



## **Inspiring Impact case study**

### **Getting colleagues on board with evaluation**

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#### **About Changeworks**

[Changeworks](#) is one of Scotland's largest environmental charities – a thriving organisation with over 30 years' experience in sustainability<sup>1</sup>. We work with organisations, communities and individuals to deliver practical solutions that reduce carbon emissions, fuel poverty and waste.

Changeworks has around 200 employees and volunteers in Edinburgh, Inverness, Shetland, Orkney, the Western Isles and Argyll.

Changeworks provides energy efficiency and fuel poverty advice and support services so people can live in affordably warm homes. We also work with local authorities, organisations, schools and communities to minimise business and domestic waste. We help public, private and voluntary sector organisations to reduce their impact on the environment using carbon reduction advice and behaviour change, programme management and research and analysis.

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<sup>1</sup> Changeworks is a Living Wage Employer achieving national standards Investors in People and Investing in Volunteers, and has been awarded international environmental management accreditation ISO 14001 and European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Committed to Excellence 2 stars.

## Context and drivers

The main reasons behind why we wanted to improve how we evaluate our work were: to ensure that Changeworks accurately demonstrates our impact to funders, clients, customers, employees and interested stakeholders; to make internal processes and procedures more efficient and effective, and to identify how we can continuously improve.

We conducted a review of Changeworks' Strategic Plan, which in turn gave us the opportunity to review and improve how we evaluate our impact.



## Developing our impact practice

An evaluation steering group was set up to refine our key objectives and develop indicators for evaluation. We contacted Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) for advice and their Director Steven Marwick came into Changeworks to help us plan and develop our evaluation process. Our steering group included at least one person from every department and one person was also given the responsibility to lead the development of our evaluation review.

In addition, we formed a team of evaluation champions with one person representing each department. Their roles were to:

- liaise with Heads of Departments to agree a process to collect data
- gather data and evidence within their team

- 'sell the story' of the importance of evaluation and understanding our impact to colleagues in their departments, and
- work closely with the key person leading the process to ensure the aims of evaluation review were met.

## Impact practice today

**Process & key roles:** We now have a clear process in place. One member of staff has overall responsibility for organising Changeworks' evaluation and impact measurement. They hold annual meetings with the key evaluation person in every department to discuss improvements and refinements.

**Data collection:** We have a carefully planned data collection timetable that is communicated to staff. Quantitative and qualitative data is entered into a central spreadsheet on an annual basis by the key evaluation contacts from each department. Where relevant, links to case studies can also be added to the spreadsheet to provide a fuller picture.

**Encouraging staff engagement:** Regular updates and incentives to encourage staff participation for surveys- such as cake and competitions between departments-have proved effective!

**Reporting & communicating:** The person with overall responsibility for co-ordinating the evaluation collates all data and writes a report. Evaluation findings are then communicated to staff via several employee communication channels. These include:

- our quarterly Business Brief – delivered at departmental meetings to improve staff understanding of our business performance and which provides staff with the opportunity to discuss our evaluation findings face-to-face
- our weekly all-staff *Newsy* email which links to the evaluation report
- a face-to-face presentation to managers
- a presentation to the Changeworks' Board and Senior Management Team where feedback is actively sought to refine and improve the evaluation process as it goes forward.

## Benefits of good impact practice

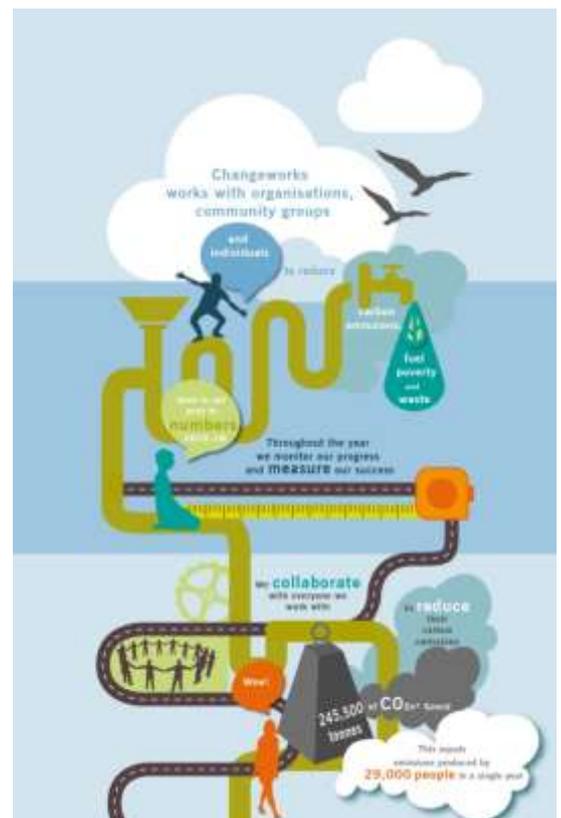
Better planning and organisation has resulted in big improvements to the whole process, and [evaluation findings are delivered in a much more timely way](#). This means internal and external [communications are more relevant and meaningful](#). With more regular communication we also build a more meaningful [understanding of our organisational performance among our employees](#). Having a central spreadsheet for data input with links to workings means that [data can be checked more easily](#). Agreeing on top line figures for communication with employees and external stakeholders [means we can track and monitor progress](#).

We have used the evaluation findings [to help evidence our success and impact](#) in our internal and external stakeholder communications. Internally, this might be at employee events, briefings and inductions. Evaluation highlights are communicated to external stakeholders online and we produce [Our Year in Numbers](#), a graphic that makes the summary results more widely accessible. Other external stakeholder communications include our [Champions of Change](#) publication to celebrate 30 years of Changeworks which featured key evaluation findings.

We also use our findings within our funding and award applications.

It's important for us to continue building on our learning, so we [try to make sure to communicate our results in an engaging and meaningful way by including more visuals and relevant comparisons](#).

For example, Changeworks Recycling collected 5,700 tonnes of recyclate during 2016/17. This is the equivalent of filling a recycling truck 1,204 times. We linked this data to a picture of a recycling truck so people could make the connection.





## Future plans

Changeworks is about to adopt a new Strategic Plan to cover the next three years which may have an impact on our evaluation processes. However, we plan to continue refining and improving our evaluation by discussing the process with managers, Board members and staff, as well as by asking for their ideas for improvements. Also, by changing the name from 'Annual Evaluation' to 'Impact Measurement' and clearly setting out how we use findings, we hope to increase staff morale when it comes to the task of inputting their data.

To take our impact practice further it would help if we could benchmark to understand if our impact is better or worse than similar organisations, but we are finding it hard to secure benchmarking partners.

We'd welcome discussions with potential benchmarking partners. If you're interested in comparing impacts<sup>2</sup>, please get in touch with Evelyn Mitchell at [emitchell@changeworks.org.uk](mailto:emitchell@changeworks.org.uk)

## Take away message

Impact measurement is...

"...an ongoing task! It needs to be constantly reviewed and refined. Leadership support is vital at the same time as having a good clear structure, process, plan and resource in place... to gather the relevant data to carry out the evaluation."

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<sup>2</sup> request for benchmarking partners open until April 2020