

GreenhackGBG

In the project GreenhackGBG we encourage citizens of Gothenburg to live a greener, healthier and fuller life. We provide a forum for participants to share their tips and ideas for the movement towards a sustainable Gothenburg, ecological as well as social. To create opportunities for the participants to take an active part in this we use social media like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The name “Greenhack” alludes to the phenomena “life hacks” where people share smart tricks on the internet covering all walks of life. GreenhackGBG is one of the actions in the Environmental Programme (see other action)

The project group includes Communicators and Environment Analysts of the City of Gothenburg. The project also collaborates with Chalmers University of Technology which is developing a web service. The service will provide the participants with an idea of their own climate impact, based on their consumption. The project is partly financed by the region Västra Götaland region with the aim to involve other of the 49 municipalities in the region.

The idea behind GreenhackGBG

Many people are deeply concerned about climate change but feel that it's too hard to deal with. In the project GreenhackGBG we want to make it more understandable and show that even a small change in our life style is a change in the right direction and can make a difference together with others. Research confirms that many of the changes in life style that are necessary in order to reach a sustainable level of GHG emissions, not necessarily mean a lower quality of life. In many cases the situation is the opposite. For example if you consume more vegetables and eat less red meat you will reduce the risk of developing intestinal cancer, and cycling instead of travelling by car decreases the risk of heart disease. Every step towards a sustainable lifestyle is of value. In GreenhackGBG it's the participants who decide what to do, whilst GreenhackGBG provides support by giving concrete tools on how it can be done. It is possible for everyone to make a change in their lifestyle. Hopefully they'll find out that it's attractive and we can urge them to go further. GreenhackGBG wants to inspire people to a greener, healthier and fuller life. By giving concrete tools on how to act in that direction and to show that another way of living is not only possible but desirable.

We can now see lots of trends in lifestyle like cycling, organic food, growing vegetables, buying second hand, collaborative consumption etc. that back up the message in GreenhackGBG. Before, working overtime to make more money was a status symbol, now it's health and free time. There are also many groups of people, such as NGO:s, that collaborate and support our goal for a sustainable Gothenburg.

From Living Life to GreenhackGBG

In the project “Living Life” which the city of Gothenburg pursued between 2010 and 2011, eleven families were challenged to implement sustainable lifestyles. For a year the families were given seven challenges to live more sustainably in terms of food, travel, energy consumption etc. The families

were given both information and coaching from municipal experts. On average the families reduced their climate emissions by 14 per cent.

GreenhackGBG started up in January 2015 and has the same base concept as in the "Living Life" project, but there is no limit to the number of participants. As in the Living Life project the participants are challenged to try something new in their lifestyle, like invite a friend to a vegetarian dinner, cycle to work or to visit a green area. Every month we change theme for the challenges; consumption and waste, energy, leisure time, food, travelling and chemicals.

We start up the month by arranging seminars for the participants to get inspiration and to learn more about the environmental theme of the month. We also release the challenges of the month on our website and inform through our newsletter and social media channels. In March for example, the theme was consumption and waste. The seminar was about collaborative consumption with the association "Kollaborativ ekonomi Göteborg" and was attended by 82 people. Afterwards a questionnaire survey was sent to the participants in order to get their view of the seminar and suggestions on how to support them to adopt a sustainable lifestyle. Many suggestions are about structures, like stations for charging electric cars, more cycle pools, but also about more knowledge and higher taxes on fossil fuels. There is also a demand for tools that makes it easier to live environmentally friendly.

On Instagram a person took up the gauntlet in public and described her everyday life in text, pictures and videos. The challenge was to give rise to as little waste as possible under one month. That proved to be hard, especially buying food without packaging. GreenhackGBG has also invited guest writers to share their competence and experience with the participants on Instagram.

The social media used (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) are channels that open up for the participants to contribute with their knowledge and provide tangible tips to others, and to spread these further in their networks. For the time being (October 2015) 1159 people have signed up as participants on our website and the number of followers on social media is as follows: Facebook 2236, Instagram 1721, Twitter 510. The goal is to have at least 5000 participants by the end of the year 2015. This is a new way for us to work and we frequently evaluate the steps taken to see how to move on. One thing that's clear is that we have to be better at attracting more men to take part. From what we know they are about one third of the participants.

Next step Svalna

One solution to that problem can be the web service Svalna that will be available to the participants in GreenhackGBG from spring 2015. We have hopes that more men will be attracted by the possibility of measuring and the new technique. Svalna is a voluntary web service which provides individuals a picture of their own climate impact based on their consumption. That will increase participant's awareness of their own role in climate change and help to set up an individual goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The service also provides the user with concrete suggestions on how to reduce their emissions. Svalna uses transaction data from the user's online banking to categorize purchases and calculate greenhouse gas emissions. The service has been developed by Chalmers University of Technology.

The City of Gothenburg also looks forward to getting the statistics from Svalna in order to get a better picture of the emissions from the citizens of Gothenburg. Besides following up the

participant's devotion we will also be able to follow up their reduced levels of GHG emissions. The purpose is to make targeted and efficient efforts to support a more climate smart behavior.

More information:

GreenhackGBG web page and social media (in Swedish):

www.greenhackgbg.se

<https://www.facebook.com/greenhackgbg>

<https://instagram.com/greenhackgbg>

<https://twitter.com/greenhackgbg>

Living Life Project (in Swedish):

http://climatesolutions.plan.aau.dk/index.php?title=Projekt_%E2%80%9DLeva_Livet%E2%80%9D_i_G%C3%B6teborg_%E2%80%93_familjer_utmanas_till_nya_resvanor

Svalna (in Swedish):

<http://www.svalna.se>

<http://www.chalmers.se/sv/institutioner/ee/nyheter/Sidor/Ny-webbtjanst-ska-oka-goteborgarnas-klimatkoll-.aspx>

Research report - Low-carbon Gothenburg 2.0 Technological potentials and lifestyle changes

(in English):

http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/sites/default/files/low_carbon_gothenburg_2.0_mistra_urban_futures_reports_2014_01.pdf

Kollaborativ ekonomi Göteborg :

www.kollekogbg.se