

**EXTERNAL EVALUATION  
OF THE COMMUNITY FUTURES PROGRAMME  
AT TRAFFORD HALL/NATIONAL COMMUNITIES RESOURCE  
CENTRE  
MARCH 2010-DECEMBER 2011**

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## **SUMMARY OF THE LSE EVALUATION OF THE TRAFFORD HALL *COMMUNITY FUTURES* CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME 2010-2011**

The Trafford Hall Community Futures capacity building initiative is an innovative, practical residential training and small-grants programme which aims to assist community volunteers in creating environmentally, economically and socially sustainable ‘community futures’. It does so by fusing local ingenuity with hands-on skills training to help low-income citizens throughout England and Wales overcome severe resource constraints, strengthen social cohesion and improve overall quality of life. The programme began in March 2010 and is developed and organised by Trafford Hall, home of the National Communities Resource Centre. It is funded entirely by The Tudor Trust. This is an evaluation of the programme’s activities and impacts during its first 22 months.

### **Key Findings**

- Thus far, the Programme has delivered on its aims and objectives of organising affordable, informative and useful residential learning events on community resilience topics for youth and adults from a wide range of educational backgrounds and income levels.
- Nearly 350 people from around 200 communities throughout England and Wales have participated in 20 Communities Futures courses on: organic vegetable, fruit and wildlife gardening; raising chickens and bees in low-income urban contexts; saving money by reducing home energy usage; recycling; greening derelict spaces; and fundraising for environmental actions.
- On horticultural topics, the courses effectively target beginner-to-intermediate-level learners from disadvantaged urban backgrounds. More advanced learners turned to the Royal Horticultural Society or DEFRA for support.
- The Programme uses an innovative Training-First model, which links residential action-focused training to small grants to help people implement their ideas.
- 31 urban and 7 rural groups have received £12,520 to launch 45 action projects, the majority of them focused on starting or expanding community allotments, community chicken- and beekeeping schemes.
- The grant amount (up to £300) was found appropriate by applicants.

- Take-up of the grant fund was slower than take-up of the training scheme, because groups either lacked the capacity to apply, already had adequate funding from other sources, or did not think their project fitted.
- The Programme targets low-income residents. A few higher-income participants from local community and environmental groups also attended.
- Decreased public funding, difficulty in motivating and sustaining initiative among community members and local administrators, and lack of time were cited as the most pressing broader challenges for community volunteers.
- Uncertain land tenure and lack of fencing for gardens were the biggest challenges for volunteers engaged in community allotments projects.
- Horticulture, caring for animals and creative re-use of materials and land had therapeutic benefits for participants of all ages. Growing and preparing food has been effective in bringing people from all ages, cultural backgrounds and walks of life together.
- Impacts include an increased interest among young people in horticulture and in growing one's own food; greater appreciation of nature; a willingness to buy fewer mass-produced items from chain shops; improved intergenerational relationships; and stronger trust between neighbours.

### **Participants' Key Recommendations for Trafford Hall**

- Shorten the length of the training days so that activities do not extend past the evening meal, as by then course participants are too tired to fully concentrate.
- Expand the courses by one day to make the pace more manageable.
- When there are younger learners, host games after dinner to help them burn off energy and be more focused for the next day's class.
- Have a short information session on the grant-seeking process at the end of the first day.
- Consider strengthening the technical aspects of courses instead of the community development component.
- Consider offering new courses on topics mentioned in page 30 of this report.
- Host a networking and sharing event for Community Futures trainers to exchange lessons learnt and best practices.
- Improve lighting and signage on the carriageway from the main road to the entrance of Trafford Hall.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### ***Background***

In the wake of the recent global economic downturn, low-income communities throughout Britain have become particularly vulnerable to global warming and other adverse climate changes. Persuading Britons to amend their lifestyles in ways that would lower greenhouse gas emissions has been acknowledged as crucial to securing a more sustainable future during a period of increasing job insecurity, rising food and fuel costs and growing inequalities in environmental, social and economic conditions.

Although policy instruments such as environmental taxes have been proposed to curtail carbon emissions at the household level, studies indicate that such levies are likely to impact poorer households especially severely, as they already pay significantly more per unit for energy use and waste collection than do more affluent residents<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, 'green' fiscal measures alone may not improve deeply entrenched social and relational imbalances in communities that are experiencing multiple deprivations. While the 2011 Localism Act promises to devolve greater autonomy to social housing residents and the local authorities and community organisations working on their behalf, the extent to which environmental concerns are effectively integrated throughout local public service delivery mechanisms remains unclear.

Within this context, the Community Futures Programme has been created by the National Communities Resource Centre, a community capacity building charity, to help residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods develop greater social, economic and ecological resilience through community self-help. The Programme aims to assist community volunteers in creating sustainable 'community futures', by fusing local ingenuity with practical skills training to help low-income residents overcome severe resource constraints, strengthen social cohesion and improve overall quality of life.

### ***About this report***

This report is about the operations, outcomes and impacts of the Community Futures training and small grants programme funded by the Tudor Trust and developed and organised by Trafford Hall, home of the National Communities Resource Centre. The author, a former MSc student at the London School of Economics, has been asked to evaluate the Community Futures training and grants portfolio from an independent position.

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony Giddens, 'The Politics of Climate Change: National Responses to the Challenge of Global Warming', *Policy Network Paper*, London UK, September 2008. Available at: [http://www.policy-network.net/uploadedFiles/Publications/Publications/The\\_politics\\_of\\_climate\\_change\\_Anthony\\_Giddens.pdf](http://www.policy-network.net/uploadedFiles/Publications/Publications/The_politics_of_climate_change_Anthony_Giddens.pdf)

The following report assesses how Trafford Hall's model of intensive short residential training and small follow-on grants impacts social and environmental resilience in vulnerable communities. It seeks to identify any linkages between the action grants, small-scale self-help initiatives and wider impacts in communities. It examines the following:

- Content of the environmental resilience training programme;
- Communities targeted by the Community Futures programme;
- Why participating organisations chose to apply or not apply for action grants;
- Types of projects implemented by grantees;
- Quality of learning experience and applied social outcomes among participants, both those who received action grants and those who did not.

The findings and recommendations of this report are relevant for Government, funding bodies, tenants and residents of social housing areas, councils, registered social landlords, housing associations, and all organisations engaged in urban regeneration, sustainable urban agriculture, conservation and environmental public health initiatives in fragile communities.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This report examines Community Futures programme activities from their inception in March 2010 through to December 2011. Data informing this report was gathered from:

- Funding proposals and interim monitoring reports to the Tudor Trust
- Proceedings from three consultative meetings held in autumn 2009 and summer 2011
- Inventories of Community Futures courses offered and records of attendance
- Written participant evaluations of course content and delivery
- Standard tender for trainers and sample course curricula
- Lists of Community Futures action grants applied for and awarded
- Project and financial monitoring information submitted by grantees
- Print and online programme marketing collateral
- Previous evaluations of other Trafford Hall capacity building programmes, such as Making Things Happen (1999-2003) and Making Communities Work (2008-2010)

Using stratified and snowball sampling, semi-structured interviews were conducted in person and over the telephone with over 80 key informants, including Trafford Hall administrators and advisors, Community Futures course trainers, participants and grantees, housing association representatives, and including community members who had not themselves attended Community Futures courses but who were aware of projects in their locality. Informants were selected to reflect the geographic and urban/rural diversity of where course attendees and grantees live. Whilst categories of ethnicity, age and gender among participants have been noted when information was available, they do not form the primary frames of analysis for this evaluation. Quantitative data on courses, grants and selected demographic information on grantees was tabulated using Excel. Most of the data examined for this report is qualitative and was analysed manually, with the assistance of NVivo8 software.

32 out of 38 grantee organisations were interviewed. A paper questionnaire was also sent out to 86 course participants who had attended courses but whose organisations had not subsequently applied for action grants. Representatives of 8 organisations submitted responses; the low response to the postal survey was as expected and was followed up with an extensive telephone survey. A total of 21 non-grantee organisations provided information on their experience of Community Futures trainings and subsequent impacts in their communities. Additionally, the author observed three residential training courses and conducted both formal and informal interviews with course instructors and participants. Site visits were made to projects launched by two grantee organisations (Coventry, London) and one applicant (Liverpool).

## **THE COMMUNITY FUTURES PROGRAMME**

### ***Trafford Hall and the National Communities Resource Centre***

Trafford Hall is a 250-year-old, Grade II listed and environmentally retrofitted Georgian manor house set on 14 acres of organically managed gardens and native woodland near Chester. As a Green Dragon Level 4-certified conference facility, it is also the home of the National Communities Resource Centre, a national charity that for the past 15 years has offered dedicated residential training and support to over 100,000 community leaders working on the front lines in Britain's poorest communities. The Centre describes its mission as the empowerment of disadvantaged groups and individuals to tackle local problems, 'creating solutions to tough problems that lift the sights of participants'. Its peaceful, therapeutic environment provides a tranquil setting for community groups to take stock of their experiences, learn new skills and share different approaches to common challenges. Its staff members also maintain a strong commitment to making all delegates feel welcome and comfortable, not only through the use of wheelchair friendly ramps and lifts but especially through staff interactions with delegates. Many course participants are disabled or have special health conditions, and others are not accustomed to being away from their families and homes overnight. Course participants that come to Trafford Hall from severely deprived conditions particularly appreciate efforts made to make them feel comfortable and included.

Moreover, Trafford Hall describes itself as 'a living demonstration of how to become more sustainable', wherein visitors can experience how fresh organic produce cultivated in onsite allotments or on nearby smallholder farms is creatively prepared in the kitchen; how low-intensity light bulbs, recycled newspapers and thermal linings conserve energy usage; and how biomass and solar heating can effectively warm guest rooms. The intentional absence of televisions in the guest rooms encourages course delegates to enjoy the grounds and to mingle in the lounge. These touches expose participants to elements of an eco-friendly and localism-driven ethos, which participants may or may not be familiar with upon first arrival.

The residential nature and community ethos of Trafford Hall's training itinerary promotes strong networking among participants and enables them to establish supportive relationships across the country. The training content and methodology promotes practical analysis and pro-active, collaborative and community-driven self-help. These qualities make Trafford Hall's capacity development methodology distinct from other community mobilisation workshops that are more typically held in large hotel franchises. It is hoped that Community Futures delegates come away from training courses feeling re-energised to tackle some of the harshest, most intractable problems in their communities.

### ***Community Resilience***

Before its official launch in the spring of 2010, the Community Futures Programme had been at least five years in the making. Intense concern among Trafford Hall's Directors over the urgency of assisting low-income communities to effectively cope with the effects of climate change and economic recession prompted Trafford Hall staff to consider what models of resilience these communities found most meaningful. They concluded that:

*Community resilience requires the ability to respond positively to challenges and change, to cope with shocks and pull together in solving new problems such as rising energy and food costs, actual shortages, loss of home based skills and shortages of work and income.*

The following model (Table 1) was proposed as a way of linking Trafford Hall's environmental and social goals through a training and grants programme aimed at helping low-income urban and rural communities acquire the practical knowledge and confidence to implement innovative action plans in sustainable living and community resilience.

# Community Resilience

## Target Groups

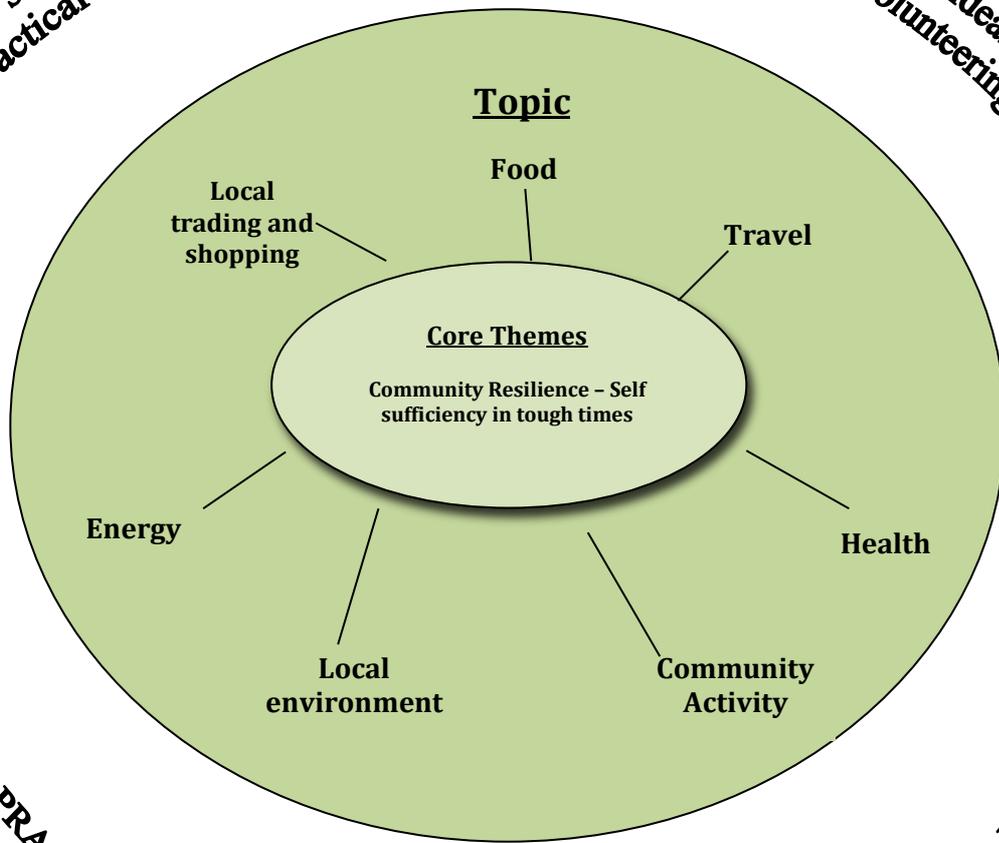
Children (over 10) Young people (14-24)  
 Families Older residents Ethnic Minorities

**DOING**  
 action planning  
 ideas swap  
 brain storming

**SEEING**  
 Trafford Hall as a model  
 site visits  
 practical examples

**TAKE-AWAY**  
 pump priming grants  
 trying out ideas for real  
 volunteering

## Tools



## Skills

**SOCIAL**  
 communication  
 planning & organising  
 confidence in groups  
 building teams  
 building trust  
 respect  
 inter-generational contact

**PRACTICAL**  
 horticulture  
 building with wood  
 sport  
 survival/challenge  
 music  
 maintenance & repairs (e.g. bikes)

**PERSONAL**  
 presentation  
 written  
 verbal  
 breaking barriers  
 innovation  
 ambitions & dreams

In October 2009, the Tudor Trust awarded Trafford Hall a £7500 grant to organise an exploratory consultation for 40 prospective course participants from Trafford Hall's network of social housing residents, community organisations and supporters. The event was designed with extensive survey input from residents on the types of environmental issues and trainings that they thought were most relevant. Peer organisations were recommended by the Tudor Trust, Low Carbon Communities Network, Triodos Bank, NESTA, the Foundation Climate Fund, the Community Recycling Network, Sustrans, Groundwork, the Transition and City Farms movements, 10:10 and other organisations and networks engaged in community-based ecological projects.

In November 2009, findings from the surveys and the consultation were used to design a taster training day that covered the basic science of climate change and that provided an introduction to the practicalities of establishing a small-scale community agriculture scheme. All places were booked and 30 delegates from throughout Britain travelled to sample the courses, which were delivered in half-day blocks by two trainers who used a combination of information sessions, games, short films, case studies, practical gardening tips and a tour of Trafford Hall's facilities. Although the trainers and some participants felt that event organisers had fit too much information and too many people into the workshops, participants were on the whole 'happy' or 'very happy' with the trainings.

From this initial round of consultation, most social housing residents confirmed that:

- There was a need to increase public awareness of environmental problems in low-income neighbourhoods and to persuade people to adopt more environmentally conscious lifestyles.
- Fuel poverty was a significant concern, especially for older residents.
- (1) Practical energy- and money-saving actions and (2) food cultivation skills were the most popular themes for proposed training courses.
- Hands-on skills trainings were more relevant than abstract discussions about climate change.
- Small-scale, local-level projects were thought to be most do-able.
- Having inspirational, successful real-life case studies on hand was essential to sustaining group morale.

Subsequently, Trafford Hall proposed a three-year community-based environmental training and action programme that would help members of vulnerable communities all over the United Kingdom build knowledge, confidence and trust to take practical, positive actions in their localities. A series of pilot courses was developed around the following topics:

- Growing and preparing *food*;
- Conserving, generating and efficiently using *energy*;
- Protecting, cultivating and enjoying biodiversity in the *natural environment*;
- Bringing people together to foster mutual exchange, support and self-help organising through *community activities*;
- Encouraging walking and cycling *to reduce carbon footprint and improve health*;
- *Recycling waste* and creatively reclaiming used goods, including bicycles, furniture, clothing and other gadgets.

Drawing on its own experience as an aspiring carbon neutral centre as well as on its national network of trainers and their time-tested strengths in participative training, action-planning and social entrepreneurship, Trafford Hall proposed to target motivated young people 14-24 years of age with poor educational qualifications, skills and experience. Furthermore, as many of the proposed courses as possible would be accredited through BCTV, CAT, Homes and Community Agency, the National Accreditation Framework and the Open College Network. The initial proposal planned to deliver the following outputs:

- 15 courses per annum at 25 participants per course = 375 participants per annum, or 1100 participants over three years
- 2 consultation events for sharing best practices
- Detailed action plans and certificates of completion to delegates from participating organisations
- 75 follow-through starter grants per annum at £300 per grant = 225 new community projects over three years

Intended outcomes over the three-year period include:

- New techniques to help participating organisations build self-help action and resilience in the environmental field
- Publicity and networking on the theme of community resilience in the face of climate change, showcasing inspiring models from community groups
- Partnerships with existing community-oriented environmental organisations
- Direct support to environmental organisations that want to attune their approaches to the needs and priorities of low-income communities
- An estimated 10,000 people in 400 low-income communities directly and indirectly impacted by the training and grant programme

In March 2010, the Tudor Trust awarded Trafford Hall a grant of £250,000 over two years to implement the Community Futures training and small grants programme. A brief timeline of programme activities is shown in Table 2.

***‘Training First’ Intervention Model: Perspectives from Administrators and Trainers***

The Community Futures Programme is anchored in a model of sustainable capacity development that is consistent with Trafford Hall’s longstanding engagement with individuals, families and community groups who fall through the public services safety net or who are outside main funding streams for disadvantaged areas. Course delegates must attend as representatives of a community-based organisation. They are recruited by email, print and word-of-mouth on the basis of motivation to learn and, in some cases, evidence of being a first-time Trafford Hall participant. Community Futures recruitment is conducted on the basis of affinity group (eg, environmental activism) instead of through explicit ethnicity-, gender- or age-based filters. Although course applicants are not means-tested, over 95% of Community Futures course participants live in low-income areas, and many have experienced difficulties in accessing better-quality schools, health care services and jobs, due not only to poor qualifications but also to post-code discrimination. Previously traumatising experiences with traditional formal education make many course participants more responsive to the participatory, practical and learner-centred training in which Trafford Hall specialises.

Building on findings from the first consultation event and from in-house research, preliminary course development for the Community Futures programme commenced during the first quarter of 2010/11, and Trafford Hall’s training unit disseminated tender documents to a wide range of trainers, based on detailed aims and objectives for each course. Trainers were selected through a thorough tendering process, including presentations being made to a panel that included relevant community activists. Trainers were required to demonstrate technical competence in their subject area (eg, horticulture, apiary management), creativity, innovation and skill in working with residents of deprived communities, as well as cost-effectiveness.

Upon completion of each 2-day course, participants were eligible to apply for a small action grant. In order to qualify, they needed to apply as a legally constituted organisation, operate a dedicated bank account and submit a project proposal relevant to the course as well as two references, one from within the organisation and one from within the broader community. Proposals were submitted within 6 weeks of completing the course and funding and disbursement decisions were made within 8-12 weeks. Grantees were asked to submit financial and project monitoring data as soon as they had spent the funds.

According to programme administrators and trainers, the hallmarks of the Community Futures training, grants selection and administration processes are *confidence, respect* and *trust*:

It's valuable to give people the confidence that they do have the power to do something, that they're not at the mercy of the council or the Government. Confidence is about building your knowledge base, about understanding how things happen, understanding what other people know. It's about knowing the right people and making those social resources available to course attendants. *(Administrator)*

As a trainer, my personal philosophy is that we want people to be relaxed, [to] have fun and learn from each other. We must be willing to be flexible and adapt to the needs of our learners. It's phenomenal what can be achieved in three days. There was a man who was constantly put down in school. When he first arrived on the course, he was very shy and insecure about speaking in front of large groups. By the closing session, he was almost a new person. It's very empowering to see this, witnessing people with low self-esteem leave confident, fizzing with enthusiasm. *(Trainer)*

There's very little bureaucracy around the grants, and that's really important, because a lot of people have never applied for a grant before. It's quite a scary thing to do. It might not be a lot of money, but it's a lot in terms of responsibility for some groups and we've agreed that we need to keep it as simple as possible. *(Administrator)*

People don't rip you off. People come here, they meet [our Programme Coordinator] while they're here, they've got a relationship with Trafford Hall, they understand our ethos, they understand the whole fact that we're prepared to trust them, and generally speaking, they don't abuse it. So somebody at some point has got to take a chance on giving these quite small groups quite a small amount of money, and that you've got to trust people. I think if you trust people with £300 or £500, and they feel that trust, then they're more likely to go on and do good things, and next time they get a grant it might be £1000 from somebody else, like the local authority. *(Administrator)*

**TABLE 2: TIMELINE OF MAIN COMMUNITY FUTURES ACTIVITIES**

Autumn 2009/Winter 2010	Spring/Summer 2010	Autumn 2010/Winter 2011	Spring/Summer 2011	Autumn 2011/Winter 2012
<p><b>October 2009:</b> With support from the Tudor Trust, Trafford Hall hosts a exploratory consultation for 40 delegates from 29 community groups throughout the UK.</p> <p><b>November 2009:</b> Trafford Hall hosts a taster environmental action training day for 30 delegates from throughout the UK.</p> <p><b>March 2010:</b> The Tudor Trust awards the Community Futures Training and Small Grants Programme £150,000 for 2010/2011, and £100,000 for 2011/12.</p> <p>Course development begins, with plans to run 13 overnight courses and reach 300 delegates during Year 1. Over 600 organisations are contacted via email, web and print marketing. Courses are initially promoted to select organisations in the NW region to ascertain interest and fine-tune implementation.</p> <p>Courses are priced at £50 per person (£20 for each additional attendee from the same organisation). This includes full costs of accommodation, meals, training and administrative fees. A small childcare and travel bursary is made available for special cases.</p> <p>10% of those contacted are unable to attend due to financial unaffordability and Trafford Hall's distance from their homes.</p>	<p><b>April 2010:</b> 3 pilot courses are held:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Starting Organic Gardening</li> <li>2. Save Money Save Energy</li> <li>3. Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces (Part I)</li> </ol> <p>18-25 places are booked on each course. Most attendants are social housing residents, some with physical and/or learning disabilities. Follow-on action grants of up to £200 are offered to applicant groups.</p> <p><b>June 2010:</b> A second consultation and networking event is held to further engage interested but as of yet uninvolved community groups.</p> <p>An advisory group is established, consisting of two expert advisors from the Sustainable Development Commission, along with Trafford Hall's Environmental Development Worker, its Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of its Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Courses are henceforth designed to focus on at least one of four themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Wildlife Conservation</li> <li>○ Saving Energy</li> <li>○ Recycling/Creative Re-use</li> <li>○ Community Social Cohesion</li> </ul>	<p><b>September 2010:</b> Main Community Futures programme launches. A further 8 courses are held.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces (Part II)</li> <li>5. Involving Your Street</li> <li>6. Too Good to Waste</li> <li>7. Wildlife Gardening</li> <li>8. Community Allotments</li> <li>9. Community Chickens</li> <li>10. Growing and Sharing</li> <li>11. Fundraising for Environmental Projects</li> </ol> <p>11 2-day courses have been attended by 264 individual participants (189 delegates on courses and 75 at 2 networking events). About 5000-6000 individuals are targeted for each course.</p> <p>3-5 grant applications per course are submitted within 2 weeks after each training.</p> <p><b>November 2010:</b> The first tranche of 4 grants at £200 apiece (totalling £800) is awarded to community groups in Liverpool and Manchester to convert derelict land into community allotments.</p> <p>Grant ceiling is raised to £300.</p>	<p><b>May 2011:</b> Trafford Hall hosts a third networking and sharing event to encourage and support community environmental action. 60 delegates attend, about 25% of whom are new to Trafford Hall.</p> <p><b>May - September 2011:</b> 6 courses are held:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Generating Income from Your Community Allotment</li> <li>13. Starting Organic Gardening</li> <li>14. Trees Matter</li> <li>15. Wildlife Gardening</li> <li>16. Growing Fruit and Veg</li> <li>17. Improving Your Home to Reduce Your Energy Use</li> </ol> <p>36 more grants of up to £300 apiece (totalling £10,819) are awarded for community-based projects throughout England and Wales.</p>	<p><b>November - December 2011:</b> 3 courses are held:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18. Breadmaking</li> <li>19. Recycle Bicycles</li> <li>20. Tailormade</li> </ol> <p>5 additional grants of up to £300 apiece (totalling £1400) are disbursed to community organisations in Yorkshire, Bradford and Liverpool.</p> <p>Grant ceiling is raised to £500.</p> <p><b>As of 31 December 2011,</b> a total of 348 people from 135 different community groups (including repeat participants) have attended 20 Community Futures courses.</p> <p>Of these, 31 urban and 7 rural groups have received £12,520 to launch 45 action projects in communities throughout the UK.</p> <p><b>February 2012:</b> Funding for the 2012/13 Community Futures Programme is renewed by the Tudor Trust for £100,000.</p>

## **FINDINGS**

### ***Courses Offered***

From March 2010 to December 2011, a total of 20 Community Futures courses were held, including 3 pilot courses and one 2-part course. Courses focused on the following themes, and some courses addressed more than one theme: (1) Horticulture, Animal Husbandry (chicken-rearing and beekeeping), and Wildlife Conservation (2) Saving Energy (3) Recycling/Creative Re-use (4) Community Social Cohesion. A full summary of courses offered, themes addressed and participant reviews is shown in Annexe 1.

Typically, 15 - 25 people attended each course. Some participants were sponsored by their housing associations or community groups, and some were self-financed. Overall, each course averaged 20 delegates. The most well attended courses were:

- Improving Your Home to Reduce Energy Use
- Community Allotments
- Starting Organic Gardening

Most courses, especially the ones on horticultural and animal-raising topics, were widely mixed by gender and age, although some courses (such as Recycle Bicycles) had only male students, whilst others (Tailor Made) attracted only female students.

### ***Geographic Representation***

348 people from 135 different community organisations throughout England and Wales participated in the courses, with the majority coming from the Northwest, followed by the West Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, North Wales and London. The Southwest, Southeast, Northeast and Eastern regions had the lowest attendance rates, due in part to their geographic distance from Trafford Hall.

### ***Ethnic Representation***

Data on participant ethnicity is based solely on self-reported information from course application forms. Participants from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups are estimated to comprise approximately 10% of all Community Futures delegates.

The Community Futures Programme does not target participants specifically based on ethnic background. It was suggested that cultural differences may account for relatively lower rates of participation among BME groups in community allotments and in ramblers' walking groups, both of which are historically derived from an indigenous Anglo-Celtic culture of

gardening and nature appreciation, at least within the UK context. However, these dynamics are changing, as newcomers from not only other countries and cultural backgrounds but also other parts of the UK join long-time social housing residents in mixed neighbourhoods where community resilience activities are underway. Immigrants also bring their own traditions of gardening, cooking, energy conservation and community engagement, and course respondents found their involvement to be vitally enriching in encouraging social cohesion.

### ***Other Demographic Features***

Community Futures course participants are generally younger (from adolescent youth to adults in their mid-50s) than delegates on other Trafford Hall courses, who are frequently middle-aged or older residents with more time available for voluntary activities. Community Futures participants tend to be physically active, energetic and have fewer mobility issues. Their affinity for self-directed environmental action makes them more noticeably pro-active and entrepreneurial. However, course delegates included men and women of diverse ages and levels of mobility, education and exposure to environmental concepts. The vast majority live or work in low-income communities.

### ***Challenges Faced by Community Futures Participants***

As previously mentioned, the majority of Community Futures course participants (particularly urban residents) live in low-income areas, and many have experienced difficulties in accessing better-quality schools, health care services and jobs. Conditions of deprivation in their neighbourhoods range from mild to severe. They include the following characteristics:

- Neighbourhood blight, fly-tipping and derelict land
- Anti-social behaviour (eg, vandalism, breaking and entering, drug dealing)
- Apathy among community members, including volunteers
- Self-isolation (especially among elderly residents who live alone)
- Low self-confidence and depression due to 'living from hand-to-mouth'
- Increased mistrust and self-segregation between ethnic and age groups
- High unemployment and fewer holistic, non-traditional education and job-training opportunities
- Fearful thinking due to economic downturn and decreased public funding for local community-based organisations

### **High Unemployment and Few Alternatives**

Caia Park is one of the poorest places in north Wales. Most of the young people here will stay in Caia Park. Some have aspirations to get out, but

there's little incentive. At least 50% are unemployed or in short-term retail job schemes. We [Caia Park Environmental] desperately need volunteers. At the moment, even Internet access at £30/month is too expensive for our group. (*Caia Park Environmental, Wrexham, Wales*)

Nationally, Breckfield and North Everton rank in the top 10% (#4 out of 3414 wards) indices of multiple deprivation. (*Breckfield HIM Project, Liverpool*)

We live in inner-city Nottingham, where many people are unemployed or on benefit. There are about 9000 folks here, mixed by age. Our own group has been up for 8-9 years and we have about 200 members. (*Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens, Nottingham*)

People were scared by the economic downturn. There were few options here, few alternatives for people who want more practical, holistic skills. (*Carlton Education and Enterprise Ltd, Barton-upon-Humber*)

### **Depression and Anti-social Behaviour**

For me personally, I receive the severe disability premium for income support. I didn't really think about taking any measures. I was going through a divorce at the time and felt very isolated. When you've got a disability life is about survival – I just used to live on hope and a prayer. You need other people to boost you up and give you confidence. A lot of people on our estate feel this way. (*Marsden and Slaithwaite Transition Town, Huddersfield*)

My community is very mixed by age, family size and ethnicity. We did have a bit of anti-social behaviour in our community – mostly young people hanging out on the corner because they haven't got anything to do. I thought the ASB label was a bit unnecessary and that it stigmatised the young people unfairly. (*New Oscott and Wryley Birch Housing Liaison Board, Birmingham*)

### **Derelict Land and Blight**

Things were just derelict. We had a primary school which both of my now grown children attended when they were younger, but the school was eventually shut down and the grounds were used by members of the Traveling community as an illegal grazing area for their horses. The land was basically going to waste. Our group and another community group called Playscapes in the Community got together to reclaim the land, but those plans fell through. (*Transition Hull, Hull*)

### **Low Awareness of Energy-Saving Measures**

Even in regenerated urban areas, awareness of energy conservation measures was not guaranteed:

We have a safe, greened up area. I have fantastic neighbours and our council is very supportive. There are about 2000+ in my own 'patch'. But most people on our estate weren't monitoring the amount of electricity they're using. I don't think they were thinking about how they could actually save money. (*Charlton and Carnbrook Housing Panel, London*)

### **Social Fragmentation**

Self-isolation and lack of social cohesion were noted by both urban and rural respondents.

I moved to the Delawyk Estate 11 years ago to be with my boyfriend (now husband). Our area consists of 115 3-bedroom houses, and our residents range from elderly people who live alone to families with up to 4 children. We don't have any anti-social behaviour here; our neighbourhood is safe. This estate is ethnically diverse and there are a lot of mixed-race kids here. Our residents include people from a range of educational backgrounds – we have both working people and professionals. But people on our estate don't mix with each other as much, especially between generations. Many kids here never have a chance to go to the countryside. (*Delawyk Residents Management Organisation, London*)

Socioeconomic deprivation was reported to be less severe among rural respondents, but mistrust among neighbours was still present:

Our countryside has changed. 30 years ago, I was sitting in my physician's waiting room, and an old man sitting next to me struck up a chat and began telling stories about what he'd seen on the ridge. He must have been 75 years old at the time, and that was 30 years ago. It turns out that he was the postman. During his day, Cock Ridge used to host many community events. Everyone used to talk to each other and to leave their doors unlocked. But then about 25 years ago, developers arrived and began building here. Ardman Industries (creators of Wallace and Gromit) also relocated here. Now people here no longer leave their doors unlocked; there is much more isolation among residents on the ridge. (*Keynsham and District Beekeepers Association, Bristol*)

## **Rural Conditions**

Rural respondents tended to be more active in wildlife conservation and confident in engaging politically with local authorities. Most did not live in social housing estates. They described themselves as experienced gardeners and educational resources for people who want to become more 'switched on' about environmental and agricultural issues:

We're a 12-member conservation group that was established in 2003 to look after our local nature preserve, the Belper Parks, [which] are now some 800 years old and are part of a World Heritage site. We also maintain a 5-acre wildflower garden in the middle of the town. Belper is a Tory area but surrounding areas have been Labour until 1970. Currently there are 12 Tories and 4 Labour on our council – previously there were no Labour members at all. The Borough Council used to give us grants of £1000 but no longer. After trying three times, we finally received £1000 to set up an interpretation board in a local car park. (*Friends of Belper Parks, Derbyshire*)

For the past 8 years, I've been running a 0.75-acre community orchard that we lease from the Somerset County Council. We have apples, pears, plums, bat boxes and bird boxes. I don't think I need any more information on [wildlife] gardening – I know enough on my own. (*Community Orchard at Bagley, Bagley*)

Currently we are a 17-acre teaching farm. We raise sheep, pigs, chickens and bees. We get 200-300 visits per year, including from as far afield as Australia.

Most people come from within a 70-mile radius of us. We're pretty well established, so we might not need too much improvement. When we ourselves need information, we go online to North Yorkshire Smallholders, the local permaculture association or to DEFRA. We're too rural for the Transition movement, although they do send people out here to see what we're doing. It would be good, however, for our volunteers to be better informed about pollinating insects. Some of them could benefit from attending a Trafford Hall course in wildlife gardening. (*Old Sleningford Farm, North Yorkshire*)

### ***How Participants Initially Learnt About the Community Futures Courses***

How then did people hear about Community Futures courses, and what motivated them to sign up?

Respondents were first introduced to the Community Futures programme through:

- Trafford Hall's promotional literature and email list-serves
- Registered social landlord
- Housing association
- Local authority
- Peer social provision organisation (eg, Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, Bristol; Lache Park Ltd, Chester; Bankside Open Spaces Trust, London)
- Employment as a community worker or tenant empowerment trainer
- Recommendation of spouse or friend
- Personal online research

### ***Motivation to Attend Community Futures Courses***

Participants reported that they chose to attend Community Futures courses because they wanted to:

- Practically improve their technical knowledge and skills in a subject area of personal interest (eg, growing their own vegetables, saving energy and money, raising chickens on their estate, developing and financing a community recycling project)
- More effectively engage and serve their community (some were nominated to attend by their community group; others were already working on projects relevant to the course; others wanted to contribute to local skill-shares)
- Become more self-sufficient in growing their own food
- Increase their awareness of responsibility to the planet
- Secure funding with greater confidence and success
- Receive 'expert advice in a nice surrounding'
- Take a break from stress, meet new people and think objectively about their project

- See how Trafford Hall worked

### ***Course Participant Satisfaction Rates***

Out of 348 attendees:

- 51% were first-time visitors; 49% had participated in previous Trafford Hall courses.
- 86% found the course level 'just right'; 8% found it basic; 3% found it advanced
- 90-95% felt the course had given them new ideas and ways to take existing ideas forward
- 87% are committed to doing something different as a result of the course
- 96% rated the venue and facilities as good or excellent
- 88% rated the catering as good or excellent
- 93% reported being satisfied overall (happy or very happy); 4% were uncertain; 1% was dissatisfied; 2% did not respond.
- 94% reported receiving good value for money; 1% was uncertain; 5% did not respond.

Participants praised the courses and spoke highly of the competence, creativity, attentiveness and good humour of their instructors. They appreciated the participative, interactive and experiential methods used to convey information and practice skills. They felt that they not only learned new information and practical skills but also gained *confidence, inspiration and renewed enthusiasm*.

Please tell the funder that the course was amazing - I have come away VERY INSPIRED to share what I learnt with members of my local community. I had a reasonable level of crafting skills before I came but the course has made me realise that you can start something for the community in a very small way. From little acorns large oak trees do grow. That you do not have to be a teacher to share your knowledge and enthusiasm for a subject, and in doing so you can hopefully get communities together and talking to each other across different age groups and backgrounds. (*Watford Community Housing Trust, Hertfordshire*)

The trainers were fantastic and the course content moved at an easy, understandable pace. These courses are invaluable for people who are community minded and environmentally friendly. Council funding cutbacks have affected our ability to attend basic courses in managing tenant boards, etc. But the Council can't always deliver a Trafford Hall experience here. (*Turning Pages Community Centre, Greenwich*)

The energy conservation course was useful – we learned all about ways to reduce our energy usage. In contrast, Council trainings are much shorter and try to cram too much information into a few hours. Trafford Hall courses, on the other hand, have helped me become more confident and assertive. (*Charlton and Carnbrook Housing Panel, London*)

### *The Trafford Hall Training Experience: Snapshots*

As mentioned previously, the residential nature, community ethos, course content and teaching methodology of Trafford Hall's training itinerary is carefully designed to promote practical analysis and pro-active, collaborative and community-driven self-help among course delegates, many of whom have had discouraging early experiences with formal education. Although the most popular horticultural courses were not scheduled during the evaluation period, the author was able to partially observe three other courses (Breadmaking, Recycle Cycles and Tailor Made) and hear perspectives from trainers and course participants on what makes 'the Trafford Hall experience' unique.

Community Futures courses are typically scheduled over two days, with the first day's session running from 9am until 9pm, with breaks for tea and meals. Delegates and trainers often share meals and mingle in the lounge after the end of the first day. The second day runs until the late afternoon and concludes with action-planning or the completion of a project. Everyone receives a skills certification. Before delegates depart, they are given a short briefing on the Community Futures grants application process. A combination of lectures, slideshow presentations, small- and large-group discussions, action-planning, film screenings, field visits (when relevant) and hands-on skills training is employed. The courses are highly interactive and attendees are encouraged to ask questions and take breaks when needed.

All of the trainers interviewed had considerable experience as adult educators or community organisers. They shared a commitment to making the learning process accessible, enjoyable, empowering and practically meaningful:

There are two types of trainers: the more formal, rigid, authoritarian type, and the other type - which is adaptable and flexible, yet excellent. The second type is more suited to Trafford Hall. I feel the biggest learning tool that participants have in the room is each other. We trainers are just mere players. If students aren't getting it, it means we're not communicating properly. We need to make them feel safe. There is always a learning opportunity. (*Trainer*)

Trafford Hall takes people outside the comfort zones of their experiences and shows them something else, something different. They meet other people and realise that they're not isolated. They arrive thinking that they're rubbish but they leave with a can-do attitude. However, I cannot empower them; all I can do is show them that they already have that power within them. How do I do that? I ask them to reflect on what they've done already, just in surviving day to day. The fact that they're at Trafford Hall shows that they're motivated to learn. (*Trainer*)

I very much like people to feel safe and confident in what they're doing. I like there to be a lot of active class participation and sharing ideas, particularly when participants have such different backgrounds. I like to take the role of facilitator.

It's about being friendly and informal and making people feel that I'm approachable. *(Trainer)*

### ***Working with Diverse Expectations Among Course Participants***

One of the biggest challenges cited by trainers was in meeting every delegate's learning needs on courses when delegates did not share a visibly common goal and had widely different experiences with and assumptions about both environmental impacts and on formal education processes, and about whether the course would focus more on community development or on increasing competence in a particular specialty or skill. For example, more experienced gardeners on the wildlife gardening courses have expressed a desire to learn more advanced material; more experienced bakers on the Breadmaking course requested training from a professional baker as opposed to more training on community action-planning, which they felt they were already good at. Moreover, tensions among members of community groups (further discussed on page 46) sometimes surfaced during a course. This led trainers to conclude:

On the Breadmaking course, we had a big disparity in learner expectations. 2/3 were there for community development, 1/3 wanted to focus on learning practical baking skills - for them, the community engagement dimension was secondary. Somewhat separately, one group had a total breakdown on the second day and almost erupted into open verbal conflict. They calmed down once we separated the members.

I've seen this kind of conflict happen on other courses. You have to go by your instinct in addressing this. When there are two trainers, one carries on teaching and the other goes and intervenes. You cannot afford to allow discrimination within your own training room. As a trainer, you have to go in and be in charge of the learning atmosphere. You are supposedly the expert, therefore you must be the one to take control – not of the people, but of the learning process. You have to keep things as open as possible while keeping people focused. *(Trainer)*

It's very Trafford Hall to have conflict [during a course]. I think it's because of the mixture of people in the room – they come from very different backgrounds and sometimes their reasons for being on the course aren't the same. It's different to a situation where everyone works for the same employer and they're on a work-related training together. Also, Trafford Hall participants are away from home on a residential, which draws out issues they may not have had time to deal with before. Emotions rise to the surface. There may be a playground mentality in the classroom - there's always at least one person who wants to challenge us or to create problems for the rest of the group. Because everyone's going through a personal change process during the course, and that lances the boil, so to speak. It can be exhausting for us as trainers because we have to constantly monitor unspoken group dynamics whilst delivering the content. *(Trainer)*

### *Snapshots of Three Courses*

Each of the observed courses was two days long, facilitated by a pair of trainers and attended by 18-20 participants. Each course featured hands-on skills training as well as elements of community-based collaborative project planning. Below are selected snapshots from each course. Although the snapshot for Breadmaking is fuller than that of Recycle Cycles and Tailor Made, this is only because the author was able to observe the Breadmaking course at greatest length. All three courses were thoughtfully delivered and enthusiastically received; much could be noted about each.

#### *Course A: Breadmaking*

The aims of this course were to teach people how to bake different types of artisanal bread, as well as to explore the benefits of making bread from both community engagement and public health perspectives. Becoming ‘a self-sustaining business’ was promoted as a way to avoid becoming dependent on vulnerable funding streams. 15 women and 5 men ranging in age from 20s to 80s attended. Most of the delegates worked with low-income urban communities in the Northwest region and were interested in establishing or further developing ongoing bread-making projects as means of improving health and strengthening community cohesion. A few of the participants were also more advanced bakers who were running their own kitchen-based social enterprises. The experienced training team consisted of one male and one female trainer.

Hosted in a bright training room that opened out onto Trafford Hall’s gardens, the first day of the course began with introductions and suggestions from participants on what they hoped to get out of the training workshop. Members of an established local breadmaking project then shared best practices from their own experiences, and participants discussed the relevance of this project to their own experiences. In a workbook provided by the trainers, they assembled into small groups and reflected on the challenges their communities were currently experiencing, possible causes of these challenges and the evidence required to substantiate them, and the changes that a breadmaking initiative would catalyse. Using the Community Development Foundation’s ABCD model of healthy communities<sup>2</sup>, they also reflected on how they would measure and evaluate their breadmaking project’s impact on community wellbeing. Following a lively lunch, course delegates went to the computer suite for an hour to research funding streams, explore grant applications and accreditation opportunities, as well as social networking sites and blogs related to community bread projects.

The itinerary then shifted to basic food science and culinary arts. All delegates were very excited about the afternoon’s main activity: learning to bake a healthy and delicious loaf of

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<sup>2</sup> Barr, A., and Hashagen, S. (2000) *ABCD Handbook: A Framework for Evaluating Community Development*. London: CDF.

bread. Some had even brought their own recipes and spices from home. The remainder of the afternoon was spent in Trafford Hall's upstairs kitchen, preparing, kneading and proving their loaves. Considerable energy and excitement was observed, as well as anxiety among some of the delegates about their self-perceived lack of baking expertise. This was relieved somewhat when even the most advanced baker's loaf failed to rise as hoped. After the final proving, the bread went into the oven and the participants retired to dinner. At 7pm, the course resumed. Attendees sampled their finished bread products, took a quiz on health and hygiene and listened to a presentation from a professional caterer on how to effectively source local supplies and buy in bulk. Shortly after 9pm, trainers and participants adjourned, some to socialise in the lounge and others directly to sleep.

The second day of the course focused primarily on community project planning. In small groups, participants strategised their vision, premises, products and customer profiles. Small business marketing concepts such as market segmentation and unique perceived benefits were introduced as ways to accurately identify community needs. They set about action-planning using Gantt chart timelines and then presented their proposed projects to the larger group. Project ideas included:

- Engaging neighbourhood hubs in making and delivering bread to residents without cars in rural Northamptonshire
- Teaching breadmaking to young parolees and other Merseyside youth in recovery
- Creating cooperative breadlines for youth and elderly people in Coventry and Chester, signing up for food safety and other accreditation schemes as needed
- Creating a community café to serve ethnically diverse residents on a Manchester estate
- Creating a community-based cooperative bakery as part of a regeneration scheme in Anfield, Liverpool

All 17 participants who completed the course evaluation form reported being satisfied with the overall quality of training. 3 participants felt that the material was too basic. 95% of the suggestions for course improvement requested a stronger focus on hands-on baking and guidance from professional bakers. One participant even suggested that Trafford Hall consider becoming a culinary school or at least offer more culinary courses.

### *Course B: Recycle Cycles*

17 men and 2 women (support workers) ranging in age from early teens through late 50s attended this very hands-on course, which aimed to transmit both practical bicycle repair skills (for vocational accreditation) as well as guidance on setting up a bicycle-refurbishment social enterprise. The majority of participants were male at-risk adolescents and their adult chaperones from urban areas throughout England. Learning new repair techniques was the primary reason most had booked the course. Three to four respondents had also expressed a desire to learn how to source used bicycles and set up a social enterprise. Although skill levels varied, most of the youth attendees were already somewhat familiar with bicycle maintenance and repair.

A team of three male trainers, all expert cyclists and cycle mechanics, facilitated the course in one of Trafford Hall's sunny training rooms in the stables area. A demonstration bicycle was set up at the front of the classroom; throughout the course, participants were encouraged to come up and try out different repair techniques on the bike. The trainers also discussed details on establishing a bicycle repair business, and they screened a post-dinner film on an annual cross-country cycling race in the United States. Skills taught ranged from sorting out punctured tires to marketing bicycle-repair-oriented social enterprises using social media.

Although some attendees found the first training day to be a bit long and preferred hands-on activities to more lecture-type presentations, they generally enjoyed all the activities and appreciated the trainers' knowledge, good humour and approachability. One young participant from Yorkshire commented on how excited he was to learn more about something he could do well. His chaperone, an adult youth support worker, noted that the young man had previously struggled with writing-intensive activities in school but that riding and working with bicycles had fired up his imagination and enthusiasm. A group of three boys from east London was also very excited to complete the training course. Having arrived to rural Cheshire from the inner city late in the evening the day before the course, they had a lot of energy to let off and their boisterousness initially concerned a few Trafford Hall staff. However, once the boys realised that they could earn credits for coming onto the course, they became more focused and settled in quickly. They were very pleased to receive certificates of completion for their work.

All of the attendees reported that this was their first time visiting Trafford Hall. 100% were happy or very happy with the experience. The most-cited suggestion was to incorporate an actual bicycle ride into the course.

### *Course C: Tailor Made*

Unlike the Recycle Cycles course, all of the trainers and participants in the Tailor Made upcycling-sewing-and-crafting course were women. 18 people ranging in age from early 20s to late 70s attended from throughout England and Wales. Some were young mothers with very little tailoring and crafting experience; others were great-grandmothers who had been sewing for 60 years. Several brought their sewing machines to the course with them, and the trainers also provided a few machines. The course combined skills training with environmental impact education.

The trainers, experienced crafters, adult educators and mothers of young children, described their ethos as one rooted in do-it-yourself creativity, recycling, ethical localism and sustainable living. They were committed to integrating environmental awareness with hands-on skills in sewing, felting and working with natural fibres and materials. They opened the first day with large- and small-group discussions on the following questions:

- What negative impacts does the multinational textile industry have on the environment and on society?
- What positive steps can we take to reduce these negative impacts of the textile industry on the environment and on society?

A range of opinions on environmental issues emerged from the ensuing conversation. Some participants were very passionate about the importance of recycling, up-cycling (converting waste materials into materials of higher value) and buying locally; others admitted to being more consumptive and described the attractiveness of mass-produced 'bling' from large chain shops, due in no small part to the power of media and advertising, as well as to the stigma in some low-income communities of buying second-hand. Delegates suggested the following positive steps that they could take to reduce negative impacts of the textile industry:

- Promote organic cultivation of base plants (e.g., cotton)
- Less man-made fibres, chemical dyes and treatments
- Buy locally made products,
- Use wind- and solar-powered energy in making clothes
- Show carbon footprint on manufactured clothes
- Fix rather than ditch
- Promote skills-sharing in schools and communities
- Make consumers aware of the process of how cheap clothes are made
- Make recycled clothing trendy and charity shops more appealing (and affordable) to low-income purchasers, target wealthier people to recycle their top-end clothing,
- Persuade big shops to sell upcycled bags and other goods
- Ask magazines to promote up cycling

Following this discussion, participants were asked to handle a range of natural and synthetic fibres and practice carding both synthetic wool and real sheep's wool. The sensory experience

(sheep's wool is oilier) helped to convince a few participants of the difference in quality.

Participants also shared about the affordability of crafted versus mass-produced goods:

There is pressure to spend money all the time – eg, where we shop. One of the criticisms of the craft industry is that merchandise is fairly expensive because craftspeople need to survive. There was a range of views on this. Some people wanted to run workshops in their communities. One group was already running a sale every 3 weeks. Another group was less concerned about charging money for time, because the process was valued more for its therapeutic benefit. MASTT Huddersfield wanted to make veg bags for their communities. Another woman was into buying old wedding dresses cheaply and converting them into fancy-dress frocks. Someone else was teaching people how to line curtains and improve insulation, teaching young mums how to make children's clothes. (*Trainer*)

The main hands-on skills advanced in this course were sewing and dry-felting. After reviewing examples from craft magazines and books and choosing materials from recycled fabrics, participants then designed and created their own shoulder or handbags to take home with them. They were so absorbed in their sewing projects that they skipped meals. The energy of creative focus and excitement in the room was palpable to observers. In the late afternoon of the second day, the participants shared their finished products with each other, praising and congratulating each other's work. They spoke about how much fun it had been to create their own bags, how easy it was to work with recycled materials and how surprised they were at their products. They loved the process of creating something both beautiful and practical. Over two-thirds of the participants left the course with the intention to set up community crafting/skills-share circles and promote recycling/upcycling in their localities.

I'm good at doing things with my hands - if I do it, I'll remember it. But if I have to write, I won't remember it. This course was very, very good – it was all hands-on. You did have to watch a small video of what other people do, at 7-9pm. But overall it was a VERY good course. Everybody had something different to take away, and it was great to hear their experiences. People from our group had something to offer, too. I've been on several Trafford Hall courses and this was hands-down the BEST by far. (*Participant*)

Our course was quite diverse, geographically and economically. Some were from social housing, some from community centers and youth groups. Others were individuals interested in setting up social enterprises. Some were aware and quite skilled at crafting, others less so. There was a wide gap among participants re: their awareness of environmental issues. But I think some people definitely changed the way they thought about their relationship with the natural world after leaving the course. (*Trainer*)

From the three courses observed, environmental issues and impacts are most meaningful to attendees when conveyed experientially and related to practical skills training that they can share in their communities. Younger learners with shorter attention spans may struggle with long lectures and respond more positively to games and kinaesthetic learning methods.

### ***Recommendations for Improving the Courses***

Course delegates also provided detailed recommendations for improving each course. Their main suggestions were to:

- Shorten the length of the training days so that activities did not extend past the evening meal, as by then many were too tired to fully concentrate, and the schedule was demanding.
- Some trainers also felt that the length of time allotted to each course was too short and intensive, and that, if Trafford Hall's operating budget allowed, courses could be spread out over a longer period of time.
- Conversely, youth participants and their chaperones felt that having games and play activities after dinner would help younger delegates burn off energy and be more focused for the next day's class.
- Consider strengthening the technical aspects of courses instead of the community development component. Many participants were already experienced community mobilisers and wanted instead to deepen their practical skills in specialty topics such as artisanal bread baking and chicken rearing. Some suggested that Trafford Hall consider expanding its facilities to become 'a proper teaching farm or culinary school'.
- Host a networking and sharing event for Community Futures trainers to exchange lessons learnt and best practices.

A number of respondents suggested that Trafford Hall offer courses on the following subjects<sup>3</sup>:

- Technical aspects of horticulture, from general to advanced levels
- Designing effective newsletters
- Running a social enterprise
- Involving all stakeholders in one's community
- Developing volunteer leadership
- Teambuilding, conflict resolution and improving communication
- Engaging local authorities under the Localism Act
- Getting involved in national environmental campaigns

Trafford Hall can help us with more practical courses. We'd like more technical horticultural training, as well as training in running a social enterprise. (*Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens, Nottingham*)

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<sup>3</sup> Some of these topics are already offered through Trafford Hall's DIY (Do-It-Yourself) training programme, although Community Futures respondents may not have been aware of it.

Trafford Hall could put on a course about involving all stakeholders (different to their course on summer fetes). They could also run a workshop on re-designing newsletters to increase readership. (*Delves East Tenant Management Organisation, Walsall*)

We need a bespoke training on our site to help us bond better as a panel. We need teambuilding. (*Marches Residents Contacts, Shropshire*)

Is there a course on improving communication among team members? (*Marsden and Slaithewaite Transition Towns, Huddersfield*)

It would be good if Trafford Hall offered a course explaining how the Localism Act will affect the relationship between communities and local authorities. (*Friends of Belper Park, Derbyshire*)

We would value more capacity building courses from Trafford Hall, as well as a course on how to engage with national environmental campaigns like Groundwork or on Green Energy initiatives. (*Breckfield HIM Project, Merseyside*)

Trafford Hall could run a 2- or 3-session course on effectively facilitating community meetings, on developing negotiation and listening skills. (*Lache Village Gardening Project, Chester*)

We'd love some guidance on how to deliver information about our projects to new school groups, at pubs and at other community gatherings. (*Keynsham and District Beekeepers Association, Bristol*)

Trafford Hall can continue offering courses on useful gardens. (*Hazel Knuts Gardening Club, Swansea*)

Trafford Hall courses are good and the costs are reasonable. The Programme Co-ordinator also seems quite approachable. We'll send volunteer team leaders to future Trafford Hall trainings, especially trainings about developing volunteer leadership. I've not really pushed it with other volunteers because we haven't got the money in yet, but leadership among volunteers would be a useful course. General gardening courses for beginners would also be good. (*Volunteer Centre of North Warwickshire, Nuneaton*)

### ***Participant Feedback on the Trafford Hall Experience***

Overall, course attendees spoke positively and enthusiastically about their experiences at Trafford Hall. In addition to the feedback on course content and delivery, the features they found most outstanding were:

#### **Peaceful rural environment**

I love Trafford Hall. It's a nice place, it's peaceful and you can get away and relax. You're out in the middle of nowhere with no distractions. Staff is also very friendly and accommodating. I don't mind the distance we must travel from London to get there. (*Charlton and Carnbrook Housing Panel, London*)

Being at Trafford Hall was a really positive experience. It's also nice to get away and have time to reflect on what we're doing. (*Bath and Northeast Somerset Council, Bath*)

The environment is inspiring, beautiful and really good to visit. For us, as people who can't afford breaks, it was a real tonic. (*Grafton Road Residents Association, Devon*)

At Trafford Hall, I can take a break and reflect on my work. I can start to feel quite proud of what we're doing. (*Carlton Education and Enterprise, Ltd, Barton-upon-Humber*)

### **Beautiful grounds, excellent food and comfortable accommodation**

I've always loved Trafford Hall. The place is amazing. The food, accommodation and staff friendliness at Trafford Hall are top of the line. It is such a beautiful place. (*Delves East Tenant Management Organisation, Walsall*)

It is a fantastic venue; an energy-efficient, beautiful old listed building really pushed the boundaries on conservation possibilities. (*Bath and Northeast Somerset Council, Bath*)

The actual physical environment is brilliant, and the chalet rooms are so eco-friendly. (*Turning Pages Community Centre, London*)

The Trafford Hall chalets were cosy and warm. The food was brilliant and the staff make us feel comfortable. (*Endeavour Housing, Stockton*)

We enjoyed it very much – I knew the food would be good and well presented! It lived up to all of our expectations. (*Hazel Knuts Gardening Club, Swansea*)

The food is lovely and is prepared from ingredients that are actually grown onsite – this is quite different to the standard boxed sandwiches at most conferences. (*New Oscott and Wryley Birch Housing Liaison Board, Birmingham*)

The food is great – two of our volunteers are chefs and they like the food. We also like that Trafford Hall is close by, since many of our volunteers are older and won't travel more than 2-3 hours for training. We use only Trafford Hall for residential trainings. (*Queens Park Residents Association, Blackpool*)

### **Welcoming and attentive staff**

I thoroughly enjoyed Trafford Hall. Door to door it's a 5-hour commute each way from where I live, but it's absolutely lovely. Staff is attentive. I have a disability and Trafford Hall is very understanding. I couldn't find anything wrong with it. (*Turning Pages Community Centre, London*)

I was impressed by the helpfulness of staff. I'd just broken my wrist and the head gardener went out of her way to make sure I was comfortable. (*Hazel Knuts Gardening Club, Swansea*)

The staff is very friendly – they're a big family and project a harmonious atmosphere. (*New Oscott and Wryley Birch Housing Liaison Board, Birmingham*)

We both have mobility issues and stayed in the stable blocks but it was easy to get around. Everything was well thought out. (*Seven Hills Social Group, Torquay*)

The whole environment that Trafford Hall has created is exceptionally good. People love the courses but it also feels like being on holiday. Some people come from poor living conditions and are made to feel very welcome at Trafford Hall. (*Keynsham and District Beekeepers Association, Bristol*)

### **Useful networking opportunities**

Our classes were very mixed geographically – we get a wide variety of people on the courses and it's good meeting and talking to all sorts of people. (*Friends of Belper Park, Derby*)

Trafford Hall had a real good atmosphere and a good ethos - no TV in rooms, pub quizzes after dinner - very simple and ideal for networking. (*Endeavour Housing, Stockton*)

The Trafford Hall course was an excellent value for money. Meeting informally in the evenings was very helpful. It was good for me to get feedback from our volunteers whilst away from the office, and it was good for them to get away, bond over meals, and meet with other UK groups doing similar work. (*Breckfield HIM Project, Merseyside*)

We could mingle and network with others. Trafford Hall courses really empower us to look after our communities. It's a shame more people don't know about this. (*Caia Park Environmental, Wrexham, Wales*)

### **Feeling uplifted and inspired to take action**

I am 71 years old. At Trafford Hall I gained a lot of confidence. Usually I just listen at meetings, but since coming on the Trafford Hall courses, I've spoken in front of groups. (*Tenants Forum, Stockbridge, Liverpool*)

I'm a big fan of Trafford Hall. Trafford Hall is really good at creating an ambience in which tenants mix with each other. I believe in their ethos of peer learning, as well as learning from each other, mixing each other. You can't train someone in empowerment, but Trafford Hall gives you all the skills needed to empower you. (*Hinckley and Bosworth Council, Leicestershire*)

The Trafford Hall course was so uplifting – it really energised us and made us want to take action. It was also great to meet people from other parts of the country. The things that they were doing were just amazing. (*Marsden and Slaithwaite Transition Towns, Huddersfield*)

Trafford Hall was absolutely brilliant. Everyone's helpful – I've never felt left out. People were inviting and friendly. You feel like it's all one group together. I've been on a few trainings with other organisations, and they were run in a more formal, traditional classroom-style. They were cold and uncomfortable and I didn't enjoy them at all. I feel more at ease at Trafford Hall. It feels like a friendly meeting – you don't feel alone. When I leave Trafford Hall, I can't wait to pass on what I've learnt. (*Peulwys Go Green, Conwy, Wales*)

## GRANTS AWARDED

Small, kick-starting grants were built into the Community Futures programme in order to give participating organisations an opportunity to implement the learnings and action plans that they developed during the course. Approximately 3-5 applications were submitted for each course.

From March 2010 – December 2011, 45 grants totalling £12,520 were awarded to 31 urban and 7 rural groups throughout the UK to launch action projects in their communities. 4 grants were £200 each and 41 grants were £300 each. In October 2011, the grant amount was raised to £500, but no grants of this amount had been awarded as of 31 December 2011.

A full listing of grantees by organisation, region, course taken and project theme is available in Annexe 2 on page 57. The following tables summarise grants and grantees by the courses to which they are linked, their geographic locale, the rural or urban character of their community, and the type of project launched.

Some courses generated more grant applications than others. Grants awarded and the courses to which they are linked are shown below:

<b>Course</b>	<b># Grants Awarded</b>
Wildlife Gardening	8
Starting Organic Gardening	7
Community Chickens	6
Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces	5
Community Allotments	4
Fundraising for Environmental Projects	3
Growing Fruit and Veg	2
Growing and Sharing	2
Save Money, Save Energy	1
Trees Matter	1
Too Good to Waste	1
Involving Your Street	1
Breadmaking	1

**TABLE 3: COURSES AND LINKED GRANTS**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Urban Grantees</b>	<b>Rural Grantees</b>	<b>Total # Grantees</b>	<b>Total # Projects</b>	<b>Total £ Awarded</b>
East	0	0	0	0	0
East Midlands	1	1	2	3	985.00
London	2	0	2	2	467.55
Northeast	0	0	0	0	0
Northwest	14	0	14	14	3495.00
Southeast	0	0	0	0	0
Southwest	1	3	4	4	1034.18
Wales	1	1	2	2	595.00
West Midlands	6	1	7	9	2244.00
Yorkshire and Humber	6	1	7	11	3299.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	31	7	38	45	12,519.73

**TABLE 4: GRANTEES BY REGION, SETTLEMENT TYPE,  
AND FUNDING AMOUNT**

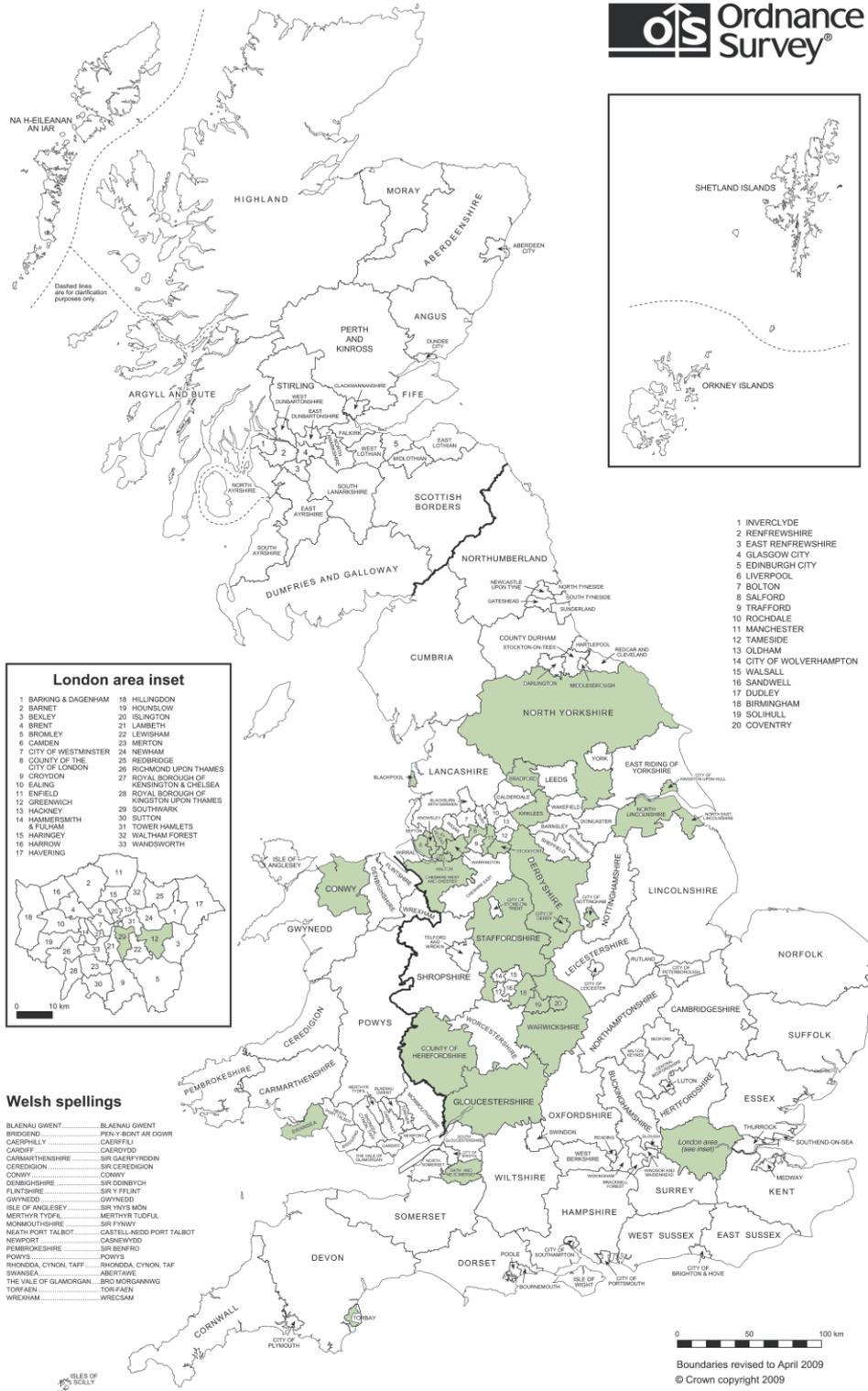
*Types of Actions Taken*

Starting or expanding a community allotment or wildlife garden in a formerly derelict area was an especially popular project theme for grantees. Thus, seeds, soil, gardening tools, and material for raised allotment beds, polytunnels and greenhouses were the most common types of expenses, followed by the acquisition of chickens and coops, bees and hives, and wildlife-attracting vegetation. A number of projects targeted school-age children and youth or elderly people, and some encouraged intergenerational working to produce food or to beautify blighted areas. Community-building and improving social cohesion was embedded into most, if not all, grant projects, although a few made the link more explicitly than others.

Grantees took the following actions with their Community Futures funds:

- Bought energy monitors to assess home energy use and how to save money on the estate
- Set up rainwater butts to save water for use in community garden
- Started and/or expanded a community allotment on a piece of formerly derelict land on their estate
- Used food grown on allotment to feed local residents (for free or at a low price)
- Built a polytunnel or greenhouse with which to supply local residents with plants

- Beautified blighted areas; repaired and repainted residential facades, installed benches, planted small gardens in neglected urban areas, maintained lawns of elderly and infirm residents
- Set up an apiary and honey-production area to teach beekeeping to schoolchildren
- Started an urban chicken coop with ex-battery chickens and taught local youth to care for the chickens
- Started or expanded a wildlife garden, wildflower meadow
- Planted a community orchard
- Established a community-wide artisanal bread making circle
- Created a newsletter to advertise their organisation's projects at an open day



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**TABLE 5: COMMUNITY FUTURES GRANTEE PROJECT SITES AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2011**

### *Examples of Community Futures Projects*

**Organisation: Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens (Nottingham) | Course Attended: Wildlife Gardening | Project: Beekeeping**

The Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens is a 0.4-hectare wildlife garden in the middle of an ethnically diverse low-income neighbourhood in Nottingham. Most of the Meadows' 9000 residents are unemployed or receive benefit. In 2001, residents organised to transform an unused, rubbish-strewn playing field into what has become a thriving and well-tended community garden with fruit trees, herbs and organic vegetable plots. Produce grown in the plots is sold to resident members at reduced rate, and local schoolchildren participate in workshops on growing their own fruit and veg as well as in safe firepit usage. Now the Meadows Community Gardens hosts several annual events and receives over 6000 visitors per year, including one from HRH Prince Charles. It is known as a safe space in which many of the Meadow's different community groups can come together, including a basket-making group, a cycling club and a Muslim Asian women's group that tends the onsite tandoor oven.

Although the Meadows Gardens has attracted support from larger sponsors, this support is limited to capital purchases. A £285 Trafford Hall grant has enabled the group to purchase a beehive that is being used to teach young people about making honey and how honey is prepared and eaten by the different cultural communities that live in the Meadows. The group also plans to sell the honey alongside its other organic produce.

**Breckfield Health Inclusion for Men (HIM) Project (Merseyside) | Course Attended: Starting Organic Gardening | Project: Cold Frame for Organic Allotments**

Based in the Breckfield and North Everton neighbourhoods of Liverpool, Breckfield HIM is a unique social enterprise that aims to promote healthier lifestyles in men of all ages, not only through substance abuse counselling, clinical health workshops and complementary therapies, but also by its popular, hands-on intergenerational gardening and allotments projects in which men in their 20s through 60s grow seasonal fruits and vegetables as well as orchids. HIM's award-winning, volunteer-led environmental and gardening team, the Breckfield Diggers, is a recognised resource for local environmental initiatives. Community Futures courses in organic gardening have helped nearly 20 volunteer Diggers to improve their gardening skills and secure agreements from the Liverpool Primary Care Trust and Liverpool City Council to develop allotments on formerly derelict land in other sheltered housing estates. With a £285 Trafford Hall grant, they have purchased materials for constructing a cold frame on their main project site.

*'I went up to Trafford Hall on this course with 8 guys aged 23 to 66 – most are in their 50s. One has a learning disability (communication) and several who live alone are unemployed and suffer from depression. After the course, the lads felt comfortable and confident in doing more on the current site, so they applied for money to build a cold frame, which expands their gardening resources. They put any additional produce stock into our other gardening schemes'. (Breckfield Health Inclusion for Men Project)*

**The Lache Garden Village Project (Chester) | Courses Attended: Involving Your Street, Breadmaking | Project: Community Artisanal Bread-making Group**

The Lache Village is one of the most deprived estates in Chester and is considered a residence of last resort for families unable to live in other housing schemes. Like other under-resourced neighbourhoods, it struggles with low educational attainment, high unemployment, poor access to nutritious food and poor health. However, a number of Lache residents are committed to transforming these conditions. Prior to attending Community Futures courses, organisers of the Lache Garden Village Project had established a community allotment that eventually expanded to include a greenhouse and 42 raised beds. After attending Community Futures courses, the group decided to establish an artisanal bread-making circle to improve their cooking skills, develop healthy eating habits and become more confident. A £300 Trafford Hall grant has enabled 8 men and women volunteers to learn how to bake soda bread. They now go once a week into the 2 local junior schools and spend about 6 weeks in each school, teaching over 40 pupils how to bake bread from scratch.

*'The Lache can be a difficult community to engage; there's a strong sense of apathy and passivity here. People don't get involved readily because they assume that external funding will run out in a few years anyway, so why bother? People are used to having social solutions imposed on them from the outside, by local authorities or the housing associations. If an initiative is longer-term, a lot of folks don't see the point of getting involved. But through the bread-making project, people have gradually become more trusting and confident and open with each other'. (The Lache Garden Village Project)*

**Windlehurst Gardening Club (Stockport) | Course Attended: Starting Organic Gardening | Project: Polytunnel for School Allotment**

Windlehurst School is a non-residential school for 20 young men ages 11-16 whose severe behavioural difficulties prevent them from being able to participate in mainstream schools. The teachers who established the Windlehurst after-school gardening club decided to expand the school allotment after attending a Community Futures course on organic gardening. Almost of all the School's students are involved in the garden and have been growing flower bulbs, salad and root vegetables. The young men are building 4 raised beds from scratch and then filling them with compost and topsoil. With their £300 Trafford Hall grant, they have purchased materials for a polytunnel and are in the process of installing it, with plans to complete the installation by spring 2012.

*'Most of our kids didn't have the opportunity to garden at home. The gardening project has given them the chance to experience things that they wouldn't otherwise be able to. The kids have been fiercely protective of their own garden plots and police them more vigilantly than they do other areas of the school. One student in Year Nine has gotten very enthusiastic about the project and came with me to check out materials for polytunnel - this is the same young man who goes every week to volunteer at the animal rescue sanctuary, with whom we have an arrangement. Another student is growing cuttings on his windowsill at home. Yet another student has taken great pride in growing sunflowers and tomatoes on his plot, and he gave some sunflowers to his mum'. (Windlehurst School Gardening Club)*

**Hazel Knuts Garden Club (Swansea) | Course Attended: Growing Fruit and Veg  
Project: Greenhouse for Propagating Plants from Seed**

The Hazel Knuts Gardening Club was established in 2011 on a sheltered housing estate in Swansea. Its core group of 15 members installed several wheelchair-friendly raised beds in which to grow flowers and vegetables. With £295 from Trafford Hall, the group bought a wooden frame, wooden composter, a wheelbarrow and extra trestles for their greenhouse, in which they are making hanging flower baskets upon the request of the Family Housing Association. They hope that their garden will encourage more mixing and a stronger community spirit among residents.

*'One of the ladies here hosts a coffee morning by the garden. Men will sit on the two benches by the beds and talk by the gardens and enjoy each other's company, help each other out. People are also stopping by on their motor scooters. Sometimes grandchildren come too. In the summer months, 5-10 people visit per day. 40 people came to our last open day. Right now, a lot of people are new and we've had to introduce them to the garden. The funds from Trafford Hall really help us cover the extra essentials, but it's not too large an amount of money for us to become dependent on it'. (Hazel Knuts Garden Club)*

**Charlton and Carnbrook Housing Panel (London) | Course Attended: Save Money Save Energy | Project: Home Energy Monitoring and Conservation**

After attending a Community Futures course on saving energy at home, members of this south London housing panel decided to launch a home energy use project, as the estate's 2000+ residents (especially elders) are very keen to reduce their utility bills. One member of the housing panel is also partially sighted and committed to creating energy-saving strategies that support the financial needs of people with special health considerations. With a £167 grant from Trafford Hall, the group purchased 4 energy monitors that they bring to Housing Panel meetings and lend out to interested residents for 3 months at a time. Residents attach the monitors to their energy meters to assess how much energy they are using each month. Between 200 to 300 people have participated in these informational meetings.

*'Some people are a bit scared to find out how much electricity they actually use. But, after using the meter, I've changed the ways I use hot water. Now I turn all the plugs off at night and wash on a lower temperature (30C instead of 40C). I also use low-wattage light bulbs and turn the thermostat down. My weekly winter electricity bill has gone down from £15 to £10'. (Charlton and Carnbrook Housing Panel)*

**Colwall Orchard Group (Malvern) | Course Attended: Starting Organic Gardening | Project: Tools to Plant a Traditional Orchard and Community Allotments**

The main aims of the Colwall Orchard Group are (1) to sustain, promote and celebrate community-based heritage agriculture in the rural parish of Colwall, and (2) to bridge the generational divide by bringing young and old together. They are doing this by setting up a community orchard and allotments for 40 families. The families have been looking after the apple, plum, pear, cherry and apricot trees, many of which are more than a century old, and they are keen to break ground as soon as land purchase is finalised. A Trafford Hall grant of £200 has enabled the group to acquire quality gardening tools for their allotments.

Community Futures grantees sometimes collaborate to take joined up actions in their communities. The following boxes profile such actions in two different areas:

**CARLTON EDUCATION AND ENTERPRISE, LTD & THE KNOTTED NOTE CHARITY (BARTON-UPON-HUMBER)**

Both Carlton Education and Enterprise, Ltd and the Knotted Note Charity are based in north Lincolnshire, just across the Humber Estuary from the city of Hull. The Knotted Note Charity was established as a community café eight years ago by a dozen young people from Baysgarth School. Now, having concluded its final Lottery contract, it primarily provides advice and signposting to families. For several years it was supported by Carlton Education and Enterprise, Ltd, which is an environmentally orientated multi-service job and life-skills training organisation that works with NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) youth through alternative education. One of Carlton Education's founders launched the organisation seven years ago whilst completing her own GCSE. Since then, Carlton Education has become a recognised provider of quality education and training for underemployed youth in Lincolnshire. It is also a social enterprise with a number of revenue-producing projects, including a launderette, bicycle and computer refurbishment schemes, and, more recently, an organic smallholding that is used to help youth recovering from substance abuse grow food, care for livestock and develop ASDAN qualifications in employability.

Representatives from both organisations have participated in Community Futures courses on wildlife gardening, raising chickens, growing and sharing produce, and fundraising for environmental initiatives. Community Futures action grants have enabled them to build three chicken arks and purchase a chicken incubator for producing eggs; cultivate wildlife-enhancing plants and produce on the smallholding to sell at farmers' markets; and host an open day to promote their community projects. All projects have a strong educational element and actively involve local schoolchildren, teachers and families. Despite challenges in providing transport to and from the smallholding, it alone attracts 40-60 volunteers each month.

*'As a result of our environmental projects, volunteer placements on the farm have increased. There is much more interest, and many people want to go onto the farm. A lot more families have learned new skills around gardening and wildlife. People are also eating the chickens and the eggs. Quite a few young people are [now] thinking about where food comes from, when they previously didn't have the connection or interest.*

*I want to expand the farm skills training for young people. I also want to get more bees, farm vegetables, mate the goats we have, and bring on some cats and ferrets. I want to grow food more cheaply – it's easier to do this in the spring if we want people to be eating seasonally.*

*Working on the farm is also very healing for participants. We had a 15-year-old girl who was very difficult to be around before she started there – she was very aggressive. But now she is less defensive around other people and easier to work with'.*

*(Carlton Education and Enterprise, Ltd)*

## **MANOR FARM RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION, CRAVEN CONNECTION, AND HENLEY GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE (COVENTRY)**

Although these three inner-city Coventry organisations are separate, Craven Connection is an amalgamation of the Residents Associations of Henley Green and Manor Farm. It is called Craven because the land underneath the Henley Green Centre was formerly the Craven Pit, a coal mine which closed down in 1906. After the Second World War, Coventry became an industrial hub and several large council estates were built to house people who had relocated to work in the local automobile manufacturing plants. Despite improvements brought in by the New Deals for Communities regeneration initiative, the mostly wooden and plastic houses on both the Manor Farm and Henley Green estates remain in very poor condition, and residents regularly experience leaking roofs and cold, windy drafts. As a result, the Henley Green Community Centre has become a popular gathering place and hosts a number of environmental projects.

Volunteers from the three above organisations range in age from 30s through 70s and work together to plan which Community Futures courses to attend and projects to launch. Together, they have participated in courses on community allotments and on raising chickens, after which they successfully applied for funding from Trafford Hall to convert derelict land into a community allotment; expand a youth gardening project; and build a chicken coop for ex-battery chickens to provide fresh, organic eggs for local residents, involving a nursery, crèche, junior school and youth club. There are now 19 re-homed hens of various breeds whose eggs are used in the community kitchen. The chickens project has been very popular among local youth, many of whom have been previously incarcerated.

The three groups have also recently started a monthly cook-well-eat-well session in the community centre, all derived from the knowledge they gained on gardening and growing vegetables whilst at Trafford Hall. Using produce from the allotment, volunteers prepare food for taste testing. For £1, people receive small goody bags of fresh vegetables from the allotment, and each month's session features cuisine from a different part of the world. A recent cooking session featured food from India and 'it went clean - we catered for about 50-60 people, but there were at least 100 people at that one'. The group is now planning to pilot a healthy lunch scheme in the Henley Green Primary School:

*'Currently pupils get a dinner card that they can top up – in senior school, you need a thumbprint. Dinners are £2.10 per meal per day and free if you're on benefit. You get one sandwich, one pudding, and one little carton of diluted orange pop. Many of the kids who go to Henley Green Primary don't really get any other meals at home - their parents spend the money on drink or drugs. Our lunch bag would have a healthy sandwich, fruit and a drink. I think this scheme will help the parents more than it will help the kids'.*

*(Manor Farm Residents Association, Craven Connection, and the Henley Green Community Centre)*

### ***Reasons for Not Applying for Trafford Hall Grants***

Despite the educational and networking benefits perceived from having attended Community Futures courses, not all participating community organisations applied for action grants. Their reasons for doing so varied. The primary reasons were:

- Lack of capacity within the organisation to complete the paperwork (knowledgeable staff, time)
- Lack of applicability of course content and project focus to the community's most pressing needs
- Reluctance among social housing residents to start new projects
- The group was already receiving money from larger funders (eg, local council, housing authority or the Lottery) and wished to make the Community Futures funds available for 'smaller groups that needed it more than we do'.
- The group was not officially constituted and was therefore ineligible to apply for Community Futures grants.

### **Lack of Interest Among Community Members**

There was no interest among tenants to apply. (*Riccall Lands Charity, Yorkshire*)

Our association seems very loathe to start up any new projects, and it's hard to get members motivated. (*Wrexham Tenants Federation, Wales*)

### **Low Capacity within the Community Group**

I've never applied, but I'd like to apply. I can't find the paperwork. Before, other life circumstances interfered [with my ability to apply]. But my health has improved now. (*Caia Park Environmental, Wrexham, Wales*)

We didn't apply due to lack of staff and time. (*Friends of Nutclough Woods, West Yorkshire*)

Someone was supposed to fill in the form and send it off but did not. (*Trent and Dove Housing, Staffordshire*)

I did look at the application. Although we get some money from our landlord and training from local housing associations, there is a real need and interest in accessing Trafford Hall grant support. But it (the paperwork) just felt overwhelming. It's not for me. We just need more help with the paperwork. It would have been nice to have a longer Q+A at the end of the workshop about the grantseeking process. It would have helped us feel more comfortable. Gary could talk to us for an hour at the end of the first day of the workshop, perhaps in the evening at the bar – definitely before we go home on the second day. (*Delves East Tenants Management Organisation, Walsall*)

Being able to sit down and apply and to get all the paperwork you needed together [is difficult]. I have a committee but I tend to have to do most of the things needed. I had hoped to apply for some water butts on some of the

properties surrounding the community garden, as we rely on a resident to supply water. (*Jobson Road Residents Association, Lincolnshire*)

### **Not A Constituted Group**

We couldn't apply because we're not a constituted group. There are many French-speaking Africans on our estate and no one in our group speaks French yet. Language barriers and communication difficulties make it difficult for us to form a representative group. (*Kirkholt Junior Wardens, Rochdale*)

### **Lack of Grant Relevance to Community Needs**

I didn't apply for a Trafford Hall grant because it didn't apply to what we could do. Marches offers its own in-house grants through our Housing Association Community Chest. Plus I didn't have a viable project in mind. (*Marches Residents Contacts, Shropshire*)

I didn't apply for several reasons: I was juggling too many different responsibilities at the time to write the Trafford Hall application - I'm also on the Save the Neighbourhood panel and the Youth Inclusion group. Things are calmer now and I could probably deliver the project I'd have applied to Trafford Hall to do. I couldn't have used the Trafford Hall money within the given time limit. (*Turning Pages Community Centre, London*)

### **Funding Was Available from Other Sources**

As money is always short, I used the local council first and several people provided tools. (*Grafton Road Residents Association, Devon*)

Even though funding is getting tighter, we've always managed to get money from other sources [than just Trafford Hall]. Our local council has applied for £500 million from the Lottery and gave us £30,000. But some people can only get money from Trafford Hall, and we don't want to take opportunities away from them – we need the money less than others do. (*Hinckley and Bosworth Council, Leicestershire*)

### **Too Much Paperwork Required by Trafford Hall**

One grantee commented on the paperwork for the Community Futures grants:

The monitoring paperwork for our Community Futures grant was intense for the small amount of money involved. We thought it was a bit much to expect volunteers to be responsible for completing a four-page monitoring report with invoices and photos. Volunteers can't do it on their own - having paid staff is necessary to fulfil this requirement. Our Lottery-funded Awards for All project requires the same amount of paperwork but offers £5000 instead of £300. (*Volunteer Centre of North Warwickshire, Nuneaton*)

## **MAIN CHALLENGES FACED BY COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS**

### ***Project Challenges***

When asked about their main challenges, grantees identified several project challenges:

- Poor pest management
- High cost of composting
- Lack of rainfall
- Social conflict among participants in urban chicken-rearing schemes (mostly around what to feed collectively owned chickens – halal feed or not?)
- Uncertain land tenure and poor security in unfenced allotments – the land used for allotments on many estates is through informal concession by the landlord and can be reclaimed at any time, even though most landlords have been very supportive. However, securing legal tenure is often too expensive and time-consuming for many community groups. Without planning permission, groups are not always able to erect fencing to protect their allotments, leading to incidents of vandalism and petty theft.

### ***Broader Community Challenges***

The following were mentioned by both grantee and non-grantee organisations as significant challenges:

- Apathy among community members, especially youth and the very elderly - difficulty in motivating them to volunteer and sustaining their interest in creating changes
- Difficulty in inspiring confidence and leadership among volunteers
- Decreased funding for social programmes, especially youth inclusion initiatives
- Apathy and lack of support from local authorities
- Lack of time and health challenges among volunteers
- Geographic distance from Trafford Hall (more a concern among eastern respondents than southern respondents)

### ***Need for Improving Understanding Across Cultural and Socioeconomic Divisions***

Additionally, community groups observed that cultural and socioeconomic differences among residents of a locality could lead to tension and difficulty in working collaboratively, even with the best intentions.

I've been involved with my TMO at Delves East for 4 years, and things weren't too bad when I first moved in. It was pretty good, quiet and a big mixture of people, including a big Asian community. West Bromwich Road divides our estate into two parts, with about 300 properties on either side. Delves East is the more affluent side; the poorer people live on the west. Each side has a committee of 11 members each, and the two committees work together. But in Delves, we have a mixture of people who own their own homes and people who live in social housing – so there are class tensions. The private homeowners have no understanding of what we do. The Council has little money, plus they pass the buck. They do the minimum amount of work necessary. (*Delves East Tenants Management Organisation, Walsall*)

We live in Kirkholt and our gardening project is on the Kirkholt Estate. Kirkholt Estate and Lowell Salinge Estate are both in Rochdale and border each other. Lowell Salinge has a lot of French-speaking African residents who live in flats. Unfortunately they don't have much space in which to grow fruit and veg, even though they love to garden. Kirkholt is also very diverse. We have a lot of different nationalities represented here – about 75 languages are spoken, and French, Spanish and Portuguese are the big ones. The exact number of non-native English speakers is unknown, but many do not speak it as a first language. It is especially difficult for us to communicate with parents. We have big language barriers and it keeps us from being able to legally constitute a representative group and get funding. (*Kirkholt Junior Wardens, Rochdale*)

Conversely, in another group, the arrival of a younger, entrepreneurial and ambitious West African immigrant into the estate's 'community café market' appeared to provoke feelings of insecurity among the more senior, less formally educated white British women who comprised the estate's de facto leadership. Although they had all previously worked together on community projects, new rivalries emerged when one of the 'old-timers' was made redundant at her job. The African social entrepreneur felt that the 'old-timer' now wanted to take control of the community café, whilst the 'old-timer' found the 'newcomer' aggressive and disrespectful. The African respondent also noted how the British voluntary spirit seemed more formal than what she had experienced back in Cameroon, where helping one's neighbour 'is a more a natural and heartfelt thing to do'.

This kind of tension can be observed on tenant panels and within the leadership structures of numerous community-led voluntary organisations. Ways of broadening intercultural understanding, respect and trust on *all* sides will need to be taken into consideration as dynamics change in communities, on community allotments and in other group-managed regeneration projects.

## OVERALL PROGRAMME IMPACT IN COMMUNITIES

All organisations that attended Community Futures courses were asked if conditions had changed for better or for worse in their communities after they had completed their courses, and if applicable, after they had launched Community Futures grant-funded projects.

Responses were very positive among each group.

- Grantees linked specific community improvements to their action projects.
- Non-grantees attributed improvements to increased numbers of people interested in the skills that participants were sharing after having attended Trafford Hall courses, as well as to actions undertaken without Trafford Hall funding.
- Groups enumerated how many volunteers were participating in their projects but were reluctant to quantify how many people in the wider locality had been indirectly affected by having a community representative come on a Community Futures course.
- Both grantees and non-grantees felt that coming on Community Futures courses had introduced them to *new ideas and likeminded peers*, given them more *confidence* and raised their *self-esteem*.
- They also stressed the importance of *patience* in seeing more tangible results and were cautiously optimistic about attributing large-scale changes to small projects.

### Among non-grantees:

#### Stronger Community Relationships

Things have gotten better since we started our gardening project – we take the kids to sheltered accommodation for informal visits to see elderly residents, with whom they've begun to build relationships. It's harder to vandalise an elderly person's home if you know them! (*Kirkholt Junior Wardens, Rochdale*)

We've now associated with more organisations – with a school, a priory meadows group, as well as with Amicus Horizon. People from each group come about once a week to see us. About 15 new people are coming on board. There are 80 people using our allotment and 70 people on the waiting list. Groups come in with 15-20 people at a time. There are also 5-6 allotments near to us. Things are more expensive now, but people tell me how much better our produce is than what they can find at Tesco's. (*Bexhill Neighbourhood Gardening Scheme, St-Leonard's-on-Sea*)

#### Enthusiasm Among Children and Families for Gardening

Our community garden has been up for 12-18 months, and the kids have been learning to grow their own food. 10 kids ages 16-21 spend 1-2 hours a week working in the garden. They like making food from scratch. They tend to be quite self-isolated when they first arrive, not interested in formal education. On the gardening project, they work in small groups of 2-3, sometimes up to 5, and

they start coming out of their shells here. (*Endeavour Housing Association, Stockton*)

Our estate (Kirkholt) has had a lot of bad press and has been designated as one of the UK's most deprived estates. Unemployment here is high and we used to have high rates of anti-social behaviour, but now there are more community groups, police, and wardens sponsored by the Rochdale Borough-Wide Housing Association. We also have 2 different Junior Warden groups, through which approximately 10 children 8-15 years of age work on allotments in 2 estate sites. It's slow in the winter, so we do indoor gardening now. We also have two balcony gardens and a mural that the kids work on. Also, we've got a veg plot and a wildlife area at the Holy Family School, where we keep bat boxes, bird boxes and benches. Things are better. There's something for kids to get involved in regularly. They're also able to take veg home. We get lots of positive feedback from teachers and parents. Kids don't want to go home – they want to stay and garden! (*Kirkholt Junior Wardens, Rochdale*)

### **More Interest in Recycling and Creative Re-use**

There is a trickle-down effect. I've set up a few demo kits (with insulation, eco light bulbs) for community groups to use here as a model. I've also picked up some factsheet leaflets from CFE trainers and have passed them onto community groups. (*Bath and Northeast Somerset Council, Bath*)

I'm still using the information I learnt at Trafford Hall. The certificate I got from Trafford Hall hangs on the notice board in our community centre. When people ask me about it, I take 20 minutes to tell them about saving energy and saving money. People actually come up to me and tell me how they've saved some money per quarter, through for example turning the heat down in the evening by one setting, or by insulating their homes with Council support. People are now looking at the energy rating on their white goods and using more of the energy-efficient light bulbs, which the Council gives away for free. (*Turning Pages Community Centre, London*)

Trafford Hall teaches us how to re-use things creatively. Here at Caia Park, we do a lot of community cohesion work with NEET youth, the police, schools, the local estate manager and other groups. Although Caia Park has financially deteriorated, there is now much more enthusiasm among students and teachers to take environmental actions. There's more of an interest than there used to be in recycling, for instance. We've got a number of things going: a community allotment, a gardening competition, an environmental education awareness open day in the summer, work with kids in schools during holidays, and a recycled bicycles project where we give away we free bikes to families, including many refugee families. (*Caia Park Environmental, Wrexham, Wales*)

### **Improvements 'Below the Surface'**

Trafford Hall is brilliant for inspiring me personally. During the environmental training at Trafford Hall, we went to see a disused railway track that had been converted into a garden. I thought it was quite beneficial. My TMO does 'street walks' – neighbourhood public safety patrols - and funds a charity for a Children's Christmas party where it costs £1 for children to attend the panto, including transportation. Additionally, we run trips to the beach, bingo nights and other community events. Have things changed? Yes and no. Sometimes momentum fades. On the face of it, the changes aren't visible, but our estate in

general continues to improve, whether or not you can see it. (*Delves East Tenants Management Organisation, Walsall*)

### **Among grantees:**

#### **People Are Saving Money**

After using the [energy monitoring] meter, I've changed the ways I use hot water. Now I turn all the plugs off at night and wash on a lower temperature (30C instead of 40C). I also use low-wattage light bulbs and turn the thermostat down. My weekly winter electricity bill has gone down from £15 to £10. (*Charlton and Carnbrook Housing Panel*)

#### **More Enthusiasm for Gardening Among All Age Groups**

Trafford Hall's courses and grants help small, local projects. They help people get projects going, get enthusiastic and create something. The projects bring people together and inspire them. I'm hoping the results of our [biodiversity] projects will get people moving. I think the projects have already given us more enthusiasm and made us more attractive as a club. (*Keynsham and District Beekeepers Association, Bristol*)

Yes, there's been a 15% increase in our garden membership; members get discounts on fruit and veg. We're selling more organic produce locally. We've competed in the East Midlands in Bloom competition. And HRH Prince Charles has also paid us a visit. (*Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens, Nottingham*)

Oh yes. All residents here are members of the Peulwys Go Green partnership board and there is a core group of 6 of us who serve on the sub-committee, which is very active. People who were previously uninterested in allotments have now put their names down. They see that we're serious about getting it up. Jeanette, my next-door-neighbour, is a pensioner – she's grown her own veg and bakes cakes and wants to get involved. Azaria's still in school but wants to learn how to sew. Jane up the street is a young mum and is also interested. There is a lot of interest among young and old alike. If we count the surrounding areas, I'd say that at least 1500 people are interested in our project. (*Peulwys Go Green, Conwy, Wales*)

#### **More Interest in Healthier Eating**

Yes. Residents have become more aware of the food production cycle and of the importance of healthier eating, even if some volunteers just want to plant flowers. We have about 30 direct beneficiaries and approximately 100 people who are indirectly impacted. (*Queens Park Residents Association, Blackpool*)

Things have definitely changed for the better. There are more people thinking about where their food comes from, and they're more active in gardening and in building new relationships. (*The Rockwell Centre, Bradford*)

#### **More Interest in Learning Horticulture Among Young Men**

Have things changed? Absolutely. The teaching staff have been very supportive, especially the cookery instructor. We've been able to link the gardening project across all subjects in our curriculum, from maths for measuring plot sizes and seed amounts to the arts for making papier-mâché pots which the kids fill with

plants and bring home to their families. At Key Stage 4 (ages 14-15), some of our kids transition onto vocational college. Historically the lads have disparaged horticulture as rubbish and an unmanly subject, but this year two of them are actually considering taking horticultural courses at the college. (*Windlehurst Gardening Club, Stockport*)

### **Stronger, More Trusting Relationships within the Community**

The elderly people we help on our free Gardening Buddy scheme come to visit us, or else they send letters of appreciation. They're grateful and amazed that we do [their lawn service and planting] for free. Sometimes we even get donations. (*Volunteer Centre of North Warwickshire, Nuneaton*)

People absolutely love the project and some people are asking about how to start up their own chickens scheme. Some people were initially sceptical, but they've since changed their minds. I'm thinking of a widower on our estate, a pensioner in his 50s who's had a reputation for excessive drinking, making disrespectful comments about women. He lives on his own, was a loner and a bit anti-social. I think his wife's death really hit him hard. He was initially reluctant to get involved in the project, but now he's definitely one of its most enthusiastic supporters and always offers to help organise our holiday events. He won't get into the coop himself or touch the chickens, but he always leaves food scraps for them in the bin outside the coop, and it makes him happy when the chickens eat them. Ever since he's been participating in the chickens project, his spirits have improved. He's become friendlier and is apparently drinking less. In fact now he's cat-sitting for one of the neighbours. This project has really helped him. (*Delawyck Residents Managed Organisation, London*)

### **'Changes Take Time But We Are at a Tipping Point'**

It's still early days for our group. Some people were already onto the organic gardening and nutrition bit on their own, before we started the group. Our allotment raises public awareness, but changes take a long time. However, I feel that things are at a tipping point this year, after more than ten years of being at it. I feel big changes are on their way to happening this year. (*Friends of Longford Park, Manchester*)

### **Participant Reflections on Climate Change and Community Resilience**

Community Futures participants have shared both practical and philosophical reflections on what social and environmental resilience in the face of climate change and economic downturn meant to them. During the initial consultation workshop in October 2009, a group of 40 delegates was asked what single thing they would do to combat climate change if they were in charge of the country. Some of their suggestions are listed below:

- Provide access to land – everyone should have an acre of land on which to grow food.
- Create legislation to ban the use of concrete and incentivise the construction of energy-efficient homes.

- Subsidise public transport, build more bus routes, give bicycles right of way and provide better access to new or refurbished bicycles.
- Make practical volunteering compulsory for youth and unemployed people.
- Emphasise recycling and sustainability in the national curriculum.
- Teach people basic skills such as gardening, cooking, knitting, crafting.
- Support localism by prioritising people who live closest when hiring.
- De-link from a strictly growth-based economic model.
- Make public officials more responsive to communities and do not rely totally on government action to get things done.
- Get Britain more involved internationally in reducing carbon targets.

For the current evaluation, participants also shared the following thoughts on what community resilience meant to them more broadly. Several themes emerged:

### ***Market-Based Social Entrepreneurship vs. Mission-Driven Community Action***

Whilst all participants were aware of the need to become more economically self-sufficient, they expressed diverse opinions on whether to focus on social entrepreneurship or to adhere to more consensus- and mission-driven models of community action:

The elderly people we help on our free Gardening Buddy scheme come to visit us, or else they send letters of appreciation. They're grateful and amazed that we do [their lawn service and planting] for free. We've considered charging £8 an hour for our services, but if someone couldn't afford to pay, we wouldn't charge them. It's a difficult thing to decide. (*Volunteer Centre of North Warwickshire, Nuneaton*)

The Santander Foundation gave us £2000 to build a greenhouse and the Council donated some compost bins. We're growing herbs, potatoes, carrots, leeks, peppers, onions, garlic, aubergines and tomatoes. But, due to the economic climate, things have gone downhill. I've gotten more open-minded about what I can grow and am starting to think about what would sell. (*Endeavour Housing Association, Stockton*)

### ***Re-evaluating Food Systems: Is Agricultural Localism Practical on a Larger Scale?***

Respondents generally strongly supported local food systems and community-supported agriculture but wondered if it is practical on a larger scale:

Things are more expensive now, but people tell me how much better our produce is than what they can find at Tesco's. Still, there's a reason why Tesco must exist. We've got to feed the nation as cheaply as possible, and Tesco can do that. But is it good for us to be eating out of season, even if we're getting food out of season from all over the world? There are some aspects of large-scale food systems that I don't like. (*Bexhill Neighbourhood Gardening Scheme, St. Leonards-on-Sea*)

### ***Concerns About Government Decentralisation***

Several respondents were concerned that the powers devolved to local government through the 2011 Localism Act would not be in the best interest of environmentally minded communities, especially those in deprived areas:

It offends my sensibilities that we do not look after our tribe. The Localism Act won't change much. We won't be permitted to step out of line with the national government's deficit-decreasing and cost-cutting agenda. For example, take a couple who live on the estate – she's a housekeeper and he's a porter at the local hospital and they have two kids. The caps on their benefits will cause them to lose their jobs. I am concerned that they [the current government] will cut the deficit at the expense of the poor. (*Hinckley and Bosworth Council, Leicestershire*)

The government needs to praise what's already working on the local level instead of continuing to make us jump through bureaucratic hoops. The Big Society, which I support in many ways, wants us to be more responsible, but they don't give us the resources. Rather they have made the subcontracting process more complicated and tend to award tenders to bigger organisations that are further removed from the target communities, both geographically and culturally. I'm thinking of an organisation that works with youth here but whose offices are based in Glasgow and Manchester. How are they supposed to know what we need? People would rather work with people they know. Cameron's government is trying to promote community without [actually] listening to local communities. I want the current administration to know that we do not need to remake the wheel. (*Carlton Education and Enterprise, Ltd, Barton-upon-Humber*)

### ***A Return to Older Values***

Respondents also mused on the resurgence of values of frugality, creative re-use and relationships (both the need for connection and the need for solitude and 'space'). It was felt that these would counter the social and environmental degradation of acquisitive, consumption-oriented and hyper-technological modern society.

When I was younger, there weren't as many cars. Now, especially with the economic climate, we have to look at different and more inventive ways of using what we've got. It's good that we're going back to older values. Things go around in a circle. I'm seeing a lot of things come back around that I did as a child. For example, I'm finding that modern cookbooks are encouraging young parents to use leftovers. A lot of things can be re-used. Other values that could be brought back include valuing relationships - respecting the elders and doing things together as a family, instead of letting kids run in the street or sit in front of computers all day. (*Turning Pages Community Centre, London*)

I don't think climate and weather patterns have changed all that much – they move in cycles and we just forget. People need to start inventing tools that are less dependent on electricity. There's an excessive use of mobile phones and iPods – they're not necessary. High technology brings the world far too much close together. We're all living on top of each other now; there's no personal space anymore. We really need to take time to stop and think. (*Hazel Knuts Garden Club, Swansea*)

## **SUMMARY COMMENTARY**

To date, the Community Futures programme has been successful in achieving the following of its intended outcomes:

- New techniques to help participating organisations build self-help action and resilience in the environmental field
- Publicity and networking on the theme of community resilience in the face of climate change, showcasing inspiring models from community groups
- Partnerships with existing community-oriented environmental organisations
- Out of an estimated 400 low-income communities directly and indirectly impacted by the training and grant programme over 36 months, the programme has so far reached between 150 and 200 communities in its first 22 months.

Despite funding shortfalls and perceived apathy among some community members and local authorities, environmentally minded community groups have witnessed increased levels of interest and commitment by residents of low-income communities to take forward sustainable lifestyle practices such as community gardening, permaculture and preparing food from local sources; recycling, upcycling and creative re-use; reducing home energy use; and working collaboratively to promote community integration and social cohesion. Gardening and small animal husbandry projects were especially popular, and people who participated in them noted the positive health impacts of working creatively and in growing and nurturing living things. The practical, learner-centred education and networking programme at Trafford Hall, whilst intensive from a training perspective, is seen to have not only increased participants' knowledge and skills about socio-environmental resilience, but also to have very effectively inspired greater confidence, assertiveness and self-esteem among them and their neighbours.

### *Sustainability*

The impact of Community Futures' small-scale, community-oriented courses and micro-grants is based on incremental change processes at a community, neighbourhood or municipal level. For programme administrators and training instructors, relevance to and ownership by local communities take precedence over scaling up training programmes, grants amounts and project administration procedures in ways and at a pace that would be unmanageable or inappropriate for community members. Community representatives who attended Trafford Hall courses agree that patience and the willingness to start from a small scale are essential to ensure social sustainability of resilience projects.

At the same time, whilst many of the organisations profiled pro-actively solicit funding from sources other than Trafford Hall, some of the smaller, less established organisations based on social housing estates rely on the Community Futures grants for a significant portion of their operating costs. Some of these groups have expressed ambivalence about the extent to which they should adopt more market-oriented social enterprise models in order to remain financially sustainable, although most recognise the need to become more economically self-sufficient. Many have also expressed interest in learning how to more effectively engage local authorities under the new Localism Act.

In summary, the Tudor Trust-funded Community Futures practical training and starter-grant model advances (1) interactive practical skills training in a supportive learning environment (2) community-building and peer networking (3) strengthening participant confidence to deliver projects and share skills upon return to their communities. Thus, it catalyses a ‘ripple effect’ among a much wider population. As it is a relatively new programme, the impacts registered in this evaluation are best seen as emergent. Broader changes are likely to be more visible several years down the road, when programme activities have become more established, trust-based relationships have deepened, and changes in community members’ awareness and attitudes have had time to take root.

## ANNEXE 1: 2010/11 COURSE THEMES AND PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION

**Programme Themes:** (1) Horticulture/Animal Husbandry/Wildlife Conservation (2) Saving Energy (3) Recycling (4) Social Cohesion

Date	Training Course (Trainers)	Programme Themes	# Newcomers/ Total Attendees	Satisfied/ Not Satisfied	Value for Money (Yes/No)
15-16 July 2010	Starting Organic Gardening (Phil Lilywhite and Richmond Dutton)	(1), (4)	13/21	19 satisfied, 2 mixed	20 yes
19-20 Aug 2010	Save Money, Save Energy (Brian Whittington)	(2), (3)	8/20	19 satisfied, 1 mixed	19 yes, 1 maybe
07-08 Sept 2010	Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces I (Dan Jones)	(2), (3), (4)	8/17	15 satisfied, 2 mixed	17 yes, 1 maybe
21-22 Oct 2010	Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces II (D. Jones)	(2), (3), (4)	0/15	14 satisfied, 1 mixed	15 yes
13-14 Dec 2010	Involving Your Street (Rowanbank)	(2), (3), (4)	3/13	7 satisfied, 2 mixed, 1 dissatisfied	8 yes, 5 no response
10-11 Feb 2011	Too Good to Waste (Rowanbank)	(3), (4)	4/11	9 satisfied, 2 mixed	11 yes
24-25 Feb 2011	Wildlife Gardening (Jo Dyer and Karen Atkinson)	(1), (2), (4)	12/17	17 satisfied	17 yes
01-02 March 2011	Community Allotments (Lilywhite and Dutton)	(1), (2), (4)	17/23	23 satisfied	22 yes, 1 maybe
07-08 March 2011	Community Chickens (Brian Whittington)	(1), (2), (4)	6/18	15 satisfied, 2 mixed	17 yes, 1 no response

15-16 March 2011	Growing and Sharing (Lilywhite and Dutton)	(1), (2), (4)	6/10	9 satisfied, 1 mixed	10 yes
30-31 March 2011	Fundraising for Env Projects (Anne Parkes)	(2), (3), (4)	6/19	18 satisfied, 1 mixed	18 yes, 1 no response
26-27 May 2011	Generating Income from Your Allotment (Lilywhite and Dutton)	(1), (2), (3), (4)	7/14	13 satisfied, 1 no response	13 yes, 1 no response
23-24 June 2011	Starting Organic Gardening (Lilywhite and Dutton)	(1), (2), (3), (4)	13/19	18 satisfied, 1 no response	18 yes, 1 no response
14-15 July 2011	Trees Matter (Lilywhite and Dutton)	(1), (2), (4)	15/19	19 satisfied	19 yes
21-22 July 2011	Wildlife Gardening (Dyer and Atkinson)	(1), (2), (4)	7/13	13 satisfied	13 yes
08-09 Aug 2011	Growing Fruit and Veg (Dyer and Atkinson)	(1), (2)	8/19	17 satisfied, 2 no response	17 yes, 2 no response
05-07 Sept 2011	Improving Your Home to Reduce Energy Use (CSE)	(2), (3)	9/23	23 satisfied	21 yes, 2 no response
16-17 Nov 2011	Breadmaking (Daryl Moore)	(3), (4)	6/20	16 satisfied, 1 mixed, 1 dissatisfied	17 yes, 3 no response
24-25 Nov 2011	Recycle Cycles (That's How We Roll Training)	(3), (4)	18/19	19 satisfied	18 yes, 1 no response
30 Nov – 01 Dec 2011	Tailor Made (Rowanbank)	(2), (3), (4)	11/18	18 satisfied	18 yes

## ANNEXE 2: 2010/11 COMMUNITY FUTURES GRANTEES AND PROJECTS

Region	Grantee Organisation	Course Attended	Grant Amount	Project	Project Themes
EAST MIDLANDS	Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens, Nottingham	Wildlife Gardening	£285	Purchase beehive and bee-friendly plants for community garden. Educate local schoolchildren in beekeeping.	Horticulture/Wildlife Conservation, Social Cohesion
	Friends of Belper Park, Derbyshire	Wildlife Gardening; Fundraising for Environmental Projects	£300 (x2)	Convert an area of tussocky long grass into a wildflower meadow.	Horticulture,/Wildlife Conservation, Social Cohesion
LONDON	Charlton and Carnbrook Housing Panel, London SE1	Save Money, Save Energy	£167.55	Purchase energy monitors for tenants to assess home energy usage and ways to save energy.	Saving Energy, Social Cohesion
	Delawyck Residents Managed Organisation, London SE24	Community Chickens	£300	Purchase chickens and materials to build a coop.	Animal Husbandry, Social Cohesion
NORTH WEST	Breckfield Health Inclusion for Men Project, Merseyside	Starting Organic Gardening	£295	Purchase a greenhouse to grow plants for their communal garden.	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
	Clayton North Tenants and Residents Association, Manchester	Starting Organic Gardening	£300	Purchase gardening tools and plants to start community garden	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
	Clock Community Centre, W. Everton, Liverpool	Starting Organic Gardening	£200	Purchase gardening tools to convert derelict land into a community allotment	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
	Cullen Street Green Harmony Association, Liverpool	Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces	£200	Produce neighbourhood newsletter	Social cohesion
	Friends of Longford Park, Manchester	Starting Organic Gardening	£200	Purchase gardening tools to convert derelict land into a community allotment	Horticulture, Social Cohesion

	Friends of Princes Park, Liverpool	Trees Matter	£300	Purchase trees and shrubs to create winter interest area	Horticulture/Wildlife Conservation, Social Cohesion
	Lache Garden Village Project, Chester	Breadmaking	£300	Purchase ingredients for baking artisanal bread in a breadmaking circle. Introduce techniques to local schoolchildren.	Horticulture, Recycling, Social Cohesion
	Queens Park Residents Association, Blackpool	Community Allotments	£300	Purchase a greenhouse and compost bin to launch community allotments	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
	Riverview Residents Association, Liverpool	Growing Fruit and Veg	£300	Purchase tools and equipment to expand community allotment	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
	That Bloomin' Cairns Street, Liverpool	Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces	£200	Clean up a neglected residential street, repair an elderly resident's broken windows and install planters in front lawns	Horticulture, Recycling, Social Cohesion
	The Islington Estate Tenants and Residents Association, Salford, Manchester	Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces	£300	Hire architect to produce professional plans for improving neighbourhood	Social Cohesion
	Windlehurst Special School Gardening Club, Stockport	Starting Organic Gardening	£300	Purchase polytunnel for gardening project at a school for NEET youth	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
	Winskill Road Tenants and Residents Association, Merseyside	Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces	£300	Purchase benches and slabs to make community common area more accessible	Social Cohesion
SOUTH WEST	Friends of Cock Ridge Road, Bristol	Wildlife Gardening	£300	Purchase trees and animal habitats for community garden	Horticulture/Wildlife Conservation, Social Cohesion
	Keynsham and District Beekeepers' Association, Bristol	Wildlife Gardening	£300	Plant an evergreen hedgerow to attract wildlife and protect garden from strong winds	Horticulture/Wildlife Conservation, Social Cohesion

	Seven Hills House Social Group, Torquay	Save Money, Save Energy	£234.18	Purchase water butts to collect rain water and save on water bills	Saving Energy, Social Cohesion
	Westgate Tenants Consultative Committee, Gloucester	Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces	£200	Install plants and benches in a formerly neglected common area to encouraging mingling.	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
WALES	Hazel Knuts Garden Club, Swansea	Growing Fruit and Veg	£295	Purchase greenhouse to propagate fruit, veg from seed	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
	Peulwys Go Green, Conwy	Starting Organic Gardening	£300	Purchase rotavator to till soil in community allotment	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
WEST MIDLANDS	Colwall Orchard Group, Malvern	Starting Organic Gardening	£195	Plant a new, traditional orchard and provide allotments for 40 rural residents	Horticulture, Wildlife Conservation, Social Cohesion
	Craven Connection, Coventry	Community Allotments; Community Chickens	£300 (x2)	Expand youth gardening project; Set up a community chickens project for a nursery, crèche, junior school and a youth club	Horticulture/Animal Husbandry, Social Cohesion
	Kingfisher Project, Burton-on-Trent	Starting Organic Gardening	£200	Purchase timber to build new raised beds in a successful community allotment	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
	Manor Farm Residents Association, Coventry	Community Allotments; Community Chickens	£300 (x2)	Convert derelict land into a community allotment; Build a chicken coop to provide shelter for 20 ex-battery chickens	Horticulture/Animal Husbandry, Social Cohesion
	New Oscott and Wryley Birch Housing Liaison Board, Birmingham	Wildlife Gardening	£250	Purchase wildlife-attracting plants for community garden	Horticulture, Wildlife Conservation, Social Cohesion
	Seeds of Hope Craft Group, Solihull	Community Chickens	£300	Purchase 6 chickens and a coop and run to shelter them	Horticulture/Animal Husbandry, Social Cohesion
	Volunteer Centre of N. Warwickshire, Nuneaton	Growing and Sharing	£299	Purchase stainless steel tools to improve elderly residents' gardens and local public spaces	Horticulture, Social Cohesion

YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER	Carlton Education and Enterprise, Ltd, Barton-Upon-Humber	Fundraising for Environment Projects; Community Chickens; Wildlife Gardening	£300 (x3)	Advertise community projects; Purchase incubator to breed chickens and educate local youth; Purchase wildlife-attracting plants and boxes	Horticulture/Animal Husbandry/Wildlife Conservation, Social Cohesion
	Knotted Note Charity, Barton-Upon-Humber	Community Chickens; Growing and Sharing; Fundraising for Environmental Projects	£300 (x3)	Build 3 chicken arks; Cultivate produce to sell at farmers' markets; Advertise and host an open to promote their community projects	Horticulture/Animal Husbandry/Wildlife Conservation, Social Cohesion
	Emmaus Bradford, Bradford	Too Good to Waste	£300	Design and print flyers to advertise community project	Social Cohesion
	Marsden and Slaithwaite Transition Towns, Huddersfield	Wildlife Gardening	£300	Purchase greenhouse for community garden	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
	Transition Hull, Hull	Community Allotments	£299	Set up a family gardening area to teach children how to grow fruit and veg	Horticulture, Social Cohesion
	Old Sleningford Farm, N. Yorkshire	Wildlife Gardening	£300	Purchase wildlife-attracting plants and shrubbery for an existing pond and surrounding area	Horticulture/Wildlife Conservation, Social Cohesion
	Roots and Fruits Project @ The Rockwell Centre, Bradford	Involving Your Street	£300	Purchase polytunnel for community allotment and use as a nursery to supply local residents with plants	Horticulture, Social Cohesion

## ANNEXE 3: RESPONDENT ORGANISATIONS

The following organisations formally or informally shared information for this evaluation:

Region	Organisation
East	Jobson Road Residents Association, Lincolnshire Watford Community Housing Trust, Hertfordshire
East Midlands	Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens, Nottingham Friends of Belper Park, Derbyshire Hinckley and Bosworth Council, Leicestershire
London	Charlton and Carnbrook Housing Panel, Greenwich Delawyck Residents Management Organisation, Dulwich Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association, Islington Turning Pages Community Centre, Greenwich
Northeast	Endeavour Housing Association, Stockton
Northwest	2Up2Down, Liverpool Adactus Housing, Manchester Breckfield Health Inclusion for Men Project, Merseyside CALICO, Burnley, Lancashire Clock Community Centre, Liverpool Cullen Street Green Harmony Association, Liverpool Friends of Longford Park, Manchester Kirkholt Junior Wardens, Rochdale Lache Village Garden Project, Chester Oldham Drive Tenants Group, Stockport Pioneers Estate Tenants and Residents Association, Liverpool Queens Park Resident Association, Blackpool Stainburn Gardening Club, Cumbria Sustainable Blacon, Chester Tenants Forum, Stockbridge, Liverpool That Bloomin' Cairns Street, Liverpool Windlehurst Special School Gardening Club, Stockport Zion Community Resource Centre, Manchester
Southeast	Bexhill Neighbourhood Gardening Scheme, St. Leonards-on-Sea
Southwest	Bath and Northeast Somerset Council, Bath Community Orchard at Bagley, Bagley Friends of Cock Ridge Road, Bristol Grafton Roads Residents Association, Devon Keynsham and District Beekeepers Association, Bristol Seven Hills Social Group, Torquay Westgate Tenants Consultative Committee, Gloucester
Wales	Caia Park Environmental, Wrexham Hazel Knuts Gardening Club, Swansea Peulwys Go Green, Conwy Wrexham Tenants Federation, Wrexham
West Midlands	Colwall Orchard Group, Malvern Craven Connection, Coventry Delves East Tenant Management Organisation, Walsall Henley Green Community Centre, Coventry Manor Farm Residents Association, Coventry Marches Residents Contacts, Leominster, Shropshire New Oscott and Wryley Birch Housing Liaison Board, Birmingham Trent and Dove Housing, Staffordshire Volunteer Centre of North Warwickshire, Nuneaton
Yorkshire and the Humber	Carlton Education and Enterprise Ltd, Barton-upon-Humber Friends of Nutclough Woods, North Yorkshire Knotted Note Charity, Barton-upon-Humber Marsden and Slaithwaite Transition Towns, Huddersfield Old Sleningford Farm, Ripon, North Yorkshire Riccall Lands Charity, North Yorkshire The Rockwell Centre, Bradford Transition Hull, Hull

## ANNEXE 4: PAPER SURVEY FOR NON-GRANTEES



1) Name

2) Course attended

3) What interested you to attend the Trafford Hall course initially?

4) Have you taken any further actions in your community since attending the course? (if no skip)

- What actions have you taken?
- Who has been involved?
- How have you and your community benefited as a result?
- What challenges do you face (if any) in improving your community needs?
- What kind of support do you need to make your ideas successful?

5) What kept you from applying for a Trafford Hall Community Futures grant after the course?

6) Is there anything **more that** Trafford Hall could have done to assist you?

7) Are there any courses that Trafford Hall doesn't currently offer that you would like to attend?

8) Any other comments?

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. If you have progressed with a project in your community as a result of attending a course and have some photos, we would love to see them; you can e-mail them to myself at [g.dutton@traffordhall.com](mailto:g.dutton@traffordhall.com).

## ANNEXE 5: GRANTEE AND NON-GRANTEE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Organisation/Location</b>	<b>Region</b>
<b>Course Attended</b>	<b>Mode of Interview</b>

(1) When you think back on your time at Trafford Hall, what really stands out to you?

(2) Before you came on your first CF course, what were things like on your estate/in your community group/in your neighbourhood?

(3) What interested you to attend the Trafford Hall Community Futures course(s) initially? Did other people from your association also attend?

(4) Did you apply for a Community Futures action grant? If no, what kept you from applying?

(5) Tell me a bit about you're currently doing in your community.

- What actions have you taken?

- Who has been involved?
- How have you and your community benefited as a result?
- What do you love about it?
- What challenges do you face (if any)?

(6) Has anything changed (for better or for worse) within your community group and in your wider estate/locality since you attended the course?

(7) What could make life in your community even better? What would you like to do next?

(8) How can Trafford Hall help you make your ideas successful?

**ANNEXE 6: COMMUNITY FUTURES COURSE EVALUATION FORM**



NAME (Optional) .....

<b>1. What did you think of the venue?</b>	☹ Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent ☺
<b>2. What did you think of the catering?</b>	☹ Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent ☺

**Please tell us what you thought about the course; there are no right or wrong answers**

<b>3. Has the course given you new ideas?</b> <i>(Please give an actual example of an idea or other thing you have learnt)</i>	Yes / No <i>(please circle)</i>
<b>4. Will you do anything differently as a result of the course?</b> <i>(if yes, please tell us what)</i>	Yes / No <i>(please circle)</i>
<b>5. Has the course encouraged you to take forward an existing idea?</b> <i>(if yes, please tell us what)</i>	Yes / No <i>(please circle)</i>
<b>6. Summarise here <u>from your action plan</u> the three key actions you plan to take when you get back</b>	1. 2. 3.

<p><b>7. Was there anything you wanted from the course that you didn't get?</b></p> <p><i>If yes please tell us what:</i></p>	<p>Yes / No <i>(please circle)</i></p>
<p><b>8. What did you think about the way the course was taught?</b></p> <p><b>Did you feel the trainers knew the subject?</b></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>M211 All on Board</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Please Turn over – just a few questions to go!</b></p>	

<b>9. What have you learnt from the course?</b>	
<b>10. Which parts of the course or exercises did you find <u>least</u> useful and why?</b>	
<b>11. Was any of the training something you didn't like, but which did you good?</b>	
<b>12. How could the course be improved?</b>	a)  b)  c)

**ANY OTHER COMMENT YOU WISH TO MAKE:**

<b>13. What did you think about the level of the course?</b> <i>(please tick)</i>	Much too basic 	A bit basic 	About right 	A bit advanced 	Much too advanced 
<b>14. Overall, how happy are you with this event?</b> <i>(please tick)</i>	Very Unhappy 	Unhappy 	Mixed feelings 	Happy 	Very happy 