

Green
+ Healthy
Frome

LEARNING INSIGHT #6
STORYTELLING
MAY 2026

Story telling



Green and Healthy Frome is a partnership made up of the following



Funded by:

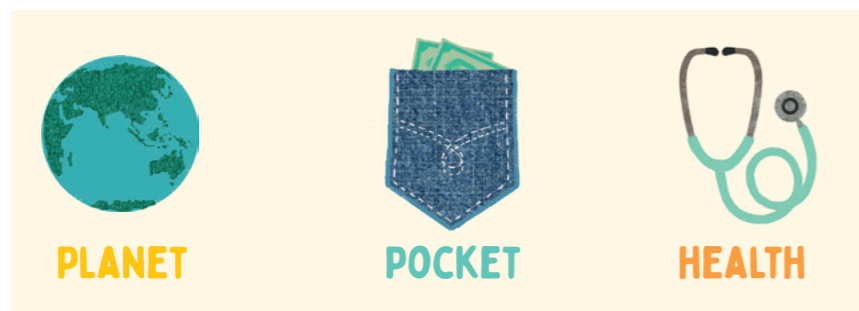


WHAT IS GREEN AND HEALTHY FROME?

Green and Healthy Frome¹ (GHF) is a partnership of Frome Medical Practice², Frome Town Council³ and Edventure Frome⁴ (a community, learning and social enterprise hub). GHF was funded by the Lottery's Climate Action Fund⁵. After a two year development phase (April 2021 to March 2023), we achieved a three year full award (April 2023 to March 2026) to upscale our programme.

Our mission is to engage our community to make changes which are good for the planet by highlighting climate, health and/or cost of living benefits. We do this by:

- Modelling and embedding sustainable practices into existing systems and structures, both at community and organisational levels
- Promoting community engagement and network building by working with community groups, individuals, and other organisations to enable action on climate and to amplify our impact
- Providing free resources to individuals, families and households, enabling them to make choices which are good for their health and good for the planet, often saving money too
- Using storytelling to promote behaviour and culture change within and beyond Frome
- Using evaluation to share our insights, learning and impact



GHF's core message is that 'people's health and the health of the planet are firmly linked - if we improve one, we'll also improve the other - enabling everyone to share in a better future'.

You can explore Green and Healthy Frome⁶ to find out more about what we did, what we learned and what happened next in Frome.

¹<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/>

²<https://www.fromemedicalpractice.co.uk/>

³<https://www.frometowncouncil.gov.uk/>

⁴<https://edventurefrome.org/>

⁵<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/funding-programmes/climate-action-fund-our-shared-future>

⁶<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/>

1. INTRODUCTION

This Learning Insight is designed to help community-led projects build an effective, audience-first communications strategy - drawing on the real world learning of the Green and Healthy Frome (GHF) programme. What we discovered, sometimes the hard way, is that communication is not an afterthought. It is the connective tissue between your work and the people you are trying to reach. Without a clear strategy, even the most impactful programmes risk speaking only to those already converted.

This Learning Insight draws on what we built, what worked, what we would do differently and the frameworks and tools that helped us most. It can be read from start to finish or dipped into as needed. Each section stands alone, but together they build a practical approach to audience-first communications. If you are short on time, start with the sections most relevant to your current challenges. We hope our learned experience helps your story reach the people who need to hear it.

Key principle: *Communications is not about broadcasting. It is about building a relationship between your work and the people whose lives you want to improve. Every channel, every message, every story should serve that goal.*



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WHO IS THIS FOR?

This Learning Insight is for community groups starting out, statutory and VCSE sector partners and professionals, and funders wanting to understand how communications can amplify impact with a particular focus on community-led action on climate.

2. START WITH THE STRATEGY

Before you write a single social media post or send a single email, take time to understand why you are communicating, who you are talking to, and what you want them to think, feel or do differently.

DEFINE YOUR PURPOSE

Storytelling for GHF had a specific purpose: to inspire and make easy behavioural changes that increase community wellbeing and environmental sustainability. Every piece of content we produced was measured against that goal.

Ask yourself:

- What behaviour or attitude do we want to change?
- Are there any pain points we can fix?
- Who are we trying to reach - and what motivates them?
- What do we want people to think, feel or do after engaging in our communications?
- How will we know if it has worked?

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE - WHAT MOTIVATES THEM?

One of the most important decisions we made at GHF was to ground our strategy in existing research on what actually motivates people to change behaviour. We knew from the evidence base that the climate catastrophe narrative creates anxiety and paralysis rather than action. We chose instead to lead with optimism, empowerment and practical benefits.

The Culture for Climate Scotland's *Guide for Talking About Climate Change*⁷ and the *More in Common Seven Segments*⁸ psychographic framework were valuable reference points. These frameworks helped us to categorise the British public into seven distinct values-based groups, as well as helping us understand how different people will respond to different messages and that reaching beyond your existing audience requires speaking in new ways.

BUILD YOUR STRATEGY BEFORE YOU BUILD ANYTHING ELSE

A communications strategy does not need to be long. It does need to answer these questions:

- Who are we talking to?
- What are the benefits to our audience groups?
- What is the single most important thing we want them to take away?
- What channels will we use, and why?
- What is our tone of voice?
- How will we resource and sustain this over time?
- How will we measure success?



⁷<https://cultureforclimate.scot/guide/guide-to-talking-about-climate-change/>
⁸<https://www.moreincommon.org.uk/seven-segments/>

3. FIND YOUR UNIFYING MESSAGE

When you are working across multiple projects, partners and priorities, it is easy for your communications to become busy and fragmented. We found that without a clear, shared message, we were saying a lot - but not always being heard. Effective communications are built on clarity and consistency. People are far more likely to engage with messages that are simple, relatable and rooted in what matters to them. A unifying message helps connect diverse strands of work into something coherent - making it easier for your audience to understand, and to see where they fit. For us, this meant stepping back from the detail and asking: what is the common thread that runs through everything we do? This section explores how we found a common thread across a complex programme - and why clarity matters.

THE CHALLENGE

GHF brought together three partner organisations across a hugely diverse range of workstrands - from cycling and energy efficiency to sustainable period products, food systems and prescribed medications. Each partner organisation had its own identity, its own audience and its own agenda. Early on, we asked: how do we communicate one cohesive message to the public when our work is this broad and disparate?



THE SOLUTION - PLANET, POCKET, HEALTH

We took a strategic step back. Through conversations with partners, workstrand leads and communications colleagues, we explored the values that underpinned everything we did. Three unifying themes emerged:



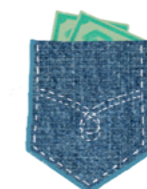
Planet:

Highlighting climate impact and support to shift to sustainable practices



Health:

Physical and mental well-being benefits from engaging in our work



Pocket:

The financial savings or support our initiatives offer (with the exception of a few projects)

This framework became our shared language. Every project, story and campaign connected back to at least one of these three pillars - giving us a consistent lens through which to communicate enormously varied work.

WHY IT WORKED

- It widened our audience appeal. People who would not normally engage with climate messaging were drawn in through health or financial savings angles.
- It gave partners a common framework, helping us make united decisions about how to communicate
- It simplified our website⁹ architecture, making it easier to navigate and to cross-promote workstrands
- It gave us a story that was optimistic, practical and relatable - rather than overwhelming

HOW TO FIND YOURS

To develop your own unifying framework:

- Bring your partners or team together and ask: what are the values that underpin everything we do?
- Look for the themes that appear across multiple workstrands - not just in one project
- Test your framework against your audience: does it resonate with people who are not already interested in your cause?
- Keep it simple - two or three themes maximum - complexity is the enemy of clarity

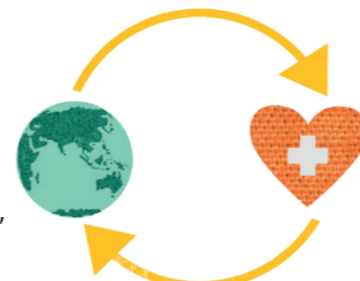
CORE THEMES & SUPPORTING MESSAGES

Theme	Key Message	Audience appeal
Planet, Pocket, Health	Small changes in daily life can improve health, save money and reduce environmental impact	Broad - reaches across demographic and value groups
Community Action	Collective action makes a difference - making small, achievable, simple changes will create a healthier, greener future. There is power in community, group action.	People motivated by belonging and shared identity
Practical Solutions	Affordable, achievable, practical steps can lead to better homes, better health, cleaner air, an empowered community and a healthier lifestyle	People motivated by improvement and practical benefit
Success Stories	Local people and community networks are already making a positive impact - be part of the movement!	People motivated by emotions, social proof and peer behaviour

THE RESULTS

Following the rebrand and introduction of the Planet, Pocket, and Health framework:

- Facebook reach increased by 589% in the first quarter after launch
- Instagram reach increased by 199% in the same period
- Media presence grew, with a clearer narrative for community members, like-minded organisations and funders alike
- Partner organisations adopted the framework as a shared internal language



⁹<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/>

4. TONE OF VOICE

How you say something is as important as what you say. Your tone of voice shapes whether people feel welcomed, inspired or alienated by your communications. It signals who your work is for, how accessible it is, and whether people feel invited to take part. Research into behaviour change and public engagement shows that people are far more likely to act when they feel a sense of agency, relevance and connection. Language that feels overwhelming, technical or judgmental can quickly shut that down. In contrast, language that is clear, human and relatable helps people see themselves in the story and believe that change is both possible and within their reach.

For us, tone of voice was not just a stylistic choice, it was a strategic tool. It helped us move away from messages that risked creating anxiety or distance, and towards communications that felt hopeful, practical, easy to understand and grounded in everyday life. GHF's tone of voice was deliberately optimistic, accessible and empowering. We knew from evidence-based research that doomist climate narratives create anxiety and disengagement rather than action. We wanted people to feel that change was possible - and that they were part of it.

OUR TONE OF VOICE PRINCIPLES

- **Optimistic** - focus on what is possible, not what is lost. Amplifying that small changes when done collectively DO matter.
- **Accessible** - avoid jargon, acronyms and insider language. Write for someone encountering your work for the first time by displaying messages in an accessible way.
- **Empowering and inspiring** - position the audience as capable of making change, not as passive recipients of information
- **Practical and relatable** - lead with audience benefits, make actions real and achievable rather than abstract goals
- **Warm and human** - use real stories and real voices and include humour wherever possible
- **Inclusive** - check that your language does not exclude any part of your community

Practical test: read your copy back and ask - does this make someone feel energised and activated, or overwhelmed and guilty? If the latter, rewrite it through a solution-focused and community-oriented lens.



LANGUAGE TO USE VS. LANGUAGE TO AVOID

Use	Avoid
Easy, small changes make a big difference	The Climate Crisis demands urgent action
Save money and help the planet	You must reduce your carbon footprint
Join your community in...	If we don't act now...
Here's a free, simple way to...	This is a complex systemic problem
Collectively, we can make a difference	We are running out of time

5. THE DIGITAL FOUNDATION: WEBSITE AND USER EXPERIENCE

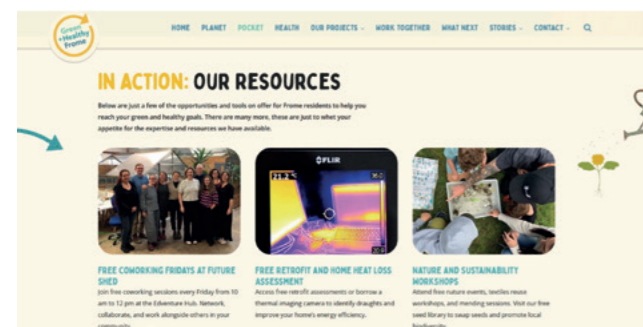
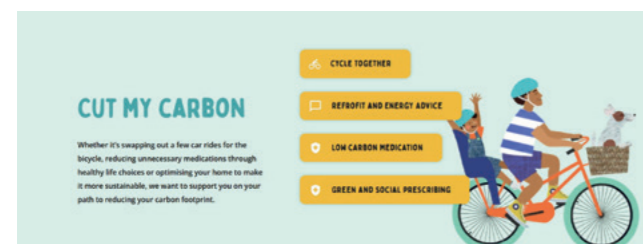
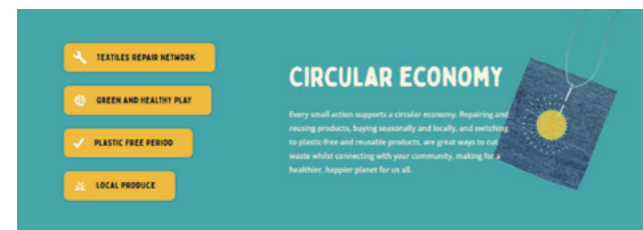
Your website is arguably the foundation of all communication projects. Before you build your social channels, design your newsletter or plan your campaigns, get your website right (with the exception of smaller projects that just use social media). Our current Storytelling Lead joined us a year into the 'full award' stage, making implementing changes more challenging. Most notably, when it came to the brand restructure this met with some resistance from the established team. However, we still had an opportunity to change the face of GHF and we pressed ahead. The website was our first priority - it was the destination everything else pointed to - and it wasn't working. The content was dense and uninspiring, the site was visually flat, the navigation was confusing and visitor retention was low.

START WITH AUDIENCE-LED NAVIGATION

We found it difficult to decode our complex project into a clear structure for the website. We engaged a Communications and Engagement Consultant to lead a user experience (UX) discovery process. Rather than organising the website around our internal structure - which made sense to us but not to visitors - we built the navigation around what our audience actually cared about: Planet, Pocket and Health. Under each pillar, we created sub-categories based on what people were looking for, not what we happened to offer. For example, under Planet¹⁰, we used categories such as Circular Economy, Cut My Carbon, Green Action and Protect Our Environment. This allowed us to create multiple touchpoints of engagement and to cross-pollinate all workstrands using multiple discovery pathways - so that every visitor could find something relevant, useful and motivating regardless of which pillar drew them in.

We also created a benefit-led resources banner section titled 'In Action: Our Resources', which featured on each Planet, Pocket and Health page. This section highlighted resources relevant to each content pillar, leading with a specific audience benefit, providing an additional touchpoint for engagement across all workstrands.

Key insight: People are often inspired by practical, free ways to take action rather than by activism or campaigning alone. Design your website around what your audience wants to do, not what your organisation wants to say.



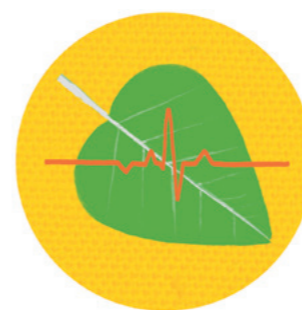
¹⁰<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/planet/>

VISUAL IDENTITY - MAXIMISING BUDGET

With the UX structure in place, we were able to commission a local artist to rebrand our visual identity. With clarity on the website structure, we could be specific on what assets we needed whilst harnessing the potential for them to visually communicate multiple elements of our project. We briefed our illustrator to create explanatory, upbeat, playful, localised and aspirational images. To enhance engagement we also requested dynamic elements - animated assets and GIFs - to bring the site to life and draw users in.

Crucially, we asked for all assets to be delivered individually (static, GIF and animated versions) so we could use them throughout the life cycle of the project across social media, newsletters, posters, event platforms and banners. This created strong brand identity and consistency across every touchpoint - and maximised the value of a single investment. We recommend that you:

- Structure your website before commissioning illustration assets
- Commission your visual assets once - then use them everywhere
- From the outset, request assets in multiple formats (static, animated, GIF) and think about what format e.g. JPEG, PDF, PNG will work best with your outputs
- Ensure your visual identity works across both digital and print contexts
- Choose a style that reflects your community - local, upbeat, warm and human tends to outperform corporate or generic



KEEPING CONTENT TIGHT - LESS IS MORE

One of our clearest learnings was that less is more. Our original website had too much content, which reduced visitor retention and made the key messages hard to find. When rebuilding, we stripped content back to an absolute minimum, used simplified and inclusive language, and made sure every page connected clearly back to at least one of the three pillars.

- Reduce copy to the minimum needed to communicate the key message
- Every page should have a clear purpose and a clear call to action (CTA). Be explicit with instructions (CTA) - people are much more likely to take action if invited to do so.
- Use plain English - aim for a reading age of around 11
- Review your website regularly and remove content that is out of date or no longer relevant

6. CHANNELS

Choosing the right channels is about understanding where your audience is and meeting them there. You do not need to be everywhere - in our opinion it is better to do less and do it well.

GHF used a wide range of channels across the programme. The table below summarises how we used each one, at what frequency, and what it was best suited to.

Channel	Best used for	Frequency
Website	Hub for all information, events, impact stories and resources. Everything points here.	Ongoing updates
Social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn)	Engagement, storytelling, event promotion, reaching new audiences via shares and boosts	3-5 posts per week
Email Newsletter	Direct updates to warm audience - success stories, upcoming events, resources. High trust channel.	Monthly
Events & Workshops	In-person community engagement and relationship building. Best for deepening existing connections.	As scheduled
Printed Materials	Flyers, posters and guides for local distribution - good for engaging audiences with low digital engagement	As needed
Press	Reaching a broader local and national audience. Builds credibility and third-party endorsement.	Campaign-led
Partnership Amplification	Leveraging partner and collaborator networks to extend reach beyond your own audience. Ask partners and collaborators to share social posts and events listings, to include in their newsletters and or websites, to amplify and engage with LinkedIn posts. Apply for awards.	Ongoing

Principle: It is better to do fewer channels consistently and well than to spread yourself too thinly across all of them. Choose the channels where your audience is most active and commit to those first.

7. CREATIVE STORYTELLING METHODS

Stories are the most powerful tool you have. Data builds credibility, but stories move people. They translate abstract ideas into lived experience, helping people see how an issue connects to their own lives and communities, enabling people to remember a product/brand/project. Research in communications and behaviour change consistently shows that people are more likely to engage with, and respond to, information when it is presented through narrative. Stories create emotional connection, build trust and make complex or unfamiliar topics feel accessible. They also help shift social norms – showing not just what is possible, but what others like us are already doing.

For us, storytelling was central to how we brought the programme to life. It allowed us to move beyond describing the work, and instead show its impact through real people, real places and real experiences. Below are the formats that worked best for us – along with some practical guidance on how to use them:

FILM

Film consistently outperformed all other content formats in terms of reach and engagement on social media. A reel or short-form video will always achieve higher reach than a static post. We partnered with a local filmmaker to help community members create and share their own stories through film, as well as producing emotive content for GHF directly.

- Keep films short - this is sometimes hard to do but it is best to stay under 90 seconds for social and under 5 minutes for websites or events
- Lead with the human story, not the organisational message - we wanted to create an emotive connection with our audience through film. We utilised humour, often including outtakes and making the content relatable. We aimed to include a wider representation of our community so that everyone felt welcome in our project.
- Add subtitles to all video content - the majority of social media videos are watched without sound
- Repurpose film content across platforms: full film on YouTube/Vimeo and website, clips on socials and stills in the newsletter. If suitable (particularly for an interview), transcribe footage and create a written story.



AUDIO & PODCASTS

Podcasts are highly accessible and popular, particularly for audiences who engage with long-form content. They work well for in-depth interviews, panel discussions and storytelling.

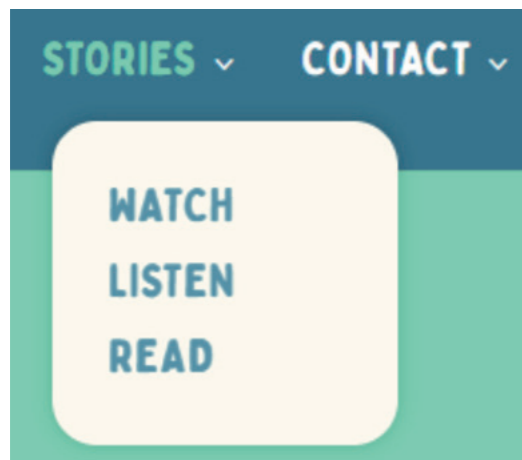
- Even a simple recorded conversation, edited and uploaded, can be valuable content
- Share podcast episodes across newsletters, social media and your website

WRITTEN STORYTELLING

On the right platforms, written reflections and longer-form pieces can be a powerful way to deepen engagement with a warm audience.

- Substack and newsletter takeovers from like-minded organisations can reach new, engaged readers
- Local and national press - with a well-pitched story - generates significant expanded reach
- Blogs on your website build SEO and give your audience a reason to return
- Newsletter redirection - point mailing list audiences back to the website to read the full story

GHF Learning: As our content evolved, we restructured our website navigation to make our storytelling more prominent, with a main menu title of **Stories** and subcategories of: **Watch**¹¹, **Listen**¹² and **Read**¹³. This made it easier to promote all three formats.



¹¹<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/watch/>

¹²<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/listen/>

¹³<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/read/>

VISUAL & CREATIVE FORMATS

Images, illustrations and graphic formats drive strong engagement, particularly on Instagram and Facebook.

- Story reels combining images, text and music can be highly impactful
- Reels containing community images of people outperformed text overlaid on flat or stock imagery
- Live illustration at events were a memorable and shareable engagement tool, along with using props and participatory activities
- Infographics work well for communicating data or showing processes in an accessible way



EVENTS

In-person events remain one of the most powerful ways to build genuine community connections. They also generate content - photography, film, quotes and stories - that can fuel your communications for weeks as well as providing an opportunity to cross-promote and unite a disparate project under the main content pillars.

- Always plan your content capture before the event - who is filming, who is photographing, what stories do you want to tell?
- Post-event content often performs better than pre-event promotion - people respond to seeing what happened
- Events create opportunities for word-of-mouth - the most trusted form of referral

EVENT EXAMPLE: GREEN HACKS DAY

Green Hacks Day put these principles into practice. It brought together multiple workstreams and other community initiatives under GHF's three main content pillars - climate, health and cost savings - creating a single event with broad relevance and reach beyond the project workstreams. Stalls, free workshops and activities covered topics including green energy, social prescribing, plastic-free period products, solar panel installation, repair and reuse of clothing, composting, bike checks, eco parenting and pickling.

By spanning such a wide range of themes, the event deliberately targeted different audiences and demographics - including those less typically engaged with environmental messaging - for example: by including composting and reducing your online carbon data, we hoped to engage more men.



GHF Learning: With a programme as event-rich as GHF, it quickly became clear that expecting the Communications Lead to attend every event was neither realistic nor the best use of resources. Similarly, assigning a photography budget to every event is costly and unsustainable.

A more effective approach is to be selective and strategic from the outset. Prioritise the events that best serve your communications goals - whether that is a flagship moment for a press release, a story that needs visual documentation, or a campaign that needs a human face. For those priority events, build in enough lead time to prepare properly: brief your photographer, plan your narrative focus, identify the stories you want to capture, and think about how the content will be used across channels before the event takes place. For lower-priority events, consider alternatives: a simple briefing for a trusted attendee with a smartphone, a post-event quote collected by the workstrand lead, or a write-up that draws on participant feedback rather than on-the-day coverage.

8. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Multi-partner communications are one of the hardest things to get right. Alignment, trust and clear processes are essential, but they take time and intention to build. When multiple organisations, each with their own priorities, audiences and ways of working, come together communications can quickly become fragmented or slow due to the number of voices and people involved.

SET UP YOUR STRUCTURES FROM THE START

GHF was a three-partner programme with eight external-facing workstrands and three overarching workstrands, each with its own identity, agenda and communications needs. Managing this effectively required clear communications structures - and our honest reflection is that some of these should have been established from day one rather than introduced part-way through the programme. The structures that worked best for us were:

- A regular embedded presence - one day per week co-locating in a partner organisation, which built trust, kept communications joined up and made it far easier to gather stories and updates in real time
- A fortnightly meeting with communications leads from all three partner organisations, to align on scheduling, share upcoming content and resolve any messaging tensions
- A shared content planner, accessible to all partners, providing visibility of what was being published across all channels and when
- Partner amplification of content from social media collaborations and sharing, to joint Facebook events to publishing press releases

In this section, we share what we have learned from a communications perspective through working in a complex partnership. These reflections focus on the practical realities of coordinating messaging, managing relationships and keeping communications joined up across organisations. For a deeper exploration of partnership working more broadly, including governance, collaboration and shared decision-making, please see our **Power in Partnership** Learning Insight.¹⁴

OUR LEARNING - AGREE ON PARAMETERS EARLY

One of our clearest learnings has been that many coordination challenges stem from not having agreed on the basics upfront. Before your programme begins, we would strongly recommend spending some time agreeing on a communication structure, paying particular attention to:

- Choosing a document/asset sharing platform all partners can access
- Agreeing on an event listing platform all partners have access to
- What content each partner is expected to share, in what format, and within what timeframe
- For all partners to agree on updating a shared Content Planner Calendar at agreed regular intervals
- How brand guidelines apply across partner communications
- Who has sign-off authority for different types of content
- How conflicts or competing priorities will be resolved
- Regular all-partner meetings being built into the programme delivery plan from the outset

¹⁴<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/our-learnings/>

MANAGING DIFFERENT PARTNER PRIORITIES

Each partner in GHF had a different organisational agenda, different audiences and different tone of voice. For example, Frome Medical Practice's always led with improving 'health', with sustainability as a secondary benefit rather than a co-benefit. This is natural and to be expected in any genuine partnership - but it requires active management.

- Treat the shared communications strategy as a living document that all partners contribute to and feel ownership of
- Use your unifying framework (Planet, Pocket, Health in our case) as a neutral lens that sits above any individual partner's agenda
- Be explicit about whose turn it is to be foregrounded in any given campaign or story, rotate the spotlight equitably

GHF Learning: *Given the complexity of this broad project and the involvement of multiple workstrand leads, it is essential to acknowledge that while diverse inputs are valuable, the Communications Lead should have the final decision-making authority. This approach will help streamline progress and ensure a cohesive output.*



¹⁵<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/our-learnings/>

¹⁶<https://www.theconsciousproject.org/>

BUILD YOUR EVALUATION, DATA AND SHARED INSIGHT FUNCTION FIRST

In a multi-partner programme, evaluation data is not just for reporting - it is a shared asset that strengthens communications across the programme. When it flows well, data provides a steady pipeline of stories, evidence and insights that can be used by all partners to communicate impact in a timely and compelling way. This requires early agreement on what data is being collected, by whom, and how it will be shared. Without this, partners can end up working in silos - holding pieces of the story but lacking the full picture.

One of our most significant learnings from GHF is the importance of embedding links between evaluation and storytelling from the beginning of the programme, providing a pipeline of data and stories to feed into our narrative. In practice, the evaluation of this complex project was difficult and the Evaluation Lead was not in post during our final year which meant that the data pipeline did not materialise as planned. Without it, we were unable to demonstrate the impact of individual workstrands in real time, which limited the breadth and depth of our storytelling.

In practice, linking evaluation to storytelling means:

- Agreeing shared metrics and outcomes across partners from the outset
- Creating simple mechanisms for capturing stories alongside data (e.g. event feedback, short interviews, partner reflections)
- Establishing regular points for sharing insights across the partnership
- Ensuring evaluation is resourced and embedded, not treated as an add-on

Our Final Evaluation¹⁵, undertaken by The Conscious Project¹⁶, provides a wealth of learning on evaluation, storytelling and our wider programme.

GHF Learning: *Treat your evaluation function as essential infrastructure. Agree from the start who is responsible for collecting data, in what format, at what frequency, and how it flows into your communications. Be prepared to shift and adapt evaluation as the project evolves. A pipeline of stories and data makes everything else easier.*

9. REACHING NEW AUDIENCES

Reaching new audiences is essential if you want your work to grow beyond those who are already engaged. It requires a deliberate shift from speaking to your existing community to thinking about who is missing - and why. In practice, this means understanding where new audiences spend their time, what matters to them, and how to frame your message in ways that feel relevant and accessible. It also means being willing to test, adapt and sometimes step outside your usual channels and approaches. This section explores the strategies that helped us extend our reach, while reflecting honestly on the limits of audience growth within a defined community.

TARGETED BOOSTING

Organic social reach has limits, particularly on Facebook. Paid and targeted boosting - even within small budgets - can significantly extend your reach to new or targeted audiences. We used boosting selectively, prioritising high-performing organic content and key campaign moments. We learned to:

- Boost content that is already performing well organically - it is more likely to resonate with new audiences too
- Use A/B testing with your posts, test with a generic audience before boosting it with your targeted audience
- Use geographic and interest-based targeting to reach the specific community segments you want to engage
- Set clear objectives for boosted posts - reach, engagement or link clicks - and track the results



PARTNER & COLLABORATOR AMPLIFICATION

Your existing network of partners and collaborators is one of your most valuable distribution channels. We actively cultivated relationships with aligned organisations, particularly the networks of action that were developed through Future Shed¹⁷, our community engagement programme. We asked them to share our content - and reciprocated by amplifying theirs:

- Identify organisations whose audiences overlap with yours and build reciprocal sharing relationships. There is power in collaboration and room for all.
- Make it easy for partners to share your content - provide ready-made captions and assets, collaborate with your posts
- Tag partner organisations in your posts to extend reach and encourage resharing

¹⁷<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/future-shed/>

NEWSLETTER TAKEOVERS

Approaching like-minded organisations to feature your story in their newsletter is a highly effective way to reach a warm, engaged audience that already trusts the sender.

- Identify organisations with newsletters whose readers would find your work relevant
- Pitch a specific, reader-relevant story rather than a general introduction to your programme
- Offer to reciprocate - feature them in your newsletter in return

APPLYING FOR AWARDS

Awards generate visibility, credibility and media coverage. OpenStoryTellers¹⁸ created films for GHF which won multiple festival awards, generating significant exposure for both the project and the participants (see **Campaign 1** below).

- Research awards relevant to your sector - community impact, communications, inclusion, sustainability and health - all have relevant award schemes
- Even being shortlisted generates content and credibility
- Use award wins in press releases, social media and funder reports



¹⁸<https://openstorytellers.org.uk/>

¹⁹<https://greenhealthyfrome.org/youth-climate-action/>

²⁰<https://www.togetherfilms.org/films/future-council/>

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

Reaching new audiences also means ensuring your communications are accessible to people with a wide range of abilities and needs. Having a wide representation of people telling our stories enabled us to forefront the lived experience of those with lesser-heard perspectives. Our partnership with OpenStoryTellers where, where we collaborated with learning disabled artists to explore the unequal impacts of climate change, was particularly powerful (see **Campaign 1** below).

In our final year, we set up the Youth Climate Action Group¹⁹ in Frome to address under-representation of young people in GHF. The Group's activities culminated in processions across Frome with their inspiring sculpture 'Plastic Bones' - a globe made of waste with accompanying messaging - and a showing of the film Future Council²⁰ which inspired more young people to sign up.

Simple steps can make a significant difference: adding captions and subtitles to all video content, using clear and plain language, ensuring good colour contrast in visual materials, and making digital content compatible with screen readers. Providing alternative formats - such as audio versions of written content or easy-read summaries - can also help widen access.

GHF Learning: Accessibility was not consistently embedded across all channels from the outset. While we did caption much of our video content, we did not use alt text until late in the Project. As a result, some of our communications may not have reached people who would otherwise have engaged and will have excluded some audiences. Accessibility should not be treated as an add-on or a final check. Building it in from the start helps ensure your work is genuinely inclusive - and that more people can see themselves in, and benefit from, what you are doing.

AUDIENCE SATURATION - AN HONEST REFLECTION

One of the realities of working in a small town is that you will eventually reach a saturation point with your core local audience. It is worth asking regularly:

- Are we reaching new people or speaking to the same people repeatedly?
- What does our follower growth tell us about whether we are expanding our reach?
- Are there audiences - by geography, age, interest or background - that we are consistently not reaching? If so, is it worth digging deeper into what will resonate with them?



GHF Learning: In a town of 28,000 people, we found that after a period of growth, our social audience began to plateau slightly. This is a signal to diversify your channels, invest in boosting, deepen partner amplification and consider whether press and events can reach the parts of your community social media cannot.

10. MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

When used well, data is the feedback loop that helps you understand what is working, who you are reaching and how to get better. It turns communications from a series of outputs into a process of continuous learning and refinement.

Without data, you are relying on instinct and anecdote. With data, you can make informed decisions – doubling down on what resonates, adapting what doesn't and identifying gaps in who you are reaching. Data also helps you demonstrate value to partners and funders, showing not just what you did, but the difference it made.

Importantly, not all data is equal. The most useful insights often come from a combination of quantitative metrics and qualitative stories. Together, they provide a fuller picture of reach, engagement and impact. This section sets out what we tracked, what we found most useful, and how to build a simple, manageable approach to measuring what matters.

WHAT TO TRACK

Across GHF we tracked a range of metrics. The most useful were:

Metric	What it tells you
Social media reach & impressions	How many people are seeing your content - and whether that number is growing
Engagement rate (likes, comments, shares)	Whether your content is resonating - high reach with low engagement suggests the content is not connecting
Follower growth	Whether you are reaching new people or only your existing audience
Newsletter open rate	How compelling your subject lines are and how engaged your list is
Click-through rate	Which content topics and calls to action are driving interest
Website traffic & retention	How many people are visiting, where they come from and whether they stay
New vs. returning visitors	Whether you are reaching new audiences or primarily your existing community

GOING BEYOND THE METRICS

Reach and follower counts are easy to measure but do not tell the whole story. The more useful questions are:

- What content generates the highest engagement? What do those posts have in common - format, topic, tone?
- Which newsletter subject lines get the highest open rates? What language patterns are working?
- Which stories generate the most clicks - and what does that tell us about what our audience actually cares about?
- Are we reaching a new audience or the same people repeatedly? What is the demographic profile of our users and who else do we want to reach?

GHF Learning: In reality, with our complex project and our Communications Lead working part-time with a heavy workload, we often struggled to prioritise in-depth data reporting and analysis. To make this process more efficient, it would have been helpful to structure data capture systems to maximise insights in real time rather than retrospective review.

We would recommend prioritising key metrics that will directly impact your objectives, automating data collection using tools and software (e.g. Meta Pixels, Google Analytics and Zapier) that can automatically gather and update data, reducing periodic inputs and saving time. And if you want to share your findings you could incorporate data visualisation tools to bring your data to life with infographics (e.g. Tableau, Google Data Studio and Infogram).

11. WHAT WORKED WELL AND WHAT WE'D DO DIFFERENTLY

Honest reflection is one of the most valuable things a programme can offer to others. Here is our learning summary.

WHAT WORKED WELL

The Planet, Pocket, Health framework

It gave us a clear, shared language that worked across partner organisations and audience segments. It widened our appeal and made complex work feel simple, relatable and relevant.

The rebrand

Commissioning a strong visual identity with reusable assets transformed our brand consistency and had a measurable impact on reach - Facebook up 589% and Instagram up 199% in the first quarter after launch

Tone of voice

Using inclusive language, an optimistic, relatable tone, and adding humour and playfulness in our films and content made people connect with the brand on an emotional level

Film

Short-form video consistently outperformed every other content format. Partnering with a filmmaker and supporting community members to tell their own stories through film produced some of our most powerful and widely shared content - including two award-winning films.

Being embedded in partner organisations

Working from a partner's office once a week made an enormous difference to trust, communication and the ability to gather real-time stories and updates

Fortnightly partnership communications meeting

Regular touchpoints across partner communications leads kept scheduling aligned, resolved tensions early and ensured consistent messaging

Events as content generators

Planning content capture into events - photography, film, quotes - meant events continued to fuel our communications long after they took place

Nurturing collaborations and partnership

Providing communications support, guidance and advice to the broader GHF networks meant that relationships were strong and collaborators were always willing to reciprocate

Joined-up messaging with partner organisations meant we were able to amplify campaigns and reach slightly different audiences

WHAT WE'D DO DIFFERENTLY

Establish the evaluation function from day one

The lack of integration between evaluation and storytelling meant we often lacked the data pipeline we needed to tell the full story of the programme's impact in real time.

Structure and Systems

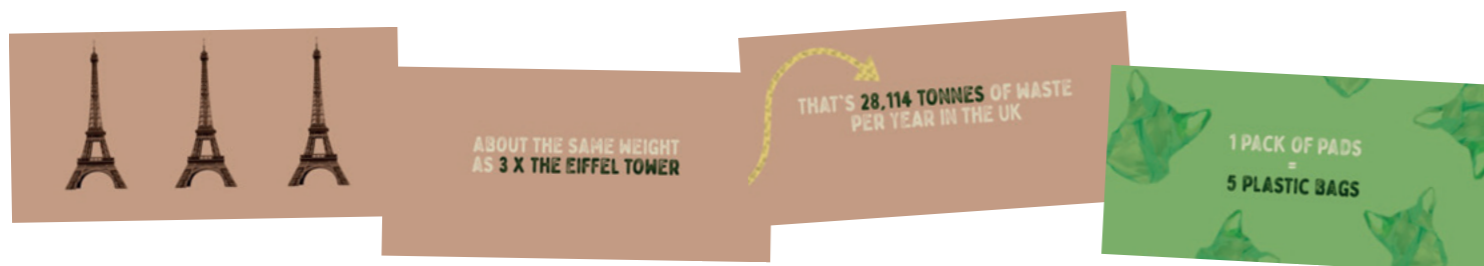
- Agree on document sharing, communication structure and systems before the programme starts - which platform, what format, what timeframe - agree them all upfront and get sign off from partners
- Establish frameworks between partner organisations to manage alignment between communication leads, share pipeline content and resolve scheduling conflicts proactively
- Embed a shared content planner and keep this as a standing agenda item from programme inception - this helps to identify opportunities to cross-promote and gives communication leads time to plan a narrative around planned activities

- Develop partnership communication protocols defining content-sharing commitments for each partner specifying volume, format and lead times to reduce last-minute requests and ensure consistent cross-organisational amplification

- Design a standardised event communications timeline with milestone-based scheduling - defining when key assets, copy, approvals and promotional pushes must be delivered relative to each event date

- Build in audience research at the outset - understanding who we were reaching and who we were not reaching earlier would have helped us tailor our messaging more effectively

In hindsight, a project of this scale and complexity would benefit from a dedicated full-time Communications Lead supported by a Communications Assistant - ensuring the breadth of storytelling activity could be delivered to its full potential without compromise.



12. CAMPAIGN EXAMPLES

Below are two campaigns that illustrate different aspects of what community communications can look like in practice.

CAMPAIGN 1: OPENSTORYTELLERS - DOES CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT EVERYONE EQUALLY?

One of the most significant and celebrated projects of the GHF programme was a collaboration with OpenStoryTellers²¹, a creative organisation that empowers people with learning disabilities to tell their own stories.

The Brief

We wanted to explore whether climate change affects everyone equally - and to do so in a way that centered the voices and experiences of people who are rarely heard in climate conversations. OpenStoryTellers brought their expertise in inclusive, participatory storytelling whilst GHF brought the climate and health context.

What We Did

- Over a months-long collaboration, OpenStoryTellers' artists worked with facilitators to explore climate themes through storytelling, producing a diverse body of work spanning sculpture, photography, fashion, immersive installations, animation and film - with fast fashion, food waste and plastic pollution as central themes
- GHF showcased the work in a 10-day exhibition 'An All Round Hullabaloo' at the Round Tower, Black Swan Arts, attracting over 350 visitors
- During Frome Festival we previewed a new film, 'The Making of An All Round Hullabaloo', at the Town Hall followed by a live Q&A with the artists

- Produced two short films including the award-winning short films, including 'Journeys Through Time and Climate'²² - inspired by real-life bus journeys through Somerset - which highlights the everyday barriers faced by disabled people who rely on public transport, blending animation, live action and illustration
- Overall the project was attended by nearly 500 visitors in total, including the Mayor of Frome, and generated significant community conversation about how climate change disproportionately affects some of the most vulnerable members of the community
- The campaign to support this project was multifaceted and supported by social media, website, newsletter and press, with paid and organic posts. As well as promoting the two events, we built up anticipation to the film releases by producing and publishing short clips and creating conversations by connecting with relevant LinkedIn groups and asking charitable organisations to promote the film, share content, include in their newsletters and further discuss the key question of whether climate change affects us all equally?

²¹<https://openstorytellers.org.uk/>
²²<https://vimeo.com/1062533608>



The Results

- Journeys Through Time and Climate film was selected for the Animation Award and screened at the 'Together! Disability Film Festival', and was finalist in both Best Animation and Best Film by Somerset Film Director at the 'Frome International Climate Film Festival'. We won the 'Activists Without Borders Film Festivals': Social Impact Award.
- The project was featured in likeminded organisations' newsletters, like Sensing Climate²³, and the film was shared on social media by Friends of the Earth²⁴ members
- The project generated significant media interest and social engagement. It demonstrated that climate communications can be inclusive, participatory and creatively ambitious - and invited a new, or lesser-heard perspective to engage new audiences.

What Made It Work

Genuine co-production, not tokenism. The participants were not subjects of a film about climate change - they were its authors, embedding lived experience. That authenticity came through in every frame, and it is what made the films resonate so widely.

²³<https://sensing-climate.com/>
²⁴<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/>





CAMPAIGN 2: THE GREEN & HEALTHY FROME 2025 CONFERENCE

The GHF Conference was our flagship final year event - a large-scale, multi-partner gathering that brought together community members, partner organisations and a wider audience beyond Frome, all united under the theme of learning and sharing.

The Brief

To plan and deliver a learning event that showcased the breadth and impact of the GHF programme in a dynamic and immersive way.

What We Did

- Coordinated multiple partner organisations around our co-produced programme
- Managed all PR - press releases, targeted social media promotion, both paid and organic, event listings and partner amplification
- Produced all event materials, including storytelling signage, invitations, programmes and printed assets
- Commissioned photography and planned video capture for post-event content
- Curated and delivered communications workshops

The Results

- The conference was attended by a significant cross-section of the Frome community and wider beyond Frome networks
- Post-event content - photography, film clips, attendee quotes - fueled social media and newsletter content for subsequent weeks
- Post event follow up included delegate packs that shared our learnings and resources from the day
- The conference strengthened GHF's standing as a leading example of integrated community health and climate action- opening doors to national conversations, amplifying our reach beyond a local audience, and establishing GHF as a practical resource for organisations looking to learn from or build on our model

What Made It Work

A good lead-in period, planning and a team around the event made it easier to plan the Conference as a content opportunity from the very beginning - not as an afterthought. Every aspect of the planning included a communications lens: who do we want to target, what will we photograph, what points do we want to highlight, what do we want to share, how do we want to position the day in terms of tone and pitch. That discipline and preparation amplified the benefits of the event long after the day itself.

13. PRACTICAL RESOURCES & TEMPLATES

The following frameworks, tools and templates supported GHF's communications work. We found them useful as a starting point for our community communications strategy - we hope you find them useful too.

FRAMEWORKS & RESEARCH

More in Common - Seven Segments:

A psychographic, values-based framework that categorises the British public into seven distinct groups. Essential reading for audience strategy.

<https://www.moreincommon.org.uk/seven-segments/>

Climate Change Behaviours Segmentation Study (ClimateXChange):

Evidence-based research on what motivates behaviour change in relation to climate. Informs tone of voice and messaging strategy

<https://www.climateexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/climate-change-behaviours-segmentation-study.pdf>

Guide to Talking About Climate Change (Culture for Climate):

Practical guidance on climate communications language and framing

<https://cultureforclimate.scot/guide/guide-to-talking-about-climate-change/>

TOOLS WE USED

- **Canva** - for designing social assets, posters, press adverts and newsletters
- **CapCut** - for short-form video editing
- **WordPress** as a template for website management and content publishing
- **Mailchimp** subscription e-mail platform - for newsletter management and analytics
- **Google Analytics** and **Meta Business** suite for social media analytics - for tracking reach, engagement and follower growth
- **MetriCool** - for social media scheduling



IF YOU ONLY DO FIVE THINGS

If you are short on time or just getting started, these are the things that we think will make the biggest difference:

1. START WITH YOUR AUDIENCE, NOT YOUR OUTPUT

Be clear on who you are trying to reach, what matters to them, and what you want them to think, feel or do differently

2. DEVELOP A SIMPLE, UNIFYING MESSAGE

Find the common thread that connects your work and makes it easy for people to understand and engage with: always lead with audience benefits

3. INVEST IN YOUR FOUNDATIONS

A clear, audience-led website and consistent tone of voice will strengthen everything else you do

4. PRIORITISE STORYTELLING OVER BROADCASTING

Show your impact through real people and real experiences: stories build connection and drive action

5. BUILD IN EVALUATION FROM THE START

Create simple ways to track what is working and capture stories as you go: data and storytelling work best together



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Not forgetting our wonderful freelance partners
Holly Lawton UX advisor [linkedin.com/in/lawtonholly](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lawtonholly)
Jenna Herman illustrator [jennadoodles.co.uk](https://www.jennadoodles.co.uk)
Alex Doe filmmaker [doeandsmith.com](https://www.doeandsmith.com)
Chris Dawson web designer [tallhat.com](https://www.tallhat.com)
Nick Moyle Learning Insight Design [inkcapdesign.co.uk](https://www.inkcapdesign.co.uk)

You can find our final Project Evaluation, further Learning Insights and Toolkits in Green and Healthy Frome's [learning resources](#).²⁵



Green and Healthy Frome is a partnership made up of the following



Funded by:



²⁵<http://www.greenhealthyfrome.org/our-learnings>

