

LIVING SMART for a sustainable community

EVALUATION REPORT OF THE LIVING SMART PILOT PROGRAM FEBRUARY, 2003.

The most positive thing about the course was all the people involved and the energy created - gave me a great sense of positive community and that change is possible on a larger scale.



Everything we learn impacts on us in some way. The program motivated me to take action, I was aware of things I could do but didn't do anything. Action is the key and every little bit helps. The goal setting gave me the direction/means to take action, thus the action became attainable.



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1.0 THE LIVING SMART PROGRAM

The Living Smart Program is a joint initiative by the City of Fremantle, The Meeting Place Community Centre and Murdoch University. It is a community environmental education project that aims to increase awareness of sustainability issues and to provide the community with the knowledge and skills to take action to improve the sustainability of their homes and their community.

The Living Smart program was piloted in February 2003, as a seven-week workshop series at The Meeting Place. This pilot was evaluated to ensure the program was effective, that it was suited to community needs and that it met its objectives. The evaluation process and its outcomes are presented in this report.

1.1. Pilot Program Objectives

The objectives of the Living Smart Pilot Program are to;

- Develop a framework and materials for implementation of the Living Smart Program
- To implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the Living Smart Pilot Program
- To revise and improve the framework and materials developed, based on the evaluation findings, for future implementation of the Living Smart Program.

1.2. Pilot Program Indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure the success of the pilot program.

- Number of enrolments.
- Drop out rate.
- Increased sense of community and well-being by participants.
- Participant satisfaction - overall and with different components.
- Participant rated effectiveness - overall and for different components.
- Participants reported level of change for each of the topics.
- Change in participant knowledge, attitudes and behaviour as tested by the pre and post intervention questionnaires.
- Participant interest in continuing the program.

2.0 OBJECTIVE ONE: DEVELOPMENT OF FRAMEWORK AND MATERIALS

For a period of seven months the joint partners of this project worked together to develop a framework and materials for the Living Smart Pilot Program. This included an underlying structure for the program, environmental information, a goal-setting process and identifying funding sources.

2.1. Structure of Program

The pilot program was a series of workshops, over seven weeks, covering twelve topics. The topics were chosen to give an overview of sustainability and sustainable lifestyles. Each topic followed a similar format: providing information, facilitating discussion and setting goals. See Figure One.

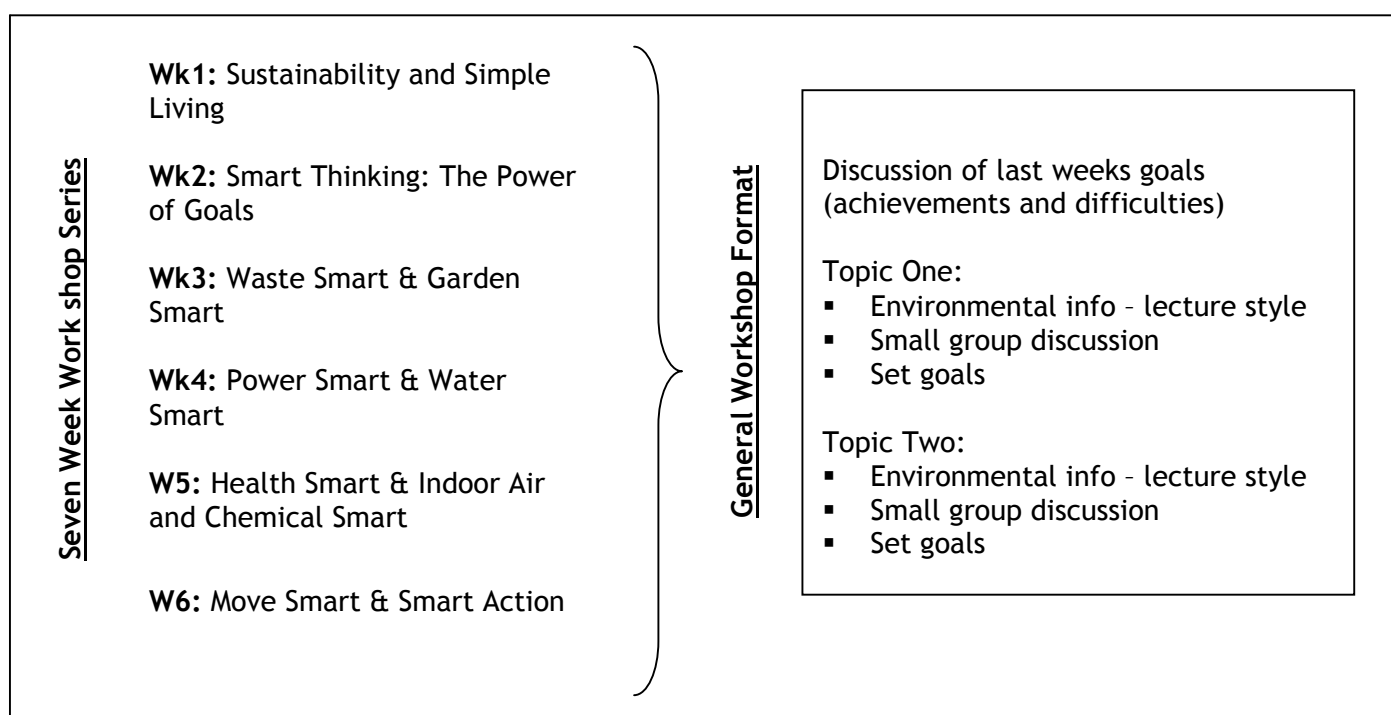


Figure 1: Structure of the Pilot Program

2.2. Environmental Information

The provision of environmental information is an essential component of any environmental education program and care should be given to the content and delivery of information. Two techniques were used to communicate information to participants, 1) personal communication by a facilitator (with visual aides) during the workshops and 2) written communication in the form of an information booklet. The information booklet had a separate chapter for each topic and included interesting facts, activities, references for further information and space for setting goals.

Background information on the underlying issues of each topic was given, including facts and figures. However, behavioural change is difficult to promote without providing people with specific

information about tasks to perform and knowledge of how to perform these tasks. Thus, each topic also included positive messages about how to act, the benefits of the actions and that these actions will make a difference.

2.3. Goal Setting

The purpose of environmental education programs is to create informed individuals who actively participate in the protection of the environment and the wise use of natural resources. This involves not only raising awareness and understanding but also creating skills and action. The majority of environmental education programs have focused on achieving awareness by providing information. It was assumed that by increasing a persons awareness of environmental issues and thereby improving their environmental attitudes, the appropriate course of action in terms of personal behaviour would become obvious and would be followed. It is now widely recognised that this linear model of knowledge, attitude and behaviour does not occur and that an environmental education program cannot simply provide people with information and expect them to change.

Goal-setting is a technique that has been proven to be effective in many behaviour change programs. It facilitates behaviour change because it commits a person, it focuses them and it motivates them. Therefore, the concept of goal setting was incorporated into this program. By teaching goal setting as a life skill, participants will have the ability to change their own behaviour. Participants can then continue to change and improve those behaviours targeted in the program, even after the program is complete. They can also transfer these skills to other environmental issues and behaviours that they may be concerned about but were not targeted in the program.

Participants were taught goal setting skills in the second workshop, then in each of the following topics participants were asked to set a goal to improve their behaviour in this area. The goal was set individually by the participant and could be anything of their choosing. This allowed participants to set a goal that was specific to the changes they were able and willing to make. Rather than participants feeling overwhelmed by the amount of information they have received, or meaning to do something but not getting around to it or simply forgetting about what they had intended to do. Participants left each workshop with a number of small changes that they had written down and had committed to doing.

After participants had set their goal, the goals were collected by the facilitator. These were then compiled and each topics goals were made into a wall chart showing the actions committed to by the group. This was designed to motivate participants by showing what others were doing and what they were able to achieve together as a group. At the beginning of each week time was given to discuss progress towards their goals. This way participants could provide examples of achieving

their goal and experiencing benefits or they could have a chance to discuss any difficulties they were having.

2.4. Incentives

A number of small incentives were provided to participants throughout the program. These included a calico bag, water timer, energy efficient light globe and a multi-rider. It was thought that after an initial experience with these items participants may be motivated to incorporate them into their lifestyle.

2.5. Funding

The Australian Greenhouse Office provided \$2100 through the CCP Milestone 4 Assistance program. This was used to buy the incentives, pay for an experienced facilitator and to digitally record the pilot program workshops.

In-kind resources and support were provided by The Meeting Place, Murdoch University, the City of Fremantle and the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council.

3.0 OBJECTIVE TWO: IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

A pilot allows a program to be evaluated before committing large-scale resources to it. The evaluation of the pilot allows you to determine whether the program is effective, meets its objectives and is suited to community needs. This information can then be used to not only improve the program but also to seek sponsorship and funding.

3.1. Implementation

In January 2003 the Living Smart program was advertised as a first semester course in The Meeting Place newsletter. The course was free to participate in but was originally restricted to a limit of 20 places. After an overwhelming response 30 people were accepted into the program and the remainder were placed onto a waiting list. The program started on Tuesday, February 11th and continued every Tuesday for seven weeks from 7-9pm. The course was facilitated by Dr Peter Dingle (Murdoch University) and each session was videotaped.

3.2. Evaluation Methodology

A number of techniques were used to provide both quantitative and qualitative data for the evaluation.

3.2.1. Pre and Post Questionnaires

Participants were sent a questionnaire before and after the program. Questions covered demographics, opinions on goal-setting and scales used to assess knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. These scales are outlined below in Table One and can be found in full in Appendix A. Pre and post questionnaires were compared to determine if any knowledge, attitude or behavioural changes had occurred as a result of the program. Note, not all participants returned the pre and post questionnaires.

	Number of questions	Purpose
Environmental knowledge	10	To assess participants knowledge of environmental issues. Questions were general and covered all topics covered by the course.
General Environmental Attitudes	9	To assess participants attitudes towards the relationship between nature and humankind. Sourced from Dunlap and Van Liere, 1978: The New Environmental Paradigm.
Specific Environmental Attitudes	11	To assess participants attitudes towards the local environment and their impact on it.
Sustainable Behaviours	33	To assess the number and frequency of sustainable behaviours by participants. The behaviours listed were covered in the course.

Table 1: Details of scales used in the pre and post intervention questionnaires.

3.2.2. Feedback session

The last week of the program was used to obtain feedback from the participants. Two open discussion topics were presented and responses from participants were charted on a board as a mind map. The first topic was, what did you like about the program, what worked and how could it be improved. The second topic was, where to next, what would you like to see happen with Living Smart. The outcomes of this mind map are presented in Appendix B and a transcript of this session in Appendix C. Each participant was also asked to complete an extensive feedback form, which asked questions about participant satisfaction, effectiveness of the program and how the program could be improved.

3.2.3. Control groups

Two control groups were used to compare whether changes in participants knowledge, attitudes and behaviours were a result of the program and not other internal or external factors. One control group was recruited from an established environmental organisation. The second group was recruited by dropping letters in the local area. Both groups were asked to participate in a Murdoch University Environmental Study and no mention of Living Smart was made. The environmental control group (envt group) was simply asked to answer the pre and post intervention questionnaires. The community control group (comm group) answered the pre and post questionnaires and were also sent an information booklet that contained the same environmental information (minus the goal setting) that the Living Smart group received.

3.3. Results

The evaluation methodology provided an extensive amount of qualitative and quantitative data. The main findings of the evaluation will be summarised under the headings participant characteristics, change in participants, participant evaluation and the future of Living Smart.

3.3.1. Participant Characteristics

Reasons for participating

There were two main reasons why people participated in the program. Firstly, they wanted to receive information - both current scientific facts and figures and practical hands on information and ideas. Secondly, they wanted to meet like minded people and gain a greater sense of community. Other reasons for participating were to reduce their impact and to contribute to the environment, only one person cited saving money as their reason for participating. Most participants expected the program to be factual and practical and to receive information and ideas.

Questionnaire Scores

In the pre-intervention questionnaire participants were assessed on their environmental knowledge, general environmental attitudes, specific environmental attitudes, and sustainable behaviours. While there was considerable variation in the group, overall their scores were high particularly for sustainable behaviours (see Table Two).

	Minimum Score Possible	Maximum Score Possible	Average score	Minimum scored	Maximum scored	Standard Deviation
Environmental Knowledge	0	10	7.71	5	10	1.82
General Environmental Attitudes	-18	+18	9.71	3	18	5.20
Specific Environmental Attitudes	-22	+22	15.36	10	22	4.18
Sustainable Behaviours	0	99	70.86	48	85	13.16

Table 2: Living Smart participants scores on questionnaire scales

When comparing these scores with the control groups there were some apparent differences, see Figures Two to Five. The environmental group had the highest knowledge while the Living Smart group had the most positive behaviour. However, none of the groups were found to be statistically different (using a one-way ANOVA) from each other on any of the scales in the pre-intervention questionnaire. Therefore it is statistically valid to compare these groups.

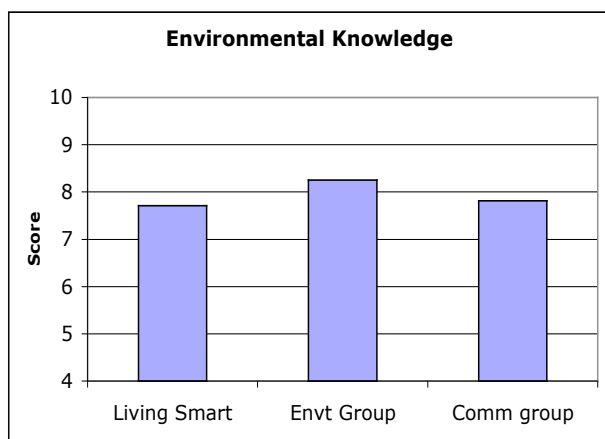


Figure 2: Level of environmental knowledge of the different groups

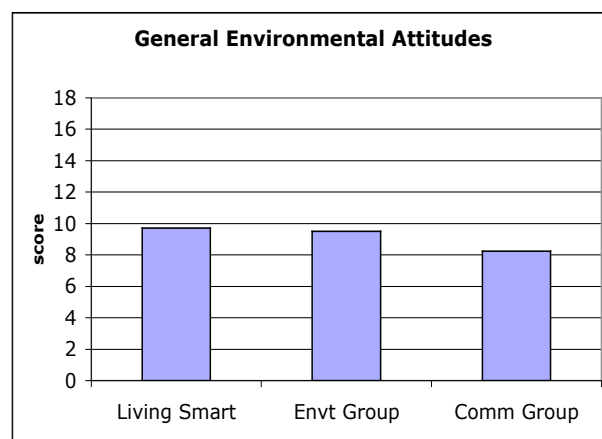


Figure 3: General environmental attitudes of the different groups

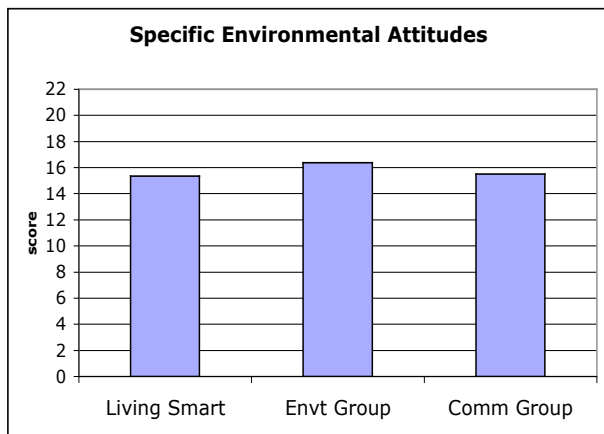


Figure 4: Specific environmental attitudes of the different groups

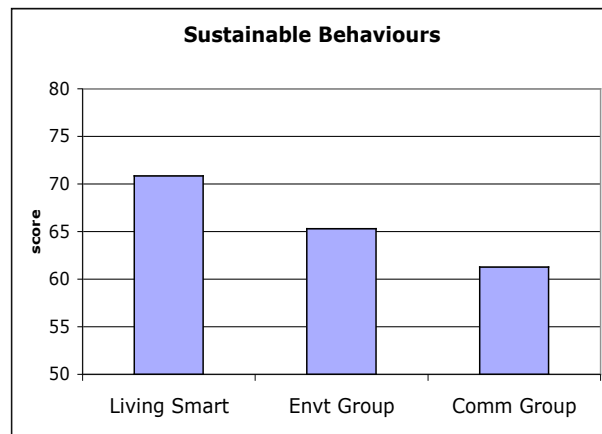


Figure 5: Level of sustainable behaviours of the different groups

Demographics

The demographics of the Living Smart group shows that the program appealed to a cross-section of the community, see Figures Six to Nine. The age of participants ranged from 18 to 62 with an average age of 41. Two-thirds of the group was female. There was a range of occupations including professionals, clerical, homemaker, labourer, student and unemployed. The highest level of education ranged from the completion of year 12 to post-graduate education. The annual household income was generally in the lower wage brackets and there was an even spread in the type of home ownership.

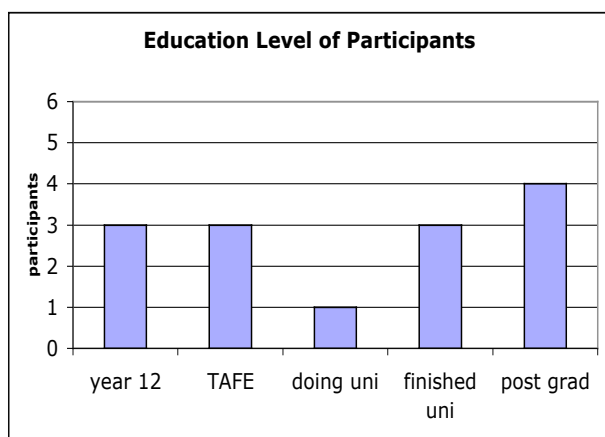


Figure 6: The highest education level of participants

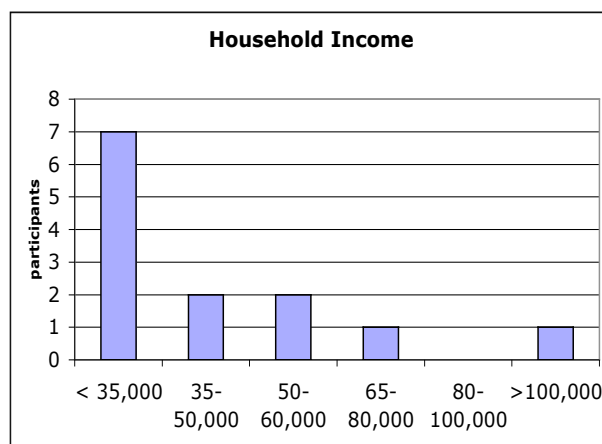


Figure 7: Participants annual household income

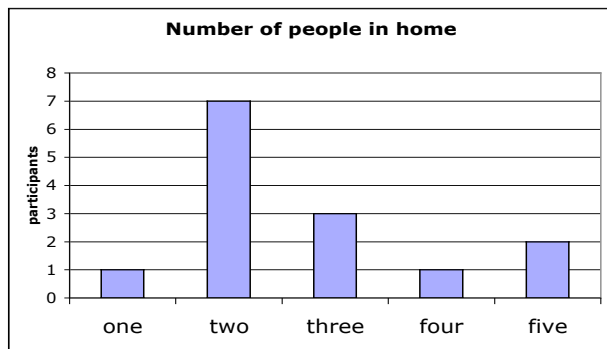


Figure 8: The number of people living in participants homes

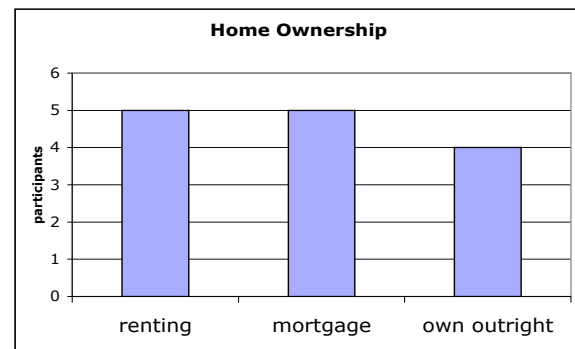


Figure 9: Type of participants home ownership

When compared to the Living Smart group it seemed that the environmental group generally had a higher education level, a higher income level, had less renters and were generally managers or professionals. However, the Living Smart group was very similar in demographics to the community group, which would suggest that participants in the Living Smart group are representative of the South Fremantle community.

3.3.2. Change in Participants

Self evaluation of change

In the feedback form participants were asked to evaluate the changes they had made to their lifestyle as a result of participating in the program. Participants rated how environmentally positive they were (on a scale of 1 to 7) in each of the topic areas both before the program had started and after, see Figure Ten. In all areas participants believed they had improved their efforts to be environmentally positive after participating in the program. Participants also rated how effective (on a scale of 1 to 7) the program had been in helping them make positive changes for each of the topics covered, all topics were rated as 5 or above (see Figure Eleven).

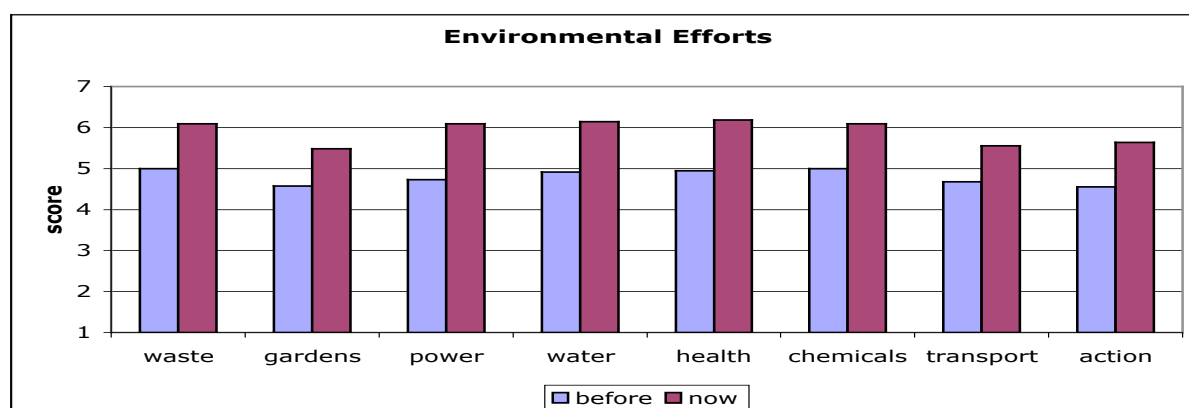


Figure 10: Effort of participants to be environmentally positive in the topic areas before and after participating in the program.

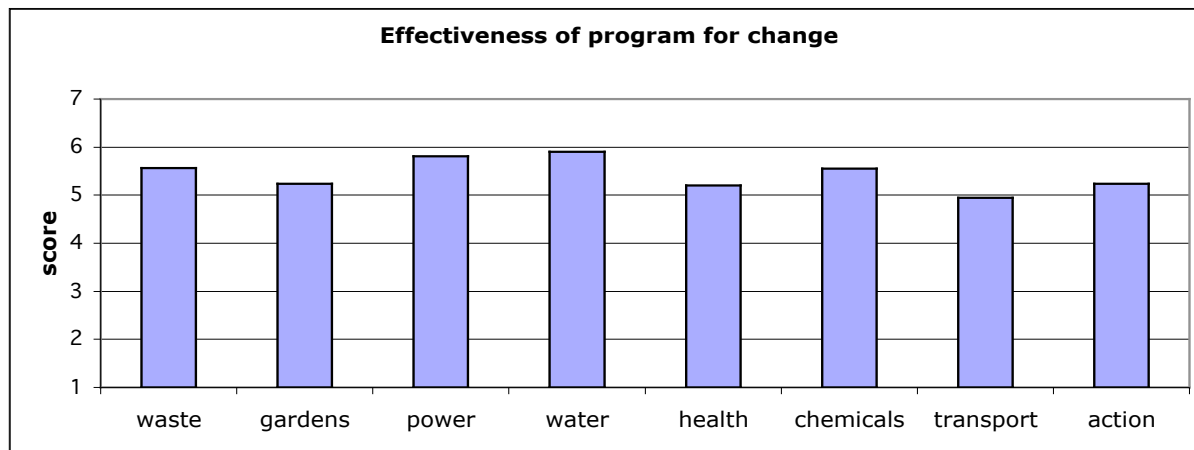


Figure 11: The effectiveness of the program in helping participants make environmentally positive changes in the topic areas.

Importantly 68% of participants said that the program changed the way they think about lifestyle/ environmental issues. Half of the participants felt that what they had learnt in the program would influence them for a very long time and 41% said it would influence them forever. As a result of attending The Meeting Place, 91% of participants felt more a part of the community, 95% increased their knowledge of community resources and services and 82% increased their sense of well being.

Change in questionnaire scales

The scales from the pre and post intervention questionnaires were compared to see if there were any changes, see Figures Twelve and Thirteen. It was found that the participants in the Living Smart program increased both their environmental knowledge score and their sustainable behaviour score. The community group, who received a booklet on sustainable living, increased their environmental knowledge score but did not increase their sustainable behaviour score. These changes were found to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level using a paired sample t-test. The environment group, who did not receive any information, did not change on any of the scales.

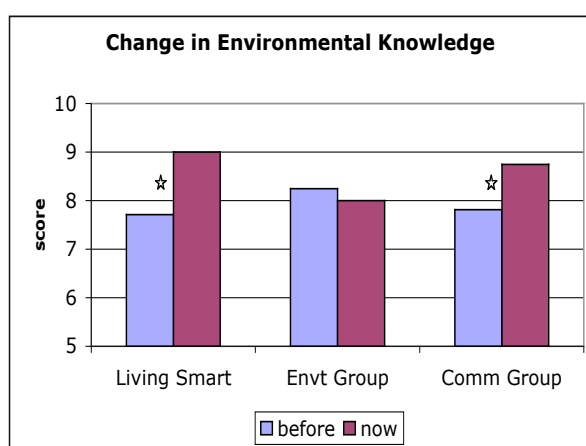


Figure 12: Change in the level of environmental knowledge of the different groups (*indicates a significant difference)

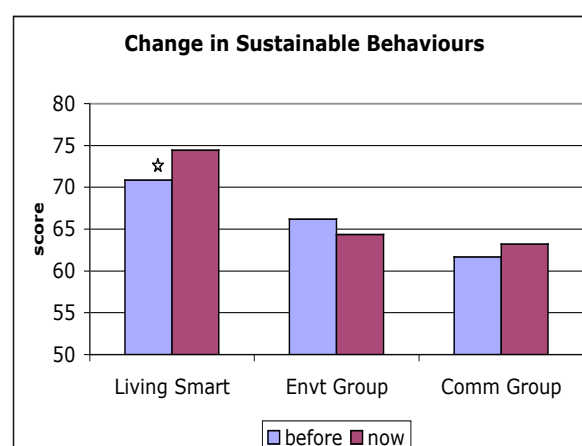


Figure 13: Change in the frequency of sustainable behaviours by the different groups (*indicates a significant difference)

3.3.3. Participant Evaluation

Participant satisfaction

Participants in general were highly satisfied with the program and felt that their expectations had either been met or exceeded.

I got a lot more out of it than I anticipated especially the concept of goal setting. I have been doing positive affirmations, writing down goals, however I never thought to apply this to help improve my lifestyle - to have less impact on the environment.

□

The program was far better than I anticipated. The fact we were all encouraged to participate made it far more enjoyable and informative.

□

I learned more than I expected to - There has been a change of attitude that I didn't expect on environmental issues. The whole course was a lot more positive and energetic than I thought it would be.

When participants rated their satisfaction with different components of the program on a scale of 1 to 7, all components were rated above 5, see Figure Fourteen.

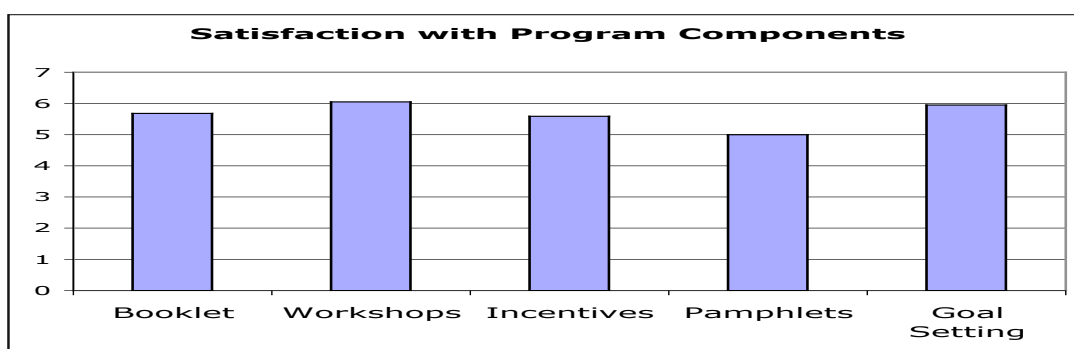


Figure 14: Participants satisfaction with different components of the program.

Participants thought the most positive aspects of the program were; other people/the group (8 comments), the facilitator (5 comments), the goal setting (3 comments), the information (3 comments), motivation/ realizing change is possible (3 comments).

Evaluation of different components of the program

Participants thought the most important parts of the program in helping them change their behaviour was the information, both the practical ideas (41%) and the facts and figures (36%) followed by the goal setting (36%) and the supportive group (32%). When asked to rate (on scale of 1 to 7) the effectiveness of the program components in helping them change their behaviour, all components were rated as effective. The order of importance was workshops, booklets, goal setting, incentives and pamphlets, see Figure Fifteen.

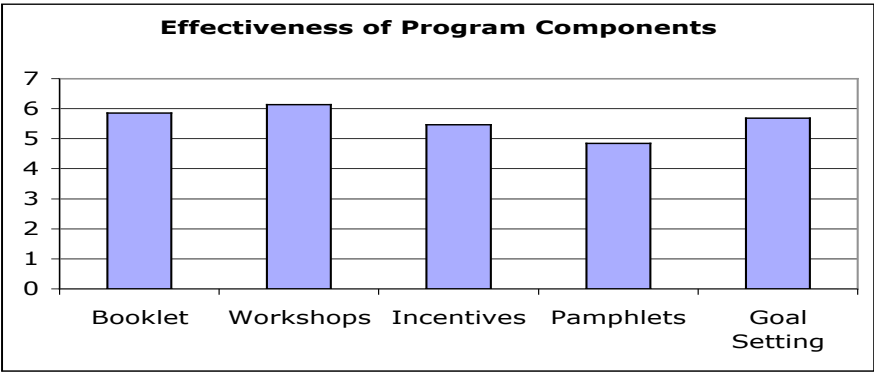


Figure 15: Participants rating of the effectiveness of different components of the program

Participants were generally very positive about the information they received, particularly the range of topics. Everybody said the information in the workshop was useful or very useful, 95% said the information in the booklet was useful or very useful, 95% said the information in the pamphlets was useful or very useful. The majority of people though the information was specific and easy to understand. Approximately two thirds felt there was the right amount of information and a third thought there wasn't enough. Generally people were most positive about the information in the workshop, followed by the booklet and then the pamphlets.

Good, useful, practical plus supportive (for convincing others)

□

The information received was good and informative

□

I would liked to have spent more time... more information... expand on subjects

The majority of people thought the goal setting was effective as it increased motivation, was reinforcing and made them more likely to act. However, some opinions on this did vary and there were a small number of participants that didn't agree with the goal setting. For 63% of participants it was very important that they reach their goal, for 32% it was somewhat important and not important for 5%. Over half of the participants felt the goal setting had impacted on other areas of their life.

It is good because I have to think and reflect on my behaviour and I talked to other people about it

□

It gives structure - Goal Setting - the how and why were important for me to continue the goals I set myself, and will set myself

□

Clarifies ideas and commitment when language. Is a powerful reminder when project is written down - cant escape

□

I love to see things written down so that I can be reminded of my goal, which is too easily forgotten with the many daily chores and responsibilities

□

Suggestions for improvement

The most frequent comment for improving the program was related to time. Participants felt there wasn't enough time to cover the topics in-depth and that they were receiving a lot of information in a short space of time. Therefore participants sometimes felt rushed when it came to discussion, asking questions and setting goals. As such participants felt there was a lot of untapped knowledge within the group, which there wasn't space or time for. Suggestions that were made to improve this were a longer course with only one topic per night or an advanced course.

Comments made for improving the goal setting process were more time and discussion for setting goals, better links between goals and weekly group goals. A couple of comments were also made that the goal setting should be more of an option rather than a must. The main comment for improving the booklet was for better references for further information. Participants felt that there was too much glossy pamphlet material and that the pamphlets should be optional. Other comments mentioned that the venue was sometimes too hot and that the workshops did not always start or finish on time.

3.3.4. Future of Living Smart

Twenty participants had plans for getting the program out into their community. Talking to others and spreading the word (7 comments) was the most common, by setting a personal example (four comments), running another course same or similar (three comments) and being trained to run the course (two comments). When participants told other people about the program, 45% percent of those people were very interested and 36% were interested. Over half of the participants said they would be interested in helping expand this program into the community. This included becoming a facilitator either individual or as a group (6 comments), giving support / help with meetings (three comments), helping to spread the word (two comments). Support that would be needed if participants were to run future sessions of Living Smart were more knowledge, training, facilitation skills, and administration and venue support.

During the discussion participants also came up with some ideas for how they could continue to progress their learning now that the program was complete, these ideas are listed in Figure Sixteen. A number of participants have agreed to meet on an ongoing basis as 'The Friends of Living Smart' in order to continue learning and to pursue some of these ideas.

- Establish a telephone network
- Create an action group to pursue a particular issue
- Monthly meetings to discuss different topics
- Audit of participant skills
- Invite guest speakers to meetings
- Further field trips
- Create an Eco-café open to the community to discuss different issues
- Form a community to run swap-meets, write newsletter etc..
- Ongoing social events

Figure 16: Participant ideas for furthering the Living Smart Program

4.0 CONCLUSION

The results of the evaluation will be discussed in light of how well the programs indicators and objectives were achieved and the lessons that can be gained from the pilot program.

4.1. Discussion

The Living Smart Pilot Program was conducted to ensure that it was effective, suited to community needs and met its objectives.

4.1.1. Was it effective?

The program was effective in increasing participants knowledge of environmental issues, increasing their number and frequency of sustainable behaviours, improving their efforts to be environmentally positive in all the topic areas and in increasing their sense of community and wellbeing. Improving environmental behaviour is the most challenging aspect of any environmental education program. Evaluation showed that the structure of workshops and goal setting not only significantly improved participants knowledge but also behaviour. This behaviour change was not found in any of the control groups. In addition the participants believed all topics in the program were effective in creating change, in particular power, water, waste and chemicals. Participants thought all five components of the program (booklet, workshop, incentives, pamphlets and goal setting) were effective. The least effective was considered to be the glossy brochures and pamphlets from other government departments. See Table Three for a summary of indicators, which demonstrate the effectiveness of the program.

Indicator	Status	Positive/ Negative
Increased sense of community and well-being by participants	91% of participants felt more a part of the community. 82% increased their sense of well-being	+ve
Participants rated effectiveness - overall and for different components	Participants rated the effectiveness in the program for helping them make environmentally positive changes in each of the topic areas (scale 1 to 7). All topics were rated between 5 and 6 as being effective. The effectiveness of the different components of the program in creating change were; booklet (5.86), workshops (6.14), incentives (5.47), pamphlets (4.85) and goal setting (5.68).	+ve
Participants reported level of change for each of the topics	68% of participants changed the way they think about lifestyle/environmental issues. In all topic areas participants rated that they had improved their efforts to be environmentally positive. The biggest improvement was in power, water, health, chemicals and waste.	+ve
Change in participant knowledge, attitudes and behaviour	Living Smart significantly improved their levels of knowledge and sustainable behaviours although there was no change in attitudes.	+ve

Table 3: Indicators summarising effectiveness of the program.

4.1.2. Was it suited to community needs?

The strong interest from the community and the high enrolment rate indicates that the program was timely and that sustainable lifestyle issues are of importance to the community. The varied demographics of the Living Smart participants also showed that the program appealed to a cross-section of the community. Participants were highly satisfied with their experience in the program with the program often exceeding their expectations. Over half the participants indicated that they wanted to stay involved in the program and see it furthered into the community. A number of participants are continuing to meet and learn together. Given the strong interest in the program, participant satisfaction with the program and the ongoing participation and interest from participants the program is highly suited to community needs. See Table Four for a summary of indicators, which demonstrate the program is suited to community needs.

Indicator	Status	Positive/ Negative
Number of Enrolments	30 enrolments, plus waiting list.	+ve
Drop out rate	Only 3 drop outs over the course of the program	+ve
Participants satisfaction - overall and with different components	Participant comments indicated that there was a high satisfaction rate. On a scale of 1 to 7, satisfaction with the different components of the program were all above five; booklet (5.68), workshops (6.05), incentives (5.59), pamphlets (5.0) and goal setting (5.95).	+ve
Participant interest in continuing the program	58% of participants were interested in helping expand this program into the community.	+ve

Table 4: Summary of how indicators, showing the program is suited to community needs.

4.1.3. Did it meet its objectives?

The program met its first objective by developing a framework for a seven-week workshop series, which provided information, set goals and facilitated discussion. A 60-page information booklet that included interesting facts, activities, further references and space for setting goals was produced. The course was run at The Meeting Place in semester one of 2003. The program was evaluation by using pre and post intervention questionnaires, an extensive feedback form and an entire session to discuss the program with participants. This information was then analysed and incorporated into this report to achieve objective two. Objective three involved using the information gained through evaluation to revise and improve the framework and materials developed. To date a revised structure for the program and booklet has been proposed as well as a draft budget for the next three years. This revision and improvement will be ongoing for the next six months before the next Living Smart program is run in 2004.

Objective	Status	Achieved
Develop a framework and materials for implementation.	Framework: seven two hour weekly workshops. Booklet: 65 page, 13 chapter booklet. Funding: \$2100 received.	✓
To implement and evaluate the programs effectiveness.	Course ran in semester one at The Meeting Place. Evaluated using pre and post questionnaires, one feedback session and completed feedback forms. From this data an evaluation report was written.	✓
To revise and improve the framework and materials developed, based on the evaluation findings, for future implementation.	A revised structure has been proposed, information in the booklet has been re-edited and a new structure proposed. A proposed budget has been written for the next three years and funding sources are being sought. These aspects will be continually revised and improved.	✓ & ongoing

Table 5: Summary of achievement of Living Smart Pilot Program Objectives

4.2. Lessons Learnt

By implementing and evaluating the Living Smart Pilot Program a number of lessons have been learnt which should be considered in future Living smart programs.

- Information is an important part of the program and is one of the reasons why people participated in the program and is what they based their expectations on.
- Meeting like-minded people and the community aspect of the program is equally important and the idea of the group as a community should be fostered.
- The people participating in the program have their own skills and experiences and time should be made for these to be shared.
- The program should not be too rushed so as not too allow enough time for discussion, sharing and setting goals.
- The goal setting was effective at creating change and was easily incorporated into the program

4.3. Conclusion

Running a pilot program has been an invaluable step in the development of Living Smart. Doing so has shown that there is a strong community interest in the program and that the program as it stands is effective. However, the evaluation process has identified ways in which the program can be improved so that it is even more effective. From this experience the program can now be more widely implemented throughout the community and we can be sure that it is an effective program that is going to provide benefits for the participants, the involved organizations, the community and the environment.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Questionnaire Scales

Knowledge Questions (True or False)

Lights are the biggest consumer of energy in the home

Natural Gas produces less greenhouse gases than electricity

Rainfall in the South West of Western Australia has been below average since 1975

Most households use only a small amount of water on their garden

Over half of a households waste is estimated to be food scraps and garden waste

West Australians generate 1.4 tonnes of solid waste per person each year

A single litre of petrol emits an insignificant amount of greenhouse gases (less than 0.1 kg)

Cars are the biggest contributor to smog in Perth

It takes a lot more energy and resources to grow a field of wheat than to maintain a herd of cattle

Chemicals that are used in the home are unable to contaminate groundwater

Sustainable Behaviours (Always, Usually, Sometimes, Never)

Purchase products that have little packaging

Purchase products that are reusable or refillable

Purchase products that are recyclable

Making gifts and cards for families and friends rather than buying them?

Repair clothes, tools and appliances rather than replacing them?

Hiring, sharing or borrowing things rather than buying new ones where possible?

Reuse unused side of paper

Reuse gift wrapping paper, cardboard boxes

Reuse glass jars and plastic containers

Composting organic/ garden waste

Place recyclable items into the curbside collection

Check and repair all water leaks

Buy water efficient appliances

Don't leave tap running while brushing your teeth, shaving or washing

Plant natives

Minimise the amount of water you use in the garden

Catch and reuse cold water while waiting for water to heat up

Open windows or use fans rather than turning on the airconditioning

Use cold water whenever hot water is not necessary

Turn off lights when leaving a room

Use alternative transport(walk, bus, bike) when possible

Hang washing out rather than using a clothes dryer

Only run full loads in dishwasher/ washing machine

Take shorter/ cooler showers

Turn off appliances at power point rather than leaving on standby function

Buy energy efficient appliances

Eat vegetarian meals
Buy takeaway processed meals
Exercise three times a week for at least twenty minutes
Buy locally grown/ made products
Buy organic food
Avoid the use of chemicals in your home
Use non toxic chemical alternatives for cleaning

General Environmental Attitudes (Strongly Agree, Agree, Unsure, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

We are approaching the limit of the number of people the earth can support
The balance of nature is very delicate and easily upset
Humans have the right to modify the natural environment to suit their needs
Humans must live in harmony with nature
The earth has only limited room and resources
There are limits to growth beyond which our industrialized society cannot expand
When humans interfere with nature it often produces disastrous consequences
Humans need not adapt to the natural environment because they can remake it to suit their needs
To maintain a healthy economy we will have to develop a stable economy where industrial growth is controlled

Specific Environmental Attitudes (Strongly Agree, Agree, Unsure, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

Household waste significantly contributes to the amount of waste going to landfill
Consumers have the right to use as much power as they want and can pay for
The production of consumer goods uses valuable resources and energy, and therefore consumer choices should be made
Water is a basic human right and therefore we should be able to use as much as we want wisely
It is important that we reduce, reuse and recycle as much of our waste as we can
Humans should adapt their daily lifestyle so as to have minimal impact on the local natural environment
Domestic power use can significantly contribute to the level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere
My daily activities can contribute to the degradation of the local natural environment
There is sufficient land available for large amounts of landfill, therefore recycling and minimising waste is not important
Water is a valuable and scarce resource and it is everybodys responsibility to conserve it.
It is important for people to use their car as little as possible to reduce air pollution.

WHAT WORKED/ WHAT DID YOU LIKE

- Beginning - names - fun - empowering
- Goals - commitment - good
- Info sharing - people sharing - comfortable - like minds - also diverse - local
- Sequence - continuity - duration - flow - time
- Info - practical - supportive - measurable - factual - recent - lots - accessible - holistic - language - positive - booklet (size, easy, language)
- books worked well - field trip (hands on) - having outcomes - low/no pressure - presenter - incentives (able to implement) - cost - minimal - don't lose some -\$70 payable & concession
- change - growth - pleasure

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Logistics - start time (varies) - more groups - too compressed - 10 weeks (for motivated groups) - one week/topic - expand some sections to other times - seating arrangements (circle)
- Structure - group goal - group activity (weekly achievable) - more field trips - meter reading (effective) - establish group rules/ etiquette
- Materials - up to date - journals list - glossies - eg water corp - unnecessary packaging - reading - doubts, confusion - link goals at start - shopping places - simple living - spiritual - feminine - role of L,C,S.
- Presentation - other experts - hands on (garbo) - discuss success at beginning

IDEAS FOR CONTINUING LIVING SMART.

- Telephone network
- One issue - outside home - action group
- Discussion groups - meetings - topics - once a month
- Audit of skills
- Talk - maintain impetus - different topics - guest speakers - followed by m,eating
- Visits - field trips - murdoch uni - interesting visitor info
- Eco-café - friendly café - open to community - nights - issues
- Form community - eco swap meet - newsletter - name? - run living smart program - social
- Home action - ghost bust? - school bust?

What worked, What did you like about the program? (general discussion)

The way you started with the name learning, that was fantastic and then the goal setting was key, the detail you gave us, in a fun way

It was very empowering learning the goal setting

Information sharing, meeting like-minded people

Continuity - from week to week you built on what was done in the previous week, it all flows

The cornicopia of up to date facts and statistics that you could amaze your friends with over dinner

The confirmation of beliefs, of what I already thought, was confirmed through the facts

Change in personal attitude, I got very lazy over the years, Like the plastic bags, I mean you know it but you don't do it but it really made me aware again, It made me change, and it made me get on to my family and it actually does have an effect. Because I think we do get habitual.

I really like the idea of saying treasures instead of resources, that really shifted my way of thinking

From the changes has come growth for me and in there as well pleasure, certainly the course has been most pleasurable

I thought the goal setting was this great thing, I sort of left goal setting for a few years, I didn't realize how valuable it is. It is a commitment as well as something you wanted to do but might have put of

The project sheets were also an existent system for our commitment, so we filled them in and gave them to you, an then when we came back the following week there were ours and everyone elses so there was the project sheet and the display.

It was holistic

The incentives were really nice **How important were they for getting you here** well no, we didn't know that we were going to get them

Im not trying to flatter you but enthusiastic, charasmatic

The notebook, it was easy to read through each week

There wasn't a lot of pressure put on us

I liked how you let everyone talk, everyone could have their opinion and I liked the group dynamics, you felt comfortable or I felt comfortable saying what I wanted to say

It was really good to have sam, lucy and caroline, because sam when I first enrolled was who I chatted to so it was really nice to have sam here and have the odd beer afterwards, just to know that they are part of the community and the environment we were trying to create.

Just having outcomes happen, there was something tangible at the end of it.

If we were to run this in the future what would be a reasonable cost \$70, 65, 64.25, 70 dollars and a concession. You may start eliminating the people you most want by charging, very very minimal costs, a dollar a night, the whole aim of the thing is to disseminate knowledge through other people, so you regain your expenditure through the spread of knowledge,

The field trip was good, when we went out to the recycling plant, it sort of made it a lot more hand on

The diversity of the group, although they were likeminded they were extremely diverse

The incentives I just wanted to clarify it was not because we were given things but because we were given something we could actually use and that then gave us the incentive to go on and use things, like the travel pass that people may not normally use, or the light bulbs that people may buy or the shopping bag

Testimonials

Participant: Id like to say that the living smart course for me was a really good insight into practical ways that everyday people can makes some changes in their lives that will in turn make a real change in the environment. I also enjoyed the dynamic presenter of the course and certainly the dynamics and diversity of the group everyone brought different things to the course.

The goal setting when I enrolled in the course, I wasn't expecting a lot of the content to be on goal setting but it was really effective way of actual achieving real things by breaking it down into specific actions that people can do in their day to day lives, so the goal setting was a great thing.

I think one of the most positive things about the course for me was the fact that there were so many people coming together that have a similar goal and that is that we need to start doing a lot about making changes for the environment and I found the course to be extremely empowering.

Participant: Well what it did for me was make me refocus on quite a few areas that I think I had become real complacent with, and I picked up a lot of hints and tips and bits and pieces of useful information which I used, that I took home and used and its really remotivated me, just being here, getting the information from peter and the information from the people around here, and then it spurred me on a bit I think to greater things I was already doing stuff sustainable, or so I thought and I just needed to go a bit further.

Have achieved any specific goals as a result of the program

Yes definitely, real practical stuff, I revisited the whole sort of energy use in the home which I think was an area that I really needed to work on, the whole idea of using low energy light bulbs was something that I needed to do, so I did that, and it got me going in the graden again. Which I had come a little bit lazy on, which is quite easy to do, Ive got my little vege patch on the go again and Im waiting for the little insects to come along and eat all my vegetables again. The whole dynanism, the energy of the thing. I think there is a lot of untapped energy still in there, just the people who are here are very positive people and they want to make changes and they create a very good dynamic in the group.

Participant: Probably the group dynamics for me, just the interaction with people, the reinforcing of ideas, and it makes me realize that there is an immediacy about living sustainably its really important its not something can be delayed and I think just being in this group being around people reinforcing that other people feel the same way that I do, gives me the motivation not to continue because Ive been on this path a long time but just to influence other people because I kind of give up everything now and again.

There were little ideas things that probably were habitual that I hadn't thought of previously there might have been a couple of things, like Im quite clued up with water useage but there were perhaps a few things that I did habitually that I didn't quite click to that other people said that well we do this and I thought well thats practical and I can do that and I can just save that little bit more. So its almost like just fine tuning what we were already doing around the home that I found

really good. And the more I do it the more it enriches our life because since we've been doing this whole simple living thing for the last five years we were just incredibly happy. And that's what you get from it brings its not that we were just helping the environment, its just really really enriching. And you can't explain that to people you can't explain it because that just happens it just comes. Its like people say they haven't got a direction where am I going to go and how do you explain to them its about not having chemicals in your home, its about having your hands in the soil its about eating stuff that's just a complete life force for you. It just brings a smile to my face.

Now I probably feel more of a responsibility to collect more information but also impart it.

Organiser: Before I started I knew nothing about living smart I was the most un living smart person you could ever meet. And since I have been doing it ive learnt an incredible amount about living sustainability. I guess just how well it has been received by the community when we first put it out we were all a little bit nervous because it was kind of like our baby, and there it was came out was fantastic, loved by everybody and it was a great success.

Where are we taking this, what do you want to do (general discussion)

A good idea to target an issue that we could try as a group to make a change in a bigger way rather than just in our homes

Further discussion groups to tackle certain areas, there is a lot of knowledge in this room and I don't think we had enough discussion amongst ourselves to get that knowledge out.

Maybe we could do an audit of the skills people have.

Every now and again have a talk that you could have a discussion afterwards so you can keep up the impetus of learning something a little bit different

Get together once a month and have an open space meeting

Discussion could be supported by a guest speaker.

We could do visits to places

Continuing action, be an active group

It seems to me that people want to form a community and all those activities will follow

Something like the velocity café to get it out to the wider community, so like an eco café where you discuss and issue on a night but it is open to the whole community.

What follows on from this then is can this group then run the living smart program

Is there anything happening at murdoch uni that we can tap into?

Get a newsletter going amongst the group - either email or hardcopy

Swapmeet