



Project Twin Streams:  
Sustainable Living, Sustainable  
Household Programme

Interim Process Evaluation Report

February 2009

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## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank the following people for their advice, contribution and/or participation in the evaluation of the Project Twin Streams Sustainable Living, Sustainable Households Programme: Regan Solomon; Jenny Chilcott and Helen Haslam (Waitakere City Council); Yuki Kamiya (Sustainable Ranui-Swanson); Tejopala Rawls and the Sustainability Advisors Team (EcoMatters Environment Trust); Meredith Youngston (Celebrating Swanson); Mary Foy (Te Ukaipo) and Emma Frost (Ranui Action Project); and our colleagues, Karen Witten and Pauline Dickinson.

# Executive Summary

## Background

Project Twin Streams (PTS) provides the overall framework for the Sustainable Living, Sustainable Households Demonstration Programme (SLSH). PTS is an urban sustainability project in Waitakere City employing creative environmental approaches to restore six local streams. PTS is designed to encourage community involvement in the long term care of local streams based on the belief that this will lead to healthier streams and communities. PTS-SLSH builds on the successful community engagement by the PTS community organisations and the recognition that sustainable development requires interventions at multiple levels. The SLSH programme has evolved from PTS as a way of working with people to make changes in their own homes and neighbourhoods in order to live more sustainably. In the current phase of the programme (July 2008 to June 2009) the target number of households to complete a home check is 80 in Glen Eden and 250 in Ranui and Swanson combined.

## PTS Sustainable Ranui-Swanson

Since the last report there have been several changes. The Swanson and Ranui projects have been combined and a new co-ordinator was appointed in October 2008. Programme implementation has been slow due to a period of time when there was no co-ordinator, the time required for the new person to become familiar with the programme and the summer period when it is more difficult to recruit households. By late January 42 households had been referred for a home check. The cluster conversation has been used less consistently in Phase Two but at a recent planning meeting the importance of this approach was reaffirmed. A number of follow up workshops on composting and gardening have been developed along with other ways of connecting with local residents about sustainability issues.

## Sustainable Homes Programme Glen Eden

There has also been a change in co-ordinators at EcoMatters. A Green Streets approach is being used to foster participation in the programme. This involves targeting a particular area and offering a range of services at the same time. In September the Sustainable Homes Programme organised a community event at the Glen Eden Community House with other organisations and between 150 to 200 people attended. By the end of January about 50 households had been recruited into the programme. EcoMatters have been working on a behaviour change survey as a way of following up with the households recruited in Phase One and with the new households that joined the Sustainable Homes Programme since June 30th 2008. This is still in development and to date no other follow up has been undertaken with Phase One households.

## Evaluation

The broad aim of the evaluation is to ensure that the SLSH programme is well designed, documented and implemented. The process evaluation objectives are:

- To support the effective documentation of project implementation
- To examine how well activities have been implemented and to identify any areas of improvement.

Additional funding has been allocated for the process and outcome evaluation for Phase One of the programme and to include Phase Two of the programme in the

evaluation. A number of additions have been made to the original evaluation plan and these include two rounds of in depth participant interviews; two focus group discussions with programme partners; a follow up telephone survey with Phase One participants; and a baseline and follow up survey with Phase Two participants recruited in 2009. Water use data from participating households will also be analysed. Ethics approval from the Massey University Human Ethics Committee for the evaluation was obtained in December 2008.

## **Process Evaluation Findings**

### *Ranui and Swanson*

Overall the process evaluation findings indicate that the engagement, implementation and follow up of Phase One and Two participants is somewhere between “good” and “very good” in Ranui and Swanson.

### *Engagement*

The formative evaluation findings indicated that Phase One households were being engaged successfully in Ranui and Swanson. Efforts were made to engage lower income and diverse groups who may not usually become involved in sustainability projects (Greenaway, 2008). Word of mouth and using previous participants as role models was seen as a good way of encouraging “hard to reach” people to take part. This approach has an additional benefit of drawing on community strengths and creating opportunities to develop and support local community leaders. Another person has been appointed to support the project co-ordinator in Ranui and Swanson. There was no negative feedback from interviewees about engagement methods. It is important the focus remains on recruiting hard to reach and diverse households and the evaluation findings, along with research evidence, suggest that cluster groups are an appropriate way to do this.

### *Implementation*

Efforts have been made to clarify programme elements and there are some interesting new developments, such as the Redlands Grove cluster group and potential mucking in workshops that are consistent with community development principles. As suggested in the evidence review, because behaviour change is complex and difficult multiple interventions are needed. It is also important to tailor interventions to the needs and motivations of communities (Wild and Greenaway, 2008).

In the formative evaluation findings key informants believed that the facilitated conversation was a non-threatening way for people to engage with sustainability issues and the approach would allow people to share what they already knew and therefore capitalise on local people’s strengths (Greenaway, 2008). Feedback from participants and programme partners supports this conclusion. A key challenge is to build on the cluster conversation and to support local community leaders. Recent engagement with Earthsong may offer opportunities to further develop local leadership. A central component of PTS-SLSH is the use of community development approaches and the benefits of these were supported by the formative evaluation findings and the evidence review undertaken for this project (Greenaway, 2008, Wild and Greenaway, 2008). There is evidence that community development approaches are being utilised well in Ranui-Swanson. In general the home check was well received in Ranui and Swanson. Initial feedback from households in Ranui and Swanson highlighted some issues but the project co-ordinators did try to address these once they were identified.

### *Follow up*

The follow up activities in Ranui and Swanson have been determined by the interests of programme participants. In particular, interest has been focused on composting and gardening with some interest in rain tanks. Whilst, from a community development perspective, it is positive that the project is responding to local interest this also means that less focus has been directed to water, energy and transport issues. Perhaps it is too ambitious to attempt to provide follow up activities in all four target areas but it is important that there is a sound rationale behind the choice of which aspects to focus on. There is a need to keep a balance between being responsive to participants' interests and also focusing on what initiatives are needed to achieve the short-term outcomes specified in the programme logic models (see Appendix).

The main areas to focus on are developing systematic follow up processes with households and greater clarity about what the programme involves (recent work in this area is noted). It will be helpful to do some thinking around what follow up strategies could be utilised for the different outcome areas. Further exploration of ways to engage and develop local community leaders will also be important as the programme proceeds in order to foster the sustainability of the programme.

### *Glen Eden*

Overall the process evaluation findings indicate that the engagement, implementation and follow up of Phase One and Phase Two participants is "good" in Glen Eden.

### *Engagement*

The engagement methods appear to be appropriate for the local community. The formative evaluation findings indicated that EcoMatters had engaged diverse groups of households in their programme (Greenaway, 2008). One person in Glen Eden had experienced a cold call and they were less enthusiastic about the project. The actual engagement of participants in the programme does not appear to be a barrier and a range of recruitment methods have been used to encourage people to sign up for a home check. In Glen Eden, Ecomatters are taking more of a community development approach but there are still challenges with developing ways to build on the Green Streets approach.

### *Implementation*

The home check appears to have been very well received by Phase One households. On the whole participants found this a useful and interesting process. Some of the Glen Eden participants were not aware that the programme had more to it than the home checks. This suggests there is a need to clearly communicate to participants what the programme consists of and to be clear about follow up approaches.

### *Follow up*

One off interventions are unlikely to be effective (Wild and Greenaway, 2008) so it is important that follow up with existing households continues at the same time as new households are recruited. The main challenge for Glen Eden at this stage is the lack of follow up with Phase One households. This is due to number of factors including: the high priority given to the completion of home checks, changes in project staff and the developmental nature of the project. There is also a need to look at how the initial engagement and interventions can both encourage behaviour change and do so in ways that foster community connections and cohesion. Feedback from participants, in all areas, suggests that the opportunity to connect with others is an aspect of the programme that is valued. It is also a central component of the community development model.

The use of a behaviour change survey to follow up with households is continuing an individualised household approach and it will be useful to look for opportunities to connect people in Glen Eden. EcoMatters may like to consider trialling a cluster conversation as part of the Green Streets approach and the development of a vision group may also be useful.

### **Interim Outcome Evaluation Findings**

The interim evaluation findings are encouraging. There are indications that PTS-SLSH is resulting in reductions in water and energy use and that participants are changing their waste disposal practices through increased composting. There is also a strong interest, as in other parts of the country, in developing gardening skills through workshops and for some, through community gardens. Whether the programme is resulting in changes to transport behaviour is unclear. It is likely that there are infrastructural barriers to public transport use that are not easily addressed by programmes focused on behaviour change at a household level. The follow up survey of Phase One participants and analysis of water use data will provide additional information on whether or not short term outcomes have been achieved. If Phase Two participants are recruited into the evaluation further evaluation data will be available for these households. In depth interviews with a sample of Phase Two participants in 2009 will provide additional information about programme implementation and outcomes.

### **Improvements**

There are some areas where improvements can be made and the following action points have been identified:

- In Ranui and Swanson there needs to be a clear and shared understanding of when someone is part of the PTS-SLSH programme.
- Each programme needs to communicate potential follow up activities to participants and clarify who will be following up with them and when. Ideally follow up approaches should be informed by community development principles in order to create opportunities to develop local strengths and foster connections.
- Each area needs to ensure that time and resources are allocated to following up with households.
- Each site needs to analyse how potential follow up activities will contribute to the achievement of the short term outcomes and to prioritise these activities.
- It will be useful for both sites to explore ways of identifying and utilising local community leaders and/or champions more effectively.
- Need to explore ways of addressing barriers that are not at the household level, for example, unsupportive landlords, excessive packaging and public transport infrastructure
- Each site needs to improve the communication of links with PTS
- The evaluator needs to address issues with the recruitment of Phase Two households for the evaluation and if less than 50 are recruited by the end of March the feasibility of the outcome evaluation will need to be assessed.
- Update logic models to reflect changes in project delivery.

# 1. Introduction

This report focuses on the process evaluation of the Project Twin Streams—Sustainable Living, Sustainable Households (PTS-SLSH) Programme from January 2008 to February 2009. It also includes descriptive information about the achievement of short-term outcomes by the PTS-SLSH programme. More detailed outcome evaluation findings will be available in July 2009.

The main process evaluation data in this report comes from interviews with participants involved with Phase One of the programme (from January to June 2008); a focus group discussion with programme partners held in February 2009; and feedback gathered from programme participants by programme co-ordinators. Some process evaluation data for Phase One has been reported previously (Greenaway, 2008). This report includes an update on programme development since July 2008, including follow up initiatives with Phase One households and engagement and recruitment of Phase Two households. Recent changes to the evaluation methodology are outlined. Further process evaluation data for the Phase One and Phase Two households will be reported in July 2009.

## 1.1 Background

Project Twin Streams (PTS) provides the overall framework for the Sustainable Living, Sustainable Households Programme (SLSH). PTS is an urban sustainability project in Waitakere City employing creative environmental approaches to restore six local streams. PTS is designed to encourage community involvement in the long term care of local streams based on the belief that this will lead to healthier streams and communities (Trotman and Wood, 2006:3).

The SLSH programme has evolved from PTS as a way of working with people to make changes in their own homes and neighbourhoods in order to live more sustainably. PTS has successfully engaged diverse individuals, families and groups in a range of activities, including planting days, and in creative processes (see <http://www.waitakere.govt.nz/AbtCit/ne/twinstreams.asp>). A community development model has been developed jointly by community organisations and Council through their work together on PTS. Through the stream restoration work community members and in particular, the PTS community organisations, identified that replanting stream banks would not be enough to improve water quality. They needed to work with people in their own homes to change household behaviours and to increase awareness of wider sustainability issues. Council also has specific objectives focused on reducing water, energy and waste and reducing the use of private motor vehicles and wanted to explore ways of increasing community uptake of these issues. These factors provided an opportunity to develop the PTS-SLSH demonstration programme to test whether the community development model, that had successfully engaged communities in stream restoration work, could also be used to engage households to live more sustainably.

The community development approach is based on the following assumptions;

- People are more likely to make changes in behaviour when they understand the problem and are involved in identifying the solutions in a meaningful way
- Local communities know the most appropriate and effective methods to engage local people
- Each community has its own diverse characteristics. Programmes need to be adapted to harness the diverse strengths of communities. A single broad approach is unlikely to be effective.

- Creative learning methods that engage with people's hearts and minds are more effective than simply distributing written information in creating meaningful and long-term behaviour change
- Local organisations can be more effective than Council in engaging their own communities in the sustainability journey but need to be adequately resourced and supported to do so

A partnership approach between communities, local, regional and central government, non-government organisations and local people is seen as a very effective way of achieving long-term change towards sustainability (Chilcott, 2008).

One of the underlying assumptions of the PTS community development model is that a "one-size fits all" approach is unlikely to be effective and that different communities have their own way of doing things. Three sites were selected for the demonstration phase: Swanson, Ranui and Glen Eden. These sites were selected because they had all expressed interest in the project; were believed to have strong community networks and had actively engaged diverse communities of interest in Project Twin Streams (Waitakere City Council, 2007b). In Ranui, Te Ukaipo saw PTS-SLSH as a natural extension of the work they were already doing with PTS; a group of residents in Swanson (Celebrating Swanson) had started taking action as a result of screening the Al Gore movie "An Inconvenient Truth" and had approached Council; in Glen Eden EcoMatters Environment Trust had been developing a city-wide Sustainable Homes Programme and saw PTS-SLSH as an opportunity to pilot this in Glen Eden. Therefore, PTS-SLSH involves trialling three different ways of engaging and working with communities.

The programme vision is: *"Sustainable households driven by local communities who influence others to create a sustainable catchment"* (Waitakere City Council, 2007a).

#### 1.1.1 Project Twin Streams Sustainable Ranui-Swanson

In August the project co-ordinator for Sustainable Ranui, Sue Berman, advised that she was no longer available to work full time on the programme. Yuki Kamiya was appointed as the new project co-ordinator in mid October 2008. Yuki was a facilitator and interpreter for an environmental education programme and corporate outdoor training programme in Japan and lives locally at the Earthsong Eco-Neighbourhood in Ranui. Sue has returned to the programme and is providing assistance with facilitating cluster conversations.

For Phase Two a decision was made to combine the Sustainable Ranui and Sustainable Swanson projects and Te Ukaipo, a community development initiative of Te Tairere Atawhai Mercy Ministries Ltd, now has a contract to deliver both of these projects in partnership with the Ranui Action Project (RAP). In Phase One the Ranui Vision Group was able to provide support for the Ranui programme. Less support was available for the Swanson component as Celebrating Swanson is a voluntary group. However, Celebrating Swanson is still an important connection point for engagement with the Swanson community and the co-ordinator plans to work with this group to link in with local events and initiatives.

Project implementation has been slow in Ranui and Swanson due to a period of time when there was no co-ordinator and the need to allocate time for the new co-ordinator to become familiar with the programme. By late January 2009 42 households from Ranui and Swanson had been referred to EcoMatters for a home check and 36 of these had been completed. According to the co-ordinator a total of 83 people have been engaged in PTS Sustainable Ranui-Swanson since July 2008.

These are people who have shown good interest in the programme and have signed up for a home check and/or a cluster conversation.

The cluster conversation has not been utilised as consistently as in Phase One. In part this is because the new co-ordinator is less comfortable with this method of engagement; and needed to spend time becoming familiar with the project. It is also more difficult to recruit households in the summer months. The new co-ordinator has also been working less hours on the project than in Phase One. An additional position is currently being advertised to support the co-ordinator with community engagement and facilitation of the cluster conversations.

At a recent vision group meeting greater clarity was achieved about the different programme elements which reaffirmed the importance of cluster conversations as a core programme intervention. There was also acknowledgement of the need to be creative and flexible with programme elements in order to ensure that a diverse range of people can participate. Home checks are seen as incentives to become engaged in the programme rather than as the key component.

#### *Follow up with Phase One Households*

Between October and December 2008 project staff attempted to phone all Phase One participants from Ranui and Swanson and asked for feedback on the project and about other activities or initiatives that participants might be interested in. A summary of the feedback is included in the evaluation findings below.

One composting workshop has been completed this year and another is organised for February. A vegetable growing workshop has been organised for March. Approximately 70 people have either participated, or are enrolled, in one of these workshops. The workshops are in high demand and a number of attendees have participated in other parts of PTS-SLSH, for example a cluster conversation and/or a home check. Other ideas for other follow up opportunities include:

- Workshops on rainwater tanks and hot water cylinder wraps
- "Mucking in" workshop<sup>1</sup> at a local resident's home
- Cloth nappy demonstration

At a planning day in January 2009 the following initiatives were identified as potential supports for the programme in Ranui:

- Profile project participants as role models (for example Mary Foy's power bill success)
- Include a Sustainability Category as part of the Ranui Achievers Profile
- Promotion at Ranui Whanau Day on Sat 21 March
- Celebration of Success – invite all project participants to a celebration event – provide examples of other things that people can do, find out what else people are interested in
- Form a Celebrating Ranui group for those people who do want to meet regularly

#### 1.1.2 Sustainable Homes Programme-Glen Eden

In late July 2008, the project manager, Suzie Trihn, moved to another organisation and Tejopala Rawls was appointed as her replacement. Tejopala was already employed by EcoMatters and had good knowledge of the Sustainable Homes

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<sup>1</sup> Local residents volunteer their labour to improve an aspect of another resident's home and/or garden. The aim is to foster community connections and at the same time up-skill local residents so that they can apply their new skills and knowledge in their own homes and gardens.

Programme. He had previously managed the Water Wise Up programme for EcoMatters. Suzie Trihn returned to the EcoMatters team in early February 2009 and will co-manage the Sustainable Homes Programme with Tejopala.

About 50 Glen Eden households have been recruited between July 2008 to January 2009.

#### *Green Streets approach*

In the demonstration phase of the project EcoMatters used a variety of methods to recruit households into the programme including door knocking, letter box drops, advertisements in the Western Leader, promotion through other EcoMatters programmes and website and through school newsletters. In Phase Two EcoMatters moved to a "Green Streets" approach, developed from their involvement with the Massey Matters project. The Green Streets approach involves targeting a particular area and offering a range of services at the same time. In September the Sustainable Homes programme organised a community event at the Glen Eden Community House and the following organisations were involved:

- Weedfree Trust
- Keep Waitakere Beautiful Trust
- Project Twin Streams
- Ace Space
- Waitakere City Council Solid Waste unit
- Community Waitakere
- Glen Eden Community House
- EcoMatters Education for Sustainability project
- The Tag Out Trust (EcoMatters Environment Trust, 2008).

EcoMatters targeted households living in streets adjacent to the community centre and promoted the event by talking at a local primary school assembly, a flyer drop in letter boxes, invitations to local schools and community groups and flyers were given to parents of children in after school care at the community centre. EcoMatters also organised a bouncy castle and provided free ice creams. About 150 to 200 people attended and 41 people signed up to the programme including 17 from the target area (EcoMatters Environment Trust, 2008).

The Glen Eden Community House has also had a home check and according to the co-ordinator this has resulted in water and energy savings. There is also interest in setting up a composting system and installing a rain tank as a way of demonstrating strategies or interventions to reduce water and waste.

Another event was held in late January 2009 but only a small number of local residents attended. The low attendance was attributed to the event being held in the school holidays and the lack of access to local school networks to promote the event.

EcoMatters are interested in the differences between neighbourhood and individual engagement approaches. They are also interested in whether a home check is the most effective approach or whether they could use alternatives for example sending out tap aerators to residents, and followed up by door knocking and offering advice and support at that stage. One key focus in the coming months will be working with schools in the area, particularly Rosier Road kindergarten and Prospect Primary.

### *Follow up with Phase One Households*

EcoMatters have been working on a behaviour change survey as a way of following up with the households recruited in Phase One and with new households that have joined the Sustainable Homes Programme since June 30 2008. This is still in development and to date no other follow up has been undertaken with Phase One households. The evaluator has offered to assist EcoMatters with further development of follow up methods.

### 1.1.3 Waitakere City Council

Waitakere City Council advisors were central players in the instigation of the PTS-SLSH programme. A small team within Council developed the initial programme components, sourced funding and met with community organisations to discuss how they could work together to deliver PTS-SLSH. The Council continues to be involved in a number of ways. A strategic advisor is supporting programme development and providing strategic brokerage services to the programme. This includes identifying additional resources available to the programme, fostering links with other agencies who are actively engaged in related work in Waitakere and communicating the purpose and goals of the programme to internal and external partners. A communications advisor is providing advice and support to each site.

The SLSH programme also has the potential to contribute towards the following Project Twin Streams outcomes:

#### *Environmental*

- Increase installation and use of sustainable technologies by households and businesses

#### *Social*

- Increase community understanding of how to live more lightly on the earth
- Increase sense of belonging with others in the local community
- Increase interaction between people and local places (Trotman and Wood, 2006:15)

## 2. Evaluation Approach

The main purpose of the evaluation is to assist with the development of the SLSH programme, to test the community development assumptions and to gauge the achievements of the programme in relation to the intended outcomes. The evaluation of the PTS-SLSH programme has a strong utilisation focus. In practice this means involving the people who are likely to use the evaluation findings in the development and implementation of the evaluation; in this case Council staff and community organisations. This approach is based on the assumption that active engagement of intended users is more likely to lead to the implementation of the evaluation findings and recommendations because they are relevant and useful (Patton, 1997). This has been challenging due to the demands on the project workers' time. Council officers have been closely involved in the revision of the original evaluation plan. In addition, the evaluation draws upon Trotman's (2005) analysis of best practice approaches to evaluating local sustainable development projects.

### **2.1 Changes to the evaluation plan**

In October 2008 SHORE was funded to undertake the process and outcome evaluation for the Phase One (demonstration) households. In late 2008 further funding became available to include Phase Two households as part of the evaluation. As a result the following additions were made to the original evaluation plan:

- In depth interviews with a sample of Phase One participants (n=15) were conducted in December 2008 and January 2009. Another round will be completed with a sample of Phase Two households in May 2009. The interview data will provide information on participants' experience of the programme to date, motivations for participation, changes within households, connections to others in their neighbourhood, barriers to change and suggested programme improvements and ways of engaging others in PTS-SLSH.
- A focus group discussion with six key programme partners was held in early February 2009. Another focus group discussion will be held in June 2009. The data from the group discussion will provide information on the use and impacts of community development approaches, aspects of the programme that are working well and areas for improvement.
- The evaluator will review programme reports and other relevant documentation to ensure that an accurate description of the programme is included in evaluation reports.
- In May 2009 all Phase One participants, who agreed to participate in the evaluation, will be contacted by a CATI interviewer from SHORE. They will be asked a set of questions about their water, electricity, transport use and waste disposal practices. These will be similar to the questions used in the baseline survey. The data from the baseline survey will give an indication of whether or not changes in household practices have occurred after involvement in PTS-SLSH and the extent to which some programme outcomes are being achieved.
- The water use data from participating Phase One and 2 households will be analysed and compared with the average water use for households in each area. This data will give an indication of water use in PTS-SLSH households.

This will help the evaluators make an assessment of whether or not outcomes regarding water use are being achieved.

- Phase Two participants (who were recruited in 2009 and agree to participate in the evaluation) will be interviewed via a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) to gather baseline and follow up data. Participants will be asked about their preferred language and the CATI manager will attempt to allocate an appropriate interviewer so they can explain the survey in the participant's first language. The survey data will give an indication of changes that are happening within households as a result of PTS-SLSH and the extent to which short-term outcomes are being achieved.

EcoMatters are also planning to introduce a behaviour change survey as part of their sustainable homes programme. There was some concern that the delivery of two surveys could result in a double up and place undue demands on programme participants. However, as the EcoMatters survey is still in development it seemed sensible to go ahead with the baseline survey in Glen Eden.

The Council has a strong interest in whether the programme is providing tangible benefits to households. The evaluation needs to provide simple and credible information about the changes for households, for example savings on water, electricity and/or transport costs. There is also interest in whether organisations are using community development approaches and how effective these are.

Not surprisingly as the programme is developed and refined the recruitment and implementation methods have changed. This does present challenges for recruiting Phase Two participants to take part in the baseline and follow up survey. There will be limitations with the outcome evaluation data due to the small sample size and the short timeframe for the programme to produce results. The programme is quite vulnerable in this situation because it is too early to show significant changes. It may be possible to demonstrate change over time if more households are recruited into the evaluation. At the time of writing only eight Phase Two participants have agreed to take part in the evaluation. If evaluation referrals do not increase substantially there is little point in continuing with the baseline and follow up survey of Phase Two households.

A further limitation is that participants with English as their second language are less likely to be involved in the in-depth participant interviews because the interviewer may be unable to explain the purpose of the interview when inviting them to participate.

## **2.2 Evaluation Questions**

The purpose of the process evaluation is to describe and document what actually happened as part of the PTS-SLSH programme in both Phase One (Jan to June 08) and 2 (July 08 onwards). Data will be collected in order to make an assessment about the quality of the PTS-SLSH programme in each area and the ways in which community development approaches are being used in each area. Factors that have enhanced or impeded the quality and effectiveness of programme activities will also be identified so that improvements can be made if necessary.

The key process evaluation questions are:

- What methods are being used to engage households? Which methods worked well and/or which methods were not so effective? What factors motivated households to participate in the programme in the three localities?
- Which households are participating in the Sustainable Living Sustainable Households Programme? Has the programme engaged diverse and hard to reach groups?<sup>2</sup>
- What interventions are being implemented? How well are they being implemented?
- What have we learnt about the different engagement and implementation methods in each of the three localities?
- Are there any challenges or barriers? How are these being addressed?

The key outcome evaluation questions are:

- Has the Sustainable Living, Sustainable Households Programme achieved the intended short to medium term outcomes in Glen Eden, Ranui and Swanson?
- What are the unintended outcomes, both positive and negative, that have resulted from the SLSH programme? For example, what did participants identify as the benefits from their involvement in the programme?
- To what extent are other households being influenced by the Sustainable Living, Sustainable Households Programme?
- Is it the Sustainable Living, Sustainable Household programme worth continuing?<sup>3</sup>
- What improvements could be made to the SLSH programme?

### **2.3 Evaluation Methods**

For the current report the following data collection methods were used to gather information to inform the evaluation findings.

#### **Participant Interviews**

Between December 2008 and January 2009 17 participants were interviewed from 15 households. Five households were from Ranui, five from Swanson and five from Glen Eden. Nine of the household that interviewed had children living in the house. Two were single women living alone (one elderly, one in her 20s); the remainder were elderly or retired couples. Each interview was recorded and transcribed.

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<sup>2</sup> This question has been addressed in the formative evaluation report with respect to the Phase One participants.

<sup>3</sup> This question will be addressed in the final evaluation report.

The participants spanned those who were already firmly committed to sustainability practices in their homes, to those who engaged in the project primarily to save money. Most participants were implementing some waste minimisation, power and / or water conservation practices. All households stated they recycled prior to participating in the programme.

### **Focus group**

In February 2009 a focus group discussion was held with six of the programme partners which included two representatives from each project and from Council. Eleven people were invited to attend but five were unable to attend. The focus group was recorded and transcribed. The main areas of discussion were the perceived benefits of the programme for participants, community organisations and Council; engagement and follow up processes, and key learnings from the project so far.

### **Feedback from Sustainable Ranui-Swanson follow-up**

Between October and December project staff attempted to ring each of the Phase One participants in Ranui and Swanson. Feedback was received from 16 participants from Swanson and approximately 56 participants from Ranui. Brief notes from each phone call were recorded in an excel spreadsheet.

### **Workshop feedback**

Twenty composting workshop participants completed a written feedback form and provided information about other initiatives they are interested in.

### 3. Process Evaluation Findings: Phase One

The process evaluation findings below cover the engagement, implementation of interventions and follow up with households recruited in Phase One of the PTS-SLSH programme. There is some overlap between the engagement of households in the programme and the interventions with households. Therefore, in Question One the focus is on the ways in which interviewees became connected to the programme. In Question Two more attention is given to the use of cluster conversations and home checks as interventions rather than engagement methods. The findings for Ranui-Swanson and Glen Eden are discussed separately and an overall assessment of programme performance is made. Suggestions about ways to improve the quality of the programme are included.

#### 3.1 Engagement and participation

Question One: What methods are being used to engage households? Which methods worked well and/or which methods were not so effective? What factors motivated households to participate in the programme in the three localities?

##### 3.1.1 PHASE ONE Ranui and Swanson

In Phase One of the programme the main form of engagement in Ranui and Swanson was through cluster conversations run by the co-ordinator.<sup>4</sup> Participants were recruited into the cluster conversations through the use of local networks and approaches to existing groups. Other engagement methods included:

- Articles in the local newsletters RAP RAVE
- Posters on community notice boards
- Flyers with dates for open “community conversations”
- Email and letter sent to RAP Society membership
- Email via the Big Clean Up subscription list
- Word of mouth (Berman, 2008).

Most of the interviewees were part of a cluster conversation at some point (all five from Ranui and four from Swanson). In Ranui, one person became involved through the local Community Centre after the co-ordinator had spoken with an ESOL group. One interviewee had received information in her mail box from her neighbour (a local leader) and then attended a cluster conversation. Another knew someone who worked for RAP and had participated in a cluster conversation at her local church. Another person had been rung and invited to a cluster conversation at the community centre. This person couldn't recall who had rung her. One woman had connected through a local play group

In Swanson, interviewees became connected to the programme in a variety of ways. In one case the co-ordinator spoke about the project at a Mainly Music class and the interviewee then hosted a cluster conversation at her home. Another person found out about the programme at a community picnic after participating in the Papatuanuku exercise developed by the previous co-ordinator. This person then attended a cluster conversation followed by a home check. A grand-daughter had recommended the programme to one interviewee and she had only had a home

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<sup>4</sup> For more detail on recruitment methods and cluster group conversations please see GREENAWAY, S. (2008) Project Twin Streams: Sustainable Living, Sustainable Household Demonstration Programme. Formative Evaluation Report Auckland, Centre for Social and Health Outcomes Research and Evaluation, Massey University.

check. One other interviewee had been involved in a cluster conversation at the local senior citizens group and another had participated in a cluster conversation with their neighbours. There was no negative feedback about any of these forms of engagement.

### 3.1.2 PHASE ONE Glen Eden

In Glen Eden EcoMatters engaged households through school newsletters: a letter drop to residents; advertisements in the Western Leader; promoting SLSH through the PTS newsletter, events (PTS Stream Planting Day and two PTS Private Property Open Days) and via the email database; door-knocking; an interactive stall at the Glen Eden shops; word of mouth; contacts made through the Sustainable Living Centre; the EcoMatters website; working with the Glen Eden Community House; and developing a relationship with Hoani Waititi Marae (Greenaway, 2008).

In Glen Eden, one participant responded to an advertisement in the Western Leader and two were unsure whether they found out about the project from an email, flyer or advertisement. Another person found out about the programme through a friend who had received a flyer about the project. One man from Glen Eden was phoned out of the blue and he was unsure of how his contact details had been obtained. The participant from Glen Eden enrolled in this way was the least enthusiastic when discussing the project. However, he had still recommended the project to his daughter.

### 3.1.3 PHASE ONE Motivations in Ranui, Swanson and Glen Eden

Most interviewees were motivated to join the programme for more than one reason, and there were no differences between the different areas. Financial savings and improving efficiency in water and power use were the primary motivators for participating in the project, particularly in Ranui and Glen Eden. However, living in a cold damp uninsulated house was another primary instigator. Many interviewed were already implementing sustainability initiatives in their homes and wanted to see how they were doing and if they could improve. They were also interested in meeting likeminded people who were practicing sustainability in their homes. One Ranui household was very supportive of Ranui community initiatives. As well as wanting to learn about sustainability practices in the home this couple also wanted to support a local project and saw it as being as much about community sustainability as household sustainability. Only one person (from Glen Eden) gave financial savings as the only reason they participated. Some participants had environmental concerns as a motivation.

As part of the interview participants were asked for suggestions about ways to encourage “hard to reach” or other people to take part in the programme. Participants identified a range of methods to raise the profile of the project and reach others in the community. Flyers, brochures, letterbox drops and advertisements in newspapers were all mentioned. Word of mouth to neighbours, friends, family and groups by community members who had participated in the project (and so could speak positively and first hand about the experience to peers) was considered the best method.

...[H]aving a meeting together or talking like how we saved and how it helped us....  
Coming from you they will, some people are like hesitant, (but with us) someone's done it, she's done it you know [Ranui]

Definitely, I would really encourage participation within the community and church groups. I think Pacific Island people learn best when they're in their community groups. They encourage each other and they feed off each other. I've seen those changes happen at church [Ranui]

Participants thought accessing people via the groups that people belonged to such as church, gyms (and pubs) might be possible. They also suggested street barbeques. Enticement with free giveaways and subsidies for sustainability strategies was suggested, as was decreasing rates for those who were attempting to follow sustainability suggestions. One participant felt using creative methods to reach young people like poster, rap or poetry competitions to get the sustainability message out would be good, while another thought implementing the programme in schools would enable children to take the message to their parents. Another participant thought approaches via community agencies such as Women's refuge, Waitakere anti violence, Man Alive, courts, and Citizens advice might be worthwhile.

#### 3.1.4 PHASE TWO: Ranui and Swanson

In Ranui and Swanson programme partners have endorsed the strengths of cluster conversations as an engagement and intervention strategy. The new co-ordinator has developed other ways of engaging participants that also provide opportunities for connecting with others. These include workshops on various topics and "mucking in" events at local households.

In Ranui-Swanson a recent neighbourhood sustainability conversation in Redlands Grove involved both new households and people who had participated in previous cluster conversations. Local residents are taking the lead and organising a street party (supported by the project co-ordinator) in late March. This will involve neighbourhood support, information on child safety and interactive activities on sustainability for both adults and children. The group of residents are interested in having on-going meetings about sustainability issues.

#### 3.1.5 PHASE TWO: Glen Eden

In Phase Two EcoMatters have moved to a "Green Streets" approach where a range of services, including the Sustainable Homes Programme, are offered to residents living in streets adjacent to the Glen Eden Community House.

In the focus group the Green Streets approach was seen as adding value to the Sustainable Homes Programme through partnering with other local agencies as this provides potential community building opportunities. This approach was identified as a cost effective approach as 30-40 people were signed up for a home check at one event. The ability to utilise local schools' networks through other EcoMatters staff was seen as adding to the success of the event.

One challenge identified with the Green Streets approach is how to build on the community events so that the initiative creates a greater sense of cohesion. One strategy was to hold another event at the Glen Eden Community House and to use interactive methods to foster discussion and a shared vision about what needs to happen to foster sustainability in their area. As reported above only a few people attended this event. One suggested initiative was establishing a community garden with the community house identified as a potential location.

There is potential for the community house to be used to demonstrate changes that local residents could potentially make to their own houses. EcoMatters have given

the house a home check and there is interest in setting up a composting system and possibly installing a rain tank if funding is available.

### **3.2 Interventions**

Question Two: What interventions are being implemented? How well are they being implemented?

#### 3.2.1 PHASE ONE Ranui-Swanson

For Phase One in Ranui and Swanson the main interventions with households were the cluster conversations followed by a home check. The previous co-ordinator also made follow up visits to some of the cluster groups. Between October and December each participating household was contacted by the project team to see if the home check had progressed smoothly and to identify future activities that households might be interested in. A composting workshop was held in January and another is planned for February. A number of gardening workshops are scheduled for 2009. Information about the workshops has been distributed to programme participants.

##### *Cluster Conversation*

Those interviewed came from cluster conversations which had been organized through church groups, ESOL classes, children's music classes and from particular streets. Cluster conversations engaged a diverse range of people, perhaps more so in Ranui. At least one cluster group continues as a loose network via an email loop and members are in occasional contact. This group is emailed information about upcoming sustainability related courses and other issues by a local coordinator.

The cluster conversations were viewed very positively by interviewees from Ranui and Swanson. They generally had the added benefits of connecting participants with likeminded others in their vicinity and adding to a sense of community. Participants shared knowledge, thoughts, experiences and sustainability practices with each other. Some participants adopted neighbour's practices as a result of the discussions. Cluster conversations were seen as a good way of meeting neighbours and beneficial to people who may have moved from another locality and were entering a new community.

...[Y]eah it was nice. It was good and then from that we sort of all sat around, it was a lot of brainstorming ideas of what you know we could do in our households and I thought yeah, I thought it was a really good idea...I was new to the neighbourhood as well so I thought that's a great way of meeting people but just you know, I just was really interested in what it was about and yeah I'm in for conserving energy, conserving water... [Ranui].

This participant had recently moved to Ranui and had experienced a house break-in and burglary leaving her feeling vulnerable and suspicious of the area. Participating in the cluster conversation connected her into the neighbourhood and contributed to her comfort with, and willingness to stay, in the area.

##### *Home check*

In Ranui there was positive feedback about the home checks and interviewees reported that they had followed up on a number of recommendations made by the sustainability advisors. Household interventions reported included: the installation of showerheads; tap aerators; turning down the temperature on the hot water cylinder; and fixing a leaking shower. One person considered that her new showerhead and the tap aerators would lead to financial savings for their household. In another

household of seven people it was reported that after the new showerhead was installed, and with household members taking shorter showers, the whole family could now take a shower without running out of hot water. Another participant was provided with information about composting and worm farming at the home check. She then purchased a worm farm which she is now using successfully. One participant reported installing a hot water cylinder wrap and an HRV system.

Information about the home check was gathered by the Ranui and Swanson project co-ordinators between October and December and this was summarised by the evaluator. In Ranui many of the participants commented that the home check was good or useful. Several people reported that the project supported existing behaviours. One person noted that it was great to share with other people. Some people reported problems such as not receiving a report, slow or poor follow up, problems with their hot water cylinder or a lost insulation form.

In Swanson, interviewees were positive about the home check and found it helpful. Participants had actioned a number of the recommendations made by the sustainability advisors (see Section 4.1 for more detail). Participants reported that tap aerators had been installed however one person had removed these as they found that their water pressure had reduced too much. Another participant removed a shower restrictor for the same reason. This person felt that their household was already a low water user and valued the benefits of a strong shower. One household found the water temperature difficult to control after the water flow was adjusted but this problem had been addressed. Another household found the home check useful because it was identified that they were paying for their neighbour's power and a number of water leaks were found.

Several Swanson participants expressed their concerns about the home check. One elderly participant expressed disappointment that they received conflicting information about the insulation and was asked for personal information before knowing if they could get the insulation. Apparently they did not get insulation because of wood under the house but they are too old to move it. Another person reported that they didn't gain much from the process and they would have preferred to have the audit, problem areas highlighted and information provided at the same time. They didn't feel that they learnt anything new. One person questioned whether having two organisations involved was a waste of resources. Another person was disappointed that they hadn't received a form to apply for insulation.

In general, the interviewees in Ranui and Swanson were grateful for the home check information and used it to make changes in their households.

Well certainly this was useful. The guy that came was very knowledgeable [Swanson]

[T]he man that came, the young man was marvellous and so quick and made a lovely job [Ranui]

Well I think it's excellent really I felt quite pleased that it was done, that people take the trouble to come round and check your water and all the rest of it [Swanson]

### 3.2.2 PHASE ONE: Follow up initiatives with households in Ranui and Swanson

In feedback given to the project co-ordinators participants expressed interest in gardening and composting workshops or any other workshops that were being run. One person would love to see the programme become available to the wider

community and another thought Council should take more action with businesses. One person wanted to know more about recycling and another was interested in Transition Towns and also wanted to receive feedback on what is happening in the wider community and the differences their actions are making.

Two interviewees commented on the importance of follow up initiatives to support behaviour changes in households:

I like the follow-up. I like it that they're doing interviews and they're asking people. Because then it makes, when it comes round again, you know we don't take it lightly, because we know that the follow-up comes. I like it when things are being followed up. I appreciate that [Ranui].

Yeah, I'd love to know more and I'd love once in a while if someone comes, if they came home visit and tell us and show us how to go around doing things. Since now I'm not working and I have time [Ranui].

### *Composting Workshop*

A composting workshop was held in late January 2009 in Ranui and half (7 from Ranui and 3 from Swanson) of the participants had also participated in Phase One of PTS-SLSH and seven are involved in Phase Two of the programme. Twenty participants completed feedback forms and almost all were from Ranui or Swanson. The workshop received very positive feedback with almost all participants strongly agreeing that the workshop increased their knowledge and composting skills. One participant somewhat agreed. Half of the participants already had a compost system at home and almost all strongly agreed that they would use the knowledge and skills from the workshop to improve the way they composted. Of those who didn't have a compost system, almost all agreed that they would definitely use the knowledge and skills from the workshop to start their own compost.

All of the participants strongly agreed that the tutor and other staff were helpful and supportive and that overall the workshop was excellent. All participants reported that they would recommend the workshop to others.

Participants were asked about what other services or workshops they were interested in. The following table shows the number of people who are interested in each activity. Some of the participants had already had a home energy / water audit and had participated in a neighbourhood sustainability conversation.

Vege growing workshop	19
Rainwater tank workshop	15
"Mucking in" workshop at someone else's place	10
"Mucking in" workshop at your place	8
Neighbourhood sustainability conversation	8
Hot water cylinder wrap workshop	7
Free home energy / water audit	6
Cloth nappy demonstration	5

The participants in the compost workshop suggested the following additional activities:

- Pruning fruit trees, understanding soil
- Food co-op
- Learning more about the community garden
- Other gardening skills- using glass houses/ cold house, raising seeds without commercial seed mix, self-sufficient gardening

- Running compost and gardening sessions at local schools, sending home informative material for parents to read

### 3.2.3 PHASE ONE: Glen Eden

The main intervention in Glen Eden has been the home check discussion about waste and transport and the commitment form. There has been no follow up with Phase One households in Glen Eden although EcoMatters are developing a follow up survey to identify barriers to household behaviour change. They hope that this will enable them to offer further advice and support to households in order to overcome these barriers.

#### *Home check*

Interviewees were positive about the home check and had found it worthwhile for a variety of reasons. Most felt they had learnt useful information about implementing sustainable practices in their homes and felt affirmed for the power, water and waste minimization initiatives they were already applying.

[The] main benefit is a sense of being part of something, just on one hand an affirmation that you know, that we are doing ok. It was quite affirming having that guy come here and kind of walk around and look over things and say actually that some parts of this place are working pretty well, that was nice, so that was good and so that's the interior stuff, and the exterior stuff that is in connection with Ecomatters in a sense, it's a bit of a project that's going on in the community [Glen Eden]

It was really cool I thought it was a really good idea and it was completely free and she had quite a bit of useful information and we got some free light bulbs out of that and fittings for the taps and lots of information but I just can't see how it hurts to give up an hour of your time to get lots of information and stuff. It is really worthwhile – seemed like quite a good deal. [Glen Eden].

In contrast one household was visited during lunch which they found a bit disruptive. A Glen Eden participant who had been contacted randomly by phone disagreed with the home checks findings and thought the man who came was not as knowledgeable as he needed to be (this was not confirmed by the other participants who all felt the home check people were extremely knowledgeable).

As home checks are specific to each house, a range of suggestions were made to and adopted by participants. Many were now using eco bulbs although some had issues with eco bulbs and thought they didn't give off enough light. One person had given their free compost bin to their mother as they were not yet composting. Interviewees reported that tap aerators and a new showerhead and been fitted along with a toilet gizmo. Two participants reported that they had removed the tap aerators because one sprayed too much and another did not like the reduction in water pressure. Participants also reported that the brochures and information supplied were useful and one person appreciated finding out about the Sustainable Living Centre.

Some participants suggested they would like to meet likeminded people in their community to share learnings and to keep inspired.

Well just what I said about being able to know who else was involved. Yeah, if there were a number of houses up here, if you could just to know. Just make me get out and meet my neighbours a bit more... it would be good to know if there was something ongoing and also cause it feels like its sort of individual households and

there's no connecting up with the households, so it would be interesting if there was something that brought the households together cause then you'd feel a bit more inspired to keep on doing things [Glen Eden].

Another Glen Eden participant was sharing information with the neighbourhood through informal conversations and noted that discussing gardening and sustainability issues with neighbours was something they had been doing for some time.

#### 3.2.4 General suggestions for follow up

Participants wanted to be kept up to date about sustainability practices that they could implement at home. One participant thought the availability of information sheets on a website that could be printed out on various sustainability related practices such as how to do compost and set up an organic co-op that could be accessed easily would be useful. One wanted to be informed of how the programme was progressing and learnings and outcomes from the project.

One person thought a peer teaching method would be beneficial, and saw it leading on to projects in the wider community.

And you know like we could get people come here to see what we have done, and other people might get inspired by what we've done and we might get inspired by what other people have done... And the next step from that I reckon is that then if you had a group of people who were doing the stuff I'd love to see that group then go and set up a garden and orchards, in other places I'd really like that.[Glen Eden]

One participant felt a follow up in three years time would be good, while another suggested getting the cluster group together for a yearly meeting to see how people were going. Some thought that change had to come from a positive place, out of inspiration and not fear. They felt the project could look at national and global situation and go further, like Transition Town. They felt sustainable practices needed to become normalised in society.

Participants were interested in taking what they had learnt and continuing to apply it. Some wanted to extend it in a variety of ways. Three were interested in solar power, and one couple are interested in intentional community living. Many were keen on learning to garden, compost properly and community gardening opportunities.

Gardening. Like my soil needs lots of extra compost and it needs building up because the soil that's on there is just clay and its got fruit tree roots all in it and I need to build it right up so that means the quantity of stuff, access to bags of soil and compost and stuff cause its quite pricey to buy all that stuff [Glen Eden]

Some of the programme partners have been involved in the Ranui-Swanson programme as participants and were also able to give feedback on the cluster conversations and home checks.

I loved the household check, Angela did it, and it was very thorough [...] even though there were a number of things we needed to change and it was just really lovely having Angela being very supportive [...] as to how we might go about making those changes. And she even managed to get my rather stubborn husband to make some shifts in his behaviour, which was wonderful and so all that part of it was great [Council].

The project co-ordinators in each site have also received informal feedback from participants in the programme about the home checks:

[T]he comments I hear from the participant[s] is how much they enjoyed connecting with people and they always talk about the food they had with the advisor and how much they loved Angela and how they loved the way John was and that's all I hear to be honest. It might be about a lot of things that they have learned but they seemed to have enjoyed a lot to connect individually [with the advisor] [Co-ordinator].

A cluster conversation at Earthsong was seen as bringing residents together in a way that hadn't happened before. The composting workshop was described as a great way to follow on from the home check and cluster conversation. Another focus group participant reiterated the benefits of the cluster conversations for Maori participants as she considered there is potential to foster collective action.

### **3.3 Challenges and barriers**

Question Three: Are there any challenges or barriers? How are these being addressed?
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#### PHASE ONE: Ranui, Swanson and Glen Eden

Participants talked of the need for a cost-benefit analysis for the implementation of sustainability strategies. The cost of implementing some of the suggestions such as insulation and obtaining water tanks was prohibitive for most of the participants and was a major barrier to implementation. Some participants did not fit the criteria for water tanks and insulation but could not afford to obtain these themselves. Not owning the house compounded this issue, as some participants were reluctant to invest money, energy and time in properties they did not own.

Some participants talked of landlords who were reluctant to spend money on rental properties, or were uninterested in sustainability issues and the health of their tenants. One participant thought that education needed to also be directed at landlords and they needed to be brought into the project. Another thought that landlords should not be able to rent out properties unless they can prove the house is warm and dry. Landlords and neighbours who were not acting and thinking sustainably (spraying, burning rubbish) were considered de-motivating by one household.

Excessive packaging on consumer goods that cannot be recycled was seen as a challenge in attempting to live sustainably. Changing habits of households towards more sustainable practices, and particularly encouraging teenagers and children to abide by sustainability suggestions was another challenge. A lack of knowledge about gardening and composting was seen as a barrier by a few participants.

Two participants talked about not enough, or difficulty with organizing, inorganic rubbish collections. One felt this would encourage people to fill rubbish bags with items that could go to inorganic collections, while another was bypassing the inorganic collection and taking rubbish to the tip as the new system (of pre paying and organising collection) was seen as a barrier and difficult to negotiate.

Most interviewees did not use public transport on a regular basis, and this was for a variety of reasons. Most participants found the inconvenience of using public transport in comparison to a car off-putting. Public transport was considered unreliable and not frequent enough for many, and one participant had safety concerns in relation to her children using it. Many of the participants were mothers and found negotiating public transport with small children difficult. Some of the older

participants had been using public transport more regularly due to obtaining gold cards which made public transport free. These trips were generally social (visits to friends and family rather than for food shopping for example). When public transport was used it was generally considered to be very good. Some of the older participants found the walk between train and bus stops and their destination too difficult to manage.

Most participants did not see the project as part of any larger sustainability programme in Waitakere and were unsure about where to go to obtain more information and support about sustainability issues. Two of the interviewees were aware of Project Twin Streams. Some participants had connected with Ecomatters and the Sustainable Living Centre through the project but many had not and in Glen Eden the home check was seen as the main aspect of the project.

No I didn't know that this was a project that people got involved in, what I thought this was, was a guy who would come to your house and look over your house and tell you how you might improve it in terms of its efficiency, so I thought it was like an offer of auditing a house audit and in effect that was what he did do [Glen Eden].

The focus group participants identified some challenges for the programme. For some the link to PTS did not appear to be communicated strongly in either Phase One or Two. One solution was to include a pamphlet about PTS in the resources given to households to reinforce the connections between household behaviour and the impacts on local streams.

Greater clarity about the follow up and who would be doing it was also identified as an issue. One suggestion for Ranui and Swanson was for the co-ordinator to ring households after they have had their check and ask how it went. This was seen as a way to reinforce commitments to behaviour changes. It could also be an opportunity to inform households of upcoming initiatives that they might also wish to be involved in. Another challenge identified in the focus group was how to retain the flexibility of the programme and to not get fixed into a one size fits all approach.

A challenge for EcoMatters was their need to focus on a number of different projects across the city which means they have not spent as much time as they would like to on building relationships with the Glen Eden community. Another challenge is to record feedback from households in order to improve documentation of programme achievements.

I think the um we are having to learn about how to do, how to do those community events in such a way that that it does lead to a greater sense of cohesion, doing stuff together in their neighbourhood rather just than we held an event and now we go back to an individual household approach, and that is still a challenge for us [Co-ordinator].

### **3.4 What have we learnt?**

Question Four: What have we learnt about the different engagement and implementation methods in each of the three localities?

In the February focus group programme partners identified a number of strengths of the PTS-SLSH programme. Some thought the creation of opportunities for participants to share knowledge was valuable. Another key strength of the programme is the ability, through the home check, to tailor information to the needs and interests of individual households. The hands on measurement of what is

happening in households was seen as more persuasive than just providing information. Advising people on the best way to use their resources and where they can make the greatest difference to their energy and water use was also seen as beneficial.

Taking a developmental approach to the programme was seen as important by programme partners. For example, with reference to the Green Streets approach in Glen Eden, one person commented:

...[J]ust observing that and seeing the excitement that's generated, in the community building opportunity, the partnering with Community Waitakere around that and you know the open day the festival type things you've had and how that kind of builds relationships in the community as well and we have been able to follow that up as well with the home checks [Council].

Programme partners considered that community organisations have been able to connect with a diverse range of households

...[A]nd I think that this programme is demonstrating how through building those kind of relationships you can access and begin to build up a trust in a local community and slowly get to households that Council would never have access to [Council].

Another key learning from the project is the long lead in time for project development. One person felt that Phase One was too rushed which resulted in unnecessary pressure for all involved. There is also a need to educate funding bodies about the time needed to develop programmes in partnership with community organisations:

I think one of the things that I continue to learn or be reinforced is to create that understanding with Council that community processes take a long time and the ones that are going to be most successful, are those that can be developmental and responsive to different ways of working and to trial different things and not to just have one model that you impose and get caught up in a numbers game and how you balance [that with] some of the needs of Council to see some pretty quick changes [Council].

Focus group participants discussed the need to balance sound programme planning processes with the need to experiment and learn from their experiences.

Some felt that the capacity of community organisations was also being developed through the programme with the PTS-SLSH complementing other initiatives that were being delivered by each organisation. The need to be creative with the resources available to the programme and to look for synergies with other local organisations or groups was also seen as important. One focus group participant thought that Ranui residents are more likely to go to a workshop in their local area rather than travel to New Lynn for example. Holding the workshop in Ranui also had the added benefit of increasing participants' awareness of the community garden.

### 3.4.2 Overall Process Evaluation Assessment

The rubrics below indicate the standards set by the evaluator for the process evaluation of both Phase One and Phase Two of the PTS-SLSH programme. There is one rubric for Ranui and Swanson and another for Glen Eden.

The main criteria used to make the performance assessment include:

- Appropriate engagement of participants
- Quality of programme implementation determined by feedback from participants and programme partners

- Use of community development approaches
- The extent to which follow up initiatives have been implemented with households.

The assessment is followed by recommendations for further action.

*Ranui and Swanson*

<b>Performance descriptors for process evaluation: PTS Sustainable Ranui-Swanson</b>	
Excellent	Performance is clearly very strong or exemplary. Any gaps or weaknesses are not significant and are managed effectively
Very Good	Performance is generally strong. No significant gaps or weakness, and less significant gaps or weaknesses are mostly managed effectively.
Good	Performance is good in some areas but there are gaps or weaknesses that need to be addressed.
Poor	Performance is unacceptably weak. Does not meet minimum expectations/requirements.
Insufficient evidence	Evidence unavailable or of insufficient quality to determine performance.

Overall the process evaluation findings indicate that the engagement, implementation and follow up of Phase One and Phase Two participants is somewhere between “good” and “very good” in Ranui and Swanson. The formative evaluation findings indicated that Phase One households were being engaged successfully in Ranui and Swanson. Efforts were made to engage lower income and diverse groups who may not usually become involved in sustainability projects (Greenaway, 2008). Word of mouth and using previous participants as role models was seen as a good way of encouraging “hard to reach” people to take part. This approach has an additional benefit of drawing on community strengths and creating opportunities to develop and support local community leaders. These are also key elements of the community development model that underpins the PTS-SLSH programme. In Phase Two engagement has been slow due to the change of project co-ordinators and the time needed for the new co-ordinator to familiarise herself with the project. Another person has been appointed to support the project co-ordinator in Ranui and Swanson. There was no negative feedback from interviewees about engagement methods. It is important the focus remains on recruiting hard to reach and diverse households and the evaluation findings along with research evidence suggest that cluster groups are an appropriate way to do this.

Efforts have been made to clarify programme elements and there are some interesting new developments, such as the Redlands Grove cluster group and potential “mucking in” workshops that are consistent with community development principles. As suggested in the evidence review, because behaviour change is complex and difficult multiple interventions are needed. It is also important to tailor interventions to the needs and motivations of communities (Wild and Greenaway, 2008).

In the formative evaluation findings key informants believed that the facilitated conversation was a non-threatening way for people to engage with sustainability issues and the approach would allow people to share what they already knew and therefore capitalise on local people's strengths (Greenaway, 2008). Feedback from participants and programme partners support this conclusion. A key challenge is to build on the cluster conversation and to support local community leaders. Recent engagement with Earthsong may offer opportunities to further develop local leadership. A central component of PTS-SLSH is the use of community development approaches and the benefits of these were supported by the formative evaluation findings and the evidence review undertaken for this project (Greenaway, 2008, Wild and Greenaway, 2008). There is evidence that community development approaches are being utilised well in Ranui-Swanson.

In general the home check was well received in Ranui and Swanson. Initial feedback from households in Ranui and Swanson highlighted some issues but the project co-ordinators did try to address these once they were identified.

The follow up activities in Ranui and Swanson have been determined by the interests of programme participants. In particular, interest has been focused on composting and gardening with some interest in rain tanks. Whilst from a community development perspective it is positive that the project is responding to local interest this also means that less focus has been directed to water, energy and transport issues. Perhaps it is too ambitious to attempt to provide follow up activities in all four target areas but it is important that there is a sound rationale behind the choice of which aspects to focus on. There is a need to keep a balance between being responsive to participants' interests and also focusing on what initiatives are needed to achieve the short-term outcomes specified in the programme logic models (see Appendix).

The main areas that need to be addressed are the need for systematic follow up with households and greater clarity about what the programme involves (recent work in this area is noted). It will be helpful to do some thinking around what follow up strategies could be utilised for the different outcome areas. Further exploration of ways to engage and develop local community leaders will also be important as the programme proceeds in order to foster the sustainability of the programme.

<b>Performance descriptors for process evaluation: PTS Sustainable Homes Programme Glen Eden</b>	
Excellent	Performance is clearly very strong or exemplary. Any gaps or weaknesses are not significant and are managed effectively.
Very Good	Performance is generally strong. No significant gaps or weakness, and less significant gaps or weaknesses are mostly managed effectively.
Good	Performance is good in some areas but there are gaps or weaknesses that need to be addressed.
Poor	Performance is unacceptably weak. Does not meet minimum expectations/requirements.
Insufficient evidence	Evidence unavailable or of insufficient quality to determine performance.

Overall the process evaluation findings indicate that the engagement, implementation and follow up of Phase One and Phase Two participants is “good” in Glen Eden. The engagement methods appear to be appropriate for the local community. The formative evaluation findings indicated that EcoMatters had engaged diverse groups of households in their programme (Greenaway, 2008). One person in Glen Eden had experienced a cold call and they were less enthusiastic about the project. The actual engagement of participants in the programme does not appear to be a barrier and a range of recruitment methods have been used to encourage people to sign up for a home check. In Glen Eden, Ecomatters are taking more of a community development approach but there are still challenges with how to build on the Green Streets approach.

The home check appears to be very well received by Phase One households. On the whole participants found this a useful process. Some of the Glen Eden participants were not aware that the programme had more to it than the home checks. This suggests that there is a need to clearly communicate what the programme consists of to participants and to be clear about follow up approaches.

One off interventions are unlikely to be effective (Wild and Greenaway, 2008) so it is important that follow up with existing households continues at the same time as new households are recruited. The main weakness for Glen Eden at this stage is the lack of follow up with Phase One households. This is due to number of factors including: the high priority given to the completion of home checks, changes in project staff and the developmental nature of the project. There is also a need to look at how the initial engagement and interventions can both encourage behaviour change and do so in ways that foster community connections and cohesion. Feedback from participants, in all areas, suggests that the opportunity to connect with others is an aspect of the programme that is valued. It is also a central component of the community development model.

The use of a behaviour change survey as a tool to follow up with households in Glen Eden is taking an individualised household approach and it will be useful to look for

opportunities to connect people in Glen Eden. EcoMatters may like to consider trialling a cluster conversation as part of the Green Streets approach and the development of a vision group may also be useful.

## 4.0 Interim outcome evaluation findings

### 4.1 Short and medium term outcomes

Question One: Has the Sustainable Living, Sustainable Households Programme achieved the intended short to medium term outcomes in Glen Eden, Ranui and Swanson?

#### 4.1.1 PHASE ONE: Ranui, Swanson and Glen Eden

Most household changes adopted by interviewees were small, achievable and affordable. Participants talked about being more knowledgeable, informed, and conscientious and motivated to conserve power, water and minimise waste as a result of the home checks. Actual changes made in households included acquiring and using eco-bulbs, being more consistent and conscientious about turning electrical equipment off at the wall, using less water through having shorter showers and only washing full loads in washing and dishwashing machines, buying and using a trigger nozzle for a garden hose, starting composts and worm farms, and working towards getting insulation and water tanks for the house. A couple of participants had disposed of their electric blankets. Some households had changed heating methods to more efficient systems. Two participants had either acquired or changed drapes and blinds to keep the warmth in. Two had installed hot water cylinder wraps. Some households had adjusted their fridges, freezers and hot water temperatures. Some households had found and fixed water leaks.

Suggestions for insulating homes were generally being left until there was money available. Some participants were very enthusiastic about water tanks but the installation of these is being delayed for financial reasons. One elderly couple had subsidised insulation put into their house. However, these participants thought it possible the house may be demolished to make more housing. Three other households (two from Ranui, one from Glen Eden) had applied for the insulation (Snug Homes) and not met the criteria. Another two households (from Swanson) were thinking of applying for subsidised insulation at some point in the future.

Many participants had not noticed changes in the comfort of their homes as it was summer when interviewed and they had not yet experienced a winter since participating in the project. Two participants commented on there being less mould and mildew. Two participants saw the project as assisting in protecting the longevity of their house. Many believed they were saving money, although some had installed other devices that use more power or had experienced changes in the house (such as new babies) that may cancel out any savings. Participants were using fewer rubbish bags.

In feedback to the project co-ordinators five of the Swanson households reported that they had only learnt a little through the programme but that it had confirmed they are on the right track and/or reinforced sustainability goals. Other changes reported since becoming involved in the programme included: making actions much more of a family behaviour rather than something the one person nagged about; getting chickens which were seen as good for recycling; putting in a compost; installing under floor installation and investigating ceiling insulation plus switching off all appliances on stand-by at night; saving money; and installing insulation.

In Ranui a few people reported that the programme had made a big difference for their household. Those that had insulation installed reported benefits. At least nine participants reported using less energy since their involvement in the programme.

Five people had had insulation installed and a sixth had qualified for it. Other changes within households included: buying a fuel efficient car; replacing a heater; less plastic bag use; use of eco bulbs; increased recycling; lower power bill; increased gardening and composting; increased knowledge about waste; replacing a Hot Water Cylinder; turning off appliances at the wall; reduced shower times; and telling other people about the programme.

## **4.2 Unintended outcomes**

Question Two: What are the unintended outcomes, both positive and negative, that have resulted from the SLSH programme? For example, what did participants identify as the benefits from their involvement in the programme?

### 4.2.1 PHASE ONE: Ranui, Swanson and Glen Eden

There were a few unintended consequences mentioned. One interviewee talked of a friend in her cluster group who had created a garden and was now eating more healthily and doing more exercise and so had lost weight. Some participants had attended Transition Town meetings, and their mother who lived on the North Shore had attended Transition Town meetings too.

More gardening has resulted from the programme and seems to be popular. One participants' neighbour has followed her lead and created a garden. It had also led to conversations between neighbours who were not necessarily in cluster conversations together.

...[G]ardening and talking to neighbours. Yes and the garden. They're like wow that's pretty cool and it's actually, it has an impact on neighbour because now they've done a garden. So they saw what I did and they're like oh that's cool [Ranui].

One participant thought the project had benefited the family by encouraging their child to spend more time outdoors. She also thought the project fed into a healthy eating programme running at her son's school and he often won healthiest lunchbox prize. This family was inspired to acquire chickens. They felt this gave their child an understanding of sustainability in a very direct way.

One participant discovered that their parents had had huge gardens in the past and were very knowledgeable. He thought his generation had missed out on information about gardening and companion planting. Another participant was uncertain whether a street action on asking the council to not spray the verges came out of a cluster conversation.

## **4.3 Influencing other households**

Question Three: To what extent are other households being influenced by the Sustainable Living, Sustainable Households Programme?

### 4.3.1 PHASE ONE: Ranui, Swanson and Glen Eden

All interviewees, with one exception, had spoken to others about the programme and had encouraged them to participate in the programme. The main people spoken to were friends, family and neighbours. Pamphlets distributed to one participant were passed on to a family member, suggesting that information is being shared. The main reasons given for not recommending the project were that the participants thought the project was a pilot only available in their area. In general participants seemed

unaware of the other projects occurring in Waitakere. One household was implementing suggestions made at their house into their parents house close by. Some participants had taken the resulting report from the home check and discussed its contents with others. One participant did not directly recommend the project although recommended the strategies learnt in the project. He felt he could talk more knowledgeably and with more conviction and inspiration since being involved in the project.

Two houses had insulation fitted as a result of participants recommending colleagues and neighbours contact the project; these were seen as very positive outcomes. Although these participants had not been eligible for insulation themselves they were pleased for the others and felt they had achieved in changing others' lives for the better.

... [S]he said it's the best thing that's ever happened. She said the house is so warm, so cozy like her son sleeps through the night, you know and she said that was the best. I think it ended up being \$1,200, the best investment they've ever spent.... So just through talking to other people, how you can improve their lives and all it was, was putting the black poly um underneath the house and in the roof. That stopped all the condensation and it stopped all the draughts, yeah so she's wrapped [Ranui].

When asked what aspects of the project they would recommend, the participants thought the home check and suggestions on water and power savings were primary.

F: Definitely the power saving and the water saving.

M: Water saving yes.

F: Yes, because everybody pays water and power. So I think everybody should get the chance to listen and make use of these tips there. The economy is not getting any better [Glen Eden].

Other household members were often equally as engaged with the project, and children were encouraged to adopt the sustainability strategies the household had in place such as having short showers, recycling and composting. Sustainability became a family project for a couple of the families with older children.

M: Yes, and we find it very effective, because when we try to bring in the children, as well to be part of the project you know. Yes, so it was really good to get everybody to participate.

F: It becomes a family effort. We've encouraged the kids, especially with those who are assigned to do the rubbish, to pick out the food for scrap and that and to put it into our garden, into our tower in there.

M: So, they've also learned the value of that [Ranui]

Participants believed this was useful information for their children to learn and would be beneficial for them in the future as well. Some participants had home stay students who were also taught to follow the household lead in relation to composting, short showers and energy conservation.

...[H]ave actually got a home stay student staying at the moment so we had to go through and show her how to sort out rubbish and what to do with it and that kind of thing and as far as water usage goes we are pretty strict on having short showers and stuff so she got all the house rules when she moved in [Glen Eden].

## 4.4 Improvements

What improvements could be made to the SLSH programme?

As the evaluation findings indicate the SLSH programme is developing well in each area and programme participants have given positive feedback about their participation in the programme. As expected there are some areas where improvements can be made and the following action points have been identified:

- In Ranui and Swanson there needs to be a clear and shared understanding of when someone is part of the PTS-SLSH programme.
- Each programme needs to communicate potential follow up activities to participants and clarify who will be following up with them and when. Ideally follow up approaches should also be informed by community development principles in order to create opportunities to develop local strengths and foster connections.
- Each area need to ensure that time and resources are allocated to following up with households.
- Each site needs to analyse how potential follow up activities will contribute to the achievement of the short term outcomes and to prioritise these activities.
- It will be useful for both sites to explore ways of identifying and utilising local community leaders and/or champions more effectively.
- Need to explore ways of addressing barriers that are not at the household level, for example, unsupportive landlords, excessive packaging and public transport infrastructure.
- Each site needs to improve the communication of links with PTS.
- The evaluator needs to address issues with the recruitment of Phase Two households for the evaluation and if less than 50 are recruited by the end of March the feasibility of the outcome evaluation will need to be assessed.
- Update logic models to reflect changes in project delivery.

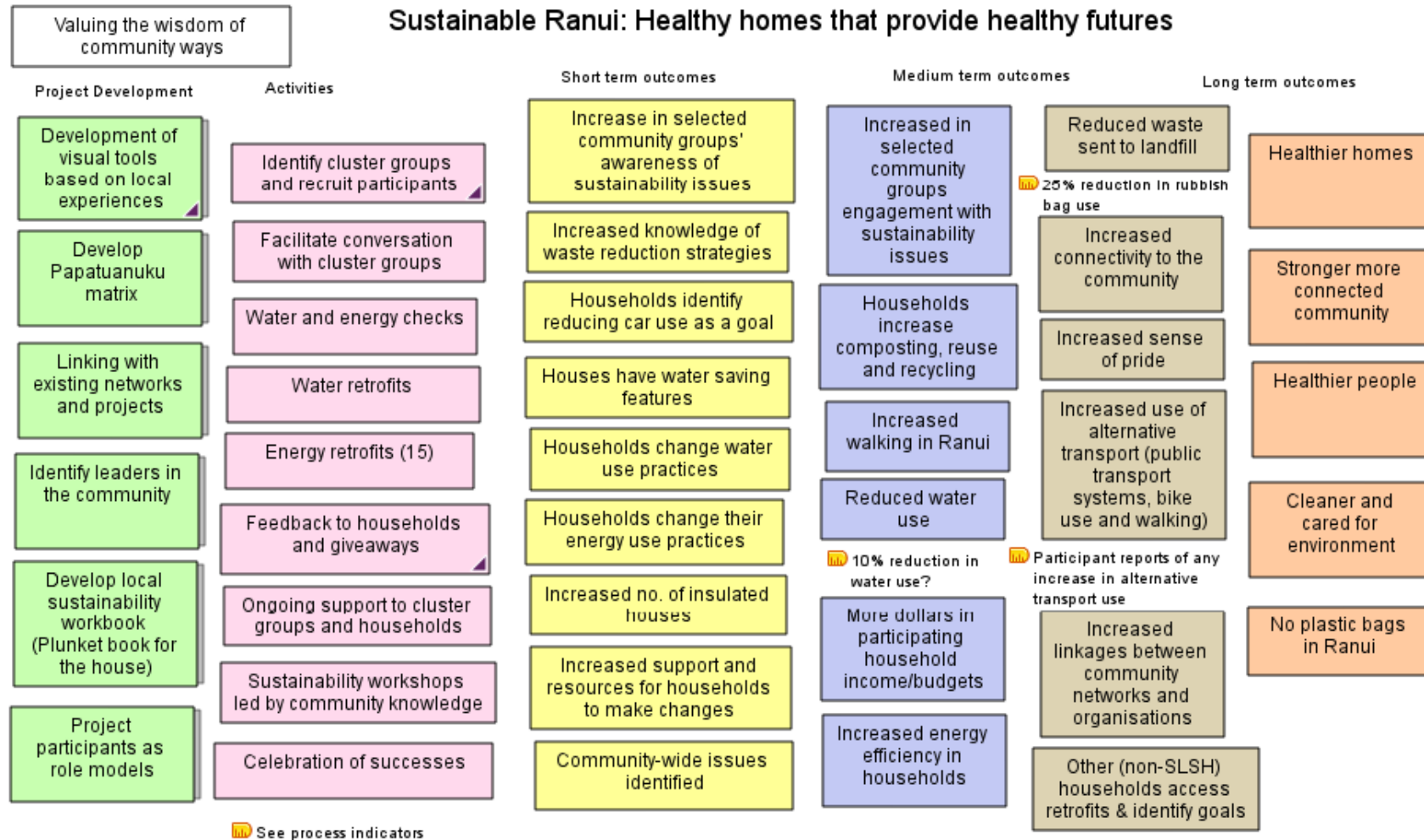
### 4.4.1 Conclusion

The interim evaluation findings are encouraging. There are indications that PTS-SLSH is resulting in reductions in water and energy use and that participants are changing their waste disposal practices through increased composting. There is also a strong interest, as in other parts of the country, in developing gardening skills through workshops and for some, through community gardens. It is unclear whether the programme is resulting in changes to transport behaviour. It is likely that there are infrastructural barriers to public transport use that are not easily addressed by programmes focused on behaviour change at a household level. The follow up survey of Phase One participants and analysis of water use data will provide additional information on whether or not short term outcomes have been achieved. If Phase Two participants are recruited into the evaluation further evaluation data will be available for these households. In depth interviews with a sample of Phase Two participants in 2009 will provide additional information about programme implementation and outcomes.

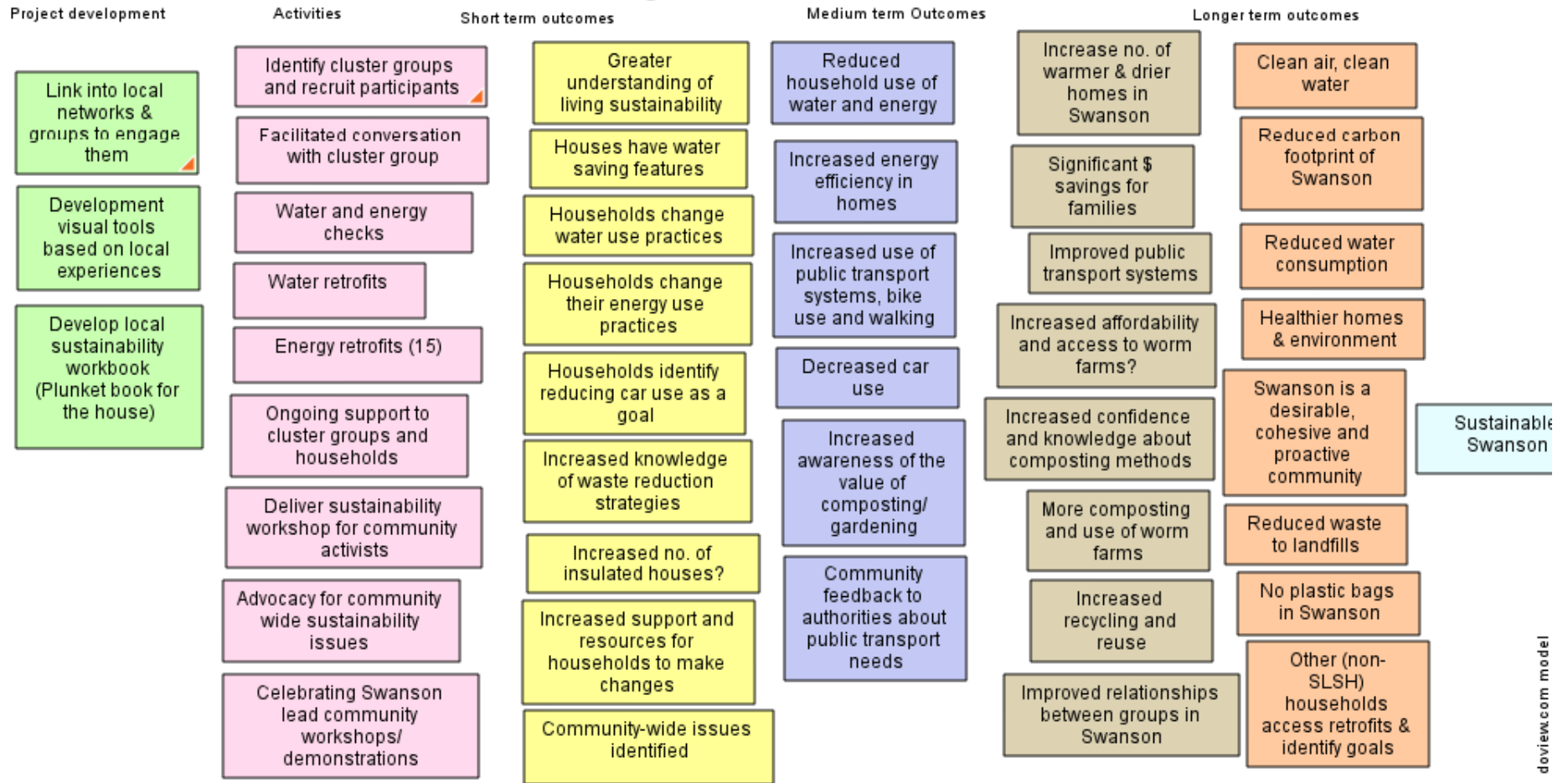
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# Appendix: Programme Logic Models

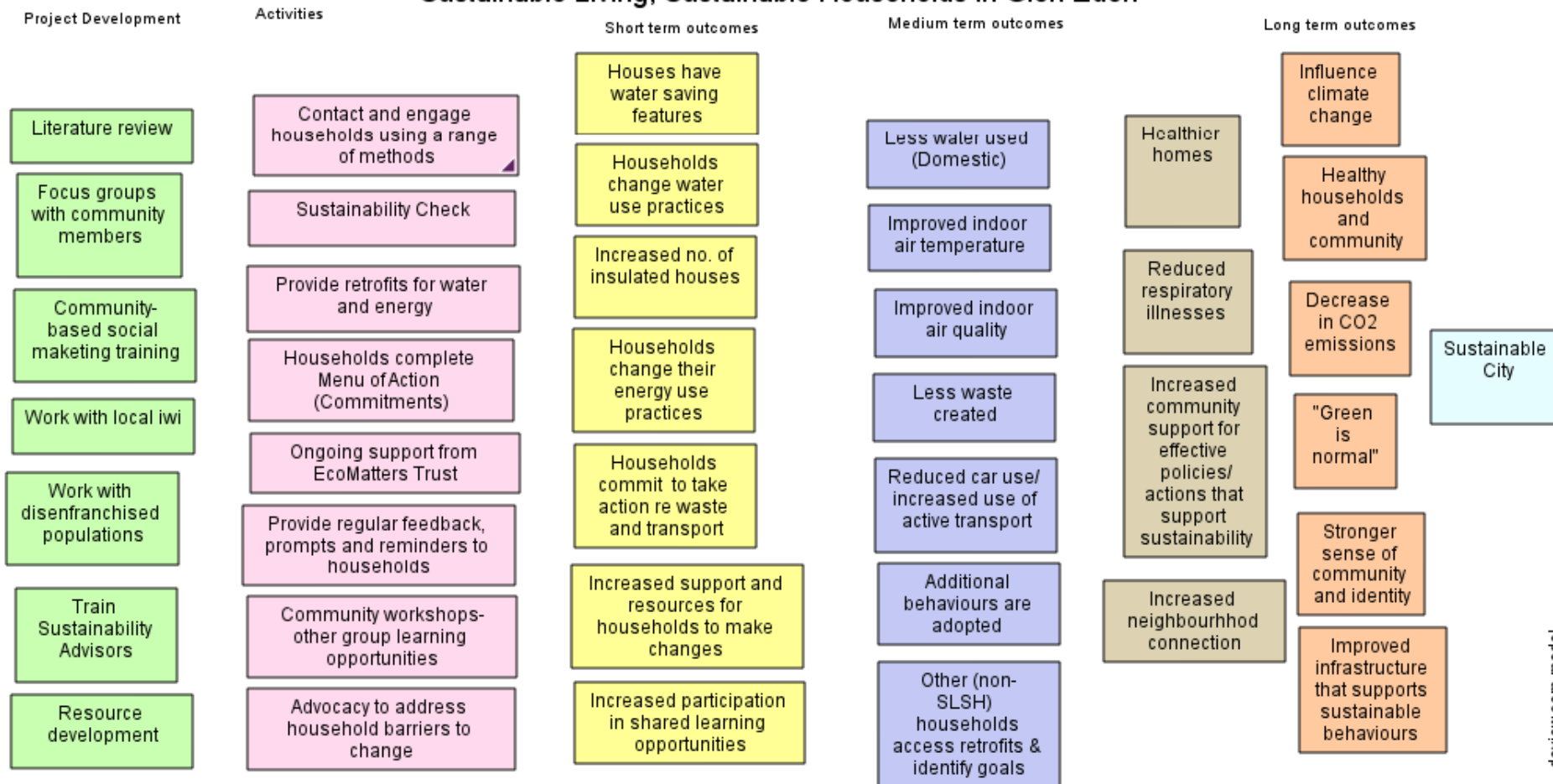


## Sustainable Living, Sustainable Homes in Swanson



doview.com model

## Sustainable Living, Sustainable Households in Glen Eden



doviev.com model