PARTICIPATORY METHODS RESOURCE PACK

INDEX   **SECTION**

Introduction

The Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) was established in 1929 as a registered charity which aims to improve and enhance the quality of life for those who live and work in the rural areas of Essex. It encourages self-help community projects and speaks out to the relevant authorities on issues that matter to people living in rural Essex.

The work of the Rural Community Council of Essex is based on enabling communities to become strong, active and empowered, capable of doing things for themselves – defining the problems they face and then tackling them together. An Information Pack, 'Involving the Community in Your Project', provides guidance about different types of surveys – the advantages and disadvantages of different methods, good practice in carrying out surveys and how to use the information gathered.

This Resource Pack provides examples and practical advice about Participatory Methods. Other resource packs are available for 'Questionnaires', 'Workshops' and 'Factual Information'.

Assistance and support is available to help you design and use community involvement methods that are appropriate for your project and your community. Please contact your local field officer at the Rural Community Council of Essex at the address below for further information:

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Threshelfords Business Park
Inworth Road
Feering
Essex CO5 9SE

Tel: 0844 477 3938
Fax: 01376 573524
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Plan and Model examples

Planning for Real®

When used fully, Planning for Real® is a complete process of community involvement and development. It is an eye catching and hands-on method which encourages people to say what needs to be done to improve their lives by placing suggestion cards on a **model** (usually based on a 1:300 scale map) of their 'neighbourhood'. The method bridges the language gap and breaks down many of the barriers that prevent people from taking part in consultation. The models are light and portable which means that Planning for Real® can be taken to where people meet or gather.

Planning for Real® is a registered trade mark of The Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation (NIF). Organisations wishing to run 'Planning for Real' events or to describe themselves as users of a 'Planning for Real' approach should first contact NIF and obtain permission for use of the trade mark.

          Tel: 0870 7700339
          email: info@nif.co.uk
          web: www.nif.co.uk

A video showing how Planning for Real® works in practice is available for hire from RCCE. Planning for Real® Toolkits are also available at the RCCE office. RCCE field officers are trained Planning for Real® practitioners and are able to run 'Planning for Real' events.

Map and Flag examples

A map or large scale plan of an area (at least 1:5000 scale) is mounted on polystyrene board and used as an eye catching way of stimulating comments about the area. Participants are invited to record their comments on coloured flags. Being lightweight and portable the method can be taken to specific venues to target particular groups e.g. toddler groups, sheltered accommodation, youth clubs. It can also be used where people gather in significant numbers e.g. outside shops, at community meeting places, local events such as fetes.

Town Plans
The map and flag method has been used in Manningtree, Witham and Halstead as part a Town Appraisal and Plan process.

Three different coloured flags were used to answer three questions:- 'what is special?', 'what are the problems?', 'how can things be improved?'

Samples of coloured question sheets, coloured flags and instructions are included.

Open Spaces
The map and flag method has been used for 'doorstep green' projects and the design of recreation space in Chelmsford, Epping, Witham and Felsted.

Flags were placed in the plan to show the preferred location for facilities and equipment e.g. junior climbing frame, toddler swings, benches, planting etc.

Transport
The map and flag method was used as part of the Castle Hedingham and Sible Hedingham transport needs assessment.

Flags were used to record journey details; different colours were used to record age and access use of car or public transport.

Sample instructions are included.

Speeding and Parking
The map and flag method was used as part of the Great Bardfield Speed Management Project.

Three different coloured flags were used to record:- 'Speeding hotspots', 'Parking hotspots', and 'Traffic hotspots'.

Samples of coloured question sheets are included.

The map and flag method can be adapted for a variety of situations

Map and Flag photos

STOUR VALLEY MARKET TOWN INITIATIVE

Write your thoughts and ideas on the coloured flags and stick them into the map in the appropriate location:

Use the GREEN flags to say "WHAT IS SPECIAL"
about Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford.

Use the ORANGE flags to record "PROBLEMS"
that exist in Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford.

Use the PINK flags to tell us your ideas for "IMPROVEMENTS" to life in Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford.

Your comments will be anonymous and impossible to trace back to you. However we need to compile a profile of people taking part in the survey and ask you to also:

Place STICKY DOTS on the three profile sheets to tell us a little about yourself

Place a RED HEADED PIN on the map to indicate where you live

Thank you for taking part in the survey. Please tell all your friends and family about it and encourage them to come along and
PUT THEMSELVES ON THE MAP

What

is

Special?

What do you like about
Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford?

What are the Problems?

What don't you like about
Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford?

How can things be improved?

What ideas do you have for the future of Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford?

What actions and projects will improve life for the people of Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford?

FLAG UP YOUR TRANSPORT NEEDS

Use the flags to tell us what service you need - where, when, and how often.

STEP 1

Take a flag – make sure you use the colour that matches your age/access to a car

STEP 2

Write on the flag the following:

- Where you live,
- Why you are travelling (shopping, school, swimming, cinema etc)
- What day(s) of the week you want to travel,
- What time (am, pm, eve, out all day etc),
- How often you want to travel (weekly, fortnightly, monthly)

STEP 3

Find your destination on the map and stick the flag in.

(If you wish to go to a specific place within a large town, please include details on the flag)

Where are the

Speeding Hotspots?

Write details on an Orange Flag and place at the relevant location in the map

Where are the

Parking Hotspots?

Write details on a Blue Flag and place at the relevant location in the map

Flip Chart comment examples

Comments can be gathered on flip chart paper, either by writing directly onto the sheets, or by writing comments on post-it notes that can then be stuck onto an appropriately headed sheet. A 'flip chart' method can be used in a portable, simple form at community events or with village groups and can be more complex at workshops and exhibitions/drop-in sessions

Fete
A flip chart method was used by Braintree District Council to gather views and opinion to inform the Community Strategy. A 'Fete Pack' was developed in partnership with RCCE and used by town and village representatives at community events. The answers to two questions were recorded on the flip chart:- 'What's good about our area?' and 'What needs improving?'

Sample sheets and instructions are included. These have been adapted from the 'Consulting Your Communities Toolkit'

Community Group
An adaptation of the fete pack can be used to gather views of a community group, perhaps taking 20 minutes or so at the start of a regular meeting.

Sample sheets and instructions are included. These have been adapted from the 'Consulting Your Communities Toolkit'

Workshops, exhibitions and drop-in sessions
At an indoor venue, several flip chart sheets can be used, headed up to gather views on a variety of topics or to answer specific questions.

Instructions for use of flip chart method at a fete

Display a list of the following themes.

- Getting around
- Things to do
- Feeling safe and well
- Being part of the community
- Taking pride in where we live
- Access to services and opportunities
- Caring for the environment.

The list of themes may help people think about different aspects that affect their lives.

Invite individuals to write (or you write for them) their comments/issues directly onto the flip chart under each of the headings – What's Good and What needs Improving. Do not worry if there is duplication as it will help identify a common thread and / or the strength of feeling.

What's Good about our Area	What needs Improving

Instructions for use of flip chart method at a community group meeting

Introduction
Introduce yourself and welcome the group or thank them for inviting you. Explain to the people the reason for involving them. Also assure them that it is a simple and enjoyable process. You might like to get the members of the group to introduce themselves if they do not know one another. Let them know that there are just three very easy tasks in all.
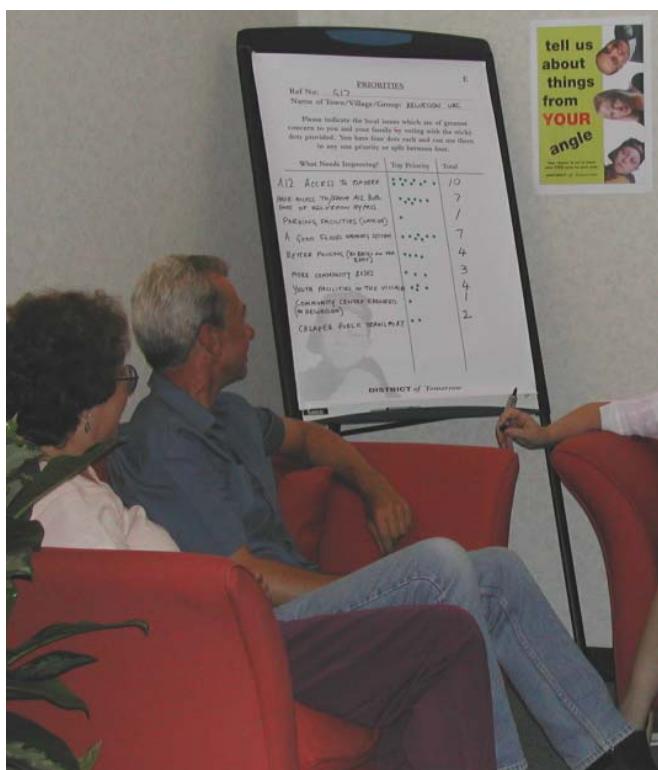
The first task is to help us form an overall picture of the number of people we have involved.

To do this you will need a sheets to record each persons age within age ranges.

Now give each person a sticky dot. Please use red dots for females and blue dots for males.

Ask each person to place the dot in the appropriate place on the sheet.

The second task is to find out what needs improving in the area.

Lead discussion around the following themes.

- · Getting around
- · Things to do
- · Feeling safe and well
- · Being part of the community
- · Taking pride in where we live
- · Access to services and opportunities
- · Caring for the environment.

The list of themes may help people think about different aspects that affect their lives.

Following the discussion, list the things that people suggest needs improving. This may take 20 min.

Then give everyone four sticky dots.

Ask everyone to indicate the local issues which are of greatest concern to them and their families by voting in the top priority column with the sticky dots provided. All four dots can be used to vote for one priority or split between four.

Please total up the dots to identify the issues in order of priority.

The third task is to find out what's good about the area.

Use the same process as above to list and vote on the positive aspects of the area.

Finally please thank everyone and let them know how the information will be used and how the responses will be reported back to them.

Name of Group:………………………………

Please indicate the local issues which are of greatest concern to you and your family by voting in the top priority column with the sticky dots provided. You have four dots each and can use them in any one priority or split between four.

What's Good About Our Area?	Top Priority	Total

Name of Group:………………………………

Please indicate the local issues which are of greatest concern to you and your family by voting in the top priority column with the sticky dots provided. You have four dots each and can use them in any one priority or split between four.

What Needs Improving?	**Top Priority**	**Total**

Voting examples

Sticky dots can be used as a quick method of prioritising.

Broad priorities
The example asks participants to vote for their top two priority issues.

Specific Questions
Two examples of voting on specific questions are included:
- Great Bardfield Village Design Statement - voting on guidelines.
- BDC Statement of Community Involvement – voting on preferred methods for receiving information

Please indicate which issues are of greatest concern to you and your family by voting with the sticky dots provided. You have two dots each and can use them in any one priority or split between two.

Litter and the street scene

Things for young people to do

The amount of traffic

WHAT NEEDS IMPROVING?

Dealing with crime

Public Transport

Leisure and entertainment

facilities
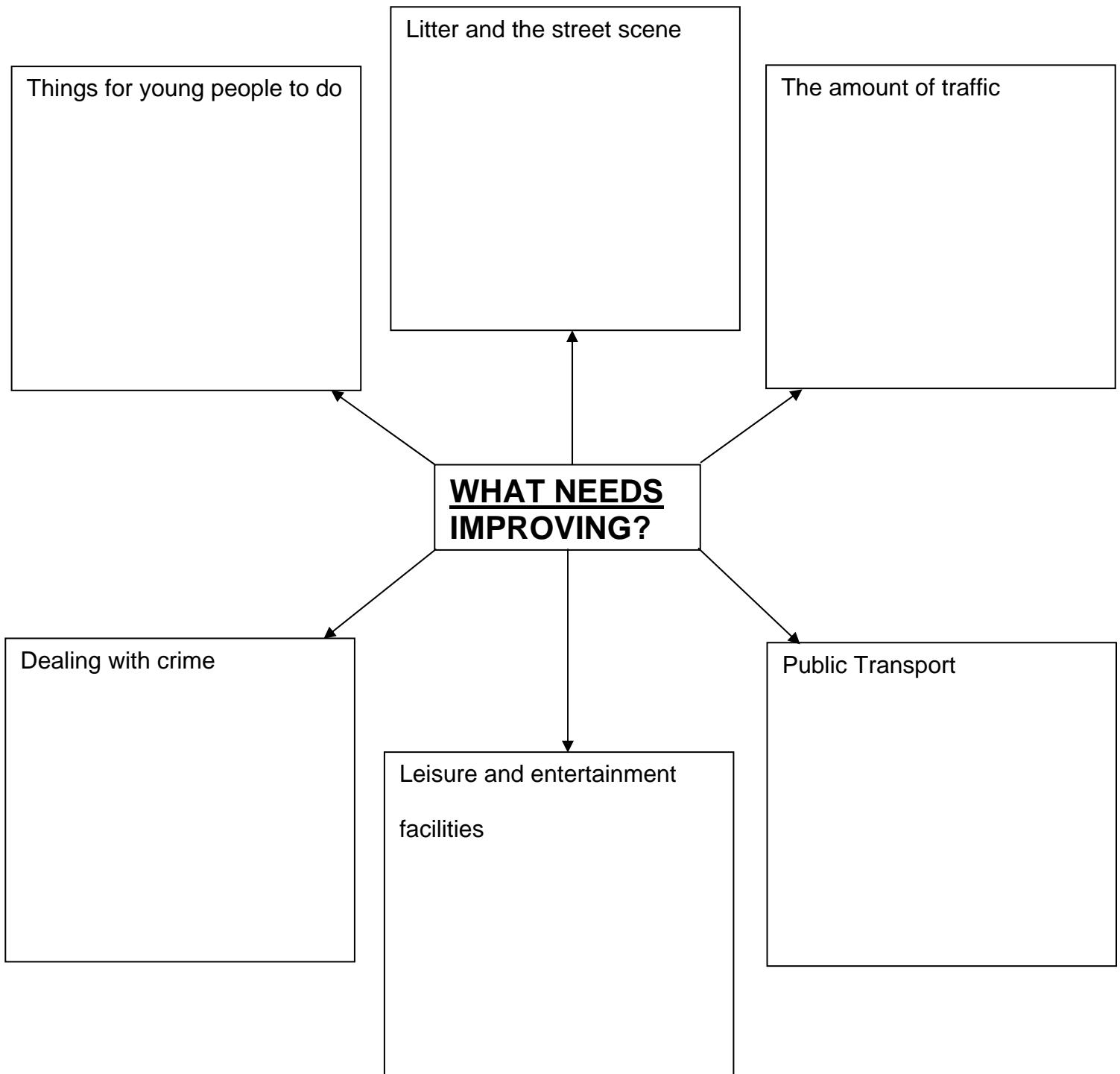
Summary Description of Area 1 – Dunmow Road, Bell Lane, Durham Close

Dunmow Road - Entrance to village from west down gentle gradient, past flood reservoir followed by unobtrusive strip development to either side of road. Mixture of bungalows and chalet bungalows built on north side elevated but set well back from road. Mainly chalet bungalows built in 1960s to south side of the road with ground levels falling away into the valley. Grass verge to south with banks and hedges to north soften appearance at entrance to village. Historic Centre (Area 2) commences with thatched cottages on the south and The White House on the north.

Bell Lane - Entrance to village from north up medium gradient via narrow, sunken lane virtually direct into Historic centre. Telephone Exchange in prominent position on ridge visible from outside village.

Durham Close - Mixture of detached and semi detached, brick and rendered, two-storey houses built in early 1970s. Variety of building orientation and materials provides interest.

Recommendations	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
No future developments in Dunmow Road should be above chalet height and the 'set-back' building line should be maintained.				
Boundaries of properties in Dunmow Rd should remain 'soft' ie hedges/shrubs/grass verges etc.				
Overhead cables should be removed if ever the opportunity arises.				
No development should be permitted along Bell Lane, before or behind the existing buildings.				

Please use your sticky dots to show whether you agree or disagree with the above recommendations

METHODS FOR INFORMING
Vote for your top two preferred methods of receiving information

Method	Vote	Comment
Newsletter / leaflet / articles		
Detailed document (hardcopy)		
Training / briefing sessions		
Website (addresses to browse)		
Public Meeting / presentations		
Radio features		
Exhibition / Roadshow / Open day		
CD Rom		

Card Game examples

Pre-prepared option cards can be placed under the headings:- 'essential', 'nice to have' or 'not at all', to indicate people's preferences

Village Hall projects
Cards can be prepared to reflect all possible village hall activities and uses from the various leisure and recreation options, to provision of a village shop or services. The cards can be pictorial as well as text.

The sample included is adapted from the Planning for Real ® Toolkit

Involving young people examples

Drawing and colouring sheets
Young children can be asked to draw a picture of what they like about their park, village, town etc. A sample is included.

Colouring activities can occupy young children whilst adults take part in other participatory methods at an exhibition or drop-in session.

The Good, The Bad and The Future
This is a 'flip chart comment' method specifically aimed at young people. Sample and instructions included.

The Good, The Bad and The Future

A flip chart sheet is drawn up as shown below. Young people are asked to write on post-it notes (individually or in groups) comments in relation to the following questions:
What is special?
What are the problems?
What improvements could be made?

The post-it notes are placed on the chart under the appropriate headings (the good, the bad and the future)

The good	Profiles
	    (male/female)
	    (under 12 / 12+)
		The bad

	The future	

Tip: use different coloured post-it notes for the three questions.
Advantage: This method is ideal for drop-in sessions or an informal event, e.g. at a youth club.
Limitation: This method does not highlight priorities.