Who Does Carbon Conversations appeal to?

Carbon Conversations’ primary audience is people who are aware of or who are becoming concerned about climate change (in Defra’s audience segmentation terms, this means the 44% of the population who are ‘Positive Greens’ ‘Concerned Consumers’ or ‘Waste Watchers’).

The workplace version, Conversations to Action, can be particularly relevant to existing Green Teams to enhance impact and effectiveness, or indeed to help start a Green Team where none exists.

Carbon Conversations is very complementary to other community carbon-reduction schemes. Any local community group with an active membership would be well placed to run a group.

# Facilitation and training

Carbon Conversations groups need good facilitation if they are to work well. They are usually delivered in the community by pairs of trained, volunteer co-facilitators who receive ongoing mentoring and support. Groups can also be delivered by professional facilitators, commercially or as part of their job and have been used successfully in workplaces.

The approach is sometimes called ‘psycho-education’, a term that expresses the combination of exploratory, participative learning coupled with psychological understanding of how groups work and people change.

Volunteer facilitators need to be people with good, intuitive ‘people’ skills. It is an advantage if they have prior experience of small group facilitation. They also need to be prepared to master the basic content and point people to reliable sources of information.

Training in the material and methods is provided by The Surefoot Effect and its network of Designated Trainers. On completion of training, facilitators sign an Agreement about the use of the scheme. They are then added to the list of ‘Approved Facilitators’ and can purchase multiple copies of the materials for use with their groups.

The facilitation and groupwork training provided can be used in a number of settings, not just Carbon Conversations, which can be helpful in career and personal development.

# Why train as a facilitator?

The facilitator training provided for Carbon Conversations covers group work and facilitation skills – both very transferrable skills useful outside of Carbon Conversations.  If you haven’t been on a Carbon Conversations course, you will need to attend a 3-day training to become an approved volunteer facilitator.

The first day familiarises attendees with what it is like to participate in a Carbon Conversations. The second two days focus on group work/facilitation skills.

If you have been on a Carbon Conversations course, you are eligible to attend a 2-day training, which looks at group work/facilitation skills.

It is necessary that facilitators are trained to run Carbon Conversations, as participants benefit greatly from having the structure and flow that effective facilitation brings. However, the skills taught are transferrable to other aspects of life and are especially useful in the workplace.

Becoming a facilitator can greatly increase your confidence and provides you with the necessary tools to communicate your message effectively at work, at home and in your community.

What does it cost?

As a guide, a three-day course costs £300 and a two-day course costs £200. There may be opportunities to access bursaries or additional funds to subsidise the training costs.