

**Research Plan for Greater Wellington
'Towards a Sustainable Region'**

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Developed by TNS Wellington

The Greater Wellington Regional Council has identified ten quality for life elements (*Take Ten*) - biodiversity, water, air, energy, land, transport, waste, recreation & parks, safety & hazards and community - and what it wants to achieve in each of these areas to work towards achieving the goal of a sustainable region.

In 2003, Greater Wellington launched a Communications Strategy to support Greater Wellington's goal of a sustainable region through communications that raise awareness, increase understanding, influence attitudes and change behaviour. The Strategy focuses on enabling individuals and communities to contribute to the goal of a sustainable region, and supporting co-operation and partnership between Greater Wellington and local and central government, business and iwi.

The tools that have been used to address these outcomes are: a brand that communicates the organisations' role and purpose; social marketing to directly engage with the public (*Be the Difference*); a strategic communications programme using media to communicate with the region as a whole and divisional communications to focus on individual programmes.

Achieving these outcomes requires an informed, motivated community actively willing to play their part, and also willing to support the regulation, policy and interventions undertaken.

Research

Critical to the Communications Strategy is research to inform its development and to evaluate its success (and guide development beyond the first three years). This short paper recommends an approach for the 2005 research programme to support the strategy.

The overall objectives of the proposed research are to:

- **Communications Strategy:**

Measure awareness and understanding of Greater Wellington's brand and role in achieving a sustainable region.

- ***Be the Difference:***

Evaluate the success of the *Be the Difference* campaign in both achieving behavioural change and positioning Greater Wellington's brand as delivering sustainability.

Communications Strategy Research

In order to assess the effectiveness of the Communications Strategy Greater Wellington needs to measure the extent to which the views of residents have evolved since the implementation of the strategy.

- Quantitative research will be used to *measure* the extent to which there has been change in residents attitudes towards the environment, awareness and knowledge of sustainability, and awareness of the Greater Wellington brand, activities and services. Research undertaken at the outset of the Strategy will provide a benchmark from which to assess the impact of the strategy.

Be the Difference Campaign Research

Be the Difference was launched in early 2003. It is now timely to make an early assessment of the campaign (18 months post launch).

- Quantitative research is required to *measure* the extent to which there has been change in the awareness, attitudes and behaviour of *Be the Difference* members as a result of being part of the programme.
- Qualitative research with members is required to obtain an in-depth understanding of member perceptions and experiences of the programme and to assess the extent to which the campaign and communication materials are meeting the needs of those who have signed up. The extent to which there has been change in environmental attitudes and behaviours of members (with a particular focus on behaviours) as a result of the programme will also be explored. In addition, understanding and perceptions of the role of the Council in environmental management will be explored.

Proposed Approach

The table below provides an overview of the proposed approach:

Communications Strategy Research	A quantitative telephone survey of the Wellington residents (will also cover General Public Views of <i>Be the Difference</i>).
<i>Be the Difference</i> Research	A quantitative (telephone and online) survey with <i>Be the Difference</i> members. .
	Focus groups with <i>Be the Difference</i> members.

The approach, including proposed timing, is outlined in more detail below.

Communications Strategy Research

Survey of Wellington Residents	
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To measure awareness of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Greater Wellington brand - Be the Difference, Elements, Greater Wellington advertising and website - the role, activities and geographical scope of Greater Wellington. • To gauge whether Wellington residents think Greater Wellington has a role to educate and encourage behaviour change towards protecting the environment (specifically within households and businesses). • To identify segments within the general public based on attitudes towards the environment. • To measure understanding of sustainability and assess awareness of the environmental challenges facing the Wellington region.
Method	Phone survey, n=600 residents, quota key areas (June/ July 2005), 15 minutes, 3 open ended questions.

Be the Difference Research

Survey of <i>Be the Difference</i> Members	
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess extent to which there has been change in environmental attitudes and behaviours of BTM members (with a particular focus on behaviours) • Assess the extent to which the campaign and communication materials are meeting the needs of those who have signed up. • Obtain an updated profile of BTM members. This will allow for comparisons to be made with both the quantitative benchmark survey conducted with the general population in the Greater Wellington region and the BTM benchmark. • Compare the attitudes and behaviours of BTM members to those of the general public (see survey of Wellington residents)

Method	Phone survey, n=200 (June/ July 2005), 6 minutes, one open ended question. On-line survey, n=200 (June/ July 2005), one open ended question.
Focus Groups with <i>Be the Difference</i> Members	
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand member perceptions and experiences of BTD • Understand how the campaign and communication materials have been received, and whether they are meeting the needs of those who have signed up. • Explore the extent to which there has been change in environmental attitudes and behaviours of BTD members (with a particular focus on behaviours) as a result of BTD. • Explore perceptions of the role of the Council in environmental management.
Method	n=6-8 focus groups

Proposed Timing

Research Component	Timing
Quantitative Survey of Wellington residents	June/ July 2005
Quantitative survey of BTD members	June/ July 2005
Qualitative research with BTD members (focus groups)	July 2005