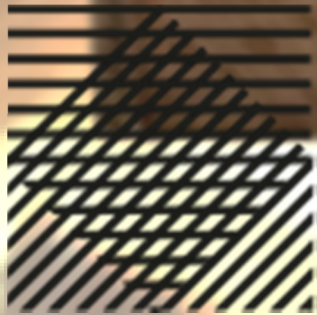


# TRANSFER

'Making it Real' Exhibition Report



Trinity Shopping Centre, Leeds.

6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2015.



# TRANSFER

## Trading Approaches to Nurturing Sustainable consumption in Fashion and Energy Retail (TRANSFER)

TRANSFER is knowledge exchange project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Retail Sector Initiative 2013 (ES/L005204/1).

With growing drives towards greater sustainability within the retail sector and growing requirement to conform to existing and emerging legislation, companies from ostensibly disparate sectors face the common challenge of encouraging the reduced consumption of saleable products, while simultaneously maintaining financial prosperity.

Initially focused on knowledge exchange between the energy & water utilities and fashion retailers, TRANSFER is now working together with a diverse group of large and SME retailers from a number of sectors, with the aim of successfully addressing this paradox.

Combining the experiences of our commercial partners with academic expertise from a team of psychologists and fashion and management experts from the University of Sheffield and University of the Arts, London; TRANSFER is also investigating how efforts to promote sustainable consumption within retail are received and responded to by consumers.

In fulfilling the project aims we hope to foster a more complete understanding of how retail sector initiatives can be successfully designed and implemented in order to have a positive impact on both retailers and their customers.

### HOW MANY PEOPLE DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE A T-SHIRT?

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This non-technical report provides a summary of the TRANSFER 'Making it Real' exhibition, held at Trinity Shopping Centre, Leeds (February 2015). This innovative, interactive exhibition was conceived of and developed upon the basis of discussions held with TRANSFER partners at a commercial partner workshop held in April 2014.

Dr Chris Jones, Principal Investigator.

# TRANSFER Exhibition Report

## Summary

On the basis of discussions held with retailers and consumers about the challenges and opportunities around the promotion of more conscientious, sustainable consumerism; the TRANSFER academic team worked with DED Associates to create an interactive installation in Leeds Trinity Shopping Centre (6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2015).



The installation focused on the concept of **'making it real'**, a theme derived from the partner workshop held in April 2014 (see Figure 1, left) and stemming from the belief that part of the motivation behind unsustainable consumerism is the fact that people feel detached from the things that they are purchasing.

The thrust of the exhibition, therefore, was to showcase, in full view of the public, the manufacturing process behind a t-shirt: creating a visible and wearable connection between

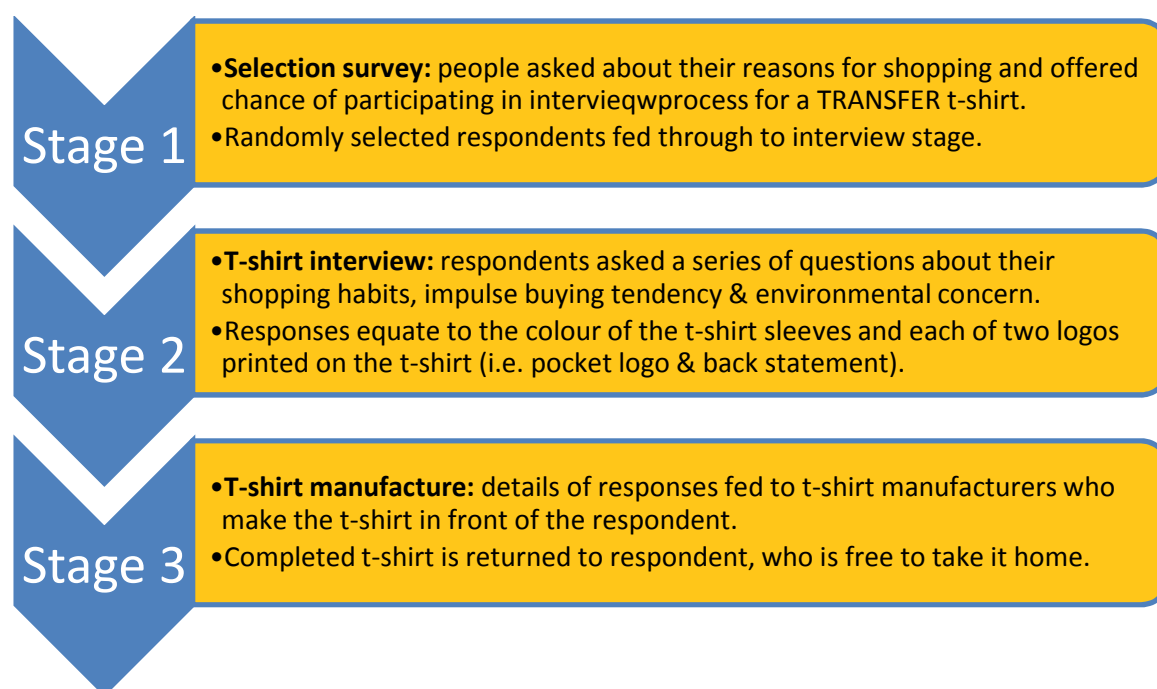
consumers' fashion purchase decisions and the manufacturing processes underlying the products that people desire – making real the people, resource and time involved in the production of a something as simple as a t-shirt (see Box 1, for the exhibition aims).

### **Box 1: Aims of the 'Making it Real' exhibition**

- To engage the consumer in an active dialogue relating to how clothes are made, where they are made and who makes them.
- To make the social, environmental and cultural impacts of our day-to-day purchasing decisions more real, tangible and connected.
- To engage in practice-based research translating individual responses to key questions into the process of making and the resulting aesthetic of a garment.

## The Process

The exhibition took the form of a 'pop-up t-shirt factory' and was situated in a prominent public location in the Trinity Shopping Centre, Leeds. Members of the public were invited to interact with the exhibition by taking part in a short interview. Their responses to this interview were fed into the design of a t-shirt, which was then made in front of them and was theirs to take away (see Figure 2, for the basic process).



*Figure 2. The basic 'pop-up t-shirt factory' process.*

### Detailed account of exhibition activity

- Members of the public visiting Trinity Leeds were invited to take part in a short selection survey with a member of the TRANSFER team. This survey asked respondents about the motivation behind their clothing purchase, asked if the respondent would be willing to have their photo taken with their shopping bag (if available). This photo was then uploaded to the TRANSFER Twitter account (@projectTRANSFER) and tagged with their stated reason for buying the garment (see Figure 3).
- Respondents were then asked if they wanted to be entered into the prize draw to stand the chance of being selected to have a TRANSFER t-shirt made for them. Respondents had a 1/3 chance of being selected.

- Selected participants were taken to an interview platform associated with the exhibition. A member of the TRANSFER team took the participant through a series of questions (using an online survey) relating to their shopping habits, impulse buying tendency, and environmental concern & behaviour. The selection of interview questions was made based upon the results of other TRANSFER research activities, which indicated that these factors might be important in facilitating/inhibiting over-consumption of fashion. See Box 2, for brief details of the questions asked (a full list of the questions is available in Annex 1 of this report).



Natalie - TRANSFER @ProjectTRANSFER - Feb 7  
I bought some boots for my daughter #makingitreal

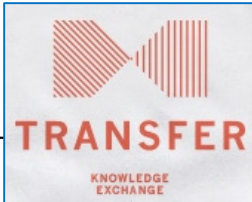


*Figure 3. A Twitter post showing a shopper, their shopping bag and the reason for their purchase.*


- The interviewee's responses to the interview questions were then analysed and transferred to a manufacturing docket (See Figure 4). This docket informed the manufacturing team about (a) the size of the t-shirt to be made; (b) the sleeve colour; (c) which of three pocket logos should be included on the front; and (d) which of two statements should be included on the back. The docket also contained a tear off collection receipt, which was provided to participants to inform them of when their t-shirt would be ready for collection.

## Box 2: What was asked in the t-shirt interview

- First, participants were asked 5 questions about their clothes shopping/disposal **habits and their awareness** of what people buy and where clothes come from. Participants' responses to these questions equated to a '**connectedness to clothing**' (AKA knowledge) score, which related to which of three pocket logos would appear on their t-shirt (a fully connected TRANSFER logo or one of two disconnected logos).
- Second, participants answered a 9-item **impulse buying tendency** scale, which assessed people's tendencies to buy in a considered or spontaneous way. Their score on this scale equated to a '**impulsiveness**' score, which related to which of two dictionary definitions was printed on the back of their t-shirt (i.e. 'Considered' or 'Impulsive').
- Third, participants were asked a series of 5 questions about their **environmental concern** and 6 questions about their **environmental behaviours**. Their responses to these questions were combined and equated to a '**greenness**' score, which related to which colour sleeves would be stitched into the t-shirt (i.e. *high* = Orange vs. *low* = Black).

Figure 4. Manufacturing docket with scale scoring & relative t-shirt design feature.



# TRANSFER

PARTICIPANT NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ TIME OF INTERVIEW \_\_\_\_\_


| GENDER          | MALE                     | FEMALE                   |                          | OTHER                    |                          | PNTS                     |                          |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |
| AGE             | 16-20                    | 21-30                    | 31-40                    | 41-50                    | 51-60                    | 61-70                    | 71-80                    | 81+                      |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| SIZE            | XS                       | S                        | M                        | L                        | XL                       |                          |                          |                          |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |                          |
| KNOWLEDGE SCORE | -5 TO -2                 |                          | -1 TO +2                 |                          | +3 TO +5                 |                          |                          |                          |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |                          |
| POCKET LOGO     | SEPARATED (HORIZONTAL)   |                          | SEPARATED (VERTICAL)     |                          | FULLY CONNECTED          |                          |                          |                          |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |                          |
| IBT SCORE       | +9 TO +27                |                          | +28 TO +45               |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| NECK STATEMENT  | CONSCIOUS                |                          | IMPULSIVE                |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| GREENNESS SCORE | -1 TO +14                |                          | +15 TO +31               |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| SLEEVE COLOUR   | BLACK                    |                          | ORANGE                   |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |

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## COLLECTION RECEIPT

PARTICIPANT NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ TIME OF COLLECTION (APPROX.) \_\_\_\_\_






PLEASE RETURN TO THE EXHIBITION WITH THIS RECEIPT AT THE STATED TIME IN ORDER TO COLLECT YOUR T-SHIRT.

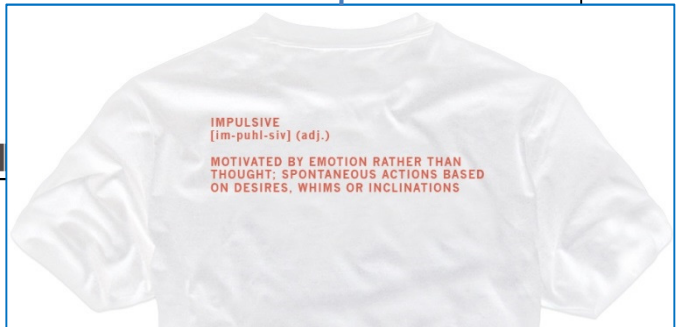
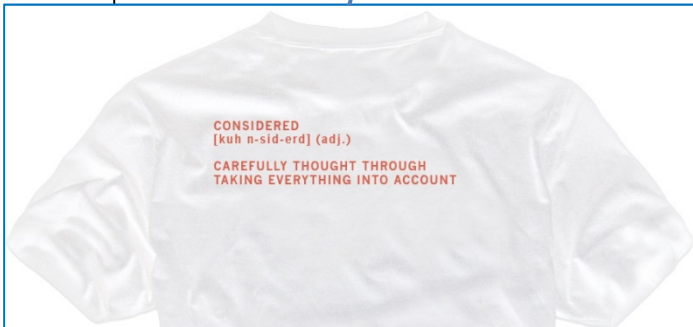


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SUPPORTED BY:



- The docket was then passed to a group of experienced 'makers' (managed by Antiform and recruited from the Leeds College of Art & Dots Printhauss) who responded to the instructions of the docket and created the t-shirt in real time. The group comprised a cutter, an overlocker, two machinists and a heat transfer operator (see Figure 5). This allowed all aspects of the t-shirt manufacturing process to be observed by the interviewee (and other members of the public). Each of the 'makers' signed the docket after they had finished their part of the manufacturing process in order to further the personal connection to the t-shirt production.
- Each interviewee was offered the option to stay and watch the t-shirt being made or to go away and come back to collect their t-shirt at a later time. Finished t-shirts were suspended and transferred back to the interview platform for collection via a washing line (see Figure 6). Rather than paying for the t-shirts (which were free) each interviewee made a commitment of time to acquire their garment and the labour & resource that it represented.

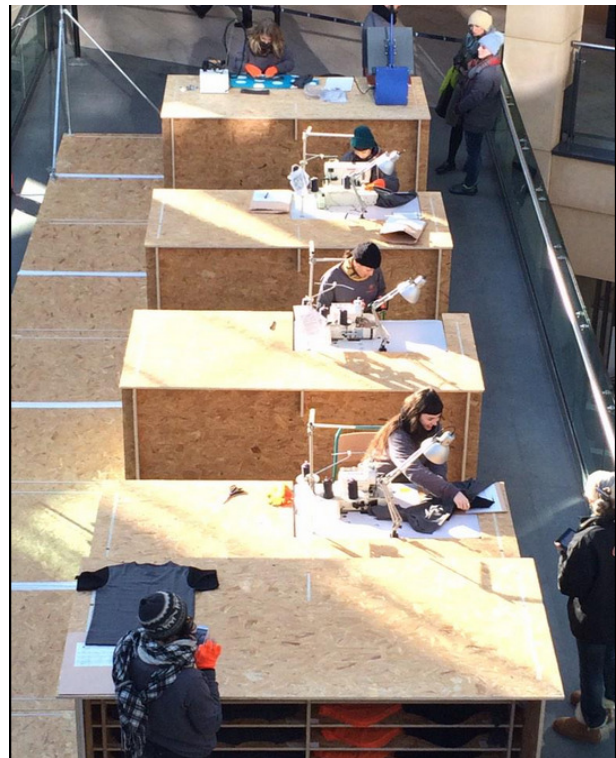


Figure 5. The t-shirt manufacturing process in action at Trinity Shopping Centre .



Figure 6. The finished t-shirts on the washing line waiting for collection (above). A finished t-shirt with 'considered' definition printed on the back (right).



## Selection Survey Results

- 127 shoppers took part in the selection survey (c. 10 per hour of the exhibition).
- 66% were female, 32% male (2% preferred not to say)
- 65% were aged 30 or younger.
- 52% stated they were 'very interested' in current fashion trends; 40% were 'a little' or 'somewhat' interested; 8% were not interested.

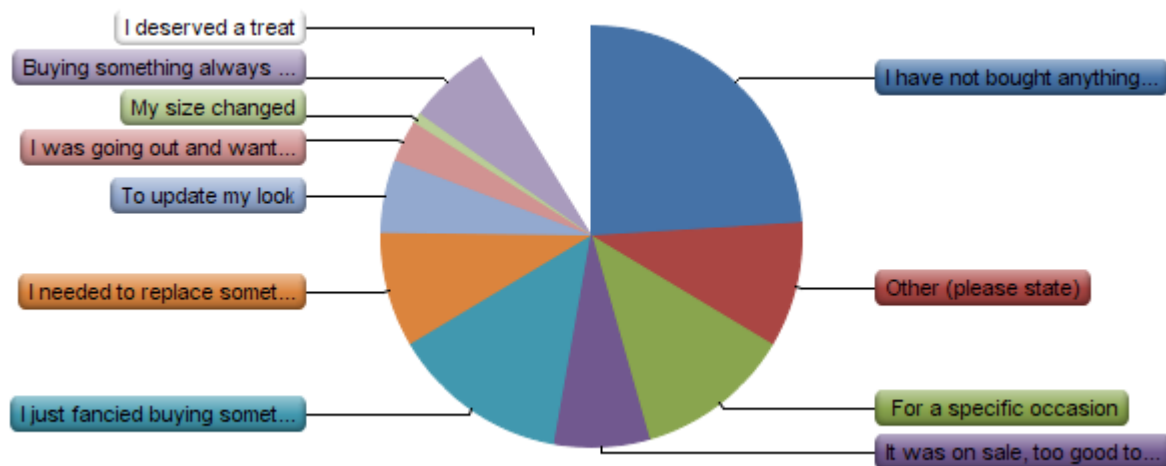


Figure 7. The reasons stated by selection survey respondents for making their clothing purchase.

- See Figure 7: 76% of shoppers reported having bought something (24% had not bought anything). The most popular response to the question 'which of the following responses best describes why you made a clothing purchase today':
  - 14% - I just fancied buying something
  - 12% - For a special occasion
  - 9% - I deserved a treat
  - 9% - I needed to replace something
  - 7% - It was in the sale, too good to resist
  - 6% - To update my look
  - 6% - Buying something always makes me feel good
  - 3% - I was going out and wanted to feel my best
  - 1% - My size changed
  - 10% - Reported other reasons (including, "I was cold" & "it was stripy").
- 53% of respondents agreed to have their photo taken and uploaded to Twitter.
- 83% (N = 105) agreed to be entered into the prize draw to stand a chance of being interviewed for a t-shirt.



## T-Shirt Interview Results

Over the course of the two-day exhibition around 60 t-shirts were made, with 56 of the t-shirt interviews yielding data which could be subject to formal statistical analysis. What follows is a brief summary of some of the key findings from the t-shirt interview stage of the process.

- 68% Female, 30% male (2% preferred not to say)
- 64% were aged 30 or younger

**Connectedness:** Interviewees were asked 5 questions to assess their clothes shopping/disposal habits and their knowledge of where clothes come from and which purchases are often made but then not worn. They could have scored between -5 & +5, with higher scores equating to greater connectedness (see Figure 8).

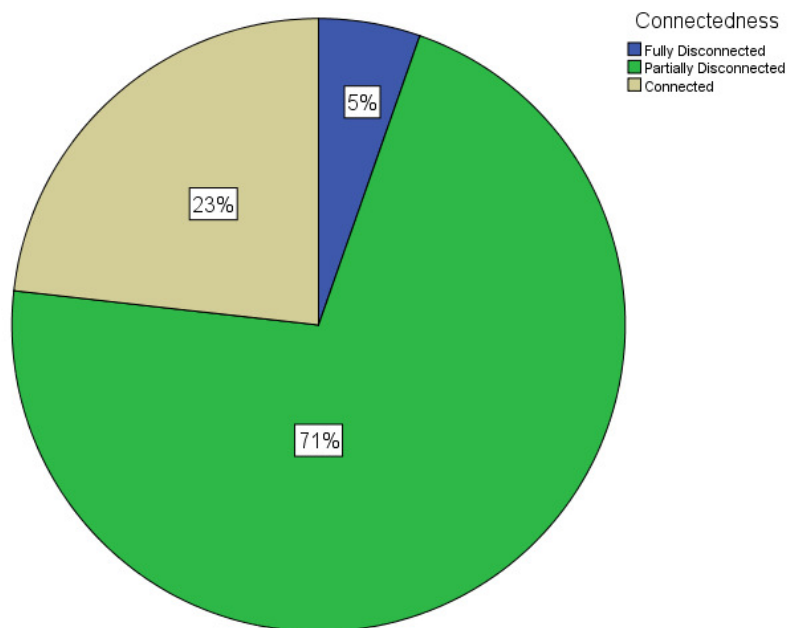


Figure 8. Interviewee Connectedness Scores.

Fully disconnected (-5 to -2); partially disconnected (-1 to +2); connected (+3 to +5).

The majority (71%) of interviewees were identified as being *partially disconnected* from sustainable clothing purchase & disposal practices (e.g. they spent more than the UK average on clothing,, had greater than average levels of unworn clothing at home, etc.).

The fact that most people are only partially disconnected suggests that most people were engaged in some sustainable practices.

**Impulse Buying Tendency (IBT):** Interviewees completed an established 9 item scale (Rook & Fisher, 1995) to assess tendencies to "buy spontaneously, without reflection". IBT is found to be related to a 'desire to acquire' (materialism) and to 'gut driven' (hedonistic) shopping. People with a high IBT are likely to buy more things and less likely to consider the consequences. Interviewees could have scored between +9 and +45 on this scale, with higher scores equating to greater impulsivity.

Two-thirds (64%) of our interviewees were found to be *considered* shoppers (i.e. not tending to buy on impulse). A significant minority (36%) were self-claimed *impulsive* purchasers (see Figure 9). Raising an individual's awareness of their impulsivity could help people to make 'better' choices at the check-out (i.e. purchases they value & wear more often).

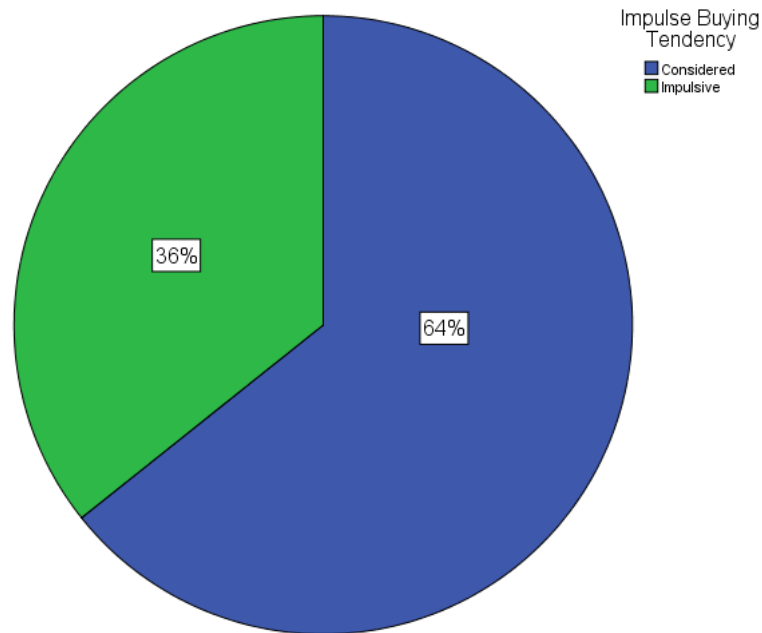
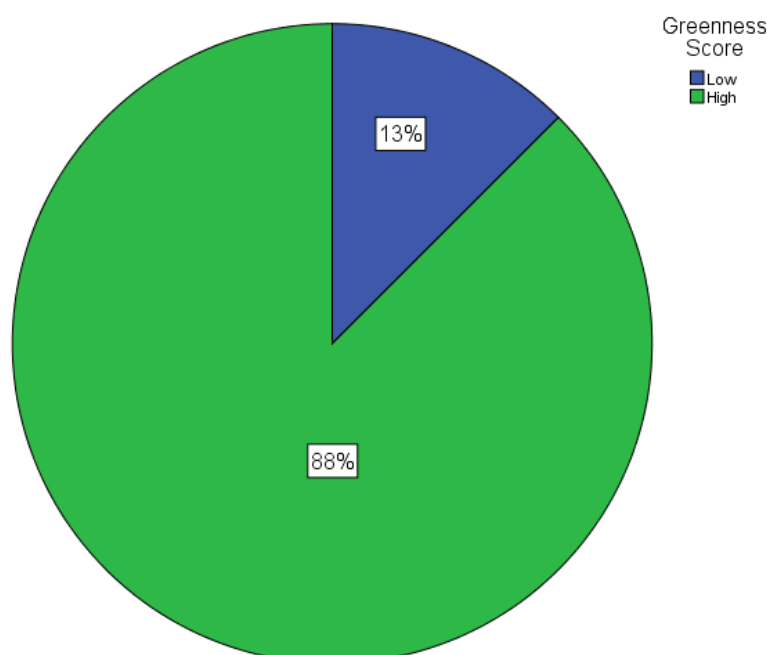


Figure 9. Interviewee Impulsivity Scores.

Considered (+9 to +27); impulsive (+28 to +45).

**Environmental Concern and Behaviour:** Interviewees completed two brief scales to assess (a) their general level of concern for the environment and (b) their tendencies to act pro-environmentally. People who are more 'green' are more likely to consider how their decisions and actions, including shopping behaviour, might impact upon the environment. Interviewees could have scored between -1 to +31, with higher scores equating to higher 'greenness' (see Figure 10, for the breakdown of 'greenness' scores).



The majority of our interviewees (88%) were *environmentally aware*, scoring above the midpoint for the combined concern & behaviour scales. This finding is consistent with the growing level of UK environmental concern and could be a lever in reducing over-consumption of clothing (and energy).

Figure 10. Interviewee Environmental Concern & Behaviour Scores.

Low (-1 to +14); high (+15 to +31).

## Correlational Analysis

In order to see how 'connectedness', 'impulsivity' and 'greenness' scores might be related to one another, a series of correlations were run on interviewees' raw scores for each of these scales (see Table 1, for the scale means).

| TABLE 1.       | Connectedness | Impulsivity | Greenness |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|-----------|
| Mean           | 0.80          | 25.50       | 22.20     |
| Std. Deviation | 1.92          | 7.06        | 7.32      |
| Range          | -3 to +5      | +14 to +45  | 0 to +37  |

| TABLE 2.                                    | Connectedness | Impulsivity    | Greenness |
|---|---------------|----------------|-----------|
| <b>Connectedness</b><br><i>Significance</i> | 1.0           |                |           |
| <b>Impulsivity</b><br><i>Significance</i>   | -.25<br>.062  | 1.0            |           |
| <b>Greenness</b><br><i>Significance</i>     | .34<br>.01**  | -.41<br>.002** | 1.0       |

$N = 56$ ;  $p < .05^*$ ,  $p < .01^{**}$ ,  $p < .001^{***}$

The correlations (see Table 2) revealed that there was a significant positive correlation between **Connectedness & Greenness**, meaning that interviewees who expressed more concern for the environment (and engaged in more pro-environmental behaviour), were more likely to show higher levels of awareness of where their clothes come from and the impact that clothing industry has on the environment.

There was a significant negative correlation between **Greenness & Impulsivity**, meaning that interviewees who expressed greater concern for the environment were less likely to be impulsive consumers.

The correlation between **Impulsivity & Connectedness** failed to reach conventional levels of significance. However, there was a trend towards those with greater connectedness being less impulsive consumers.

### Box 3: The Average Participant:

The majority of participants were females under the age of 30, who were very interested in fashion. This is consistent with the shopper profile of **Trinity Shopping Centre, Leeds** and the particular interest shown in the event by students at the **Leeds College of Art**. The average participant was found to be partially disconnected in terms of their tendencies to engage in sustainable clothes shopping/disposal practices **BUT** was a generally considered (rather than impulsive) clothes shopper and someone who was generally concerned with environmental issues and likely to engage in pro-environmental behaviour.

## Public Engagement

The response from the public was excellent. The visibility and interactivity of the 'Pop-up t-shirt factory' proved to be a real draw and point of interest for shoppers visiting the shopping centre. In addition to the formal conversations achieved through the interview process, there was also considerable informal conversation between the TRANSFER team and the public about the aims and objectives of the project.

Footfall figures provided by Trinity Shopping Centre indicated that just under 150,000 people passed through the Centre over the two days providing the exhibition with considerable local exposure.

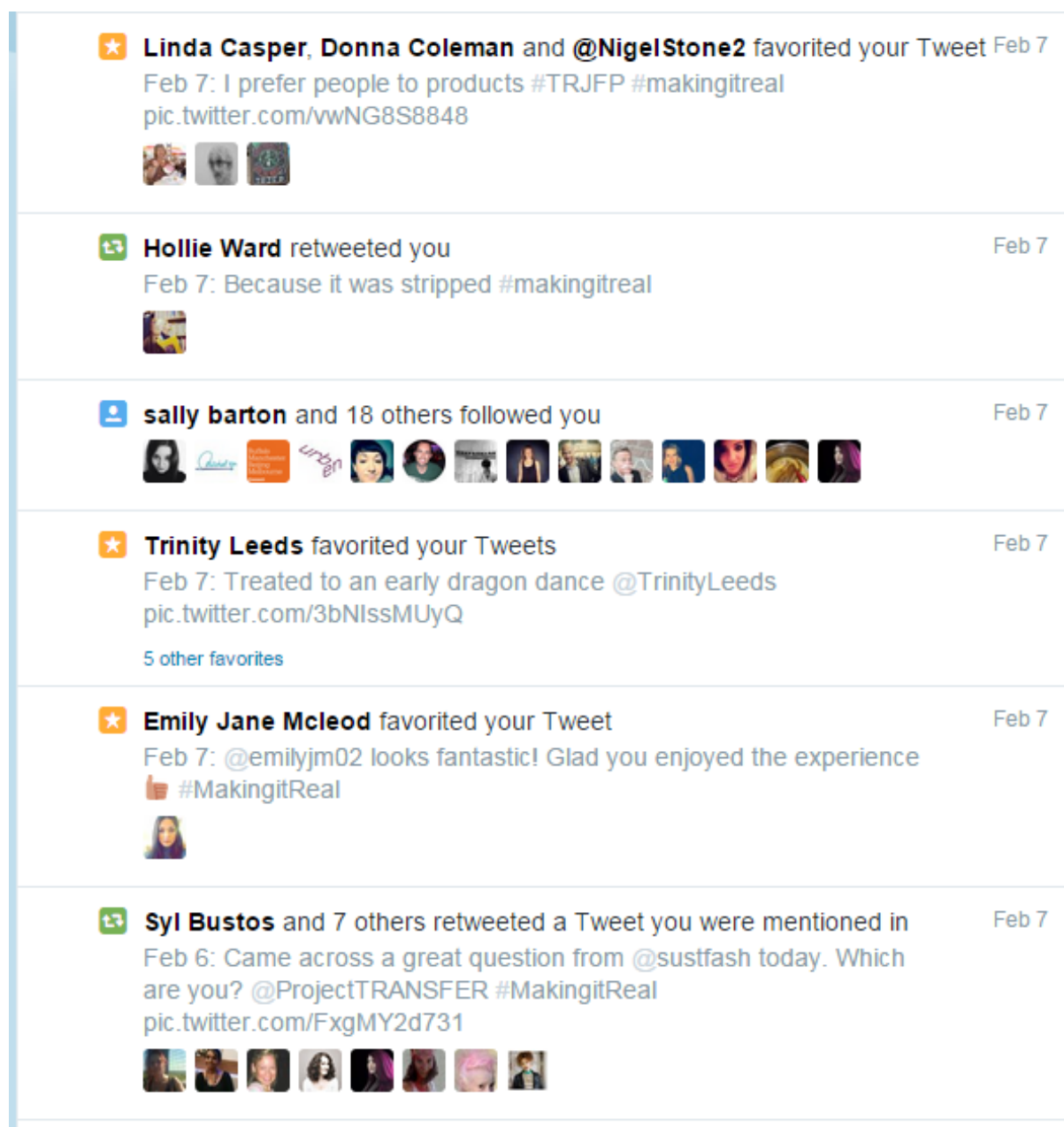


Figure 11. Example of the Project TRANSFER Twitter feed during the exhibition.

In addition to TRANSFER Twitter activity (@projectTRANSFER), a number of other groups and individuals used the event Twitter handle (#makingitreal) to send messages of support & encouragement, and retweeting pictures relating to the exhibition (see Figure 11, for an example of the Twitter feed from the exhibition and Box 4 for details of some of the key people who Tweeted about the exhibition).

### Box 4: Twitter support for TRANSFER Exhibition

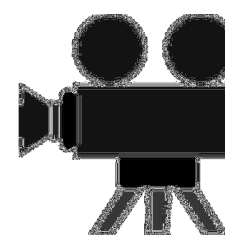
- Followthethings.com @followthethings (1,625 followers)
- Fashion Revolution @FashRev (8,197 followers)
- Julia Roebuck (2,600 followers)
- Zoe Hitchcen (1,500 followers)
- The Fabric Social (783 followers)
- Stitched-up (1,616 followers)
- Responsible Marketer (21,500 followers)
- Kiesduurzamemode (1,200 followers)
- NERIDA (1,600 followers)
- Under The Stars Fest (1,235 followers)
- Leeds Trinity Shopping Centre (26,000 followers)
- Economic & Social Research Council (29,400 followers)



In addition to Twitter activity, the exhibition was also visited and reported on by three fashion bloggers, each with a considerable number of followers:

- **Cheery Little Thing:** <http://cheerylittlething.com/>
  - o <http://cheerylittlething.com/fashion-in-yorkshire-makingitreal-projecttransfer/>
- **A Forte for Fashion:** <http://www.aforteforfashion.co.uk/>
  - o <http://www.aforteforfashion.co.uk/2015/02/event-transfer-pop-up-t-shirt-factory.html#more>
- **Antiform:** <http://www.antiformonline.co.uk/>
  - o <http://www.antiformonline.co.uk/bringing-the-factory-floor-to-your-door-a-pop-up-t-shirt-factory/>

The 'Making it Real' exhibition was also videoed by Dr Rob Speranza of the South Yorkshire Film Makers Network (<https://www.syfn.org/>), who is producing a short documentary of the weekend. Rob is also producing a short animation along with Emily&Anne Animation (<http://www.emilyandanne.co.uk/>), which will seek to depict some of the TRANSFER project's emergent themes; increasing the reach of the project and sharing the message with a wider public audience.



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## Conclusion

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The **'Making it Real'** exhibition at **Trinity Shopping Centre, Leeds** was the culmination of the research activities conducted as part of project TRANSFER (project-transfer.com). The aim of the exhibition was to reconnect people with their clothing; to showcase the steps, resources and personnel involved in the manufacture of a simple t-shirt (i.e. to make the process and people involved more real to the consumers).

## DO YOU KNOW WHO MADE YOUR CLOTHES?

[PROJECT-TRANSFER.COM](http://PROJECT-TRANSFER.COM)  
[#PROJECTTRANSFER](https://twitter.com/PROJECTTRANSFER)

The intention with the exhibition was not to tell people where to shop or what to buy but rather to get people to begin to understand the embedded costs in the clothing we often take for granted (often because of how cheap it is). In doing so, we hope that we would begin to get people think twice before making a purchase; to ask themselves "is this something that I will value and wear?"

The exhibition was a genuine success, yielding considerable interest and engagement from passing shoppers. Those we spoke to typically bought into the aims and objectives of the project, recognising the importance of making more considered clothing purchase decisions. And while it often takes more than the raised awareness of issues and the formation of good intentions to affect change; these things make a good starting point and can be a catalyst for change.

The premise for the exhibition stemmed from discussions with our commercial partners and members of the public, which indicated that a factor that might drive overconsumption of clothing, was the disconnection that people had from the manufacturing processes that put clothes in shops. This disconnection means that people do not fully appreciate the social & economic footprint their clothing purchase decisions leave, reducing the guilt associated with 'bad' choices or 'surplus' purchases.

## ARE YOU FASHION CONSCIOUS OR FASHION COMPULSIVE?

[PROJECT-TRANSFER.COM](http://PROJECT-TRANSFER.COM)  
[#PROJECTTRANSFER](https://twitter.com/PROJECTTRANSFER)

**We believe that the 'Making it Real' exhibition was such a catalyst for change.**

## The TRANSFER Team

TRANSFER combines interdisciplinary academic expertise from two Universities. The core team comprises research academics with interests in Environmental Psychology, Logistics and Supply Chain Management and Sustainable Fashion.

- Prof Helen Storey (Centre for Sustainable Fashion, London College of Fashion)
- Alex McIntosh (Centre for Sustainable Fashion, London College of Fashion)
- Dr Chris Jones, Principal Investigator (Dept. of Psychology, University of Sheffield)
- Dr Natalie McCreesh, Project Coordinator (Dept. of Psychology, University of Sheffield)
- Prof. Lenny Koh (School of Management, University of Sheffield)
- Dilys Williams (Director, Centre for Sustainable Fashion, London College of Fashion)



*From left to right: Chris Jones, Natalie McCreesh, Lenny Koh, Dilys Williams, Alex McIntosh & Helen Storey*

TRANSFER also unites expertise from a number of businesses, industries and other stakeholders with interests in promoting sustainability in fashion, energy & water retail. Our partners include:

ASOS Plc • Co-operative Energy • DED Associates • Ecotricity • E.ON UK • Jessica Brinton (Journalist, Sunday Times) • Katherine Goodwin (Womenswear design consultant) • LUSH Cosmetics • Marion Hume (Journalist) • Marks and Spencer • Meadowhall Sheffield • MK Things Happen • National Grid Plc • Neals Yard • Retail Centric • Reve en Vert • ReWardrobe • Susie Stone Ltd • Thames Water • Trinity Leeds • United Utilities • Westfield London • WRAP

### **For 'Making it Real', the Academic Team would particularly like to thank:**

- **DED Associates** – for their help in the design & manufacture of the exhibition.
- **Lauren Barker & Trinity Shopping Centre, Leeds** – for hosting the exhibition.
- **Antiform, Dots Printhauss, Leeds College of Art & the manufacturing team** – for the loan of the machines and the manufacturers' time, effort and expertise.
- **Will Stuttard** – for his help preparing the exhibition & coordinating volunteers.
- **Steven Chong, Jean Yeo, Lucy Bartram, Camila Teixeira de Carvalho, Daphne Kaklamanou & Keelan Meade** – for coordinating the selection survey & assisting with the general running of the exhibition.
- **Rob Speranza** (South Yorkshire Film Makers) and **Emily&Anne Animation** – for attending and participating in the exhibition and for providing a film-based record of the exhibition and the TRANSFER project more generally.
- **All the shoppers** who interacted so positively in the exhibition.



**TRANSFER**



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