Section 10 - *Partnership Working*

Introduction

There is a continued focus on partnership working within communities; many funders require organisations to be working in partnership for example. The first article in this section reminds us of the reasons for working in partnership and recaps on some of the factors that need to be in place if partnerships are to succeed, and offers some insights into a way of working across borders and boundaries between communities from a bottom up approach, supported by a case study. The third article proposes a model for when an organisation wants to develop a partnership project for a regeneration project.

Faith communities are being encouraged to be involved in partnerships with other organisations, the first article outlines some of the work already being undertaken by faith groups, and the next two suggest issues for non faith workers to consider when working with faith communities.

Two techniques are proposed for examining the effectiveness of working relationships between statutory bodies and the communities they seek to serve.

One of the big issues facing some communities is the planned expansion of their area to cater for demand for new housing, and a case study about a major development area offers a way of embedding community development into the plans of the developers and local authorities.

Guidance is offered on how partnership bodies can communicate more effectively with their residents through developing community newspapers. The ward mapping activity aims to explore community needs and how organisations can come together to show how they are meeting them.

In the 2001 Skills Manual there are many articles about partnership working which are still relevant; at that time working in partnership was relatively new for many community workers and groups and hence there was a much bigger section. Many of the regeneration initiatives mentioned in these articles have changed but the articles still offer a sound basis for developing and maintaining partnership working.

FCDL have a resource pack on Effective Partnership Working which has handouts, guidance notes and exercises which explore the rational behind the push for partnership working. It covers the different informal and formal models of partnerships, the implications for community groups of joining partnerships or setting them up and how to involve people in them effectively. The pack provides material on tackling the conflicts and issues of power imbalances that are inevitable aspects of partnership working.

FCDL also have taster packs which introduce the ideas behind partnership working and how to engage with partnerships.

Within the resource pack Strategies and Policies to Support Environmental Action, created for the Every Action Counts there is relevant material on being involved in partnerships to support sustainable development.

Contents - *Partnership Working*

DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS

Introduction

A partnership can be defined as…

> "Three or more organisations - representing the public, private and voluntary sectors – acting together by contributing their diverse resources in the furtherance of a common vision that has clearly defined goals and objectives."
>
> *Making Partnerships Work: A practical guide for the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Andrew Wilson and Kate Charlton, February 1997.*

In the voluntary and community sector, partnership work is when two or more organisations come together to undertake a project or programme of work collaboratively. It is important that any partnership develops the structures that best suits its partners and objectives.

Three models of partnerships - based upon the different aims of partnerships.

- **Synergy** – the idea is to develop joint ventures which can produce more by working together than by working alone, they produce synergy from bringing together their complementary skills and powers.
- **Transformation** – these are joint ventures which are attempting to bring about mutually agreed changes to transform a situation.
- **Budget enlargement** – these are joint ventures which are aimed at getting additional funds from a third party, often from a source that each partner could not access on its own.

Advantages to partnership work:

- More diversity and choice in service delivery.
- More effective service delivery.
- Avoid duplication of work.
- Challenge assumptions and act as a catalyst for change.
- Access to a wider range of skills and knowledge.
- Gain access to funds and resources for the community.
- Promotion of reconciliation and community cohesion.
- Opportunity to raise the issues and profile of the area and / or group and discredit negative stereotypes.
- Chance to develop and deliver new projects.
- Opportunity to influence wider policy.
- Develop trust, confidence, understanding and promote networking between sectors.
- Commitment to community development principles and practices.

Factors for a successful partnership*:*

- Agreement from the onset that a partnership is necessary.

- The correct organisations and people are engaged.
- There is trust and respect between the different partners.
- Development of a shared vision of what could be achieved with realistic goals.
- Time to build the partnership.
- Suitable structures are developed which are appropriate to the partnership.
- Good communication systems between the partners.
- Each partner gains from the partnership.
- An acknowledgement that each partner brings individual expertise and skills.

Developing cross border or cross community partnerships.

Creating partnerships is one of the most challenging areas of work, particularly for those that need to be cross border or cross community partnerships. There can be high levels of mistrust between and also within communities. Cross border or cross community partnerships should be based on the following principles (based on those of the Community Relations Council):

- **Diversity** – this can be seen in the ever-changing variety of community and individual experiences. Respect for diversity affirms the value that can be derived from existence, recognition, understanding and tolerance of difference (whether expressed through religious, ethnic, political, sexual or gender background).
- **Interdependence** – requires recognition by different interest or identity groupings of their obligations and commitments to others and of the inter-connectedness of individual and community experiences and ambitions leading to the development of a society which is at once cohesive and diverse.
- **Equity** – is understood as a commitment at all levels within society to ensuring equality of access to resources, structures and decision-making processes and to the adoption of actions to secure and maintain these objectives.

There are a number of points to consider before attempting to create positive community relations. They can be summarised as follows:

- Communities are much more likely to engage if they see a positive outcome for them. So, for example, if the redevelopment of a site meant the introduction of much needed play facilities then this is more likely to be appealing than encouraging people to engage in cross community work for its own sake.
- You need to be sensitive to people's personal safety. If they are or perceive themselves to be at risk then this needs to be handled sensitively. This may include taking practical steps around neutral venues etc.
- Be sensitive to the make up of groups engaged in initial cross community contact. The introduction of high profile individuals may possibly have a negative effect on the group. For example, somebody who has been involved in previous community conflicts can move the focus from the issue to the individual.
- Different communities will be at different stages on the continuum of Community Development i.e. some will have a very sophisticated infrastructure while others are at a less developed stage. Groups need to be sensitive to these differences and not have either too high or too low an expectation of other communities. Additional support may be required to help develop the community infrastructure of the weaker group. However, the fact that different communities are at varying stages of development does not exclude them from partnership work.

- Timing can be an important element in engaging in cross border or cross community development. It is less likely to be successful during periods of high tension in either the local area or the wider community e.g. the marching season.
- Groups should have clearly defined ground rules to which all parties are prepared to sign up. These will be more successful if the participants develop them themselves.

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Case Study

BUILDING CROSS BORDER PARTNERSHIPS, KILTY CASHEL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, LEITRIM / FERMANAGH BORDER

Kiltyclogher is a small village (population approx. 250) in Co. Leitrim, half a mile from the border with Co. Fermanagh. Cashel is the rural area that lies immediately on the northern side of the border in Co. Fermanagh with a population of approximately 340.

The area that encompasses Kiltyclogher and Cashel formed a natural unit in spite of the fact that it spanned two jurisdictions. Farming, commerce and social activity involved daily interaction across the border until the closure of border roads in the early 1970s. From that point onwards, it was necessary for people to travel over twenty miles to go from Kiltyclogher to Cashel, normally a two-mile journey.

Both communities were already suffering from depopulation and the effects of agricultural decline and almost a quarter of a century of severely restricted access had accelerated the decline of both Kiltyclogher and Cashel, in spite of the efforts of community groups on both sides. However, the easy interaction between both communities up until the closures meant that there was a reasonable joint population that could support and enjoy social and business activities. In effect a whole generation has grown up without the opportunity to engage and co-operate with their neighbours over the border. This obviously also left a huge gap in the local social network.

In 1999 the Kiltyclogher Community Council in Leitrim and the Cashel Community Association in Fermanagh applied successfully to the PEACE 1 Programme for funding towards the employment of a development worker for this cross-border area. The role of the Development Worker was to undertake some groundwork in terms of bringing the two communities back together after having been separated from each other for over two decades due to the troubles.
Through mediation and a number of joint activities in the years 1999 – 2001, both communities developed a better understanding and progressed their relationship in a very positive way. Many joint cross-border initiatives were launched, including a pilot social housing project, joint youth work, etc.

The Kiltyclogher / Cashel Development Company Limited was formed in 2002 with the objective to stimulate economic activity, to enhance the social conditions, to develop jointly cultural activities, to develop new and strengthen existing cross-community relations, and to promote a better understanding between the communities. This was achieved through the involvement of local people from both communities, with the main aim of making the greater Kiltyclogher/ Cashel area a better place to life and to work in.

The Development Company devised a joint strategy plan for the area and individual plans for Kiltyclogher and Cashel. The plans took into account all views and needs of the community members and a range of target areas were identified including community and cross border development; social development; tourism development; environment issues and the sustainability of the Kiltyclogher Cashel project.

The project has been involved in over 36 different projects, with over 20 agencies and over €1.25 m has been secured for the area. As a result a strong, experienced, committed and representative management

committee has been developed compromising representatives from both communities.
The projects have resulted in greater facilities in the area for local residents as well as increasing tourism potential. The barriers that did exist have now been removed and residents from both sides of the border can now freely interact and socialise.

One of the projects implemented was a children's art project with an environmental theme where, with assistance from professional artists, a butterfly sculpture was created. The children that participated came together from a cross border and cross community background and this gave them an opportunity to work together, talk about their own areas and get to know one another as individuals. This was something that was denied to an entire generation by the crossing closure and the separation of the communities. One of the best outcomes has been the new and lasting friendships that have been made, which will hopefully continue long into the future.

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Melvyn Waddell

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL REGENERATION PROJECT

Introduction

After developing a process of inclusive community consultation it is equally important to support individuals to see creative solutions. This can only be achieved if people have access to information. This section is a guide for groups developing a regeneration project within their community.

1. Community Planning:

The first step is to look at the overall community and the needs of the area. This is important in deciding what type of project is best for your area. You may already have this information through community surveys and audits. This information will also be essential when selling your project to stakeholders and funders. The project may have been started in order to improve a site that is derelict, under-used, suffers from graffiti, vandalism or which attracts anti-social behaviour, but it is worth remembering that if the site is simply 'cleared up', old problems may reoccur. The area you are planning to transform needs to have a purpose.

2. Prioritising an Area:

When picking the site for your project, it is important to take the following factors into consideration so that the project runs smoothly

- Where could the project be sited so that it provides the greatest benefit for the whole community?
- Is the project value for money on a particular site? Is there agreement on the site?
- Land ownership – Who owns the site at present? Do they have any future plans for it? Would they become involved in the project (maintenance support and / or funding)?
- Can a statutory agency take responsibility for aftercare and maintenance?
- Can the existing materials on site be used or recycled for the project?
- How will slopes and drainage affect design and location of features?
- What is the site used for at present (children playing, meeting place for young people, vandalism, graffiti, quick route to the shops etc)? Current uses should be taken into consideration in the planning stages to make the best use of your site. For example, problems like fly tipping or antisocial behaviour can be designed out, and positive uses for the site can be enhanced through design.

3. Site survey:

Once the site is prioritised a detailed site survey should be carried out by a Landscape Architect. The points below should be considered:

- Views of and from the site.
- Underground services - water supply, gas and electricity pipes etc.
- Changes in levels - is the site on a steep slope or bumpy ground? This information can be important for drainage access etc.
- Desire lines – these are routes taken by people to / from different points i.e. unofficial paths.
- Micro-climate – are the site conditions wet, windy, sun trap, boggy etc? Trees can block wind; sunny areas are better to sit in; boggy areas may need drainage etc.

4. Design of the site:

A landscape architect is a designer who specialises in helping groups to draw up plans to transform outdoor space. They will also supervise the work and manage contractors on the group's behalf. A landscape architect translates a community's ideas into a sketch plan with a budget to show what is possible with available funding. They will also take the following points into account:

- Working with the community's ideas and needs.
- A unique theme for the project e.g. local history or culture.
- Facilities for specific age groups or for the whole community.
- Zoning of the site i.e. putting the right facilities in the right places.
- Safety.
- Aesthetics – making the whole scheme look attractive.

5. Planning & Legal Issues:

The points below outline the main planning and legal considerations:

- Access / Accessibility – permission may be needed for any changes to rights of way, and any new access features may need to meet disability legislation.
- Health & Safety – regardless of project scale, adequate Health and Safety procedures need to be in place.
- Insurance – projects should proceed with appropriate levels of insurance.
- Land Ownership – it is important to proceed with the permission of the land owner.
- Planning Issues – it is important to know if a planning application has been lodged or approved or if the site has been zoned for development.
- Planning Permission – may be needed for any structures included in the project.

6. Delivering the project:

All projects need to be delivered according to a detailed landscape plan.

- Once the final detailed landscape plans for the site have been produced by the Landscape Architect and agreed by the local community the scheme will be sent to a quantity surveyor to provide detailed costings for the overall project.
- Upon receipt of detailed costings the group may need to source, apply and secure further funding to implement the project.
- Planning permission may also be required at this stage depending on the size and nature of the project.
- Once all necessary approval and funding has been secured, the work is put out to tender. Tendering means seeking contractors who will do the work of the best quality for the best price. Tendering involves the Landscape Architect writing a 'brief' and producing plans of exactly what the contractor will be required to do. This tender should be sent out to at least three appropriate contractors who will send you back quotes for the cost of the proposed work.
- The contractor that quotes the lowest price and is considered capable of doing the work is usually selected. When the contractor is appointed the contract is signed. The contract details the work, how and when it is to be done, and controls when the contractor is to be paid. The contract is signed between the client and the contractor and its sets out the responsibilities of each party. Work commences on site.
- On completion of the project the options for aftercare and maintenance include handing the site over to a statutory body or the local community undertakes to maintain the project. However, there could be insurance issues should the community take on this responsibility and also training may be required.
- To make sure the project remains important to local people it is essential to sustain community involvement. This can be achieved by making use of the site for events and activities.

7. Payment of Contractors:

Consultants: (i.e. landscape architect, quantity surveyor) fees are normally worked out on a percentage of the total project cost.
Contractors: paid at regular intervals for the work completed – this is agreed in the contract. A percentage of each payment is kept until the end of the defects liability period.
Defects Liability Period: is the time after the work has been completed by the contractor, during which if faults appear in the work (e.g. the work is not of a high enough quality or faults appear), the contractor is obliged to amend any faults. The period is normally 6 months for building work and 12 months for planting work. Final payment is not normally released to the contractor until this time has passed or faults have been rectified.

Further details on managing a project can be found in Section 9 Developing Organisations.

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FAITH GROUPS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

There is a much wider recognition at all levels of society of the role that can be played by faith organisations in wider social and economic developments and of the important things they can bring both to the process of regeneration[1] and to Community Development generally. Work involving faith groups may be carried out either by faith based Community Development workers or by more generic Community Development Workers. In the first instance, the workers may need to convince others of the merit of involving churches and other faith groups in developments and may need to convince the people involved in faith groups of the merits of looking outwards. Other Community Development Workers can sometimes overlook the benefits gained from working with faith groups.

Examples of the creative work being undertaken

I have seen a computer training facility established in a room above a mosque, and observed Methodist and United Reform churches coming together to share facilities and develop part of their space into voluntary sector offices and meeting space. I have visited older people's day care faculties run in a Hindu temple, attended an event at a conference centre that has been developed in a New Life church and toured a Salvation Army church used for high quality community meeting space during the week.

The benefits to faith organisations to become involved in local regeneration initiatives and community activities

These can include:

- Strength through becoming involved in partnerships – many faith organisations may have their own ideas about what they would like to see happen to and in their neighbourhoods but not have the resources to make it happen on their own – there are some interesting examples of faith groups working with voluntary and statutory bodies to bring about some real changes to an area by pooling resources and ideas.
- New people becoming involved – by being involved in a wider world outside the place of worship, faith groups can make themselves known to a wider group of people who may benefit from what they have to offer.
- Additional use of buildings – many places of worship are under-used. By becoming involved with wider developments, the facilities availab will become better known and opportunities for using them taken up.
- There will be opportunities for membership of faith organisations to widen their knowledge of developments locally and their ability to become involved
- It will provide opportunities to 'practice what they preach'.

Faith organisations contribution to regeneration and Community Development

There are a number of contributions they can make:

1. They have a membership, many of whom are motivated to be interested in acting for the benefit of the wider human race and who may be interested in becoming involved and committing some time to local developments.

1 Faith and Communities: a good practice guide for local authorities. Local Government Association, 2002

2. Most will have buildings which they often want to increase the usage of. Some will include sacred space that cannot be used for anything else but many will happily allow the space used for worship to be used for conferences, concerts, meetings, etc. They nearly always have other space attached. Sacred space can also become deconsecrated to allow for greater community use.
3. There are some sources of funds that are available only to religious groups – working in partnership can often help a group of local agencies to increase their access to funds that can then be devoted to local activity. The Council for Churches in Britain and Ireland has access to Opportunities for Volunteering, Methodist churches have access to specific funds.
4. Behind every place of worship is a network of others across the country and across the world which gives access to information and contacts that can be shared.
5. Most religions have been around for a long time – they have built up a certain credibility in terms of delivering welfare services and in terms of Community Development. They often have a very local base and close contact with local people and issues, not just those who attend for worship but those met through carrying out rites of passage at times of birth, marriage and death and through contact with local schools and other institutions important in communities.

Some of the issues raised with faith groups becoming involved in regeneration

- Both people's personal histories and a neighbourhood's political history as well as wider political history may cause some people and groups to be mistrustful of all or specific faith groups and their motivations for becoming involved. More evangelical groups may be suspected of becoming involved for purposes of conversion or recruitment.
- Practical issues include the dwindling congregations in some Christian places of worship who already feel overloaded with the work of running the church and may not want more meetings and demands on their time.
- Some buildings are also less appropriate for public use either because of their lack of physical accessibility or because of the physical fabric of the buildings.
- Where there is a large bureaucracy supporting the faith, such as in the Church of England or the Methodist church, time may have to be allowed for decisions to be made about use of resources and changes in accepted practice.

Most local authority areas now have Faith Forums of some sort that bring together a range of groups and raise the profile of the contribution they can make. Most of these forums also have an input into Local Strategic Partnerships thus allowing a faith perspective to enter into local decision making. It is becoming increasingly recognised that the faith sector is one that has much to offer, provided that we are aware of and willing to work within the constraints outlined above.

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WORKING WITH FAITH COMMUNITIES - PERSONAL AWARENESS

Introduction

This article arises from my experience of working with faith communities. One of the most challenging aspects of working with faith communities is that it makes me, in a very explicit manner, consider my own beliefs and opinions. It is not just a matter of intellectual knowledge or professional skill but I am forced to reflect on my own fundamental convictions.

The term faith group or faith community can be unhelpful if it obscures the reality that we all have a 'faith' of some kind that underlies what we assume to be common sense, self-evident and rational. We may call it a worldview or set of personal values but it generally works in the same way as a 'faith'. In this article I am using the term to mean the more formalised groups who state that they believe in a religious faith.

1. We can approach beginning to work with a faith group holding different attitudes which can be summarised as:

- I don't consciously reflect on how this group's worldview challenges mine but I assume that I come from a rational, common sense perspective whilst they are clouded by irrational dogma or superstition. This may be because I consider my religion superior or that all religion is inherently untrustworthy or other variations along this continuum. This is likely to cause problems in how I relate to the group as it can be construed as a patronising approach.
- I find working with a religious group unsettling. I don't know what I think about issues of faith and religion or how working with this group might require me to adapt or develop my Community Development Work skills. This is a better and more honest approach but will probably make me clumsy in my work because of a lack of confidence.
- I approach a new religious group with scepticism about my own assumptions. I try to get to know them as people and learn what they really think rather than assume I know where they're coming from. I use the encounter to reflect on my own assumptions and genuinely learn from the encounter.

2. The above has perhaps raised some questions for you. What do I believe? Is religion rational or superstitious? It is worth reflecting on where my beliefs about faith and religion have come from. What was I brought up to believe in? What has been my exposure to religion? How have my life experiences informed my thinking?

3. We will all, inevitably, bring preconceived ideas to our encounters with people of a particular religion. We have been made particularly aware in recent years of our preconceived attitudes to Islam but we also need to reflect on our attitudes to other religious traditions. For instance people have limited and prejudiced attitudes to Black Pentecostalism. Prejudiced ideas about black people seem to be reinforced by an ignorance concerning Pentecostal religion which makes it easy to marginalise Pentecostal churches. We need to be aware of other stereotypes affect our perceptions, for instance, the comic portrayal of vicars can give us a false picture of the Church of England.

4. Some of these questions raise important personal issues which I am arguing we need to address if we are to be effective in working with faith communities. But, nonetheless, we need to focus on our

professional work with faith communities rather than our own faith journey!

We should be able to identify what are the resources we have to bring to working with faith communities. Obviously if we are from a particular faith community we often have an advantage in understanding that community and, perhaps, being accepted by it. We may also be able to help them connect their faith to the Community Development Work they are doing. But it is not necessary to share a faith in order to work effectively with people and sometimes not being identified with a particular strand within a religion can give us a helpful neutrality.

We should also be able to identify what our issues are. Maybe we have particular experiences that make it difficult for us to respect a particular faith. Or maybe we just feel ignorant so we lack confidence. It is important for us to be open with ourselves and, hopefully, with any supervisor, concerning what issues we are struggling with.

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WORKING WITH FAITH COMMUNITIES - PRACTICAL SKILLS

1. What do I need to know?

Some knowledge of the religion we are working with is always going to be necessary and useful but intellectual knowledge can be over stressed. What people actually believe and do can often be very different from what is written in books and pronounced by religious leaders! Many religious people are more than happy to talk about their religion if you are genuinely interested in it and it is this knowledge that is perhaps more important than what is written in books.

2. Understanding the diversity and complexity of the faith communities with which I work

People coming into a faith community need to appreciate the diversity within that community. In Hackney, for instance, where I work the traditional churches still have a strong presence but it is Pentecostal churches that are stronger. Involving representatives only from the Church of England, Catholic, Methodist, United Reformed and other Presbyterian denominations would not mean you are hearing the full Christian voice in Hackney. Sometimes identifying with one strand of a religion will make it difficult for you to work with others from the same religion.

3. My level of understanding

You not need a full knowledge of every faith. People are expecting you to be open, respectful and reliable rather than the font of all knowledge. In fact they are likely to be suspicious of someone who parades their knowledge of a faith community of which they are not a member. What is important is to be aware of what your lack of knowledge means for your practical work.

When is it appropriate for me to give my opinion on the issues for a particular community?
When is it better to confess ignorance?
When do I need to be aware of treading carefully because I don't understand?
When might it be helpful for me to challenge attitudes and practices?

Sometimes lack of knowledge can mean we don't take action when it would be appropriate.

4. Working with faith communities

Working with faith communities is not really different from working with other communities. Their needs and aspirations need to be understood, articulated and solutions found together. The process is the same as any other kind of Community Development Work. What is different is that values and beliefs are more explicit in faith communities and they are held within a clearer structure. There is therefore less pragmatism and beliefs can at times rule out options which might otherwise seem desirable - many faith groups, for example, are uncomfortable about receiving lottery funding.

5. Working on controversial issues

It is probably fair to say that faith groups often adopt more socially conservative positions than many other voluntary organisations. This is particularly evident over the issue of homosexuality and the role of women. In some groups an overt homophobia is evident although it is also true that there are some groups within the different faiths that are committed to gay liberation. Generally faith groups will have a cautious approach to equality issues when they involve gay and lesbian people. This can create serious tensions with the values and ethics of the community development profession.

The key to working effectively on these issues is generally to get beyond slogans and entrenched assumptions, once people become people rather than labels, attitudes can shift. Also faith groups can just come at things from a different angle. Thus when I was talking to a female church leader who was the member of a group that did not generally seem sympathetic to female leadership she did not justify her leadership on the basis of women's rights, or an interpretation of biblical texts but rather that God had called for her leadership and that it was not up to a man to challenge that!

6. The role of faith communities for community work

What religious faith very obviously does offer to our largely secular society is a different perspective. It is less likely to be influenced by fashionable policies and more likely just to carry on doing what it believes is the right thing to do. This is often facilitated by the fact that it has its own internal financial resources and is less dependent on government funding. Sometimes this means that faith groups will act in ways which seem to you brave, courageous and radical but at other times they will appear reactionary and bigoted. This is the tension that any Community Development Worker working with faith communities must face - it is a tension which not only requires a high level of professional skill but also considerable personal awareness and, if at all possible, a dash of wisdom!

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EFFECTIVE WORKING BETWEEN COMMUNITIES, PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS - EVALUATION H

Evaluation 'H' is a participatory evaluation tool that can be used in a wide range of contexts. Here the Evaluation 'H' is used for examining the current relationships between the community and public authorities and partnerships to identify how they are working. This technique allows communities to recognise that there are different perceptions on the relationship between communities and authorities and to identify some actions to address the areas of ineffective interaction.

It asks:

1. How effective is the interaction between your community and public authorities?
2. What are the reasons for effective and ineffective interaction?
3. How can the reasons for ineffective interaction be addressed – what needs to happen?

Where can it be used?

Communities and groups within an area will have different experiences of interaction with public authorities and partnerships and suggestions on how to make improvements. This tool will help Community Development Workers to reveal these different experiences and perceptions as a way of building better understanding within and between groups, communities and officialdom and to identify actions they could take.

Examples of situations where the tools have been used include:

- A group of older people from a housing estate
- Young people attending a youth club
- Families of children attending a Koranic school
- Parents and carers attending a toddlers drop-in play group

The result of the Evaluation 'H' can be used as input to the Verification Matrix (see the next article in this section). It is best to use the Evaluation 'H' tool initially on a specific community or interest group where perspectives and opinions are likely to be similar. The outcomes of the 'H' can then be verified with broader groups or communities.

The exercise

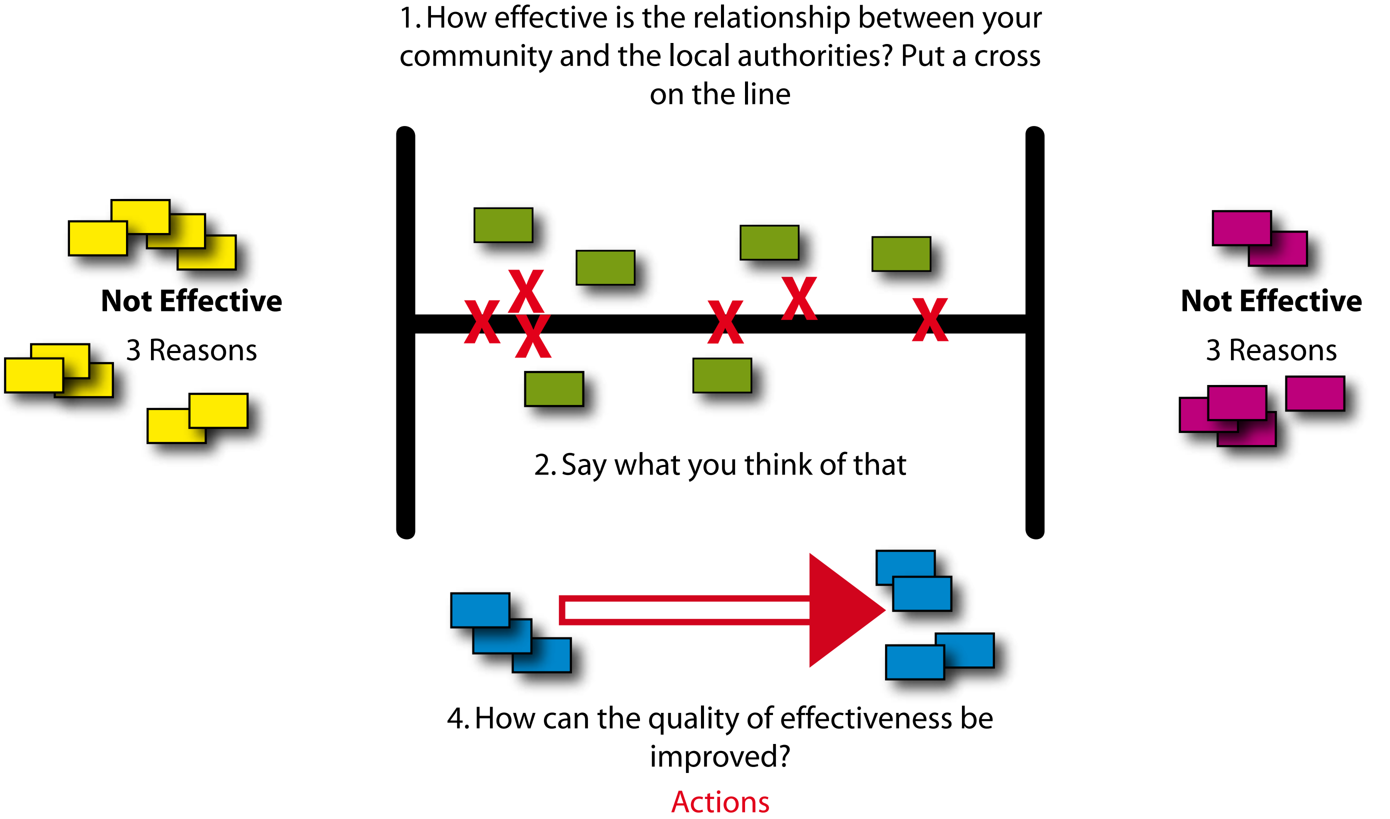
Draw a large H on a sheet of paper (4, A1 flip-chart sheets stuck together is a good size) – see diagram overleaf – and give post it notes and felt-tip pens to all the participants.
Ask group members to discuss the following questions:

1. How effective is the relationship between your community and the public authorities and partnerships? Each person puts their personal answer as a X on the horizontal bar of the H diagram between the 'very effective' end and the 'not effective' end. They are asked to write why they think this on post-its and stick them next to their cross. The group discuss the general outcome of this stage: where most crosses are, what the spread is like, what this means etc.
2. Each person writes their explanation for the ineffective relationship on post-its and puts them on the left side of the 'H'. The whole group discusses the reasons and cluster the similar responses into groups. This is repeated on the right side of the 'H' with reasons for an effective relationship.

3. Each person identifies actions that can be taken to: a) overcome each of the different clusters of reasons for an ineffective relationship and b) strengthen the reasons for effective relationship. These are written on post-its stuck along the bottom of the 'H' and the group discusses and clusters the suggested actions.

Tips

- It can take up to 2 hours to complete the process
- Ideal group size is between 6 and 15; for larger groups split in 2 and one group focuses on reasons for ineffective relationships and the other reasons for effective relationships. Each group then feeds back to the other.
- Record points from discussion on post its on the relevant area of the chart
- This tool allows for different opinions to be expressed and recorded.
- Make sure that everyone has a chance to put forward their perspective.
- Participants should think about their own role in any of the actions suggested.
- The most important question to ask at all stages is: 'Why do you think that?'
- If there are working groups reconvene as one group to summarise the results



Further Information

For more information on the work of Practice Links and the Community Development Foundation visit www.cdf.org.uk

A 'Take-Away Toolkit' that explains in detail the use of the two tools described above can be downloaded free from this site by following the links to Practice Links' work on Community Leadership and Representation.

EFFECTIVE WORKING BETWEEN COMMUNITIES, PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS - VERIFICATION MATRIX

Verification Matrix

The aim of this tool is to share and promote better understanding of the different perspectives recognised in the Evaluation H, (see the previous article in this section) and then to identify common ground, and different views and prioritise actions.

Each suggested action from the Evaluation 'H' is assessed by asking:

1. Would this action improve the quality of interaction for your community?
2. Who needs to do what to make this action succeed?
3. What would be an obstacle to the success of this action?

The various outcomes and actions suggested by the 'H' exercise should be used as the initial material for the Verification Matrix (see diagram overleaf) as they can then be verified with larger and broader groups or communities.

The **Verification Matrix** can be used:

- To present the different perspectives of different groups to other people from their own or other communities
- To promote improved mutual understanding and the identification of common ground on suggested actions.
- To prioritise the suggested actions.
- With small groups from different communities or much larger and diverse groups of people at open meetings or public events.
- Within communities - larger groups of people from a community verify the suggested actions from the smaller group who developed the Evaluation 'H' between communities - groups from different communities verify each others' suggested actions from different Evaluation 'H's
- For discussion between communities and public authorities and partnerships

Tips and points

- It can take up to 2 hours to complete the process as there needs to be plenty of time for discussion around each action
- Ideal group size is between 6 and 15
- You can divide participants into small groups and ask them to look at three or four actions at a time
- Each participant should be able to express their personal opinion on the matrix whilst listening to other points of view during group discussion
- Through discussion additional actions may be identified and space allowed to accommodate these on the matrix.
- It is unlikely that everyone will agree so the tool allows for different opinions to be expressed and recorded.

- It is important for participants to think about what their own role might be in any of the steps that are suggested.
- Participants vote for their top 3 suggested actions using sticky dots. The actions with the most dots will become the highest priority for the participants.
- The most important question to ask at all stages: 'Why do you think that?'
- The chart should be as large as possible to allow comments to be added to it without overlaying them but should allow participants to reach all the cells of the matrix (4, A1 flip-chart sheets stuck together is a good size).
- If there are a number of small working groups then allow time to reconvene as one group to summarise the results

Verification Matrix

ACTIONS	**Would this improve interaction for your community?**		**Top 3**	**WHO should do WHAT?**	**What would make it difficult?**
	YES…say why	**NO**…say why			
Action 1					
Action 2					
Action 3					
Action 4					
Action 5					
Action 6					
Action 7					
Action 8					
Others					

Useful contacts or websites

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Case Study

CREATING A COHESIVE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY FOR A MAJOR DEVELOPMENT AREA: WEST OF WATERLOOVILLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Background and Introduction

The completion of a Major Development Area at West of Waterlooville, in the southern part of the Winchester District will create a new community of up to 5,000 people (or approximately 7, 500 if the reserve site is triggered). The development will provide a range of house types and sizes and include a high proportion of affordable housing to meet local housing needs.

The development falls across two local authority areas; that of Winchester City Council and Havant Borough Council. It was therefore imperative that close cooperation between the authorities took place and one way that this happened was through the West of Waterlooville Forum, made up of councillors from the two authorities and Hampshire County Council and supported by appropriate officers from those authorities.

A fundamental objective of the Forum was to ensure the development provided for a cohesive and sustainable community, and to do this as much emphasis will need to be given to the community infrastructure as would be given to the physical infrastructure. Furthermore, the new settlement will be an extension to, and become an integral part of, Waterlooville so ensuring that the Major Development Area (MDA) is fully integrated with the host community will be an essential part of creating a sustainable community. It was agreed that a key tool in helping to achieve this would be to develop a Community Development Strategy for the MDA.

The Key Stages of the Process

The Vision: The West of Waterlooville Forum had some very clear ideas and aspirations of what they wanted this development to achieve. Six clear statements were agreed which made up the vision for the MDA.

Consultation: The first stage of developing the Strategy was to determine what the aspirations and needs of the existing community were and this was done by pulling together information from earlier planning consultation events and then running a further consultation event which enabled us to prioritise those needs and aspirations. The outcomes of this event have heavily influenced the Community Development Strategy and will be used to monitor and take forward the Action Plan that followed.

Structure: It was also important that we identified a suitable framework for the strategy (obtained from CDX) based on the values and practice principles of community development work. In addition we also identified seven key components for creating a sustainable community (from the Academy of Sustainable Communities). The components were then matched with ten key principles identified in the developer's Masterplan document. This enabled us to establish clear links between our aspirations for a sustainable community and the Developer's vision for the MDA.

Action Plan: An Action Plan was produced which set out the main actions required to deliver those parts of the Vision relevant to the Community Development Strategy. It does not therefore attempt to set out all the actions required to realise the Vision. Implementing the Action Plan is the responsibility of the local authorities, the developers and other agencies. The Forum is seen as the responsible body for ensuring that the actions are being met and agreeing changes to the Action Plan as required. The Action Plan is structured around the six elements that comprise the West of Waterlooville Forum's vision for the community. In the case of each action it identifies the lead agency, anticipated timescale, how it will be funded, links to the planning process and links to the key components of a sustainable community.

Monitoring & Evaluation: In order to determine progress against targets in the action plan it was agreed to incorporate performance indicators (PI's). The PI's we used were from the Quality of Life section of the Audit Commission's Library of PI's, which we felt were the most appropriate in relation to our CD Strategy action plan targets.

Summary

It is important to acknowledge that the Strategy is a long-term plan for West of Waterlooville and that the actions contained within it may change over time as the needs and aspirations of the new community emerge. It is equally important to ensure that someone owns the strategy. In our case this is currently the West of Waterlooville Forum, but over time this will hopefully become the new and emerging community.

The Community Worker, with the support of others, is seen as the key mechanism for delivering the strategy and for ensuring that both the new and existing communities have an input into the decisions that affect their community.

Contact:

If you require any further or more detailed information about the Strategy please contact:
Mark Maitland
Community Officer
Winchester City Council
City Offices
Colebrook Street
Winchester
SO23 9LJ

Tel. 01962 848518
Email mmaitland@winchester.gov.uk

Alternatively you might like to download a copy of the strategy from our website:
www.winchester.gov.uk

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER PROJECT

Introduction

All Community Partnerships should have a community newsletter to distribute information and promote the group and projects within their area. Here are some tips on how to organise a community newspaper.

1. Form a newsletter sub group. It's good to have a cross section of people who can submit reports and articles, from the community centre, local schools, church, mosque, temple, chapel, youth club, residential home, community project, residents groups etc. It doesn't matter if they haven't the skills to produce a newsletter to start with, they can learn on the job or go on training courses. Ask for more people to join in every edition. Have a system for recording contact details.
2. Look at existing community newsletters for examples of good practice.
3. Here are some examples of good practice in the design and layout of a newspaper:
    - Comic Sans or Ariel font size 12 or another non serif font to make it easier for people to read
    - Plenty of spaces between paragraphs and articles
    - Print on a pale yellow, cream coloured background
    - Use photo permission forms for children and make sure that adults are ok about having their photo in the newsletter
    - Offer the newsletter in other languages and formats
4. Use plain English, remember the average reading age in England is 12 years old, you can always ask your local Adult Learning & Libraries to do a "readability" test on your draft
5. Encourage people to write about things that matter to them, encourage political discussions and analysis of what is happening in the area
6. Funding - Get local businesses to advertise and suport the group to decide on some rates; If organisations want to promote their service, ask for a contribution towards printing costs if they can, they should be building promotion costs into their project. But don't disadvantage the smaller and under-funded groups.
7. Think about where are you going to produce the newsletter. Is there a local resource centre you can use? You may need to put in a grant application for a computer and software, if you have to do this then try and put the computer somewhere accessible for all, like a community building or school, not in someone's house.
8. Make sure the group's insurance policy has the equipment listed. Contact the group's insurance company as they will need an outline of the project, this could result in an increase the insurance policy premium.
9. Get some estimates for printing. Try the local authority print room, print co-operatives and local printing firms.
10. Organise local residents to help with delivery; get people to take on one or two streets near to their homes as far as possible.

11. Keep looking out for training; publisher courses, newsletter courses to help and support those involved.

12. Make sure advertisers and contributors receive a copy of the finished newsletter.

13. Keep spare copies of newsletters as they are always useful for future funding, sponsorship or your own archives.

Contact:

Sue Davison
Principal Community Development Worker, Community Partnerships, 13 Horsemarket, Darlington, DL1 5PW Tel: 01325 388527 susan.davison@darlington.gov.uk

WARD MAPPING

Introduction
Ward mapping event is an event designed to bring together service providers and people working in a particular area. We used this approach to host an event to highlight what services and facilities were available in the Woolsington Ward of Newcastle, to check where there were gaps in services and to suggest new areas for joint working.

Ward mapping can:

- Bring together those working or providing a service in the area
- Raise awareness about the existing working partnerships and form a database
- Celebrate good practice
- Identify gaps in service
- Suggest new projects/ partners
- Highlight what services and facilities are available in the ward

How to set up a ward mapping event

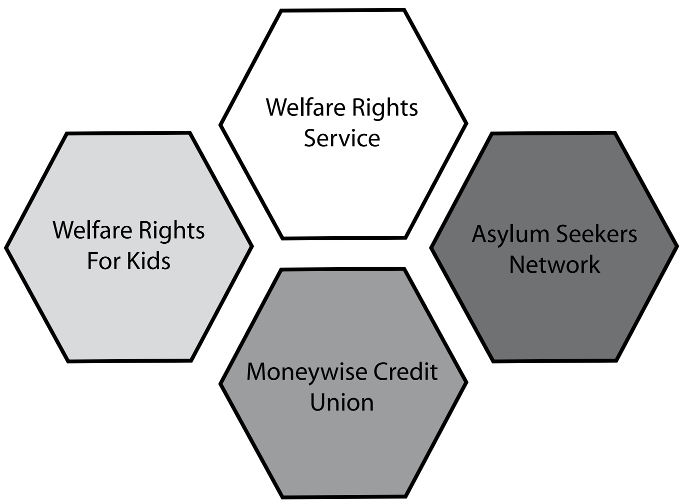
Invite people who are working in or running services in the area, this can include officers, service providers, statutory bodies, voluntary organisations and community groups. It can provide a good opportunity to bring in new workers in an area to meet others and form working partnerships.

Advertise in as many places as possible and make sure that the event runs in normal work hours so that as many people can attend in a professional capacity as possible. In advance of the event ask people to confirm that they can come and to provide info on what, where and when their services and projects run.

How to run a ward mapping event

1. Find out what people are doing and the services their organisation is providing – run this as a small group session and agree to put this together for participants and get a commitment to update it regularly.

2. Map any current partnership working between participants. One way to do this is to use magnetic hexagons (or paper ones on a flipchart) for people to write on and link together their services and facilities that they already work with. The diagram (left) gives a small extract from a mapping.



3. Use the information from the first exercise to get the group to think of new partnership opportunities and then use the hexagon idea to map potential partnership opportunities

4. Get the group to identify where they think there are gaps in service provision and if there are ways of filling these gaps by working together and record on a flipchart

5. Run an evaluation using post-it notes on a graffiti wall for feedback

6. Ask the group how they want the information from the session to be displayed – e.g. database or directory or some other way. This information needs to be updated when circumstances change so get a commitment from the participants to update the information when needed. We enclosed the initial mapping information for those who could not attend

7. Agree action and responsibilities. Agree to any partnership meetings – quarterly or biannually – to update those new to the partnerships and to share information

8. Plan to share the information that has come up from the mapping event with the wider community. One way is to run a community information-sharing event to share the information gathered from services and facilities – advertise it and make it fun.

This material was extracted from a report 'Woolsington Ward Mapping Event 2005' Newcastle City Council.

The workers involved were Marion Simpson, Community Development Officer, and Heather Lamb, the Ward Co-ordinator.