



# Unstaffed displays

Display boards or posters can be prepared to provide information about forthcoming events, on-going activities or recent achievements, as a way of engaging local community members in forest or woodland activities. Unstaffed displays are usually set up in public spaces such as libraries, council offices, town halls, shops, schools or other areas where many people congregate or pass by. They are probably most useful to disseminate general information and invite interested parties to participate. They need to be especially eye-catching because they will compete for attention in areas where people are meeting or passing by for other purposes. Colour photographs highlighting local people or dramatic scenery are good to include. Information in the form of piecharts or other graphs can be attractive and suggestion boxes or places for comments on sticky notes are recommended. Many community groups can offer resources for displays, such as venues or audiovisual and graphics materials.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good writing and graphic design skills are needed.

### Equipment

- Photographic equipment, poster materials, display easels or boards, and standard office printing equipment are all essential.

### Time

- Time is required to prepare, review and revise good display material.
- Allow at least a week or two to prepare a new display, and longer if you need to contract out for photographic or design services.
- Time is required to identify and arrange a good location for the display.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Public Involvement Guide – A desk guide to Public Involvement. USDA Forest Service (1998). Northern Region, Public and Governmental Relations.
- Public involvement in environmental permits: a reference guide. US Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Available from: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)
- Reference manual for public involvement. J. Barker et al. (1999). 2nd edn. Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Health Authority, London.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Once a display is completed it can be re-used many times in a variety of locations.
- A display can be useful for informing the wider public of the planning process and of their opportunity to participate.
- It can be a good opportunity to raise the profile of the forest or woodland organisation.
- Relatively small resources are needed.

## Weaknesses

- Low response rates are typical.
- The technique can be relatively ineffective in gathering useful responses to the planning process.
- Choosing the wrong site is a waste of resources.



Plans for ecological design under inspection in an Unstaffed display (Irk Valley Futures, Joanne Tippet).

This toolbox is designed to assist Forestry Commission staff when they are considering which tools they could use to involve the public in the forest and woodland planning process. For more information please visit the website at: [www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox)