

# working with communities

**“our project  
would be easy  
if it wasn’t for  
the people!”**

**“why is no one  
interested in  
our project?”**

- why?
- who?
- when?
- how?
- examples

why?

# why?

→reach out:

- accountability, locally responsive, perception
- pride, quality of life, part of the community

→gather in:

- skills, knowledge, experience, perspective
- grow, learn, capacity, support

→help others:

- confidence, fulfilment, active, enjoy, learn

who?

# who?

- those who are local
  - those with an interest
  - your audiences, many and varied
  - different methods, different people & stages
- 
- who is involved already?
  - who would you like to be involved?
  - who should be involved?



when?

# when?

→as early as possible and throughout

→to inform project:

→conception

→development

→delivery

→management

→evaluation

how?

# how? principles

- project size and scope, capacity, funds
- shared purpose: give and take, talk and listen
- friendly, open, respectful, honest, transparent
- open, wide, understand barriers, realistic
- beware data protection
- worthwhile, valued, incentive, reward, pay?
- anticipate conflicts, strong feelings
- be prepared to change what you do

# how? methods

→passive:

→1. information: give information

→2. consultation: ask opinion, share purpose

→active:

→3. joint decisions: influence, help decide

→4. collaboration: detail, have a role

→5. delivering: 'ownership', independence

# 1. information

→ one-way, first step, general

→ broad understanding

→ attract support

→ generate interest

→ posters, leaflets, events, speakers, mail-shots, press releases, newsletters, online, champions

→ piggy-back existing methods

# 2. consultation

- two-way, influence, opinion, ideas, feedback
- early on, especially where will impact locally
- reduce conflicts, allow project change
- beware raising expectations
  
- questionnaires, meetings, drop-ins, chats
- open days, get out there, experience it
- piggy-back existing methods

# 3. deciding

- involved in managing, gathering expertise
- decision-making, people embedded in project
- identify gap or task
- find people, interview, appoint, induct, review
- terms of reference, powers, funds, remit
- member of board, panel, working group
- advisor, specialist



# 4. collaborating

- deciding together, then doing together
- detailed active consumers and deliverers
- seeking commitment, resources, capacity, ideas, trust, growth, visibility
- individuals/groups, formal/informal
- researching, writing, designing, curating, coordinating, helping, learning...

# 5. delivering

→ high degree of influence, control, autonomy  
→ 'ownership'

→ they work independently, you give support  
→ mutual respect of community and expert  
→ intensive skills and capacity development,  
risk-taking, trust, motivation

→ project within a project  
→ might need external professional help

**“look at all  
these people!”**