

**A Community Engagement Model for Bracknell Forest Borough Council**

Informing the delivery of extended services in and around schools.

October 2007



Opening up opportunities in our local communities

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# Executive Summary

***Delivering a working model, supported by theory and best practice, to inform the delivery of extended services in and around communities in Bracknell Forest.***

Bracknell Forest Borough Council commissioned 4Children through the DCSF funded Fast Track programme to undertake research, consultation and collaboration with local authority staff and the Bracknell Forest community. The aim was to create a community engagement model to inform the local authority about demand for extended services from children aged 0-19 and their families.

Local authorities have a duty to undertake a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, under the Childcare Act 2006, and the model has been developed within this context (see Annex 1 for more information).

A series of meetings were held with the local authority Extended Services team to determine the scope and range of the proposed community engagement model.

This process built upon work already undertaken with the Bracknell Forest community and the local Area Steering Groups. The proposed model is designed to highlight practical methods of engagement that can be used borough wide, and to highlight demands for services with a view to engaging existing or new providers in their delivery.

The Bracknell Forest Children and Young People's Plan has identified four priorities to enable a positive contribution to be made.

They are that children and young people...

- Engage in positive community and voluntary activities.
- Have a range of choices of things to do and places to go.
- Participate in decision making and in supporting the community
- Are enabled to access wider community activities before and after school and in the school holidays.



This model is seen as part of a suite of tools for strategic planning, providing an output which will allow for the effective commissioning of extended services.

A clear need for a unified information resource around engagement was identified, with a particular focus on lead times and action planning from the results of any engagement as key elements of the model.

Practical community engagement undertaken as part of this project, supporting a local community event, highlighted a range of additional services seen by parents and carers as useful – with sports and arts and crafts as the main demand for additional services in and around schools.

The responses around childcare from community members highlighted how sensitive provision is to locality, price and available times of supply. Information on childcare for new parents was also a significant factor mentioned in the community interviews.

The model, suggested activities and action planning are designed to address these research findings. The model includes a broad spread of activities to encompass the widest variety of communities of interest, and enable the local authority team to plan and facilitate new services in partnership with the community.



# About consultation

Schools are in a central position to strengthen links, develop partnerships and widen their engagement with children, families and the whole community.

Extending services beyond the school day will enable improved outcomes for children - in particular the five Every Child Matters outcomes: *to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.*

As part of the Education Act 2002 schools are required to consult widely before providing extended services. As well as consulting with the school community, this needs to be part of a wider consultation with the local community, and part of the delivery of services within Bracknell Forest.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 12) states that children and young people have the right to say what they think and be listened to by adults when they make decisions that affect their lives.

Our programme of consultation has this ethos at the heart of its delivery and will ensure that full and effective participation will create meaningful and successful services.

We recognise that children are equal citizens in an adult dominated world and that by working in harmony, together we can build on joint experiences and aspirations.

This consultation model for Extended Services is part of a wider community consultation, but specific to the delivery of a programme for services in and around schools, in children's centres and in youth settings.

The model that has been developed will have an ongoing evaluation aspect. It will bring together activities and events that have proved successful and engender good practice. By combining these within a model of community consultation, further initiatives will be part of a programme that will help to deliver services and projects led by the community served, based on need, that are creative, expansive and working to a sustainable future.

The school has a key part to play in community consultation. Schools have always been fully involved with their own community, including children, families, staff, governors and the local authority. Governing bodies have an obligation to be aware of parents' views, and



School Councils and Parent Teacher Associations undertake a variety of consultations. Further opportunities are presented by the establishment of Parents' Councils.

Consultation will help schools to deliver extended services which best meet the needs of the wider community. The level of participation will increase to accommodate full involvement and decision making processes, determined by the level of community interest.

Outreach work and knowledge of the community that is being served will help to ensure that the needs of all groups are met. Access and availability for all will be a first priority. Inclusion for all children, young people and families within the community is fundamental, and is implicit in the model. In particular, it aims to ensure that families and people who would not normally access services, for example children and families with disabilities, have ways in which they can feel included.



# Making a start

This document aims to achieve:

***...a working model, supported by theory and best practice, to inform the delivery of extended services in and around communities in Bracknell Forest.***

Engaging with communities of interest is a resource hungry process. The deeper the engagement with the community, the more comprehensive the planning and evaluation needed.

The processes need to be well organised and managed, with a clear structure and objectives. To be successful they need to be fun, inspiring and encouraging for all to take part.

Engagement should be professional and sensitive to all the issues of equality and inclusion – making sure that every voice is heard.

Those members of the community consulted with, whatever their age, gender or cultural background, need to feel valued and know that their contribution is respected.

As part of the programme, the consultation results will be analysed and the findings shared with all involved. This information will be reviewed constantly and will be used to determine the decisions to be made.

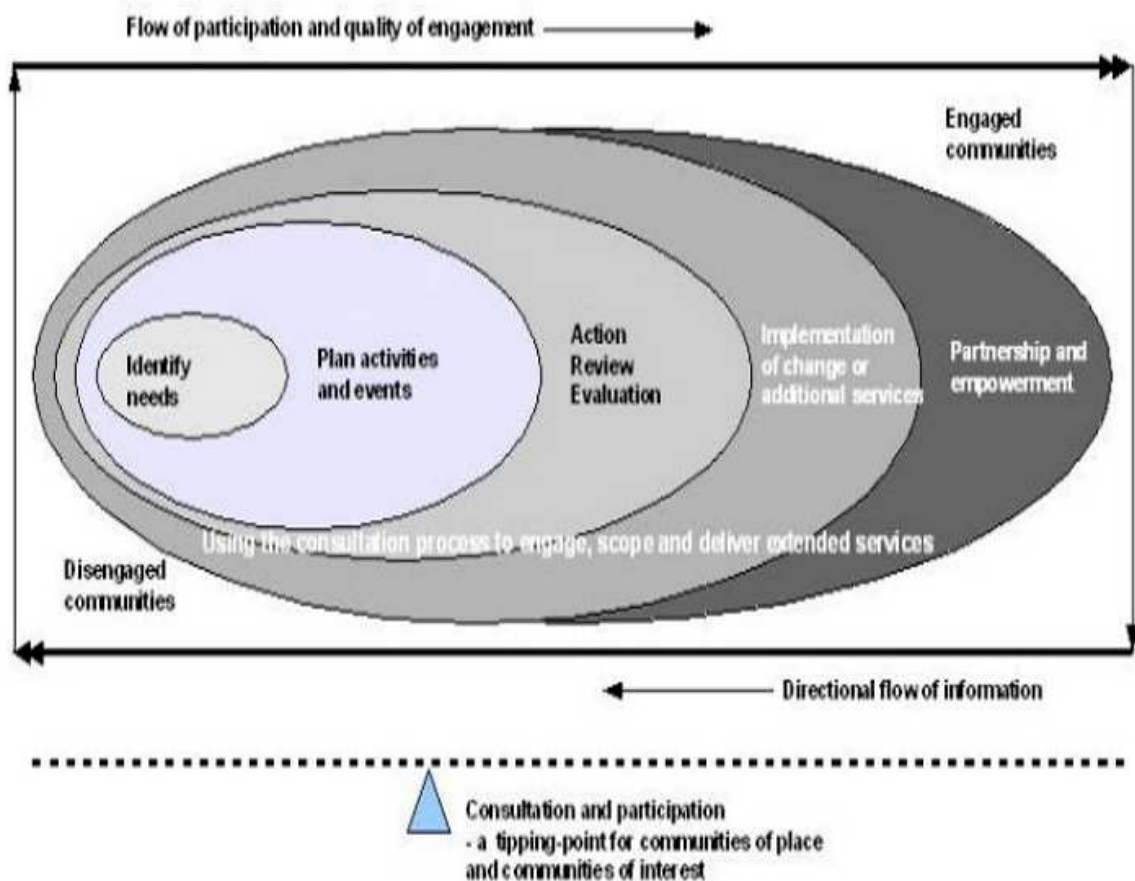
Some practical considerations on community consultation are included to help planning. There is also some advice about practice and activities.



# A new visual model

This is a new theoretical model for Bracknell Forest, highlighting how information can flow from disengaged communities towards partnership and empowerment<sup>1</sup>.

A Community Engagement Model for Bracknell Forest



The timeframe moves from left to right, with the tightly banded circles of activity at the start reflecting the intensity of action needed to gain critical mass for the process, and the duration of engagement, quality of information and feedback stretching as time progresses.

<sup>1</sup> This model reflects Bracknell Forest's need for a continuous community engagement process.

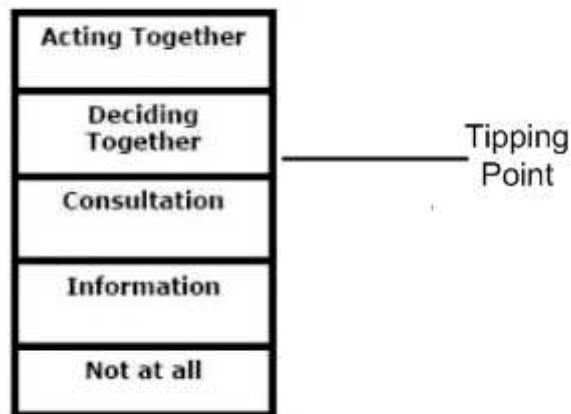


The flow of activity reflects the continuous nature of community consultation and engagement. Once a community has determined which services are relevant to its needs, as time passes the process can be restarted anywhere on the oval, to re-energise existing provision or to tackle a completely new set of community needs.

The tipping point in the model is more art than science. Where it occurs on the project time-line will vary from community to community.

Every practitioner knows the point in a project involving complex and diverse partnerships when '*...we have really turned a corner now*' or '*...everyone at today's meeting was positive and constructive*'. The ultimate tipping point anecdote is '*...I think we are really going to make it this time*'.

The ladder of participation for Bracknell Forest:



Acting together may involve a wide range of positive and effective short-term engagements. In the Bracknell Forest model action planning after any engagement and consultation is a critical factor in determining effectiveness.

Aim to achieve and build a consensus about community project 'tipping points' into your consultation evaluation process. It's a soft outcome that will have an impact on the results you are striving to achieve. The real tipping point in the process is when acting together becomes comfortable for everyone in the process.

Deciding together can be a powerful process – working together with stakeholders to plan the future services together. This level does, however, stop short of recognising that all partners have responsibility for the proposed outcomes.



Consultation is the process of asking for information, views and feelings about any proposed changes to services. It can be undertaken face to face, by the use of printed flyers or activities planned for in this document. It is the first significant level of engagement in the ladder to true partnership working in communities.

This Bracknell Forest Model falls into five broad categories of action and reflection...

- Phase 1 Identifying needs
- Phase 2 Planning activities and events
- Phase 3 Taking action,
- Phase 4 Review
- Phase 5 Evaluation

Co-ordination and dialogue are important throughout the process:

- To know which services might be appropriate for each community calls for a degree of dialogue before any formal consultation event can begin (more on this pre-activity stage is covered later in this document).
- In planning activities and events, who has control of the resources needed to deliver a consultation process – have the community, children and young people and other interested stakeholders been involved in the process up until now?
- To reach those, whose voices are not always heard, the least consulted.



# Building good foundations

The process of community engagement and consultation creates opportunities for everyone to become empowered and involved. Children, young people, parents and carers should be given the opportunity to participate at every stage of the consultative process - whether defining issues, formulating plans or implementing the solutions.

Engagement, as part of developing extended services in your area, should be seen as part of the 'strengthening communities' agenda. However, too much consultation can lead to consultation fatigue.

Using engagement methods which are high up the Ladder of Participation scale - truly acting in concert with the community - will involve community members, schools, children, young people, parents and carers before any event takes place.

This will determine the activity and the questions. It will open up dialogues that will be useful in disseminating findings back to children, parents, carers and community members when the activity is completed.

Planning well, widely and effectively will ensure that what happens is well received, and the quality of information gathered is timely, accurate and relevant.

Key questions...

- What are your key objectives?
- At what level do you want to engage?
- Which children, young people, parents and carers do you need to address?
- What has been, or is being done already, and may be relevant?
- Do you need to consult about consulting and what will be done with the outcomes?

## Key objectives

The first stage of the planning process will be to clarify your objectives i.e. what are you trying to achieve by engaging with the community?

In this pre-activity phase the aim is to reach agreement on what the community objectives are in an early form – involving all stakeholders, partners and community members in planning and implementing the planned activity.



Create a plan that recognises and makes clear the strategic and operational demands needed to develop extended services. Local communities will welcome clarity of information, engagement and support.

### **At what level do you want to engage?**

Having set the overall objectives; consider the appropriate level or type of engagement required from the community in order to meet their needs.

The greater the level of engagement or involvement, the greater the opportunity to empower citizens and build capacity will be - as well as to create opportunities to deliver effective new services. Embrace innovative and even controversial suggestions as appropriate.

However, the higher up the ladder of participation your engagement is – the more comprehensive the community support and training that may be needed.

### **Who to engage with?**

Think of a 'snapshot' of the people you want to talk to and with. Define the community of interest to address. Who to involve and when?

There are differences in communities of interest and communities of place. Schools and wider community groups may feel a separateness - which will be overcome more effectively in a spirit of co-operation.

Diversity and equality of access issues are an essential point of this part of the programme of work.

People will identify with different issues at different times as their circumstances dictate.

Even in a community interested in these services, some people will not have been heard before, will have felt excluded previously or may feel that the consultation engagement is somehow for others, not them.

It is important to be pro-active in ensuring that people feel they have a voice that will be heard. This will involve knowledge of the community and initial outreach work in meeting with children, young people and families who are on the edge of those communities.

Further information is provided in the next section.



## **What has been or is being done already?**

Gather all the information about current provision and any previous consultation. Explore other community engagement processes that have been undertaken. This document includes some sources of good practice.

What other consultation exercises have taken place in the Borough? Are they relevant to the current activity? Can the resources or information and contacts featured at the end of this document help?

When your community has completed a consultation or action planning exercise, or established a new data-set about your area, add it to the Borough's Community Register of Consultation<sup>2</sup>.

You are an expert in your field...so are the residents, parents, carers, children and young people of the community you wish to consult and take affirmative action with.

Harness that knowledge.

## **Do you need to consult about consulting?**

Before establishing the process of consultation it is important to inform and consult the community to firstly, set out the reasons for the need for consultation and secondly, to establish the benefits that will arise as improvements are made which have been determined by people's needs.

For many people consultation can be yet another questionnaire, which may not lead to any significant beneficial changes. Consultation fatigue can result in a lack of motivation and involvement. By being pro-active about consulting about consulting, community empowerment will be increased..

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2 See <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/online-community-register-of-consultation.htm>



# Engaging with all the community

In this section ideas are explored for reaching out to communities of interest and place that are not normally on the horizon of public debate. These communities have sometimes been called 'hard to reach' – but there are problems with the phrase. Jones and Newburn express the conflict well:

*Problems with the term 'hard to reach'<sup>3</sup>*

*There is a considerable lack of clarity about what is meant by the term 'hard to reach'. There are three main problems with the notion of 'hard to reach groups'.*

*The term can be:*

- *used inconsistently – it is clear that...the term is associated mainly with minority ethnic groups and the gay and lesbian community, whereas...the term covers a much broader set of groups (e.g. the elderly, people with disabilities and young people in general);*
- *misleading – it is difficult to see why some groups often included under the rubric of hard to reach are described in this way (e.g. established minority ethnic communities with long-established means of communication...);*
- *potentially stigmatising – use of over-arching terms suggest a level of homogeneity between distinct groups that does not necessarily exist.*

The local authority aims to be inclusive and sensitive in all its consultation, action planning and community engagement. The engagement process suggested here provides a mechanism for consulting people who find services hard to reach, that dovetails well with the current sustainable communities and inclusion agendas<sup>4</sup>. This engagement model uses the term, 'least consulted' as more appropriate terminology.

Dissolving the barriers of power and control, merging relationships into partnerships and supportive understanding can be a fraught process of change. However, the results from working together in this way can be positive, uplifting and empowering for all concerned – young and old, rich or poor, black and white.

<sup>3</sup> See Trevor Jones & Tim Newburn *Widening Access: Improving police relations with hard to reach groups*, Home Office, 2001



## Helping the least consulted in your area gain a voice

This part of our framework document is designed to provide you with a range of practical mechanisms that can be deployed to engage not only with children and young people, but also older family members, and those who face access issues and language and cultural barriers to participation.

### Children and young people

Children and young people are often consulted least and their involvement should be integral to the development of thriving and dynamic extended services.

*“There is evidence that child/youth participation can lead to improved service development, increases children and young people’s citizenship and social inclusion and their wider personal development.”*

*(Kirby, Lanyon, Cronin and Sinclair, 2004<sup>5</sup>)*

By enabling children and young people to participate in consultation activities within their local community and further afield you will:

- Give children and young people chances to make a difference and have a voice. Ensure that services are more responsive to the needs of children and young people.
- Help to develop understanding of rights and responsibilities as active citizens.
- Help to develop confidence and self-esteem by being encouraged to express their opinions and having their views valued.

The participation of children and young people within the Bracknell Forest model may include:-

- Stage 1. Initial consultation activity which will encompass a wide remit as in the 'Suggestions for Activities'.(see Annex 4). This will enable a needs identification and lead on to stages 2 and 3.
- Stage 2. Designed fun events to include activities as put forward by the children and young people and may include suggestions as in 'Events' .
- Stage 3. Children and Young People's Forum (See following section).

The consent of parents and carers will always be needed before consulting with children and young people. All staff and volunteers working with children and young people will need to have an enhanced CRB clearance.

<sup>5</sup> Taken from a conference presentation – ‘Participation in practice: making it meaningful, effective and sustainable’. National Children's Bureau, London. March 2004



### Things to consider...

- Always begin the consultation process with young people at its heart from the first step. Include children in decision making processes, ensuring that their issues and needs are carefully considered. Let the children lead, with your guidance, if at all possible.
- Include the role of, and the rewards for, children in every step of your project planning process.
- Think how you might motivate and encourage children for their energy and contribution.
- Engage in ways that encourage young people to work with their peers.
- Layer your activities, places and times of engagement to suit specific age groups.
- Always use relevant and focused design and language in materials aimed at children and young people.
- Challenge yourself a bit – use music, art and sport as integrated mechanisms for consultation. Be sensitive to using styles that are relevant to young people - not necessarily the same as yours!
- Keep the formal elements of meetings relatively short – don't deliver 'board meetings' with children expected to contribute on adult terms.
- Map communities well beforehand – plan to be where the children and young people are, at times that suit them and their parents and carers. Use school councils, youth forums and conferences, as well as any peer group networks already in existence.
- Don't wear a suit - be jargon and acronym free!<sup>6</sup>
- Consultation work should be designed to enable children to feel comfortable, respected, valued, and accepted.
- Involve young people at the action planning stage, as well as in the presentation of feedback to adults in the community.
- Go to children and young people. Be creative - devise exciting and interesting events that will grab their attention and encourage their participation. Make points of contact local, youth relevant and accessible.

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6 This last point about language is of course useful for communicating with all groups. Our everyday language is peppered with insider knowledge and understanding. Outside of our circle – others do not share it.



- Be direct and caring. Ask specific questions; define the limits if necessary and use straight-forward language.
- Be brief and light touch, vary the methods, be clear about which age group are targeted and set narrow age limits to make responses relevant and consistent.
- Arrive with no hidden agendas – be open and up front, never agree to something that is impossible to carry through. Respect all opinions, even if expressed in a crude way. Loudness or brash behaviour is often a mask for lack of confidence and fear.
- Remember the quiet children, the children who are at the edges – they have a voice too.
- Always have good, clear explicatory lead-ins to discussions and let everyone know that they can decline to contribute too if they wish. Ensure that the pace and length of delivered material is appropriate to your audience.
- Be inclusive.

*See Annex 3 for a 'Before You Start' Checklist and Annex 4 for some suggested consultation methods for children and young people.*

### **Older people and grandparents**

Use the experience and deep knowledge of older people in your projects. Ageism and negative attitudes to older people can colour all levels of engagement.

Celebrate the positive aspects, for example, of bringing different age groups together to share experiences and to discuss the needs for new provision.

The process of letting a previous generation share in the development of services for a new one can be a powerful inclusive and engaging process.

Things to consider...

- Map your community of older residents well beforehand. Plan the access to your event with issues of mobility and movement in mind – or go to the audience in their environment.
- Always give a senior community of interest advance notice of content and purpose for your consultation.
- Remember that older people much prefer one-to-one engagements to transmit their ideas and feelings.



- Always have A3 copies of A4 documents available, letting the individual choose whether to use them or not.
- Remember the 'silver surfer' – don't assume that ICT has passed your audience by – conversely don't assume IT literacy either.

*Some of the techniques described above and at Annex 3 in relation to young people will also be appropriate.*

### **Individuals with additional needs**

Almost everyone will have an illness, injury or age related condition at some point in their lives that affects their sight, hearing, mobility or understanding in some way. Plan to facilitate access for everyone on this basis.

The able-bodied turn an additional need into a disability – by not planning appropriately for building access, for effective transportation links, for information formats that are useful to all or by posting information about events, their context and content in inappropriate places for those who have an impairment. Hard thinking should make access easy.

### **Overcoming the gender bias**

Gender and power are linked, with cultural background and different social norms sometimes disenfranchising women from the public decision making process.

Below are things you might consider, when striving to redress the balance in your communities:

- Monitor and weigh gender contributions in all your project work. As with the other elements of supporting the least consulted, strive to make this thinking part of your everyday experience.
- Invite your audience or deliver your activity on a 50% gender ratio.
- Deliver your work using male and female facilitators, being careful to afford both genders a voice in the proceedings.
- Don't be afraid to organise single gender events – this will allow some women whose culture does not allow them to speak in front of men the opportunity to be heard, or fathers to express their views on parenting. Single gender groups can allow valuable contributions to be made as part of the overall work.
- Organise childcare as an integrated part of your event. Let families and carers know it is available as part of your process.



- Publicise transport, timings and settings mindful of the needs of working families, those without access to private transport or who may be fearful of going out in the evening.

### **Supporting access by faith groups**

Use faith groups as a way of gathering views – do we already talk to them as individual groups? Are there cross-faith organisations that can be part of partnership consultations? Are we comfortable with our assumptions about particular faith groups?

Below are some things to consider when seeking the involvement of faith group members:

- As with all under-consulted groups, plan to develop the faith literacy of your organisation. Develop your understanding before asking for that of others.
- Strive to be sensitive to difference in faith groups.
- Gently challenge yourself and others about your assumptions.
- Plan events and meetings sensitive to the constraints of alcohol...
- ... and the consumption of certain foods, mindful of days of the week that can be inappropriate for some groups.
- Use a faith calendar well – plan your events and projects with key dates and festivals always in mind. Don't clash with the community for their interest.<sup>7</sup>

### **Increasing the contribution of black and minority ethnic groups**

The Borough of Bracknell Forest has had high levels of population change over the last two decades, compared with South-East England and the nation as a whole. This process continues, with individuals, children and families from Eastern Europe as an example of one group that is relatively newly arrived.

Longer established, but just as culturally distinct is the Nepalese community based traditionally around the Gurkha community of Sandhurst. The local Nepalese community represents a perfect metaphor for some of the opportunities and subtle complexities of community engagement in any process of consultation.

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<sup>7</sup> The BBC Religion and Ethics pages have an excellent searchable faith calendar. See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/>



Much work has already been undertaken by the Bracknell Forest Extended Services team to encourage the contribution of and to offer support to Nepalese children<sup>8</sup>.

As with other groups, we can never assume that all communities of black and minority ethnic residents are the same, with the same cultural and social make up. Each will have their own different sub-cultures, language and traditions.

Some pointers:

- As with other least consulted groups build on the connections that already exist. Use your local knowledge to establish or refresh cultural and community contacts to develop a fuller understanding and engagement.
- Be sensitive to language and cultural mores in any process you undertake.
- As with other groups where language is a sensitive issue, be prepared to facilitate translations, both in print and at meetings.
- Use appropriate and mixed images in all promotional material – keeping cultural sensitivities at the forefront of your mind.

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8 A recent Extended Services Newsletter highlights this well. See <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/extended-services-newsletter-issue-1-online-version.pdf>  
- a pdf copy of the team publication.



# Planning engagement

It is important to plan your engagement thoroughly to meet the required needs and achieve the envisaged outcomes. This section describes some of the practical considerations.

## Style of engagement

Successful engagement can encourage more participation, create better cohesion and inclusiveness and play a key part in delivering sustainable services within a community or school.

Using simple participatory mechanisms imaginatively can bring people together, make more linkages across communities, open up potential new avenues of engagement for stakeholders within the community and stimulate a refreshed interest in their own surroundings.

Using more informal and friendly ways of engagement can make consultation more interesting, particularly when seeking the help and support of community members who may perceive the local authority as exclusive and disempowering. Informal tools will also help to gain information from local people who may feel traditionally marginalised or excluded from the decision making process.

Engagement with local employers can also aid the consultation. Some schools have found that the establishment of a community enterprise adds to sustainability of extended services<sup>9</sup>.

Whatever the methods chosen, planning engagement takes time:

## Lead times

The following table offers an indication of how long you need to allow in order to deliver engagement processes of good quality, that will afford you the opportunity to provide high quality feedback to the community you are working with.

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9 Paulsgrove Primary School in Portsmouth, through developing the Axxess Partnership within their cluster, have begun to supply refurbished PC's and wireless internet access to their local communities. Bridging the e-divide through a mixture of business partnership, grants and imaginative co-operation. See <http://www.paulsgrove.portsmouth.sch.uk/Home.html>



Time	Conditions
One month	A very short time. Only really offering the opportunity to produce information hand-outs or letters and to hold a simple event or meeting with your intended audience.
Two months	This is the time you should allow yourself to organise a well-run public meeting or engagement activity with simple clear aims and marketing material – where you know your audience well and the issues are not sensitive or overly complex.
Three months	Ideally this is the minimum lead-time you should allow for a quality engagement process. This will afford you the time to engage with your potential audience, as well as the other interested stakeholders.  You will also have time to key your activity into the context of the work of other partners and give yourself time to maximise the understanding of your community re the process, integrating any capacity building needed.
Four months	A fully formal engagement process of a reasonably complex or sensitive issue should take this time.
Five months	You will have time to engage with your communities of interest and place - with children, families, schools etc. - in every aspect, from designing the activity, undertaking the process, and effectively delivering, to structured and meaningful feed-back and action planning.
Six months	At this level you will have space to organise complex engagement, deploying experts and partner stakeholders in the process if necessary. Community members will have sufficient time to understand both the process and the issues.  Your action planning and the circulation of findings can be widespread and effective.



## Planning the process

A good way to plan the process is to create an 'O' grid. The example below offers an example of the considerations you need to take into account, and some issues that need addressing before you can engage effectively:

The O	The detail	Your timetable here...
Outputs	<p>What engagement exercise will you actually deliver and produce for your community?</p> <p>This could be an event, a report or an action planning session.</p>	
Owners	<p>Who will be involved in the process?</p> <p>Community members, partners and stakeholders, as well as your own organisation colleagues.</p>	
Operations	<p>How will you do what is intended?</p> <p>The answer to this question will be conditioned by the approach you have decided upon above.</p> <p>Your choice of approach should be governed by what you need to produce, with whom and by when.</p>	
On-cost	<p>What is your budget?</p> <p>How much do you have to spend and how will you get the resources you need to deliver your process?</p>	
Opportunity	<p>When will your engagement take place?</p> <p>You need to allow time to plan, co-operate with colleagues, support your community, deliver the work and feed back efficiently and effectively.</p>	



## How many people to engage with?

The Audit Commission offers an insight into how many community members need to be engaged and consulted with in order to establish accurate statistically sound results<sup>10</sup>.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has produced a research tool-kit for assessing the demand for childcare in local authority areas<sup>11</sup>. This stresses that the findings of your sufficiency research should produce 'generalisable' results. These should reflect how parents and carers '...use, experience and feel about childcare'. The aim is to determine if the supply of childcare in a particular area is sufficient.

Ensuring that the research findings are statistically sound will remove fears of chance or bias influencing any investment decision that may be deemed necessary in creating childcare supply.

The key factor in determining sample size for any research is not only the quality of the survey interactions, but also the precision levels or expectation of confidence in the findings. To ensure that your findings reflect the needs of the community, means engaging with specific numbers of parents.

The table below is drawn from the DCSF tool-kit<sup>12</sup>.

Population Proportion	Sample size lookup table							
	Precision required (at the 95% confidence level)							
	+/- 12%	+/- 10%	+/- 8%	+/- 5%	+/- 4%	+/- 3%	+/- 2%	+/- 1%
50%	66	96	150	384	600	1,067	2,401	9,604
45% or 55%	66	95	148	380	594	1,056	2,376	9,507
40% or 60%	64	92	144	369	576	1,024	2,305	9,220
35% or 65%	60	87	136	349	546	971	2,184	8,739
30% or 70%	56	81	126	323	504	896	2,017	8,067
25% or 75%	50	72	112	288	450	800	1,800	7,203
20% or 80%	<b>42</b>	61	96	246	384	683	1,536	6,147
15% or 85%	<b>34</b>	<b>48</b>	76	195	306	544	1,224	4,898
10% or 90%	<b>24</b>	<b>35</b>	54	138	216	384	864	3,457
5% or 95%	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>28</b>	72	114	202	456	1,824

Figures in **Bold and Underlined** denote sample sizes of less than the recommended minimum.

<sup>10</sup> The Audit Commission has source information on sampling and population sizes drawn up for local authority best practice/CPA assessments etc. See Local Authority Performance Indicators (England) 2001/02 Reference Guide [http://ww2.audit-commission.gov.uk/pis/pi\\_guidance\\_04.shtml](http://ww2.audit-commission.gov.uk/pis/pi_guidance_04.shtml)

<sup>11</sup> See <http://www.surestart.gov.uk/publications/?Document=1860>

<sup>12</sup> Department for Children, Schools and Families – Tool-kit for Conducting Research/Assessing Demand for Childcare 2007.



The left hand column 'population proportion' is the expected proportion of the community who will use the service or have the attributes being questioned.

In the absence of full knowledge about proportionality the tool-kit recommends using the 40/60% split which previous national research indicates as effective.

The top row indicates the level of confidence required from your analysis. A good way to understand confidence is to think that if we undertook our survey again tomorrow would we get the same result?

The DCSF tool-kit recommends aiming to achieve confidence levels of between plus or minus 3% to 5%. Therefore we can see in the example above that if we expect 40% of our local community to use childcare then our research must be undertaken by engaging with 575 individuals.

However, most of our consultations will be with much smaller groups of people - the results will still have meaning, but you can have less confidence that the outcomes are representative. The alternative is to boost your sample size and the methods below will help achieve a reasonable confidence level.

### **Boosting your sample size**

It is possible to increase levels of confidence by increasing the size of your sample of the population, to better reflect the make up of your local area.

The *Magenta Book*, a comprehensive guide to evaluating policy is useful in assessing how and when to boost sample sizes<sup>13</sup>

### **Confidentiality and anonymity**

DCSF stresses the need for a highly ethical approach to undertaking community engagements, surveys and research. Seeking the true feelings of a person about some issues can be stressful. For example, seeking information around income and the quality of existing provision and support can be sensitive.

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<sup>13</sup> See <http://www.policyhub.gov.uk/downloads/chapter5.pdf> The Magenta Book , Guidance Notes for Policy Evaluation and Analysis - What is sampling? March 2004 Government Chief Social Researcher's Office



The guidance highlights four key areas for consideration...

- Anonymity
- Confidentiality
- Informed consent
- Lack of pressure

The Economic and Social Research Council has recently published a new Research Ethics Framework<sup>14</sup> which provides a wealth of detail on best practice in the area of research ethics.

### Operational delivery

It is useful to structure the delivery of your engagement in the following tiered way:

Ownership	Activity
Overall	Ensure that there is someone who has an overall view of the process, ideally in touch with both stakeholder partners and contacts in the community.
On the day	Ensure that all the individual elements of any process have a champion. For example, if using a graffiti wall in a community centre – have someone on hand to refresh the display, explain the process and to moderate activity around the display.
Facilitation	<p>If the engagement has a history of sensitivity or heated complexity consider using an independent facilitator for your meeting or event.</p> <p>Build briefing and document circulation for this person(s) into your activity plan.</p> <p>Allow the facilitator to explain his or her role and to express their independence from locality and ownership of the process.</p>

<sup>14</sup> See [http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/ESRC\\_Re\\_Ethics\\_Frame\\_tcm6-11291.pdf](http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/ESRC_Re_Ethics_Frame_tcm6-11291.pdf)

This comprehensive new document illustrated good practice and offers some interesting case studies in the ethical management of research.



If budget considerations allow, the facilitator role can be usefully enlarged to be part of the feedback mechanism, the production of a final report or for the delivery of further action planning.

## **Where to consult?**

### **Schools**

Parents' evenings and other meetings organised by linked associations.

### **School or community events**

Running a consultation alongside another main event can be a useful way of collecting information, possibly from non-traditional respondents. School Fairs, music festivals, sports days, outdoor activities, family learning sessions or the village fete are classic events that bring the many families or areas of the community together. Add the consultation on to one of these and benefit from all the people being together in one place!

### **Neighbourhood shop, local store, post office, pub, church**

Each of these buildings has a different level of traffic and character of user.

### **Drop-in events**

Use this format to allow people with limited time to attend when they can.

### **Gallery**

An exhibition of art or photographs which uses an informal gathering with a different primary focus that can offer opportunities for reflection and information gathering by families and individuals - very useful for working alongside children and young people. This can encourage creativity and confidence building. Are there any possible local sponsors for an arts or creativity prize?

### **Children's centres, nurseries, playgroups**

Innovative and different consultation methodologies - use this shared experience to cement partnerships, identify needs and spread ownership of your service aims.

### **Focus groups & workshops**

Whether working with children or older residents, focus groups and workshops can offer an opportunity for more in-depth analysis and feedback. Often a guest speaker or experienced practitioner can help too. Slightly more formality needed - but can still be relaxed.

### **Reconnaissance walk**

Engage with residents and talk about community aspects which have changed in the environment and services they may need.



**Out on the street**

It is important to consider use the Health and Safety protocols of your organisation in all places. However, it is particularly important in relation to street work.

(see Annex 4 for some suggested activities)



# Action planning

After the consultation

## After the events

After a successful consultation, part of the engagement process is to return to the participants and engage in an action planning session. Action planning cements ownership of the consultation and validates the opinions and information gathered. The action planning process can help set priorities for action. Emphasis should be placed on informality and participatory action.

The agreed actions will be part of the evaluation process and will continually evolve to ensure the services provided are dynamic and meet the needs of the community.

## Forums for Children and Young People

From the consultation activities and events there should always be the opportunity for further involvement of those consulted. This can be developed into a Children and Young People's Forum.

The objectives of this group should encompass a wide strategic role in the delivery of extended services for children and young people. On the ladder of participation this will enable the move from consultation and tokenism to full involvement.

The Forum could work in parallel with the area steering groups. Opportunities will be available for collaboration and participation throughout the programme. It might be possible to use the energy of existing groups, for example School Councils working together across an Area Steering Group, to establish a new forum.

In Bracknell Forest the organisation of the 'Cluedo<sup>15</sup>' initiative might bring an initial start to this group, as could the use of 'Xpresionz<sup>16</sup>', the young persons web presence in the Borough, which could enable electronic media to be used for suggestions.

## Fun and consensus

The action planning tools offered below will help to create consensus, but where the event is held, at what time and the refreshments offered will all

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15 A group of Bracknell Forest children and young people specifically trained to work with peers on consultation projects.

16 The Bracknell Forest Children and Young People web pages: See <http://tinyurl.com/yt9qyg>



condition the experience. Using the techniques and methods in this section will help keep individuals focussed on the action planning process.

Set the tone early and lay out the ground rules, gently but clearly.

- Listen to everyone's ideas.
- Only one person speaks at a time.
- Respect other people's ideas even if you don't agree.
- Have fun!

Use break-out groups, summarise often and get ideas on the wall as soon as possible.

Choose the tools that best suit you and your participants. Plan out what will happen - when, how and by whom. Identify the key players in action delivery. If some groups are moving more slowly than others and no resolution will be apparent at this meeting, then offer to stage a focus group type of activity to resolve issues about particular services.

Any or all of the following may be useful:  
Flip charts or large A3 pads, Blu-tack, pens, felt tip markers, small post it notes, display boards, tables and chairs, clock, bell or whistle or even a microphone.

### **Use the information roundabout technique**

Pass A3 sheets or worksheets round each table for example – place the results of the debates on the wall at appropriate times. Reflect their contents back to participants. Use the roundabout technique to share and feed back contributions.

Having gathered the feedback from the group, be sure to share 'what will happen next' and establish communication lines to continue the dialogue. Swap email addresses, pass round a 'share my contacts' sheet.

### **Use the information grading technique**

If you have a variety of suggestions arising from a consultation process, have these already available on lists and pass them round the tables of participants. Get each group to note solutions, difficulties and opportunities emerging from their view of proposed suggestions.

Use different colour pens for each group to note differences in feedback. Get participants to use their valuable and specialist local knowledge about proposed services, access, delivery or any other issues that may have arisen in the community consultation. Often a specialist visitor or 'expert guest' can make a valuable contribution.

### **Offer public thanks to all involved.**



# How to know when it has been successful

Community consultation will be fully part of extended services in Bracknell Forest...

- When this consultative process is automatically part of the delivery of the services.
- When children, young people and families have shared control over the planning, development and successful outcomes of the project.
- When we have stopped 'adding it in'.
- When children, young people and adults have fun together.
- When a full range of services are available for all members of the community.
- When members of the community feel empowered and work in partnership.

Strive to use the feedback and evaluation in the next piece of community engagement you undertake – building layers of understanding and partnership to create empowered and constructive communities.

Use a brief format for evaluating your consultation - a template of key questions to ask your organisation is provided in the next section – to find the data and evidence you might need to support your argument for effective action.



# How to evaluate your consultation

Were the objectives clear to those consulted?

Evidence: Detail your objectives and responses from feedback forms.  
Include samples of publicity and papers from the exercise.

Did your methods match your objectives?

Evidence: State what your methods were, illustrate how you achieved them.

Were your results representative?

Evidence: Offer your attendance, numbers and monitoring information.

Were your time-scales and the process clear and open?

Evidence: Show your project plan and how close to the critical path you were.  
Offer evidence from the service user feedback forms.

Was the event accessible?

Evidence: Indicate how you negotiated access and engagement.  
Use evidence from event feedback forms, photographs, video and drawings.

Were the 'least consulted' part of your outcomes?

Evidence: Restate the constituency you sought to bring with you and how you did it.  
Use monitoring information from feedback forms, photographs, drawings etc.

Were your costs within budget?

Evidence: Include a budget statement in your evaluation.

Was a new service/change created as a result?

How many residents, children, young people, parents and carers will be affected by these changes?

Evidence: Detail any service plans or agreements arising from known change.  
Offer capacity data from new service/business plans.



# Feedback form

Plan to use a simple feedback form at the end of every consultation event. Use the analysis of the information gathered in your evaluation. You could use a reply-paid postcard that could be filled out later.

For example:

What was the best thing about today's event?

What did you learn today?

What was the most useful thing about the event?

How could we have improved the event?

If you can, please tell us your postcode:

**All information is confidential.**

Would you like to help in other community consultations?

Yes

No

Please tell us your contact details:



# Useful web sources on consultation

**4Children**

<http://www.4children.org.uk/>

**Audit Commission – Guidance on sample sizes for statistical analysis**

[http://ww2.audit-commission.gov.uk/pis/pi\\_guidance\\_04.shtml](http://ww2.audit-commission.gov.uk/pis/pi_guidance_04.shtml)

**A consultation resource from renewal.net**

<http://www.renewal.net/Nav.asp?Category=:toolkits:how%20to%20create%20community%20participation:Consultation>

**Borough of Bracknell Forest web-site**

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/>

**BBC Faith and Religion pages – a searchable faith calendar**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/>

**The changing role of the VolCom and Public sectors**

- a view from ourpartnership.org.uk

<http://www.ourpartnership.org.uk/newspub2/story.cfm?id=439&sid=172>

**The Interplay Between State, Private Sector and Voluntary Activity:**

**A Vision for the Future** A view from the Directory of Social Change

[http://www.dsc.org.uk/charityexchange/pdfs/Policy\\_document.pdf](http://www.dsc.org.uk/charityexchange/pdfs/Policy_document.pdf)

**Groundwork East London's models for community consultation**

<http://www.groundwork-eastlondon.org.uk/upload/documents/document44.pdf>

**The Community Participation pages from NCVO**

<http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/policy/index.asp?id=3903>

**19 ways from Barking & Dagenham to reach those who are consulted least.**

<http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/6-living/equality/equality-communicating.html>

**A Scottish perspective on consulting with children and young people.**

<http://www.create-scotland.co.uk/advice/consultingyoung>

**LGBT Community/Equality Network – some useful Scottish web pages on consulting with LGBT communities.**

<http://www.lgbtcommunity.org.uk/how.html>

**The view from Northern Ireland on consulting with young people.**

<http://www.communityni.org/index.cfm/section/News/key/CYPConsultation>

**World Bank: Nepal – Data and Statistics**

<http://www.worldbank.org.np/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/NEPALEXTN/0,,menuPK:286961~pagePK:141132~piPK:141109~theSitePK:223555,00.html>



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## Other useful publications

**Children, young people and social inclusion : participation for what?**  
Bristol : Policy Press, 2006.

**Creating citizen-consumers : changing publics and changing public services**  
London : SAGE, 2007.

**Getting Started: Developing childcare in and around schools  
– A resource for schools and partners.**  
London: 4Children, 2007

Available at <http://www.4children.org.uk/information/show/ref/855>

**Listen Up!**

Resource pack supporting children to develop into active citizens through participation  
4Children 2004

**Participation - spice it up! : practical tools for engaging children and young people in planning and consultations** Cardiff : Save the Children, 2002

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Aldershot : Ashgate , 2000

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Opening up opportunities in our local communities

# Annex 1

## Childcare Sufficiency Assessments

An important factor in deciding the type and number of childcare places within a local authority area is to have an understanding of both the need and current level of supply of registered childcare. There is now a duty for the local authorities to carry out a 'Childcare Sufficiency Assessment'<sup>17</sup> and all authorities have to complete an assessment by April 2008.

This will help to quantify provision, identify gaps and in consultation with parents, communities and employers, plan how to support organisations to address them.

Sufficient childcare is defined in Section 6 of the 2006 Act as "sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in the area who require childcare in order to enable them to:-

- Take up or return to work
- Undertake education or training to assist them to obtain work."

A local authority must also have regard to the provision of childcare for which the childcare element of the working tax credit is payable and to ensure that suitable childcare for disabled children meets the needs of parents in the area.

Effective consultation is a core element of the sufficiency assessment and will provide a landscape of the community needs for childcare. Local authorities have a duty to consult with a number of groups and partners who are involved in the delivery of childcare. These include the Local Safeguarding Board and partners of the local authority such as the Primary Care Trust and Jobcentre Plus.

In addition there must be consultation with a number of groups, including children, parents, childcare providers, local employers, schools and further education establishments and other organisations with an interest in childcare.

As part of the model for consultation for extended services, the demand for childcare, including out of school provision, has to be addressed. The suggested activities included will form part of this consultation and will enable effective involvement of a wide number of children and adults.

The questionnaire provided (see Annex 2) offers a format for the collation of data for the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

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<sup>17</sup> Childcare Sufficiency Assessments: Guidance for Local Authorities DfES 2007



## Annex 2

# Childcare Sufficiency Questionnaire

**Helping families in Bracknell Forest.**

**What would be best for you?**

This questionnaire for parents and carers is designed to find out the needs for childcare for children from 0 to 14 years of age (17 with special needs).

**Thank you for completing our form.**

1. Do you have children?  Yes  No

2. How old are they?

0-5  5-11  11-14 (17 with special needs)

3. Do your children have special needs or a disability?

Yes  No

4. If yes – tell us about it if you can.

5. Which schools do they attend?

6. Do you currently use childcare?

Yes  No



7. If yes do you use...

Family  Child-minder  Nursery

After School Club  Breakfast Club

Holiday Play Scheme  Other

8. If your child is under 5, how often do you need childcare?

Full time 8.00am – 6.00pm

8.00am – 4.00pm

Part-time Mornings only 8am -1.00pm

9am -1.00pm

Afternoons only 1pm – 6.00pm

1pm – 6.00pm

Daily sessions

One day  Two days  Three days  Four days

9. Do you use the free entitlement places for 3 and 4 year olds?

Yes  No

10. If your child is at school what type of childcare do you use?

Breakfast Club

After School Club

Holiday Play Scheme

Other



How many days a week do you use it?

Would you like to use it more? Yes  No

What would make it better?

11. Are you in work or training? Yes  No

12. Do you access Working Tax Credit? Yes  No

13. If you are not in work or training now would you consider this in the future?  
Yes

14. What would help you most?

15. What sort of childcare would help you?

Nursery provision?

Breakfast club?

After-school club?

Holiday play scheme?

Would you like full time?

..or part-time?

16 Please tell us how much you could afford for childcare per week?

Under £25   £25-£50   £50-£100   £100-£200   £200-£300



17 Please enter your postcode

18 Is English your first language?

Yes

No

19 Please tell us your ethnic background?

White

British

Irish

Other

Black or Black African

Caribbean

African

Other

Asian or Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Other

Chinese

Chinese

Other

Please state

20 Are you

Female

Male



## Annex 3

# Before you start check-list

**Before beginning your consultation and action planning exercise do you clearly know the following...**

- Why are you consulting and who are you consulting with?
- Are you clear what influence on decision making will be achieved?
- Who will eventually take the relevant decisions?
- Will your consultation be part of that process too?
- When will the decisions/change happen?
- How will you feedback these decisions/changes to consultees?
- Is your complaints procedure clearly available?

**Can you guarantee the following...**

- You have used plain language and no jargon?
- Your questions to be asked are concise and thoughtful?
- A mix of methods and groups are to be used?
- All transport, access, language and support is in place?
- Your mix of consultees references the Borough profile?
- Is everyone's anonymity guaranteed?
- You have planned well enough and in time?
- You know who is facilitating events?
- You know who is monitoring and evaluating events?
- You are sure your consultation will reach those hard to reach parts of your organisation?



**Just before you start your consultation, have you covered the following...**

Who are you talking to? Are they the right people?

Whose views will be influential? Will everyone have a say?

Are the questions you are asking the right ones?

Have there been any material changes since you formulated them?

Think through your planned methods – is there a variety?

Are some quantitative? Are some qualitative?

Are some action led, are some reflective, are some visual?

Will a range of ages, genders and localities be covered?

Is your feedback plan in place?

Are you ready for complaints and Data Protection Act queries?

**Have fun, have a great event!**



## Annex 4

# Suggestions for activities for children, young people and adults

### Model making

. Set the scene first. Have a storytelling session or a *star bursting session* to start with. Using paper or wallboards get the respondents to tell what services or changes they would like to see. Finally, get craft the 'new' ideas for the rest of the session. Feedback the results.

More detail at Annex 5

### Community map

A great way to undertake assessments of where services should be, or how seeing spatial differences in the community. Use several maps and break out into smaller groups – helping to cement confidence and team working skills. Use stickers to show where the services the children suggest should be.

More detail at Annex 5

### Boxes and stickers

Arrive with options and choices written up on paper. Use different coloured stickers for each age group or area – let the children sticker their best option choices.

### Simple questionnaire

Use very simple questions, with a limited number of options. Use graphics to support choices. Be mindful of reading age and skills, and prepared to read out the questions and record the answers.

This type of consultation can work well on websites and notice boards.

### Recorded<sup>18</sup>

With all the appropriate permissions in place, film or record the voices of the young people talking about how they find life in their community or school and what they would like to see improving in the future. As a second stage, play back their responses to the group and seek endorsement of their views.

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<sup>18</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting>



**SMS and internet**

Use SMS/text to engage young people. Why not use online communities/social networking ideas to attract comments and opinion from young people?

**Photo or art survey**

Using digital cameras as a resource, get children and young people to photograph community or school elements that they would like to change or develop.

For new services get the children to photograph things that will portray the idea of a new service. With appropriate permissions, the resulting photographs could then be built into an exhibition to encourage input from parents and carers (see section above).

This activity can also provide superb child-centred artwork for future extended service publications – with the children appropriately credited. More detail at Annex 5

**Spectrum line**

This gives a horizontal line based on an initial question and users place their own feelings at a point on the line.

More detail at Annex 5

**Graffiti wall:**

Now almost a mainstream activity in itself. It is hard to beat the liberating effect of so much white space, relatively free from constraint to express ideas, thoughts and vision. Have plenty of sticky tape, felt pens, crayons and pencils ready. Use post-it notes for more discreet contributions.

More detail at Annex 5

**Post It notes**

An informal way of giving people freedom in expressing their thoughts and also an opportunity to see other's views. Cover that wall space!

**Engage with young people where they gather**

Try short surveys at bus stops, or in queues elsewhere - a good way to engage with children and young people when they are together, and feel less intimidated and part of their own group.

**Diary Room**

The use of a web cam and enclosed area, as in 'Big Brother' for children and young people to talk freely and to answer questions.



### **Design It Day**

Activities specifically focussed on area of identified need, i.e., in the design of a room or building create a day based around the needs, design, how they would like it to work etc. Have plenty of art-based materials and people to help. This is a great way to get ideas flowing and to listen to what children are really saying. Be ready to make lots of notes.

### **Music Making**

Use professionals to make different styles of music as the children and young people want. Create songs based around need. You will hear the voices of children and the issues they have.

### **Theatre Forum**

Work with professionals in delivering innovative theatre forum with children and young people, either in the street or at a venue of their choice.

### **Dance It Out**

A complete dance workshop to enable music, movement and space to empower children and young people to work through their thoughts and feelings. This can be a great way to lead into discussions afterwards, works especially well where there are language barriers and children who find it hard to express their feelings and thoughts in words.

### **Street Walk**

A walk around the streets in their areas, let them do the talking about what is good and not so good on the streets in their areas. This is their territory and they will have views.

This lends itself well to support from older family members, offering support to give a historical, family history context to the ideas and feelings of the children and young people.

### **A Citizen's Jury**

The Citizens' Jury can be a powerful and formal method for determining community outcomes. Brokered and managed by the local authority, the process allows commissioning organisations to call witnesses, lay out choices and options and let a cross-section of the community deliberate on the issues or proposed services.

More detail at Annex 5

### **A Charette**

A useful tool when there is likely to be a broad consensus of the community is a charette. This process has its weaknesses, risking the exclusion of some community partners, but is a process that is effective at harnessing local knowledge and understanding in relatively short time periods.

More detail at Annex 5



**Root and Branch**

This can be a very good technique for stimulating ideas about change, new services or different ways of providing services.

It is visual and participants can see ideas leading to action in graphic way. More detail at Annex 5

**Fence Leaping**

This technique is useful in deciding how barriers to service change can be overcome.

More detail at Annex 5

**Who What and Where Board**

This is also a good technique for stimulating thinking about how things can be done, particularly once there is a list of new services or ideas to be sorted and developed.

More detail at Annex 5

**What next**

The start of the follow up. Ask about further involvement, and for any suggestions for ensuring that children and young people are kept in touch with progress.



## Annex 5

# A menu of activity resources

### **Model Making<sup>19</sup>**

#### **How does it work?**

This method of engagement is creative, fun and can be used to engage children and young people as well as adults.

It is also useful when looking for light touch methods of drawing out the views and opinions of adults who would not normally engage in more formal structured processes.

#### **When to use it?**

Ideal for use in community centre and school settings, where the resources can be made available in comfortable, open surroundings.

#### **Getting started:**

Explain to participants that this exercise about developing a vision.

Using arts and craft techniques, cutting and pasting and coloured materials the participants can create real models of their vision.

This might be a completely new building or can be angled to retrieve ideas about where new services could be delivered in existing infrastructure. or concern on the models.

You can use post-it notes or coloured sticky dots to highlight areas of interest. The models built in the session can be used to illustrate opportunities or barriers to development in order to promote further discussion,

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<sup>19</sup> This local East Anglian charity has based their creative vision for a new Curiosity and Imagination Centre entirely through working with children and model-making techniques. See <http://www.imaginewmarket.org.uk>



## Materials and resources

These can be infinite – paper, card, pens, pencils, glue pots, stars, sticky labels, string...anything from the craft and making box in fact.

Have fun.

## Community Map

### How does it work?

You can use maps as an engagement tool in two distinct ways.

Either use materials for participants to draw maps themselves and to create mental models of change and transcribe them to their drawings. A winner with young people!

Alternatively, use actual maps and ask participants to mark on them where new services might be sited, where there might be concerns about placing new services and how access and travel mediates access to any proposed new provision.

This latter method is ideal for drawing comments from more senior residents, or in getting them to express their feelings about change, through the medium of reflecting about the history of an area.

They are both good for getting community members to visualise their community and to pass on their views and opinions about proposed services.

### When to use it?

Ideal at any group consultation or engagement, maps are always useful for providing context to any proposal.

### Getting started:

Using simple resources divide your audience into groups to create their maps. Re-convene to sum up and illustrate individual group ideas.

Alternatively, post a large map on a surface and ask participants to add post-it notes or other stickers to the map to illustrate ideas and concerns.

## Materials and resources

Pens, paper, large maps, sticky stars and labels, post-it notes.



## **Photo Survey**

### **How does it work?**

This can be an exciting and visual way for children, young people and other residents to contribute to a process in creative and engaging ways.

### **When to use it?**

It can be particularly useful for community members where literacy or first language concerns may keep them from making a full contribution.

One legacy of this activity, providing appropriate permissions are in place is the range of good quality visual material that can be produced and utilised in engagement reporting or feed-back publications to the focus community.

Young people respond well during the creative process itself and are profoundly empowered by seeing their creative work published as part of a community action.

### **Getting started:**

Draw up a short list of themes, services or community facilities that represent the change, idea or new service you wish to engage about.

Ask the participants to then photograph their community through their eyes, keeping in mind the themes you have agreed upon. Set a time limit for the activity.

Using digital equipment should allow you to print and publish their images on the day. Create a paste-up board for the work to be displayed as you go.

Invite other, perhaps more artistically reticent community players in to see the work and record their observations.

### **Materials and resources**

Digital cameras, computers and printers – space to display.

Get creative...but keep a record of the comments – feed back widely.



## The Spectrum Line

This is a simpler way to get valuable feed-back from people attending your event. It affords the opportunity to lay out some simple choices about services and then to test how strongly people feel about them.

### When to use it?

The Spectrum Line can be useful when supporting decision making with people who find using complex literacy skills challenging.

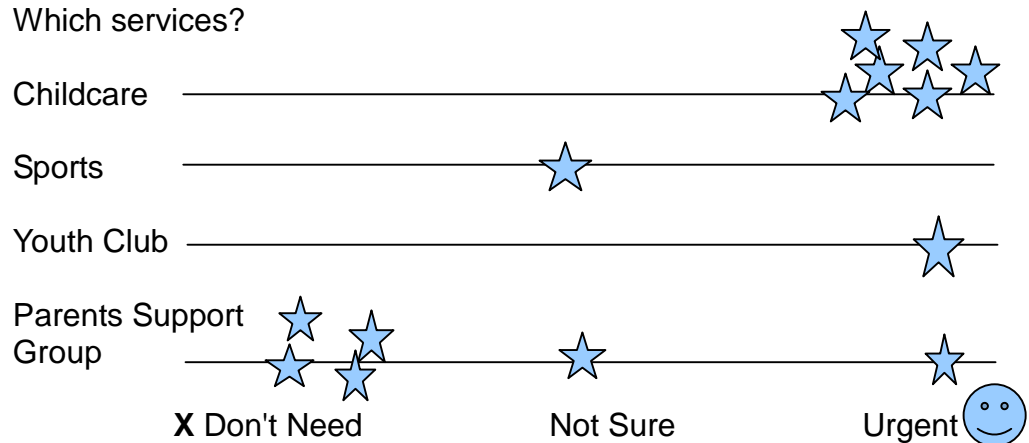
### Getting started

Layout your 'choices' at the start of the display.

Lead away from them with a line, marked with a series of weights.

Ask your audience to mark or stick up their responses to the choices illustrated. Photographically record the display and keep records of numbers of answers.

Which services?



### Materials and Resources

A large board or wall covered with paper.

A set of marker pens, pencils and post-it notes.



## The Graffiti Wall

### How does it work?

A really good way to get people, young and old, to take part at the start. They can write draw, do it graffiti style or however they like.

Make the questions to be asked part of the display, so that users can reference them when thinking or creating an answer.

Have someone as a moderator, keeping the display fresh and relevant – able to answer queries.

### When to use it?

At events at the start of the participation process, excellent at outside venues when there is limited space – you can use your existing mobile display panels.

### Getting started

Fix a number of different coloured papers to a board or stand. Young people can add onto a section of the paper or across several.

Giving your board an alternate coloured grid pattern encourages participants to their work across the board. For example:

Childcare	Sport	Health	Transport
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Papers can always be taken down and replaced.

### Materials and resources

Large pieces of paper or board, A3 size or bigger preferably.

Felt pens, pencils, Blu-tack

Velcro fixers possibly

Large board, display stand or wall you can stick paper onto.



## Develop a Citizens' Jury

The Citizens' Jury can be a powerful and formal method for determining community outcomes. Brokered and managed by the local authority, the process allows commissioning organisations to call witnesses, lay out choices and options and let a cross-section of the community deliberate on the issues or proposed services.

The intended outcome is for the citizen's jury to issue a recommendation for service change or development, with the support of the commissioning agency.

The published recommendations are in the format of a formal report. This can include details of both the process and the selection procedures for the panel itself and for the experts attending who offered considered judgements on the issues raised.

The process, if well marketed beforehand, well executed and with follow up actions of appropriate quality, can offer a sound basis for executive action with strong community ownership.

### First steps

Decide upon the issue the jury is to consider...

Plan for a lead-in of at least two months – booking the accessible venue, catering, creche and consumables needed on the day(s).

Also plan for two months of support after the jury has sat – the production of their report is a key stage in the process.

Ensure that a 'jury paper' is produced outlining the main issues for consideration.

Choose and secure the services of the experts on the appointed day(s).

Ensure that additional papers from the expert witnesses are also available. These should be in the form of summaries of the 'expert issues' for the jury to consider.

Organise a mail drop/poster campaign publicising the jury – offering the target community details of the process, the issues or service change to be debated and calling for community volunteer members. When volunteers emerge ensure that jury members are selected randomly, whilst reflecting the resident profile of the area.

Circulate the rules of engagement for the jury, the position papers and details of the venue, timings etc. to the jury chosen.



Plan to deliberate for more than one day if necessary – if the issues are complex or if the community participants need capacity building support.

### **On the day(s) chosen for the jury...**

Ensure that an independent facilitator, sensitive to the issues and the organisation of the citizen jury is able to give an overview of the event and emphasise how the commissioning agency will follow through on their recommendations. Taking the proposed actions or offering sound information on why they will not be undertaken.

Undertake a fun exercise by way of introduction.

As well as the jury listening to the experts, it is possible to have break-out sessions with the jury and experts to further explore the issues under review. Use the techniques in the previous action planning section of this document to facilitate this.

Ensure that regular summing up and reflecting back is done during the process. Explaining the stages reached during the event.

### **After the deliberation event...**

Ensure that there is appropriate ownership of the production of the report for the jury. Keep its journey to publication well circulated within the community.

Share the formal outcomes of its uptake by the local authority or commissioning agency.

Maintain contact with the jurors – as ambassadors for future events.

### **Points to consider ...**

This technique differs somewhat from the charrette that follows in that it calls upon the services of nominated specialists. The members of the community may undertake informal group work in the process, but are essentially in deliberative mode on the day.

It is a powerful tool for the commissioning agency to focus on the community as a coherent and qualified source of opinion around changes that will affect them.



## Undertake a Charrette<sup>20</sup>

A useful tool when there is likely to be a broad consensus of the community is a charette. This process has its weaknesses, risking the exclusion of some community partners, but is a process that is effective at harnessing local knowledge and understanding in relatively short time periods.

The characteristics of the process are a rapid interchange of ideas across community groups, individuals and local authority representatives, with a well-defined action planning and feedback process at its conclusion.

### Step One:

Undertake pre-charrette meetings. Talk to the local community and stakeholders to disseminate both the idea of the charrette, but also to determine some of the key issues and ideas that might be brought to the table during the activities that are to follow.

### Step Two:

Publicise the location, timing and content of the public meeting/s for the consultation.

### Step Three:

At the public meeting use a facilitator to set the scene, highlight the issues, ambiguities and possible solutions to the planned development of services.

Get the audience to break into smaller groups to debate what has just been said and to deliver their ideas to the main group as part of the process.

### Step Four:

After the public meeting, organise steering committees by communities of interest or communities of place. Get them to discuss in detail the proposals put forward at the main public meeting.

This small group structure will almost certainly guarantee that a number of community ambassadors will disseminate details of the charrette through their own informal networks.

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<sup>20</sup> Charrette is a small cart – used by French students in the 1850's at the *Ecole de Beaux-arts* in Paris to transfer their work to a central point at the end of every week.



**Step Five:**

Create static displays and information resources for the public at a venue central to the local community. Invite review of the proposals, recommendations and ideas put forward to date.

Use the opportunity to seek more local input from visitors on the day – using the facilitator discuss the progress of the charrette to date and outline the proposals received again.

**Step Six:**

Re-convene the local steering committees, this time with the involvement of all the local actors who are integral to the delivery of the proposed changes or renewed services.

Agree, both the feasibility of the proposals and an action plan for implementation – agree with key service deliverers a timetable for action.

Return to your base and implement the plan! Keep everyone informed.

You should allow a minimum of three months lead-time to create this sequence of intense activity over a short period of time. Plan the pre-event stages carefully, selecting the choice of venue and participants to reflect the diversity and mix of your communities of focus.

**Root and Branch Solutions****How does it work?**

This can be a very good technique for stimulating ideas about change, new services or different ways of providing services.

It is visual and participants can see ideas leading to action in graphic way.

**When to use it?**

Ideally this method is useful at the start of an engagement process to tease out the major key themes in a school, childcare setting, community building or wider community arena.

**Getting started**

Create a tree – with large spreading roots and wide branches, offering a good spread of 'arms' to hang ideas on.



You can do this on large swathes of black sugar paper and mount it on a wall. You can do it on an angled table or board that participants can reach themselves.

Tell your participating audience what the root and branch is to illustrate. For example '...our local community hasn't got enough breakfast club places'.

Ask you audience to consider WHY this is so. Stick or write these ideas at the root of the tree.

Ask your audience to consider what EFFECTS this situation is having. Stick or write these answers on the trunk of the tree.

Ask your audience to think about SOLUTIONS to the issues identified. Stick or write these ideas on the branches.

Using your review and summing up skills – help the community to consider the ACTIONS that thinking about the tree might lead to. Record them.

Remember – creating the tree can be a good opening exercise for a group in itself.

### **Materials and resources**

Felt tips, pens, sellotape, glue, sugar paper, post it notes – notepad for recording responses and ideas.

### **Fence Leaping**

#### **How does it work?**

This technique is useful in deciding how barriers to service change can be overcome.

#### **When to use it?**

It is a useful tool at either an action-planning event or in a wider engagement event when small groups of people can work independently to think about the options and solutions needed to achieve something.

#### **Getting started:**

Use break-out groups to go away and think about how a new service delivery might be achieved or how a barrier to develop an existing one can be overcome.



Call the groups back and review and consider their solutions. This activity can then be combined with a prioritising activity to achieve a consensus about a service need or to rank multiple suggestions if they emerge.

Use a pre-printed template as below if needed...

Service identified	How it can be overcome	By whom	When	Your vote?
1	1			
	2			
	3			
2	1			
	2			
	3			
3	1			
	2			
	3			

### Materials and resources

Pens, paper and perhaps sticky dots or stars. Tables for break-out.

### Who, What and Where Board

#### How does it work?

This is also a good technique for stimulating thinking about how things can be done, particularly once there is a list of new services or ideas to be sorted and developed.

It is ideal as a means of getting the community take broad ownership of service development and deliver a detailed plan for taking a new service forward.

#### When to use it?

Use it in break-out groups, as before, and consolidate the ideas of several groups into one consensus viewpoint.



### Getting started:

Use a simple pre-printed grid below to help the process...

We can do  
this on our  
own.

We can do it  
with a little  
help.

We need help  
and money.  
Partnership  
would help us.

We can't do  
it – but we  
can tell  
others about  
it

When?

By January

By March

By June

### Materials and resources

Some forms, pens and paper and a space to meet in.



# Annex 6

## A Case Study

This section of the document contains an analysis of a consultation event which took place in the summer of 2007.

Held at a local community centre in Priestwood, Bracknell, the exercise was delivered to seek the views of children, young people, parents and carers about the development of extended services in their local area.

### **Methodology:**

**Setting:** The choice was made to utilise a local community health day in order to consult with local people.

### **Choice of technique:**

A Graffiti wall was planned in order to give parents, children and young people the maximum opportunity to develop their ideas and suggestions about what their school and community should be providing.

A childcare and services questionnaire was used – in order to stimulate dialogue with community members as they answered questions.

### **Timing and dates:**

The event was held from 12.00 to 5.00pm on a weekday to maximise contact in the community centre with a broad spectrum of residents.

A team sponsored by 4Children were available on the day, in concert with the local authority to facilitate the process.

### **Contact with the community:**

The consultation team was able to talk to a wide cross-section of the community – from mothers, fathers and carers with children, to residents interested in health and environmental matters – and involving a wide age range. Some twenty-five detailed conversations took place on the day.

### **Results of the dialogue:**

The table below shows the aggregated responses that emerged from the parents, carers and children questionnaires and graffiti wall stickers that that were submitted.



<i>Childcare service requested</i>	<i>% of responses</i>
Nursery	12.5
After School Club	75
Breakfast Club	12.5

Wider community/school services that emerged were...

<i>Wider services requested</i>	<i>% of responses</i>
Sports	50
Arts	10
Crafts	10
Drama	15
Dance	4
Fencing	4
Community Information Points	4
Meeting places for parents and carers	3

A number of key themes emerged from older residents...

Recurring theme	Detailed concern
Children and young people	Perceived need for structured outreach, organised sports and activities for older children.
Health	Lack of development for hospital facilities within the borough. High quality provision noted generally.
Community Transportation	Accessible community taxi service for disabled residents.
Borough-wide Transportation	Buses to other principal towns in the area.

### **Analysis of the conversation with residents:**

The overwhelming demand from parents and carers was for an increase in after school club provision, which itself was linked to observations about sport and other physical activities for young people.

For parents with young children information resources were a key theme, although not overtly identified as needed. This need emerged after questions about community information points.



Sports and drama, along with arts and crafts were the most significant requests for services sought around developing services in schools.

For older residents spoken to, the principal concern was, in effect, a community safety issue. The perception that young people were under resourced perhaps illustrates a more general concern for those older residents.

However, all were approving of the comments on the graffiti wall around structured sporting activity.

### **Learning from the event:**

1. The event was well planned, with good leafleting, good visitor welcomes and management, with a large, useful evaluation wall board available to visitors in the centre lobby.
2. A good range of services and advice was available.
3. The event was concurrent with a blood donor session by the Primary Care Trust in an adjacent space which drew interested and relevant residents.

### **Development considerations:**

1. Planning - For the 4Children team more focus could have been given to marketing their survey/consultation directly to parents and carers.
2. Marketing - This direct contact with parents was achieved on the day by local authority officers 'ticketing' the event at the local school gates at leaving time. A successful tactic that could have been usefully deployed prior to the event itself.

### **Feedback:**

Given the complexity and quality of the community responses, careful consideration of how full findings could be fed back to residents and actioned by the local authority were by necessity absent from this brief sampling exercise



# Notes

