

# Community Empowerment Discussion Toolkit

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Inspire East would like to thank individuals at South Cambridgeshire District Council and community members of the Kursaal Ward in Southend for helping with the development and testing of this toolkit.

If you would like to find out more information on community empowerment or the discussion toolkit please contact Inspire East at:

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## Instructions

The development of this toolkit has been funded by Improvement East. Inspire East leads the Regional Empowerment Partnership (funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government) and is supported by the East of England Development Agency. The toolkit has been developed in association with **nef** (the new economics foundation).

## Why 'Community Empowerment'?

Community empowerment means different things to different people and there is a vast amount of documentation surrounding community empowerment, community engagement and community development. The National Empowerment Partnership (NEP) provides the following definition:

**Promoting community empowerment means:**

***Assisting people in communities to acquire the confidence, skills and power to influence their conditions both directly and through what public bodies do for or with them (taken from NEP 2009).***

This toolkit has been developed by the Regional Empowerment Partnership and is funded by Improvement East, both of whose work is specifically interested in the community empowerment activities that directly or indirectly support individuals to engage with public bodies and enable them to have a greater say in how their services are delivered.

## What they say about the toolkit

Inspire East

*The toolkit facilitates discussions to help you think about what actions are important for your community and suggests ways you can go about doing them.*

*As a new community project we were delighted to use the toolkit. It's a really good way to look at lots of issues and encouraged everyone to focus and contribute to the way forward for their community.*

Councillor  
Judy McMahon

The overall aim of the toolkit is to help groups work together to decide on what issues are important in their community. It generates ideas so groups can go on to plan activities and services for their local area. It also assists councillors to hear the issues of communities and citizens in order to gain a better understanding of local needs.

More information about the organisations that have funded and supported the development of this toolkit can be found on pages 12 and 13.

This toolkit has been designed for use with two types of local groups that are working out what issues to tackle (and empowering themselves along the way):

- community groups/local citizen groups, especially newer ones, that are still working out what they want to do
- parish and town councils, particularly if they are wondering whether to develop a parish plan.

## Why a 'Discussion Toolkit'?

Groups may not know what they want to do. At the other extreme, they may decide too early, without checking that:

- they are tackling causes rather than symptoms, or
- their solution is the best one.

This toolkit helps groups to develop their ideas, by reading and discussing lots of examples on what to do and how to do it from different sectors and different parts of the country. The process allows groups to decide on what to do individually and/or with the councillor's support.

## 1 How many people need to be involved?

Each toolkit is designed for a group of four to eight people, with six being the ideal number. More people can be catered for, with more kits. Each group will need someone to take them through the process described on pages 8 to 11 of these instructions - see section 3 below.

## 2 How long will it take?

Pages 8 to 11 describe two versions, lasting:

- 60 minutes
- 30 minutes

As this is a discussion toolkit, the longer version means more time for discussion - it will probably be a better discussion. But half an hour is definitely better than nothing!

If the time you have is not exactly 30 or 60 minutes, you can adjust the timings on pages 8 to 11 to fit the time you have.

## 3 Does someone need to facilitate the discussion?

This toolkit is designed to be easy to use. But it does need one person to take the group through it. That person doesn't need to be a professional facilitator, but it does help if:

- ideally, they have taken part in a discussion using the toolkit before
- failing that, they take some time beforehand to read the instructions and to make themselves familiar with the contents of the box.

There are more tips for facilitators on page 5.

- 1 Give people a sense of the end point right at the start and get their agreement to work together towards this.
- 2 Stick to time. This is especially important with the 30 minute version. Tell people you're going to move them on and do it. If you think you'll struggle, set an alarm that rings when the each session should end. It may help to write the start and finish times for each round in the blank columns on pages 8 to 11.
- 3 Don't get involved in the conversation. Even if people say something that you know is wrong, your role is to guide the process, not the content, of the conversation. This is particularly difficult if you know something about the subject but it's really important. Your role is a powerful one and if you keep talking, you'll disrupt other peoples' ability to have their own conversation.
- 4 Make sure everyone gets the chance to speak. One way to do this is to ask people at the start to agree to let others finish before they start to speak. If you do this, remind people of their agreement when they forget it!
- 5 If you are a councillor facilitating the discussions, be clear at the action planning stage what you, as a councillor, will help with and what you will feedback to the council and Local Strategic Partnership partners.

Check the kit, especially if you have used it before. Make sure you have all of the following:

### a) Cards that can be reused every time

Two sets of cards with information about community empowerment:

- Twenty large pink story cards.
- Forty green information cards.

### b) Cards that get written on

After the first or second time you use the kit, you may need to photocopy more cards. Alternatively you can access an electronic copy of the cards on the Regional Empowerment Partnership website by following this link:  
[www.inspire-east.org.uk/discussiontoolkit.aspx](http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/discussiontoolkit.aspx)

- Orange question card - one only.
- Purple blank cards - eight are provided with each kit but they are rarely used so you should only need four each time.
- Blue cluster cards - again eight are provided with each kit but you should only need four each time.

### c) Other material in the kit

This consists of:

- These instructions.
- Four copies of an action planning sheet.

Again, you may need more of these sheets after a while. You may need to photocopy some of the material or alternatively the instructions and action planning sheet can be downloaded from our website:  
[www.inspire-east.org.uk/discussiontoolkit.aspx](http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/discussiontoolkit.aspx)

### d) The bits you will need to provide

You will also need:

- 1 A pen for each person.
- 2 A table for each group with a chair for everybody.
- 3 A clock or watch.
- 4 A facilitator and time keeper (if these people are not you, try to have a conversation with them beforehand to make sure they understand the process).
- 5 Refreshments (optional).

## Beforehand

Lay out the main elements of the kit on the table in the order they will be used:

- the question card
- the story cards
- the information cards
- the blank cards
- the cluster cards
- the action planning sheet.

It may help you keep to time to write the start and finish times for each round in this column. ↓

Round one	4 mins	Walk the group through the process showing them all of the cards and the final action planning sheet. Move all the material except the question card to one side. Check that everyone is happy with the question you are trying to answer. Feel free to change it if the group wishes.	
Round two	8 mins	Deal out the story cards. Ask each person to choose one, <b>on the basis that it best helps them discuss the question</b> . If there is time, people can put their discards in the middle of the table for others to read and, if they wish, choose instead of the card they picked from their hand. Then ask everyone to read out/summarise their card and say why they chose it. (Allow a bit of discussion if people want to, but explain that this is the information gathering phase and the bulk of the discussion comes later.) Remove the discards to one side and lay out the chosen cards text side up in the middle of the table.	

Round three	8 mins	Deal out the information cards and do the same as in round two. Then ask everyone to choose two cards and go round the table twice asking everyone to read/summarise their cards and say why they chose them.	
Round four	20 mins	Ask people to discuss the chosen cards as a whole. If they find that there are too many words on the table, they can turn cards over - they just have titles on the back. Ask them to start to notice connections between the cards. If they do, they should move those cards together. Explain that through this process they will create groups or clusters of cards, where each one is part of the answer to their question. Tell them to concentrate on creating no more than four clusters. If they want to add information and ideas, they can write them on the blank cards.	
Round five	10 mins	When they have done this, get them to fill in a cluster card for each group of cards. Use naming the cluster and stating its meaning to pin down exactly what each cluster is about.	
Round six	10 mins	As a group, fill in the action planning sheet as far as possible. People will find it helpful to look back at the cluster cards for ideas. Agree your next steps.	

## Beforehand

Lay out the main elements of the kit on the table in the order they will be used:

- the question card
- the story cards
- the information cards
- the blank cards
- the cluster cards
- the action planning sheet.

It may help you keep to time to write the start and finish times for each round in this column. ↓

<b>Round one</b>	<b>2 mins</b>	Walk the group through the process showing them all of the cards and the final action planning sheet. Move all the material except the question card to one side. Check that everyone is happy with the question you are trying to answer. Feel free to change it if the group wishes.	
<b>Round two</b>	<b>5 mins</b>	Give everyone a story card. Then ask everyone to say what their card is about and how - if at all - it helps them discuss the question. (Ask the group not to discuss people's choices. Explain that this is the information gathering phase and the bulk of the discussion comes later). Then lay out the cards in the middle of the table.	
<b>Round three</b>	<b>6 mins</b>	Deal out the information cards. Ask each person to choose one, <b>on the basis that it best helps them discuss the question.</b> Then ask everyone to read out their card and say why they chose it. Remove the discards to one side and lay out the chosen cards in the middle of the table.	

<b>Round four</b>	<b>10 mins</b>	Ask people to discuss the chosen cards as a whole. If they find that there are too many words on the table, they can turn cards over - they just have titles on the back. Ask them to start to notice connections between the cards. If they do, they should move those cards together. Explain that through this process they will create groups or clusters of cards, where each one is part of the answer to their question. Tell them to concentrate on creating two clusters	
<b>Round five</b>	<b>3 mins</b>	When they have done this, get them to fill in a cluster card for each group of cards. Use naming the cluster and stating its meaning to pin down exactly what each cluster is about.	
<b>Round six</b>	<b>4 mins</b>	As a group, fill in the action planning sheet as far as possible. People will find it helpful to look back at the cluster cards for ideas. Agree your next steps.	

A vast amount of information is available to help promote and develop community empowerment across the East of England. The following is available on the Regional Empowerment Partnership website

[www.inspire-east.org.uk/communityempowerment.aspx](http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/communityempowerment.aspx):

- Case studies
- Research reports
- Resource packs for councillors
- Information on other toolkits
- Training and events.

**Who are Inspire East, REP, Improvement East, EEDA, nef?**

**Inspire East** is the Regional Centre of Excellence for sustainable communities in the East of England and is supported by the East of England Development Agency (EEDA). Their aim is to deliver the knowledge, skills and advice that will inspire the region's organisations to use and apply best practice. Inspire East are the accountable body for the Regional Empowerment Partnership (REP).

For more information about Inspire East please visit:  
[www.inspire-east.org.uk](http://www.inspire-east.org.uk)

**REP** is the East of England Regional Empowerment Partnership (REP). It has been set up to improve the quality, coordination and evidence of empowerment in the region. The REP is made up of various individuals from organisations across the region.

For more information about the REP please visit:  
[www.inspire-east.org.uk/communityempowerment.aspx](http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/communityempowerment.aspx)

EEDA stands for the East of England Development Agency, for more information visit: [www.eeda.org.uk](http://www.eeda.org.uk)

**Improvement East** are the Regional Improvement Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) for the East of England. The RIEPs are partnerships of councils and other local service providers working together to deliver excellent Local Area Agreement outcomes, achieve efficiency savings and support economic growth and community empowerment. The RIEP works alongside Inspire East and the REP to deliver community empowerment activities in the East of England. Improvement East has provided funding for the development of this toolkit.

For more information please visit:  
[www.improvementeast.gov.uk](http://www.improvementeast.gov.uk)

**nef** is an independent think-and-do tank that inspires and demonstrates real economic well-being. It aims to improve quality of life by promoting innovative solutions that challenge mainstream thinking on economic, environment and social issues. We work in partnership and put people and the planet first. nef is unique in combining rigorous analysis and policy debate with practical solutions on the ground, often run and designed with the help of local people. This toolkit is a version of the Democs conversation kit, developed by nef. nef researched and wrote the content for this toolkit.

For more information please visit:  
[www.neweconomics.org](http://www.neweconomics.org)

## Sources used for the cards

Source	Story (S) cards	Information (A) cards
Gordon Brown, Britain's Everyday Heroes, Mainstream Publishing, 2007	1,2,3,4,5,6	26, 27
The new wealth of time: how timebanking helps people build better public services, nef, 2008	7	
<a href="http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/downloads/new_parks_allotment.pdf">http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/downloads/new_parks_allotment.pdf</a>	8	
<a href="http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/downloads/southern_quarter_development_group.pdf">http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/downloads/southern_quarter_development_group.pdf</a>	9	
<a href="http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/downloads/south_holland_radio.pdf">http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/downloads/south_holland_radio.pdf</a>	10	
<a href="http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/downloads/sutton_bridge_marina.pdf">http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/downloads/sutton_bridge_marina.pdf</a>	11	
<a href="http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/downloads/vegtastic.pdf">http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/downloads/vegtastic.pdf</a>	12	
Prove It! Measuring the effect of neighbourhood renewal on local people, Groundwork, 2000	13, 14	22
Discussion material for a Peoples Café, nef	15	
Beatrix Campbell, Goliath: Britain's Dangerous Places, Methuen, 1993	16	
Lynn Sloman, Transport for Quality of Life, and Victoria Harvey, Friends of the Earth South Bedfordshire, personal communication	17	
Gordon Blackmore, Secretary, Somercotes Community and Sports Centre, personal communication	18	
Democs kit for Norfolk County Strategic Partnership, 2007	19	8
Empowerment toolkit, Inspire East	20	
A Charter for Rural Communities, the Final Report of the Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development, Carnegie UK Trust, 2007		1, 2, 3
Democs kit on climate change, <a href="http://www.climatespace.org/?p=801">http://www.climatespace.org/?p=801</a>		4
Democs kit on sustainable enterprise, Local Alchemy, 2006		5,6,7,25
Representing the Future, The Report of the Councillors Commission, Councillors Commission, 2007		9
Empowering evaluation: evaluating empowerment, a practice sharing report from CDX, Community Development Exchange, undated		10

Source	Story (S) cards	Information (A) cards
Nef, report for Carnegie UK Trust on civil society and climate change, 2008, available at <a href="http://democracy.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/civil_society/publications/civil_society_and_climate_change#attachments">http://democracy.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/civil_society/publications/civil_society_and_climate_change#attachments</a>		
<a href="http://democracy.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/files/NEF_CUKT%20Briefing%20Paper.pdf">http://democracy.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/files/NEF_CUKT%20Briefing%20Paper.pdf</a>		13
Parish Plans in Action, A review of the implementation of interim Parish Plans, North Yorkshire 2005 - 2007, Yorkshire Rural Community Council, 2007		14, 15, 16
Planed, Sustainability Tool Manual, 2007		17 to 20
What is community empowerment?, cdx (Community Development Exchange) and changes, 2008		23
Ward councillors and community leadership: a future perspective, Joseph Rowntree Foundation Findings, 2007		24
MLA (Museums Libraries Archives Council), Community Empowerment Discussion Paper, 2008		28
<a href="http://www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/news/blears-empowerment-more-important-than-ever">http://www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/news/blears-empowerment-more-important-than-ever</a>		29
<a href="http://www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/case-studies/the-village-spend-coedpoeth-north-wales">http://www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/case-studies/the-village-spend-coedpoeth-north-wales</a>		30
Stephen Thake, Sustainable Futures: Investing in Community-Based Organisations, nef (the new economics foundation), 2004		31
<a href="http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/casestudy/lavenhamvillagehall.aspx?NavPageId=60">http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/casestudy/lavenhamvillagehall.aspx?NavPageId=60</a>		32
Community Assets, the benefits and costs of community management and control, Civil Renewal Unit, Department of Communities and Local Government, 2006		33, 34
Case studies of Community Champions funded by the Scarman Trust, unpublished		35, 38
Derek Johnstone, EDuce Ltd and Claire Campbell-Jones, Sharp End Infoseek Ltd, Skills for Regeneration: Learning by Community Champions, Department of Education and Skills, 2003		36, 37
<a href="http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/kingedwardsquay.aspx?NavPageId=60&amp;contId=4484">http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/kingedwardsquay.aspx?NavPageId=60&amp;contId=4484</a>		39
<a href="http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/sustranscasestudy.aspx?NavPageId=60">http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/sustranscasestudy.aspx?NavPageId=60</a>		40

Anne Glover, Braunstone  
Community Association  
(BCA), Leicestershire

S1



"We took over 250 houses, practically every one was empty and boarded up. There was a waiting list to move out of Braunstone. The BCA took the houses off the council at a pound each and, working with a housing association, spent £10 million doing them up. Now there's a waiting list of two years to move into Braunstone because we've transformed and improved the area so much".

Peter Morson, ex-miner,  
Chair of Parish Council,  
Dordon, Warwickshire

S2



"When we were picking our play equipment for the new park (my son) Danny said to me, 'Dad, are you sure that the kids want that?' So we had a proper election at the primary school for all the kids to pick what they wanted for the park. It has proven to be the least vandalised equipment throughout the borough, because there's ownership of it. The kids say, 'I got that.'"

Susan Langford, founder  
of Magic Me, London

S3



Magic Me brings young and older people together to do arts projects. Susan says that "it looks at what people can do together rather than what they can't do. So often, services, particularly for older people, are about what they need and what they lack, whereas actually what they've got is an incredible amount of talent and skill and energy and time. And the same goes for young people".

Emmaus Community for  
homeless people,  
Cambridge

S4



While organisers Paul and Janet Bain were on holiday, three community members emptied the safe, stole their car and took off. The three community members were charged and given a short sentence in jail.

When their sentence was over, they were welcomed back and given the keys of the safe again. "We said, 'Look, if you want to do this again then you go ahead, but understand that you're taking the money from the people you live, eat, sleep and work with.'"

## First Fairtrade Town, Garstang, Lancashire

# S5



Garstang became the world's first Fairtrade Town in 2000. The UK's 250th Fairtrade Town was declared in 2007.

It was tough to set up at the start: people wouldn't listen. So the Oxfam Group leading the campaign organised a meal using Fairtrade produce and invited all the key people in the community. People started asking, "Well, what is it you want us to do?"

## Dreamscheme, Flower Estate, Sheffield

# S6



Founder of Dreamscheme Kate, wanted to find a way to "encourage a positive attitude [towards young people]. Lots of young people spend incredibly small amounts of time in the company of adults who approve of them". Dreamscheme has enabled young people to work on local projects within their community. They gain points for each hour they work which they can then spend on trips.

The project has produced more respect for youngsters. Instead of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs), young people are awarded PROSBOs - 'Pro-Social Behaviour Options'.

## Blaengarw Workmen's Hall 'Time Centre', South Wales

# S7



Community activity declined after the closure of the mines in 1984. The 'time network' has revived it. The network enables members of the community to earn time credits by helping to run community groups. The credits can then be spent, instead of cash, on attending social events and other activities. This is done on an hour-to-hour exchange, for example: attending a three hour pantomime costs three hour credits.

540 members exchange 58,000 hours per year. The community has also come together to do large community projects; for example, in summer 2007 Blaengarw held its first festival for 21 years.

## New Parks Allotment Society (NPAS), Leicester

# S8



Over the past 18 months, the NPAS has transformed its allotment site, adding a hall, outside patio seating and bathroom facilities. New activities include children's parties, food and gardening classes for disabled children, cookery classes, and training courses to earn income.

Tony, the chair, says: "It hasn't all been plain sailing. There have been issues and arguments, but from every argument came an idea".

## The Far Cotton and Delapre community centre, Northampton

# S9



£1.8m was raised for facilities at the Far Cotton and Delapre community centre that include a creative workspace for artists and a well-being centre with healthy eating courses for the elderly. Activist Georgie says, **“There are lots of lonely people out there and the community centre is a place that welcomes you, not just rooms for hire”**.

The key is, **“that you work through the community; a community centre is no good without the people that use it”**.

## South Holland Radio, Sutton Bridge Lincolnshire

# S10



Rosanna and Alan, the founders of the radio, wanted to tackle the isolation of minority ethnic groups and young people, particularly with the lack of public transport and communication. So they set up a local radio station to bring to life the social networks which are vital to a thriving community. They intend to broadcast in five languages. They also plan to train and develop the skills of local people in broadcasting.

## Sutton Bridge Marina project, Sutton Bridge, Lincolnshire

# S11



The Marina committee, mainly retired residents, with outside help, are raising £1.1million for the Sutton Bridge Marina Project. Committee member Tom says, **“The new marina will bring in a body of people who will spend ‘new money’ in our local economy”**. The committee will encourage the main building contractors to use local labour and local firms in the development. Add-ons will include nature walks to promote the local wildlife and landscapes.

## ‘Vegtastic’ Fruit and Vegetable Co-operative, Somercotes, Nottingham

# S12



**“If you have no transport,”** says Sarah, the founder, **“then it is difficult to carry a load of potatoes and vegetables all the way back from the out-of-town shopping centres.”** Vegtastic provides accessible and affordable fruit and vegetables, supplying over 30 bags a week to local parents. The food comes from local suppliers, including allotment holders - all of which provides extra income for the community.

## Whelar Street Croft, Openshaw, Manchester

# S13



Residents of terraces backing onto an open courtyard suffered attempted burglaries, joy riding, dumping and youth nuisance every week. Neighbours didn't know each other, adding to the feeling of fear and isolation.

A residents group changed the courtyard into a secure community garden, cutting off the access to burglars and joy riders. Residents have set up a home watch scheme and now call each other if they see any suspicious behaviour.

## Kath and Ann, Ramshaw, West Durham

# S14



Kath and Ann's first community involvement was with a play project. When they first got involved, all the meetings were very confusing, but they gradually got more confident. Now if something is unclear they say, "Excuse me, can you explain that better?"

They then realised that the old play area was poor because it hadn't been looked after by the parish council, so they both got elected. They have since helped bring mains gas to the village.

## Skatepark in Ledbury, Herefordshire

# S15



In 2002, young people made a presentation to the Town Council as their existing play equipment was out-of-date and clapped out. The Town Council helped raise £60,000 for a new skatepark. The young people worked on the design with Ledbury company Playworld. It was finished about 18 months later.

There has been almost no vandalism or graffiti as the youngsters respect the equipment that they helped to design and choose. In September 2006, 18 young people took part in the first skatepark competition.

## Park, Meadowell, Newcastle

# S16



Children and adults turned a dumping site into a park. The children wanted a 'parkie' - a keeper to keep it safe. The council said no. So residents decided to open it every day and clean it up every Sunday. After a year they discovered that the council was about to employ a play worker. They felt hurt and snubbed. The Sunday clean-up stopped, and the treasured site deteriorated.

## Transport in Wing, Buckinghamshire

# S17



Villagers in Wing campaigned for a bypass, which the council didn't think they could get money for. So they identified alternatives, which an expert panel backed as a better option to the bypass.

A public meeting intended to be about the alternatives was hijacked to be only about the bypass. The current position is a stalemate, with the council officially supporting a bypass, but no prospect of funding.

## Somercotes Community and Sports Centre, Derbyshire

# S18



Two local football clubs who needed new facilities approached a local voluntary community group, which then facilitated a community visioning day to get residents' ideas and raised over £750,000.

Facilities now include a football pitch, floodlit tennis courts, fitness suite, hall, and a bar/diner. The project was built of sustainable materials and most of the construction work was undertaken by local businesses.

## Valley CIDS, Derbyshire

# S19



The Valley CIDS charity began with a group of people eager to 'raise aspirations and release potential' of local youngsters. After consulting over 300 local young people, the charity secured £160,000 from the Lottery Young Peoples fund to develop a state of the art 'Blend' youth coffee bar which boasts an internet café, computer games consoles, coffee bar, snooker table, dance studio, meeting and counselling rooms and youth worker offices. Young people now have a place to go and hang out and meet their friends.

## Croxley View Estate, Watford

# S20



The police and council organised meetings to listen to and act on residents' issues. Thefts from garages have ceased since they were fenced off. Needles no longer appear in grassy areas now they are mown more often. Some repeat offenders have been re-housed off the estate, breaking up the gangs that residents feared. A member of the police/council team commented, "they have seen that their information has made a difference".

## The transfer of public assets

A1



Since 2007 the government has encouraged local authorities to transfer buildings to local communities at low rents. This helps communities to develop social enterprises which can provide them with an income.

## Kickstart, Norfolk

A2



Kickstart is a moped loan scheme that helps people in rural communities who lack transport to get to a job or training. It is now the largest Wheels to Work scheme in the UK.

## Isle of Gigha Community Wind Farm, Scotland

A3



Set up in 2004, this is the UK's first grid-connected, local community-owned, wind farm. It meets all of Gigha's energy needs, exports the surplus to the mainland, and earns the community £80,000 a year.

## Primary school produces all its own food

A4



St Peters school in Nottinghamshire produces its own food. The school makes a profit despite doubling its spending on ingredients. The children help design menus, visit the farms that supply them, and grow organic vegetables in the school garden.

## Community Cashpoint

A5



When the last bank in the village closed, Ibstock Community Enterprises (ICE) in Leicestershire asked the Bank of Scotland if it could run a cashpoint. ICE is paid a small commission which promotes local regeneration.

## Organic Vegetable Box versus Supermarket

A6



Every £10 spent on a fruit and vegetable box scheme in Cornwall was worth £25 for the community, compared with just £14 when the same amount was spent at a supermarket.

## West Berkshire Sustainable Lifestyles project

A7



This project gives new tenants a 'moving-in pack' of low-energy light bulbs, solar-powered radios, compost bins and similar products. Six months later, it checks their savings on waste, water and energy.

## Creating greener, cleaner and safer streets

A8



With Street Leaders, in the Marlpit area of Norwich, local residents volunteer to take on a street and patrol it. They then report dog fouling, anti-social behaviour, fly tipping etc.

## Why a community activist is not a councillor

A9



"I ain't interested in power, I want to see results. I'm not interested in spending half the time slagging off the other party. Why am I interested in that? It's just wasting my time."

## Do people think they can make a difference?

A10



Number 4 of 198 National Indicators used to measure the performance of local government is 'the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality'. The average in England in 2008 is around 32%.

## Thalia Carr, seldom heard groups, Reading Borough Council

A11



"I sent all the BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) and faith groups an invitation to get involved in the climate group and not a single one responded. I was coming from the Council, an outsider so to speak."

## Modbury, south Devon, Britain's first plastic bag free town

A12



"I think the reason this has worked in Modbury is because I am local and people know me."

Rebecca Hosking,  
the wildlife filmmaker  
who led the campaign.

## Project 'Light House', Histon and Impington, Cambridge

A13



This aims to enable all homes in the two villages to generate their own power renewably. The initial goal is to have 50 homes equipped with solar photovoltaic panels etc. by the end of 2009.

## What a successful parish plan needs

A14



- Community support in filling in questionnaires and taking action.
- Involvement from local authorities and service providers.
- Information gathered and presented systematically so that conclusions can be defended if challenged.

## Potential impacts of a parish plan on the community

A15



- More interest in village affairs.
- Highlighting community needs.
- Checking levels of support for projects.
- Parish Council better informed.

## Example of difficulties in parish planning

A16



It was "difficult to get new volunteers to come forward [to help implementation of working groups]. The existing steering group was 'burnt-out'".



The local group was challenged to make the Community Wood project more sustainable. This led them to think about: using native trees; producing biomass fuel; promoting walking for health; and setting up a woodworking co-operative.



Rural citizens across Wales put most emphasis on:

- Good quality employment opportunities.
- Affordable housing.
- Accessible services.



60% of attendees of Narberth Food Festival in Pembrokeshire only spent money in the area because they attended the festival. The value of the festival to the area had a net impact of £34,510.



- Providing recycled furniture for low-income families improves quality of life.
- Stopping furniture going to landfill helps the environment.
- Training and employing disadvantaged people helps the economy.



The newsletter is delivered to every household in a village that is very spread out. It keeps in touch those without access to the village website. It is free - they have obtained sponsorship from eleven businesses.



Residents in Merton were asked 'Do you know who to contact?' Results showed that no young people could name their councillor or knew how to contact them. Councillors were horrified and want to do lots more work with young people.



- Makes sure some people don't get left out.
- Connects people so that new relationships form.
- Brings people together and finds out what their shared concerns are and what they want to do about them.



- Help you make your plans.
- Advise you how to make a difference.
- Represent your interests to other councillors and to council staff.
- Introduce you to people with useful knowledge and resources.

## Crime and Chatting

# A25



Research shows that violent crimes are 40 percent lower in neighbourhoods where residents regularly chat and work together than in areas where they don't.

## Neighbourhood Fix-It [www.fixmystreet.com](http://www.fixmystreet.com)

# A26



This is a website where you can find a map of your local area and stick a pin in to show a problem. The website works out which is your council and sends it a report.

## [www.WriteToThem.com](http://www.WriteToThem.com)

# A27



You put your postcode into this website. It then tells you who your Member of Parliament (MP) is, and you can contact them. It exists because 60% of us don't know who our MP is.

## Who could you work with?

# A28



Northamptonshire Museum and Art Gallery helped Age Concern to run reminiscence sessions, which help people remember the past. The Gallery brought Second World War objects to older people who were unable to visit the museum.

## Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for communities and local government

# A29



**"In 2008, councils have taken huge strides in getting people involved and making themselves more accountable through participatory budgeting (where local people decide how to spend public money), town hall open days and community contracts."**

## The Village Spend, Coedpoeth, North Wales

# A30



In 2006, the Community Council in Coedpoeth was the first in the UK to use participatory budgeting (where local people decide how to spend public money). Residents and primary school children suggested projects, with six chosen by vote at a public meeting.

## Wickham Market Partnership, Suffolk

# A31



The Partnership worked with the County Council to redevelop two bungalows into a library and resource centre. This gave them confidence that they could manage a complex project. They moved on to a feasibility study for the town as a whole.

## Lavenham Village Hall, Suffolk

# A32



95% of residents asked for a village hall in a local survey. They helped choose the architects and refine the design of the hall.  
**"The consultation was very important to get everyone to feel that it was their hall."**

Hastings Trust,  
Hastings, Sussex

A33



The Trust owns several properties, earning rent that covers some of its core costs. It is also willing to be landlord for unpopular programmes, such as work with young offenders.

Hunworth and Stody  
Village Hall, North  
Norfolk

A34



When the parish council asked for ideas in 1999, restoring a dilapidated church hall got most support. Raising £23,000, doing the restoration work and meeting in the hall has given the village self-confidence.

Faiza Ibrahim, Somali  
woman, Barton Hill,  
Bristol

A35



Faiza organised a day where Somalis and non-Somalis could meet, relax, share food and music. She was overjoyed to see her isolated Somali friends talking to their African Caribbean and white neighbours for the first time.

Valerie Barker,  
Community Champion,  
Calderdale

A36



Valerie got a grant from Community Champions to landscape a community garden and set up a tool library. "None of this could I have done before. When people back you, you've got that bit more confidence."

Peter Watts, 'Smooth  
Guides', Dorchester

A37



Peter, who has Multiple Sclerosis, produced a guide to disabled access at tourist attractions. He did it for the "sake of doing something useful, because it is not much good just staring at walls and watching daytime television".

Paul Hill, Graffiti  
Project, London

A38



Paul persuaded the landlord of his estate to whitewash an outside wall. Then he employed a graffiti artist to train the teenagers. The young people enjoy it, and have stopped spraying graffiti on the stairwells.

Anita Cleary, King  
Edwards Quay,  
Colchester

A39



"Only the local people know what they want. Involvement also ensures a feeling of ownership and pride and responsibility. Ideas like the Fun Day and Hythe Festival have also helped to build a strong sense of community cohesion."

New cycle route  
through Luton

A40



Sustainable transport charity Sustrans created a new cycle route through Luton by working with local cycle groups. Users say the route is convenient and has made them more active. Disused or donated bikes are recycled and lent to low income users.

## Cluster card

Name of cluster \_\_\_\_\_

What is the meaning of this cluster?

What cards did you use in this cluster (e.g. S3, A7, A29)?

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Blank card

Question Card

What do you want to achieve in your local area?

Question Card

What do you want to achieve in your local area?

Question Card

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