

Summary findings of PPI engagements

Attached are the findings of PPI engagements from September to November 2023 conducted in efforts to address/resolve issues that came up before and after the pilot.

Sustained PPI at the University of Hertfordshire on Saturday, 23rd September 2023

The process evaluations involved children aged 6-15 years. Their feedback and insights have been summarized below:

- The children expressed a genuine curiosity about the plug-in and found it fascinating how it provided sustainability ratings for products. During the break session, they used Claire's laptop to search for their preferred food items on Tesco.com.
- When asked about their understanding of the eco-labels, the children described them as good and helpful. They noted that the labels followed a traffic light system, with some mentioning that similar labels are commonly found in European countries. Several children also likened these labels to power labels.
- Some participants suggested that it would be beneficial to have the eco labels available as a mobile app, given that many people use their phones for grocery shopping.

When shown an image of the eco label on Tesco.com, all participants indicated that they noticed them. They offered the following suggestions to enhance visibility:

- Some noted that shoppers would need to be informed about the labels to notice them effectively.
- Feedback included making the label colours brighter and using larger text
- Emoticons: Some children suggested using emoticons, such as thumbs-up for A-rated products and thumbs-down for G-rated products, to make the labels more engaging and understandable.
- Concerns were raised about the similarity in colour between some ratings, such as A and B; C, D, and E. They suggested basing it on the colours of the rainbow.
- Participants mentioned that the colour of the rating and the product sometimes appeared similar, making it challenging to notice. They suggested using a green background for products with an A rating, for example.
- They also suggested having the rating on the product like the nutrition labels.

After participants had the opportunity to select their top breakfast, snack, and lunch items, we projected the sustainability impact of each food item and asked:

- Would you change your behaviour based on the labels?: Children expressed a willingness to change their eating behaviour, particularly for items they considered their least favourite, such as slices of ham. They indicated a readiness to stop consuming such items.
- Swapping or Stopping: Children mentioned that they would opt for more sustainable options, such as choosing the most sustainable bread available. They were open to swapping items within the same category but were more hesitant to make changes across different food categories (e.g., choosing sustainable cheese within the cheese category).

- Do you think families would use the plug-in?: Children believed that their families would use the plug-in. They expressed their intent to inform their families about the eco-labels and actively encourage the purchase of more sustainable items.
- Has it made you think differently about the things you eat and drink?: Overall, the children reported that the plug-in had made them think differently about the foods and beverages they consume. They expressed a willingness to stop or replace unsustainable items they did not favour with more sustainable alternatives

PHRESP PPI with parent advisors in Birmingham on 2nd October 2023

I shared with them instructions on how to download and install the Sustained Choice plug-in available for the public ahead of the meeting.

We asked the following 2 questions;

1. How to encourage the public to change their behaviour and adhere to eco-labels, for example, when completing their online grocery shopping to make more sustainable choices
2. How can we disseminate our study findings to the general public.

Below is the feedback they raised:

Some were able to install it and test it, while some felt nervous about installing the plug-in and did not proceed due to data security concerns. In the chat, they highlighted this (data security issues) as a big issue. They were nervous about the plug-in, who can see the information that the plug in gathers and what is that used for.

Overall, they agreed that this is a very important project in relation to addressing the climate crisis. However, they are currently in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis, and as much as they would like to make food purchases based on their environmental impact, they consider price to be the most critical factor. Unfortunately, the most sustainable options tend to be expensive, and they are not willing to pay an extra pound for something they usually buy, for example, at GBP2.00. Considering the environmental impact of food has become a privilege, and it could also have a negative impact on mental health if individuals feel guilty about not being able to afford the 'better' options.

They suggested that one way to encourage people to change their behaviour is by highlighting the project's importance/findings. For instance, if we were to emphasize that switching to sustainable foods could lead to a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions or other climate change-related benefits, it could serve as a powerful message to inspire change.

Additionally, for dissemination, they recommended various approaches such as:

- Posting on blogs with easy-to-read content and creating infographics for circulation on social media platforms.
- Tailoring the dissemination of findings to different cultures to ensure relevance and effectiveness.
- Useful tool to educate children at schools so we could disseminate it via schools or local authorities. For schools, preparing lesson plans for use as PSHE or even geography and biology lessons could be helpful as having children more aware of the impact of purchases may result in the next generation of adults with different attitudes or priorities.

The majority commented on the potential limitations of our sample. They expressed concerns that the sample may not be representative because the plug-in is only compatible with PC/laptops and limited to Tesco shoppers. Many primarily shop using mobile phones, which would exclude them

from our study. Additionally, some mentioned that they shop at Aldi, which is generally more affordable than Tesco. This could result in a study sample that is skewed toward specific income groups and those who are likely already making more environmentally conscious choices.

One participant shared an interesting perspective: 'I shop at Aldi as well as many other supermarkets. You should see the BMWs in the car park at Aldi! (i.e., it's not just poorer people who shop at the German discounters now).' This comment received several thumbs ups. Another participant added, 'Absolutely. No one likes to pay more than needed.'

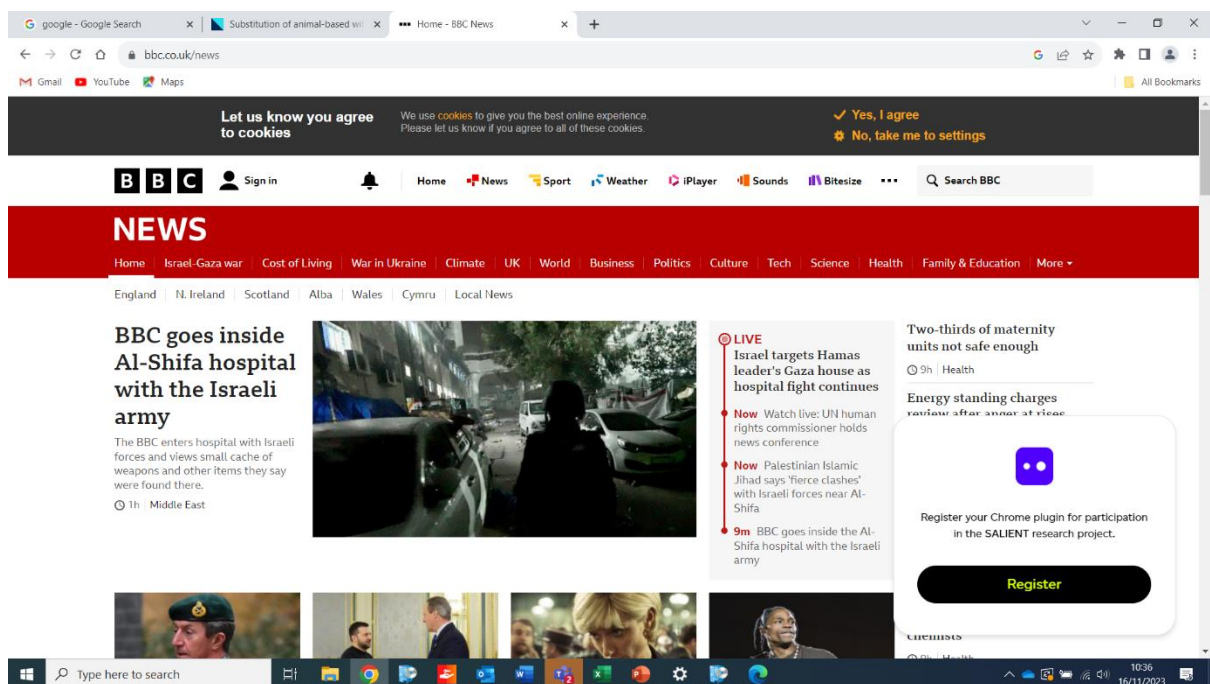
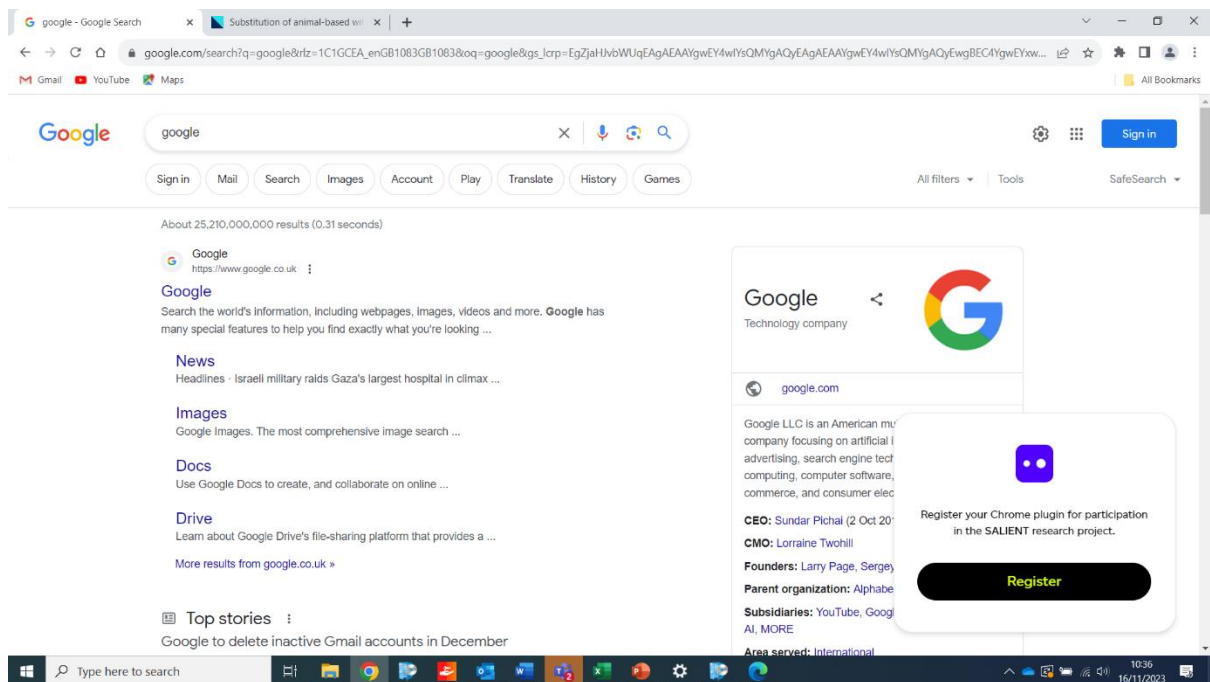
They suggested that it would be useful to explain eco-labelling using animated short videos that clarify the grading system. These videos can be easily dubbed into different languages, which is more efficient than refilming them with actors. The reason for this preference is that there is a lot of information to digest to understand why a product is rated 'G,' for example. Reading through this information is time-consuming, and most shoppers don't have the time to go through all the text explanations for each product's rating, such as 'G' versus 'B.' Many found it challenging to grasp the breakdowns provided. Several agreed that is time consuming. One person commented, 'Shopping for a food-allergic child is already challenging with 23 allergies and anaphylaxis. Adding extra time for time-pressed, budget-conscious shoppers doesn't align with this idea.'

They also pointed out that they noticed that, quite often, the most sustainable products were less healthy, while the least sustainable ones were the healthiest by comparison. For someone who prioritizes health information when shopping, this tool may not be useful.

Sustained Trial (SALIENT)

IT Quirks for Plug In (Nov 2023)

1. Can see the chrome plug in box (at bottom right hand screen) 'lurking' on other websites, which has put off a couple of people in using the app, as they feel like they are being followed on their other websites (see screenshots).
 - a. Suggestions: maybe if the box remains for some participants, put that this might be a possibility on the download instructions/online information about not to be concerned, and/or advice on how to get rid of it on other websites?



2. Concerns about using Plug In on incognito mode: if participants do shop on Tesco online in incognito mode, unsure if the plug in will still work?

- a. Suggestion: give advice if customers do use incognito mode to not for the duration of the trial?
3. A big thing (which has already been brought up previously) was that people just don't tend to do food shops on their laptop, but instead a phone or a tablet. One of our contributors suggested those that do have a laptop, it might be a work laptop and therefore they are not able to actually download a plug in, which may mean people will sign up to the trial, but then not finish.
4. One of our contributors was using their work laptop which was a surface pro – and their laptop didn't allow them to download the plug in onto Chrome and could only download it on Microsoft edge. This meant that the plug in download instructions were a bit different (i.e. the order that you download it in, how you get the plug in active)
 - a. Suggestion: provide instructions on non-chrome browsers or say if you are using a browser that is not chrome, it might be more challenging and you might need to follow X steps

Sustained Trial (SALIENT)

Concerns/Solutions for IT Security/Trust on Plug In (Nov 2023)

Online Plug In Information (see [Sustained Choice x SALIENT \(google.com\)](#)):

- Some of our contributors commented that the online plug in information doesn't look that legitimate, credible or trustworthy
 - Suggestions: maybe having University names or logos on the Plug In info (instead of Tesco screenshot of the app?), or have links to university page that describes study in more detail to ensure participants can read about it and know it's legitimate
 - Other ideas public contributors suggested was instead of having a link, embed the link in the SALIENT logo so that people know that they are clicking on the study logo, and it gives credence to the study. There was a general idea of you want to make participants make them feel like they are contributing to academic research (and perhaps not market research), so use this to SALIENT's advantage
 - Another idea was to create a recruitment video with a talking head of one of the researchers at SALIENT describing the study, which would allow participants to put a face to a name (and then maybe search their name on google and see it's legitimate)
- One of our contributors also said they couldn't see the screenshot of the Tesco website (within the plug in information link), and to them it was blank space. This made them think the plug in was dodgy
- There was also question of what 'SALIENT' (as part of the Plug In Name – 'sustained choice X SALIENT')) might mean to people who are accessing the plug in 'cold'. One of our public contributors knew what it meant because they were familiar with SALIENT from us talking about it, but suggested others might not
- One contributor suggested that the idea of moving from one page to another page (i.e. download instructions page to online plug in info page to tesco page) might deter people. They said that often, when websites ask you to move in between different interfaces, it makes them concerned that something 'dodgy' or suspicious is going on

- Particularly, our contributors and their extended networks were worried that the Plug In might be 'dodgy' and have malware or spyware on it that allowed the Plug In to track payment details, credit or debit cards, or their addresses.
 - Suggestions: provide (re)assurance within the online plug in information that their details (including card details) will not be tracked, and the plug in will only collect data on the products they are buying. One of our public contributors said that participants need 'hand holding' and given information every step of the way
 - Other public contributors suggested having disclaimers about how participants data will be used and shared (i.e. thanks for taking part, please be advised all detailed will be stored in terms of GDPR and not be tracked). The contributors suggested that with market research websites, there was a concern that different studies on the market research website shared data with other studies, and so public contributors said to be really clear that data will not be shared outside the SALIENT research team and how the data would be processed/stored aligning with GDPR
 - Linked to the above idea about the video with a talking head, the video could also involve information about data sharing/GDPR, reassurance that no bank details will be collected and/or shared.
- This is linked to IT quirks, but one contributor who asked their networks of family/friends/colleagues to look at the plug in found that the plug in didn't work the first time (in that they downloaded the plug in but it wasn't activated on the Tesco website). They said the people they had asked would have given up on trying to use the plug in, had in not been for them encouraging their networks to try again. Because the plug in didn't work, they suspected the plug in might be 'dodgy'/suspicious, and therefore required reassurance to try again
 - Suggestion: make sure there's support for if it doesn't work and/or provide instructions that if it doesn't work, close all your tabs/restart chrome or laptop.

Other suggestions about retention of participants:

- One of our contributors described how they are signed up to amazon market research emails to get them to watch not yet out movies/tv series, and said that amazon sends the link out and if you don't click on the link, it will send you a reminder/prompt at different times of the day over the next week to encourage you to watch the tv series/movie. They suggested that to get people to not only sign up but to take part in the research, regular links at different times of the day might help – maybe especially in the evening or weekends when people are likely to do the shop?

Sustained Trial (SALIENT)

General feedback on Plug In from wider network of one Public Contributor

App tester- 60 years old female mainly 2 adults and 3 dogs in house but frequently 8 adults in house.

*Struggled to understand initial instructions as loaded app then didn't see anything initially on Tesco website.

*Nearly gave up but glad they didn't

*Very interesting to see and would help inform choice although cost is her first priority.

App tester-52 year old Male 3 adults and one teen in household -1 cat- regular Tesco online shopper.

Downloading was not an issue but didn't initially see anything on Tesco web page. So removed the app and redid and every thing was there.

Visually- looks good, doesn't interfere with product info so does not get in way. It would be nice to know how the estimates are reached.

Impact-Price and quality of product is our first choice. However if nearly identical products at same price I might look at ap to make a decision. Time to use it and price would be my constraints however I can see others finding it useful

Over all nice little extension with relevant info I can see the appeal to some.

App tester-81 year old female- lives alone- uses an ipad normally thus had to look at app om my lap top. This lady is regular online Tesco shopper.

Wasn't instantly sure what the App was showing.

Ran through several products that she usually bought...said she probably wouldn't change much as she knows what she likes. She is interested in sustainability and prefers to buy UK products where possible however sticks with her trusted brands.

However we did find a more sustainable biscuits at a cheaper price so that would be a happy change for her.

App tester 62 year old female- household of 4 adults and 1 dog. Mainly uses a tablet but tested this on mac desktop. Does occasional online shopping

No problems loading the app.

Looked at products she usually buys.

*Are all products estimated? No recognition of packaging, different ways of farming

*how can we make choices when many products are rated the same ie coffee/ teabags

*usually buy milk that gives back to farmers- interesting that UHT milk was the same rating as fresh despite it undergoing heat treatment.

*Tuna – not really surprised its rating not great but why is Tesco tuna better than Princes- are Tesco sponsoring app?

*Mayonnaise- this had more info re packaging, more variations in alternatives-thought glass might be better than plastic but not really- light version was made in UK but full fat did not get that symbol- vegan no better than lighter.

*loose veg should be better than packaged but there was no difference.

PROS interesting and helpful to make informed choices but as lots are estimated they wondered about accuracy

CONS time consuming for the first few times but better once you knew what was what.

Lots of info to go through so a bit of info overload. This is worse when maybe considering price too. They would understand why people would not change products.

More general top tips on what to look for. How to swap to alternatives to help them shop more sustainably by making better choices.

App user 39 year old female – single parent of 2. Uses Tesco on line all the time however does this on phone and app will not work on that at moment. I showed this person on screen.

Was interesting to see and simple to look at. We looked through usually bought products – many were Tesco value products that actually didn't fare too badly.

For this person cost would be first priority and probably would not have time to check out sustainability.

Felt that many younger people shop from their phones so this should be a consideration for future versions.

Tesco

- Tesco didn't have to
- Not endorsed by Tesco
- The people doing shopping needed to understand how it works – if that's one of the barriers to – make it as part of their remit when signing people up. Sounds like hand holding but it needs to be. There is absolutely no way we can see your bank details
- Look at what website address looks like. People are more likely to trust a .uk
- Concerns: instructions about info about what's happening

Potential labelling errors:

- Tesco own-brand straight-cut oven chips have a different rating than their crinkle cut oven-chips, even though the bag is the same size.
- Dairy milk and plant-based milk has the same rating, shouldn't plant based better?
- Chocolate in general: there needs to be a way of subdividing or accounting for things like rainforest alliance badges or fair trade labels – these should automatically get a higher score. Otherwise, there is a danger of invalidating these efforts or losing the trust of consumers.
- Fresh apples that come from France have the same rating as those from South Africa. France is closer so they should have a better rating.
- British beef and South American beef have the same rating, British beef should be better as there is less travel.
- Fresh, bagged, and tinned carrots all have the same rating. Surely tinned and packaged food is less sustainable.
- Sceptical as to why brands of tinned tuna varied so much and suspicion that Tesco might be 'sponsoring' the plug-in to get the highest rating on theirs. Tesco own brand seems to score relatively highly across the board on ratings, compared to other brands.
- Aunt Bessie's duck fat frozen roast potatoes are the same as the regular roast potatoes, surely duck fat is less sustainable.
- It just seems odd that fizzy drinks (coca cola) are sustainable. They are full of sugar and come in plastic bottles.
- Most of the Christmas food special offers are not sustainable, which is sad.
- Whole cucumber has a low rating (E).

- All fresh eggs have the same rating. Shouldn't organic free range ones have a higher rating?
- All frozen seafood scores low apart from Mussels – is that a mistake or are mussels just really sustainable?
- There are no ratings for any of the mince pies, and there are lots of different mince pies. But there is a rating for jars of mincemeat (G).
- Eggs are E but custard tarts and tinned custard are D. Custard is made mostly of eggs.
- Jars of goose fat are a C, which seems too high because it is an animal product.
- Icing sugar is E but granulated sugar is B (same brand, Silver Spoon). Isn't it just the same sugar?
- Tesco own-brand crunchy peanut butter has a different rating from the smooth one.
- All the dairy free spreads have a low rating, they must be more sustainable than dairy.
- Some of the oat milks score lower than soya milks and soya beans are not that sustainable.
- All the dairy free cheese alternatives have a low rating even though they don't contain animal products.
- A lot of the baby and toddler food products don't have ratings. Why is this?
- Innocent orange juice smooth has a different rating than the one with bits one. The little bottles have a lower rating than the larger ones. Same with Tesco own range orange juice. This doesn't make sense, surely if it is within brand then the same oranges are used regardless of bits or bottle size.