

# Greenways to Work Mid Term Evaluation Report

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**European Union**  
**European Social Fund**  
Investing in jobs and skills

# CONTENTS

<b>1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Outline of the Project	6
2.2 Background to the Evaluation	7
2.3 Methodology	8
<b>3 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1 Achievements of objectives and targets	11
3.2 Quality	12
3.3 Added Value	13
3.4 Impacts	14
<b>4 PROJECT AND PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5 INNOVATION, TRANSNATIONAL AND MAINSTREAMING</b>	<b>17</b>
5.1 Transnational	18
5.2 Mainstreaming	18
<b>6 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES AND AREAS TO DEVELOP</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>7 CONCLUSIONS &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>23</b>
7.1 Conclusions	23
7.2 Recommendations	25
7.2.1 Project management and delivery	25
7.2.2 Impact	26
7.2.3 Transnational co-operation	27
7.2.4 Innovation	27
7.2.5 Mainstreaming	27
<b>APPENDIX A: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: CONSULTEES</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS</b>	<b>31</b>

# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Greenways to Work is a European Social Fund (ESF) transnational project run by Impact Housing Association in Cumbria, which aims to create the necessary skill base and critical mass to deliver environmental skills in Cumbria. It focuses on three broad areas of work:

- The development of skills in the recycling industry
- Skills within the social housing sector to advise tenants on energy efficiency
- Skills to increase the market share of biofuel, particularly wood fuel, in Cumbria.

At the time of its submission, in early 2009, it was recognised as an exemplar project, bringing together a unique blend of people-based work, vocational training, support to companies and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders across Cumbria and the North West.

A two stage external evaluation was commissioned to assess the effectiveness of the project's new and practical approaches to skills development in the climate change sector, and its influence on wider policy and practice for developing employment opportunities in the sector.

A detailed review of the effectiveness and impact of the project on those involved was undertaken as part of the project Mid Term Evaluation, whilst offering some useful lessons both for the continued life of the project, and for the wider activities of Impact Housing. The focus for the final evaluation will be on the project's wider impact and how its results can be best used in the future.

This mid term evaluation report explores progress of the project against targets to date; the quality of training and business support offered and new opportunities generated and outstanding success stories. It also begins to explore the project's impact on the wider social economy and employment communities and policy makers. It considers strengths and weaknesses, information gaps, and suggests a framework for continuous evaluation during the project's second and successive years, with particular recommendations in achievement of targets, record keeping, partnership management and mainstreaming and influencing activities.

The evaluation examines in particular the three areas of focus of this strand of the ESF programme; its innovative approach, transnational co-operation and mainstreaming of results. It also pays regard to how the quality of local and regional partnerships has been affected and what that will mean for the future. It starts to explore how policy formulation has been affected, including the involvement of organisations and sectors which were previously not part of the Housing Association's field of operation.

Finally, it considers arrangements for the continuation of the project, catching up on achievement of targets where these are lagging, changing targets where these are clearly no longer appropriate, and improvements to monitoring and record keeping systems to provide clear evidence of impact during the second half of the project life cycle. It also looks briefly at plans for continuation of the partnership after the ESF funding ends, and this will be explored more in the final evaluation.

The project has reached a wide range of trainees and businesses in recycling, wood fuel related business and energy efficiency advice for housing workers, all of whom give

positive feedback on the quality of training. The project's outstanding success is the development of new, accredited qualifications which are expected to help improve job prospects of trainees and stimulate new business development in the ill-defined 'climate change' sector. Its impact however remains to be seen, as graduates go on to use their new qualifications and skills.

The project's outputs are largely on target, with some difficulty recruiting housing workers from other providers for energy awareness, though significant numbers have been reached. Further work will monitor the impact of this training on the tenants they subsequently advise to gauge impact on fuel poverty and health. Similarly, follow up of recycling trainees after finishing their ESF course will assess the extent of recycling job opportunities, and further review of the work on the wood fuel supply chain will enable evaluators to assess its impact too.

A complementary new ERDF project on insulating hard to treat buildings may offer the project an opportunity to deliver training in this area, which has been delayed because of its high cost.

One study visit has taken place with Swedish partners, benefiting from their expertise in community and district heating and building insulation.

Evaluators identified two particular 'success stories', one on rural outreach working with Age Concern, the other a seminar on forest planting. It is recommended that the project record and build on more success stories of this type as well as documenting innovative practice systematically.

Elements of the project which prove to be successful, cost-effective and replicable on a wider scale can be rolled out via the project's mainstreaming plan, which will target key delivery organisations and decision makers. This will be the focus for the latter part of the project, after reviewing data monitoring systems suitable for measuring impact.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Outline of the Project

Greenways to Work is a transnational European Social fund (ESF) project involving four partners in Cumbria. It is funded by the European Union's (EU) ESF English national Programme's Innovation Transnational and Mainstreaming (ITM) strand. The project commenced its operation in August 2009. The total budget for the project is £1,613,568, with £806,784 of ESF funding over 3 years. Impact Housing Association is the Lead Partner, working closely with Cumbria Woodlands Ltd, National Energy Action and the North West Community Waste Network.

Whilst Impact Housing Association is primarily a social landlord, it has a track record of social, economic and environmental projects to benefit the communities it serves; such as furniture recycling and community renewable energy, also offering employability skills in these areas. The project arose from a concern with climate change and responded to the ITM call for projects on the North West region's chosen ESF theme of skills for climate change.

The project's aim is "to create the necessary skill base and critical mass to deliver environmental technologies and practical environmental projects in Cumbria", linking to Impact's concern to achieve greater levels of sustainable development and social cohesion. The specific project objectives are:

- To Train front line housing staff to deliver energy efficiency advice
- To develop a bespoke insulation scheme for hard-to-treat houses
- To use the current network of Impact recycling projects to develop training in recycling services
- To deliver training and advice to existing small scale enterprises and employees in renewable energy

A key feature of ESF ITM projects is their transnational dimension. Impact identified partners in Sweden; the County Administrative Board (Lansstyrelsen) in Ostergötland, in East Central Sweden. The partners in Cumbria share experience and best practice with colleagues in Ostergötland, allowing Cumbria partners and stakeholders to observe good practice in a region which has excelled in environmental skills and development. This creates new learning experiences for partners and their beneficiaries. This is a new area of activity for the partners, demonstrating how far organisations such as Housing Associations could provide practical economic opportunities and influence policy in this growing market. It will identify further projects in skills development and renewable energy technologies.

The project delivers three inter-related activities that have a significant effect on business and employment skills in energy efficiency, renewables and recycling and which promote a reduction in fuel poverty and carbon footprint. The actions of the project are to:

- Build the skills of housing officers to deliver energy advice to tenants

- Carry out energy efficiency measures such as insulation and draught proofing in circumstances where market solutions do not work or hard to treat properties
- Deliver practical training and formal qualifications in furniture and white goods recycling to unemployed or low waged people seeking related jobs
- Deliver training and business advice to woodland based micro enterprises, opening up new opportunities in renewable energy such as biomass production

In doing so, Impact's tenants would be indirect beneficiaries of these actions whilst local residents gain new skills for new employment opportunities.

The project outputs also include new training materials and bespoke qualifications, publicity materials and events.

## 2.2 Background to the Evaluation

Impact Housing Association commissioned an external evaluation of the project in two stages. It aimed to assess the extent to which Greenways to Work met its dual aims of developing new approaches to skills delivery and influencing policy in jobs growth in the climate change sector. At the end of its first year the evaluators sought to add value to, strengthen and shape the project in the second part of its life cycle, identifying achievement of objectives and targets, lessons learnt, issues to be addressed and improvements to make, with specific recommendations for information recording and methodology for continuous self-evaluation during the remainder of the project. The final evaluation, towards the end of year 2 of the project will assess the extent to which the project has been able to achieve the results and impacts it had set itself, both for the beneficiaries and for the wider communities of interest and policy makers. It will provide a basis to develop new areas of work in climate skills, help resolve any problems which could constrain future plans and ensure the visibility and influence of the project for mainstreaming and expansion.

This report is aimed at partners and stakeholders on the project as a practical guide to maximizing its effectiveness and impact; how to improve administration, focus its direction and strengthen its key messages. The final report will review lessons for the wider practitioner and policy making communities. The report takes account of partners' and stakeholders' views on project activity and on the leadership and financial management of the project.

The key evaluation questions are summarised as:

- To assess the extent to which the project has met its contractual aims and targets
- To verify that learning objectives have been achieved
- To understand and explain which aspects of the project have been successful, which not so successful, and why
- To examine the management of the project, its strengths and weaknesses
- To draw out the lessons to be learned from this project, and how they might be applied elsewhere
- To assist Impact and partners to plan their next steps.

Whilst mainstream ESF programmes give clear and detailed guidance on project evaluation which includes a degree of audit and control, and consistency with QOC requirements, no such guidance was available to Impact Housing Association for the Innovation and Transnational Mainstreaming strand, and neither the evaluators' brief nor a subsequent evaluators' briefing by the Managing Authority referred to such checks, and the authors were requested to concentrate on innovation, quality and impact issues, with reference to record keeping where there are obvious improvements to make or useful input to ongoing evaluation.

Separately, the ITM Unit of Birmingham City Council, the Managing Authority's intermediary body, and Government Office North West (GONW), representing the contracting authority, paid two visits to the project under Article 13; to ensure compliance with EU Regulations and national rules such as eligible expenditure, procurement and publicity as well as the particular requirements of the ITM strand. These took place in June 2009 to conduct a baseline review and in August 2010 for an on the spot check.

## 2.3 Methodology

Paula MacLachlan and Ian Hill approached the evaluation by reviewing current management and monitoring arrangements with the key partners at their request. They interviewed key project staff, to verify their understanding of the project and ESF context, and gain their ideas about the project's strengths, weaknesses and future direction. They undertook a document review to assess progress against targets to date, and identify weaknesses or gaps in documentation or monitoring, and any success stories which may have already arisen from the project. Research reviewed quantitative data on; businesses given support; employment created through the projects activities; area of housing or other buildings properties insulated; numbers of households benefitting from energy advice.

In parallel a focus group session was held; with a sample of recycling project beneficiaries and staff, whilst the views of housing officers who had received energy advice skills input were assessed on the basis of written feedback forms. Structured telephone interviews were conducted with a sample of business beneficiaries of renewable energy support to ascertain their views, and to probe the benefit of the project to them and the quality of their experience. The focus groups and interviews explored in more depth issues arising from the document review, elements of the evaluation not covered by questionnaire such as lessons learnt and the future. The interviews probed whether the project had made a difference and other potential causes of change.

Next, one to one semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with a range of partners and other stakeholder and funders to review innovation, influence and potential for mainstreaming of the projects' results. Additional discussions were held with the Programmed Secretariat and project management and coordination staff.

This report looks at: achievements against objectives and targets; results so far; impact and influence; contacts between partners and communications; and the added value of the transnational character of the project in terms of shared learning and its success at innovating and mainstreaming so far. It goes on to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the project, and considers lessons learnt for the remainder of the project, including targets, record keeping, partnerships and communications. Finally it draws

overall conclusions and summarises recommendations arising during the course of the report.

A full list of documents reviewed is at Appendix A, and a full list of consultees at Appendix B. Questions covered through the written questionnaires and telephone interviews are at Appendix C.

Our findings have been consolidated into this report by chapter headings, integrating the findings from the different elements of research rather than describing the findings of each stage of research separately. Further details of methodology and conclusions of each research stage are available separately from the evaluators.

### 3 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The chapter builds on comments and responses during the interviews and questionnaires. It summarises views from a variety of stakeholders, and goes on to examine the achievement of outputs and results.

Overall, stakeholders from all parts of the project (partners, beneficiaries and trainees, other interested organisations) have made positive and encouraging comments about the project. From an evaluation perspective, these comments usually relate to one area of project delivery alone (e.g. energy efficiency, or renewable energy), rather than across the project as a whole. This is explored in more detail in section 6.

The overall achievements of the project could be broadly grouped into *People*, *Policy* and *Practice*

The **people achievements** can be seen amongst the trainees on the recycling project, amongst the attendees at energy efficiency awareness sessions, and amongst business and trainees in the wood fuel sector.

From the perspective of trainees working in the recycling project (Impact Furniture Services or IFS), the project provides variety, flexibility and an enjoyable working routine. One trainee commented “*Every day is different*”, whilst another remarked that “*What starts as one scrap of junk, by the end of the day you can change it completely; that’s what makes my job enjoyable*”. Course participants also commented on the high quality of after-course support in energy efficiency training.

A similar level of satisfaction can be perceived amongst businesses receiving support to develop their biofuel products and services. In the words of one beneficiary: “*Cumbria Woodlands have been instrumental in developing our interest in woodland management and the information and advice we have received has been invaluable*”.

In terms of **policy achievements**, there are interesting examples of the project providing clear added value. An example was given of how Cumbria Woodlands have used project funds to collaborate with Forest Research on a seminar which identified optimum locations for forestry as a flood prevention measure in the Derwent & Cocker catchments. This seminar had over 80 attendees, has a clear follow-up plan, and will certainly have an impact on climate policy relating to flood catchment management.

Work with local authorities such as Eden District Council delivering workshops in rural areas were seen as a successful new approach to build on. Similarly, work through Age Concern’s Village Agents and open days helped contribute to awareness raising and reaching the general public.

Achievements in **practice** have come about in the ways that the project has introduced new working methods and practices to training for Climate Change in Cumbria. The concept of ‘skills for climate change’ is an ill-defined one, and encompasses skills in construction, management, communications and so on. The project has been particularly strong in developing new skills and qualifications in two key areas; Energy efficiency/awareness and recycling/reuse of materials. These new, accredited

qualifications give a lasting legacy to the project, and have tangible impacts on the individuals concerned; for example, one trainee in IFS is now applying for jobs in other public sector organisations in the recycling/energy sphere.

The project also demonstrates skills development beyond formal qualifications. The programme of good practice/awareness events in the wood fuels sector, branded as the 'inspire' part of the Cumbria Woodlands programme, are seen as interesting and stimulating.

### **3.1 Achievements of objectives and targets**

The project set out a number of outputs and results in the application form. These are contractually binding outputs, involving 310 participants starting with qualifications below level 3, of whom 10% had basic skills needs, mainly the recycling trainees, and 15% were qualified to below level 2. On the delivery side, the project aimed to develop 3 new methods of delivering environmental technology skills and 4 new recycling products, support 40 businesses and produce one policy report. At the end of the first year 319 participants had been involved.

The specific activities of the project fell into three related areas:

1. Training housing and social care staff in energy awareness through an accredited one day course, and energy efficiency days training them to give energy advice. Training also for housing staff on installing energy efficiency measures such as insulation. There were 92 participants, against a target of 40 in the first year.
2. Training in furniture and white goods recycling for re-use, delivering accredited qualifications and leading to a growth in services. Thirty two trainees have been reached against a target of 25 in the first year
3. Renewable energy business development, with 4 sub-areas of activity:
  - a. Training for workers working with wood e.g. chainsaw use
  - b. Business advice in forestry and other land based businesses to explore the potential of biomass, such as pre-planting studies
  - c. Development of markets for other renewable
  - d. Business networking event to promote service across the supply chain e.g. take up of wood boilers, attending Green Build Fortnight events and producing a promotional booklet.

The target for numbers of businesses involved in year 1 was 75; the project had achieved 61 at the end of May, so short of the first complete year.

Whilst the primary beneficiaries of the project are partners' and housing organisations' staff trained, recycling trainees and wood related micro enterprises, the project also provides CPD for front line training staff, and secondary beneficiaries are low income households receiving energy efficiency practical works and advice.

The Managing Authority Intermediary Body (Birmingham City Council) had expressed concern at the lack of activity with Swedish partner in the project's first year. After a

slow start however, a study visit took place in October 2010. The budget for this aspect of the project could usefully increase to allow greater depth of exchange

Overall, the project has achieved more than its first year target outputs in all three activity areas. The project has developed a new curriculum and qualifications in Energy Awareness and Recycling skills, and it has delivered qualifications in a field where this is not widespread. It has developed a new accredited course for housing professionals, building on initial work undertaken by National Energy Action, a national specialist organisation. The specific added value here, however, is that Impact's training programme is a bespoke course based on single day modules to meet the needs of staff with very little time and no budget for training. It has also worked with the North West Network of Community Recycling Organisations to develop specialist modules within an accredited package.

Impact has, in numerical terms, met the target *numbers of housing staff trained*, although this has not produced the match funding required, as other housing providers found it difficult to prioritise work they regard as tangential to core business, and they are put off by ESF 'bureaucracy', specifically requirements related to use of staff time as in kind match funding. This may be overcome by tying training into other Housing Associations' own Affordable Warmth strategies and timing courses to fit seasonal topicality. Although the targets for numbers trained are being met, the involvement of other Housing Association staff is not producing the match funding envisaged. This issue may be resolved by re-focussing the activities of the project in the second and third years

## 3.2 Quality

In August 2010 an On the Spot (Article 13) visit was made by the ESF ITM Unit and Government Office NW, during which participant numbers and accreditation of qualifications were checked along with progress reports and templates for timesheets, evaluation forms and the SLA with Cumbria Woodlands. Positive feedback from trainees was noted and also changes to match funding. Among other recommendations, the need to document innovation was highlighted and an increase to the transitional budget was suggested to permit more activity.

In terms of quality, detailed feedback from participants in energy awareness courses was collected and analysed comprehensively by staff. Feedback from 93 participants from 3 organisations showed 81% of them rated the organisation of the courses as 'good' or 'excellent'. Most rated the notes and materials very highly except for 5 who did not find them relevant 'yet' and one who found them of 'poor' relevance, one comment was also received concerning difficulty for one participant with a visual impairment (although a range of support is normally offered within the Framework of Impact's Equality and Diversity policy). 94% found the course style good or excellent. Asked which element of the course participants found most useful and informative, nearly 40% said all of it was. Of the others, the most valued aspects were (in order): energy efficiency and conservation, and energy loss; energy efficiency tips were especially informative; case studies, technical information, the booklet and slide show. A smaller number mentioned climate change, damp and home improvements, though many were interested in no or low cost improvements. Behaviour change was also mentioned.

Some found working with bills very informative though many did not enjoy the mathematical work on meter readings and bill calculations.

Systematic use of and analysis of evaluation forms for participants of other areas of project activities also would assist continuous improvement and to help assess the impact of activity, and plans are in hand to improve this.

Recycling trainees have an opportunity to give feedback as part of their individual review. As the first cohort approach their end-of-training review, staff are currently trying to make this more focused on the quality of training and how it has changed trainees' plans for the future.

Similarly, Impact staff collect additional feedback from energy efficiency beneficiaries via a follow up telephone call with significant additional comments added to the analysis of their immediate post course feedback forms. Staff are considering how to link this to future objectives, and to assess the impact of this advice to householders. If timed at least one month after the course it could focus on actual change of practice as a result of the course, and collect quantitative data on numbers of tenants or households given advice, and, later, resulting household energy savings or improved comfort and health.

Finally, Cumbria Woodlands have sought feedback from their business beneficiaries, the key points of which are that the support has been very well received and has helped to move business along in terms of Improving the skills of business owners or their employees, finding new markets and developing new products or services. One business noted that *"The help has influenced our aim to be more environmentally friendly, save cost and provide customer friendly solutions"*. However, not all businesses who responded to the questionnaire were aware of the ESF support.

In terms of future quality assessment, the evaluators recommend ensuring that recording meets the requirements and standards of the accrediting bodies for qualifications and business advice.

They also recommend review of how useful the qualifications have been to beneficiaries in the labour market by setting up a beneficiary tracking system which can be maintained after the project ends to assess long term impact.

### **3.3 Added Value**

The added value of ESF funding enabled a more structured approach to training and jobs development in these areas, whilst the specific contribution of the innovation, transnational and mainstreaming stream would demonstrate how to combine generic and specific skills for new job opportunities related to climate change, and to learn how to develop supply chains for renewable energy.

Other achievements include after-course support to trainees, work with new partners such as Eden District Council at its rural workshops for the public and attending Age Concern village agents' open day. These have led to unexpected but very useful results and can form a foundation for future collaboration.

Stakeholders were asked what they thought the most significant achievements of the project were. Almost all referred to the development of new qualifications and the novelty

of ESF delivery through social landlords and the successful partnership of varied organisations in the project. Many also pointed to the achievements of the woodfuel activities of the project. Specifically, stakeholders highlighted:

- Development of a new qualification for recycling, likely to be useful for job seekers and career development of those in work
- Awareness training for significant numbers of frontline housing staff and the creation of a qualification in energy awareness, complementing National Energy Action's longer courses on insulation and treatments and energy efficiency.
- Working with supply and demand sides of the biomass supply chain, to improve Cumbria's wood fuel capacity

A key interest is in the direct impact of these activities on low income households both as economic actors, the traditional ESF area of intervention, and as housing occupiers and energy users. Several mentioned the complementary ERDF project on insulating hard to treat homes and the potential to develop this work further. One referred to the development of a pilot energy services company based on NEA and National Federation of Housing Associations' feasibility study

### **3.4 Impacts**

Impact is defined as the difference the project has made especially its innovative and trans-national character, and how far its findings are eventually mainstreamed. It looks at how partners achieve results which they could not have otherwise, or introduce developments more quickly, or enable them to avoid pitfalls previously encountered by others, as well as enabling new groups of actors to work together across sector and other barriers

Jobs growth is a secondary objective for a Housing Association and a new area of work for Impact. Staff felt that the active promotion of renewable through training, advice and business support represented a creative use of ESF which would not have been possible through its mainstream co-financed route. The project has approached energy efficiency training in a systematic way and on a large scale, unusual in the housing field.

Staff felt it was too early in the life of the project to assess impact of the project but drew attention to the potential of advice for practitioners for other housing providers. It was therefore a matter of regret that take up has been so limited in the first year. They also felt that there were opportunities for new jobs in recycling, and a tracking system for beneficiaries after the project's intervention ends will help to quantify that.

Reflecting on the project's contribution to sustainable development, social cohesion, mainstreaming learning, and better integration of social provision with economic development, these softer aspects were seen as valuable alongside the contractual outputs, and can led on to other activities.

The project will benefit from loan scheme for home energy monitors so that the difference in use can be measured for a period before and after the newly trained Advisor visits. This will give some indication of impact on energy use.

A previous research report show that biomass offered significant potential for jobs growth in the area, and Impact Housing Association had an existing partnership with Cumbria Woodlands. However the work could be extended to other renewables.

In terms of measuring impact, baseline data was available on qualification levels but not on current energy use so that it is not possible to assess the impact on fuel bills. The evaluators recommend that a simple tool be developed to remedy this and some sample comparative monitoring be put in place. Monitoring how training and qualifications have been used and systematic feedback from course participants on the difference the course has made will also help to assess impact (see 'Quality' section above).

## 4 PROJECT AND PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT

The project partnership brings together organisations from different sectors and experiences. For this reason, the project has stimulated some interesting sharing of ideas and experiences. One stakeholder commented that the added value of the project derived in part from the way it brought different sectors together.

Through the partnership Impact was able to support the development of another organisation, Cumbria Woodlands, with its involvement with foresters and landowners, and their collaboration aims to stimulate demand for products by for example promoting wood burning boilers. The involvement of National Energy Action (NEA), which leads on fuel poverty issues, has enabled the development of new qualifications and training courses which could be shared more widely.

Stakeholder interviews expressed no strong opinions about the project management; stakeholders who were closer to the project were broadly satisfied with the management of the project, and some made specific comments about the efficiency and approachability of the project management team. Stakeholders who were further away from the project activities had no strong opinion.

Several stakeholders did however mention that they were not sure how the 3 strands of activity formed a single project and wondered if more could be done to integrate them. As a first step the Lead Partner might consider having occasional meetings involving all project partners together to reinforce the project's wholistic approach, ensure the common vision is understood and shared, to review milestones and how they were achieved in order to plan mainstreaming activities, and to ensure consistency in approach to administrative and reporting matters.

At the inception meeting of the evaluators the project partners took the opportunity to explore some confusion around match-funding, record keeping, indirect overheads calculation methodology and claims processing. Partnership arrangements between Impact Housing Association and Cumbria Woodlands Ltd should clarify the latter's status as a partner, and therefore require it to keep full audit trail records, to include source documents and time sheets, rather than invoicing the Lead Partner as if it were a sub-contractor. We would also advise Cumbria Woodlands to keep records of their overhead costs (indirect costs) in order to provide evidence for the 12% flat rate overhead if required. Though not part of their brief, the evaluators advised on remedial action to take. As a result of reconstructed records, their respective budgets may change.

The evaluators recommended clarification of administrative arrangements in the partner organisations and their responsibilities in the audit trail, and it is understood that this is now being addressed.

The evaluation has identified future collaborative opportunities, which could extend the impact of the project. These could include more work with Age Concern and Eden Council (see above), and strengthening the links with FE providers such as Lakes College West Cumbria, to broaden the scope of skills training (such as training for construction workers on renewable energy technologies)

## 5 INNOVATION, TRANSNATIONAL AND MAINSTREAMING

The particular strand of ESF funding for this project focuses on Innovation, Transnational and Mainstreaming (ITM). The programme exists to finance new, innovative activity which draws on good practice from around Europe, and which can influence future policy and delivery. It is appropriate to review how far the project is developing new approaches and what further potential there may be, though other sections of this report touch on all three dimensions. It is important to remember that these are fundamental conditions to the funding, because the programme exists to identify new practice which is effective and cost-efficient to roll out on a larger scale. Recording and disseminating key aspects of this for wider take up is therefore a central obligation of partners. It also offers potential for raising the profile of partners, maximising the impact of the project, positioning them as experts in their field and advantages in applying for other funds.

Innovation

Many consultees recognised that the project had innovative aspects, but for a variety of different reasons. These included:

- The way in which the project brings together different sectors and organisations with different contacts and experience
- The opportunities created by the project for practitioners to see current good practice and be exposed to new ideas
- The opportunities for professionals to diversify their skills and knowledge
- The development of new qualifications which are responsive to local needs, and which are provided in a flexible manner, not through formal educational providers
- The way in which the project works with both supply and demand side for the wood fuel sector

On reflection, the innovative nature of the project seems to lie in its integrated approach. A key challenge for partners is to strengthen this integration, and to find ways to continue and extend the collaboration beyond the ESF project (see below).

The ITM Unit had recommended that innovation be documented separately by the project in its recommendations following the Article 13 visit.

For innovation to be demonstrated it needs to be based on baseline research or anchored in regional policy. Whilst the need for the project and its potential is undoubtedly clear and unanimously understood by stakeholders, the project could usefully take a more robust approach to recording or collecting supporting data, for instance household level impact of interventions on fuel bills or thermal comfort, monitoring the take up of grants in order to inform policy. Currently government policy targets the most vulnerable sections of the population, whilst the project has the opportunity to propose what support could work for those less vulnerable but still at risk of fuel poverty e.g. the Green Deal.

One or two interviewees questioned the innovative aspect of the biomass work, though it was still considered useful in that it addresses different stages of the supply chain. It

would be important to ensure that the project's communication and dissemination strategy can reach non-specialist audiences on this topic.

## 5.1 Transnational

The transnational element of the project has been slow to develop. The initial contact with Ostergötland was based on historic links between Cumbria and Ostergötland from previous EU-funded projects. Staff were aware of the transnational dimension of the project and referred to its added value in testing the transferability of the 'Inspire, Advise, Train' approach. They sought to learn from Swedish partners' expertise in community and district heating, and from their institutional experience. They also have expertise in green technologies and building insulation.

In addition organisations within the partnership have experience of value to other Member States, such as NEA's work on fuel poverty, which can influence the EU's draft Directive on Fuel Poverty.

The transnational interest of the project was the value of the Swedish partner's knowledge and experience. It may be possible to make more of the presence of peers from other Member States to promote reflection on the softer impacts such as how partnerships work, and to increase the visibility of the project using the novelty of overseas involvement.

Two study visits were foreseen during the project with a conference in the third year. To date, only one of these study visits has happened, although it is clear that the project partners are planning further activity, and are starting to make links with other regions in other EU member states.

That study visit can be seen as successful in that it brought together 6 individuals from the project partnership and other stakeholder organisations, it achieved a demanding and varied itinerary, and received very positive feedback comments from the participants. One participant reported that it was *"An excellent visit that provided inspiration, technical detail and national, regional and local policy across climate change, low carbon transport infrastructure, behaviour change, renewable energy, forestry and recycling. It was informative, well organised and gave an opportunity to exchange ideas on planning and energy use."*

The initial visit was well documented, and identified some specific areas for further action, particularly in using experts from two of the Swedish organisations visited: the **East Sweden Energy Agency**, and **Cleantech Ostergötland**, both of which were identified by several participants as having significant relevance for climate change policy in Cumbria.

The evaluators would observe that, whilst the partners are working to ensure that at least the minimum requirements are met with regard to transnational activity, there is much more which can be done in this respect which could add value to the project, and some specific suggestions and recommendations are made in section 7 below.

## 5.2 Mainstreaming

ITM requires projects to produce extensive mainstreaming plans which identify a range of partners and other stakeholders to help mainstream the practice and learning of the project. Programme managers also provide thematic networks to build a critical mass of evidence and explain trends. The ITM Unit targets high level policy makers to support this. The project participates fully in these networks, whose value cannot be underestimated as projects often find it very challenging to locate key decision makers in government, especially in times of change. The evaluators have not seen the mainstreaming plan for this project, although it is understood that this is being re-developed.

As a general comment, we could observe that there are several excellent examples of mainstreaming which have occurred during the first year of the project, but these have often occurred by chance or in an unstructured way, and the project could be more systematic in its approach to mainstreaming.

Some examples of achievements to date are:

The project was used at a showcase event last year as an example of good practice in green jobs. As a result the partners are now in touch with the Environment Agency for its work on sustainable development.

The work piloted by Cumbria Woodlands on flood reduction through forestry, in conjunction with EA and Natural England, has significant opportunities to affect mainstream policy on land use in relation to flood risk, and could see changes in catchment flood plans in the future.

Many stakeholders interviewed referred to the need to mainstream the experience of the project and consider how the project can make a difference beyond Cumbria. It has already proved transferable to the Regional Competitiveness ERDF programme, as a project is now underway on retrofitting insulation in 'difficult' buildings, with a clear crossover to the training element of Greenways, and the link between them can trigger a larger partnership across the North West.

The work on bespoke qualifications for recycling activity have significant wider relevance, and the collaboration which is being developed with FE providers to support the delivery of training programmes in renewable energy for workers in the construction industry is an excellent example of how the project can add value to mainstream activity.

Some proposals for future mainstreaming opportunities include:

Meetings with NWDA, SFA and Cumbria Vision to ensure use of the project results and roll out across other programmes. This concept could be extended to form a project Advisory Group consisting of the project partners, Cumbria County Council Climate Change team and the Lake District National Park Authority; this would also ensure the project's impact.

The pilot energy services company is considered relevant to this project, and could be a replicable piece of good practice, not commonly used elsewhere in the UK. It is the more relevant in view of government policy changes on feed in tariffs and the Renewable Heat Incentive.

Open Days are also considered useful for mainstreaming targeting specific audiences such as the LGA, National Federation and the Homes and Communities Agency, or bodies which may succeed it.

Other activities suggested include a newsletter (this would also inform wider policy community stakeholders, some of whom were not aware of the project); a review of the website to improve its key messages and reach; and events for invited targeted audiences which can generate wider geographical take up of the project's successful elements, and also provide networking opportunities for those present. A commissioning body for the latter would be required, to be discussed with the ITM Unit.

As the development of new qualifications is widely regarded as a major achievement of the project, it will be important to ensure that it is available nationally via the national qualifications database, and to consider how it could form a unit within other framework qualifications.

The project will need to ensure that other ESF co-financing organisations are aware of how they can take up the lessons of the project, as well as reaching the Skills Funding Agency, JobcentrePlus and local authorities. The project itself is committed to producing one policy report and organising a national conference with its Swedish partners in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. It may be that these two actions can be combined into a single, significant, 'Green Jobs' conference for later in the second year of the project (summer 2011), which uses transnational expertise, but which is aimed specifically at influencing mainstream policy.

Finally, other EU programme such as UrbACT also have overlapping interests and this could offer a next step for Impact after the ESF funding ends.

Whilst central to the ITM programme, the mainstreaming activities themselves may be best delivered by partners' staff other than those managing the day to day operations

## 6 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES AND AREAS TO DEVELOP

Key project strengths lie in the development of new courses and their accreditation, the quality and cost-effectiveness of the short courses, the transferable 'Advise, Inspire, Train' model used for wood fuel development, and potential for action which is currently opening in new fields such as renewables re-training for plumbers, boosting numbers of trainees through recruitment via partner networks

Its weaknesses, conversely, were seen as a lack of match funding coming from external participation in energy awareness training. Match funding relies on course participants recording the amount of time they subsequently spend giving energy advice, and capturing this accurately is cumbersome and unreliable. Recommendations are made elsewhere in this report for capturing advice given and energy savings resulting. However this should be uncoupled from the match funding requirement.. Match funding however remains a significant barrier, seen as a weakness internally to the project, rather than externally.

Some progress has also been slower than expected ; development of extra modules and the high cost of work on difficult to treat buildings, though they provide very good training opportunities with wide long term impact.

In addition, the lack of integration between the 3 disparate elements of the project was observed as a weakness by some stakeholders.

Training feedback is excellent but there is a need to verify its impact. The accreditation of training is very valuable and should be rolled out to other types of training and project interventions. There were some suggestions about splitting the one day courses and offering some specialist group work (see below).

There are clearly recruitment difficulties in energy efficiency training attributed to the recession, lack of response from housing providers and administrative complications associated with use of staff time as match funding in kind. Budget and match funding were mentioned often as a constant challenge, but difficulties in achieving targets need to be set in the context of the project's broader achievement and overall value for money.

Some adaptation of existing plans and revised estimates of participant numbers may be necessary, also to accommodate new match funding estimates, as well as the amount of work which can be done on hard to treat buildings. For the latter, several interviewees mentioned the recently-approved ERDF project which could include training in insulation (the training could be funded by GreenWays, supporting the retro-fitting work financed by ERDF). At the same time the project could increase its impact by encouraging other housing providers to engage in energy efficiency, and some proactive action might also boost course participant numbers.

During the second year staff also hope to develop the waste aspect of the project, working with waste disposal contractors, and work on other renewables besides wood. Staff could also usefully build on the rural work started with Eden DC and Age Concern.

For future energy awareness courses, some participants suggested two separate half day courses rather than a full day in order to absorb the information provided. Others, variously, would like more information on renewable energy, insulation, recycling, different types of construction, grants and conducting home energy audits. It is difficult to see how all this can be achieved in a single day. However some small groupwork covering options on these themes might work, or follow up sessions. Alternatively, participants could be asked to indicate their preferences on registering, so that they could be segmented according to prior knowledge or interest. Participant feedback from these courses shows that the climate change message is reaching its audience, helping to achieve the aims of the project.

No feedback forms were collected for recycling beneficiaries although individual training plans are in place. Where feedback is routinely collected, it is not always systematically analysed, missing the opportunity for the results to be used to adjust delivery. Using the model of feedback from energy awareness courses, we recommend more systematic and thorough participant feedback at events, to reflect a wider beneficiary and stakeholder view, which in turn will help to assess impact in the final evaluation and guide future projects' focus.

We also recommend some changes in the type of monitoring to allow a focus on strategic results and impacts.

There is room for improvement in communications and dissemination ; the minimum requirements appear to be met, but the project could do much more to promote its successes and its policy and mainstreaming relevance. Communications and dissemination are critical to the Mainstreaming principle of the funding programme. More use could be made of the website to reach the wider communities of interest of the project, including policy makers. In particular two interviewees had difficulty distinguishing the ESF element of Cumbria Woodlands work from its day to day activities, and it could usefully be clearer about the ESF added value, innovation and progress of the biomass elements of the project. This concern was reflected by the respondents to the business questionnaire; 3 of the 8 respondents were not aware, or only vaguely aware, of EU support.

The particular transferable lessons from the transnational element of the project need also to be clarified in dissemination activity, including learning what does not work and what is not transferable.

For information gathering to support the project, the second year might consider what is the replicable potential and how to apply the project's learning on a wider scale

Evaluators hoped to identify case studies and success stories for the project to use in its mainstreaming and influencing work. Staff interviewed referred to City and Guilds workshops in rural areas and Age Concern's Open Days, and to the programme of events organised by Cumbria Woodlands, including the work on forestry to reduce flood risk. Evaluators recommend that project staff record more information about these activities and their results, and note other examples of project impact on its beneficiaries.

Staff also suggested tracking a sample of project training 'graduates' in order to observe changes in their practice and its effects as an indicator of impact.

Significantly, two of the stakeholders approached did not know the project enough to comment; the project's dissemination plan might consider how this could be addressed (see Mainstreaming section above).

## 7 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1 Conclusions

The project addresses an important and topical subject, green inclusive growth, bringing together an unusual range of actors across sectors, and which has potential for tangible impact on local economic development partnerships and EU 2020 targets. Its methods of working have been appropriate; valuable lessons have been learnt and there are opportunities to use these in other areas, in spite of partners' resource limitations.

The project is innovative in that:

- **It addresses issues of disadvantage** – for example, it tackles issues of fuel poverty amongst disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and it offers job opportunities for people who are excluded from the labour market.
- **It demonstrates the job growth opportunities in these sectors**, whilst developing transferable skills which are important for employability in any sector – for example, the skills acquired by trainees in the furniture recycling project
- **It makes a clear link between social housing and environmental technologies**, by working with front line housing staff on energy efficiency and fuel poverty issues
- **It builds on international best practice**, particularly the potential for local job growth linked to local environmental technologies, which is more common elsewhere in the EU than in the UK, particularly through the links developed with Ostergötland in Sweden
- **It offers the potential to formalise and open up qualifications in the environmental sector** which are currently unavailable or only partly available. It enables these qualifications to be accessed by a much wider group of potential participants.

The project is well-designed, with high quality delivery and a well-developed networks. External communications could usefully be reworked to promote the considerable achievements of the project more effectively, and to encourage wider interest beyond the project's current partners and funders. This is especially the case for the renewable energy element of the project.

The transnational component of the project is being addressed, but is perhaps under-utilised ; there are excellent opportunities for new knowledge and ideas, and future collaborative partnerships, which are not being realised.

New accredited training materials are a very significant project achievement whose value may be underestimated by front line training staff. Their potential for mainstreaming to maximise the project's impact should be explored as the project develops, to ensure its long term impact after the ESF funding ceases.

All consultees were very positive about the project and its training was rated very highly. Staff hope to increase numbers undertaking energy efficiency training next year, in spite of the associated challenges. As training 'graduates' emerge, the project will need to

monitor how they use it in practice and the difference it makes to their clients and services in order to gauge the project's impact. A range of recommendations are made about how to measure this.

The project has a diverse partnership well suited to rolling out its results. There is potential for work to develop further on insulating awkward buildings, though this is an expensive area of activity which will require additional match funding. However it is possible to deliver training alongside the new ERDF project on retrofit and renewables. Other work to develop includes work on renewable energies other than wood, and work with waste disposal contractors. There are other stakeholders who could be more closely involved in the project, if not as partners, then as valued advisors ; these include LDNP, Envirolink NW and Cumbria County Council

We recognise that, although ESF funded training is not core business for Impact Housing, this project nonetheless fits with the wider portfolio of Impact's social and economic activities. However, it is also important to realise that non-core business of this kind can skew an organisation's mission and purpose, but we found no evidence of this. In fact, the project appears particularly well-integrated into Impact's core activities.

As the project moves into its second half, the focus should be turned now to mainstreaming lessons, and influencing policy by promoting what the project has discovered and how it can be made to work in other areas to fulfil the economic opportunities identified as well as the environmental benefits. This also represents an opportunity for Impact Housing and Cumbria Woodlands to raise their profile beyond Cumbria and secure a prominent position to apply for other pilot funding

The shifting landscape of public service delivery and the third sector may present new opportunities for Impact through the Big Society and localism agendas

Finally, we should acknowledge that the future of ESF funding beyond 2013 is uncertain; this makes it doubly important to demonstrate the relevance and impact of this kind of innovative project, and its potential for mainstreaming.

## 7.2 Recommendations

These are generally incorporated into the body of the report. This section draws together and summarises the main ones, around the themes of delivery, impact, transnational co-operation, innovation and mainstreaming.

### 7.2.1 Project management and delivery

1. Ensure that the project is fully integrated into the mainstream activities of Impact Housing. This means ensuring that managers are briefed, that the organisation identifies ways in which it can support project delivery, and that Impact fully recognises the significance and potential of this project
2. The project partnership should review the delivery of the energy efficiency training, to make sure that it is fit for the needs of Housing Associations in Cumbria, and that it fits with the affordable warmth strategies in place at the current time, and that it is seasonally appropriate. It is recognised that, in view of the recession and match funding in kind problem, the current requirement of using match funding from this source may be a counter-incentive to participation. The two suggested actions are to review this whole area of activity with the Cumbria Housing Group, and to revise match funding arrangements related to energy efficiency advice, so that the training can continue, whilst reducing the need for match funding from this source, as the project focus shifts slightly in year 2.
3. For energy efficiency training in particular, consider segmenting one day courses according to professional background or interests of participants, or dividing into thematic groups for part of the day to respond to varied wishes for more information e.g. damp, home improvement grants, cost of use of different appliances. This could enable the delivery of e-learning packages which are currently under development, and also allow the energy efficiency training to roll out to other providers, such as the NHS.
4. As a general point, training for other organisations (such as other housing associations) needs to be free at the point of delivery, accessible, flexible, and de-coupled from any requirements to produce evidence of the recipient organisations providing match funding.
5. The project should be much more systematic about collecting and analysing feedback from all participants (evaluators only saw it from energy awareness courses, though it is understood that other feedback mechanisms are in place and are being reviewed as described in this report). A useful addition to the feedback questionnaires might be an open question asking participants to note 3 things they will do as a result of the activity.
6. In addition, the project should collect and write up success stories, with the potential to use these for publications and an improved website presence. This should include a clear presentation of the benefits and cost-effectiveness of the energy efficiency training, and its transferability. Examples might relate to each

- of the Innovation points in the Conclusions section above and records could address the key questions of :
- a. What it did
  - b. How it did it
  - c. What happened as a result
  - d. What we wish we had known before doing it
  - e. What others should know in order to try it
7. Impact Housing, as lead partner, should revisit Cumbria Woodlands to check reconstructed records and audit trail compliance. They should also adjust the subsequent ESF claim if lack of evidence for sums previously claimed has led to an effective net over claim
  8. As the rural outreach work of the project develops e.g. through participation at village open days and awareness raising with the general public, systematic counting of participants and their feedback should be recorded as these also contribute to the achievements of the project.
  9. In order to help to integrate the 3 strand approach, the project should organise some partner and stakeholder meetings, possibly through use of the project advisory group model, which can focus initially on the recommendations of this evaluation, and which could be instigated by holding a 'project review meeting' which gathers together all partners and stakeholders for a one-off session to discuss and shape future delivery. This group could include stakeholders which might be regarded as 'Advisory Partners' (such as NEA and Cumbria County Council), but also organisations which may be delivery partners in the future, such as Lakes College West Cumbria., Lake District National Park and Envirolink NW

### 7.2.2 Impact

10. A method should be devised to follow up a sample of housing advisors to find out how many people they advise and what the saving on cost/emissions/healthcare results. This could be addressed through the 2-week follow-up phone call currently being instigated, although this may be more effective if held 1 month after the training takes place. It is worth noting that NEA have particular expertise in research and analysis, and may be able to offer expert input into the design of any questionnaire and methodology.
11. For housing energy efficiency advice, the project should collect baseline data
  - Numbers of tenants advised before and after training
  - Current fuel bills of tenants advised and change after receiving advice in their bills, their thermal comfort and their health
  - Current take up of home improvement grants
  - Other information on how frontline housing staff change how they work and the difference they have made as a result of their training.

This can provide more accurate and detailed info by a sample at household level to complement NEA's broader fuel poverty statistics

12. Track a sample of graduates from each of the 3 strands (for final evaluation) to measure 'distance travelled'; Monitor the destination of trainees after they have finished their training, by sample, e.g. job outcomes, usefulness of qualifications or changed behaviour or business practice.

### **7.2.3 Transnational co-operation**

13. Revisit the project budget allocated to transnational cooperation, in the light of the ongoing review of transnational activity, to ensure that the budget is commensurate with aspirations. It may be that a slight increase in the budget for this area could allow for more in depth exchange with current and potential transnational partners
14. Continue to establish links with other EU regions, with a particular focus on regions which are interested in the skills agenda (and which may already be using ESF transnational funding for this activity, allowing development of a 2-way exchange) ; liaise with Birmingham City Council when appropriate to seek ESF ITM contacts in other member states.
15. Examine the potential to develop a future EU-funded project which focuses particularly on transnational cooperation in the climate change skills area ; this could be relevant for a number of EU programmes, most notably Leonardo (vocational training), Urbact (urban development policy and practice) and Intelligent Energy Europe (renewable energy activities). The evaluators can provide more detail on these programmes if interested.
16. Use the transnational links developed by the project to attract attention, e.g. by using transnational expert speakers at a mainstreaming seminar/conference with clear target audiences.

### **7.2.4 Innovation**

17. Whilst recognising that the fact of a Housing Association leading a project of this nature is in general a key innovation, it is helpful to document the specific replicable lessons of the project systematically (in line with ITM unit recommendation following its visit). As a start, this could focus on the bullet points at the start of section 7.1, and should focus on what was done, how it was done, and what recommendations could be made to make this example transferable.(see also recommendation 6)
18. Include case studies in future project publications, or on the web. Examine whether any of the project partners have technical experts (e.g. communications officers) who can help with this task

### **7.2.5 Mainstreaming**

19. Formalise and revise the written mainstreaming plan, focussing on actions identified in the recommendations of this report, and identifying responsible

- individuals for actioning them, bringing in skills from outside the immediate project staff where necessary.
20. Promote, and potentially sell, the qualifications and accredited training to help the work become self-funding after ESF funding ends
  21. Ensure that the qualifications developed are registered in the national qualifications database, and explore how they could form a unit within other wider framework qualifications
  22. Organise a regional networking event or mainstreaming conference, in the summer of 2011, which will allow the project to showcase its achievements
  23. As part of this networking event, or as a separate event, organise targeted Open Days for national and regional providers and policy makers e.g. LGA, National Federation, HCA
  24. Target the current regional ESF co-financing organisations with key messages which can be integrated into future ESF programmes e.g. Skills Funding Agency (SFA), JobCentrePlus
  25. Develop a project Newsletter, which can be sent by email to stakeholders and partners
  26. Review the project's web presence and improve project information carried, especially on the distinctive ESF work of Cumbria Woodlands – this would require either a new project website (this can be explored through Impact's current ISP), or an improved dedicated area of the Impact Housing website
  27. Ensure that the establishment of the proposed energy services company is documented as an example of transferable good practice.

## **APPENDIX A: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED**

Application Form

Contract

Financial and activity reports & claims progress reports 1 to 3

Analysis of feedback from energy awareness course participants

Course feedback form template

Analysis of participants against target (extracted from database), September 2010

Article 13 Baseline Visit report, June 2009

Article 13 On The Spot Visit report, August 2010

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## APPENDIX B: CONSULTEES

### **Project Staff :**

Heather Lindsay

Rod Yeoman

Andrew Reed

Phil Davies

### **Partners and stakeholders :**

Neville Elstone, Cumbria Woodlands

Kevin May, Forestry Commission

Jenny Wain, Cumbria County Council

Ian Scott, NW Recycling Network

Graham Johnson, Lakes College West Cumbria

David Ingham, Cumbria County Council

Joanne Carr, National Energy Action

Heather Law, Birmingham City Council (ESF ITM Unit)

Shay O'Rourke, Government Office NW

Plus 5 consultees who have not yet responded to our requests for interview :

Rosie Mathiesen, Britain's Energy Coast

Adam Swainbank, Envirolink NW

Margaret Moore, NW Development Agency

Ranko Simic, Ostergötland County Administrative Board

Karen Slater, Natural England

## APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS

### To Partners and Stakeholders

Who we are; appointed by Impact

Purpose of evaluation; how effectively the project is developing new approaches to skills delivery and influencing policy in jobs growth in the climate change sector, and how it can improve and build on its first year achievements for the remainder of the project lifetime.

1. Are you aware of the project?

**If YES, Go to Q2**

**If NO, Go to Q12**

2. Have you looked at any information about the project on the internet (e.g. on the Impact Housing website, or the ESF Works website)?
3. Have you received any information about the project? Has this been adequate?
4. Would you like more information about the project, if so in what format?
5. What would you describe as the 3 most significant achievements of the project?  
*Prompt if necessary: think of tools, delivery methods, ways of working, partnerships*
6. What do you think might be the added value of this project, in terms of enhancing or improving activities in which you are engaged?
7. The project is designed to be innovative. What would you describe as the innovative aspects of this project?
8. The project has a transnational dimension. Are you aware of this?
  - a. If YES: What additional value do you think that transnational cooperation could give to the project?
  - b. If NO: Do you see any ways in which transnational cooperation could enhance this project?

9. Have you had any contact with the management structure of the project? Would you like to comment on the project's management?
  
10. Is there information which could be gathered in the second year of the project which could be useful to you or your organisation?
  
11. How might this project influence mainstream training or skills programmes?  
Could the activities or achievements of this project be replicated elsewhere?

***For organisations not aware of project:***

12. The project aims to improve skills to deal with the challenges of climate change. What is your organisation doing in this area?
  
13. Can you see ways to work with this project in the future? If so, could you describe them?
  
14. Do you believe that there is a demand for skills for dealing with climate change issues?

*Prompt if necessary: recycling, energy efficiency, energy awareness, renewable energy*

15. What policies in the area of skills for climate change might be influenced by this kind of project? How?

**To Businesses receiving renewable energy advice**

This is a quick survey by Cumbria Woodlands to assess how effective our support is, and what results it brings for you

This is part of a wider evaluation of a European-funded project called 'Greenways to Work'. That project aims to develop skills across Cumbria to deal with the impacts of climate change

Your answers will be kept anonymous; no comments will be attributed to you personally

1. When did you receive help from us?
  
2. What kind of help was it? (details of as many as apply):
  - a. Telephone advice
  - b. Vist(s) on site; if so, how many times have we visited you?
  - c. Attending one of our workshops or seminars (state which one)
  - d. Other (give details)
  
3. What kind of things did we help you with? (tick or give details of as many as apply):
  - e. Finding new markets
  - f. Developing your products
  - g. Improving your skills, or the skills of your employees if you have any
  
4. Would you say that our support has helped you? If so, in what way?
  
5. Would you like more help from us in the future? Could you suggest what kind of help that might be?
  
6. The support you have had so far was financed by a European Funding programme. Were you aware of that?

Thanks you very much for your time

**To Project Staff**

What is your role in the project ?

Who do you regard as your project beneficiaries ?

What targets do you have ? How well have they been met so far ?

Can you describe your greatest achievements in the project ?

Can you identify the projects strengths ?

Its weaknesses ?

What will you do differently in the coming year ?

What in your view is innovative about the project ?

What is your involvement in the transnational element of the project ?

What lessons might there be for mainstreaming activity in this project, or for other programmes and policies ?

### **To Recycling Trainees**

How did you first hear about the Recycling project at Impact ?

What were you doing before you came here ?

What do you think is good about the project ?

What kind of qualifications are you doing at present ?

Has being on this project changed how you think about work ? In what way ?

What plans do you have for the future ?