

PRESS RELEASE – 15 July 2010

Community Challenge winners share £20,000 for low carbon travel projects

GRASSROOTS community projects for low carbon transport are celebrated at a national awards ceremony today.

The Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership (LowCVP) and the Energy Saving Trust today announced the winners of the Community Challenge, a competition offering prizes of up to £5,000 for community-based projects promoting low carbon vehicles and fuels or smarter, sustainable travel. Seven innovative solutions to greener transport at community level are to share £20,000 prize money to support their work.

Meeting the winners at the LowCVP Annual Conference today, LowCVP Managing Director, Greg Archer, said: “The winners are engaged in projects that not only help reduce road transport emissions, but also provide wider community benefits, such as employment and training opportunities for young people.”

“We are delighted to recognise and support the achievement of community organisations across the UK in helping to accelerate the shift to low carbon vehicles and fuels. The judges were hugely impressed by the creativity and originality on show.”

The Energy Saving Trust Chief Executive Philip Sellwood said: “I have been delighted that the Energy Saving Trust and the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership have been able to jointly run the Transport Community Challenge.

“ In judging the entries, I was impressed by both the quantity and quality of projects looking for support. The projects illustrated to me that there is a groundswell of support for low carbon transport at the community level. It is inspiring that there are such innovative thinkers out there with some great ideas on how to reduce transport carbon emissions.”

Among the winners are WiganRecycles, a scheme where unemployed 18-24 year olds are trained as eco-driving instructors, to provide workshops on green driving to public sector organisations in the area.

Ace Bicycle Club, a Social Enterprise based in South London, will receive £1,000. Ace repairs and rebuilds donated bicycles for use by vulnerable and marginalised members of the community. The grant award will provide professional mechanic training to one of its volunteers.

Prizes were awarded in three categories:

Vehicles and Fuels

- £5,000 to Cotswold Council for Voluntary Services to test how eco-mapping within their minibus fleet and eco-driving training provided to its staff improve fuel economy and lowers costs. Eco-mapping helps to optimise fuel performance based on where and how a vehicle is used.

Smarter Driving and Eco-Driving

- £5,000 to Climate Squad, for a project to train newly qualified and learner drivers in eco-driving, with training delivered by young people testing the potential for peer-to-peer support
- £2,500 to WiganRecycles, a scheme where young, unemployed 18-24 year olds are trained as eco-driving trainers and provide workshops to public sector organisations in the area

Reducing Car Use

- £1,000 to Ace Bicycle Club, which repairs and rebuilds donated bicycles for use by vulnerable and marginalised members of the community, to provide professional mechanic training to one of their volunteers
- £1,000 to Broomfield Bike Beauties, a group of mums who met at the school gate, developed a shared interest in cycling, undertook a 190-mile charity cycle ride, and who plan to encourage other local parents to take up cycling
- £5,000 to Oxcar, a car club in Oxford funded to bring forward innovative ideas for the take-up of car-clubs
- £500 to SPOKES, an informal network for people working within the NHS who cycle to work or use a bike for business, to help raise awareness of the opportunities for cycling within the provision of health care

Three projects were highly commended by the judges:

- The School Travel Health Check, which maps patterns of travel to and from school to assist with travel planning
- easitNETWORK, which works with a wide range of businesses in the South East of England to offer low carbon alternatives for the daily commute
- I Move It, a website offering a low cost delivery option making use of available boot space in cars already making a journey

The Community Challenge is funded by the LowCVP and Energy Saving Trust, and supported by ACT Travelwise, Global Action Plan, *liftshare*, the RAC Foundation and WhatGreenCar.com.

ENDS -

Notes for editors:

1. The Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership is an action and advisory group, established in 2003 to take a lead in accelerating the shift to low carbon vehicles and fuels in the UK and to help ensure that UK business can benefit from that shift. The LowCVP is a partnership of organisations from the automotive and fuel industries, the environmental sector, government, academia, road user groups and other organisations with a stake in the low carbon vehicles and fuels agenda.
2. The Energy Saving Trust is one of the UK's leading organisations set up to mitigate the damaging effects of climate change. It aims to cut carbon emissions - a contributor to climate change – by promoting the sustainable and efficient use of energy, water conservation and waste reduction. EST is an independent, non-profit making organisation that acts as a bridge between government, consumers, trade, businesses, local authorities

and the energy market. EST provides impartial information and advice with a network of local advice centres in the UK, designed to help consumers take action to save energy.

3. More detail is provided below on the Community Challenge prize winners:

Fuels and Vehicles

Cotswold Council for Voluntary Services (CCVS)

Cotswold Community Transport provides transport services to older, disabled and rurally isolated members of the local community. CCVS wishes to use ECU eco-mapping technology within its fleet of 15 minibuses. “Engine control unit” mapping helps to re-programme a vehicle’s engine management system to optimise fuel performance, based on where and how the vehicle is used.

CCVS is awarded £5,000 to carry out ECU mapping work and to provide eco-driving training to its drivers.

Smarter Driving and Eco-Driving

Green for Go - Global Action Plan’s Climate Squad

Climate Squad aims to embed long-term eco-driving habits in newly qualified or learner drivers through a series of workshops and simulator training. The training will be delivered by young people, to help test the potential for peer-to-peer support in changing behaviour. Climate Squad will be testing to see whether simulator training works better on its own or in conjunction with interactive workshops, providing useful insights for future projects.

Climate Squad is awarded £5,000 to develop and deliver its Green for Go programme.

WiganRecycles

WiganRecycles has developed a programme to deliver fuel efficient driving training to public sector workers in the borough. Training is delivered by young unemployed people (18 – 24) who are trained and certified as professional trainers, introducing them to green collar industries and employment opportunities. The young trainers have designed the training programme and materials. A pilot programme saw the training delivered to the local Primary Care Trust, with 37 sessions given at 14 different locations.

WiganRecycles is awarded £2,500 towards the ongoing costs of the project.

Reducing car use

Ace Bicycle Club

Ace of Clubs is a day centre in South London for vulnerable, homeless and isolated members of society. The Ace Bicycle Club aims to provide bicycles to vulnerable and homeless people to allow them access to free, environmentally friendly transport. The Club’s volunteers have created a bicycle workshop to repair and rebuild donated bicycles for their members and for the local community. The Club would like to increase the service they offer within their local community and also offer bike maintenance / mechanic services to other community organisations.

Ace Bicycle Club is awarded £1,200 to cover the costs of professional mechanic training for one of their volunteers.

Passing the Cycling Baton - Broomfield Bike Beauties

Broomfield Bike Beauties started as a group of non-cycling mums who met at the school gates. Over time, the group started going on cycle rides, and they have recently completed a 190-mile cross-country charity cycle ride. The group now wishes to encourage cycling among other parents through a series of outreach activities including using an electric bike to increase participation.

Broomfield Bike Beauties are awarded £1,000 for the purchase of an electric bike and towards their outreach work.

Changing up a gear - Oxcar

Oxcar is an existing car club which expects to have 16 vehicles operating by summer 2010. Oxcar has been experimenting with a scheme whereby members can lease their existing vehicles to the club, helping to reduce the level of finance required for additional vehicles. Oxcar has generated a number of other ideas that would support expansion but, as it is volunteer led, lacks the time and resource to pursue these ideas. Lessons learned would be shared with other Car Clubs.

Oxcar is awarded £5,000 towards running costs and staff time to enable further development of innovative ideas.

SPOKES

SPOKES is an informal network for staff within the NHS who cycle to work or use a bike for business purposes. SPOKES has almost 400 members nationwide and has been successful in raising the profile of cycling on a new SPOKES website, through work with the Carbon Trust and at a number of NHS sustainability conferences. Support provided by SPOKES has led to cycle shelters being installed in two hospitals, advice being provided to five NHS Trust and seven Trusts starting Bicycle User Groups in the past year. SPOKES would like to escalate its work and reach more widely into the NHS.

SPOKES is awarded £500 to help with promotional materials and affiliations that will raise its profile further.

For more information, please contact:

Neil Wallis, Head of Communications, LowCVP

Phone: 020 3178 7863 Mobile: 07974 255720 email: neil.wallis@lowcvp.org.uk

Liz Warren or Chloe McLaren Webb at SE2 Ltd on 020 8469 1333. liz.warren@se-2.co.uk

ENDS