

One in three people in the South East say communities have a role to play in tackling climate change 2020

- People across the South East say they will make changes in 2020 to help the environment
- 1 in 3 (33%) ^[1] say communities have a role in tackling climate change
- West Wight Timebank on the Isle of Wight is already taking environmental action thanks to National Lottery funding



The West Wight Timebank community garden in Totland

Three quarters of people 75% ^[2] in the South East of England say the environment will be important to them in 2020, a new survey from The National Lottery Community Fund reveals.

As people set their resolutions for 2020, more than three in five (65%) ^[3] people in the region agree that if everyone makes small changes, we can make a positive difference to the environment. In 2020, local people say they will be; reducing the amount of plastics used 54% ^[4], recycling more 52% ^[4] and cutting back on food waste and increasing on food sharing 36% ^[4].

Meanwhile, one in three people ^[5] recognise communities have a role to play in tackling climate change. While some intend to join in with community environmental activities, such as litter picks, tree planting and beach cleans, many more recognise the personal benefits of being involved in such community activities. These include bringing the community together 52% ^[6], making new friendships and connections (40%) ^[6] and improved mental and physical wellbeing amongst participants (36%) ^[6].

One local community project helping to address climate action is the Isle of Wight's **West Wight Timebank**, which is funded by a three year, £64.5k grant from The National Lottery Community Fund.

By giving people the opportunity to donate their time to help other local people, and receive other people's time and support in return, the project links up the skills and needs the community - with a strong focus on the environment and climate action on the Island.

Under this community project, which has exchanged over 8,000 hours, an eclectic range of environmentally-focused activities are taking place, including food redistribution to minimise food waste and a plastic refill pop-up scheme to reduce plastic waste and its impact on the environment. The project also runs a community garden in Totland, with 50% of the vegetables and soft fruit grown going to people in the community.

Other examples of environmentally-friendly activities include a monthly litter picking group and a 'drop & swap' initiative, giving the people the chance to bring in household objects that are no longer needed and exchanging them for items other people have brought in.

Sally Gaeta, Project Lead at West Wight Timebank, said: "The West Wight Timebank builds mutual social and practical support networks to enable our community members to do what they can to recycle, reduce, reuse and redistribute goods to make a small, but not insignificant impact on our environment."

Jon Eastwood, Senior Head of Regional Funding at The National Lottery Community Fund, said: “We know that local projects, such as West Wight Timebank, not only help protect the environment but also offer plenty of other benefits that local communities can reap to help them thrive. That’s why it’s great to see people are keen to get involved locally in 2020.”

As part of The National Lottery Community Fund’s Environment Strategy, the Fund launched a £100 million Climate Action Fund that will enable people and communities to take the lead in tackling the climate emergency. The National Lottery Community Fund is also exploring ways to support voluntary and community organisations mitigate their impact on the climate, for example via its Climate Action Top-up scheme which is being piloted in Wales, as well as new information and guidance.

Communities across the UK are being encouraged to find out more and get inspired to take environmental action by visiting www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/funding-guidance/reducing-your-environmental-footprint