

**Sustainable  
living for the  
many people:  
Live LAGOM**



**Live LAGOM is a unique three-year project that explores the challenges and benefits of a more sustainable life. It offers IKEA customers and co-workers the chance to test IKEA products that help save energy and water, reduce waste and promote a healthy lifestyle.**

**La•gom** | là:gɔm | (Swedish)  
*adverb*

The Swedish word LAGOM means just the right amount - not too much, and not too little. It comes from the phrase "Lagom är bäst" - the right amount is best.

**The Swedish word lagom** means just the right amount - not too much, and not too little. It comes from the phrase "**lagom är bäst**" - **the right amount is best.**

This concept has been part of the Swedish psyche and way of life for years. We believe that's what living a rewarding but responsible life is all about: not sacrificing what you love, while not taking more than you need from the planet. It's a powerful idea, with the potential to change how people feel about sustainability.

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**Joanna Yarrow**  
Head of Sustainability,  
IKEA UK & IE





We believe sustainable living should be accessible to as many people as possible, not just the fortunate few.

For many years more sustainable products have been expensive, ugly, or performed poorly (or all of these!). At IKEA, we design every product according to the principles of 'Democratic Design' – combining form, function, quality and sustainability, all at a low price. Many of these products support small everyday changes to make life more sustainable, by enabling people to cut energy and water use, reduce or sort waste, and live more healthily. It is these little changes that add up to a movement to Live LAGOM.

It's not enough just to create these products. People need to try living with them, experience how well they work and give us feedback so that we can continue to design products and services to help them live more sustainably. That's why we're giving people around the world the opportunity to test them in their own homes.

The IKEA Group runs a global project to help people live more sustainable lives, independently managed by IKEA in different countries. Live LAGOM is the UK and Ireland project. It's unique because it extends over three years, involves customers, co-workers, bloggers, designers, an

academic research partner and a charity with expertise in sustainable living.

We're one year in, and excited to share our early findings in this report.

**"Sustainability is for everyone because we all share the same planet. While big changes would be phenomenal, we believe that a lot of people doing a little will have a powerful impact. If we all changed our light bulbs, recycled proficiently and cut waste we could all Live LAGOM."**

**Noelle Shannon**  
Customer and Live LAGOM participant, Dublin

## Sustainability at IKEA

At IKEA, we're guided by our vision to create a better everyday life for the many people.

This is more critical today than ever before. The climate is changing due to human activity, and the population continues to grow while resources do not. To live within the limits of this planet, we must all change the way we live to become more sustainable. This means being more efficient with resources like energy, food and water; minimising the waste we produce; and living more healthily.

We want IKEA to be part of the solution, and have a positive impact on people and the planet in everything we do. **Our People & Planet Positive Strategy** has three focus areas:

- **Inspire and enable millions of customers to live a more sustainable life at home.** We create products that enable customers to save or generate energy, reduce or sort waste, use less or recycle water, and live healthier lives: all at the lowest possible price.
- **Strive for resource and energy independence.** We focus on securing long-term access to sustainable raw materials, having a positive impact on the communities where we source materials, and using resources within the limits of the planet. By 2020, we will produce as much renewable energy as all the energy we consume across our operations.
- **Take a lead in creating a better life for the people and communities impacted by our business.** We want to be the best place to work for our co-workers, and we aim to extend these high standards throughout our value chain to our suppliers' co-workers, through our supplier code of conduct, IWAY.



## Who's who?

- **IKEA UK & IE:** IKEA's retail operations in the UK & Ireland. Founders of Live LAGOM and responsible for the overall running of the project.
- **University of Surrey's Centre for Environmental Strategy (CES):** Experts in sustainable production and consumption. Responsible for monitoring and evaluating the success of the project.
- **Hubbub:** A charity dedicated to communicating sustainability issues to a mainstream audience. Supporting our engagement with participants.

See the People & Planet pages of our website for more

[www.ikea.co.uk/people-planet](http://www.ikea.co.uk/people-planet)  
[www.ikea.ie/people-planet](http://www.ikea.ie/people-planet)



## Year One Highlights

# XX

households to date

# 100%

of participants plan to continue living a LAGOM lifestyle following the project<sup>1</sup>

Answered definitely yes (91.14%) or probably yes (8.86%) to the question "Do you intend to continue living a LAGOM lifestyle?"

# 92%

Over 92% of participants agree that the project has helped make it easier to Live LAGOM

## How Live Lagom started

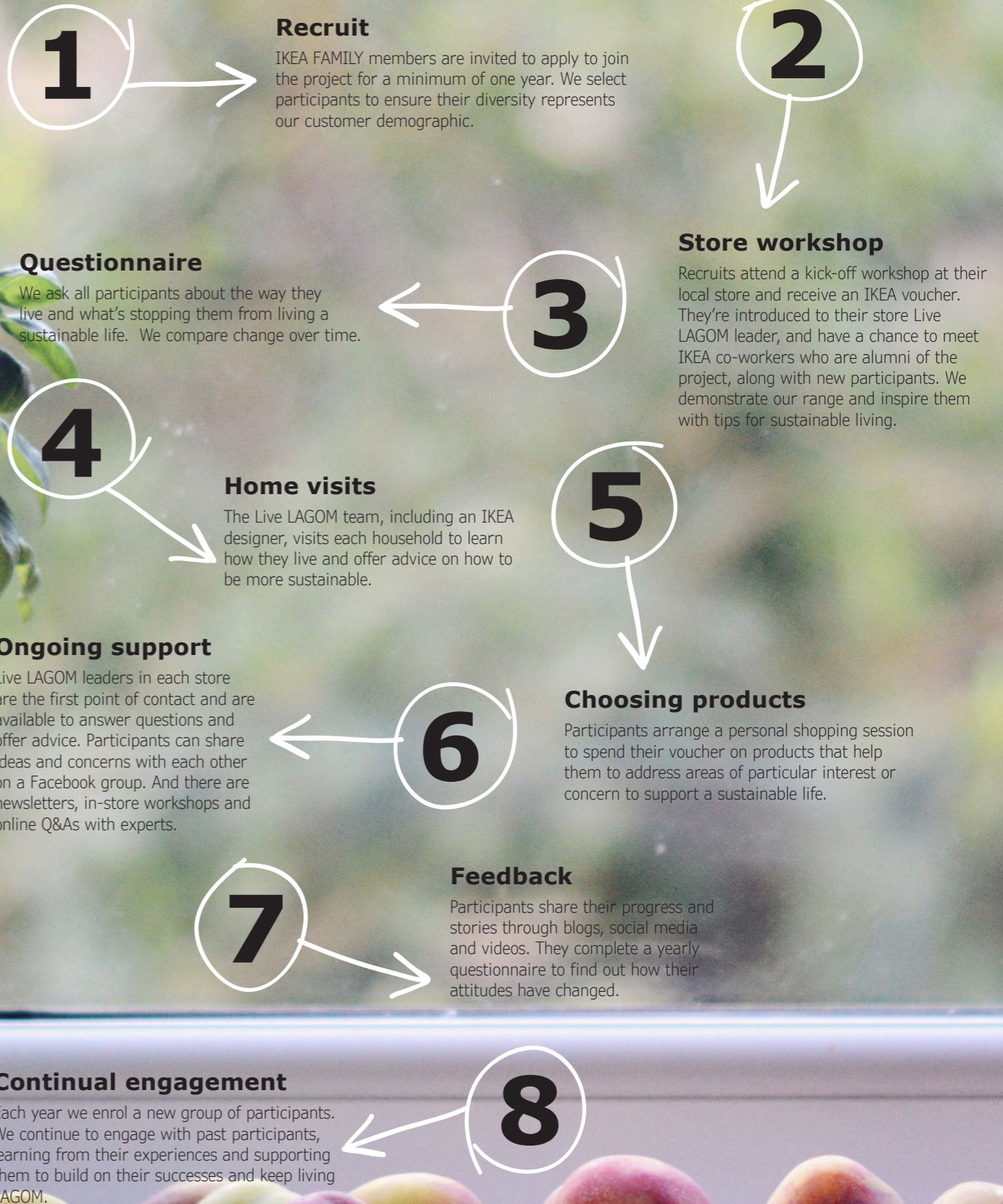
In 2014, we started with a project involving 200 co-workers. Each received a voucher to invest in IKEA products that enable a more sustainable everyday life at home. It was a great success: co-workers came up with innovative uses for our products, saved money on their household bills and reduced their impact on the planet. Participants became our sustainable living ambassadors, sharing their experiences with co-workers and customers.

In September 2015, we launched Live LAGOM – offering customers, co-workers, bloggers and design experts the opportunity to join in.

<sup>1</sup> Answered definitely yes (91.14%) or probably yes (8.86%) to the question "Do you intend to continue living a LAGOM lifestyle?"

## How Live LAGOM works

- 8 steps to a sustainable life at home





## How IKEA products support sustainable living

### TRENDING: ENERGY

Energy was one of the most popular issues that participants chose to tackle. The potential is huge: households consume 29% of global energy and contribute to 21% of annual CO2 emissions.

#### The LEDARE bulb – saving energy

LED bulbs use up to 85% less energy than traditional incandescent bulbs. A simple change can make a big difference to your energy bill.

**"My biggest commitment was having the large windows draught proofed which, along with the LED lighting, has seen my monthly bills halved, saving over £200 a quarter!!"**

**Lorraine Cleaver**  
Glasgow

**LEDARE**  
LED bulb E27 400 lumen  
702.667.65



#### The KLOCKIS timer – saving water

By helping to make a small change in your daily routine, products can enable a more sustainable life in the most unexpected places.

**"The KLOCKIS timer has been a huge eye opener in the bathroom! By timing our showers, we save time getting ready, and reduce our water and energy consumption."**

**Lydia Niziblian**  
Customer and Live LAGOM participant,  
Cardiff



**KLOCKIS**  
Clock/thermometer/alarm/timer  
802.770.04

#### FÖRTROLIG containers and BLANDNING lunch box – cutting food waste

Food containers keep food fresher for longer, cutting food waste and unnecessary spending.

**"I used to spend £120 a week at the supermarket, buying loads of food that I never cooked. I'd spend even more on lunch and dinner. That's all changed! I now cook at least three times a week, and store the spare food in containers. Now I've saved enough money to finally pay off my student overdraft!"**

**Anna Lysick**  
Customer and Live LAGOM participant

**BLANDNING**  
Lunch box for salad  
502.876.84



Find out more about how our products support sustainable living, in our Hidden Gems publication: [LINK \[onlinecatalogue.ikea.com/GB/en/Hidden-Gems\]\(https://www.ikea.com/gb/en/hidden-gems\)](https://www.ikea.com/gb/en/hidden-gems)

### TRENDING: FOOD WASTE

Food waste was one of the biggest concerns for participants. UK households produce a total of 7 million tonnes of food and drink waste each year, of which 4.2 million tonnes is avoidable. Eliminating this avoidable waste could save the average household around £470 per year.



# Our Research



**"Live LAGOM is the most innovative customer-facing initiative I've seen for promoting sustainable living from a big company. IKEA is showing the way for others"**

**Ian Christie**  
Fellow,  
Centre for Environmental,  
University of Surrey



## Why IKEA commissioned the research

At IKEA, we're fascinated by how people live and regularly study the lives of households across the world to understand how we can help make their everyday more wonderful. Live LAGOM is a unique opportunity to build on this approach and find out how we can support people to live more sustainable lives.

We've partnered with experts in sustainable living and behaviour change at the University of Surrey to help run a robust process and analyse our findings.

We're only a year into the three-year project, but are excited to share our early findings.

## Research aims

Over three years, there will be 450 participants – around 150 per year. And it will indirectly reach around 750 people – partners, children and flatmates. The research covers all participants for however long they choose to stay involved.

### The research:

1. Assesses whether and how IKEA can support a shift to more sustainable living.
2. Recommends new initiatives and further research to support the development of IKEA's People & Planet Positive sustainability strategy.
3. Identifies the most effective methodology for this type of study.

## How information is gathered:

- **Questionnaires:** Record levels of interest, knowledge, engagement and attitude – one questionnaire at the start and a second at the end of the first year.
- **Participant queries, comments and written contributions (including blogs):** Analysis helps identify where participants need the most support and why, the challenges and barriers they faced and their motivations.
- **Control group:** A group of over 1,000 non-participants are monitored with questionnaires. This allows us to see whether the support provided has been successful.

## One year into the project, our early analysis suggests:

1. IKEA's Live LAGOM project is enabling participants to make positive changes to their lives. This is because it provides the know-how, encouragement, and products they need. We call this a Lifestyle Support System.
2. Participants are developing a LAGOM social identity and sense of community.

In the coming years, we will verify these tentative findings and explore how we can build on them to trigger and maintain a movement towards a more sustainable way of life. We will continually improve our methodology to provide the best support for participants, and use in-depth research with focus groups.



## Finding 1: Supporting the change

### Live LAGOM as a lifestyle support system

Our identity, values, aspirations and attitudes define us and shape the way we live, including our spending habits.

To become part of people's everyday, sustainable living must be desirable and attainable. We believe that attractive, affordable products are a vital part of the support system to enable people to make and maintain changes to their habits and routines.

The Live LAGOM project has inspired participants and acted as the support system they need to kick-start their sustainable lifestyles.

Its impact extends beyond the project because participants influence those around them – friends, family and co-workers – sharing their experiences, ideas and inspiration. Live LAGOM proves it's possible to fulfil your lifestyle needs and dreams, while minimising your impact on the planet.

To move from a short term project to a sustained movement, we need to co-create with our customers. This means listening to their feedback to improve our offering and continuing to offer the best support we can for a more sustainable life. By working together, we can also strengthen our relationships with customers, contributing to our ambition of becoming the go-to destination for sustainable living.

**"We are so happy to have been part of this project. We met such a lovely group of people, got so much inspiration and have made changes we know we will be able to keep up for life. The impact of the project will stay with us forever... This may be the end of the Live LAGOM project for us, but... Living LAGOM will remain part of our lives forever."**

**Nicole Mullen**  
Customer and Live LAGOM participant,  
Dublin

**We define a Lifestyle Support System as an organisational entity that uses its influence on both its workforce and customers to provide individuals and households with crucial support (i.e. products and services) and guidance to help improve their quality of life, while living less carbon-intense lifestyles.**



# 92%

**Over 92% of participants agree that the project has helped them to overcome barriers to living LAGOM<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup> Agreed (41.77%) or strongly agreed (50.63%) with the question "Would you agree that the project has helped you to overcome barriers to a more LAGOM lifestyle?"





**Creating the desire – from push to pull**

We want to become the go-to destination for sustainable living, providing not only the products but the technical and emotional support that customers need to change their lifestyles for the better. To do this we will continue to tell our customers about the benefits of our products (the push), but we also want to be the first place that consumers think of when they want a sustainable life (the pull). It is by providing a combination of great products and back-up support that we inspire the Live LAGOM movement. We plan to find out more about how to make this shift over the coming years.

***"I thought I had to spend a lot of time and money on being sustainable but this project has shown me how small changes can make a big difference. The biggest challenge is consistency through every household member."***

**Natalie McDermott**  
Customer and Live LAGOM participant,  
Gateshead



Isobel Harris is retired, and lives together with her partner in Edinburgh. With the support of the Live LAGOM project, Isobel was able to start making small changes in her home, like decluttering and changing her lighting to LED. These small steps showed just how easy it can be to live a more sustainable lifestyle, and led to bigger steps like installing a smart meter. Now she saves £80 per month on her energy bill!

And Isobel's not stopping there.

***"I am now 61 and a half. This is one thing I can't change, but I can make life better, and the changes have begun. It was a bit difficult at times to change our habits of a lifetime, after all at this age we tend to become set in our ways, and even less inclined to stress about what we should be doing... But I had to keep reminding myself of how the world would be for my children and grandchildren and their grandchildren too. Selfishness for your own life does not come into it, we all want the world to be better for our children." I'm so happy to be able to report that I have achieved what I set out to do...my main thing was to save on my energy bills. And boy, never did I think I would be able to save so much. I am absolutely over the moon and it's safe to say, I'll never go back to the way it was before."***

**Isobel Harris**  
Customer and Live Lagom participant,  
Edinburgh





**To be an effective Lifestyle Support System, there's much more we need to understand. And it goes beyond the immediate impact in the home. Now we're asking:**



Small changes in your home can have big savings for your wallet. But if these savings are used for unsustainable activities – like more flights abroad – there's no overall benefit to the planet. Does this happen in practice? And if so, what can we do to address it?

- This is called the rebound effect. In the first year of the study we found that 18.5% of participants used savings from the project for things like holidays and new clothes. The rest invested in further lifestyle changes (27%), paid off debt, or gave the savings to charity. We plan to find out more about how the rebound effect works, and how we can mitigate it.
- Louise Pollock from Glasgow invested her savings back into the family farm: "Living the LAGOM lifestyle has certainly taught myself and the family of where we had waste and where we can save money. The money that we have saved we have put back into the farm, purchasing more chickens and with the next savings tally I am hoping we can afford a pig."

If someone commits to an action, like saving water, does it make them more likely to make other changes and become increasingly environmentally aware?

- This is the spill-over effect and we've seen some evidence of it. We want to investigate if our direct engagement with customers can initiate wider environmental benefits.

**Sustainability is often considered a more expensive, less desirable option. How can you change attitudes, to consider sustainable living as a way to save, not spend, money?**

- This is critical to reinvigorate the sustainable living movement. 59% of Live LAGOM participants don't agree with the public consensus that more environmentally friendly products are too expensive<sup>3</sup>. We want to find out why this is, and how to encourage this attitude change.

<sup>3</sup> Answered "Tend to disagree" or "Strongly disagree" to the question "It's too expensive for me to choose environmental friendly products"



## Finding 2: Building a community and social identity

### Live LAGOMers

*"The lovely thing about this project is that we've not been doing it in isolation. Across the UK, other Live LAGOMERS also made changes. Being part of a bigger project is a great motivator and it is useful to see what ideas and experiences others have."*

**Gemma Mathison**  
Customer and Live LAGOM participant,  
Bristol

#### **Lagomer** (Swedish)

*Noun*

A person who is working towards living a more LAGOM lifestyle – making small changes to their everyday life to minimise environmental impact, being thrifty with resources, and enjoying a fun, happy and balanced life.





**Participants have been sharing ideas, successes and challenges with each other on social media and at events. Together they've developed a sense of community, and a shared social identity. They've started referring to themselves as "LAGOMERS".**



While "sustainability" has connotations of living wild, being impractical and expensive, LAGOM doesn't. The participants created their own understanding of what a LAGOM lifestyle is – one that is environmentally friendly and less greedy while maintaining a good quality of life. This social identity allows people to identify with a new, desirable community. And it brings them together to encourage one another to do more and become "more LAGOM".

As the community builds, members will influence the people around them – friends, co-workers and family - encouraging them to live a more LAGOM lifestyle too. This builds more momentum for the movement, and more LAGOMERS!

**"I think it's a misconception that you have to become an eco-warrior and go green. Once you change your mindset and think about your actions and implications, it comes naturally like a healthy diet."**

**Pippa Wright**  
Customer and Live LAGOM participant,  
Milton Keynes

**"There is no question that when starting the project I was completely consumption driven and bought things for the house based on aesthetics or on impulse. Now I am looking at ways to create a homemade home. We have discussed this experience with all our friends & family and reassuringly nobody has poured scorn on our journey. We have had many a captive audience especially when discussing LED lights and their longevity. But most of all the reduced bills"**

**Noelle Shannon**  
Customer and Live LAGOM participant,  
Dublin





**This is just the beginning of an important journey to explore how we can help inspire and support a movement of people living more sustainably in easy, affordable and enjoyable ways.**



**We're excited about the task ahead.**

Now we need to maintain and grow the LAGOM community. We'll continue to engage the LAGOMERS from the first year of the project, connecting them with new participants in the next two years.

We'll support them through a new series of challenges and experiences, learning from their feedback and working with our designers to improve our products and services.

And we'll explore ways to enable households that aren't directly participating in the project to get involved in other ways, joining the conversation, trying out new ways of living more sustainably and sharing their stories along the way.

Through this research, we hope to learn even more about what we can do to support sustainable living.

**"IKEA has the confidence to let their customers tell the sustainability story. Customers have been able to choose their products and describe how they have affected their lives. As a result Live LAGOM has an authenticity and relevance missing from most other sustainability campaigns."**

**Trewin Restorick**  
CEO/Founder,  
Hubbub



**"While this may be the end of the IKEA Live LAGOM project, it is really just the start of our lagom är bäst journey and already I couldn't imagine life any other way. Now, hand me the self-watering pots, a pack of seeds and let me watch the magic unfold. With our raised beds come raised hopes for a more sustainable future."**

**Rosie McCormack**  
Customer and Live LAGOM participant,  
Dublin





## Links to other reports

- > Hidden Gems Report
- > Sustainability Report



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