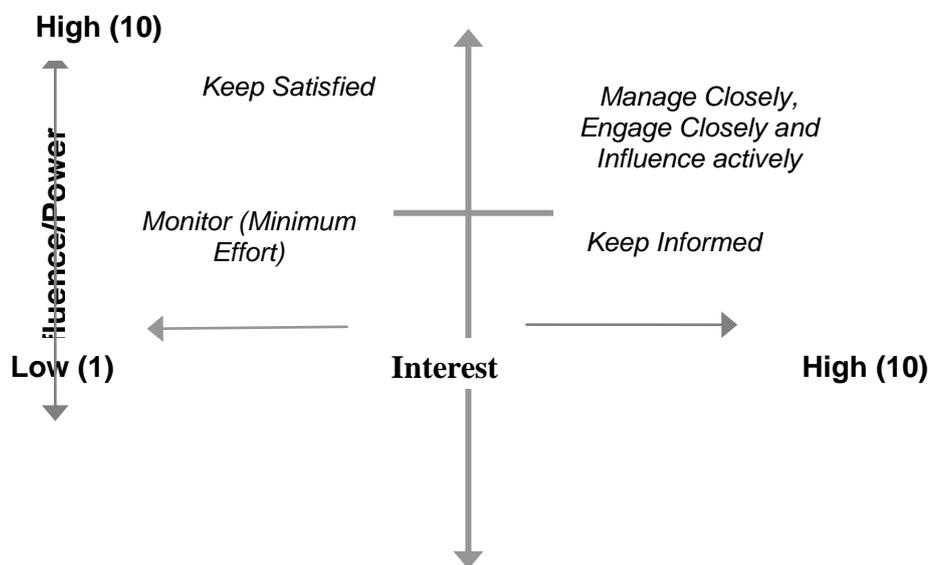# Section 8
Representation and Community Engagement

8.1 Stakeholder Analysis

Who are the main stakeholders and what are their expectation about you.

Stakeholder	What they expect from the group
	•
	•
	•
	•
	•
	•
	•
	•

One analysis tool draws up a list of stakeholders and scores them 1-10 on both power and interest. It then places them in the appropriate quadrant as illustrated below:-

High (10)

Keep Satisfied

*Manage Closely,
Engage Closely and
Influence actively*

Influence/Power

*Monitor (Minimum
Effort)*

Keep Informed

Low (1)   **Interest**   **High (10)**

The idea is that an organisation will develop a different strategy for engaging with and responding to stakeholders in accordance with the quadrant in which they are placed.

Equality - Sections 75 (1) and (2): Equality Commission

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities designated for the purposes of the Act to comply with two statutory duties. The first duty is the Equality of Opportunity duty, which requires public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine equality categories of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without.

The second duty, Section 75 (2), the Good Relations duty, requires that public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group. For ease of reference, the duty under Section 75 (2) is referred to as the *'good relations duty'*.

Section 75 (2) formalises the shift from managing diversity and difference to Promoting diversity and integration. It requires public authorities to take a pro-active initiating approach to contributing to a shared society, rather than responding to the effects of a divided one.

It means recognising and acknowledging the legacy of decades of sectarian conflict, and challenging sectarianism and racism. This requires not only reacting swiftly to incidents and manifestations, such as graffiti or name-calling; but also educating and training people to understand that prejudice is not acceptable. It means creating an ethos, a culture, of good relations, and recognising the need to promote good relations both within, and between, communities.

The Equality Scheme, and the equality policy that Coleraine Borough Council has, in accordance with its statutory duty and in association with all other local authorities, deems that good relations duties extend beyond religious or/and political dimensions to include also minority ethnic groups. The section 75 categories include the following:

- o Persons of Different Religious Belief, Political Opinion, Racial Group, Age, Marital Status or Sexual Orientation;

- o Men and Women Generally;

- o Persons With a Disability and Persons Without;

- o Persons with Dependants and Persons Without.

These Section 75 groups are also highlighted within the community cohesion focus of developing more cohesive and integrated communities. Key issues include:

A public body such as Coleraine Borough Council is required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations and is bound to have regard for affirmative action, through the Race Relations Order (1997), Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), and the adoption of the EU Convention on Human Rights.

8.2   What is community engagement?

Community engagement is the process of involving people in decisions that affect them. This can mean involving communities in the planning, development and management of services.   It can also be about tackling the problems of a neighbourhood, such as crime, drug misuse or lack of play facilities for children or it can be about identifying the assets in a local community and how best to utilise these most effectively for the wider benefit of the community and its individuals.

Why is community engagement important?

Local communities are a rich source of energy, creativity and talent. They are made up of people with diverse backgrounds who each have something to contribute to making an area flourish. The role of local Government and other statutory agencies is to help communities to work together to fulfil their potential.

Creating a self help ethos is a primary remit of this work. Ensuring people are able to have their voices heard in the planning of local services people is at the core of community engagement. When communities feel they are asked, listened to and see action on the ground as a result of their input, the sense of belonging and pride in a community increases:

- o   Local democracy is boosted and empowered;
- o   The confidence and skills base of local people increases;
- o   Higher numbers of people potentially volunteer in their communities;
- o   There is a higher satisfaction with the quality of life in a local neighbourhood; and
- o   This leads to the delivery of better, more responsive services.

Community engagement is all about delivering on outcomes for local people.   This could be reduced crime, healthier children, warmer homes or better educated 16 year olds. All of these issues are multi-faceted and require a collaborative and integrated approach with communities and the statutory sector to their delivery. Understanding the outcomes that are meaningful to local people and developing a truly integrated approach to address those means taking a partnership approach to working with local communities.

In Scotland, this integrated and partnership type model is being delivered through the Scottish Government.   The Scottish Government has a clear purpose to "create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth, and it is determined to work in partnership across Scottish society to deliver on that purpose". The purpose is underpinned by five strategic objectives and the new National Performance framework, which sets out a set of agreed outcomes in a range of areas that will be critical to making Scotland more successful.

This new approach to delivering change plays out at Local Authority level through the new Single Outcome Agreements, which are a product of the new and trusting relationship between central and local Government. From 2009/10, Single Outcome Agreements have been developed by Community Planning Partnerships in recognition of the fact that all of Scottish society, the public and third sectors and communities themselves, have a role to play in delivering the purpose.

There is recognition by the Scottish Government that communities doing things for themselves can sometimes be the best way of delivering change. This has required

mature dialogue between the public sector and community groups, underpinned by trust and respect.

Local government reform in NI, according to NILGA's President, Mrs Evelyne Robinson, speaking at the first Regional Transition Committee meeting of the Local Government Reform Programme on 25th April 2012 which was chaired by the DoE Minister, Alex Attwood stated that "it must be driven by the long standing vision of stronger local government doing more for local people, devolving resources and functions from the centre whilst retaining the sense of place so important to the community we represent and the many visitors to our council areas". This requires good community engagement and participation of local communities.

So why is engagement important to local authorities and to innovation?

"Better Together" is a Living Lab Tool kit for user participation produced by Eileen Beamish et al through the University of Ulster and the Social Market Research and the Social Research Centre. The Living Lab movement is emerging globally as a tool for economic and social development at the local and regional scale, providing significant opportunities for rural, urban and regional development both to large companies and to small to medium sized enterprise (SME) innovation, leveraging their sustainable competitiveness and giving a new role for public authorities in promoting and facilitating innovation. They are a widely recognised and accepted pillar of the European Innovation System. Over the last seven years European Living Labs have evolved based on and strongly linked with national and European Policy and Innovation initiatives. Themes within this include: e-government and e-participation; well being and health; future cities; social innovation; social inclusion; thematic tourism and rural development to name but a few.

Better Together describes User Participation as[1]:

"user Participation describes a series of methods and processes that are specifically designed to actively involve people in influencing decisions that shape policies, practices, products or services"

It is really about involving people in decision making. People have the opportunity to speak their mind, listen to what others have to say and generally explore how their views are perceived by others and how they perceive the opinions of others. It can be an unstructured or structured event but more likely than not structured to enable the collection and dissemination of the views afterwards. More sophisticated methods like video and audio can also be added. Of late, user participation is also taking place through social media websites and "apps" such as Facebook and Twitter offering access to large numbers of people via electronic channels. These can provide completely new paradigms of interaction; for example "crowd sourcing" solutions to community problems.

Within the toolkit ten reasons are suggested for companies or public bodies to be user centred. These are[2]:

Number	Reasons to be user centred
1	Users can have good ideas. Twenty five years of research has shown that users rather than manufacturers are often the initial developers of

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[1] *Source: Social Research Centre 2011*

[2] *Ref: "Better Together" – a Living Lab tool kit for user participation produced by Eileen Beamish et al Social Research Centre Ltd; Social Market Research Ltd and University of Ulster. TRAIL Living Lab 2012*

Number	Reasons to be user centred
	what later becomes commercially significant products
2	Users understand needs. Trying to understand what users need is highly complex. If you only use conventional market research techniques you will only get so far
3	Service providers and Manufacturers gain from their insights. Users ask questions like – "does this actually work"; "what are the drawbacks?". The answers avoid investing significant resources into something that does not meet the need of the market.
4	There will be no need to "second guess" the problem or issues around the solutions; you can gain greater understanding by involving the users directly with your project.
5	As a developer of the service or product you will gain a greater sense of esteem and sense of value in the work you are undertaking as you will feel more assured about the integrity and future applicability of the work
6	The work you are undertaking is more likely to be beneficial for users if they are informing what you are doing. Ideas and solutions can be tailored to the unmet needs and market gaps of the population of interest.
7	The chances for successful or increased take up of the product or service you are developing will be improved because you have taken the needs of the users into consideration.
8	Users may feel more satisfied as they know they've been involved in the processes and informed the final product or service. Users may feel more valued and listened to, as opposed to simply being considered as "customers".
9	In the long run, it is possible that user involvement may save you time and money by limiting the number of "wrong turns" which could be made, which would result in having to back and start again.
10	There are moral, ethical and rights reasons. A strong case can be made that the public should be actively involved in any publicly funded research which will impact on their health status, for example.
Ref: "Better Together" – a Living Lab tool kit for user participation produced by Eileen Beamish et al Social Research Centre Ltd; Social Market Research Ltd and University of Ulster. TRAIL Living Lab 2012	

The document also outlines the basic process of user participation. If organisations follow a user centred approach they are trying to understand three main things:
  o **Knowledge:** what the user knows or does not know about the service or product
  o **Attitudes:** how they perceive the service or product
  o **Behaviour:** how they currently interact, will interact or don't interact with the service or product.

Better Together also talks about a three stage process which involves the organisers of the user participation process to consider a number of things before starting the process:

  o Before participation
      o **Rationale** – why are we doing this – for what purpose
      o **Objectives** – what are we trying to find out?
      o **Existing Knowledge** – what do we already know
      o **Who** – who will we ask - involve
  o During participation

- o **Approach** – how will we go about involving users?
  - o **Quality check** – has our user participation been good enough? How will we know?
- o After participation
  - o **Findings** – what does all the feedback from users tell us?
  - o **Implications** – what does this feedback mean for our proposed service or product
  - o **Feeding back** – how will we share our findings and conclusions with users?

It advises the participation organiser to use consultation methods that are appropriate to the needs of users and will yield information which is valid and reliable. This often means using more than one approach to participation, giving a more robust and reliable outcome.

This toolkit also then outlines some values at each of the three stages above which are outlined in more detail in the reports itself.

- o Before participation
  - o Honest intention
  - o Visible commitment
  - o Clarity of purpose
  - o User identification and engagement
  - o Proportionality
  - o Efficiency
  - o Policy compliance
  - o Practicalities
  - o Organising the project
  - o Steering committee
- o During participation
  - o Timing
  - o Time span
  - o Robustness
  - o Enabling users to participate
  - o Accessibility and inclusion
  - o Consenting and confidentiality
- o After participation
  - o Integrity
  - o Due regard
  - o Care with "attribution"
  - o Feedback
  - o Continuous improvement
- o General
  - o Empowerment
  - o Efficient, effective and economical use of resources
  - o Consistency

The toolkit has a number of other useful elements including **a stakeholder mapping process** (page 28) and a stakeholder prioritisation matrix looking specifically at power and influence as two indicators for choice of stakeholders (page 31).   There are usually different views on who really holds "power" or is "interested". These debates in themselves yield insights which are hugely beneficial to any participation exercise. The guide advises that one should invest the majority of the time and resources in involving the "key players" – those stakeholders with the greatest level of power and interest. They also advise going back to the principles of the exercise

and marrying the stakeholder list with the principles and desired end result of the exercise.

It then outlines a number of **useful techniques in how to undertake both qualitative and qualitative techniques** which could be used as part of a process and outlines some techniques that are a mix of both quantitative and qualitative – which are generally more expensive. From the quantitative perspective, this includes guidance on surveys, sampling etc. It also covers guidance on maximising response rates to questionnaires and questionnaire design and the different types of questions which can be sued in questionnaires.

From a **qualitative perspective** it covers, interviews, focus groups, case studies. The toolkit then explores emerging methods like virtual focus groups, e-panels and social media. Thought needs to be given to the cost and time to undertake each and what is the most appropriate one/s to use given the agreed stakeholders. (*This is where the dialogues Designer and the process Planner outlined later in the document can be useful).* Being clear about how to maximise participation is also important.

It explores how to **analyse all of the data**. The importance first of all of examining the results in their individual data sets is deemed important. Judgement is needed to interpret the data. The most robust interpretation of different data sets emerge when, in an atmosphere of trust and respect, a diverse groups of individuals feel free to, and are encouraged to, challenge one another's views. Presenting the results of the research to the users is also important and will of course depend on budget and time as well. Thus presentation should take account of the needs of those you have consulted as well.

The final section covers issues around **governance and ethics**. These describe not only the overall management arrangements for the project but also clarify and document key roles and responsibilities across various players. It states that ethics is a set of principles which has primacy over all others. It assesses what types of participation processes are appropriate and which are not. The goal of ethics is to protect those involved in the participation exercise from harm. Clarifying the ethical framework from the start is very important. The format and content of governance frameworks and ethical frameworks differ depending on the nature, scale and complexity of various projects. It needs to be appropriate to the level of risk for the participants and the researchers.

Things covered in a ethical framework include: Management arrangements of the exercise – steering groups, mission, aims and value base of the organisation and being clear about the purpose of the exercise; consent; data protection; confidentiality; involvement; respect; risk assessment and compensation.

The document includes **a very useful case study** from Edinburgh City Council. It tracks the whole process on how it listened to citizens about their needs and expectations in relation to the Council's Community Recycling Centres.

8.3 So what is good engagement?

Arnstein's Ladder of Participation
Sherry Arnstein typified citizen participation into a number of rungs on a ladder. Her purpose was to demonstrate the levels of involvement of citizens in the decisions that affected their lives.

Arnstein felt that there were eight rungs on the ladder – two levels of non participation, i.e. manipulation and therapy; three degrees of tokenism, i.e. informing, consultation and placation and three degrees of citizen power, i.e. partnership, delegated power and citizen control. The eight types are arranged in a ladder pattern with each rung corresponding to the extent of citizens' power in deter-mining the end product.

The draw back of the "ladder" is an implied hierarchy but that is not the case – the important thing is to be clear about what you are trying to achieve with both yourself and those you are involving. Different 'types' are appropriate at different times and in different situations.

Citizen control	
Delegated Power	Citizen Power
Partnership	
Consultation	
Informing	Tokenism
Placation	
Therapy	
Manipulation	Non-participation
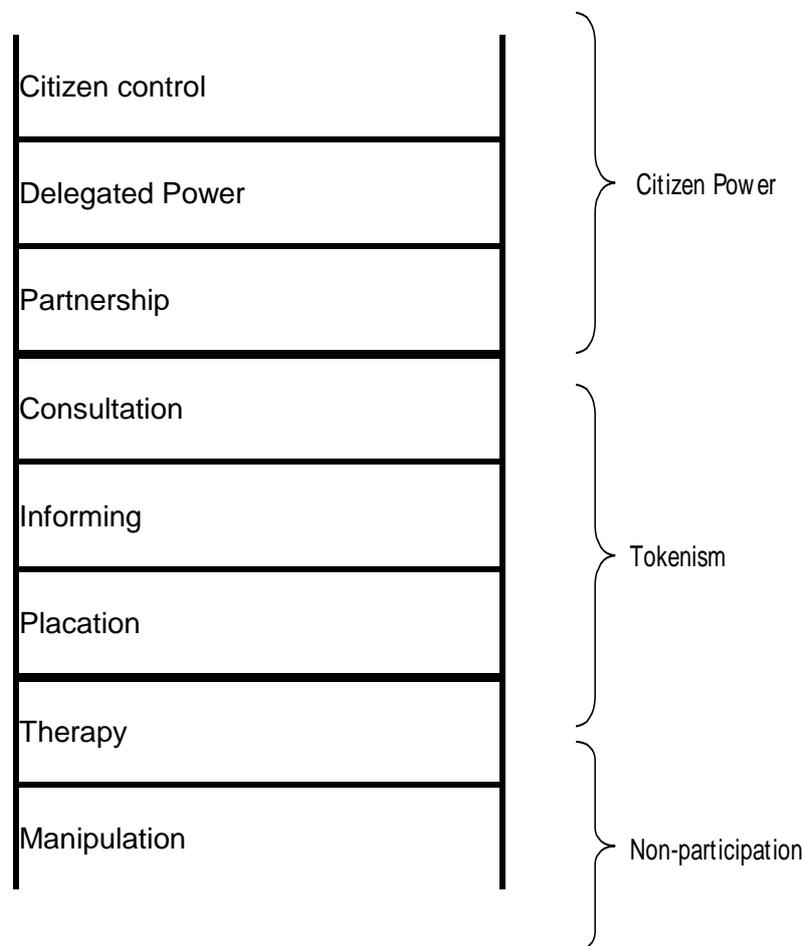
Manipulation and Therapy: The bottom rungs of the ladder are Manipulation and Therapy. These two rungs describe levels of "non-participation" that have been contrived by some to substitute for genuine participation. Their real objective is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable power-holders to "educate" or "cure" the participants.

Placation is simply a higher level of tokenism because the ground rules allow stakeholders to advise, but retain for the power-holders the continued right to decide.

Information: Providing information. (e.g. about the existence of a service, results of a decision). This tends to be one way communication.   Explaining or raising awareness of something - often in order to change attitudes/action. This tends to be one-way communication.

Consultation: Asking opinions.   This can include questionnaires asking for reactions to a particular decision, voting, market research, focus groups and debate. Can be two way communication (e.g. if participants are informed of the results) but final decisions are made by those who are doing the consulting.

Involvement: Where more than just opinions are sought – participants may be part of the solution though taking action, endorsing something, etc. Communication must be two way, but responsibilities are not necessarily formally set out and relationships between participants may remain unclear.

Partnership: Direct involvement in decision making and action, with all parties having clear roles and responsibilities and powers – usually for a defined purpose/shared common goal. Two-way communication is essential.

Delegated Power/ Citizen Control: Giving away decision making, resources and control. There should also be clear lines of accountability and should involve two way communication with those giving away the power.

The ladder juxtaposes more powerless citizens with the powerful in order to highlight the fundamental divisions between them. In actual fact, neither the powerless stakeholders nor the power-holders are homogeneous blocks of people. Each group encompasses a host of divergent points of view, competing vested interests, and splintered subgroups.

8.4   Quality standards for Community Engagement

Communities Scotland National Standards for Community Engagement are outlined below[3].

The National Standards for Community Engagement set out best practice guidance for engagement between communities and public agencies. The standards were:

- o commissioned by the Minister for Communities, through Communities Scotland
- o developed by SCDC from the experience of communities and agencies with extensive participation of over 500 community and agency representatives
- o published in 2005 with endorsement by the Scottish Executive, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, NHS Health Scotland, the Association of Chief Police Officers and many others

SCDC was the delivery organisation for the National Standards for Community Engagement Support Programme 2005/2007.

The Standards for Community Engagement set out 10 statements of commitment that can be used to develop and support better working relationships between communities and agencies delivering public services. They are underpinned by principles of good practice that have been highlighted by community and agency representatives across Scotland to promote equality and fairness. The experiences of over 500 community and agency representatives were drawn on to develop the model.

Each standard has a series of indicators that can be collected in order to assess performance. The standards can be used to ensure good practice and hold communities and partners to account.

1. **Involvement** – We will identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of engagement.

2. **Support** - We will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement.

3. **Planning** - We will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and actions to be taken.

4. **Methods** – We will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.

5. **Working together** - We will agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently.

6. **Sharing Information** – We will ensure that necessary information is communicated between the participants

7. **Working with others** – We will work effectively with others with an interest in engagement.

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[3] *Communities Scotland National Standards for Community Engagement*

8. **Improvement** – We will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants.

9. **Feedback** – We will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected

10. **Monitoring and evaluation** – We will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieve its purposes and meets the national standards for community engagement.

In summary, any community engagement initiative must have a clear sense of purpose and employ effective methods for achieving change. It must recognise the importance of equality and the diversity of people and communities and build on the skills and knowledge of all those involved. It must be committed to learning for continuous improvement.

Ultimately one must remember that no "one-size fits all" approach exists for community engagement, however general approaches can be tailored to meet specific needs.
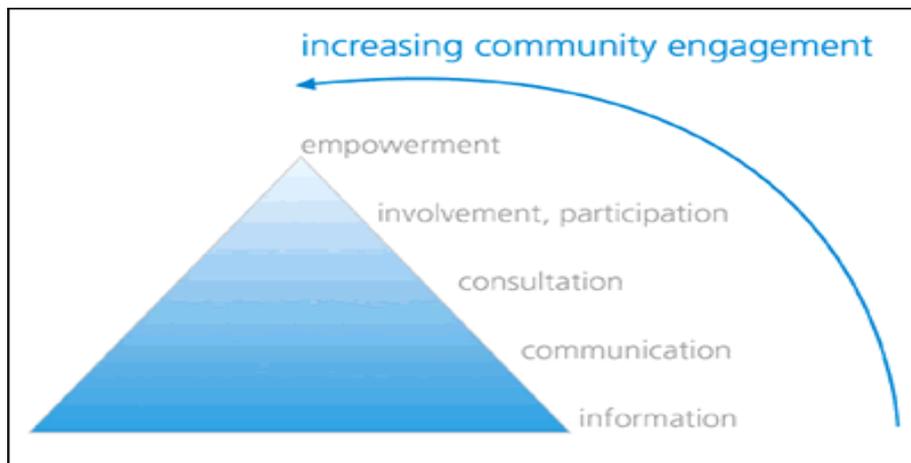
Developing principles for community engagement

Another set of values has also been set out by **Involve.** The **People and Participation web site** is based on Involve's successful book by the same name which was launched in 2005. The book provides a useful summary of participatory methods and practice but given the number of methods and speed of the development of new methods it is impossible for a printed publication to stay accurate for long.

People & Participation.net is funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government in England (Community Empowerment Division), the Ministry of Justice (Democratic Engagement Branch) and the Sustainable Development Commission. The site aims to be a central portal for information and inspiration about participation to practitioners across the world. The developers believe that the methods and principles they promote through these sites will be of use to people in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

The site has been developed by Involve and Headshift. Involve is a not for profit organisation which specialises in understanding and promoting new forms of public

participation. Headshift is an innovative new media company which specialises in designing participative sites.

Involve believes that good participation practice adheres to the following principles[4]:

Principle	What it means
Makes a difference	The purpose of participation is to achieve change in relation to the purpose identified; it may also make a difference to all those involved in terms of learning, confidence and sense of active citizenship. This requires active commitment to change by all parties.
Voluntary	People may be encouraged to be involved, and even paid for involvement, but effective participation requires them to choose to be involved. Participation cannot be compulsory.
Transparency, honesty and clarity	Transparency, honesty and clarity about the purpose, the limits of what can and cannot be changed, who can be involved and how, and what happens as a result.
Adequate resources	Adequate resources to manage the process well and to deliver on the results.
Appropriate participants	Appropriate participants representative and/or inclusive, depending on the purpose of the exercise, with traditionally excluded groups given special support and encouragement when their involvement is appropriate.
Accessibility	No participant should be excluded because of lack of physical access to meeting places, timing, appropriate support (e.g. child care), etc.
Accountability	Participatory processes need to be accountable to all those involved (including the organisation that may be running / commissioning the exercise, and to the wider community). This requires good record-keeping and reporting of both processes and outcomes.
Power	Participatory processes should have sufficient power to achieve the agreed objectives. This may require a change in the existing power sharing arrangements.
Learning and development	Participatory processes should seek to support a climate of mutual learning and development among all those involved.

http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/ProcessPlanner/Scope+Introduction

Examples of Community Engagement Techniques

Consultation & Information Gathering Techniques

In the following section we are going to outline a range of techniques the greater detail of which can be found online for further exploration by the reader. There are many different ways of consulting with the community. The important thing is for you to choose the method that best suit your needs and which ensure a match with those whom you intend to work.

Think about what sort of people you want to contact. Do they have regular meeting places? Are they mobile? Do they have access to computers and the internet? Are they literate? One of the most effective methods of consultation is simply going out and talking to people, in places they meet or enjoy a hobby or pass time.

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[4] http://www.involve.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Deliberative-public-engagement-nine-principles.pdf

Think also about the sort of information you are looking for. Does it only apply to a particular group of people, does it require special analysis, can it be explained in words or does it need to be seen?

Method	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Produce a flyer for every household	• Telling them about the process and how it's to be conducted • Remember to include a contact number	• Everyone sees the same written information	• Might be expensive • Not everyone reads • Time-consuming to distribute
Special meeting	• Invite everyone to a special event in e.g. village hall, possibly with workshops, facilitators	• Opportunity for people to hear at first hand and ask questions	• People might not turn up
Publicity in newspapers- supplements, local news letters etc.	• Whatever you decide to do, make sure you tell the local press and radio, include the parish magazine (see specimen news release also in this resource pack)	• Usually free • Reach a wide audience	• May not reach everyone • Information may not be accurate • May not be included due to shortage of space
Suggestion boxes	• Put these at strategic places around the village, inviting comments, suggestions	• Easy for people to use • No pressure on participants • Confidential • Can be done in respondents' own time	• Random • Might get vandalised
Informal chats in pub, at a shop, outside school	• Have a list of questions on a clipboard and ask the same questions to everyone	• Target specific groups • People might speak more freely • Captive audience • Gives comparable sets of answers	• Not necessarily inclusive
Write to all clubs, societies	• Ask members to identify issues of concern, make suggestions • Offer to send a speaker/facilitator	• Covers a range of interest groups	• Not everyone is in a club or society
Hold an 'ideas' competition	• Away of stimulating creative thinking and generating interest • This could use a variety of media, including drawings, written suggestions, or video	• Can be infectious • Taps hidden talents • Can double up as a skills search for use in other aspects of the plan	• Competitive element might put some people off
Run a drop in event one weekend	• Get people to write up issues or 'wishes' on flip charts or use sticky 'post it' labels	• Can be an opportunity to socialise and have some fun	• Some people might be away or unable to attend that weekend

Method	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
	• Offer drawings or pictures as alternative to written words • Offer refreshments and possibly an attraction • Consider providing a crèche and transport for elderly or isolated residents	• Flexible – people can choose when they come and take as long or short a time as they want	
Run a competition for schools	• Ask the children to draw pictures of what they like or dislike about the area and what they would like to see	• Fun for the children	• School timetable might not have time. • Some children may not bother to do it at home.
Jigsaw	• People take photos of different parts of the area to illustrate what they like/dislike about it. These are then mounted at workshops and comments invited	• Visual • Can be used to illustrate the final plan • Can participate in the feedback stage, even if don't/can't take photos	• Not everyone enjoys or feels able to take photographs
Walkabout	• Young people from the village, including the primary school and youth club are invited to join local residents on a 'walkabout 'to help generate ideas for improving the area. • It involves them taking an hour long walk around the village with the aim of identifying current problems and possible solutions for the future regeneration of the area	• A social and relaxed opportunity to sound out ideas • Group activity generates discussion • Being there may provoke more ideas than an inside event.	• Weather – dependant.

People and participation web site[5]

Some 58 Engagement techniques can also be seen on the People and Participation web site with full up to date costs and explanations for each. This adds to and updates the Participation Works 21 techniques referred to earlier. These are outlined by name only below but a search on line will enable access to each.

http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/Methods/browse+methods

Engagement Techniques		
1. 21st Century Town Meeting 2. Action Learning 3. Action Planning 4. Appreciative Inquiry 5. Area Forums 6. Blogs 7. Citizen Advisory Groups 8. Citizens' Panels 9. Citizens' Summits 10. Citizens Jury 11. Community Appraisal 12. Community Development 13. Consensus Conference 14. Consensus Voting 15. Conversation Cafes 16. Co-production 17. Customer Journey Mapping 18. Deliberative Mapping 19. Deliberative Polling	20. Deliberative Workshops Delphi Survey 21. Democs 22. Design Charrettes 23. Dialogue 24. Digital Interactive TV 25. Dynamic Facilitation 26. ePanels 27. E-petitions 28. Focus Groups 29. Forum Theatre 30. Future Search 31. Graphic Recording 32. Local Issues Forum 33. Mediation 34. Mystery shopper 35. National Issues Forum 36. Online Consultations 37. Online Forums 38. Open Space 39. Opinion Polls 40. Participatory Appraisal	41. Participatory Budgeting Participatory Strategic Planning 42. Participatory Video 43. Planning Cell 44. Planning for Real 45. Policy Slam! - Consensus voting 46. Real Time Strategic Change 47. Samoan Circle 48. Scenario Workshop 49. Search Conference 50. Study Circle 51. Twitter 52. User Panels 53. Virtual worlds 54. Webcasting 55. Webchat 56. Wiki 57. World Cafe 58. Written Consultations

Examples from the Community Planning Network

The Community Planning Network has published a full range of methods on its website. Over the years there has been a huge increase in the demand for more local involvement in the planning and management of the environment. This both benefits local residents, who attain a direct influence over the shaping of their local community and also the professionals who secure much needed local knowledge and resources vital for creating safer, stronger, wealthier and more sustainable communities.

A number of techniques which best involve local residents in the complexities of architecture, planning and urban design have been identified. The following are a summary of these various techniques and methods that have been used with regards to community planning and community engagement, and their main advantages:

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[5] http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/Methods/browse+methods

Action planning event – All parties involved create plans of action at carefully structured sessions. This is an alternative to bureaucratic planning.

   o   Costs varies depending on scale of event

Activity Week - Programme of events and activities, held by organisations or individuals, focused on a particular theme e.g. environment week.

   o   Very costly but scope for sponsorship

Architecture centre - Meeting place for all those involved in shaping the future of their surroundings, set up to help people understand, and engage in, the design of local buildings and the built environment.

   o   Costly but scope for sponsorship

Art Workshop - Allows local people to help design and construct artworks to improve their environment.

   o   Relatively costly

Awards scheme - The organisers establish the purpose of the scheme and assemble partners and sponsors. Stimulate activity and spread good practice at a local, national or even international level.

   o   Costs vary depending on scale of awards scheme i.e. local or national. Great scope for sponsorship

Briefing workshop - working sessions held to establish a project agenda or brief
   o   Core costs include facilitator and venue

Choice Catalogue – Used to make design choices within a predetermined structure. Useful when large numbers of people involved and range of options available are extensive
   o   Dependant on scale of consultation

Community Centre Design - Places where communities can get affordable technical help to plan and manage their environment.   Normally independent charitable agencies funded by governments, local authorities, universities, charities or private sponsors
   o   Costs dependent on the number of paid staff and cost of premises

Community Planning Forum - Open, multipurpose events lasting several hours. Secures information, generates ideas and creates interaction between interest groups. The format combines interactive displays, an open forum, workshop groups and informal networking
   o   Main costs include venue hire and advertising leaflet production

Community Profiling - Building up a picture of the nature, needs and resources of a community with the active participation of that community to develop an understanding of itself
   o   Relatively cost effective. Main cost includes facilitators' fees

Design assistance team - Comprise a number of specialists from a variety of relevant disciplines who work with the local residents or agencies in that area. Provide a fresh and independent viewpoint

   o   Normally only paid expenses

Design Fest - Multidisciplinary design teams develop and present their ideas in public. Stimulates debate and develops imaginative solutions, particularly on controversial issues

o Design fests are costly however there is a great deal of scope for sponsorship.

Design game - Visual way of allowing people to explore physical design options for a site or internal space. Useful for designing parks, room layouts and for land-use planning

o Costs are very much dependent on standard of design

Design Workshop - hands-on sessions allowing small groups of professionals and non-professionals to work creatively together developing planning and design ideas. Normally held as part of a planning day or other action planning event

o Main costs include planning preparation and facilitators fee

Development Trust –mechanism for communities to undertake regeneration and development projects themselves. Normally independent, non profit, community-based organisations with management structures ensuring accountability to local people. May undertake a specific project or a range of economic, environmental, cultural or social initiatives

o Non profit organisations with a charitable status, making it possible to attract resources from public, private and charitable sectors.

Diagrams - visual way to collect, discuss and display information at all stages of the planning process. Diagrams provide a focus for discussing issues and help stimulate creative thinking. Diagrams are used for ordering and presenting information, prioritising issues, decision making and monitoring

o Not costly

Electronic Map - Allows people to explore an area and make comments at computer terminals with specially created software

o Very costly method

Elevation Montage - Shows the facade of a street by assembling photos of individual buildings. Useful for helping people gain an understanding of the building fabric and devise improvements. Generates a dialogue amongst participants and useful for discussion and analysis

o Quite costly method

Environmental Shop - Local environment shops provide a permanent way to disseminate information and create dialogue. This can be independent or part of a local regeneration agency or community centre. Normally displays information on local initiatives and projects

o Costly method

Feasibility Fund - Provides money to community organisations for paying experts to undertake feasibility studies on possible projects. This is an effective way of kick-starting local initiatives, by getting projects to a stage where they can attract capital funding and support

o Initial costs required to establish funds

Field Workshop – Offers a way for local communities to draw up plans of action where there is little data available to start with. This involves a team of technical experts working closely local facilitators, local officials and many local residents of all ages, backgrounds and interests with the aim of developing a common understanding of the nature of the community, the issues faced and possible solutions.

o Main costs include people's time, accommodation and travel.

Future Search Conference - Highly structured events at which a cross-section of community members creates a shared vision for the future. Designed to encourage people to think globally, focus on the future, identify common ground and make public commitments to action

o .Main costs include venue, meals and facilitation fees – requires a long period of planning and time to deliver.

Gaming – Games are devised to mirror real life planning scenarios or to teach specific skills. This is particularly useful during early stages of any community planning activity or to prepare people for a specific challenge ahead. It may produce preliminary design proposals or an agenda for future initiatives needed

o Main costs include facilitator's fees. Costs also involved in developing and producing games.

Ideas Competition - Normally held at the start of the development process or when there is opposition to a proposed scheme. The task can be to produce general ideas for improving an area or proposals for a specific site, building or problem. It stimulates creative thinking and generates interest and momentum.

o Simple competitions for local sites can be organised very simply and cheaply. High profile competitions will involve considerable time and expense.

Interactive display - allow people to engage in the issues and debate, on their own and in an enjoyable way, by making additions or alterations to pre-prepared exhibits.

o Costs will vary depending on complexity of exhibits. Main costs will include artwork and materials.

Local design statement – A way for local people to provide guidelines for new development in their area. It is a valuable way for local people to make a positive input into the planning process at an early stage. It is drawn up by a specially formed team of local volunteers, preferably supported by local planners and national agencies who secure the views of as many people as possible through publicity, holding workshops and circulating draft statements for comment. The statement is adopted by the local planning authority and can be used to approve or reject planning applications from developers

o Relatively cheap if local skills and services used.

Mapping – effective non-verbal way of finding out how people view their area. Individuals or groups create physical maps of their neighbourhood or city using pen and paper, lines in the sand, cloth, chalk or other materials to hand. Good way to gather and present site-specific data, understand differences in perception and stimulate debate as a basis for joint planning**.**

o Costs depend on materials used and cost of facilitation however it need not cost anything.

Micro planning workshop – A comprehensive action planning procedure for producing development plans for upgrading settlements. This is based on regular intensive workshops which involve a minimum of preparation, materials and training

o Costs are minimal apart from organisers' and participants' time.

Mobile Unit – Medium to provide the technical support necessary for community planning activity. It ranges from a van used to transport an exhibition to a mobile home or trailer converted into a fully equipped design studio. It is useful for working in communities lacking facilities or where a series of similar events are planned in several locations
- o Cost of mobile unit, maintenance and insurance.

Models - Most effective tools for getting people involved in planning and design. Particularly useful for generating interest, presenting ideas and helping people think in three dimensions
- o Cost very much dependent on complexity of model.

Neighbourhood planning office - Important local focal point for community planning activity and make it easier to follow up and sustain initiatives. Provide a working base for all professionals dealing with an area, a venue for meetings and workshops and a first point of contact for local people on planning and building issues
- o Very costly method

Newspaper supplement - One of the most effective ways of spreading planning and design ideas to large numbers of people and generating public debate. Standard newspaper coverage is used to publicise activities and generate debate: news stories, feature articles, letters, legal notices, guest columnists
- o Relatively cheap method

Open House event - Allows those promoting development initiatives to present them to a wider public and secure reactions in an informal manner. Less structured than a workshop and more informal than a traditional exhibition. Organisers will be present to deal with queries and engage in informal debate
- o Main costs include hire of venue and exhibition material as well as staff time and design time

Open Space workshop - Highly democratic framework for enabling any group of people to create their own programme of discussions on any theme without much preparation. Workshop sessions are self managed by the participants and are particularly useful for dealing with general policy issues, for generating enthusiasm and for dealing with urgent issues needing quick action
- o Main costs include hire of venue

Participatory editing - Allows people to help shape reports and news-sheets without necessarily leaving their own homes. Drafts are circulated, or displayed, for comment. Participants make comments on the draft with coloured pens or Post-its. Reports have a crucial role to play in crystallising the results of community planning initiatives and communicating to others
- o Main costs include photocopying; binding; postage; time.

Photo Survey - Help groups develop design ideas by taking and discussing photos of their existing environment. Can be used as part of a wider community profiling or action planning event or as an independent exercise. It acts as a basis for discussion, analysis and design
- o Costs involved in processing and printing photos

Planning aid scheme - Normally set up and run by national or regional professional institutions planning aid schemes provide free and independent planning advice to groups or individuals who cannot afford to employ a consultant. They aim to give people the knowledge, skills and confidence to deal with the planning system and to become involved in wider planning issues
  o Costly method to initially set up.

Planning day – Good way for getting a cross-section of main stakeholders to work creatively together to devise and explore options for a site, neighbourhood or city
  o Main costs include venue and presenter fee.

Planning for real - Uses simple models e.g. a large 3-dimensional model of a neighbourhood, as a focus for people to put forward and prioritise ideas on how their area can be improved. It is a highly visible, hands-on community development and empowerment tool, which people of all abilities and backgrounds find easy and enjoyable to engage in
  o Costs very much depend. Can be done relatively cheaply.

Planning weekend – This is an intensive and carefully structured programme of activities spanning a weekend. It is an elaborate but highly effective way of generating momentum for change and getting all parties involved in producing a plan of action for a site, neighbourhood or city. The end result is a set of proposals for action which is presented to the community
  o Costly method assuming parties come free

Prioritising - Important aspect of all decision-making and often needs to be done as a group activity if the results are to be generally agreed on. Various options are worked out using brainstorming, surveys or other methods. It provides a basis for decision-making or further discussion
  o No significant costs involved apart from facilitator's fees if any

Process Planning session - Allows key interested parties or 'stakeholders' to work together to determine the most suitable public participation process for their particular situation to ensure that the outcome is supported by all parties. Participants are introduced to the various options available and helped to design a process of their own, usually by an external facilitator
  o Main costs include venue, catering and fee for presenter

Reconnaissance trip - Involves direct inspection of the area being considered by mixed teams of local people and technical experts. It is used to familiarise everyone with the physical environment and key issues at the start of many community planning processes, and to review progress at intervals
  o Main costs include transport and organisers time

Review session - Useful way of monitoring progress and maintaining momentum. It reviews a previously carried out action planning event or other community planning initiative. Considers progress, evaluates earlier initiatives and determines the next steps
  o Main costs include venue, preparation, travel costs and refreshments.

Risk assessment - Involves analysing threats facing a community. Risk assessment comprises three elements: hazard analysis, vulnerability assessment and capacity assessment . Group work, preferably with trained facilitators, can aid communities carry out their own risk assessments as a basis for taking action to

reduce risks. The end result is a clear understanding by the community of the nature and scale of the risks it faces. It is then possible to determine what is needed to reduce the risk; for instance new local initiatives, outside resources, technical expertise
- o Costs vary depending on approach adopted.

Road show - Combines a series of workshops, exhibitions and a symposium to generate professionally produced urban design proposals based on local people's wishes. Good way of generating interest, securing wide debate and providing an impetus for implementation

- o Main costs include organisers' time, publicity material and venue for symposium

Stimulation - Used to act out a real event or activity, helping both participants and observers gain information and insight prior to formulating plans. It can also be used to test draft plans
- o Minimal costs involved for materials.

Street Stall – An exhibition or interactive display held out of doors. It makes it possible to secure the views of larger numbers of people than is normally possible indoors and particularly useful where the views of people using a particular street or public space are required. Facilitators are on hand to encourage people to make comments and engage in debate
- o Main costs include display material and staff time

Table Scheme display - Allows large numbers of people to understand and make an input into development proposals, with or without engaging with others. It can be used as part of an exhibition or open house event
- o Few costs involved unless

Task force - Multidisciplinary teams of students and professionals develop realistic proposals for improving a site or neighbourhood based on an intensive programme of site studies, lectures, participatory exercises and studio working. The programme begins with academic input and skills training and then moves into engaging with the community and producing urban design proposals. It is an efficient way of securing high quality design proposals at the same time as providing a first-rate educational opportunity
- o Cost dependent on numbers involved. Main costs include travel, accommodation, staff time, presentation materials. Scope for sponsorship also exists

Urban design studio - Special units attached to a university or other educational establishment which undertake environmental project work, usually in the immediate locality. Have access to all the resources of the establishment; staff, students, researchers, facilities and equipment and provide both a valuable educational experience for students and an important resource for local communities. Strong links with local agencies and community organisations
- o Main costs include staff, travel and equipment

User group - Act as clients in championing the views of those who will use the end product and keep the momentum going. Are as representative as possible of the end users, including as many interests and viewpoints as possible. This is a key element of most community planning

    o   Most groups will raise money through membership fees and fundraising events

Video Soapbox - Allows members of the public to broadcast their opinions on video screens erected in public places. It is particularly useful for generating public interest and debate for high profile events such as a road show
    o   Costly method

New Economics Foundation 21 techniques for Community Engagement [6]

Many techniques can be used to engage communities. Once you have chosen your criteria, it is easier to identify which one suits your particular situation best. The New Economics Foundation (NEF) has produced a book entitled 'Participation Works'. In it, NEF outlines over 21 techniques for consulting and engaging communities. Each has its own timescale, ultimate output etc.   Each has merit based on the overall objective of the consultation exercise.   For further details on the elements of each of the techniques see:
http://www.neweconomics.org/sites/neweconomics.org/files/Participation_Works.pdf

The 21 techniques are listed and briefly explained below.
1.   Action Planning
2.   ACE (Act, Create, Experience)
3.   Choices Method
4.   Citizens Juries
5.   Community Appraisals
6.   Community Indicators
7.   Inspired Envisioning
8.   Future Search
9.   Guided Visualisation
10.   Imagine!
11.   Local Sustainable Model
12.   Open Space
13.   Parish Maps
14.   Participatory Appraisal
15.   Participatory Strategic Planning
16.   Participatory Theatre
17.   Planning for Real
18.   Round Table Workshops
19.   Social Auditing
20.   Talk Works!
21.   Team Syntegrity

A summary of the techniques is outlined below while a more detailed review and guidance on reach of these techniques is outlined in the book. This is very useful in terms of getting a feel for the cost and logistics for undertaking one of these techniques locally.

1: Action Planning

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[6] http://www.neweconomics.org/sites/neweconomics.org/files/Participation_Works.pdf

This technique Involves carefully structured collaborative events at which all sections of the community work closely with specialists from different disciplines to deal with planning and urban design issues.

2: ACE (Act, Create, Experience)
Releases potential through Principle 21, Rio Summit: 'The creativity, ideals and courage of the youth of the world should be mobilised to forge a global partnership in order to achieve sustainable development and ensure a better future for all.' It aims to explore, show and support the contribution youth (13-25 year olds) can make to the Local Agenda 21 process.

3: Choices Method
Involves large numbers of people in developing a vision for their community in such a way that they are then inspired to act to realise it. It is an elaborate process needing a long lead-time. Utilising the support of local media and volunteers are crucial.

4: Citizens Juries
Provide a structured way of involving citizens in the decision-making process and of making public bodies accountable.

5: Community Appraisal
Is a survey of the community, by the community, for the community and an action plan or list of recommendations for the future of the community.

6: Community Indicators
Act like a flag. They are tools for simplifying measuring and drawing attention to important issues.

7: Inspired Envisioning
Is where people listen to the voice of their spirit and share their vision with others to discover which parts fit together and support each other.

8: Future Search
Generates action by building a shared vision among a diverse group of people.

9: Guided Visualisation
Is the use of a script to take a group on an imaginary journey into the future?

10: Imagine
Understands and appreciates the best of the past as a basis for imagining what might be, and then creating it.

11: Local Sustainable Model
Is a way for a community to assess its present position and test the likely effects of projects.

12: Open Space
Is an intensely democratic framework, which enables an unlimited number of participants to create their own programme of discussions around a central theme. It is particularly effective in generating high-energy participation, learning and commitment to action.

13: Parish Maps

Encourage people to come together to explore and express what they value in their parish and take an active part in its care and development.

14: Participatory Appraisal
Is a set of methodologies that encourages learning and interaction. Many of the methods are visual.

15: Participatory Strategic Planning
Enables a group to come to a shared vision of its desired future, and to create a detailed participant owned plan of action.

16: Participatory Theatre
Uses physical movement and creativity to explore people's own experience. This helps release the blocks that frustrate us and leads on to a common vision.

17: Planning for Real
Is an eye-catching, hands-on method, which people use to sort out what needs to be, done to improve their neighbourhood.

18: Round Table Workshops
Involve the key players in an area in generating a vision and strategy over a relatively short time as part of a longer term initiative to bring about regeneration.

19: Social Auditing
Is a way of measuring, understanding, reporting and ultimately improving an organisation's social and ethical performance.

20: Talk Works
This involves a group of people attending a one-day core workshop in essential conversational skills as preparation for participation in further activities. Effective dialogue is the key enabling competency and is a vital ingredient for all successful group projects.

21: Team Syntegrity
Enables people to share as much information and ideas about a complex issues as possible, and explore creative solutions over three to five days.

The New Economics Forum having employed a variety of the techniques outlined above has found the following to be the most effective in community engagement.

Democs (deliberative meeting of citizens) is part card game, part policy-making tool that enables small groups of people to engage with complex public policy issues. It helps people find out about a topic, express their views, seek common ground with the other participants, and state their preferred policy position from a given choice of four. They can also add their own policy positions.

Imagine is an adaptation to UK circumstances of an American approach called Appreciative Inquiry. Imagine uses questions that focus people's attention on success and encourages them to tell stories from their own experience of what works. By seeing what works and exploring why, it is possible to imagine and construct further success, ensuring that a vision of the future is created with a firm basis in reality. It allows local communities to articulate their aspirations, needs and priorities' thus engaging positively with the wider community.

Future search conference is used by a community or organisation to create a shared vision for its future. It enrols a large group of stakeholders, that is, people who are affected by the outcomes or have power or information on the topic at hand. It reviews the past, explores the present, creates ideal future scenarios, identifies a shared vision, and makes action plans.

Other useful toolkits[7]
NEF also has other useful toolkits which have easy to use templates within them for us in undertaking consultation and engagement with local communities.

http://www.neweconomics.org/sites/neweconomics.org/files/Community_Empowerment_Discussion_Toolkit.pdf

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	When Used
Quantitative Survey Research (Face-to-face) **Quantitative Survey Research Telephone)**	• Statistically sound - control of respondents means it will be representative of the population as a whole • Results easy to report back • Can compare with other surveys (both internal and external), previous findings and future benchmarks • Results back swiftly	• Respondents cannot "interact" - questions structured • Little time for respondents to consider responses/deliberate or add their own thoughts • Can seem "distant" from respondents • Will miss those without telephones - also cannot be used for certain special needs audiences	• When hard figures are needed - trends and benchmarks • When issues are already known but need to be quantified • When quick consultation process needed
Postal Survey Research **(Self completion)**	• Low cost • Allows you to be seen to consult large numbers of people • Good for certain groups who are interested enough to respond to a questionnaire; also for sensitive/confidential subjects	• Often unrepresentative - certain groups more likely to respond • Possibly poor response rates • No control over who completes the questionnaire, or in which order questions are answered • Get scant verbatim responses	• To demonstrate that you consult • When little budget available • For treatment of certain sensitive subjects • Where high level of interest anticipated
Qualitative Research (Group discussions)	• Enables people to express why, not just what • Discussion can follow the mood of the audience - not prescriptive • In groups, respondents can use each other as springboards to generate new ideas • Useful for evaluating communications material	• Cannot be used to extrapolate results to whole population not statistically reliable • Usually meetings only last for 2 hours max • More vocal people used to the meeting forum may shout each other down	• For diagnostic research • When you need to understand (reasons for attitudes/behaviour) and generate new ideas • Before a quantitative survey, to identify the issues to quantify

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[7] http://www.neweconomics.org/sites/neweconomics.org/files/Community_Empowerment_Discussion_Toolkit.pdf

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	When Used
	• Useful for in-depth analysis of how a service is perceived		• After a quantitative survey to investigate any unclear results
Quantitative Survey Research (Face-to-face) **Quantitative Survey Research Telephone)**	• Statistically sound - control of respondents means it will be representative of the population as a whole • Results easy to report back • Can compare with other surveys (both internal and external), previous findings and future benchmarks • Results back swiftly	• Respondents cannot "interact" - questions structured • Little time for respondents to consider responses/deliberate or add their own thoughts • Can seem "distant" from respondents • Will miss those without telephones - also cannot be used for certain special needs audiences	• When hard figures are needed - trends and benchmarks • When issues are already known but need to be quantified • When quick consultation process needed
Postal Survey Research (Self completion)	• Low cost • Allows you to be seen to consult large numbers of people • Good for certain groups who are interested enough to respond to a questionnaire; also for sensitive/confidential subjects	• Often unrepresentative - certain groups more likely to respond • Possibly poor response rates • No control over who completes the questionnaire, or in which order questions are answered • Get scant verbatim responses	• To demonstrate that you consult • When little budget available • For treatment of certain sensitive subjects • Where high level of interest anticipated
Qualitative Research (Group discussions)	• Enables people to express why, not just what • Discussion can follow the mood of the audience - not prescriptive • In groups, respondents can use each other as springboards to generate new ideas • Useful for evaluating communications material • Useful for in-depth analysis of how a service is perceived	• Cannot be used to extrapolate results to whole population not statistically reliable • Usually meetings only last for 2 hours max • More vocal people used to the meeting forum may shout each other down	• For diagnostic research • When you need to understand (reasons for attitudes/behaviour) and generate new ideas • Before a quantitative survey, to identify the issues to quantify • After a quantitative survey to investigate any unclear results
Panel (Large group recruited via self completion survey or face-	• Once set up, a cost-effective resource for all types of consultation • Panel members may become "advocates" of those conducting the consultation • A tangible resource for	• Panel members become "atypical" so tracking is not advisable over a long period • Panel members may often be self-selecting and unrepresentative without careful checking and	• Involvement without over-expense • When different agencies want to work in partnership • For encouraging citizenship

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	When Used
to-face interview)	building relationships	weighting of results • Large amount of administration and maintenance involved	
Written Word (letter/leaflet)	• Can go to all residents • Gets across point of view and rationale for a certain issue	• Cannot control responses - may not contain information you are looking for, and extraneous information you are not	• To demonstrate consultation
Public Meeting (Issue based town wide)	• Any citizen can attend • Forum for explanation and discussion • Gives publicity to the issue • Can generate new ideas • Provides opportunity for citizens to "have their say" • Provides opportunity for Partnership members to publicly share their views	• May only attract those affected by the issue • Activists or those used to public speaking may dominate discussion • Requires skilled chairing	• Where the issue needs a public airing and publicity • To explain the issue and encourage debate • Where no "data" is required • To provide citizens with the opportunity to have a say
Public Meeting (Issue based - neighbourhood level)	• Involves, informs and empowers the local community • Good indicator of local feeling • May provide new information and local knowledge concerning issue	• More local people may dominate at the expense of others • Less confident people may feel intimidated	• When the issue requires local community involvement
Exhibition	• Displays/options can be clearly set out and presented all at once • Feedback forms/questionnaires can be filled in – low cost fieldwork	• Only options presented under discussion • Only those who are able to come to the venue	• When responses needed to visual display materials • When there are specific options to present
Planning for Real	• Involves, empowers, informs respondents - sense of local ownership • Takes respondents through the planning process and enables them to see what is involved • Many residents can take part - no upper limit • Catches the interest of those involved	• Costly in terms of planning, administration, time and resources.	• When involvement of the whole community is needed/desirable
Others' Data (Internal)	• Cheap and (usually) quick way to get hands on data • If already used, data has "credibility" attached to it	• Will only answer question that was asked - possibly not the one you want to ask	• When quick, low cost data is needed • When you want to base your research on others'

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	When Used
			approaches
Others' Data (External)	• Gives external comparisons/benchmarks - where to aim for	• Again, may not ask the questions you want to answer • Not at local level unless breakdown can be obtained	• As above
Media	• Quick and responsive	• Only goes to established audience - not universal/representative • Media can put their own slant on a story	• Publicising process to date
Less Formal Consultation	• Free ranging Cost-effective. A relaxed structure can allow new ideas to emerge	• Not statistically reliable An over-representation of a particular point of view is possible Less formality in terms of timescales and structure may mean that less detail is collected	• To develop ideas To complement other processes
(Workforce response/ comment)	• Asking the people "on the front line" • Gaining their commitment and involvement	• Scepticism if not "seen to act" on all findings	• Where there is a commitment to act on results • When you need to feed back what happens to the material gained
Conferences	• Reaches out to specific interest groups • Captive audience • Can get feedback through cost-effective self completion questionnaire	• Low response rates unless completed on site/given time/incentives • Only narrow audience reached	• When a specific defined audience is to be consulted
Referenda	• Asking the whole of the population	• Expensive - lots of administration • Comprehensive	• When crucial to ask the whole population of their views on important issues

8.5 Engaging as many types of people as possible

The key to successful community plans is total community involvement. But you should not sit back and wait for people to come to you. You will have to reach out and contact them in ways which are interesting, entertaining and, most of important of all, ways which suit their lifestyle.

Think about how you might involve people who don't normally get involved in parish council or village affairs. Don't assume they will not want a say. Most people will respond positively, if approached in a way that is sensitive to their situation.

You might not have all the groups below in your community. But it is important that all those who do exist are consulted and have had a chance to contribute to an Area Plan.

Group	Some suggested methods for engagement
Schoolchildren (5-11)	• Run a competition, getting the primary children to draw what they like and dislike about the community • Get the primary school children to make a model of the village (as in "planning for real") which could be used as a feature at a general consultation event. • If you decide to use a questionnaire, consider doing a separate one for schoolchildren (5-11). *NB. Dealing with children and young people requires particular skills and ethics. A useful reference guide is "Hear by right" produced by the LGA and National Youth Agency (contact address at the end of this table). The children may also be able to advise you.* Let's Talk Let's Listen - Guidance for public authorities on consulting and involving children and young people - Equality Commission for NI Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered they can be key agents for development and peace. If, however, they are left on society's margins, all of us will be impoverished.' (Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations)
Young People (11-18)	• If you're doing a questionnaire, you might consider drawing up a separate one for young people- or even better, get them to draw up their own • Young people take a task group or facilitator on a guided tour of the area, pointing out likes and dislikes. • Young people make a video showing the 'Good, Bad and Ugly' things about the community from their perspective – or a video competition. Results could be part of the Parish Plan document. • Set up a youth forum for young people to express themselves – this could become an annual event. • Some young people might be enlisted to help with delivering and collecting questionnaires, possible for extra pocket money (though be aware of employment law implications – see Section 5 on Budgeting). • Countryside rangers may have ideas on involving young people.
Over – 60's	• A discussion meeting with refreshments, allowing people to talk in a relaxed atmosphere about their hopes and fears. Informality is a key here.

Group	Some suggested methods for engagement
Young and old **Carers**	• Older inhabitants discuss their memories with local children then consider what kinds of positive change in their surroundings they would like to see through their lifetime • See if you can provide a stand-in so carers can take part in events and consultations. • You could use it as an opportunity also to consult the person being cared for
People with visual, hearing or mobility difficulties	• On any publicity include contact numbers for transport to public meetings and events. • Ensure the venue meets their needs e.g. Wheelchair access. • Think about recording all information on audio cassette. • Consider providing a sign interpreter for major events, or use premises already fitted out with an effective 'loop' system.
Women's Institute, Townswomen's Guild	• Write to them inviting comments, and offering a speaker to attend a meeting. • May be willing to help with providing refreshments at an event, or administrative tasks.
Church & other religious groups	• Write to them inviting comments, and offering a speaker to attend a meeting. • May be able to help with an offer of accommodation for meetings, • Ask if you could include an article in their magazine, or an insert to be delivered with the magazine.
Scouts & Guides	• Might be enlisted to help with delivering and collecting questionnaires, possibly for a contribution to funds.
Groups with regular bookings at village hall, listed in parish magazines and elsewhere	• Write to them all, inviting comments. • Offer to attend one of their sessions to tell them about the PP, and obtain feedback
Local history group	• Will probably have maps, surveys and other information you might want to use or update.
Camera or photography club	• May be able to help with illustrations, or information collection.
Landowners	• May be able to provide a venue for an event. • May have influential contacts in local government, business etc.
Visitors	• Could be invited to post comments in suggestion box.
People living in outlying or more isolated areas	• Make sure they are informed about public meetings, events etc • Lay on transport for those without it and don't forget to mention this in the publicity. • Make a special effort to talk to them face to face.
Playgroup	• Contact playgroup committee members for their input. • Use a playgroup session to get children to draw or talk about their likes or dislikes. • You may be able to use playgroup facilities as a crèche when holding consultation other events.
Farmers & Agricultural workers	• Contact through school, pub, and social events. • Make use of their existing networks. • Encourage them to put up a representative on the steering committee. • Consult them over timing of events – e.g. Avoid lambing, harvest time etc.
Young farmers	• May be able to help with transport and muscle-power.

Group	Some suggested methods for engagement
	• Might have ideas about making public events more fun.
Young people and others who have left the village but might want to come back	• These people often return for village events like football final, or carnival. • Contact via friends and relatives, old school newsletters and websites like Friends Reunited.
2nd home and holiday home owners	• Knock on their doors and leave a leaflet if not there. • Try contacting holiday home owners through the local tourist office, lettings agency or website. • The local tourism partnership may be able to help contact them.
Football team or other sports clubs.	• Hand out flyers to spectators at local matches. • Find out where they socialise or train, and contact them there.
Armed forces	• May be self-contained, but wives with children often have needs and concerns relating to the area. • Contact them through their community liaison officer, or the school, or shop.
Housing Estate	• Find out if they have residents group or if not suggest they nominate someone to act as their spokesperson.
Garages, petrol stations, garden centres, shops, banks	• May have comments to offer, as well as window displays for posters and information. • They might also be able to offer help in kind, such as photocopying or prizes for filling in questionnaires.
Allotment group	• Identify a spokesperson. • Visit the allotments to canvas opinion. • They may have a newsletter which might take adverts or information about meetings, etc.
Travellers	• The local council may have a liaison officer who will advise about best ways of consulting, • Visit them and discuss in person.
Refugees	• Contact a spokesman or local support group. • Consider translating leaflets or finding an intermediary who speaks their language if necessary.
Black and other ethnic groups	• Consider if community events will conflict with beliefs or practices. • Think about how you will promote the Parish Plan and make positive efforts to involve ethnic minority groups.
Shift workers and weekly commuters.	• Remember that different people work different hours, different days of the week and often different hours in different seasons. • Make sure timing of events and calling times accommodate their availability and if they don't, allow for alternative times or ways of consulting them. • Think ahead so seasonal workers coming into the community for short periods can be heard too.

Some potential methods appropriate for different levels of engagement	
Informing	o Advertising in local media – newspapers, local radio o Advertising in community run media – community newspapers/ newsletters, parish magazines, community web sites, community radio etc o Posters/billboards o Web and podcasting o Text messaging o Mail shots o Email shots o Local notice boards – shops/supermarkets, churches, mosques, libraries, clinics etc o Exhibitions in public spaces (models, pictures, maps etc)

Consulting	a) Individual focus
	   o Questionnaires
	      o self completion
	      o administered
	   o Opinion polls
	   o Interviews
	      o non-directive
	      o semi-structured
	   o Suggestion boxes
	   o Interactive displays/exhibitions
	   o On-line consultations

	b) Group/community focus
	   o Buzz groups
	   o Speed dating
	   o Group interviews/focus groups
	   o Nominal group process
	   o Group passing process
	   o Area forums
	   o Citizens panels
	   o Citizens juries
	   o Open meetings/events including:
	      o 'Open space'
	      o 'World café'
	      o 'PP vote/Option Finder'

Engaging in shared decision making or action	o Open meetings/events including:
	   o 'Open house',
	   o Open space
	   o 'World café',
	   o 'PP vote/Option Finder' etc
	o Stakeholder workshops
	o Story dialogue
	o Photovoice
	o Deliberative mapping
	o Planning for Real
	o Design charrettes
	o Participatory drama/forum theatre

8.6   Taking a Technological Approach to Engagement[8]

Bristol City Council is seen as one of the most e-enabled councils in the UK.   It has produced a guide on e-democracy in Bristol.   This outlines a range of e-participation tools that can be used by the public sector. The guide "e-democracy in Bristol" aims to inspire and reassure local authorities that e-participation is safe, cost-effective and important.   Over the past six years, Bristol City Council and other pioneering authorities have taken risks, experimented, won UK and European awards and have only occasionally failed to deliver.   A considerable amount of learning and knowledge has resulted from this collective work. e-participation offers a route into a new, more open and meaningful dialogue with citizens, service users and communities.   http://www.connectingbristol.org/

The guide states that **information is a precursor to involvement.** Without it people don't recognise that they have the right to be consulted; they cannot participate in a meaningful way or respond to a consultation with an informed view.

In many types of council there is still a risk that several different departments will consult the same person or group at the same time. A lack of co-ordination means that well-intended officers are unaware of this duplication and fail to recognise the inefficient use of resources. Consultees on the other hand are only too aware of the frustrations caused by being asked to respond to numerous consultations all at once. So common is this frustration that it has been given a name – "consultation fatigue". Over time, consultation fatigue reinforces a belief that responding to consultations is a waste of time and effort. Consequently, response rates wither and trust declines.

New technologies are having a huge impact on the way that information is produced and shared. Now all citizens and communities can search for and find relevant information in a matter of nano-seconds. They can publish and broadcast information immediately and for little or no cost.

MORI research suggests that through the effective combination of mobile phone, Internet and digital TV authorities can directly reach the vast majority of their local populations. It is also noted that e-communication is also frequently cheaper than traditional communication methods, not relying on the
dissemination of expensive and non-environmentally friendly printed materials.

The guide identifies three types of e-engagement levels – e-information; e-consultation and e-participation.   It outlines a number of options to achieve it on each. The guide gives a brief definition of each method, its use, how to use it, demonstrates a case study of its use in a local authority setting and gives an annotated summary of its cost, the time required to make it work and the ICT skills required to undertake it and for citizens to take part in it. It also gives a rating for each method in terms of its effectiveness in information sharing, engagement or decision making – the highest level on the engagement ladder. This is an excellent resource for those thinking of using e-technology more frequently in their public engagement work.

> "Promote a webcast on the subject being debated rather than on focusing on the novelty of the channel itself. The public are more likely to be engaged by a relevant and interesting debate than a flashy new technology channel"

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[8] http://www.connectingbristol.org/

Stage	Method	To implement this approach councils needs			To participate in this approach citizens need			The potential impact of this approach on:		
		Time	Resources	ICT Skills	Time	Resources	ICT Skills	Information	Engagement	Decision making
e-Information	Webcasting	xxxx	££££	xxx	xx	££	xx	High	Medium	Low-Medium
	SMS and Email Alerts	xx	££	xxxx	x	£	x	Medium High	Low	Low
	Consultation Finder Database	xxx	£££	xxx	x	£	x	Medium High	Medium	Low
	Blogs	xxxx	£	xx	xx	£	x	Medium High	Medium	Low-Medium
	Games and Simulators	xx	££	xx	xx	£	x	Medium	Medium	Low-Medium
e-Consultation	Quick Polls	xx	£	x	x	£	x	Low	Low - Medium	Low
	Online Surveys	xx	££	xx	xx	£	x	Low	Medium	Medium High
	E-Panels	xxxx	£££	xx	xx	££	x	Medium	Medium High	Medium High
	Discussion Forums	xxxx	££	xx	xx	££	x	Medium High	Medium High	Medium High
	Deliberative Polls	xxxx	£££	xxx	xxx	££	xxx	High	High	Medium High
	Live (VIP) Messaging	xxx	£££	xxxx	xx	££	xxx	Medium	High	Low Medium
	Interactive Voting	xxx	££££	xxx	xx	£	x	Medium	Medium High	Medium
	Street Kiosks	xx	£££	x	x	£	x	Low - Medium	Low - Medium	Low - Medium
	SMS Text Voting	x	££	x	x	£	x	Low	Low	Low
e-Participation	E-Petitions	xxxx	£££	xx	xx	££	xx	Medium	Low-Medium	Medium High
	Pledges	x	£	x	xx	£	x	Medium	Medium High	Medium High
	Photo Sites	xxx	£££	xxxx	xx	£££	xxx	Medium High	Medium	Low-Medium
	Video Views	xxxx	££££	xxx	xxx	££££	xxxx	Medium	High	Medium
	Local Issues Forums	xx	£	xx	xxx	£	xx	Medium	Medium	Low-Medium
	Online Campaigns	xxxx	££££	xxxx	xxx	£££	xxx	High	High	Medium High