

# The Practitioners' Hub Pilot Project

January 2013 – July 2013

A report to funders, partners and participants



**Energy Efficiency and  
Conservation Authority**  
Te Tari Tiaki Pūngao

## Preface

The Practitioners' Hub pilot project was an experiment in collaboration based around an online member-only forum. Community Energy Network (CEN) hosted the project in conjunction with Beacon Pathway and The EnviroSchools Foundation. It involved participants from 23 organisations with shared objectives to make high quality, independent, personalised advice accessible to New Zealanders to help them improve the performance of their homes.

The pilot achieved what it set out to do, which was to test a concept. The concept was that independent home performance advisors would be more effective (i.e. facilitate more change in households) if they were better connected with one another, with the existing knowledge base and with other types of practitioners (e.g. scientists, researchers, policy makers, educators). It was assumed that the benefits of these connections would be multi-directional (e.g. researchers and policy makers informing advisors and vice versa).

A lot has been learned in a fairly short amount of time about the strengths and limitations of collaborating online, the components of the concept that are of most value to participants and therefore where future potential lies. The pilot has also demonstrated the level of commitment, and willingness of a core group of organisations to provide practical and in-kind support because of the value they see in the initiative.

The website itself has performed well (notwithstanding a number of glitches), and participants value the discussion forums and best practice library highly. However, one of the key lessons from the pilot has been that some types of communication and connection do not occur easily online (at least not at present) especially in a small group. In future we will look for ways to maintain the value of the website but create new opportunities for (offline) collaboration and connection.

Following the online trial, a recent workshop in Wellington and a survey of users, the purpose and longer-term focus of the project has become clearer. The immediate potential of the Hub appears to be in identifying the needs its participants and synthesising the knowledge and experience of those in the group to produce 'outputs' to meet those needs (e.g. resources, training opportunities etc.). Ensuring that a quality assurance process, which reflects the collective knowledge of the group, is built into this work will be a high priority.

The MoU partners (CEN, The EnviroSchools Foundation and Beacon Pathway) have agreed to continue to act in a governance-type role for the time being, and have agreed in principle to commit resources to the project for the coming twelve months. The next steps are to confirm the work plan and budget.

The project was made possible by the financial and in kind support received from the following organisations, and the generosity and good will of all participants (refer to Appendix A). I would like to thank everyone involved for their enthusiasm and commitment to the concept and their willingness to experiment. I hope they will see the value in what has been learned, and the potential for the future as much as I do.

- Beacon Pathway,
- BRANZ,

- Community Energy Network,
- EECA,
- Enspiral,
- Godfrey Hall,
- The Enviroschools Foundation, and
- The Working Together More Fund

Special thanks should also go to: Jo Wills, Vicki Cowan, Heidi Mardon, Christian Hoerning, Roman Jaques, Andrew Pollard, Lois Easton, Godfrey Hall, Andrea Blackmore, Norman Smith and Phill Coxon.

Sally Blackwell  
Hub Project Manager  
23 August 2013

## 1. Background

The Practitioners' Hub (The Hub) is a collaborative project involving practitioners from 23 organisations. Participants all share an objective to make high quality, independent, personalised advice accessible to New Zealanders to help them improve the performance of their homes.

Community Energy Network (CEN) hosted the pilot project in conjunction with Beacon Pathway and The Enviroschools Foundation. The Hub is designed to foster a community of practice to: facilitate peer learning, synthesise best practice, and produce practical tools that support advisors to be effective.

This report describes the Hub pilot project, which ran between January and July 2013. Its purpose is to let funders, supporters and participants of the project know what happened, what was learned, and what the intended next steps are.

## 2. Starting out – Identifying opportunities to collaborate

In February 2012 CEN held a workshop called *Developing Effective Advisors*. The workshop brought together a group of practitioners with aligned interests to clarify the needs in the sector, explore opportunities for collaboration and understand the role different organisations could play. The group at the workshop included:

- Advisors and educators – from community enterprises, local government (Eco Design Advisors), environment centres, Otago Polytechnic and The Enviroschools Foundation,
- Building and social researchers - from BRANZ, Beacon Pathway, University of Otago and University of Oxford, and
- Government officials and philanthropists (primarily as observers).

At the workshop, the following were accepted as a given:

- Many New Zealand homes perform poorly and as a result there are negative social and environmental impacts for individuals and the community as a whole, and
- Independent, personalised advice has been shown to be an effective mechanism to help people make positive changes in their homes whatever their personal circumstances.

The following challenges were identified:

- There are very few resources and very little funding available for organisations that provide independent advice,
- There is no recognisable or readily accessible training and / or accreditation available for home performance advisors to assure quality to households,
- Advisors' access to up to date information and best practice is inconsistent across the group,
- Developing a sustainable business model that allows advisors to remain credible and independent is problematic,
- The services offered by the advisors at the workshop are disparate and uncoordinated, and
- Researchers and policy makers are not well connected with each other, with consumers or with advisors on the ground.

The following opportunities were also recognised:

- There is a wealth of good science, best practice and practical expertise about improving home performance resting within organisations and individuals in the sector (i.e. collectively we know what needs to be done and how),
- There is a significant and growing number of not-for-profit and community-based organisations around the country already providing (and supporting the provision of) high quality, independent, personalised advice to households to create positive change,
- Existing advisors have repeatedly demonstrated that well-delivered, personalised advice from a credible person can overcome many of the decision-making barriers faced by households, and prompt action,
- With greater resources, support and access to best practice material and professional development existing advisors could be even more effective and there would be space for the 'profession' to expand from a solid base, and
- Better connection between advisors and other practitioners would inform the practice of different groups, avoid duplication and create better results.

At the workshop participants identified a clear need: *The ability for different practitioners to connect, share advice/experience, share training and secure funding to improve practice.*

To meet this need the group proposed the development of a 'Hub' to create new connections between all the diverse actors in the field to leverage greater benefit for all.

### **3. Developing a Solution**

Immediately after the workshop it wasn't clear exactly what a Hub was or how it should function, but it was thought that it should:

- Facilitate peer to peer conversation and learning,
- Create alignment among key actors so there is awareness of one another, the work being carried out and what is working and what is not,
- Connect people to the existing knowledge base to prevent repetition and build the capability of the sector more efficiently,
- Create multi-directional links between advisors, researchers and policy makers to ensure their work remains highly relevant and practitioners have access to latest research and information,
- Synthesise research and best practice into usable and useful tools, and
- Provide opportunities for training.

Not wanting to leap into an over-engineered 'solution' a staged approach was taken to allow participants to test how the Hub met their needs and to allow the concept to be adapted in response.

The proposal for stage one was to establish a secure (i.e. member only) web-based forum where participants could share resources and connect with one another. It was anticipated that in the longer term, the Hub might evolve to have a life of its own - perhaps developing resources, facilitating or even providing training.

#### **4. Core principles**

There was consensus at the workshop that participation in the Hub should be based around a set of agreed core principles. The intent of this was to set parameters for people working toward a common goal to come together in good faith. These principles were to reflect the values of the group. As a starting point it was agreed that these principles should be:

- Advice should be independent and in the best interests of the client (i.e. not provided primarily as a sales technique),
- Advice should be accessible for all, and
- Advice should be based on good science and best practice.

#### **5. Defining a practitioner**

At the workshop it was identified that the success of advisors required a whole community of practice to work together effectively. For this reason the term 'practitioner' was used to identify all the different actors who through their work contribute to the quality of advice being provided to New Zealanders.

Therefore a practitioner was defined as: *someone who through their professional practice is involved in providing, promoting, supporting, or researching the basis of independent, expert, advice to New Zealanders as a mechanism to enable improved performance of their homes and a better quality of life.*

#### **6. Defining membership**

It was proposed that in the long term (i.e. beyond the pilot) membership to the Hub would be open to anyone who can demonstrate they are a 'practitioner' and that they work according to the Hub's core principles.

Because the pilot was experimental (i.e. a lot of elements were being tested and longer term arrangements were uncertain) membership was limited to those organisations that attended the workshop, their organisational networks and trusted colleagues (see below).

#### **7. Collaborative arrangements**

Like many new ideas, taking the concept and creating something tangible and effective was a challenge. CEN called the initial workshop but it was clear that this was a collaborative initiative. A number of proposals were developed and ideas tested but it wasn't clear who 'owned' the idea, who would lead it and how it would be funded.

In September 2013 CEN, Beacon Pathway and The EnviroSchools Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide leadership to catalyse the project. These organisations all contributed funding from their own resources to activate the Hub and fund a part time Project Manager (Sally Blackwell) to drive the initiative. The MoU partners did not see themselves as a governance group as such, but rather a partnership to move things forward.

A number of funding proposals were made and additional funding was received from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) and The Working Together More Fund. Godfrey Hall also made a private contribution.

Beacon Pathway and BRANZ provided in-kind support in the form of staff time and access to resources. The many participants who contributed ideas, expertise, and time throughout the pilot provided additional in-kind support.

## **8. Purpose and Objectives of the Pilot**

The purpose of the pilot was to test and develop the Hub concept, establish arrangements for on-going collaboration and evaluate the outcomes. The pilot was progressed on the basis that it would include:

- A website with member-only login,
- Public and private discussion forums and groups,
- Regular blogs,
- A best practice library, and
- Forums to provide feedback and input into the Hub's operation and design.

The specific objectives of the pilot were to:

1. Establish a best practice library for practitioners,
2. Trial and establish the most effective mechanisms to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and knowledge transfer (e.g. blogs, tip sheets, roundtable discussions etc.), and
3. Establish collaborative arrangements to ensure the Hub is viable long term, including:
  - Establishing on-going membership criteria and user guidelines,
  - Establishing information sharing agreements,
  - Establishing a quality assurance process to ensure Hub content is high quality, and
  - Establish governance arrangements and the on-going business / funding model.

## **9. Launching the Pilot**

### **The website**

In November 2012 Enspiral (<http://www.enspiral.com>) was contracted to develop the website. It was built with the following features:

- Discussion forums in which any member could start, contribute to or follow a discussion,
- Blogs where topic specialists were invited to write on a particular topic, and
- The ability for participants to comment on blogs, and
- Personal profiles (name, image, and personal info).

This was done on a modest budget using BuddyPress open source software and the site - <http://hub.communityenergy.org.nz/> - was launched on 20 December 2012.

Over the first few months of 2013 additional features were added, including:

- A best practice library in which any participant could upload and / or download resources to share with other practitioners,
- Forum digests that automatically sends participants notifications of comments in the forum,

- An HTML newsletter,
- A community 'rating' system (see below).

### **Participants**

All the participants at the February 2012 workshop plus members of their organisational networks and trusted colleagues were invited to participate. They were provided with logins to the secure site, and there was no charge for participation.

At the time of the launch around 39 individuals were invited to participate. This number has grown to 45 during the course of the pilot. They are representatives of the organisations listed in Appendix A.

## **10. Running the Pilot**

### **Web-based activity**

The aim of the pilot was to use a web-based tool to develop a community of practice (without knowing exactly what the desired end-state was). Creating "engagement" (i.e. on-going discussion between participants) through the site was therefore a key goal. Another priority was to develop a quality assurance system for the material on the site, which is grounded in the collective knowledge of participants.

The following mechanisms were used during the pilot to achieve these goals. They were either installed at the outset or added during the seven-month trial.

- **Blogs**

Between December 2012 and mid April 2013 six technical blogs were contributed. Each one was written by a practitioner with specialist knowledge on a particular topic and was an example of in-kind support from participants' organisations. People were approached to write a blog, although others were welcomed to offer a blog contribution if interested.

The intention of the blogs was to increase knowledge on a particular issue and spark conversation. Therefore topics were selected for their relevance, and to a degree, their contentiousness. Contentious issues always spark more discussion! Topics covered were:

- Preventing Summer Over-heating,
- Is Solar Water Heating worth the investment?,
- Why Water Matters,
- Retrofitting Wall Insulation,
- Fuel Poverty – Do we need to define it to solve it?, and
- Ventilation Systems: Sort out causes of moisture first.

- **Forums**

Unlike the Blogs, which were for invited contributors, the forums allowed anyone to start, participate in or follow a discussion topic. The general discussion forum is where most of the interaction on the site occurs. There is also a 'widget' on the side bar of each page that



automatically shows the latest forum posts and replies. This has been very effective at keeping people engaged in the forum discussions.

- **Best Practice Library**

The Best Practice Library (BPL) was a challenge for the developer to create within the budget available. However, given the constraints it is an excellent and flexible platform that allows any participant to upload or download a document to share. Documents can be in any common format (e.g. Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF etc.).

The Project Manager moderates any document that is uploaded. This is to ensure it is of relevance and, on first glance, appears to be of high enough quality to be included in the library.

A number of peer-review features have also been added in an effort to build an internal quality assurance system. Each document in the library can be tagged as 'Hub assured' or not; and participants can leave comments about a resource or add a star rating to it. This system has not been fully embedded yet.

- **Digest emails**

Several months after the launch the developer installed a number of plug-ins<sup>1</sup> to the BuddyPress site to provide additional functions: one of these was an email digest. The digest sends daily or weekly notifications to participants alerting them to new posts in the forum<sup>2</sup>. This has been a useful tool to encourage participants to go back to the site and to keep them engaged in discussions.

Various improvements to the digests have been included in feedback from users. This will be incorporated into the next stage of web development provided that the budget allows it.

- **Newsletters**

Another new feature added in the New Year was a HTML mass email function. The function itself looks good and works well. However, there are still problems with delivery. It appears that many organisations' servers block these emails. To date the developer has not been able to overcome this issue, and as a result conventional email is still often used to communicate to participants.

- **Comments**

Participants can leave 'comments' regarding material on most areas of the site (i.e. as opposed to posting in the forums). Most comments have been on the blogs and in relation to some resources in the BPL.

A 'widget' has recently been added to the sidebar on each page that shows the most recent comments, regardless of where on the site they are made. Until recently it was not always easy for participant to see comments, and it is likely this has slowed engagement through this mechanism.

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<sup>1</sup> A plug-in is a software component that adds a specific feature to an existing software application.

<sup>2</sup> Participants have the options of 'unsubscribing' to the digests.

- **Self 'ratings'**

A number of features have been added that are intended to allow the community to peer review material and contribute to the development of an internal quality assurance system. These are:

- A star rating where any participant can add their rating to a comment to reflect how useful they thought it was, and
- A 'thumbs up' or a 'thumbs down' function.

These systems haven't been fully embedded but may prove useful as the quality assurance process is further developed.

## **Workshop**

As expected with a pilot project there has been a number of challenges that have helped refine the Hub concept. After several months of the site being 'live', it became clear that participants actively participated in technical discussions (i.e. technical and practical aspects of providing advice) but it was difficult to conduct conversations about on-going collaboration online.

A workshop was held in Wellington on 27 June to provide an opportunity for participants to discuss collaboration and other non-technical aspects of the project. The day was intended to be part 're-engagement' and part evaluation. Its objectives were to:

- Re-engage in the original objectives of the Hub, its achievements to date and the next steps;
- Agree shared objectives for what will be achieved together in the next year;
- Decide on the components necessary to achieve any new objectives: business model, resources, membership, management and governance; and
- Set an action plan for work to achieve the collective objectives is set.

Participants made a lot of progress against these objectives during the day and valuable feedback was received. A copy of the full notes from the day is available in the Hub Best Practice Library - <http://hub.communityenergy.org.nz/best-practice-library/>.

Key themes, and decision points from the workshop are included in the commentary below.

## **11. What we've learned**

The assessment of what has and has not worked so well during the pilot is based on feedback from the workshop, results of an online survey (see Appendix B) and the observations of the Project Manager.

### **What worked?**

The pilot provided a fantastic learning opportunity. It has given partners an opportunity to experiment with a new way to build connection and new ways to disseminate knowledge. A lot has been learned in a fairly short amount of time about the strengths and limitations of working online, what is of most value to participants and therefore where future potential lies. The pilot has demonstrated the level of commitment, and willingness to provide practical and in-kind support, from a number of core organisations. This in itself has been of great value, and bodes well for the future.

The website itself has worked well with the most popular parts of the site being the forum (where anyone can post or reply to a question) and the best practice library (where anyone can upload or download resources - i.e. research reports, presentations, tip sheets). Participants appreciate that their posts were almost always responded to and that there was a diversity of input and opinion into relevant topics.

Participants value the connections that they can make with other like-minded practitioners through the Hub. They also value that the members are known to one another and that membership is restricted. This has built trust among the group, which encourages them to share knowledge and resources. It also adds credibility to the content and advice provided in comments. In their feedback, participants compared the hub site favourably to public forums where they are often sceptical about the credibility or intention of participants.

Having a moderator has also worked well and has been an important part of making the pilot work. People liked that their posts were almost always responded to and that they were encouraged to come back to the site and kept informed of what was happening. They valued that someone was responsible for being the 'glue' and keeping things moving.

### **What did not work so well?**

It became clear throughout the pilot and from the feedback of participants that some types of communication and connection do not occur easily online (at least not at present). Specifically, one of the objectives of the Hub was to establish (as we went along) the longer-term objectives for the collaboration and the arrangements necessary to make it viable. A number of attempts were made to facilitate this discussion through the forums but it wasn't possible to create the engagement needed to make progress on this.

Feedback from the workshop and the survey showed that a number of technical and social barriers exist to members using the Hub site. Some of the technical issues (e.g. a slow server and a 'clunky' login mechanism) can be easily addressed and are a result of the site being only in a pilot stage and having few financial resources. Therefore they are not a big concern. The social barriers seem to be: lack of time, aversion to a new way of doing things, mistrust of posting comments online and in some cases a perceived (or real) lack of direct relevance to their day-to-day priorities. These challenges will require further thought to consider where best to place resources in the future.

By the completion of the workshop it became clear that the website, (especially the forum and the best practice library) provides an important foundation for the Hub collaboration and therefore should be maintained and built upon. However, the website itself is only one part (or tool) of the Hub and we need to put more focus on other ways of connecting and into developing "outputs" for members in the next stage of the project.

### *Working with open source software*

The website was built using BuddyPress (<http://buddypress.org>), which is open source social networking software aligned with WordPress (<http://wordpress.org>). WordPress is one of the most popular types of open source web software. Open source software is computer software where the

source code is made available under license to study, change and distribute at no cost to anyone and for any purpose”. It is very often developed in a public, collaborative manner<sup>3</sup>.

The benefits of this system are that the software is very cheap to access and developers all over the world are constantly updating it. The web costs associated with the project were mostly developer time to install and personalise the software for the Hub.

There are also a number of (unanticipated) downsides to using open source software that have provided valuable lessons. Although the original installation of the site went smoothly, the addition of multiple plug-ins (i.e. digests, newsletters, peer ratings etc.) to improve engagement through the site created multiple bugs that actually temporarily prevented engagement. The lesson is that open source software is not without cost. Sufficient budget is needed to test new features and fix bugs as they occur and for on-going maintenance of the site.

### *Timeframe*

The pilot was launched just before Christmas in 2012 and was originally intended to run until 31 March 2013. It was hoped that by then it would have become clear how the Hub needed to evolve in the longer-term. However, it became obvious by February that it was optimistic to expect enough engagement to have built through the site in three months for that to occur.

The three-month timeframe was partly dictated by the budget, which was based on an assumed number of hours required by the Project Manager to facilitate the community. In February the de facto steering group, made up of Beacon, CEN, The Enviroschools Foundation and the Project Manager decided to extend the timeframe to allow longer to see how things developed. The extended timeline, while necessary, meant that the Project Manager had less time per week to ‘drive’ the initiative and progress may have suffered as a result.

## **12. Progress against objectives**

The pilot achieved what it set out to do, which was to test the concept and to establish where its value lay and the elements required to maintain it. The following commentary is provided on the original objectives set.

- **Trial and establish the best ways to facilitate discussion and peer-to-peer learning through the Hub**

Outcome: Hub participants have found the forum and best practice library to be the most useful tools for connecting and sharing information, and effort will be put into developing them further (especially the best practice library). We’ve also learned that some discussion and peer learning needs to occur off line and we will investigate different ways of doing this. It is likely to involve creating some new “products” (i.e. resources) designed to increase the knowledge and the effectiveness of practitioners.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open-source\\_software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open-source_software)

- **Establish a best practice library for (and through) practitioners**

Outcome: The best practice library has been developed and holds lots of potential for further growth. The focus in the next phase of the project will be to increase the diversity of the library, improve the search function and ensure that resources are easy to find. We will also focus on synthesising resources in the library to create new and highly usable resources for advisors working face to face with householders.

- **Establish arrangements to ensure the Hub is viable long term, including**

- **Establishing a quality assurance process to ensure Hub content is high quality**

Outcome: We have put a number of steps in place to build quality assurance into the Hub and its outputs. We have trialled a self-rating system, which has allowed people to comment on the quality of resources. More work is required to encourage people to use this system and to feed it back into the content on the site.

At the workshop it was decided that we would trial a peer review quality system as part of a working group convened to develop the first hub resource. The working group will consist of a number of individuals from different organisations with expertise on a particular topic. The group will need to reach consensus on a number of technical matters and we will use the experience of this process to inform how we build a peer review system into other work.

- **Establishing on-going membership criteria and user guidelines**

Outcome: At a recent meeting of the Hub steering group it was agreed that membership would be based on an assessment of an individual (rather than an organisations) credentials against a set of membership criteria. Membership will be for individuals who can show that through their professional practice they ascribe to and demonstrate the values and principles of the hub. These are loosely, that: advice provided should be based on good science and best practice, and in the best interests of the client. The idea of restricting membership to the Hub is that it will enable us to build a community of practice built on shared objectives, trust and credibility. We believe this will be more effective and provide better opportunities for New Zealand households. We will develop a web-based membership application form and trial the system over the coming months. We will also develop a code of practice for members.

- **Establishing information sharing agreements**

Outcome: At present information and resources are shared quite openly because the membership is small and there is a high level of trust. Further work is required to establish how information can be shared with a wider group and how IP is handled on any material that is created through the Hub.

- **Establish governance arrangements and the ongoing business / funding model**

Outcome: At the workshop it was agreed that the existing MoU partners should continue to act as a quasi-governance group. At a subsequent meeting those partners (Beacon Pathway, The EnviroSchools Foundation and CEN) agreed to revise their existing MoU for another year. Over the coming months this group will determine who else may be approached to be part of the “formal” collaboration. It was agreed that the Hub should sit under this collaborative agreement and did not require a new entity or to be housed in a particular organisation. These arrangements will be monitored over time. Existing Hub participants will remain as members and we will continue to strengthen connections with other partners. In the medium term (at least the next 12 months) the Hub will require external funding to continue operating. The collaboration is still in an early stage and issues of ownership and IP of any potential resources have not been addressed. Introduction of a membership subscription and expanded membership (possible with different levels) will also be considered.

### **13.The next twelve months**

The workshop on 27 June confirmed that there is still a need and a desire for the Practitioners Hub. Valuable feedback has been received through the workshop and the survey and this has set the scene for future work.

The focus in the next twelve months will be to build on what is already working and expand the focus of collaboration away from the website. The website is an important tool that will support this work but will not be the sole focus. Instead partners will focus on developing resources through collaboration that are a synthesis of the collective knowledge of the group and also of value to the group. Subject to an approved work plan and budget there is in principle support from MoU partners to:

- Maintain and develop the site,
- Develop shared resources and a quality assurance system,
- Fund a part time moderator/facilitator to keep the project moving (~10 hours per week).

## **Appendix A: Organisations with representatives participating in the Practitioners' Hub Pilot**

- Auckland Council
- Beacon Pathway
- Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust
- Building Research Association (BRANZ)
- Community Business and Environment Centre
- Community Energy Action
- Community Energy Network
- Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA)
- The Enviroschools Foundation
- Hamilton City Council
- Hutt City Council
- Insulpro Manufacturing
- International Energy Agency
- Invercargill City Council
- Kapiti Coast District Council
- Nelson City Council
- Otago Polytechnic
- Palmerston North City Council
- Rocky Mountain Institute, NZ
- Sustainable Living Education Trust
- Sustainability Options
- Sustainability Trust
- University of Otago - Centre for Sustainability

## **Appendix B - Hub only survey responses**

Between 8 and 28 July Hub participants were invited to complete an online survey consisting of the following questions. 11 participants (23%) completed the survey. The results presented are intended to capture the themes that emerged. They do not attempt quantitative analysis.

### **1. In your opinion, what is the best thing about the Hub website?**

- Connection
- Trusted, known people involved
- Like-minded people
- Knowledgeable/experienced people

### **2. What hasn't worked well, or has been frustrating about the Hub website?**

- Best Practice Library and other resources not as well presented/accessible as they could be.
- Lack of time to use it
- Lack of engagement online – question whether this is the best tool
- Web problems – too slow, difficulty logging in
- Digest emails – can these be more engaging (i.e. more text to entice and a direct link)

### **3. If you could add or change one thing about the Hub website, what would it be?**

- Improve the best practice library – easier to search and find things.
- Swifter access to forum and better digests and direct email links to discussions
- Improve the speed
- More direct input from people 'on the doorstep'

### **4. What are the things that encouraged you to use the Hub website, or brought you back to it?**

- Topics of interest
- Good debate
- Part of a community
- Seeking answers

### **5. What were the things that discouraged you from using the Hub website, or were barriers to using it?**

- Time!!
- Speed and navigation on site
- Losing passwords and barriers logging in
- Content not directly relevant

### **6. What do you think have been the biggest barriers to members using the Hub website?**

- Time!!
- Quicker and easier to call someone already known for the answer
- Posting in an online forum
- Direct relevance to day-to day-work.



**7. Please tell us how you rate the following features that we have trialled on the Hub website**

People are most satisfied with	The Forum Recent Replies box Recent comment box Follow up emails
Has potential - but still needs work	Best Practice Library Search function Digest emails Blogs Newsletters Home page News function
Not so sure about	Star ratings Thumbs Up Personal profile

**8. If money was no object, what would you like the Hub website to be able to do?**

- Synthesise info in best practice library in to usable fact sheets with links to source docs
- Make site faster and easier to navigate
- Events calendar
- Full time administrator engaging people with relevant content and disseminating it
- Better digest emails that are easier to use and access.
- More buy-in from participating organisations – dedicating resources to “Hub” time.