



Warm Hearts and Cool Heads: The Leadership Potential for Climate Change Champions

A report for Hampshire County Council
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Executive Summary

This report by Alexander, Ballard and Associates was commissioned by Hampshire County Council in order to explore the potential for climate change championship as a strategy for change. Its structure is explained below but first we headline its key findings and recommendations.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1. Champions are needed.

An effective response to climate change demands behaviour change across the board, yet change of the scale and magnitude required does not happen on its own. Our research for this report and for the Espace Behavioural Report, “How can local authorities stimulate and support behavioural change in response to climate change?” involved studying many different climate change strategies, action plans, and initiatives. The momentum to carry these forward always came from a particular individual or group of individuals.

Although other factors, such as institutional support, underpin a project’s success, in the long term the determination, ingenuity and commitment of key individuals has been essential to major change taking root. There are examples and case studies to support this finding in the main body of this report.

In addition, although many of those we interviewed questioned the interpretation of championship, no-one doubted that leaders of change were needed.

Recommendation 1. Hampshire County Council should continue to develop a championship strategy

Finding 2. A healthy ecosystem of champions is vital.

In the environmental field, championship is most commonly used to refer to a particular type of leader who can persuade others to take action at the most concrete level, such as changing from high to low energy light bulbs. Such actions often have a measurable outcome, for example, electricity use goes down. This is the understanding of change agency which tends to inform the role of local authority environmental champions.

However, this understanding seemed too narrow for the more substantial agenda for change which is clearly needed. We therefore chose to explore the qualities needed to meet a wider change agenda, how such qualities could be developed and how champions with these qualities could be supported by HCC.

It was clear from the start of our inquiry that in addition to those who had been given an official champion title, there were many others championing climate change, both as part of their job remit within the Environment Department, and in other departments. From our experience we believed this to be the case in organisations other than HCC as well. We began to wonder about the role of these different champions and how, if they were all necessary, a championship strategy might intentionally include them.

We therefore extended our inquiry to include three categories of people to interview:

- **Formal** champions were councillors who accepted the official title (3 interviews)
- **Informal visible** champions were those for whom climate change or sustainability was part of their organisational mandate. Informal because they did not carry such a label, but visible because of their commitment to fulfilling and transcending their role to act as effective change agents. Others can then see that they were engaging seriously with the climate change agenda. (12 interviews)
- **Informal less visible** champions were those whose role did not explicitly require any championing of sustainability or climate change and who did not draw attention to themselves with a label but who were nonetheless making climate change or sustainability part of their remit. (4 interviews)

19 in-depth interviews clarified the roles that different types of champion play in the change agenda:

- **Formal** champions provide visible leadership, have convening power to bring different parties together and carry political legitimacy as elected councillors in asking for change. They can provide a bridge between their community and the local authority.
- **Informal visible** champions have the capacity to work on projects over longer periods of time, possibly spanning electoral cycles, and therefore can work effectively on strategic issues and to build organisational capacity.
- **Informal less visible** champions can be vital in recognising opportunities for change within departmental programmes and for building a bridge into line management teams and day to day operations.

Recommendation 2 Hampshire County Council needs to extend its championship strategy to include and nurture a diversity of champions. It would be a mistake only to develop a cadre of formal champions.

Finding 3. Champions have identifiable characteristics, two of which are crucial for effectiveness.

Although we uncovered significant differences between champions in terms of the roles they played, we identified similarities in the characteristics shared by effective champions. Two of these can be described as core qualities or must-haves, the others were identified as needs for the multi-tasking which a champion role entails.

- **Core Quality 1: “Passion.”** This emerged as one of the most highly prized characteristics. It was a key motivational factor in sustaining champions through emotionally and intellectually draining work which has an increased risk of burn-out. Passion was judged as vital for inspiring others and, provided it did not

become overwhelming, could be channelled to useful ends. Some evidence suggests that if emotions are repressed, as they can be in some bureaucracies, responses to climate change are likely to be less effective. However, the importance of passion is usually overlooked in recruitment procedures.

- **Core Quality 2: “Agency”** Unlike many people in organisations who avoid exploring the power they have to make a difference, climate change champions do not stop searching to find meaningful ways of responding to the climate change crisis. This we describe as the relentless search for “agency,” another defining characteristic for effective climate change champions who continually try to address the wider contextual factors blocking their actions. Sometimes this even involves leaving a particular career path or, alternatively, choosing to stay in a role in order to increase or maintain their capacity to make a difference. This characteristic is explained by the particular challenges that climate change poses. An individual project may be successful in isolation but eventually its scope will be limited by the wider contextual constraints. Therefore, although a strategy of small scale interventions can be successful for a time, there usually comes a point when climate change champions are compelled to address the wider system. This invites a more strategic response; one that usually requires him/her to reach out beyond the remit of his/her role.

There was a lot of agreement among interviewees about which other qualities were most needed in order to meet the challenges a climate change champion faced. Although it would be unrealistic to expect every potential champion to show all of these, the resulting list is helpful for the recruitment process and for identifying development and support needs:

- Fluency in different language styles (so as to be able to communicate with differing stakeholder groups)
- Frame shifting. (Being able to conceptualise in ways that meet people where they are whilst giving them another perspective.)
- Simultaneously hot and cool headed.
- Authenticity.
- Credibility.
- Staying informed.
- Courage.
- Tenacity and patience.
- Resilience.
- Authority and voice.
- Relationship and network building.
- Capacity to work with fear, despair and compassion.

Recommendation 3. In recruiting climate change champions Hampshire County Council should look for these qualities and aim to develop them if they are not already evident. Passion and the thirst for agency should top the list.

Finding 4. There is both a need and the potential to increase the number and diversity of champions.

Although we found evidence of many laudable initiatives on climate change, social and organisational change is not being facilitated as widely and as quickly as it needs to be if national and international mitigation and adaptation targets are to be met. The consequences of this inertia could be catastrophic for the biosphere, the economy and society. Many more individuals and groups need to be engaging with the change agenda.

Discussions with existing champions, supported by our own experience, suggests that there are people with a climate change remit in many departments who are not yet championing the issue effectively but who could do so if given more support and development.

Taking each of our three categories in turn we looked at how HCC might begin to build more capacity for climate change championship.

1. Formal champions. Feedback from interviewees was positive. Formal champions found the role fulfilling and believed it would appeal to other largely self-selecting councillor candidates. Champions in other categories recognised the value of formal champions. Research into initiatives such as Global Action Plan suggests that creating formal champions across different departments is an idea worth exploring.

2. Informal visible champions. Our interviewees were able to identify qualities which would characterise a champion. These were held to a greater extent by those we interviewed in this category. However, it became obvious that more could be done to develop such qualities in others whose organisational role would require them to engage with the climate change agenda. If these qualities were developed it is likely that more people would become champions in this category. Owing to their organisational visibility, potential and actual champions in this group are easy to reach.

3. Informal less visible champions. Champions in this category have a vital role to play in any widespread change initiative yet they are the hardest of the three categories to access. In this group we found individuals whose concern about climate change causes them to look for ways to make a difference but who can not challenge the status quo too radically unless provided with support from the wider organisation. They often feel isolated and cut off from climate change initiatives and fear that becoming more visible or active as a champion could make their position less tenable. Yet they and others, not yet engaging with a climate change agenda, take decisions that (if informed with more awareness of the issue) could make a big difference. For instance when new buildings are specified or a new service is developed there is often huge scope to reduce energy or to protect against likely impacts but this moment of 'agency' is often fleeting and may have long disappeared by the time that the issue is picked up in normal organisational processes.

In our experience supported by wider research, most people find it easier to follow rather than to challenge established guidelines in such cases – they do not look ‘outside the box’. Even when they become aware of their power to make a difference in such cases, they are likely to need more support to do so. The unrealised agency available within this category therefore demands a longer term strategy in order to access it.

Recommendation 4. Hampshire County Council needs to create more formal climate change championship roles which it could offer to officers as well as councillors. It needs more pro-actively to involve and support less visible champions in cross-departmental projects addressing climate change. It needs to stimulate more learning and creative dialogue between those who are engaging with the climate change agenda, and those whose remit it is but who are not.

Finding 5. HCC already has a valued leadership development programme which provides a strong foundation but something more specific is needed for those working on climate change.

HCC’s Leading for Success Programme provides a good foundation for developing the qualities that underpin good performance in organisational roles and has built a pool of managers from which suitable champions can be recruited. Those developed to this level would be described as “achievers” by Bill Torbert, whose Leadership Maturity Framework is used in the main report to clarify different champion roles.

However, the programme is not intended to meet the particular needs of those making a transition in Torbert’s developmental terms from “achiever” to “individualist”, the level at which the particular qualities of climate change champions begin to emerge more fully. The programme was not designed to support those working on sustainability and climate change in particular but (appropriately) has a more general remit.

This report shows that there are specific support needs for practitioners in this particular field that are currently not being addressed.

Recommendation 5. HCC needs to build on the foundations provided by ‘Leading for Success’ to devise a further learning process for developing the core qualities specifically needed by climate change champions. This would be particularly appropriate for those in the informal visible category.

Finding 6. Working on climate change is itself a pathway for developing strategic leadership qualities.

The complexity of the challenge presented by climate change provides opportunities for leaders to develop. Finding agency generally requires an individual to take a whole systems approach. This is the approach of the “strategist” as defined by Bill Torbert – the stage beyond “individualist” which is characteristic of the ‘mature’ champion. Since

climate change champions are continually searching to increase their agency they need to develop strategic leadership qualities to be effective.

It is possible to catalyse movement between the different stages of leadership maturity defined by Torbert. This can be done by the appropriate matching of different champions to project management roles and by encouraging and supporting individuals at transition points in their development. Some climate change champions may be ideally placed to take a role in this and might even be able to help develop more champions in the informal less visible category.

Recommendation 6. The need for project managers presented by the ESPACE behavioural change work and other climate change initiatives is an opportunity HCC should take to develop existing champions and recruit others from different departments.

Finding 7. Champions could be more effective if a linking pin organisation supported their collaboration and association.

Climate change champions have intellectual, emotional, relational and developmental needs which they feel could be met in part by an association of kindred spirits.

Wide research identifies “association” (working in groups with other people) as one of the most important routes to effective work on environmental issues.

Different types of champion are needed for different roles. A strategic approach to their deployment would recognise the need for a champion “ecosystem”. Enabling individual champions to recognise their place in this ecology without inhibiting development or cross-boundary working could build more shared purpose, potentially transforming a lot of separate individual efforts into a more effective collective effort. A champion organisation would need to make this possible.

Recommendation 7. Hampshire County Council should develop its own capacity as a champion organisation by exploring different ways to bring together both internal and external champions with comparable roles for shared learning, opportunities for joint working and mutual support.

Questions

Some powerful questions emerged from the in-depth conversations and structured interviews on which this report is largely based. These were to do with the potential for HCC to explore its organisational agency through creating association.

Participants recognised that there was still much to learn about the conditions that give rise to effective partnerships and creative collaborations. They were eager to continue exploring questions such as the following:

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- How is collective energy generated and sustained for one initiative rather than another?
- What enables a shared vision to take form?
- How do people come to share a common higher purpose and sustain it/themselves over the life of a project?
- What can be learnt from successful projects such as Hawthorne Court?
- Can a whole organisation become a climate change champion?
- How do we awaken collective will?

Exploring such questions could form a focus for action learning processes for existing and new climate change champions.

Suggested next steps

- This report could provide a focus for bringing together the “champions” who participated in it to discuss and further develop the recommendations.
- Significant insights have emerged from this inquiry that should be informing climate change policy and strategy implementation. Hampshire could play a leading role in disseminating this research and pursuing the questions arising from it. At the very least, the report could be made publicly available online.
- Start to explore how to build on the Leading for Success Programme informed by existing work in this field as described in this report. Establish a pilot supervised learning group for champions internally to provide experience on which to base future developments.
- This research should be integrated with the ESPACE behavioural project. Find ways to present the findings of both reports together both internally and to ESPACE partners.
- Start to build support for these ideas more widely at the highest levels of HCC with a view to their incorporation within the business plan. Use feedback from others to redefine the questions arising and look for ways to pursue them.

Structure of the report

The report is presented in three parts.

Part One explains the purpose of the project, the questions it was designed to address, and some of the particular difficulties pertinent to climate change. It describes our methodology and the key informing theories which comprise a framework against which to analyse findings from the interviews and our shared experiences as consultants and clients.

Part Two explores and develops the starting questions. It looks at the different ways that a champion is defined, how champions find and develop their agency and the need for an

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“ecosystem” of champions. It focuses on specific qualities and skills which can help others to recognize, assess, support, recruit and develop climate change champions whilst defining their needs. It pinpoints the huge emotional burden such a champion is likely to be carrying and examines the importance of passion for championing climate change. Finally, part two prepares the ground for a discussion of Hampshire County Council’s capacity-building role in relation to the need for champions to lead behavioural change strategies developed for ESPACE.

Part Three details conclusions, recommendations, emerging questions and next steps.

Part 1. Setting the scene

1. Purpose of the project

1.1 Why this research was commissioned

As part of its responsibilities as a signatory to the Nottingham Declaration and to the Carbon Management Programme, Hampshire County Council (HCC) has been exploring how to raise awareness of climate change among stakeholders and how to engage them in effective responses to the challenges it poses.

Alexander, Ballard and Associates (ABA) have been supporting the development of a climate change strategy with recommendations for targeted action on adaptation and mitigation. With assistance from Rosslyn Research, we have carried out extensive research into behaviour change under the auspices of the ESPACE project. From a number of case studies included in this research it has become clearer that the successful implementation of new climate change policies and strategies requires qualities of leadership not commonly recognised or understood in the current state of public knowledge.

In parallel, HCC is beginning to explore different leadership models in connection with its sustainable development work. One model has been the appointment of councillor champions. There is a champion of climate change and another of renewable energy.

HCC's Environmental Strategy Group has commissioned Alexander, Ballard and Associates to carry out focussed research on championship with reference to other models of leadership. This is to determine whether the champion model is an appropriate way forward in the context of the council's own evolving role on climate change. It will contribute to a better understanding of how to support and build capacity for leadership in this field.

1.2 Questions addressed in this project

After lengthy discussion with HCC, we agreed that the needs of the project could best be served by addressing the following broad questions:

- How a champion is defined (paying attention to the complexity of their task and the extent to which success requires them to reach out from their role to engage with a wider context)
- How champions are recognized and how their effectiveness can be assessed.
- How champions can best be supported and what a body such as Hampshire County Council's Environmental Strategy Group might provide to meet some of a champion's needs.
- How to develop capacity for championship.

Inevitably as we began to share these questions with participants in this inquiry, more questions arose. Some were very close to those agreed with HCC. For instance:

- Who is a champion and what is understood by the label?

- Are champions self-grown or self-appointed?
- How do champions negotiate the constraints of their roles?
- What factors help champions fully to realise their agency, i.e. their power/capacity to make a difference?

Others opened up new areas. For instance:

- What are the rewards?
- Is the concept diluted by having multiple champions?
- Who judges effectiveness?
- Can an organisation be a gestalt champion?
- What would diffuse championship look like?
- What burdens do champions carry?
- How big a role does passion play and what extinguishes or fuels it?

We believe that it is good research practice to give the interviewees an opportunity to influence how we undertake the research: this is to reduce the likelihood that our or our clients', framing of the project will over determine the outcomes and so suppress possible new insights. So we have done what we can to explore their perspectives where possible, while respecting HCC's own needs as the client for this project.

1.3 Particular difficulties in working on climate change

No-one can unequivocally claim expertise in leading behaviour change in the field of climate change or other related sustainability challenges. This is because even in the face of millions of initiatives, local and global, the problem is getting worse not better.

Many of the champions or change agents we interviewed experienced feelings of despair at the futility and puniness of their greatest efforts. We sometimes find that this sense of failure dilutes appreciation of what a champion has achieved.

This research can help, therefore, by making more explicit the difference in championing this issue as opposed to any other, and by paying tribute to the qualities of leadership it requires. We might then ask, in reference to 1.2., how such qualities can be recognised, valued and nurtured, particularly if they are habitually ignored by or, worse, discouraged in organisations.

2. Methodology

This research has allowed for more collaboration and participation than might more commonly be expected. This is because we see research as a learning process which ideally encourages inquiry, action and reflection among all participants.

The bulk of the process consisted of 20 in depth (30' to 120') conversations/interviews with individuals selected on criteria relevant to the kinds of questions we and they wanted to explore. For instance, having identified the importance of understanding more about a champion's support needs, two of the interviews were with individuals who played a role in supporting champions.

As discussed in §4, one of the key alternatives to the use of 'formal' champions is the use of informal ones, who might be either in a champion role because of their job role or who might have a less obvious connection to the issues.

We therefore spoke to people who could be seen as fitting into three broad categories:

Formal champions were the councillors who accepted the official title of champion, one of climate change, one of the environment and one of recycling. (3 interviews)

Informal champions: visible were those for whom climate change, or sustainability more generally, would be expected to be, or clearly was, part of their organisational mandate. (12 interviews)

Informal champions: less visible. Those whose role did not explicitly require any championing of climate change or sustainability and yet were choosing to make this part of their remit. (4 interviews)

The purpose of talking to people across these three divisions was to understand more about the different enablers and constraints to change that might arise in each situation. We also assumed that we would find different support needs in each group.

From the outset we recognised that the commissioners of this research, Christine Seaward and Doogie Black were with our own consultants (Susan Ballard, Mike Zeidler and David Ballard) each a champion of sustainability in his or her own right and that this might be material to the way we approached the research and to its outcomes.

At the very least it made it possible for us to include our own reflections and experiences as contributions to it. We made this an explicit part of the research by carrying out a piece of structured reflective writing in response to some questions about our own championship. Some of the learning from this mini cycle of inquiry was able to inform interviews with other "champions"

We have also drawn on current theories and models of leadership from literature which we include as a mini review in Appendix A. We have been able to test some of our

assumptions against these theories and in some cases have used them to provide an illuminating framework for our analysis and conclusions.

3. Key informing theories

To help familiarise readers with the key concepts to which we keep referring, we offer a quick introduction to ideas or models which have proved particularly helpful or relevant as a framework for our analysis. The terminology associated with these theories is used as a lexicon in this report to help the sense-making process. Where appropriate, theories are explained at greater length in Appendix A, and/or a reference for further reading is given.

3.1 The vital importance of context

On climate change, emissions need to fall by 60% worldwide by 2050 for atmospheric carbon dioxide to stabilise even at twice the top of the long run range.¹ This means that, no matter how successful a project might have been in isolation, there is always more that needs to be done. Inevitably, sooner or later, an initiative will run up against limiting factors in the wider context of the project or organisation.

Such contextual factors might be wider political, economic, social, technical, legal or environmental constraints (PESTLE). For instance, no matter how good a new energy efficient product might be, there might be little room for progress if there is not a trained group of installers, still less if there are few routes to providing necessary training.

Contextual factors might also include personal constraints including cognitive or cultural ones – for instance lack of knowledge, language, contacts or skills, role boundaries, personal values or ways of thinking – and also group cultures or ways of behaving.

The need continually to look to the wider context is one of the factors that make change work on climate change intrinsically strategic. One definition of strategy is, ‘the difference that makes a difference.’ Applied to climate change this usually means looking significantly to influence constraining contextual factors wherever possible. More on this is given in ESPACE report, “How can local authorities stimulate and support behavioural change in response to climate change?” §3.

In this paper it will become clear that the champions from whom we heard had often developed the capability to tackle complex contextual issues. However, since it is very hard for an individual to work on contextual factors unaided, there is a powerful role that can be played by enabling organisations such as local authorities.

3.2 Processes of change for sustainable development

Contextual factors that relate to sustainable development challenges such as climate change can seem intractable, so how can they be addressed? In a paper published in June 2005, which draws together strands from many different researchers, David Ballard has identified three conditions as needing to be addressed in parallel. These are:

¹ RCEP. (2000). Energy - The Changing Climate. London: Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution.

- 1) **'Awareness'** of what is happening and of what is required. Such awareness can be at various levels. Almost every adult has 'brand recognition' type awareness of an issue such as climate change. Relatively few, however, are aware of its urgency and scale. Fewer still have adequate awareness of the systemic structure of the issue: of the delays, of when windows of opportunity open up, of the contextual barriers that need to be overcome. Despite awareness being required, however, research overwhelmingly shows that it is a poor way into the issues: pushing information at people seems to reinforce resistance to awareness.
- 2) **'Agency'**, or the ability to find a response that seems personally meaningful in the face of what can often seem to be immense and intractable issues, has been shown to be vital in unlocking the door to awareness. To manage this normally requires that the key contextual factors in §3.1 above are brought into play.
- 3) **'Association'** with other people in groups and networks has also been shown to be crucial in encouraging people to act on sustainability issues – indeed it may prove to be the most important factor. This is partly because of a 'weight watchers' effect, with pro-environmental behaviour being reinforced and normalised, and partly because groups offer 'agency'. Developing 'agency' on key contextual issues often requires extending association to new people and groups.

It is necessary to develop these in parallel, at least initially in small steps. For instance, low awareness prevents agency being recognised and also prevents groups working effectively on the issue to develop association. Each of the three A's is necessary but insufficient in isolation, which means that any change programme needs to work across all three. Doing so successfully requires a key process, that of:

- 4) **'Action and reflection'**. Acting (even for an entirely different reason such as to save money) gives greater capacity for awareness. It is also the point of the other three conditions: actions speak louder than words. The evidence suggests that the move from action to awareness is far more common than vice versa. Reflection is also needed to identify contextual blocks to change and therefore to discovering agency; it is also needed to prevent association processes in groups from bogging down (which they often do). To a leader, reflection helps identify where a process is getting stuck and how it might unstick again. It opens up the gateway to the higher levels of strategy, where limiting assumptions are identified and challenged (see ESPACE report, "How can local authorities stimulate and support behavioural change in response to climate change?" Appendix D, §7).

Addressing all four of these 'A's' in parallel is not easy but will reliably enable changes in some, if not all, participants. There will often be a sudden shift in awareness at some stage – often after about six months. There may be some emotional disturbance at this time, but many people may reorient their priorities very significantly (and may express a wish to become champions themselves). Following this, faster progress will usually be possible, but the search for agency in particular usually remains a lengthy one.

Our ESPACE research suggests that such a journey is rarely made without the active involvement of a champion of some description – indeed we did not identify a single case where a champion had not been involved.

In the context of this research, it was clear that awareness of the scale and urgency of climate change was at a much higher level among most champions than for the general population. Although it was hard for us to test this, our impression was that awareness of systemic structure was also unusually high. Certainly, the majority of champions demonstrated that they had developed their own routes to agency. We return to their ‘association’ skills below: while there are examples of these being strong, we suspect that much more might be possible. Similarly, while raising no doubt about these champions’ ability to act, and of their capacity for reflection, we suggest further development could still be of value.

3.3 Tempered radicals

People who have developed significant awareness of issues such as climate change still need to earn a living and to find a route to agency. To become a “tempered radical” is one strategy for balancing these needs. The term was coined by researchers Debra Meyerson and Maureen Scully, by which they meant:

“Individuals who identify with and are committed to their organisations and also to a cause, community or ideology that is fundamentally different from, and possibly at odds with the dominant culture of their organization.” (Organization Science 6(5) 1995)

Many people in change roles within organisations have been inspired by their research. It seemed possible to us that it might be relevant to ‘champions’ working on a ‘cause’ such as climate change in large organisations. While there may be less conflict between the interests of the organisation and those of the wider environment in local government than in some commercial organisations, local government has many other competing objectives besides responding to climate change. We felt that the concept would be worth exploring, particularly where individuals were championing sustainability or climate change alongside a broader and perhaps more widely acknowledged remit, or perhaps even without their championship being more widely recognised.

More detail on the ‘tempered radical’ concept can be found in Appendix A §5.

We found that the tempered radical idea did make sense for the majority of people we interviewed, but that there are important differences between work in this arena (climate change) and on other issues. We return to these, particularly in §5.

3.4 Sub-personalities

In working as a ‘tempered radical’ it is necessary choicefully to use different aspects of the personality, for instance: the logical critic, the negotiator, the resister, the inspiring

leader. Roberto Assagioli, the founding father of psychosynthesis², which has become known as a psychology of will, used the term sub-personalities to describe such different facets of personality that make up a single autonomous self.

Assagioli explains sub-personalities initially in terms of the different roles that each of us plays in life. Some people identify themselves more with a particular role (parent, sibling, boss, coach, and so on) than another. Mostly people slip in and out of their different roles without being aware that they are doing so even when they behave very differently with different traits and attitudes in each role. However, unless an individual is suffering from multiple personality disorder, a thin thread of memory connects the different selves and one can apply enough discernment to identify and disidentify with them.

Many people are ruled by sub-personalities and so lack the capacity to change behaviour to suit the situation. Assagioli, however, recognized that with awareness of his or her different sub-personalities, instead of being ruled by them, an individual can choose how to behave, deploying aspects of him- or herself most appropriate to context and purpose. This is a process in which notions of the self expand in a process that some would see as ‘spiritual’, including greater personal integrity and a greater sense of one’s higher purpose.

Owning different parts of oneself, such as the “boy racer” or the “shopaholic” and understanding why they might have come into prominence encourages people to see their own role in damaging the environment. This is helpful for those who tend to blame others for the problem. Realising that we perhaps all have a less conscientious “shadow” self is a step towards working with some of the underlying psychological and emotional causes of climate change. We believe this is helpful in working more tolerantly with other people.

Although less conscious of this last point, many champions were aware of playing different roles purposefully. Some identified the ability to do so as an important quality in their work which involves relating to and communicating with many different constituencies. An interesting question arose from this awareness: how much of oneself is one able to bring into the workplace? This had wider implications for where (home, work, wider community) one practised pro-environmental behaviour and how each of us would define the relationship between the personal and the political.

3.5 Human developmental theory

Assagioli’s sub-personalities theory suggests that the route to becoming a tempered radical is a developmental journey. To lead the processes of change for sustainable development requires other capacities that develop over the course of a life, for instance, the capacity for strategic thinking (to address contextual issues), to face and handle difficult emotions, to help others learn, inter al.

² Assagioli, R; 1993, Psychosynthesis: The definitive guide to the principles and techniques of Psychosynthesis, Thorsons, London.

Bill Torbert, in work which is consistent with that of many other researchers, has identified how such aspects of managers' capacity develop in predictable ways over the course of a career. While development is not guaranteed (and perhaps the majority of people do not develop to their potential), the broad shape of the competencies and qualities that develop at each successive stage can be identified. This is relevant to the work of champions because some of the qualities that develop in this way include a) the capacity to deal with issues that extend over lengthy periods of time and large geographical areas, b) the capacity to work successfully with strategic change (and to help others do so) and c) the capacity to form a view that is less conditioned by prevailing ideas of 'normal', while also relating to the mainstream by using multiple languages, etc. All of these qualities, and more covered by his theories, are highly relevant to work on climate change.

According to this theory, the majority of people in organisations have not yet reached a developmental level at which effective work as a champion can begin (for pen portraits and approximate percentages, see Appendix A §4) However, people acting from three stages of maturity encountered in organisational life do have (to an increasing degree) the qualities required to act as effective champions. These three are the 'achiever', the 'individualist' and the 'strategist'.

The achiever

An achiever is a manager who has learned to bring together groups of people with relatively different outlooks and skills and can get them to work together effectively towards a shared goal. This makes them effective at leading cross organisational projects. An achiever has made the transition from leading a discipline (e.g. finance) towards effective general management. About 35% of managers operate at this level.

Achievers are strong at initiating and receiving feedback from people with whom they work (colleagues, customers, suppliers, etc), whether or not they share the same background. However, because they still tend to operate within one frame of reference (e.g. the 'bottom line' or 'customer service') they are limited in their capacity to 'think outside the box' and to relate effectively to people who come from very different sets of assumptions. This severely limits their capacity to lead transformational change. It implies that, while they can lead projects, they need to have the scope of the project (or their role) defined to a significant extent.

Despite this lack of comfort with transformational change, having a significant achiever population is a very important enabler of change and most organisations (whether public or private sector) see developing the number of 'achiever' managers as a major developmental focus. This is certainly the case in HCC, where we identified that the (we understand) well-regarded 'Leading for Success' programme is targeted at developing this capacity.

The individualist

To become an 'achiever' is often seen as the pinnacle of management development but perhaps 15% go beyond this point to what is known as the 'post-conventional' stages. As

the first of these, the 'individualist' begins to internalise that it is possible for different people to see the same situation through many radically different lenses at the same time with membership of groups, or other factors, conditioning how people see things and even what they want. Individualists become very interested in understanding and 'deconstructing' their own views and those of people around them. They become fascinated by what motivates them and are often preoccupied with a search for meaning in their lives. If this is not available in their everyday work, they will often withdraw somewhat, focusing on their own particular interests.

Very often individualists may leave the organizational world altogether, perhaps to retrain in a new career closer to their hearts. In this, we suspect that they are sometimes helped on their way by achiever-dominated organisations who feel threatened, or irritated, by people at this stage (often in mid life) not seeing the same things as important any longer.

When an individualist withdraws it is a shame, for he or she has much to offer. No longer taking the status quo for granted, radically new ways of seeing things can emerge. When involved in work that they see as relevant, they often become very inspiring to others. On the other hand, managing a group of individualists can be like 'herding cats': they can be very resistant to taking (or even giving) direction.

In some ways a person operating from the individualist stage would seem to be the ideal climate change champion. He or she has learned to operate outside organizational cultures and (in beginning to look for work with a higher purpose) may be strongly attracted to work on climate change. Becoming a champion can give them an opportunity to look for what inspires them and to practise the skills that they will need in doing that work. On the other hand, he or she will not yet have fully integrated these skills and is likely to benefit from support (though it is a rare organisation that has developed appropriate ways of offering this).

The strategist

The highest level of managerial development regularly encountered in organisations is the 'strategist', comprising perhaps around 2.5% of middle and junior managers and only around 14% even of the most senior executives in major organizations. The strategist's sense of higher purpose, of the meaning in their work, has become very strong. This allows people at this stage to look creatively for alternative ways to fulfil this in their working lives, and so (for the first time) to become fluent in working with strategic change. They become capable of both leading change processes and in helping others develop the capacity to do so as well.

Strategist managers have learned to be open to the potential of the situation, to the ways in which the different perspectives of various stakeholders can be combined. They are continually looking for an appropriate frame of reference for the situation. They will be open to feedback from any source, whether clearly linked to their purpose or not. They constantly look to draw people together to investigate difficult and challenging issues.

We suggest that the strategist is the first stage to have fully developed the capacity to act as a ‘tempered radical’ (though they may also choose alternative strategies). They will not require an organisational ‘mandate’ to act as a change agent but will be relatively self-sufficient.

We found that these ideas were extremely helpful in understanding how champions work. Clearly we had neither the time, nor the remit, nor indeed the permission, to look in detail at the stages various people seemed to be operating from. Nonetheless, it seemed clear to us that most of the people to whom we spoke were at least acting from the categories described (i.e. above the organisational centre of gravity), with an unusually high proportion demonstrating clear signs of strategist-level behaviours and language.³

³ One of the consulting team has over a decade of familiarity with and use of these concepts and has been accredited to use them in work with individual managers.

Part 2: Exploring the questions

4. Different ways of defining & using championship

4.1 General use of the term 'champion'

In general usage, what it means to be a champion is not defined by a set of specific behaviours but tends to imply different types of advocacy ranging from sponsorship to fighting for a cause. A quick Google search on the word champion produces diverse illustrations of how the word is used:

- New Zealand Save the Children invites people to become Children Champion Sponsors.
- Gay Rights Organisation, “Stonewall” asks whether your employer is a Diversity champion.
- President George Bush hailed the late Pope John Paul II as a champion of freedom.
- An organisation rather than an individual can be described as a champion, as for example, “Natural England”, the new agency whose purpose is described as being to champion the countryside.
- Sporting references invariably used the word champion to mean winner, particularly of a major event such as the Olympics or the Tour de France rather than smaller and less significant events.

In the context of climate change, we see the term 'champion' as meaning to advocate or promote a cause, particularly a worthy one which deserves more than ordinary attention.

Besides these Google references, a 'champion' can also mean someone who takes on a fight on behalf of someone else whether an army or nation (as in David vs. Goliath) or a beautiful woman (as in Lancelot and Guinevere).

In this sense, to be a champion might risk letting others off participation in the endeavour. This is a sense that was strongly resisted by our interviewees, as we shall see below.

4.2 Champions & work on climate change

In our research for the ESPACE project, we quickly identified that a champion-like role had been filled by at least one person in every one of the case studies that we studied. In one case, that of the end of the slave trade in the UK, perhaps more similar in scale and duration to climate change than any other initiative, several different people played this role in a variety of very different ways over the years. (See ESPACE report, “How can local authorities stimulate and support behavioural change in response to climate change?” Appendix E, §12)

Why a champion-like role is required can be understood with reference to the process of change for sustainable development described in §3.2 above. Most people are locked into a cycle of low awareness and perceived low agency. Far from supportive association, most social groups militate against serious action and reflection on the issues. In so far as there is action, it is trivial, and there is little if any serious reflection. The journey towards correcting this is fairly lengthy and can be troubling. Finding 'agency' is crucial in enabling people to engage, but this requires much higher levels of awareness than are held by the general population. Champions who have learned to carry such awareness can play a vital role in helping others to develop their own agency and other capacities.

4.3 Champions in organisations

4.3.1 Champions in local Government

In Local Government, a champion role is helpful where there are no portfolio holders. The allocation of these specialist remits is often dictated by the concerns of central government. So, for instance, when Heritage or E-democracy becomes a cause célèbre someone is often designated as a champion for these briefs at local and/or regional level.

On one level such champions can contribute to measurable cost benefits, such as a decrease in taxable waste to landfill if a recycling champion is effective. At another level, the visibility of an inspiring and high calibre champion could be generating change of a different order of magnitude. For example, Kennet's recycling champion, as well as meeting recycling targets, is starting to use his positional power to build a peer community of those trying to reduce their energy consumption.

A local government championship strategy has the potential to develop a cadre of community leaders who can inspire and lead others to make significant behavioural changes.

4.3.2 Champions in HCC

Although Hampshire County Council has appointed a climate change champion, whom we interviewed, and a renewable energy champion, our clients were not able to identify any other formal champions. Since, unlike some other authorities and organisations, HCC has not developed a fully fledged formal champion programme, there is an opportunity to assess how and whether such a programme might best serve its needs. This report is a contribution to a review of the options.

We had good feedback from several other informal champions both inside and outside HCC on one of the formal champions that they had met.

4.3.3 Champions in the environmental domain

The term, champion is taking on the meaning of community or peer group leader for programmes of successful action. Visible achievement becomes part of the definition. For

instance, The Waste and Recycling Action programme (WRAP) encourages Recycling champions from any sector to contribute their stories on its Recycle Now website. Highlighting successful behaviour change in this way is implicitly intended to generate more change by inspiring others to greater efforts. Online stories illustrate what is possible. (http://www.recyclenow.com/recycling_champions/index.html)

Another connotation of champion terminology in the environmental context is “training”. This idea that rather like champion athletes, environmental champions can benefit from good coaching pervades environmental change programmes.

In the three examples provided in Appendix C, the concept of championing, whether it is called championing or ambassadorship, or carbon watching, is defined by mobilising others to take mitigating action on climate change. This is “achiever” orientated behaviour in Torbert’s terms (See §3.5 and Appendix A §4).

The model of formal championship most commonly in use in the environmental context tends to be targeted at a particular type of leader (Torbert’s “achiever”) who will persuade others to do particular things (reduce energy consumption) through defined actions (replace high energy light bulbs) usually with measurable outcomes (electricity bill goes down). In HCC and other local authorities the champion model is evolving to offer even more agency and developmental opportunities.

4.4 How do champions see themselves?

Many of the people identified as champions for this research were not happy with the label. This was not surprising as it had already been challenged by Gwen Prince in Llanidloes in ABA’s work on behaviour change for the ESPACE project (Case Study: ESPACE Appendix E §8). She objected to the implication of a single leader charismatically attracting followers. The alternative model she proposed was distributed leadership; described metaphorically as seeds which generate new growth.

Only a quarter of those we interviewed were comfortable with the term and then only if it was clearly defined in a particular context. Most felt uneasy about the concept of a single champion for sustainability because,

“Unless everyone is a champion of sustainability it won’t happen.”

Interviewees offered alternative descriptions of themselves to represent their own kind of leadership more accurately. Examples were,

“Pioneer,” “bioneer,” “civic intrapreneur,” “animateur.”

We could not within a single round of interviews arrive at a definition of leadership that embraced the different perspectives that these terms hint at. However, by focusing on qualities and skills described by our interviewees as important for championship we

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achieve more clarity about the kinds of behaviours that characterize change agents, whatever term is used to describe them.

We have retained the term champion for convenience and used it to refer not only to the formally appointed councillor champions, but also to those in the other categories of champion which we defined above. (§2)

There are many different ways of being a champion of climate change and different concepts of leadership. The primary concern about formally designating someone as a champion is of letting others off this responsibility. However, as a conduit for councillors' environmental passion, the champion role was widely applauded. We think it could be used more widely by Hampshire as a developmental role.

For instance, it could provide the opportunity for those acting from Torbert's "achiever" stage to make the transition to "individualist." Often a straightforward organisational role can inhibit this transition.

5. The relentless search for agency: what defines a champion

5.1 Finding Agency

Formal champions might have a mandate to take action; visible but informal champions might be expected to take action within the boundaries defined by their role; invisible champions are commonly those not tasked with bringing about change in their organisations.

But what makes such a person a champion – or not? After all, just because a person has the official title of a champion doesn't mean that he or she is perceived, or behaves, as such.

One thing above all others characterised champions with high awareness of climate change: their relentless search for 'agency' – to find meaningful ways of responding to the crisis. This is in contrast to people who find themselves as simply fulfilling the expectations of a role. While the latter will accept a barrier as a given, the true champion will look to see if there is a way around it or – better still – to remove it altogether so that others will also be more empowered (or obligated) to act.

Champions ask questions like, If I am to be an agent for change, what power do I have in any given role or context or at a particular moment in time? How might I increase that power? In this respect, champions (of all types) show the qualities of a leader as defined by John Adair: '*Change throws up a need for leaders; leaders bring about change.*' Similarly, Warren Bennis sees the leader as challenging the status quo, as innovating. Such qualities do not reside in a position, but in the person who fills it. (Appendix A §2)

One champion described this behaviour in terms of choosing, as an artist might do, from a palette of strategies. He described this even more graphically,

"If you were a flea on the bum of a rhino, when the rhino sits down if you are clever you crawl into a fold of skin, you could hop off, or you could become a parasite and burrow into the skin and do it differently."

In our view, many people in organisations avoid asking such questions for fear of the change or the added responsibilities that might result. Many others resist finding out about their agency because they assume that it is fixed by role or context, or beliefs about themselves. These people fail to become champions. What distinguishes a champion's behaviour is a growing awareness of his or her own power to make a difference. We found evidence of the steps a champion took purposefully to increase his or her agency.

Very often, in our experience, individuals in positions with the greatest potential agency are not exercising it and probably do not even recognise it. This insight is important when we come to consider how to select and deploy champions.

Impatience with small wins strategies

One common ‘tempered radical’ approach to developing agency particularly for those who have little organisational power, or who do not want to risk losing the power and position they have reached, is to pursue a “small wins” strategy. (Appendix A §5) This is the use of small scale interventions which do not attract much attention: they do not rock the organisational boat so much that the tempered radical is tossed out.

Sustainability champions however, are usually and often painfully aware of the need for whole system change. For them, small wins, confined to a single organisation, however gratifying, do not address the bigger need for whole scale social transformation.

The evidence we found suggested that for climate change champions to feel comfortable, they had to find a way to connect small wins to the bigger picture. As one said,

“Champions must be committed and determined to see things through and able to change mindsets with clear communication about the benefits of the changes. If big changes aren’t possible, they need to set out a strategy of small achievable goals that relate to the long view.”

Often we found examples of champions using small wins within a much more ambitious and long-term strategy. One for instance called small scale change projects, “pilots” as he judged that no-one minded if an experiment went wrong. He also claimed to work incrementally so that any mistakes could be reversed more easily.

Another picked battles carefully, choosing those that there was energy for and where a timely intervention in a project specification could make a big difference both for successful change in that case and by setting a precedent for future projects.

In several instances it was implied that small actions which did not draw attention to the champion in the moment, over time could accumulate into wider change before anyone fully appreciated that it was happening. The normalisation of decisions or procedures which would contribute to sustainable ways of doing things did not therefore appear to be as risky or threatening in these cases.

What came across strongly was a sense that behind many large-scale change processes were many small steps over a long period of time. Although these did not necessarily happen by design, champions had a clearer sense than many of their guiding role or contribution to them. Yet why was it that some things happened and others didn’t?

Building agency through creative collaboration

One champion described the ease and speed by which one action he had been leading harnessed collective energy, whereas he was aware of others that met with considerably more resistance.

He agreed that Hampshire County Council's recent success in partnering the building of a new nursing home for elderly people was a good example of what could be achieved when collective energy has somehow been tapped.

Hawthorne Court Nursing Home: The result of creative collaboration

A partnership approach to solving the problem of elderly people occupying hospital beds because there is nowhere else for them to go, was pioneered by Hampshire County Council's Social Services Director and the Chief Executive of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority.

Their partnership extended to further collaboration with seven local Primary Health Care Trusts and resulted in the building of Hawthorne Court Nursing Home.

The home could be described as a template for addressing "bed-blocking" issues and represents a huge shift in the way care is provided and delivered.

Realising the vision of such a home was highlighted in a national newspaper as a remarkable achievement. It surely involved relationship building, the overcoming of legal obstacles, getting people together in meetings, changing the habitual approach, mediating between the different cultures found in the NHS and local government, and so on.

At any point resistance or an obstacle could have become insurmountable or beyond the energy of a single individual to overcome. It suggests therefore that Hawthorne Court could only have been achieved with the good will of those involved. In other words, enough people wanted it to happen, were committed to making it happen and were inspired by the vision of what was possible to put in the extra effort needed to see it through.

Another champion described the process of building a new organisation when his department had been all but demolished by budget cuts. He met up in pubs with a group of similarly placed peers across the region. Together they joined forces, decided what they wanted to do and bid for funds to create their own Agency.

Champions look for opportunities to work in partnerships which can provide more power, creativity and resources than working alone. They believe that the sum of the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. However, accessing this greater agency, in the first instance, requires them to work across role boundaries.

How champions reach beyond role boundaries

Several champions provided detailed examples of how they continuously reached out beyond the constraints of their given role to change the context (See §3.1.) The following anecdote provides a good illustration of what this means in practice:

Going the extra mile

Despite being told by planning consultants that it was impossible to develop a particular site with eco-housing, this champion drew up a scheme and got it approved in just two weeks. The same unsympathetic consultants fortuitously hired an eco-conscious design team with whom the champion liaised to get local builders on board. Other eco-builds nearby provided a precedent but in spite of all the green lights, the scheme did not happen. This was because the land owners wanted to maximise the capital value of the site. Having pushed as far as his role would allow, the champion decided that the only way to determine building standards was to own the land.

More recently, he has been involved with a social enterprise co-op which bought former industrial land and built a village proving that it was possible to create jobs and build ultra low energy housing profitably.

Another example was provided by Charlie Bower (Appendix B §2 and Box §5.2) who was behind the creation of the Bulmer's Foundation. In both these cases a single champion was acting in response to constraints. In order to overcome barriers to his mission, he has had to extend the boundary of his own agency to include others. This is what David Ballard describes as "association" in the 4 A's model of conditions needed for change in the context of sustainability. (See § 3.2)

We think that the mobilisation of collective energy, such as exemplified by the Hawthorne Court example, above, requires a quality of association that was not adequately defined in the interviews. You can bring people, or even champions together, as many climate change gatherings and conferences do, but something more is needed if they are to share a vision and work together with a common purpose.

5.2 How different types of champion develop agency

The overall challenge that all three categories of champion have in common is to find and extend their capacity for "agency" (§3.2 and Appendix A §1). We noticed how agency can be constrained or enabled by the context and role in which a champion operates.

Formal Champions

The challenge for formal champions is to act as an effective bridge between change needed at the level of the wider community: more people taking the bus, or recycling waste, and the support that needs to be provided for that change by the council: subsidising community transport schemes, providing kerbside recycling. Champions therefore have to straddle the two domains of community and council, gaining credibility and influence and being seen as effective in both.

In this sense, the formal champion potentially provides agency for others in two directions: for the wider community, he or she identifies how they can be helped to take action and goes on to stimulate the provision of such help; in addition the champion can potentially provide support in ‘scaling up’ local initiatives. For the host institution, the champion provides a way of engaging the support of the wider community.

To meet this challenge one champion talked about consciously putting on and taking off different hats. He found himself sometimes having to clarify whether he was speaking as party politician, champion or eco-warrior! His experience had alerted him to the need to manage the incongruities that sometimes arose from the different standpoints that these positions or hats represented.

Visible informal champions

Our ESPACE report (§5) identified the strategically vital role that is potentially available to a local authority. We are surely not alone in having spotted this, which may explain why we found so many champions in local government roles.

Champions with an environmental remit often took on ambitious challenges of a strategic nature to harness their organisation’s power as an agent of change, in other words to develop a champion organisation. This can be a particularly successful strategy for tackling context constraints as in the following example:

The Bulmer’s Foundation

Bulmer’s former Head of Sustainability, Charlie Bower (Appendix B §2) used his positional power both to increase the company’s profitability and to create a fundamental shift in organisational values. The company started to act beyond the typical constraints of a profit-led business. The evidence of Charlie’s effectiveness is in the creation of the Bulmer’s Foundation, which secured huge funding for sustainability programmes in education, land use, health and economic development and which is now working closely with Herefordshire County Council and the local strategic partnership, the Herefordshire Partnership. (For more on their activities see ESPACE report “How can local authorities stimulate and support behavioural change in response to climate change?” Appendix E §3)

We found evidence that champions in public service organisations were also trying to build their organisation’s capacity for championship. One, for instance, had moved from a consultancy role to work in local government where he had pursued a strategy to embed sustainability into performance management. This had provided the excuse to talk to people across the whole organisation and a platform from which to identify those who were ready to help, indifferent, or opposed to his ideas.

In Hampshire County Council we found that strategic champions have variously succeeded in building support at the highest levels of corporate management for business plans and commitments which embrace sustainability policies.

Champions in this group are straddling the domains of organisation and wider community perhaps even more systemically. They have to handle the politics and dynamics inside the organisation, at departmental level and across boundaries with other departments, as well as carrying the organisation with them in its influence outside, both on the council tax payers it serves and within partnerships built at other levels, with Europe, with the Region and with national Government.

Less Visible Informal champions

The agency available to a climate champion in a less visible position (perhaps in another department altogether) is less clear cut. It may be very great – for instance if a large capital project is being planned, with a consequent significant opportunity to influence design to address mitigation and / or adaptation agendas. At other times, the potential may be much lower. The agency available not only varies greatly, but may only be available for a short period – for instance when the choice of architect is being made on a construction project.

This means that such a champion needs to be able to ‘hold’ his or her awareness, to recognise opportunities and then be ready to act quickly. This path may not be available to a more visible champion, since the necessary ‘association’ with the project team may not be available.

A typical challenge faced by a champion of this type might be how to get a rainwater harvesting system or a turf roof accepted as an integral part of a new build. The challenge is in overcoming all the obstacles, for example: adequately completing a risk assessment in response to health and safety legislation covering water butts in public places, having enough expertise to recommend something credible, budgetary constraints, intervening at the appropriate point in the specification process, being able to influence the person who can make the decision to go ahead with the idea.

In these instances the challenge is not obviously about changing a value system, or the culture of a department, or the wider organisation. What often holds things in check is simply habitual behaviour. The bewildering amount of complex choices may lead an individual to take the easy familiar option, particularly if it meets a cost-effectiveness criterion, rather than to expend extra time and energy on what may seem like a lost cause. The challenge is to navigate and encourage the multiple efforts and behavioural changes that are needed even for quite small concrete gains in sustainable infrastructure. The inner challenge is to find the resilience to keep going even when there seems to be no tangible reward in doing so.

5.3 Realising potential agency through an ecosystem of champions

The discussion above shows the different roles played by different types of champion. The visible informal champions could use their positional power and remit to build whole organisational capacity for championship. Formal champions can bring together people in formal processes. Less visible informal champions can unlock the door to major agency in projects. While achieving the kind of big gains in behavioural change that are needed

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is a huge challenge for champions working alone, there are great benefits in working in association with each other.

As the different qualities enabled by their different roles became apparent, we began to see exciting opportunities for an organisation to bring different types of champion together to participate in larger scale processes. In such a way, we began to appreciate what one of our interlocutors might have meant by an organisation acting as a 'gestalt champion'.

6. Recognising and assessing champions

6.1 Why do Champions do what they do?

6.1.1 Passion: Emotional connection with the work

When prompted, and often without prompting, all 19 of our champion interviewees expressed something about the importance of an emotional connection with their work:

“My passion keeps burning...it engages me. Keeps me going;” “If you haven’t got what you want to lead in, go home and find the thing you do get passionate about”

This connects with what American leadership theorist Warren Bennis writes about leaders: *‘Leaders must love what they do, and love doing it. At least as important, they must be able to make this passion as vivid to others as to themselves.’* (Appendix A §2).

Although most interviewees rated passion high up their list of qualities vital for championship, four people sounded notes of caution about uncontrolled passion. We could identify no outstanding difference in the range of emotions expressed by any of the three categories of champion.

The palette of emotions

So-called negative feelings: anger, frustration and impatience seemed commonly to arise for champions when they were in touch with “the bigger picture” but were obstructed by those who weren’t:

“I kept meeting chief executives who knew the issues but did nothing about them;” “A fraction of the cost of the Iraq war could have gone on home insulation.”

Noticeably those who in some part of the interview had described feeling angry were also those who identified issues of social injustice as a motivating force in their work:

“Money should be redistributed more sustainably. If you solve a social problem you solve an environmental problem. You have to tackle more than the immediate agenda”

They were most likely to be passionate about continuing levels of deprivation and poverty, the global inequality of the rich polluting, the poor being more impacted. In these instances there was also evidence to suggest that it was moral outrage that kept “champions” moving on rather than being crushed by forces opposed to their purpose:

“When we look back it’ll be deemed immoral;” “Language that is comfortable now, will become uncomfortable in the face of appropriate pressure.”

Moral outrage as a driving force is documented in the Slave Trade Case Study which is included in the ESPACE Behavioural Change Project Report, “How can local authorities

stimulate and support behavioural change in response to climate change?” Appendix E, §12.

We also noticed just how frustrating it is for champions with what amounts to a strong vision for the common good when that vision is not shared more widely. The feelings of loneliness and isolation that commonly arise from that realisation may not be far from the surface. Kate Moore (Appendix B §1) described a client who had burst into tears when asked whether she felt lonely. She also recognised how pained she can feel herself,

“When someone attacks what you stand for it feels personal. It is so hurtful you can lash out like a wounded animal totally inappropriately.”

Despair and gloom sometimes arose during the interviews when we touched on issues of scale or how little even the greatest efforts achieved,

“Rewards are overshadowed by helplessness and inevitability. There are not many rewards; there is no outcome that is immediately on the horizon where you can affect change substantially”

In most cases the interviews moved quickly on from hints of grief at the loss of something precious, *“You walk for miles now and never see a butterfly”* whereas the written mini-inquiry was perhaps a more appropriate means for this emotion to be expressed,

“I feel massive grief. When I think of my children, of how the world might be in the future, I can become overwhelmed with it.”

On the other side of the coin, love and joy were also evoked for many around the creative challenges, opportunity to create a future more fulfilling for human potential, and empowerment that sustainable development presented,

“I have freedom and flexibility in my role to get involved in new projects. I can revisit my passion of twenty years ago”; “I run out of hours in the day, or I could move mountains”; “I’ve learnt more in the last year and a half than I’ve ever done... what a waste of life not to care about what you do.”

Emotional range, or roller-coaster?

A duality of emotional experience which could be described as a rollercoaster was a common experience, *“Emotionally some times I feel uplifted and inspired and other times I feel overwhelmed and depressed.”*

In her role supporting other champions, Kate Moore noticed when a client was “crushed” and then would “bounce back.”

What few people outside the sustainability field seem to have grasped is that any other issue that awakens strong emotions: racism, gender bias, cruelty to animals, disparities in

health services, torture, terrorism, is eclipsed in priority by the urgency of climate change:

“Child labour can go on for a million years, but climate change can’t be tolerated for 100;” “It’s a show-stopper;” “If it takes a disaster to happen before people take it seriously, then it’s too late.”

Consequently, it would not be surprising if the emotional charge around climate change were correspondingly more intense.

Confronting the feelings of fear and despair which this awareness provokes can be incapacitating, yet, unlike many citizens, champions do not fall back on the defences of denial or indifference. They remain true to their convictions. If anything, their activities are fuelled by the so-called “negative” emotions. In the face of despair they do not give up for long, but look for ways to reconnect with the creativity needed to sustain them for the next cycle of action.

A SWOT analysis of passion

Our interviewees were in no doubt about how passion is a **strength**

“Meeting with people who have passion, vision and energy is a shot in the arm”

Two themes were continually corroborated:

- 1) Passion keeps us going, and if you’re in for the long haul something has to sustain you.
- 2) Passion is an infectious energy. It inspires others and we are inspired by it.

However, strength of passion was occasionally seen as a **weakness**. Rather like electrically charged particles, passion has both the power to attract and to repel. In one set of circumstances unbridled enthusiasm can reawaken energy in others, in another it can distance them:

“Passion can be corrosive. Some people say passion clouds objectivity, you’ve got to have sober non-hysterical statements of options, so you need to know when to use passion in a measured way”

Being able to differentiate between those with the capacity to respond to passion and those who feel more comfortable with logic is a skilled judgement that effective champions learn to make.

“I’ll swallow my passions and talk compliance, business reputation and employee morale”

The word “corrosive” applied to passion, as above, may relate as much to the effect passion can have on another as to its effect on oneself. In her study of environmental champions, (Appendix A §3) Louise Chawla found that 29% of those interviewed recognised the danger of burn-out and the need for “conserving oneself” Indeed, one of

our champions used a powerful image of a fire at his back to describe his passion. The environmental field is not the only domain in which we find individuals driven by a consuming passion.

The risk of burn-out is one that is well documented in the fields of health care and social work and in these areas as well as in hospice work the importance of adequate supervision is constantly emphasised.

Champions have an **opportunity** to use passion to overcome the huge amount of inertia caused by resistance to painful feelings around climate change if they find a way to awaken inspirational passion in others. The excitement of building a low carbon future is probably more likely to inspire such passion than prospects of doom.

However, the biggest **threat** identified by the interviews was of passion extinguished by continually repeating a message which no-one else seems able to hear,

“When no-one takes any notice even when I spend hours and hours extolling”; “passion can be extinguished by banging the same drum and getting nowhere.”

Passion through a developmental lens

Bill Torbert (§3.5 & Appendix A §4) identifies the role of emotions at different levels of managerial development. He argues that those characterised as “Expert,” the stage before “Achiever,” and the dominant organisational majority, would not have sufficient capacity to handle troubling emotions. This may explain why those who do show “negative” feelings in an “expert” organisational culture are commonly side-lined or ostracized, and why it is hard to persuade “experts” of the relevance of emotions to behavioural change.

“Speaking from the heart doesn’t often work in organisations”

An “expert” culture can limit a climate change champion’s effectiveness in catalyzing change. If troubling emotions are repressed, people can become locked-in to what we would describe as sub-optimal behaviour. An example of this is recycling plastic bottles without facing the possibility that this alone is failing to make much difference. Because we feel better doing something than nothing, it is easier to keep doing something rather than to face the painful feelings we described earlier.

If, as is often the case in our experience, an organisational culture has evolved which prevents any expression of the full palette of feelings this “stuckness” is reinforced.

The intensity of feelings and walking the tightrope between joy and despair may be characteristic of sustainability work. It seems unlikely that anyone would take on the scale of the challenge unless they were in touch with the high stakes of not doing so. In other words, most of our champions were more able than the average citizen to hold an awareness of the huge threat that something like climate change presents to our species, and how urgent it is to catalyse a meaningful response. Uniting those with a common

passion may result in the kind of creative collaboration that achieves bigger change.

6.1.2 Higher Purpose

There is strong evidence that authentic champions of sustainability are not doing things for egotistical reasons:

“I couldn’t care less that there are no financial rewards. Never having to question why you are doing what you are doing; there’s huge reward in caring about what you do. I never switch off, I live, breathe it and invest so much.”

Far from getting more money, kudos, or status, many would deliberately ignore these incentives in order to be more effective at what they did. Instead their motivations arose from a strongly felt connection or bond with something more than themselves, whether that was with other people, other species, or the transpersonal, which some might describe as Gaia, others as the spirit of the universe, or others who frame their spiritual experience in terms of religion, God:

*“The importance of climate change lies in its context as part of the web of life;”
“This is not a world of chemical reactions and physical relationships alone. I believe it’s a world of love and spirit too;” “I feel exhilarated when I am in touch with the natural world and its robust liberating exuberance;” “I pray a lot and try to do what I perceive in prayer”*

If champions revealed this side of themselves it tended to be in the context of their support needs when they explained what sustained them.

However, it still suggests that passion for many champions may well involve a spiritual dimension. In which case theirs is the particularly soul destroying task of sustaining this side of themselves in the face of a materialistic society driven to the over-consumption contributing to climate change:

“I don’t believe sustainable development is going to happen, at least not without major crises. I also don’t believe it can happen without a major reappraisal of the social values that have made consumerism possible; and I think this needs to start with a deeper exploration of what a human being really is.”

Being in touch with the “bigger than self” picture is inherent in references to the local and global context of their work,

“You have to be able to journey between the different points, local, regional, national, international, global. That’s about connecting felt local experience with imagining your place in the context of a water catchment and of global change.”

This ability to see systemic connections helps champions to hold to a higher purpose, even if others might view their work as demeaning or their role in the organisation as

lowly. Champions have more conviction that even if they are working on a small scale, they are contributing to something bigger. One of the respondents to Louise Chawla (Appendix A §3) expressed this succinctly,

“Whatever the outcome of particular ‘battles,’ the larger ‘war’ is a global reorientation of human relationships with nature, to which every action contributes.”

At least three of the most strategic champions we spoke to identified “the unsung emotional deprivation” at the root of the environmental crisis.

Reminding champions of their higher purpose and helping them to reconnect with it could be the kind of support they most need.

6.2 Assessing the effectiveness of champions

“I step out of bed and want to know we’ve moved in the right direction of our higher level strategy, I want to get us down to one Earth sustains us. Have I moved us closer to that?”

We knew from prior research for the ESPACE Behavioural Project that those leading climate change initiatives found it difficult to assess the effectiveness of their projects and some even expressed embarrassment about this. We therefore asked our interlocutors how they assessed effectiveness or were assessed themselves.

One respondent did not try to hide what an absurd question he thought it was,

“I don’t worry about being effective; it’s the sort of thing organisations worry about. Often you don’t know a lot of the time and that’s what part of keeping faith means. For me it is about finding places to work more easily..... I’ve had success completing policy documents but over the next five years will they make any difference on the ground? It takes five years for something to translate into practice.”

The difficulty of measuring effectiveness over the kind of long time scales that sustainability champions see themselves working to is obvious. Many of those we interviewed were only just being able to celebrate success after many failures during a developmental journey of many years, or even decades.

Sometimes it was impossible to know oneself if an intention to change something had resulted in an outcome:

“I’m realistic enough to know that only a small fraction of devices and ideas effect change and are taken up. It’s about taking risks and trying things.”

The respondent in this case could point in detail to examples of successful actions he had taken and to things that had failed to be taken up despite his best efforts. However, several individuals felt that the way they worked made their effectiveness largely invisible, so much so that success was often credited to someone else:

“You only get feedback from people who know and understand what you’ve done. If I influence the right people, seniority can make things happen ...I’d like to be seen to be making a difference.”

Champions often viewed the immeasurable, unattributable, anecdotal signs of change as more important indicators of effectiveness than things that could be counted. In Kate Moore’s case (Appendix B §1), although membership of the business club she runs is steadily increasing, what really counts for her is,

“When the links you’ve made with other people start to bring the issues to the surface; when eventually the door opens after you have been pushing against it; when you tap into a well of empathy when talking to somebody; when you see someone in an organisation doing things and we’ve been able to support them to roll something out.”

Kate also repeatedly referred to colleagues or clients with whom she worked in partnership on change initiatives, a reminder that an outcome can rarely be attributed to a single champion.

On the other hand, some champions also referred to the need to measure the outcomes of their strategies in concrete terms, such as carbon dioxide emissions reduced,

“I don’t just want a PR thing. I want to say x has reduced its consumption by x % and account for it.”

Effectiveness for most of our champions hinged on being able to survive long enough to achieve one’s goals, a typical tempered radical quality, and to be able to extend individual agency which was expressed variously as:

- Influencing those with more power to make changes
- Harnessing more resources to support one’s actions
- Inspiring others to pick up the baton
- Generating initiatives that spread and are sustained
- Building collaborative partnerships
- Reaching out of role boundaries
- Lifting strategic horizons

Some important change work that makes a real and lasting difference cannot be achieved and counted using the kinds of time scales we commonly employ for judging effectiveness. Nonetheless, champions express a need for external affirmation and feedback about the difference they are making.

Some of the most effective initiatives are taken collaboratively or by influencing someone with more power, in which case an individual champion’s contribution is hard to assess. People acting from a lower stage

of development would probably be unable to see how effective a champion was. Yet champions often have a well developed awareness of their own effectiveness or lack of it, which may be evidence of their ability to reflect on their actions.

6.3 Champions' qualities and skills

a) Fluency in different language styles

Of all the communication skills identified by champions, the tempered radical's ability to speak to multiple constituencies was the one most prized. Several champions said this had as much to do with the quality of listening as to speaking. They practised open-minded listening to understand other views and values. They could then discern how receptive an audience was before framing a message and pitching it accordingly,

"...the aim is to find the animating passion of an audience and talk to their priorities whilst avoiding technical detail. The object is to scatter the kind of ideas that will spark many initiatives across the organisation."

There was evidence too that this was effective in the change process,

"Success is measured by the spread of appropriate language and behaviour across the organisation, rather than the number of projects."

We came across examples where "tempered radicals" (§3.3 and Appendix A §5) were able to effect change by holding those in power to their own rhetoric. In some cases, such as HCC, the signing of declarations and agreements on climate change provides a language and a lever for action, were one needed.

b) Frame shifting

One champion told us that when a talk on sustainability was not going down too well, he was able to switch his framing by remembering that he was the son of an accountant. Speaking with that identity he wooed his audience with a "waste not, want not" message and talk of short term paybacks for sustainability investments.

The facility to shift frames of reference may be easier in those who have a more developed awareness of their sub-personalities (see §3.4).

The capacity to bring multiple identities into service without being caught in a particular persona and losing touch with a bigger self is one of the signs of a psychologically healthy individual. We suggest that this facility can be fundamental to finding greater agency and that it can be developed.

c) Simultaneously hot and cool headed

The ability to act choicefully applies as much to the balancing of passion and intellect as to orchestrating our different identities. As Meyerson and Scully say about tempered radicals, passion may fuel action and change while "coolness shapes the action and

change into legitimate and viable forms.” Charlie Bower, for instance, may have felt passionate about making sustainability a defining feature of Bulmers, but he still had to demonstrate how this could enhance the company’s profitability. (Appendix B §2)

When other champions have experienced the anger and pain of being obstructed in their best efforts, that energy is often eventually channelled into new problem solving approaches which skilfully bypass or remove the obstruction. For instance, two champions who both had their departments demolished, despite the pain of reorganisation, were able to build something better out of the wreckage.

d) Authenticity

Many champions stressed the need for authenticity, “walking the talk” which is a quality of leadership signalled as well by both Bennis and Adair (Appendix A §2). Warren Bennis sees the maintenance of integrity as fundamental to trust:

“Leaders cannot cut their conscience to fit the fashion. Integrity rests on self-knowledge, a steadfast devotion to honesty and to principle, and maturity.”

While vitally important, integrity also needs to be interpreted appropriately for work on climate change. Very few people are able to live sustainably in carbon terms at present while also actively working to promote change in society and the question as to how best to demonstrate integrity is perhaps harder than in other areas.

One champion coped with the possible label of hypocrite around this paradox by using his imperfections, “a high energy consuming house” as a means “to lead by example.” He believed he was in this game to learn alongside everyone else. His ability to hold up his own behaviour as wanting may be part of the key to his ability to connect with people. Other people may be less intimidated by someone like themselves who is trying to do his best, than by someone whose human weaknesses are not so visible in their eco-warrior lifestyle. By owning their vulnerability, champions include us all in the league.

This strategy would be seen as an act of leadership rather than management by UK-based John Adair (the world’s first professor in Leadership Studies). He sees managers as concerned with continuity and with telling us what we should do, but he sees leaders as more concerned with change and with helping us to see why we should embrace it. (Appendix A §2)

e) Credibility

Credibility is judged to be an essential quality of leadership but wherein does it reside? To a certain extent credibility came of the authenticity explored above, but it was also something that champions had earned over time as people came to trust them.

One champion explained how he had been so opposed to his organisation on a certain issue that he had taken them to court. The fact that he had risked his career in this way for what he believed in had raised his credibility for the rest of his career,

“If x says it’s o.k. it must be because he won’t stand for any environmental damage.”

As significantly, the fact that in spite of this action, he continued to work and thrive in the organisation raised its credibility as well.

Another champion explained how someone with whom he had “crossed swords” and who had taken his organisation to court ten years ago, now trusted him and conferred with him. Once again this shows the benefit that can arise when individuals and organisations have the capacity to engage with the conflicts that inevitably arise from major change.

Both the above examples are of individuals who had achieved large and wide scale changes. In referring to sustainability issues Debra Meyerson’s book, “Tempered Radicals,” uses examples of small wins but does not pursue the idea that the stakes are higher for so-called tempered radicals in sustainability. They are, as several people said, “prepared to go the extra mile.”

The other notable difference is that the employees in these two examples worked in public sector/ service organisations, whereas most of the tempered radical case studies are of people in commercial organisations. There may well be less of a gap between personal and organisation values in our examples which would allow a champion more leeway for mounting a challenge.

f) Staying Informed

Another of the specific difficulties facing those who championed the cause of climate change, was in maintaining their often hard won credibility when talking about such a complex issue riddled with scientific uncertainties. This may have been why several champions stressed the need for robust well-sourced factual information and the need for champions to have the intellectual skills of being able to sift and analyse and translate complex problems into simple messages.

Louise Chawla’s research (Appendix A §3) confirms this aspect of environmental championing. 61% of people she interviewed stressed the importance of being sufficiently well informed about the issues to withstand attack from opponents. Staying informed also means knowing the ‘rules of the game’ and how to find effective ways of intervening: it is as important to understand economic and political (and one might add organizational) ways of finding solutions as to understand the issues themselves.

g) Courage

Undoubtedly, champions show enormous courage in the challenging actions they take. This ranged from the individual cited above who risked his career by taking his organisation to court, to those who risk the criticism of their colleagues for investing in a new environmental technology option that appears costly and may later prove to be less efficient than thought at the time. Many of our interviewees shrugged off the risks they were perceived to have taken. Firstly because they may have become wily strategists who have learned to plan their actions carefully for success, and secondly because most would perceive the risk of being inactive as far higher than any risks they might run through

acting. This, too, is where climate change champions differ from those whose battle is for gender equality or some other social cause. Although no-one said it explicitly, the idea that they had no choice but to put on a mantle of leadership when aware of the threats to human survival was implied by comments such as (emphasis ours):

*“Awareness of climate change **has to be** part of my job”*

h) Tenacity and patience

There is a moral courage in keeping going even when others have given up, or little difference is perceived. Many of our champions identified or demonstrated staying power as a vital feature of sustainability work. They often married this to the need for persistence and patience:

“It’s a long game: you have to have faith and hope. It is not obvious that anything will happen. Ironically you have to play the game of delivering objectives”

“Patience is needed to help people step from ignorance to understanding and from understanding to action.”

One councillor champion had recently voted against fellow councillors on the issue of affordable housing because he asserted that the Climate Change Strategy demanded eco-building standards not put forward by the officers. He felt that his effectiveness would be measured in changes brought about by relentless pressure. As Anita Roddick (Appendix B §8) said,

“Persistence is required to battle the cultures of nimbyism, accumulation and ownership.”

Patience was implied by another councillor champion’s understanding of the nature of cultural change. He likened the subject of sustainability to the fifty year learning evolution from the view that tobacco was healthy to the current understanding that it kills.

i) Resilience

“You have to have a thick skin”; “but not too much as it can translate into not caring or, worse, I’m right and you’re wrong.”

The resilience to move on and try something else was a quality that characterised many champions’ experience. Many examples illustrated how they had learnt to bracket off anger and frustration so as not to be disabled by them. Failures became opportunities for learning.

j) Authority and Voice.

One champion’s role model was John Wayne who could walk fearlessly into a situation and command attention. A third of those interviewed admired the quality of speaking with authority. We noticed how authority was carried by some champions, the natural

raconteurs, through the stories they selected to tell, in others it came across more quietly through the persuasive logic of their conviction. For others, authority registered in the passion which resonated through the conversation.

In many ways authority was the hardest quality to pin down but the easiest to recognise. We suggest that authority is a function of “finding one’s voice” which can be developed.

k) Relationship and network building

The capacity to make connections with other people in order to work in partnership was also prized by the majority of those we interviewed. These partnerships were seen as particularly important for “cross boundary” working. Once again champions could single out others adept at being able to form trusting and respectful relationships both with those within their organisations and, as importantly, those outside it.

Although some people are natural networkers whose qualities are described in the Espace behavioural project, (Appendix D §11; §12), others would benefit from understanding how networks form and grow. This could help individuals to see what their role might be in contributing to them and what steps they could take to do this better.

l) Capacity to work with fear, despair and compassion

We have identified that the capacity to experience rather than repress the full spectrum of emotions is a factor in a champion’s effectiveness. One of the key differences between effective and ineffective work seems to be the ability to hold and appropriately share and reveal passion on the one hand, or to be driven by or lost in it on the other (§6.1.1).

“Strategists” (see §3.5) have typically developed an increased capacity to tolerate distressing emotions and to be able to share them with others so an important aspect of their role in developing others may simply be to find ways that strong feelings and the passion that connects with a transpersonal dimension can be expressed and valued in safety.

Bearing in mind that the development of awareness (see §3.2) seems also to be an incremental journey, it is likely that those who grasp the fuller significance of what is happening, may be able to guide others during the various emotional shocks of awakening.

Naming the above qualities and appreciating how they distinguish climate change or sustainability champions from change agents in other fields is an important first step towards recruiting and developing champions. Most of the skills identified here can be developed with support and guidance.

7. Selecting potential champions

This report has identified some core qualities and skills which champions of all types need in order to tackle the particular complexities of a sustainability issue such as climate change. Champions have great passion for their subject. Above all, they are hungry for agency – to find and use meaningful ways of responding to this complex issue – and they have learned how to engage in various ways with the broader context to this end. We have differentiated between formal champions and informal champions (visible and invisible) and have identified where each has capacity for developing agency. We have also (§ 3.5 above) distinguished three developmental stages (‘achiever’, ‘individualist’ and ‘strategist’) into which people in these roles might reasonably be expected to fit.

We have observed that, all too often, individuals in organisations do not realise, and probably often do not even recognise, the agency that they could exercise.

How can these realisations be used in recruiting champions?

7.1 Weakness of current recruitment processes

All of these perspectives should be informing the selection of champions, yet in many of the person specifications for environmental posts that involve change agency that we have seen, they are not in evidence.

For instance, in a recent newspaper advertisement for a Carbon Trust Strategy Manager (Appendix D) an emphasis is placed on an understanding of energy. Competence in behavioural change, or even in organisational development, is not mentioned, even though to carry out the role effectively would require such understanding. Another recent person specification for an Education Commissioner for the Sustainable Development Commission⁴ ignored virtually all of the qualities that we have identified. What is valued instead is broad experience at a senior level in a particular sector – for instance education.

We think that this may be because people involved in recruiting for such positions have not fully engaged with the issues themselves and so are unlikely to recognise the qualities required. Those acting from the “expert” framing, for instance, would probably ignore the emotional and change dimension of the work and look to appoint someone with technical or scientific experience and qualifications.

We also doubt whether recruitment agencies would have the necessary experience to appoint effectively in this field, unless they were very carefully briefed.

Therefore, it is possible that both applicants and recruiters might participate in the recruitment process with little awareness both of the magnitude of the climate change challenge and of what it demands of those that try to meet it. People may apply for career or other motives rather than because of any felt connection with the environmental or social issues that motivate and sustain the people of high calibre whom we interviewed.

⁴ www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/appointments/sdc/index.htm

This would of course also mean that when suitable candidates do apply they may often not be recognised as such. Unfortunately, it is also likely that people appointed as champions or as other types of leader may often lack the required qualities. We turn to the question of how such people can develop these qualities in §8.

7.2 Recognising the passion and the ability to discover agency

Passion is necessary, for why else would one be motivated to understand and yet still take on this challenge? But it is also insufficient, because people in these roles need the capacity to channel passion to useful ends. The ability to find agency is key. If this can be demonstrated, it is likely that most of the other core qualities will also be available, since finding agency is itself a strategic skill.

If either quality is absent, the suitability of the person for the role should be seriously questioned. At the very least, it is important to think through how the person might find these qualities, and how they might be supported in doing so.

We suggest that:

- Advertisements should ask for people who can demonstrate a strong interest in work for environmental sustainability, perhaps even for climate change.
- It would be reasonable to expect such people to show high awareness of the issues – they would ideally already be at the rare level 3 (awareness of systemic structure) but should certainly already be at level 2 (awareness of scale and urgency of the challenge). Developed awareness will both be evidence of passion and – at higher levels – will provide a basis for agency.
- People should be asked why they are attracted to such roles. In responding they should be made to feel as comfortable as possible in speaking about their emotional responses to these issues (which, it goes almost without saying, should be evaluated very respectfully).
- In addition, they should be asked to demonstrate their capacity to work on contextual issues without a prior mandate – which is where agency is normally to be found. A case exercise would be one way of testing this.

7.3 Other key qualities

The list of qualities and skills identified in §6.3 above is clearly relevant to selection.

They were as follows:

- Fluency in different language styles.
- Frame shifting.
- Simultaneously hot and cool headed.
- Authenticity.
- Credibility.
- Staying informed.
- Courage.
- Tenacity and patience.
- Resilience.

- Authority and voice.
- Relationship and network building.
- Capacity to work with fear, despair and compassion.

Clearly it would be entirely unrealistic to expect an applicant to show all of these qualities! As we have indicated, in our opinion, passion and evidence of being able to find agency should predominate. Yet such a list might help in making choices between candidates, and might help in identifying where a person might most need support in early months and years in the role.

7.4 Use of developmental models

As mentioned in §3.5, it is possible to form a reasonable estimate of the level of development that particular people are operating from.⁵ Although it would have been entirely inappropriate, and perhaps unethical, to apply this framework to particular individuals whom we interviewed, we are able to make some general observations to inform a selection process.

The search for agency is itself characteristic of the higher levels of development. We would anticipate that many of the people applying for champion roles would be at or near the ‘individualist’ level at least. Indeed such roles might be ideal for the development of such people.

On the other hand, research shows that people below this level can work effectively in roles with responsibility for significant change, provided that they can work in creative relationships with colleagues who are at these levels.⁶

We could see that the roles of formal councillor champions were typically more tightly bounded than those of other types of champion. On the other hand, we also observed that people in these roles sometimes worked in ways that were characteristic of skilled change agents. We concluded that while these roles could probably be done by people at the ‘achiever’ level, they might be more suitable to people moving into the ‘individualist’ level who wanted to experiment with new approaches to working; they could also be done successfully by people at even later stages of development, since the capacity to transcend the limitations of a role is one of the most powerful signs of the ability to find agency.

As noted above, among our broader sample of champions working for sustainability (including the sample from HCC) there was a much higher proportion of people who talked in characteristically ‘strategist’-like language than would be encountered in a random collection of “managers for change”. They were resistant to the champion label and held quite visionary ideas about the meaning and practice of leadership in the field of sustainability.⁷

⁵ Reliable tests are available: please contact us if more information on sources is required.

⁶ Rooke, D. and Torbert, W.R. (1999) The CEO’s role in organizational transformation. *The Systems Thinker* 10(7).

⁷ The ‘strategist’ stage is also called the ‘vision logic’ stage by the American writer Ken Wilber.

Certainly (as far as we can tell), every interviewee showed signs of having advanced further than the 'expert' stage which characterizes around fifty per cent of managers.

In conclusion, what all of this suggests:

- Someone with more than average awareness of climate change, who understands agency, who is familiar with the emotional dimensions of change work, and who has some capacity to recognise emerging individualist and later awareness, should be involved in selection and recruitment from the very first stages.
- People appointed will ideally already be at the 'individualist' stage and should certainly be showing signs of moving towards that stage.
- Given that individualists are often looking to find a place of greater meaning for themselves in the world, it may be that some might choose other areas after experience with climate change; this suggests that appointments might be most safely made as secondments or as short term placements with longer term positions potentially available in due course.
- In our experience⁸, the ideal way to recruit potential "individualists" is to stress the challenge, the learning potential and the potential to contribute to an issue of importance in a way that is as yet incompletely understood.
- It is likely that the most effective process for identifying formal climate change champions involves a strong element of self selection.
- Selecting different types of informal champion within organisational roles is more complicated but should be informed by the different perspectives that this report offers.

⁸ The University of Bath MSc in Responsibility and Business Practice, on which one of the consulting team teaches and of which another is a graduate, was recognised in Harvard Business Review (April 2005) as being almost unique in its experience of successfully facilitating this transition amongst its participants.

8. Developing champions

8.1 Nature or Nurture

§6.3 suggests qualities that champions require. §7 suggests that it is unlikely that any person will have all of them and that they may even need some help in consolidating the two critical qualities: passion and the ability to turn a thirst for agency into effective action. This suggests that many will need assistance to develop to become effective in the role.

We asked our interviewees about their own experience, looking to establish whether a champion is typically born or made. From their descriptions of how they came to be champions of the environment we can conclude that the majority of the people we interviewed were not born to this role. Indeed some were reluctant leaders:

“Something just pushed me into it and off I went. It’s like jumping into cold water.”

Paul Dickinson (Appendix B §4) was shocked by graphs of the Vostok ice core data, which had prompted him to look for greater agency⁹. However most of our interviewees had not experienced such a sudden epiphany. Instead it seemed for most that the journey into championship had been a slower, altogether more haphazard affair composed of a lifetime of accumulated experiences which persuaded them into more and more ambitious acts of leadership for change.

Indeed, most of the people to whom we spoke had little idea as to how the qualities of a champion could reliably be developed in other people.

This implies that typically leadership is awakened by accident rather than by design. However, development of leaders does not need to be left to chance. It is clear both from our own experience and from the literature that it is possible to develop and enhance personal qualities of leadership similar to those drawn out of the interviews.

8.2 Perspectives from developmental theory

How do the key qualities of ‘passion’ and ‘ability to develop agency’ develop? We suggest that these qualities are characteristic of people at Torbert’s ‘Strategist’ level (see §3.5 above). Such people are preoccupied with issues such as justice and development and take a time perspective that spans several generations. This makes issues such as climate change completely natural territory for them. They can make principled choices

⁹ Wolff, E. and EPICA project members (2004). "Eight Glacial Cycles from an Antarctic Ice Core." *Nature* **429**(6992): 623-628. These show unequivocally that what is happening to the climate is well outside the range of what has been normal over the past 740,000 years and also make clear the very strong correlation with local (Antarctic) temperatures. These graphs are often powerful in awakening people to the gravity of the situation on climate change. For examples, see Ballard, D. I. (2005). "Using Learning Processes to Promote Change for Sustainable Development." *Action Research* **3**(2): 135-156.

and commitments in the face of relativism. In other words, they are no longer subject to the social construction of the groups to which they belong and so open up the gateway to mature tempered radicalism.

As one of the primary researchers on mature adult development puts it:

‘Unlike persons at (the immediately preceding individualist) stage, who may despair about knowing who they really are, (strategist) individuals become able to “own” more of the contradictory parts of themselves. They can integrate previously compartmentalized sub identities of the self into a coherent new whole or core identity. *The crucial new element is generativity, the commitment to generate a meaningful life for oneself through self-determination, self actualization and self-definition – the hallmarks of an Autonomous person.* A strong, integrated ego with mostly mature defenses is the basis for such commitments as well as the experience of being part of a meaningful community of similarly committed and principled people.’¹⁰

We suggest that the italicised phrase ‘*the commitment to generate a meaningful life for oneself*’ can be related strongly to the passion that is so evident in many of our champions.

More than this, the capacity to ‘own’ contradictory sub identities can be strongly linked to Assagioli’s sub personalities theory (§3.4), which offers the important capacity to frame shift in relations with others (as opposed to being locked into one frame of reference).

But what about people at earlier stages? Strategists, after all, are relatively rare, comprising well under 5% of the managerial population. In our experience, which is consistent with the literature, people operating from the earlier ‘individualist’ stage are often searching for purpose. While such a person may have a sense of where this might be, they are not yet sure of it. On the other hand, they are increasingly clear as to where it isn’t! This means that they are increasingly choosy about where and how they spend their time. They are typically strongly attracted to projects that offer great learning potential and that give them a chance to explore their own motivations.

People operating from even earlier stages (such as Achiever or Expert) may become very keen on an issue such as climate change, but it is rarely personalised and unlikely to threaten the status quo of surrounding social systems. Therefore, although they can make a worthwhile contribution, someone else – a champion – needs to make the more challenging connections for them.

¹⁰ Cook-Greuter, S. (1999). Postautonomous Ego Development: A Study of Its Nature and Measurement. Doctoral Thesis presented to Graduate School of Education. Cambridge, MASS, Harvard University.

8.3 A possible approach

The UK's Chartered Institute for Professional Development has recently (March 2005) published a report suggesting that companies are suffering from a shortage of effective leadership even though they are investing large sums of money in leadership training. A subsequent (April 4th) Financial Times article concludes that a shift in leadership training away from generic skills and towards personal development is the answer.

The article claims that leaders themselves are calling for help with personal, ethical and emotional development to supplement skills such as empathy and analytical ability. We suggest that encouraging people to engage with sustainability and human change provides tremendous opportunities for stimulating the personal and leadership development being called for. However, since the challenge of climate change is an urgent one, this development can not be left to chance, or to a lifetime of career experience, as seems to have been the case for many of our interviewees. A carefully designed process is needed which would help to develop the qualities essential for the kind of challenges that different climate change champions would be expected to tackle. Since we have also identified that effectiveness requires strong commitment to a higher purpose and a passionately felt connection, opportunities to explore the motivational roots underpinning climate change championship are also needed.

Building on the HCC programme 'Leading for Success'

We spoke to the Environment Department's Organisation Development Adviser with responsibility for the existing 'Leading for Success' programme in HCC, which he agreed is aimed at developing "achiever" qualities. This provides a good foundation because it has built a pool of managers from which suitable champions can be recruited. We clearly did not have the scope to do a full evaluation of the programme but what we have heard about it tends to confirm the generally favourable view that we encountered among HCC managers.

The programme seems to have made a significant contribution to providing experience of entry level (but none the less very often absent) developmental processes such as group working and action and reflection through action learning processes. However, the programme is acknowledged not to have been designed to meet the special needs of people making the achiever to individualist transition.

Obviously, one way is to appoint more champions as the formal role is itself a stimulus for development. Within sensible limits the programme could extend to a recycling champion, a water champion, an energy efficiency champion and so on, or a generic climate change champion could be appointed in several districts. The risks of diluting the impact, a concern raised by one interviewee, or overlapping remits could be reduced by careful team-building and support. However, this would require that strong learning processes and sufficient skilled support are provided.

We agreed that it would be relatively easy to offer a follow-on course that built on the existing programme and that was tailored for people in champion roles related to environmental sustainability.

Such a programme might offer:

- Learning processes that aim specifically at developing ‘frame awareness’ and the skills of frame shifting;
- Guidance in action inquiry processes that can apply such awareness to particular projects;
- Guidance in various approaches to change, including some of those explored in Appendix D of the ESPACE report and in this document;
- Supervision on project work, including emotional support where required;
- Increasing awareness of environmental issues, aiming to develop over time to level 3 awareness (of systemic structure);
- Structured opportunities to spend time in the natural world, building on strong evidence from Louise Chawla’s work, and from others in the field, that this can be highly developmental (see Appendix A §3 and ESPACE report Appendix D, §21);
- Scope for people to explore their own connection with these issues and in particular to discover their own route to agency;
- Support for people who find that they do not want to work in this field.

Typically, ‘graduates’ of such a programme would take a leading role with later cohorts, supported to a limited extent by outsiders during the first few years.

This may seem to be overambitious. However, this approach has been pioneered by centres of excellence for sustainability education such as Bath University’s Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice.^{11 12} Their MSc course, which three interviewees had been through, (and on which one of the consulting team teaches,) provides a carefully devised set of learning opportunities and supervision which helps people through the “achiever” to “individualist” transition and beyond. The Bath course intentionally disrupts cultural norms, as well as giving participants opportunities to find out if they have an emotional and/or spiritual connection with sustainability work or not. Elements of this approach have also been applied with some success in commercial organisations.¹³

The learning from Bath shows that it is possible to design a process and to pinpoint essential features within a process that can catalyse leadership development. Using the findings from this report and drawing on expertise in the field and internally, Hampshire could devise a home-grown leadership development programme for climate change champions.

¹¹ Maughan, E. and P. W. Reason (2001). "A Cooperative Inquiry into Deep Ecology." *ReVision* 23(4): 18 - 24.

¹² Marshall, J (2003); Matching form to content: Educating for Sustainability: The Masters (MSc) in Responsibility and Business Practice in Teaching Sustainability, C. Galea (Ed.) Greenleaf, Sheffield.

¹³ Ballard, D. I. (2005). "Using Learning Processes to Promote Change for Sustainable Development." *Action Research* 3(2): 135-156.

9. Supporting champions

9.1 Needs

The support needs that champions expressed to us fall under four headings:

- a) Intellectual
- b) Emotional
- c) Relational
- d) Developmental

a) Intellectual

We have mentioned already that champions fear losing hard-won credibility and yet climate change is a complex issue riddled with scientific uncertainties. It requires a level of awareness and cross-disciplinary expertise that few possess. Most champions are time-poor and therefore find it hard to keep their knowledge updated or to evaluate and rehearse arguments based on new information. As one person said,

“We are in desperate need to understand strategic capabilities in terms of technologies and to build a portfolio of knowns and articulate what we don’t know.”

And another,

“We need informed choice articulated clearly to engage and empower public. Too much hanging onto the technological fix restricts choices.”

There was a strong perception that this need was not being met by the traditional sources of information:

“We need to find out about long term futures so that we can make interventions in elderly care tracks; transport tracks. We need to work with organisations to determine this. Academics aren’t doing the job in breadth, think tanks are too political.”

There was also a suggestion that champions might like to commission specific pieces of research. One for example, wanted to see better evidence to support the economic and social value of the natural environment, and more critical appraisal of the value claimed for economic development which is oblivious to environmental costs.

b) Emotional

Kate Moore (Appendix B §1) whose work most directly involved supporting others, described the importance of monitoring a champion’s progress over time. She saw the need to point out appreciatively what that person had achieved, to offer encouragement, and identify the positive gains, *“you’ve got the chief executive on your side.”* This was particularly necessary when a champion was feeling discouraged.

Several spoke of the need to be able to “vent” strong emotions and if possible to have an emotional “sounding board.”

There was a sense that sharing feelings was reassuring and a way to dispel a sense of isolation that champions, because of the nature of their work, are prone to.

We have analysed the range of emotions that climate change champions, in particular, experience, including the risks to well-being that these could pose. (§5.2) In other similar fields where emotions can be strong, for instance hospice work or organisational consultancy, structured supervision processes are seen as good practice.

Although many champions have become proficient at building support networks for themselves and show strong signs of self-sufficiency, any support programme for people working in this field should take account of the emotional dimension. For reasons to do with effectiveness described earlier, this could also meet a developmental need.

c) Relational

Many champions wanted to meet like-minded people, to hear their stories and re-charge from their inspiration and energy. During the interviews they enjoyed hearing snippets of information about each other, or to know that the problems they were facing were also faced elsewhere. A need was expressed for a space in which to share good practice and the face-to-face dimension of this seemed to be valued more than an online repository.

The need for a deeper quality of relationship that might be possible between champions was voiced. One person described this as sharing ‘Dartington’ experiences like that on offer at the Schumacher College in Devon which is known to tap into the emotional aspects of sustainability work.

Kate Moore as a former tempered radical now supporting others in that position recognised the importance of finding an association with like-minded people with a shared sense of purpose,

“I am fortunate that my own goals and the goals of the organisation are congruent. It is a haven where I get support for my behaviour. I used to be a tempered radical at PWC. I battled and felt trapped. Now I can support other people in a tempered radical position.”

Some people had created support for themselves by creating networks within their organisation. This strategy spelt success for another who felt he had built support by “awakening other champions.”

This kind of association could also provide the affirmation that a champion might not be getting elsewhere:

“Meeting other champions keeps my pecker up. I’m a pessimist and need external pats on the back.”

It was also recognised that meeting relational needs brought opportunities for collaborative working and increased agency.

d) Developmental

Most champions expressed their developmental needs in terms of learning networks. Quite a few wanted to find more opportunities and a process to incorporate more reflective practice into their working lives. One pointed out that this would be a more powerful tool if it had the support of senior people. They wanted to find a channel for sharing experience and good practice.

Others mentioned the need for mentors or “guardian angels” who could offer practical advice and coaching particularly when unanticipated obstacles appeared. Facilitators were seen as valuable for bringing battlefield enemies together for productive dialogue.

A buddying model whereby two champions could share experience for two-way learning was suggested as another good source of developmental support.

One champion working in local government had particularly helpful insights to offer, suggesting that unconventional experiences that take people out of their cultural norm could provide positive disruption to promote new insights and learning. This champion pointed out that group development extending beyond the Environmental Strategy Group to include the full diversity of interest would be essential.

An action learning process for climate change champions from different departments at HCC and even from other organisations could fulfil many of the support needs which interviewees identified. Such a process could develop from the developmental structure identified in §8.3, or could be developed in parallel with it.

9.2. Personal Risks and Rewards

Champions of sustainability, we decided, often carry enormous burdens of responsibility for which they are rarely rewarded or recognized by society or even their organisations. These are people with a vision of what is needed, and of what could be possible if more people could be enlisted to lighten the load.

Although most of our champions had learnt to be self-sufficient in terms of meeting their need for support, they were likely to be, or have been, even more at risk from isolation, depression and burn-out than champions in other fields for the reasons we have clarified (§5.2).

One champion, in particular, repeatedly raised the need for reward, in terms of recognition of the time and energy expended:

“If being a champion is a good thing why aren’t they given an honorarium like a first-aider?”

We see this as less about financial compensation (it was obvious that this champion was already doing far more than an honorarium would pay for) and more about the need to feel seen and valued,

“The most valuable form of support would be to continually affirm the value of work as a counter to the grinding effect of denial and resistance”

Some of our interviewees were gratified that through this research they had been singled out for their environmental championship:

“It’s flattering to be seen as a member of a growing clique”

We suggest that those champions not currently receiving adequate recognition might become more effective with appropriate rewards and visibility. A quality association would enable champions to feel appreciated and might also provide some mitigation of the risks they take on.

10. Developing organisational capacity for championship

10.1 Why is more championing needed?

Why does an organisation such as Hampshire County Council need to develop the capacity to support champions?

§3.1 emphasises that a major opportunity for change concerns infrastructure— design of buildings, developments, transport systems, etc. These are all areas that involve departments of HCC. However, we argue that opportunities for continued change at any level will inevitably be constrained unless the broader context is addressed and people continually recognise and develop their own agency.

The champions we interviewed commonly worked at increasing agency and were able to achieve much more widespread change when they worked in collaborative partnership with others who held the same higher purpose.

It is reasonable then to assume that much more could be achieved not only by supporting and developing existing champions but by developing many more within an ecosystem of champions.

We also suggest that uniting champions with a project that could tap into a shared higher purpose would increase capacity for championship.

A project such as the Schools project (ESPACE Report §11) developed from the ESPACE behavioural change work would be ideal for this purpose.

10.2. Developing the capacity for agency

Our research so far shows that timely action is crucial in change initiatives and yet many individuals do not realise the agency he or she has at certain key moments. Moments of significant ‘agency’ can be very short-lived and if they are missed, ‘agency’ may become much lower for a long time.

Champions (both formal and informal) need to practise tuning into such moments and to help others tune into them. They must also begin work (e.g. build relationships) some time before the moment of agency arrives as there will not be time to do so if left until the last minute.

The more people in different contexts and across different departments who are anticipating these possibilities, the more likely it is that significant change can happen.

Importantly, this research is indicating that there is a pool of untapped capacity for championship, particularly in the third category of champion we have identified: the invisible informal champions. Although their organisational role may not currently give them a remit to work on sustainability or change issues, they nonetheless try to do what

little they can. Some may want to do more but are constrained by their role and/or lack of association. The question for formal champions and visible informal champions is how to reach out to and build relationship with the invisible, informal champions.

10.3 Providing a focus for championship

The ESPACE behavioural project provides a series of strategic challenges in different sectors, such as coastal, transport, agriculture and education inter al. We have suggested some behavioural change projects in a number of these sectors which need champions. Some of these initiatives have gained support from stakeholders who would be likely to participate, others need retuning. One in particular, the Schools project (ESPACE REPORT §11) won outstanding support and would provide champions at a number of levels with opportunities for personal and leadership development if supported by an action/reflection learning process.

The ESPACE behavioural change report also includes analysis and informed explanation of the conditions that are most likely to catalyse behavioural change. New initiatives can be measured against these to diagnose likely success, or new ideas could be generated from them. Unleashing a cadre of champions onto this material could generate significant creative collaboration to develop further projects.

The behavioural change strategies identified in the Espace report provide excellent pathways for climate change champion development. Those who lead the proposed projects could be part of a supported learning programme that caters for the key emotional dimension. This would help to develop whole organisational capacity for championship and explore collective agency particularly if other Espace partners were encouraged to work on these projects alongside Hampshire.

10.4 The legacy issue: providing succession

One of the concerns that arose during the early part of this project was about who would fill the space if a champion moved on. The developmental perspective discussed in §3.5 above highlights the risks: the work of one champion may be lost if his or her successor lacks the capacity to carry it on.

This concern would be addressed directly by a capacity-building programme which focussed both on developing qualities for championship as well as identifying even more potential champions. As indicated in §5.1 the largest untapped source of champions is in the category of invisible informal. These individuals could be seconded from their normal role to take on a more visible profile. Using a framework such as Torbert's would help to identify a pool of individuals at a transition point who might be ready to move into a departing champion's role. This pool could be further widened by involving those outside HCC in a champion association or network.

Offering challenging and strategic projects as a developmental opportunity would appeal to many champions who might otherwise leave the organisation if they felt their agency was being constrained by their role.

Finally, providing a learning process in support of what champions do with recognition of the emotional dimension of this work might go a long way to keeping good people in post.

Part 3: Concluding

11. Findings and recommendations

11.1 Findings in answer to the initial questions

Drawing directly from the interviews, this report shows how the term champion is used in different contexts, what typical formal and informal champions do and the qualities they need to have in order to be successful (§4&5). This provides a stronger foundation for being able to recognize and select other champions than we suggest is commonly informing official recruitment processes in many organisations (of which HCC may be one.) **We believe that the need to deploy individuals at higher stages of leadership development must be recognised, and those qualities themselves developed, if an organisation and indeed society is to tackle climate change more effectively.**

We have looked at the complexity of a champion's tasks and at why they need to reach out beyond the boundaries of their role to engage with a wider context (§3.1; §5.1). What we have discovered is key to understanding why the area of sustainability in general and **climate change in particular is more strategically challenging than almost any other issue.** For this reason **an engagement with sustainability can provide opportunities for leadership/management development.**

We have identified several types of champion for whom different tasks are most suitable. It is therefore important to acknowledge those differences in the way champions are selected and deployed.

Assessing the effectiveness of champions in general is difficult because they are often fulfilling their objectives on a much longer time scale, contributing to joint initiatives, and their strategies not even seen or understood by colleagues who may be less developmentally mature. However, **if they are involved with kindred champions in a learning development process which allows time for adequate review and reflection, we believe their effectiveness can both be tracked and enhanced.**

This report clarifies the needs that champions of climate change have. (§6) We believe that HCC could best meet these needs by:

1. Developing a learning programme for an association or network of potential and current climate change champions whose development is supported by an action/reflection process.
2. Using the strategies that are evolving from the ESPACE behavioural project as an action focus for such a programme.
3. Paying careful attention to the processes needed to build caring, supportive and trusting relationships and a safe space for exploring feelings and deeper connections with the work.
4. Harnessing the resources needed to communicate and create further conduits for the outcomes and processes of shared learning.

5. Developing a feedback process for appreciating and making more visible the inspiring work that champions do.
6. Reaching out to every department in HCC and beyond, to partner organisations, and to other champions elsewhere (such as those we have interviewed) in order to build and extend this network.

11.2 Recommendations based on these findings

11.2.1 Hampshire County Council should continue to develop a championship strategy.

Without exception, the strategies, action plans and initiatives that we looked at for this report and its sister report, “How can local authorities stimulate and support behavioural change in response to climate change?” depended on effective champions to lead them. Furthermore, future action strategies which we have recommended in that report, will require a variety of champions to lead them. The education project (§11 of the ESPACE behavioural change report) is a classic example of a project that will need champions if it is to fulfil its potential.

11.2.2 Hampshire County Council needs to extend its championship strategy to include and nurture a diversity of champions.

It would be a mistake only to develop a cadre of formal champions since different types of champion acting from different stages of leadership development are needed to match a variety of projects in different contexts. Each has an important role in “an ecosystem” of champions.

11.2.3 In recruiting climate change champions Hampshire County Council should take account of core qualities identified in this report. Passion and the thirst for agency should top the list.

The qualities required of leadership in the field of climate change are poorly understood. There is evidence that this impinges on recruitment and is likely therefore to be constraining the success of response strategies. This report presents a much clearer evidence-based picture of the qualities that are needed and suggests how they may be developed; of particular importance are Passion and Agency.

11.2.4 Hampshire County Council needs to create more formal climate change championship roles which it could offer to officers as well as councillors.

HCC needs more pro-actively to involve and support less visible champions in cross-departmental projects addressing climate change. It needs to stimulate more learning and creative dialogue between those who are engaging with the climate change agenda and those whose remit it is but who are not.

11.2.5 HCC needs to build on the foundations provided by ‘Leading for Success’ to devise a further learning process for developing the core qualities specifically needed by climate change champions.

We have shown both from literature (§3.4; §3.5 and Appendix A) and the personal narratives captured in the interview records (Appendix B) that the capacity for

championship in individuals can be seen to grow as they develop through this work. We believe that personal development programmes which explore the deeper personal connections with sustainability work can speed this process up, particularly if they can also provide opportunities to develop the core qualities needed. This would be particularly appropriate for those in the informal visible category.

Although HCC's current "Leading for Success" Programme provides an impressive foundation in action learning, it has not been designed specifically for those working in the field of sustainability. Nor understandably, has it been created to support what we argue is the necessary transition from Torbert's "achiever" to "individualist" and beyond. We therefore recommend that HCC start to explore the particular developmental needs of individuals intended for championing/change agent roles and draw on outside expertise, if necessary, to develop a programme to help meet those needs.

11.2.6 The need for project managers presented by the ESPACE behavioural change work and other climate change initiatives is an opportunity HCC should take to develop existing champions and recruit others from different departments.

The ESPACE behavioural change work presents an action focus for a learning programme such as that suggested above which aims to develop more champions. The challenge of leading community change in response to climate change provides opportunities for leaders to develop strategic skills since finding agency generally requires an individual to take a whole systems approach.

11.2.7 Hampshire County Council should develop its own capacity as a champion organisation by exploring different ways to bring together both internal and external champions with comparable roles for shared learning, opportunities for joint working and mutual support.

Climate change champions have intellectual, emotional, relational and developmental needs which they feel could be met in part by an association of kindred spirits.

Wide research identifies "association" (working in groups with other people) as one of the most important routes to effective work on environmental issues.

Different types of champion are needed for different roles. A strategic approach to their deployment would recognise the need for "an ecosystem" of champions. Enabling individual champions to recognise their place in this ecosystem without inhibiting development or cross-boundary working could build more shared purpose, potentially transforming a lot of separate individual efforts into a more effective concerted effort. HCC as a linking-pin organisation could make this possible.

11.3 Some emerging questions for discussion

Association/Collective leadership

Although this report has identified association as one of the most important routes to increased agency (§ 3.2; §5.1), and we are recommending that HCC create a development

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programme for an association of climate change champions, we realise that it is easier to describe what is needed than to do it.

We referred earlier to one of the champions who had noticed how some projects are achieved with the greatest of ease whereas others don't make it past the first post. There is still much to learn about the conditions that give rise to effective creative collaboration and partnerships. For instance: How is collective energy generated and sustained for one initiative rather than for another? What enables a shared vision to take form? How do people come to share a common higher purpose, and sustain it/themselves over the life of a project? What can be learnt from Hawthorne Court? Is it possible for a whole organisation to become a climate change champion? How do we awaken collective will?

These are some of the questions that HCC might like to address if it chooses to develop its own agency through association.

11.4. Possible Next Steps

- This report could provide a focus for bringing together the champions who participated in it to discuss and further develop the recommendations.
- Significant insights have emerged from this inquiry that should be informing climate change policy and strategy implementation. Hampshire could play a leading role in disseminating this research and pursuing the questions arising from it. At the very least, the report could be made publicly available online.
- Start to explore how to build on the Leading for Success Programme informed by existing work in this field as described in this report. Establish a pilot supervised learning group for champions internally to provide experience on which to base future developments.
- This research should be integrated with the ESPACE behavioural project. Find ways to present the findings of both reports together both internally and to ESPACE partners.
- Start to build support for these ideas more widely at the highest levels of HCC with a view to their incorporation within the business plan. Use feedback from others to redefine the questions arising and look for ways to pursue them.

