the history and values of a community.

Organisational Capacity

Values of the organisations active within a community and resulting support available for community action.



**Responsibility for
Community Ecological
Footprint**

Infrastructural Capacity

Provision of facilities for sustainable living by government, business and community groups.

Personal Capacity

Members' resources for community sustainability (e.g. understanding, skills, values, enthusiasm).

Themes observed so far

- Early stage of data analysis
- Issues
 - Low figures for countable indicators
 - Validity of counting (e.g. 250+ reporting learning)
 - Framing as “targets”
 - Capacity framework rings true with staff
 - Predominantly building relationships (adding to existing theory)
 - Two years still early for measurable impacts
- Next steps
 - Further interviews/surveys; analysis against key themes