

D I G I T A L I S I N G

Sustainable Consumption



Further Insights 2020

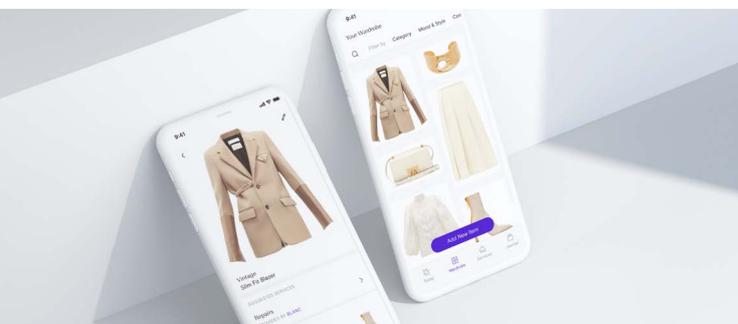
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Save Your Wardrobe

SUMMARY

This research extends and builds on our earlier report – Digitalising Sustainable Consumption (2019) – and examines the role of digitalisation in changing how consumers manage their wardrobe and clothing and shift towards more sustainable approaches.



This research is a collaboration between Save Your Wardrobe (SYW) and expert consumer researchers who specialise in ethics, sustainability and digitalisation, from the Adam Smith Business School, University of Glasgow. The research took place between March and September 2020, with 26 SYW users and used interviews and diaries to explore the impact of the SYW application (app) in mobilising sustainability. In this report, we engage the voice of our research participants to illustrate their various experiences in digitalising their wardrobes and the resultant relationship this has with sustainability.

We would, with thanks, like to acknowledge the time given generously by the research participants, to Lily James who assisted with the data collection and to the Glasgow Knowledge Exchange for funding the project.

“This idea of buying something every week and wearing it and posting a picture, is just a cycle. I really like that Save Your Wardrobe lets you see what you already have in a different light. It makes you feel like you’ve had something new...when I shared it with my followers, that is what I said... Because especially we all want new things all the time and this is kind of what was so appealing to me about the app. What I thought would resonate with a lot of people was that.”

Participant

Who we are

AUTHORS



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Save Your Wardrobe

INTRODUCTION

The impact of the climate crisis on people and the planet has put the fashion industry and our consumption behaviours under much needed scrutiny.

Currently, UK citizens buy more new clothes than anywhere else in Europe and throw away over a million tonnes of clothing annually (UK Parliament Environmental Audit Committee, 2020). This represents both a challenge and an opportunity to transform our approach to fashion.

Recognising that the most sustainable clothing is the clothing you already own, the Save Your Wardrobe (SYW) app is designed

to support consumers in making the most of their wardrobes, helping users to reconnect with the contents of their wardrobe and encouraging them to buy less, buy better and enjoy what they already own. Founded in London in 2017 by CEO Hasna Kourda and co-founder and CTO Mehdi Doghri, SYW offers the opportunity to digitalise your wardrobe, unlocking 80% of unworn clothing.

The app connects you to an ecosystem of services that offer opportunities to upcycle and extend the life of your garments.

SYW are continuously unlocking a range of services to support users move to more sustainable practices. Through engagement with users and via research, SYW have built a unique mobile application to address multiple wardrobe needs.



Covid-19

TIME TO PAUSE

Participants in this research were subject to enforced lockdown because of Covid-19 during the data collection for this project.



While paradoxically wearing significantly less of the items in their wardrobes, the imposed stop resulted in time to organise, imagine and become more emotionally and mentally engaged with their clothing. Stopping also resulted in more conscious reflection of the impact of clothing consumption, their actual clothing needs and a desire to sustain the change:

“But yeah, I’m happy with this time I’ve had off to realise that yeah, I can’t be shopping like that and I don’t want to.”

This echoes finding from Shaw and Duffy (2020) that found that when consumers stopped and took time to reflect on their clothing consumption via mindfulness, awareness of sustainability and a reconsideration of existing behaviours took place. Thus, despite reports of high fast fashion sales during lockdown (Bootle, 2020; Hanbury 2020), participants in this research, rather than buying more, engaged more meaningfully with what they already owned.

“Just as soon as Covid happened, I feel like I have just engaged so much more with my clothes in the past few months than probably I have ever, the app has definitely been a huge part of that.”

Participant

“Yeah, I guess it has made me a bit more conscious, so I think this has been a bit of a wake up call for a lot of retailers... and what are they doing with the clothes that aren’t being bought? I don’t know the answers to those questions but I guess these are things to think about.”

Participant

Sustainability

ORGANISING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Through the process of organising to digitalise the wardrobe, moments of realisation occurred in which clothing was made visible in line with sustainability aspirations.



“Yeah, I mean it was kind of like, like an organisational activity because I kind of took things out in sections, I did like a bunch of my sweaters at one time. I did shoes at one time and pants at one time, so I think it was like kind of taking things out almost like an inventory, you know like kind of laying them out...”

Through the process of sorting, sifting and organising to upload each individual item, participants reflected on clothing items, the memories evoked, the joy sparked (or not) and the fit of the item within the wardrobe as a whole. During this process there was a reconnection to physical items and judgements were made as to their value and if the item merited being uploaded to the app:

“It does make me appreciate the things that I have more. They might not be in the condition they are on the app, if they’re all like quite organised and tidy and clean and everything, but there’s something about looking through them as really high res images on the phone...I really like it, it makes me see my wardrobe ... it makes me appreciate it a lot more.”

The process of making clothing more visible was foundational in gaining an understanding of what was currently owned. We saw processes of inventory taking, de-cluttering and re-thinking the spatial confines of the physical wardrobe. Through the process of organising to digitalise the wardrobe, moments of realisation occurred in which clothing was made visible in line with sustainability aspirations. This included, questioning the volume of clothing owned, wardrobe aesthetics, identifying clothing for repair and questioning the sustainability of clothing materials and brands.

Once clothing was organised participants were “careful” to maintain the clarity of the physical space, and this process of organisation then facilitated organisation of repair, cleaning, selling and donating via the ecosystem of services offered by the SYW platform. The ability to organise and plan outfits resulted in organisation of laundry, reducing unnecessary washing and drying. Thus, the digital wardrobe created an understanding of the physical wardrobe and provided a means to manage this going forward:

“I feel like it’s a lot more organised and since I used the app to upload and actually arrange everything in the physical wardrobe, I’ve actually been more careful about putting the clothes back in the right place. I don’t rush it anymore, I just actually think about how much easier it is to stay up to date with what I wear. For example, if I have a skirt in one place and the shirt in another, I think it’s really good to actually keep it this way instead of making a mess and having to rearrange again, just because it’s more time consuming to stop caring for how they’re arranged. I think definitely I feel more organised and at the moment I think I know everything with my clothing and having it in the app as well again makes it easier to memorise, just remember what there is and think of the possible options whenever I want to wear something different.”

While the time put into organising items to upload to the SYW app was traded for the time the app saved in terms of its functionality to, for example, plan outfits, scrolling through wardrobe digitally and connection to services, this time invested also resulted in a deeper connection with one’s clothing:

“So now all of these unconscious habits that I had around my clothes I’ve been noticing more and thinking, sometimes in my mind I’ll just quantify and be like, oh, so I’m spending 20 minutes right now de-pilling this sweater so I can continue to wear it. Now I’m much more conscious of these efforts and actions that I do around my clothes. I’m trying to self-analyse and think, okay, so I have now put in such and such effort and labour into this garment, do I feel more inclined to keep it for longer, do I have more of a connection with this piece? And I think generally the answer has been yes, and I think that’s currently because I’ve just gotten better at not impulse buying or buying things that I know I’m not really going to wear, which used to be such a problem for me.”



“I guess I’m hoping that maybe this time I’m able to mentally delve into my wardrobe, is going to help me later when I don’t have that time and I need to be able to put outfits together.”

Participant

The labour underpinning clothing in terms of acquisition, organisation, care, maintenance and upkeep of physical space really was a labour of love. This in turn was reflected positively in terms of how that clothing was appreciated, used and cared for. Organising for sustainability emerged as a form of labour that invited care opportunities, such as, repair and mending as part of the process. This was facilitated by the eco-system of services provided by SYW and participants additionally shared a desire for education and upskilling opportunities to mend and clean garments themselves. This process of organisation and labour to utilise the SYW app itself became a moment of reflection and, as such, an opportunity to challenge and subvert existing patterns of behaviour.

“The satisfaction of having all my things in one place, and even just photographing them, taking them out, getting a picture, uploading it, there was something about that that I really liked...”

Participant





Engagement

MOBILISING SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

Changing entrenched patterns of behaviour can be challenging, making tools that disrupt habits, and facilitate and support new actions important.

Recent decades have been dominated by discussions of a gap between attitudes and behaviours in relation to sustainability (e.g., Hassan, Shiu and Shaw, 2016). Increased sales of fast fashion brands, such as Boohoo, despite negative publicity, appear to support the view that consumers don't care about the impact of their clothing consumption (Jones, 2019). Changing entrenched patterns of behaviour can be challenging, making tools that disrupt habits, and facilitate and support new actions important in changing clothing behaviours.

Our research found that SYW served as a tool to reflect upon, encourage and facilitate new behaviours that are more sustainable. Engagement with the SYW app raised awareness, supported behavioural change and led to the development of behavioural strategies to sustain those changes.

“I think for me the main thing would be to help me to feel more motivated to reuse my clothes and to have different outfits and to think a bit better of the type of clothes that I use.”

Participant

Raising awareness

Our research found that SYW served as a tool to reflect upon, encourage and facilitate new behaviours that are more sustainable.

Participants described becoming increasingly aware of the human and environmental impacts of clothing production, consumption and disposal. Many reflected that the “fashion industry is pretty screwed up” and “really needs to evolve”. Shared was the “uncomfortable” realisation “that I am part of the problem”. Engagement with the SYW app confronted participants with the contents of their wardrobe which, for many, had been hidden in the physical realm and which highlighted their role in this unsustainable industry:

“... I realise that 50% of my wardrobe is from Primark, absolutely enormous. It's ridiculous and I was like, oh my god, I didn't realise. I knew that when I go to Primark I go like crazy but I didn't have a full overview of all the things I have and when you realise that 50% is from one brand and that brand is maybe one of the worst you're like. So, I would say that's the different things that the app helped me to integrate more. I was already aware but at the end of a proper proof of that I was like, yeah, I know I go to Primark but that's fine, I have a few things from Primark and it's just putting it through the app I was like, because they tell you on the app what is the main brand you have and they tell you each item and you are like, oh my god, oh my god and I didn't enter my socks or underwear or sport top because I don't need, but all that came from Primark as well. So, another 50/60 items being added to my wardrobe that come from Primark, so tights,

bra, all these things that I didn't enter on the app...Yes, that's a few changes the app showed me.”

Many participants described this increased awareness in terms of becoming more “conscious” of their clothing consumption which they reflected upon in terms of “being mindful”:

“And, I think mindfulness means being conscious of where they're coming from, and how they're getting to you and why they're getting to you and if you really need them, and I think mindfulness about your clothes kind of then extends into like a larger discussion of like capitalism and like, you know, like system that we're in, where we just buy and we buy, and we buy and no one stops to think about why they're buying or if it's really making them happy, and or where any of the stuff is really coming from.”

Articulations around mindfulness reflected the need to be grounded and not influenced by an environment focused on consumption of new trends and accompanying products, and as a result to experience contentment with what you already have in your wardrobe. This was aligned to personal health and wellbeing as well as planetary health and the health of others (e.g., garment workers). Thus, mindfulness was very much linked to sustainability and underpinned a motivation to be careful in clothing use and maintenance across the lifecycle of a garment, to appreciate

clothing and its continuity, your relationship with it and role you play in production, use and disposal. Knowledge is power and the insight provided by the SYW app as to the contents of one's wardrobe enabled participants to move beyond awareness to more effectively manage their clothing decisions going forward. Thus, we see mindfulness taking participants beyond initial awareness to consider ways to change their current behaviours:

“So, it's a good way for me to find the gaps in my wardrobe and that allows me to be a more conscious consumer because then I am only buying things that will allow me to enjoy the rest of my wardrobe more.”

Participant

“So I think it’s a big part of it is just spreading awareness, so yes for me it has made me more aware I think and yes now I’m thinking maybe putting the brand on clothes with the app is actually important.”

Participant

App changing behaviours

Participants were keen to engage both in repair services as well as personal upskilling to repair clothing. Save Your Wardrobe, as a tool, supports, enables and encourages new more sustainable behaviours.

We observed a change in behaviour among our participants motivated by a desire to be more sustainable:

"...I could probably do more in terms of sustainability but it's made me realise that I wasn't like, oh god, I don't do any of that, that's really bad, it's made me realise that I do a little bit, you know, there's an area on there for getting things altered, I do that myself, I don't throw things away when a button pops off or a hem comes down, I fix them. It's made me realise that I do actually care about making my wardrobe sustainable... So yeah, it's got a nice feel to it, there's a nice tone to what it's trying to do and I think the underlying message is use your wardrobe properly and try not to be so, less landfill. I think that's the message that you get from it and I think that it's nice to be a part of."

The ability afforded by the SYW app "to see my wardrobe as a whole", and the clarity this provided in terms of knowledge about what you own, how you use it and the patterns of behaviour engaged in was "eye opening". Reflecting on this we found participants felt they needed to change current behaviours and supported by SYW articulated a desire to create a "sustainable wardrobe". Through engagement with the SYW app participants described an "appreciation" and "re-appreciation" of their clothing, viewing their wardrobe "with a fresh pair of eyes". This resulted in a re-evaluation of consumption, care and maintenance of their clothing. Participants focused less on new but on reframing existing

items, re-engaging with them, shopping from their own wardrobe, repairing and caring, swapping and purchasing second-hand. For most the immediate reaction that emerged from this engagement was the realisation that "I have enough":

"From a more practical perspective, it was really about stopping myself from making any purchases. I no longer consider myself a shopaholic but I was a shopaholic before and sometimes I feel like falling in the trap of oh, this is something that I really like, and it's not that expensive so let's buy it. For me, this was really stopping myself from making any purchases, or if making them, really selecting cautiously. For example, I know I need new sneakers but I know that I want the ones from, I don't know whether you know the brand, Veja, and I cannot find the model in my size, and now I'm patiently waiting for it for a couple of weeks so I can order it. Yes, that kind of thing, patience and really selecting cautiously."

As well as "shopping from my wardrobe", where purchases were undertaken they were now "smarter purchases", reflective of identified needs and patterns of usage, with a focus on "buying better" in terms of quality and sustainability credentials. Accompanying engagement and re-appreciation of existing clothing was a recognition of the need to care for items, be more careful in using them and to be creative in finding ways to increase longevity:

"Also, just pushing myself to be creative, looking at a jumpsuit that has big bleach stains on it and just thinking, okay, so how could I make this so that it's something that I would still find attractive and still want to keep wearing, but that no longer has bleach stains on it".

Participants were keen to engage both in repair services as well as personal upskilling to repair clothing themselves. Going beyond traditional routes to repair, however, this highlights opportunities for creative practices, such as, bespoke mending that make a feature of the mend through visible, decorative and durable repair. SYW, as a tool, supports, enables and encourages new more sustainable behaviours.



“I definitely felt more organised, revisiting old clothes made me see what I have in my closet – that was good, because I was wanting to buy something new, but realised I don’t need to.”

Participant

Strategies for sustained change

Sustainability in relation to clothing was described as a “journey” or “a work in progress”, with different people at different stages.

In the absence of clear guidance as to the most effective courses of action, participants lacked clarity as to how to consistently “incorporate” or “implement” sustainability into their everyday lives. As a result, participants developed their own approaches to sustainability, while recognising these as incomplete. For some this involved a tiered system of questions, a buying quota, a “buyerarchy” or an analysis of “cost per wear”:

“So, you try to think twice before buying something to say, is it really, first, necessary and, yes, does it make a difference in my wardrobe, it's really these questions. Do I need it, does it make a difference in my wardrobe and how it's made, where does that come from, what is the brand value attached to it.”

“I said I'd buy 20% new things from now on which would include like underwear and like essentials but then I'd try to buy second-hand or upcycled or vintage 80% of the time, but I think that might be a little bit ambitious for me starting out so I might put it to 70% or 65% but trying to live by that where I can.”

“So, being a conscious consumer is being very aware that you probably already have too much in your wardrobe...and you don't actually need anymore and you need to use what you have first. But if you are already using what you have or you don't have it, then you move up the next level, which I think it's thrift. So, it's finding the different ways you can fulfil your needs,

before buying something brand new, because that requires you to use fresh resources from the ground. So, that's how I view my own purchases, I always make sure that I don't have something in my wardrobe yet and does the thing that I exactly need first. Oftentimes when you ask that first question, you can actually find something suitable in your wardrobe that works already, so then you don't have to go through the entire triangle and that's fine. But if that's not the case, then the next option is thrifting, which is why I always go to the swap platform first and if that doesn't work for me, then I go and look at the pre-loved platforms...and what not before buying something brand new.”

“So, I try to approach my shopping choices in a way that's just asking myself do I really want it and will I really like wear it as much as I like, I want to wear it and also actually do like this cost per wear thing. So, I bought like an expensive like t-shirt, for example, a brand of t-shirt or a skirt then I would like calculate the number of wears that I need to get to justify that price and I know that if I like something very much, like if I constantly think about it or even if I'm not like night dreaming about it than I know that for sure I have to get it. So yes, I try to approach it like that.”

In the various approaches participants had devised, we observed one or more of the following elements; not buying new, buying less, buying second hand, buying better quality and paying more for it (e.g., “investment pieces”), caring for clothing (e.g., following

“To just be very aware of what your purchases mean, so I always go back to this...buyerarchy of needs triangle which I find extremely useful and right at the bottom always, it says use what you have.”

Participant



care labels), repairing (doing own repairs or engaging repair services), waiting before buying, swapping, avoiding packaging, consideration of fabric and means of disposal.

Participants sought to consider the life of a garment from “cradle to cradle”, this, however, was fraught with complexity. Information sought from social media, webpages, brands and articles was inadequate in offering clear actionable solutions:

“Oh, and then of course the whole cradle to cradle thing, that’s something that I really didn’t know before, but just it’s so simple. Like, the question of like well what happens to your stuff when you’re done with them? But like, no one thinks about that, we all just assume that they can just go off into some

like waste facility somewhere and that it’s going to be fine. But it’s not, our waste is accumulating, and really in third world countries, and like the environment and our oceans and it’s not okay and we need to start designing clothes and objects that have a lifecycle built into them, where there’s a sustainable way of disposable at the end, yeah.”

“So, cotton, wool, etc., if it washes into the ocean, it would biodegrade but recently, I read that that’s not the case because the marine environment is very different. Now I’m thinking, even my natural fibre clothing, which is basically my entire wardrobe, if I wash them in the washing machine it’s going to give off microfibres and so now, that’s the only thing that makes me think about my wardrobe and sustainability right now, because

all this time I’ve been so, for the past seven years towards natural fibres, and now I’m thinking is that the right move, is there any right move because we learn that it is not actually biodegradable in the marine environment. It may be biodegradable in a soil environment with the right ph levels, or whatever, but not so in a marine environment. Now I don’t know what the right move is but I’m not sure I can solve that.”

Looking to the future

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

Participants viewed SYW as having the potential to play a key role in offering much needed guidance in relation to sustainability.

This research has clearly illustrated the opportunities for raising awareness in relation to sustainability. Armed with this motivation for change, however, it is vital that there are clear actions that can be taken to mobilise these concerns. SYW play an important role in raising awareness, facilitating behaviour change and linking to an eco-system of related services. There is significant potential to develop this further.



SUSTAINABLE BRANDS

Sustainability is at the centre and core of the brand.



COMMUNITY BUILDING

Support sustainable actions through community.



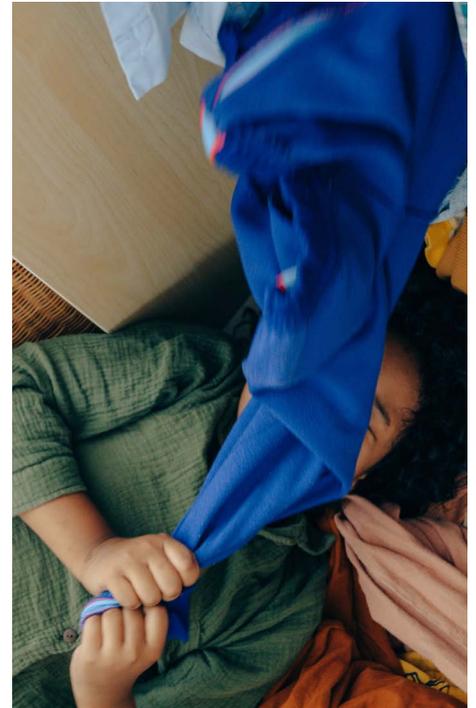
CONNECTIVITY

Taking a holistic lifestyle approach to sustainability.

Sustainable brands



Save Your Wardrobe offered significant opportunities in terms of reducing clothing consumption and increasing use and longevity of existing clothing.



With a focus on using what you already own more effectively, such shifts towards sustainability are core to SYW and, as a result, participants felt well supported in this regard. With awareness of sustainability raised and a desire to take corresponding action, participants experienced difficulty when seeking to translate their desire for sustainability into a purchase for a new item, when they identified a genuine need:

“But yeah, I think it’s just so huge. Like everything to consider in that one garment. I think as well it’s so frustrating sometimes when, like I remember a few months ago, Primark released like oh a new organic cotton t-shirt and like there’s this whole spread in their window...and a marketing campaign

of them with the cotton and it’s all organic. It’s like yeah, but that’s one aspect. Well who made the t-shirt? Where was it made? How much did you pay for it? Like your customer ... you’re going to have maybe the customer that values that because they’re organic cotton, but you’re still going to have that customer that buys it and then just throws it in a skip in a few weeks. That’s just like a one thing. It’s just like the green washing, it’s just not ... it’s just irresponsible not to inform the customer of the whole process. So, then they I think ... then it’s false information and the customer’s like, I’m contributing to a sustainable fashion garment, but they don’t know the whole background on it. It’s not fully...if it’s not circular and it’s not everyone in the supply chain being treated fairly then it’s not.”

It is important for brands and supporting digital applications promoting sustainability to ensure their approach is authentic. Given the volume of clothing already in circulation and the impact of producing any new garment, sustainability cannot be an add on, but rather requires a whole systems approach. Thus, there is a balance to be struck between modifying consumption along more sustainable lines and the need to reduce overall levels of consumption (Shaw and Newholm, 2002). Finding this balance in strategic positioning is vital to engaging meaningfully with sustainability:

“There’s been quite a few times where I kind of found the brand or maybe some advertising popped on my Instagram or something and

then I kind of looked at it and I was, okay, they look like quite nice and they look quite sustainable. And then you kind of look through their offering, then you start reading their comments and I think, yeah, there was a few times, I can't remember exactly what brands they were, but I just read the comments and I was like, no, it's not really something that, I think for me one thing that really puts me off is when they try to sell more by claiming that they are sustainable which, just like, that just doesn't go together. Like, we obviously know that over consumption is the biggest problem so don't tell me to buy more, I will buy if I want to, you don't tell me to buy more just because you are claiming to be sustainable. So, I think that was the case that really put me off a few times when I looked at certain brands."

What we witnessed in our research, from those using the SYW app, was that the insight acquired into their wardrobe meant any new purchases were carefully considered and sought for their contribution in maximising item use in relation to existing garments. Much greater consideration was given to buying new than for second-hand, where with limited exception, value was seen in extending the life of a garment.

As noted above, brand sustainability claims were treated with scepticism, with a call for total transparency, supported by clear messaging and independent evidence. This applied to both well-known high street brands and lesser known brands claiming to be sustainable. The only exception was brands for which sustainability was part of their DNA. This included, Stella McCartney and Patagonia. Beyond these well-known brands there was a keen desire for more genuinely sustainable brands that challenge

traditional business models and offer connections with customers:

"I think now I would like to buy even more sustainably, if possible, so like really, I think at this moment for me what's quite important as well is like to really buy from like either the maker. So, like either buy from like a person that makes the clothes or like a very small brand that are just, I don't know why, like for some reason for me now it's quite important to buy from almost someone I know. Like, obviously, I don't know the person but you can, like, I follow quite a lot of like clothes makers on Instagram and I think you do kind of connect with them and their process through time as you follow them. So, I think for me it's now quite important to support these makers because, obviously, I think, yeah, again, like, I don't know, there's just been like a lot of press about like bigger brands and even brands that like kind of position themselves as sustainable and so on...it's no longer enough for me just to buy from a brand just because they say they're sustainable. Yeah, I think for me it's like kind of like it's now the time to really shop as small as possible. So, I think that's going to be one of like the big changes...but I'm really going to try and just limit my

buying...in that sense or change my buying..."

Moving forward there is a need and an opportunity to provide support for consumers in navigating sustainable actions across purchase, use, maintenance, repair and disposal. An improved infrastructure to support sustainable choices is needed. The creation of small, localised brands that build open relationships with their customers have the potential to support consumer demands for core, functional, durable garments.

"I follow quite a lot of like clothes makers on Instagram and I think you do kind of connect with them and their process."

Participant



Community building



Beyond supporting sustainable actions in consumption, there was a desire to engage in action as part of a wider community.

“There is such a lack of real grassroots activism within fashion and there’s just no organisation structure for that. But I think if there’s a lot of people out there who care, especially in London, and I feel like that once the app really starts to grow, if they can start to incorporate that as part of its sustainability-minded approach, that would be, to me, so much more empowering and so much more interesting and engaging than just shopping guides to sustainable brands. Or just giving us facts about what is sustainability because that information is already out there and it’s already pretty depressing. What we need I think at this point is a platform that can galvanise people to go out and actually try and create change.”

As evidenced in the high level of engagement, time and commitment

many participants dedicated to the use of the SYW app, it is perhaps not surprising that they felt part of something important. All wanted support in their journey towards a more sustainable relationship with clothing and to feel part of a like-minded community. There was a desire to engage with SYW beyond the function of a wardrobe management tool. Participants wanted to be part of a community with the potential to mobilise different forms of activism, community and civil engagement, as well as support in terms of prompts, incentives and feedback to further strengthen positive behaviours and formation of sustainable clothing habits. As noted above, participants sought support in terms of clear pathways to action in relation to sustainability. They also wanted to see this within their own community, embedded as part of

the community created by the SYW platform. The app already offers significant potential in opening opportunities to engage with clothing services beyond its core London base. Opening up services and support to geographically diverse local communities offers opportunities for education and deeper engagement in sustainability as a movement. As a digital tool with a physical manifestation, SYW offers strong potential to support green recovery through support of local clothing repair, maintenance, education and upskilling services located within local communities, supporting local economies.

Connectivity



Awareness does not exist in a vacuum and issues of sustainability are not confined to clothing.

“On the one hand, I think probably the biggest change is that I’ve just become more conscious of my relationship with my clothes. I think before a lot of it was so unconscious. I was conscious of the actions that I was doing but not of the way that they fit into a bigger picture, so I didn’t quite understand.”

The insights offered by SYW cut across the lifecycle of a garment and raised awareness of sustainability, resulting in changes in behaviour. Thus, highlighted was the potential to link SYW to like-minded applications that relate to wider sustainability choices. Spillover effects have been found in the area of sustainability (De

Groot, Schubert and Thøgersen, 2016), revealing the wider potential of SYW to mobilise sustainable actions beyond clothing alone and, in doing so, to support other related sustainability tools.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

The findings in this report represent ongoing research in collaboration with SYW as well as wider research by the authors. If you would like any further information on the current research, work ongoing, to discuss the research or to request hard copies of this report, please email:

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