

**SUSTAINABLE FASHION WEEK**

**2022**

**BEHAVIOUR CHANGE RESEARCH**



# OUR INTENTION

We want to understand more about people's fashion habits, and what barriers people are faced with when it comes to making more sustainable choices. What people need, depending on a number of factors, will vary significantly. To prompt behaviour change, we're seeking to understand these varying needs and then design our programme of activities in response. We hope this research can give us the information we need to enable us to provide solutions to those barriers, and help change people's relationship with fashion for the better.

A Single Thread CIC - the driving force behind Sustainable Fashion Week - stands for inclusivity and accessibility. Everyone gets dressed every day; therefore, everyone has a part to play in the sustainable fashion story - but not everyone feels it is relevant to them. We want to make sure that everyone has access to the skills and information that they need to enable meaningful change in their consumption of fashion, regardless of income or background.

Fashion causes significant environmental and social harm. It is responsible for between 4% and 10% of global carbon emissions. The production of fast fashion has accelerated in the past decade, with new trends coming out almost every month. Clothes are made as cheaply as possible, primarily using synthetic oil-based fibres or poorly farmed natural fibres, then manufactured into garments often under awful working conditions. They are not made to last. By doing this, big brands are profiting from the exploitation of farmers and garment workers, as well as the earth's ecological integrity.

Our activity involves up-skilling, inspiring and empowering the community to equip them with the skills and information needed to support change in their consumption habits and help reconnect them with their clothes. Our 2021 flagship event was a showcase of the many ways we can create new fashion habits that are not harmful to people or the planet. We've hosted panel discussions, skills workshops, online workshops, repair cafes and a wide range of different community events. The results of this survey will enable us to develop the focus of our community engagement activity, ensuring it directly delivers against an identified need. SFW is keen to put energy into empowering the community, in ways that tangibly help, to take action and drive positive change.



# A SINGLE THREAD



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Understanding the barriers that people face in order to make more sustainable fashion choices we aim to create behaviour change by creating a set of recommendations from our research. These recommendations will enable A Single Thread CIC to increase engagement by providing the support that people want and need to make meaningful change, in a way that best suits them.

## Data Process

In order to gain the information we needed we conducted a questionnaire and face-to-face interviews with the public. The online questionnaire had 138 participants over a few months, where we were able to develop an understanding of demographics, current behaviours, barriers faced, support needed and participants current knowledge about sustainability in fashion. The face-to-face interviews allowed for people to tell their own stories, share experience and feelings. This is incredibly important as there is no one way to engage with sustainable fashion, nor can we develop a true picture of peoples situation and understanding for not being able to consume fashion in a more sustainable way.

## Recommendations

From the data findings we have developed four recommendations that will help people to engage, develop skills, grow their knowledge around sustainable fashion and give them the opportunity and confidence to take action against the fashion industries that are currently damaging people and the planet.

- 1 Create a Podcast Series** – A majority of the participants stated they would like to learn more about sustainable fashion through a podcast series. In order to give people reliable information we decided that interviews and talks with people who are part of impacted communities and industry professionals. The series will not only make people aware of damage caused, but also give people the knowledge of what makes fashion sustainable or unsustainable, share initiatives and resources that are doing good, and give people the confidence to change their own behaviours.
- 2 Create a National Campaign: “Mend it May”** – The aim is to increase awareness and conversation around the fashion industry on a much larger scale. Participants pledge to not purchase any new items of clothing for the month and repair as many items as possible. Using behaviour change theory from the COM-B model and Transtheoretical Model of behaviour change can motivate and create an opportunity for the public to engage, learn and actively participate in sustainable fashion practices.
- 3 Develop a Strong Social Media Strategy** – A large amount of the questionnaire participants stated that they get sustainability information from Social Media, however, did not find it as reliable as other sources of information. By using information from more reliable sources, such as articles and data, to formulate digestible social media posts where the sourced can be accessed and verified by the public. Focusing posts on prolonging the life of clothing will also be beneficial counteracting the mass consumption of highstreet clothing through the education and awareness of mending, reuse and repair.
- 4 Talks and Workshops** – Talks and workshops were rated highly by questionnaire participants as a preferred method of learning. Creating events on fast fashion impacts, what sustainable fashion is, different clothing materials and how to care for them. It is important that these are beginner friendly as our data collected showed there are varying levels of knowledge, and this should be accessible for people just beginning their sustainable journey. Many participants also wanted events to be held in schools to begin education and behaviour change early in life.

# QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

## Data Overview

We had 138 participants in the questionnaire over a few months of gathering data. Participants were asked to take part through the Sustainable Fashion Week's social media, as well as individual contacts and groups of different communities such as Facebook creative and area specific groups. We also contacted local businesses, universities, community centers and Social Media Influencers being asked if employees, visitors and followers could take part in our data collection. Our aim was to reach people in as many different communities as we could within the time period, and not only people who are currently engaging with sustainable fashion practices.

The questionnaire comprised of 21 questions which covered:

- demographics and psychographics of the participants,
- behaviours participants currently have around their fashion habits,
- barriers participants currently face in engaging with sustainable fashion,
- support needed to increase engagement
- and the current knowledge participants have of sustainable fashion.

Covering these areas allows for us to create a picture of the current level and habits the participants have around sustainable fashion, the barriers they face and what can be done to break these down and increase engagement.

## Demographics

- Age of respondents ranged from 18 to 64, with the highest group being 25 to 34. Followed by 18 to 24, followed by 35 to 44.
- 92/138 respondents were female
- Only 10% of respondents were ethnicities other than White British
- Respondents lived in a variety of areas with higher and lower social economic factors all over the UK and some even abroad,

25/138

Stated the most common place they want reliable and accessible information was from the *retailer themselves, or at the point of purchase*

67%

Of respondents said they would *definitely* be interested in changing their consumption habits

78

People said that price prevents them from shopping sustainably, whilst accessibility (51) and sizing issues (36) were also commonly mentioned

# QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

## Barriers to sustainable fashion

Price (78), accessibility (51), and sizing issues (36) were cited as the most common barriers for engaging with sustainable fashion by Q17, 'What do you find prohibits or puts you off from shopping more sustainably?'. Whilst underrepresentation in the industry (31), lack of understanding (24), and lack of time (21) were also common responses. These responses provide us with invaluable information which helps us to curate our recommendations in a targeted approach to hopefully negate the most prominent barriers as much as possible.

What do you find prohibits or puts you off from shopping more sustainably?

78/138

Said price

51/138

Said accessibility

36/138

Said sizing issues

## Areas of interest within sustainable fashion

The responses to Q18, 'Would you be interested in changing your habits to become more sustainable?', indicated that there seems to be plenty of interest in changing consumption habits to become more sustainable, with 93 saying yes, 11 saying maybe, and 4 saying no- all of which already felt they are as sustainable as they can be. Q20, 'What would you like to learn more about in regards to sustainable fashion?' shows the main areas people want to learn about are, 'What materials are most damaging to the planet (57)?', 'How to mend clothing (45)?', 'What are the basics of what makes clothing either sustainable or unsustainable (40)?', 'How to upcycle unwanted clothing (39)?', and 'How to care for clothes and make them last longer (39)?'. This information is extremely useful as it provides a clear insight into what might engage people. We have used these responses to guide our recommendations which will be explored in more detail later on in this report.

"Increasing general understanding of the issue a fundamental priority."

# QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

Only 3 participants mentioned that sustainable fashion can have a positive impact on the environment.



## Understandings of sustainable fashion

A thematic analysis of Q6 unraveled some interesting responses. Most commonly, 41 answers referred to words that may be considered synonymous with ‘sustainability’, like ‘eco-friendly’ or ‘clothing made with environmental considerations.’ Breaking this down further, 16 referred to ‘lowering’, ‘reducing’, or ‘minimizing’ environmental impact. 11 referred to having no environmental impact, and only 3 referred to sustainable fashion having a positive impact on the environment. The other 11 referred more broadly to either ‘environmentally friendly’, ‘eco-friendly’, or ‘environmentally conscious’ clothing. These findings indicate that the majority of people have quite a vague understanding of sustainable fashion which would prove difficult to act upon. Thus, this report makes increasing general understanding of the issue a fundamental priority.

“ It seems that for many, sustainable fashion is framed only as a purchase decision, something you can buy. ”

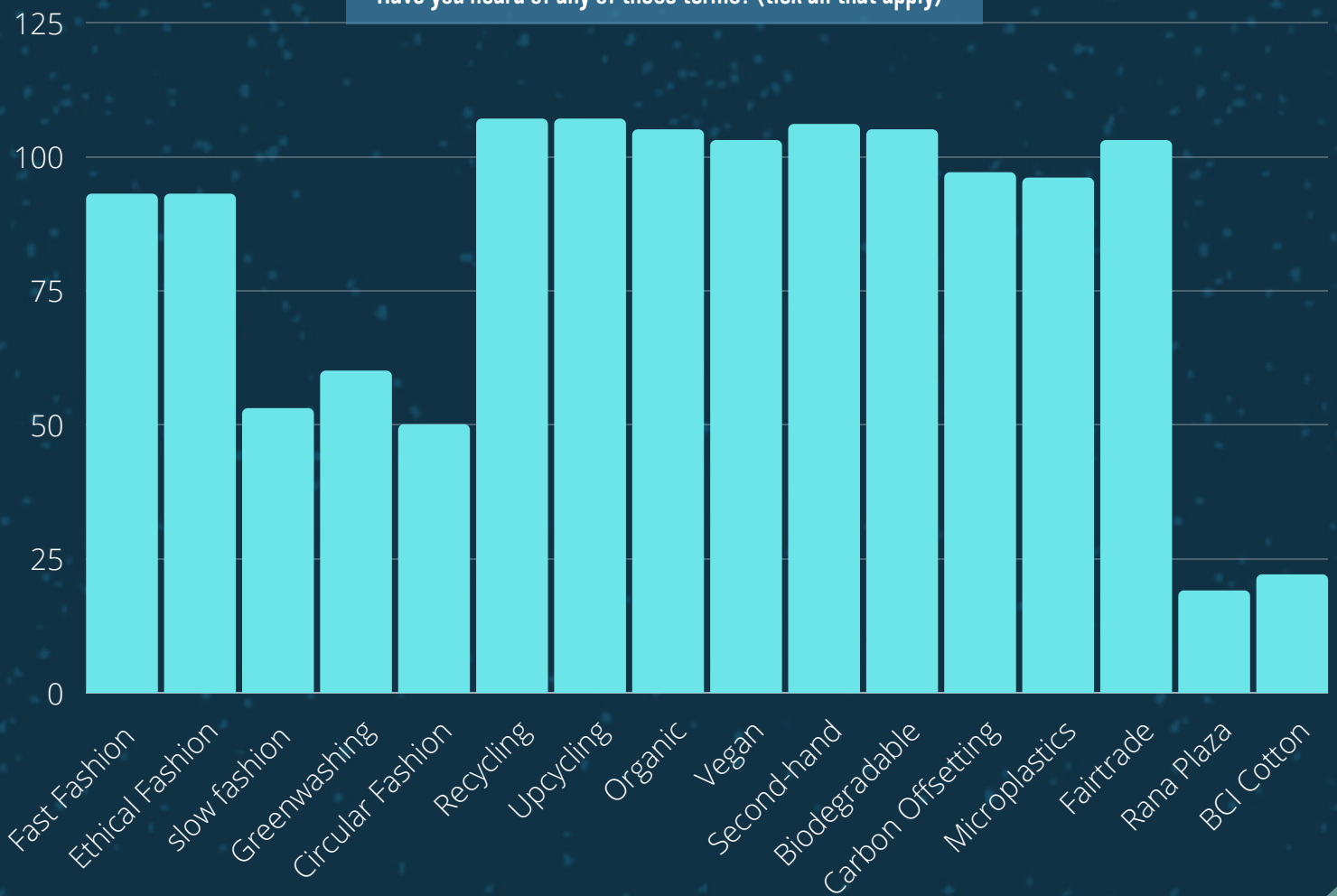
A large number of respondents (33) referred to ‘social impact’, ‘socially responsible’, ‘ethical’, or just to treating employees well, whilst 19 referred to either the use of ‘eco-materials’ or using less resources in production. These are good considerations, but from this it appears that many people see sustainable fashion only in terms of production. It seems that for many, sustainable fashion is framed only as a purchase decision, something you can buy. With no focus on post-consumption behavior, the onus shifts solely onto the producer. Because of this, this report will go on to place emphasis on suggesting ways to encourage sustainable post-purchase behaviors as well as increasing knowledge of materials.

Not everyone defined sustainable fashion in such a way, however, as 29 referred to ‘quality’, ‘longevity’, or ‘value’. Meanwhile, 24 referred to ‘second-hand’, ‘upcycling’, ‘mending’, or ‘making your own clothes’, and 15 referred to designing clothes with disposal or regeneration in mind. This indicates that many can acknowledge the importance of post-purchase behaviors, and provides a basis for increasing people’s knowledge in this area so that they can engage in sustainable behaviors, like mending or swaps for example. Behaviors like these are essential to closing the loop or at least slowing down the industry.

# QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

This data highlights the fact that people want to develop their knowledge of sustainable fashion in a digital format. This allows the public to have access to accessible learning materials - as long as they have internet access and a device that can play the content. It also allows for learning materials to be accessed in the participants own time as podcasts and online resources are not live, whereas live resources rely on the participant to be available at a certain time and place. Online talks can be live, pre-recorded or uploaded following a live session, allowing participants to access materials in a time that best suits them.

Have you heard of any of these terms? (tick all that apply)



In order to gain an understanding of the current knowledge participants had of sustainable fashion they were asked 'Have you heard of any of these terms? (Select all that apply)'. Sixteen terms were asked about sustainable fashion movements, initiatives, processes, and words commonly used when discussing positives and problems in fashion sustainability. 11 of the 16 terms had over 90 participants select that they have heard of the term before, with the lowest number of positive responses being 'BCI Cotton' (the Better Cotton Initiative - which promotes standards for cotton farming) with 22 and 'Rana Plaza' (one of the largest disasters in the garment production industry where a factory collapsed in 2013) with 19 selections.



# QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

There are gaps in knowledge and information accessed by the participants around materials and the impact the fashion industry has on communities. The survey participants were asked 'What would you like to learn more about in regards to sustainable fashion? (Tick your top 4 choices)', the top answer was 'the different materials clothes are made of and their impact on the planet' and coming midway was 'How fashion can damage people and communities and what can be done to help'. These two topics come hand in hand as people and communities are needed to grow, manufacture, ship, sell, buy, wear, and dispose of clothing, as well as being negatively impacted by clothing production and disposal.

## What do respondents want to learn more about in regards to sustainable fashion?

57/138

Said what materials are most damaging to the planet

45/138

Said how to mend clothing

40/138

Said what the basics are of what makes clothing either sustainable or unsustainable

39/138

Said how to upcycle unwanted clothing

## How do people want to learn about sustainable fashion?

Thematic analysis of Q10, 'Where would you like to see more accessible and reliable information come from regarding sustainable fashion and how?' revealed that the majority of respondents (25) want information from the retailers themselves, or at the point of purchase. However, issues like greenwashing are rife (Fashion revolution's fashion sustainability index, 2020). This apparent solution would be very difficult to regulate, and retailers are unlikely to tell you to buy less. This could also shift the responsibility more onto the retailers and away from the consumers. Social media was identified as the second most common response (21).

Moreover, social media was the most common source that people already gain sustainable fashion knowledge from (87), displayed by the results from Q8, 'Tick the three most popular sources you have gained sustainable fashion knowledge from?'. However, Q9, 'In your opinion, tick the three most trustworthy sources of information based on sustainability', showed that only 40 found social media to be trustworthy, whilst 65 said articles were trustworthy, but only 47 currently used them as a source. The recommendations section will elaborate on this, to show how articles could be used to increase trust in information on social media.

# FACE TO FACE FINDINGS

## Demographics

- Respondents in the centre of Bristol ranged from university students to middle aged and were predominantly White middle class
- Case study GL12 man was a man on a low income from the GL12 area
- Focus group participants were aged between 20-25, 6 women and 4 men. Out of these participants, 5 were White British middle class, 3 were White British university students and 1 was an Asian university student.

6/10

Focus group participants were *completely unaware* of how damaging the fashion industry is and *did not* see the problem with buying fast fashion

1/10

Expressed that as a mid-sized woman around a size 14-16 on average they found it *extremely difficult* to buy *secondhand* clothing

## However...

after being told a little about sustainable fashion and problems with fast fashion they were all shocked and *wanted to learn* how to shop more sustainably

'Even from the small number of respondents I was able to talk to on the streets in Bristol, it was interesting hearing different opinions people had towards clothing consumption. To me, the differences in attitude across generations appeared notable... the older generation seemed to guide their responses more naturally toward reduced consumption, for example making clothes last with mending, and lower levels of consumption seemed to be normal to them out of habit. Whereas the younger respondents appeared to be more concerned with changing their purchase behavior, concerned more by brand decisions and secondhand consumption, rather than reducing quantity of purchases, durability of items themselves, or mending. Consumption is a process with many stages, not just a one-time purchase behavior, so it was eye opening to gain other perspectives on how people frame the issue in their minds and as a result, how they interact with their clothing.'



' Social Media  
emerged as an area  
of interest in  
case study 1 '



# 'On the High Street' Interviews

## What did we do?

As part of our research and data collection, we undertook some face-to-face interviews in Bristol City Centre. These ended up being less successful than we hoped as most people were unwilling to stop and share their thoughts with us. However, the handful of people who did stop to talk gave us very interesting and diverse opinions. These ranged from not believing in climate change and sustainability, to not knowing what the term sustainability meant, to thinking sustainable fashion is determined by price and is characterized by expensive high street brands such as Calvin Klein. But speaking to one man from GL12 was of note.

## Case Study // GL12 Man

This man's take on sustainable fashion was particularly interesting. He explained how he is environmentally conscious and lives a vegan diet, but being a volunteer, he is on a low income. Because of this, he shops mostly from charity shops and dabbles in upcycling. As a single dad, he is constantly repairing clothing, putting to use the skills he learnt as a child. When asking how he learnt how to sew and mend, he said,

**'I was in the army cadets a boy, so my mum agreed I could join the cadets as long as I looked after my own kit. (She) Taught me how to sew the badges on and all that business, so I think it was from my upbringing.'**

He felt the tight knit community where he grew up also influenced this massively. Through all generations being together in the same space, people could share skills, but this has been lost over the years and might be why such skills have become less common. He said that he wants to engage more with sustainable fashion, but struggles because of the price, saying,

**'It's like middle class stuff really, isn't it? And it just shouldn't be. And I know that's the cost it really is, you know the stuff you get cheap is because its mass produced and not ethical. Buts it's that trying to marry-up when you're on a lower income, with your ethics, and that's a big challenge for me.'**

He told me how he isn't into buying clothes just for one instance like people do nowadays. Instead, he focuses on longevity and durability. What was particularly interesting was that despite his vegan diet, he wears leather boots because they are more durable. This shows how dedicated he is to getting as much life as possible out of the items he owns,

**'I'll buy good quality stuff that lasts... they (his leather boots) last for years, they're 15 years old and I'm still wearing them.'**

Speaking to him provided great insight into how realistic the demands of sustainable fashion are on someone who is environmentally conscious but on a lower budget. He has shown that there are small practical changes that people on a budget can make to reduce the damage from their consumption, like focusing on longevity and repair skills. By using online communities as a space to share skills, it is hoped that we can reintroduce repair methods like sewing skills as mainstream knowledge.


# Face to Face focus group

We decided it would also be useful to have a small focus group of 10 people. This proved to be very useful as the participants were able to have more of an open discussion and it allowed ideas and thoughts to be shared easier. It also allowed the opportunity to educate on what sustainable fashion is and how people can be more conscious of their fashion purchasing habits. These individuals were all aged between 20-25 with six being women and four being men.


The results from these interviews were very interesting. Six of the interviewees were completely unaware of how damaging the fashion industry is and did not see the problem in buying fast fashion. Therefore, they do not engage in buying sustainable fashion. After being told a little about sustainable fashion and problems with fast fashion they were all shocked and wanted to learn how to shop better. However, when discussing sustainable fashion they identified lack of time, sustainable fashion being too expensive and not knowing where to start. From a brief bit of information about fast and sustainable fashion the interviewees felt like there was a mine field of information to navigate.

To engage and learn about sustainable fashion the interviewees expressed an interest in e-books that they could easily read on the go as well as easily digestible social media content. The interviewees also expressed in seeing informative short form video content such as Instagram reels. A few interviewees also wanted an online database where they could find information as well as be able to find local sustainable and second-hand stores which especially had stocks of fashionable items in bigger sizes.

I thought these results were very interesting, it made me realise how much of an 'echo chamber' I lived in. With studying sustainability, it shocked me that over half of the group had absolutely no idea on sustainable fashion and the impact that fast fashion has on the environment. This showed me that there is still a massive barrier in how we need to educate the younger generation on sustainable fashion and climate issues. This was echoed in their views on the barriers to engaging with sustainable fashion as these echoed the responses we got with our online questionnaire. I found it especially interesting to hear from the mid-sized woman as outside of our research when discussing buying sustainably with friends this is an issue that they have also communicated to me.



"I am a midsized woman who is on average a size 14-16 in most shops. I would love to buy sustainable and buy more clothes second hand, however, most of the clothes that I find in charity shops are either too small or just not something that I would wear. I try to be intentional when purchasing clothing and only buy things that would fit in my wardrobe without buying anything else. I am also not able to afford to buy sustainably as my income does not stretch to that which is a shame as I would like to be more sustainable."






# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Sustainable fashion and the damaging effects of the fast fashion industry is likely going to remain a prominent issue in fighting the climate crisis. However, this research has allowed us to understand the barriers that individuals face in order to engage and make more sustainable choices when it comes to purchasing clothes.

From the research we have come up with four recommendations which will enable A Single Thread CIC to increase engagement by providing the support that people want and need to make meaningful change, in a way that best suits them. We have developed our recommendations around behaviour change theory so that it is an easy and proven way to enact long term change and allow consumers to change their behaviours and buy more sustainably.

We focused our recommendations from our data findings to making sure that we were creating easily accessible knowledge, as this was an area that we identified consumers struggled with. These recommendations are an easy for people to engage, develop skills, grow their knowledge around sustainable fashion and give them the opportunity and confidence to act against the fashion industries that are currently damaging people and the planet, whilst also being applicable and accessible for different age groups.



# RECOMMENDATION ONE

## PODCASTS



42%

people chose *podcasts* as their first option for where they would like to learn more about sustainable fashion



22%

People stated that '*underrepresentation in the industry*' prohibits them from shopping more sustainably

Podcasts rated highest for the question 'How would you like to learn more about sustainable fashion? (Tick your top 3 choices)' on the digital survey. Out of 14 options including 'Other (please state)' 58 out of the 138 respondents opted for 'Podcasts', with the second most popular result being 'Information on where to find online resources' with 43 participants.

We want to give people the best access to reliable information so they can make the best decisions they can regarding their fashion choices and create positive change. By creating a podcast series to discuss how fashion is affecting different communities we can create widely accessible content by interviewing and involving industry professionals and people from impacted communities to share their knowledge and their own lived experiences. 31 people who participated in the online survey stated that 'underrepresentation in the industry' prohibits them from shopping more sustainably, with this podcast we could create a platform where people who have not been heard are able to speak freely.

### The aim of these podcasts would be to:

- Make people aware of the damage the fashion industry can have on different communities
- Give people the knowledge of what makes fashion sustainable or unsustainable.
- Share initiatives, activities and other resources that help create a more sustainable fashion future.
- Give people the confidence and passion to change their own behaviors when it comes to their own fashion choices.

Interviewing people or initiatives who represent people who are directly impacted by the fashion industry (such as farmers who are being exploited, factory workers in unsafe work environments), and indirectly impacted (such as people whose homes are being polluted or destroyed because of the fashion industry) will create awareness to consumers of the damage high street shopping can have on communities and their homes.

Discussing materials and manufacturing processes will improve the understanding of the complex processes a single item of clothing goes through, including all the people, energy and pollution that goes into a single item of clothing. Sharing alternatives to big brand high street shopping will give people confidence that they can do something to become more sustainable. This could include material certifications, brands with transparent supply chains, learning new skills such as clothing repair, buying less and wearing items more, clothes swapping events, and much more.

This podcast will give the public new knowledge, confidence, and ideas about what they can do to help communities who have been exploited by the fashion industry and reduce the damage their current shopping habits have. Participants can also learn in a time that best suits their needs, on the go and at their own pace.

# RECOMMENDATION TWO

## 'MEND IT MAY' CAMPAIGN



17%

people have previously engaged with activism, such as; emailing MP's, *engaging with campaigns* and boycotting clothing shops



19%

of respondents said that lack of *awareness/ understanding* prohibits them from shopping sustainably

### What is Mend it May?

Mend it May was created with the goal of raising more awareness and increasing conversation around the fashion industry on a mass scale. With inspiration taken from already successful campaigns such as 'Veganuary', Mend it May encourages individuals to sign up to a month of mending as many items of their clothes as they are capable of with no maximum or minimum, alongside pledging to not buying anything new. With the other three recommendations being more knowledge and informative based, we wanted to create one which simply got more people involved in the conversation, with the hope of individuals carrying out further research independently.

### Why a national campaign?

The theory behind Mend it May has come from one determinant from the COM-B model of behaviour change and the Transtheoretical Model of behaviour change. Firstly, the COM-B model of behaviour change has been designed with three major premises in which an individual must have in order to successfully carry out the behaviour change. These are, capability, physically and being psychologically capable of seeing it through, motivation; understanding the fashion industry, its consequences and what needs to be done whilst having the motivation to do it, and opportunity; socially and physically having the resources to sustain sustainable shopping habits (Wilson, 2016). The determinant which was the focal point of this campaign is creating reflective motivation; Wilson (2016) states that creating reflective motivation is achieved by creating positive feelings about the behavioural target, and it is known that by engaging with a service such as pledging to a goal can increase positive behaviour change, this happens by allowing the individual to embrace social responsibility through their engagement. Secondly, the Transtheoretical model uses the progression of change, consisting of five stages the individual experiences before the behaviour change happens. These are pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance (Spencer, 2007). Which suggests that having a goal of one month of the year allows enough time for each individual to process each stage of the Transtheoretical Model, before carrying out the action stage. Binding behaviour change theory and collected data together, we believe that the Mend it May campaign has real potential to make change on a much wider scale.

# RECOMMENDATION THREE

## DEVELOP A STRONG SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY



63%

people already use social media as their *main* source of information



34%

people found information on social media to be *trustworthy*

### Why social media?

People wanted to receive reliable and accessible information directly from retailers or at the point of purchase. However, issues like greenwashing are rife (Fashion revolution's fashion sustainability index, 2020). This could also shift the responsibility onto the retailers and away from consumers. Furthermore, it is well established that information alone does not guarantee behavior change (Diddi et al., 2019) (Preuit and Yan, 2017) as consumption is a complicated, multi-faceted decision (Sullivan et al., 2012). Therefore, this report recommends encouraging sustainable fashion consumption through engaging means on social media (SM).

### Clear, accessible information

SM is the most common source of information but not the most trustworthy. So, to publicize valid information, it is recommended that SM posts are combined with trustworthy sources like articles. Taking small clips of information from reliable sources and posting them on SM in accessible language that is easier to understand is recommended. Information can be applied to popular brands, so people have the tools to make decisions based on knowledge of materials and dyes in the clothes they look to consume. Posts containing specialized language should have a 'sustainability for dummies' style translation underneath, presented in language that is accessible to everyone. Through prioritizing making confusing information easy to understand, it might make the fundamental aspects of sustainable fashion more tangible for those who see it only as a vague buzzword. People just need to understand little ways they can alter their behaviors to help both them and the planet.

### Helping yourself, helping the planet

Alongside the 'dumbing down' of the issue, it would prove beneficial to clearly present ways changes can benefit the individual. SM posts could include demonstrations of people combatting identified barriers through creative reuse. This can be done by showing examples where people have upcycled cheap (competitive with Shein and Primark) old clothing with faults from wear and tear and applied easy fixes to them. Posts should display creative ways 'waste' can be reused and repurposed to encourage the message of 'waste is just a verb'.

Supplementing this, simple tips and tricks can be shown to help people learn 'life-hacks' for prolonging the life of their clothes, as well as resizing or customizing them. People can send in 'Simple Sewing Savings': fixes and mends which can be shown on the page to share ideas, inspire others, and encourage normalization of sustainable behaviors. To drive activity, a monthly competition for 'best upcycler' can be decided by whichever post gets the most likes in the month.

By making complicated information more accessible and displaying personal benefits, whilst providing a space to share ideas, SM posts could engage people with sustainability. As a result, increasing their understanding and allowing them to take on more responsibility (Armstrong et al. 2016).



# RECOMMENDATION FOUR

## TALKS AND WORKSHOPS



34%

of the responses were for in person events and workshops



9%

of people want to learn about sustainable fashion in an academic setting

The data showed that people were really interested in in-person talks and workshops where they could learn. After the pandemic people expressed that they found in person sessions to be more engaging and interesting than online. These talks could also be recorded and uploaded for people unable to attend. This would allow a database to be built up online of useful information for people to look back on or learn more. We would also create informational packs and workshops to give out to schools as educating the younger demographics on the importance of fast fashion and climate change is extremely important.

### Workshops:

When asked what people would like to learn regarding sustainable fashion the most popular answers were 'The different materials clothes are made of and their impact on the planet' 'How fashion can damage people and communities and what can be done to help' 'Where to shop more sustainably on a budget' 'How to care for your clothes better and make them last longer' and 'Where to shop sustainably and locally'.

We would create a few beginner workshop series; these would run monthly with a different topic each month. The workshops would all have 4 sessions running over the month. This would allow people to tune into different topics that interested them the most and not overload them with information as this was identified as a barrier in engaging with sustainable fashion. These workshops would come with worksheets to help learn more to be completed every week as well as an information document that would be easy to refer to and share with others. Some ideas for the workshop sessions are listed below.

- Fast fashion and its impacts – an introductory workshop going through the basics of fast fashion; it would cover the start of fast fashion, why it is so damaging to the environment and the factors making fast fashion so accessible and damaging today.
- The basics of sustainable fashion – this workshop would go through where the best place to start is when looking at sustainable fashion such as buying second hand, sustainable brands and being intentional with buying.
- Fabrics, materials and how to care for them – this workshop would explore the ways to care for fabrics in order to make them last the longest, it would also cover microplastics when washing fabrics and using things such as a GUPPYFRIEND to catch them.
- The basics of mending clothing – this would be more of a hands-on workshop with sewing machines and fabrics where attendees could bring different items of clothing and be taught the basics.

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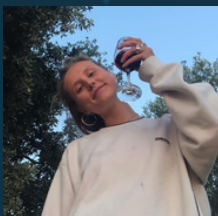
This research report was produced by students from the University of the West of England.



**Isabelle Eaton** - Currently studying an MSc in Sustainable Development. I have always had a passion for nature and animals for as long as I can remember. As I grew up, I realised the impact humans were having on the planet and wanted to learn what I could to protect it. Completing this research has been really eye opening and has further ignited my passion for making sustainability and climate change issues easily accessible to individuals.



**Isobel Manley** - I wanted to know how craft can actively contribute to a better future which lead me to study for my MSc in Sustainable Development, and I have recently started my own sewing business upcycling textiles and using waste fabric. This project has taught me so much about what sustainable fashion is and what it can become, especially the importance of community engagement in making positive change, which I will continue to work towards in the future.



**Sophie Junnonen** - Currently studying an MSc in Sustainable Development based in Bristol. I'm super passionate about tackling the climate crisis with particular interest of the fast fashion industry on the environment, meaning this research has been pretty exciting alongside gaining invaluable knowledge on what needs to be done in the future to positively impact the people and the planet, which is something I hope to contribute to further.



**Nick Fahey Williams** - Studying 'Sustainable Development in Practice' at the University of the West of England. Particularly interested in consumerism and upcycling with hopes of going into sustainable fashion .