PLANNING AND ENGAGING WITH INTERCULTURAL COMMUNITIES:

BUILDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS BASE
NOVEMBER 2006

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Image by Richard Brecknock

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOREWORD

PROFESSOR PETER ROBERTS

PLANNING IS A KEY ELEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: THESE ARE PLACES WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE AND WORK, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.

However, it is no longer acceptable to impose a planning solution upon a community, or to assume that all communities are alike and require the same pattern of provision. Rather, the challenge now for planning is to capture the rich diversity of communities and to reflect this diversity in intercultural strategies and actions. The new model also emphasises the importance of engagement and participation; there are essential prerequisites for community ownership and provide the foundation of a sustainable community.

This report offers advice and insight into how the new planning for intercultural communities can proceed. It rightly emphasises the importance of effective engagement and it demonstrates how this can engender local `ownership' and community cohesion.

I am delighted that the Academy for Sustainable Communities has been able to support the research which underpins this report. I am sure that you will find it to be of considerable help in developing and implementing your strategies and programmes.

Professor Peter Roberts
Chair of the Academy for Sustainable Communities

■ SUMMARY

THIS REPORT SETS OUT TO ADVISE, INFORM, INSPIRE AND ADD VALUE TO THE WORK OF PRACTITIONERS IN THE FIELDS OF PLANNING, BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

It is not a 'toolkit' of techniques for public consultation (see Resources section below for several excellent such aids). Rather, it aims to encourage a rethink of public consultation. More specifically its aims are:

- To identify principles of good practice in community engagement, participatory urban planning and development.

- To then establish how participatory planning and development can contribute to community cohesion.

- Finally, to set out the case for a new and dynamic 'intercultural' praxis which seeks out difference, is able to manage conflict, and is focused upon adding value and values to our communities.

THIS REPORT HAS SIX KEY MESSAGES:

- Cultural diversity means more ideas, more options and more opportunities – the challenge for Britain's communities is to realise this **diversity advantage**.

- Realising diversity advantage means bringing people of different cultures together so that they can learn from each other and co-operate in an **intercultural** way.

- Extending and enriching public **engagement** in the planning and development of neighbourhoods is now the norm, not the exception. Good practice builds long-term relationships within and between communities.

- Good community engagement requires techniques but is really about having the right **attitudes and skills**.

- Good community engagement does more than canvass opinion. Everyone has a story to tell, emotions to express and wisdom to impart and a good practitioner can find and interpret them and turn them into a unifying narrative. This requires a skill which professionals ignore at their peril
  – **cultural competence**.

- A corollary of change is conflict. Planning and development which avoids conflict may cause more harm than conflict itself. Good practice takes not the line of least resistance but the harder yet more creative road of **conflict-management, mediation and relationship-building**.

READERS CAN USE THIS DOCUMENT:

- To start a conversation between practitioners and communities about how to link planning priorities with people in more engaging and long-term ways;

- Apply to their own context the examples provided of how some local authorities (Local Authorities) are aiming to build long-term processes with their communities in innovative ways; and,

- Learn how to learn – we are still learning about how to build long-term sustainable communities with their involvement. We need to adopt a position which is both optimistic and inquisitive – to learn from and with communities and to learn about ourselves in the process.

THE TARGET READERSHIP IS PROFESSIONALS ENGAGED IN PLANNING AND REGENERATION IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONS. IT SHOULD ALSO BE READ BY MEMBERS OF THE 'CORE OCCUPATIONS' IDENTIFIED BY THE EGAN REPORT AS:

- Implementers and decision-makers in LAs, Local Strategic Partnerships, regeneration companies, and relevant national and regional agencies

- Built environment professionals including planners, urban designers, architects, engineers and surveyors

- Environmental professionals

- Housing and social services managers

- Economic development officers

- Community and neighbourhood development workers

- Generic neighbourhood renewal and regeneration officers

2 ■ CONTEXT

SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Planning is now at the forefront of determining our future society. The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities (2003) set out to challenge and change the whole basis upon which we think about planning, arguing that future decisions about sustainable communities and regeneration must be far more grounded in an understanding of possible repercussions.

Egan maintained that:

Sustainable communities meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice. They achieve this in ways that make effective use of natural resources, enhance the environment, promote social cohesion and inclusion, and strengthen economic prosperity.

This means not only their impact upon the surrounding environment and the economy but on the people on the ground. It means a reappraisal of the knowledge, aptitudes and skills that we expect of the people who make the relevant decisions.

Egan identified 13 generic skills which will be required by the professions involved. 'Soft', 'people' skills are now as important as project management skills. Professions must now attend to the needs, desires, dreams and prejudices of real people while continuing to operate within the rational, measurable environment in which they developed, lest they waste valuable time and resources on creating environments which are ultimately rejected. Listening to and actively engaging communities has moved from the fringe to the centre of current practice.

A NEW PLANNING CULTURE

The case for greater public involvement has been growing since at least the late 1960s when the Skeffington report, People and Planning (1969), made far-reaching recommendations to involve the public which influenced subsequent legislation. Indeed the planning system then became one of the few policy arenas where public involvement was a statutory requirement. Subsequent legislation has ensured that actual participation is enshrined in law and guidance such as Community Involvement in Planning: The Government's Objectives (ODPM, 2004) and in the guidance issued to regional and local planning bodies[1] has reminded the planning community that legislation comprised not simply a revision of procedures but a new way of thinking and acting which would require 'culture change'.

A NEW SKILL – CULTURAL COMPETENCE

What Egan has done is broaden our understanding of sustainable development. It is now a national priority to create communities which are going to be sustainable in terms of the social, economic and environmental well-being of all their members. This report's reading of Egan, however, is to take our understanding of this a stage further and to suggest that there is a fourth pillar of sustainable development – culture[2].

Culture in this sense is "our values and aspirations, traditions and shared memories, the ways we develop, receive and transmit these, and the ways of life they produce."[3] Therefore, if sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,"[4] then culture matters because it is a resource which we inherit from our forebears and pass on to our children. Culture is thus our past and our future. Egan is therefore suggesting that what the planning and built environment professions require is not only soft, people skills but also cultural competence.

The purpose of this report is to try and translate the idea of cultural competence into practical ways of working. But it also aims to go further than this to deal with the reality of our communities in the UK – that of significant and growing cultural diversity.

EMBRACING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

As our neighbourhoods and communities change at a pace which is both invigorating and alarming, so too do the challenges faced by those responsible for our urban environments. Our communities are growing in complexity with individuals increasingly reluctant to conform to predetermined identities or patterns of behaviour and resistant to outside attempts to manage or impinge upon the lifestyle identities they construct around age, gender, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation or consumption habits. However, our feeling about the discourse of diversity throughout the last 50 years or so is that it has maintained a tone which is apologetic.

The sense that the British people are being asked to adapt reluctantly and accommodate to something which they would rather not contemplate but which is unavoidable. In day to day practice, for example in local government, this has often translated into an atmosphere in which diversity is regarded as at best an issue to be managed, at worst a problem to be solved - just another thing that makes life more complex and tiresome.
To coin a phrase - the diversity deficit.

INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT AND DIVERSITY ADVANTAGE

This is not the way diversity is perceived everywhere. Whilst it might be seen as a problematic issue to some, our standpoint here is that the complexity of diversity is there to be embraced and harnessed. Variety means more ideas, more options, more opportunities and ultimately a better quality of life for all – the diversity advantage of cities.

In societies in which immigration lies at the heart of national identity such as the US and Canada, diversity has been far more widely regarded as a source of potential opportunity and advantage. The private sector has led, evolving the idea that there was a 'business case for diversity'. This drew on a number of strands of thinking: that diverse teams of people brought new skills and aptitudes which broadened a company's business offer and which in combination might produce new process and product innovations which would advance competitiveness[5]. It also drew on ideas that a business more diverse in outlook would have upstream access to new markets both home and abroad and, through an appreciation of 'supplier diversity', downstream access to better-priced and more interesting goods[6].

1 Planning Policy Statements 11 and 12
2 Jon Hawkes (2001) The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's Essential Role in Public Planning. Common Ground Publishing.
  Diagram courtesy of the New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage http://mch.govt.nz/cwb/
3 UNESCO (1996) Declaration of Cultural Rights
4 The World Commission on Environment and Development's (the Brundtland Commission) report Our Common Future (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

This way of thinking has transferred gradually into wider socio-economic thinking, giving the idea that a more heterogeneous nation is better equipped than a homogeneous one to weather the storms of the global economy and adapt to change. Such a charge, for example, has been levelled against Japan and Germany as they have fallen behind the economic performance of more diverse G8 member states[7]. There is also a strand of thinking (associated with Richard Florida) which contends that success at the level of local and regional economics will also be influenced by the extent to which cities can offer an open, tolerant and diverse milieu to attract and hold mobile wealth creators[8].

Such thinking has made a few inroads into Britain, specifically in the corporate world, but is rarely encountered in the public sector and local government. There may well be valid arguments that North America is another place where they do things differently, but to our knowledge this debate is not even being had at present. Our aim in particular is to encourage the towns and cities of Britain to shift their mindset. To start thinking of their own cultural diversity as an asset not a liability, and to start looking for advantages – not only economic, but social, cultural, political – that can be derived to help them position themselves in a more advantageous position.

The challenge, therefore, is to work with the grain of this diversity and to find ways of building cross-cultural co-operation and productivity. Sadly, the civil disturbances in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in 2001 have triggered a realization that the UK was not coping as well with cultural diversity as it liked to think it was. The subsequent enquiries, leading to the Cantle Report,[9] suggested that in large parts of many British cities, people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds were living 'parallel lives' with little knowledge of or empathy for each other and that this, when combined with economic disenfranchisement and extremist politics, was a recipe not just for sporadic outbreaks of violence but something which would eat at the very basis of society.

This has serious implications for the all of the sustainable communities' professions, including planning, regeneration, social work etc, particularly for the skills they will require for engaging with communities. We must look at all areas of life in our local communities and consider how planning can maximize formal and informal levels of interaction between people whilst eliminating factors which exacerbate distrust and disengagement.

5   For example, Cox, T. Jr. (1994). Cultural diversity in organizations: Theory, research and practice: and Montes, T. (2000). The Diversity Challenge
6   Ram, M et al (2002) Assessing the Potential of Supplier Diversity Initiatives as a means of promoting diversification amongst Ethnic Minority businesses in the UK.
7   Zachary, G Pascal (2003) The Diversity Advantage: multicultural identity in the new world economy.
8   Florida, Richard (2002) The Rise of the Creative Class: and how it's transforming work, leisure and everyday life; and Ottaviano, Gianmarco and Peri, Giovanni (2004) The economic value of cultural diversity: evidence from US cities.
9   Home Office. Community Cohesion. A Report of the Independent Review Team, chaired by Ted Cantle. London (2001)

3 ▪ CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND
THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE

> "WE ARE GETTING TO THE STAGE WHERE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BECOMES A CORE PART OF THE JOB DESCRIPTION OF EVERY REGENERATION PROFESSIONAL. IN THAT CONTEXT RECRUITMENT WILL COME DOWN TO 95% ATTITUDE AND ONLY 5% TECHNICAL EXPERTISE."

Moira Blood - Partnership Manager
Oldham Housing Investment Partnership

If one thing is certain these days it is that change is a permanent feature. Reform extends even to our value systems but what matters even more than the specific detail of reform is the way in which we cope with change itself: how we come to terms with what we gain, what we can keep and what we will lose – and how we can enable others to do the same. In this sense, the 'management of change' should be brought to the fore at the expense of terms such as 'consultation' and 'engagement' – or even 'regeneration' and 'project management'. Change management should be the core skill required of any professional. In this section we introduce four exercises for developing a culturally competent approach to planning and development projects. Professionals can build these exercises into their practice as a precursor to any major programme of consultation and planning.

UNDERSTANDING CHANGE

Change affects people in different ways. To an urban regeneration professional, for instance, a thorough analysis of all the available information, technical advice and economic projections may lead to an obvious conclusion that an area of housing is unviable and needs demolition and relocation. To a resident, however, the most salient points may be that in losing their house they are losing a part of their history; and they may be worried that they will lose their job and most of their friends. One analysis is facts-based, the other 'emotional', so how should priority be applied?

The response of the professions has often been to value the factual and to minimize or exclude the less quantifiable. However, put that same official into a position where they have been told that cutbacks mean their job is on the line, and the best they can hope for is for a transfer to a new location hundreds of miles away, and they may begin to think in terms of their daughter's education, a relative in care nearby or a local faith community of which they are part. Their response would be, understandably, driven less by facts and more by emotion, as well as by culture. Managing change is thus not simply about presenting the evidence but also understanding the emotional and cultural factors which determine how people respond.

And it is culture that this report is really about. Put simply, our argument is that the more professionals take account of culture – their own as well as that of those they work with – the better, more sustainable will be the projects and programmes they manage.

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE

Culture is simply 'the way we do things here' and that applies as much to the office, department or company as to the housing estate and the ethnic or faith group. Therefore, when we engage with anyone who has a significantly different life experience, we are engaging in a form of cross-cultural communication. People construct their culture upon three foundations: Values, Practices and Institutions. Let's look at each in turn.

VALUES

When we are born, we know nothing about ourselves, our family or our community. As we grow, we learn about the way things are done. We also learn eventually that things are done differently by others and elsewhere, and we learn to make value judgements about the superiority of one way over another.

EXERCISE 1

TO UNDERSTAND HOW CULTURAL VALUES IMPACT UPON THE PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT, ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS: [10]

o How does the life experience of individuals I work with differ from my own?

o How does this difference of experience reflect on:
  • their values
  • my values?

o Which of the shared values are relevant to our partnership in this piece of work?

o Which values need to be re-aligned to accomplish a productive working relationship?

HAVING ANSWERED THE ABOVE, ASSESS:

o How is the programme of work likely to impact upon existing cultural values in the area?

EXERCISE 2

TO UNDERSTAND HOW CULTURAL PRACTICES IMPACT UPON THE PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT, DO THE FOLLOWING EXERCISES:

o Identify some things you do that you think are based on your own culture, for example, how you greet people, how you dress, who you address first in a group.

o What practices exist in the area in which you are working that are not universal in the cultures of all the participants?

o Which of these practices are relevant to the delivery of your project?

o What modifications are necessary, and by whom, in order to maintain a productive working relationship?

o How is the work you are doing likely to impact on existing cultural practices in its area?

PRACTICES

When we interact with people from different cultural backgrounds to our own, it is often at the level of cultural practices that our strongest experiences of sharing and conflict take place. How we communicate – both in language and non-verbally – is perhaps the most salient distinction between different cultures.

INSTITUTIONS

A community sustains itself through cultural institutions. These are not necessarily institutions of bricks and mortar nor are they conducted through conventional channels. They are based on common interests such as healthcare, religion and leisure pursuits and they govern communities and influence decisions on a wide range of issues. Yet they are frequently overlooked by professionals.
Immediate answers may not emerge, but the mere act of asking the question shifts the perception of what the work entails. We then realise that professionals are not neutral, objective arbiters but are in fact one amongst many stakeholder groups with their own cultural preconceptions.

MANAGING CONFLICT

This in turn should lead us to accept that communities may always be made up of many cultures that will occasionally have opposing interests – particularly as much regeneration work happens in a context of unequal power relations. We should not assume that a permanent state of harmony can be achieved or is even desirable.

Conflicts should not then be perceived as a failure, but as an integral part of the process through which stakeholders take on increased involvement and control. The focus should always be on the potential for learning that exists in every conflict situation.

EXERCISE 3

TO UNDERSTAND HOW **CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS** IMPACT UPON THE PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT, ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

o In what cultural institutions do I play an active role? Think about your family, community and work place.

o What cultural institutions exist in the project area that are directly relevant to the project's activities?

o How is the project likely to impact upon existing institutions in the area? Think about both positive and negative impacts.

EXERCISE 4

o Does the delivery and management of the project involve the participation of local people?

o Are local know-how, knowledge and values important in the delivery of the project?

o There are many stakeholders with different ethnic or organisational cultures involved in every project: local resident, government, consultant etc. Do they have significantly different points of view and expectations concerning:
   •   the aim and content of development?
   •   the objectives of this project?

o Does the delivery of the project require a change in local knowledge, habits and values?

o What are the potential diversity advantages to be achieved through more intercultural activity?

THINKING AND PLANNING CULTURALLY

Having recognized the existence of different cultural standpoints, identified stakeholders and accepted the role of conflict, the professional then needs to anticipate where interest, support or opposition might emerge through a **Cultural Sensitivity Analysis:**

This process may seem arduous and a delay to the hard-pressed professional with a project to deliver. One solution is to supplement the team with a cultural planner. Such professionals have been a familiar feature in overseas development and are increasingly evident in the UK. By using both conventional research and informal methods such as story-telling and role play they may uncover hidden traits, suppressed memories, latent faultlines and unrealized aspirations, all of which will have a powerful influence on whether the programme will be accepted. They should not, as often happens, be drafted in at short notice or treated as a peripheral decoration to the main body of work.

Whether such specialists are adopted or not, there is no substitute for professionals developing their own cultural sensitivity by, for example, undertaking similar exercises to those outlined above. The case studies described later on include some in which cultural specialists have taken a leading role and others in which professionals have supplemented their core skills with cultural competence.

4 WHAT DO LOCAL AUTHORITIES THINK?

IN THE COURSE OF RESEARCHING THIS REPORT WE HAVE SOUGHT THE VIEWS OF A WIDE VARIETY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFICIALS. THE FOLLOWING REPRESENTS A SPREAD OF CURRENT OPINION:

"We thought we had done everything right. We put our best people on to the job, the plans were extensive, we used the best contractors and materials available and met, if not exceeded, all the technical and environmental standards – and we came in on time and in budget. And yet, the community have turned their noses up. They can't agree amongst themselves what they want but the one thing they are all agreed on is they don't like what we have done. Why?"

"We need to make sure we include all the various interests in our consultation – it is easier to talk to people separately because we can't get young people to consultation sessions and the business community we see separately because they have different interests. Some cultural groups are reluctant to participate."

"We have equalities officers, consultation officers, social planning officers, urban planning officers, media officers – all involved in consulting the community. But we still have not worked out how to capture information at a corporate level. So we keep repeating consultation exercises again and again."

"The irony is that one of our hard-to-reach groups are the white middle-class 20-30 somethings who never contribute to any public consultations."

"We organised a community consultation session about the future of our borough. We hired a facilitator. We put effort in to attracting people from diverse communities. But we could not get people to move around and they stuck with people that they knew. This meant that – as an example – the Bangladeshi men all sat together and had to comment on parks. The result is all our public consultation on parks comes from the views of these men and their views are not included in any of the other important areas."

"I realise the Statement of Community Involvement is a good thing but it means we are becoming very rigid with how we do consultation. It is not allowing us to experiment."

"It just comes down to resources. We are expecting too much from planning officers in local authorities who are not resourced to do effective consultation and who are not trained either."

IT WAS CLEAR IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY THAT THEY ARE FINDING IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO BUILD EFFECTIVE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN, SAY, PLANNING AND COMMUNITY COHESION – DESPITE GOOD EFFORTS TO DO SO.

HOW IMPORTANT IS CONSULTING EFFECTIVELY WITH DIVERSE COMMUNITIES TO YOUR AUTHORITY?
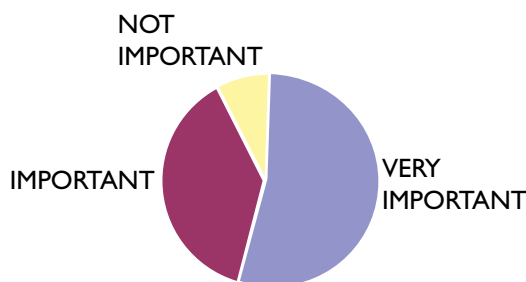

NOT IMPORTANT

IMPORTANT

VERY IMPORTANT

As can be seen from the chart (top right), LAs believe it is either very important or important to consult effectively with their diverse communities.

But LA planners often have little time to plan consultation approaches, there is always a lack of resources and concern in the community as to whether consultation will have an impact.

Many people in local authorities claim it is hard enough just to build connections within their own organisation, still less with the wider community

The following chart (below) shows the barriers to effective consultation as perceived by local government officials.

The approach to consultation needs to be rethought. Not to add more requirements for people in local authorities but to make every consultation count and to build 'social capital' for the long term. There is a huge weight of expectation on local authorities and the planners within them. Councils are working at the front line of community expectation between policy and delivery while the consequences of poor planning decisions are seen every day in local areas.

The demands on local authorities to resolve local problems are immense.

MAIN BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE CONSULTATION OF DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
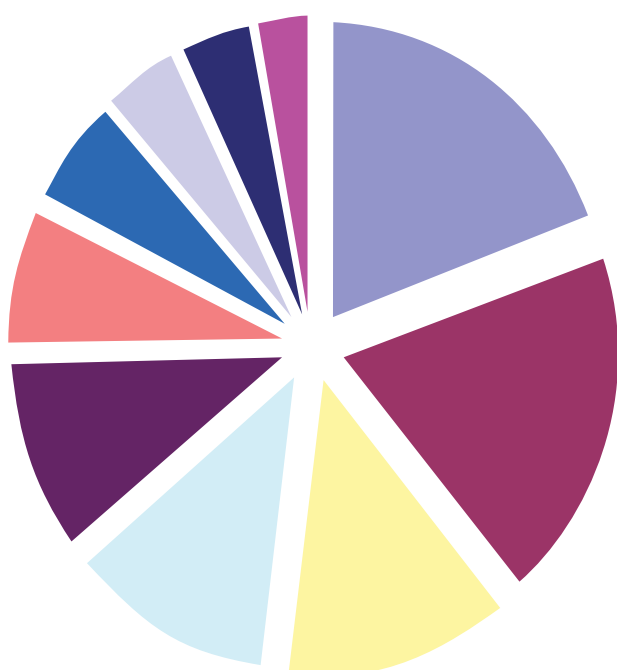
- RELUCTANCE TO PARTICIPATE
- CONFIDENCE IN MAKING VIEWS HEARD
- EFFORT REQUIRED BY AUTHORITY TO ACHIEVE PARTICIPATION
- DO NOT SEE AS RELEVANT
- DIFFICULT TO LOCATE
- DESIGNING A PROCESS WHICH IS EFFECTIVE ACROSS COMMUNITIES
- LANGUAGE
- CROSS CULTURAL ISSUES BETWEEN GROUPS
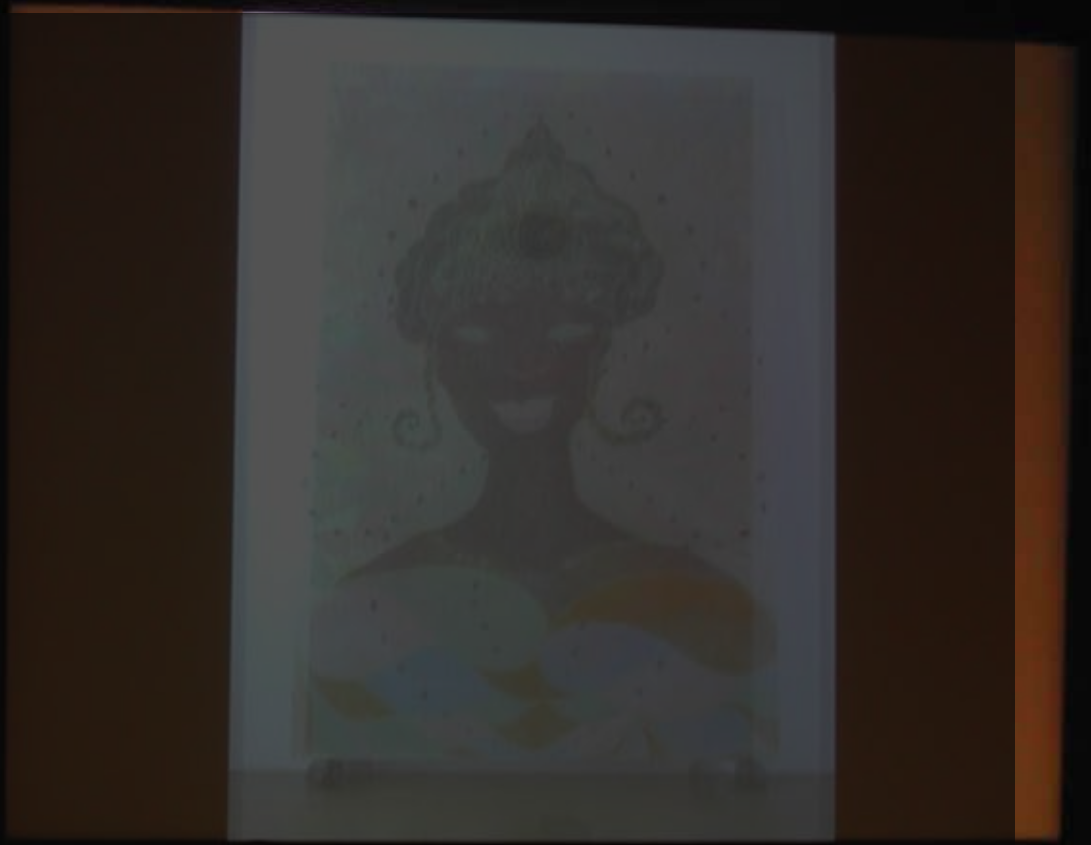
PRINCIPLES

It is not the intention of this document to provide a directory of community engagement and consultation techniques. However, it is important to reinforce the key principles and practices which we regard as fundamental to the arguments we are making.
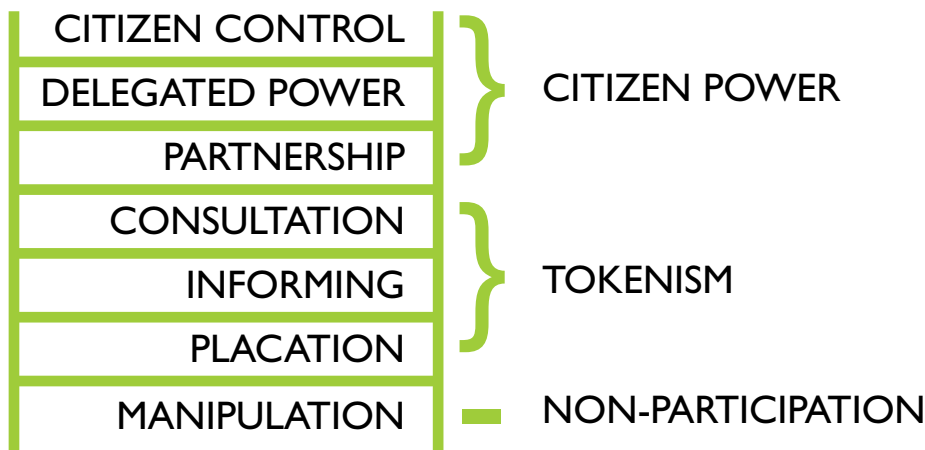
Firstly, some readers may be perplexed by the language used in the field and the variety of approaches discussed. 'Consultation', 'engagement', 'involvement' and 'participation' are all related but have different meanings. This has been clear at least since Arnstein devised her Ladder of Citizen Participation (below), which not only distinguished different parts to the process but also highlighted the vital importance of recognizing the place of power relations in it.

CITIZEN CONTROL	
DELEGATED POWER	} CITIZEN POWER
PARTNERSHIP	
CONSULTATION	
INFORMING	} TOKENISM
PLACATION	
MANIPULATION	— NON-PARTICIPATION

ARNSTEIN, S. (1969) A ladder of citizen participation, AIP, 35, July, pp. 216–224.

It can be argued that since the 1960s people have become far more sophisticated in understanding themselves as consumers and citizens and their relationship with the state, commerce and the media. Nevertheless, whether one takes the view that engagement is, at one extreme, a form of market research or, at the other, an exercise in redefining the distribution of power in society, few now would see it as a process that can be overlooked.

With a greater awareness of the importance of engagement, various forms of guidance have appeared in recent years. For example, Guidelines on Effective Community Involvement and Consultation produced by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Consultation Institute represents an important exercise in defining the responsibilities of the planner as a service provider to the public. The Guidelines are founded upon seven Standards For Consultation: Fairness, Visibility, Accessibility, Transparency, Full Disclosure, Fair Interpretation and Publication

Whilst all these standards are part of an essential foundation to good practice, others would argue that they do not tell the full story, inasmuch as they are predicated on a clear division between 'client' and 'service provider'. Other forms of guidance take an 'empowerment' perspective whereby the intention is to facilitate not so much a better service for the participant but a greater stake in the process whereby decisions, plans and services are defined. The National Standards for Community Engagement produced by Communities Scotland acknowledge the themes picked out above but also raise principles not reflected in the RTPI work:

- **Fairness, equality and inclusion** must underpin all aspects of community engagement, and should be reflected in both community engagement policies and the way that people participate.

- Community engagement should have **clear and agreed purposes**, and methods that achieve these purposes

- Improving the quality of community engagement requires commitment to **learning from experience**.

- Skill must be exercised in order to **build communities**, to ensure practice of **equalities** principles, to **share ownership** of the agenda, and to enable all viewpoints to be reflected.

- As all parties to community engagement possess knowledge based on study, experience, observation and reflection, effective engagement processes will **share and use that knowledge**.

- All participants should be given the opportunity to **build on their knowledge and skills**.

- **Accurate, timely information** is crucial for effective engagement.

These principles provide a far richer understanding of how intercultural community engagement can and should be done. Particularly important is the emphasis on learning from experience, sharing knowledge, and equality in the engagement process [11].

 11 These and subsequent exercise drawn from the work of Pekka Seppala and Arja Vainio-Mattila (2000) Navigating culture: a road map for culture and development.

TECHNIQUES

IT IS NOW ACCEPTED THAT WE CAN ADAPT TECHNIQUES DERIVED FROM A WIDE RANGE OF PROFESSIONAL SETTINGS TO ADD VALUE TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. HOWEVER, IN SELECTING THE APPROPRIATE TOOL THERE ARE A NUMBER OF CONSIDERATIONS THE PROSPECTIVE CONSULTOR SHOULD BE AWARE OF.

Firstly, there is a question of underlying values. These can be assessed against the principles outlined above. Then there are questions as to the extent of public involvement – the scale, depth and timescale. This will be determined by balancing the values of the exercise with the resources available, for example the balance to be struck between in-house staff, members of the community and outside experts. Finally, there are important questions about the nature of the target groups, with some techniques being more appropriate for younger people, say, or where language issues may call for non-verbal communication.

TECHNIQUES WHICH HAVE BEEN APPLIED SUCCESSFULLY IN THE PAST AND MAY BE APPROPRIATE FOR CERTAIN CONSULTING CONTEXTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

• **Planning for Real**[12] creates a level playing field between planners and people who may have limited literacy in English or in planning vernacular. Based upon a 3-D model of a development area, participants relate directly to different planning scenarios through use of scale model and illustrated suggestion cards, prioritising land and building uses.

• In **Image Theatre** participants develop images and tableaux representing the issues under discussion, and then act out possible solutions to a problem. This has proved particularly valuable in working with excluded and 'hard-to-reach' groups and is practiced by companies such as Mind the Gap[13].

• **Parish Maps** enable a community to come together around a vision of a neighbourhood built upon diverse cultural factors and stories which are meaningful to them in their daily lives. [14]

• In order to reconcile conflicting visions for the community, **Future Search** deliberately draws upon diverse sources (ideally eight groups of stakeholders), encouraging all to explore their own visions of the past, present and future before guiding them to identify common ground and potential shared visions.[15]

• Similarly, **Guided Visualisation**[16] helps participants to imagine a future 'day in your life'. These imagined futures are then shared within the group and collective vision of the future emerges. Action points are then developed to move towards it.

• **Action Planning** brings together 'experts' and the community. Typically a multi-disciplinary team of 10-14 people from various interested organisations facilitates the event. The experts may be planners, architects, environmentalists, economists or social workers. The process follows a number of stages including briefing by key stakeholders, familiarisation with the area, workshops on particular topics or design issues, brainstorming, analysis, report back and publication and distribution of a report and action points.

• **Community planning forums** are open, multipurpose events lasting several hours. A three-stage format is designed to secure information, generate ideas and create interaction between interest groups with a minimum of advance planning. The format combines interactive displays, an open forum, workshops and informal networking. Key ingredients are a leaflet advertising the event, a means of distributing it, a venue and a facilitator. [17]

• **Community profiling** involves building up a picture of the nature, needs and resources of a community with the active participation of that community. A range of methods are used to enable the community to develop self-understanding. The methods combine group working and interaction with data collection and presentation techniques. The focus is on methods which are visual in order to widen participation. [18]

12 Planning for Real is a registered trademark of the Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation. www.nif.co.uk
13 www.mind-the-gap.org.uk
14 See www.commonground.org.uk/parishmaps/m-index.html
15 See www.futuresearch.net
16 See, for example, www.vision21.demon.co.uk

- Whilst the traditional approach to change is to look for the problem, do a diagnosis, and find a solution, **Appreciative Inquiry** suggests that we look for what works in an organization. The tangible result of the inquiry process is a series of statements that describe where the organization wants to be, based on the high moments of where they have been. Because the statements are grounded in real experience and history, people know how to repeat their success. [19]

- **DEMOCS**, which stands for 'Deliberative Meetings of Citizens', is a conversation game enabling small groups to discuss public policy issues. No speakers or experts are needed, as pre-prepared cards convey the necessary facts. It works best for six people over two hours, but it is flexible. **DEMOCS** helps people to absorb information and to make it meaningful. It has been used to tackle sensitive subjects like homelessness, animal experiments and self-harm. [20]

OF COURSE KNOWING WHICH IS THE RIGHT TIME OR SITUATION TO USE ONE TECHNIQUE OR ANOTHER IS ALSO VITAL. [21]

WORKING INTERCULTURALLY

THE AIM OF THIS REPORT IS TO NOT ONLY TO REINFORCE ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE BUT TO OPEN UP NEW THINKING AND DEBATE UPON THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE ENVIRONMENTS.

The process of community engagement around planning and development is not neutral in its impact. It can either act to confirm or reinforce social and cultural divisions in society or it can undermine and resolve them. In the past it may well have seemed to professionals that the only, or at least the most obvious, way in which to communicate with a diverse populace was to notionally sub-divide it along ethnic and cultural lines, to identify community 'leaders' or 'gatekeepers' and to establish an ongoing process of dialogue with them. Particularly in cases where communities are relatively newly-established, this is and remains an effective means of garnering a view.

17 See www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
18 See www.infed.org/community/community_profiling.htm
19 See for example Imagine Chicago at www.imaginechicago.org
20 See www.neweconomics.org/gen/democs.aspx and www.playdecide.org]
21 For a helpful discussion of this point see Enhancing Consultation, Participation and Engagement in Yorkshire and Humberside (2006), produced by the New Economics Foundation for Yorkshire Futures, available from stuart.keilty@yorkshirefutures.com

However, in a Britain in which diversity has been established over three or four generations, it is not only now wholly inadequate but may be positively counter-productive to achieving cohesive and sustainable communities. Neighbourhoods and the individuals within them are now complex and multi-faceted. People increasingly hold not one but multiple identities and it is wrong to assume, as may have been done in the past, that because a person has a certain ethnic background, their views on an issue can thereby be determined, or communicated via an ethnic representative.

A multicultural approach to engagement, which assumes the maintenance of separation needs to be superseded by an intercultural one which actively encourages the establishment of dialogue and debate, of confrontation with and understanding of difference, of mediation and resolution, and of mutual learning and empathy. Particularly around the kinds of issues which arise in planning and development of neighbourhoods, communities can find there is far more with which they can find common cause than issues which divide them. It is down to the professional to plan and prepare for such encounters rather than, as too often happens at present, leave them to chance.

THE EGAN REPORT IDENTIFIED A SERIES OF GENERIC SKILLS WHICH ARE REQUIRED BY THE MODERN PRACTITIONERS.

In this section we take several of these skills individually and assess how they can be applied in ways which encourage intercultural community engagement and cohesion; [22] specifically:

1. INCLUSIVE VISIONING
2. PROJECT MANAGEMENT
3. LEADERSHIP IN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
4. BREAKTHROUGH THINKING AND BROKERAGE
5. TEAM AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING
6. MAKING IT HAPPEN GIVEN CONSTRAINTS
7. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND APPRAISAL
8. STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT
9. COMMUNICATION
10. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

What is important to note is that whilst each of these cases are examples of effective engagement in challenging circumstances, none (with the possible exception of number ten) required skills or resources of an exceptional nature.

22 Each skill treatment begins with attributes highlighted by the the Academy for Sustainable Communities (ASC). For more information go to www.ascskills.org.uk

SKILLS REQUIRED

o Innovative involvement of the community.

o The ability to vision an inclusive future state for a community.

o The ability to articulate a vision and get wide buy-in.

o Imagining a future state and the implications of getting there.

CASE STUDY 1 – KING'S CROSS DEVELOPMENT FORUM

THE AIM
To develop a long-term, inclusive and broad-based forum of residents and community groups able to comment on and respond to the challenges of the King's Cross Redevelopment.

THE APPROACH
The redevelopment of the railway lands area in King's Cross will be one of the largest regeneration projects in Europe when it commences in 2007. However, more than 30 years of false starts have fostered pessimism in the community about the redevelopment. The diverse London Boroughs of Camden and Islington were determined to establish an effective process and to engage a wide range of organisations and people in the community for the long term.

The Camden King's Cross Team decided to establish a consultation process going well beyond the statutory requirements and sought consultation with the local community beyond the 'usual suspects'. Discussions led to the establishment of the King's Cross Development Forum where over 160 groups and individuals are represented. It has been involved in each stage of the planning process.

The Development Forum is also charged with widening its membership and it has the respect of development and other statutory consultees.

The consultation infrastructure has been further strengthened by the Council training facilitators to meet with their communities and bring important information to the attention of other communities and the Council. There has been a high participation rate from black and ethnic minority (BME) communities.

Importantly, the Council has made an effort to continue to meet with and involve many people who would not normally participate in consultation processes. Further, meetings were also arranged in local buildings to appreciate the historical importance of the local heritage and stories of King's Cross.

A much wider public understanding of the planning system has been achieved and development proposals have changed significantly as a result of this work.

SKILLS FOR PRACTITIONERS

• Building confidence and a long-term relationship with the local community so to maintain engagement and overcome pessimism.

• Balancing the importance of involvement and exchange of views with moving the project forward.

• Helping the community consult for itself by engaging planning facilitators.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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6.2.　PROJECT MANAGEMENT

CASE STUDY 2 - LONDON EMERGENCY PLANNING FORUM

THE AIM
To stage a broad-ranging consultation event for emergency services, public transport and deaf and disabled communities in London.

THE APPROACH
Following the 7th July 2005 bombings in London, the Metropolitan Police Authority was approached by the Disability Independent Advisory Group which had collected feedback from those affected by the July events. It was felt that the needs and concerns of the deaf and disabled community had not been considered by emergency services.

The MPA and Transport for London agreed to hold a joint seminar to understand how emergency plans consider the needs of deaf and disabled people and to develop with the community alternative options to address gaps in policy and procedure. The aim was to consider the responses of emergency services in all urgent situations and not just those as a result of a terrorist attack.

The seminar brought together all emergency services (MPS, TfL, London Underground, London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and the London Ambulance Service) with a broad cross-section of people from the deaf and disabled community. The event was held in the Greater London Authority building in London. In planning the event the MPA and TfL made sure it was accessible and that all delegates could participate fully in the day.

The seminar provided information in multiple formats. (Prior to the event delegates were asked in what format they required information in so that these formats would be available on the day). Personal assistants were provided for individuals who required particular support.

The seminar was considered to be a success. Not only did people have a chance to talk directly about their needs but they also had the opportunity to build networks with each other and develop closer relationships with people responsible for emergency planners.

It became apparent that the implementation of changes suggested by delegates – such as the use of visual aids – could have benefits for the larger population, for example non-English speakers. One outcome was that the use of universal images and signs would be an effective communication tool.

As a one-off event it is difficult to know how much impact the seminar will ultimately have. However, it is included as a case study because of the serious effort made to connect services providers and communities at the same time and to make it possible for everyone to participate fully. It was also recognised that to understand the needs of deaf and disabled communities a broad range of people – in terms of faith, gender, sexuality, race, etc – needed to participate.

6.3. LEADERSHIP IN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

THE AIM
To build a cohesive community across the whole borough.

THE APPROACH
Tower Hamlets' diverse (58% BME), young and growing population brings with it a range of challenges linked to service delivery, planning and community cohesion. The Borough is also relatively deprived.

It is thus critical that the Borough builds close connections to its diverse communities and engages with them fully to plan for the future. Its progress in this area is formally recognised: the LA recently achieved Level 5 of the Equality Standard for Local Government – one of only two in the country to do so.

An inclusive agenda within the Council itself is carried through to the consultation process[23]. The Council's consultation team not only acts as a source of expert advice for staff developing consultation approaches but it also makes sure that any consultation is joined up within the Borough. This approach allows for the Borough's equalities agenda to be embedded at the core of the consultative process.

The Council has established 14 Local Area Partnerships which include local residents as well as other key stakeholders – local business and police, for example.

These LPAs are the main points for consultation, although the Council also has a Residents' Panel and is piloting e-consultation. An interfaith forum meets every two months and brings together key faiths and faith-based groups. These discussions encourage cohesion and prevent divisions forming between groups. At the time of the London bombings, for example, there was a co-ordinated and immediate response to demonstrate unity in the Borough, and this limited tension.

The Council works with a local community theatre group which takes issues identified by parents and teachers and develops scenarios which are acted out in schools. Students observe, respond and discuss interracial issues to understand them and themselves better.

Tower Hamlets' approach to physical planning recognises that diverse cultures view and use space differently. Every developer is now required to produce an equalities impact assessment for major new developments not only in terms of access for disabilities but also in terms of impacts on ethnic minorities.

CASE STUDY 4 -
MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL:
SENSE OF PLACE

THE AIM
To put enhanced cultural literacy at the heart of the way in which it engages with and plans for communities.

THE APPROACH
Manchester has launched the Sense of Place campaign to explore what the city means to people.
In a 12-month programme it aims to speak to as many people as possible. It is going far beyond the usual limitations of public consultation to engage with the deeper and even subconscious feelings that people have about the place where they live and those they share it with.

Participants are asked to talk about their neighbourhood and the city as it impacts upon their senses: what it sounds and smells like; what their own personal and family stories of the place are; and how differently it might feel like through the eyes of different people such as a woman with a child or someone in a 4x4 car. In the process, better understandings are gained of, for example, the journeys people make, how different locations develop meaning and reputation and how local stories and/or myths develop.

The research has so far thrown up a vast range of responses. For planning and built environment professionals it is enhancing the palette of possibilities by which they can understand the potential impact a piece of work might have upon a group of citizens – and they on it.

Manchester already has a Community Engagement Toolkit but is now enhancing this with its 'Forty concrete ideas for developing Sense of Place'. This is proving particularly helpful around two issues that might previously have been considered difficultly: Firstly, in the building of greater trust and understanding between refugee and host communities and, secondly, in joint working between the city and its neighbours, for example in the joint planning of the Irwell Valley with Salford.

SENSE OF PLACE WORKS THROUGH:
• Sense of Place workshops
• Meta-data analysis of recent community engagement work
• Research into the city' history and present make-up
• Community Arts workshops
• Working in partnership with specialist agencies such as the refugee network
• Devolution of budget to Community Radio across Manchester to run programmes exploring local identity
• Use of community comics[24] to explore the meaning of belonging and placelessness
• Working with allotment groups and using fruit and vegetables as a means to enable people to express their feelings about places and situations.

A budget has been created to facilitate different council departments and voluntary and neighbourhood organizations to initiate events.

SKILLS REQUIRED

o   A genuine desire for the team, collectively, to win.

o   A 'can do' attitude which looks at problems as challenges and opportunities, not risks and threats.

o   The ability to create a networked environment where advice is sought and readily given, coaching is rewarded, and teams are created with appropriate skills and qualifications

CASE STUDY 5 - NEWHAM COMMUNITY FORUMS

THE AIM
To build long-term cohesion and connections with the community in Newham. To share responsibility with the community for building connections between different groups.

THE APPROACH
The east London Borough of Newham is a diverse and young local authority area with over 50% of the population from BME communities. Community cohesion is considered important in a borough where people from BME backgrounds report that they feel much more at home if they know their neighbours.

The local authority has established ten community forums which cover the total geographical area of Newham and are the main point of connection between communities. Each forum holds four public meetings a year which are open to all and four environmental 'walkabouts' each year. The programme for each forum is established by its steering committee of six residents, three business members and three under-represented group members. The Chair is always a resident. The Council itself appoints a lead member or councillor who responsible for each forum and must attend each meeting. Two additional councillors provide support to each lead member. Police and health service representatives also attend forum meetings. The relationship between the Council and the forum is two-way. The Council uses the forum as a way to talk to local residents and business and to hear their views. However, the forums also take responsibility for building connections and links within their local areas. Members of each Forum also participate in the higher level Council bodies contributing to borough-wide policy and programmes.

The 'walkabouts' provide an opportunity to look at problems and improvements in the local physical environment with the support of local council officers. The Council finds that it is able to resolve 50 to 70% of the issues. As an example of community-building, one forum felt it was not making connections with recently arrived eastern European residents and so hosted an east European dance festival. It was a great success with up to 300 people attending.

The Council commitment to the forums is recognised in their budget – over the last two years they have invested over £1 million in supporting the work of the forums. The forums are not the only way that Newham consults with its community but it is the main point of connection between local residents and the Council and so is integrated into a range of council processes and ecision-making.

The Council has found that the ethnic make-up of the forums generally corresponds to that of the local area. However, there are challenges engaging some cultural groups, in particular newly arrived migrants who may have no history of community engagement – or for whom government is viewed with suspicion. It is also difficult getting the engagement of young people under 30 though the Council has established youth forums and a youth parliament as a way of making links to young people.

SKILLS FOR PRACTITIONERS

•   Community engagement at the local level – building up local social capital and knowledge which will be important to address major development issues

•   Demonstrating commitment and action by resolving local issues effectively

•   Asking the community to make the links to other community members – not owning all the responsibility

FURTHER INFORMATION

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CASE STUDY 6 - ROCHDALE OPEN FORUMS

THE AIM
To connect predominantly housebound Asian women with women from white communities to generate active integration and people-to-people contact. .

THE APPROACH
Women-only events were held at venues around Rochdale where stalls offered Asian clothes and henna painting. Once inside, visitors could question professionals from relevant agencies such as the health services and domestic violence unit. Childcare was provided to reduce the barriers that might have prevented women from attending.

To appeal to local white people, pubs and clubs were used to publicise events. The events were held in community centres in mainly White areas. Utilising Asian clothes shops and pubs and having the events in areas where the other communities normally would not go proved to be highly innovative and effective. As organiser, Zahida Iqbal, said, "Five years on, the normally white-only community centres are now multicultural and the Asian only centres are being used by White women. There is a real exchange taking place where White women want henna paintings and are into Asian clothes and shoes whereas Asian girls are becoming more western."

The events enabled long-lasting links between White and Asian women and community centres in different geographical/cultural areas. The consultation enabled women's issues to be placed on the map, specifically in the Borough's community strategy. Many more women were now aware of services available to them in a range of areas. It showed that women across cultures could connect in ways that men would not.

Seven events took place across Rochdale which took months of planning but in total cost only £2,500. Funders had originally regarded the events as futile.

SKILLS REQUIRED

o   Providing energy and focusing resources to ensure objectives are reached.

o   Understanding and being realistic about constraints, but not accepting artificial barriers.

o   Challenging unrealistic targets or timescales. Looking for practical workaround, focusing on the 'vital few, not the trivial many' and applying the 80/20 rule[25].

o   Project and programme management, with an emphasis here on achieving a sustainable community vision in spite of conflicting interests, individual agendas and adversarial behaviour.

SKILLS FOR PRACTITIONERS

• Perseverance and self-belief in the face of opposition or apathy

• Ingenuity in the management of resources

• Locating and leveraging commonalities across culture, e.g. gender

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.equal.ecotec.co.uk/resources/gpg/gpg/down_doc. asp?file=gpg_empowerment.doc

25   I.e. Don't wait for 100% perfection but go ahead when you are 80% there.

6.7.   FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND APPRAISAL

CASE STUDY 7 - CASTLEMERE COMMUNITY CENTRE

THE AIM
In the first instance to obtain the views of the public in very deprived and challenging but highly diverse area of Rochdale on their future needs across a wide range of services. This evolved into a campaign to enlist resident support to help finance the purchase of a redundant school to house a multi-activity centre.

THE APPROACH
The Freehold and Milkstone area of Rochdale comprises 37 ethnic groups but ranks in the top 1% of most deprived wards in the country. There was vocal demand for easier access to social, health and educational services at a local level and a dilapidated former school had been identified a local resource with the potential for conversion.

The Council was sympathetic in principle to local services but was unwilling to take the financial risk. Consequently a group of local activists initiated a high energy programme of workshops to engage local views. They worked so well that participants gave not only their views but also agreed to contribute up to £250 each to start a fund to purchase the building. This raised £150,000 and, on the strength of this, other funding bodies were prepared to contribute.

Originally valued at £170,000 the Centre is now worth over £1.2 million representing an important community asset. It has attracted a wide range of mainstream services and has established a model that many others are now emulating.

Co-ordinator Hafiz Malik says, "The centre has brought communities together. Through active grassroots development we have ensured that the problems in Oldham and Burnley are not repeated here."[26]

SKILLS REQUIRED

o Ensuring that financial, social and environmental costs are fully understood.

o Ability to create and manage a business plan and associated contracts.

o Understanding risk/reward approaches for all stakeholders.

o Being able to appraise business cases, proposals and contracts in order to make sound financial decisions.

o Understanding where finance for sustainable communities comes from, how to attract it, and how to construct a business case for the long-term sustainability and prosperity of a community.

o Specific emphasis on being able to develop the business case for ongoing sustainable communities, including the economic models which make long-term sustainable development possible

SKILLS FOR PRACTITIONERS

Firstly, the project demonstrates the importance of recognising the potential for consultation to transform into action research and to have the flexibility to capture momentum and go with it. It also highlights the art of effective fundraising and expectation management through transforming an apparently insurmountable funding target into much smaller but manageable stages. Finally, it demonstrates the value of spreading commitment and ownership across a wide spectrum of the community.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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26   Quoted in New Start magazine, 6 February 2004, p11.

SKILLS REQUIRED

o   Communicating and building relationships with and between relevant stakeholders, understanding their relative impact and importance.

o   Knowing that stakeholder groups change all the time, so keeping pace with the emergent ones.

o   Being able to bring key people and groups with you to retain critical mass support for the vision and to solve the problems.

CASE STUDY 8 - WHAT KIND OF PLACE? HOLBECK URBAN VILLAGE

THE AIM

Although adjacent to the thriving central business and retail district of Leeds, Holbeck's 19th Century industrial fabric had until quite recently remained largely untouched. Plans to create an urban village (HUV) comprising new residential, business and retail development were considered necessary, but there was also concern to take account of the delicate ecology of the original community. There was also awareness that Holbeck sits across the route which links the city centre to the suburb of Beeston - a place made notorious as the home of two of the 7/7 London bombers - and a sensitivity to the need to avoid reinforcing that community's apprehensive relationship with the outside world.

THE APPROACH

The City Council's Development Department decided to go far beyond its accepted standards of community engagement and committed extensive resources to involving its own staff and several outside consultancies and arts organisations. This culminated in a month-long exhibition entitled 'What Kind of Place?' to generate debate and discussion around proposals for the area. This was launched with a two-day festival of high-profile engagement events. These included 'Secrets and Lights', a series of light installations by the Culture Company exploring the theme of 'hidden Holbeck'.

There was a concern that the consultation would be perceived to be only of relevance to the newly-arrived businesses and loft residents so Multicultural Urban Design were engaged to ensure there was targeted engagement with the white working class and BME resident communities of Holbeck and Beeston. This involved persistent attempts at grassroots community involvement; presentations to women's groups; door-to-door business and shop discussions; use of SMS technology; presentations in schools; signage across Leeds; and visits to mosque and churches.

The shadow of the July 7th bombings had created a serious climate of fear in the Muslim communities. For example, one mosque refused entry to the engagement team altogether and another expelled a team member who was distributing leaflets, confusing him for a political activist. This encouraged the team to be more ingenious in getting around the 'community gatekeepers' to engage with people directly. The result was a procession of Beeston residents, led by musicians, who attended the exhibition launch to rub shoulders with IT executives and loft-livers to add their comments on the plans, swelling the attendance to over a thousand.

All groups in Beeston claimed that this was the first they had come to know about the plans in HUV. Kalsoom Bibi from the ASHA Group said after the event, "Normally we wouldn't get asked to attend such an event and it was a real treat to be able to see what is going on in Holbeck Urban Village… the top officers were showing us around and taking us for a tour… it was brilliant and I learnt so much."

SKILLS FOR PRACTITIONERS

Faced with widespread apathy or opposition, the team could easily have concentrated on talking only to the most easily reached and articulate but they chose to go beyond the immediate requirements of the brief to establish wider and longer-term relationship. They particularly sought out opportunities for intercultural dialogue between different stakeholders and were not content to deal solely through gatekeepers.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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6.9. COMMUNICATION

CASE STUDY 9 - FOUR WARDS INTERCULTURAL PROJECT, LEICESTER

THE AIM
To take four culturally very different wards within the city and arrange a series of consultations and events with the intention that residents would learn more about each other and co-operate.

THE APPROACH
The Society for Intercultural Understanding Leicester (SICUL) in association with Leicester City Council identified four wards: the mainly Hindu area of Belgrave, the predominantly Muslim Spinney Hills and two mainly White working-class wards, Braunstone and Saffron. Initially, 500 residents from each ward were surveyed to establish a baseline of the extent to which there was cultural integration.

The findings alarmed the survey team: contrary to popular imagination, Leicester is really not a great deal more culturally integrated than places like Burnley and Oldham which have been associated with the 'parallel lives' scenario. For example, only between 11% and 25% of respondents considered that they shared any aspect of their culture with others and less than a fifth said they would be interested in informing others about their culture.

THE SECOND PHASE OF THE PROJECT SET OUT TO ORGANISE FIVE EVENTS WITH THE INTENTION OF CREATING 'INTERCULTURAL BRIDGING' BETWEEN THE FOUR WARDS. THESE WERE:

•   An exhibition challenging stereotypes of Pakistani women's place in the workforce held in Belgrave

•   An evening of Asian music and dance at Aylestone Working Men's Club in Saffron

•   An intercultural football tournament in Braunstone with teams from each ward

•   A children's concert for schools from each ward

•   A Sikh play presented by a Muslim group to an audience from the four wards.

While not all community organisations invited were willing to co-operate, participation exceeded expectations. The organisers were particularly pleased because participants were local residents and activists who would become opinion-formers in their own communities. SICUL is now looking to further develop the project in two ways: extending the principle across all wards of the city; and also focusing upon one ward in greater depth to address particularly the integration of newly-arrived communities. The City Council is currently considering a range of policy innovations which will intercultural rather than monocultural approaches.

FIVE PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESS IN GENERATING INTERCULTURAL BRIDGING WERE ESTABLISHED:

- The idea around which groups are to be brought together must clear.

- The spatial context must allow for more than one culture to feel at ease.

- Making the connection between different cultures cannot be taken for granted but must be pursued deliberately and systematically;

- Negotiation is an essential part of the process in order to clarify sensitivities and expectations.

- The event must result in a successful intercultural interaction in which there has been both mutual learning and enjoyment.
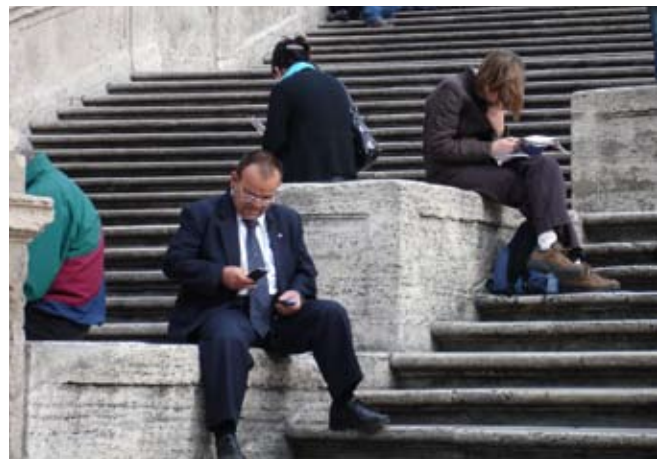
SKILLS FOR PRACTITIONERS

This project requires practitioners to step outside familiar patterns of communication
and build and maintain links where none formerly existed. It is going to the heart of
potential sources of misinformation and enabling people to take a more direct role in building cohesion.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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A full report of the project can be obtained at www.emen.org.uk

image by Phil Wood

6.10.   CONFLICT RESOLUTION

SKILLS REQUIRED

o   Understanding the dynamics of conflict and how to achieve mutual agreement.

o   Demonstrating the ethics of good practice, including respect for all parties, tolerance of different people and perspectives, confidentiality and the importance of honesty.

o   Listening actively to others, and working to formulate options and solutions.

CASE STUDY 10 - THE BLOCK, SYDNEY

THE AIM
To engage with a neighbourhood divided by deep ethnic and economic differences through facing up to conflict.

THE APPROACH
In her book Cosmopolis II, Leonie Sandercock quotes the example of The Block, a disused factory site in the Redfern neighbourhood of Sydney, Australia. Blighted by many familiar inner-urban problems, particularly drug use, the area was designated for 'clean up' as part of the city's preparations for the 2000 Olympics. The potential for dispute arose from the presence of two resident communities with widely different views: a long-standing conservative white community whose vision was for a park with a police station at its centre, and the Redfern Aboriginal Corporation who wanted the site for Aboriginal economic and community purposes.

Embarrassed by protests at its plans, the City Council called upon a social planning consultant, Dr Wendy Sarkissian, for help. Having listened to as many voices as possible, she decided that there were viewpoints which, no matter how toxic or painful needed to be brought out into the open and heard. These included white suspicions that any Aboriginal project could only be a front for further drug trade activity and deeply held resentment against 200 years of white suppression of aboriginal culture and land rights.

Sarkissian's decision was to hold a 'speak out'[27] at which all were encouraged to release their fears and concerns. It was an angry and potentially dangerous encounter in which all sides including Sarkissian came in for criticism but ultimately it led to the joint preparation of ten guidelines underpinning a new masterplan for the area which all sides were prepared to stick to.

The message from this is that the avoidance of controversy may be expedient in the short term but may cause longer-term damage and that conflict, whilst never a pleasant experience, may be a necessary and potentially positive part of the planning and development process. As such it needs to be part of the professional's toolkit of skills to be able to work with conflict and to manage it in ways which are not ultimately destructive or divisive.

SKILLS FOR PRACTITIONERS

Whilst Sarkissian is doubtless a remarkable practitioner, she exhibits skills which others can and should be exercising on a more regular basis. The first of these is preparation – a painstaking process in which she spoke widely to all protagonists, being prepared to listen without judgement, which ultimately built within her the trust and social capital which enabled her to 'ride the tiger' of the speakout. Secondly, she had succeeded in creating a 'safe space' in which unpleasant things could be aired without them becoming explosive. More than this, she had succeeded by formalizing or 'ceremonialising' the disputation, and some people have talked of the need to take deep seated conflict beyond a safe space to a 'sacred space' with the idea of moving everyone to 'higher ground'[28]. There are interesting echoes here of successful conflict resolution in South Africa and Northern Ireland. Thirdly, Sarkissian recognized "the need for a language and process of emotional involvement or embodiment" using a range of techniques such as story-telling, drama, music and visualization to enable people of widely different backgrounds to describe the world as they saw it.

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.sarkissian.com.au/

27   More information on Speak Outs at www.engagingcommunities2005.org/abstracts/Sarkissian-Wendy-final.pdf
28   Forester, John (2000) 'Multicultural Planning in Deed: Lessons from the mediation practice of Shirley Solomon and Larry Sherman', in M. Burayidi (ed.)
     Urban Planning in a Multicultural Society. Westport, CT; Praeger.

7 ■ CONCLUSION: TWELVE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PRINCIPLES	ACTION
1 CLEAR GROUND RULES SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED	This should be done at the outset so people are clear about what the objectives are.
2 THE PROCESS MUST HAVE AN HONEST INTENTION	The consultor must be prepared to be influenced by opinions of consultees and this means there needs to be trust and respect.
3 ENGAGEMENT NEEDS TO BUILT OVER A LONG TIME	'Consultation capital' like social capital is something that takes time to develop so it is important to clearly articulate opportunities for involvement as part of a continuous programme, not a one-off event.
4 AIM TO INFORM AND INVOLVE ALL THOSE WHO HAVE A JUSTIFIABLE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE	This requires thorough advanced preparation drawing up varied sources of local knowledge and an awareness of what will motivate various people to participate.
5 MAKE SURE THAT COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICITY IS INCLUSIVE	This means considering issues such as language, disabilities, making sure it will be able to understood by the widest cross section of people.
6 USE METHODS OF INVOLVEMENT WHICH ARE RELEVANT TO THE COMMUNITIES CONCERNED	Target diverse and underrepresented people and consider carefully the issues associated with venue, food, cultural norms, etc. Think about what will prevent participation, how it can be arranged to recognise and value the community's diversity, and how it can be made satisfying and valuable for participants beyond the issue being consulted upon.
7 TRAIN COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN PLANNING AND ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES	Consider ways of recruiting people from communities to act as intermediaries to explain what is planned and to convey the concerns. This will start to create new forms of leadership and engagement.
8 RESOURCES NEED TO BE IDENTIFIED TO SUPPORT THE PROCESS	Resources invested will ultimately be resources saved - understand how well-developed consultation practices equate to investment in a sustainable community.
9 CONFLICT IS INEVITABLE	Conflict resolution through consultation is a community-building process whilst conflict avoidance, whilst attractive in the short term, may lead to a 'parallel lives' scenario emerging.
10 STAFF ATTITUDES ARE CRUCIAL	The attitude of staff will determine the success of any process – they must be open, good listeners, honest and engender trust. Get to know your staff and understand how they will deal with each stage.
11 CONSULTATION SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO BUILDING COHESION	Avoid consulting on an ethnic group by group basis and do not rely solely upon 'community gatekeepers' to access to groups. Encourage consultation around issues which are of cross-communal interest. Also encourage consultation in places and spaces which are intercultural rather than exclusive.
12 PARTICIPANTS HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPECT THAT THE PROCESS OF DATA ANALYSIS AND THE FORMULATION OF CONCLUSIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED WITH TRANSPARENCY	Think about how outputs and outcomes can be communicated in a way which generates energy and satisfaction at being involved. If it is not going to be possible then it should be disclosed at the outset.

FURTHER READING

AMIN, ASH (2002)
ETHNICITY AND THE MULTICULTURAL CITY.
LIVING WITH DIVERSITY.
REPORT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT,
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE REGIONS

A ground-breaking study which focuses on inter-ethnic tolerance and conflict and what mixture had failed to create cohesion and cultural interchange in the UK. It asks both high-level structural questions about urban policy and also explores at the neighbourhood level the possibilities for creating new spaces and institutions around which an intercultural society can be built.

BEEBEEJAUN, YASMINAH (2004)
WHAT'S IN A NATION? CONSTRUCTING ETHNICITY IN THE BRITISH PLANNING SYSTEM. PLANNING. THEORY AND PRACTICE, VOL. 5, NO. 4, 437-451.

One of the pitfalls for planners and others engaged in community engagement is to ethnically 'pigeonhole' people, assuming that by virtue of their ethnic background they will hold a pre-determined set of values and outlooks. This piece provides a critique of current practices which prioritise cultural difference without considering power relations and equality.

BLOOMFIELD, JUDE AND BIANCHINI, FRANCO (2004) *PLANNING FOR THE INTERCULTURAL CITY.* BOURNES GREEN. COMEDIA.

The multicultural city may be a place of growing diversity but in which groups live largely parallel lives of mutual incomprehension. The Intercultural City is proposed as a place which actively plans for and encourages the interaction of cultures as a source of new ideas and diversity advantage.
Available at www.interculturalcity.com

BOOTH, CHRIS ET AL (2004)
PLANNING AND DIVERSITY: RESEARCH INTO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES. ODPM.

The report was written to inform the review of UK national planning policies and guidance (PPG) to ensure they reflect fully the needs of a diverse society and are compliant with equality legislation. Shortcomings are found and there are recommendations to mainstream diversity considerations into the training and professional development of planners, into plan-making and development control and that should be explicitly addressed throughout PPGs.
Available at www.communities.gov.uk/

BRECKNOCK, RICHARD (2006)
MORE THAN JUST A BRIDGE: PLANNING AND DESIGNING CULTURALLY. BOURNES GREEN. COMEDIA.

Part of Comedia's Intercultural City series of publications, the book explains the notion of Cultural Literacy and why it is becoming a vital skill for those in the planning and built environment professions. It proposes methodologies for development project planning and implementation.
Available at www.interculturalcity.com

BROWNE, CHRIS ET AL (2005)
COMMUNITY COHESION: SEVEN STEPS. A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT. HOME OFFICE, COHESION AND FAITHS UNIT.

Drawing upon experience from the Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme, this is a practical handbook of workable ideas and case studies across the policy agenda.
Available at http://raceandfaith.communities.gov.uk/

BURAYIDI, MICHAEL (2000)
URBAN PLANNING IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY.
WESTPORT, CONN. PRAEGER

A key text drawing upon thinking and practical experience from around the world.

CANTLE, TED (2005)
COMMUNITY COHESION: A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR RACE AND DIVERSITY.
BASINGSTOKE, PALGRAVE MACMILLAN.

Whilst not specifically concerned with the planning and built environment professions or with community engagement, Cantle provides a very useful synthesis of debates in the UK particularly since the 2001 disturbances. It asks important questions on the need to recognize the impact of regeneration on the cohesion of mixed neighbourhoods.

COMMUNITIES SCOTLAND (2005)
NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

A useful reference for anyone setting out to design a process of or policy for community engagement. Available at www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/

COOKE, BILL & KOTHARI, UMA (2001)
PARTICIPATION: THE NEW TYRANNY.
LONDON, ZED BOOKS.

Concerned primarily with the overseas development profession, this selection of essays nevertheless poses important questions for UK-based practice. It argues that even with the best intentions, community participation can be institutionalized and become just another, albeit more subtle, means of excluding the majority from power.

CUMMINS, JUDE (2004) *BUILDING COMMUNITY COHESION INTO AREA BASED INITIATIVES: A GUIDE FOR RESIDENTS AND PRACTITIONERS.* HOME OFFICE, COMMUNITY COHESION UNIT.

The guide suggests concrete ways in which diverse groups of people – for example of different classes, ages, faiths, race and ethnicity – can be encouraged to live and work together cohesively within ABIs, and looks at the factors that both contribute to and undermine this process. It focuses on good practice examples found during research into community cohesion initiatives. Available at http://raceandfaith.communities.gov.uk/

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (2006)
COMMUNITY COHESION AND NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FACTSHEET.

One of 18 Factsheets of varying levels of detail and usefulness which also includes topics such as Diversity and Neighbourhood Renewal and Race Equality and Neighbourhood Renewal
Available at www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/page.asp?id=8

EGAN REVIEW:
SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES **(2003)**

Blueprint for a new culture in planning and the built environment professions.
Available at www.communities.gov.uk/index.sp?id=1502251

HAGUE, C ET AL (2003)
PARTICIPATORY PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN MEDIATION, NEGOTIATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN MAKING PLANS. ODPM, 2003.

By the standards of UK planning publications a radical report drawing upon the work of Sandercock and other challenging thinkers. Drawing upon case studies from around the world it makes the case for 'public participation' to be put aside in favour of 'participatory planning', in acknowledgement of increasing diversity. This, for example, might involve using third-party mediation to resolve conflicts and objections to a plan, or the preparation of plans through brokering agreements between a range of stakeholders.
Available at: www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1143436

HICKEY, SAMUEL & MOHAN, GILES (EDS) (2004)
PARTICIPATION: FROM TYRANNY TO TRANSFORMATION.
LONDON, ZED BOOKS.

A response to the Cooke and Kothari book above, this selection essays draws examples from overseas development on ways in which participatory techniques can transform communities experiencing multiple deprivation. Again, not directly transferable to the UK but nevertheless a source of good ideas.

HIGGINS, MARILYN ET AL (2004)
DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY IN PLANNING: A GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE. ODPM.

An important and useful, if relatively orthodox, assessment of why British planners should take diversity seriously and how they might develop their practice.
Available at www.communities.gov.uk/

HUSSAIN, ASAF; LAW, BILL; AND HAQ, TIM (2006)
ENGAGEMENT WITH CULTURE: FROM DIVERSITY TO INTERCULTURALISM. UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER: VAUGHAN PAPERS NO. 41

Report of a project in Leicester to develop active cross-cultural engagement between residents of four very different parts of the city. It asks why Leicester appears more intercultural than many other UK cities and proposes a policy agenda to enhance this.

INVOLVE (2005) *PEOPLE AND PARTICIPATION*

An excellent guide to some of the methods described in this report, plus others, with a standard layout so that methods can be compared, and a detailed case study for each method.
Available at www.involving.org

MULLINS, DAVID ET AL (2004)
EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING HOUSING: INVOLVING BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC TENANTS AND COMMUNITIES. ODPM.

A useful guide to methodologies for greater involvement of BME communities in stock investment and transfer programmes. It has less to say on involving all communities in an intercultural way.
Available at www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1153405

NATIONAL HOUSING FEDERATION (2004)
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

Aimed mainly at housing associations it is an engagingly written though relatively superficial introduction to the subject. Available at www.inbiz.org/

NATIONAL PLANNING FORUM (2005)
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING: GOOD PRACTICE NOTE 1.

A useful first step for those new to the subject.
Available at www.natplanforum.org.uk/

REEVES, DORY (2005)
PLANNING FOR DIVERSITY: POLICY AND PLANNING IN A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE. OXFORD, ROUTLEDGE

A key text for practitioners, this book considers the implications of not only cultural but gender, age and other forms of diversity for the planning profession. It concludes with an argument for the importance of cultural competence and an agenda for change.

SANDERCOCK, LEONIE (1998)
TOWARDS COSMOPOLIS: PLANNING FOR MULTICULTURAL CITIES. CHICHESTER, WILEY

Sandercock has arguably done more than anyone to reappraise the planning profession within the context of diversity. In this largely theoretical but highly readable book she questions the core principles upon which planning practice has been based and proposes a new paradigm.

SANDERCOCK, LEONIE (2003)
COSMOPOLIS II: MONGREL CITIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY. LONDON, CONTINUUM

Sandercock's second book is more practically orientated and written in the light of growing anxieties, particularly in European cities, on community cohesion. It sets out to show how the planning and built environment profession can help increasingly diverse urban communities to live together

SEPPALA, PEKKA AND VAINIO-MATTILA, ARJA (2000) *NAVIGATING CULTURE: A ROAD MAP FOR CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT.* MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HELSINKI, FINLAND

Whilst aimed at overseas development practitioners, the report provides a compelling account of why anyone engaged in planning for change should have a clear understanding of the importance of culture.

WALKER, PERRY ET AL (1998)
PARTICIPATION WORKS! 21 TECHNIQUES OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY.

A classic account of the most effective methods for community participation which continues to retain its relevance.   Available at www.neweconomics.org

WOOD, PHIL (2004)
THE INTERCULTURAL CITY READER. BOURNES GREEN. COMEDIA.

An accompaniment to the Bloomfield and Bianchini book above, this is a selection of thirty key texts which explain the emerging ideas of interculturalism in urban policy terms. Available at www.interculturalcity.com

WOOD, PHIL, LANDRY, C AND BLOOMFIELD, J (2006) *CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN BRITAIN: A TOOLKIT FOR CROSS-CULTURAL CO-OPERATION.* JOSEPH ROWNTREE FOUNDATION

The most thorough analysis so far of interculturalism and diversity advantage at the local level.
Available at www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/

APPENDIX

A TYPOLOGY OF PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

1	MANIPULATIVE PARTICIPATION	Participation is simply a pretence, with 'people's' representatives on official boards but having no power.
2	PASSIVE PARTICIPATION	Involves unilateral announcements by an administration or project management without listening to people's responses. The information being shared only belongs to external professionals.
3	PARTICIPATION BY CONSULTATION	People participate by being consulted or by answering questions. External agents define problems and information gathering processes and so control analysis. Does not concede any share in decision-making and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.
4	PARTICIPATION FOR MATERIAL INCENTIVES	People participate through contributing resources – labour or volunteering time - in return for incentives. It is very common to call this participation, yet people have no stake in it once the incentives end.
5	FUNCTIONAL PARTICIPATION	Participation seen by external agencies as a means to achieve project goals, especially reduced costs. People may participate by forming groups to meet pre-determined objectives related to the project. Such involvement may be interactive and involve shared decision-making, but tends to arise only after major decisions have already been made by external agents. At worst, local people may still be co-opted to serve external goals.
6	INTERACTIVE PARTICIPATION	People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and formation or strengthening of local institutions. Participation is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals, based upon seeking multiple perspectives. As groups take over local decisions and determine how available resources are used, so they have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.
7	SELF-MOBILISATION	People participate by taking initiatives independently of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for the resources and technical advice they need, but retain control over how resources are used. Self-mobilisation can spread if governments and NGOs provide an enabling framework of support. Such self-initiated mobilization may or may not challenge existing distributions of wealth and power.

Derived from
PRETTY, J. (1995) Participatory learning for sustainable agriculture, World Development, 23(8), pp. 1247–1263.
and ARNSTEIN, S. (1969) A ladder of citizen participation, AIP, 35, July, pp. 216–224.

PLANNING AND ENGAGING WITH INTERCULTURAL COMMUNITIES:

BUILDING THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS BASE