

**Environmental Reference Group Meeting Minutes  
17 August 2010 Committee Room 1, Wellington City Council**

**Present:**

Peter Gilbert  
Marc Slade  
Sarah Free  
Tushara Kodikara  
Claire Graeme  
Bev Abbott

**WCC Officers:**

Zach Rissel (Policy)

**Apologies**

Nigel Smith (Youth Council) -  
resigned  
Mel Cutler – resigned  
Nick Potter – resigned  
Kathryn Maxwell  
Hamish Allardice (Co-chair)  
Sea Rotmann (Co-chair)  
Phil Hancock  
Mike Ennis  
Philip Mladenov  
Councillor Wade-Brown  
Councillor Ionna Pannett

**Agenda**

1. Regional Waste Assessment
2. Engaging households on sustainability (session 2)
3. Environmental Performance Measures (session 1)

**Minutes from June meeting**

Minutes of the 21 June meeting confirmed with minor change noting Marc Slade's absence.

**Regional Waste Assessment report**

The item was pulled do to content of the first draft of the assessment. The item will be re-scheduled and a more detailed assessment is completed by consultants.

**Engaging households on sustainability (session 2)**

Zach Rissel ran a follow-up session from the previous week on how to engage households and communities on sustainability issues. This session looked at how to make better use of the personal and professional networks of the ERG with the aims of:

- Providing information to households and groups on how to take practical steps at home
- Providing information to community groups on how to utilize Council grants
- Understanding key questions, concerns and priorities of households and the community and identifying whether existing programmes can address those needs.

The feedback included:

- Sarah Free

- could utilize the e-newsletter of the Sustainability Trust
- the Trust sends out an email newsletter to schools, some have indicated that they want to engage the parents with the newsletter
- the Trust has established networks with refugee services (linked with the curtain bank) – refugee groups are more interested in immediate, practical solutions (e.g. discounted goods or services) rather than engaging in higher-level discussions
- Sarah also belongs to a Baptist church and there could be opportunities to work with the minister and church leadership group to bring messages to the congregation
- In terms of barriers that Sarah has identified in the community, the biggest is obviously costs but the next biggest is the confidence to make the change
- As an aside, the curtains are free for Community Service Card holders
- Large, more affluent homes use the most energy so this could possibly be a target audience
- People are motivated by safety in numbers.
- Peter Gilbert
  - Quick, home checks that provide holistic advice and audits would be ideal. These could cover advice from energy efficient lighting to smoke alarms.
  - Noted that this service already exist with groups like the Sustainability Trust, Right House and EnergySmart – the Trust charges \$50 for Community Service Card holders and \$100 for everyone else
  - Possible to make the above offer more visible to “the converted” (those that are very keen on sustainability) or those who have higher disposable incomes.
  - A subsidized plumber for people that have leaky taps etc would be very useful. Bev noted that this was one of the recommendations from the Water Conservation Work that Bryan Smith was looking into.
  - Churches bring people together. Ministers are the key points of contacts. Gave an example of how his wife’s church linked with the Owhiro Bay planting group. This should be a key target audience.
- Bev Abbot
  - Brought up the idea of involving property managers of churches to focus on the church property as well.
  - A pilot was brought up that could potentially use funding from EECA/WCC that would involve conducting an audit, involving volunteer tradesman from the congregation.
  - It could also be used as a stepping stone to connect with elderly members of the church and targeting the wider congregation.
- Claire Graeme
  - Crèches are a good place to start. Not for getting to parents but converting the crèche to more sustainable practices.

- Claire also promoted using the EnviroSchools programme more pro-actively.
- Both Claire and Peter identified landlords as key audience members. The group discussed how difficult it was to engage landlords and the concept of a “green rentals” rating system was discussed. Marc commented that the rating system could mirror the backpacker rating system that exists around NZ. Follows a model of ‘rate my flat’. Could allow potential tenants to view rental properties in terms of heating, insulation, comfort, energy efficiency and other measures.
- Marc Slade
  - Play-centres (like crèches) could be effective audiences because they are collectives.
  - Transition Towns could potentially be a useful target audience where we try to get members to make personal, voluntary commitments.

### **Key ideas for follow-up**

- 1. Promoting ‘home checks’ or the home-energy advice service to higher income families or those that are ‘converted’.**
- 2. Run a case-study with a church where an energy audit is conducted and then the audit could lead to energy savings measures. If successful, use the case-study to promote the same model to other churches. This could be a possibility for Sarah Free’s church. Zach to have to check with Grants Team to ensure transparency with engaging churches with the grants process.**
- 3. Work with churches to promote the home-energy advice service, curtain bank and the insulation programme to the congregations.**
- 4. Investigate the concept of the “green renters” rating system. What would it rate? Who would be responsible for administering it? What are risks/issues?**
- 5. Work more closely with crèches/play-centres/schools (EnviroSchools) to promote resource efficiency on site but also as a stepping stone to families.**
- 6. Get ‘converted’ groups such as Transition Towns to make meaningful, voluntary commitments to specific measures at home.**