

# Sustainable Harbrough Project

## Summative Evaluation Final Report



by  **RoseRegeneration**



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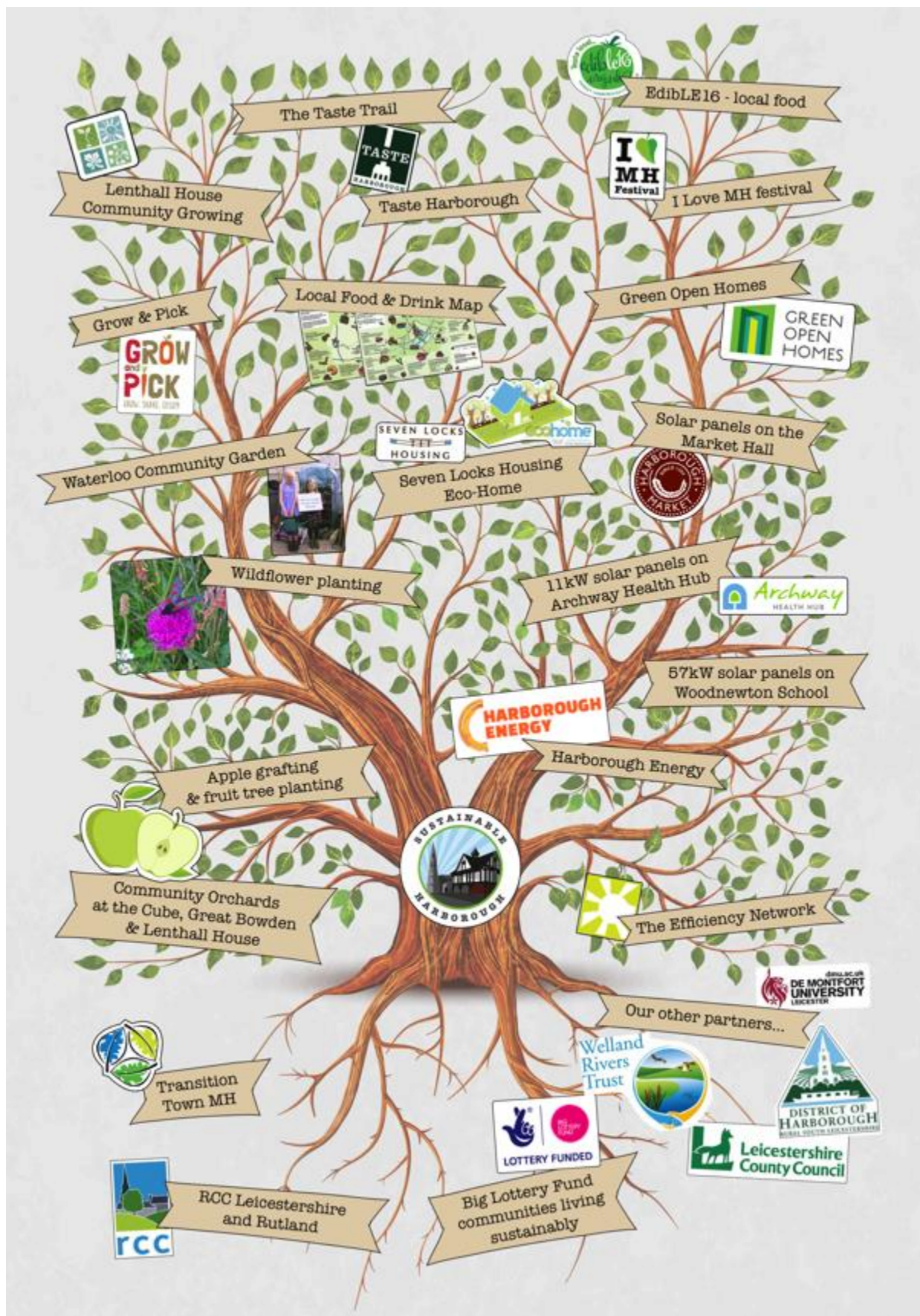
# Introducing Sustainable Harborough Challenge

Sustainable Harborough Challenge (*Sustainable Harborough*) is a programme of activities designed to encourage **behaviour change, and improve environmental sustainability and resilience to climate change in Market Harborough.**

It was one of twelve communities in England to receive Lottery funding under the '**Communities Living Sustainably**' programme. Designed to not only help people deal with the potential impact of climate change and build the sustainability and resilience of their local community; the programme has also sought to take the learning from each project to provide inspiration to other communities. Each project was led by a registered charity – with all sectors of the local community included (e.g. its residents, businesses, voluntary and community sector, public sector) coming together to form a partnership. The Lottery grant supported the partnership to draw up and then implement a plan to help their community live and work more sustainably. Sustainable Harborough has been the only CLS project focused on building the sustainability of a market town.

In Market Harborough the partnership has been led by the Rural Community Council (Leicestershire & Rutland) and made up of local partners, some of whom were already delivering activities in the town and who wanted to do more; and others who wanted the opportunity to work together (e.g. Local Authorities, universities, housing associations, utility companies, business representatives, environmental groups etc.)

Sustainable Harborough was a **test and learn project**, set up to help local people trial new and innovative approaches to adapt to changing environmental conditions, economic pressures and pressure on services and to share this learning with other market towns. With £999,962 of Lottery funding over a five-year period (2013-2017) the partnership has worked with the local community to deliver a number of initiatives covering **food, energy and environment.**



Collectively, the initiatives supported by Sustainable Harborough have sought to encourage the local community to participate in environmental activities; sharing their ideas, knowledge and expertise and undertaking practical actions.

### **Sustainable Harborough Vision Statement**

As a result of Sustainable Harborough the Market Harborough community (businesses, schools, communities, groups and individuals) will be taking responsibility for making Market Harborough more sustainable, be supporting each other to deliver improvements and be a beacon for other communities to improve their own sustainability.

We will know that we have been successful if:

- There is a significant reduction in carbon emissions from the town.
- The town is more resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- The physical environment of the town and particularly its river are improved.
- New enterprises have been established to continue to support and deliver improvements in the town.
- There are credible plans, informed and led by the Market Harborough community, for continuing the work started through the Challenge.

The purpose of this summative report is to set out the findings of an external evaluation undertaken by Rose Regeneration between July and December 2017. The report contains information about:

- The **approach** – the evaluation framework developed to measure process, impact and economic.
- **Process** - an assessment of Sustainable Harborough's processes: how the outcomes (and indicators for achieving these) were agreed with the Lottery and progress made in achieving them.
- **Impact** – an assessment of the difference Sustainable Harborough has made to individual initiatives and beneficiaries.
- **Economic** – an assessment as to whether Sustainable Harborough has offered value-for-money and if it has been delivered economically.

## Our approach to evaluation

Evaluation involves using project information to understand (i) how and why Sustainable Harborough has made a difference – the quality, direction and value of its work; (ii) what worked and didn't work and why – for individual initiatives and beneficiaries; and (iii) what key messages and lessons can be taken forward by the partnership beyond the life of the Lottery grant.

The aim of the evaluation has been to test, summarise and report back on the impact of Sustainable Harborough. This has involved answering the following questions:

- *How well has Sustainable Harborough met its stated targets and outcomes?*
- *How has Sustainable Harborough's systems and processes been set up – have they enabled the project to accumulate evidence to demonstrate the difference it is making against its stated targets and outcomes?*
- *How has the project benefitted individual initiatives and beneficiaries in Market Harborough? And how has this information been shared with the local community and Learning Partnership established by the Lottery?*
- *What has been successful and worked well, and what has worked less well (and why)?*
- *Has Sustainable Harborough been a good investment locally?*
- *What learning and recommendations can be taken forward in similar future projects?*

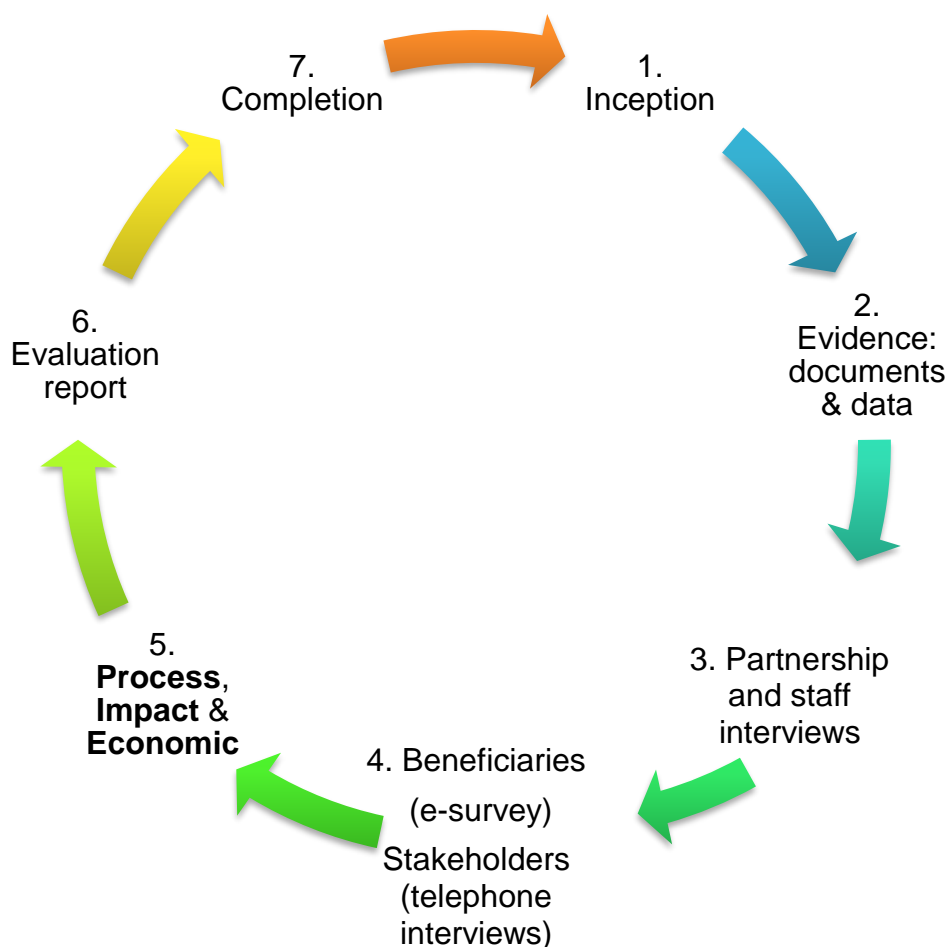
Our approach to answering these questions is based on the three core principles of evaluation set out in HM Treasury's Magenta Book:

1. **Process** – an estimation of the effectiveness of the design and delivery of the project.
2. **Impact** – an estimation of the outcomes of the project.
3. **Economic** – an estimation of the value-for-money and economic efficiency delivered by the project.

Following these principles has also involved taking account of:

4. What data and information was collected before the project started to inform how it was delivered (also known as the '**baseline**').
5. How the baseline has been translated into an underlying logic for the project – the relationship between project inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts (often called a '**logic model**').
6. Information about project refinements and improvements, and areas of good practice (known as '**strategic added value**').

The diagram below summarises the methodology we have used to undertake the evaluation:



Evaluation component	Methods
Process	<i>Documents &amp; Data</i> – how and when the project was set up and what Sustainable Harbrough set out to do. <i>Systems</i> – a review of how project systems and processes were developed and any refinements/improvements made.
Impact	<i>E-survey</i> for beneficiaries <i>Telephone interviews</i> with stakeholders <i>Social Return on Investment analysis</i> for 3 initiatives led by Sustainable Harbrough
Economic	<i>Value-for-money</i> – how much has Sustainable Harbrough cost to deliver? How reactive is Sustainable Harbrough to meeting beneficiary needs? (How <i>efficient</i> has the project been?)

In November 2017 the key findings of the evaluation were triangulated with a group drawn from the partnership, staff and stakeholders. The workshop covered: the *scope of the project* (what Sustainable Harbrough was set up to do, its governance, partnership working and cross-referrals); *how well Sustainable Harbrough is known*

*and the contribution it has made (to residents, households, businesses and schools); and the legacy and sustainability of the outcomes achieved.*

The evaluation has been carried out in parallel with a '**lessons learned**' piece of work undertaken by a postdoctoral researcher from De Montfort University. These two pieces of work were aligned to join up activities requiring input from the partnership, staff, beneficiaries and stakeholders so as to maximise involvement and avoid people/organisations experiencing consultation fatigue. The findings from the learning report resulting from this parallel work have informed this evaluation report.

## Process findings

This section provides an assessment of Sustainable Harborough's **processes**, including:

- Why Sustainable Harborough was needed.
- How the targets, outcomes (and indicators for achieving these) were agreed with the Lottery – and progress made in achieving them.
- An example of a beneficiary journey – how the project has supported initiatives/people and how this has informed project systems.
- How much Sustainable Harborough costs and how much Lottery spend has taken place.
- Any refinements and improvements made to project systems.

### **Why Sustainable Harborough is needed (i.e., the rationale for the project)**

The project began with a vision from Transition Town Market Harborough (TTMH) which identified potential to encourage behaviour change in the Market Harborough community, leading to residents making greener choices and saving energy as well as wanting to create new economic opportunities. TTMH worked with the RCC to undertake some development work. This included: circulating press releases and holding open public meetings; bringing together voluntary, community, private and public organisations to share information and form a partnership; and recording ideas and potential initiatives.

TTMH and the RCC were then successfully awarded £10,000 from the Lottery to form a partnership and prepare a Project Development Plan. This development work included:

- I. A desktop survey of existing data, studies and information about local environmental initiatives – learning from similar projects that had been delivered as well as projects that were underway.
- II. Contacting organisations/stakeholders to gauge interest in the project and/or in joining the partnership.
- III. Delivering a programme of community consultation (online, in print and face to face) to raise awareness of the Lottery bid.
- IV. Identifying potential initiatives which could contribute to the Communities Living Sustainably programme.

The findings from this development work were used by the RCC and TTMH to submit a successful bid to the Lottery, becoming one of twelve Communities Living Sustainability projects across England.

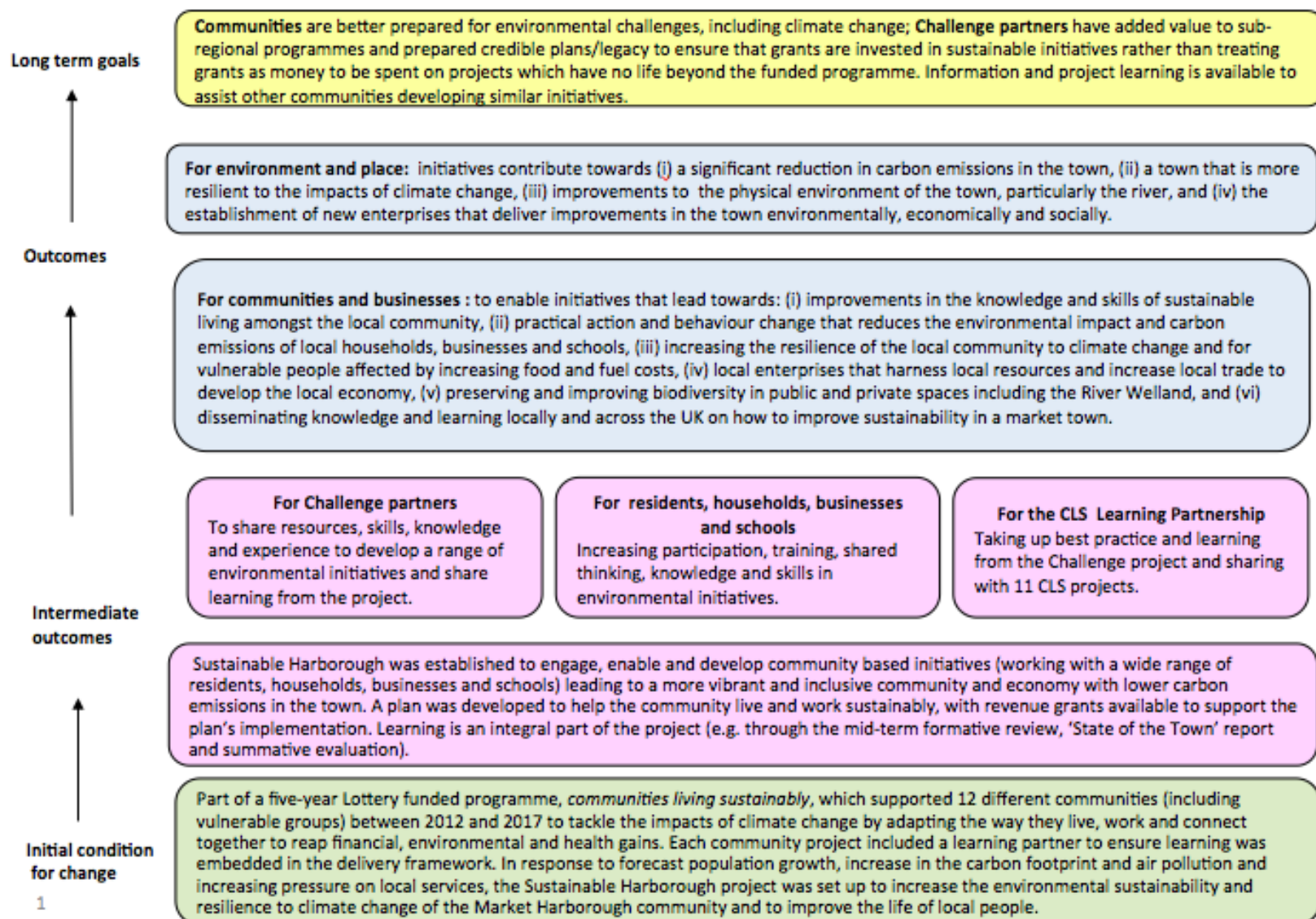
### **How the project has developed (i.e., Sustainable Harborough's logic model)**

Sustainable Harborough has been a test and learn project. It has actively sought to engage people in the project and work with them to find out their ideas and help them realise them, 'working with them' in a co-production way, rather than being top down, prescriptive and 'doing things to' people. Sustainable Harborough has sought

to deliver a diverse portfolio of activities and work (community led) so as to empower local people to identify Market Harborough's needs and take action to address environmental issues.

Sustainable Harborough began in January 2013 and finishes in December 2017. The diagram overleaf describes all the things Sustainable Harborough does for the people benefitting from the project. It tells the story of Sustainable Harborough in a diagram and a few simple words. The diagram marries how the project was originally set up with some of the changes that have happened since it started.

## Sustainable Harbrough Challenge Project



## How the outcomes were agreed with the Lottery

The RCC agreed six outcomes accompanied by indicators with the Lottery. These were part of the Project Development Plan and designed to fit with the aim and outcomes of the Communities Living Sustainably programme more broadly:

Outcome	Indicators
Improve the knowledge and skills on sustainable living amongst the local community and increase public support and participation in activities to improve local sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of people participating as volunteers or community champions</li> <li>○ Number of people reporting improved knowledge or skills</li> </ul>
Bring about practical action and behaviour change to reduce the environmental impact and carbon emissions of local households, businesses and schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reduction in CO2 emissions due to energy use in Market Harborough</li> <li>○ Number of interventions carried out by households</li> <li>○ Number of interventions carried out by businesses</li> <li>○ Number of interventions carried out by schools</li> </ul>
Increase the resilience of the local community to environmental change, through increased community use of local natural resources and assistance for vulnerable people to manage changes in the local environment and increasing food and fuel costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Economic value of local natural resources used per year in Market Harborough</li> <li>○ Number of vulnerable people and households with reduced food and fuel costs</li> </ul>
Establish local enterprises that harness local resources and increase local trade to sustain and develop the local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased annual value of local trade due to project</li> <li>○ Number of new community enterprises</li> </ul>
Preserve and improve biodiversity via the community including public and private spaces and the river Welland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase in number of bees counted on buzzing borders – updated to: Create 10 buzzing borders of at least 5m in length</li> </ul>
Improve and disseminate knowledge across UK communities on how to improve sustainability in an average sized UK market town, targeting market towns in particular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of people from other communities reached via dissemination activities</li> <li>○ Number of public reports produced describing learning from the project</li> </ul>

## Review of performance targets and monitoring

The table below sets out the indicators of change agreed with the Lottery and delivery against them between the start of the project in 2013 to the 6 December 2017:

Outcomes	Indicators	Measure	Total target	Total to 6 December 2017 (year 5)	Notes
<b>Outcome 1</b> - Improve knowledge and skills on sustainable living amongst the local community and increase public support and participation in activities to improve local sustainability	<b>1a</b> - Number of people participating as volunteers or community champions	Number of people	300	400	
	<b>1b</b> - Number of people reporting improved knowledge or skills	Number of people	1,000	1,471	
<b>Outcome 2</b> - Bring about practical action and behaviour change to reduce the environmental impact and carbon emissions of local households, businesses and schools	<b>2a</b> - Reduction in CO2 emissions due to energy use in Market Harborough	Percentage	10%	N/A	Statistics on carbon dioxide emissions are measured by the Department of Energy and Climate Change and published by the Office for National Statistics. This information is available at Local Authority area and is split between transport, residential, commercial and industrial sources. At the end of the year 1 project staff and the Lottery agreed measuring

Outcomes	Indicators	Measure	Total target	Total to 6 December 2017 (year 5)	Notes
					reduction in CO2 emissions in the Market Town using these statistics would not highlight the contribution of the project in reducing emissions. In year 2 this target was no longer applied.
	<b>2b</b> - Reduction in CO2 emissions per year due to project	Tonnes	1,000	190.762	The final reduction in CO2 emissions will be 3964.253 tonnes over the life of the interventions supported by Sustainable Harborough.
	<b>2c</b> - Number of interventions carried out by households, businesses and schools	Number	1,000	1,823	
<b>Outcome 3</b> - Increase the resilience of the local community to environmental change, through increased community use of local natural resources and assistance for vulnerable people to manage changes in the local environment	<b>3a (i)</b> Increase among Market Harborough food shoppers who report awareness of local food branding as measured through recognition of edible16 logo	Annual percentage increase over 2015 baseline	15%	47%	Based on consumer surveys and information supplied by Edible16. ▽

Outcomes	Indicators	Measure	Total target	Total to 6 December 2017 (year 5)	Notes
and increasing food and fuel costs	<b>3a (ii)</b> Increase in number of Market Harborough food producer and retailer businesses which are included in an annual Food Map update.	Annual percentage increase over 2015 baseline	15%	38%	
	<b>3a (iii)</b> Increase in Market Harborough food shoppers who report buying from local independent food sellers	Annual percentage increase over 2015 baseline	20%	95%	
	<b>3b</b> - Number of vulnerable individuals and households with reduced food and fuel costs	Number of people	250	116	This figure will increase after the Lottery funded period has ended through the activities of “warmer homes”, a community energy service run by Harborough Energy in partnership with Harborough District Council to insulate the homes of vulnerable residents.

Outcomes	Indicators	Measure	Total target	Total to 6 December 2017 (year 5)	Notes
<b>Outcome 4</b> - Establish local enterprises that harness local resources and increase local trade to sustain and develop the local economy	<b>4a</b> - Increased annual value of local trade due to project	Value in £	100,000	297,261.69	
	<b>4b</b> - Number of new community enterprises	Number	6	5	1 community enterprise registering in December 2017/January 2018.
<b>Outcome 5</b> - Preserve and improve biodiversity via the community including public and private spaces and the River Welland	<b>5a</b> - Increase in number of bees counted on buzzing borders	10 buzzing borders of 5m in length	10	10	
<b>Outcome 6</b> - Improve and disseminate knowledge across UK communities on how to improve sustainability in an average sized UK market town, targeting market towns in particular	<b>6a</b> - Number of people from other communities reached via dissemination activities	Number of people	200	226	
	<b>6b</b> - Number of public reports produced describing learning from project	Number	5	6	This includes a LM3 report and this Summative Review document.

Sustainable Harborough is a test and learn project. This means the project can look at the evidence (what is working well, what is working less well) and focus its activities and initiatives on things that are already working as well as having the flexibility to try out new ideas.

Sustainable Harborough has over-achieved on nearly all of its targets – particularly the number of people participating in the project (1a), the number of people reporting improved knowledge and skills (1b), the number of interventions carried out by businesses and schools (2c), increased shopper awareness of natural resources (3a, 3b), and increase in local trade (4a).

The project has achieved other targets in line with the profile it developed at the outset – e.g. buzzing borders (5a).

The project will achieve some of its other targets as it draws to a close – e.g. number of new community enterprises (4b) and number of public reports produced (6b) – with other targets further exceeded as part of legacy planning (i.e., reduction in CO2 emissions for outcome 2b and the update of the local food map for outcome 3a).

For one of the targets, the number of vulnerable individuals and households with reduced food and fuel costs (3b), the target has not been achieved by the project but is being taken up through a legacy activity led by Harborough Energy and Harborough District Council.

The table above highlights the difficulty of measuring some of the indicators of change, with some measures removed over the course of the project (2a) and others needing an innovative approach to measurement e.g. shopper surveys used for outcomes 3a and 3b; to measure improvements in bee habitats (5a) a public competition was held with 200 wildflower seed packs given to people to sow in their gardens – with them returning a photograph of their successful 'buzzing border' in return for a jar of local honey.

## **How the management information and reporting systems have been developed - and refinements/improvements made**

Sustainable Harborough staff have submitted formal monitoring forms to the Lottery at the end of each year of the project. They have been in a regular and ongoing dialogue with their funding officer, and participated in a learning network established by the Lottery (and led by Groundwork) to encourage peer learning between Communities Living Sustainably partnerships.

Two factors have informed the project systems. Firstly, the *lottery outcomes and indicators*: the project has a master sheet setting out the targets for each outcome, the timescales for achievement and delivery against these. Secondly, the systems have been '*person focused*' with the nature of their enquiry, the time they have available, the initiative they would like to participate in and the actions they have undertaken all recorded and monitored on an outcomes spreadsheet specific to each initiative. There are now some 400 people on these sheets and the nature of their involvement in Sustainable Harborough can be tracked and evidenced. This enables project staff to see in real-time where an individual initiative is, who/how/when people are participating and how their delivery links to the master sheet/Lottery targets. The project systems also allow for the recording of data and information outside the scope of the Lottery funding (e.g. action learning, building a case for further investment).

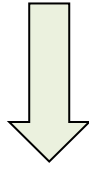
The project systems have evolved – moving from an access database (where lottery outcomes and individual initiatives were separated) to an excel database (where this information is now linked); and from a local network system to using the RCC's server.

### **'Beneficiary journey'**

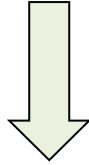
Sustainable Harborough has systems in place for recording the number of people contacting the project, and for monitoring how they would like to get involved and how quickly they are able to participate. As the project is person/community-led, there is no typical journey for someone who might get in touch with the project. The flow diagrams below are examples of journeys for an individual or group who might seek to access support from Sustainable Harborough (with the text provided by the project team). They are for illustrative purposes only and are not representative of the entire project and every contact made.

### Individual beneficiary journey

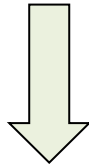
Person phones up expressing interest in a project – e.g. gardening



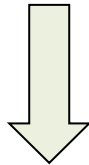
Person passed onto project lead for gardening projects



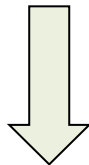
First job is to find out when they are available for gardening, and then to fix up a suitable time to meet at the garden – this will either be coordinated with an upcoming action day, or linked up to when a senior volunteer is on site, or the project lead will arrange to meet



When the person is met – the first thing is to go through an induction with the person. This works through an introduction to the garden, hours of gardening, risks associated with the space, the ethos of the garden, current work going on etc.



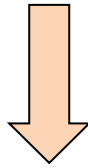
Once induction has been worked through – person fills in a Volunteer Sign Up Sheet. This gives us contact details so that we can keep them in touch with events coming up and meetings should they wish to get more involved. This also gives us important Next of Kin details, and the new volunteer signs to say that they understand the risks on site.



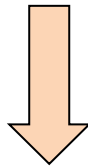
Volunteer is now free to use the garden, engage in Action Days, join the Garden Management group etc.

### Group beneficiary journey

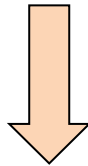
Group of people come together at an event like a forum – all expressing interest in a project area (i.e. Community Energy)



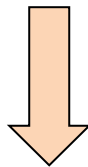
Arrange a follow-up meeting to specifically set up a working group to take their project area forward – at this meeting we'll discuss what they want to do, what the initial steps are and who wants to do what. We'll also set up a method of people staying in touch, and regularity of meetings



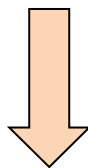
Project Staff will work with the group – staff doing the background work and group steering the staff and taking decisions. Initial tasks being to work up a timeline for development and key steps along the way as well as budget requests. Much of this information feeds into a Project Plan format (which includes how the project will be self-sustaining in the future)



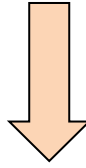
Once project plan is complete, it goes to the Partnership board for budget approval, which then needs to go to the RCC for further approval (this process is managed by the Project Manager)



Once project budget is agreed by Partnership board and RCC the project team (Staff and Manager) manage the budget along with the group and work towards the timescale as determined by the group.



Entity is set up and Business plan is worked towards as part of on-going process of managing the business.



Business, processes etc. are handed over to the group formally at the end of the project and they carry on delivery changing what they need to as necessary – they are an independent legal entity.

## How much Sustainable Harborough costs and how much Lottery spend has taken place

According to information supplied by the RCC in December 2017, Sustainable Harborough has performed financially to profile; details are set out in the table below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Lottery Funding Requested</b>	<b>Actual Lottery Drawdown</b>
1	197,544	197,544
2	208,094	208,094
3	171,488	171,488
4	213,076	213,076
5	209,760	209,760
<b>Total</b>	<b>999,962</b>	<b>999,962</b>

The process evaluation has found that Sustainable Harborough has met its Lottery targets and spend profile.

## Impact findings

This section of the report considers what impact Sustainable Harborough has had on the lives of beneficiaries and the project's achievements.

This section considers three areas:

- 1) What benefits do beneficiaries gain from engaging in Sustainable Harborough?
- 2) What is the value of this type of work to the local community, stakeholders and to the funder?
- 3) What broader outcomes and benefits have been delivered by Sustainable Harborough (beyond its Lottery targets)?

### **1) What individual initiatives and beneficiaries have gained from engaging with Sustainable Harborough?**

An online survey was used to gather the views of the local community on the impact of Sustainable Harborough. Using a "snowball" dissemination approach – where individuals associated with the project were asked to distribute it to their peers and contacts. 58 responses from were received.

The survey covered: how sustainable they thought Market Harborough was, whether they had noticed any changes in its sustainability over the last five years, their views on some of the initiatives supported by Sustainable Harborough and – with Lottery funding now ending – what they thought would happen next.

*How sustainable do you think Market Harborough is on a score of 1-10 where 1 is not at all and 10 is completely?*

The composite score for responses to this answer was 5.4 indicating a view that the town is relatively sustainable.

*How do you think this has changed during your time here or the last 5 years (whichever is the shorter)?*

86% of respondents felt that the town had become more sustainable over the last 5 years.

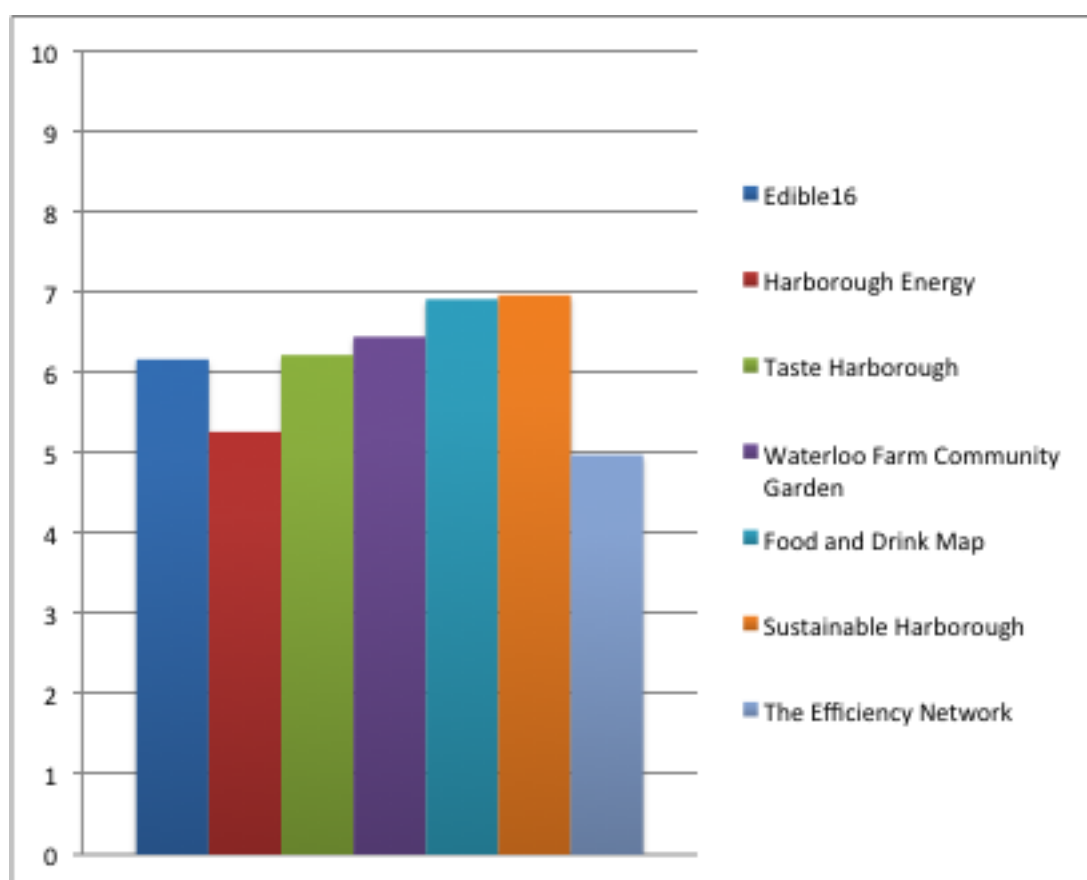
*What reasons would you give for the change?*

15 of the responses cited the work of Sustainable Harborough and/or its associated initiatives.

*Have you heard of any of the following and if so how effective do you think they are – 1-10 where 1 is lowest (had not heard) and 10 is the highest (heard and familiar)?*

The table below shows a relatively good range of awareness of the initiatives of Sustainable Harborough and a relatively positive rating for their

effectiveness. The energy related projects of the initiative are least well known.



Seven respondents indicated that there had been insufficient publicity around the achievements of the initiatives. One respondent suggested that too many initiatives had been supported. There was a suggestion that over a longer period of time Sustainable Harbourough could have delivered more powerful change. According to one respondent *“changing attitudes takes years of steady work - you have made a good start”*.

*Which organisations have made the biggest contributions to making Market Harbourough more sustainable over the last 5 years – please score 1-10 where 1 is the lowest in terms of impact and 10 is the highest level of impact.*

The aggregate score for each organisation cited was as follows:

- Local businesses – 6
- Local community groups 7.1
- Local authority – 4.7
- Government – 3.2
- Sustainable Harbourough – 5.9

Other organisations cited included Harbourough in Bloom, Welland River Trust and Transition Town Market Harbourough.

The relatively low score for Sustainable Harborough may be aligned to the relatively low awareness of some of the initiatives it has been directly involved with. A conscious decision to work on project development and assembly as opposed to a high publicity strategy has been followed and may explain its modest profile.

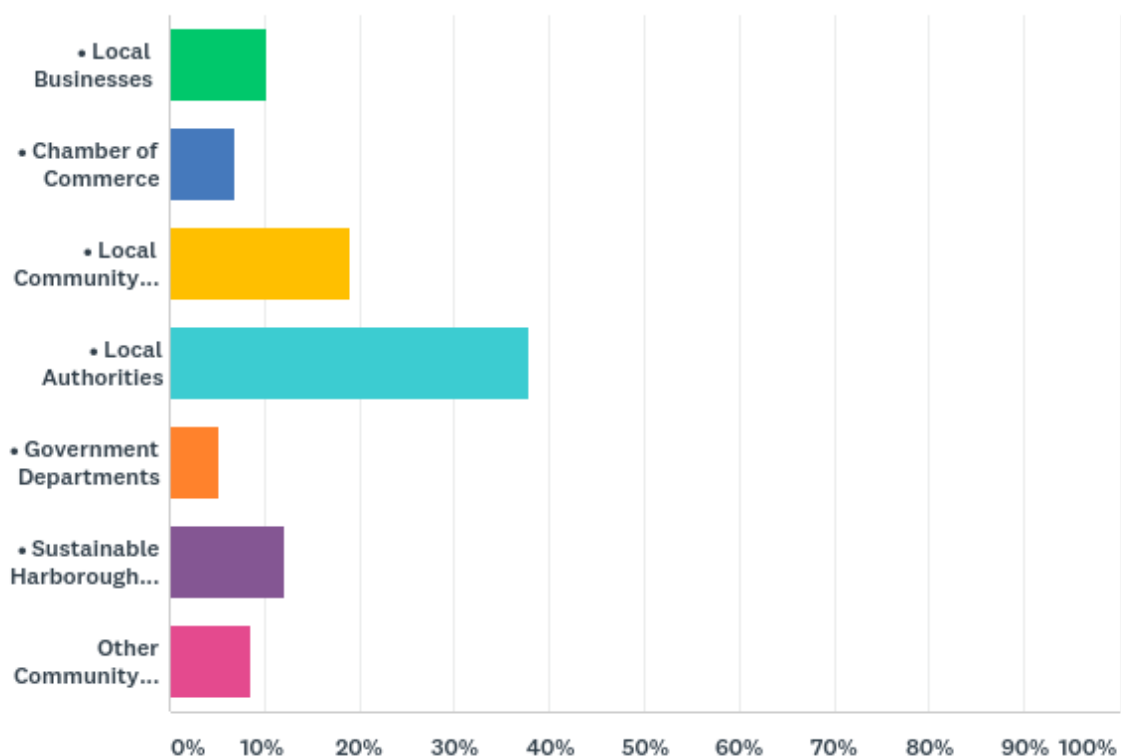
*What do you think the priorities should be for making the town and its environs more sustainable over the next 5 years?*

This question solicited a wide range of responses – strong themes were complementary to the food and energy outcomes of the work of Sustainable Harborough. The strongest area of emphasis proposed was recycling.

*Who should lead them?*

The majority of respondents were in favour of the District and County Councils taking lead responsibility for this agenda going forward:

### Q10 Who should lead them?:



*From the perspective of your involvement how much impact do you think the organisation has had on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is very little impact and 10 is massive impact?*

The composite score for this question was 5.6 suggesting a moderate regard for the achievements of the initiative.

Responses to this question span a wide range of perspectives from “I've never heard of it; “never noticed its existence”; “never been contacted by it or invited to participate in its activities” through to “inspirational”.

*What in your view is the likelihood that without Sustainable Harborough the things ascribed to it would have been achieved through other processes? On scale of 1-10 where 1 is highly unlikely and 10 is highly likely?*

We asked this question to try and isolate out the counter-factual – this is the extent to which the things achieved by Sustainable Harborough might have happened anyway. The composite score for this question was: 3.6 – showing that the majority of respondents felt the organisation had clearly driven some direct change.

*How important do you think it is for the initiative to continue into the longer term? I.e. over the next 5 years? Please give a score of 1-10 where 1 is not important at all and 10 is crucial*

The composite score for this question was 8.7. This shows a clear consensus amongst respondents that the initiative should continue. It also resonates with the views of most of the respondents who see the mission of the organisation as being very long term.

*If you think Sustainable Harborough should continue in some form what priorities would you set for it?*

There was no clear consensus in relation to this question. Some respondents suggested a “mixed economy” of interventions previously undertaken by the organisation should be continued and extended.

*How do you think it should seek to fund its ongoing activities?*

There was no clear view about how this might best be achieved. A number of respondents suggested Sustainable Harborough could develop a fee earning/income generating approach; and others suggesting local fund raising. Very few respondents suggested grants or support from local authorities.

Overall, respondents saw Market Harborough as a relatively sustainable place and/or thought it had become more sustainable over the last 5 years. A third of respondents attributed some of this increase to Sustainable Harborough; with others also citing the work of local businesses and community groups. There is clear enthusiasm for moving forward with more sustainable projects.

## Staff Discussions

Detailed interviews have been held with three members of staff: Gavin Fletcher (project manager), Jo Sharman (community projects officer) and Alex Hopkinson (support officer). Each discussion covered:

- What Sustainable Harborough had been set up to do?
- How the systems and processes were set up.
- How decisions were made about where and how to invest in initiatives.
- How the impact and achievements of activities supported by Sustainable Harborough have been measured and disseminated.
- Legacy planning.

Collectively, these interviews provided insights into:

*Test and Learn* – this is acknowledged as one of the key strengths of the project, providing it with opportunities to take risks and work innovatively.

*Publicity* – the project approach was purposefully intended to avoid having a public dissemination focus. There had been discussions about the relative merits of a more campaign based approach and a shop front in the town. Rather a decision was taken by the staff and partnership to focus on delivering initiatives and maintaining a lower profile. While this means the project has been led by local ideas and ensured the development and delivery of a wide range of initiatives, it also means a smaller cadre of people in Market Harborough were aware of the project than would otherwise have been the case.

*Decision making* – the project *invested* in activities that it felt would last and have potential beyond the project rather than viewing itself as a grant fund for local people.

*Data and evidence* – the project team worked with initiatives to collate additional data on impact beyond the Lottery reporting requirements.

*The counterfactual* – it is clear that Sustainable Harborough has delivered a number of aspects of the sustainability agenda in the town which would not have happened without its input. Attention was particularly drawn to the local energy initiatives which would not have offered sufficient early pay back to take off without the work of the project.

*Vulnerability* – there is a view that more could have been achieved in this context particularly if the eco-homes project had fully developed. Its real contribution would have been around demonstrating the potential through design and behaviours to deliver reduced energy costs.

*Succession* – a series of standalone approaches to the initiatives supported by Sustainable Harborough have been planned and implemented. There is considerable optimism that initiatives such as Harborough Energy and Edible16 will be able to continue to function effectively.

*Statutory Bodies* – whilst there has been involvement by District and County Councils there is also a sense that more opportunities could have been taken up to work collaboratively.

## **2) The benefits of Sustainable Harborough's work – from the perspective of stakeholders and the local community**

Sixteen stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary and community sectors and local community with awareness of the project were interviewed. Each discussion lasted 30-60 minutes and covered:

- Their awareness of Sustainable Harborough and any involvement they have had.
- What they thought the project had been set up to do.
- The contribution they thought its activities had made to: sustainable living, reducing environmental impact, tackling climate change, improving biodiversity and increasing local trade.
- Their views on legacy.

Stakeholders described the overall purpose of Sustainable Harborough (e.g. around changing behaviours, helping people to take practical green/sustainability actions) and how this had been interpreted and taken up differently by residents, businesses and local groups who had come to the project on their own terms. Similarly, there was a view amongst some stakeholders that people wanted to live more sustainably but didn't know how – with the project providing some ideas and actions for them to take up. Sustainable Harborough was also seen to have played an important role in networking, giving people voice and raising the profile of the town.

**Stakeholder views on what Sustainable Harborough was set up to do:**

Make the local community more self-sustaining with food, energy water...better able to look after itself with its own resources rather than bringing resources from outside to consume.

To support local people to live more sustainably...that could be through food, water, tourism etc. Sustainable Harborough has then been about connecting all the sustainability projects in the District up and helping people and groups network, build their capacity and be self-supporting. Sustainable Harborough has been that central hub that you can go to and they'll put you in touch with like-minded organisations. They've really tried to raise the profile of the town.

Sustainable Harborough has put out a strong message around supporting the place where you live and that's led some of them [local people] to change their behaviour.

People interpret sustainability in different ways, and Sustainable Harborough has had to target the project differently for residents, businesses and community groups.

The offer a platform and voice; bring together groups and giving them capacity and identity.

People have the appetite to make changes but perhaps not the know-how or the will. Sustainable Harborough has tried to encourage the changes and for people to take self-responsibility.

We all have morals but do not know how to make changes, especially with limited time and money. Sustainable Harborough helped people to think about how to do this.

Stakeholders discussed the contribution Sustainable Harborough has made to encouraging behaviour change, sustainable living, building capacity in the local community and economy.

**Stakeholder perspectives on the value and contributions the project has made to the local community in Market Harborough:**

Sustainable Harborough has made people more aware of their behaviours and actions, and helped them to change and improve these – whether it's through sourcing food locally and seasonally...through to consuming fewer resources.

It's given people a vehicle to make the most of footfall and increase footfall to their business. This may have happened anyway but it wouldn't have been as obvious or have happened as quickly.

Some businesses wouldn't have the profile they have now if Sustainable Harborough hadn't been there.

It is probably the little things that have had the most impact...like more people being aware of the environment.

It's built the capacity of small and aspiring groups who want to do things to benefit the local environment.

Some of the things it has done – Edible16, Harborough Energy, Waterloo Community Garden – wouldn't have happened without Sustainable Harborough.

Sustainability has more traction now than it did five years ago and Sustainable Harborough has raised awareness and plugged into that general mood.

Some stakeholders discussed the difficulties of quantifying the contribution the project had made (e.g. how do you measure how Sustainable Harborough has 'influenced' people? How do you measure behaviour change? How do you measure environmental impacts?) Many felt the project had been the 'glue' in bringing people and groups together and in progressing people on their sustainability journey.

Stakeholders described instances of people and groups being supported by the project but being unaware of this: "I'm not sure some of the things Sustainable Harborough has been involved with people would recognise they were behind it." This led to discussions around whether the project should have had a big presence on the high street or whether it has been more successful because it has taken a more subtle and nuanced approach.

The one area where stakeholders felt Sustainable Harborough had not progressed was in supporting vulnerable households:

*"Where it hasn't worked as well is in supporting the hardest to reach – we wanted to do this but as a group of small producers we don't have the scale or ability to offer food at a price that is competitive and affordable for people in food poverty".*

*"With fuel poverty and food poverty there's been less focus but that's because there are lots of other initiatives in place in Market Harborough."*

With the project now coming to an end, stakeholders were asked about the legacy and impact it will leave behind:

We always knew the Lottery funding and Sustainable Harborough was time limited...Sustainable Harborough is pointing us in the direction for more grant funding but we are aiming to become self-sustaining.

Some of the activities are self-sustaining and have their own brand, board and will continue...For little projects Sustainable Harborough acts as a sounding board and connects people. There's nobody else to fill that gap. They've had a local presence and provided personal support and put like-minded organisations into sustainability and localism in touch with each other.

I think most of the initiatives will be continuing through volunteers and community groups – that's always been the plan. Sustainable Harborough will be missed when it's gone though.

Hopefully some of the disparate individuals and groups they've connected will keep in touch and continue.

The networks of people getting to know each other and working with other projects and community groups will carry on.

The 'spirit of Harborough' brand is recognised now. Next year the Taste Harborough trail will be running again and they want even more producers to get involved and put on an event.

Some stakeholders provided examples of particular initiatives that they thought would continue (e.g. Edible16, Waterloo Community Garden, Harborough Energy). Because the project has been ‘test and learn’, and taken an incremental approach to working with local people and helping them realise their ideas, two stakeholders felt this approach had led to less momentum and focus on legacy. In the words of one stakeholder *“there should have been clarity at the beginning about what they wanted to do and they should have done three things really well, seen them through and then celebrated success...it’s been lots of different things and it’s been difficult to know what’s got off the ground and will continue.”*

### **3) Some examples of the social value delivered by Sustainable Harborough**

‘Social Value’ refers to the wider economic, social and environmental outcomes of projects. These are things that are often left out of analysis which focuses on targets, outputs and unit costs. While counting these things is important, social value enables you to look at the ‘bigger picture’.

The Social Value Engine (<http://socialvalueengine.com/>) developed by Rose Regeneration and East Riding of Yorkshire Council, provides:

- A systemised and academically robust assessment of social value to forecast, plan and evaluate activities.
- More than 140 peer-reviewed financial proxies derived from reliable sources.
- A description of how an initiative creates value and a ratio that states how much social value (in £) is created for every £ of investment.
- It helps you think about how activities are making a place better to live in (sustainable communities).

Three initiatives supported by Sustainable Harborough were selected for Social Return On Investment (SROI) analysis: (i) Waterloo Community Garden, (ii) Harborough Solar One and (iii) Green Open Homes. These initiatives were chosen because they cover the vision and focus of the project in its three key areas (food, energy, environment) and because data was available for each to enable SROI analysis to be undertaken.

To undertake the analysis for each initiative the following process was followed:

1. *Information about the initiative was collected* – e.g. when it started/finished, the issue it sought to address, how many people participated, the key outputs (with numbers/volumes for each), the total cost (how much came from the Lottery and if any contributions were made from third parties).
2. For each output, *outcomes and financial proxies were then identified*.
3. To understand the unique contribution Sustainable Harborough has made, for each initiative ‘deflator’ information was analysed. This involved looking at project data and national data (where applicable) to understand:

- Whether any of the people participating in the initiative have been from outside Market Harborough – and if so what percentage. We call this deflator '*leakage*'.
- What proportion of the outcomes associated with the initiative may have happened anyway – and if so what percentage. We call this deflator '*deadweight*'.
- Whether the effects of the initiative will be permanent or whether they will diminish over time – and if so what percentage. We call this deflator '*drop off*'.
- Whether the outcomes could be claimed by other organisations also working with the beneficiaries of the initiative and/or because those organisations are undertaking similar activities to Sustainable Harborough – and if so what percentage. We call this deflator '*attribution*'.

All of this information was then run through the Social Value Engine. This provides a ratio of how much social value has been generated (per £) for every £1.00 invested by Sustainable Harborough.

As well as the ratio, the Social Value Engine assigns each outcome to a domain of the Bristol Accord. The Accord was developed in 2005 by the UK Government with Member States from across Europe to help people see how their activities were contributing to making their community more sustainable. The Accord has eight domains:

1. *Well run* – a sustainable community has effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership.
2. *Well connected* – a sustainable community has good transport services and communication, linking people to jobs, health and other services.
3. *Well served* – a sustainable community has public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate to people's needs and accessible to all.
4. *Environmentally sensitive* – a sustainable community provides places for people to live that are considerate of the environment.
5. *Fair for everyone* – a sustainable community is for everyone, including those living in the community now and in the future.
6. *Thriving* – a sustainable community has a flourishing and diverse local economy.
7. *Well designed and built* – a sustainable community features a quality built and natural environment.
8. *Active, inclusive and safe* – a sustainable community is one that is fair, tolerant and cohesive, with a strong local culture and other shared community activities.

The social value generated by each initiative is further broken down to see which area of the Bristol Accord it contributes to. Some initiatives will contribute to all eight domains while others may focus on one or two domains.

The information below provides a summary of this process for each initiative.

## **(i) Waterloo Community Garden**

### *About the initiative*

The initiative provided a site for people to collectively grow fruit and vegetables. With allotments over-subscribed and few other growing spaces available in the town, the initiative sought to *“provide a growing space of benefit to the community, help people learn how to grow fruit and vegetables organically through skill sharing at activity days and events, and produce a harvest that will be shared locally.”*

Over a 2 year and 7 month period a piece of unused land full of weeds was turned into a community growing space and asset for the local community.

### *About the outputs, outcomes and financial proxies*

Information has been collected on the:

- The number of people participating in community growing at the site.
- The number of people receiving skills and training in growing fruit and vegetables.
- The amount of local food grown.
- Estimation on carbon reduction from people growing food locally.
- The support the initiative has received to become self-sustaining – i.e., becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).
- The number of other local organisations receiving support on how to set up and run a community growing initiative.

Financial proxies have been attributed to each of these output areas.

### *About the deflators*

Following discussions with Sustainable Harborough staff, each output area has then been has been adjusted to take account of:

- *Leakage* – the proportion of the outcomes that benefit those from outside Market Harborough (the initiative’s target area and group).
- *Attribution* – an assessment of how much of the outcome was caused by the contribution of other organisations or people (i.e., what percentage of people coming along to find out about community growing could have got this from somewhere else.).
- *Deadweight* – the amount of outcome that would have happened even if the support had not been provided (i.e., would the local community have found some other means of finding/using a local growing space).
- *Drop off* – the deterioration of the outcome over time.

This information is summarised in the table below:

Initiative Output	Outcome Selected	Financial Proxy Selected	Unit Cost	Number of Units	Time Period	Leakage deflator	Deadweight deflator	Attribution deflator	Drop-Off deflator	Total Annual Return	Total Project Return (2.7 years)	Source
275 people participating in community growing	2c. strengthened public and civic engagement	value to an individual of being member of a social group	£1,112.00	275 people	2 years and 7 months	£0.00	£394,991.67	£197,495.83	£197,495.83	£305,800.00	£789,983.33	Ducane Housing Association, Value for Money Statement
20 people provided with skills and training in growing fruit and vegetables	7f. learning/participation	average cost of a personal development course	£850.00	20 people	2 years and 7 months	£0.00	£10,979.17	£4,391.67	£4,391.67	£17,000.00	£43,916.67	Corporate Coach Group, Personal Development Training
Supporting other organisations with community growing initiatives	8b. greater sense of cohesion and cooperation across different sectors	cost of time spent collaborating	£1,996.00	6 groups	2 years and 7 months	£0.00	£15,469.00	£1,546.90	£1,546.90	£11,976.00	£30,938.00	The Carmichael Centre
Increase in local food grown	3e. growing	reduction to grocery bills on average by growing your own vegetables	£1,552.00	46 people	2 years and 7 months	£0.00	£29,508.69	£18,442.93	£46,107.33	£71,392.00	£184,429.33	This is Money, Grow Your Own Food
Supporting community group to establish a CIO	7a. increase in the creation of new micro-enterprises	average cost of starting a micro-business	£41,458.00	1 group	2 years and 7 months	£0.00	£10,709.98	£10,709.98	£0.00	£41,458.00	£107,099.83	Business Zone, Average Cost of Starting a Business

Initiative Output	Outcome Selected	Financial Proxy Selected	Unit Cost	Number of Units	Time Period	Leakage deflator	Deadweight deflator	Attribution deflator	Drop-Off deflator	Total Annual Return	Total Project Return (2.7 years)	Source
unused land moved into community use	4b. increased or improved open green spaces and recreational infrastructure	value of greenspace	£115,000.00	1 hectare	2 years and 7 months	£0.00	£74,270.83	£74,270.83	£74,270.83	£115,000.00	£297,083.33	National Housing Federation
Providing 4 members of the local community with governance training and support	2a. improved capacity for local solutions to local problems	average cost of trustee training	£280.00	4 people	2 years and 7 months	£0.00	£289.33	£0.00	£0.00	£1,120.00	£2,893.33	National Council for Voluntary Organisations
Carbon reduction through people growing local food	3a. carbon reduction through sustainable behaviours and increase in green space	value of carbon savings from growing vegetables on allotments	£0.10	577 square metres	2 years and 7 months	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£37.26	£57.70	£149.06	Sustainable Development Commission

The table above is colour coded to represent different areas of the Bristol Accord – this enables you to see the difference an activity is making to a place and the sustainability of a local community. Waterloo Community Garden is having an impact in the following areas of the Bristol Accord:

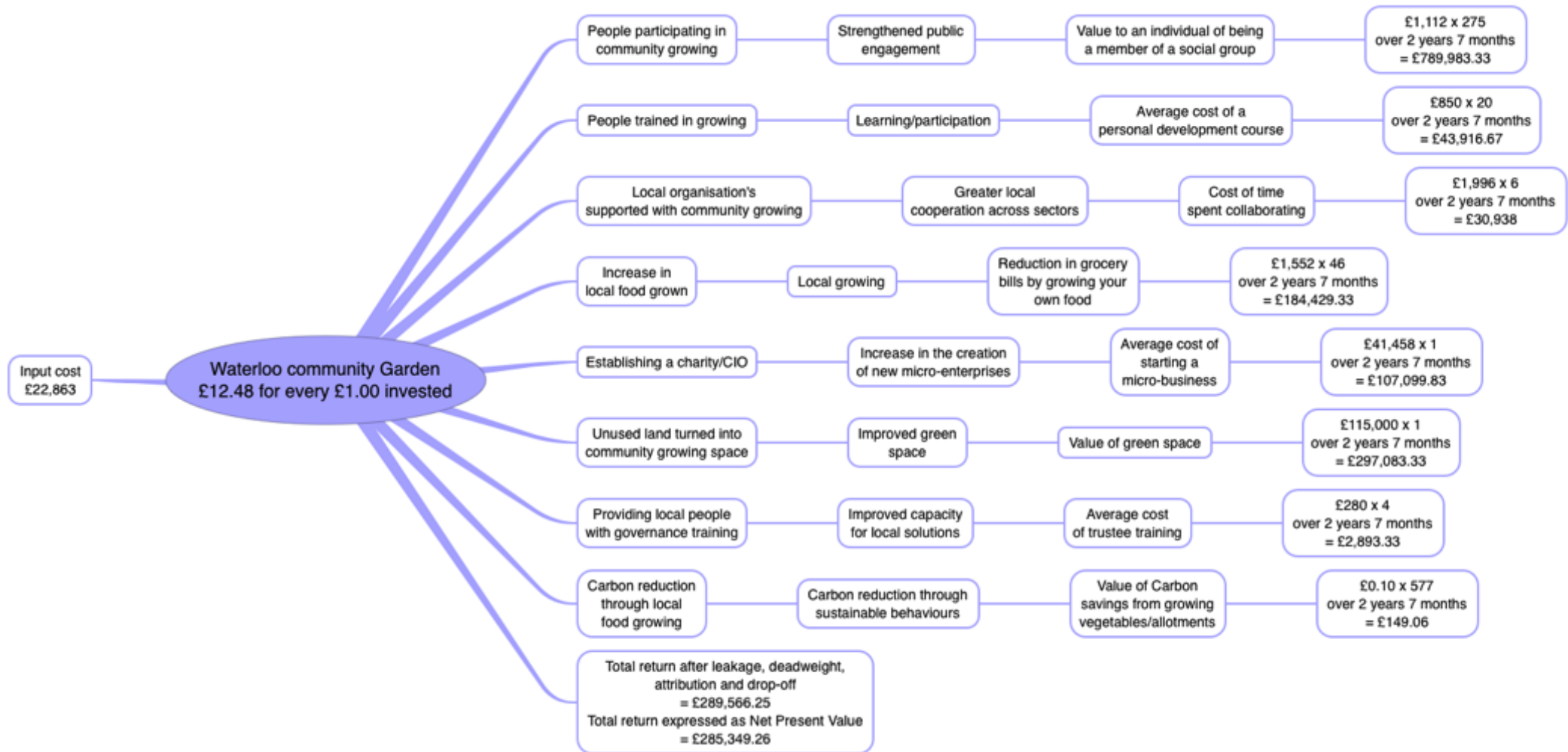
<b>Well Run</b> – the initiative is inclusive and ensuring active and effective participation by individuals and organisations.	£792,876.66
<b>Environment</b> – the initiative is providing a place where people can live and work that respects the environment, uses resources efficiently and seeks to encourage sustainable production and consumption.	£184,578.39
<b>Well Designed and Built</b> – the initiative is providing a user-friendly green space	£297,083.33
<b>Thriving</b> – the initiative is providing links into the wider opportunity (e.g. skills, training, volunteering opportunities).	£151,016.50

<b>Well Served</b> – the initiative is providing an affordable service which is accessible to the whole community.	£30,938.00
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Dividing the net value of each output area by input cost leads to the following results:

<b>Total Return</b>	
<i>Less (-)</i>	
Leakage – are any of the beneficiaries from outside Market Harborough?	£0.00
Deadweight – what would have happened anyway?	£536,218.67
Attribution – have other organisations been helping your beneficiaries?	£306,858.14
Drop-Off – will the results of your initiative diminish over time?	£323,849.82
<i>Total Return after leakage, deadweight, attribution and drop-off</i>	<i>£289,566.25</i>
<b>Total Expressed as a Net Present Value</b>	<b>£285,349.26</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£22,863.00</b>

This leads to a net Social Return on Investment for Waterloo Community Garden of £12.48 for every £1.00 invested by Sustainable Harborough. This is illustrated in the diagram below.



The community garden has been established and run by volunteers; with the CIO formed and now being registered with the Charity Commission. The initiative will continue after Sustainable Harborough ends.

## **(ii) Harborough Solar One**

### *About the initiative*

The initiative aims to show how everyone can benefit from community owned solar schemes by solving the problems of:

- How to finance expensive renewables up-front.
- How to get more renewables around.
- How to enable the community to initiate and deliver a renewable energy project.
- How to generate financial savings for businesses, schools ('roof hosts').
- How to generate income and funding for the local community.

### *About the outputs, outcomes and financial proxies*

Information has been collected on:

- The number of people participating in the initiative.
- The forecast reductions in energy bills for the roof hosts.
- The forecast cashable savings for residents and businesses from investing in renewables.
- The number of new renewable energy businesses created.
- The more substantive links that have formed between local residents, businesses and schools through the initiative – and sharing learning with Community Energy England.

Financial proxies have been attributed to these output areas:

Initiative Output	Outcome selected	Financial Proxy selected	Unit Cost	Number of Units	Time Period	Leakage deflator	Deadweight deflator	Attribution deflator	Drop-Off deflator	Total Annual Return	Total Project Return	Source
Reduction in energy bills - for one business and one school	3a. carbon reduction through sustainable behaviours and increase in green space	expenditure on energy per family per year	£1,423.00	2 groups	20 years and 0 months	£0.00	£17,076.00	£5,692.00	£17,076.00	£2,846.00	£56,920.00	ONS Family Spending, Edition 2014
More substantive links formed between local	8a. more substantive links between organisations	dft estimation of business time savings	£8,035.00	7 groups	1 years and 1 months	£0.00	£15,233.02	£6,093.21	£3,046.60	£56,245.00	£60,932.08	Countryside and Community Research Institute,

Initiative Output	Outcome selected	Financial Proxy selected	Unit Cost	Number of Units	Time Period	Leakage deflator	Deadweight deflator	Attribution deflator	Drop-Off deflator	Total Annual Return	Total Project Return	Source
residents, businesses and the school	and service providers											Assessment of The Social Return on Investment
Supporting the local community to establish 2 new renewable energy business	7a. increase in the creation of new micro-enterprises	average cost of starting a micro-business	£41,458.00	2 businesses	1 years and 1 months	£0.00	£4,491.28	£4,491.28	£44,912.83	£82,916.00	£89,825.67	Business Zone, Average Cost of Starting a Business
Adoption of renewables by residents and businesses (solar PV installations)	3d. improved resource efficiency adoption of renewable energy	cashable benefits from investing in renewables	£3.36	£231516	20 years and 0 months	£0.00	£4,667,362.56	£4,667,362.56	£4,667,362.56	£777,893.76	£15,557,875.20	Association for Public Service Excellence, Powerful Impacts: Exploring the social and economic benefits of renewable energy schemes
Working with Community Energy England - reporting on findings, collaborating on projects	2d. improved efficiency and dynamism of community and voluntary sector	dft estimation of business time savings	£8,035.00	3 groups	1 years and 1 months	£7,834.13	£7,834.13	£0.00	£0.00	£24,105.00	£26,113.75	Countryside and Community Research Institute, Assessment of The Social Return on Investment
Providing 4 members of the local community	2a. improved capacity for local solutions to	average cost of trustee training	£280.00	4 people	1 years and 1 months	£0.00	£121.33	£121.33	£0.00	£1,120.00	£1,213.33	National Council for Voluntary Organisations

Initiative Output	Outcome selected	Financial Proxy selected	Unit Cost	Number of Units	Time Period	Leakage deflator	Deadweight deflator	Attribution deflator	Drop-Off deflator	Total Annual Return	Total Project Return	Source
with governance support	local problems											
Local people participating in a renewable energy project	3b. improved water and soil quality	willingness to pay for improved air quality	£14.00	94 people	1 years and 1 months	£356.42	£71.28	£71.28	£498.98	£1,316.00	£1,425.67	Value Base

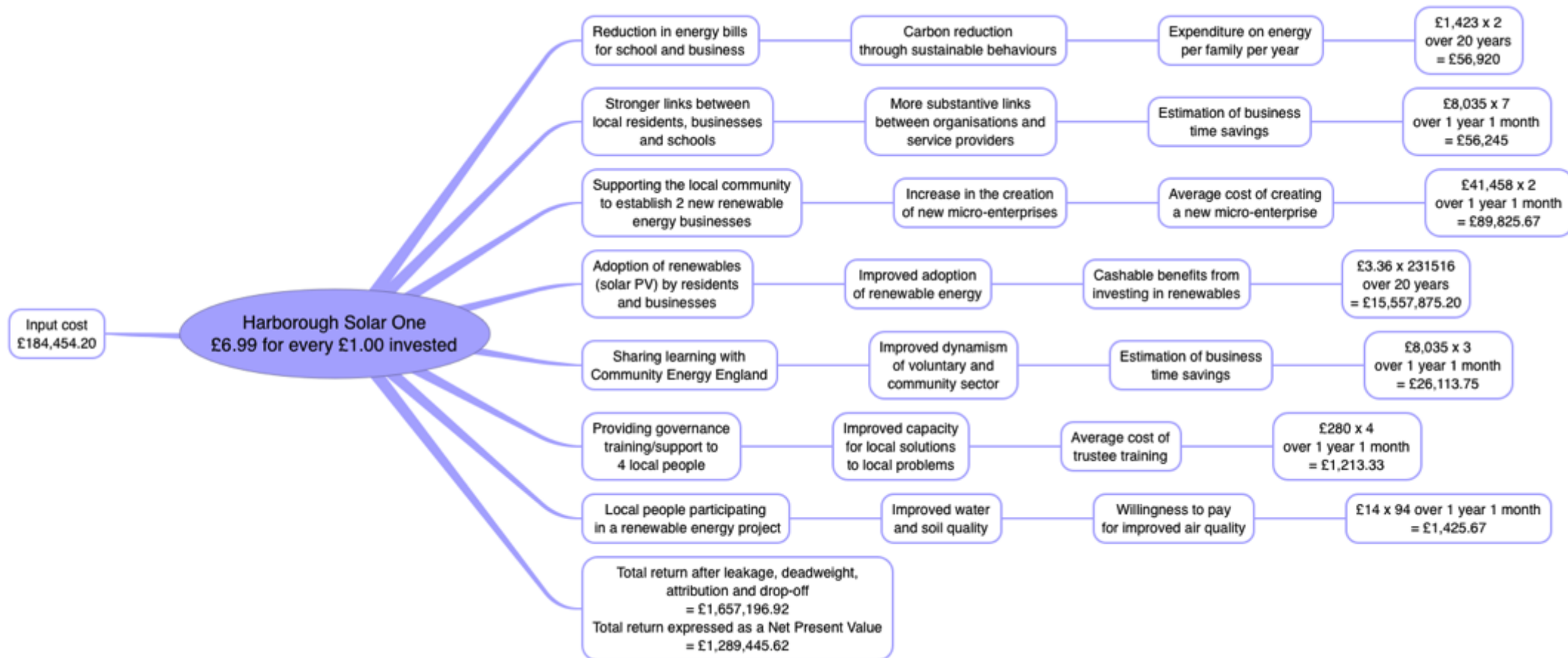
The table above is colour coded to represent different areas of the Bristol Accord – this enables you to see the difference an activity is making to a place and the sustainability of a local community. Harborough Solar One is having an impact in the following areas of the Bristol Accord:

<b>Well Run</b> – capacity building to develop the local community's skills, knowledge and confidence in renewable energy	£88,259.16
<b>Environment</b> – the initiative is actively seeking to minimise climate change through the use of renewables.	£15,616,220.87
<b>Thriving</b> – the initiative is using suitable local buildings to support investment in renewable energy	£89,825.67

Dividing the net value of each output area by input cost leads to the following results:

<b>Total Return</b>	
<i>Less (-)</i>	
Leakage – are any of the beneficiaries from outside Market Harborough?	£8,190.55
Deadweight – what would have happened anyway?	£4,712,189.60
Attribution – have other organisations been helping your beneficiaries?	£4,683,831.66
Drop-Off – will the results of your initiative diminish over time?	£4,732,896.97
<i>Total Return after leakage, deadweight, attribution and drop-off</i>	<i>£1,657,196.92</i>
<b>Total Return expressed as a Net Present Value</b>	<b>£1,289,445.62</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 184,454.20</b>

This leads to a net Social Return on Investment for Harborough Solar One of £6.99 for every £1.00 invested by Sustainable Harborough. This is illustrated in the diagram below.



### **Income multiplier**

Fifty-three investors in Harborough Solar One receive an average annual payment of £83.48.

A proportion of this increased income will be re-spent on local goods and services – it will have an induced effect.

Using the Scottish Government's Type II (direct, indirect and induced effects) table in its Input-Output model suggests a multiplier of 2.4 from spend on electricity activity. In other words, for every £1.00 invested there is an income multiplier of 2.4 meaning £2.40 of additional spend will take place.

For Harborough Solar One this means the average payment of £83.48 generates an additional £200.35 of spend through linkage effects on goods and services from suppliers.

From 2018 the initiative will be appointing a project delivery support officer (equating to 3 days a month a minimum) and is looking to deliver other pieces of paid work.

### **(iii) Green Open Homes**

#### *About the initiative*

A Green Open Homes event is an opportunity for residents to ask a neighbour about an energy saving improvement that they've made, and see if it might work for them. On an event day, people who have made energy saving improvements open up their homes to share their experiences. Visiting a home is seen as a great way to find out about the reality of getting solar panels, insulation, triple glazing, or new heating options (receiving impartial practical advice rather than talking to a salesperson). Residents are able to have a good look at the technology, whether the installation was a hassle, and find out much they're really saving on their energy bills as a result.

#### *About the outputs, outcomes and financial proxies*

The events took place over 2 years. Information has been collected on:

- The number of householders involved in the events (i.e., opening their homes, conducting tours) – and the training/support they have received.
- The number of residents visiting the open houses.
- Residents who have implemented an energy saving improvement as a result of the event now, in the next 12 months or next five years (e.g. taken detailed information on products/technologies, said they are considering or have made a major change, participation in a local energy group).

Financial proxies have been attributed to these output areas:

Initiative Output	Outcome Selected	Financial Proxy	Unit Cost	Number of Units	Time Period	Leakage deflator	Deadweight deflator	Attribution deflator	Drop-Off deflator	Total Annual Return	Total Project Return over 2 years	Source
Number of householders demonstrating energy saving improvements	2e. improved leadership and agency for individuals in the community	cost of advocacy	£31.00	20 hours	2 years and 0 months	£0.00	£124.00	£0.00	£620.00	£620.00	£1,240.00	Children Society, Calculating the Cost According to Age
Number of residents visiting an open house and making an energy saving improvement to their home	3a. carbon reduction through sustainable behaviours and increase in green space	expenditure on energy per family per year	£1,423.00	75 people	2 years and 0 months	£0.00	£181,432.50	£21,345.00	£0.00	£106,725.00	£213,450.00	ONS Family Spending, Edition 2014
Number of householders provided with training/support	7e. skills development and improvement for residents and workers (including migrant workers)	average cost of a personal development course	£850.00	20 people	2 years and 0 months	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£17,000.00	£34,000.00	Corporate Coach Group, Personal Development Training

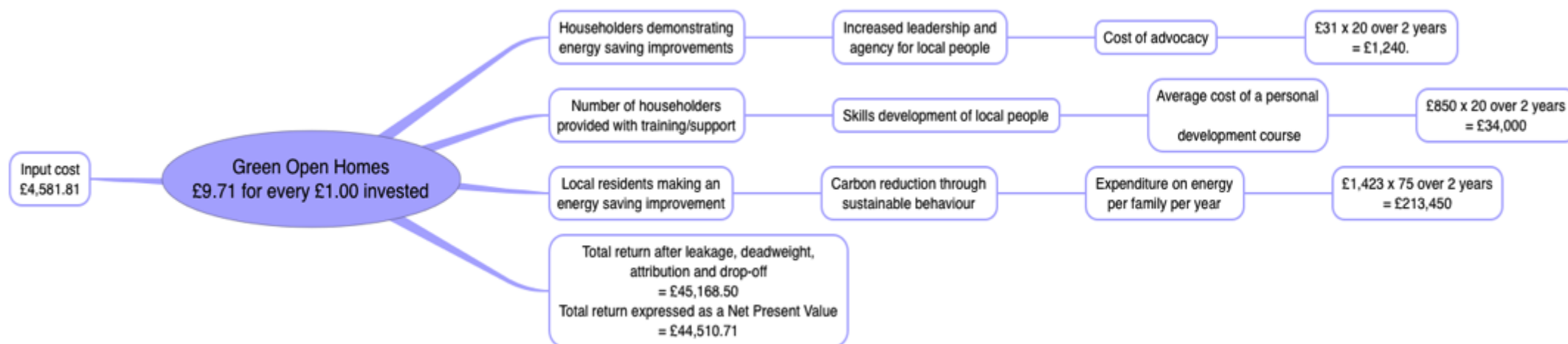
The table above is colour coded to represent different areas of the Bristol Accord – this enables you to see the difference an activity is making to a place and the sustainability of a local community. Green Open Homes has had an impact in the following areas of the Bristol Accord:

<b>Well Run</b> – the initiative has built the capacity of the local community and a sense of responsibility and pride.	£1,240.00
<b>Environment</b> –the initiative has provided places for people to visit that respect the environment and use resources efficiently: visitors have gone away and sought to then maximise their energy efficiency.	£213,450.00
<b>Thriving</b> – the initiative has provided local householders with training and support to benefit the local community.	£34,000.00

Dividing the net value of each output area by input cost leads to the following results:

<b>Total Return</b>	
<i>Less (-)</i>	
Leakage – are any of the beneficiaries from outside Market Harborough?	£0.00
Deadweight – what would have happened anyway?	£181,556.50
Attribution – have other organisations been helping your beneficiaries?	£21,345.00
Drop-Off – will the results of your initiative diminish over time?	£620.00
<i>Total Return after leakage, deadweight, attribution and drop-off</i>	<i>£45,168.50</i>
<b>Total Return expressed as a Net Present Value</b>	<b>£44,510.71</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£4,581.81</b>

This leads to a net Social Return on Investment for Green Open Homes of £9.71 for every £1.00 invested by Sustainable Harborough. This is illustrated in the diagram below.



One resident participating in the initiative described how: “I was very surprised at how many different products are available depending on your budget, house size etc.”

Unit costs are not available for the project. To provide an indicative sense of the value delivered by Sustainable Harborough financial proxies from the Social Value Engine have been applied to a number of the overall outputs achieved by the project. This is set out in the table below:

Indicator	Financial Proxy Selected	Unit Cost £	Number of Units	Social Value £	Notes
6a - Number of people from other communities reached via dissemination activities	Value to an individual (aged 25-49 years) of feeling like they belong in their neighbourhood.  <a href="http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/Value%20for%20Money%20Statement%20%E2%80%93%202014.pdf">http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/Value%20for%20Money%20Statement%20%E2%80%93%202014.pdf</a>	9409	226	400823	Actual number – deflated by 90% to account for other factors that contributed to the achievement of the target
4b - Number of new community enterprises	Average cost of starting a micro-business  <a href="http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/Value%20for%20Money%20Statement%20%E2%80%93%202014.pdf">http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/Value%20for%20Money%20Statement%20%E2%80%93%202014.pdf</a>	41458	5	207290	Actual number
3b - Number of vulnerable individuals and households with reduced food and fuel costs	Average fuel poverty gap  <a href="http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/Annual_Fuel_Poverty_Statistics_Report_2016_-_revised_26.04.2017.pdf">http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/Annual_Fuel_Poverty_Statistics_Report_2016_-_revised_26.04.2017.pdf</a>	371	116	43036	Actual number
2c - Number of interventions carried out by households, businesses and schools	Expenditure on energy per family per year  <a href="http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/household%20expenditure%20ONS.pdf">http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/household%20expenditure%20ONS.pdf</a>	1423	1823	259412	Actual number - deflated by 90% to account for other factors that contributed to the achievement of the target
2a & 2b Reduction in CO2 emissions	Cost per kg of CO2  <a href="http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0386111211000136">http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0386111211000136</a>	3.43	3,964,000	6,788,260	Reduction in CO2 emissions estimated over the life of the interventions supported by Sustainable Harborough - deflated by 50% to account for other factors that contributed to the

Indicator	Financial Proxy Selected	Unit Cost £	Number of Units	Social Value £	Notes
					achievement of the target
1b - Number of people reporting improved knowledge or skills	Average cost of a personal development course  <a href="http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/Two%20Day%20Personal%20Development%20Training%20Course.pdf">http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/Two%20Day%20Personal%20Development%20Training%20Course.pdf</a>	850	1471	1250350	Actual number
1a - Number of people participating as volunteers or community champions	Value per volunteer in UK  <a href="http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/352270956-Helping-Out-A-national-survey-of-volunteering-and-charitable-giving.pdf">http://socialvalueengine.com/calculator/352270956-Helping-Out-A-national-survey-of-volunteering-and-charitable-giving.pdf</a>	1666	400	666400	Actual number

It has only been possible to generate a *Gross Social Value for Sustainable Harborough*. This is because (a) there is insufficient evidence to take account of all of the 'deflators' for every indicator (i.e., leakage, deadweight, attribution and drop-off). Where this has been possible this is indicated in the notes column of the table above. (b) The contribution of others such as loaning equipment or offering a room for free for a meeting has not been routinely collected for the overall project. This means generating a Net Social Value (i.e., looking at the unique contribution Sustainable Harborough has made to the overall gross value) has not been possible.

Taking account of the overall outputs where a financial proxy has been applied, and then dividing these by the £1 million Lottery investment over 5 years generates **a Gross Social Value of £9.61 for every £1.00 invested**. This £9.61 figure includes Sustainable Harborough's contribution as well as contributions made by others.

## Economic findings

This section considers whether Sustainable Harborough has offered value-for-money to its funder and/or whether it could have been more effective economically.

### **Value-for-money: how effective is Sustainable Harborough?**

Sustainable Harborough does not have unit costs. This is because the project is person/community led rather than top-down and prescriptive with its initiatives and activities pre-determined.

Value-for-money has been incorporated into the design stage of the project's activities and initiatives. Here the staff team considers:

- Can the initiative be delivered over Sustainable Harborough's duration?
- How much will it cost (e.g. from the Lottery grant)?
- What other resources will it need (e.g. staff time to build capacity, help people focus their ideas).
- What other input from Sustainable Harborough might be required – now and in the future?

Value-for-money has been monitored in two ways. Firstly by the partnership, which has had oversight of the budget. Secondly, by project staff who have regularly reviewed and had ongoing real-time internal conversations about each activity/initiative.

### **How reactive is Sustainable Harborough to meeting beneficiary needs? (How efficient is the project?)**

To understand whether Sustainable Harborough has responded as quickly as possible (*reactive*), we spoke to a number of beneficiaries and reviewed the spreadsheets that relate to each initiative.

Project staff have recorded and monitored people participating in any activity led by Sustainable Harborough. When an individual/group expresses an interest in the project the nature of their involvement, the amount of time they can commit and where an initiative is (just starting or established, whether activities take place regularly or less frequently – when the next induction day is or when the group next meets etc.) are taken into account. In practice, this has meant beneficiaries have not had to wait a long time to be able to participate in the project.

Sustainable Harborough has also thought about the deliverability of its activities/initiatives before it has sought to engage people in them. This means individuals/groups have not enquired to be a part of something that may or may not happen; rather they register an interest in initiatives that are in the pipeline, starting up or already taking place. This has ensured the project has identified and managed beneficiary needs.

## Conclusions

This section contains a summary of the results of the evaluation and some considerations for similar future projects.

Sustainable Harborough has taken abstract concepts (e.g. climate change, carbon footprint, environmental sustainability) and translated them into meaningful initiatives to help residents, households, businesses and schools adapt the way they live, work and connect. It has been person/community led and grassroots driven rather than top-down and prescriptive. The project has had the time and flexibility to try new ideas and learn from what has worked well and less well.

### ***How well has Sustainable Harborough met its stated targets and outcomes?***

Sustainable Harborough is a “test and learn” project. It has tried different things: carrying on with activities that work well and discontinuing activities that work less well. Over the last five years, project staff have had real time conversations with the beneficiaries, the partnership, stakeholders and the Lottery about whom, how and when the project is delivered. This has led to:

- The *overachievement of many of its targets*: particularly the number of people engaged and the number of - interventions carried out by businesses and schools.
- Identifying how *some of the targets are difficult to measure* (e.g. reduction in CO2 emissions) or require new ways of measuring (e.g. the use of shopper surveys, public competitions) from that described when the Project Development Plan was written.
- The project has been *responsive* to what the local community wants to do – measuring the totality of what Sustainable Harborough has achieved is therefore difficult as it has many facets and strands underpinning its activities.
- A recognition that some of the outcomes the project is seeking to achieve are *generational* and will not happen in their entirety over the five-years of its operation. Rather Sustainable Harborough has sought to embed sustainable ideas and actions that can continue to be taken forward after the project finishes. E.g. the work with vulnerable households that the community energy initiative is now undertaking.

### ***How have Sustainable Harborough’s systems and processes been set up – have they enabled the project to accumulate evidence to demonstrate the difference it is making?***

Sustainable Harborough had to set up project systems – and has done so in ways that tracks individual beneficiaries/groups, initiatives and their contribution to meeting Lottery targets and outcomes. Importantly, the systems have also enabled staff to collect additional information that demonstrate the added value they have delivered (e.g. brokering relationships, leveraging other funding).

### ***How has the project benefitted individual initiatives and beneficiaries in Market Harborough? And how has this information been shared with the local community and Learning Partnership established by the Lottery?***

Sustainable Harborough has meant different things to different people – although it has multiple facets these have been drawn together under sub-themes (food,

energy, environment). In some cases people/groups benefitting from project support have been unaware that this is from Sustainable Harborough and the 'brand' has been less well known than it might.

- Sustainable Harborough has increased participation, training, shared thinking, knowledge and skills in environmental initiatives among beneficiaries.
- Local networks have been built and/or become far richer. Sustainable Harborough has acted as an 'honest broker' and 'enabler' for different groups/organisations.
- Sustainable Harborough has encouraged people to work together who might not have done or would have taken longer to do so.
- It has made things happen that might not otherwise have taken place e.g. putting solar panels on public buildings; where/how/why purchase local food.

Learning has been an integral part of the project:

- Within Market Harborough learning has been disseminated through the mid-term formative review and 'State of the Town' report – and information about the project has been available online, through a newsletter, social media and print media.
- As part of Communities Living Sustainably, the project has contributed to a Groundwork led Learning Partnership – highlighting key issues, experience and activities and contributing to reports and workshops.
- Initiatives set up by Sustainable Harborough have sought to share learning more widely e.g. Harborough Solar One with Community Energy England.

### ***What has been successful and worked well, and what has worked less well (and why)?***

*Things that have worked well:*

- The project has helped people on their sustainability journey on their own terms.
- It has provided the wiring to make things happen at a grassroots local level rather than being a campaigning or lobbying organisation with a physical presence on the high street.
- The staff team has been consistent – and they have been approachable, knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Local people have felt able to come to them with ideas and know they will help.

*Things that have worked less well:*

- There is a recognition that the project has found it difficult to engage vulnerable people affected by increasing food and fuel costs – how do you engage and support people in the greatest need? How do you ensure you don't replicate but enhance existing provision?
- Some members of the partnership have changed – initiatives conceptualised in the Project Development Plan have not been fully realised without their input.

### ***Has Sustainable Harborough been a good investment locally?***

At the design stage the project has thought carefully about investing in sustainable initiatives rather than treating the Lottery grant as money to be spent on activities which have no life beyond December 2017. Some of the wiring or 'glue' that Sustainable Harborough has provided have been difficult to cost or quantify.

Some of the initiatives that the project has supported will bring in additional local investment (e.g. income multiplier used for Harborough Solar One – energy efficiency savings).

***What learning and recommendations can be taken forward in similar future projects?***

- Understanding the data you will need to collect to measure your outcomes and building this into project design and delivery. And thinking about other data that can be captured on the added value you are delivering.
- What role you want your partnership, board or steering group to play – an oversight role, providing strategic input, acting as a sounding board, supporting delivery (all or some of the above)?
- Ensuring communities are better prepared for environmental challenges cannot be achieved in a 3, 5, 10 year project time horizon – buy-in takes time so thinking about legacy and sustainability from the outset is important.
- Considering what initiatives/activities you support – and knowing when to withdraw support from something that isn't going to work.

As a result of Sustainable Harborough the local community (businesses, schools, communities, groups and individuals) are taking more responsibility for making Market Harborough more sustainable.



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