New Thames Valley Vision

SSET203

LCNF Tier 2 SDRC 9.8(c) Part 2 Knowledge Sharing Report

Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre Evaluation
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) is the new trading name of Scottish and Southern Energy Power Distribution (SSEPD), the parent company of Southern Electricity Power Distribution (SEPD), Scottish Hydro Electricity Power Distribution (SHEPD) and Scottish Hydro Electricity Transmission. SEPD remains the contracted delivery body for this LCNF Project.

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Executive Summary

Effective Customer Engagement is a key aspect of a future where networks are increasingly using solutions which involve the recruitment of customers e.g. demand side flexibility, energy efficiency or embedded generation. The NTVV project set out to evaluate how a high street presence could assist with this engagement and provide some very useful insights on customer engagement. This learning would provide value for the NTVV project and learning for future projects requiring specific customer engagement in order to populate trials and encourage participation. To fulfil this requirement the Project set up the Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre or ‘the Centre’ as it will be referred to within this report.

The Centre managed to attract interest from domestic customers and educational groups, providing a good venue for keeping customers informed, engaged and a platform to share learning with project participants. However, engagement with community groups, SMEs and organisations outside the energy industry proved less successful. For these groups specific events held at more convenient locations and times, organised directly with the groups themselves is recommended.

One of the key findings was that entering a building perceived as a “shop” was a barrier to the public, this was displayed by a lower than expected numbers of visitors. The impact of this perceived barrier was lower than expected engagement which drove up the cost per customer. This cost was high enough to make the initiative unviable for a DNO operating individually as a sustainable method of engaging with customers.

In contrast, “events” held immediately in front of the Centre provided a much higher level of both engagement and specific project sign-up, these events also encouraged more customers to visit the shop where project specific detail was displayed. People that visited the Centre did show interest through their questions on energy efficiency measures and the NTVV project in general, this was aided by the use of unique and innovative exhibits. It was found during the centre’s operation that without regular changes, displays could become stagnant and un-noticed. Therefore, the information displayed and the layout of a centre should be refreshed on a regular basis to keep it relevant and informative.

Of particular note was the success of the Centre in engaging with different sectors of the community through invite only events, including: 2 domestic Focus Groups, 4 school group visits and Automated Demand Response (ADR) handover meetings. This indicated a possible route to more effective overall community engagement via utilisation of alternate event venues and educational institutions.
Embedding a local context around the customer engagement experience, in this case the energy usage of the local area and the NTVV project, combined with offering a personalised service in close collaboration with the local council was a success. Despite this it was difficult to capture the thoughts of customers through feedback, though higher rates of feedback were achieved during events.

To maximise the impact of such a centre, a central location in a very busy high street is needed in order to attract a large number of customers. Also, the personnel working in the Centre should have excellent communication and soft selling skills to ensure a smooth customer experience and the delivery of a DNOs messages. The Centre can improve customers’ relationship with the DNO by offering information and engagement opportunities. In relation to specific initiatives or projects a centre would also add value by helping to recruit participants for trials and through providing a meeting venue.

In comparison to other engagement methods the overall costs of engagement are high, reaching approximately £123 per customer (due to mainly the relatively small number of customer engagements) which is difficult to justify for the DNO individually, taking into account that the total average revenue per domestic customer for a typical DNO is approximately £85 per year\(^1\). However, if a DNO could partner with organisations, such as Local Authorities or other utilities, this cost can be shared and the viability of replicating this approach and maintaining a centre would increase.

In conclusion, a partnership approach with a local authority or another commercial partner with aligned objectives would be recommended should this process be repeated or scaled. This would offer an increased range of potential benefits for the public, encouraging greater footfall and reduce the cost burden on a specific partner. This approach, combined with a strong on-line presence and tailored events designed to engage specific community groups would provide significantly more efficient and effective means of engaging with customers.

Through the range of events held both within and outside the Centre this report details that a DNO may best achieve high quality, cost effective interaction when engagement takes a more active role in visiting its target audience as opposed to the passive approach offered by the Centre. Through the contacts established and events run as a result of the Centres operation alternative methods of engagement show an ability, when run with a clear focus, to retain high quality interaction with significantly lower costs that the Centre. As was also found in SDRC 9.8b 2 ‘Housing Associations and Low Carbon Promotions’, positive interaction with school groups, in addition to wider family members,

\(^1\) Network charges account for 16% of total annual electricity bill (approx. £530 in 2013) (https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/ofgem-publications/64006/householdenergybillsexplainedudjuly2013web.pdf)
can facilitate a conversation point and identified the potential for a more effective approach to direct engagement for future.

1 Introduction

The New Thames Valley Vision (NTVV) is a Low Carbon Network Fund Tier 2 project awarded by Ofgem during the 2011 competitive selection process. Focusing on the low voltage network, the NTVV aims to demonstrate how electricity distribution networks can better serve their customers by understanding, anticipating and supporting their energy use as they move towards low carbon technologies.

This paper addresses the criterion in the NTVV Bid Successful Delivery Reward Criteria (SDRC) 9.8 (c) 2. The focus of this report is to provide an analysis of the impact of the Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre while also discussing the effectiveness at conveying different messages, the community engagement achieved and the requirements for scalability.

1.1 Background

The importance of distribution businesses conducting stakeholder engagement has been recognised in the regulation of energy networks. The NTVV project seeks to increase the understanding of the engagement needs of domestic, SME and large business customers, with particular focus on the role of the distribution business in helping to achieve the low carbon transition plan.

Therefore, NTVV opened a Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre (referred to as the “Centre” from this point forward) to enhance overall stakeholder engagement and particularly engagement with local communities. The Centre has been developed to fulfil a list of requirements for the project as discussed in the report “Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre SDRC 9.7: Public engagement”.

In summary the purpose and scope of the Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre is to:

- Introduce and promote the NTVV project
- Disseminate information and learning with local stakeholders
- Capture new learning regarding customer engagement
- Assist in acquiring new participants in the NTVV project
- Promote Low Carbon initiatives and technologies
- Provide a means of continued engagement with the project.

1.2 Aim and objectives

This document aims to provide an evaluation of the Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre, its impact within the framework of the NTVV project and the opportunities for scalability. In order to better understand the impact of the Centre, analysis of the customer engagement tools and activities used are undertaken.
1.3 Methodology and approach

Both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used to analyse the impact of the Centre. A qualitative evaluation of customer engagement methods used was undertaken by the people who worked in the Centre during a workshop\(^2\), and quantitative data collected throughout the operation of the Centre regarding customer interactions have been used to draw conclusions. The key learnings have been organised in three main categories; Attracting customers (Section 2), Engaging with customers (Section 3) and Practical issues (Section 4). This report should be read in conjunction with the “Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre SDRC 9.7: Public engagement” which includes further details on the engagement tools that have been developed for the Centre.

2 Attracting customers

The below graphics show a high-level representation of statistics through the 17 months the Centre was in operation.

Before reading the below report detailing key achievements, challenges, opportunities and learning, these figures should form a basis to the Centre’s outlook.

**Key figures**

**Total number of visitors to the Centre: 2793**

\(^2\) Participants were: Mark Stannard (SSEN), Charlie Edwards (SSEN), Hazel Hill (BFC), Anastasios Koumparos (DNV GL).

\(^3\) Age statistics were estimates from the viewpoint of the Centre’s advisor and include those who attended events, school talks and low carbon promotions.
Visitors per hour: 1.7
(Excluding NTVV project visitors⁴)

Percentage of pedestrians entering the Centre:
0.17-0.23%

Operating period:
15 Dec 2012 – 9 May 2014

Type of visitors

TVV project visitors 17%
Repeat Visitors 17%
New Visitors 66%

Opening hours:
Tue – Sat 10:00 - 16:00
(15 Dec 2012 – 19 Apr 2013)
Tue – Fri 11:00 - 14:00 &
Sat 10:00 – 14:00
(20 Apr 2013 – 09 May 2014)

⁴ NTVV Project visitors include the direct project team and project partners.
2.1 Key Learnings

During its lifespan, the Centre attracted almost 2,800 visitors, of which 17% were repeat visitors, showing that around 1 in 6 customers identified further value in the services that the Centre offered. Approximately 1.7 customers per hour visited the Centre which is relatively low compared to the visitors of the shops adjacent to the Centre. However, it is recognised that not all shops are expected to have the same traffic as they operate with different objectives offering different type of products and services.

The Centre attracted the interest of audiences from different generations, representative of the overall age distribution in Bracknell. This could be partly explained by the opening hours of the Centre, as people between 21-60 years old are likely to be working and thus would be less likely to visit the Centre.

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Centre: Introduce and promote the NTVV</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. School talks are a successful way to engage with younger audiences but needs advance planning to ensure inclusion in schools’ curriculum.</td>
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School visits and talks at the Centre worked very well. These provided an in-depth insight into the NTVV project, starting with a 25 minute presentation to provide an overview of the project. This was followed by a 15 minute tour of the Centre, notably looking at interactive elements including the map, the Renault Twizy and the End Point Monitor and electrical cable display. On finishing this overview, students were given a 10 question questionnaire (“Treasure hunt Questionnaire”) to fill out with answers found on boards around the Centre. The student with the most correct answers was rewarded (e.g. receiving a solar charger, sweets). All three parts were very well received by the students.

NTVV staff initiated engagement with seven schools of which a contact was established at four (two visited the Centre and two were visited by the project team). It became apparent that once a contact had been established it was a lot easier to organise multiple school talks, both in the Centre or at school assemblies. Local authority support can play a significant role in providing such contacts and supporting engagement once contact is established.

Proximity to the Centre was also a principal factor in engagement with local schools; staff faced difficulties in organising visits to the Centre as the schools were located at varying distances, meaning it was preferable to organise presentations at the school. Nevertheless, school talks at the Centre were much more effective compared to these that took place at school buildings, as the students could interact with all the materials available in the Centre. A key learning outcome of this initiative is the
broad scope of opportunity which school talks present to a DNO. There is distinct value in engagements carried out in collaboration with stakeholders sharing a similar message, as trials under the Solent Achieving Value through Efficiency (SAVE) project are exploring, or through integration with ongoing safety engagement required under Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations (ESQCR).

Two schools (out of the seven that NTVV approached) visited the Centre during its lifespan; Edgbarrow School and Bracknell and Wokingham College; Edgbarrow visited the Centre once with a year 12 Geography class of approximately 15 pupils. Bracknell and Wokingham visited the Centre three times with 16-18 year olds; two classes of City & Guilds Electrical Installation Level 2 students (12 students in each class) and one class of BTEC Level 3 Sustainable Construction students (9 students). As schools organise their yearly programme in advance of the school year, long term planning is needed to find convenient days and allow them to undertake a visit in the Centre even if they are located further away. During the Centres operation contacts were established at the majority of schools across Bracknell. Although several of these did not have the flexibility to accommodate a visit to the centre within its lifespan, they opened the door for future engagement, including: a week long programme of assemblies at Sandhurst School and on-going classroom and assembly engagement at Ranelagh School.

### Community groups

**Purpose of the Centre: Introduce and promote the NTVV**

2. A dedicated center focusing on “energy” operating with a reasonable budget and on a small footprint is unlikely to be able to engage directly with community groups; the purpose of the groups does not generally align with the purpose of the center.

As a result it can be concluded that an exclusive high street presence focused purely on energy engagement is not an effective means of interacting with pre-established groups within the community.

Two events were organised to introduce and promote the NTVV project to the different community groups in the area. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service were invited to the Centre preceding Fireworks Day to raise awareness around fire safety. This event created a different avenue through which the NTVV team could engage the community, as well as achieving trust and a feeling of involvement with local residents. The event attracted 23 attendees. Climate Berkshire also visited the Centre, amongst attendees were eight Energy/Sustainability Officers from Berkshire local authorities. This event involved a tour of the Centre, discussion of the display boards and question and answer. The event allowed for key stakeholders across wider geographical areas to visualise, learn and brainstorm around initiatives within their own local areas.
Contact was established with many community groups including local Scout groups, local sustainability groups, charities, sport clubs, the elderly and the local round table: ‘Bracknell Rotary Club’. However, no interest was shown in visiting the Centre. Overall, it proved difficult to engage the interest of different community groups with different agendas.

### Customer trial participants

**Purpose of the Centre: Dissemination of information and learning**

3. Sharing information and learning with trial participants can attract customers’ interest if it is personalised and seen as an extension of something they are already engaged with.

### End point monitors – Domestic customer group

Two events (advertised as “Your Energy Explained” – see Appendix I) were run for project participants who have an end point monitor (effectively a smart meter without billing capabilities) installed in their houses. The purpose of these events was to inform participants on the progress that the NTVV project is making and the role their data is playing in this, as well as to raise awareness that the time of day people use energy has a notable impact on the effect on the network. NTVV team members gave attendees the opportunity to talk one-on-one with staff, this helped customers better understand their energy consumption and answered questions around energy use. The two events attracted 36 attendees out of the 250 customers that have an end point monitor and were deemed a success, securing good interest and interaction from participants.

### Automated Demand Response (ADR) – Commercial customer group

A formal event for the businesses already signed up to the ADR scheme was organised to welcome participants and explain the trial in more detail. The session was introduced by Stuart Hogarth, Director within SSEN Distribution business; this was followed by the rest of the NTVV team describing the autumn ADR testing plan. This event allowed commercial project participants to express queries about the scheme, to learn how the ADR system would work for their individual company and when ADR events would be scheduled. The ADR group was purely for corporate project participants of which 31 representatives attended (see Appendix 2).

### Corporate Energy Groups

**Purpose of the Centre: Dissemination of information and learning**

4. Minimum effort is required to attract the interest and engage with industry members.

Several corporate energy groups have visited the Centre across its lifespan, looking at the Centre itself and its impact on the local community, the success of the engagements and the methods utilised and more specific information about the NTVV project. These included; the Chief Executive of Bracknell Forest Council, Slough Borough Council, Maingate, British Gas, Council Chamber, Livos
Energy, Eco-living UK, Chief Executive of Honeywell, Ofgem, Zest, Insta group, ORES and Bracknell Plumbing and Heating.

**Attracting customer trial participants**

*Purpose of the Centre: Assist in acquiring new participants/customers to the NTVV*

| 5. Using the Centre for recruitment of domestic customer for the trials had limited success but the conversion rate was better than general mailing. |

The Centre assisted in acquiring new participants to two trials of the NTVV project; the End Point Monitors and the EMMA units. Posters and leaflets were introduced to communicate to the customers the opportunity to take part in one of these trials. The NTVV team managed to sign up 51 people that would be interested in having an End Point Monitor in their home. This resulted in 3% of unique visitors signing up during this initiative, compared to a success rate of 2.7% recruited by the general mailing approach, and equated to 20% of the total end point monitor participants.

The approach was repeated for the installation of EMMA units, a system to divert excess solar Photovoltaic (PV) generation to hot water tanks. Recruitment through the Centre was promoted for three months at the start of 2014, there were three EMMA sign-ups in this period. It is essential to note that the percentage of customers visiting the Centre who already had PV embedded generation was minimal; hence recruitment for this campaign was more difficult.

The low level of sign-ups for trials through the Centre, similar to the success rate of the general mailing approach but at increased cost, prove that this is not the most efficient way to attract new participants for trials. Whilst people visiting the Centre were often interested in their energy use and environmental issues, this did not mean that they were interested in taking part in a trial that involved a perceived level of inconvenience. However, it should be noted that people visiting the Centre were marginally more inclined to participate in a trial compared to the general public engaged through alternative media.

**Social housing associations – Property developers – Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)**

*Low carbon promotions*

| 6. Attracting the interest of SMEs, social housing associations and property developers to visit the Centre and learn more about low carbon technologies seems to be very hard to achieve due to lack of interest. |

In principle, SMEs, social housing associations and property developers are well placed to adopt low carbon technologies for social corporate responsibility purposes but also for future compliance with stricter environmental regulation. However, attracting their interest to visit the Centre and learn more
about low carbon technologies didn’t prove to be straightforward, as is evidenced in Appendix 2, section 7.7. Learning concluded there were limited incentives for such an audience to attend energy related events, this is assumed as namely due to busy schedules with minimal perceived benefits (this may be especially true for SME’s within a town centre which are often rented). An alternate approach a DNO may choose to adopt would be to instead go to the customer, whether through trade conferences, the local chamber of commerce or direct to high-street retailers landlords.

### Low carbon promotions events

*Purpose of the Centre: Low carbon promotions*

| 7. Whilst there is limited success of the use of advertisements (in newspapers, social media) for the promotion of different events, the organisation of events outside the Centre can attract significant interest of passing traffic. |

For the promotion of some of the events, advertisements in local newspapers and on social media (Facebook and Twitter) and on the NTVV website took place (see Appendix 2). The local newspaper had a circulation of about 23,000 households, the Twitter account has 260 followers, the Facebook page has 31 Likes and the website received 292 visits/month throughout the Centre operation (of which new: 153 visits/month). However, the numbers of attendees at events didn’t change significantly from those without advertisement (feedback from attendees also reflected minimal impacts of advertisement). On the other hand, the organisation of events outside of the Centre allowed the attraction of passing traffic that wouldn’t necessarily enter the Centre otherwise. It can be concluded that marketing prior to small scale energy related events is negligible, however advertisement and eye-catching displays on an event day itself weigh merit.
3 Engaging with customers

The following section will look at different approaches taken in order to engage customers; this includes both passive measures contributing to the Centre's aesthetics and catching visitor's attention, as well as active measures designed purposely to encourage customer interaction and to record qualitative feedback.

The figures displayed below illustrate headline engagement activities to give a high level overview of engaging with customers through a Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre.

Key figures

Categories of customer questions

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<tr>
<td>Home Insulation and energy efficiency</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory Centre</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy advice</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green deal</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewables and Microgeneration</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTVV project</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy bill</td>
<td>5%</td>
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Total number of questions: 644

Successful types of engagements

<table>
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<th>Engagement Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Completed Feedback forms in events</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Energy performance certificate</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTVV trial participation interest</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed 2020 Diary</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed feedback forms</td>
<td>3%</td>
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Number of visitors during events: 608
3.1 Key Learning

Visitors asked a significant amount of questions when visiting the Centre, the vast majority of which were around home insulation and energy efficiency (50% of the total questions). The customer interest may have arisen from their personal experiences and familiarity in the wider promotion of the energy efficiency concepts. It should be highlighted that there was a high number of questions received about the Centre and its role, as many customers felt that this was not clear to them. As a result an A-board was used outside the Centre in order to advertise the neutral energy advice and other services the Centre could offer.

Customers were able to complete energy performance certificates with the local council within the Centre, this received significant interest from local residents. The process for this was an interactive discussion within the Centre taking time to extract key details around said customer’s premises. This was noted as a valued personal service that could provide tailored advice to residents as well as opening conversation for further engagement and word-of-mouth advertising of the Centre.

Qualitative feedback was challenging to obtain on a daily basis. It was also found that customers who attended an event were more likely to complete a feedback form than those just visiting the Centre during a normal day.

<table>
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<th>Wallcharts</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of the Centre: Introduce and promote the NTVV</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1. Physically displayed information that is built around telling a story provides an excellent prompt for a more detailed customer engagement.</strong></td>
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A range of wallcharts were used in the Centre to provide information on the distribution network, low carbon technologies and the expected future challenges in the energy sector. These were laid out in such a way as to provide an overview of the NTVV project and maintain the flow of the engagement by telling a story. They proved to be very successful by allowing relevant information to have a physical presence. They also provided a good prompt/tool to engage in a more detailed conversation with the customers and particularly with large groups.

Whilst most of the wallcharts contained ‘high level’ information appropriate for all audiences, there were also a few with more technical details in which the more knowledgeable were interested. Although there is no direct quantitative data, NTVV staff estimated that that about 60% of unique visitors explored the wall-charts.
Bracknell Area Map

**Purpose of the Centre:** Introduce and promote the NTVV, Method of capturing learning

**Effectiveness rating:** 9/10

2. A local area map that includes relevant information provides a great local feeling that allows customers to geographically position themselves.

A very large map of the Bracknell area was placed close to the entrance in the Centre. This included information about the location of low carbon technologies (e.g. PVs), end point monitors and ADR trials. The map was a key engagement tool at the Centre, it allowed for an interactive element for customers to plot their whereabouts and the opportunity to visualise the scope of the NTVV project across Bracknell. It enabled a visual means to provide a quick introduction to the overall NTVV project, offering a local feel to customers. The map also acted as an interactive “growing” tool as it allowed the inclusion of more information about the location of the visitors, the energy related technologies within their home and their interest in the Centre. Although there is no direct quantitative data, NTVV staff estimated that the map was used as an engagement tool with 80-90% of unique visitors.

"Treasure hunt" Questionnaire

**Purpose of the Centre:** Introduce and promote the NTVV

**Effectiveness rating:** 7/10

3. "Treasure hunt" questionnaire works best with educational and younger groups helping to keep the attention of the audience.

To stimulate interest of large groups of visitors, a “Treasure hunt” Questionnaire activity was organised. This proved to be more effective for visits when combined with a small prize as it allowed visitors, particularly students, to keep focused and interested in what was discussed. The answers to the “treasure hunt” questionnaire were located throughout the Centre, this motivated participants to do their own research into the NTVV project. Approximately 50 students in total participated in the "Treasure hunt" Questionnaire.

Electric Vehicle (Renault Twizy)

**Purpose of the Centre:** Introduce and promote the NTVV, Promote low carbon initiatives

**Effectiveness rating:** 10/10

4. Unique and innovative consumer products can attract significant attention and act as an ice breaker to initiate a customer interaction.

Exhibitions of different low carbon technologies (miniature wind turbine, wall insulation, electric vehicle) were included in the Centre. The most effective of all in capturing customers’ attention was the electric vehicle (Renault Twizy) most likely due to its differentiated and eye-catching nature (glass plinth platform and surrounding electric vehicle display). On weekends the Twizy would often be
placed outside the front of the Centre where it acted as a great conversation starter and a point of interest to customers whom otherwise would not visit the Centre.

Some of the most successful event days were simply through placing the Twizy within the high-street just outside the Centre. Overall NTVV staff estimate that approximately 90% of visitors interacted with the Twizy throughout their visit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2020 Diary/ Personal energy action plan</th>
<th>Effectiveness rating: 4/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Centre: Method of capturing learning, means of continued engagement with the project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Significant effort and dedication is required by the staff to get further/detailed information from customers if there is no immediate benefit for them.

The 2020 Diaries and Personal Energy Action Plans were ideas developed by DNV GL and the NTVV Project Team as material to encourage customers to think about some longer term steps that they may be willing to take to reduce their carbon footprint. The completion of these diaries was a principal focus for Centre staff in the initial opening months of the Centre, with 25 of the total 45 engagements occurring in the first full month of the Centre being open. Significant effort, a structured approach and dedication from both the staff and the visitor were required due to the time consuming nature of the exercise. As the experience of Centre staff grew it became apparent that people did not want to answer the 2020 diary expressing underlying time limitations and sometimes its “childish” nature. Hence, the use of the diaries became less applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home energy assessments</th>
<th>Effectiveness rating: 9/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Centre: Promote low carbon initiatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Providing a personalised service that is of added value to the customer is much appreciated, increases the level of engagement of customers significantly and begins to show the possibility of influencing attitudes to energy.

The home energy assessment was an online personalised assessment of the energy performance of the visitors’ household based on a specialised software tool that takes 20 minutes to complete. At the end of this session, visitors were able to identify potential improvements that they could undertake to improve the energy efficiency of their household. The energy performance certificate was a free service that was very effective in engaging with visitors due to the personal nature and the tangible benefit to the customers. The information obtained also allowed the local council to build a better representation of the houses within their constituency. Nevertheless, it is a time consuming process that would require significant manpower in order to undertake it at scale, unless the customer were to complete the programme themselves getting only limited support when needed.
A large number of energy performance certificates were carried out initially as those most engaged came to the Centre to find out the energy efficiency of their property. Over time this decreased to reach a steady flow each month. Approximately 100 people undertook the home energy assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Exit poll” questions</th>
<th>Effectiveness rating: 2/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Centre: Method of capturing learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Low-tech implementation of “Exit poll” questions seems quite complicated for young audiences and “childish” for adults.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A “tube and token” system was established near the entrance/exit of the Centre so that visitors could consider one question after visiting the Centre. This way of collecting information didn't prove to work that well. It seemed quite complicated for young audiences and “childish” for adults. The reason this didn't work could be the low-tech implementation. If an electronic and/or more visual device was used the results might have improved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback forms</th>
<th>Effectiveness rating: 7/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Centre: Method of capturing learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Feedback forms need to be as short as possible and be accompanied with a prize to incentivise customers to complete them.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Feedback forms related to the overall Centre were mostly completed in the initial months of operation, with 23 of the total 47 engagements occurring in the first full month at the Centre. Feedback forms were found most appropriate whereby visitors registered a high level of interest within the Centre and stayed for longer discussions/tours. This correlated with those visitors who attended the Centre in its opening months, hence it was more appropriate to offer them a feedback form. However, as time progressed visit time decreased and customers were less engaged; it therefore became less appropriate for customers to complete a feedback form.

Comparatively, an event specific questionnaire emerged to be a lot more appropriate than the Centre feedback forms as people often engaged with an event for longer and hence had more of a unique experience to report upon. Event feedback was increasing towards the end of the Centre's lifespan given the incentive of a free entry to an iPad draw for every questionnaire completed. In total 80 event specific questionnaires were completed. It was found that a single page form worked better than a two page one and that assigning a prize for the completion of the feedback form increased responses.

Feedback from customers provided valuable advice on how NTVV staff could improve and relay their performance as well as useful information on how better to organise low carbon related events.
Pop up displays and “A” board sign
Purpose of the Centre: Introduce and promote the NTVV, Promote low carbon initiatives
Effectiveness rating: 7/10

9. Pop-up displays and “A” board provide great flexibility and can be used to successfully advertise events or activities.

NTVV staff used pop-up displays and “A” board signs throughout the operation of the Centre to advertise or promote different events or activities. These tools provide great flexibility and portability, proving valuable to target different audiences. Their use for the advertisement of forthcoming events was quite effective as some of the visitors referred back to them. The displays were also effective for keeping the shop fresh, changing layout and separating meeting areas.

Window display
Purpose of the Centre: Introduce and promote the NTVV, Promote low carbon initiatives
Effectiveness rating: 5/10

10. Window display should be used to convey a clear message of what the customer experience would be if they enter the store.

Having a window display in the Centre of the high street offered an opportunity to advertise and promote activities related to the NTVV project. However, the materials used in the window display, although aimed to provide an insight into the NTVV project, didn't necessarily make clear what was offered inside the Centre. Upon visiting the Centre, customers often relayed a level of ambiguity around what the Centre could offer them. In future, window displays could be used to clearly describe or imply what the customer experience would be if they enter the Centre. In addition the ability to interchange these displays would allow for differentiation of the shop front and advertisement of upcoming events. It is encouraging that a significant percentage of those that stopped to look at the window display thereafter entered the Centre (although there is no direct quantitative data NTVV staff estimated this at 25%).

Website
Purpose of the Centre: Provide further updates and detailed information to participants prior to and following visits to the Centre
Effectiveness rating: 7/10

11. Website provides credibility to the project. Benefits can be maximised when advertisement/links are made with already well known community websites.

The report in Appendix 4 details the impact of the Centre on the NTVV website. The conclusion of this study shows that it is challenging to correlate Centre operation/visitor numbers with website views. There is some evidence that larger community events generated higher levels of traffic on the website. This was a short lived peak.
As a tool whilst operating the Centre, the NTVV website acted as a prompt for directing customers to more detailed information; as well as providing project credibility. Webpage tools and videos were also used for visual demonstration/presentations of project objectives, progress and learning outcomes.

4 Practical issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Such centres should be located in busy high streets and preferably have space outside to enable the organisation of open public events.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the Centre was located in the high street, it was on the less busy side of the town where the footfall was reduced. Due to its location the flow of customers was limited (estimated to be between 750 -1000 /hour); this progressively decreased as the Centre matured due to regeneration within Bracknell town centre which resulted in closing off and shutting down of key parts of the high-street. A positive to the location on the other hand was the significant space outside the main entrance where events could be hosted and attract a higher number of customers. This proved very useful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Opening hours of the Centre should be defined based on the local characteristics of the high street.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Centre was open initially from 10:00-16:00 Tuesday-Saturday but taking into account the local characteristics of the high street this was adjusted to 11:00-14:00 Tuesday-Friday and 10:00 – 14:00 Saturday. This decision was taken due to the significantly reduced traffic during early mornings and after 14:00 and in order to reduce the operating costs of the Centre. The appropriate operating hours for such a Centre in another location would depend hugely on the local context and the local customer traffic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> The staff at the Centre need good communication and ‘soft’ sales skills to allow the effective communication of different messages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to effectively manage the flow of people and the on-going work related to the operation of the Centre, two people were needed as some engagement activities were quite time consuming. The audience of the Centre was very diverse and staff needed to be able to talk and engage effectively with all audiences. Whilst basic technical understanding of the project and energy related issues are needed, additional key skills for the staff of the Centre to have are very good communication and soft sales skills to allow the effective communication of different messages, dependant on the additional objectives for engagement.
Layout

4. Staff offices should be placed closer to the window display and be visible to the customers passing by.

The store let for the Centre was quite large with a narrow front and deep interior (see Appendix 1). During the initial layout of the Centre staff desks were located towards the back of the Centre, allowing display material to take the fore. The result of this was that staff were sometimes not visible, leaving the Centre appearing empty to visitors. Consequentially the decision was made to reconsider the layout, locating staff closer to the front windows. The area at the back of the store was transformed into a theatre for presentation purposes. This layout proved to be a significant improvement as it attracted more people to the Centre and at the same time created a functional space to the rear.

Staff were also concerned around the silence within the Centre, especially at times when the high-street was at its quietest (during its regeneration). As a result the decision was made to purchase an entertainment license; local radio gave the Centre a greater atmosphere and made it more inviting to visitors.

Benefits and Costs

5. Making economic sense of the establishment of similar centers is very difficult as the costs per customer engagement cannot easily be justified.

The Centre was established primarily to improve customers’ relationship with the DNO. However, apart from this, the Centre has provided added value by helping to recruit participants for the trials, providing a meeting venue and acting as a hub for NTVV project in Bracknell. It is important to highlight that the Centre created value not only for the DNO and the project but also for other stakeholders including the council, local green deal/efficient appliance providers and other external businesses, which were neutrally promoted and ran event days at the Centre.

The overall cost of the operation of the Centre including fixed and operational costs (man-hours are included) is estimated to be £285,000. Operational costs accounted for almost £200,000 over a period of approx. 17 months, with the majority of these being personnel costs (see also Appendix II). Numbers should be read with caution as the renting costs were relatively low compared to what is expected in a Business as Usual (BaU) situation (approx. £5,000 in this case instead of £35,000-40,000).

During the operation of the Centre the cost per customer engagement (including repeated engagements) is calculated to be approx. £123. Taking into account that the total average revenue per
domestic customer for a DNO is approx. £85 per year; this is a very significant cost that is unlikely to be met by any potential benefits for the DNO that could accrue from a better customer relationship.

However, if the Centre managed to attract enough customers to fully utilise the available personnel\(^5\), these costs would be in the range of £20/customer which is still quite significant but could be justified in certain occasions. Hence, in order to justify the establishment of similar centres, the numbers of visitors needs to be much higher compared to that which was achieved in this trial.

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### Events

6. Added value and benefits can be found through running events both within a centre and externally.

Across the Centre’s operation (and specifically following reduced footfall after the first six months operation) events were utilised as a primary means of adding value and increasing engagements. Both the Centre and Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) acted as key facilitators to the initial engagement of stakeholders across the local area. This contact base allowed for continued and lasting benefits through events held following Centre closedown and throughout the rest of the project.

School engagement in particular provides a prime example whereby contacts made through operation of the Centre facilitated further interactions. Three forms of engagement were trialled with schools, class engagement within the Centre, class engagement within a school and school assemblies. Each of these weighed their own merits in terms of cost, quality and quantity (no. of engagements). It is noted previously that within the Centre, the average cost of engagement per person was in the region of £123 per person. Given an hour long school engagement may require 4 hours preparation and organisation time, with two members of staff attending the event, estimated costs would be: £415\(^6\). Given a class of 15-30 pupils or an assembly of 50-200 pupils, cost per engagement may range from £28-£55 per person and £8 and £2 respectively. These costs could arguably be reduced further if such events were replicable given the fixed cost of preparation.

What should not be overseen however is the quality of engagement; this is more challenging to measure quantitatively. Whilst the Centre did provide a higher quality of engagement it was arguably marginal as compared to classroom discussions/presentations. There is a clear lower quality of engagement with school assemblies given limited audience participation. A DNO must align their

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\(^5\) Assuming 6 customer engagements/hour per member of personnel.

\(^6\) Given Ofgem defined staff costs of £519 per person per day. Therefore cost per person per hour of £69.20.
needs/aims with a method of engagement that is able to achieve the desired level of outcome in a cost-effective manor.

5 Summary of findings and recommendations

5.1 Summary of findings

This section contains a summary of the key findings that were discussed in Sections 2, 3 and 4. There are clear lessons that can be drawn from these findings and used in future innovation projects and business as usual for the DNOs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attracting customers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. School talks are a successful way to engage with younger audiences but needs advance planning to ensure inclusion in schools’ curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Significant difficulties may be encountered in attracting interest and engaging with community groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sharing information and learning with trial participants can attract customers’ interest if it is personalised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Minimum effort is required to attract the interest and engage with industry members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Using the Centre for recruitment of domestic customer for the trials had limited success but the conversion rate was better than general mailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Attracting the interest of SMEs, social housing associations and property developers to visit the Centre and learn more about low carbon technologies seems to be very hard to achieve due to lack of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Whilst there is some limited success using advertisements (in newspapers, social media) for the promotion of different events, the <em>organisation</em> of events outside the Centre can attract the interest of passing traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Window display should be used to convey a clear message of what the customer experience would be if they enter the store</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engaging with customers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Information boards that tell a story provides an excellent prompt for a more detailed customer engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A local area map that includes relevant information provides a great local feeling that allows customers to geographically position themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. &quot;Treasurehunt&quot; questionnaire works best with educational groups and the young helping to keep the attention of the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Unique and innovative consumer products can attract significant attention and act as an ice breaker to initiate customer interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Significant effort and dedication is required by the staff to get further/detailed information from customers if there is no immediate benefit for them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Providing a personalised service that is of added value to the customer is much appreciated and motivates people to share personal information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Low-tech implementation of “Exit poll” questions seems quite complicated for young audiences and “childish” for adults

8. Feedback forms need to be as short as possible and be accompanied with a prize to incentivise customers to complete them

9. Pop-up displays and “A” board provide great flexibility and can be used to successfully advertise events or activities

### Practical issues

1. Such Centres should be located in busy high streets and preferably have space outside to enable the organisation of open public events

2. Opening hours of the Centre should be defined based on the local characteristics of the high street market

3. The staff at the Centre should have very good communication and soft sales skills to allow the effective communication of different messages

4. Staff workstations should be placed closer to the window display and be visible to the customers passing by

5. Making economic sense of the establishment of similar centres is very difficult as the costs per customer engagement cannot easily be justified

6. Centre size should be a key consideration, if too large the space can seem empty and daunting. A good use of excess space was to divide the area using display material so that the back of the Centre could be setup in theatre layout and utilised for large events and presentations.

### 5.2 Recommendations

**Consider specific events rather than constant presence**

Taking into account the high costs of operating an Advisory Centre, limited visitors and the success of special targeted events at the Centre, it is recommended that DNOs should focus on organising specific targeted events to promote parts of their agenda. It seems that people are more interested in specific events that can attract their attention to participate while they are doing their shopping or strolling in central places. Such promotional events could be organised by specialised companies to convey more effectively the DNOs’ messages. In running such events a DNO must bear in mind the quality of engagement they are looking to achieve as this will ultimately be a trade-off against cost per person.

**Consider the development of a “Sustainability Centre” in collaboration with local councils**

The costs for establishing and operating an advisory Centre proved to be very high and would be difficult to justify for a DNO. However, there is value for the DNO in having a local presence and direct relationship with the customers. Taking into account that councils also have an agenda to promote sustainability that is in line with DNOs objectives, there might be an opportunity for collaboration in
establishing a “Sustainability Centre” for which costs can be shared between the DNO and the council. Such a centre could consider broader themes that are still in the scope of sustainability such as recycling, fair trade, organic food etc. and/or even a fair trade cafe. This would allow the development of other sources of income that could make the Centre financially viable.

To enact such an approach, the DNO would need to take account of the details which divide objectives across geographical areas for both local councils and DNO’s (and any other partnering organisation). As a result different centres would need to be tailored to fit with the objectives and the residents of different borough councils, meanwhile ensuring such objectives correlate and complement the aim for the DNO.

SSEN’s tier 2 ‘SAVE’ project is looking at exploring the benefits that a ‘multi-agency’ approach may present to a DNO in addition to the stakeholders it works closely with. Through collaboration of ideas amongst a defined stakeholder group SAVE will provide greater evidence as to how best value can be sought through shared initiatives and how this translates to both consumers and organisations. This learning will be presented in SAVE SDRC 8.8 Community coaching trial report, in June 2019.

Establish an innovation Centre to fulfil educational needs in a central area
To fulfil educational needs the development of an innovation centre in a central area of the DNOs region is suggested. Having one centre that provides an overview of electricity network challenges and the technologies that can be used to deal with these, allows high quality installations that can attract the interest of educational institutes/schools. Besides, such a centre does not necessarily need to be in a local area as those interested in visiting it would normally take the effort to travel if needed. Alternative models may wish to consider win-win approaches with local stakeholders, for example the revitalisation of existing council facilities such as community centres, libraries and museums.

Offer added value/personalised services to the customers
Customers tend to see more value when they receive a personalised service such as the energy performance assessment that was offered through the Advisory Centre. The DNO should consider different types of such services that can be appealing to the customer and thus allow a smooth customer engagement experience. The development of online tools that the customers can use on their own with some support/guidance from the DNO could be a relatively low cost option.

Assess cost/benefits considering a full spectrum of DNO objectives
Comments made earlier in this report address a Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre as limited when cost-effectiveness is compared solely with alternate forms of engagement. Where additional value can be added however is through the depth of engagement with customers and the range of potential goals a Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre could help a DNO achieve. It has already
been proven on NTVV (as noted in Section 2.2) that as well as engaging customers the Centre also acted as an effective hub to obtain participation in project trials. That is to mention just one of an array of other potential benefits a DNO could procure from a Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre including: identifying and operating programmes to combat fuel poverty, assisting with future adoption of domestic demand side response (see Low Carbon Day in SDRC 9.8b 2) and potentially related DNO tariffs, to give just a few examples. In summary through maximising the potential cumulative benefits through operating a centre there is potential for a stacking up of business cases to build a more cost-effective proposal.
6 Appendix I- Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre- Fit-out

Figure 1 Centre Fit Out

Figure 2 Centre Front
Figure 3 Opening Event 15/12/12

Figure 4 Staff engage customers around magnetic map
Figure 5 Renault Twizy

Figure 6 School Engagement
7 Appendix II – Low Carbon Advisory Centre Events

Table 1: List of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22/3/2013, 3/5/2013</td>
<td>Your Energy Explained (Section 7.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/4/2013, 8-9/11/2013</td>
<td>Electric Vehicle Events (Section 7.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7/09/2013, 4-5/10/2013, 1/11/2013</td>
<td>Bracknell Plumbing and Heating Event Day (Section 7.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/09/2013</td>
<td>ADR Handover (Section 7.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/09/2013</td>
<td>Insta-Group Home energy improvements day (Section 7.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-26/10/2013</td>
<td>Efficient Lighting Event (Section 7.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/11/2013</td>
<td>Mini Exhibition (Section 7.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/12/2013, 23-24/12/2013</td>
<td>Christmas Events (Section 7.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/1/2014-01/2/2014</td>
<td>Efficient Water Event (Section 7.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/03/2014</td>
<td>Insta-Group Green Deal Days (Section 7.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.1 Your Energy Explained

7.1.1 Round 1

Date: Saturday 22\textsuperscript{nd} March

Hours: 12pm-1pm

No. of NTVV staff: 5

Attendees: 30 Project Participants

Cost: £0 (excluding man hours)

Purpose:

- To update project participants on the progress that the NTVV project is making and the role their data is playing in this.
- To raise awareness that the time of day people use energy has a notable impact on its cost and carbon intensity.
- An opportunity to relay to project participants their electricity consumption data and the consumer category they fall within.
- The opportunity to gain a more detailed insight into variables behind people’s data such as household demographics, attitudes, knowledge etc.
- The opportunity to talk one-on-one with project participants regarding the project, general energy efficiency queries and why their usage is as it is.
What was involved?

- Customers were welcomed by advisors with free tea, coffee and biscuits and given two preliminary questionnaires to complete; the first asking general energy usage questions and the second asking more specific questions regarding individual usage and asking customers to represent their average daily usage graphically. This kept visitors occupied whilst others arrived.

- The NTVV Customer Project Manager then welcomed customers and gave a brief 20 minute presentation, providing an overview of the project, as well as discussing the success of our recent Low Carbon Day. He then relayed some average load-profiles to the audience to explain how people’s consumption patterns may vary across the day.

- Following this printed handouts, in the same format as the second more specific questionnaire, were given to each customer, each one displaying that customers energy usage.

- Next, the NTVV Project Manager illustrated the 10 consumer groups that the University of Reading’s analysis has found. He described what each grouping meant to those who fell within them. Visitors were told which group they fell in on the handout given to them.

- The session ended with individual discussions where visitors were encouraged to come and talk with advisors regarding their energy usage. Both sets of questionnaires were collected and those customers wanting a detailed breakdown of their data were asked to list their details; this was sent to them in CD format four weeks later.

Summary

This was a very successful event. There were five NTVV team members giving attendees the opportunity to talk one-on-one with staff. Participants seemed very engaged by the handout in which they predicted their electricity usage, answered questions around their usage and were then given the answer to this later in the session; this sort of engagement was very useful for getting people talking amongst themselves and with advisors following the presentation. One issue with this was that some people didn’t understand what was expected of them from the exercise in which they had to graph their data; next time we will give an example of what is required at the start of the presentation.

The humorous names given to each consumer group added a light-hearted element that received a positive reception.

The end of the event presented an opportunity for the NTVV team to engage one-on-one with customers and to gain a qualitative insight into their opinions.

This included:

- Helping customers to outline why their electricity consumption looked as it did.
- Giving some customers a more detailed overview of the projects scope across Bracknell.
• Greater insight for customers too- one customer quoted how they expected the morning and evening peaks in their average weekly electricity usage, however had not accounted for a third peak at lunch-times caused by weekend usage.
• Feedback from one customer suggested they expected more of a group discussion to exchange ideas. This is something we will take into account for Your Energy Explained-Round 2.
• Several customers bought up the price of their energy in discussion, here it was important to explain the role of the DNO and our responsibilities.
  o Discussions touched on how we are looking to minimise costs wherever possible and are committed to reducing distribution costs by 10% in 2015. This linked into how the NTVV project is looking at new innovations which could defer or negate the need for traditional, costly reinforcement.
• Another topic discussed was that of small-scale, embedded generation, and how PV installations have altered peoples energy usage behavior of the household, to use as much of the PV energy as possible, rather than sending it to the grid and buying energy back later at higher rates.

7.1.2 Round 2
Date: Saturday 3rd May 2013
Hours: 12pm-1pm
No. of NTVV staff: 4
Attendees: 6
Cost: £0 (excluding man hours)

Format:
• This event took the same format as Your Energy Explained (YEE) Round 1, however this time Charlie Edwards also took part of the presentation on Low Carbon Day. Adding a presentation slide giving a graph of project participants who said they would attend YEE2 consumption across Low Carbon Day as compared to their average consumption.
• We also took on-board learning from the first YEE event in which project participants mentioned they had expected more of a group discussion. This is something we encouraged, however, due to the smaller nature of the second event group discussion was limited.

Customer Interaction
• There was a very enthusiastic response from customers as a whole.
• One customer suggested we could illustrate graphs like the Low Carbon Day one in more tangible units for customers to relate to. For example illustrating the savings made across the hour through a visual representation of power station/ wind turbines not used/required.
Another customer was very keen to understand efficient lighting and the cost of leaving appliances such as mobile phone chargers on standby.

One customer was very keen to sit down with NTVV staff and go over their data in more detail, visualising why the peaks and troughs were as they were.

Two customers described how they wish they could be more involved in the project, they felt they hadn't heard a lot since installation other than the six monthly update.

- Need for greater interaction/communication
- Possible need for a comments section on the website news page
- Drive customers to visit twitter/website for project updates and events
- Suggestion of a community based medium whereby project participants can discuss different themes and receive energy advice

The above suggestions were addressed and trialled through a range of mediums including; Low Carbon Promotion and school events, greater ability to interact with NTVV website, increased Twitter account activity and the setting up of street level community groups including a dedicated Facebook page.

### 7.2 Electric Vehicle Events

**Nissan Leaf**

Date(s): 9/4/13  
No. of members staff: 2  
Attendance: 103 (33 on Friday, 70 on Saturday)  
Cost: £0.00 (excluding man hours)

**Format**

This event looked to raise awareness around electric vehicles by using a Nissan Leaf as an eye-catching high-street display. Customers were even given the opportunity to book test drives at the Transport Research Laboratory. In attendance with wider education and messaging the event was also used to discuss the My Electric Avenue LCNF Tier 2 project that was undergoing trial recruitment.

**BMW ActiveE**

Date(s): Friday 8th November 2013 and Saturday 9th November 2013  
No. of member of staff: 3 on Friday, 2 on Saturday  
No. of attendees: 40 (25 on Saturday and 15 on Friday)  
Total cost: £0.00 (excluding man hours)

**Purpose:**

- To give first hand experience of what the future of transport looks like.
- To raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges that Electric vehicles pose for a DNO.
• To bring attention to the NTVV project and the services offered through the Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre.

What was involved:

• Prior to the event:
  o 7 Social Media posts
  o Posters in the Centre windows
  o Website post

• During the event 8 November:
  o Electric Vehicle Displayed outside the Centre.
  o Free BMW I3 magazines to be given away

• During the event 9 November:
  o Due to adverse weather the BMW could not be placed in the high-street in Bracknell, and instead customers were invited to see the car in the town Centre car park

Outcomes
Past experience with the ‘Renault Twizy’ and ‘Nissan Leaf’ gave the foresight that electric vehicles grab customer’s attention and start conversations. The exhibition fulfilled this success on Friday, however was unfortunately dampened by weather conditions on Saturday.

This event used no paid advertisement and the BMW was acquired through a contact at the University of Reading; hence keeping the event very cost effective.

7.3 Bracknell Plumbing and Heating Event Day
Bracknell Plumbing and Heating are a local business able to offer advise and education around efficient boilers and potential funding streams available to homeowners

7.3.1 Round 1
Date(s): Friday 6th September 2013 - Saturday 7th September 2013
Hours: 10am-4pm both days
No. of member of staff: Friday: 6 (4 external to the project team) Saturday: 5 (2 external)
No of attendees: 56 (32 on Friday 24 on Saturday)
Total Cost (all events): £0 (excluding man hours)
Purpose:

• To inform and educate the residents of Bracknell on the efficiency of their boiler as compared with a new boiler.
• Increased publicity and footfall at the Centre.
• An opportunity for a local business to engage with customers in a more direct manner that would otherwise not be possible.
The opportunity for residents of Bracknell to enter in a free raffle to win a Worcester Bosch boiler.

What was involved:

- Prior to the event:
  - Bracknell Heating and Plumbing put an advert in a local paper
  - Website and social media posts through NTVV
- During the event 6th September:
  - A Gazebo advertising the event
  - Two boiler demonstrations
  - A desk with leaflets, educational books and the opportunity to talk to industry experts inside the Centre
  - Three people outside encouraging people to enter and advertising a raffle to win a free boiler
- During event 7th September:
  - A Gazebo advertising the event for one hour
  - Twizy outside for one hour
  - Two boiler demonstrations
  - A desk with leaflets, educational books and the opportunity to talk to industry experts inside the Centre
  - One person outside enticing people in and advertising the raffle

Outcomes:
A key lesson learnt from this event is the difference made by having more people outside the Centre on the first day; having three people outside the Centre created a positive atmosphere around the event. However the next day the weather ensured that the Gazebo could not be used and only one member of staff outside failed to result in the same atmosphere. In summary the event was still a great success and Bracknell Heating and Plumbing found the opportunity massively beneficial, requesting future engagement through the Centre.

In future it is important that we get as much promotional material outside to entice people into the Centre, and we will run the event from 10-3pm as the number of customers after 3pm was minimal. It could also be valuable to liaise with local media prior to the event in order to get pictures of the event to make the local paper.

7.3.2 Round 2
Date(s): Friday 4th October 2013- Saturday 5th October 2013
Hours: 10am-3pm both days
No. of member of staff: Friday: 4 (2 external) Saturday: 4 (1 external)
No of attendees: 97 (15 on Friday 82 on Saturday)
What was involved:

- Prior to the event:
  - Website and social media posts through NTVV
- During the event 4th October:
  - One boiler demonstration
  - A desk with leaflets, educational books and the opportunity to talk to industry experts inside the Centre
  - Two people outside enticing people in and advertising their ongoing raffle.
- During event 5th October:
  - Twizy outside for one hour
  - One boiler demonstration
  - A desk with leaflets, educational books and the opportunity to talk to industry experts inside the Centre
  - One person outside enticing people in and advertising the raffle

Outcomes:

It should be noted that the figures for this event are somewhat misleading, although Saturday was a huge success for the NTVV team thanks to having the Renault Twizy outside, the day was not such a success on Saturday for Bracknell Heating and Plumbing.

This event was notably less successful than Bracknell Heating and Plumbing’s initial event in September. Firstly a lack of promotional material, partially caused by organisational failure at Bracknell Heating and Plumbing, and exacerbated by adverse weather conditions meant the event lacked its previous presence.

Secondly on the Saturday Bracknell Plumbing and Heating only supplied one member of staff, this failed to have the impact or create the same atmosphere that several members of staff could create. Henceforth the decision was made to take the electric vehicle Renault ‘Twizy’ outside in an attempt to boost interest. Whilst this worked well for the NTVV project it was, if anything, a hindrance for Bracknell Plumbing and Heating.

7.3.3 Round 3

Date(s): Friday 1st November 2013

Hours: 10am-3pm

No. Of member of staff: 3 (2 external)

No of attendees: 21

What was involved:

- Prior to the event:
Website and social media posts through NTVV

- During the Event:
  - Bracknell Plumbing and Heating Van
  - Gazebo with promotional advertising
  - Two boiler displays

Outcomes
A push in promotional material helped to attract attention to this event; however attendance was still lower than the initial event. There are three differences to consider here:

1. Less staff - unable to create the same atmosphere as the initial event.
2. The event had become too familiar in the high-street.
3. The first event was advertised in the local paper.

Further Information
On 20th December at the Centre Hazel Hill (BFC) drew the winning ticket of the competition to win a free boiler that Bracknell Heating and Plumbing began running at their first event in September, which over 200 people had entered. On 17th January the winner of this draw attended the Centre for a picture for the local press at the.

7.4 ADR Handover
Date(s): Wednesday 18th September 2013
Hours: 8:30am-11am
No. Of member of staff: 7 (3 external)
No of attendees: 18
Purpose:
- To welcome our commercial ADR project participants.
- To allow project participants to express queries regarding the ADR trial.
- To show project participants how the ADR system worked through their online portal.

What was involved:

- Prior to the event:
  - Invites sent to project participants for rsvp

- During the event:
  - Breakfast meeting with tea, coffee and bacon rolls to present the project and the Centre
  - Introduction to the project by Stuart Hogarth, Director of Distribution
  - A presentation of the ADR trial by NTVV team members
A presentation of the ADR portal by Honeywell
Q and A session

Outcomes:
Allowed project participants to ask any questions about the scheme and to learn how the project would work for their individual company, as well as a chance to develop a wider overview of where the NTVV project is heading.

7.5 Insta-Group Energy Efficiency Day

Insta-Group are a locally based company offering energy efficient home improvement, including solar PV. Insta-group were also green-deal accredited allowing advise to be given around funding home energy improvements.

Date(s): 21st September 2013
Hours: 10am-4pm
No. Of member of staff: 4 (2 external)
No of attendees: 17
Cost: £95.20 (excluding man hours)

Purpose:
- To inform and educate the residents of Bracknell on how to increase the efficiency of their home in the best possible way for them, at the least cost.
- Increased publicity and footfall at the Centre.
- An opportunity for a local business to engage with customers in a more direct manner that would otherwise not be possible.

What was involved:
- Prior to the event:
  - Insta-group and SSEN put an advert in the local paper.- cost: (advert covered three events, therefore £285.6 (Including VAT)/ 3= £95.2
  - Website and social media posts through NTVV
- During the event:
  - A large foldout sign was assembled in the Centre
  - Balloons were placed within and outside the Centre to attract greater attention
  - A desk with leaflets, educational books and the opportunity to talk to industry experts inside the Centre
  - One member of Insta-Group outside handing out information and enticing people into the Centre.
  - Twizy outside for two hours
Outcomes:
The advertisement for this event in the paper and online prior to the event as well as the balloons outside the Centre certainly caused an increase in footfall at the Centre. However, attendance numbers when compared to those of Bracknell Plumbing and Heating still fell short, it is believed that this was due to less attention grabbing material outside the Centre, further reinforcing previous evidence that it is important for activity at the Centre to extend onto the high-street as much as possible to attract people’s attention.

One of the most visible outcomes for NTVV of the project was the increased interest from people with solar panels that the event attracted, leading to interest in the EMMA device that may not have otherwise been registered.

It should also be noted that the previous Insta Group event days had been advertised as ‘Green Deal’ days, which generated little interest and a certain degree of ambiguity. This issue was overcome by renaming this event ‘Energy Efficiency Day’.

Figure 7: Local newspaper advertisement

7.6 Efficient Lighting Event

Date(s): Friday 25\textsuperscript{th} October 2013- Saturday 26\textsuperscript{th} October 2013
Hours: 10am-3pm both days
No. of member of staff: Friday: 3 Saturday: 3
No of attendees: 33 (26 on Friday 7 on Saturday)
Total cost: £325.60 (excluding man hours)

Purpose:

- To inform residents of Bracknell the alternative lighting options available to them; that is: whilst they may be deterred by initial higher costs of more efficient light-bulbs in the long-term the lower energy use will save them money.
- To attract additional customers to the Centre and to gain feedback for future events.

What was involved:

- Free Compact Fluorescent Light bulb’s to those registering an interest- approximately 20 given away across the two days.
- Competition to win three LED bulbs (rrp: £40)- 8 competition entrants.
- Prior to the event:
  - Newspaper Advert (18/9)- Cost: 1 x Quarter page advert- £285.6 Incl. VAT
  - Poster in the Centre window (15/10)
  - 5 Social Media Posts (16-25/10)
  - 2 Posters in Town Centre (21/10)
  - Website Post
- During the event 25th October:
  - Screen with projector outside, displaying GE efficient lighting videos on the high-street
  - Stand outside with free efficient bulbs
  - Competition to win 3 LED bulbs
  - Information leaflets provided by GE
  - Information sheets provided by NTVV Team
  - Efficient lighting advertising by 8point3
- During event 26th October:
  - Screen and projector inside, displaying efficient lighting information on the high-street
  - Desk inside with free efficient bulbs
  - Competition to win 3 LED bulbs
  - Information leaflets provided by GE
  - Information sheets provided by SSE
  - Efficient lighting advertising by 8point3

Outcomes:
This event was co-ordinated with DNV GL with a high level of planning and advertising in an attempt to raise the profile of the event. Whilst the footfall was increased it was not significant given the costs. The most notable result of this event was the drop in numbers from Friday to Saturday; this displays to us the advantage of having something different outside the Centre. This was not the first time we have noticed such value in using the space outside the Centre. Unfortunately this means that a lot of
events that aren’t advertised on a wider scale or aren’t invite specific can become weather dependent, limiting what can be displayed outside.

A few conclusions can be drawn from the event not living up to expectations:

1. We have found it is key to have something of interest to people outside the Centre
   a. The large screen was not of as much interest to people as we hoped – Perhaps the colder weather meant people didn’t want to stop by to watch something, it would potentially be worth trying this again on a warmer day.
2. Those that were engaged with efficient lighting had already made changes in their homes, while those that were not already engaged showed little interest.
3. There was a lot of ambiguity around the event (and the Centre in general), several people thought we were selling energy efficient appliances/light bulbs. This is something that has been noted previously at the Centre and perhaps a clear message to the public that the Centre is not a retail shop needs to be established.

Figure 8: Twitter feed for the Efficient lighting event
7.7 Mini Exhibition

Date(s): Thursday 28th November 2013
Hours: 5pm-7pm (Scheduled from 5pm-8pm)
No. Of member of energy advisors/exhibitors: 12 (4 Advisors, 8 exhibitors)
No of attendees: 1
Cost: £801.6 (excluding man hours)

Purpose:

- To inform SME’s, property developers and landlords about the usage of efficient appliances and the long-term benefits/savings that may accompany them.
- An opportunity for local renewable providers to liaise with potential customers as well as other retailers.
- To advertise the NTVV project and draw awareness to the Centre and what it can offer residents within Bracknell, specifically those with/considering solar PV.

What was involved:

- Business targeted event rather than domestic consumers.
- Each efficient appliance provider was given a display area (with access to a desk and power supply) in which they demonstrated their materials.
- Competition to win five mobile phone chargers- attendees were encouraged to drop their business card, from which five winners would then be drawn at random
- Prior to the event:
  - ¼ page Newspaper Advert (21/11) - cost: £285.60 (incl. VAT)
  - ½ page Newspaper Advert (27/11) - cost: £516 (incl. VAT)
  - Banner Advert on Berkshire Media Groups web page - cost: free
  - Poster in the Centre window (15/11 - 28/11)
  - A-board (26/11-28/11)
  - 5 Social Media Posts (19/11 – 28/11) - 8 ‘re-tweets’
  - Letters sent to local landlords, property developers and SME’s
  - Emails sent to local landlords, property developers and SME’s
  - Invites dropped at all local SME’s
  - Website Post
- During the event:
  - 4 unique display tables within the Centre highlighting what each company could provide
  - Information leaflets on EMMA device
  - Feedback forms

Summary:
The Mini Exhibition Event was co-ordinated with DNV GL; a lot of time and money was put into this event in order to raise the profile as much as possible and maximise attendance. This event provided the opportunity for EMMA sign-ups as well as important contacts for future events. Attendance at this event was very disappointing, as just one person attended. The event was forced to close early as there was no interest. It is important that we learn why attendance did not live up to expectations:

1. Location: Beyond 4pm Bracknell high-street was almost deserted (despite there being late-night shopping).
2. Demographics: The imminent regeneration in Bracknell may have limited a lot of SME’s engagement as a lot will have a compulsory purchase order in March mitigating their interest in installing energy efficient solutions
3. Interest: Perhaps there was simply a lack of appetite for the event, which could be put down to:
   a. The affluence within the target area.
   b. A general lack of engagement with renewable/efficient technologies.

**Learning**

No. of feedback forms completed: 0

- For this event invites were not successful in establishing any interest.
- It is important to consider how to attract passers by into the Centre, even for invite only events, to maximise engagement.
- Applying learning from other events, without an eye-catching exhibit outside the Centre people often fail to notice what is happening within.
Figure 9: Twitter feed for the Mini Exhibition event
7.8 Christmas Time Events

Date(s): Thursday 21st November 2013 and Saturday and Sunday 23rd and 24th November 2013

Hours: 4pm-8pm on 21st and 10am-2pm on 23rd and 12am-5pm 24th

No. of member of staff: one on 21st, two on 23rd and one on 24th

No of attendees: 20 (3 on 21st, 9 on 23rd and 8 on 24th)

Total cost: £68 (excluding man hours)

Purpose:

- Community based event to attract attention to the Centre
- Inform people of the value of efficiency
- Inform people of New Thames Valley Vision project
- Ask people to write an energy pledge decoration to put on our Christmas tree
- Prior to events:
  - 6 tweets (two for late night shopping, four for Christmas weekend)
  - Posters in window of the Centre
  - A-board display
Thursday 21st
- Event organised to coincide with Bracknell late night shopping
  - Increased footfall in the town Centre
- Free mince pies available all evening (£8)

Saturday 23rd
- Event organised to coincide with Bracknell’s Christmas weekend
  - Including children’s activities and a giant snow globe in Bracknell’s main shopping mall.
- Free mince pies throughout
- Launch of Message Tree- Christmas tree set-up with decorations that could be personalised with an energy message and hung on the tree (£24)
- Christmas lights set-up in the Centre
- Launch of the NTVV Christmas Raffle (25 entries, drawn on: 21st December), including:
  - Solar phone charger- (£8)
  - Mini Solar Car- (£3)
  - Sustainably sourced chocolate (£2)
  - Potato battery experiment (£10)
  - Solar light (£13)

Saturday 24th
- Event organised to coincide with Bracknell Christmas light switch on
- Free mince pies, raffle and tree activity

Outcomes:
The late-night shopping event in Bracknell struggled to gain attraction as the visitor numbers show. This can be in part put down to the location of the Centre, outside of the main shopping Mall where the majority of the late night shopping occurs. Secondly it can be concluded that people coming for late night shopping come with the intention to buy Christmas gifts and this was not something that the Centre could offer.

Saturdays Christmas event benefitted from the increased footfall within Bracknell to boost visitor numbers. Visitors across the weekend however did not seem aware of the events happening in the Centre which were somewhat over-shadowed by those organised within Bracknell town Centre.

Sundays Christmas event to coincide with the Christmas light switch-on had potential to attract a lot of visitors as numbers in the town Centre peaked before the event in order to see the light switch-on event and fireworks display. However, unfortunately shops around the town Centre were cordoned off by a no-stopping walk-way, segregating the retail outlets from the crowd. This limited visitor numbers on Sunday and unfortunately the event didn’t reach the potential it might have otherwise.
Following the Christmas events at the Centre the activities launched on this weekend were continued for the following four weeks until Christmas, the raffle, tree and lights added a fresh feel to the Centre and were used to attract visitors over following weeks.

7.9 Efficient Water Event

Date(s): Friday 31\textsuperscript{st} January 2014- Saturday 1\textsuperscript{st} February 2014

Hours: 11am-2pm on Friday 10am-2pm on Saturday

No. of member of staff: Friday: 2 Saturday: 2

No of attendees: 41 (23 on Friday 18 on Saturday)

Total cost: £0 (excluding man hours)

Purpose:

- To inform residents of Bracknell of the water savings that can be made through simple behavioural changes and low cost gadgets in the home.
- To inform residents of Bracknell that saving water is also an electricity saving given the energy required to pump water.
- To bring customers to the Centre and inspire interest in the New Thames Valley Vision Project.

What was involved:

- Free Toilet Flush Displacement giveaways, shower timers and information booklets provided free by South East Water as the local water company to Bracknell.
- Thames Valley Vision Team annotated water efficiency poster.
- Prior to the event:
  - Poster in the Centre window
  - A-board poster
  - 5 Social Media Posts (23/1- 1/2)
  - Website Post
- During the event 31\textsuperscript{st} January:
  - Large screen display in the entrance to the Centre displaying South East Waters interactive ‘Water Calculator’ programme
  - Stand outside with free water saving devices and advice.
- During event 1\textsuperscript{st} February:
  - Same as previous

Outcomes:

This event took the format from the previous Efficient Lighting event and applied it here. Having learnt from the efficient lighting event and the minimal effect of advertising in local press this cost was forgone here and the space outside the Centre was utilised to draw attention to the event. Given the low cost and already established format for this event it proved very cost-effective.
It should also be noted that following this event, Bracknells main shopping Centre, Deputy Operations Manager was passed the contact details for Southern Water whom provided him 100 hippo bags for shops in Princess Square, saving 1L per flush, per toilet.

7.10 Insta-Group Green Deal Days

Date: Saturday 23rd March 2013
Attendance: 18 visitors (5 green deal assessments)

- Purpose:
  - Attract visitors to the Centre
  - Raise awareness of NTVV Project
  - Promote home energy efficiency

- Outcome:
  - A lot of ambiguity about green deal (next event to be named home improvement)

Need for more promotional material on the day-only brought pop-ups and leaflets.
### 8 Appendix III

Table 2: List of costs for the Centre during its span life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Item</th>
<th>Cost £</th>
<th>Fixed £</th>
<th>Operational £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fit out at 4 Charles Square, Bracknell for the new Low Carbon Advisory Centre</td>
<td>48,571</td>
<td>48,571</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Low Carbon Advisory Centre Specification</td>
<td>27,600</td>
<td>27,600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Order Request - 834 Bracknell Shop rates 14/15</td>
<td>8,125</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,125</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rates for the period 01/04/2013 to 31/03/2014</td>
<td>7,970</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCCAC rent, rates, 2012- July 2014</td>
<td>5,687</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed promotional acrylics</td>
<td>5,040</td>
<td>5,040</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non domestic rates for the period 2012 - 2013</td>
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<td>5,011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electricity in Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre</td>
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<td>1,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drawings for the Low Carbon Advisory Centre</td>
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<td>1,761</td>
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<tr>
<td>Install of CCTV</td>
<td>1,454</td>
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<td>1,454</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asbestos Removal and Air Monitoring</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install of intruder alarm</td>
<td>1,213</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,213</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Risk Assessment and Fire Fighting Equipment</td>
<td>638</td>
<td></td>
<td>638</td>
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<tr>
<td>Install and fit air con drip tray, mini pump and connect pump to nearest drain</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>475</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charcoal black rubber backed matt 2.5m by 1.5m</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>413</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event costs</td>
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<td>1,290</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manpower costs</td>
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<td>167,165</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>284,911</td>
<td>88,464</td>
<td>196,447</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total costs/interaction</strong></td>
<td>123</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9 Appendix IV - Website Impact

The Thames Valley Vision website offers an extensive library of the different activities surrounding the New Thames Valley Vision (NTVV) project. The site adds value through providing stakeholders with
access to the array of innovations currently active as part of the wider NTVV project, their wider benefits (social, economic and environmental) and ways in which viewers can get involved in project activities.

This appendix will explore how the Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre (the Centre) influenced the amount of traffic seen on the website during its period of operation from December 15th 2012 to May 9th 2014.

Throughout the 1 year 4 months and 25 days of operation there were over 30 events in the Centre. This analysis will investigate which events had the greatest impact on online presence to draw learning outcomes as to whether certain events rely more heavily on the website to attract greater interest in the project.

**Terminology**

Prior to disseminating the data an understanding of the basic terminology is required. The following terms will appear throughout the rest of this document:
A session is the time period in which a user is actively engaged with the website. All usage data (Screen Views, Events, Ecommerce, etc.) is associated with a session.

Users that have had at least one session within the selected date range. Includes both new and returning users.

Bounce Rate is the percentage of single-page visits (i.e. visits in which a person left the site from the entrance page without interacting with the page).

Page-views are the total number of pages viewed. Repeated views of a single page are counted.

Pages/Session (Average Page Depth) is the average number of pages viewed during a session. Repeated views of a single page are counted.

**General Stats:**

The table below (Table 3) displays the total number of people that visited the site during the period in question. What is immediately observed is, that there is quite a high level of New Sessions with more than 50% of the total sessions being new. It shows that half of all visits have been from unique IP’s rather than re visiting.

The percentage of new sessions combined with the large bounce rate exhibits a large amount of users that never made it past the first page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Pageviews</th>
<th>Pages / Session</th>
<th>Avg. Session Duration</th>
<th>Bounce Rate</th>
<th>% New Sessions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5,072</td>
<td>2,732</td>
<td>21,227</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>00:04:14</td>
<td>43.69%</td>
<td>52.74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: Dec 1st 2012 to May 12th 2014 traffic*

Looking at the top 10 visits according to country the majority of sessions were initiated from the United Kingdom with second being United States (Table 4). There is a large amount of sessions, totalling 539, which have not been from the UK, US or Canada. Considering NTVV project partners and suppliers; Honeywell, GE, Ice Energy (US) and Electovaya- (Canada) and the amount of visits reported, it is a safe assumption that these were supported through quality assurance purposes and/or updates in regards to the material shown provided by their companies.

Looking closely at these sessions, visits originating from developing economies (Brazil and India) there is an average bounce rate of: 81.6% and an average visit duration of well less than a minute. They would suggest random visits or other attempts and should be exempted from the total traffic/visibility of the website in conjunction to the Centre. Furthermore between 39 and 50% of visits from the UK, US and Canada were also first page visits.
Table 4: Top 10 visit list by country of origin

Notable exemptions were traffic seen from Germany, Italy and the Netherlands with more than half of the sessions proceeding past the first page and with a large visitation duration nearing the average seen from the United Kingdom. Clearly the topics being handled by the NTVV project are of increased interest to countries with large amount integration of renewables. International awareness was probably supported by the European DISCERN Project to which NTVV learning has fed into.

**Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre Traffic:**

Initial assessment looked at how best to determine the advisory Centres impact on website traffic, here two high-level investigations have been carried out. Firstly we looked at how traffic both before and after advisory Centre operation compared with that during the advisory Centre was running. There are of course a number of external factors that may influence these figures such as dissemination activities, project milestones etc. however by looking over a significant time period we can begin to even out these anomalies and build up a rough picture of the advisory Centres impact. This is shown in Figure 11 below:

![Figure 11 Website Statistics May 2012-June 2016](image-url)
The graph above shows three key variables: the total number of sessions to the website, total number of bounced sessions and total number of new users. What is clear from Figure 11 is an increase in the number of visitors to the website as the project has progressed and gained traction.

Looking specifically to the lifespan of the Centre we see the average number of monthly visits vary considerably:

- Prior to opening (May 2012-Nov 2012): 156
- Whilst open (we assume this as Dec 2012-May 2014): 290
- Post closure (June 2014-June 2016): 399

The trend shown here illustrates how as the project has progressed and become better known, website traffic has in turn grown; as a result there is no specific increase in visitor numbers that can be attributed accurately to the advisory Centre when looking at total visitor numbers. When however we look purely at those visitors to the website that were not bounced visits, interestingly we see that prior to opening we had around 104 non-bounced visits per month, during operation this jumps to 163 and post advisory Centre this stays fairly constant at 169. This would suggest whilst there were more visits later on the project the proportion of these that were of minimal value or harmful intent were likely substantially larger\(^7\) and hence value added visits have not changed a lot between advisory Centre operation and end of project. Given the hypothesis noted earlier in this paragraph that visits likely increase as the project gains more traction it may be that this affect in the statistics is mitigated by an increase in visits also caused by the Centre. This however can only be speculated.

Given the limited conclusions drawn from looking at website traffic across the project lifespan a study was carried out into how visits to the advisory Centre itself may have impacted website traffic. In order to determine how day-to-day activities within the advisory Centre impacted the website three key areas of comparison were taken daily, weekly and monthly. In the statistical analysis a Pearson’s Product Moment correlation coefficient (PCC) was taken, looking at each time period in question and directly comparing Centre visits to webpage session. The results, for all three of the time periods examined show no correlation with PCC ranging from -0.32 to -0.02 (Where +1 is perfect positive correlation, -1 perfect negative correlation and 0 no correlation). Graphical interpretation was then used to see if there was a potential delayed impact of the advisory Centre on website traffic, again no clear impact could be observed across any of the time ranges.

From the studies it is hard to draw any conclusion around the impact that a Low Carbon Community Advisory Centre may have on website traffic. The following analysis looks at different types of events held at the Centre (however, typically with higher levels of attendance than other days in the Centre) and their potential impact on website visits.

\(^7\) Bounced and short visits often indicate malicious activity
To keep learning outcomes from becoming case specific and more prone to error, events are
categorised depending upon their purpose and structure into five main categories:

- **NTVV Project Event.** (This is an event held at Centre to fulfil project objectives; these may
  range from: project partner review boards, meetings/workshops/presentations, customer
  meetings both domestic and commercial i.e. ADR Handover)
- **School and Organisation Event.** (Including educational visits and invitations to stakeholder
  organisations to visit and exhibit the Centre)
- **Company Exhibition.** (Opportunities for energy efficient/SMART technology providers to hold an
  exhibition at the Centre)
- **LCP Event.** (Low Carbon Promotion Events, see SDRC 9.8b 2)
- **Community Alignment.** (Events in parallel with activities happening elsewhere in the
  community i.e. Seasonal Events)

Given there are a number of events for each category, in order to draw most value from the below
data we will look at figures on a ‘per event’ basis. In addition we have removed all ‘bounced’ views as
these will likely add error in providing a representation of correlation between the webpage and an
events success.

Note the traffic per event is calculated as a sum of webpage traffic on the event day as well as 2 days
before and 2 days after an event.

Note also as a reference point to these figures average number of ‘non-bounced’ visits to the webpage
per day was: 5 visitors (incl. event days). Henceforth an event registering 25 or less visits is no
improvement on the norm. (5 multiplied by the event day and the two days either side).
What is initially interesting in table 5 is that there is no correlation between attendees to an event and the web-page traffic; excluding company exhibitions which represent the highest no. of attendees and a high level of webpage visits. As explanation the below section investigates four main hypotheses:

1. The target outcome of events differs and hence certain themes encourage webpage views above others.
2. Marketing of events vary on a case-by-case basis and this may be impacting web visits.
3. The impact of an event on webpage views may be longer lasting than the +/- 2 days looked at below.
4. Events need looking at on a micro-scale as we cannot account anomalies at macro-level.

**Hypothesis 1- Theme specific**
Looking individually at what each type of event was aiming at achieve begins to build clarity into the statistics within table 5. First and foremost project events in the vast majority of cases were aimed at those participants whom were already aware/actively involved in the project; as a result use of the website would likely be minimal during these events as is reflected in the statistics.

With regards school/organisation visits, an in depth level of detail was often given including tours of the Centre, presentations and energy themed activities. It can be anticipated here that some educational facilities may wish to follow-up and reference activity on the project, however given the high-level detail already provided at the events the website may not be able to add additional value. Relating this to the statistics you see a slight increase in webpage visitors through these events.
For low carbon promotions events and company exhibitions visits to the page increase substantially, both of these types of events were aimed at providing people with information that they could usefully utilise in their homes and businesses. The low carbon promotions events, encouraged people to visit the project website in order to get more information and advice on energy saving initiatives. The company exhibitions on the other hand displayed efficient technologies that people may look to implement in their homes, whilst giving a different feel to the Centre and hence potentially attracting a different audience; the Centre also ensured it continued offering impartial advice both in store and on the website. Interestingly examining the relationship between event visitors and webpage visitors, for company events this ratio is somewhat lower than that for both LCP events and school events. This illustrates that it is likely that at the company events most attention is deflected to the business organising that exhibit, whereas LCP and school events are very much Centre around the NTVV project.

Finally community events appear to record the highest number of website visitors despite having the lowest event turn-out these registered the highest number of website visits. In this case it may be the high webpage hits is due not to the event but the other activities going on in the community, this highlights the value of having the website on town Centre/shopping Centre websites.

**Hypothesis 2- Marketing**
The events with the highest amounts of marketing were both the LCP and company exhibition events, in both these instances events were advertised not only on social media and in the Centre windows but also in local newspapers and around the town Centre billboards. The high levels of advertisement do result in a slightly higher level of webpage visits; whereas the school events and NTVV events were characterised by invite only attendance and less advertisement. Community aligned events were an anomaly here as internal advertisement of these events was minimal; it is again assumed the high number of page views are as a result of the Centre “piggy-backing” on the wider activity and advertisement within the town Centre.

**Hypothesis 3- Duration of impact**
Delving further into the website data it is not possible to determine the long-term impact of events on the Centre in part due to the number of events held there. If looking at a longer timescale of +/- 10 days events begin to overlap and more inaccuracies creep into the data. The case-study examined under hypothesis 4 however does suggest that event impact is not likely to last any longer than a day or two.

**Hypothesis 4- Micro-scale**
To look at events on a micro-scale it means rather than taking the view we have from the table 5 we may account for a range of variables such as visits per page, page views over longer periods of time, page views in correlation to event advertisement etc. A case-study example is shown below for the
Low Carbon Day event (referenced in the main body of this report and in SDRC 9.8B 2) and how this impacted website views.

The Low Carbon Day event was run on 6th March 2014, however given the scale of the event first announcements were made on 18th December 2013 on social media. It wasn’t until mid February however until the scale of event advertisement really started ramping up, this is summarised in Figure 12 below. It is for this 17 day period from 13/2/14 until 6/3/14 that we will examine website traffic across to see the online impact of this event.

Figure 12 Low Carbon Day Timeline

To best identify the impact of this event Figure 13 below looks to interoperate first how individual elements in the build up to Low Carbon Day may have increased website traffic and second by
building a baseline through comparison with like periods illustrates how this varies from the norm. The graph explores three main comparisons, the same dates one year before (2013), same dates one year after (2015) and the overall average number of website visitors.

![Figure 13 Low Carbon Day Website Traffic](image)

Looking solely at the event itself (the blue line) and the average website traffic (green line) we can see that up until the w/c 3rd March website traffic ran very much on par with average, fluctuating above and below the green line. However the increased push in marketing across the week of low carbon day itself sees average consumption almost double to 9 visitors a day. This impact however does not appear to last beyond that period with consumption again falling to around average in the following two weeks.

In comparison with the year before and year after it is challenging to draw any robust conclusions that consumption across the period looked at is higher or lower than average, in fact when comparing the mean consumption for the March period in question for 2013, 2014 and 2015 all record the same amount of traffic of 7 non-bounced sessions per day. However, looking back at figure 5 showing website sessions since going live until June 2016, both spring 2013 and 2015 are categorised by significantly higher consumption levels than 2014. This may be down to the website being new, large amounts of customer recruitment and the Centre having just gone live in 2013 and the gradual increase in website sessions seen throughout operation skewing 2015 figures. As such a more appropriate comparison may be with the period before the Low Carbon Day advertisement started (excluding social media posts). Comparison with the 17 days prior to the 17 day period in which Low Carbon Day was advertised shows an average consumption of 5, this accounts for 51 fewer webpage sessions.
By looking at events on this granular scale it is possible to identify smaller individual trends that cannot be picked up by categorising events. Notably we see that on the day of the Low Carbon Day website traffic did appear to increase, however the effects of this were not lasting.

**Conclusion**

This appendix has looked into the impact of the Centre on the NTVV website and how visits varied before and after the Centre's operation. Initial analysis shows little impact of the Centre on webpage traffic, however this may be somewhat hidden by the trend of website visits increasing as the project has matured. Given this limited correlation and the relatively large number of international views to the webpage it would suggest that professional stakeholders and interest groups were perhaps to the target demographic of the website as opposed to project customers/participants.

Events seem to correlate with a slight increase in website traffic; however it is very difficult to quantify this given unknowns around the duration of impact from an event. Given individual differences in events in terms of marketing, target audience, success etc. it makes it challenging to pin-point what about an event ensues people to look further for online information; however it is apparent that events aligned with community themes can effectively ‘piggy-back’ on their advertisement.