

The Carbon Conversations Facilitator's Guide

Rosemary Randall

“ In these groups people explore issues they care deeply about, they speak from their hearts, and I find their enthusiasm and willingness to engage inspiring. Facilitating has been a very rich learning experience for me. Exploring our responses to climate change is fascinating and it's been great for developing my communication skills.

“ Having taken part in a Carbon Conversations group, I could see how powerful the process was and I wanted to learn how to harness that power myself. As a facilitator I've loved seeing how the people in groups gain strength from talking about their feelings.

“ Learning how to manage conflict in a group creatively has been so important. It doesn't faze me anymore and I actually enjoy the differences between people now.

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the *Carbon Conversations Facilitator's Guide*.

Carbon Conversations groups have been used across the UK, from Brighton in the South, to the Scottish highlands in the North.

Climate change and carbon reduction are topics that produce strong reactions in people. When someone truly acknowledges the reality of climate change for the first time their feelings are often painful and hard to bear. The old defences of indifference or false optimism don't work: it's no longer possible to say that you don't care, or that you think that it will all work out. Anxiety, guilt or a generalised distress seep through. If these feelings are not contained they can produce another layer of defence. Outbursts of anger, blame or cynicism appear and alternate with a sense of defeat and powerlessness.

Carbon Conversations groups acknowledge the complexity of these feelings about climate change – our desire to act versus our desire to keep everything as it is; our willingness to take responsibility, versus our desire to blame others; our longing for a parental figure who will cope, versus our recognition that we too need to step up. The groups provide a safe space where people can explore humanity's impact on the climate and decide what they want to do about it. The groups are based on a psychological understanding of how people react to difficult news, how they face the need for change, and how to turn this into practical and effective action to reduce emissions.

Key to this experience are the group facilitators. Their attention to individuals and to the group process creates an atmosphere where people can explore the issues without fear of criticism. The meetings provide time for discussion, understanding, reflection and change.

Aims of this guide

This guide explains how to set up and facilitate Carbon Conversations groups. The guide explains how to use the groups as part of a community project and how to recruit members. It offers detailed guidance on the psychology of climate change, on workshop design, on group process and on facilitation skills. It describes over 80 different activities that you can use during the groups alongside two sample programmes, outlining how to use them. In particular the guide will help you to:

- understand and respond to common reactions to climate change;
- work sensitively and effectively in a group;
- plan each meeting;
- answer questions that may arise;
- support the group between meetings;
- evaluate how effective your group has been.

Materials

The materials for the groups consist of:

- *In Time for Tomorrow? the Carbon Conversations Handbook*; 214pp. full colour, illustrated book, covering the main issues about climate change, carbon reduction and the process of change, issued to each participant;
- *The Carbon Conversations Workbook*, 36pp. book of group based and home based activities, issued to each participant, to help them make practical reductions in the emissions they are responsible for;
- *Monitoring your Footprint*, an online aid to recording and calculating the personal carbon emissions due to home energy, travel, food and other purchases, available on the Carbon Conversations website;
- *The Carbon Footprint Calculator*, a short lifestyle questionnaire which is used as an engagement tool, at the start of groups, to make a rough calculation of an individual footprint, available on the Carbon Conversations website.
- *The Carbon Conversations Games*, a pack of three games used to explain the carbon emissions involved in home energy, travel and food;
- *The Carbon Conversations Facilitator's Guide* – this book;
- all the above materials are available on the Carbon Conversations website www.carbonconversations.org.

Approach and ethos

For the average UK citizen with an ordinary 15 tonne lifestyle, going beyond token carbon reduction is difficult. People's resource use is tied into complex social practices. The dominant economic and social systems create acceptable, convenient ways of doing everything from washing clothes to getting to work. Stepping outside these norms is hard both practically and personally. Time, money, your sense of identity, values, desires and status can all be in play. Who am I, if I'm not the person with a new car each year? Will the kids hate me if we don't fly somewhere this summer? What if 'best for my family' and 'best for the climate' conflict?

The groups explore these questions and many like them. Discussions of carbon reduction are woven together with discussions of how people feel and what change means personally. Social and political constraints are taken account of and group members are encouraged to explore the part they play in maintaining unhelpful systems and structures.

The groups encourage people to be open, work through the conflicts about carbon reduction and support each other. People are encouraged to move towards action at whatever level and whatever speed works for them. Research by Southampton University (Buchs et al 2015) found people make average reductions of 3.7 tonnes immediately after participation. Group members are encouraged to explore how to halve their footprints over a 4-5 year period. The written materials and games provide well-researched, reliable background information for the reflective and personal discussions.

In creating Carbon Conversations, we had five principles in mind.

The importance of the personal

Climate change is alarming and it is easy to feel powerless in the face of it. We start from an understanding of personal experience and the psychological barriers to action. We try to begin from where people are now, not from where we would like them to be tomorrow.

The necessity of connection

When people feel supported and connected to others, they become able to act. We hope that, through making relationships in the groups, members will achieve a sense of companionship, a common purpose and a joint project.

The power of creativity

When there is space for creativity, people take ownership of problems and develop solutions. It is essential that members feel encouraged to contribute from their own experience and experiment with solutions that feel right for them.

The richness of diversity

We believe that our work is enriched by embracing the distinctive views of our diverse communities.

The translation of the technical

Understanding climate change involves grasping complex ideas about science, society, technology, culture and politics. We have tried to design learning materials that are clear, accessible and appropriate for a diverse audience.

Becoming a facilitator

Carbon Conversations groups combine exploratory, participative learning with psychological understanding of how people deal with difficult issues and make changes. Facilitators need to combine confidence in the programme's content with good relationship skills. It's important to be able to communicate the key issues clearly, to organise and to time-keep. It's also important to be able to listen, show warmth, be reflective, pay attention to group process and help participants work through the dilemmas of facing and dealing with climate change.

Carbon Conversations is best delivered by people who have prior training in facilitation and it is best to co-facilitate. Working with a partner means you can share responsibility and bring complementary skills to your group. Make sure you also have a reliable expert on hand who you can consult about any technical issues.

2. Climate, psychology and the process of change

Psychology can help us understand the complexity of our reactions about climate change: not just why some people ignore or deny the problem but the strange mix of reactions that most of us have and the difficulty of getting our behaviour to line up with our intentions. It can also help us understand the processes involved when people try to make changes to their lives and relationships – what is easy, what is difficult, and how to overcome problems and resistances.

The psychology of climate change

People who enrol in Carbon Conversation groups usually do so because they are concerned about climate change and want to do something about it. Nonetheless, they wouldn't be human if they weren't also beset with anxiety, sadness, doubt, anger and a thousand other difficult emotions. How should we understand these reactions?

Inner conflict and denial

We are all creatures of conflict, made up of opposing impulses, emotions and ideas. Despite our assertions, most of us do not know ourselves well: our conscious intentions, our unconscious desires and our behaviour don't always march to the same tune. Part of being human is to be capable of self-deception. For example, we can:

- hide our less worthy motives from ourselves;
- repress our unacceptable passions;
- hold one view in one context and a contradictory view in another;
- have good intentions but struggle to fulfil them;
- rationalise actions we feel guilty about;
- resist messages we don't like and shape reality to our preferred 'truth';
- hope irrationally that a parent or hero will arrive and solve all our problems.

We hear a lot about people who deny outright that climate change is happening. Much more common is the form of denial that psychoanalysis calls disavowal. Here, uncomfortable knowledge is split off and kept in a separate part of the mind. You know something with one part of your mind but don't know it with another. Connections are destroyed. Emotions are split from their causes. Facts are no longer linked to their consequences. The result is that, for a time, the disturbing knowledge no longer troubles you and you are able to get on with life as usual. This explains the way that a conversation can move seamlessly from chat about climate change into chat about foreign holidays without causing discomfort. Journalist Anne Karpf described these processes well when she described herself and many others as climate change ignorers, charting the defensive moves she recognised in herself:

"Other people are worse than me/it's all the fault of someone else (blame-shifting); they'll come up with something (techno-optimism); make hay while the sun shines (hedonistic fatalism). Then there's the view that the earth is so old and large, it can withstand the depredations of puny humans. I'd add another: climate-change fatigue. It's all too easy to become inured to the warnings – the 'yes, yes, I've heard it all before' defence." (Karpf 2012).

Jonathan Rowson uses the term 'the unmoved' to describe people who acknowledge that climate change is happening but behave as if it has little to do with them, (Rowson, 2013) while Renee Lertzman argues that apathy about climate change is often a cover for painful feelings of powerlessness or grief, (Lertzman, 2008).

It can help to acknowledge that these are shared experiences. None of us are consistent or rational. We all struggle with conflicts between different desires, avoid distressing subjects and protect ourselves from psychological pain. It can be tempting to point out to someone that their behaviour doesn't match up to their beliefs, to accuse them of inconsistency or berate them for their indifference. This is unlikely to help. People are more likely to rationalise their attitude than change their behaviour while an accusation will drive them away.

It is more helpful to look for ways of opening up this difficult subject. Anxiety, guilt, shame, loss and grief are likely to be in play whenever our responsibility for climate change is the topic. Challenges to people's sense of identity, aspiration and social expectations will be involved. Don't be surprised by your own and other people's desire to resist changes that may be necessary but which are, in many ways, deeply unwelcome.

Anxiety, guilt and shame

Climate change rightly makes people feel anxious. A manageable amount of anxiety can be a wake-up call and may lead to action. But anxiety by itself is not a good motivator; it can make people feel powerless, despairing and apathetic. If anxiety becomes overwhelming, people are likely defend themselves by:

- denying the problem;
- putting it in a box to think about another time;
- rationalising that it's not really as important as it first appeared;
- deciding that we are all doomed and might as well party our way to extinction.

Guilt is also a poor motivator. Stories of suffering caused by our selfishness will certainly make us feel bad but won't necessarily lead to action. It doesn't help to make people feel criticised and punished. Guilt can lead to people:

- getting angry and not listening;
- trying hard at first, then giving up (rather like a strict diet being broken by a binge);
- punishing themselves, becoming obsessive about what they should do themselves, and being moralising towards others.

Sometimes when people say that climate change makes them feel guilty, they are more accurately describing a feeling of shame, a feeling of being unworthy, demeaned, embarrassed and exposed to the critical view of others. Shame attacks people's sense of their own value and is easily triggered by being made to feel ignorant or by another person's condescension. Shame can lead people to:

- withdraw or avoid the subject – the 'Sorry, I'm not interested' response;
- compensate by exaggerating one's efforts or worth – the 'I do my recycling/I've been doing this for years/I do loads for the environment' response;
- make themselves into the victim – the 'I've got too much to do/I'm being hammered by other problems/I've made sacrifices already' response ;
- contemptuously blame someone else instead – the 'What about bankers/the Chinese/people who drive SUVs' response.

Recognising your own experiences of anxiety, guilt and shame and the way you protect yourself from them will make you more sympathetic to other people's expressions of these feelings. This kind of compassion will help you be a better facilitator, not because you accept these defences but because you will be better able to see how to overcome them.

Loss and grief

Carbon Conversations asks people to think about their relationship to some big subjects:

- the natural world and its resources;
- our economic, political and social systems;
- issues of justice and equality.

and then suggests that climate change means that most of us need to make major changes to the way we live.

Any major life change brings losses as well as gains. Climate change is likely to bring:

- loss of the life we have been used to or the prospects we'd planned;
- loss of lifestyle and identity;
- loss of connections to people and places we care about;
- loss of security and confidence in the future;
- loss of habitats and species that are valuable both in themselves and as part of the bio-systems that support us.

With loss comes grief – regret at what is lost, sadness at what cannot be recovered, confusion and helplessness in the face of a changed world that no longer feels safe and predictable. William Worden (Worden 1983) saw the grieving process as four tasks, each of which can be grappled with, or met with a negative response. We do not usually achieve one task neatly and then move on to the next. It is common to take a step forward and then a step back and to move between grappling with the loss and retreating into the negative responses.

Try thinking about your own responses to climate change and how you move between these different tasks. You may find it helpful to talk about this with your co-facilitator before running a group together.

Identity and aspiration

The changes people need to make may threaten their status, their aspirations or their sense of identity. Don't underestimate the impact of this. For many people, their sense of who they are is closely tied to the products they buy, the lifestyle they have chosen and the affirmation of their social circle. Realising that many of these things are unsustainable is hard and can leave people questioning themselves, feeling fragile or attacked. Think of people who have succeeded materially where their parents struggled. Foreign holidays, car ownership, home improvements and

The tasks of grief

<i>Meeting the task</i>	<i>Possible negative responses</i>
1 Accepting the reality of the loss, first intellectually and then emotionally.	Denial of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – facts of the loss; – meaning of the loss; – irreversibility of the loss.
2 Working through the painful emotions of grief (despair, fear, guilt, anger, shame, sadness, yearning, disorganisation).	Shutting off all emotion, idealising what is lost, bargaining, numbing the pain through alcohol, drugs or manic activity.
3 Adjusting to the new environment, acquiring new skills, developing a new sense of self.	Not adapting, becoming helpless, bitter, angry, depressed, withdrawing.
4 Reinvesting emotional energy.	Refusing to love, turning away from life.

Adapted from Worden, W. (1983) Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy. London, Tavistock.

the latest consumer goods are likely to matter a lot to them. Their sense of self-worth will be tied up in these material goods and the news that they are unsustainable will not be welcome.

When people are able to explore their feelings about the need for change and receive support and encouragement, they are much more likely to go through with something that is difficult for them. Attacking someone's lifestyle or mocking their aspirations will not help.

The social context

Our destructive patterns of life not only feel normal but are locked into bigger systems. Modern patterns of employment and housing make it hard to avoid lengthy commutes. The global food system makes carbon-intensive food choices easy. The increase in private renting means that many people have little control over their housing.

Swimming against the tide is not only difficult but can make people feel freaky when they do. Society offers us social contracts – deals that aren't often expressed explicitly but feel right and proper.

- Work hard and you deserve a foreign holiday.
- Slog for your 'A' levels and you can travel the world in your gap year.
- Meat twice a day is a working man's birth right.
- Get on with your life quietly and government will take care of the rest.

You can probably think of many more yourself. They vary according to class, age and culture but crop up all the time in the assumptions people make about what they've earned and what they deserve. Dealing with climate change means reshaping these social contracts and it can be hard to be a pioneer.

Defence and resistance

It is normal for people to protect themselves against shocks, unwelcome news and difficult demands. Don't be surprised at people's rationalisations, objections or forgetfulness. Don't be surprised if people sometimes want to blame others, be a special case or stop thinking about climate change altogether.

One woman in a Carbon Conversations group remarked: "There's too much to think about with food, you could never get it right and every expert's got a different opinion, so I think I'll just carry on as usual."

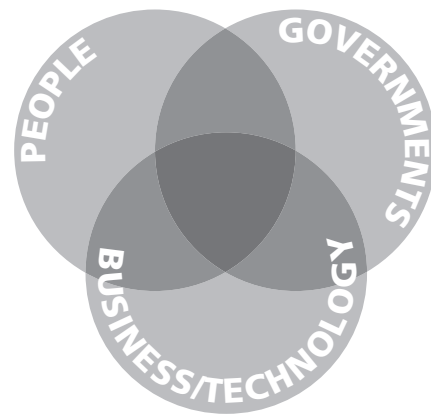
A logical approach would be to point out the food pyramid and rules of thumb in Chapter Four of *In Time for Tomorrow?* It might be more helpful however to start a conversation about her feeling of being bamboozled by experts. It's likely that behind this, she has a suspicion that someone is trying to take something away from her. She fears losing something, or being asked to do something that is too difficult.

If people are resistant to making changes, don't try to argue them into submission. Think instead about how to explore the resistance or how to soften its power. Empathising with

the feeling while at the same time not accepting the excuse often helps people unfreeze their old patterns and experiment with new ones. Opening up the discussion with the whole group can often be helpful. As a facilitator, you want your group members to support each other so they can make changes that may be difficult for them. Other people are likely to have had similar defensive reactions and exploring these together can often open a way through.

The process of change

How does change happen? There are many different approaches – psychological, social, organisational and political. In *In Time for Tomorrow?* we suggest that carbon reduction requires action by governments, business, technology and individuals.



Carbon Conversations focuses on the changes that people can make in their personal lives and in this section we describe five different approaches to how people do this – therapeutic approaches, experiential learning, systemic approaches, behavioural models and values-based approaches. You may find these useful when thinking about how people are going to achieve carbon reduction through the groups that you run.

Therapeutic approaches

We draw strongly on therapeutic approaches in Carbon Conversations. Psychotherapy suggests that we don't always know ourselves very well, are ambivalent about change, hide uncomfortable truths from ourselves and defend ourselves against painful experiences. This approach suggests that it is important to pay attention to:

- people's inner conflicts, their moods and emotions;
- people's vulnerability, defences and resistance;
- people's personal history;
- the process of change and the way it can involve slow shifts, sudden breakthroughs, surprising reverses and steps forward and back – not necessarily in any predictable pattern;
- the relationships which make change easy or difficult – both in someone's external life and in the therapy room or group setting.

The emphasis is on creating a helpful medium for change, rather than describing what should happen or the exact process of change. The opportunity to explore new

perspectives, receive feedback and observe how others respond are all important parts of this mix. In Chapter Three: 'Working in groups', we talk about this in terms of creating a safe, non-judgmental space. A Carbon Conversations group is not a therapy group but there is much that can be learned from the therapeutic approach.

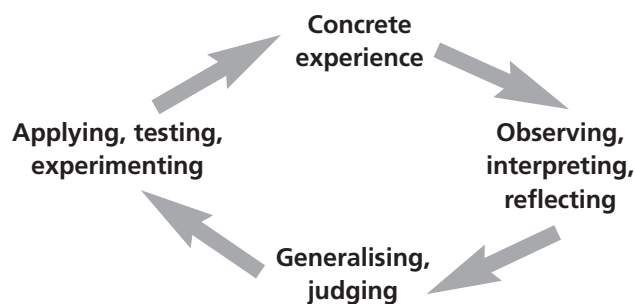
Experiential learning

The therapeutic approach fits neatly with some of the ideas of experiential learning. It's well known that people don't learn simply by being given information but through experience – cognitively, emotionally, practically and reflectively. Jon Barrett, in his book *Sustainability through Experience* (Barrett 2014) quotes Confucius who reputedly said:

"Tell me and I forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I will understand."

The principle exponent of experiential learning is David Kolb who proposed a cycle of steps that must be gone through.

Kolb's experiential learning cycle



As Jon Barrett describes it:

"...for effective learning to take place, the whole experiential learning cycle must be followed in sequence – although it is possible to enter the cycle at any point. Thus, we can learn from experience at the time it occurs or else retrospectively when thinking about it later. We can reinterpret a past event by reviewing it in the light of new experiences and we can anticipate future experiences by reflecting on prior ones. But in all cases, the cycle must be completed and applying and testing the learning gained in new experiences." (Barrett, 2013).

Carbon Conversations can involve a lot of technical and practical detail. Keeping Kolb's experiential learning cycle in mind will help you offer people experiences that members can integrate into their own process of change.

Systemic approaches

A systemic approach emphasises that people are always part of a bigger system: in fact they exist in many overlapping systems, for example the biosphere, local ecologies, economic classes, neighbourhoods, social groups, workplaces and family units. Changing one part of a system has knock on effects – and perhaps unintended consequences – elsewhere. And trying to make changes where other systemic forces are working against you is like banging your head against the proverbial brick wall.

Social theorist Elizabeth Shove argues that our environmentally destructive behaviours are actually social practices, co-determined in big socio-technical systems, (Shove et al 2012). For example many people now wash clothes every day rather than once a week as 50 years ago. This could be seen as an accumulation of personal decisions but Shove argues that this would be a mistake. Our laundry behaviour is part of a much bigger system that incorporates inputs from washing machine manufacturers, house builders, textile designers, fashion houses and detergent producers as well as ideas about comfort, cleanliness and convenience which are quite different from those current in the past.

From this viewpoint we're not people making choices but people who inhabit social practices. The point is to understand how – and where – innovation is likely to happen in these systems, as this is what will push large numbers of people to change. Policy makers need to intervene to encourage social practices that will have a lower environmental impact – making it easier for people to be good citizens. Looking at the whole system like this can take some of the guilt-inducing pressure off people, though it can also be used as an excuse for inaction.

We suggest in Chapter Three of *In Time for Tomorrow?* and in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* that people use force field analysis to explore the relationship of personal action to social systems. You will find activities using force field analysis later in this guide. Keep this approach in mind whenever you come up against the complicated relationship between individual action and bigger systems.

Behavioural models

Ideas from behavioural psychology dominate attempts to get the public to change environmentally damaging behaviours. These models place responsibility firmly with individuals. Behavioural psychology sees damaging behaviour as learned or chosen, even if it is reinforced by all sorts of factors in the immediate environment. Change occurs when motivation for change is present and the person is willing to battle with unlearning an old behaviour and relearning a new one.

One of the most commonly used models for behaviour change is that of Prochaska and di Clementi (Prochaska and di Clementi 1984, and Velicer et al 1998). It is widely used in programmes which deal with behaviours such as smoking and obesity, where someone's behaviour is a risk to themselves. The model sees change as having five stages. In the table overleaf these are summarised alongside the kinds of support that may be helpful.

People don't necessarily move through the stages in this order. At any of the stages there is the possibility of relapse and the need to return to an earlier stage.

This approach to change ignores both the unconscious and the social dimensions of change but it can be a useful way of looking at specific habits that people are trying to shift and understanding the kind of support they may find helpful.

Prochaska and di Clementi's model of change

Stage of change	Appropriate support
Pre-contemplation – no intention to change	Encourage exploration of the issue, validate lack of readiness to change
Contemplation – ambivalent about change	Explore pros and cons of change
Preparation – ready to change and testing the water	Encourage initial steps, support expectation of a positive outcome, help with problem-solving
Action - making the change	Explore social support, offer affirmation, discuss difficulties
Maintenance – staying on track	Plan continuing support, focus on benefits achieved, discuss the possibility of relapse and how to cope

Values based approaches

There is a lot of discussion amongst proponents of behaviour change about the relationship between values, attitudes and behaviour. Which follows which? Does a change in behaviour lead to a shift in attitudes, or do the right attitudes have to be engaged first? The values-based approach of the Common Cause project argues that real social and environmental change requires people's intrinsic, or 'larger-than-self' values to be engaged – values to do with care for the natural world, social justice and concern for others. These values are held by everyone to some extent but in an individualistic, consumer culture they tend to be suppressed. Authors Tom Crompton (Crompton 2010) and Tim Holmes (Holmes et al 2011) argue that appeals to extrinsic values such as wealth, power and self-interest are self-defeating. The changes made are small, are frequently not maintained and send a subtle message that deeper change is not required. So, be cautious about telling people they will save money or that they can buy sparkly, green consumer goods. Work instead to help people explore the intrinsic values that will support them in making longer-term change.

Conversations for change

Talking to people about climate change is at the heart of Carbon Conversations. This doesn't just happen in the groups themselves. You will find yourself in conversations when you are promoting the groups and as you recruit tentative members. You and your group members will find yourselves drawn into conversations at home, at work and with friends as you try to live life differently.

These conversations can be uplifting and exhilarating but they can also be troublesome, hurtful and confusing. People who speak openly about climate change sometimes find themselves being attacked, misunderstood, mocked or caricatured. Often this is because they have misjudged the anxiety or threat that others feel when the subject is raised.

The following guidance is based on a form of informal counselling used by health professionals who are

supporting people with problems like smoking and obesity. The method helps the worker approach their client with respect, listen properly, hold back on information and advice, and work with the ambivalence most people feel when faced with a difficult change. It is described in detail in the book *Motivational Interviewing* by William Miller and Stephen Rollnick, (Miller and Rollnick 2002). (The title is rather confusing as it's not really about interviewing and motivation is only a small part of the process!)

Many aspects of the approach are helpful when talking about climate change, whether it's during a carbon calculator interview, in a casual conversation at work or during a Carbon Conversations group. At the heart is the expectation that people will feel ambivalence about changing their lives and will experience conflict as they try to do so. Miller and Rollnick suggest four key rules:

- Express empathy
- Develop discrepancy
- Roll with resistance
- Support self-efficacy

Express empathy

Skilful, reflective listening is key. You need to be interested in the other person and try to understand their experience. Put yourself and your story to one side. You may think you know just how the other person feels but even if there is a similarity, the nuances of their experience and the reasons for it will be different. Expect ambivalence. Help the other person explore their mixed feelings and uncertainty. Acknowledge anxiety. Be alert to the different ways it may emerge. Anxiety may be directly expressed but it can also emerge in avoidance, short-cutting a conversation or by being deflected onto something else. Don't disapprove. Don't judge. Listen carefully and show respect.

Develop discrepancy

Change is often motivated when people see the discrepancy between their current lifestyle and an important personal goal or value. Filling out the carbon calculator can lay this discrepancy bare, as can many

moments in the group discussions. Someone who cares deeply about social justice realises that their 15 tonne footprint is part of the problem. Someone who loves nature and wildlife discovers that their impact on biodiversity is far greater than they had imagined. It's important that people arrive at the arguments for change themselves: don't preempt them. If you present the arguments for change you will stimulate guilt and turn yourself into a persecutory character. If a group member arrives at the arguments themselves they will own them and feel positive about them. You can help by offering new perspectives but be careful that you don't impose them.

Roll with resistance

It's inevitable that people will express resistance. They may feel shocked by what they discover, overwhelmed by the scale of the task or unable to manage the conflicts that change will bring. Resistance is the natural response to this – some form of “I can't”, “I don't want to”, or “It's stupid”. You may find yourself pigeon-holed (“It's all right for you,”) caricatured (“Woolly-minded environmentalist”) or attacked (“I don't like the implications of that question”). Some people retreat into factual debate. Others become angry or upset.

Resistance is a signal to respond differently. Don't reply directly to it and avoid arguing. Listen to the feelings being expressed. Empathise with the difficulty. Look for another way of approaching the issue. Be careful that you're not imposing your views. Remember that it's important for the other person to find their own answers and that this may take time.

Support self-efficacy

The other person is responsible for choosing and making changes but your support is critical. You have to believe genuinely in their ability to change and you have to support their self-determination and their plans. This doesn't mean that you don't challenge a poor effort. It's more about developing the other person's strengths and self-belief. When this works well your belief in the other person's ability to change becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

These guidelines will not help you in every difficult situation, but keep them in mind and you may find that some of your conversations go more smoothly.

3. Working in groups

Groups can be powerful places with powerful feelings. Some work creatively, while some are dull. Some are full of conflict, while others are quiet and reflective. Some people always feel comfortable in groups. Others feel self-conscious or shy. Individuals take different roles too – leader, follower, nurturer, agitator, joker, peacemaker and so on.

The idea that groups can be used to help people is an old one and is explained well in Dorothy Stock Whitaker's book *Using Groups to Help People* (Whitaker 1985). Apart from therapy groups there are self-help groups focused on a common experience and facilitated groups that bring together people who share a problem. In the first category might be a group of new mothers who meet for mutual support. In the second might be a group facilitated by a social worker for parents of children with learning difficulties. Sometimes the group facilitator is someone who also has personal experience of the problem – as in an Alcoholics Anonymous group. Groups may be time-limited or open-ended, have a closed membership or welcome new members at any time.

Carbon Conversations groups are time-limited, facilitated groups for people who want to face the impact that their ordinary lives have on the climate.

Group process

There are many different models of how people relate to each other in groups, often referred to as models of group process or group dynamics. Some models look at the phases in the life of a group. Some see the group as a living system. Some focus on the unconscious dynamics between people. Yet others look at the relationships between leaders and members or at the different roles people play. Here we suggest four things that it may be helpful to think about – the creation of a safe space, the phases of group life, the relationship between content and process and the unconscious dynamics – before going on to talk about the facilitator's role, some common problems, answering technical questions, and reflective practice.

The safe space

Critical to your group's success is the creation of the safe space. People need to feel safe if they are going to express what they feel. They need to see that their difficulties are appreciated and their conflicts understood. They need to feel sure that they will not be attacked or made to feel stupid. They need to feel that they will not be judged and criticised for their short-comings. When these needs are met, they will be better able to absorb information and solve problems.

The safe space is not always comfortable. It needs to allow challenge and it is definitely not cosy. It has to be safe enough for people to take risks, question themselves and push at the edges of what they think they can manage. If

the safe space becomes merely comforting or self-congratulatory it is not doing its job.

The subject matter of a Carbon Conversations group inevitably produces some anxiety for most people. As we described earlier the scale of the problem easily produces feelings of hopelessness, grief and fear amongst those who struggle to deal with it. Participation in a group also brings its own anxieties, however much you are looking forward to it. Will I be any good at this new task? What will others think of me? Will there be space for me in this group? As the group continues, it may offer challenges to people's identity or habitual way of life. They may find themselves rethinking their assumptions about lifestyle, values or beliefs. If the group has gone well, then as it draws to a close, people may feel anxious about how they will cope without it. Some may feel anxious about meeting goals they have set themselves. Others may feel anxious that the changes the group has inspired in them may alter relationships with family, friends and colleagues.

Faced with this complexity, facilitators need to initiate a group culture that:

- is non-judgmental and offers tolerance and respect;
- accepts the complexity and strength of feelings;
- embodies belief in the possibility of change and development;
- offers challenge as well as support;
- encourages and trusts in people's creativity.

Listening empathically, being well prepared, knowing how to support people and handle conflict are some of the key skills you will need in order to do this. You will also need to be disciplined about the boundaries of the group. Good time-keeping, sticking to the subject and keeping to agreed ground rules will all help to increase the sense of containment group members feel.

Phases of group life

It can be helpful to recognise that groups often follow a similar pattern of development as people get to know each other and work together. Bruce Tuckman (Tuckman 1965) thought the typical group went through four distinct phases. He called these, forming, storming, norming and performing.

In the forming stage, group members are unsure of themselves and others, dependent on the group facilitator or leader for direction and trying to work out what the group's task is and whether they want to be there. People tend to be well behaved and co-operative at this stage but there are underlying anxieties: am I acceptable? Is this for me? What's going to happen? You will sense this tension in people's reserve, their awkwardness or their over-enthusiasm. One person hangs back. Another gushes. A third glowers. Anxiety is likely to lie behind all these reactions.

As people get to know each other, the group passes into the storming phase. People begin to challenge each other

and the group's leaders. Lots of ideas emerge. Arguments develop about the best way to approach the task. Conflicts arise with competing claims for group time and attention. People have incompatible ideas about the best thing to do. There is a sense of people jockeying for position and asserting themselves. This can be an uncomfortable phase for a facilitator but it is usually essential to a group's formation. If it is handled well it doesn't necessarily last very long and leads to a deepening of trust as people develop a more realistic sense of each other and what the group can do together.

The group pass from this phase to the norming phase. Here the group come together in agreement about their goals, the group task and the way they will relate to each other. It becomes possible to agree plans. People settle into a more comfortable sense of what they can expect from each other. Discussion is more open. A mutual sense of 'how we do things in this group' begins to develop. The group feels much more cohesive and there is less anxiety.

Finally the group enter the performing phase. There is a lot of energy for the task and people get on with it. People cooperate on problems and work to resolve disagreements. The mood is usually positive with a strong sense of flexibility and co-operation. The facilitator can usually take a back seat at this stage or may find themselves working as a more equal member of the team.

Tuckman later realised that he had said nothing about the process of a group's ending and added a fifth stage to his model which he called adjourning (Tuckman and Jensen 1977). This is the phase where people begin to realise that the group will end. On the positive side the group needs to evaluate its work and celebrate its achievements. Below the surface however a new kind of anxiety arises connected to fears of separation. Feelings of sadness and regret need to be brought into the open and processed if the group is to end satisfactorily. Some people refer to this stage as one of mourning rather than adjourning as very often the group will not be meeting again and this needs to be acknowledged properly.

These phases are rarely of equal length. Sometimes an earlier phase will be returned to. Sometimes the whole cycle can be observed in each meeting.

Content and process

Another way of thinking about a group is to focus on two threads that are always present – content and process. Content refers to what people say, the subject matter of the group and the conscious tasks it sets itself. Process refers to what is happening between people in the group – the way people are speaking to each other, the moods that come and go, the norms that emerge, the flow of relationships and so on. In a Carbon Conversations group the content is centred on climate change and people's responses to this, while the process that you hope to nurture is one where these issues can be comfortably explored. As facilitators you have responsibilities that relate to both content and process. Content tasks might include explaining, discussing, planning, and answering technical questions. Process tasks

might include listening, facilitating communication and dealing with tension or conflict. We outline some of the key process and content tasks in the notes for each meeting.

Unconscious dynamics

Not everything that happens in a group is clear or rational. We all bring our past experience with us, our particular history of hopes, fears, dreams and desires. Our reactions are often shaped by past experience and are neither completely rational nor consciously chosen.

One person always reacts fearfully to someone in authority while another is rebellious. The slightest hint of weakness makes one person feel protective, another angry and a third contemptuous. One person can't bear any disorder, another longs for the group to be more laid-back.

We are often unaware of where our reactions come from, how strong they are and whether they are appropriate in the present. When people come together in a group, this can create a potent mixture of personalities, needs and histories. Keeping this in mind can be helpful when you face surprising or difficult interactions in the group.

The facilitator's role

As facilitators, your role is to help the group work both emotionally and practically, paying attention to both content and process.

Co-facilitation

All Carbon Conversations groups are co-facilitated and there are many advantages to this. Responsibility is shared, making the experience less anxiety provoking. You are likely to have complementary skills. You can learn from each other, evaluating each other's performance, giving and receiving feedback. The creative spark of two minds is usually a strength.

Preparation with your co-facilitator is essential. You need to be sure that you don't have clashing styles, have unrealistic expectations of each other, or have made wrong assumptions about who will do what. If one of you is more experienced than the other, make sure you are clear whose word is final. If you are equally experienced make sure you are clear who is going to lead on what. Discuss how you will communicate with each other during the group, and how you will deal with any disagreements that arise between you. Remember that you do not have to agree. It can be helpful to group members to see you express difference constructively and recover from a disagreement. Make sure there is time after the group to discuss how it went and offer each other feedback.

Style and skills

The materials assume that you will adopt a democratic style in leading the group, consulting and involving the members, respecting their opinions and letting them shape the discussions. Nonetheless, there will be occasions when you need to show leadership, take decisions and direct the group. Members need you to be confident, keep the group

to time, get through the material and deal with any conflicts and difficulties that arise. Remember that you are *not* a teacher. Your role is to facilitate a group experience about change.

You may find it helpful to look at the list of key skills below and discuss with your co-facilitator which ones you each think are your strengths.

Listening: listening to what is being said, and to the group mood – is key. Note who is speaking and who is not. Help make space for anyone who's not getting a word in. Notice whether the mood is welcoming or critical, intellectualising or warm, blaming or hopeful. Open up ideas or feelings that seem to be being ignored.

Explaining: it's important to be able to present factual information clearly and answer any questions. If you don't know the answer, say so and offer to look it up. The answer may be somewhere in *In Time for Tomorrow?*

Clarifying: people aren't always coherent. Listen with an ear for what they mean and clarify what they are saying if they are having difficulty getting their point across. When people feel strongly, are upset or confused they may need help in articulating what they want to say.

Mediating/harmonising: try clarifying points in tones or terms that are less abrasive than those used by the original speaker. Listen for what people have in common rather than what divides them and draw attention to that.

Moving an argument on: people sometimes get stuck in polarised positions, each trying to convince the other. Be alert to whether anything new is being added to the discussion or whether the protagonists are simply repeating the same points. If it has become repetitive, move the group on by saying something like: "I don't think we're going to get agreement here," or "We've got two very interesting but irreconcilable points here. Let's move on and see whether anyone's shifted their position by the time we get to the end."

Challenging: you need to be able to challenge without attacking. Support those who take risks, encourage openness and find constructive ways of challenging those who are defensive. If you feel that someone is resistant to change, try to identify what they are feeling. Empathise with their feelings without condoning their lack of action. Question what the problem is, encourage them to think of solutions, support and push a little, without being invasive.

Reflecting back: it's sometimes helpful to comment on the group mood, reflecting back what you observe and checking whether people agree. "We seem to be in an excitable/depressed/angry/bored mood tonight. Is that right? Any thoughts about why that might be?"

Time-keeping: always tell the group how long they have for an activity but keep an eye on your watch. If members are involved and enjoying themselves, they won't be watching the time. They'll need you to move them on so they reach the end of the activity.

If you are lucky, you will find that group members themselves display some of the skills above. The more this happens the better. It's a sign that the group is working creatively.

Some facilitation 'do's' and 'don'ts'

Finally, some 'do's' and 'don'ts'.

Focus on creativity and people's ability to find their own solutions. Make space for members to reflect, wonder and invent. People are more likely to act when they feel empowered and self-determining.

Speak from the heart: where appropriate, share the steps of your own journey, with the difficulties, emotions and setbacks as well as the successes.

Use information carefully: remember that information is only useful when someone is ready for it. Don't expect facts on their own to change someone's mind. Don't teach – you're a facilitator not an instructor.

Give feedback: realistic appraisal, encouragement and praise are all useful. Reassure people that what they are doing is helpful and makes a difference.

Trust the group: emphasise what participants can learn from each other, call on them to contribute, build on their enthusiasm. Believe in the power of the group to raise the status of action, make change feel right and to give people a good time.

Don't criticise...or punish, attack, humiliate, mock or scorn. Stay respectful of people's life choices, even if you disagree with them.

Go easy on fear: don't frighten people without showing them what they can do. Emphasise that it is easier to act and that things feel less frightening when you are working together with others.

Some common problems

Most groups run smoothly thanks to participants being committed and enthusiastic but it's a rare group that has no difficulties.

Resistance

Creativity rarely emerges smoothly or consistently. As a sense of possibility and hope begins to develop in a group, anxiety levels can also rise. People become excited about what the group might achieve together but also fearful about the challenges. You will often feel a resistance before you can find words for what it is about. People become less attentive, question the purpose of an activity or side-chat breaks out. The group's rising anxiety may be echoed in your own sense of discomfort.

Dorothy Stock Whitaker (Whitaker 1985 pp. 52-8) discusses this in terms of what she calls the group focal conflict – the conflict between a shared wish and a shared fear. She suggests that when the facilitator pays attention to this in a helpful way the group can move away from what she calls a restrictive solution towards a more enabling one.

A restrictive solution can take many forms. It might involve maintaining an upbeat, relentless optimism, intellectualising, blaming everything on an outside party, focusing on one group member as the embodiment of the problem, or

manically cracking jokes. For example, a group discussing travel were skirting round the painful realisation that many of their day-to-day patterns of car use and holidays were quite unsustainable. One member said cheerily, “Well of course there’s not much we can do unless government decide to do something.” A feeling of relief flooded the group, as others chipped in with agreement. The solution – an unspoken agreement not to discuss their own lives but to blame the government – was a restrictive one.

The facilitator allowed the discussion to develop for a while and then said: “It sounds as if most people are feeling rather overwhelmed by this.” This was met by denial by some, but agreement from others and the facilitator gradually shifted the discussion towards exploration of people’s fears about the changes that climate change seemed to demand of them. As people shared their anxieties – about their families, about the patterns of the day, and about how others would see them – a different kind of relief emerged and they began to talk about what they might do. The anxiety the topic had raised felt contained. With the facilitator’s help the group had moved from a restrictive solution towards an enabling one.

Confronting a resistance head-on is never a good idea. You need to respect people’s need to defend themselves. Miller and Rollnick use the memorable phrase ‘rolling with the resistance’ to describe the kind of sideways move that is needed (Miller and Rollnick 2002). If you provide safety in the way you handle the underlying feelings, the group is likely to move into a more enabling frame of mind and actively seek creative solutions.

If you can maintain a demeanour of quiet confidence, this will often allow people to feel safe enough to acknowledge and own the painful experiences that are an inevitable part of group life.

Group destructiveness

Sometimes a resistance becomes entrenched. The whole group gets stuck in a defensive space. The group mood feels ugly and destructive. This is more likely to happen if the group task isn’t clear or if the group is divided about what its task is. Typical symptoms are:

- moralising and prescribing (people shouldn’t/people should/it would be better if everybody did x or y);
- scapegoating and blaming;
- projecting responsibility elsewhere;
- looking for a saviour;
- looking for a fight, sometimes within the group but more often against an external enemy;
- chatting about trivia;
- making personal attacks on each other.

Some of the comments people make may be true. What you will notice however is that there is little context. The tone doesn’t change. There is lots of repetition and generalisation, often along the lines of “People will never”, “People ought to...” and “It’s human nature...” The emotional tone may be high – in fact people may be quite impassioned – but they aren’t really speaking personally. Ideas are not coming from the heart and there is no reflection.

A group in this state has lost touch with its creativity and problem-solving skills. People have also lost interest in each other as individuals. Collective denial may make it hard to work out exactly what is the underlying issue. What you can be sure of however is that, at some level, people feel threatened, fearful, upset or exhausted. The most helpful approach is usually to comment on the group process, for example, “We seem to be stuck in blaming others” or “We seem to be looking for someone to rescue us”. If you’re lucky, this will either turn the mood or open up a discussion of what is difficult.

Sometimes a group that is determined to stay in its defensive state will turn on anyone who remarks on that state. If you’re really unlucky, you might find yourself the object of the group’s anger. If this happens, try to ride it out. Don’t retaliate. You are unlikely to have been at fault and by the next meeting you will have had time to reflect on what caused the problem.

Difficult behaviour

Sometimes group difficulties seem centred on individuals. It feels as if one particular person, rather than the group, has the problem. It can be tempting to think that if that person left, all would be well. You’ve probably come across people who:

- arrive late/moan/object/complain/know-it-all;
- are sarcastic /aggressive/ humourless/moralising/ superior/ blaming;
- ‘make nice’, rescue, distract, joke inappropriately;
- want special attention/chat to their neighbour/don’t listen/go off in a dream;
- talk too much/talk too little/talk too slowly or quietly;
- miss the point/don’t pay attention/only talk about themselves.

Try not to label anyone as difficult. Their difficult behaviour may be a reflection of a group problem and the truth is that most of us can be difficult (possibly in several of these ways) at times. You might find it helpful to think about your own weak points. What do you sometimes do that might make you an awkward group member? What brings it on? Most difficult behaviour is worse when we are feeling stressed, threatened or insecure. Sometimes it may be something that is happening in the group that is causing someone to feel stressed or anxious. To minimise these feelings:

- make sure that everyone feels included and listened to – use a paired exercise, chair the discussion so that everyone gets heard, and make space for feelings or thoughts that people fear might be unacceptable;
- focus on strengths and good points rather than the difficult behaviour;
- if you have to speak directly, make a clear request about what you would like the person to do, rather than what you want them to stop doing.

People often don’t realise that their behaviour might be causing problems for others and are mortified if you have to point it out. With someone who talks too much it can help first to validate what the talker is saying – thank them for their point, tell them you agree, that they’ve expressed

a point well or brought a key element in. If someone feels acknowledged they are less likely to need to repeat what they have said. If that doesn't work try, "Hold it there for a moment, I'd like to bring Joe in..." or "Hang onto that point and we'll come back to it when Lucy has spoken". Avoid the confrontational, "Please stop interrupting".

If someone is a persistent non-stop talker, avoid making eye contact with them. Eye contact is a non-verbal signal that you are interested and want someone to continue. Try to seat yourself next to them and, before interrupting, touch them lightly on the arm. The physical contact is a surprise and often creates the pause in which you can intervene.

If someone is behaving badly, try thinking about the threat they may be feeling. This may be to do with either the content or the tone of the group discussion. For example:

- someone who lives in rented housing may feel side-lined by a discussion about home-improvements and retreat into a dream;
- someone who has little money may feel alienated by discussion of expensive alternatives to the supermarket and start moralising about whose fault this is;
- someone who flies a lot may fear being criticised by others and make sarcastic jokes to deflect attention.

Opening up the excluded area of discussion may help. Just saying: "Let's look at the issues for people who rent", or "What about the expense of some of these alternatives?" may shift the conversation.

Expressing an unspoken idea or feeling in a non-threatening way often helps to reduce the tension. The more personal you can be, the better. "Flying is a really difficult issue, isn't it?" might help. But admitting "I love travelling and have found it hard to say 'no' to cheap flights" will have more impact. The trick is to look for what might be behind someone's difficulty and then to say something that will lower the tension.

Sometimes difficult behaviour is less closely related to what is happening in the group. For example, someone who is used to being in charge may find it difficult to be an ordinary group member and express this by being critical or questioning. Similarly someone who feels generally unappreciated may adopt a critical or moralising tone. The first person might respond well to being offered a role such as reporting back from a small group discussion; the second might ease up if their abilities were explicitly acknowledged or recognised.

Personality clashes

Sometimes two members just go head to head. You can tell they're never going to like each other and are never going to agree. If you are breaking into smaller groups or pairs make sure they are not together. If you have to, remind them of the ground rule of no personal attacks. And remember, that it's not your fault.

Answering technical questions

Carbon Conversations includes a lot of technical information. It is easy to feel overwhelmed by this. It is important to develop your knowledge, keep the technical issues in their right place, learn how to deal with tricky questions and how to cope with group members who may seem to know more than you.

Develop your knowledge

The first thing is to develop your knowledge. Read *In Time for Tomorrow?* carefully. Keep the 'Rules of thumb' in Chapters Two, Three, Four and Five in mind – they are a sufficient answer to a lot of questions. Study the 'A-Z of home energy' to make sure you understand what some of the technical terms mean. Talk with your co-facilitator about which areas you each feel more confident about and which you will each concentrate on. For each chapter, look at one or two of the resources in the 'More information' section.

Keep technology in its place

If people are to make a genuine difference to their footprint they need to understand some basic facts about climate change and carbon reduction and they need to explore some technical information. We have tried to make this information easy to absorb by using games and activities to get it across but it's important to remember that the main point of a Carbon Conversations group is not the facts themselves. The key purpose is the exploration of the complex feelings and experiences that make it difficult to act effectively. This means that you need to keep technology in its place.

It's common to use technical discussion to avoid dealing with more upsetting issues. A detailed debate about the relative merits of LED and CFL lighting can easily replace a conversation about the difficulty of persuading flatmates to turn the lights off. Two people may engage in an energetic discussion of solar panels while the rest of the group retreat into half-welcome boredom, feeling they are excused from doing anything because they don't own their own homes.

Notice the emotional tone in the group when technical issues are being discussed. Was it anxious beforehand? Does the technical discussion bring relief? Is everyone involved in it or is it just a couple of people? People who find personal conversations difficult will often try to deflect the group onto something that feels safer to them. Sometimes the group as a whole seems to be colluding, for example by enthusiastically agreeing that you can't trust builders or that the facts are so confusing that you might as well give up.

When someone asks a technical question, listen to it carefully. The headings below set out some of the common pitfalls and confusions that come up in technical discussions and suggest some ways of dealing with them.

Urban myths and disinformation

Some of the 'facts' people present in a technical discussion may actually be urban myths. Be careful that you don't offer up urban myths yourself, and learn to recognise when someone else may be doing so.

Urban myths are often introduced as rhetorical questions:

- "Did you know that...?"
- "Surely...?"
- "Isn't it a problem that...?"

Or as stories coming from an uncertain source:

"Someone told me..."

"I read in the paper..."

"I saw online..."

"I can't remember where I got this from, but..."

One common urban myth is that keeping the heating on all the time uses less energy than turning it off when you're out and bringing the house back up to temperature when you return. You will also meet people who claim that all recycling really ends up in landfill, that CFL light bulbs can't be safely disposed of, or that the embedded energy in a new boiler is greater than the energy it saves. None of these are true but sometimes there is a grain of truth in an urban myth. For example it is true that CFL bulbs contain mercury. However, it is not true that they can't be safely disposed of, and in fact overall mercury pollution is reduced by fitting CFLs and other energy-saving measures because they reduce the need for coal-burning.

People who offer urban myths may be genuinely confused and looking for a technical answer. But they may also be hoping to justify a favourite behaviour, resisting change or expressing despair at being able to work out what to do. When you are sure that you are hearing an urban myth it is tempting just to contradict it. However you also need to explore what lies behind someone's espousal of it or deal with their disappointment at discovering it to be untrue. If you don't, they are likely to cling to it all the more strongly.

If you are unsure about the facts, ask for sources and question the authority of the source. This often makes it clear that there is no real foundation for the 'facts' being offered. Think about what is likely to be true based on your knowledge, not your intuition. If there is a trail, leading back to a source, follow it up. You will often find yourself at the dead-end of an article in the popular press or an internet chatroom with no leads back to a reputable source.

We deal with a few urban myths in the FAQs at the end of each chapter of *In Time for Tomorrow?* so check there as well.

Greenwash

The world is full of 'greenwash' – hopeful solutions that aren't really going to solve the problem but sound attractive. Typically they:

- address only a small part of the problem (though great claims are made for them);
- are a long way in the future;
- are to be done by other people;
- are unlikely to work.

Question new technologies that are going to save the world or solve a problem painlessly. Greenwash solutions are sometimes promoted by reputable bodies and companies that are household names as well as by 'snake-oil' salesmen. Personal carbon offsetting is one such solution. Another you will come across is a form of solid-wall insulation that is only 10mm thick. It's useful for controlling mould (its original use) but offers only a fraction (10%) of the insulation needed on a solid wall. Some more obvious examples of greenwash are the many products sold with the prefix 'eco', 'enviro' or 'green'.

Questions about greenwash often come up as people are beginning to engage with carbon reduction, so:

- offer encouragement to people who are thinking about the issue;
- encourage further questioning/problem-solving;
- point out the limitations of greenwash solutions;
- direct people to the longer-term, more effective solutions.

Again, you may need to deal with people's attraction to apparently easy solutions and their disappointment that the reality is harder to cope with.

Difficult distinctions

These questions usually begin "Is it better to do x or y?" They often come up as people are beginning to engage with making personal reductions. People may be:

- failing to see that both options are unsustainable, for example that both field-grown flowers from Kenya and hothouse flowers from the Netherlands have high carbon footprints;
- fretting over something which is actually a small issue or a very fine distinction;
- needing a genuine technical answer, for example about whether to get a new car or run the old one till it's worn out.

The first two examples often occur when people are having difficulty facing the scale of the changes needed and become pre-occupied with making minor adjustments to their life-style. As with urban myths and greenwash, dealing with the underlying difficulties or the disappointment may be necessary, but be careful not to be patronising. With real practical questions, such as a decision about whether to replace a car, it is usually helpful to explore the context:

- Are you a big consumer of the item in question?
- Is this a carbon-intensive activity/item?
- What is your current use?
- Will some monitoring of your use provide a better context or more information?
- Is there a third (or fourth) option?
- Is the best answer to do less of both options?

These questions should reveal whether there is actually a big difference between the options being considered. In the example of the car, it is generally better for drivers with high mileage to replace the car but better for drivers with low mileage to hang on to the existing model.

Real technical questions

Real technical and practical questions arise as people begin to think more deeply about what to do. Genuine questions often begin:

- How do I...?
- How much...?
- Where can I find...?

They have a different feel to the rhetorical questions people ask when they are engaging in an intellectual debate as a way of avoidance. With these questions it's important to:

Explore the context. Listen. What does the person know already? What do they need more information on?

Know your sources of information. Know your way round *In Time for Tomorrow*? Make sure you are familiar with some of the books and websites listed in the 'More information' sections of each chapter. Particularly for housing, create a list of inspiring examples and local professionals who you can recommend.

Know your limitations. Don't give detailed advice unless you are qualified. Don't feel that you have to be able to answer every technical query and don't be embarrassed if you can't. Point people to the resources in the 'More information' sections of *In Time for Tomorrow*?

Experts and awkward questions

You may find that you have someone with expert knowledge as a group member – a housing professional, economist or food researcher, for example. Most people with expert knowledge will be helpful and add to your discussions from their store of experience. Occasionally someone will be difficult, want to put you right or put you down. You may have no way of knowing whether what they are saying is accurate or what weight to give it. In most academic fields, there are a range of views and they may be representing a particular viewpoint. It may also be that they have more up-to-date knowledge or may have picked up an inaccuracy in *In Time for Tomorrow*?

The key thing is to deal with the comment without wasting the time of the whole group. Statements like: "That's really interesting, I'll take that back to the authors", or "Perhaps you could let me have the references so I can follow it up" will usually let you move on. Try to not get drawn into an argument that you're not equipped to tackle. You needn't be an expert yourself – you're facilitating a group of individuals engaged on a task of mutual enquiry.

Reflective practice

Between each meeting you need to reflect on how the session has gone. This can be done with your co-facilitator, with an external mentor or with a group of other facilitators. How do you think the group is developing? Is trust growing? Are people comfortable? Are people engaged with the idea of making real carbon reductions? What worked well? What do you need to change or improve? What did you each do well? What could you each improve on?

Processing your feelings and responses through reflective discussion afterwards will help you learn from each experience. This needs to be done in a safe space. You need to be able to talk openly about difficulties and feel supported in your efforts to develop.

Try to make time for a discussion with your co-facilitator while the group is still fresh in your mind, thinking about the participation of each member, the group dynamics, your own contribution to the group and the way you worked together. Use the list of questions below to help you do this. It's a long list but not all the questions will be relevant every time. Use them as a guide for your own reflection.

1) What did you learn about each member of the group?

- a) How did each person participate?
- b) How did each person present themselves? What did they want others to know about them? How did they communicate this?
- c) What did you gather about their motivation? About what they find challenging? About how comfortable they are in the group? How did they communicate this?
- d) Have your views/feelings about each person changed since the last meeting?
- e) What feelings did you have about each person?
- f) What kind of experience do you think each person had?
- g) Is there anyone you need to pay particular attention to in the next session?

2) What did you observe about the dynamics of the group?

- a) What was the mood and atmosphere of the group? How did this shift or change during the course of the session?
- b) Did you notice group norms or patterns of behaviour beginning to emerge in the group? Were these restrictive or enabling? How open were people able to be?
- c) What did you notice about anxiety in the group? How do you think anxieties about the theme of the group manifested themselves?
- d) How safe was the group? Do you think people felt able to speak openly and personally? Were they able to take risks?
- e) What common themes or concerns emerged? Was anything particularly embraced or avoided? Why?
- f) What did you notice about the way people related to each other? Who spoke? Who was silent? Who agreed or disagreed?

- g) Did people seem to adopt or be pushed into particular roles? (For instance, rescuer, joker, challenger, complainer, Pollyanna, comforter, distracter, know-it-all etc.)
- h) Was the balance of activities and discussion right for the group?
- i) What might you do in the next session to encourage the group to work well together?

3) What did you observe about yourself and your effect on others?

- a) How were you feeling before the group? What were your anxieties or 'What ifs'?
- b) What was stirred up for you during the group? What worried you? Did any of your feelings get in the way? How did you manage your own feelings? What did you run away from?
- c) How did you feel after the group? Energised? Exhausted? Relieved? What contributed to this?
- d) What do you think you modelled by your own behaviour in the group?
- e) How were your instructions, interventions and comments received? What about your more spontaneous remarks? What happened in the group as a result of what you said/did/showed? Was it what you had intended?
- f) Did you find yourself favouring particular people, ignoring or colluding with anyone? How would you explain your likes and dislikes?
- g) Did you find yourself participating in any shared defences?
- h) What might you learn from this to apply in the next session?

4) How did you work with your co-facilitator?

- a) Did your division of tasks/responsibilities go to plan?
- b) Do you see what happened in the group differently from each other or in the same way?
- c) How did you communicate with each other during the group?
- d) How did you feel towards each other during the session?
- e) Were you seen differently by group members?
- f) Were you used differently by group members?
- g) What might you try to do differently in the next session?

Once the group is over and you have looked at the feedback and evaluation you received from participants, review the whole experience with your co-facilitator. It will help to think about the design of the sessions, your success in meeting the objectives, your facilitation skills, your co-facilitation and the overall group process. An open, exploratory discussion flows best when the questions are kept fairly broad, for example:

- What am I pleased about?
- What would I do differently?
- What have I learned about myself and my abilities?
- How could I improve?

Facilitating well means developing a capacity for honesty and self-knowledge. Making time for reflective practice will ensure you continue to develop your skills.

Support and mentoring

In areas where Carbon Conversations is well established, there may be support and mentoring schemes for facilitators. Reflecting on your sessions with a group work expert will certainly add to your skills as a facilitator and help you run a better group.

4. Introduction to the materials and activities

Carbon Conversations is a relatively structured group process. It offers a range of materials and a variety of activities that will help group members reflect on and reduce their carbon impact. In this chapter we describe the materials and introduce the types of activities that can be used in meetings. Detailed descriptions of activities and sample programmes can be found in Chapters Six to Twelve of this guide, each of which focuses on one chapter of *In Time for Tomorrow?*

The materials

Make sure you are familiar with all the materials available for you to use, both print and online.

In Time for Tomorrow? the Carbon Conversations Handbook is your most important resource. It includes all the factual information about climate change and carbon reduction that you will need, highlights many of the psychological issues that are likely to feature for people and contains a selection of further reading. People need to read this in order to participate in the groups. Order a copy for each group member.

The Carbon Conversations Workbook contains the prompts for many of the group-based activities you use in meetings and the instructions for the home-based activities that people carry out between meetings. Members need this booklet in order to monitor their carbon footprint correctly and should bring it to each group meeting. Order a copy for each group member.

Monitoring your Footprint is an online workbook, available to all group members on the Carbon Conversations website. Its worksheets will calculate the carbon emissions for people's home energy, travel, food and other purchases from data that they have collected through monitoring their fuel use and through keeping food and spending diaries. Try them out for yourself. Make sure you are familiar with how to use them. Make sure that group members know where to find them on the website and are using them.

The Carbon Footprint Calculator is a short lifestyle questionnaire which makes an estimate of someone's carbon footprint by asking questions that anyone can answer easily. (People don't need to know their fuel bills for example.) It's good to use it in a face-to-face meeting with each participant, prior to the group starting. It creates a good opportunity to open a conversation with each person and give them a rough idea of their impact. It can be downloaded from the Carbon Conversations website and there are details on how to use it in Chapter Five 'Planning your group'.

The Carbon Conversations Games are used to present technical information about housing, travel and food emissions in a digestible form. The three board games explain the carbon emissions of a typical house, look at the

relationship of policy change to a family's travel footprint and explore the ways in which greenhouse gases are embedded in food. You only need one set of the games, but make sure that you have the most recent edition of the cards and the games instructions as these get re-issued from time to time. Additional copies of the games instructions can be downloaded from the Carbon Conversations website.

The Carbon Conversations Facilitator's Guide is the book you are reading. It should provide you with all the information you need to run a successful group.

All these materials are available to download from the Carbon Conversations website which also contains some activities which you can use in recruitment and a detailed explanation of Carbon Conversations' star ratings.

Opening activities

These are used in the first 20-30 minutes of a group and should help establish the group as a safe, respectful place.

Introductions and opening circles

Introductions and opening circles bring people into contact with each other and provide an opportunity for them to say something about how they feel. They model the idea that everyone has a right to equal space in the group and that members should listen to each other.

In Meeting One, introduce the idea by saying something like: "I'd like us to go round the group, introduce ourselves and say briefly what we're hoping to get out of these sessions." If someone tries to reply to someone else, politely ask them to hold onto their comment until everyone has spoken. If you write down people's expectations (on a flipchart or in a notebook) you can come back to them at the end of the group and see how well you met them. If someone has a very unrealistic expectation you might want to point that out.

In subsequent meetings, use the same format to open the group. Always include yourselves in these opening circles. It's often useful to ask members how they are feeling about climate change, encouraging them to be open about their changing moods. Hopefully people will express a variety of feelings, some up, some down, some optimistic, some gloomy. This can be a good opportunity for validating the fact that people's moods alter, that we may have up and down days, and that this is to be expected. If you get universal gloom you will have to be the one to provide the antidote. Don't respond to individual contributions but once everyone has spoken it can be helpful to comment on the general mood. For example, you might say: "We all seem to be feeling quite down this evening," or "There's a real range of emotion amongst us tonight."

Use the convention that once someone has spoken you go round the group clockwise. If anyone doesn't want to speak, is stumbling or stuck, allow them to pass, saying "Shall we come back to you?" (And make sure you do, allowing them to stay silent if they really want to.) Try to start with a different person each time, as you will find that sometimes the group models itself on whoever has spoken first. If you want to set the tone in a particular way, then you or your co-facilitator should start.

Here is a list of some of the opening circle prompts that we have used successfully.

- Tell us your name and what you are hoping to get out of these sessions.
- Tell us your name and how you are feeling about climate change today – not how you feel generally, but how you feel right now.
- Tell us how you're feeling about being here tonight.
- Tell us something you have done or are planning to do that has made you feel better about climate change.
- Tell us about a conversation you've had about climate change since we last met.

In later sessions it can be useful to focus on the theme of the session.

- Tell us about a favourite journey and a nightmare journey.
- Tell us about a memorable meal. (It might be memorable for a good or a bad reason).
- Tell us about a purchase you are pleased with and a purchase you regret.

Setting the scene

At the start of each session you need to introduce the theme of the meeting. Keep what you say brief. A few sentences is usually all that is needed. The goal is simply to give people an idea of what to expect.

Ground rules

At some point towards the beginning of the first meeting, in as light and straightforward a way as possible, introduce the idea of ground rules – agreed norms of behaviour that the group will try to follow. The best way to do this is to ask the group to brainstorm their ideas about what is likely to make the group work well together and to write these on a flip chart. Most groups will come up with a good list, but have your own ideas ready in case something is missing. For example, you hope that people will:

- show respect for each other, listen to each other, respect each other's confidences;
- arrive on time, not leave early, attend all the meetings;
- feel free to speak or not (no-one should be forced to take part in a way that doesn't feel comfortable for them);
- avoid personal attacks.

It's easy to forget the ground rules after the first meeting. Get the group's agreement that all members have responsibility for making sure that you follow them. If you write them on a flipchart, you can bring this to subsequent meetings as an aide memoire if you wish.

Feedback on activities done at home

Carbon Conversations involves a number of monitoring activities which are done at home. Making space to talk about these can be done towards the start of a meeting or later on, according to your preference.

Making time for feedback allows you to:

- deal with any difficulties members have encountered;
- develop a group norm of taking the monitoring seriously;
- draw these activities into the shared experience of the group;
- help people to learn from each other.

If someone has had a practical difficulty with an activity (for example not understanding a spreadsheet or failing to find their gas meter) this is often best dealt with one-to-one after the end of the meeting.

Main activities

Most of these activities have higher energy and are more challenging in the themes that are offered and in the way these are approached. As you get to know your group you will be able to judge which ones are likely to suit them best. Some of the activities are harder to facilitate than others, so unless you are an experienced facilitator, be cautious about anything that you have not tried as a participant yourself.

Paired activities

At various points, we suggest breaking into pairs for short discussions. Sometimes there is a stimulus, in the form of a list of questions or prompts in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. Paired activities are particularly helpful at the start of a group and at the start of a session. They allow everyone to have a say in a less threatening atmosphere and can encourage a more personal, reflective mood. Quiet people don't get swamped and can develop the confidence to speak out. Emphasise the importance of listening to each other during these discussions. Keep time while members are in pairs (5 minutes is usually long enough) but also listen for the buzz of the group; this will tell you when people have had long enough. Sometimes you will want them to report back to the group, sometimes not. Keep the reporting back brief.

If you have an uneven number in the group, one facilitator should join in.

Brief explanations

At various points you need to explain key facts that are needed for an activity or discussion, or explain monitoring or diary-keeping. Keep these explanations short. Don't deliver a lecture.

In the first meeting you will need to present some detailed information about carbon footprints and about low-carbon futures, but after this, ask people to prepare by reading the relevant material in advance. You can then concentrate on giving just enough information for the group to do the activity.

Base what you say on the information in *In Time for Tomorrow*? Prepare well, keep it short. Use a flipchart, if you find that helpful. Another useful prop is a set of cards with a key word on each to prompt you.

Whole group reflection and discussion

Open discussions can be demanding but they are often the most rewarding parts of the group as members begin to take ownership of the process, and take risks in what they are prepared to say. You need to:

- encourage a reflective, responsive atmosphere where people listen properly to each other;
- listen for the undercurrents and emotions that need to be brought into the open and explored;
- make space for everyone to contribute as they wish, bringing in quieter members if they are being neglected.

When a group discussion follows a paired activity there is always a risk that people will repeat their paired conversation blow for blow. It can help to ask for “One point from your discussion” or “One feeling that surprised you” or “One thing you’ve learned that was new to you”, before moving the group on to a more general discussion. You do not need to comment on individual contributions but once everyone has spoken it may be helpful to summarise the mood of the group and open up new areas.

Read through the section on the facilitator’s role in Chapter Three: ‘Working in groups’, for more help on this.

Brainstorms

Brainstorms allow the group to come up with ideas, instead of relying on you to tell them. You need a large sheet of paper and pen, (a flipchart is ideal, but improvise if you don’t have one.) The point of a brainstorm is to generate as many ideas as possible without stopping to discuss or evaluate them until the group has run out of ideas or the chart is full. As you write, try to group similar ideas together. Writing alternate items in a different coloured pen allows the list to be easily scanned. A brainstorm should encourage the group’s creativity and help everyone to see several sides of an issue before discussing it.

Art activities

A number of activities ask members to make collages or posters. Sometimes these are individual productions, sometimes shared productions. Most people enjoy these activities. Art is a useful way of expressing feelings that aren’t quite ready to be put into words. It can provide a useful change in pace and mood, particularly in a group where people tend to intellectualise. You need to emphasise that people don’t need to be good at art in order to take part. People who fear making a fool of themselves by drawing will often be happy to make a collage instead, so try to have a variety of materials available. People can sometimes be surprised by the feelings they uncover through this kind of activity. You need to be prepared to handle these and support anyone who becomes distressed. Don’t use these activities unless you have taken part in them as a participant yourself.

Spectrum line

A spectrum line is a good way of exploring the range of views in the group. It allows everyone to take part. Its physical aspect can provide a welcome break from more heady discussion and allows people’s intuitive responses to come to the fore.

Start by creating an imaginary line in the room and designate the two ends of your spectrum. Depending on the issues the two ends might be “I agree completely” and “I disagree completely” or “I’m very worried” and “I’m not worried at all.” Read out a statement and ask people to position themselves on the line according to their views. If you have a long list of items (for example if you’re wanting to see which food worries your group share) move through the items quickly. With a short list, or just one item, pause and ask people to talk briefly to the person next to them about the reasons for their position. End the activity by returning to the circle for a short discussion on what the spectrum line revealed.

Group games

Carbon reduction is unusual in that people need both to engage emotionally with a process of change and to understand complex, technical information. Two risks are that people are either bored by the technical detail or use it to defend against engagement with the process of change. The three group games, *Low-Carbon House*, *Travel Dilemmas* and *Food Footprints* were developed as a way of making the technical detail feel engaging and relevant.

Low-Carbon House helps people understand the extent of what needs to be done to an average UK home and allows them to ask questions about what each of the technical measures means.

Travel Dilemmas uses a case study to explore the effect of policy changes on people’s willingness to make changes. We found that travel was one of the most sensitive topics and one where people find it very hard to consider change, either policy change or changes to their own expectations. Creating a case study of people with very high travel footprints seems to make it easier to begin the discussion. People can temporarily project the criticism they fear might come their way onto the case-study characters.

Food Footprints is the simplest of the three games and is a way of explaining how greenhouse gas emissions are embodied in food.

For the games to work well you must be on top of the technical detail so that you can answer questions. The information you need is all in *In Time for Tomorrow*? though you may like to follow up by looking at some of the books and websites listed in the ‘More information’ section of each chapter.

Short films and video clips

Occasionally we suggest that you show a short film or video clip. This can help you get information across or provide a moment of light relief, but you can run all the sessions without showing any films if you wish. Be aware that

showing a film clip changes the dynamic in the group. People momentarily become passive and some may withdraw. Often it works best to choose a very short clip – two or three minutes can be enough. You need to be sure that your technology is working well if you are going to show a film.

Force-field analysis

Force field analysis looks at change systemically. It takes a possible change that someone is considering and asks them to brainstorm all the driving forces and restraining forces that might affect it. Driving forces are pushing for it to happen. Restraining forces are preventing it from happening. It's useful for exploring situations where individuals don't have complete control of the situation – it can help explore change within a couple, a family, an organisation or wider society. You will find a description and example of force field analysis on pp. 89-91 of *In Time for Tomorrow?* and instructions on how to use it with a travel dilemma on p. 21 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*.

You can use force field analysis to explore the possibility of change in many situations, so keep it in mind for other meetings as well as the travel one. Sometimes force-field analysis will show you that a desired change is unachievable – the restraining forces are too strong and the driving forces too weak. More often it offers insights into the best way to tackle a complex challenge.

Role-play

Role-play helps people explore the emotional dynamics of a situation and practice skills that may help resolve a problem. For example you might use role-play to explore how to raise sustainability issues with your boss, how to persuade a teenager to take shorter showers and turn lights off, or how to explain to colleagues that you don't fly any more. Role-plays exploring common situations that people are already familiar with need little briefing. More complex situations will benefit from role cards setting out key facts about the character or the arguments the players will make.

You need to be an experienced facilitator to run a role-play well. Choose a different activity if you have never taken part in role-play yourself or have little experience of the effect it can have on a group.

Start by asking for volunteers to take up the roles. Not everyone feels comfortable being one of the actors in a role play, so don't put pressure on anyone. Ask the rest of the group to be observers. It is often helpful to ask them to observe a particular aspect, for instance the non-verbal communication, the tactics that seem to make a conversation go well or the moment when a conversation seems to go wrong.

Most role-plays run their own natural course and don't take more than a few minutes. The actors tend to run out of steam when enough insights have been generated. People are usually eager to reflect on what they've experienced so allow plenty of time for discussion.

In the discussion start by debriefing the actors. They need to come out of character and make clear to themselves and

those watching that they were playing a part and don't necessarily share the characteristics and views of the person they were playing. Ask how they each felt playing the role and what they thought of the character they took on. Then ask the observers for their impressions and offer any of your own. What has been learned? How could people apply the learning to real-life situations? Avoid criticisms of the "You should have..." "Why didn't you...?" variety. Frame feedback as compliments and suggestions: "I liked it when you...", "Could you try..."

Visualisations

Visualisations allow people to reflect and imagine deeply. They are used in Carbon Conversations to imagine possible futures and to reflect about what happens to objects that have been thrown away.

They can be powerful exercises so you need to use them with care. They work best when people are relaxed but the associations that come into people's minds in a relaxed state can sometimes be surprising and are occasionally distressing. Think about how you have felt doing a visualisation yourself and whether your group are likely to react well to doing one.

If your group are happy to lie on the floor and practice a breathing exercise to take them into a quieter, inner space they are likely to benefit more from the visualisation. Some people find this uncomfortable, so don't push anyone to do this if they seem reluctant. Ask them to get themselves into a relaxed position and close their eyes if they wish to. Encourage those who would like to, to lie down. Ask people to notice their breathing and gently allow the tension of the day to flow away from them. Then start your script.

It's a good idea to rehearse the script beforehand with your co-facilitator to make sure that your pauses are the right length. At the end of the visualisation, allow people to come out of it gently. Sharing in pairs before discussion in the whole group is often helpful.

Closing activities

In the last 20-30 minutes the tone of the meeting needs to shift. You're winding down, moving away from deep involvement in the issue, reflecting on what you have done together and preparing for the next meeting. Make sure you leave time in each meeting for:

- drawing threads together, summarising and concluding the discussion;
- reflecting on the process of the meeting – how has it felt, what people are left with, what kind of experience has it been;
- final comments and questions;
- reminders about the next session and any activities group members should tackle before the next meeting;
- a closing circle.

There's a tricky balance to achieve between:

- making space for people to evaluate what has happened in this session and say how they feel about it;

- summarising the learning and telling people what you would like them to do in preparation for the next meeting.

The first is a process task and can be covered by making sure you have time for reflection and a closing circle. The second is a content task and can usually be covered in what we call the wrap-up.

Try to end on time, allowing a few minutes for informal chat if you can. Once the formal meeting has ended, those who need to leave can do so. Those who want to chat can stay on for a little while.

Wrap-ups and home-based tasks

At the end of every meeting it is helpful to summarise briefly what you have worked on in the meeting and then explain what you want people to do at home, before the next meeting. The reading, monitoring, diary-keeping and planning activities are key to people's full participation. If people don't do this preparation you will have to spend time explaining basic facts rather than exploring the implications of those facts for people's lives. Good preparation frees up group time for reflection and discussion and keeps the goal of change at the front of people's minds. The tone and feel of the meetings will be quite different if people don't do this preparation.

Make sure you are able to explain clearly what you want people to do. Make it sound interesting rather than burdensome. Explain that you enjoyed doing it yourself, even if it was sometimes a challenge. Talk about the difference it can make. Summarise the tasks on paper if that seems helpful. Allow time to answer any questions.

Reflection and closing circles

At the end of each meeting allow a few minutes for people to reflect together on what has happened in the group. A group that reflects together, however briefly, on its own process usually works better together. Members will find it easier to share responsibility for what happens and you will get a feel for whether you are meeting people's needs and facilitating a good experience. Start by bringing the group together by saying that you're nearing the end of the meeting. Then, you can simply ask a question like:

- Any thoughts about what we've done this evening?
- Any feelings about what we've done this evening?
- Any feelings about how we've worked together this evening?

Allow people to respond, drawing them back towards the process of the meeting if they are tending to focus on the content. You may want to reply to people's comments with some process reflections of your own, for example, "I thought there were some moments when people felt quite shocked by some of the facts", "I thought you all worked really hard at facing some of the personal implications of this stuff", or "I think we got a bit stuck in an intellectual discussion." If people are critical of you, listen, take note and respond honestly, but without taking up a lot of group time. For instance, you might say, "I'll take that on board

for next time", "Thanks for being open, that's helpful", or "Sounds like we didn't really meet your needs tonight. I'm sorry."

End each session by going round the group, as at the beginning, with a simple question that will round off the meeting and allow everyone to have a say. The simplest (and often the best) is:

- any last thoughts anyone would like to share?

Some others that we've found useful include:

- tell us one thing you'll be taking away from this meeting and one thing you would have liked more of;
- tell us something you're planning to do;
- tell us something you wanted to say but didn't get a chance to say;
- tell us your high spot and your low spot of this meeting;
- tell us something you're pleased about from this meeting and something that frustrated you;
- share a thought you had during this meeting but didn't say at the time.

A slightly more complex close-out is 'When you said that, I felt...'. It is a good one to use towards the end of the group.

You need to model this with your facilitator. One of you starts by turning to the person next to them (in this case your co-facilitator) with a closing thought, for instance: "I felt very moved by the dilemmas everyone shared about travel." Your co-facilitator listens carefully, notes what they feel about what you have just said and then completes the sentence, "When you said that, I felt..." For example she or he might complete it with "When you said that I felt reminded of how much I love foreign travel and how I try to find reasons to justify it," or "When you said that I felt anxious that I'm not trying as hard as other people," or "When you said that I felt pleased to be part of such an open group." You then continue round the group in the same way. It's important to respond – don't just say what was on your mind anyway. Express what you feel in response to what the person before you has said. As usual, if someone is stumped, allow them to pass and return to them.

You can also close out physically with a group sculpt. Here, you ask one person to move to the centre of the group and adopt a physical position that expresses what they feel. As people feel ready, they also join the centre, adopting a physical expression for how they feel and connecting physically to others if they want to. Continue until everyone is present in the centre.

A variation on this is the group hum. Here you ask people to express their final feelings by humming. Usually one person starts and then others join in as they find their voices until the whole group is participating. Deep hums, relaxed hums, excited hums, frustrated hums, quiet, loud, humorous, angry, sad, smug, mischievous hums – all are welcome. Generally the group finds a natural way to bring the hum to an end, but if not – and you feel it is time to stop – you can take the role of conductor and slowly bring the group down to a quiet hum and a stop.

Evaluation

Evaluation is going on constantly in your reflection and closing circles, in your own reflective practice sessions with your co-facilitator and in any mentoring sessions you are able to set up. Some more significant evaluation needs to take place towards the end of the group. People need time to reflect on their journey and think about the next steps they want to take. You need to hear more about people's experience of the group so you can evaluate its success and use this to plan any future groups that you run.

People's feelings about the ending are likely to be mixed. Some may be satisfied to move on and not meet again. Others may experience the end as a loss with accompanying feelings of anger, sadness and regret. Some may be looking forward to having their evenings free again. Others will miss the loss of connection to people they have bonded with.

Most people's life experiences have given them a way of coping with endings and they will bring these typical responses to your group. People may be stoical or angry, accepting or indifferent, optimistic or regretful. You need to be sensitive to these reactions and make space so people can share them honestly. Take some time with your co-facilitator to reflect on your own typical reactions to endings and think about what you can learn from this.

The end of Meeting Five (six-session version) or Meeting Eleven (twelve-session version) and the Reunion Meeting are the best times for this overall evaluation and feedback. The notes for these meetings have suggestions for ways of discussing the key issues.

5. Planning your group

This chapter discusses the design of your sessions, recruitment and publicity, the practicalities of organising a group and the use of the carbon calculator.

Session design

If you are new to facilitation you should follow the prescribed programmes outlined in Chapters Six to Twelve. These have been tried and tested by dozens of Carbon Conversations facilitators. They work well and seeing them work will give you the confidence to experiment in later groups. More experienced facilitators will want to make their own selection of activities and have more input to the design of their sessions. The guidance here should help you plan a balanced programme.

Audience and objectives

It's always useful to think about what you want to achieve in a group and to express your objectives as clearly and specifically as you can, making sure that they fit what you know about the needs of the people who will be coming. The overall objectives for a Carbon Conversations group are that by the end of the group members should be able to:

- 1) understand the relationship between their personal lifestyle and global CO₂ emissions;
- 2) feel more comfortable and less anxious when talking about climate change and carbon reduction;
- 3) have explored their personal responses to carbon reduction, including their values and feelings;
- 4) commit to making serious carbon reductions with a goal of trying to halve their carbon footprint over a 4-5 year period.

You will need to refine these for your particular group. It's usually helpful to think about the group's objectives and the people you are recruiting in a circular loop. You need to be sure that Carbon Conversations is broadly suitable for the people you have in mind and you need to refine the objectives in the light of what you know about your participants. Are they new to the idea of carbon reduction or sophisticated activists? What do you know about their expectations? Do they know each other already or are they new to each other? Are there existing power relationships and hierarchies? What do you know about their age, gender, values and beliefs? Does anyone have special needs to do with sight, hearing or physical mobility?

If you conduct the carbon footprint interviews in good time (see 'Measuring footprints' later in this chapter) you will be able to form an impression of the needs and interests of each person. Keeping some flexibility in your programme is important in order to respond to emerging needs and wishes.

Sometimes you will want to adapt Carbon Conversations to meet the needs of a particular audience. A group of parents meeting with their babies may need shorter sessions and

more of them, as well as allowance made for the needs of the infants. Faith groups will often wish to open or close with a prayer, silence or meditation and may want to add an extra session where deeper discussion of climate change and the faith perspective can be developed. Students who are living at home or in university accommodation may find that parts of the material do not apply to them, as they may not have much control over their housing and they are not yet earning. Home energy issues can usually be explored with reference to the parental home while consumption issues can be approached through discussion of students' plans for careers and the implications of these.

Six or twelve meetings?

Carbon Conversations can be run as six 2-hour meetings (usually held fortnightly) or as twelve 1.5-hour meetings (usually held weekly). The second option allows you to offer a greater variety of activities and gives more time for the group to develop but it is not always easy to get people to commit the time. Experienced facilitators may like to experiment with other time combinations but note that 12 hours is the minimum needed to hold a Carbon Conversations group, whatever the format.

Balancing the sessions

Carbon Conversations offers a variety of activities. Some are active and some reflective. Some are aimed at communicating complex information in an enjoyable way. Some will help the group explore feelings. Some focus on values. Some focus on the process of change. Some are aimed at facilitating the group process.

As you start to select activities, think about the balance they will offer and the kinds of experiences they will shape. An easy way to think about this is through the alliterative mantra of Head, Heart and Hands, asking yourself if your design contains a variety of activities that will appeal to these different aspects of the self. A more nuanced list considers people's physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and practical selves.

Physically, you need to think about people's basic comfort and the need for breaks and rests, food and drink.

Intellectually, you need to think about the mental stimulation you will offer, the way you present information and the space you offer for exploring ideas. Small amounts of information, with opportunities for discussion and practical exploration are generally most useful.

Emotionally, you need to think about connecting with people's lived experience and making space for people to become aware of and express what they feel.

Spiritually, you need to think about people's ethical selves, their values and beliefs.

Practically, you need to create possibilities for learning-through-doing, trying new experiences, practising skills and experimenting with the unfamiliar.

We have tried to design the materials so that they appeal in all these ways. Some activities appeal easily to all these aspects, but some inevitably have a narrower focus and it is important to achieve an overall balance in each session.

Sequence and pace

At the start of a group you need activities that will help the group get to know each other and establish a way of working. You need to build trust. In the middle stages of a group you need activities that allow people to engage energetically with the task in hand. At the end you need activities that acknowledge the ending and provide time for reflection and evaluation. This pattern should be present over the course of the group as a whole but it also needs to be reflected in the flow of each meeting.

Varying the pace is useful. High-energy intense activities need to be balanced with time for reflection and processing of responses. It's tempting to cram more in than there is really time for, so try to allow time for slippage. It is frustrating if you don't cover all the material you have planned for a meeting. Activities sometimes take longer than you anticipated or go in a creative direction that you hadn't expected. It is better to have possibilities in reserve that you will offer if necessary but abandon if not.

Ending on time is important for those who have babysitters to get back to or buses to catch. Run through your timings beforehand. Decide who is responsible for which parts of each meeting and how you will help each other keep to time. Decide what you will drop if necessary.

Group size

Different sized groups offer different opportunities. Carbon Conversations groups are designed to be run for 6-8 people, the classic small group. Don't allow your group to be larger than this or you will run into difficulties.

Think about the combinations that will be appropriate for different activities. Solitary activities are good for personal reflection and exploration. In pairs or threes people can easily hold an intimate discussion. This is a good combination for building trust and confidence. Four or five people can usually co-operate well on a practical task. Discussion is lively in a group of six or seven, but as you pass eight it gets more difficult. Shy people can hide, confident ones may dominate. When numbers get above twelve you move into the dynamics of the large group. You won't be handling a Carbon Conversations group of this size but you may work with larger groups in taster sessions or recruitment meetings. When groups reach this size it becomes easy for people to withdraw, to feel vulnerable to attack or to feel depersonalised. Anxiety levels tend to rise and projective processes become more common. Activities in a large group need clear structure and direction. Good chairing, breaking into smaller groups and a focus on achievable tasks is usually helpful.

Evaluation

Make sure that your design builds in opportunities for evaluation, both informal and formal. We discussed the evaluation you make with your co-facilitator in the section

on reflective practice in Chapter Three: 'Working in groups'. In your design you also need to build in space for participants to reflect on their journey, think about the next steps they want to take and offer you feedback on the experience they have had. You will find specific guidance on this in Chapters Ten, Eleven and Twelve of this guide.

Recruitment

Who will be interested in Carbon Conversations and who should you aim to recruit as participants? Should you concentrate on people already active about climate change, encourage those who are newly concerned or focus on people who are currently not bothered? Is the best approach personal contact, speaking at public meetings, posters, leaflets or web-based marketing? How should you present Carbon Conversations? What language should you use and how will you make it attractive? You need to address all these questions if you are to run a successful group.

Communication principles

It's important to think about the way you communicate about Carbon Conversations, whether you're talking one to one, speaking to a group, creating a poster or tweeting. Think about the open, non-judgmental atmosphere that you aim to create in Carbon Conversations groups and build on that. Some good rules of thumb are these.

- Listen, empathise, show interest and respect in your audience's views and feelings.
- Be participatory.
- Speak from the heart: – be personal, use your own experience, tell stories, paint pictures, use imagery and metaphors.
- Be truthful.
- Acknowledge defensive reactions – for example, numbness, anxiety, guilt – as a way of helping to overcome them.
- Frame through non-materialistic values such as people's connection to the rest of the natural world, their concern for others, their belief in fairness and justice, their desire to improve the world, or their spiritual or religious beliefs.

Be aware that some of the things which people often use to communicate about climate change – such as polar bears on ice-floes, presentations full of graphs, and enticements to save money – are actually unhelpful.

- Scaring people with doom-laden pictures and predictions makes people briefly sit up but rarely encourages them to action.
- Dry facts and graphs rarely inspire.
- Information alone doesn't change minds – people tend to listen for facts that confirm their existing way of looking at the world and filter out facts that contradict it.
- Appealing to materialist values and crude self-interest such as people's desire to save money isn't effective in the long-term.

The *Common Cause* report (Crompton 2010) and *Common Cause Handbook* (Holmes et al 2011) explain why appeals to materialist values are problematic. Southampton University's

research about Carbon Conversations (Buchs et al 2015) also suggests that intrinsic values – a love of nature, desire for justice and fairness, or curiosity and enjoyment about the world – are most important to Carbon Conversations' participants.

You'll find more about talking to people about climate change in Chapter Six of *In Time for Tomorrow?* There is also good advice on COIN's *Talking Climate* website, <http://talkingclimate.org>.

Audience

The primary audience for Carbon Conversations is people who are concerned about climate change but who do not necessarily have small footprints and may not be well informed or strongly engaged with the issue. A DEFRA social marketing report (DEFRA 2008) identified these kinds of people as 'Positive Greens', 'Concerned Consumers' and 'Waste Watchers'. They make up 44% of the population, which suggests that potentially there are a lot of people who might be drawn towards a group. Research by Southampton University (Buchs et al 2015) confirmed that these are the people most likely to be attracted to Carbon Conversations. 72% of Carbon Conversations participants came from the 'Positive Greens' category, 7.3% were 'Concerned Consumers' and 1.8% were 'Waste Watchers'.

DEFRA's 'Positive Greens' category is broader than the people who would normally designate themselves 'green' and includes many people who are sympathetic to an environmental agenda but do not know much about the issues. 'Positive Greens' and 'Concerned Consumers' tend to be well educated, with a household income of over £40,000, or be students with the potential to have above average incomes. Many of them are home-owners. These people are willing to make changes but many have not done so, either because they do not know what to do, what the significance of different actions is, what the scale of the problem is or because of the many difficulties, psychological and social as much as practical, of doing so. Their carbon footprints are likely to be above average so there is a lot of scope for them to make a difference.

The Southampton survey found that 6.4% of Carbon Conversations participants came from DEFRA's 'Cautious Participants' category and 1.8% were 'Sideline Supporters'. These people tend to come from a younger, less well-off section of the population, more likely to be renters than homeowners, often with small children and with less scope for making changes. People whose household income is below average tend to have small carbon footprints and some of the Carbon Conversations materials may be less appropriate for them. Designing workshops that use some of the materials but which focus more on people's involvement as citizens, encourage their active participation in community projects and explore their aspirations for a changing future may be more appropriate. The 18% of the population identified by DEFRA as the 'Honestly Disengaged' are unlikely to be interested in a Carbon Conversations group. The Southampton research found 0.9% of Carbon Conversations participants in this category.

This kind of audience segmentation is useful but it tells you little about how to find the people you are aiming at. If you don't have a ready pool of people, you will need to set about some active recruitment. This may mean moving outside your immediate comfort zone. You will probably need to speak at other people's meetings, network actively and make sure you have attractive publicity materials to hand out.

Map your contacts

The best recruitment often comes through word-of-mouth and personal contact. Some of the best groups happen because people involve their family, friends, acquaintances and work colleagues. Think about all the personal contacts you have and all the organisations you might approach. Brainstorming a list and creating a map of your contacts and their connections will be helpful as will developing a database of email addresses, newsletters and publicity outlets in your local area. Think about:

- local conservation and wildlife groups and local branches of national organisations such as the RSPB, Wildlife Trusts and National Trust;
- gardening and outdoors groups such as your local allotment societies, gardening clubs, Ramblers Association, Cyclists Touring Club, Orienteering club;
- community groups such as Transition Town groups, Energy Action groups, residents' associations and tenants' groups;
- local political groups and campaigning organisations with local branches, such as the World Development Movement or Friends of the Earth;
- faith groups – churches, mosques and temples;
- voluntary organisations;
- parents' groups such as toddler groups and Parent Teacher Associations;
- student organisations and youth groups;
- retired people's groups such as U3A;
- social groups such as the WI.

It can be helpful to create partnerships, running Carbon Conversations for specific groupings, where you can draw on organisational support and appeal to common values – for example a love of nature, faith beliefs about the relationship of people to the natural world, or parental concern for children's future.

Networking

Attending other people's events – with your cards and fliers discreetly to hand – helps to make people aware of the project. Even if they are not going to participate themselves, they may pass information on, agree to place something on their website or carry information in their newsletter. It is useful to make contact with leaders and influencers of all kinds. Carbon Conversations may be just the solution someone needs – but they won't know this unless you're there to chat about it. Local councillors and local government officers, community workers, community and faith group leaders, student reps, educators and business people are all worth cultivating. You may find a partnership opportunity you hadn't expected.

Meetings, presentations and taster sessions

Invitations to speak at other people's meetings are an excellent opportunity. The offer of an hour allows you to run a taster session but 5, 10 or 20 minutes can be put to good advantage. Try to do something participatory which models the principles of Carbon Conversations, however short the time you have.

A well designed participatory session usually:

- is designed for a specific audience with clear objectives/ goals;
- has a clear structure and uses a variety of methods;
- appeals to the whole person;
- is enjoyable, participative and flexible;
- takes account of time, pace and sequencing;
- builds in evaluation.

You may find it useful to refer to the guidance on session design earlier in this chapter when planning a presentation or short workshop.

Find out as much as you can about your audience. How many people are expected? What do they already know about climate change, what values do they hold, what are their other concerns and interests? The more you offer something participatory and tailored to their interests – modelling the approach of Carbon Conversations – the more likely you are to engage people.

Brainstorm your objectives, thinking about the audience. Express these as concretely as possible. What do you hope people will be able to do as a result of attending? Concrete ideas like 'Be able to: explain what a carbon footprint is/feel more confident in talking about climate change' are usually more helpful than vague expressions such as 'Know more about what we've got to offer'.

In a very short presentation you may not have time for much evaluation but even with a ten minute slot you may be able to gauge how it has gone by finishing with a final question and asking for a show of hands.

With five minutes, you can describe what Carbon Conversations is, explain its approach and how it works, say why it matters to you and give details of your next group. Most people speak at around 100 words a minute so reckon on saying no more than 250 words in order to allow some time for audience involvement, and prepare well.

An engaging way to start is by asking for 'show of hands' answers to some questions. This demonstrates that you're interested in people and allows you to connect what you say to people's mood or concerns. Questions like: "Does anyone else feel like putting their head back under the duvet when they hear the words climate change?" or "Does anyone here feel angry/bored/scared about climate change?" give you a lead-in to explaining how Carbon Conversations respects and understands these reactions. "Does anyone here know their carbon footprint/know what a carbon footprint is?" gives you a lead-in to talking about personal responsibility and how you felt when you discovered your own carbon footprint. "Who do you think is responsible for tackling climate change – government?

Business? Us?" lets you explain the relationship of Carbon Conversations' personal approach to the bigger picture.

With ten minutes, you can do all of the above but you could also tell more of your personal story (see Marshall Ganz's work – Ganz 2007 – for help on this), use more audience involvement or answer some questions. You could start with a very quick brainstorm, asking your audience to tell you who they think is responsible for tackling climate change or asking them to call out one-word answers to the question "What do you feel when you hear the words climate change?"

If you're confident about managing the audience, you could ask people to talk very briefly with their neighbour about what they feel when climate change is mentioned or whether they think individuals have any responsibility for tackling climate change. This has the advantage of getting everyone talking but you won't hear what people are saying and you need to be sure that you can bring the audience back quickly from these pair conversations. Leaving a couple of minutes at the end for questions is usually helpful.

With twenty minutes you are spoilt for choice and can be more inventive. You could choose any combination of speaker input, a brainstorm, the kind of audience engagement questions described above, a pair discussion, some small group discussions or a short Q and A.

Taster sessions

Taster sessions can be run if you have an hour or more. Sometimes you will be lucky enough to be offered an hour's slot by an organisation which has regular speakers. You may also find public events or conferences where you can showcase Carbon Conversations with a taster session. You will find three outlines for taster sessions on the Carbon Conversations website.

The first focuses on carbon footprints and uses the carbon calculator to demonstrate the nature of people's personal impact. This taster session can be run with a large number of people and it aims to cope with a variety of levels of interest, from the disinterested to the passionate. The second also focuses on carbon footprints but uses Activity 6 'Understanding the numbers' (see Chapter Six of this guide) to get everyone present involved. It is suitable for up to twelve people. The third assumes that people already have some awareness and concern about climate change. It uses three activities from the food meeting and you will need a ratio of two facilitators to every eight participants if it is to work well.

Running a stall

Another opportunity for recruitment is the publicity stall. Summer fairs, school fetes, student squashes and Christmas bazaars can all help you talk to people about Carbon Conversations. An attractive banner, striking posters and leaflets and a display of books and games will all help but the key is engaging people in one-to-one chats. This emphasises the personal nature of the Carbon Conversations approach and helps you deal with people's doubts and reservations.

One way of doing this is to offer to calculate people's carbon footprints on the spot. All you need is a laptop and you can use the footprint questions to explain people's impact to them in a personal, non-judgmental way. Make sure you are familiar with the guidance below on 'Measuring footprints' before you do this.

In quiet venues where people are willing to sit down for ten minutes you can play a short version of the food game as a means of starting a conversation with a small group.

Publicity and social media

There are many other outlets for publicity – local organisations' websites and e-newsletters, local newspapers, free-sheets and listings guides, local radio. Make sure you know the copy dates for regular publications and newsletters. Creating a positive, regular presence for your organisation and for Carbon Conversations will help you recruit regularly for groups.

Think about who you are appealing to. When asked who their audience is, people often say 'anyone who might be interested' but effective publicity always has a particular section of the population in mind. People are bombarded with so much publicity we all learn to screen out the stuff that we don't think applies to us. Advertisers of sanitary towels, power tools, baby clothes and expensive holidays all have particular segments of the population they are appealing to. Think carefully about who you hope will come to your group and target your publicity at them.

The tone of publicity is important. It needs to be framed in terms of issues that matter to your audience. It needs to engage and enthuse. It helps to focus on intrinsic motivations, be personal, make climate change relevant, ('now' and 'here' rather than in the future and somewhere else), show people what they can do, avoid scare-mongering and guilt, and be positive. Less is often more. Few words and strong eye-catching images are more likely to make someone stop and read.

Practicalities

Good preparation is the key to your group going well. It may take you several months to recruit your group, so allow time for this. Make sure you have covered all of the following points.

Dates, times, meeting place and price

Decide if you will offer the six or twelve session version (see the section 'Session design' earlier in this chapter for details), daytime or evening meetings, and whether you will build your programme around school or college terms. Avoid scheduling meetings on significant holidays for people of different faiths, and avoid clashes with major local events.

Many groups take place in people's homes. A comfortable, domestic setting is good for putting everyone at ease but may not have good disabled access. Other groups use community centres, church halls or schools. Try to make

sure the seating is comfortable, that you can arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can see each other, that heating and lighting are adequate and that you can provide refreshments. Don't sit round a table. It creates formality and will inhibit the group atmosphere you are aiming for.

The price you charge needs to cover your costs. You need to provide a copy of *In Time for Tomorrow?* and the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* for each participant. Allow something for the provision of the Games Pack which you will hopefully use for several groups, and the costs of any publicity, room hire and refreshments. Carbon Conversations groups are usually offered to participants for between £20 and £35, a price which is less than many evening classes and which acknowledges that the groups are run by volunteers. The exact price will depend on your costs and whether you have any funding that could subsidise people.

Assemble materials

Some facilitators like to provide other books and energy meters to lend, and to collate local information. Good books to lend can be selected from the 'More information' lists in *In Time for Tomorrow?* Make sure that you have a 'Borrowing Book' where people can sign for what they have borrowed.

In some of the meetings it will be useful to have pens and a flipchart, or flipchart paper that you can stick to the wall.

Publicise and recruit your group

Allow plenty of time for this. Use the guidance earlier in this chapter to help you.

Measure footprints and distribute books

You must measure your group's carbon footprints before the group starts and you should do this face-to-face. In order to take part fully in the first meeting, each member needs to have some idea of what a footprint is and how theirs relates to the national average. See 'Measuring footprints' later in this chapter.

Try to distribute *In Time for Tomorrow?* and the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* to your members before the group starts so they can prepare by reading Chapter One of *In Time for Tomorrow?* A good time to do this is when you measure their footprints.

Schedule planning and mentoring meetings

If this is your first group together, you and your co-facilitator will probably need a planning session before each meeting. You need to make sure you are familiar with each session's content, divide up tasks between you and talk through any concerns you may have.

Fix reflective practice meetings with other facilitators or with a mentor if you have one. If you aren't able to arrange these, make sure you have time after each meeting or in the planning session to review how the last meeting went, using the questions on reflective practice in Chapter Three: 'Working in groups'.

Measuring footprints

Use the carbon calculator on the Carbon Conversations website to measure the carbon footprints of all group members before the group starts. You can download it, so you do not need to be online. Do this in one-to-one interviews, ideally face-to-face. Each interview will take 15-20 minutes, though you may find you spend longer if you get into an interesting discussion.

These interviews are an important part of Carbon Conversations. They give you an opportunity to start a conversation with each person, get to know them a little bit, gauge their level of knowledge and commitment and allay any anxieties they have about the group. If you are really unable to measure everyone's footprints face-to-face, you could do the last ones via skype or a phone call. Telephone interviews will be easier with people you have already met, perhaps at a stall, talk or taster session. As a last resort you can ask people to go to the website and measure their own footprint. If you do this, or if you have people in your group who have already found the calculator and measured their footprints themselves, try to make time for a quick chat about what they discovered and how they felt about it. If your group begins without having measured anyone's footprint, then you will need to run an extra meeting where you explain the idea of the footprint and calculate them all. There's an outline for this on the website.

The carbon calculator was created by Peter Harper of the Centre for Alternative Technology and modified by Andy Brown for Carbon Conversations. It is based on government data and academic research. It gives a rough picture of an individual's CO₂e emissions over five areas: home energy, travel, food, household goods/other purchases and infrastructure. Infrastructure refers to the services provided for us by government such as schools, roads, hospitals and defence.

The calculator asks lifestyle questions that people can answer easily and uses these to make an estimate of emissions. The work that people will do in the home-based activities during the group will give them a more accurate measurement which they can use as the starting point for making reductions. Most people have little idea of the impact of their lifestyle, so this first quick guess is an important part of orienting people to the scale of the problem.

Other calculators calculate emissions differently, so use this one to make sure that everyone is starting from the same position.

How to approach the interview

Asking people about their personal carbon footprint takes you to the heart of people's lives in ways that are challenging and deeply personal. Although you appear to be asking innocuous questions about home heating and travel patterns you are actually infringing on areas that matter deeply to people – the question of how they live their lives, what matters to them, and how energy use and consumption shape people's identity and values. Don't be surprised if people:

- express anxiety about being a bad environmental citizen – "I'm sure you'll think I'm dreadful" or "I know I'm going to come out badly on this";
- become defensive – "There's nothing I can do to change this";
- rationalise high-impact activities – "I need a big car for work";
- Challenge the calculator – "I'm sure those numbers aren't right" or "Where did these questions come from?"

The calculator throws up lots of numbers and facts but you need to focus on the feelings, story and experience of the person you are talking to. How the numbers and facts are experienced is more important than the facts themselves. Remember that information is only useful if someone is ready for it. Otherwise it tends to be ignored, argued about or used to defend against change.

Look at the section on 'Conversations for change' in Chapter Two: 'Climate, psychology and the process of change', in this guide and at Chapter Six of *In Time for Tomorrow?* for more detailed advice on talking to people about climate change.

The technical detail

Start by asking if the person knows what a carbon footprint is. If they don't, explain that it's a measure of the amount of carbon dioxide an individual is responsible for each year through their ordinary activities – heating their home, travelling, eating and shopping. With some people you may also need to explain some basic facts about climate change, for example that the energy we use in our daily activities produces carbon dioxide, and that it's carbon dioxide that is causing the earth's atmosphere to warm with dangerous effects.

It's often helpful to tell people that the average carbon footprint in the UK is 15 tonnes, that the US footprint is about 24 tonnes, the Indian footprint 1.5 tonnes and that a sustainable footprint for the UK is about 1 or 2 tonnes. (If you were used to using the old calculator you may be wondering why we now use a 15 tonne figure. The answer is that better research has revealed that the previous figures underestimated a number of things in particular the emissions attributable to infrastructure and to imports.)

You can then explain that the questionnaire will give your interviewee a rough idea of where they are in relation to the national average and the sustainable target. Reassure them that they don't have to achieve that target by themselves. Some reductions will come about through changes in energy supply, technology and infrastructure but their contribution in making changes to their own life is necessary if the targets are to be met.

Introduce the **home energy** section by saying something like: "I'd like to start by talking with you about your home. This is responsible for roughly a quarter of your carbon footprint." You may also find it helpful to explain that:

- The average UK house is responsible for 6 tonnes CO₂ per year
- The average individual is responsible for 2.5 tonnes via their home

The calculator asks about the home and then divides the figure for that by the number of people over 5 who live there to arrive at an individual footprint. You may find it helpful to point out that high occupancy is a good thing because it reduces everyone's share of CO₂ but that this doesn't mean that the house is energy efficient. There may still be a lot of scope for reduction.

Travel is a sensitive issue. For some people car ownership is essential for getting to work or to the shops. For others the car means freedom and individuality. For many people the chance to fly somewhere warm and exciting for holidays has changed their lives. Many people are also part of international families with loved ones thousands of miles away.

It's worth knowing that people tend to underestimate their car use, often by as much as 50%. Be clear that the questionnaire is only asking about personal car use: commuting to work should be counted but not travel that is undertaken on behalf of an employer.

Food is another sensitive issue as most people like to feel that they are feeding their family a healthy diet. There should be enough options in the questionnaire for most people to describe themselves with reasonable accuracy.

Estimating how much CO₂ people are responsible for through the **goods and services** they buy is difficult. The best correlation is with income. The more people earn, the more they spend and so the more CO₂ they are responsible

for. As a starting point the calculator asks people to state their household income and then divides that figure by the number of people supported by that income. This doesn't reflect the carbon-intensity of people's particular purchases, so the calculator asks two further questions which help discriminate between high and low-carbon spending. Finally some of the questions asked earlier are used as proxies. The greener someone is in relation to things like cycling, walking and household temperature the more careful they are likely to be about purchasing generally.

Some people prefer not to state their income. If someone doesn't want to give a figure the calculator assumes an average income.

People on high incomes are often surprised by how much their income affects their footprint and may feel that the answer doesn't reflect their commitment to reducing their impact. Explain that the calculator is making a guess and that there will be an opportunity to make a more accurate assessment of this, and every other aspect of their footprint, during the group.

Infrastructure refers to the CO₂ emitted on our behalf through government activity providing things like roads, schools, hospitals and defence. Dividing the total figure by the population of the UK gives the figure of 2.5 tonnes, which is the same for everyone. People are often puzzled by what infrastructure means here – make sure you understand and can explain.

6. 'Looking for a low-carbon future': activities and programmes

Select from these activities:

- for your first meeting (if you are running six 2 hour meetings);
- for your first two meetings, (if you are running twelve 1.5 hour meetings).

If you are an experienced facilitator you will want to select your own mix of activities, based on your preferences and your knowledge of your group. If you are a novice, follow one of the sample programmes. They are well-tryed and should give you a good experience.

You need to get across some basic facts about climate change, carbon footprints and people's personal impact in these meetings. But the emphasis should be on people getting to know each other, sharing views and feelings.

Key tasks

The key *process* tasks are to:

- get everyone involved;
- help the group gel;
- build trust.

The key *content* tasks are to:

- discuss the basics of climate change, ideas of responsibility and ethics, and the concept of a low-carbon future;
- make sure members understand how to start monitoring their carbon footprint more accurately.

Remember

Remember that people are new to the group, may be anxious about being accepted and about whether the group is going to give them what they want. If this is the first group you have facilitated, you may be nervous as well.

Looking for a low-carbon future

Sample programme – six-meeting version

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
1.	Introductions	20
2.	Ground rules	5
3.	Setting the scene	5
4.	Feedback on footprints	5
5.	Whose responsibility?	10
7.	Why do we bother?	20
9.	Thinking about a low-carbon future	20
13.	Realistic goals and monitoring	10
14.	Book-look	10
15.	Reflection and closing circle	15

Concentrate on creating the norms and atmosphere you want. If you kick off with a warm welcome, good personal attention and an enthusiastic, well-organised session these qualities are likely to stay with the group. If you start late, in a bit of a shambles in a cold, miserable room you will be fighting to secure members' commitment and interest. Seat people in a circle so discussion is easy. Make sure you are sitting opposite your co-facilitator so you can communicate easily with each other. You need to be in eye contact so you can communicate easily during the group as you hand responsibility back and forth between you. Model the qualities you hope people will show towards others as the group develops. If you show warmth, respect, enthusiasm and commitment, then others will follow your lead. If you're late, off-hand or don't listen properly, then you give permission for others to do the same.

Don't forget to bring flipchart, pens and any other materials you need.

Opening activities

Ask people to arrive 15 minutes before the official start, so you have time to greet them individually, offer refreshments and hand out copies of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. Advertising the group as '7.15 for a prompt 7.30 start' will encourage people to come on time, and share a cup of tea and chat before you begin. Try to make sure that people have their copies of *In Time for Tomorrow?* before the meeting, but if you haven't managed to do this hand them out now.

1. Introductions

20 min

Welcome everyone. Introduce yourselves, saying something about the purpose of the group and the way you hope people will work together. Make any necessary announcements about loos, fire exits etc. and remind people of the finishing time.

Then ask group members to introduce themselves with their name and a statement of what they hope to get out of the group, or what has brought them to the group. Explain that you don't want people to respond to each other until everyone has spoken. Model what you want by being brief in your own introductions and don't allow anyone to speak again until everyone has spoken. You can use this 'go-round' as an opportunity to share your hopes that (for example) the group will work together in a non-judgmental way, enjoy their time together, get to know each other and be able to support each other.

Another way of introducing people uses a selection of small objects. Prepare a bag of about 20 small objects. A mixture of mundane, pretty and intriguing items usually works well. My collection includes a tape measure in an enamelled

case, a compass, a toy cow, a small soft toy, some dice, a box of matches, a pretty scarf, a heart-shaped box, a small sculpture of a horse, a cork, a toy car, a string of beads and a tiny pottery clog. Place the objects on the floor in the centre of the circle. Ask everyone to pick something that catches their eye. Then go round the group asking people to say their name and to tell the group what they have picked and why it appealed to them. People often find it easier to reveal something about themselves in this way than if they are asked directly: "I picked the compass because it made me think we might be going on a journey here," or "The cork caught my eye because I had a really good night out last night". You can then do a second go-round asking people to share some thoughts about why they have come to the group.

2. Ground rules

5 min

You could simply state your ground rules for the group but it is more effective to ask the group to generate these themselves. Do this as a brainstorm with one of you scribing onto a sheet of flipchart paper. Ask people to recall what seems to have made other groups which they have taken part in work well. Fill in any gaps in the list. Acknowledge that it isn't always easy to stick to ground rules.

3. Setting the scene

5 min

Introduce the theme of the meeting. If you have managed to give out *In Time for Tomorrow?* before the meeting people should have had a chance to read through Chapter One and you won't need to provide much information. If not, this is the moment to talk through the information about climate change which you will find under the heading 'Climate change: the basics'. A good way to start is to ask the group to brainstorm what they know about climate change and scribe their ideas onto a flipchart. Answer any questions. Clear up any misconceptions. If there are questions you can't answer, point people to the reliable sources in the 'More information' section at the end of Chapter One of *In Time for Tomorrow?*

4. Feedback on footprints

5-10 min

In an ideal world you will have calculated people's footprints in a face-to-face interview where you will have been able to explain what a carbon footprint is, deal with

people's anxieties and explain the limitations of the calculator. If you haven't been able to do this and have instead asked people to make their own calculation on the Carbon Conversations website, they are likely to have questions about the results. You need to allow time to deal with this. Use the guidance on 'Measuring footprints' in Chapter Five of this guide to help you here. Make sure people understand that their footprint figure is private. They don't have to share it with others unless they want to.

Main activities

You need to select from these to fit the time available.

5. Whose responsibility?

10 min

Paired activity

This activity allows you to explore one of the fundamental issues about climate change: who is responsible for doing something about it? Research shows that most of us hope that it's down to someone else.

Ask people to turn to the activity 'Whose responsibility?' on p. 4 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. Ask them to form pairs, to discuss their ideas for 5 minutes and then to report back briefly. People are likely to put different weight on the different possibilities and you may get some interesting disagreements. Wrap it up by pointing out that:

- all these actors share responsibility and have different kinds of power;
- the area the group is focusing on is the bottom of the list (local communities, families and individuals) but that this doesn't mean the other areas are unimportant or that they shouldn't be involved in other kinds of action, particularly political action on climate change.

This activity can also be done as a brainstorm, but people are more likely to feel comfortable and open up if they have had some opportunities to relate one-to-one.

6. Understanding the numbers

15 min

Group activity

This activity helps people grasp some of the numbers involved. You will find the cards ready to print on the Carbon Conversations website in the 'Recruitment

Looking for a low-carbon future

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting one

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
1	Introductions	20
2	Ground rules	5
3	Setting the scene	5
4	Feedback on footprints	10
5	Whose responsibility?	10
7	Why do we bother?	15
13	Realistic goals and monitoring	10
15	Reflection and closing circle	10

Looking for a low-carbon future

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting two

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
	Introductions/opening circle	10
19	Feedback on monitoring	5
8	Being in the natural world	20
9	Thinking about a low-carbon future	25
12	Making changes	20
	Reflection and closing circle	10

activities' document or you can create them yourself from the list below. Type the amounts of CO₂, four to a sheet to create 20 A6 cards and the descriptions two to an A4 sheet to create 20 A5 cards.

Distribute both sets of cards amongst the group, two or three from each set to each person. People then move around the group, talking to each other, trying to match their cards. Give people hints if they seem stuck, emphasise that you are asking people to guess, and don't let this part of the game run too long if people seem to be struggling to find right answers. When people think they have found a match they should lay their cards together on a table or stick them on the wall so that everyone can see them. Once most cards have been matched, gather the group together and give the right answers, repositioning any cards that are in the wrong place and allow some discussion. There are usually some surprises for people.

If you want to play a quicker version of this, lay all the description cards on the table or stick them to the wall and just distribute the number cards, asking people to match these where they think they belong. This is less interactive.

7. Why do we bother?

15-20 min

Paired activity

This activity focuses on people's values. It should give them a space to share their deeper reasons for caring about the environment and the ethical, spiritual or philosophical reasons for doing something about climate change.

Ask people to turn to the activity 'Why do we bother?' on p. 5 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*, then allocate them a different partner. This is important because you

want people to get to know everyone in the group, not just the first person they have chatted to. It also allows those who didn't hit it off in the first activity to work with someone else.

Allow 2-3 minutes for members to tick their answers and another 5 for them to discuss in pairs. Encourage people to write their own statement or to edit the statements to make them reflect their own position more accurately. Then ask for a report back, allowing some general reflection before making your own feedback.

The statements have been chosen to reflect a range of values and motivations. Some are philosophical, some are pragmatic, some are spiritual, aesthetic or religious. Be prepared for people to challenge the statements and argue about what they mean.

In your feedback you might:

- share your own views;
- suggest that people's values and beliefs about the natural world can be a source of strength and inspiration in dealing with climate change;
- point out that many of the statements are ideals that can be hard to live up to and that people should not feel guilty about the fact that they do not always succeed in doing so. There are many reasons why this may be so, political and social, as well as personal. This may be a good moment to talk about the fact that we are not rational, consistent creatures and talk about the inner conflicts we can all feel.
- suggest that if people have not already done so, they should read the sections in Chapter One of *In Time for Tomorrow?* on shared responsibility (p.9) and motivation (pp. 13-14).

Understanding the numbers

Number cards*	Description cards**
15 tonnes	UK, per person CO ₂ emissions each year
1.5 tonnes	India, per person CO ₂ emissions each year
0.3 tonnes	Tanzania, per person CO ₂ emissions each year
1.5 tonnes	Sustainable per person CO ₂ emissions each year
6 tonnes	Average CO ₂ emissions for a UK house each year
1 tonne	CO ₂ saved each year by insulating the walls of an average house
0.3 tonnes	CO ₂ saved each year by turning the thermostat down from 21° to 20° C in an average house
0.4 tonnes	CO ₂ saved each year by draught-stripping an average house
3 tonnes	CO ₂ emitted when one person takes a return flight to the USA
2 tonnes	CO ₂ emitted driving 5,500 miles in an average car
1.3 tonnes	CO ₂ emitted due to one person going on a 2000 mile cruise
0.5 tonnes	CO ₂ emitted due to one person travelling 5000 miles by train
5 tonnes	CO ₂ emitted in growing 100 kg of tomatoes in a heated greenhouse
0.04 tonnes	CO ₂ emitted in growing 100 kg of tomatoes outdoors
1.5 tonnes	CO ₂ emitted providing a primary school with meat-based dinners for a week
0.6 tonnes	CO ₂ emitted providing a primary school with vegetarian dinners for a week
35 tonnes	The embodied CO ₂ in a new Landrover Discovery
10 tonnes	The embodied CO ₂ due to a £20,000 kitchen refit
1.2 tonnes	CO ₂ emitted using a mobile phone one hour a day for a year
0.25 tonnes	CO ₂ embodied in a year's worth of clothing purchases

*Print four to a sheet of A4 **Print 2 to a sheet of A4

8. Being in the natural world

20-30 min

Sharing and reflection

This activity offers another way of exploring values and feelings about the environment. It is more direct but it needs to be set up beforehand, so it is more appropriate for the twelve-session version.

Ask people to bring something with them that represents or symbolises their relationship to the rest of the natural world. This might be an object, a picture, a poem or something else entirely – it's their choice. Some people bring stones, feathers, flowers or leaves from a favourite place. Others bring photographs, short pieces of writing or poems. In the circle, ask people to share what they have brought and the story behind it. Encourage people to talk about how they feel about the non-human world. You may find:

- memories of good and bad experiences;
- feelings of grief, anger or shame about loss and damage;
- feelings of awe, wonder, respect and fear at the power of nature;
- feelings of connectedness and integration.

Encourage people to connect these experiences with their values and with the task of lowering their impact on the natural world.

Remember that not everyone feels positive about being outside and close to nature. Make space for those who feel squeamish or uninterested. There is more than one route to having a lower impact.

9. Thinking about a low-carbon future

Brainstorm and discussion

20-25 min

The purpose of this activity is to get group members thinking about the kind of world we should be aiming for. What would life be like and how would we manage on 1 or 2 tonnes instead of 15 tonnes of CO₂? How could we manage now if, personally, we reduced our emissions to about half of what they are now? For someone with an average footprint, this means trying to use no more than 1.5 tonnes in each of the 4 areas of a footprint. This is a good target for an individual. It is imaginable, it can be worked towards realistically over a few years and further reductions will come through decarbonisation of the energy supply. We regularly meet some people who are living 6 or 8 tonne lives.

Remind the group of the material in Chapter One (pp. 15-21) of *In Time for Tomorrow?* under the heading 'Thinking about a low-carbon future' in particular the information about carbon footprints. If your group haven't had their books in advance, or haven't read Chapter One, you will need to offer a quick summary and explanation.

Ask the group to brainstorm what they think would be the attractions and difficulties of a low-carbon world. One of you should run the brainstorm. The other should scribe onto large sheets of paper. Don't be surprised if similar items appear on both sides: one person's attraction may be another person's difficulty.

Typical attractions: quieter roads, less traffic, greater sense of community, less tat in the shops, more biodiversity, a more natural life; nearer overseas places will feel foreign again.

Typical difficulties: loss of opportunities for travel; close communities will become insular; people love their gadgets and cars; how will international families manage?

If you have time, ask the group to reflect together on how to create a low-carbon world:

- Will people need to change their attitudes and expectations?
- What can individuals do?
- What should government do?

If time is tight, ask members to reflect on these questions at home, and say that you will be returning to these themes throughout the meetings.

10. Life in 2050

20 min

Visualisation

This is an alternative way of asking people to imagine the future. The activity is designed to be done with young people but you could adapt it for a mixed age group by asking everyone to imagine that they are in their early 20s. Remember that some people find this type of activity challenging so you need to judge whether it is suitable for your participants.

Ask the group to make themselves comfortable, close their eyes and focus on breathing gently and calmly. If there's a carpeted floor encourage them to lie down. Then talk through the following script, leaving appropriate pauses. At the end of the visualisation ask people to share their reactions in pairs, or in the group as a whole. If you are short of time, sharing in pairs first is a good option as it allows everyone to speak.

"It's the 2050s. You are in your fifties or sixties. You have a good job that you enjoy and the family life you have dreamed of. Major climatic events 30-35 years ago focused the world's attention on immediate action to reduce emissions. Climate change talks were successfully resumed and the world's economies began to transform themselves under a global carbon tax regime. While the effects of climate change continue to be felt, global emissions have stabilised for the very first time. The rise in world temperature is held at just over 2 degrees. There have been massive transformations in the way people live, the technologies they use and their expectations about consumption. The costs of action have been huge as well. World-wide, average CO₂ emissions are now less than 1 tonne per person per year. Wealthy people in the richest countries are responsible for no more than 3 tonnes each per year.

Run through your day with me. Imagine what it is like. Where are you living? What is your home like? How is it heated and cooled? How big is it? What kinds of equipment does it have? Does it have a garden? What is growing in it? What kind of equipment do you use for looking after it?

Imagine yourself getting up in the morning. How do you wash? What kinds of clothes do you put on? What do you eat for breakfast?

Perhaps you have a family and children. Your children may be grown up and have children of their own. Where do they live? How often do you see them? What is the children's school like?

Now think through your day. What are your morning tasks before you leave for work? How do you travel to work? How long is your journey? Imagine your place of work. How many hours a week do you work? How big is your company/department? Is it a public service or a private company? What does it do/make/organise? Is it a local company or an international one? Who does it trade with and how is that trade carried out? How do goods travel from one place to another?

It's lunch-time and you're taking some time out to book a 2 week break from work. What are you going to do? Where are you going to go?

Today is a lucky day and you're finishing in time to meet your partner after work. Where will you go? What kind of entertainment will you see? What food will the restaurant serve? How will you get home?

Finally, imagine you are putting your head on the pillow at the end of a satisfactory day in 2050. What pleases you about the way life has changed since you were a student in 2015? What do you miss from that life?

When you are ready, open your eyes, sit up and share some thoughts with the person next to you."

11. Fears for the future

15-20 min

Paired activity (15 min) or art activity (20 min)

This activity addresses people's fears head on. Ask people to turn to the 'Fears for the future' activity in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* and discuss the list in pairs, adding any of their own worries that aren't featured. Then open up a conversation in the whole group. Two risks you need to guard against are:

- catastrophising – where people wind themselves up with feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness;
- pollyanna-ism – where people are so determined to look on the bright side, that fears can't be discussed.

An alternative approach which may appeal to some groups is to provide art materials and ask people to create a quick, spontaneous image of their fears about the future. Ask people to share these in the group and allow a more general, reflective conversation to develop once everyone who wishes to speak has said something about their picture. Using art can help people get in touch with feelings that are hard to express in words and can be a good way of containing them.

12. Making changes

15-20 min

Paired activity (15 min) or art activity (20 min)

Remind people of the section about the process of change in Chapter One of *In Time for Tomorrow?* (pp. 23-24) and ask them to turn to the 'Making changes' activity on p.7 of

the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. This activity asks people to reflect on other changes they have made in their lives, talk about how they felt about these and what helped them to cope or succeed. Allow about 6 minutes in pairs and 9 minutes feedback and conversation in the group.

An alternative approach, which may appeal to some groups, is to provide art materials and ask participants to draw or paint a picture about a change they have made at some previous point in their lives. The picture could be in any form – representational, abstract or diagrammatic. It might contain words. You could also provide images cut from magazines to use in a collage. If people are comfortable with this approach, you may find it helps them express some of the deeper feelings about change. You can use the prompt questions in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* to help people focus. Allow 10 minutes for people to make their picture and 10 minutes for people to share their pictures in the group and discuss what came up for them.

Closing activities

13. Realistic goals and monitoring 10 min

Facilitator input with Q and A

There's a shift of mood to the practical here. You need to emphasise the importance of setting goals and monitoring if people are to make a real difference. You also need to do this without making people fearful that they will be shown up or humiliated if their footprints turn out to be bigger than expected. Emphasise that the point is to gain knowledge. There is no judgment involved. You need to cover the following points.

- a) If people have an average or below average footprint they should aim for 1.5 tonnes in each of the four key areas. People with larger footprints should aim to halve their footprints. Realistic timescales could vary from between 1 and 5 years. Explain that by the end of the group, people should be able to make a personal plan for how they will go about this.
- b) If the group has begun to build trust, people might like to share what their footprints are and what the journey ahead looks like. Be careful though. People need to feel that it is OK to keep their footprint private. If one person has an exceptionally large footprint, they could feel threatened or isolated.
- c) Explain that Meeting 2 (or Meetings 3 and 4 if you are running the twelve-session version) will examine energy in the home and that in preparation you want members read Chapter Two of *In Time for Tomorrow?* and to start reading their gas and electricity meters so that they can see how much fuel they actually use. The carbon footprint questionnaire gave them an educated guess. Now it's time to find out for real.
- d) Point out pp. 8-10 in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* where monitoring is explained.
- e) Describe the different types of meters people may find – the most common types are illustrated in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* – and where they are likely to

be located (outside the front door, inside the front door, under the stairs, in meter cupboards). Some meters may be inaccessible, particularly in rented accommodation. Some people may not have the key to their gas meter. (Keys can be bought from hardware shops and it may be helpful to have a couple in your pocket.) Increasingly you will meet people with 'smart' meters, as these gradually get installed across the country. Many of these come with their own monitoring displays or website access that keeps track of use.

- f) Explain that keeping track of gas and electricity consumption will be much easier if they use the online workbook *Monitoring Your Footprint* on the Carbon Conversations site or sign up to iMeasure, <http://www.imeasure.org.uk>, or Carbon Account, <http://www.thecarbonaccount.com>. Emphasise this, as it really does take the hard work out of everything. If there is someone in your group without online access you will need to print off the spreadsheets from the online Workbook for them. They can then fill them in using a handheld calculator.
- g) Explain that when people read their meters their fuel use almost always reduces: simply becoming aware of what is going on encourages people to switch off appliances and to review when they come on. By tracking their consumption they will also be able to see how their fuel use is reducing year by year.

14. Book look

10 min

Some groups like to make books, magazines and electricity monitors available for people to borrow. People are much more likely to take advantage of this if they have had a chance to look at them as a group.

Place them all in a space or table in the middle of the group. Explain that the aim is to become familiar with what is available to borrow. Give members about five minutes to take a look. Bring them back together to share what they have found out. Reach a group agreement that a book will only be borrowed until the next meeting (unless no-one else wants to borrow it) and that everyone will sign books in and out.

In subsequent meetings, make the books available for borrowing or return during the arrival time before the meeting and for ten minutes afterwards

15. Reflection and closing circle

10-15 min

End the meeting with a few moments for reflection on the meeting's process and a closing go-round. We suggest a number of ideas for these under the heading 'Reflection and closing circles' in Chapter Four: 'Introduction to the materials and activities'. For this meeting, a good one is often:

- tell us one thing you will take away from tonight; or
- any last (brief) thoughts before we close?

As with the opening circles, follow the conventions that contributions are brief, members don't reply to each other, that you proceed clockwise from whoever starts and that people can pass if they wish.

7. 'Energy at home and at work': activities and programmes

Select from these activities:

- for your second meeting (if you are running six 2 hour meetings) or
- for meetings three and four, (if you are running twelve 1.5-hour meetings).

If you are an experienced facilitator you will want to select your own mix of activities, based on your preferences and your knowledge of your group. If you are a novice, follow one of the sample programmes.

This topic involves some technical information. Be sure you understand the issues and have enough technical know-how at your fingertips. Be aware that people's actions in the home are strongly driven by their emotions and relationships: home is where the heart is.

Key tasks

The key *process* tasks are to:

- help people feel welcomed and included;
- help people work together (remind them about the ground rules);
- encourage and enthuse the group;
- help people explore feelings of resistance, difficulty or despondency;
- maintain an atmosphere that is both non-judgmental and challenging.

The key *content* tasks are to:

- check that people have found (and are using) the online workbook *Monitoring Your Footprint* or have signed up to iMeasure or Carbon Account;
- communicate the idea of the low-carbon house and pathways to achieving it;
- ensure people understand practically how to reduce their home energy use;
- ensure people understand the importance of making a plan for their home;

- make sure people understand how to prepare for the next topic.

Remember

The possibilities open to people will differ. Those who live in rented accommodation have fewer options than those who own their own homes. People who are poor have fewer options than those who are well-off. Make sure members don't feel bad about what they can't do. Equally, don't let them off the hook about what they can do.

People's homes are hugely important to them. Home provides a sense of safety, comfort and security. It is a place for expressing individuality and status through the choice of decoration, consumer goods and appliances. If you can work with the grain of this, members will become motivated and enthusiastic. Work against it and you will have a demotivated or depressed group on your hands.

Opening activities

Remember to ask people to arrive 15 minutes before the official start, so you have time to greet them individually and offer refreshments. Make sure your chairs are arranged in a circle and that you and your co-facilitator have reserved your seats opposite each other. (Place your bag or coat on the chair.)

16. Introductions/opening circle 15 min

In the second (and sometimes even in the third) meeting, some people will still be unsure of each other's names. For this go-round ask people to say their name and then use one of the suggested opening circle questions from the list in Chapter Four of this guide. We've found asking everyone how they are feeling about climate change often works well in this session. Ask how they are feeling now, today, rather than for an overall feeling and make it clear that it is their feelings you want to hear about, not their opinions. The feedback you offer will depend on what people say but it is often helpful to emphasise how much our feelings can change from day to day, depending on what has happened, what we have done and what we have heard on the news. Another possibility is to use a go-round that focuses on the theme of the meeting, such as 'Tell us the best and worst things about your current home' or 'Briefly describe the favourite of all the places you have lived in'.

You can follow the format of going round the group clockwise from whoever starts. Alternatively, start with one of yourselves. This allows group members a few more moments of thinking time and lets you model the kind of contribution you want (personal, focused and brief.)

Energy at home and at work

Sample programme – six-meeting version

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
16	Introductions/opening circle	15
18	Setting the scene	5
19	Feedback on monitoring	10
20	Home comforts	10
21	Low-Carbon House game	35
23	Planning for a low-carbon home	15
27	Wrap-up	15
28	Reflection and closing circle	15

17. What home means to me/ my ideal home

15 min

This activity can be done as people arrive or later in the meeting. It provides a useful way of engaging shy people who find it hard to make small talk in the 15 minutes you have allowed for settling in and creates an immediate sense of a shared task. It can also be used later in the meeting if you prefer.

Provide a table with A4, A3 or flip-chart paper, coloured pens and crayons, scissors, glue and a large collection of images cut from magazines. Some of these should be of houses (exteriors and interiors); some should be of the appliances and furnishings you find in houses; some should be of people (try to find a variety of ages, ethnicity, gender etc.), some can be abstract. You could also provide snippets of paper with phrases about homes typed onto them.

Ask people to make a picture or collage either of 'What home means to me' or 'My ideal home'. How you phrase the task will affect people's response. 'What home means to me' is more likely to prompt associations of safety, security and relationship. 'My ideal home' is more likely to prompt people's practical dreams which may be of urban fashion, rural idyll, eco-perfection or just enough space.

If you do this activity at the start, you can ask people to share something in the group about their pictures as an introductory go-round. If you do it later, this will be an additional go-round. Alternatively ask people to share in pairs first and then in the group.

18. Setting the scene

5 min

Introduce the theme of the meeting, checking whether people have managed to read Chapter Two of *In Time for Tomorrow?* This will affect how much information you need to provide at this point. The key facts are those about low-carbon housing and how to get there (pp. 32-34). You also need to emphasise that you will be:

- thinking about the meaning of home and about people's relationships with family, housemates and landlord/landlady as these have powerful effects on the changes people manage to make;
- playing a game that will help members understand the practical issues;
- making plans for change.

Try not to deal with detailed questions at this stage. They are likely to get cleared up as people engage in the main activities or will be better answered at the end.

19. Feedback on monitoring

5 min

Ask how everyone got on reading their meters. Did they manage to do it? Are people using the online workbook *Monitoring Your Footprint* or alternatively, have they signed up to iMeasure or Carbon Account? Were there any difficulties? Were there any surprises? Do they see the point of it? If members haven't signed up, don't be disapproving. People are often fearful of what they will discover or feel guilty that the figures will be large. Explain that the purpose is not to judge anyone, but to start to create a realistic picture of their emissions. Affirm that you think it's important and suggest having a go.

Any difficulties with meter reading are best not dealt with now – this can be time-consuming so it is usually best to discuss problems individually, at the end of the meeting. Tell people you'll have a look at it with them later and make sure you do. If you can't work out what kind of meter someone has, ask them to take a photo of it to show you.

Main activities

20. Home comforts

10 min

Paired activity

This activity explores what makes a home, a home – from the fabric of the house to its internal décor and location. The background issues are discussed in Chapter Two of *In Time for Tomorrow?* under the headings 'The meaning of home' and 'Home comforts', so if people have read ahead they should find the activity straightforward.

Ask people to turn to the activity 'Home comforts' on p.11 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. Allow members a

Energy at home and at work

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting three

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
16/17	Introductions/opening circle, using 'What my home means to me/ My ideal home'. Get this started during arrival time.	15
18	Setting the scene	5
19	Feedback on monitoring	5
20	Home comforts	10
21	<i>Low-Carbon House</i> game	35
27	Wrap-up – explain the home survey and what you'll cover next time	5
28	Reflection and closing circle	15

Energy at home and at work

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting four

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
	Opening circle	10
19	Feedback on monitoring	10
22	Changing your home	20
24	Show a film	10
23	Planning for a low-carbon home	20
27	Wrap-up – introduce travel monitoring	5
28	Reflection and closing circle	15

couple of minutes to fill in the sheet, then put people in pairs to talk for 5 minutes, finishing with 3 minutes brief feedback to the group. If your group is small, you can skip the paired discussion and share reflections about the activity with the whole group.

21. Low-Carbon House

35 min

Game

This game models the changes that could reduce the emissions of a large 1930s semi-detached house from 9 tonnes to 3 tonnes over a 6 year period. It should help group members understand the scale of what needs to be done to most UK houses and think about what their own homes may need. The game has two versions, one featuring a family, the other featuring a group of tenants and a landlord. Choose whichever seems most appropriate for the people in your group. If you have a mix of tenants and homeowners you could divide into two smaller groups and play both versions.

Basic instructions on how to play the game are in the leaflets in your Games Pack. There is more detailed guidance at the end of this chapter, including an explanation of how the game was devised and advice on some of the technical issues which should help you answer questions that group members may have. You can download extra copies of the instructions from the website.

22. Changing your home

20 min

Paired and/or group discussion

Although most people are willing to do something to upgrade their homes, many of us find it hard to organise, are worried about the expense or simply feel that we can't. This activity explores people's motivations for upgrading their home, the obstacles they may face and the resistances they may feel. It relates to the sections on 'Low-carbon living in practice' (pp. 42-50), and 'Getting stuck' (pp. 53-56) in Chapter Two of *In Time for Tomorrow?* You may find it helpful to refer to these during the discussion.

Ask members to tick the 'Changing your home' lists on pp.12-13 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. Allow no more than five minutes for this – it is best done quickly. Use this to lead into a paired or group conversation. Some people prefer to share their thoughts with one other person, before revealing themselves to the group. It's best to focus on the positive motivations before exploring the resistances.

23. Planning for a low-carbon home

Explanation and discussion

15 min

There are two practical aspects to planning for a low-carbon home, understanding what needs to be done and making the plan. The 'Survey your home' activity on pp. 14-17 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* will help members take a good look at what needs to be done. The lists of possible changes on pp. 43-48 of *In Time for Tomorrow?* which are repeated at the end of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*, should allow people to see what they have already achieved and make their own list of what

they would like to do. Finally, on p.18 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* people can make notes about their own plan.

Direct your group members to these pages and open some discussion. People might like to spend some time looking at the lists of actions and getting clarity about what each item means. It can also be heartening for people to see how much they are already doing. If people think there is little they can do because they are renting, they may be surprised at what going through the lists reveals, both about what they can do and about what they could approach their landlord to do. It may also be useful to talk about doing surveys and see whether members can help each other with these. Finally, emphasise the importance of making a plan. Even if it only contains a small number of actions, these are more likely to be put into practice if they get written down.

24. Show a film

10-15 min

DVD and discussion

There are a number of DVDs which you can use to show how homes can be renovated, inspire your group and explain some of the detail. Take a look at the video fly-throughs on the *Superhomes* site, http://bit.ly/fly_through. There are 28 different 4-8 minute videos of home-owners and tenants talking about the eco-improvements made to their homes. There are examples of houses from different periods and of different house types so you can choose something that is appropriate for your group.

25. Ask an expert

20-30 min

If you have a local home energy expert – this might be an architect, a building services engineer or a Green Deal surveyor – invite them to join you for a practical Question and Answer session for a short part of your meeting. Bringing in an outsider will change the group dynamic, so you need to be sure that your expert is sympathetic to the goals of the group, will not take over and will keep to the allotted time. Technical people sometimes think that all problems can be solved practically so you need to be sure that this doesn't impinge on the time you spend discussing the more personal problems people encounter in making changes to their homes.

26. Samples demonstration

10 min

Create a box of samples, bring it to your meeting and allow people to look and handle while you (or your expert) answer any questions. You will find a list of things to include in your samples box towards the end of this chapter.

Closing activities

27. Wrap-up

15 min

Reiterate the importance of doing a survey and drawing up a plan if people are serious about making changes to their homes. Encourage people to continue monitoring their home energy. Point out the 'A-Z of home energy' and the FAQs at the end of Chapter Two of *In Time for Tomorrow?*

and any relevant books you have to lend that could help. Ask everyone to bring their plans to the next meeting.

Introduce the travel monitoring you would like members to do for the next meeting. This is introduced in Chapter Three of *In Time for Tomorrow?* under the heading 'One tonne travel' and explained in detail in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. Members can either use the online workbook *Monitoring Your Footprint* on the Carbon Conversations website or sign up to Carbon Account, which records travel as well as home energy emissions. *Monitoring Your Footprint* allows people to keep a record of their current travel and also work out the emissions from their last year's travel. Make sure that you are familiar with the spreadsheets in *Monitoring Your Footprint* and that you can explain them to anyone who has difficulty.

Explain that people are often surprised at what their travel diaries reveal. Few of us have a really accurate idea of how far we go. Acknowledge that the travel monitoring can be time consuming and comes on top of the ongoing home energy monitoring and other home energy activities. If people feel overwhelmed by the amount you are asking them to do, allow some time to discuss this. Explore ways of making a realistic start and acknowledge it may not be possible to finish it by the next meeting.

28. Reflection and closing circle 15 min

Allow a few moments for reflecting on the process of the meeting, using the kinds of questions we suggest in Chapter Four of this guide. Choose a final go-round. It can be useful to respond to the mood of the meeting. If people seem to be feeling overwhelmed, simply asking people to say how they are feeling can be helpful. Another appropriate theme could be "Tell us one thing you've felt challenged by and one thing you've felt encouraged by in today's meeting."

29. After the meeting 10 min

Talk individually to anyone who was having difficulty with the meter monitoring and sort out their problems.

Additional guidance on the Low-Carbon House game

Some facilitators feel that they do not have enough technical background to run this game well. There is a lot you can do to prepare.

- Read Chapter Two of *In Time for Tomorrow?* thoroughly, including the 'A-Z of home energy' which will help you understand exactly what each of the energy-saving measures is.
- Read through the additional information below.
- Look for more information in Nigel Griffith's book *Eco-House Manual* (Haynes 2007), which is accessible and well-illustrated. Sophie Pelsmaker's book *The Environmental Design Pocketbook* (RIBA publishing 2012) provides more technical background.
- Play through the game with your co-facilitator, anticipating the questions you may be asked and checking how you would answer them.

If you still feel unprepared, think about finding a technical expert to join you for this part of the meeting. This might be an architect, a building services engineer or a Green Deal surveyor. Bringing in an outsider will change the group dynamic, so you need to be sure that your expert is sympathetic to the goals of the group, understands the game and its purpose and will not take over.

More about the house

We chose this house because it's possible to show a range of possible technologies being applied to it. In reality, some would be more likely to be used than others.

Heating options. The house is already on the gas main and has an existing central heating system so in reality the best heating option would be to replace the old gas boiler with a modern condensing one. Heat pumps are a good solution for areas where gas is not available. When the electricity supply is de-carbonised they will be a good option more widely.

We have not included a wood-pellet boiler as an option. Although this counts as a zero carbon technology (as trees grow they absorb the same amount of carbon dioxide as the wood emits when it burns) widespread use of wood is contentious. Widespread use of wood in urban areas would lead to unacceptable air pollution and there are anxieties about agricultural land being taken over for fuel crops. There are also elements of double counting about the carbon savings: the carbon dioxide that the trees have absorbed may also have been counted as part of a carbon offsetting scheme. In a rural area a wood pellet boiler may be the only option but we don't think widespread use of wood should be encouraged.

Insulation options. Many people in houses with cavity walls, fill the cavity with insulation and stop there. However this only provides 50mm of insulation, compared with the 100mm currently required for new houses and the 250mm that a PassivHaus designer would specify. The options we suggest in the game bring the house up to 100mm. In areas where driving rain is a problem, such as some parts of Scotland and Wales, it may be best to leave the cavity unfilled and opt for 100mm of internal or external insulation. People often fear that internal insulation of the external walls will make rooms feel small. In reality most people can't tell the difference between a room that is 3 metres deep and one that is 2.9 metres deep. Occasionally there are problems with space and shape when a room has two external walls. This is why we give the option in the game of insulating the side wall externally and the back and front walls internally.

In a house with solid walls (most houses built before the mid-1930s) dry-lining internally or insulating externally are the only options. External insulation changes the appearance of a house because rendering has to be applied over the insulation. People who are fond of their brickwork or stonework or who live in conservation areas may prefer to dry-line internally.

Glazing options. People often balk at the expense of new high-performance windows. It is useful to remember

that most windows do not last forever and will need to be replaced at some point. The old metal windows on the back of the house in the game will probably drip with condensation in winter and be difficult to draught-strip. It also makes sense to replace the windows when external insulation or dry-lining insulation is installed as this will minimise re-plastering and decoration work.

Priorities. The priority should always be to reduce the energy demand of the house. Insulation and draught-stripping should be top of the list, along with behavioural changes. Reducing the number of appliances, buying more efficient ones and reducing their use will also reduce demand. Micro-generation is a great thing to do once these basic improvements have been made.

Coping with technical questions

Dealing with technical questions can be difficult if you lack confidence. Make sure you understand what each of the cards means. For example you need to be able to explain briefly what a heat recovery extract fan or dry lining is, explain the difference between solar thermal and photovoltaic systems, know what a ground source heat pump is and when it would be an appropriate measure. All this information is in the 'A-Z of home energy' in *In Time for Tomorrow?*

If you find yourself stumped, look it up or ask the group to check for themselves. Don't be afraid to say that you don't know the answer and don't be tempted to improvise. Offer to check from the sources we suggest above or have these books to hand for people to borrow if they wish. The section on 'Answering technical questions', in Chapter Three of this guide may also help. Other participants can often offer insights or answers, but carry out a reality check.

- What is the person's opinion based on? Do they have genuine knowledge and authority?
- Does what they are saying have the ring of truth or does it sound like an urban myth or green-wash?
- Does what they are saying fit with the 'Rules of thumb' at the end of Chapter Two of *In Time for Tomorrow?*

The Green Deal and other help with costs

At the time of writing the Green Deal is the UK government's main tool for helping homeowners and landlords to reduce the carbon emissions of UK housing. It provides loans for insulation and glazing, new boilers, solar hot water, PV and heat pumps. Repayments are made through a charge on electricity bills and should be covered by savings made on fuel. If a house is sold, the loan remains with the house.

The Renewable Heat Incentive and Feed-In Tariff provide ongoing payments to homes installing solar thermal, heat-pumps, PV, and biomass boilers, making them an attractive investment for people who can afford the up-front cost. In order to receive RHI you need to have a Green Deal assessment done and, if it recommends loft and cavity wall insulation, have those installed as well. In order to receive the Feed-In Tariff your house needs to score at least a 'D' on its Energy Performance Certificate.

The Energy Company Obligation provides additional help to low-income homeowners and to all homeowners for measures such as solid-wall insulation which may be too expensive to be paid back through the Green Deal. Eligibility is complex.

Consult the Energy Saving Trust site for more information about all of these schemes, <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk>. Some local authorities provide additional help. Find out what is available in your local area.

Helping the group play the game

As they play, participants will probably have questions about what some of the options mean. Offer information but let the group take its own decisions. Note that it can be difficult to save the last tonne. People are sometimes surprised that PV doesn't save more than the 500 kg CO₂ we suggest. 500 kg is the saving on electricity consumed in the home. We do not count electricity exported to the national grid as a personal carbon saving, because it becomes renewable electricity consumed by other households and businesses.

In the family version, groups play the game in different ways. Some go for the 'Good housekeeping' and 'Jobs for the weekend' measures first. Others go for big fixes first, like a new boiler or a solar panel. There is no strict order in which changes should be made but there are consequences with different approaches. Adopting a lot of low-cost/no-cost behaviour changes at the start would be difficult in reality for either the family or the group of tenants. Remembering a lot of small changes at once, like taking short showers and turning off lights, may strain family or housemate relationships. Reducing the temperature of the house to 18 °C without doing any insulation or draught-stripping is likely to leave people feeling cold. Insulation and draught-stripping don't just reduce energy demand, they make the house more comfortable because they eliminate cold spots and create an even temperature throughout the building. Some other points it may be helpful to make during the game are:

- a) You have to make both cheap and expensive changes to achieve the target. Although some changes will save money, in the end the family or the landlord have to spend money to get there. Saving the last tonne can be difficult or expensive.
- b) The family are a middle-income family who can afford to spend some money on improvements.
- c) Remember that fridges, freezers, washing machines and boilers will have to be replaced as they reach the end of their life. Many kitchen appliances don't last more than 10 years. Modern gas boilers have a life expectancy of about 20 years.
- d) People won't necessarily save the same amounts of CO₂ in their own homes as the figures given in the game have been calculated for this particular house. Exact savings depend on a house's size, construction, age, existing improvements and people's behaviour.
- e) In their own homes people should be careful that the order makes sense practically, for example not dry-

lining a wall that will later need to have holes drilled through it for solar hot water pipes. Major renovations will need expert advice, on both strategy and detail. Otherwise encourage people to follow their personal preferences and do what makes sense for them when they are thinking about their own homes.

- f) Many people will be surprised and/or discouraged by the scale and cost of the changes needed to their homes. Remember that the main purpose of the game is to explain what those changes need to be. For homeowners, it is important to make a long-term plan, thinking about how to make the changes as money becomes available. For tenants the game can help them think about the kind of home they would like to purchase if they ever become able to, as well as thinking about the questions they might like to ask landlords when they look at properties to rent. A group of young people might also like to think about their parents' homes and what they could suggest might be done to upgrade them.

The game should lead easily into either Activity 22 'Changing your home', or Activity 23 'Planning for a low-carbon home'. If you have played the tenants and landlord version of the game you might like to supplement these activities by brainstorming how to approach people's own landlords and discussing the arguments that might work.

Creating a samples box

A samples box allows people to become familiar with technologies they may not have met before. It can be time-consuming to create, but if you are technically minded, have some money to spend and don't mind phoning up manufacturers for samples, it can be worth doing. If you are part of a community group it can be a useful resource to take to other meetings as well. Try to include the following items.

LED and CFL bulbs. Bring a variety, including a large globe-type CFL that can be used in a place where a shade is not appropriate and some for GU10 fittings (often used as spotlights and down-lighters in kitchens).

Draught-seals. Include pin-on types with plastic or brush seals; screw-on aluminium types with rubber seals (e.g. Sealmaster); self-adhesive v-seals and foams. These can be fixed to a board with their labels. Don't forget a door-bottom brush and a letter-box draught excluder.

Pipe insulation. Include preformed foams and foil-coated rock wool; also adhesive multifoil for wrapping up the valves and joints.

Insulation. Include small bags of rock wool; cellulose/paper (e.g. WarmCell); sheep's wool, (e.g. Thermafleece, Black Mountain); vermiculite (for beneath floors and down chimneys); and polystyrene beads (for cavity walls).

Bring sections of foil backed polyurethane foam (e.g. Celotex); plasterboard backed foam (e.g. Kingspan); polystyrene; natural fibres (flax for example); and wood fibre. Don't forget some metallic sealing tape and an example of multi-foil insulation, (e.g. 'Tri-iso' from ACTIS). Be aware of the limitations of multi-foil insulation. Don't be tempted to bring 'Sempatap'. Although it is now advertised for solid wall insulation it is primarily a mould control product. At only 10mm thick it is not adequate as insulation. Don't forget some radiator foil as well.

Glazing systems. You can fix small pieces of secondary rigid glazing (e.g. Easy fix), magnetic strip (e.g. Magneglaze) and 'shrink wrap' (e.g. Stormguard) to pieces of stiff card or hardboard with a square cut out of the centre. Some manufacturers will supply samples of a small section of sealed triple glazing and of the thinner conservation glazing, suitable for heritage windows. Bring manufacturers leaflets if you can't get hold of these.

Miscellaneous. Bring a chimney balloon, spray tap inserts and shower restrictors.

Leaflets. Bring manufacturers leaflets and catalogues about bigger installations such as solar thermal, photovoltaics and heat pumps. Include leaflets about government schemes such as the Green Deal and leaflets from suppliers of renewable electricity. Bring leaflets about local sources of help and cards or leaflets from reliable local installers and suppliers. If you live in a Victorian area, look for a local refurbisher of sash windows.

8. ‘Travel and transport’: activities and programmes

Select from these activities:

- for your third meeting (if you are running six 2 hour meetings) or
- for meetings five and six, (if you are running twelve 1.5-hour meetings).

If you are an experienced facilitator you will want to select your own mix of activities, based on your preferences and your knowledge of your group. If you are a novice, follow one of the sample programmes.

Like home energy, transport accounts for about 25% of the average footprint but it is much harder for individuals to tackle. Policy changes are needed but it is likely that, when they are proposed, many members of the public will be unhappy with them because they encroach on personal freedoms they currently take for granted.

The activities relating to this chapter centre on a game that looks at the options for a family with a very high travel footprint. We have found that by distancing people temporarily from their own travel issues, it is easier for them to discuss the range of options and possibilities. We feel less personally threatened when we can talk first about others – particularly when those people have a much higher footprint than most. Be sensitive however to the feelings of anyone in your group who has a very high travel footprint. There is no gain from shaming or humiliating someone. There can also be complex reasons behind a high footprint, such as a sick relative overseas.

Key tasks

The key *process* tasks are to:

- help everyone feel welcomed and included;
- maintain people’s enthusiasm as they deal with a more difficult topic;

- manage differences of opinion and feeling within the group;
- understand people’s resistances in dealing with travel as a personal issue and help them move towards change;

The key *content* tasks are to:

- communicate the idea of halving your travel footprint and the policy and personal changes that may be involved;
- check that members are managing the diary keeping/monitoring and understand its importance.

Remember

People may face real restrictions. For example:

- “I don’t know how permanent my job is so I don’t want to move.”
- “I can’t afford the rents in the area where I work so I have to commute.”
- “My mum lives 200 miles away and can’t walk very well. I have to drive or I can’t take her out when I get there.”
- “The buses don’t fit with my shift pattern.”

Complex networks of work and family relationships have developed around car use and it will take determination and government policy changes to sort these out. Despite this, everyone can make plans and look for opportunities, and it is unusual to find someone who genuinely cannot reduce their travel emissions at all.

Travel often connects to ‘non-negotiables’, things which people think they cannot do without, or which they believe it would be unreasonable to be asked to give up. You may encounter comments like:

- “I can’t live nearer to work because the schools there are terrible.”
- “A holiday abroad is my reward for the crap I put up with the rest of the year.”
- “I can’t find an interesting job any nearer to home.”
- “I’m not prepared to give up the home I’ve worked so long for, just because it’s a long way from everywhere.”

Approach such feelings with care. If you attack them head-on you will increase the resistance. Look for ways round them, encouraging deeper thought about underlying assumptions. Often people’s sense of identity is involved in these feelings and they need time to let go and mourn what may be lost. Believe in the power of the issues and the support of the group to encourage different conclusions.

Remember that, for some of us, car ownership and the freedom it brings is closely tied up with social status. Again, don’t attack this head-on. Emphasise other ways of acquiring or maintaining status. Focus on other sources of respect.

Travel and transport		
Sample programme – six-meeting version		
Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
30	Setting the scene	5
31	Opening circle	10
32	Feedback on house plans	5
33	Feedback on travel diaries	5
34	What’s the problem?	10
35	Travel Dilemmas game	40
37	1-tonne travel	10
38	Force field analysis	20
42	Wrap-up	5
43	Reflection and closing circle	10

It's useful to bring

Try to bring local bus maps and timetables; information about local 'Travel to work' and lift-sharing schemes; local cycle-route maps; information about local cycling organisations; flipchart and pens.

Opening activities

As before, ask people to arrive 15 minutes before the official start, so you have time to greet them individually and offer refreshments. Make sure your chairs are arranged in a circle and that you and your co-facilitator have reserved your seats opposite each other.

There is no 'right' order for the opening activities. Some facilitators like to start with the opening circle. Some prefer to set the scene first. Others find that people are so full of questions about monitoring that it makes more sense to clear those out of the way first.

30. Setting the scene

5 min

Introduce the theme of the meeting, checking whether people have managed to read Chapter Three of *In Time for Tomorrow?* This will affect how much information you provide as you go through the activities. Key themes to introduce are:

- personal travel decisions are deeply embedded in transport infrastructure, patterns of work and family relationships;
- people often find travel the hardest area in which to make changes;
- policy change is important but there are usually changes that people can make without this.

Emphasise that there will be time to:

- talk about the monitoring people have managed to do on both travel and home energy;
- think about what travel means to people as this can have a powerful effect on the changes people manage to make;
- play a game that will help members understand how policy and personal issues interact;
- make plans for change.

Travel and transport

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting five

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
30	Setting the scene	5
31	Opening circle	10
33	Feedback on travel diaries	5
34	What's the problem	10
35	Travel Dilemmas game	40
43	Reflection and closing circle	15

31. Opening circle

10 min

Choose one of the suggestions from the list earlier in Chapter Four of this guide or use one of your own. By this stage of the group, people should be feeling more comfortable with each other. They may have begun to plan changes, so "Tell us something you have done or something you are planning to do that has made you feel better about climate change" often works well. One that works well with the theme is, "Tell us a favourite journey and a nightmare journey". Follow the usual format of going round the group clockwise from whoever starts, allowing anyone who is not ready to speak to pass, and coming back to them at the end.

32. Feedback on house plans

5 min

Ask how people are getting on with their house plans. It's quite likely that they will not have completed them yet; encourage them to do so. Also check that people are either using the online workbook *Monitoring Your Footprint*, have signed up to iMeasure or Carbon Account or are using their energy provider's smart monitoring system. If they are doing none of these encourage them to do so and make a mental note to make time to explore this further.

33. Feedback on the travel diary

5 min

Ask if members are keeping the travel diary and how they are getting on. Were there any surprises? Did members see the point of it? Had they travelled more or less than they imagined? If people had difficulties deal with their questions at the end.

If members haven't kept the diary, make the point that in order to reduce one's overall travel, it helps to know what the pattern is; this allows consideration of what is essential and what is not. Encourage those who haven't started the diary to begin, and those who have started to carry on. Although it is true that the diary can be time-consuming, issues of anxiety, guilt and shame are just as likely to lie behind failure to complete it. You may need to explore this at some point.

Travel and transport

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting six

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
31	Opening circle	10
33	Feedback on travel diaries	5
36	What's important to you?	10
37	1-tonne travel	10
40	What can we do about holidays?	15
38	Force-field analysis	20
42	Wrap-up	5
43	Reflection and closing circle	15

Main activities

34. What's the problem?

10 min

Brainstorm

Most people agree that there are huge problems with travel and transport. Ask the group to brainstorm what the problems are, using a flipchart or large piece of paper for the answers. Follow with discussion, bringing in the points in Chapter Three of *In Time for Tomorrow?* under the heading 'How did we get here?'

35. Travel Dilemmas

40 min

Game

This game explores how the family of Edward and Sarah who feature in Chapter Three of *In Time for Tomorrow?* could reduce their footprint in the light of various policy changes.

Basic instructions on how to play the game are on the leaflets in your Games Pack. You can print off spare copies from the website. If you have more than 6 people in your group, it will be better to divide into two groups with a game for each or to play the version where small groups of two or three take responsibility for one set of cards each.

Suggest some local names for the places on the map. The historic county town was originally Cambridge, a prosperous town 60 miles from London with a population of 120,000 people, two universities and new high-tech industries. The new town was Stevenage, a post-war new town, in attractive surrounding countryside, 32 miles from London with a population of 75,000 people and good travel connections. The station was Royston and Sarah's workplace was Huntingdon. You should be able to substitute places in your own area which will bring the dilemmas more keenly alive for your group.

People sometimes wonder how willing this family would be to do anything. Assume that they are concerned and will try to make some changes, but may need to be pushed.

Offer information if it is needed and help the group to keep the game moving. There are a lot of cards to get through and the game works best if completed. With the Policy cards it can be helpful to push the group to a vote, if they are divided. Note that some of the options will not apply if the group decide that the family should move to the County Town or the New Town.

Look at the 'Additional guidance' at the end of this chapter for more information and suggestions of points it may be useful to raise with the group as they play.

36. What's important to you?

10 min

Paired discussion

The prompts for this reflective pair activity can be found on p.20 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. It focuses on people's motives for their travel and transport choices. Anything from convenience to values might feature. Encourage people to be as open as they can in their ratings and in the conversation that follows. They don't need to

work through the list in order: it may be more interesting to focus on points of similarity and difference. Allow about 5 minutes for making the ratings and 5 minutes for a paired discussion. If you want people to feed back to the group as well, you will need to allow another 5 minutes.

If you are doing the six-session programme, you may need to ask members to look at this at home.

37. One-tonne travel

10 min

Group discussion

You can use this by itself or as an introduction to Activity 38. Introduce the idea that, for those with an average footprint or smaller, a good target for travel is one or one and a half tonnes per person per year. Those with a larger footprint should try to halve it. Look at the information in Chapter Three of *In Time for Tomorrow?* that tells you how far you can go for one tonne and start a reflective conversation about what this would mean for people. People are often shocked by these numbers and find it difficult to imagine a life with less travel. It will help to:

- focus on the feelings being expressed (often shock, anxiety, disbelief, anger, dismissal, hopelessness) and acknowledge them but see them as part of a process – they are not the last word;
- offer a time-frame – lifestyle changes need to be planned for and should take place over an extended period;
- move fairly quickly to pair work where people are likely to feel less pressure and can explore in more detail what would be involved in making changes.

38. Force-field analysis

20 min

Pair work

If you're not familiar with force-field analysis, check out the information in Chapter Three of *In Time for Tomorrow?* and on p.21 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. Then practice the activity yourself with your co-facilitator. Force-field analysis is a good way of shifting people's focus away from their feelings of hopelessness or resistance towards the possibility of change. This activity asks people to discuss one 'Smarter travel' or 'Lifestyle' change that they would find difficult. People usually find it an empowering activity. When you come back to the group ask people to share one outcome with the whole group. This might be:

- a new insight;
- a change in feeling;
- a first step;
- a solution.

You can also use force-field analysis in other meetings with other topics. If you are doing the six-session programme, you may need to ask members to look at this activity at home.

39. Policy arguments

20 min

Brainstorm, pair and group work

This activity provides an opportunity for more discussion of the policy ideas featured in the *Travel Dilemmas* game. Focusing on ideas and values can be a relief from talking

about personal change. Divide into two groups of four. Give each group one of the following policies:

- Fuel tax is increased to fund public transport schemes: petrol goes up to £2 a litre and will be increased each year by 2p above inflation.
- All towns and cities with a population over 100,000 have to introduce congestion charging. The money raised funds public transport. £5 – £15 to enter the restricted zones in the rush hour.
- The speed limit is changed to 60 mph on motorways, 50 mph on de-restricted roads and 20 mph in urban areas. Funds are provided to enforce it strictly.
- Individual tradable allowances are introduced. Everyone has one tonne of CO₂ to 'spend' on travel. Those who travel more can buy credits from those who travel less.

The people in each group of four divide into pairs. One pair quickly brainstorms all the arguments they can think of in favour of the policy, while the other pair quickly brainstorms all the arguments they can think of against it. Give people flipchart paper to write on and allow 1-2 minutes for this. Then allow them to slug it out in an argument. After 3-4 minutes of this, call "All change". Those arguing in favour, must now reverse positions and argue against the idea, while those arguing against must now argue in favour. Again, allow 1-2 minutes for the brainstorm and 3-4 minutes for the argument. Bring both groups back together and discuss what arose from this:

- Did the exercise clarify anything for people?
- How did it feel to argue against your own viewpoint?
- Has anyone's view shifted at all?

You can make up the numbers by taking part yourselves, or if your group is small, work with one group of four and an observer for each pair. The observer offers feedback on how effective the arguments seemed to them.

40. What can we do about holidays?

Films and discussion

10-20 min

These two short films let people sit back and relax for a few moments. Use one or both of them just to amuse, or to stimulate personal reflection and discussion about air flights and holidays. *Plane vs Train: Race to the Alps* (6 min), http://bit.ly/race_alps, shows two journalists competing to see who can arrive first and most relaxed on their skiing holiday. *Cheatneutral* (12 min), <http://bit.ly/cheatNe>, is a comic take on offsetting. It may disconcert people who think that offsetting is a good idea but its humour is gentle.

41. I'd love to, but...

5 min

Game

This is a light-hearted way of focusing on the defences people use to justify inaction. It is modelled on the children's memory game "I packed my bag for my holiday and in it I put..." In this game, as you go round the group, each person takes it in turn to recite all the items that have already been packed and adds one of their own. Here the starting line is "I'd love to travel less but..." and you encourage people to offer whatever reasons they like –

realistic, ludicrous or fantastical – for why they can't possibly reduce their travel footprint. As the list of reasons grows and people struggle to remember it all, the group usually break down in laughter.

It can be a fine judgment whether or not this activity will help your group. It works well when people feel comfortable with each other and are prepared to reflect on their own frailties. If the group are uneasy with each other or have been unwilling to reflect on their own motives and behaviour, it may not go down very well. Some people may feel exposed. Some may feel that their genuine difficulties are being mocked. Some may also feel stressed by the need to remember the list.

Closing activities

42. Wrap-up

5 min

Remind people to carry on with their travel diaries and, if this is the end of your work on travel, to fill in some detail on the 'Travel plan' on p.22 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. If you have another meeting on travel, explain what you hope to cover in it and any preparation you want people to do. This is also a good moment to hand out cycle maps and bus timetables, if you have them.

If you are moving on to discuss food in the next meeting, explain to people that you would like them to keep the food diary on pp.23-24 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* for a week. Check that everyone is clear what to do. Don't ask them to rate the foods – this is best done once they have played the *Food Footprints* game in the meeting. Ask them to read Chapter Four of *In Time for Tomorrow?*

43. Closing circle

10-15 min

End the meeting with a few moments for reflection on the meeting's process and a closing go-round. After the meeting, talk individually to anyone who is having trouble with monitoring and diary-keeping.

Additional guidance on the Travel Dilemmas game

You may find it helpful to offer additional information as the group play the game. Some points we have found it useful to make are these.

- The Policy Change cards open up options for the family as well as bringing restrictions.
- Climate change may not be the main driver for the family's decisions. As their children become older, moving to the County Town or the New Town may seem more attractive as rural life can be difficult with teenagers.
- Policy options would probably come in over a period of years, and the family might change their views as concerns about climate change become more mainstream.
- Issues such as social status and concern for their children's success may affect the family's attitude to some of the possible changes.

- Four people travelling together in a small, efficient car, will have the same carbon emissions as four people travelling by train or coach.
- Note how important distance is. However efficient the mode of transport, it is distance that pushes up emissions.
- In order to halve their emissions, this family has to make some lifestyle changes. Look at p.87 of *In Time for Tomorrow?* for our suggestions for what this family could do.

Don't get bogged down discussing finer details of policy. People are often rightly concerned about the effects some policies could have on disabled or elderly people who can't easily use public transport. For the purposes of the game, assume that the policies will be well constructed and that appropriate provision will be made for these groups. If the question of the rural poor comes up, point out that:

- poorer people in rural areas usually have smaller cars and drive fewer miles than their wealthier rural neighbours;
- poorer people would be beneficiaries of improved public transport under most of the policies proposed;
- over time, a sensible transport policy would encourage the return of local shops and services to rural areas.

9. 'Food and water': activities and programmes

Select from these activities:

- for your fourth meeting (if you are running six 2 hour meetings) or
- for meetings seven and eight, (if you are running eleven 1.5-hour meetings).

As the group continues, it moves into areas where it is harder to measure carbon emissions accurately and directly. Food production is also responsible for other greenhouse gas emissions. The information we give is the best we have been able to find but more up-to-date sources will always be emerging. Once again, there is a group game that will help you introduce some of the technical information.

By this point, members should be working well together and taking more responsibility for what happens in the group. This should make it easier to deal with a more sensitive topic.

Key tasks

The key *process* tasks are to:

- help people feel they are useful and valued participants;
- deal sensitively with a topic that carries strong cultural and personal resonance;
- explore the possibilities for change in the context of family and personal relationships;
- help the group manage differences of opinion;
- motivate members towards safe, realistic changes.

The key *content* tasks are to:

- communicate clearly the four ways in which food contributes to CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions;
- explain the significance of water in climate change.

Remember

Diet and food preferences are both personal and cultural and people can be very sensitive about them. Be aware that some group members may have health issues related to food, for example food allergies, weight problems or eating disorders which they may wish to keep private.

Money, time and opportunity are also important factors. Although it is possible to eat a local, organic, low-meat diet quite cheaply many people assume that it will be expensive and they may not thank you for putting them right. Time and opportunity are real issues. Cooking from scratch and making vegetarian meals can be time consuming. Many people have no option but to shop at supermarkets because their local shops are long gone.

It's useful to bring

Try to bring leaflets from local organic delivery schemes, information about other sources of local food; free hippos and hogs from the water company.

Opening activities

As usual, ask people to arrive 15 minutes before the official start, to allow time for greetings, refreshments and settling in. Remember to reserve your seats opposite each other.

Again, there is no 'right' order for the opening activities. Follow your judgment over whether to set the scene first, start with the opening circle or deal with travel plans.

45. Opening circle

10 min

Follow the usual format of going round the group clockwise from whoever starts. Choose one of the suggestions from the list in Chapter Four of this guide, or use one of your own. Asking each person to tell a brief story of a memorable meal often works well. The meal can be memorable for a good or a bad reason. This warm-up often brings out the family and cultural meanings of food and it flows well into Activity 48 'The meaning of food'.

46. Feedback on travel plans

5 min

Ask if members managed to fill in the travel plan on p.22 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. If no-one has, it is worth asking the group why they think this might be. What has made this hard to do? Realising that you forgot or feeling that you didn't have time are common first responses but if you probe a little, people may welcome the opportunity to talk about some of the underlying feelings. It may have felt burdensome. It may have seemed like an imposition from outside. One person may have felt stymied by the lack of family support. Another may have dreaded

Food and water

Sample programme – six-meeting version

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
45	Opening circle	10
46	Feedback on travel plans	5
47	Setting the scene	5
48	The meaning of food	10
49	Food worries	10
51	Food Footprints game	40
52	Food pyramid	10
53	Diary discussions	10
57	Wrap-up	5
58	Reflection and closing circle	15

the need to raise issues at work. Talking about these responses may ease them and make the rest of the meeting flow better.

47. Setting the scene

5 min

Introduce the theme of the meeting, checking whether people have managed to read Chapter Four of *In Time for Tomorrow?* This will affect how much information you need to provide as you go through the activities. Key themes to introduce are:

- the emissions associated with food are embedded and arise from the processes that bring food from the farm to your plate;
- these emissions are not easy to measure but there is a lot known, a lot to talk about and a lot that can be done;
- food choices are often deeply personal and cultural;
- food choices are also strongly influenced by the global nature of the food system;
- the most important issues about water are to do with virtual water rather than direct use.

Emphasise that there will be time to:

- talk about the food diaries people have kept;
- play a game that will help members understand how the food system creates greenhouse gas emissions;
- explore what food means to people and what possibilities there are for change.

In the six-session version you do not have time to discuss water, so you may need to flag this up.

Main activities

48. The meaning of food

10 min

Paired reflective discussion

Ask people to turn to p.25 'The meaning of food' in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. This reflective activity focuses on people's feelings about food. Ask people to talk in pairs for 5 minutes and then spend another 5 minutes sharing anything they would like to with the whole group. The activity asks participants to think about the key influences on their eating patterns such as family, religion and culture, their own preferences and any restrictions

they experience. Encourage people to be as open as they can. When it comes to feedback in the group, emphasise that people need only share what they feel comfortable sharing.

49. Food worries

10 min

Spectrum line, brainstorm or paired discussion

We've found that this activity works best as a spectrum line but you can also run it as a brainstorm or as a paired discussion.

To run it as a spectrum line, designate one end of the room 'Very Worried' and the other end of the room 'Not Worried At All'. One by one, read out the list of 'Food worries' on p.26 of the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*. For each one ask members to arrange themselves along the wall depending on how concerned they feel about this item. This is a good way of seeing the range of views in the group without getting bogged down in abstract discussion. The activity works best when it's done quickly.

If you want to do this as a brainstorm, ignore the list to start with and simply ask members to brainstorm their worries about food onto a piece of flipchart paper. You can add to their list with items from the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* if they run out of ideas. Follow this up with a brief group discussion. Try to encourage people to be reflective. How does it feel to be worried about something as basic as food? Do people share feelings of (for example) powerlessness or anger? How do people cope with being worried about food?

If you prefer to run a paired discussion, ask people to look at the list in pairs, adding items of their own and talking together about their concerns before feeding back briefly to the whole group.

Close this activity by emphasising the interconnectedness of many food worries. Use the information on pp. 106-107 of *In Time for Tomorrow?* to help you do this.

50. Eating for a healthy planet

10 min

Film and discussion

This short Canadian film is a good introduction to the problems of livestock production. It runs for just 4 minutes. You can use it before or after playing the *Food footprints*

Food and water

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting seven

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
45	Opening circle	10
46	Feedback on travel plans	5
47	Setting the scene	5
48	The meaning of food	10
49	Food worries	10
51	<i>Food Footprints</i> game	30
52	Food pyramid	10
	Reflection and closing circle	10

Food and water

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting eight

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
	Opening circle	10
53	Diary Discussions	10
54	Food time-line	20
55	Taste the waste of water	15
56	Snack and recipe sharing	15
57	Wrap-up	5
58	Reflection and closing circle	10

game. It's available at <http://vimeo.com/65083570>. There is also a longer (55 minute) film of the same name, available at <http://vimeo.com/63833179>.

51. Food Footprints

40 min

Game

This game explores the different factors that account for the embodied emissions in food by asking people to order 12 different foods according to whether they have high or low emissions in the four categories of production (everything that happens on the farm), processing, packaging and transport. Note that this is one of the places where CO₂ is being used as a shorthand for CO₂ equivalents (CO₂ e) and that other greenhouse gases (methane and nitrous oxides) are also being talked about. People sometimes find this confusing.

Introduce the game by briefly summarising these four factors for people. They are described in detail on pp. 107-112 of *In Time for Tomorrow?* If people have read ahead they should be familiar with this. If they haven't you will need to provide a slightly longer summary and you may need to answer questions. People are sometimes confused about the difference between production and processing, so make sure that you are clear in your own mind. Production covers everything that happens on the farm: rearing animals and growing crops. Processing happens after the animals or crops have left the farm and covers things like slaughtering the animals at the abattoir, trimming celery at the packing station, and everything that goes on at food processing plants and factories such as freezing peas, brewing beer, making bread or creating ready meals.

Full instructions on how to play and the correct order for the cards are with the game itself. Look at the 'Additional guidance' section, later in this chapter for suggestions of comments it may be useful to make to the group as they play.

If you have eight people in your group, it may be best to split into two groups with a game for each.

52. Food pyramid

10 min

Brief explanation/group discussion

This discussion follows on from the game. It's important to emphasise that although the way that emissions become embedded in food is complicated, there are some simple rules of thumb that you can follow for a low-carbon diet. Crucially these match well with advice for a healthy diet. Point out the information in *In Time for Tomorrow?* on 'Easy steps to a healthy, low CO₂ diet' (pp. 113-115) and the 'Rules of thumb' (p.126). Emphasise the importance of gradually adapting your diet in ways that feel enjoyable rather than embarking on a crash course of unsustainable changes.

53. Diary Discussions

10 min

Group discussion

Ask people to share what they discovered by keeping a diary of their food purchases. This conversation often merges easily with the one about the food pyramid and links into a discussion of possible changes. Explain the ABCDE rating system that accompanies the diary. This is based on the way foods are categorised in the *Food footprints* game, so this should now make sense to people. If you have time, people might like to fill this out now. If not, encourage people to fill this out at home. In your discussion you might touch on:

- What surprised people?
- What was comfortable/uncomfortable about what they recorded?
- Does the diary suggest anything that would be easy to change?

Point people to the spreadsheet *Changing Your Diet* in the online workbook, *Monitoring your Footprint*. Here people can enter the proportions of different types of food in their diet, such as red meat, chicken and pork, fish, dairy produce, cereals and pulses, fruit and vegetables and so on. By playing with the percentages of different kinds of food, they can see the effect that various changes will have on their carbon emissions.

54. Food time-line

20-30 min

Reflective drawing activity

This time-line encourages people to look at how change has occurred at other periods of their lives. It can be helpful in thinking about how to make future changes. Ask participants to turn to the 'Food time line' (p.27) in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* which has prompts on how to do the activity.

Each person creates a line on a piece of paper, starting at birth and ending now. On the line, they mark the points at which their diet changed. For example, they might highlight eating school dinners, going to a pub for the first time, leaving home or becoming a vegetarian. On either side of the line they draw and write about the influences on their diet at each time. Some people like to draw the line as a river, illustrating it with different things happening on the bank and showing tributaries joining or leaving it. Some people draw it as a road, passing through different places and experiences.

As a minimum you need to provide large sheets of paper and felt-tip pens. You can also provide more sophisticated art materials and pictures of food cut from magazines, scissors and glue so that people can use them for illustration.

Allow about 10 minutes for creating the time-lines. Then share them in the group. If you are short of time you can divide into two smaller groups for this but you will find that people are usually very interested in each other's pictures and want to hear about them all.

In the conversation, try to draw out the implications of the way people's diets have changed in the past for how they might make changes in the future. Issues of choice, control and relationship are likely to feature strongly.

55. Taste the Waste of Water 10-15 min

Film and discussion

Taste the Waste of Water was produced for World Water Week in 2012. You can find it at http://bit.ly/taste_water. It runs for just 6 minutes and is a good introduction to a discussion on water. Link it to the information on pp. 119-120 of *In Time for Tomorrow?* Themes you could follow up in discussion are:

- How did you feel watching this?
- Does information of this kind change your mind? Help you change what you do? Or does it make you feel guilty? Turn you off?
- What do you think you can do?

56. Recipe and/or food sharing elastic

This needs to be set up at the previous meeting so is tricky to use in the six-meeting version of Carbon Conversations, unless you do it as part of your reunion meeting.

Ask people to bring a recipe or a snack that they think is low-carbon and that they would like to share with others. If people bring food for an entire meal you will of course get little else done at this meeting. Sharing and talking about recipes might take no more than 15 minutes. A good compromise is to ask people to bring some low-carbon snacks that can be nibbled on during other activities once the recipes have been shared and explained.

Be aware that some people may not have time to make food for others, may not have recipes at their fingertips or may not be able to afford to do this. You need to negotiate with your group whether or not to do this activity.

Closing activities

57. Wrap-up 5 min

Deal with any final questions. This is also a good moment to hand out information about local vegetable box schemes or organic growers.

Remind people of the work you would like them to do in preparation for the next meeting. This may be to bring recipes, finish the ratings on their food diary and/or create their food plan, depending on whether you are running the six or twelve meeting version of Carbon Conversations. In preparation for the next theme, Consumption and Waste, people need to read Chapter Five of *In Time for Tomorrow?* If you are using Activity 63 'The meaning of stuff' you need to explain what people must bring with them.

Completing 'Where does your money go?' (p. 30 in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook*) and the 'Spending diary' sheets in the online workbook *Monitoring Your Footprint* is best done between meetings 9 and 10 in

the twelve-session version. In the six-session version you can either ask people to do this between meetings 4 and 5 or leave it to be done between meeting 5 and the reunion.

In a six-meeting group, you are now two-thirds of the way through and the ending of the group is likely to be on people's minds. You may want to say something about this. See Chapter Three: 'Working in groups', for help with this.

58. Reflection and closing circle 10-15 min

End the meeting with a few moments for reflection on the meeting's process and a closing go-round.

Additional guidance on the Food Footprints game

People are likely to ask why items score high and low in the different categories. Much of this information is in Chapter Four of *In Time for Tomorrow?* so make sure you are familiar with that.

Beef and dairy produce score high in the production category whether you are looking just at CO₂, all the greenhouse gases or the overall ecological footprint. In an ecological-footprint analysis, agriculture (growing grains) scores higher than horticulture (growing fruit and vegetables) and viniculture (growing grapes for wine) higher than both.

In the processing category, freezing scores high because of the electricity use. People who freeze home-grown produce should be reassured that this food will have low emissions in the other categories. They should look at the efficiency of their freezer, make sure it is defrosted and turned off when not in use and try to reduce their overall electricity consumption.

In the packaging category plastic has a low carbon impact, primarily because it is light. It is an environmental problem for other reasons. Tin and glass score highly because they are heavy and use a lot of energy to manufacture. Aluminium is extremely energy-intensive to manufacture and although it is endlessly recyclable, most is not recycled so cans have a high carbon footprint.

Note the big difference in impact between foods that are transported by air and by sea. Goods transported by bulk sea carrier have low emissions compared with goods flown in from the same destination. Figures for the different types of transport are on p.112 of *In Time for Tomorrow?* If you have a calculator handy you can compare the transport emissions of various foods using these figures.

It is difficult to know exactly where a particular item fits in the hierarchy. The answers given are our best guesses on the information currently available. Foods can score high in one category and low in another. There is more on this in the 'Food diary' activity (p.23 *Carbon Conversations Workbook*) and in the 'Changing your diet' spreadsheet in the *Monitoring Your Footprint* online workbook.

A good story to throw in as the group discuss the tomato ketchup cards is this one, quoted in the report *Eating Oil*.

"In 1996 researchers at the Swedish Institute for Food and Biotechnology presented the results of an analysis of tomato ketchup. The study considered the production of inputs to agriculture, tomato cultivation and conversion to tomato paste (in Italy), the processing and packaging of the paste and other ingredients into tomato ketchup in Sweden and the retail and storage of the final product. All this involved more than 52 transport and process stages.

*The aseptic bags used to package the tomato paste were produced in the Netherlands and transported to Italy to be filled, placed in steel barrels, then moved to Sweden. The five layered, red bottles were either produced in the UK or Sweden with materials from Japan, Italy, Belgium the USA and Denmark. The polypropylene (PP) screw-cap of the bottle and plug, made from low density polyethylene (LDPE), were produced in Denmark and transported to Sweden. Additionally, LDPE shrink-film and corrugated cardboard, were used to distribute the final produce. Labels, glue and ink were not included in the analysis." (Quoted in *Eating Oil: Food Supply in a Changing Climate*, Andy Jones, *Sustain*, 2001.)*

10. ‘Consumption and waste’: activities and programmes

Select from these activities:

- for your fifth meeting (if you are running six 2 hour meetings) or
- for meetings nine and ten, (if you are running twelve 1.5-hour meetings).

This is often a complex meeting. Continued economic growth and unrestrained consumption lie at the heart of the climate change problem but are also difficult to tackle.

If you are running the six-session version, this is also the last meeting with a structured programme and there is now a longer gap before the final, reunion meeting. If you haven't already done so you should fix the date for that meeting with your group.

In the six-session version you need to spend some of meeting five evaluating what you have done and talking about the ending. In the twelve-session version this can be left till meeting eleven.

Key tasks

Key *process* tasks are to:

- help people feel they are useful and valued participants;
- open up issues of identity, status and lifestyle;
- deal sensitively with those who may have very different incomes and attitudes to money;
- raise issues about the ending of the group and members feelings about this.

Key *content* tasks are to:

- communicate clearly how consumption and waste relate to climate change;
- encourage members to make long-term plans for carbon reduction;
- make plans for the ‘Moving on’ reunion meeting.

Consumption and waste		
Sample programme – six-meeting version		
Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
59	Opening circle	10
60	Feedback on food plans	5
61	Setting the scene	5
64	The Story of Stuff	15
65	Why do we buy?	15
68	Tracking down the CO2	15
71	What comes in goes out again	20
72	Planning the reunion	10
73	Ending and evaluating	15
74	Reflection and closing circle	10

Remember

For many people the goods and services they buy are intimately connected with their sense of identity and status. You will need to handle these issues sensitively, without making people feel guilty or ashamed. Remember too, that people rarely reveal their incomes directly to others and you may have members in your group who live in very different circumstances from each other.

These meetings also bring recognition that the group will be finishing and people may have sadness and regrets, particularly if they have made strong bonds. You will need to make time for people to express these feelings.

It's useful to bring

Try to get hold of ‘No Junk Mail’ stickers for front doors, obtainable from some local authorities; information about local recycling facilities, second-hand shops, exchange and barter schemes, local trades and crafts people; flipchart and pens.

Opening activities

As usual, ask people to arrive 15 minutes before the official start, to allow time for greetings, refreshments and settling in. Again, there is no obligatory order for the opening activities.

59. Opening circle

10 min

Follow the familiar format of going round the group clockwise from whoever starts. Choose one of the suggestions from the list in Chapter Four of this guide or use one of your own. It often works well to ask members to recall a purchase they were pleased with and a purchase they regret. You could also ask members to bring an item (or a picture of an item) that is expressive of their identity. In the go-round each person briefly explains what they have brought and how it represents their sense of themselves.

60. Food plans

5 min

Ask if people want to share any last thoughts about their food diaries and their plans for making changes to their diets and food purchases.

61. Setting the scene

5 min

Introduce the theme of the meeting, checking whether people have managed to read Chapter Five of *In Time for Tomorrow?* This will affect how much information you need to provide as you go through the activities. Key themes to introduce now or as you go through the meeting are:

- the idea of embodied emissions;
- the problem of economic growth;

- the relationship of income to emissions;
- the relationship of consumption and identity.

Emphasise that:

- you are aware that this is one of the most difficult and sensitive areas of people’s carbon footprints to discuss;
- you will be using a number of different activities to explore what these complex issues mean personally;
- you hope that people will help you maintain the non-judgmental and open atmosphere of the group.

Main activities

62. What makes you happy?

10 min

Group poster-making

Provide a large sheet of paper (flip chart paper is ideal) with the heading ‘What makes you happy?’ on a table with scissors, glue, felt-tip pens and a selection of images cut from magazines showing different environments, activities and groupings of people. Ask the group to make a collective poster showing what makes them happy. Each person chooses an image (or two) and sticks it on the paper, accompanied by any words they want to add. If people can make their images relate to other people’s in some way, all the better. Hold a brief group conversation where people explain their choice of image and what it represents to them

This activity can also be used to lead into the opening circle. As people arrive direct them to the table and ask them to contribute their image and words. In the initial go-round people briefly explain why they chose their image and what it means to them.

63. The meaning of stuff

15-20 min

Group and pair reflection

This activity works best if you ask members to bring some objects, or photos of objects, that mean something to them to the group. It follows on easily from the opening circle (activity 59) where you have asked people to think about objects and identity. The purpose is to focus on people’s complex relationships with objects and it can help you get away from punitive notions that possessing anything is bad.

Consumption and waste

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting nine

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
59/62	Opening circle/What makes you happy?	10
60	Feedback on food plans	5
61	Setting the scene	5
63	The meaning of stuff	20
64	The Story of Stuff	20
65	Why do we buy?	15
	Wrap-up – introduce ‘Where does your money go?’ and the Spending Diary	5
	Reflection and closing circle	10

People tend to think first of bringing mementos, so emphasise that you mean any kind of object and that the associations can be good or bad. A washing machine or a chair may have a richer day-to-day meaning than a memento. It’s the relationship to objects that you’re interested in discussing. Divide into pairs or small groups in whatever way seems appropriate and discuss the questions suggested in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* p.30.

64. The Story of Stuff

10-25 min

Film and discussion

Show the film, or an excerpt from the film, *The Story of Stuff* (available for download at <http://storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-stuff>) and follow this with a discussion of the main themes of the film:

- consumption vs. contentment;
- the economic growth paradigm;
- waste and recycling;
- reducing consumption.

Finish with the question:

- Are we prepared to reduce our own consumption and how would that make us feel?

The film’s running length is 20 minutes so, depending on the time you have available, you may prefer to show extracts.

65. Why do we buy?

15 min

Brainstorm/paired discussion

In the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* p. 29 you will find a checklist of personal and social reasons for our consumption of goods and services. Ask people to work through this list in pairs for about 5 minutes, talking about what they feel is true of them. Alternatively, ask people to brainstorm all the possible reasons they can think of for why they (or other people) buy stuff, writing these up on a flip-chart as you go and then adding anything from the list on p.29 that hasn’t been mentioned. A brainstorm is fine in a small group and should get a good buzz going. In a larger group, a paired discussion will give everyone more space to reflect.

Follow the pair discussion or brainstorm with some group conversation. Issues you could raise are:

Consumption and waste

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting ten

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
	Opening circle	10
66	Needs and wants	15
68	Tracking down the CO2	15
71	What comes in goes out again	20
67	Five ways to well-being	15
72	Planning the reunion	5
	Reflection and closing circle	10

- which reasons apply to you, your family, friends and colleagues?
- which do you think are good reasons for buying?
- which do you think are bad reasons?
- which make you uncomfortable?
- which do you understand or sympathise with?

You may also find it useful to bring in points from *In Time for Tomorrow?* pp. 136-139 where these issues are discussed in detail.

66. Needs and wants

15 min

Group poster-making

This activity goes down well with groups who react better to practical activities like the food spectrum line but it's probably best not to use it in the same meeting as the other poster-making activity 'What makes you happy?' It is useful for exploring the social construction of needs.

Divide into groups of 3 or 4 and give each group flip chart paper, coloured pens and any other art materials you have available. Ask them to make a group poster which depicts the differences between their personal 'needs' and 'wants'. They can use words, pictures or both.

Ask each group to present their poster, briefly, reflecting on what it shows. It may be helpful to draw out the ways in which need is socially defined so that one person's 'want' is another person's 'need'.

67. Five ways to well-being

10-15 min

Small-group conversation

This activity uses the New Economics Foundation's *Five Ways to Well Being* cards, available from them for £2.04 at http://bit.ly/five_ways.

Each card briefly describes one of five activities that research shows produce a sense of well-being in people's lives.

"Connect...With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

Be active...Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Take notice...Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

Keep learning...Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

Give...Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you."

If you don't want to purchase the cards, you can print them out from the New Economics Foundation website. Make sure you attribute them to the New Economics Foundation who make them available under a Creative Commons License.

Divide into small groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a set of cards. Ask them to think about the past week and discuss the following questions:

- which of the five ways they have been able to practise in the past week;
- whether they think the five ways are useful advice;
- how they could make more space in their lives for these activities if they are lacking.

This discussion can also provide a useful framework for talking more generally about the changes people might make in relation to their consumption and purchasing patterns.

68. Tracking down the CO₂

10-15 min

Group discussion

This activity works best when people have read pp. 141-146 of *In Time for Tomorrow?* carefully and have completed the 'Where Does Your Money Go?' activity in the online workbook *Monitoring Your Footprint*. Make sure that you are familiar with this and have used it yourself. In the twelve session version of Carbon Conversations people can do this activity between meetings nine and ten. Introduce this in the wrap-up at the end of meeting nine. In the six session version it is best done between meetings four and five, though if people haven't had time you could postpone some discussion to the reunion meeting.

Ask people to share what they discovered through doing the activity. Generate some discussion on which purchases have high and low carbon intensity and share ideas for possible changes.

69. Short films about products and purchases

10-15 min

If your group would like to explore particular products, try showing any of the following short films as a stimulus for discussion.

White Gold. 8 minute film from the Environmental Justice Foundation, showing the true cost of our cotton clothes to the environment and people of Uzbekistan, http://bit.ly/ejf_cotton.

A Model Supply Chain. 4 minute film, again from the EJF, about a model cotton factory, http://bit.ly/ejf_supply.

It's worth showing the two films together, as the first is very depressing.

The Toxic Path of Electronic Waste. 4 minute film about the hazards of our high turnover in electronic goods, http://bit.ly/e_afterlife.

Digging into the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. This short trailer from the longer film *Plastic Paradise* shows the shocking destination of much of the US and Asia's plastics, http://bit.ly/garb_patch.

The Story of Bottled Water/Cosmetics/Electronics. These films from *The Story of Stuff* team are all less than ten minutes long, <http://storyofstuff.org/movies>. They repeat some of the main film's points, so if you have already shown this it would be better to choose something else.

70. Short films about economics and the limits to growth

10-15 min

If you want a quick way to explain the problems of economic growth or want to stimulate discussion about the economics of consumption, use any of the following short films as a stimulus.

The Impossible Hamster. Amusing, one-minute animation about the impossibility of permanent economic growth, http://bit.ly/imp_ham.

The Test Tube. David Suzuki takes three minutes to explain exponential growth and why it's a dumb idea for the economy, http://bit.ly/test_tube.

The Circular Economy: from Consumer to User. Three minute animation explaining the idea of the circular economy – an economy where what is sold to the consumer is access to a product rather than ownership of it, http://bit.ly/ell_mac.

Better not Bigger. This PowerPoint presentation from the Center for the Advancement of a Steady State Economy makes the case for an economy that is better rather than bigger. There are accompanying notes and you can select the slides you want, <http://steadystate.org/discover/video-audio-and-presentations/>.

Growth is not Enough. 3 minute film from Kate Raworth, promoting the idea that we need to think in terms other than growth, <http://bit.ly/katera>.

The High Price of Materialism. Six minute film about the relationship of consumerism to well-being, http://bit.ly/high_price.

71. What comes in goes out again!

Visualisation

20 min

Visualisations allow people to recall or imagine. They move people away from rational ways of thinking and are usually relaxing and enjoyable. It is important to make sure everybody in the group is comfortable and invite them to close their eyes if they wish. Most people enjoy visualisations but some do not like closing their eyes in front of others and some find the entire activity difficult. At this point in the group you should be familiar enough with your members to judge whether or not they will enjoy this activity.

You may need to rehearse with your co-facilitator to make sure you get the pauses right. If you read too quickly, listeners will not have time to recall anything. If you are too slow, they will get bored. In a small group, people can feedback to the whole group. In a large group, they may feel more comfortable sharing in a pair first. In the group discussion, you may be able to bring in some of the ideas on pp. 148-152 of *In Time for Tomorrow?* Allow at least 10 minutes for people to share what they experienced and reflect on it, once they have opened their eyes.

There are two alternative scripts. The first asks people to remember their childhood home and think about what has happened to all the items in it. This can be difficult for people with negative or distressing childhood memories. The second script focuses on people's current lives and asks them to imagine what they will do when they no longer want, or need to get rid of, their current possessions.

Script One. "First, think back over the last week about everything you have bought to eat. Remember the shops you went into, the bags you were carrying, what you chose from the shelves, how you unpacked it when you got home.

Now think about what has happened to all that shopping. Think about the food itself, the plastic, the cardboard, the tins, the bottles. Where is it now? How much:

- was turned into energy to keep you alive?
- was turned into fat, to store for lean times?
- is on its way to the sewage works?
- is on the compost heap?
- is on its way to be recycled?
- is on its way to landfill?

Now think back 5 years. Fix the time by remembering what job you had, how old your children were, where you went on holiday or where you were studying. Imagine you are opening your wardrobe or clothes cupboards or drawers. Look at the clothes and shoes you were wearing 5 years ago. Perhaps some items look old-fashioned and quaint. Perhaps there are some old favourites that you've still got. Think about the underwear and socks. The trousers and shirts, suits and coats, dresses, woollens, jackets, T-shirts, summer clothes and shoes.

Now think about what has happened to all those clothes from 5 years ago.

- What is still in your cupboards? What do you still wear?
- What have you thrown away? Was it worn out? Grown out of? Or were you tired of it?
- Where did it go? Swapped with friends? Passed on to younger siblings? Taken to a charity shop? Sold on e-bay? Put in the wheelie bin?

Finally, think back 15–20 years and remember the home you were living in then. If you are young you will be thinking back to your childhood home. Slowly take a walk around your old home looking at all the things in it. Come in the front door and feel your feet on the carpet or rugs. Look round the living room – sofa, chairs, TV, Hi-Fi, lamps, pictures. Maybe there's an occasional table or some cushions. Maybe there's a video player or a computer game

console. Move on to the kitchen. What's in here? Fridge? Freezer? Dishwasher? Oven? Food mixer? Microwave? Toaster? Kettle?

What has happened to all the objects you've noticed so far? Where are they now? Maybe you know, maybe you don't.

- Are any of them still in the same place?
- Did any of them move with you if you moved?
- Are some of them gone completely?
- If they have gone, were they worn out when they went? And where did they go to? To a second-hand shop or given to friends? Into a skip? Taken to the Council's Household Rubbish site? Taken away by a dodgy clearance firm and maybe fly-tipped?

Now move round the rest of your old home looking at things and asking yourself the same questions. Take a look at the bathroom, the bedrooms, utility room, study, garage – even the garden, if you wish.

Take a last look round and then open your eyes. Take a couple of minutes to be present here. Then turn to your neighbour and share anything that you would like to share from your visualisation."

Script Two. "Please get comfortable and if you wish, close your eyes. Now, think back over the last week about everything you have bought to eat. Remember the shops you went into, what you chose, the bags you used, and how you stored the food when you got home.

Now think about what has happened to all that shopping. Think about the food itself, but also the plastic, the cardboard, the tins, the bottles. Where is it now? How much:

- was turned into energy to keep you alive?
- was turned into fat, to store for lean times?
- is on its way to the sewage works?
- is on the compost heap?
- is on its way to be recycled?
- is on its way to landfill?

Now let's go into your home and think about your clothes and shoes. In your mind's eye look through your cupboard and drawers. Where did you buy the clothes? Do you know where they were made? What are they made of?

How long will you keep those clothes and shoes? What will you do with them when you are finished with them? Can they go to someone else in your family? To friends? Perhaps ebay? Perhaps a charity shop? Or perhaps they are so worn they have to go into the recycling as textiles.

Now let's go through the rooms in your house. Think about the furniture, the sofa, the tables, the chairs, the beds, mattresses, carpets and curtains. How long will you keep them? How long will they last? Where will they go when you are finished with them?

What about white goods, small electrical items? Will you keep them till they are no longer usable? Or replace them before that? What are the options? Take a few minutes to walk through the kitchen, the bedrooms, the living rooms.

Sit down in a comfy chair or couch and think about books, CDs, DVDs, computer games, computers, iPods and mobile

phones. How long will they be part of your life? What will you do with them when you no longer want them?

What about the possessions in the garage or shed if you have either of these? What about the garden if you have one? Take a final look around your home asking yourself the same questions. How long will you keep these objects? What will you do with them when you no longer want them? What will happen to them then?

Take a last look round your home and then open your eyes. Take a couple of minutes to be present here. Then turn to your neighbour and share anything that you would like to share from your visualisation."

Closing activities

The next three activities are likely to run seamlessly into one another in the six session version. All three together are likely to take from 20 to 30 minutes. It can work well to start by introducing the idea of the ending and the fact that people will be moving on from the group. Then remind people of the long-term goal of halving their footprints or reducing them to 1 or 1.5 tonnes in each of the four key areas and encourage people to complete any of the home activities in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* that they haven't yet finished. This leads easily into the practical task of planning the reunion. You may also want to take this opportunity to deal with the practical task of handing out the evaluation sheets. You can then follow this with the more process-oriented conversation about ending, the evaluation and a final closing circle.

In the twelve-session version you need to plan the reunion at the end of meeting ten and hold the ending and evaluation conversation at the end of meeting eleven.

72. Planning the reunion

5-10 min

Group discussion

If you haven't already fixed the date for your reunion meeting do so now. 4-8 weeks ahead usually feels right.

Ask what format people would like the final meeting to take. Some groups choose to meet in the same place, some to regroup in a member's home. Some like to bring a shared meal, some choose to share a meal out. Ask if anyone wishes to bring a specific topic to the meeting or if the group would like to discuss something in more detail. Water and virtual water are topics people often like to spend more time on. If you are running the twelve-session version, which usually has 1.5 hour meetings, you might want to suggest an extended meeting for the reunion as 1.5 hours is quite short if people haven't met for a time or want to share food and socialise.

Don't think you have to come up with an agenda for the meeting yourselves. Encourage the group to say what they would like to do. A good way of gathering ideas is to ask people to write them on post-it notes, either alone or in pairs, before sharing them. You can also ask members if they would like to lead a discussion or present some information or whether they would prefer the meeting to be more informal.

73. Ending and evaluating

15-20 min

Group conversation

Open up some discussion of how people are feeling now the group is coming to an end. Expect mixed feelings and don't expect everyone to feel the same. There may be feelings of sadness, disappointment and regret as well as completion, satisfaction and hope. Some people may be glad to be getting their evenings back. Others will anticipate missing the friendship and support of the group.

Ask for feedback on the group as a whole. If you have kept the list of expectations from your first meeting, return to that and look at how many have been met. Otherwise, you could, ask for:

- high spots;
- memorable moments;
- low spots;
- changes members are hoping to make;
- whether people feel differently about climate change compared to when they started the group.

Encourage people to reflect with you on the process of the group. What has it been like working together? How have people's feelings changed as the group has progressed? If they look back to the beginning how has the group itself developed? What has it given them? What do people value about the work they have done together?

74. Reflection and closing circle

10 min

End the meeting with a few moments for reflection on the process of this final meeting and a closing go-round. Asking everybody to say one thing they will take away from the group and one thing they would like more of often works well. This can also be a good moment to use "When you said that I felt..." which you will find described towards the end of Chapter Four of this guide.

11. ‘Talking with friends, family and colleagues’: activities and programmes

If you are running the twelve-session version you have a whole meeting available for discussing Chapter Six of *In Time for Tomorrow?* In the six-session version any discussion of these themes will be restricted to what comes up in the reunion meeting. You could also consider running a separate half-day or whole-day workshop exploring how to apply listening and communication skills to climate change conversations. There are some suggestions for activities and resources you could use for this in the ‘Additional resources’ section at the end of this chapter and in ‘More Information’ at the end of this guide.

If you are doing the twelve-session version, the simplest way to approach these themes is through an open discussion (Activity 78) for which we give some prompts. We also suggest some listening activities and a role play (Activities 79 and 80). You will only have time to do one of these three activities. Activities 79 and 80 require skill to facilitate. If you have not facilitated this kind of work before stick to the open discussion option and, if you wish, look for someone who could run an extended workshop on listening and communication skills on another occasion.

Key tasks

Your key *process* task is to create a safe space where people are comfortable about:

- sharing difficult experiences;
- examining their own patterns of communication;
- discussing sensitive areas of their lives.

At all times you need to be alert to participants’ readiness to participate in this type of conversation and sensitive to any difficulties they may have in doing so.

Your key *content* task is to explain any of the concepts in Chapter Six of *In Time for Tomorrow?* that people are

unfamiliar with. You may need to follow up on some of the sources in the notes or in ‘More information’ in order to feel confident about this.

Opening activities

75. Opening circle

10 min

Follow the familiar format of going round the group clockwise from whoever starts. Choose one of the suggestions from the list earlier in this guide or use one of your own. If you want to focus on the theme of the meeting you could ask people to share an example of a conversation with another person that was memorable, for either a good or a bad reason. It doesn’t need to be about climate change as you will be sharing examples of those conversations shortly. Alternatively you might like to encourage people to reflect on the fact that you are now in the final session by asking them to share what they are feeling about the group and the work you are doing together.

76. Setting the scene

5 min

Introduce the theme of the meeting, checking whether people have managed to read Chapter Six of *In Time for Tomorrow?* Key themes to introduce now or as you go through the meeting are:

- climate change communication is a complex matter;
- our own strong feelings of urgency, anxiety or distress can sometimes make us poor communicators;
- a high level of self-awareness is useful in handling difficult conversations;
- being able to listen and have empathy for others is often the key to having a good conversation.

Main activities

77. Sharing the best and worst conversations

10 min

Pair and/or group discussion

Ask people to share some examples of good and bad conversations about climate change that they have had. It is sometimes easier to get examples of both good and bad conversations if people have had a few moments to share their thoughts in pairs first. Try to draw out some common themes from the examples. You will find some of the probable themes described on pp. 163-165 of *In Time for Tomorrow?* and you may find others emerging amongst your members. Follow this discussion with one of Activities 78, 79 or 80. You will only have time for one of these.

Talking with friends, family and colleagues

Sample programme – twelve-meeting version, meeting eleven

Activity no.	Activity name	Time allowed
	Pre-meeting arrival time	15
75	Opening circle	10
76	Setting the scene	5
77	Sharing the best and worst conversations	10
78, 79 or 80	One of ‘Open discussion’ ‘Practising listening skills’, or ‘Levels in conversation’	30
81	Plans for future conversations	10
73	Ending and evaluating	10
74	Reflection and closing circle	15

78. Open discussion of the themes and advice in Chapter Six

30 min

Hold an open discussion on the themes and advice in Chapter Six of *In Time for Tomorrow*? You could structure this in a number of ways:

- as a completely open discussion in which people take the topic where they wish;
- working in pairs for ten minutes exploring personal responses to the ideas in Chapter Six before sharing these in the whole group;
- spending 5-8 minutes on each of the themes of anxiety, relationships, ambivalence, empathy and resistance, and meeting your own needs.

Try to establish a reflective mood in the group. Focus on what people feel about the issues. Encourage them to share difficult experiences and support each other.

79. Practising listening skills

30 min

Much communication is non-verbal. Most of us say more with our body language, tone and pitch of voice, speed of delivery and facial expression than with our words. We also respond more strongly to body language, tone and expression, noticing and reacting to these without consciously realising that we are doing so. There are lots of opportunities for misunderstanding. For a conversation to go well, listening to the other person with an awareness of the many ways in which both people are communicating is often more important than concentrating on what we want to say next or crafting a smart reply. These two exercises may help. Spend about 10 minutes on the first one and 20 minutes on the second one.

Silent listening. Ask people, in pairs, to designate one person A and the other one B. For 2-3 minutes, person A talks about one of the following subjects: something I'm looking forward to; my favourite places; some childhood memories; or anything else which they choose. Encourage the 'A's to let their thoughts and feelings go where they will, without censoring them. Person B listens, giving their attention to person A but without speaking at all. Encourage person B to listen in a free-floating kind of way, paying attention to person A, but also noting their own responses.

After the 2-3 minutes talking /listening allow another 2-3 minutes for the pairs to reflect together on the experience. Person A should share what it felt like to be listened to. What was the effect of person B's attention on what s/he said? Did s/he feel properly heard? How did person B show s/he was listening? Person B should share what it felt like to listen without speaking. Was it difficult? Did s/he feel constrained? What did s/he notice apart from Person A's words? Was s/he more aware of Person 'A's body language, tone, mood and gesture for example?

'A' and 'B' then swap roles for another 2-3 minutes' listening and 2-3 minutes' reflection. Bring people back to the group to share briefly whatever they wish to about the experience.

Open questions, reflecting and checking. In pairs people take it in turns to listen and talk, this time for 5 minutes each. Ask people to speak about something they would like to change, or alternatively any other subject that comes to mind. This time the listener should occasionally respond, either with an open question or by reflecting back to the speaker what the speaker has said, concentrating on the speaker's mood and feelings.

Open questions encourage the speaker to explore the subject more, for example "How did that continue?", "How would you like things to be different?", "What might be getting in the way of your good intentions?", "What did you feel when that happened?" Closed questions encourage a yes or no answer – for example, "Was that your own idea?" or "Have you ever thought about doing x instead?"

Reflecting back means picking up what the speaker seems to be expressing and reflecting it back in order to check that you have understood properly, for example: "It sounds like you felt quite passionate about that." Or, "I think you're saying you felt annoyed with yourself."

After 5 minutes the pairs should spend 2-3 minutes sharing with each other how they felt doing this exercise and then swap roles. Finish with some brief discussion in the whole group.

80. Role play on levels in a conversation

30 min

Ask two people in the group to role play one of the following conversations, developing the characters as they wish.

- A group of flat mates have agreed that they will all remember to turn lights and appliances off when they are not using them but Alex has noticed that Leslie rarely does so. Alex has decided to raise this with him/her.
- A manager is looking for one of his/her staff to take on the role of Green Champion in the department. S/he asks Chris (who may be reluctant) to do this.
- Two friends are talking about holidays. Jo(e) is planning to go on an African safari. Charlie is concerned about climate change and is taking the train to France.

Ask each of the other group members to observe one of the levels in the conversation (content, mood, agenda and perception) using the descriptions of these on pp. 167-8 of *In Time for Tomorrow*? to help them.

Allow the role-play to run for a few minutes, debrief the actors (see instructions on role-play in Chapter Four of this guide) and then discuss what people have learned. You may find it useful to ask:

- What was happening at each level of the conversation?
- How did Leslie, Chris or Jo(e) show their ambivalence or resistance?
- How did Alex, the manager or Charlie show empathy and encouragement and deal with the resistance?

You may want to run several short role-plays or use more of the time for talking about people's real-life situations.

81. Plans for future conversations 10 min

Wrap up this theme by asking people to share responses to issues like:

- how they feel now about conversations they have held in the past about climate change;
- whether they have learned anything that they might apply in the future;
- how they can get support for themselves and offer support to others in coping with climate change.

Additional resources on communication and listening skills

Experienced facilitators will all have their favourite tools and activities for teaching reflective listening and communication skills. Many of these can be adapted for a workshop on talking about climate change, particularly if you combine them with the guidance on climate change communication given in Chapter Six of *In Time for Tomorrow?* and on the *Talking Climate* website, <http://talkingclimate.org/>.

In addition to the basic listening skills and role play activities included earlier in this chapter we have listed other resources in the 'More Information' section at the end of this guide.

One method which is specifically oriented to climate change and public speaking is Marshall Ganz's work on *The Story of Self, Us and Now*. This work helps people channel their personal commitment and sense of urgency into a story that is likely to appeal to an audience, whether this is one or two friends or a larger group. Ganz argues that the most effective communications are built on stories and his workshops help people craft a story that connects their personal feelings with the audience they are speaking to and the necessity for action.

Running a full workshop on this topic takes at least half a day but introducing people to these ideas during your Carbon Conversations group may give people inspiration and encourage them to return for more. You need to make yourself familiar with Ganz's work which you will find on the 350 site <http://bit.ly/ganz-2009> where you will also find handouts and full instructions on how to run a workshop.

12. Moving on: the reunion meeting

This is either Meeting Six or Meeting Twelve, depending on which version of Carbon Conversations you are doing. The date should have been set at the end of Meeting Five or Eleven.

Your key task is to organise the practicalities of the meeting and send out a reminder shortly beforehand. In your email remind people to bring their evaluation forms if they have not yet returned them, to make sure they have read Chapter Seven of *In Time for Tomorrow?* and completed any activities in the *Carbon Conversations Workbook* that remain outstanding.

The reunion meeting usually has no formal agenda. It should be an open space for people to share thoughts and feelings about themselves, climate change, their plans, hopes and fears. It can be an opportunity for reviewing progress in achieving the goal of halving footprints, and for sharing the plans people are making and the difficulties they may face. It is also an opportunity to deal with people's feelings about the ending of the group. Bring information about local organisations that could help people or which they might like to support.

Start with an opening go-round as a way of helping everyone to feel included and valued. End with a closing circle. If you discover that no-one, or very few people, have completed their evaluation forms, suggest that you all spend 10 minutes completing them now. Have some spare copies to hand.

Otherwise, let everyone talk as they want to and make plans as they see fit. Stay tuned to the mood and atmosphere of the group. Your role is, as it was at the beginning, to help make this a safe space, where people can talk openly.

Common themes

If you are doing the six meeting version, this may be the first occasion on which you have time to discuss Chapter Six of *In Time for Tomorrow?* Some of the themes that often come up in reunion meetings, some of which connect with Chapter Six, are listed below. You might like to raise them if you think they are relevant to your group and don't come up spontaneously.

The process of change

People may find it helpful to talk about how common it is to feel ambivalent about making changes to your life, what the process of overcoming resistance is for different people, different ways of finding support for changes that are difficult, and what the satisfactions are of making serious changes to your carbon impact.

Coping with anxiety, loss and grief

People may want to take some time to talk about the anxiety they may feel at the scale of the problem, and the sense of loss involved in some of the changes they have been asked to contemplate. There may be specific losses people want to discuss, such as those involved in deciding not to fly.

Relationships and communication

People may want to talk about their family, their social circle or their work colleagues. People often find it difficult to explain to those they are close to why they are prioritising climate change in their lives and sharing experiences may be helpful.

Grappling with the practicalities

People often like to spend some time swapping notes on practicalities, and getting information and recommendations from each other. Emphasise the importance of continuing to monitor energy use and emissions.

Beyond personal carbon reduction

Exploring what involvement people might want beyond personal carbon reduction can be a positive theme. Raise the possibility of people becoming Carbon Conversations facilitators, getting involved in community activity and becoming active politically.

Sustaining yourself

It can be important to make space for talking about the values and beliefs that sustain people, the experiences that give them hope and the sources of support that they have.

Celebrating the group

Don't forget the importance of celebrating what people have achieved together: their willingness to engage with the issue, the progress they have made in understanding it, the carbon reductions which they have in hand and are planning.

Feelings about the ending

Make space for people's feelings about the ending of the group. Even if people decide to meet up again, or continue to meet in other contexts, this is the end of this group. Allow to people to express whatever they wish.

More information

Full details of all the books described below are in the bibliography.

On the psychology of climate change

Joe Dodd's *Psychoanalysis and Ecology at the Edge of Chaos* (Dodds 2012) provides a good overview of the psychoanalytic approach to climate change. Sally Weintrobe's *Engaging with Climate Change: Psychoanalytic and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Weintrobe 2012) is a collection of articles written from a psychoanalytic perspective with responses from climate scientists and social scientists. Nick Totton and Mary Jayne Rust's *Vital Signs* (Rust and Totton 2012) takes an eco-psychology approach to climate change. Rosemary Randall's articles *Loss and Climate Change* and *A New Climate for Psychotherapy* are clear and easily accessible online.

George Marshall's *Don't Even Think About It: Why Our Brains are Wired to Ignore Climate Change*, (Marshall 2014) and COIN's *Talking Climate* website exemplify the cognitive approach while Tom Crompton's *Common Cause: the Case for Working with our Cultural Values* (Crompton 2010) and the *Common Cause Handbook* (Holmes et al 2011) provide an excellent introduction to values-based thinking about climate change.

On group process

Dorothy Stock Whitaker's *Using Groups to Help People* (Whitaker 1985) is a good introduction to all aspects of group life, particularly the unconscious processes. Nina Brown's *Psycho-education* (Brown 2011) looks at how to bring a psychoanalytic understanding to small-group learning. Gaie Houston's *The Red Book of Groups* (Houston 1990) is short, sweet and full of insight about what happens in groups. Bruce Tuckman's articles *Developmental Sequence in Small Groups* (Tuckman 1965) and *Stages of Small Group Development Revisited* (Tuckman et al 1977) outline his theory of the phases of group life. Tree Bressen's *Group Works: a Pattern Language for Bringing Life to Meetings and Other Gatherings* (Bressen 2011) is a set of cards which provide an interesting method for exploring what can happen in groups.

On active and reflective listening skills

Miller and Rollnick's work on informal counselling skills can be accessed via the website <http://motivationalinterviewing.org> and also in *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People for Change* (Miller and Rollnick 2002). The short online article *Active Listening* by Kathryn Robertson (Robertson 2005) will introduce you to the ideas of active listening while Caroline Brazier's *Listening to the Other: a New Approach to Listening Skills*, (Brazier 2009) is a more comprehensive introduction to listening skills.

If you are an experienced facilitator wanting to refresh the tools you use when teaching listening skills, you may find inspiration from the exercises on Tree Bressen's site, <http://www.treegroup.info/exercises/> or from the tools section of the Training for Change site, <http://trainingforchange.org/tools>. There is an outline for teaching reflective listening skills on the National Network for Collaboration's website http://bit.ly/reflect_listen and you can also base many activities on the guidance in Miller and Rollnick's book, (Miller and Rollnick 2002).

On workshop design and facilitation skills

Susan Cooper and Cathy Heenan's *Preparing, Designing, Leading workshops: a Humanistic Approach* (Cooper and Heenan 1980) remains one of the best introductions to designing a workshop but George Lakey's *Facilitating Group Learning: Strategies for Success with Diverse Adult Learners* (Lakey 2010) also has good advice. Robert Chambers *Participatory Workshops: a Sourcebook of 21 Sets of Ideas and Activities* and Sam Kaner's *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making* are full of useful workshop methods. Joanna Macy's *Coming Back to Life: Practices to Reconnect Our Lives, Our World* (Macy 1999) is a guide to her 'work that reconnects' and exemplifies an eco-psychology approach to workshop activities, while Paul Murray's *The Sustainable Self: a Personal Approach to Sustainability Education* (Murray 2011) is packed full of group learning activities, written from a values based perspective. George Lakey's book (Lakey op cit) is one of the few books on group facilitation that really engages with issues of diversity. The *Seeds for Change* website <http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/resources> has a good resources section with useful guides to facilitation and running workshops.

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Why is climate change so easy to ignore? Carbon Conversations offers empathy, encouragement and a practical path to anyone who feels concerned but lost, angry or powerless about this urgent topic.

The groups help people grapple with difficult questions and move towards the low-carbon lives that we all need to be living. They provide the safe space that lets people explore the issue without fear of judgment. The groups focus on the way people feel in response to climate change, on the psychological process of change, and on the social contexts that make change difficult. The meetings explore the key areas of an individual carbon footprint in a supportive and non-judgmental fashion, allowing people to make plans that feel right for them and which will halve their carbon footprints.

This guide provides all the information a competent facilitator needs to run a successful group. The guide explores the psychology of climate change; shows you how to engage people and recruit them to a group; discusses how groups relate and how to facilitate them; explains workshop design; and offers a detailed programme and notes for each meeting.

“Carbon Conversations is about so many worthwhile things: acting at a community level, helping people envision a low carbon future, achieving real change. For me its greatest value, in which it is truly remarkable, is that it provides a framework for people to share the real reasons why they act the way they do – their motivations, their blockages, and beyond this, their concerns about the world. *In Time for Tomorrow?* goes far beyond prosaic arguments about saving energy and explores the landscape of hope. This is why it generates such lasting enthusiasm from participants.

George Marshall, co-founder of The Climate Outreach and Information Network and author of *'Don't Even Think About It: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Ignore Climate Change'*

“One of the twenty most promising solutions to climate change.

The Guardian

The author



Rosemary Randall is a psychotherapist and group facilitator who has been involved in the environmental movement for many years. She writes and lectures widely on the psychological aspects of climate change.