

## Notes from SDG Group discussion 07.11.18

Thank you all for coming to our event on 7th November to talk about the UN Sustainable Development Goals and how we can support them through local action.

We've done a short write-up in a blog on [our website](#). As promised, here are some more details, taken from your handwritten notes. It's a combination of comments and ideas. We hope it makes sense and look forward to hearing from you on how you are taking action!

### Lessons from Bristol

We heard some great stories from various towns, and thought that it might be useful to remind you of these tips from Bristol, which were handily summarised on a slide:

1. Don't reinvent the wheel - build on what's already underway.
2. Don't wait for new money - use what's already there but focus it better.
3. Mobilise and challenge local businesses and other groups.
4. Monitor and report regularly - through press, to NGOs and social media.
5. Create an SDG Ambassador responsible:
  - for giving SDGs publicity
  - for keeping the SDGs before the Council
  - to help mobilise business groups
  - to spread awareness of the SDGs in schools.

### Small group discussions - themes:

- **Spreading the word:** making the SDGs part of our common language
- **Joining the dots:** The SDGs provide a framework for a wide variety of actions and priorities, and encourage innovation and collaboration by helping people see how to join the dots between various priorities (e.g. health, food and land use). Some of the best solutions will tackle more than one SDG at a time.
- **Cross-sector collaboration:** identifying ways in which we (citizens, businesses) can support our town/city councils to implement the SDGs together.

### To begin with:

- When choosing your priority SDGs, look at what is already happening in your town.
- 3 Pillars: environment, social, economic
- Push at the open doors: relate existing council policy and citizen-led initiatives to specific SDG targets, e.g. action on homelessness, low-cost housing needs, food banks, gender equality, traffic, air pollution, reduction of single-use plastic, etc.
- Remember that economic inequality is the biggest factor affecting psycho-social welfare - see this TED Talk "[How economic inequality harms societies](#)" by the author of the book "[The Spirit Level](#)", and consider how you can place key focus on SDG 10: "to reduce inequality within and among countries".
- If your measures are robust, you can make real progress (c.f. smallpox being totally eradicated within 11 years of the goal being set).
- Create stepping stone goals to bring people on the journey and lead you towards the end goal.
- Think global, act local.

### Spreading the word:

- Awareness of SDGs – language of them is a problem
- Start with key stakeholders and build up to public engagement over time.
- Do a petition to the local council asking them to engage with the SDGs - you only need 100 signatures.
- Aim to choose a smaller number of SDGs rather than all 17 of them. Single out a few significant/relevant goals, not only social.
- Invite people in the community and link them to a framework like [Kate Raworth's doughnut model](#). In the process, you empower people.
- Arrange for people to share their stories at public events, and relate them to one or more SDGs.
- Engage with the schools. In a similar approach to councils - start by looking at which SDGs they are already supporting and build on that.

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- Engage with the arts, festivals etc like [Design Brighton](#), to reach a wider audience. (David, Sally and Peter are already connected with Design Brighton).
- Ask wider public to engage, including schools, to prioritise and then vote on the ones they want to support, to get them involved.
- Importance of learning from others and use of networks.
- Commit to being an international town/city and seek opportunities for international collaboration based on your local action. For example, see what's happening in [Flanders](#).
- Grass Roots: don't just preach to the converted! Get people involved - e.g. what are their problems and what SDGs can they be linked to? Show positive impact and confidence that we can make a change. Share stories.
- Networks of households and identify their priorities; Then pass onto the district household.
- Monitor progress towards SDGs and communicate/share information on achieved performance
- Quarterly regroup to see what's been achieved and what to do next.
- Share positive stories and invite the press.

### Joining the dots:

- One thing to focus on is the clear overlap between social & environmental. It can be difficult to understand the links between social and environmental targets. Consumer society is one of main challenges. Time for engaging in environmental activities.
- Appoint an SDG ambassador (c.f. Bristol example above)
- Build up a network of people who are used to joining the dots and invite them to meetings as external representatives of one or more SDGs.
- Appraise and review interconnections; A learning network to connect ambassadors who represent each goal
- Talk about money being saved and lives being saved; Economic impact: people stop going to work because of health problems; Look after the air – health improves
- Lewes £ - enables people to improve their quality of life e.g. buy and drink and donate for another person = buy it/pay for it forward
- Opportunities and challenges SDGs offer – the key to this is policies and interventions that address all three pillars

### Cross-sector collaboration (private-public):

- Create a local SDG group, consisting of representatives from the Council and any other organisations doing work which supports one or more of the SDGs.
- Engage MA students in a project to a) map existing council initiatives to SDGs and then b) monitor progress. (cf what was done in Bristol). Use the guide which Raphie Kaplinksy prepared (he will share the link with Richard Jolly). It includes which indicators to look for, who to interview, and what questions to ask.
- Community transport, e.g. ebike cycle hire, carshare
- Partnership with Veolia / Ovesco / Lewes / UTC College – projects on tide energy generation, feasibility study
- Retail community hub
- Integrated web on arts and craft, community benefit, health services
- "Co-wheels" – car club with electric vehicles
- Engage trust to provide solutions
- Create alliances, exploit co-benefits
- Play the 2030 SDG game - a great suggestion by John Bristow, who connected us with a local practitioner, Nate Whitestone. Here's a [video](#) about it. Suitable for large groups, and suitable for people who know nothing about SDGs right up to experts. (Sally played it at the Meaning Conference on 15th Nov!).

It was great to see everyone so engaged, and we hope that some new ideas and opportunities have come out of the discussions. As we said on the day, we can't share all your email addresses with each other for data protection reasons, so we hope you were able to connect individually with anyone you'd like to keep in touch with. Do put a recurring event in your diary for the first Wednesday of the month and keep coming to our events, and follow us on social media (@CircBrightHove).