



Know your audience

People's attitudes to climate change connect to their social class, the views and behaviour of their peers, their level of education, political views, age, gender and aspirations. The information on this handout is summarised from the DEFRA report 'A framework for Pro-Environmental Behaviours' published in January 2008. The researchers found that they could divide the UK population into the 7 categories listed below.

- Which category describes you most closely?
- Which categories describe some of your family and friends?
- Which categories might be found amongst groups you would like to talk with about climate change?
- How could you frame your conversation so as to appeal to people in each of these groups?
- Which groups would it be most sensible to concentrate on?



1. Positive greens. 18% of the population. 7.6 million people.

"I think we need to do some things differently to tackle climate change. I do what I can and I feel bad about the rest."

- Pro-environmental views, interested in living a more environmentally friendly life than they currently do and feel they could do more;
- Not strongly motivated by saving money; may feel guilty about harming the environment.
- Good at recycling, likely to buy ethical, local and fair-trade produce; likely to have implemented some energy-saving measures at home.
- There's scope for them to do more, particularly on travel where their car-dependency is only just below average.
- Most likely to be in the upper (AB) socio-economic groups, to have a degree, to read the Guardian, Independent or Times, to have a household income of £40,000 and over. Their profile is biased towards middle age (41-64) and owner-occupancy.

2. Waste watchers. 12% of the population. 5.1 million people.

“Waste not, want not, that’s important, you should live life thinking about what you’re doing and using.”



- More pro-environmental than average, but likely to be sceptical about the size and urgency of the problem.
- Motivated mainly by an urge to avoid waste.
- Likely to be content with what they are doing at present which is usually recycling, saving energy and water at home, purchasing ethical and local/national products. They are less concerned about travel than the ‘Positive Greens’.
- Worried about changes to the UK countryside and bio-diversity.
- Most likely to be middle-aged or older. One third are aged over 65 and are retired. Less than a quarter are under 40. Many are on low incomes (40% have household incomes of less than £20,000.) Over half own their own homes. Most likely to read the Daily Mail or Daily Telegraph.

3. Concerned consumers. 14% of the population. 5.7 million people.

“I think I do more than a lot of people. Still, going away is important, I’d find that hard to give up...well I wouldn’t, so carbon offsetting would make me feel better.”



- Hold broadly pro-environmental beliefs, but less strongly than the Positive Greens and Waste Watchers. They acknowledge their impact on climate change but don’t accept that we are reaching our limits to growth. They doubt that an ecological crisis is imminent.
- Their attitudes to travel may be green but this is not matched by action. Their dependence on car travel is average and they take the most flights per year of any group.
- Their current behaviours focus on saving energy and water in the home and purchasing some more environmentally friendly goods. They are least likely to cite barriers such as money and inconvenience. They tend to think that they are doing more than they actually are.
- One third are aged 30-40. There are few over 65s in this category. There’s a slight bias towards the middle-to-higher socio-economic groups (ABC1). One third have household incomes over £40,000. This group has the most people with incomes over £60,000. They are likely to be owner-occupiers and have dependent children.

4. Sideline supporters. 14% of the population. 5.6 million people.

“I think climate change is a big problem for us. I suppose I don’t think much about how much water or electricity I use, and I forget to turn things off...I’d like to do a bit more.”



- This group have pro-environmental views but they are weakly held. Their green views haven’t translated into green behaviour and their current actions are the least green of all the groups, except 6 and 7. They have low knowledge of what to do.
- They have high levels of car ownership and a strong dislike of bus travel.
- They cite a range of barriers to doing more, particularly the need for things to fit with their current lifestyle and the difficulty of changing habits. They may feel guilty about harming the environment.
- This group span all ages but the under 30s are over represented. Their household income is average and there are more people in socio-economic groups C2, D and E represented here. The newspapers they are most likely to read are the Daily Mail or the Sun.

5. Cautious participants. 14% of the population. 5.6 million people

“I do a couple of things for the environment. I’d really like to do more...well as long as I saw others were.”



- This group agree there is a crisis, recognise their impacts but are pessimistic about their ability to tackle climate change. They are quick to say any efforts we make will be negated by other people or countries.
- They report more barriers to pro-environmental behaviours than other groups but tend to have green travel attitudes and think people should pay for the damage they cause. They may feel some guilt about harming the environment.
- Pro-environmental behaviours aren’t a natural fit with their self-identity. They are likely to feel embarrassed about being seen to be ‘green’.
- Their age profile is younger than average. They are likely to have dependent children. They are more likely to be renting than to be home owners.

6. Stalled starters. 10% of the population. 4.1 million people.

“I don’t know much about climate change. I can’t afford a car so I use public transport...I’d like a car though.”



- This group tend to have negative and confused views. They are least likely to think their behaviour affects climate change. They see the problem as too far in the future to worry about or think it has been exaggerated.
- They have a low level of knowledge about the environment.
- They may have a low impact because of financial constraints but they don’t wish to reduce their car use or air travel.
- They are most likely to cite barriers such as convenience, cost, difficulty, other people’s lack of action. They are also likely to see ‘green’ behaviour as embarrassing or ‘alternative.’
- Half of this group are in socio-economic groups D or E and they have the lowest household incomes. Almost half the households live on less than £20,000. They tend to be either younger or older than average and there are more people from black and minority ethnic groups in this segment. They tend to have low qualifications and are likely to read the Sun, the Mirror or the News of the World.

7. Honestly disengaged. 18% of the population. 7.4 million people.




“Maybe there’ll be an environmental disaster, maybe not. Makes no difference to me, I’m just living my life the way I want to.”











































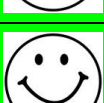






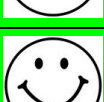






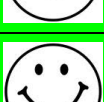
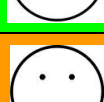





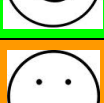





























- This group are likely to be uninterested, unconcerned or sceptical. They are likely to deny that their behaviour contributes to climate change.
- They don’t see themselves as ‘green and they do little to help beyond recycling.
- They are least likely to feel guilty about harming the environment and are most likely to think that it’s not worth doing anything unless others do.
- The group includes all ages but the under 30s are over-represented. There are more people from socio-economic groups C1 and 2, D and E. They have below average incomes. They are more likely than average to be working full-time, to be renting and to read the Sun, News of the World and Star newspapers.

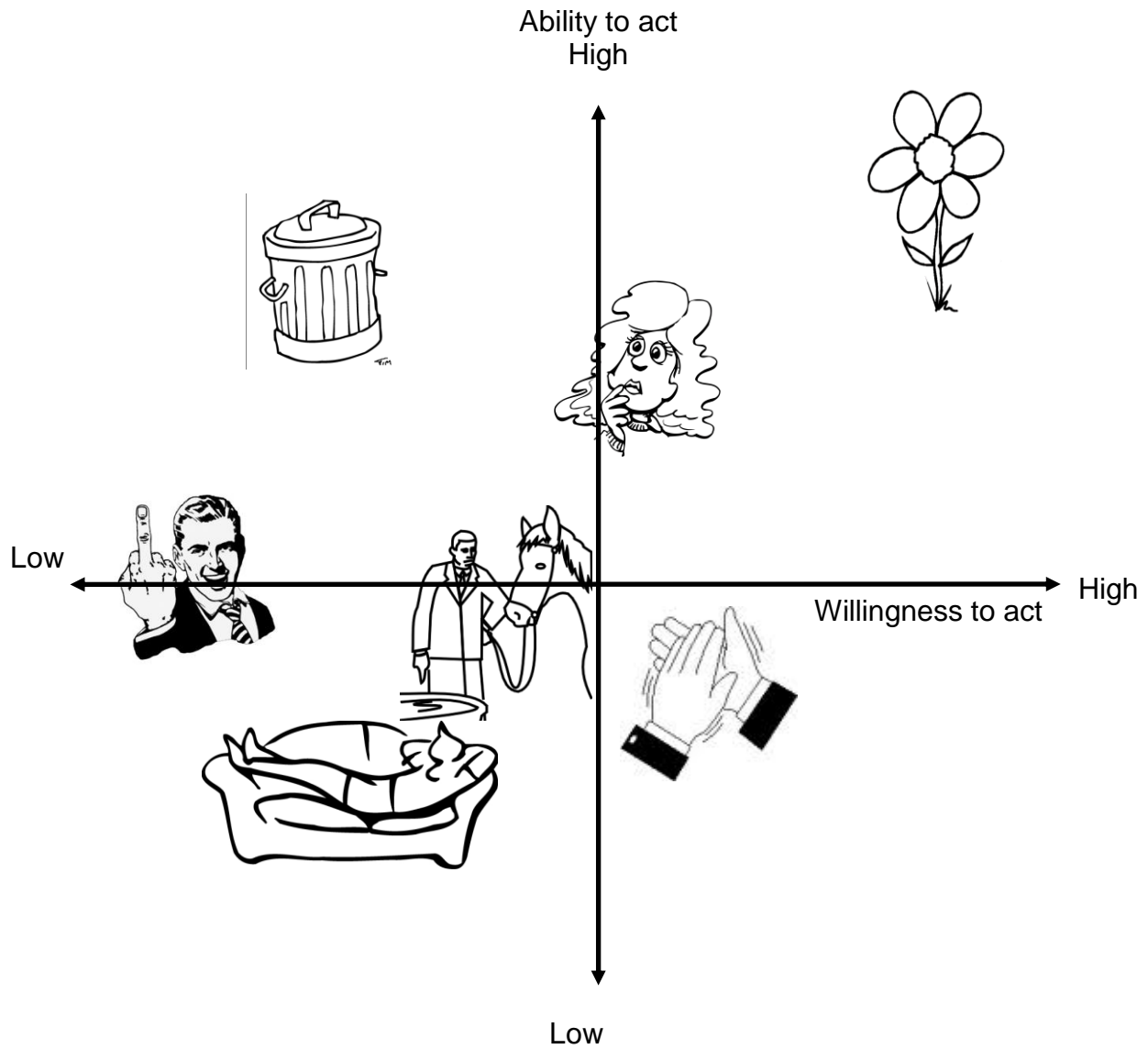
What's acceptable?

This chart shows how some actions might fit with each group's identity and attitudes. (It doesn't tell us whether they actually do them at present!)

High acceptability  Medium acceptability  Low acceptability 

	Positive greens 	Waste  watchers	Concerned  consumers	Sideline  supporters	Cautious  participants	Stalled starters 	Honestly  disengaged
Avoid unnecessary flights							
Use more efficient vehicles							
Use car less for short trips							
Install insulation							
Waste less food							
Increase recycling							
Better energy management							
Install micro-generation							
Adopt a lower impact diet							
More responsible water usage							
Buy energy efficient products							
Eat more local & in-season food							

Are people willing to act?
Are they able to act?



This chart shows how willing each group of people is to act and how able they are to act. The ability to act may be connected to income.