



# Advertisements

Advertisements can be placed in newspapers and magazines, and on radio and television. They can be used to inform people locally or nationally about how to become involved in the forest planning process. A display Advertisement in a local newspaper is an effective way of getting information to people in a small community and the advert can be placed in several newspapers to get larger coverage. Classified adverts or legal notices are much less effective as they are read by very few people. Choosing the best days and sections of the newspaper for publishing is essential in order to reach the intended audience. These options, together with guidance on presentation and distribution, should be discussed with the advertising departments of the newspaper and TV/radio.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good layout, graphic design and writing skills are all necessary.
- Hiring consultants or other experts may be required.

### Time

- Leading time for media outlet will vary.
- Adequate time should be reserved for discussing Advertisement design.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Public Involvement Guide – A desk guide to Public Involvement. USDA Forest Service (1998). Northern Region, Public and Governmental Relations.

### Web

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- The content is completely controlled by you, so you can be sure of what gets printed and when and where it is distributed.
- Distilling your message into an effective advert can help personal clarification of the issues.
- Using a wide circulation newspaper, TV or radio engages large populations.

## Weaknesses

- Advertisements can be expensive, especially in urban areas and on TV.
- If poorly designed or placed in wrong publications they waste resources.
- It may be necessary to combine the advert with other publicity methods to ensure that all details are effectively conveyed.
- The advert may not reach all people who have concerns about the forest management plan.

Examples of poster Advertisements to encourage local people to get involved in plans for community woodlands:



Galloway Forest District.



Reforesting Scotland.



Lochaber Forest District.

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)



# Advisory committee

Advisory committees are small groups of 10 to 20 people formed from representatives of various stakeholder groups. The committee members meet regularly to discuss issues and raise ideas. The aim is to find out the stakeholders' views and priorities regarding specific issues rather than set detailed recommendations for action. Members should represent a broad range of interests and they can be selected by interviewing potential individuals. The committee should be provided with comprehensive information in order to reduce reliance on experts and technical knowledge, and background information, minutes and agendas should be sent out before each meeting. Several other methods of participation ([Site visits](#), [Presentations](#), [Working groups](#)) can be used to encourage members to explore and analyse issues and to gradually arrive at a consensus about the way forward. A third party may be needed to facilitate the process. When setting up an Advisory committee it is important to define clearly the roles and responsibilities of all parties. The working process of the committee should lead to a final report that gives non-binding recommendations for action.



An Advisory committee (forest panel) on a forest site visit (Ae Forest District).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Facilitation skills are useful for participating staff, but a third party facilitator may be needed.
- Active listening skills are essential.

### Equipment

- Basic requirements are good/quiet meeting facilities and standard office resources to produce written information, minutes and final report.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING: ★★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★

## Strengths

- Contentious decisions can be made more acceptable to the public.
- The process is democratic and representative of opposing points of view.
- Participants' understanding of other perspectives increases, leading towards compromise.
- There is scope for detailed analysis on planning issues.
- The long time scale provides the opportunity to raise issues and to allow for more in-depth debate.

## Weaknesses

- The process is time and labour intensive.
- Members may not reach consensus.
- Not all groups may be properly represented.
- The legitimacy of the process is dependent on the attitude and commitment of managers to listen to committee members.
- Participants may have unreal expectations of their influence over the process.

### Time

- Committees normally run for several months and require considerable time commitment from all parties.

### Costs

- For an advisory committee formed of three groups of 16 people, running for six months, the costs were estimated to be between £100,000 and £150,000 (Petts and Leach, 2000).

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Evaluating methods for public participation: literature review. J. Petts and B. Leach (2000). Environment Agency Technical Report E135. Environment Agency, Bristol.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of deliberative processes: waste management case studies. J. Petts (2001). *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* **44** (2), 207–226.
- Public participation in environmental decisions: an evaluation framework using social goals. T. C. Beierle (1998). *Resources for the Future*, Washington, DC. Available from: [www.rff.org](http://www.rff.org)

### Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)
- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/cac.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/cac.htm)

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# Briefings

A Briefing in this context means a form of presentation made on a regular basis to local or community groups who may have an interest in forest or woodland planning. They provide an opportunity for you to give information and help people in the area to know the on-going activities. Participants may be invited to ask questions after the presentation in order to bring about discussion and receive feedback. Examples of groups that might be appropriate to receive Briefings are community or parish councils and trade groups. Remember to keep any presentation short and simple, at least until you have been invited back several times, after which the audience may want more detail. Ideally presenters should be staff members who know the project or programme thoroughly and are aware of participants' interests or concerns. The same Briefing may be used for different groups. They are a good way of identifying people who may want further information or who are interested in volunteering to help on particular projects.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good public speaking and presentation skills are essential.
- Experience is needed in developing posters or giving presentations, and graphical layout.

### Equipment

- Groups who hold regular meetings usually have presentation facilities, but additional presentation equipment may be necessary.
- Briefings are usually held around a small table, in an office or in a conference room.
- Equipment necessary to prepare a talk may include a good camera, poster layout, and other graphics production facilities.

### Time

- Usually held on weekday evenings or weekend afternoons, so time required is short.
- New presentations require preparation time, including time to rehearse the talk.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Public involvement in environmental permits: a reference guide. US Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Available from: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Briefings allow contact with community members at a time and place where they are comfortable.
- They may provide a good opportunity to reach many people who might be unaware of the process.
- You control the information content and how it is presented.
- Good will can be developed using Briefings.
- They are a good way to establish communication links with affected groups.
- Briefings are relatively inexpensive.

## Weaknesses

- If the topic is too technical for the audience, it may not hold their interest well.
- Important stakeholders may not be present, so repeat presentations may be needed.
- Regular use of Briefings can be very time consuming for staff.
- A Briefing cannot be relied upon as a primary method of informing people.

## Web

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)
- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/briefing.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/briefing.htm)

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# Census & demographic data

The Census is the most complete source of information about the population of the UK that we have. There are other national statistics that are collected in England, Wales and Scotland on a more regular basis, but they may not provide the same level of detail in spatial terms as the Census. The Census has data on households, including the age and gender of individuals, and also information on cultural characteristics such as ethnicity and religion, state of health, educational qualifications, employment and economic activity, and journeys to work. The Census data is set out ward by ward.

The Census data and other national statistics are an invaluable resource in helping to identify what social mix would be representative for a particular area, the target audience, and also the non-users of forest and woodland services. As a context setting and planning tool demographics provides forest and woodland managers with a means of learning more about an area, so it is not a participatory technique beyond showing the rationale for how and why certain groups and individuals were invited to take part. Population data from the Census should be used as a first step in the early stages of planning to:

- define target groups that may previously have been under-represented;
- identify hard to reach groups to ensure engagement is inclusive of the entire community.

Census and other population data can be accessed through Neighbourhood Statistics for Scotland, England and Wales. Data is presented in the form of:

- key statistics at ward, middle output area (collection of wards or section of an authority area) and local authority level;
- special reports and theme tables, which look at particular topics such as faith and religion or ethnicity in greater detail;
- standard tables of data, which are specially designed for social equality and inclusion purposes at the different scale levels.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Ability to use spreadsheets and databases

### Equipment

- Access to a networked computer.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Information is easy to access and manipulate.
- This is a rapid method of assessing key stakeholder and social groups of importance in a particular area.

## Weaknesses

- Ward and local authority boundaries may not be the same as woodland and forest boundaries, so some degree of skill and judgement is needed to build an accurate picture.
- Latest information is not always available – the Census data may be out of date.

#### Time

- This is a quick way of gathering relevant information.

#### Costs

- Staff time.

## Useful sources of information

#### Web

- Census for England and Wales: [www.ons.gov.uk/census/index.html](http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/index.html)
- Census for Scotland: [www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/census/index.html](http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/census/index.html)
- Neighbourhood Statistics for England and Wales:  
[www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination)
- Neighbourhood Statistics for Scotland: [www.sns.gov.uk](http://www.sns.gov.uk)
- Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation: [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD)
- Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation:  
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/wimd/?lang=en>

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# Citizens' jury

Citizens' juries are relatively new in the UK. They were first tried here in 1996 after meeting some success in the US and Germany. They involve a group of 12 to 25 representatives from the community, who volunteer to spend several days considering a subject in depth, discussing and researching the matters at hand. Juries are organised by independent organisations and only report back at the end to the concerned parties. Jurors hear evidence from witnesses who might be experts or members of pressure groups and receive written evidence. They scrutinise the evidence and debate the questions and deliberate their decisions in the groups. The commissioning organisation is expected to publicise the jury and its report as part of the process of public involvement. Forest or woodland managers might commission a Citizens' jury to contemplate a resolution to a particular, often controversial dispute, then consider its findings when deciding on a policy. A Citizens' jury does not replace other forms of consultation or participation, but may provide a new perspective that adds openness and fairness to governmental activities. Citizens' juries are non-binding with no legal status. Therefore a link with normal decision-making processes needs to be made.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Independent organisations can be used to supervise a jury.
- Forest managers need to be able to recognise when an option may be desirable.
- Running a jury requires one or two skilled moderators with considerable understanding of group dynamics.
- Good written communication skills are needed to produce a report.

### Equipment

- Meeting facilities and an ability to gather evidence and produce a report is required.

### Time

- Several weeks are required to organise the jury, usually four days to carry out the process and a short time to prepare a report.
- Managers who commission the jury will need time to prepare and present information to the proceedings.

### Cost

- Normally budget of about £17,000–20,000 (New Economics Foundation, 1998).

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★

## Strengths

- A jury provides an avenue for the public to identify with findings and support a recommendation.
- New perspectives brought by people who are outside a dispute may highlight new solutions.
- A jury can help to build consensus and share information.

## Weaknesses

- Juries require considerable resources and time to set up and conduct.
- They may not produce a group consensus if the issue is extremely controversial.
- The jury/report does not normally generate widespread participation.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Making better decisions: report of an IPPR symposium on citizens' juries and other methods of public involvement. C. Delap (1998). Institute for Public Policy Research, London.
- Participation works! 21 techniques of community participation for the 21st century. New Economics Foundation (1998). CD-Rom edition 1999. Available from: [www.neweconomics.org](http://www.neweconomics.org)
- Techniques for talking: participatory techniques for land use planning – a review. M. Toogood (2000). Report Commissioned by RSPB.

### Training

- The Prince's Foundation: tel. 020 7613 8500 or [www.princes-foundation.org](http://www.princes-foundation.org)

### Case study

- The Fife Council ran one successful example in March 1997: Creating job opportunities in a deprived area.

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# Community issue groups

Community issue groups have similarities to **Focus groups** and **Citizens' juries**. Their main aim is to bring new views and external perspectives to the planning process. Community issues groups usually consist of between 8 and 12 participants who meet up to five times over a series of weeks. These meetings enable a more in-depth analysis and exploration of the subject area compared to Focus groups. Meetings build upon previous discussions, giving participants time between gatherings to reconsider issues and raise questions. New information can be introduced to the discussion to build up participants' knowledge of the issue. Discussions are normally taped and analysed later, and reports are produced.



Community disabled access group discuss woodland plans from their perspective New Forest Forest District.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good communication and presentational skills are basic requirements.

### Equipment

- Good meeting facilities are necessary.
- Taping, transcribing and report writing equipment are usually required.

### Time

- Each meeting takes 2 to 2.5 hours.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participatory environmental processes: experiences from north and south. T. Holmes and I. Scoones (2000). IDS Working Paper. Institute of Development Studies, Brighton.

## Level of engagement

**INFORMING:**

**CONSULTING:** ★★

**INVOLVING:** ★★★

**PARTNERSHIP:**

## Strengths

- Community issue groups work more efficiently than Focus groups in encouraging careful consideration.
- Informed discussions offer an opportunity to explore issues in-depth.
- Opportunities are created to refine views.
- The technique is fairly cost effective.

## Weaknesses

- Time requirements are quite high.
- Relatively low numbers of participants are involved in the groups.

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# Consensus building

Consensus building is a collaborative approach in which the main aim is to reach a result that benefits all of the participating groups. People with different views of the issues at hand work interactively towards agreeing a sensible solution or a way forward. In this approach, the knowledge and information held by the public is treated in the same way to that of the experts and, ideally, there is a real dialogue between all viewpoints. Consensus building comprises many techniques, e.g. **Delphi surveys**, **Workshops**, **Nominal group technique** and others. Many of these techniques can be used when making decisions in co-operation with stakeholders, such as agreeing criteria and alternative selection. Neutral and independent third party facilitators and mediators are usually needed to carefully manage and structure the process. The desired levels of consensus are defined according to the situation at hand; the group does not necessarily have to agree entirely upon a decision if they reach enough consensus to move forward.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Knowledge is required on how to use different Consensus building methods.
- External personnel such as mediators or facilitators are needed.

### Equipment

- Good meeting facilities are a basic requirement.

### Time

- Plenty of time is normally required to build consensus.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Good practice in rural development, No. 5, Consensus building. R. Sidaway (1998). Scottish National Rural Partnership, The Scottish Office, Edinburgh.
- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.
- Participation works! 21 techniques of community participation for the 21st century. New Economics Foundation (1998). CD-Rom edition 1999. Available from: [www.neweconomics.org](http://www.neweconomics.org)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★★

## Strengths

- Consensus building is an interactive mode of participation.
- The approach provides a structured and tractable way for decision-making.
- It helps participants to understand each other's viewpoints.
- Stakeholders are involved throughout the process which can enhance the levels of trust and reciprocity.

## Weaknesses

- There is a risk that consensus may not be reached on the issues.
- Consensus building techniques are not appropriate for groups that have no interest in compromise.
- Time requirements are usually extensive.
- Professional, neutral facilitators are normally required.

### Web

- The guide to effective participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

### Training

- The Environment Council provides facilitation courses in 'Stakeholder Dialogue':  
tel. 020 7632 0103 or [www.the-environment-council.org.uk](http://www.the-environment-council.org.uk)

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# Co-view

Co-view (or 'Collaborative Vision Exploration Workbench') is a tool to help facilitators of natural resource management and stakeholders to articulate and explore a shared vision of the future and to develop strategies to achieve it. Co-view aims to strengthen the link between visioning and modelling, by making it easier to use a visioning process as the entry point for modelling, and to use the results of simulation modelling to help to generate strategies for achieving the vision. Co-view consists of manuals on visioning and participatory modelling as well as two computer software packages: 'The Bridge' and 'Power to Change!' game and papers related to participatory modelling. The package also includes Simile, a powerful simulation-modelling environment. The Bridge is a visioning tool that helps users to define a vision and to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats so that the group can devise an appropriate strategy to achieve the vision. The 'Power to Change!' game is an interface within Simile, that allows participants the opportunity to 'experience' the impacts of changes they make to key variables in the virtual reality of the simulation model. The game provides opportunities for learning at low cost to the real world and very much quicker than is possible in real life. In multi-player versions of the game there are opportunities for group or social learning about how best to 'realise' shared visions.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Facilitator.
- Computer Modeller.
- Other skills/roles useful include 'process coach' and 'gatekeeper'.

### Equipment

- Computer.
- Co-view software.
- Charts and cards.

### Time

- Anything between two and five days.
- It is important for the facilitator to observe when the participants start showing signs of fatigue; at that point the process can be adjourned.

### Costs

- Generally between £700 (covering venue and materials) and £6000 (covering facilitators' time).

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★★

## Strengths

- Links visioning and modelling.
- Enables participants to express their perceptions of how the world around them works.
- Helps planning towards achieving vision and goals.

## Weaknesses

- Modelling can be complicated and the output very sensitive to assumptions.
- Need for computers can be restrictive in areas where computers are not available.
- The interface between the visioning and the model can be confusing.

## Useful sources of information

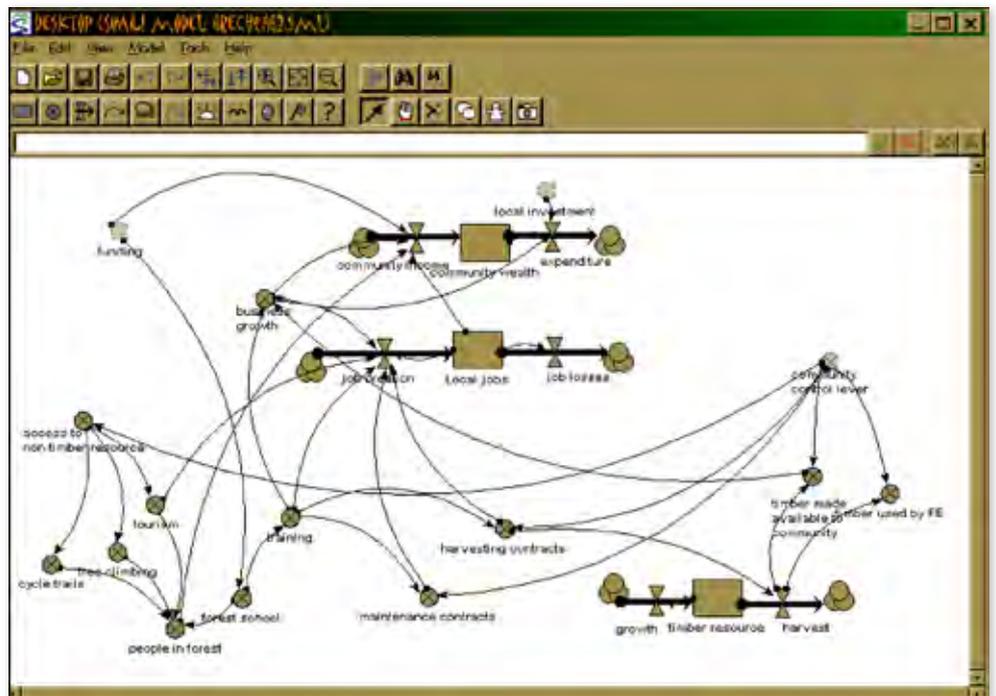
### Web

- Free downloads of the software and manual are available from:

[www.cifor.cgiar.org/acm/pub/co-view.html](http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/acm/pub/co-view.html)

### Case study

- A workshop was held in September 2002 to evaluate Co-view as a tool for helping rural communities around Brechfa Forest in Wales. A report on the workshop is available from Forestry Commission Wales, Aberystwyth (tel. 0300 068 0300).



An influence diagram of Brechfa forest developed by workshop participants and drawn with the Co-view software.



Workshop participants at Brechfa forest (Richard Nyirenda, CIFOR).

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# Delphi surveys

The Delphi survey is named after the oracle at Delphi, a city of ancient Greece. The oracle would be asked difficult questions about the future and would then provide advice about likely happenings and how to proceed. In the present day version, experts in a particular field act as 'oracles'. Their views on well-designed subjects are requested and analysed by a surveyor. This is done by a short questionnaire, often anonymously in written form, and usually with the experts remaining in their own surroundings. Example questions might include: 'What are the issues of concern to the conservation community with regard to my woodland, and why?' or 'How do you recommend improving the local economy through activities in the woodland?' After a set of answers have been returned by the experts, the surveyor compiles them and circulates them all back to each expert, who then comments on the answers from others and provides further suggestions. In this way, after several repetitions of the process, certain issues may be highlighted as important, and the surveyor has an idea of which topics have found agreement among the experts and which ones have generated controversy. The results can be used to generate further discussion at committee or different forms of meetings.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Expertise in designing questionnaires is necessary.
- Good writing skills are helpful in reformulating and summarising responses.
- No statistical analysis is necessary.

### Equipment

- Writing and printing facilities are required to produce the questionnaires and process the information reached in the survey.

### Time

- Requires several weeks to months, depending mostly on how quickly experts can return answers, and how many repetitions are desired.
- Time can be shortened by doing face-to-face interviews rather than circulating questions by mail.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★

## Strengths

- Expertise from a variety of sources can be combined to provide an overview of the situation at comparatively low cost.
- The survey is designed to get experts to exchange ideas, and generate collected wisdom that should help to ensure that no important issues are forgotten.
- Anonymity reduces the risk of confrontations.

## Weaknesses

- Validity of opinions of the 'oracles' varies with who they are, so a crucial element is the correct selection of experts.
- Relatively long-term commitment is required from the experts.
- A very limited number of participants are included.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.

### Web

- PPPM 613 Planning Analysis by R. G. Parker:  
[darkwing.uoregon.edu/~rgp/PPPM613/class10summary.htm](http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~rgp/PPPM613/class10summary.htm)
- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/smlgroup.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/smlgroup.htm)

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# Design charrette

Design charrette is an intensive session in which a small group of participants explore topics related to a specific problem and redesign project features. All significant stakeholders should be invited to have a representative participant. A charrette can also contribute to sharing information and increasing participants' understanding in planning issues. To start, the group leader presents principles that underpin the planning and design process for participants. The group can then be divided in subgroups, which discuss ideas and assess alternative solutions to agreed issues, and then present them to the larger group. The group then seeks consensus and tries to decide on final resolution of the approach to be taken. At the final stage, a report presenting the whole process and its outcomes is produced for public discussion. Presentation, graphic images, design standards and implementation strategies produced in a charrette provide documentation for the planning process. The Design charrette may generate a prioritised action plan regarding the problems being addressed. It is essential to be clear at the start about how the results of the charrette will be used.



Involvement in design begins with an introduction to the forest and key issues.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good facilitation and personal communication skills are primary requirements; hiring trained facilitators is often advisable.
- The leader should be familiar with group dynamics and the substantive issues faced by the group.

### Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING: ★★ ★

PARTNERSHIP: ★

### Strengths

- Design charrette can turn the attention of the attendees to possible solutions and constructive ideas instead of negative aspects.
- The technique helps to generate partnerships and positive working relationships with the public.
- It allows a more interactive learning process between planning experts and local community representatives.
- It provides a more in-depth understanding of planning issues.

### Weaknesses

- Participants may not be considered to be representative by the broader public.
- The effects may not be long lasting if the charrette is used as a one-off technique.
- An experienced leader or facilitator is needed to guide the process.
- Intensive preparatory work is required.

### Equipment

- A room large enough to arrange the group meeting is needed and possibly to accommodate the sub-groups.
- Facilities (computer/printer) are needed to produce a report on the results.
- Other useful materials may include maps, printed background information and display boards.

### Time

- A moderate amount of time is needed to make the necessary arrangements and identify the participants prior to the meeting.
- The session usually takes five to seven days, possibly less, depending on the issues and goals of the process.

## Useful sources of information

### Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)
- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/charrett.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/charrett.htm)

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# Direct observation

Direct observation is a means of gaining information on the ways that people use the forest or woodland. This may simply be watching what people are doing in a certain part of the forest or woodland location. In general, the observer should be noting events, processes and relationships that are important to some aspect of the forest or woodland's use. It is a simple technique, but may provide useful additional data to that gathered by other means.

Direct observation is appropriate in the following conditions:

- **When you want direct information.**  
For example: using a visitor facility to experience it as a customer.
- **When you are trying to understand an on-going behaviour, process, unfolding situation or event.**  
For example: observing visitors' movements on arrival at a visitor centre.
- **When there is physical evidence, products or outcomes that can be readily seen.**  
For example: tracks and litter made by visitors indicating types and extent of woodland use and abuse (horse prints, cycle tracks, erosion).
- **When written or other data collection procedures seem inappropriate.**  
For example: observing participants dynamics, questions raised and level of participation in a planning meeting.

To be useful observations need to be recorded and this can be done through one or more of the following means:

- **Observation guides:** printed forms that provide space for recording observations.
- **Recording sheets or checklists:** printed forms to record observations as in a YES/NO option or on a rating scale to indicate extent or quality of something.
- **Field notes:** recording observations in a narrative, descriptive style as you notice or hear something or import.
- **Pictures:** photographs and videotapes.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Observer(s) need the ability to select relevant and important factors in relation to different forest or woodland user groups.
- 'Seeing' and 'listening' are key skills to observation.

### Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

### Strengths

- Direct observation is easy to carry out.
- It provides the opportunity to document activities, behaviour and physical aspects without having to depend on peoples' willingness and ability to respond to questions.
- It is a useful technique for gathering information on the various uses (including conflicting uses) of an area.
- Minimal advanced preparations are needed.
- The technique works well in places where forests or woodlands are actively used by the public.

### Weaknesses

- The technique is not useful in distributing information or creating interaction.
- It can be a rather limited information source, and should be used in connection with other techniques of information gathering.
- The ethics and morality of covert observation must always be considered.

## Time

- The amount of time required depends, among other factors, on the size of the forest or woodland area and the intensities of the different types of use. Valuable information can be reached in a relatively short time.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Collecting Evaluation Data: Direct Observation. E. Taylor-Powell and S. Steele. Co-operative extension publication. The University of Wisconsin. [www1.uwex.edu](http://www1.uwex.edu)



An example of field observation notes on public use of a woodland near Wishaw (Open space, Edinburgh College of Art).

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)



# Displays

Displays are used to provide information for community members, but they usually allow some consultation as well. The design and format of Displays may vary considerably from interactive Displays to simple information posters. In order to use the techniques efficiently, information offered must be relevant for the audience, attractive and comprehensible. Displays can include, for example, photographs, maps, models and diagrams and can use computer displays or videos. Different types of Displays are described in more detail in [Interactive displays](#), [Unstaffed displays](#) and [Staffed displays](#).



Simple Displays on site can help collect information from users.



A staffed Display (Inverness Forest District).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good writing and graphic design skills are necessary, as well as personal communication skills in staffed displays.
- Professional skills can be used if complex Displays are to be designed.

### Equipment

- Possible resources include photographic equipment, poster materials and display easels.
- Standard office writing and printing equipment.

### Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

### Strengths

- Displays can extend to people who are not normally reached in the involvement process.
- They will tend to stimulate public interest in the planning process if well designed and visually appealing.
- Displays provide a good way of distributing information about the planning process.

### Weaknesses

- Failure to prepare good information may lead to conflicts if people feel that the full range of options is not presented.
- Choosing a wrong site will waste resources.
- Displays may be resource intensive if they are staffed.
- Careful designs required.

### Time

- Time needed to prepare, review and revise Display material depends on the type of Display; at least a week or two is normally needed to prepare a new Display.
- Time requirements are usually higher in staffed Displays compared to other forms of Displays.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Community participation in Local Agenda 21. J. Bishop (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- 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.



An unstaffed Display of environmental plans (Irk Valley Project, Joanne Tippett).



An interactive Display (Red Rose Forest).

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# Electronic democracy

Information and communication technology (ICT), or Electronic democracy, offers a new opportunity to involve people in planning processes. It provides inexpensive and instant access to a wide range of information and communication for users and a potentially efficient means to gather information for planning. The different options to utilise ICT include websites, informal on-line discussions, formal consultations using on-line debates and televoting. In addition, different techniques, such as **Citizens' juries**, can be adapted to be used on-line. Electronic democracy requires careful planning of the material that will be presented and how the feedback from users will be used. It is advisable to promote the web addresses actively in order to use this medium effectively.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Excellent computer design and programming skills are needed; consideration should be given to hiring experts.

### Equipment

- Computers for generating content and servers to provide access to users.

### Time

- Adequate time has to be allowed for careful planning of the websites and information gathering systems.
- Regular updating and maintenance is required for web pages and discussion lists.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Cyberdemocracy. R. Tsagarousiona et al. (1998). Routledge, London.
- Making better decisions: report of an IPPR symposium on citizens' juries and other methods of public involvement. C. Delap (1998). Institute for Public Policy Research, London.
- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. Y. M. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.
- Public Consultation through the Internet. Institute for Environment, Philosophy & Public Policy (2003). Lancaster University, Lancaster. Available from: [www.lancs.ac.uk](http://www.lancs.ac.uk)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Electronic democracy is a fairly convenient way of disseminating information to large groups and obtaining feedback.
- It provides the opportunity for the right information to be available for a definite group of people.
- It creates interactive communication between planners and different stakeholder groups and individuals.

## Weaknesses

- It is not accessible to everyone; only to those with access to the Internet.
- It may be difficult to assess how well different groups can be reached by the Internet.
- There is a risk of manipulation, misinformation and incivility if not carefully managed.

## Web

- Building Citizen-based Electronic Democracy Efforts by Steven Clift: [www.e-democracy.org](http://www.e-democracy.org)
- Example of e-democracy applications: <http://itc.napier.ac.uk>
- Making the Net Work: [www.makingthenetwork.org/index.htm](http://www.makingthenetwork.org/index.htm)
- Partnerships Online: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)

## Training

- The Prince's Foundation runs courses on E-Participation: tel. 020 7613 8500 or [www.princes-foundation.org](http://www.princes-foundation.org)

## Case study

- Making better decisions: report of an IPPR symposium on citizens' juries and other methods of public involvement. C. Delap (1998). Institute for Public Policy Research, London.

The screenshot shows a web-based public consultation interface. At the top, it says 'What sort of Scotland do we want to live?' and 'Environment'. Below this, there is a text area with a globe icon and a 'background' link. A table of responses is displayed at the bottom, with columns for question snippets, user names, and dates.

Question Snippet	User Name	Date
Would it be feasible to make Scotland a nuclear free state? The storage of nuclear waste will be a p...	Rory Draskin from Scotland	05/06/01 16:42
Biodiversity and falling in the decline of the environment is the big issue. Nature is not bank...	BH Smith from Scotland	02/06/01 13:10
The creation of employment to create and clean up the environment is our best hope for the future a...	Judina Thomas from Scotland	02/06/01 13:39
When will the Scottish Parliament and SPFA separate when that there is a very serious Environment...	Sandy Young from Scotland	02/06/01 16:17
Lead a member of the Environment group of the Scottish Cmc. Farmers a process in America an...	Roger Dowds from Scotland	05/06/01 16:19
Farmers should be made more responsible for the waste that they produce if it hits the environment...	William Johnston from Scotland	07/06/01 22:41
It concerns me greatly the lack of thought involved in the fishing industry. I have heard said th...	andrew warshaw from Scotland	06/07/01 12:09
Would people learn to respect the countryside environment and that it is difficult to believe that...	Richard from Scotland	09/07/01 14:40
Biodiversity is the key to a stable environment. Industry is still creating too much pollution of a...	Roger Griffith from Scotland	03/07/01 11:34
Must move to localized sustainable farming and food production. Most waste talk must be exact facts...	vixie from Scotland	09/06/01 12:45

An example of a web-based public consultation.

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# Events

Participation in community Events organised by other organisations such as agricultural shows or other local fairs is described under **Staffed displays**. Events in this context mean the organisation of an Event by forest or woodland staff. Events, e.g. guided walks, forest or woodland shows and open days, provide an opportunity for staff to inform the public about the forest or woodland planning process and to gain an understanding of those who are potential participants in the process and their interests. The gathering of this information may be quite informal. For example, recreation and wildlife rangers can provide regular feedback to the planning team based on the knowledge they have gained from leading public Events. A regularly commemorated date or Event, such as the Tree Council's National Tree Week, is a good time to schedule an Event because it allows you to take advantage of other organisations' advertising. A more formal Event may include various elements such as presentations and displays and may be organised around specific activities such as tree planting. Presentations should include attractive graphics and cover as many issues as possible. Adequate staffing is essential to allow people to discuss issues of concern. It is recommended that special activities are organised for children as well as fun activities for adults to make the Event enjoyable to all.



Events of all kinds can attract different stakeholders to a woodland and be used to canvass opinions

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Graphic design and written communications skills are necessary for preparing good, attractive presentations.
- Excellent speaking, listening and personal communication skills are desirable.

### Level of engagement

**INFORMING:** ★★

**CONSULTING:** ★★

**INVOLVING:**

**PARTNERSHIP:**

### Strengths

- Useful information can be gathered from activities already organised within the forest or woodland.
- Events build a link between ranger staff skills and the planning team.
- Public attention is drawn to the forest or woodland.
- Events bring fun into participation and are able to engage groups who would not normally attend.
- They provide a variety of information needed by community members.
- Events introduce people to parts of the forest or woodland programme in a way that may encourage them to participate more in the future.

### Weaknesses

- Attendance by the public is not assured.
- If poorly organised and presented an Event can have negative impact on the public image of forest or woodland organisation.

Continued overleaf

Weaknesses continued:

- Costs can be expensive.
- Planning and carrying out an Event requires much arranging and/or assistance.
- Depending on the size of the Event, it may require the presence of a large number of staff.

## Equipment

- A good facility where displays can be housed in any weather is necessary.
- Numerous staff are needed to ensure that the Event will work.
- A variety of refreshments should be available.

## Time

- Considerable preparation is necessary to ensure the success of the Event.
- Planning needs to begin months in advance to advertise the Event and to prepare materials.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Involving communities in forestry through community participation. Forestry Commission (1996). Forestry Practice Guide 10. Forestry Commission, Edinburgh.
- Public involvement guide – a desk guide to public involvement. USDA Forest Service (1998). Northern Region, Public and Governmental Relations.

### Web

- Community Woods: [www.community-woods.org.uk](http://www.community-woods.org.uk)
- The guide to effective participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

### Training

- The Prince's Foundation runs courses on Designing Successful Involvement Events: tel. 020 7613 8500 or [www.princes-foundation.org](http://www.princes-foundation.org)

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**Open Day  
at  
Borgie Forest**

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September  
1 – 5pm  
Come along and learn about Borgie Forest  
and have a free fun afternoon

Treasure hunt  
Forest trips  
Plant a Millennium tree  
Help plan the future of the forest  
Forest art attack  
Wood turning  
Greenwood chair making  
Bring a bike and pedal through the trees

Everybody welcome  
(Food and drink available or bring a picnic)

Subsidised minibus transport will leave Durness and Melvich  
at 12.30pm and return approx. 3 hours later – to book phone  
01641521385.

*This event has been arranged by  
North Sutherland Community Forestry Trust  
Forest Enterprise and Caithness & Sutherland Enterprise*

A forest event including participatory planning as part of the attractions (Reforestation Scotland).



# Focus groups

A Focus group is a small group technique in which participants discuss specific issues and topics in depth with the help of a trained facilitator. The technique can be used to achieve input on planning decisions but can also be used as a message-testing forum where key messages are tested prior to proceeding with planning or taking action. Focus groups often range from 5 to 15 people specifically composed to represent a range of perspectives from within the subject population. Participants represent a particular group of society with shared social, cultural, age or gender nominators so that their positions and views become clear during the process. Homogeneous groups of participants are an advantage as this helps discussions to go smoothly.



A disabled access group will have specific ideas and inputs.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- A skilled facilitator is required, ideally an independent and neutral one.

### Equipment

- A good meeting facility is important and potentially some incentive for participants, such as refreshments.
- Session audio-recording equipment is necessary.

### Time

- Focus groups are relatively short-term, one-time events that last between one and two hours.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- A Focus group allows participants to consider issues in detail by listening and responding to others within a controlled context.
- Group sponsors are provided with flexible opportunities to follow up on questions and sometimes find out the reasoning behind responses.
- It is relatively inexpensive to run.

## Weaknesses

- Focus groups are not statistically valid because they include only a small number of participants.
- Sometimes it is difficult to recruit people to take part.
- A facilitator is required; the end result can be a mixture of conflicting conclusions from different groups.
- The short time span does not allow very detailed exploration of participants' views or the development of shared opinions.

- Several weeks may be required to set up a session, and a day or two to develop documentation of the outcome.
- Preparation includes development of issues into question form which can be discussed productively. Often the session ends with an exit questionnaire which must be collated, analysed and reviewed.

#### Costs

- Consultant costs may be up to £250 per day, but an inclusive fee for a project or a particular service can normally be negotiated which reduces costs.
- Recruitment by research professionals usually costs around £200 per group.
- Attendance payments; this is usually a flat fee of £15–25 per person, per session, depending on the evaluation of degree of incentive required.
- Transcription costs – currently £50 per C90 tape (source of all costs: Toogood, M., 2000).

## Useful sources of information

#### Books

- Focus Groups Sage. D. L. Morgan (1988). Publications, London.
- Reference manual for public involvement. J. Barker et al. (1999). 2nd edn. Southwark and Lewisham Health Authority, Lambeth.
- Techniques for talking: participatory techniques for land use planning – a review. M. Toogood (2000). Report Commissioned by RSPB.

#### Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)
- PPPM 613 Planning Analysis by R. G. Parker: [darkwing.uoregon.edu/~rgp/PPPM613/class10summary.htm](http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~rgp/PPPM613/class10summary.htm)

#### Training

- Facilitation courses by The Environment Council: tel. 020 7632 0103 or [www.the-environment-council.org.uk](http://www.the-environment-council.org.uk)

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DATA DECISION-MAKING DEMOCRACY DESIGN DISPLAYS EVENTS FORUMS FORUMS  
 FORMAL INTERACTIVE INTERNET INTERVIEWS LEAFLETS MEDIA MEETINGS NEWSLETTERS  
 PAPER PARTICIPATION ONE-TO-ONE OPEN PARTICIPATORY PARTNERSHIPS PARTNERSHIPS  
 PARTICIPATIONS PUBLIC QUESTIONNAIRES RESPONSE SHARED SITE STAFF SURGERIES  
 SURVEYS SURVEYS TELEVISION AND RADIO VISITS WEBSITES WORKING GROUPS

# Forums

A Forum is an organised group of interested parties such as local business or political organisations, conservationists, religious or social groups who agree to meet regularly to discuss issues of mutual concern. Participants are generally representatives of a stakeholder organisation or group. A Forum is often useful in maintaining awareness of issues that concern local people and in stimulating discussion of potential solutions that include local priorities. The purpose, role and level of participation should be made clear to the participants. A Forum can be divided into subgroups which explore the issues in more depth. Using workshop techniques is another way to enable people to contribute more. It is advisable to use a facilitator when the issues are very complex.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Personal communication skills are essential.
- Active listening skills are important.

### Equipment

- Flexible facilities are needed for regular meetings.
- Useful meeting equipment may include microphones and tape recorders.

### Time

- Meeting intervals can be flexible, e.g. once a month or once a quarter.
- Time limits should be set for contributions to the meetings to give everyone the opportunity to speak.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Community participation in Local Agenda 21. J. Bishop (1994). LGMB, London.
- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.

### Web

- The guide to effective participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)

### Training

- Facilitation courses are provided by The Environment Council: tel. 020 7632 0103 or [www.the-environment-council.org.uk](http://www.the-environment-council.org.uk)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- A Forum is a good method for information sharing and generating new ideas.
- Because of the long-term time frame, it provides an opportunity to develop trust and in-depth discussions on issues.
- It helps to stimulate contacts and networking.
- It is relatively cheap to organise.
- Over time, a Forum is able to generate trust, ideas and increase understanding.

## Weaknesses

- A Forum is not usually good for generating actions to resolve issues.
- The role of the Forum often remains unclear and this can reduce the number of attendees in the course of the process.
- Small membership may not necessarily represent the wider views of the specific group or community.
- Long-term commitment is usually needed from the organisers if the initiative for the Forum is theirs.



A forest Forum at work (New Forest Forest District).

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# Head, heart, bag, bin

This is a quick, easy and informal evaluation tool that provides feedback about an event, activity or project. It can be a useful tool for capturing people's reactions where other more formal forms of evaluation are less appropriate. An outline of a body is either drawn on a large sheet of paper on the floor, or given to people on an A4 sheet of paper. The head and heart areas of the body are marked out clearly, along with a bag and bin. Participants are then asked to use four sticky notes to write down something to represent the head, heart, bag and bin.

- **Head:** something I have learnt from being part of this event, activity, project.
- **Heart:** something important I have felt or experienced from being part of this event, activity, project.
- **Bag:** something useful I will take away with me from this event, activity, project.
- **Bin:** anything that I thought wasn't so good and would want to forget having been part of this event, activity, project.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Very few skills needed.

### Equipment

- Sheet of paper with outlines.
- Sticky notes.
- Pens.

### Time

- Very little preparation time is required, and time needed to complete (although dependent on number of people involved) is also short.

### Costs

- Staff time.

## Useful sources of information

### Web

- The Evaluation Trust: [www.evaluationtrust.org/tools/story](http://www.evaluationtrust.org/tools/story)  
[www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk](http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★

## Strengths

- It is quick and easy to do.
- It helps people think creatively.
- This is a very visual method showing results to everyone.

## Weaknesses

- Some people may find this method too frivolous.
- It may be challenging for those with low literacy levels.



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# Interactive displays

Interactive displays can be a part of a forum, a workshop or other event. They are used in conjunction with a display of general information to offer viewers a chance to 'vote' on various options displayed on a board. For example, one poster may describe the forest management planning process in general, while a second will illustrate several different potential uses or appearances of a particular area, and a viewer is asked to place a coloured self adhesive dot beside a preferred alternative. An Interactive display in a local library or town hall can be a useful addition to other ways of soliciting input from community members. Careful attention should be paid to the design of the display so that it will stimulate public interest and receive responses.



An Interactive display using computer projector and screen (Red Rose Forest).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good writing and graphic design skills are essential.
- Good personal communication skills are needed to make the display interactive.

### Equipment

- Equipment needed includes poster materials, display easels, coloured stickers, as well as standard office writing and printing facilities.

### Time

- Time requirements for designing and preparing depend on the type of display.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- An Interactive display is one way of engaging people who would otherwise be unlikely to participate.
- It may contribute to raising awareness of a project.
- This type of display is an interactive form of working with a broader public.

## Weaknesses

- An unappealing display is unlikely to gain extensive public attention and stimulate public interest in the process.
- If design experts are used, the costs may become very high.
- The display requires regular maintenance to ensure that the interactive elements are working.
- Some monitoring mechanism may be needed to prevent abuse of voting activity.

- Normally preparations need to be started early, at least one week in advance, or several weeks in advance if professional designers are used.
- Time will be required to maintain the display while it is being presented.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Community planning handbook. N. Wates ed. (2000). Earthscan Publications, London.
- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- Public involvement in environmental permits: a reference guide. US Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Available from: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

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# Internet surveys

Internet surveys are usually web-based response polls. On-line discussion rooms or chat rooms can also be used to explore the public's opinions on and attitudes towards particular issues. They offer an opportunity to gather information from the broad public and to find out what aspects and issues are important concerning the use and planning of a forest or woodland area. When setting up an Internet site the format should be designed carefully so that information input can be controlled by the manager. For instance, chat rooms and discussion rooms can easily generate excessive or inappropriate information. Also see [Websites](#) toolsheet.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good computer design skills and knowledge of web programming are essential.
- Depending on the design of the survey, analysis of responses may require statistical skills.

### Equipment

- Standard computer facilities and servers to provide access for users are needed.

### Time

- Careful design of a survey usually requires an extended time period.
- Considerable time may be required to analyse all the responses.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Making better decisions: report of an IPPR symposium on citizens' juries and other methods of public involvement. C. Delap (1998). Institute for Public Policy Research, London.

### Web

- Downloadable survey software: [www.statpac.com](http://www.statpac.com)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)
- Making the Net Work: [www.makingthenetwork.org/index.htm](http://www.makingthenetwork.org/index.htm)
- Partnerships Online: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- Tips for on-line discussion list: [www.e-democracy.org](http://www.e-democracy.org)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Internet surveys provide an opportunity to gain information from people who are not likely to attend group meetings.
- Polls can potentially reach a large number of people in a short time.
- Input received is from a better cross-section of public compared to mailing lists.
- Response rate is usually higher than in other forms of communication.

## Weaknesses

- Results can be easily biased.
- The survey only involves those with access to the Internet.
- It is difficult to assess whether the survey results are representative.
- The analysis phase may require a lot of resources.
- It may be impossible to control the geographic reach of the poll.
- Responses can be easily manipulated if the poll is not rigorously operated.

## Training

- The Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research runs courses on surveys:  
[www.ccsr.ac.uk](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk)

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[www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox)



# Interviews

Interviews can be in-depth, structured or semi-structured. In an in-depth Interview, the interviewer and the interviewee discuss a definite but possibly broad topic for less than an hour. The questions are not planned in advance and specific issues that arise can be discussed in more detail. In structured Interviews all the questions are formulated in advance. In this way, it is easy to gain answers to issues of special importance. Analysis of the results is relatively easy to carry out and the information reached can be readily quantified. In semi-structured Interviews, the majority of questions are created during the Interview, allowing both the interviewer and interviewee the flexibility to probe for details or specific issues. A range of pre-set topics is covered during the Interview to obtain feedback or delve into an issue or problem. Structured and semi-structured Interviews can be conducted face-to-face or by telephone. Interviewing key persons of a community is a good way to gain valuable information for planning and to identify possible stakeholders and groups.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Interviewers should be able to generate trust in interviewees.
- Good listening skills and an open approach are important.
- Interviewers should be highly skilled especially in in-depth interviewing.

### Equipment

- A tape recorder is necessary if Interviews are to be recorded (common with in-depth Interviews).

### Time

- Interviews may require a lot of time in total, but individual Interviews should preferably be kept short (20–30 minutes). In-depth Interviews normally take less than an hour.

## Useful sources of information

### References

- Reference manual for public involvement. J. Barker et al. (1999). 2nd edn. Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Health Authority, London.

### Web

- Information on how to carry out semi-structured interviews: [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Interviews provide a more in-depth understanding of people's ideas on the given issue compared to self-completed questionnaires.
- They can be good in bringing about interaction.
- They can be used to evaluate potential participants in other planning events.
- If the sample is taken carefully a good cross-section of people's opinions can be obtained.
- In-depth Interviews can generate a lot of new, high quality ideas.
- Structured Interviews are quick and cost effective in comparison with other types of interviews.
- They can be relatively cheap.

## Weaknesses

- A lot of time and resources can be spent with few people.
- Expertise is often needed to prepare the framework for the Interview.
- In-depth Interviews require a highly skilled interviewer and are more expensive than Focus groups.

Continued overleaf

Weaknesses continued:

- Structured interviews allow only minimum input from the interviewees.
- Analysis of qualitative data produced in in-depth or semi-structured interviews requires special skills.

- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/keypers.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/keypers.htm)

#### Training

- The Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research provides courses on Interview Questionnaire Design: [www.ccsr.ac.uk](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk)

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# Ladder of change

The Ladder of change is a quick, easy and informal evaluation and assessment tool that provides feedback about the impact or change brought about by an event, activity, project or decision. Ladders are useful ways to imagine scales and make comparisons between different points in time (e.g. before and after). This method is particularly helpful for making qualitative assessments of changes that are difficult to measure in other ways, for example capturing information about changing attitudes, degrees of co-operation or feelings of success.

Each single ladder represents one particular indicator or criteria. It is possible to ask people to report against several ladders at one time. The indicators represented by the ladders can be predetermined or discussed and selected as part of a group exercise. The rungs on the ladder represent the scale of measurement. '0' should be situated in the middle of the ladder so that a positive and negative change can be indicated. The number of 'rungs' in the scale and what they mean can be tailored to each situation. For example, a scale of five rungs could include 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. One side of the ladder represents one point in time (e.g. before an activity, project or decision), and the other side of the ladder a different time period (e.g. after an activity, project or decision). Participants are asked to mark scores on the ladders to show how they viewed the level of that indicator at either point in time. Scores can be used to generate quantitative values against the indicators. Often the greatest value of this tool is the information and debate that comes from the group discussion fixing the scales and choosing personal levels of difference.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Some facilitation skills are needed.

### Equipment

- Sheets of paper.
- Pens.

### Time

- Very little preparation time is needed, and time required to complete, although dependent on the number of people involved, is also short.

### Costs

- Staff time.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★

## Strengths

- It is quick and easy to do.
- It is a very visual method that shows results to everyone.
- It can convey qualitative information using numbers (i.e. quantitative measures).

## Weaknesses

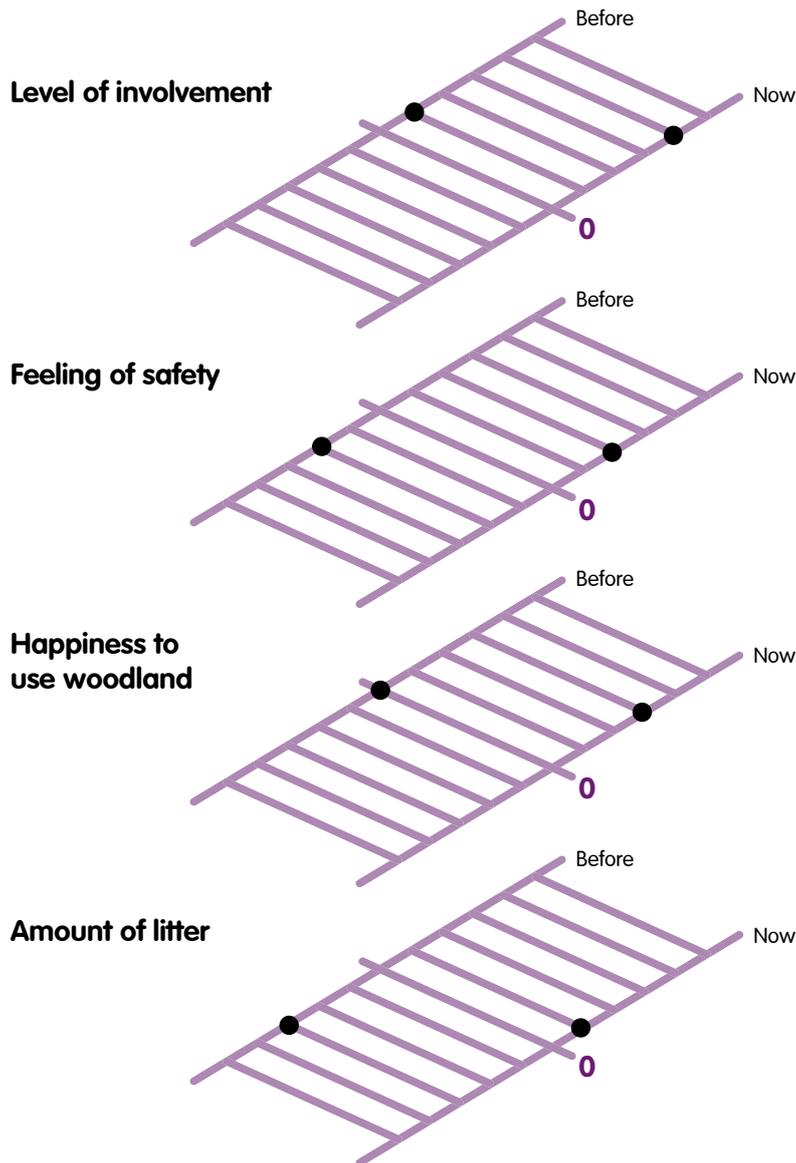
- Some people may find this method simplistic.
- Qualitative information may be mis-represented as 'quantitative scores'.

## Useful sources of information

### Web

- The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) monitoring and evaluation methods guide has guidance on this tool at: [www.ifad.org/evaluation/guide/toc.pdf](http://www.ifad.org/evaluation/guide/toc.pdf)

Example of a ladder used to measure the effects of actions to reduce anti-social behaviour in a woodland.



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# Leaflets

Leaflets or simple flyers can be distributed widely in public places such as shops, libraries or town halls. They can also be disseminated as inserts in community newspapers, usually at a lower cost than either direct mail or display advertisements. Leaflets are probably taken more seriously when distributed through local newspapers. Carefully targeted Leaflets allow you to compose a simple message and reach a specific audience. In some cases, they can include a public comment form. They can be used to update communities on the progress of the planning process as well as initially inviting people to participate, depending on the size and location of the community.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good written communication skills and graphic design skills are essential.

### Equipment

- Standard office writing and printing equipment are needed.

### Time

- Leaflets are not particularly time-consuming to generate or distribute, but some lead-in time is necessary for design and editing.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Community participation in Local Agenda 21. J. Bishop (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.
- Public involvement guide: a desk guide to public involvement. USDA Forest Service (1998). Northern Region, Public and Governmental Relations.

### Web

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

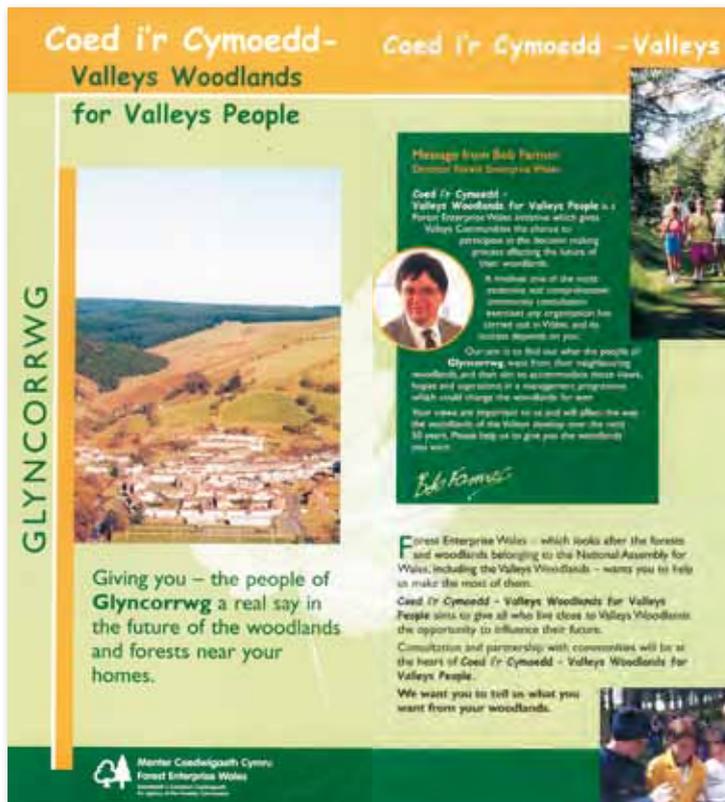
PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Leaflets and inserts are inexpensive ways of disseminating information or announcing meetings or workshops that are entirely under your own control.
- Leaflets are easily distributed within a community.
- Good graphic design can catch the attention of potential participants.

## Weaknesses

- Good design skills are required for the Leaflets to be effective.
- Leaflets do not usually reach all potential participants.
- They can be 'lost' among many other promotional Leaflets.
- The level of influence on public can be difficult to assess as there is no guarantee that the material will be read.



A bilingual Leaflet encouraging people to have their say on their local woodlands (Coed Y Cymoedd Forest District).

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# Media

Getting your information into newspapers or on radio or television (other than by paying for advertising – see [Advertisements](#)) can be very effective. When seeking this type of space, you will generally have to think whether your story is newsworthy. Working with the Media usually requires some effort to cultivate a good relationship with news reporters and editors in order to get your information published. When planning to use the Media, it is important to consider who you are trying to reach and what is the most effective way of reaching that particular group. In general, material designed for the Media should be attractive, relevant, accessible and clear. For more information on different techniques, see toolsheets on [Television and radio](#), [Newspapers](#) and [Newsletters](#).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Excellent writing skills are needed for working with the press.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills are necessary for appearances on TV and in radio programmes.

### Equipment

- Standard writing and printing facilities are required.
- Facilities and equipment such as a camera or graphics packages are needed for producing visual material.

### Time

- Preparations for press releases or TV/radio broadcasts should generally be made several weeks in advance.
- Contacts with the media should be started in the early phases of what is an extensive planning process and later contacts timed to coincide with the most crucial stages of process.

## Useful sources of information

### References

- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- Public involvement guide: a desk guide to public involvement. USDA Forest Service (1998). Public and Governmental Relations, Northern Region.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Information disseminated in the Media can potentially reach a large number of people.
- Wide dissemination contributes to raising awareness of the planning process.
- Press releases, news and articles are usually cheap.
- Articles written by journalists are considered to be more credible than advertisements.

## Weaknesses

- Press releases commonly have a low response rate in the Media.
- Impact on the audience is often difficult to assess.
- The contents of a press release or media appearance may be altered by reporters.

- Reference manual for public involvement. J. Barker, et al. (1999). 2nd edn. Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Health Authority, London.

#### Web

- The guide to effective participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)



Letting as wide a group of people know about your event or involvement process is a crucial early step.

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# Newsletters

Newsletters are a good way of keeping targeted groups informed about the planning process. A forest or woodland Newsletter can be published if the necessary resources are available or an existing local Newsletter can be used to inform the community. If a forest or woodland Newsletter is published it is necessary to maintain an updated mailing list to ensure that all interested persons and groups are reached. Newsletters can be used to keep community members and other stakeholders informed about meetings, events and other features of the planning process. They can also include a list of contact persons, which will enable interested people to obtain additional information. The information included should be short and simple and visually attractive.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good writing skills are essential.
- Graphic design skills are needed.

### Equipment

- Standard office equipment (computer and printer) is needed.

### Time

- Writing, designing and editing the Newsletter is likely to require several weeks.
- Less time is needed to contribute to Newsletters of other organisations.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Community participation in Local Agenda 21. J. Bishop (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.
- Public involvement in environmental permits: a reference guide. US Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Available from: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

### Web

- The guide to effective participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★ ★

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING:

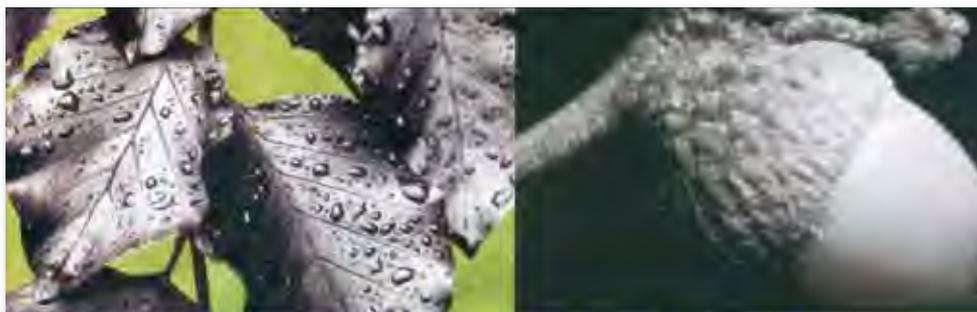
PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Newsletters are easily distributed within a community.
- They are normally relatively cheap to produce.
- They promote direct contact between the community and forest or woodland managers.
- A relatively large number of people can be reached.

## Weaknesses

- There is no guarantee that information will be read.
- The readership of a Newsletter produced by another organisation may be rather limited.
- The effectiveness of Newsletters is directly linked to the selection and numbers on the mailing list.
- Careful design and consideration of the contents is required if the Newsletter is to be effective.



## NEW FOREST - NEW FUTURE

### Newsletter Number 1

**What is New Forest - New Future?** New Forest - New Future is a project to produce plans which will guide the management of all of the New Forest Inclosure woodlands into the next century. We wish to hear everyone's views on the proposals

#### The Story So Far

The New Forest - New Future project was launched in March with a great deal of interest from the press. A series of open days, talks and walks were given between March and May, in Marchwood, Holbury, Dibden Purfieu, Colbury, Brockenhurst, Burley and Godshill.

By the end of May proposals for the following Inclosures had been looked at:

*Dibden, Marchwood, Fawley, Kings Hat, Crab Hat, Foxhunting, Deer Leap, Longdown, Church Place, Ipley, Perrywood Ivy, New Copse, Perrywood Ironshill, Stockley, Frame Heath, Hawkhill, Moonhill, Ladycross, Markway, Dur Hill, Millersford Plantation and Turf Hill*

Additionally talks have been given to New Forest Friends of the Earth and to Southampton University.

**'New Forest - New Future will mean that we and our children will have a chance to enjoy a more natural forest'**

**Peter Frost - New Forest Association**

#### Having Your Say

Hundreds of local people came along to the events to find out more about New Forest - New Future and to let us know what they thought of the proposals.

Our 16 events had 700 attendances (with some people attending more than one event). A total of 217 completed feedback forms had been received by 1st June 1999.

#### Support for Heathland

There has been a broad support for the proposals, particularly for restoration of more heathland. Some people felt the plans were too radical, whilst some people felt they were not radical enough! Most people preferred a balance between more heathland and retaining trees.

Many comments expressing a wide range of feelings about the management of the New Forest were received and many interesting points were raised.

Issues such as the restoration of woodland tracks after timber operations came through strongly and have been noted!

Please contact Paul Hibberd for further information or to be added to the Forest Design Plan mailing list



Forestry Commission

THE QUEEN'S HOUSE, LYNDHURST, HAMPSHIRE, SO43 7N1  
TEL: 01703 283111 FAX: 01703 283979

A forest Newsletter to inform people of the planning process and to encourage their involvement (New Forest Forest District).

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# Newspapers

Newspaper articles and Newspaper inserts are both efficient ways of distributing information. Articles are usually generated by a press release to local papers or by more personal contact with reporters. To be persuaded that the creation of a new forest or woodland plan is newsworthy and therefore merits space in their publication, reporters usually need to be convinced that the topic really interests the local community. Therefore you need to present the key aspects of interest to the Newspaper reporters and their readers. Meetings or workshops can be announced in this way. Presenting the public involvement process in its best light, providing evidence that people's opinions matter and that they can affect the outcome is a good approach. Press releases should be short – one to three paragraphs – and to the point. It is essential to include contact information to allow a reporter to follow up for more detail. Newspaper inserts can be simple leaflets or supplements offering more detailed information on the planning process. The information should be presented in a clear way and kept focused. Inserts and supplements can include mail-back response sheets and thus contribute to public involvement.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good writing skills are necessary to create a short, simple message that will engage editors and readers.
- Newspaper supplements may require expert journalistic skills to be effective.

### Time

- Minimal time is needed for each release, but successful efforts to cultivate good relationships with news reporters and editors usually requires additional time.
- Press releases for weekly newspapers should be sent out about two weeks before an event.

### Costs

- Newspaper inserts and supplements are normally free, but may require financial subsidy if extra copies are wanted for specific audiences.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Community planning handbook. Wates, N. ed. (2000). Earthscan Publications, London.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Articles by a reporter have the benefit of being presented by someone outside the forest or woodland management staff.
- News content may be viewed as unbiased and therefore efficient in inducing community members to participate in an involvement process.
- Announcements carried as news are free.
- Articles and inserts are useful ways of engaging with large populations at a low cost.
- Newspaper inserts and supplements are published and distributed very quickly.

## Weaknesses

- Reporters control the actual content of an article and may not interpret your words correctly.
- The best way to avoid misinterpretation is often to write a short, simple article yourself and issue it as a press release or provide it as a submitted article.
- Timing of publication is not controllable.
- Expert graphic design skills may be required to produce an exclusive insert or supplement.

- Public Involvement Guide – A desk guide to Public Involvement. USDA Forest Service (1998). Northern Region, Public and Governmental Relations.
- Reference manual for public involvement. J. Barker et al. (1999). 2nd edn. Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Health Authority, London.

Web

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

Interested locals discuss the plans for Cow Hill on display in Fort William Tourist office. Picture: The Daily Express

## Public come up with Cow Hill ideas

**DO you want to travel by cable car up to a dry ski slope on the Cow Hill?**

Or visit a restaurant on the 900 feet Cow Hill summit, reached via the back-track, try a pay-as-you-go mobile service?

Last week's fact-finding mission by the Forestry Commission, in connection with the Cow Hill behind Fort William, certainly provided plenty of food for thought for and from local people.

A series of questions were posed, with the main thrust of these being centred on these questions:

- How important is the Cow Hill to you?
- Why is it important to you?
- What do you like and dislike about the Cow Hill?
- What sort of improvements might you wish to see on the Cow Hill?

These surveys were asked to indicate on maps how they currently use the Cow Hill, and how they might wish to use it in the future.

Nearly 200 local people took part and provided information to the

**Forestry Commission exercise produces interesting schemes**

Forestry Commission at various locations around Fort William.

Teams of staff asked folk for their views in the Fionnistrion, Upper Achlader, Cloggan, Invercherry and Caid – and in Fort William's High Street and Victoria International Centre.

The participants had varied and wide-ranging views on what they thought could be delivered from the Cow Hill to benefit the local community.

These included the provision of a greater number of footpaths which could be used to link with current paths on the hill and beyond, as well as negotiating future path development elsewhere in the area.

It was stressed that such paths and tracks should be constructed to benefit all abilities.

Facilities for young people were top of some lists, as well as requests to try to control and make provision for young motorcycle riders.

In the main, it appeared that some people enjoyed the views from the Cow Hill, particularly from the summit, so easier access to the top was requested.

Locals were also keen to see improvements to Fort William, on and off the Cow Hill, with appropriate signs and information.

The existing wildlife and natural beauty on the hillside are important to people, and some were eager to see some expansion to woodland trees, shrubs and heather and, hopefully, a subsequent increase in wildlife.

Of those questioned, some commented that the Cow Hill is just how the way it is and that development should detract from its existing natural state.

Others are looking to develop a cable car to a dry ski slope, or mountain facilities at the summit, serviced by a pay-as-you-go mobile service.

So there is quite a debate but the opportunity to engage in and this will be continued over the next few months, via community councils, residents' associations, local schools, interest groups, and events to be held by the Forestry Commission.

A report on the consultation gathered during the two-day mission will be produced shortly and will be made available through community councils.

In the meantime, should you wish to make any suggestions about the Cow Hill and, indeed, any forestry-related matters, they can do so by contacting the Forestry Commission, at Lochaber Forest District, Tostlandy, Fort William, Telephone 01 907 93384.

Questions stimulate reader's thoughts

Questions stimulate reader's thoughts

Opportunity for more information

Opportunity to get involved

A Newspaper article which informs, provides feedback and encourages further involvement in the planning process (Lochaber News, Lochaber Forest District).

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# Nominal group technique

Nominal group technique (sometimes referred to as Delbecq groups) can be used to define needs and goals from representatives of different interest groups. The technique may also help in prioritising ideas and identifying solutions to specific planning questions. A small group of less than 12 persons is preferable. The meeting starts with a facilitator asking a few simple questions in order to generate participant response to the issue. The attendees normally formulate their answers and judgements of alternative ideas independently in written form. Participants are then asked to read out and explain what they have written. Each idea is discussed more widely and clarified by each participant and the individual ideas are numbered. Participants then indicate their preferred ideas (for example by voting with sticky dots) and a discussion of the preferences then follows. The group tries to reach a common solution to the questions or issues that were originally posed. If there is still lack of consensus, the individual judgements are produced again. The method should lead to a prioritised list of actions or issues.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Skilled facilitators (one to three per group) are required.

### Equipment

- Meeting facilities that enable efficient individual and group working are necessary.
- Clipboards, sticky notes and flip charts are useful.

### Time

- Time is needed for identifying and contacting the participants and organising the group meeting.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.
- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.

### Web

- [darkwing.uoregon.edu/~rgp/PPPM613/class10summary.htm](http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~rgp/PPPM613/class10summary.htm)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★

## Strengths

- All participants are likely to contribute due to the small group size.
- As the debate is limited, participants may express their ideas with minimal fear of being criticised.
- The technique can help to prioritise different issues or options.
- Judgements and discussion can lead to consensus between participants.
- Participants may be from a variety of backgrounds.
- Only limited resources are needed.

## Weaknesses

- Only a very limited number of participants are involved.
- The technique does not generally allow in-depth examination of the issues.
- A balanced participation of stakeholders is essential.
- The technique must be combined with other means of involvement when issues are complicated.

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)

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# One-to-one contact

One-to-one contact is a good way to obtain detailed information about how some important stakeholders feel about specific issues. Such contacts may include, for example, conversations with walkers along a woodland trail or with MPs in their offices. The advantage of meeting people in their own surroundings is that they are in a comfortable and non-threatening environment. The most important aspects of this type of communication are usually the abilities to build trust and open lines of communication with those stakeholders who show a strong interest in the planning process. If someone from the forest or woodland arranges to talk directly with a neighbour at the start of the planning process it can contribute towards building good will. Regular informal One-to-one contacts with the public by foresters, rangers or other staff should all be regarded as opportunities to gauge the public's attitude to the forest or woodland and how they feel it should develop. Consideration might be given to setting up mechanisms to ensure that feedback from these informal contacts reaches the planning team.



Involving knowledgeable users can provide good quality information at early stages in a design and planning process.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good listening skills and the ability to convey the plans and purposes of forest or woodland management are essential.
- Excellent interpersonal communication skills and the ability to respond to key questions are necessary.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★★★

INVOLVING: ★

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Rapport can be built with key stakeholders.
- One-to-one contact is easy to conduct.
- The technique helps to gain a more in-depth understanding of people's ideas and concerns on a given issue compared to Questionnaires.
- Genuine interaction can be brought about between stakeholders and foresters.
- The technique may save time in resolving conflict or informing important stakeholders.
- Making contact in this way helps to break down barriers that might prevent the sharing of information.

## Weaknesses

- A great amount of time may be spent with only a few people.
- Information reached by this means may be too one-sided if the persons contacted represent ideas and values of a very limited range of stakeholders or social groups.

### Time

- Contacts may require a lot of time in total, but individual discussions should preferably be kept short to ensure that the contacted persons maintain their interest in the issues discussed.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.
- Public Involvement Guide – A desk guide to Public Involvement. USDA Forest Service (1998). Northern Region, Public and Governmental Relations.

### Web

- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/keypers.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/keypers.htm)

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# Open house

An Open house can be held on site, in a building managed by the staff or in some easily accessible public space, simply as a 'get-to-know-you' event. It provides community members with a chance to meet the staff, learn about what they do and raise questions or issues about management activities. The atmosphere is usually very informal. The event should be held in a large, open space. Displays should be set up on the site/ around the space, describing activities connected with the forest or woodland, and refreshments should be provided. As many staff as possible should be present at the event. Staff should take discreet notes to help remember the comments and suggestions of attendees, and they should arrange a follow-up meeting to compare notes. Participants should also be asked to fill out a comment sheet.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Skills in graphic design and personal communication are needed for the direct interactions.
- Professional display designers can be used if available.

### Equipment

- Equipment for preparing and/or serving food is required.
- A meeting space that is large enough for displays and visitors is essential.

### Time

- The event is best run at evenings or weekends when most people are not at work, but this can demand what would normally be off-duty hours from several staff.
- Several weeks of lead-in time are necessary to plan and publicise an effective Open house event.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Community planning handbook. N. Wates ed. (2000). Earthscan Publications. London.
- Public involvement in environmental permits: a reference guide. US Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Available from: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

### Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Small group and one-to-one conversations can turn into detailed discussions of issues.
- Open dialogue and 'putting a human face' on the staff can improve credibility.
- Participants may request information and comment on a proposal or plan.
- The event can help to improve public understanding of planning issues.
- Different members of the forest or woodland team can help each other to answer difficult questions.

## Weaknesses

- Public comments may be difficult to record and document.
- Considerable demands can be made of staff time.
- Costs of organising and running the event can be high.
- The event needs to be used in conjunction with other opportunities for the public to voice their opinions since not everyone will be able to attend or feel able to speak.
- Careful advanced planning and significant preparations are required.

- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/openhous.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/openhous.htm)

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# Open space

Open space is a democratic framework, in which the attendees create and manage their own programme of discussions on a central topic. The number of participants should be unlimited. A facilitator is normally used to guide the opening and closing sessions and to explain the procedure and principles for the attendees. Outside these activities, the facilitator should stand as far away as possible from the discussions taking place. Participants are invited to raise issues that they find essential and on which they want to convene workshops. The leaflets announcing the issues are placed on a matrix of times and spaces available for the workshops. Everyone signs up for their chosen workshop(s). Finally, there is a plenary session where attendees can make any final statements. The most important outcomes, such as ideas, conclusions and plans for immediate action, are documented in one comprehensive report that is circulated to all participants. If there is adequate time the total contents of this report can be focused and prioritised. Open space works best when the issues are complex, the people and ideas involved are diverse and the need to reach resolution is high.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- A skillful, experienced facilitator is needed.

### Equipment

- Flexible facilities are required to accommodate numerous groups of different sizes.
- Office supplies are necessary: marker pens, sticky notes and flip charts.
- Refreshments will probably be necessary.

### Time

- Time required will vary from one-day workshops to several-day conferences, or regular weekly meetings, but usually last from one to three days.

## Useful sources of information

### References

- Community planning handbook. N. Wates ed. (2000). Earthscan Publications. London.
- Open space technology: a user's guide. Harrison, O. (1992). Available from Wikima: tel. 020 7229 7320
- Participation works! 21 techniques of community participation for the 21st century. New Economics Foundation (1998). CD-Rom edition 1999. Available from: [www.neweconomics.org](http://www.neweconomics.org)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Open space is a relatively inexpensive way to reach a large number of people.
- Minimal organisation is needed.
- Action is generated in a short time.
- The techniques promote learning and formation of new innovative ideas.
- Participation is likely to be fairly profound.
- An immediate output is gained in the summary of the discussion.

## Weaknesses

- The techniques are less useful if the agenda has already been set.
- If discussions are not well facilitated they may be over-dominated by a single point of view.
- The accurate reporting of results at the final stage can be difficult to achieve.

- Tales from open space. Harrison, O. (1995). Abbott Publishing, Maryland.

#### Web

- [www.iadb.org](http://www.iadb.org)
- [www.openspaceworld.org](http://www.openspaceworld.org)

#### Training

- Scottish Community Development Centre: [www.scdc.org.uk](http://www.scdc.org.uk)

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# Participatory appraisal

Participatory appraisal is a methodology that creates a cycle of collecting information, reflection and learning. Participatory appraisal practitioners design a process based on the needs of the client, then use suitable methods to facilitate analysis and discussion of local issues and perceptions with local people. The methodology has evolved rapidly and is continuously modified by users. It can be adapted to work with small groups or entire communities. Each group of participants proceeds gradually from stage to stage, first looking at their perceptions of the current situation, then identifying barriers or gaps and then coming up with solutions or issues for change. Participants are able to choose the level of participation that suits their interests and needs. Many of the methods used are visual, which helps to simplify complex issues. Examples of the different methods used in Participatory appraisal are brainstorming, institutional analysis diagrams, ranking of priorities or criteria and community mapping.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Facilitators trained and experienced in Participatory appraisal are essential.
- Facilitators and participating staff need to have good overall communication and listening skills.

### Equipment

- Writing and printing facilities, drawing materials and facilities for group work are all potentially needed.

### Time

- Time needed depends on the length of the process.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participation works! 21 techniques of community participation for the 21st century. New Economics Foundation (1998). CD-Rom edition 1999. Available from: [www.neweconomics.org](http://www.neweconomics.org)
- Techniques for talking: participatory techniques for land use planning – a review. M. Toogood (2000). RSPB, Sandy, Bedfordshire.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★

## Strengths

- Participatory appraisal is a highly flexible methodology.
- Interactive activities involving many stakeholders are used.
- Participatory appraisal helps groups to determine their priorities for action.
- It can be used in different locations where people naturally gather together.
- The opinions and concerns of local people have a central role in the process.

## Weaknesses

- Trained facilitators are required to guide the process.
- A long period of time plus resources to generate outcomes and reach decisions may be necessary.

## Web

- Information on different visual methods is provided in the site of Centre for Environment and Society: [www.essex.ac.uk/ces](http://www.essex.ac.uk/ces)
- Scottish Participatory Initiatives (SPI): [www.srds.co.uk/spi](http://www.srds.co.uk/spi)

## Training

- The Prince's Foundation: tel. 020 7613 8500 or [www.princes-foundation.org](http://www.princes-foundation.org)
- Training provided by Scottish Participatory Initiatives SPI (see web) and IIED Resource Centre for Participatory Learning and Action: tel. 0207 388 2117

## Case studies

- The community woodland handbook. McPhillimy, D. (1998). Reforesting Scotland, Edinburgh. Available from: [www.community-woods.org.uk](http://www.community-woods.org.uk)
- The Scottish Rural Development Forestry Programme 1994–1997. Reforesting Scotland (2001). Contact Reforesting Scotland: tel. 0131 554 4321 or [www.reforestingscotland.org](http://www.reforestingscotland.org)



People involved in Participatory appraisal in Felston (Reforesting Scotland).

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)



# Participatory budgeting

Participatory budgeting and public valuation are techniques that allow the public to debate the social and economic values they attach to particular policy, activity or design options. Using small groups of citizens representative of a particular area and community affected by the issues to be discussed, the groups deliberate on their preferences for forest use, planned activities, planting schemes, landscape design and infrastructure options. The aim is that a public discussion will revolve around maximising the public goods instead of benefiting individuals.

To bring real focus and meaning to the discussion a variety of methods can be used to value various options, or the discussion can turn towards deliberating the allocation of actual budgets for the proposals. Whereas valuation asks stakeholders to provide a notional value for features and options being discussed, the overall goal of participatory budgeting is to reach a consensus about actual spending and resource allocation of a specified budget. Participatory budgets can be used at different levels, from a project through to a regional or departmental budget. Citizens are provided with information that enables them to prioritise the needs of their neighbourhoods or community of interest, debating new services and project proposals to set budget allocations in a democratic and transparent way. Different levels of engagement can be designed in using different techniques to discuss and assign values and budget segments, so the process meets different levels of participation.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Requires good facilitation skills.

### Equipment

- Publicity materials.
- Information on budgets.
- Flip charts and similar materials.

### Time

- Awareness-raising/promotion is needed before the event so participants have required information and knowledge of objectives.
- Is likely to require a series of events rather than a single meeting.

### Costs

- Staff time.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★★

## Strengths

- It is a powerful technique for facilitating consensus between stakeholder groups over the use of public goods and services within a project or programme.
- It helps participants to understand each other's viewpoints and to come to some agreement about shared priorities.

## Weaknesses

- Some agencies have reservations discussing resource allocation issues in a public forum.
- It does not work well if agencies involved have restricted budgets linked to central targets, which limit the amount of decision-making power that people have over project and activity design.

- Venues).
- Costs may be quite high depending on the number of meetings and people involved.

## Useful sources of information

### Case studies

- Discourse-based valuation of ecosystem services: establishing fair outcomes through group deliberation. M. Wilson and R. Howarth (2002). *Ecological Economics* **41**, 431–443.
- A variety of UK cases can be found at: [www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/case-studies](http://www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/case-studies)

### Reports

- Bringing budgets alive: participatory budgeting in practice. Community Pride Initiative and Oxfam's UK Poverty Programme. Oxfam (2005).  
[www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/documents/Bringing-20budgets-20alive.pdf](http://www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/documents/Bringing-20budgets-20alive.pdf)

### Web

- The Participatory Budgeting Unit: [www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk](http://www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk)

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# Participatory GIS

Participatory GIS uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to involve people in planning and design decisions using their spatial knowledge and discussion of virtual or physical, two or three-dimensional maps and visualisation aides. Discussion, information exchange and joint analysis between stakeholders allows the consideration of different design options alongside negotiation, advocacy or awareness-raising in decision-making processes. The use of Participatory GIS often promotes better integration of social issues with the ecological and technical forestry issues. For example, using maps to indicate and discuss the social use of space by different sections of a community can suggest the best layout for planting plans and provision of additional features and facilities in a regeneration project. Participatory GIS has also been used as an effective tool to discover more about local heritage and cultural values and discuss integration in landscape planning. Participatory GIS can be conducted using digital materials and methods on a computer, but is just as effective using hard copies of maps and other printed materials to support spatially focused discussion. It supports a range of interactive approaches from face-to-face contact to web-based applications.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good facilitation skills.
- Knowledge of GIS techniques and packages is needed if using computer-based packages.

### Equipment

- Printed materials.
- Maps.
- Computer stations and web access.

### Time

- Preparation time needed can be quite high depending on activities and techniques used.

### Costs

- Staff time.
- Venue(s).
- Costs may be quite high depending on the number of meetings and people involved, and on the use of computers and printed maps and aerial images.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★★

## Strengths

- Participatory GIS has the potential to include more marginal groups in society in decision-making processes.
- The visual language used by Participatory GIS is very accessible and understood by everybody.

## Weaknesses

- Using some kinds of mapping tools can be complicated.
- Indiscriminate use of Participatory GIS without proper thought as to the objectives and reasons for engagement can be costly and counterproductive.

## Useful sources of information

### Web

- On-going annotated bibliography on Participatory GIS and participatory-mapping applications in natural resource management and rural contexts:  
[www.ppgis.net/pdf/PGIS\\_PSP\\_LSK\\_Biblio\\_may\\_2010.pdf](http://www.ppgis.net/pdf/PGIS_PSP_LSK_Biblio_may_2010.pdf)
- PGIS, PPGIS and P-Mapping in the urban context: references:  
[www.ppgis.net/pdf/100514\\_Urban\\_PGIS\\_refs.pdf](http://www.ppgis.net/pdf/100514_Urban_PGIS_refs.pdf)

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[www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox)



# Partnerships

Partnerships involve the closest and most extensive interactions with stakeholders. In a true Partnership as described here, forest or woodland managers and staff work with members of partner organisations as integral parts of their team, sharing planning and decision-making activities fully. Such a commitment to share responsibility requires dedication from both or all parties to the idea that joint action produces a more satisfactory outcome for all. True Partnerships require considerable time commitments from all parties. Although there are likely to be many more hours spent in meetings and discussions than if a single person did an analysis and made a decision, the process of sharing that responsibility is likely to produce a plan and a decision that is more acceptable to stakeholders. In order to ensure that all interest groups can be involved, the mechanisms for developing Partnerships and accepting new partners should be as open and inclusive as possible.



Forestry Commission staff working in Partnership with Highland disabled ramblers.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good interpersonal skills are essential to making full Partnerships work.
- Meeting facilitation, active listening and mediation techniques are all important.
- An ability to share the power of decision-making with other stakeholders is a prerequisite.

### Equipment

- Basic office facilities for small group meetings are needed.

### Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP: ★★ ★

### Strengths

- Full Partnerships are the best way to ensure that all parties will endorse outcomes from joint activity.
- Partnerships are the best means of building trust among stakeholders.
- They provide opportunities to access new resources, as partner organisations may be able to contribute time and resources for their share of the effort.
- Working in Partnerships may enable new funding opportunities to be accessed.

### Weaknesses

- The time commitment is the primary cost of Partnership.
- Difficulties may arise if some interested parties feel excluded by Partnerships that include others with different interests and goals.

### Time

- Considerable time commitments are needed in order to make a Partnership work.
- Partnerships that work well are maintained through time at whatever level of activity is needed to meet current needs.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Building effective local partnerships. Local Government Management Board (1993). LGMB, London.
- Good practice in rural development, No. 1: Effective partnership working. B. Slee and P. Snowdon (1997). Scottish National Rural Partnership, The Scottish Office Central Research Unit.
- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.

### Web

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- USDA Forest Service's guide on partnerships: [www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)

### Training

- The Prince's Foundation: tel. 020 7613 8500 or [www.princes-foundation.org](http://www.princes-foundation.org)
- Scottish Community Development Centre: tel. 0141 248 1924 or [www.scdc.org.uk](http://www.scdc.org.uk)

### Case study

- Ae Forest District maintains partnership arrangements on several of their forest design plan areas, such as Mabie Forest and Cairnhead Forest.

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# Planning for Real

Planning for Real® (PfR) is a technique, developed originally by the Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation (NIF), is designed to provide a hands-on, non-threatening experience to community members. Participants take part in a workshop setting using a 3D model of the planning area (often constructed by the participants themselves from cardboard and polystyrene) on which they put cards or other symbols representing issues, problems or suggestions for actions that they would like to see. Group meetings can follow this with the community to sort out and prioritise the suggestions so that a profile of community needs can be drawn up. When used fully, 'Planning for Real' is a complete process of community involvement containing many of the elements needed to facilitate effective capacity building in local communities. 'Forests for Real' is an adaptation of PFR using options cards specifically related to forestry issues and was developed by forest staff in Fort Augustus Forest District.



Suggestion cards placed on a standard FE stock map during a Forest for Real event (Lochaber Forest District).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Organisers need the ability to generate interest among the community to attend and to allow people to lead the event.
- A member of the community who is not associated with staff can be a good leader.
- Active listening techniques and meeting facilitation skills are important.

### Equipment

- The PFR session is built around a version of a clear model of the planning area.
- A neutral location, e.g. a public meeting space, is preferable.
- 'Planning for Real' pack (available from NIF) provides information and materials.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★

CONSULTING: ★★ ★

INVOLVING: ★★ ★

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- A model is much more easily understood than a map.
- Using suggestion cards means that ideas can be put forward without needing to be articulate or self-confident.
- Vocal or articulate people are prevented from dominating the input.
- The technique helps to increase the feeling of ownership in any outcomes among the community members.
- Appeals to people of all ages.

## Weaknesses

- A reasonable amount of preparation time is needed to ensure efficient attendance.
- Meeting organisers may need to exercise restraint to allow all community members to participate fully.
- PFR done poorly can raise expectations beyond the level at which outcomes can be delivered.
- Many more than 50 participants in any one session can be unworkable.

## Time

- The meeting itself may take a few hours.
- Preparation to ensure that people will participate and follow-up may involve considerable time.
- Responding to the ideas generated and providing direct feedback often involves additional meetings.

## Costs

- Generally between £500 (covering venue and materials) and £15,000 (covering a trained facilitator for two to three months prior to the event) (Source: New Economics Foundation, 1998).

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participation works! 21 techniques of community participation for the 21st century. New Economics Foundation (1998). CD-Rom edition 1999. Available from: [www.neweconomics.org](http://www.neweconomics.org)

### Web

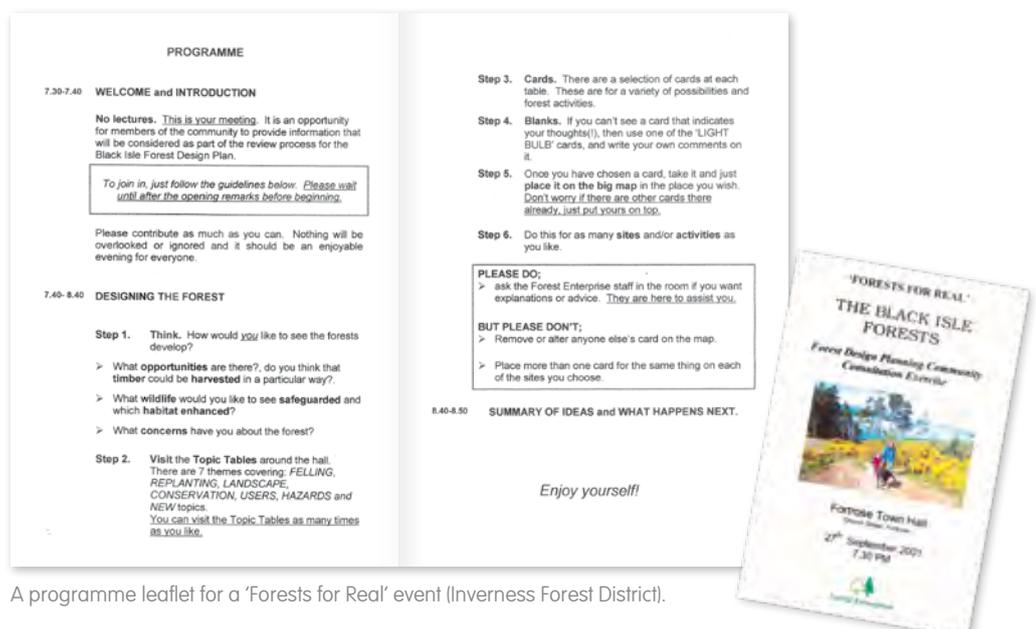
- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)

### Training

- The Prince's Foundation: 020 7613 8500 or [www.princes-foundation.org](http://www.princes-foundation.org)

### Case study

- Staff at Fort Augustus Forest District have conducted these exercises with good experience. Ae Forest District and Thames Chase Community Forest (East Anglia Forest District) have tried similar events.



A programme leaflet for a 'Forests for Real' event (Inverness Forest District).

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)



DATA DECISION-MAKING DEMOCRACY DESIGN DISPLAYS EVENTS FORUMS FORUMS  
 FORMAL INTERACTIVE INTERNET INTERVIEWS LEAFLETS MEDIA MEETINGS NEWSLETTERS  
 PAPERWORK PARTICIPATION PARTICIPATION OPEN PARTICIPATORY PARTNERSHIPS PARTNERSHIPS  
 PARTICIPATIONS PUBLIC QUESTIONNAIRES RESPONSE SHARED SITE STAFF SURGERIES  
 SURVEYS SURVEYS SURVEYS TELEVISION AND RADIO VISITS WEBSITES WORKING GROUPS

# Presentations

Presentations are suitable for informing and consulting rather than involving people in decision-making. They are talks with props such as flip charts or slides. Visual materials can be used to make the Presentation more interesting. When planning a Presentation it is essential to define the object clearly and organise the ideas into main points and subpoints. Keeping the Presentation short and simple is advisable. If necessary, it can be revised so that more emphasis is put on the benefits for the audience.



A Presentation at the start of a planning process to potential participants (The National Forest).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good presentation and graphic design skills are important.

### Equipment

- Suitable meeting facilities are needed.
- Possible equipment includes flip charts, a slide or computer projector, and graphic production facilities.

### Time

- The preparation time for visual aids depends on the technology used.
- Adequate time must be allowed to rehearse the presentation.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Presentations are an excellent way of clarifying the message for the audience and getting feedback at the beginning of a participation process.
- Information can reach a fairly large audience at one go.

## Weaknesses

- Presentations are not very useful for gathering information and exploring the public's viewpoints.
- Careful planning and good public speaking skills are needed to fulfil the purpose of the Presentation.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.
- Public involvement in environmental permits: a reference guide. US Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Available from: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

### Web

- Beyond fences: seeking social sustainability in conservation. Borrini-Feyerabend, G., ed. (1997). IUCN, Gland, Switzerland. Provides tips for audio visual presentation. [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)
- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)

### Training

- A presentation skills course is available from: [www.businessballs.com/presentation.htm](http://www.businessballs.com/presentation.htm)

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# Public hearings

A Public hearing provides a formal opportunity for representatives of the public to comment on a proposed plan or decisions already made. The organiser may start by presenting relevant information on the planning process. Predetermined speakers then announce official positions of interest groups following a scheduled timetable. Speeches are generally prepared beforehand and deal with decisions already reached. The Public hearing is often carried out in a similar way to a juridical process. Comments made during a Public hearing will become part of the planning record but they are normally non-binding. Hearings often provide a time period during which written comments may be received. However, when the purpose of the meeting is to discuss issues and gather public views more broadly, it is advisable to organise a workshop or small informal meetings instead of a Public Hearing.

## Resources and requirements

### Equipment

- Good meeting facilities located on a neutral site are necessary.
- Microphones may be needed.
- A moderator may be needed.

### Time

- Time is required for contacting stakeholders and identifying speakers, scheduling a suitable venue and organising the hearing itself.
- A Public hearing usually has a predetermined time frame of between two and five hours.
- The event should be publicised early, preferably one month in advance.
- To allow maximum attendance, it is advisable to arrange the event for an evening or at a weekend.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.
- Public involvement in environmental permits: a reference guide. US Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Available from: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)
- Public participation in environmental decisions: an evaluation framework using social goals. T. C. Beierle (1998). Resources for the Future, Washington, DC.

### Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

### Strengths

- This type of hearing meets legal requirements in formal planning situations.
- Recorded comments provide useful information for planning.

### Weaknesses

- There is little opportunity for effective interaction and dialogue.
- There is the risk of creating an open conflict situation if participants feel they do not have an actual chance to influence the decisions.
- Sometimes an 'us versus them' feeling may be created among the audience.
- There may be an insufficient level of public involvement when a Public hearing is held at the end of a process and not accompanied by other opportunities to participate.

## Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)
- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/pubmeet.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/pubmeet.htm)

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# Public meetings

Public meetings are gatherings called by an agency or others in positions of authority in order to tell the public what they are planning to do and to listen to the response and gather comments. They provide information on what the planning process aims to achieve and how members of the community can take part in the process. Public meetings are traditionally the normal approach to public involvement. Unfortunately, this approach does not always serve a positive purpose, but rather makes those who want to be involved in decisions feel that they are not really heard. However, Public meetings can be useful in certain situations. Primarily, they need to be conducted as part of a larger effort that includes other tools. If the meetings are part of a larger effort and public input can be shown to be a genuine part of that larger process, some benefits can be gained. In some situations, organising workshop groups with a reportback plenary session can be a more effective way of using the time that would have been used for a meeting. The opportunity for participants to present their ideas and suggestions in written form as well can raise the amount of feedback received.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good public speaking skills are important.
- The meeting leader should be trained in facilitating large meetings and have the trust of the attendees.

### Equipment

- The meeting room should be large enough to cope with the anticipated number of attendees, and ideally should be on a neutral site.
- Posters or other graphical displays set up around the room help everyone, including early arrivals, to understand the topic better and provide time to formulate any questions.

### Time

- Meetings are generally one to two hours long.
- Several days, preferably at least two weeks, are needed to prepare for the meeting.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Information can be disseminated to a large number of people at one time and in a relatively short period of time.
- Public meetings can be useful for raising awareness of the planning process.
- They generally work well in small communities when no particularly controversial issues are involved.
- They may provide an opportunity for a wide variety of interaction.
- A Public meeting that dispenses a progress report on planning efforts can be beneficial.

## Weaknesses

- A Public meeting can get out of hand and diverted from its original purpose if one or a few very vocal, very animated attendees have issues that they want to raise in a public forum.
- Such a meeting can be self-defeating if allowed to proceed, but cutting attendees short can also cause serious repercussions.

Continued overleaf:

Weaknesses continued:

- This type of meeting is generally poor for consultation, debate or decision-making.
- If poorly organised, and controversial issues are being raised, an 'us versus them' feeling may be created.

- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.
- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.

Web

- The Community's toolbox by D'Arcy Davis-Case: [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)
- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)

Training

- The Environment Council: tel. 020 7632 0103 or [www.the-environment-council.org.uk](http://www.the-environment-council.org.uk)

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# Questionnaires

Questionnaires are useful when gathering information from large groups. They can be targeted to particular groups or sent to a random sample of residents. They can be carried out by doorstep interviews, by telephone or distributed by mail or be handed out at special events or locations for self-completion. Questionnaires can be either open, so that the respondent formulates the response in his/her own words, or structured, when set alternative answers are given; they can also be a combination of the two. The data produced by structured Questionnaires is usually easy to quantify, whereas open Questionnaires are likely to provide partly qualitative information. Multiple-choice Questionnaires with a few open-ended questions are often a good option. Questionnaires must always be tested to find out the possible design faults and they should be kept as short as possible to receive a high response rate. If possible, they should be kept anonymous in order to achieve a larger response rate.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Designing and testing the Questionnaire usually requires experts.
- Good writing skills are needed in order to make the questions as clear as possible.

### Equipment

- Standard office facilities are needed for writing and printing the Questionnaires and for analysing the information received.

### Time

- Open-ended Questionnaires are time-consuming to analyse.
- Adequate time is required in order to produce statistically valid results.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.
- Reference manual for public involvement, 2nd edn. J. Barker et al. (1999). Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Health Authority, London. Covers self-completed questionnaires.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- This is generally an inexpensive way to gather information.
- Questionnaires can collect relevant information from large numbers of people or from representative samples.
- When open-ended questions are used, participants are able to comment on topics that they find important.
- Mailed Questionnaires can reach people who would be unlikely to attend meetings.
- Person to person Questionnaires can help to create interaction with local people.

## Weaknesses

- There is no interaction between the respondents and planners when postal Questionnaires are used.
- Questions and responses can be easily misinterpreted.
- There is a risk that the sample may not be very representative as the returning rate may vary between different groups in the population.

Continued overleaf

Weaknesses continued:

- The response rate is generally low in mailed surveys.
- Professionals may be needed to design and analyse an effective Questionnaire.

## Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

## Training

- The Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research provides courses on 'Questionnaire design': [www.ccsr.ac.uk](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk)

## Case study

- Cross-plan integrated participatory planning as a tool for rural development. S. Bell and M. Komulainen (2001). University of Oulu, Finland.

**Lochend Woods**  
A community woodland for Dunbar

Lochend woods will shortly due to be handed over to the Dunbar Community Development Company to be managed as a resource for local people by the Dunbar Community Woodland group.

In order to ensure that the woods are managed to provide what you want from them and to do in them, a local consultation exercise is being carried out. This will start with a:

**Public Meeting**  
on  
Tuesday 5th March  
from 7-9pm  
in Dunbar Parish Church Narthex

The meeting will take the form of a workshop to allow the widest range of ideas and opinions to be collected.

If you are unable to come to the meeting, we would still welcome your ideas! Please fill in the questionnaire overleaf and drop it into the **Crunchy Carrot in the High Street or No 27 High Street** (Philip Revell). Feel free to write more on another sheet!

Everyone's opinions will be displayed at an exhibition - look out for the announcement.

If you would like to be kept informed, become a member of the Dunbar Community Woodland group, or help in any way (please specify) please leave your details below.

name..... phone/e-mail.....  
how you might help.....

This consultation is being sponsored by Reforesting Scotland

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. The woodland will be managed to improve the following aspects; please mark them in the order of importance to you.

Recreation/sports  
 Informal play  
 Solitude  
 Safety  
 Wildlife  
 How it looks/landscape  
 Children's education  
 Timber products  
 Training/learning opportunities

Anything else?.....

2. In term of its 'character' what kind of place would you most like to have?  
natural/wild..... public park.....

3. In terms of information what would you like?\*

lots of signs and notices in the woods..... information elsewhere.....

4. How often would you visit the woods if they were how you wanted them?  
daily..... weekly..... monthly..... yearly.....

What do you mainly go there for?.....

5. If you did help how much time could you spare?  
one day a week..... one day a month..... one day a year.....

How many people/family members are you answering for?.....

\*please make a mark somewhere on the line.

A Questionnaire combined with a public meeting advertising leaflet (Reforesting Scotland).



A Questionnaire being completed outside a local supermarket (Inverness Forest District).

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)



# Response cards

Response cards are a form of informal survey that engages a self-selected section of the population. The purpose of Response cards is to receive information on the public's views and their preferences concerning plans for the forest or woodland. Response cards are normally return forms that are attached to information sheets, newsletters or other public mailings. Alternatively, they can be handed out in public meetings or provided in conjunction with a newspaper insert or a feedback box in a public place. When sending Response cards by mail the postage should be paid in advance to ensure a better response rate. It is advisable to include a section where interested respondents can add their name to a mailing list for further information on the planning process.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good written skills are necessary to ensure that Response cards are well structured and understandable.
- Knowledge is needed on how to analyse the results of the survey.

### Equipment

- Standard writing and printing facilities are required to produce the cards and analyse the responses.

### Time

- The planning phase requires a moderate amount of time.
- Time needed for sorting and analysis of responses depends on the size of the survey.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.
- Reference manual for public involvement. J. Barker et al. (1999). 2nd edn. Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Health Authority, London.

### Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- This type of survey is likely to engage people who would not otherwise participate in the process.
- When anonymity is preserved, people who do not usually speak in public meetings can contribute easily.
- The survey offers a possibility to expand the mailing list.
- Results can be documented as part of a public involvement record.

## Weaknesses

- The results of a Response card survey are not statistically valid and can be easily skewed.
- Written responses are typically less forthcoming than verbal responses.
- The technique is not very helpful in creating new contacts with stakeholders.
- Careful planning is required to fulfil its purpose.

**What kind of woodland would you like to see in your area?**

These exciting changes will be happening soon, but before any trees are planted we want to hear your views and offer you the opportunity to influence the design of this woodland. Please take a few minutes to read the following question and mark your ideas on the accompanying map. Send your comments back to us at the adjacent address, or call in at the Delamere Visitor Centre before the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2000.

**Questionnaire**

Use the spaces provided, a separate sheet or the map overlay to mark any ideas or comments.

*How do you envisage using this area?*

*What would make your visit to this new site more enjoyable?*

*Where do you think the key access points should be located? What type of entrances do you prefer? (Kissing gate, stile, other)*

*The Forestry Commission has a policy of open access (freedom to roam). However, where do you think the main routes should go?*

*Are there any views that you wish could be retained or screened?*

*Would you like to locate a bench anywhere?*

*Try to draw on the map the location and area of open space woodland you would like to see?*

*A considerable history is associated with this site. Do you have any local knowledge we might not be aware of, i.e. place names?*

*Can you think of a name for this woodland?*

*Any other comments?*

**Guided walks of the site will take place on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September starting at 10.30am from the Visitor Centre.**

Your ideas will be used to prepare a draft proposal, which will be on display at the Visitor Centre on the evening of Wed. 27<sup>th</sup> Sept. These draft ideas will then be worked up into detailed proposals, which will be available for viewing at the Visitor Centre during the afternoon and evening of Wed. 11<sup>th</sup> October.

This is only the start of a much bigger project throughout the Mersey Forest area. If you would like to be kept informed of woodlands being created near you, please give your name and address to our **Community Liaison Officer**.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

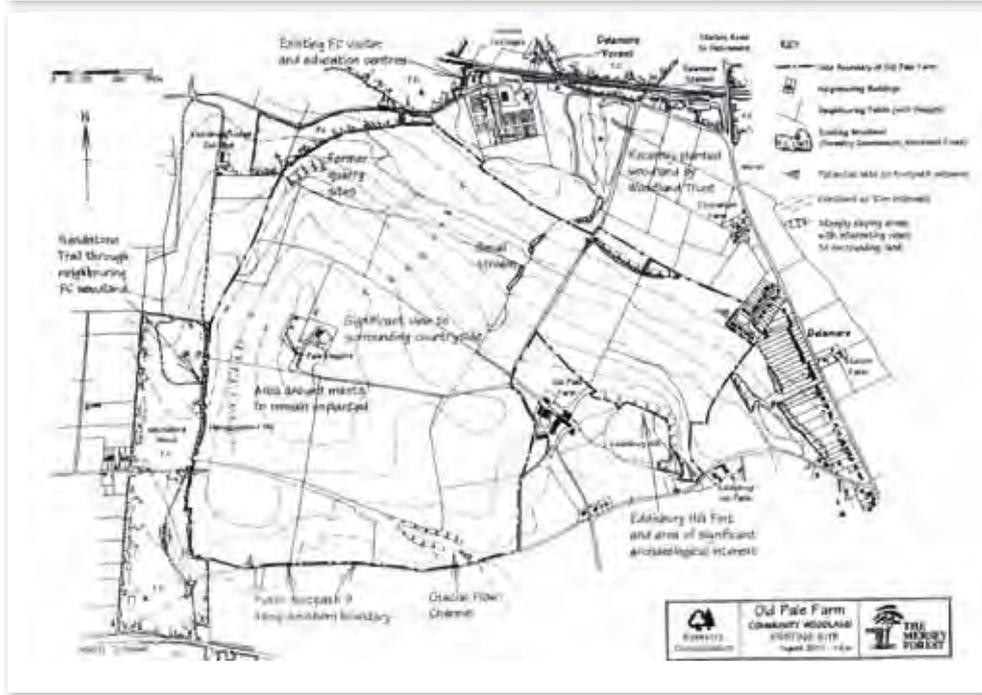
**Forest Enterprise, Delamere, Northwich, Cheshire. CW8 2JD. Tel 01606 882167**



**OLD PALE FARM**

Mersey Forest is working with the Forestry Commission to create new community woodlands in your area. The first of these is going to be **Old Pale Farm**, adjacent to Delamere Forest. It is hoped that this area will be transformed into mixed woodland with open space that people can enjoy.

**Your new woodland**



A response leaflet combining a questionnaire and site plan for suggestions on a new wood (The Mersey Forest).

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# Scenario building

Scenario building is a participatory planning and strategy tool that helps people to imagine a set of possible future outcomes. Scenario building is a form of visioning. It is not a tool designed to build consensus around a particular single vision of the future, but to explore the political, social and economic realities of a situation. The scenarios that evolve can show both positive and negative outcomes of different choices and this can prompt discussion about possible points of conflict and possible points of common interest or agreement among different stakeholders. Scenario building works best in situations that are socially complex and changing, and where uncertainty about the future and different stakeholder positions dominate. The process can help participants to create scenarios that answer the question 'What if...?' creatively and in a way that unifies diverse social groups as they explore the potential futures and ways of getting there. Scenario building may use a suite of techniques to evolve different scenarios, explore stakeholder assumptions and encourage mutual understanding about a particular planning or service provision issue.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Needs experienced, creative and dynamic facilitation to bring out new ideas from participants.
- Some experience of conflict management and mediation is useful.

### Equipment

- Flip chart.
- Cards.

### Time

- Needs time for careful preparation.
- Depending on the numbers of people involved and the number of sessions needed, Scenario building may take a week or more in half day sessions.

### Costs

- These will include costs of venue, facilitators' and participants' time, and equipment (dependent on context).

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★★

## Strengths

- A strong method for dealing with communities facing changes, uncertainties or problems, or when groups of stakeholders are in conflict about natural resource or infrastructure planning.

## Weaknesses

- Requires a skilled facilitator who understands the tool.
- Takes committed participation and some time and effort to be effective.
- Will not work if there is insufficient buy-in from key stakeholders.

## Useful sources of information

### Case study

- G.D. Peterson, T.D. Beard JR, E.M. Bennett, S.R. Carpenter, G.S. Cumming, C.L. Dent and T.D. Havlicek (2003). Assessing future ecosystem services: a case study of the Northern Highlands Lake District, Wisconsin. *Conservation Ecology* **7(3)**, 1.

### Reports

- Scenario analysis: a tool for task managers. J.N. Maack (2001). In: *Social analysis: selected tools and techniques*. Social Development Papers Number 36. The World Bank, Washington, DC.
- What if? The art of scenario thinking for nonprofits. D. Scarce and K. Fulton (2004). Global Business Network, Emeryville, CA. [www.gbn.com](http://www.gbn.com)
- Anticipating change: scenarios as a tool for adaptive forest management: a guide. E. Wollenberg, D. Edmunds and L. Buck (2000). CIFOR, Bogor, Indonesia.

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# Secondary data

Secondary data is existing information that has been gathered for some purpose outside the planning process. Obtaining Secondary data in practice normally means 'desk' or 'library' research. Information can be obtained from the data that is routinely collected by the planning organisation or from external sources. External data is gathered by other organisations either for their own use or for commercial use. General sources of external data are, for instance, various computerised databases, associations, other government agencies and different published sources such as libraries and newspapers. A computerised database can provide information on a wide range of topics, and lists of commercial databases are normally available in public libraries. Librarians can also be invaluable in the search for specific information for planning. Among the potentially useful data provided by government agencies are demographic data, employment data and special reports on industries. Other examples of Secondary data are historical information and the Census data. Associations may have valuable information about conservation or social aspects. To estimate the relevance of information for the planning process it is essential to know how and why the information was produced.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Using Secondary data requires understanding of the methodologies of data collection and their limitations.

### Equipment

- Standard office facilities are needed.
- A computer with a modem is required if databases are utilised.

### Time

- Identifying relevant sources of information and going through the data may be very time-consuming.

## Useful sources of information

### Web

- Census Information Gateway: [www.census.ac.uk](http://www.census.ac.uk)
- General Register Office for Scotland: [www.gro-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk)
- Office for National Statistics: [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- It is usually relatively easy to acquire Secondary data.
- This is often an inexpensive source of information.

## Weaknesses

- The vast amount of data available may make it difficult to identify information that is relevant for a particular occasion.
- Depending on the type of the data used, expert knowledge on the methodologies of data collection may be needed.

## Training

- The Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research (Demographic Forecasting with POPGROUP): [www.ccsr.ac.uk](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk)

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# Shared decision-making

Shared decision-making includes processes that aim to resolve disputes between the parties involved and enable them to agree on decisions at hand. The definitions of the processes vary between authors and institutions, and lines between processes are blurred. The definitions used by The Environmental Council are used here. In Negotiation, people consult directly with each other, exchanging ideas and offers about possible outcomes. Each of the participating groups advocates for its own interests. Mediation is a process in which disputing parties meet together and separately in confidence with a neutral third party to explore and determine how the dispute between them is to be resolved. Mediation can be seen as a way to extending negotiation. Mediation characteristically focuses on issues of specific conflict and involves smaller numbers of people compared to facilitation. Similar to mediation, Facilitation is more widely used, and not only to resolve conflict. It usually involves larger numbers of people and is used in multiparty and multi-issue situations where parties can work together. Arriving at a consensus is one means of decision-making in which the above methods can be used as part of the process. The process starts with the whole group defining the problem and exploring possible solutions. The group is then divided into subgroups, which review the issues and produce more detailed solutions. In the end, the groups report back, look for consensus, and identify remaining issues. The whole process can be repeated when necessary.



Planning and consultation meeting between foresters, recreation rangers and representatives from disabled access group.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- The third party (mediator or facilitator) should be well trained and experienced in the principles and practice of the process and skilled in breaking deadlocks.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP: ★★★

## Strengths

- A facilitator or a mediator can help the parties to move forward from deadlocked situations.
- Mediation is a good preventative tool and can be used effectively to stop problems escalating.
- Ownership of the decision made by the involved parties is of high level compared to other ways of making decisions, such as voting.
- Mediation and negotiation are considerably flexible and can be used in various situations and time frames.

## Weaknesses

- Time and labour requirements are considerable.
- The process usually requires significant management and organisation.
- It may be difficult to identify who the parties are and whom they represent.
- If parties do not have shared incentives to negotiate or reach consensus, the probability of success is low.

Continued overleaf

Weaknesses continued:

- An impartial third party facilitator or mediator hired for a long period of time may be expensive.

- The facilitator needs to be able to recognise when facilitation is not enough and mediation is required instead.

#### Equipment

- Good meeting facilities which contribute to efficient discussion as necessary.

#### Time

- Plenty of time is usually required to build a compromise.

## Useful sources of information

#### Books

- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.

#### Web

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- Guidelines for facilitation are provided by FAO: [www.fao.org/Participation/ft\\_factl.jsp](http://www.fao.org/Participation/ft_factl.jsp)

#### Training

- The Environment Council runs courses in 'Stakeholder Dialogue': tel. 020 7632 0103 or [www.the-environment-council.org.uk](http://www.the-environment-council.org.uk)
- Courses and information on mediation are provided by Mediation UK: tel. 0117 9046661 or [www.mediationuk.org.uk](http://www.mediationuk.org.uk)

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# Site visits

A Site visit offers the public an opportunity to get acquainted with the planning area or proposed projects. It can also be targeted to special groups, e.g. key stakeholders, advisory committee representatives or media. On guided visits, the attendees are able to discuss the different planning options and their implications and other related issues. Careful designing of a Site visit is always important and should include a demonstration (the preferred option) or a presentation. Participants should be encouraged to pose questions and comment on the topics in order to create genuine interaction and exchange ideas. When planning a Site visit, it is recommended to make a bad-weather plan, for instance by arranging a large enough indoor venue for presentations/ demonstrations and discussions. The organisers must also give due consideration to health and safety requirements of taking visitors on to work sites.



Darrochwids (Buchan Forest District). Site visits can stimulate interest and involvement in forest and woodland plans.



Clinkham Woods (The Mersey Forest).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- The group leader should have excellent presentation and overall communication skills.
- The leader must have adequate knowledge of the site to be able to answer participants' questions.

### Equipment

- Transportation is needed for participants.
- If the visit is self-guided, facilities are required for producing maps, signs and brochures.
- Providing refreshments for participants is a good idea on longer trips.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★★★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- A Site visit can increase the public's awareness of the forestry planning and related issues.
- The discussion environment is more neutral compared to other options.
- The visit can provide an opportunity to create new interaction and rapport with stakeholders.
- Organisers can be made aware of the public's viewpoints.

## Weaknesses

- The number of participants is fairly limited by logistics and other practical factors.
- Site visits may need to be repeated several times and this increases costs.
- There is a risk of creating a poor public image if the visit is not well designed and organised or the staff are unable to answer questions from participants.

## Time

- Time is needed to make the arrangements such as transportation and possibly to acquire the materials for the demonstration/presentation.
- Enough time should be allocated so that the visit is not rushed.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.
- Public Involvement Guide – A desk guide to Public Involvement. USDA Forest Service (1998). Northern Region, Public and Governmental Relations.

### Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)
- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/sitevis.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/sitevis.htm)



Forest district staff and community representatives at an on site planning meeting. Galloway Forest District.



Forestry Commission staff, members of the public and local residents at an onsite consultation meeting. Whitelee forest near East Kilbride.

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# Small informal meetings

In Small informal meetings the number of participants is kept low, often between 5 and 20, to maximise the effectiveness. These meetings can be targeted at a certain interest group or can involve people who represent diverse interests. When contentious issues are being discussed, it is advisable to address the meeting to a particular interest group, as there is less potential for conflict. They may be meetings at existing groups or informal meetings arranged in a private home, in a library meeting room or in some other suitable public facility. The location should be convenient and central. Alternatively, they can be arranged in conjunction with another event. This type of meeting is a good at encouraging a co-operative approach to identifying and solving problems, and can provide a forum for decision-making by consensus. They can also promote activities and enable participants to share experiences. In order to avoid confrontation, the meeting can cover several issues instead of focusing on one specific theme. On some occasions, a third party facilitator may be used to ease the discussions. Comments generated in the meeting may be recorded or summarised and sent to participants.



Participants in a Small informal planning meeting (Clinkham Woods, The Mersey Forest).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good overall communication and facilitation skills are necessary to make the meeting go smoothly.
- Polite and appreciative conduct is essential.

### Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★★★

INVOLVING: ★

PARTNERSHIP:

### Strengths

- A Small informal meeting is usually quick and fairly inexpensive to run.
- It can help to reach interaction and encourage a co-operative approach to identifying and solving problems.
- Small informal meetings usually provide a good opportunity for in-depth information exchange.
- Participating people feel that their perceptions are taken into consideration in the process.
- Regular meetings provide a forum for decision-making by consensus.

### Weaknesses

- The format is not normally suited to debate and decision-making.
- The meetings may take considerable time to arrange.
- Sometimes small group meetings may be too selective and leave out important groups.

### Equipment

- A flexible meeting facility which is suitable for discussion(s) is necessary.
- Providing refreshments for participants is worth considering.

### Time

- Normally a fairly limited time is needed for preparation and holding the meeting.
- Before the meeting, it is useful to spend a short time writing down topic-related questions and ideas.

## 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)

### Web

- The community's toolbox by David D'Arcy: [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

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# Staffed displays

Staffed displays differ from stand-alone displays in that they include people who are present to interact with interested passers-by. They need to be targeted to community events where people go and expect to be spending time browsing and talking to people. They do not generally work well in, for example, shopping malls, because people are not there to discuss forest or woodland management. Displays as part of local agricultural shows or community events are more likely to attract people who have an interest in the display material. Staff displays are also more likely to be successful in small communities where many people know each other and are more inclined to talk. Careful advanced planning of the display material is essential to make the display effective.



Yurt used for Staffed displays and discussions as part of Forest Design Process in Coed Y Mynydd District.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good writing, graphic design and personal communication skills are all needed to make this form of engagement effective, though they need not all be possessed by the same person.

### Equipment

- Photographic equipment, poster materials, display easels or boards and standard office printing equipment are all necessary.
- A system for recording people's responses is recommended.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Direct personal interaction with community members provides an additional perspective on public attitudes.
- Displays may reach people who are not reached by other involvement means.
- They are a good way of sharing information with public and raising awareness of the planning process.

## Weaknesses

- If location or display design is poor a great deal of time may be taken up for little response.
- A large number of personnel may be needed if the display is continually staffed.
- Staff manning the displays must be prepared to deal with the more hostile members of the community.

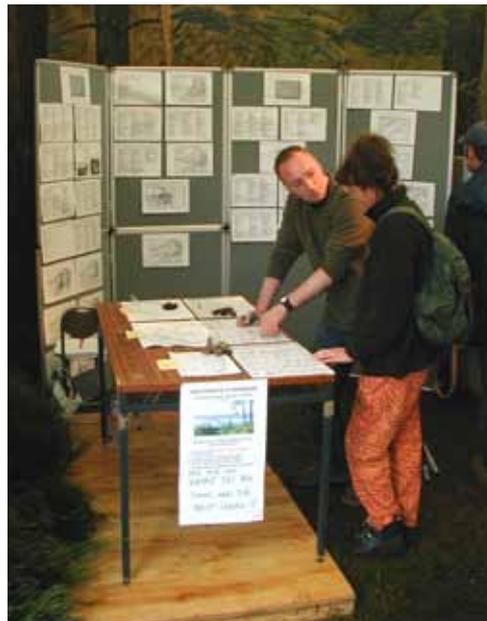
## Time

- Time requirements for preparation are similar to [Unstaffed displays](#).
- Allocate as many days or half-days as are available for personal interactions at community events.
- Appropriate shows and events are often outside normal office hours and staff may need to arrange for extra time.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- 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, 2nd edn. J. Barker et al. (1999). Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Health Authority, London.



A Staffed display can encourage a response to forest plans (Inverness Forest District).

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# Stakeholder analysis

Stakeholder analysis allows forest managers to identify the interests of different groups and find ways of including those who are likely to benefit, while managing the risks posed by stakeholders who might not be supportive. It can also help to identify real perceptions and needs which contribute to the development of forest and woodland activities, projects and management plans most suited to potential users, interest groups and others. Stakeholder analysis is used to identify:

- the interests of all stakeholders who could be affected or can affect planned forest activities, events, facilities and management plans;
- potential conflicts between stakeholders;
- opportunities and relationships that can be built to aid success;
- the groups that should be encouraged to participate in different stages of the planning and activity cycle;
- ways to improve plans and lessen any negative impacts.

There are different ways of undertaking such an analysis. There are usually a number of steps, and the methods used will be suited to the local context. Opening up Stakeholder analysis to include representatives of some or all of the stakeholder groups will be important. The basic steps in any Stakeholder analysis are:

- Identify the key stakeholders and their interests in the activity.
- Assess the influence and importance of each of these stakeholders in the activity.
- Sort, rank or score stakeholders to identify when they will be engaged, to what degree they will be engaged, and how engagement might change over time

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Excellent facilitation skills are needed where analysis includes people outside the forestry team.

### Equipment

- Flip charts.
- Sticky notes.
- Pens.

### Time

- Each step can take up to an hour or more, so a full analysis may take up to a day.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★★

## Strengths

- This tool can help to deal with complex situations by prioritising who to involve and why.
- It helps to focus engagement effort.
- It also helps to outline risks of not involving certain stakeholders.

## Weaknesses

- The analysis will only be as good as the information used.
- Unless analysis is opened out to include people outside the forestry team, judgements about stakeholders may remain subjective and influence the results and engagement planning choices.
- Complex situations can be over-simplified.

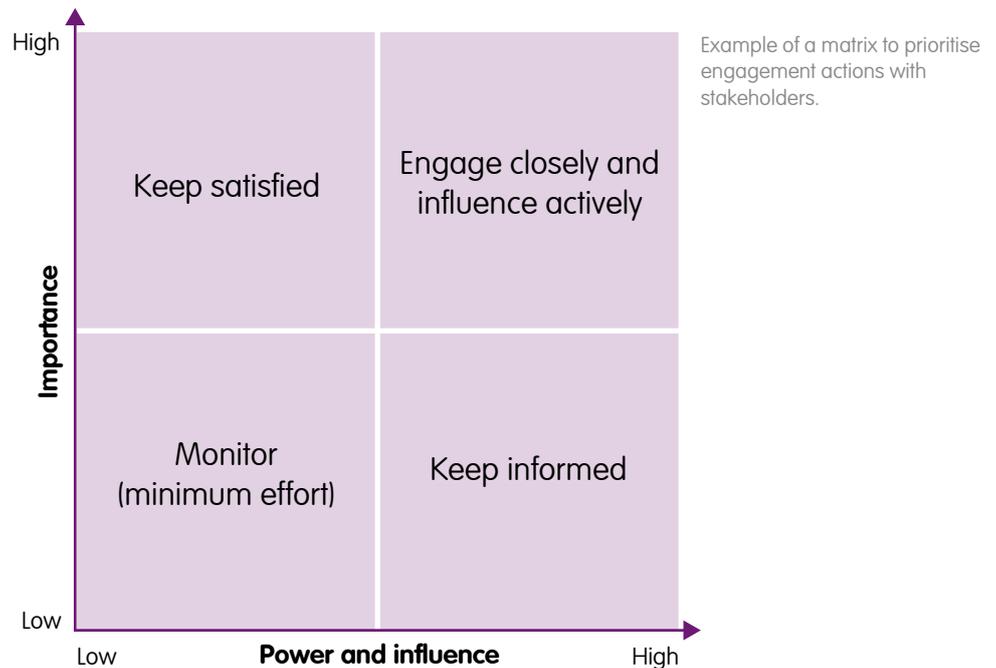
### Costs

- Staff time.
- Venue (where analysis includes stakeholders).

## Useful sources of information

### Web

- Stakeholder analysis descriptions and tools from the Overseas Development Institute: [www.odi.org.uk/rapid/tools/toolkits/communication/Stakeholder\\_analysis.html](http://www.odi.org.uk/rapid/tools/toolkits/communication/Stakeholder_analysis.html)
- Stakeholder influence mapping and power analysis tool, which is part of the Power Tools series, International Institute for Environment and Development: [www.policy-powertools.org/Tools/Understanding/index.html](http://www.policy-powertools.org/Tools/Understanding/index.html)
- The Effective Engagement Planning Tool from the State Government of Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment, provides a simple-to-use piece of downloadable software for detailed stakeholder analysis: [www.dse.vic.gov.au/effective-engagement](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/effective-engagement)



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# Surgeries

Many people respond positively to being provided with a small amount of time with exclusive attention from 'people in power'. Forest or woodland managers can provide that reinforcement to members of the community and get valuable insights into the wishes and needs of the people by holding occasional Surgeries in a public or neutral location. If necessary, several staff can be present on selected days so that more people can be seen. The larger the population of the area, the more frequent such Surgeries should be, though it may take several sessions before word spreads among community members that the sessions are real, and that they are being listened to. For example, in very small communities, one session per year may be enough, while in areas with very large populations one per month may be needed. Surgery date(s) need to be published throughout the locality in advance.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good personal communication skills are essential.
- Skills at listening and being able to keep the conversation in a productive direction are important.

### Equipment

- A meeting room at a library, school, council hall or similar public site is ideal to minimise the intimidation factor.
- Facilities for waiting are useful, including written information to browse and light refreshments.

### Time

- Time commitments for Surgeries vary, depending on the communities they are intended to serve.
- For a district that serves a large population, perhaps a half-day every month would be appropriate. For smaller communities once every six months or once a year would suffice.
- Surgeries should be held in the evenings or at weekends.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Direct, detailed information from individuals can be helpful to planners.
- Many people feel better about voicing complaints in private, one-to-one situations.

## Weaknesses

- Many people will not feel comfortable enough to express their concerns directly.
- Views gathered through Surgeries may not be very representative of the population.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- 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.

### Case study

- Fort Augustus Forest District.

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)



# Surveys

Surveys can be formal or informal. Informal Surveys tend to reach a self-selected group of people whereas formal Surveys are scientifically assembled and administered and aim to obtain information on issues at hand from statistically significant samples of the population. Surveys are a means to get a general sense of an average response from a specific section of the population or the whole population of a particular area. They can provide information on public opinion about particular issues and public concerns related to planning and find out what information people would like to receive. Surveys can be carried out in person, by mail, by phone or by internet. The design of Surveys and structuring of questions need to be conducted carefully to avoid errors in information gathering. Benefits from Surveys – whether conducted by interviewers or completed by respondents – may be improved if local groups are involved in the whole process, including design of the questions, administration of the Surveys and analysis of the results. Some common types of Surveys are described in more detail on the toolsheets: [Internet surveys](#), [Response cards](#), [Telephone surveys](#), [Interviews](#), [Questionnaires](#) and [One-to-one contact](#).



Surveys can be used to collect opinions and ideas but involving people in surveys of the forest is also a useful way to encourage their involvement and perspectives.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Excellent skills, possibly even expert skills, in structuring the questionnaires or questions.
- Interviewers should preferably be trained to conduct interviews.

### Equipment

- Standard office facilities are needed for writing and printing material and carrying out telephone surveys.
- A computer program for analysing the results is useful.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Surveys can provide a good cross-section of public opinion and people's views about given issues in the area.
- They can be targeted to special groups of the population.
- If properly designed, the results can be statistically valid.
- Informal public opinion surveys are relatively inexpensive.

## Weaknesses

- Organising a Survey can be expensive and time and labour intensive.
- Survey design normally requires professional skills.
- Surveys do not provide much opportunity for interaction.
- Interviews may give false impressions if not conducted in the proper way.
- Carrying out a Survey may raise false expectations within communities unless the purpose is made clear.
- The Survey sample must be taken with care.

### Time

- Time requirements depend on the type of Survey, but time is always needed for designing and conducting the Survey, and analysing the results.

### Costs

- Costs depend on the extent and nature of the Survey; informal Surveys and self-completed questionnaires are generally cheap compared to formal Surveys or interviews.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Community participation in Local Agenda 21. J. Bishop (1994). LGMB, London.
- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government } Management Board, London.
- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.

### Web

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/surveys.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/surveys.htm)

### Training

- The Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research runs courses on Surveys and Questionnaire Design: [www.ccsr.ac.uk](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk)

What do you Dislike about Cow Hill

A

B

C

What do you Like about Cow Hill

M

N

O

1:17000

How Important is Cow Hill To You (Even if you dont use it)

Not Important 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Important

Why Not Important?

Why Important?

How often do you use Cow Hill

Daily  
Weekly  
Monthly  
First Visit  
Never

1

2

3

What are your suggestions to improve Cow Hill?

A Survey form to capture views and ideas of people on a forest (Lochaber Forest District).

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# Task force

A Task force comprises a group of experts or relevant stakeholders appropriately appointed to deal with a particular issue or issues. A Task force is usually formed when a specific outcome or policy recommendation needs to be developed. It may review the participation process, receive community input, and exercise other functions depending on its mandate. A group is assigned a specific task, with a time limit for reaching a conclusion and resolving a problem, subject to ratification by official decision-makers. The personnel of the agency usually appoint Task force members and a facilitator guides discussion to cover all issues that the participants see important. It may use other group work methods such as brainstorming in order to seek solutions to specific problems. The sponsoring agency can provide technical support depending on the issues addressed. The members of the Task force should have credibility with the public and represent various views. It is also important that the members are independent. Academic organisations may sometimes take part in organising a Task force with a local agency.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- The facilitator must have experience in group processes.
- The facilitator must also have excellent communication and presentation skills.

### Equipment

- A large meeting facility is usually required.
- Materials and facilities are needed to produce presentations of proposals and reports.

### Time

- Regular meetings may be required to understand and deliberate the issues.
- Each meeting may last several hours or even a full day.
- Planning should be started several months in advance.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Community planning handbook. N. Wates ed. (2000). Earthscan Publications. London.

### Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING: ★★ ★

PARTNERSHIP: ★

## Strengths

- Findings are likely to have fairly high credibility if the diverse interests of stakeholder groups are presented.
- A Task force offers an opportunity to reach compromise.
- The group is usually able to produce high quality proposals and recommendations.
- In a collaborative Task force, a great depth of discussion is expected.

## Weaknesses

- Costs may be quite high.
- A skilled facilitator is needed.
- The process is time and labour intensive.
- Reaching a consensus is not guaranteed.
- Participants must make an extensive commitment to the process.
- The results may be too general to draw any firm conclusions.

- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/colltf.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/colltf.htm)

#### Training

- The Prince's Foundation: tel. 020 7613 8500 or [www.princes-foundation.org](http://www.princes-foundation.org)

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# Telephone hotlines

A Telephone hotline is a separate line for the public to pose questions and voice concerns and viewpoints about planning issues. It is usually a local phone number and can be installed as a temporary or a semi-permanent measure. A temporary line is used when there is a need to obtain major public input in a limited timeframe. Recorded information about the planning project can be provided outside the office hours of the contact person. The contact person who is responsible for replies should be local and well aware of different issues related to the forest or woodland planning process. A Telephone hotline may contribute to information gathering if a telephone log is kept for documentation. The phone number should be adequately publicised to ensure full use of the technique. Websites and e-mail can be used in a similar way to provide information for, and receive feedback from, interested community members.



A pro forma being used to record the views of a telephone caller in a forest office (Buchan Forest District).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- The contact person should have good knowledge of planning issues and related topics.
- Skills are needed in dealing with complaints in a non-defensive manner.

### Equipment

- Telephone line and an answering machine for calls outside staffed hours.
- At least one staff member should be available for answering the phone during office hours.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- The hotline provides easy and quick access to information for members of public.
- Updates on planning activities are easy to provide.
- The system promotes an image of 'accessibility'.
- It is a useful way to control information flow.

## Weaknesses

- The designated contact person must have good knowledge of the subject and be prepared for prompt and accurate responses.

#### Time

- The Hotline can be set-up quite quickly, but time should be reserved for publicising.
- Telephone Hotline hours should be designed to be as convenient as possible for the public.

## 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)

#### Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

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# Telephone surveys

Telephone surveys and polls are normally used for gathering specific information on public attitudes and opinions. In addition, a phone poll in which people are asked to phone in can be used as a means to acquire anonymous information. Surveys are conducted by taking a random or representative sample of the population or they can be targeted to a segment of the community. The information gained with this method should be statistically valid. The survey should preferably be developed and administered by a professional in order to avoid bias. It is worth noting that this method is often not the best option when statistically valid results are not needed.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- The formulation of questionnaires and administration of surveys normally require professional skills.

### Equipment

- Standard office facilities including writing, printing and telecommunication equipment are needed.
- Computers and programs for data processing are also needed.

### Time

- Plenty of time is usually required to conduct Telephone surveys and process the data.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.
- Public involvement in environmental permits: a reference guide. US Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Available from: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

### Web

- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

### Training

- The Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research runs courses on surveys: [www.ccsr.ac.uk](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- Telephone surveys can build political support if they are considered to be administered fairly and are a valid measure of public opinion.
- If the survey is designed properly, it allows planners to make generalisations about large populations.
- They can be used to provide real opportunities to voice opinions on policy alternatives.
- Response rates are usually higher than in mail surveys.

## Weaknesses

- Telephone surveys can be expensive and labour intensive.
- They may oversimplify the issues and miss opportunities to dig deeply into opinions and feelings.
- Potential methodological problems could invalidate surveys which are poorly designed or administered.
- Poor response rates can be a problem unless incentives are offered.

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# Television and radio

Television (TV) and radio can be used for public involvement in different ways, for instance, in the form of interviews or participatory programmes. The main aim is to inform the wider public about the planning process and possibly to encourage audience response. Participatory programmes explore a particular topic and give the public (studio and viewing/listening audience) an opportunity to comment on it. Staff record comments and/or respond to questions raised by the audience. This two-way communication is also called interactive TV. Most interactive TV enables viewers to respond by telephone, but more sophisticated technology is becoming available that allows participants to respond directly to issues seen/heard in the programme. When seeking space in the media, the newsworthiness of the subjects should be high. When actually being interviewed by a reporter or when attending a participatory programme, it is essential to explain the subject matter in plain English and avoid professional expressions and jargon. It is good practice to ask beforehand what topics the interviewer is going to cover and to be prepared for additional questions if you are aware of potentially controversial issues. If visual material is used in the programme, it should be clear and simple.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good communication and presentation skills are necessary.
- Interactive programs need facilitators.

### Equipment

- Good clear visual material is useful in TV to make the ideas easily understandable.

### Time

- Arrangements for television appearances should be made several weeks or months in advance.
- Press releases for radio stations should be sent out about two weeks before an event.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.
- Public Involvement Guide – A desk guide to Public Involvement. USDA Forest Service (1998). Northern Region, Public and Governmental Relations.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- People who would not normally attend other events may be reached.
- Television reaches a large public and a wide geographic area.
- Interactive TV enables people to absorb large amounts of information quickly and respond straight away.

## Weaknesses

- TV is an expensive medium and therefore extensive advance planning is required.
- Assessing the impact on the audience can be difficult.
- Poor media appearances can have an adverse effect on the public's views about the planning organisation.
- Input from interactive TV is not statistically representative.

### Web

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)
- Public involvement techniques for transportation decision-making by United States Department of Transportation: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/interv.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/interv.htm)

### Training

- Training in customer care and service standards will be important to the success of this method. Check for internal or external providers.'



Public involvement promoted through local television.

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)



# Trade-off analysis

Trade-off analysis (multi-criteria scenario testing) is a decision support tool. It can be used to help decision-making where there may be multiple objectives and some uncertainty about the impacts of different forest management strategies. Trade-off analysis will involve a number of steps. Generally it combines stakeholder analysis, conflict assessment and participatory decision-making into a 'multi-criteria analysis'. The main benefits of the tool are that the way in which decisions are reached are made clearer and more transparent, and will include more stakeholders. The tool can therefore build agreement between stakeholders and help to manage any potential conflicts and competing interests. There are three key steps:

1. Stakeholder analysis.
2. Consensus building:
  - identifying scenarios,
  - identifying criteria.
3. Multi-criteria analysis to understand impacts on stakeholders and to decide between scenarios.

Public meetings can be used to identify and then involve stakeholders to build a picture of the different possible management strategies, and the important criteria attached to them. These multiple criteria can then be listed out within each scenario, and the impact of different scenario criteria on key groups can be worked out. The final stages of the process involve stakeholders in agreeing which management scenario is their preferred option, and what the implications of that are on different stakeholder groups.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good facilitation and mediation skills are needed.
- Understanding of the local context is also required.

### Equipment

- The process can be very sophisticated or very simple. Some forms of multi-criteria analysis use computer software to help in judging and scoring the criteria, others use matrix scoring methods on paper.

### Time

- Depending on the methods used the process can last from half a day to a number of weeks.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING:

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★★

## Strengths

- The process is transparent to those involved.
- The preferred scenario (outcome) is mutually agreed by participants.

## Weaknesses

- It can be complicated and time consuming.
- It may require conflict management skills where conflicting groups are brought into contact with one another.

## Costs

- Staff time.
- Venue.
- Computer modelling software.

## Useful sources of information

### Case studies

- Using multi-criteria analysis and visualisation for sustainable forest management planning with stakeholder groups. S.R.J. Sheppard and M. Mietner (2005). *Forest Ecology and Management*, **27(1–2)**, 171–187.
- Examples of using trade-off analysis in natural resource management in a selection of countries, supplied by Research into Use project:  
[www.researchintouse.com/nrk/RIUinfo/PF/NRSP08.htm](http://www.researchintouse.com/nrk/RIUinfo/PF/NRSP08.htm)
- Trade-off analysis for coral reef management:  
[www.coremap.or.id/downloads/ICRS9th-Tompkins.pdf](http://www.coremap.or.id/downloads/ICRS9th-Tompkins.pdf)
- Addressing trade-offs in forest landscape restoration. K. Brown (2005). *Forest restoration in landscapes, Part A*, 59–64. Springerlink:  
[www.springerlink.com/content/ng2583521527x766](http://www.springerlink.com/content/ng2583521527x766)

### Journal article

- Trade-off analysis for marine protected area management. K. Brown, W.N. Adger, E. Tompkins, P. Bacon, D. Shim and K. Young (2001). *Ecological Economics* **37**, 417–434.  
[www.uea.ac.uk/menu/acad\\_depts/env/people/adgerwn/tradeoff.pdf](http://www.uea.ac.uk/menu/acad_depts/env/people/adgerwn/tradeoff.pdf)

### Web

- International Association for Public Participation’s database of tools and techniques includes some that can be used in multi-criteria analysis: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

Example of a criteria and scenario table used in building stakeholder consensus and scenario choice.

Criteria	Scenario			
	A	B	C	D
<b>Economic</b>				
Increased revenue (£1000/ha)	9	11	17	19
Visitor enjoyment (£/ha)	1.80	2.75	0.50	1.60
<b>Social</b>				
Local employment (no. jobs)	2	2	6	6
Level of wellbeing (score 2 = low, 6 = high)	5	4	3	2
Level of access (score 3 = low, 9 = high)	5	4	5	7
<b>Environmental</b>				
Woodland quality (score 2 = low, 6 = high)	2	4	4	6
Level of biodiversity (score 3 = low, 9 = high)	3	6	3	3
Water quality (µgN/litre)	1.3	1.2	3.0	1.8

Adapted after Brown et al. (2001).

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# 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 (Irl Valley Futures, Joanne Tippet).

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# Visioning

Visioning covers a wide range of approaches and techniques, which can be classified together in that they are all concerned with identifying different options for the future. People can use Visioning to create images that can help to plan and guide change in their neighbourhood or local environment. In a simple visioning exercise a facilitator asks participants to close their eyes and imagine they are walking through their neighbourhood, local forest or woodland as it should be some years into the future. People can record their visions in the form of pictures, photos, written stories, dramas, dances, poems, maps, videos, models, computer modelling, 3D GIS projections or any combination of these and other media. The users' capacities, preferences and resources determine the form of vision. The only real limiting factor is the imagination of the people using them and the interests of people to participate in creating them. Once the vision is agreed the next step is to ask the question 'How do we get there, how do we achieve the vision?' leading to the start of an 'action planning' process.



A 3D model of a forest valley made from sheets of polystyrene (Ae Forest District).



A 3D computer generated visualisation of a forest landscape generated with the 'forester' extension to Arcview (Forest Planning, Forestry Commission).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Meeting facilitation skills.
- A set of selected questions to guide the visioning.
- Ability to lead discussion towards formulation of a shared/common vision.

### Time

- Visioning session may take anything between a few hours to a day, depending on the mix of the group.

### Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING: ★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★★

### Strengths

- Useful where complexity and uncertainty are high.
- Useful for scoping what a community wants, and generating a range of options.
- Process can be empowering.
- Useful for developing a sense of ownership.
- Can stimulate creative ways of thinking.

### Weaknesses

- Some people can find imagining the future overwhelming.
- Depending on the approach Visioning can be complex to organise and require considerable input from professional consultants.
- Coming up with a shared vision of a group can be difficult.

### Equipment

- Flip charts.
- Cards.

### Costs

- These will include cost of venue, facilitators and participants time and of equipment (dependent on context).

## Useful sources of information

### Books

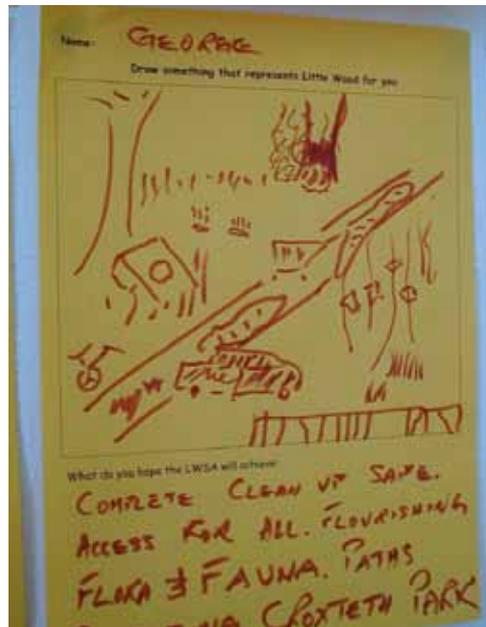
- Community Visions Resource Pack. New Economics Foundation. Available from: [www.neweconomics.org](http://www.neweconomics.org)

### Web

- What is Visioning?: [www.communityvisioning.com](http://www.communityvisioning.com)

### Case study

- Community visioning in Bristol by the University of Sussex: [www.ids.ac.uk](http://www.ids.ac.uk)



One person's vision of a local wood (The Mersey Forest).

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# Websites

Many potentially interested community members or potential participants in the planning process use computers to organise their own information and use the Internet to find out information about local events and activities. A Website can provide access to information about the forest or woodland and the planning process. By visiting the site people can get information on the planning area, the stages of planning, the implications of different alternatives and opportunities for participation. A regularly maintained, well-designed Website is good publicity and provides another avenue for beginning the process of bringing people into an active relationship with the forest or woodland. It is also a good, inexpensive medium to disseminate news, reports and other updated information about progress. Discussion lists enable interactive communication and provide a good opportunity to network.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good computer design and programming skills are needed, but these can be hired on a short-term basis.
- Good graphic design and writing skills are required to develop a site that people will want to visit and revisit.

### Resources

- Computers are needed for generating content and servers to provide access to users.
- Central network servers should be available for public access to information on equipment that receives routine maintenance.

### Time

- Regular updating is a continuing commitment.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.

### Web

- [www.communities.org.uk](http://www.communities.org.uk)
- Marking the Net Work: [www.makingthenetwork.org/index.htm](http://www.makingthenetwork.org/index.htm)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★ ★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- The public can have access to current material.
- Distribution costs are low.
- Links to other information are relatively easy.
- Interested people who are distant from the local area are given the opportunity to see what is happening and find ways to have their opinions heard.

## Weaknesses

- The information is unavailable to people who do not have access to computers.
- Continual updating is required.
- Irrelevant responses can be generated which still require resources to serve.
- Website experts may be needed to build and manage the site.

- [www.ngflscotland.gov.uk](http://www.ngflscotland.gov.uk)
- Partnerships Online: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)



Local Websites can be used to inform and consult people on forest plans (Forestry Commission Wales).

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# Working groups

Working groups offer an effective participation means for interested stakeholder groups. They help participants to familiarise themselves with the planning issues and keep them and their stakeholder groups constantly in touch with the process. A Working group is normally fairly small, ideally between 5 and 12 people. Before forming a group, the stakeholders have to be carefully assessed. The purpose and role of the group in planning should be clearly identified before starting the group work. At the first meeting, the inclusiveness and the tasks and common rules of the group should be agreed and the planning process and aims should be explained. One of the group's goals is to clarify different opinions and try to build consensus. Working groups try to arrive at solutions through dialogue rather than voting on issues.



BME disability Champions provide long term involvement and support developing ideas and actions.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good communication, listening and co-operation skills are necessary.

### Equipment

- Meeting facilities that enable effective group working are needed.

### Time

- It is good practice to agree upon a time limit for the length of time the Working group will be constituted.
- The time scale may vary greatly between groups set up for different purposes.

## Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★

## Strengths

- Interested people can become actively involved and contribute to the process.
- Group working provides a good chance for in-depth interaction and negotiations.
- Members' knowledge about the planning topics and objectives of different interest groups increases.
- Group working gives immediate feedback to the planning team during the whole process.

## Weaknesses

- Working group members may have to commit a lot of time and energy to the work.
- Usually only a few individuals constitute a Working group.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- The guide to effective participation. D. Wilcox (1994). Partnerships Books, London.
- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.

### Web

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)

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# Workshops

Workshops include a wide range of different group work methods. Workshop participants usually formulate, assess and resolve problems related to a predefined topic. Workshops enable discussion and exploration of issues at hand. They can be arranged as a one-off or repeated event to ensure effective participation. Alternatively, participants may be divided into smaller groups to increase the intensity of the group work. It is recommended that some background information is provided for attendees before the Workshop or that they have a presentation giving a clear overview of the issues. Several group-working methods can be used, for example brainstorming and **Nominal group technique**. At the end of the process, participants usually reflect on what they have achieved in the Workshop. Information Exchange Workshops are small groups which are usually targeted to representatives of different groups. SWOT Workshops explore strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to given issues. Initiatives Workshops further develop the ideas created in SWOT, consider details on factors and produce an outline work programme for a particular issue. Action Planning Workshops are arranged when there is a need to hold a session specifically for interested parties who will have a role in the implementation process.



A forest design planning Workshop (New Forest Forest District).



A community woodland Workshop (Ae Forest District).

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Facilitators need good communication skills and the ability to present the planning information clearly and understandably.
- Knowledge of other group-work methods is an advantage.

### Level of engagement

INFORMING:

CONSULTING: ★★

INVOLVING: ★★★

PARTNERSHIP: ★★

### Strengths

- Workshops are excellent for identifying criteria and analysing alternatives.
- They foster public ownership in solving problems.
- Workshops offer a direct form of participation and are likely to promote communication between participants in the future.
- They can raise the level of awareness of topics by attendees.
- Compared to public meetings or committees, Workshops are less formal.

### Weaknesses

- Staff requirements are usually rather extensive.
- Several facilitators may be needed.
- Workshops have to be planned and structured carefully, although overplanning can lead to suspicions of manipulation by participants.

### Equipment

- A large and suitable venue is needed to create interaction between participants and to display stands for charts.
- Pens, flip charts and coloured stickers may be needed.
- Standard writing and printing facilities are required.

### Time

- It is essential to publicise the workshop early.
- Arranging a good venue and identifying experienced facilitators requires some time.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.

### Web

- The Guide to Effective Participation by David Wilcox: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)
- The International Association for Public Participation: [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

### Training

- The Prince's Foundation: tel. 020 7613 8500 or [www.princes-foundation.org](http://www.princes-foundation.org)

### Case study

- Cross-plan integrated participatory planning as a tool for rural development. S. Bell and M. Komulainen (2001). University of Oulu, Finland.

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