CONSULTING COMMUNITIES:

A RENEWABLE ENERGY TOOLKIT

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Contents

Introduction

Renewable Energy (RE) projects in the UK have always involved a degree of consultation. In many cases, however, it is limited to statutory consultees and key individuals in the locality of a proposed site. But as sustainable development moves up the agenda, and as the UK generation of RE is falling behind its European counterparts, the views of communities are becoming more of an issue.

If priority is to be placed on sensitive and successful RE development, then it is vital to recognise local people as key stakeholders. They need to be acknowledged as potential catalysts for change, rather than as obstacles or sources of resistance to new technologies. A greater emphasis on community involvement (at all levels in RE development) represents a strategic move. It is both ethically important, and cost-effective in the long run.

While there are a variety of aspects of community involvement, this guide deals specifically with community consultation, and acts as a support to organisations and companies planning the development of a Renewable Energy project.

The guide is not intended as a 'tactic to get around' communities or to somehow 'win them over'. The premise behind consultation is to ensure that local people have access to relevant information and that the channels of communication exist whereby local people can contribute to project development. In a successful consultation, residents are seen as partners in the overall process of sustainable development. Local people are vital if we are to move forward.

Purpose of the Guide

This is a practical guide written by community practitioners for those involved in the development of Renewable Energy projects. Specifically it aims to give advice about *how* to consult effectively with communities and to identify the key factors to consider when planning and implementing a community consultation.

It presents principles of working with communities and an overview of different methods of consultation. Although the methods and approaches have been used within community development initiatives for many years, the guide assesses their applicability to the needs of RE developers. Furthermore, it discusses the issue of opposition as specifically related to the RE industry and presents approaches to dealing with opposition. It gives advice and ideas on appropriate methods for different situations and estimates their cost-effectiveness. While the lessons were drawn from a consultation regarding a small wind farm, Awel Aman Tawe, they apply in most cases to alternative forms of renewable energy. Awel Aman Tawe is described on the next page.

The guide is then divided into three sections:

Part One: Why consult communities?
This gives a background to community consultation. It discusses issues of *why* consult, *what* is community consultation and a background to the way communities function.

Part Two: Developing a strategy for community consultation.
This essentially presents recommendations on the approach to consultation. It addresses *when* to consult, *who* to consult, *what* to consult about and some of the broader issues as to *how* to consult. This section makes the case for an appropriate consultation strategy that is integrated into the technical components of the project.

Part Three: Using methods of community consultation.
This presents the range of methods available to the developer. They are assessed on the basis of how efficient and how effective they are as part of a community consultation exercise regarding a RE project. Although there is overlap, the methods are divided into three sections that are increasingly participative:
- Information dissemination
- Facilitation of discussion and debate
- Feeding ideas into the project

Annex One lists useful documents and organizations for further information and **Annex Two** provides examples of some of the methods used in the Awel Aman Tawe project.

Awel Aman Tawe
Fferm Wynt Gymunedol   **Community Wind Farm**

Awel Aman Tawe is a community-led wind farm project in South Wales. It was initiated by a group of local residents with experience in community development. The Amman/Swansea Valleys have recently been described as one of the most deprived areas of Britain, with high unemployment, poor health and limited services and facilities. The idea of a wind farm was mentioned in a Local Agenda 21 public consultation exercise and was researched by a small group of residents who transformed it into a community development project - *not just a wind farm.*

Underpinned by a sustainable livelihoods approach (Carney 2000) the purpose is to respond to the deprivation in the area as well as to contribute to LA21 objectives, and to respond to social, and financial concerns in the local area, as well as to the global environmental agenda. During their research the group discovered that wind farms are particularly controversial in the UK, and were surprised at the level of opposition that characterises the development of wind farms.

As community practitioners they decided to try an alternative approach to the development of the Awel Aman Tawe wind farm. Recognising the power of local voices and local action, Awel Aman Tawe pitched the project around local participation and decision-making. In particular the project stresses the need for awareness-raising, training and local employment, and therefore a programme of capacity building is integrated throughout.

Phase I of the project was to explore the idea with local people. It entailed undertaking a broad-based, thorough community consultation process - a *Participatory Assessment Process (PAP)* - emphasising the role of local people in contributing to the project details and in making the ultimate decision about whether the wind farm should go ahead.

The PAP had two specific objectives:
- To explore the criteria on which people base their decision of whether they want to pursue the community wind farm idea or not.
- To identify the conditions on which the project should go ahead.
- To support the participation of local people in making the decision as to whether the project should go ahead.

Awel Aman Tawe carried out the PAP over a period of a year in a semi-rural area of 14 villages with approximately 13,500 people. It utilised a range of methods as part of the consultation process involving approximately 70% of people in the local area. Nearly half of

the residents in the area voted in a referendum, reaching the decision that the project should go ahead.

The project was funded by the DTI New and Renewable Energy Programme, Welsh Development Agency Environmental Goods and Services Programme, Princes Trust Cymru, Shell Better Britain Campaign, Jigso, Welsh Language Board and Hyder.

A separate report ('Examining Approaches to Renewables Consultation. Lessons from Awel Aman Tawe Community Wind Farm Project' ETSU K/BD/00236/REP, available from ETSU) has been written detailing the process undertaken and an analysis of the opinions of local people during the consultation.

As part of the project, Awel Aman Tawe monitored and assessed the effectiveness and efficiency of the methods used. This has enabled the project to extract lessons for other developers and communities looking at undertaking a consultation regarding a Renewable Energy scheme.

Part One: Why consult communities?

Renewable Energy and Communities

The move towards a greater use of Renewable Energy (RE) in the UK has not been a smooth ride for developers, communities or policy makers. A level of controversy surrounds a significant proportion of RE schemes. Indeed, increasingly over the last ten years, wind farm planning applications are being delayed, rejected or called in for a public inquiry. While other RE technologies may seem less controversial they are not without planning difficulties. As more concerns are raised at a local level, developers are having to invest in more detailed feasibility studies, and respond to greater demands from Local Authority Planning committees. Consequently, obtaining planning permission is getting progressively more costly and time-consuming. According to the British Wind Energy Association (BWEA) it can take over 2 years and cost over £100,000. 'This period can be more than doubled if a planning refusal is then appealed' (Taylor 1999). Renewable Energy development is becoming increasingly high-risk, placing financial constraints to developers and consequently undermining the progress of the RE industry in Britain.

Opposition at a local level has made a significant impact on the progress of Renewable Energy schemes in the UK. Indeed 'local communities seem to be increasingly opposed to any prospective development' (Welsh Affairs Select Committee 1994). Well-networked campaigners have established organisations that support and successfully mobilise people against RE initiatives. Despite Country Guardian's membership of only 200, BWEA have indicated that, '77% of recent planning applications for wind farms had been blocked by Country Guardian campaigns' (RENEW IV).

However, the case of wind farms shows clearly that this level of opposition is not sustained in areas where RE schemes do get through the planning process and are constructed. 'Every single study [in the UK] shows that the overwhelming majority of residents in areas with a wind farm are pro-wind power, both in theory as a Renewable Energy source and in their area' (O'Gray). It is largely because of unfamiliarity that the public can be wary of Renewable Energy schemes. Furthermore, concerns that people have about the threat of Renewable Energy technology to their livelihoods can be heightened by organised opposition prior to and during the Planning stage. 'Country Guardian's horror stories had not proven true and there is a lot of anger now in the village among people who think they have been duped: some say now "why only one?"' (RENEW IV)

Given the slow growth of the Renewable Energy industry in Britain, there are few examples for people to base their opinions on. Many people have never seen a RE site and can only form opinions around what they have read or heard. Consequently groups like Country

Guardian can easily fuel fears about new technologies. Furthermore, older models with technical limitations can be flagged up as examples of an industry that is inefficient or potentially damaging to residents. As more communities object to the construction of RE sites in their localities, the greater the development of opposition groups throughout Britain, and the continued resistance to the development of the UK RE industry.

There is 'a serious gap between the public's generalised appreciation of the case for Renewable Energy and a detailed understanding of the issues. If the UK's expansion plans are to be realised, that gap needs urgently to be filled...It is vital that the government and its various agencies, together with the promoters of Renewable Energy plant take urgent steps to cultivate better public understanding of the issues and to create a more favourable climate for new proposals' (House of Lords Select Committee 1999)

Creating a 'more favourable environment' at a local level requires, among other things, consideration of two key factors:

1. **The level of involvement of communities in Renewable Energy schemes:**

'Small-scale wind turbine projects managed by members of the community are far more easily accepted by the general public' (Langebach 1993)

The UK RE industry can draw lessons from other European countries such as Denmark and Germany to identify structures and models for encouraging and implementing greater community involvement at a variety of levels. In these countries there is far greater community involvement and less local opposition to schemes. There are essentially four different levels of community involvement in Renewable Energy schemes:

- **Consultation** – local people can be drawn in to discuss a proposed scheme
- **Benefits** – local communities can benefit from the scheme - financially and in other ways
- **Decision-making** – local people can make decisions within a proposed scheme, or even to decide whether it should go ahead at all.
- **Ownership and management** – local people can both fully or part own the scheme and therefore continue to be involved in the management and decision-making.

2. **Awareness-raising and consultation with local communities**

RE schemes could do more to address local people's concerns prior to the development of individual projects. Given the still limited

knowledge about RE technologies in the UK, there will continue to be substantial concerns and worries about their potential impact. With careful, strategic awareness raising and consultation many of these fears and questions can be addressed prior to the development of successful organised local opposition. This guide primarily addresses this point by looking specifically at *how* to develop and implement a consultation strategy.

Recognising Communities as Key Stakeholders

Communities are made up of people, who share something in common, either a set of interests, (culture, language, hobbies etc) or a location. This guide addresses communities of *locality* rather than of *interest*. It is the communities who live by Renewable Energy resources whose concerns need to be addressed primarily. It is the opposition at a local level that can be most damaging to a Renewable Energy development. Fundamentally it is communities at a local level that will be affected most and who could benefit more from potential spin-offs.

Communities are powerful, not just having the power to object and resist ideas but having the power to support, develop and possibly own RE schemes. In seeing communities as stakeholders, they are not viewed simply as obstacles but as potential catalysts for change. Given the skills, knowledge, motivation and commitment that exist within communities, there is a range of ways in which they can become involved in an RE scheme. Furthermore, there are several reasons why it makes sense to involve local people in the development of local RE schemes:

- **Involving local people strengthens RE projects**.

'Consultation can bring new values and perceptions to bear on the design and evaluation of projects which subsequently expand access, strengthen responsiveness to needs and produce more appropriate policies' (Smith 1998).

Drawing on the experiences of community development across the world, there are countless examples that show that where residents are actively involved in local planning, the overall satisfaction with services and facilities is particularly high. "People's participation is becoming the central issue of our time" (UNDP Human Development Report 1993). This applies to RE schemes as much as it applies to other community issues. By involving local people the scheme can be strengthened in a variety of ways:

Reassurance and Trust: Given that RE schemes in the UK are often based relatively close to residential areas, it is natural that local people will have concerns, and only fair that these are addressed. Where residents feel involved and valued for their contribution, they

are more likely to have confidence in the developer. By involving them, a developer demonstrates a commitment to the local area and the local people. By drawing on their ideas, a developer recognises their skills and knowledge and shows respect for their opinions. Gaining residents' trust is a key factor in gaining their support.

Awareness: Involving local people in an RE scheme increases the level of awareness of RE technologies at a local level. In Britain with still few examples of RE schemes, it is important that local people have the chance of greater exposure to the issues. Greater awareness and interest strengthens the overall project as it helps people to understand *why* the scheme is developed in such a way. Furthermore it enables people within the community to discuss the issues among themselves on an informed basis rather than resorting to hearsay or rumours.

Tailoring the project: With greater awareness, local people are able to contribute to project planning and development. This not only empowers people and generates a greater sense of ownership, but also enables residents to contribute local knowledge, skills and values that will enhance the project. This could strengthen the project in different ways. For example, residents' input into the location, size, and position etc of the scheme could mean greater local satisfaction as well as identifying a greater range of options; local involvement in the Environmental Impact Assessment could contribute to greater awareness of, and confidence in, the rigour of the planning procedure.

Monitoring: As a result of local involvement in the planning of a scheme, there is likely to be a greater sense of ownership after its construction. Not only does this mean that local residents are more likely to feel proud (and advocate the use of RE to others) but they are more likely to monitor it and keep an interest in its performance. A good relationship between a developer and a community prior to construction paves the way for a good relationship after construction. Linked to a feeling of ownership is one of responsibility. If a community has an interest in the protection of and care for the scheme a developer can be more confident of less risk of damage through vandalism.

- **Involving local people contributes towards Local Agenda 21 objectives.**

'The attraction of LA21 is that it is an attempt to create a whole picture. This means balancing environmental, social and economic values to create real progress (that won't be undermined by pollution, crime or any other of the social and environmental 'externalities' that accountants leave out of the calculations)' (ETSU K/BD/00179/REP)

Local Agenda 21 (a strategy for implementing the *think globally, act locally'* commitment made at the Earth Summit in 1992) sets out a framework for local sustainable development strategies. These local action plans embrace all sectors of community life from public services and infrastructure through to social and individual skills, values and experiences. Furthermore they set plans for the local area within the larger national and global context. In particular LA21 stresses the value of local participation in local matters. By addressing issues in an integrated fashion, LA21 highlights that sustainability is not uni-sectoral. Greater local involvement in planning and implementing renewable energy schemes increases the potential for them to contribute to local sustainable development. Not only can 'the development of renewable energy [itself]..contribute to many LA21 sustainability objectives' (ETSU K/BD/00179/REP), but by involving local people in its development a range of other benefits can be identified that could contribute towards the development of sustainable communities.

Local benefits: by positioning an RE scheme within the broader framework of LA21 and sustainable development, the scope for local benefit is enhanced. Identifying potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to a specific project or a variety of possible schemes enables local people to identify and take advantage of any spin-offs as well as take measures to deal with any possible threats to the local area. As an example, one aspect of developing a RE project usually involves the construction or improvement of an access road to the site. Through local involvement residents may identify a particular route for the road whereby they could gain greater access to a popular facility, or they could even link the costs of the road construction as matched funding in an application to a donor for the costs of improvement to the amenity.

Capacity building: A key factor of sustainable development is the importance of capacity building. The gaining of skills, experiences and knowledge at a local level contributes to community development in a far more sustainable way than the short-term fix of 'experts' implementing projects from outside. While communities rarely sport the complete range of skills required for all aspects of sustainable development, most communities have the capacity to undertake sufficient training in specific areas appropriate to community goals. The assessment and planning for renewable energy schemes requires a range of skills addressing social, environmental, technical, financial issues at a policy and practical level. Building capacity at a local level could be integrated within renewable energy schemes through involving local people in a variety of ways.

- **Involving local people is cost effective**

'Too many renewable energy schemes have been defeated at the planning stage, often because the local community sees the project

as 'imposed' on them, but with very little benefits to accrue back to the local community' (Broome 2000)

Renewable energy is becoming an increasingly risky business for developers in the UK. The level of financial input prior to any certain development is getting higher. This is primarily because 'planning authorities have felt themselves to be between the hammer of public outrage and the anvil of government policy' (Welsh Affairs Select Committee 1994 para 2). Appealing a planning decision or taking a scheme though a public inquiry is both costly and time-consuming.

Involving local people also requires costs in terms of time and money. However, 'it is now well recognised that achieving successful implementation of renewable energy projects needs the acceptance of the local community' (Broome 2000). A well-planned and implemented strategy for involving local people can not only facilitate the progress of individual schemes, but also support local sustainable development and generate positive examples of successful RE schemes. If as much rigour were to be applied to the social aspects of RE schemes as were applied to the technical and environmental aspects it is suggested that the progress of applications through planning would be made substantially easier and ultimately less costly. If this was undertaken as a rule in areas where RE projects were proposed, it would support the overall image (and probably the progress) of the RE industry, and therefore greater local involvement represents not only an ethical move but also a strategic move.

What is consultation?

"Lack of communication between the people who shall live with the turbines and the developers, the local bureaucracy and the politicians seems to be the perfect catalyst for converting local scepticism and negative attitudes against specific projects. Conversely, information and dialogue is the road to acceptance" (Danish Wind Turbine Manufacturers Association 1999)

It is generally recognised now in the UK that greater local participation in RE projects is a key factor in the development and progress of the UK RE industry in general. Consultation is one form of encouraging greater local participation, but even 'consultation' can mean a variety of things and require different action at different times. To consult simply means 'to seek advice from or to take counsel with' (Oxford English Dictionary) and therefore consultation exercises ought to look different according to their specific objectives. Statutory consultation by planners, for example, fulfills a specific role with the planning procedure and cannot be assumed to meet objectives of all sorts of consultation processes. The approach taken to consultation is clearly dependant on what it is you want to achieve. For example: 'to establish a basis of trust between the developer and local community' or 'to raise awareness within the local community of the issues of RE' or 'to define the conditions on which the RE scheme should go ahead' would all require different approaches. There are certain basic questions to be asked at the very start:

- *Who do you want to consult? And what do you want to consult with them about?*
- *At what stage in the project is it appropriate to consult them?*
- *To what extent should local people decide on the project? And what are the best ways of reaching those decisions?*

These questions are all part of defining a consultation strategy and are addressed in Part Two of this guide. By clarifying your key objectives at the start, the preparation and implementation of the process will be smoother and more effective. Furthermore, it is vital to plan the process by which local ideas and opinions are fed into the project. Consultation causes resentment if people's ideas are sought but disregarded, documented but not read, or if community decisions are requested but not acted upon. Consultation can be a very empowering process, but equally it can prove to be lip service to local participation. Any consultation process, therefore, needs to clarify the extent to which residents' opinions will be sought and used, and the process by which they will be fed into the project. By making the process clear and transparent, there is less danger of raising false expectations.

Although several studies have been carried out to determine people's opinions of RE projects, the level of consultation about proposed sites

is still limited in the UK. Public meetings play a key role as a standard consultation tool. Generally community consultation has been brief, limited in scope, and furthermore has often fuelled controversy by the methods chosen. A recent evaluation of community involvement in wind farms in Britain showed that 'few opportunities for genuine consultation and participation were made available to the local communities affected by the proposed schemes' (Devine-Wright, McAlpine & Batley-White 2000).

Community networks and consultation.

Communities are not homogeneous, harmonious bodies of people. Within communities are relationships and factions, histories and boundaries, hostility and love. They are complex networks with no simple formula for understanding, analysing or working with. However, there are basic rules that people who work in communities tend to adopt and there are certain methods of approaching communities that are tried and tested. Importantly, when a new idea is discussed in a community it is not considered in isolation from the background of issues and relationships that exist. It runs along existing channels, it is argued about along existing fault lines and will be compared to existing issues and problems. Therefore a certain amount of background social data is crucial to a successful community consultation.

Although people live in the same locality they do not necessarily share the same values, experiences, interests or friends. They maintain contact with certain people and are motivated by certain issues. Communities can be visualised as lots of overlapping clusters of groups. Alternatively, they can be seen as a web of different boundaries. The level at which different groups interact depends on many factors including the size and type of the community, for example, urban communities and rural communities have different characteristics (like the number of facilities and services available or their relative isolation). In a consultation there are two factors about the community to bear in mind:

What do local people have in common?
Two people living in the same area may disagree on all sorts of things, but they share a range of factors that affect their lives.
- Local environment
- Facilities
- Services
- Problems
- Local authority and local politics
- History
- Climate
- People

How do local people divide themselves?

People identify themselves according to a range of different characteristics. This also serves to divide them from others. They divide themselves:

- By age and gender
- By ethnicity and culture
- By values, class and religion
- By location (estate, street, ward etc)
- Users of facilities like schools, post offices, clubs, clinics, and supermarkets
- Local factories or work places, or unemployment offices
- Interest groups: environmental groups, local history societies, discussion groups, support groups, sports clubs etc.
- By past experiences and circumstances
- By leisure activities and interests

Although these networks and divisions are a fundamental part of community life, they are not rigid or static. People move in and out of different groups, new networks emerge as issues arise and fresh hostilities can result from new situations. Some boundaries are more flexible than others. For example, gender is for most people a permanent characteristic, while leisure activities are determined by accessibility and interest. By identifying the divisions and networks that exist, it is easier to clarify aspects of the consultation. Some people cut across many of these boundaries and crop up again and again, while others are harder to find. Some people participate and others don't, either through lack of time or inclination. But a lot depends on how the consultation is managed.

Involving people in the consultation

Given the complex network of groups within communities, care must be taken to choose appropriate methods for consultation. If the objective is to involve as many people as possible throughout the area, the methods adopted need to consider involving all groups. If however, the objective is more specifically to involve those committed to, say, RE certain groups may be targeted (e.g. environmental networks, secondary schools' geography departments, users of recycling centres, readers of environmental pages of local newspapers etc.). By acknowledging divisions and networks, consideration can be given to time, locations and community representation within the overall process.

A public meeting, for example, is often held in the evening. This immediately excludes a body of people who for whatever reason are unable to go out in the evening (e.g. they have small children, they work in the evening, they are afraid to go out after dark). Also many people find a public meeting intimidating, and do not feel comfortable voicing their opinions in this type of venue. As a result, this approach often attracts people who are angry enough and confident enough to speak out about the issues. Furthermore, there is nothing like a

common enemy for uniting people. This is one reason why a public meeting facilitates an 'us and them' situation: local people identify with each other against the external organisation proposing a project. This is partly because the main thing the participants have in common is that they all live near the proposed site, as opposed to the developer who (usually) doesn't.

Where a consultation aims to involve all residents in an area, it is important to approach as many groups as possible working within and across existing boundaries. Facilitating the discussions at a variety of levels and in different settings reduces the chances of fanning the flames of existing rivalries. People feel comfortable talking about ideas with certain people (people who use the same language; people who share common values and opinions; people whom they see regularly; people whom they don't feel patronised by).

Certain settings facilitate a comfortable discussion. For example, many community groups meet regularly – weekly or monthly – and invite speakers specifically to have a discussion on all sorts of topics. Members of these community groups are used to discussing issues and bouncing ideas back and forth. Mostly they feel comfortable about expressing their opinions in front of each other and are well used to listening and debating ideas. It is important to recognise the value of going to the place where communities meet and fitting around the existing activities of local people. In this way a whole range of people who would otherwise not go to a public meeting can engage in the consultation process.

Informal and formal networks
In preparing a consultation strategy, the range of different kinds of groups and networks should be acknowledged. Informal networks are equally, if not more, important than formal ones. Although informal networks (friends, family, colleagues, neighbours etc) are less identifiable from the outside, the influence of informal networks should not be under-estimated. People talk about the locality among those who live there and rumours can spread rapidly through back gardens, over a pint and at the school gates.

Members of formal networks are a much smaller body of people. For example, members of Ramblers clubs or Pony clubs etc are only a small proportion of those people who actually use the countryside for recreation. Furthermore, certain roles attract certain people, and it is not unusual for one person to be a member of several formal bodies: the archaeological group, the commoners association, the ramblers association etc. They may be on the committee for each of these groups. Therefore, targeting only formal networks in a consultation exercise is restrictive. The table overleaf gives some examples of informal and formal networks.

Examples of informal networks:	Examples of formal networks:
Parents who meet regularly outside school gates	Parent Teachers Association
Neighbours	Residents Association
People who share an interest	Action Group, community discussion group, environmental group
People who walk or use the countryside	Ramblers Association; National Trust; other societies
Employees at a factory	Union

Table 1 Examples of formal and informal networks within communities.

The different ways that these networks function, particularly with regards a new idea, needs to be borne in mind in planning a consultation strategy. A formal network picks up issues that are pertinent to them and if the group discusses it at all they would discuss the idea in terms of how it could affect them as a group and the people they represent. Furthermore, in most formal groups it would be included on the agenda of a structured meeting. Discussion would usually be minuted and those not at the meeting informed of what was discussed. If the group were to form an opinion on the issue, it would be decided usually via a vote and any group policy agreed.

Informal networks work in different ways. For a start, they don't have set meetings (although many informal groups exist as a result of regular contact, like 3.20pm outside the school gates). Although people do discuss ideas and news as legitimately as formal groups there is usually less structure, and opinions and decisions can evolve in a more haphazard way. In many cases a majority view is upheld, but it won't be made as a result of a vote or require all members to adopt the overall opinion. Nevertheless, peer pressure is often applied to influence individuals' opinions. For example, the introduction of the idea of the wind farm in one village in the Awel Aman Tawe consultation area led to a strong anti campaign in the village. It caused those who were in favour of the project to feel excluded as a result of their views. 'If you are for the wind farm, it's a shame you can't voice your opinion because of intimidation' (female 27); 'I feel I cannot give my name in genuine fear of repercussion from people who are frantically against the wind farm project' (anonymous letter to the local paper).

In preparing a consultation different approaches are required for different kinds of groups. It is relatively straightforward to develop a list of formal groups in an area. These can be approached formally with information, with issues for them to consider, with requests for their participation etc. Presentations can be easily arranged and the group can be asked to draw in the opinions of others in their constituency. It is worth remembering that each member of a formal group is a member of a range of informal networks. If a group feels that the idea is part of their remit and they haven't been approached formally or consulted, they are likely to discuss it anyway. If they do not have access to sufficient information this could potentially lead to false assumptions and to the spreading of damaging rumours.

Working with informal networks requires a different approach. Press, leaflets, posters etc are various ways of getting information to these groups. Given that these informal networks are operating continually, with people interacting with all sorts of groups on a daily basis, their potential for disseminating information - positive and negative - is substantial. Furthermore, where members of these networks have access to information the ability for them to discuss the idea is enhanced. Facilitating a process where local people have enough information to maintain these discussions and reach a conclusion on an informed basis is a prime objective for a consultation process.

Part Two: Developing a strategy for community consultation

Introduction

There is little that irritates residents more than hearing rumours of a proposed development about which they cannot access further information. Rumours spread quickly and can be imbued with all sorts of untruths and misleading 'facts' especially when people are forced to make assumptions or come to conclusions because they do not have sufficient information. Where information is denied, suspicion ensues. This breeds anger and resentment, and ultimately opposition especially where the subject is controversial.

In preparing a Renewable Energy scheme, you are not presenting a new idea to a blank sheet, or discussing it in a vacuum. Residents have all sorts of values, experiences, knowledge and opinions. Recent community experiences, like the death of a child from an industrial lorry, or the threat of factory closures, or a successful lottery application for building an environmental centre are all relevant as they affect the way local people receive new ideas. Furthermore, in the complex web of social life people have good days and bad days. They have stressful periods and relaxed times. They organise their lives around children, work, elderly relatives, births, deaths, and weddings. They deal with crime, debt, abuse, pain, illness and boredom as well as holidays and celebrations. In planning a consultation these commitments and cycles have to be borne in mind.

In the development of a consultation plan, it is wise to think strategically. Do not use different forms of media indiscriminately, think through the most appropriate times and places for activities, use information appropriately, target specific audiences for certain types of information. And particularly importantly, integrate your consultation activities carefully with the other aspects of your project. There is no point in carrying out extremely costly technical and environmental assessments if at the end there is such a huge backlash of local opposition, which prevents the scheme from going ahead.

Equally, however, there is little point in undertaking a consultation, involving time, energy and money, and raising residents' expectations if there are no suitable sites in the locality, or if the site proposed is not viable. Therefore there is a balance to be struck between getting enough technical data to assess the basic viability of RE schemes in an area, and involving residents in implementing a proposed project.

The process of consultation needs to be regarded as an ongoing strategy rather than a snapshot event that happens at some point during the development of the project. Obviously there are limits to the level and the breadth of consultation that you will be able to

undertake. These limits are set by the costs available, time and the technical and informational limits. However, with strategic planning it is possible to carry out valuable consultation with local people integrated throughout the RE scheme.

The objectives of the consultation, the process, the methods, the personnel, the informational requirements ought to all be defined early on in the project plans. Furthermore, indicators to assess the progress of the consultation should be as important as the indicators for assessing the other factors of the project. A strategy for consultation, which takes into account the constraints and potential obstacles, should be clearly identified at the start. It can be modified and assessed as the consultation progresses, but if everybody is clear from the start what the objectives are and how they are to be met, it will be a smoother operation and consequently more successful.

Key aspects of defining a strategy

1. Integrate the social and technical aspects from the start
2. Involve experienced community practitioners in the development and implementation of the strategy
3. Identify the objectives for the consultation
4. Identify the main activities and methods for the consultation
5. Identify the informational requirements
6. Identify the logistics for the consultation
7. Identify the constraints and obstacles to the consultation process
8. Identify the process for feeding ideas into the RE scheme itself
9. Identify the indicators for evaluating and monitoring the consultation
10. Develop a schedule.

1 Integrate the social and technical aspects from the start

- **When do we consult?**
- **How do we tailor the consultation to the technical phases?**

Incorporating a consultation into the development of an RE scheme ought to strengthen the project: by enhancing local people's awareness of and support for the proposed technology, by encouraging involvement of local people in making appropriate decisions about the scheme, and by reducing the possibility of the development of organised opposition against the scheme. Consultation isn't an add-on, an event that happens at one or two points in the scheme, when there's time or when the project is beginning to look ropey. Consulting local people is an ongoing process that will have intense periods and more relaxed times according to what is appropriate.

Within the development of a Renewable Energy project there are various technical and environmental stages. It is important to integrate the consultation appropriately, in terms of both methods and timing. This is primarily to ensure that methods are chosen carefully rather than indiscriminately, and that they are carried out well at an appropriate time. For example, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of the first time someone hears about the scheme. What do they hear? How do they get that information and how will they perceive it? Who will they pass that information on to and how will they represent it? The consultation strategy needs to consider how that initial information distribution will be carried out. Likewise, if people are informed about the idea of the scheme but then hear nothing for months, or do not know where to go for further information it will significantly affect their opinions of the scheme.

Measures can be taken to ensure that the first thing people hear about the project is positive. Also that it is in a format that will enable them to understand the basic issues, access further information and to discuss and defend the idea within their own social networks. For example, carrying out extensive technical testing is likely to start rumours. Therefore it is advisable to limit surveys to desk-based studies prior to any consultation. If technical site visits are required then social site visits are also required. Local people need to be informed about what is happening – treat it rather like you're going into somebody's back garden – you wouldn't go in unless you had informed and requested entry, and explained your intentions.

Overleaf is an example of how the social and technical aspects might be integrated. Consultation objectives are identified within the individual phases, and personnel are suggested for their implementation.

Phase	RE development activity*	Consultation activity	Consultation personnel
One	Identification of a site. Desk based studies regarding site	Identification of local community; Development of consultation strategy. Community audit of facilities, services, boundaries, factions, etc.	Community consultant
Two		Initial information dissemination and awareness raising throughout the area. (e.g. leaflets, posters and letters to community groups). Key groups and local figures identified and approached. Prepare the ground for a full consultation.	Community worker/s and RE personnel
Three	Project feasibility. On site surveys.	Full consultation: e.g.. Series of presentations; and open days; establishment of local base to respond to queries. Define majority views regarding location, size and power output. Identify main concerns and disseminate further information regarding these. Development of community committee and identification of role.	Community worker/s and/or Community development personnel and RE personnel
Four	Preparation of statutory documents for planning application	Continued contact with interested parties, community committee and key personnel. Dissemination of plans to community (e.g. via newsletter).	Community worker
Five	Planning application	Continued contact with interested parties and key personnel. Dissemination of results of planning application. If appropriate: develop strategy for appeal or Public Inquiry	Community worker/ community consultant
Six	If planning application successful: construction and operation	Liaison with community committee throughout construction. Facilitate election of local committee to handle benefits/community fund.	Community worker/ facilitator. Community liaison officer
Post construction	Operation and maintenance	Continued contact with committee regarding complaints; response to inquiries; ensure smooth running of community fund.	Community liaison officer

Table 2 An enxample of how social and technical aspects of a RE scheme could be integrated

*These technical stages of development have been taken from 'Best Practice Guidelines for Wind Development' BWEA 1994.

Different methods are utilised at different stages, for example to update residents of the scheme's progress through planning or to make a decision about the structure for a community fund, or to involve residents in an Environmental Impact Assessment. In planning a project strategy, social components should be integrated throughout, allowing for informational requirements and preparation time. The objectives of the consultation will alter for the different stages, in the same way that the technical objectives will alter. It is important therefore that appropriate personnel are employed to implement the various aspects, and furthermore, that the strategy for consultation is developed alongside the technical strategy.

2 Involve experienced community practitioners in the development and implementation of the strategy

- **Who should develop and implement the consultation strategy?**
- **When should they be brought into the project team?**

There are standards in engineering; there are appropriate methods and approaches to dealing with technical issues. A trained engineer applies these standards to his or her work. This applies equally to community work. There are experienced community personnel that are trained in developing strategies for working with communities and for implementing consultation processes. While a developer would be unlikely to employ an untrained surveyor, accountant or engineer in designing and developing a RE scheme, there is little evidence to show that many developers employ trained community practitioners to plan and implement the social aspects of a proposed development. This distinctly undermines the potential effectiveness of a consultation process.

Employing experienced community practitioners, either as consultants at appropriate points in the development of a specific scheme, or as in-house employees assisting in a range of projects simultaneously, is a crucial move in addressing community involvement. Furthermore, practitioners may be local to the area of the development or external – this will depend on the terms of reference. Recognising the consultation process as an ongoing strategy rather than a one-off event establishes the importance of drawing in these skills at the very start. In order to integrate the social aspects with other aspects of the project, someone skilled in community work needs to have a valued input at the overall planning stage.

Table 3 An example of a Community Consultant's brief for Phase Two of the previous diagram (Table 2).

Phase Two	Consultant's brief
Time: 2 months **Location:** Office in local area	**Purpose:** To establish contact and disseminate information throughout the community. To ensure that key figures in the community are identified and positive links established. To prepare the ground for full consultation. **Activities:** • In close collaboration with technical team, design and develop information pack for local area (leaflets & poster) • Using audits undertaken in Phase I identify points for information dissemination and prepare letters and displays as appropriate. • Establish local base within existing community facility ensuring adequate accessibility. • Initiate and follow up contact with all community groups. • Distribute information packs to all community facilities (as identified by audit) and arrange for leaflet distribution throughout area • In collaboration with technical team, write press release for local papers. • Initiate contact with local MPs, community councilors and other key figures in the area (as identified in Phase I) • Set up and maintain a surgery time whereby members of the public can make contact regarding the proposed development. • Maintain a contact book in which residents' opinions and concerns are recorded. • Maintain regular contact with technical team to ensure accuracy of information dissemination, and arrange surgery times for technical personnel to visit office. • Develop and input data into a database of residents interested in the project – whether positive or negative. • Identify a set of criteria on which local people judge the proposed idea. • Submit a report detailing the process undertaken, the key concerns and issues raised by residents, and recommendations for the full consultation.

Furthermore, different skills and methods are required at different Phases. This is likely to result in different personnel employed at different points in the process, all of which require a clear Terms of Reference. Writing a ToR for a community practitioner requires an overview of the objectives, approaches and methods of consultation. This is often a job for a community consultant as part of defining the overall strategy. He or she would identify the points at which consultation would be required, what types of work they would need to undertake and what types of skills would be required to do so.

3 Identify the objectives for the consultation

- **What do we want to achieve by consulting local people?**
- **How much input from the local community do we want in the project?**

Achieving different objectives requires implementing different methods and approaches. Therefore it is important to be very clear from the start about what the objectives are of the consultation. A lot depends on the level of involvement that a developer would like a community to have. So, for example where a priority is placed on community decision-making, the methods would involve not just information dissemination and addressing concerns but facilitating a process whereby residents can become actively involved in deciding how the scheme progresses.

'To be useful for programme planning and development, objectives should be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound' (Gosling 1995). Furthermore, while there may be overall objectives for the consultation as a whole, it is important to think through and identify objectives for individual phases. The objectives of one phase may be straightforward information dissemination across a large area, while another may be to establish and maintain a community liaison group, which makes decisions about a range of issues.

Defining the objectives requires thinking about issues such as:
Who do you intend to consult? Is it an area, a group of individuals, a set of organisations? How have you chosen these people for consultation (and whose criteria were these?)? Who do they represent? What are the boundaries (and who defined the boundaries?)? Who have you left out and why?
Why do you want to consult them? To what extent do you want to involve local people? Do you plan to simply distribute information or do you intend to involve them in making decisions? If they are to be involved in making decisions, what decisions should they be involved in?
What do you aim to achieve? What would you like the outcome of your consultation to be? Do you aim to develop a community working group in which community decisions can be made? Or identify a list of

important conditions on the basis of which residents would like to see the project go ahead? Or feel satisfied that all concerns in the area have been met?

These objectives need to be clearly identified in order to plan how to go about implementing the consultation.

4 Identify the main activities and methods for consultation

- **What methods will enable the consultation to meet its objectives?**
- **What is the best approach to implementing these methods?**

Having clearly set out the objectives, it is then easier to identify the methods and activities for consultation. In establishing the approach to be taken, justification for the various methods needs to be clear, showing how they aim to meet the objectives identified. Methods should not be used indiscriminately. For example, public meetings are often seen to be synonymous with consultation itself. But a public meeting is just one method of consulting people, and should be used at the right time when it will achieve the objectives identified. Other approaches like developing partnerships with appropriate local organisations (for example a local environmental network or community development organisation) can be an invaluable move.

When planning the methods and activities, various aspects need to be considered:

Will people participate?
People respond to different things. They have different interests, and are motivated in different ways. This has various implications for the methods adopted. If you use just one method (like a public meeting) some will come but many won't. Many people feel intimidated by a public meeting. But equally a public meeting serves a useful purpose at certain times in a consultation process. People will make the effort to participate in a consultation if it matters enough to them and if it doesn't intrude too much into their lives. So for example, someone may be happy to fill in a reply-paid questionnaire that comes through the door but not be happy to stop for 5 minutes in the street to answer a set of questions. Likewise, someone may be happy to discuss the proposed project within a community group meeting that they already attend, but not to put aside extra time to attend a public meeting. This identifies two key factors that can determine what methods are chosen: **where** and **when** do you consult? Most people's lives are busy and accommodating extra time to participate in a consultation exercise will be difficult, even if the interest and motivation is there.

Furthermore there are certain people – key figures in the community - whose involvement is required for others to participate. Therefore

bringing them on board is important. It may be the local MP or the landowners in the area, or the community councilors. It may just be a popular figure who can draw people along. The converse of this is that there are others who will deter people from getting involved. Maybe intellectuals who bore people with their theories, or the local nutter who rants and raves. Furthermore, there are others who set out to sabotage the process. There is a fine balance between ensuring that people can participate and managing the process so that it meets the objectives. Again, strategically employing a range of methods helps to facilitate this balance.

Will people be excluded?
Choosing appropriate times and places is a crucial part of defining methods. People, particularly women, with young children will find it difficult to attend meetings in the evening. People who work during the day will be unable to get to a daytime meeting. People with no transport will struggle to attend at an isolated venue. People with disabilities may be unable to get access to certain locations. Informal community boundaries will define where people feel happy about going – for example, ethnicity, class, village rivalries all play a part in dividing people.

Choosing an appropriate combination of methods
In choosing methods, therefore, an understanding of the local context is important, as well as common sense. If the aim of the consultation is to disseminate information throughout an area and identify key concerns that people have, methods that have the potential to channel information through formal and informal networks need to be considered. For example, a leaflet through every door in the area is one way of distributing information widely. But people require differing levels of information before they commit themselves to an opinion. Some like to talk the idea through with their friends, others like to access further information, others like to know more about who is behind the idea. So a range of methods using multiple channels is usually required to meet the needs of the range of people in the area.

Plan methods appropriate for the area:
While the objectives of the consultation may remain the same, the methods and approach adopted will differ according to the type of location and its proximity to the proposed site. Consulting residents about a micro-hydro project in one small village in an isolated area is a different process to consulting residents in a large town or city about wind farm. Larger bodies of people usually have more groups and sub-groups, boundaries and divisions often with a greater range of criteria identifying membership than smaller areas. These boundaries, physical and social, affect the nature of people's access to hear about and participate in a consultation. Therefore issues of transport, venues, publicity, speakers, office base etc need to be considered which are appropriate to the area.

What will each method achieve?
When planning a combination of methods it is clearly more cost-effective to be strategic. Identifying what each method will achieve will help to establish whether or not the overall combination of methods could result in the consultation objectives being achieved. In doing so you need to ask certain questions about each method:

- **Who is likely to participate?** (Where is the activity taking place, what time, how is it advertised, how accessible is the venue, how long will it last, who won't be able to participate? Will people understand? Who needs to participate in order to make the method work?)

- **What can be achieved through the method?** (Information distribution? discussion? decision-making? identification of concerns, of conditions? Feedback on ideas? Election of representatives for committee? Etc.)

- **How will this method contribute to the overall objectives?** (How will we know if it is successful? - what information will we need to know and how many people need to participate? will the method pave the way for informed discussion within the community? will it facilitate the establishment of a committee? or contribute to the clarification of conditions on the basis of which the project could go ahead?)

- **How does it fit into the overall strategy?** (What other methods would need to be implemented in order to achieve the objectives? Can this method involve people otherwise excluded? What are the constraints to using this method and how can they be addressed?)

5   Identify informational requirements

- **What information do we need in order to undertake the consultation?**
- **Where can we get that information?**

In order to carry out the consultation there are things you need to know and information you need to access about the local area. Some of this information costs money to access, other information requires time spent finding out. Different methods require different types of information, but it is valuable to prepare informational resources in good time for the consultation.

Information you may need:

Project area:
- Population figures broken down into area/village etc.
- Maps (street maps, road maps, ordinance survey maps) including boundaries between local authorities, areas, parishes etc.

- Electoral registers
- Local public transport networks

Renewable Energy projects:
- Other RE projects in the area
- Details of current and previous planning applications for proposed projects

Audits:
- Community groups e.g. youth groups, Women's Institute, sports clubs, voluntary groups (including contact names and addresses, when, where they meet and what is the focus/interest of the group)
- Community facilities e.g. Community halls, adult education facilities, clubs, churches, synagogues, schools, sports venues, childcare facilities etc (including address, name and contact details of caretaker, activities and schedule, availability for use)
- Shops and businesses
- Media contacts (press, radio, TV – including tel/fax/email addresses and appropriate correspondents)

Key organisations/individuals in the area
- Community development organisations working in the area
- Commoners Associations and landowners
- Local Agenda 21 officer and groups
- Environmental networks
- Community councils
- Local political figures
- Large employers (e.g. factories, call centres, mines etc)

Much of this information will be accessible from existing data sources, for example from the local authority or RE trade associations, and if there are existing community development organisations, they will have valuable information about social groups and facilities in the local area. As well as identifying key communication channels, developing this databank of information will enable you to get a feel for the area, the value of which cannot be over estimated.

6 Identify the logistics for the consultation

- **How long will it take and how much will it cost?**
- **From where and when are we going to implement the consultation?**

In planning the approach, two obvious factors for considerations are time and cost:

How long does it take to consult? How long is a piece of string? The time required for consultation clearly depends on the objectives identified. One commonly heard frustration with community

consultation is 'it always takes longer than you expect'. A rule of thumb therefore is to identify how long you think it's going to take and add a bit extra. Nevertheless, through careful planning (identifying the logistics involved) it should be possible to gauge the time required fairly accurately. Bear in mind that if you're relying on people putting in their own time to your consultation, acknowledge the fact that their spare time may not coincide with your tight schedule. Furthermore, people do things in fits and starts, they have cycles of concentration, inspiration and motivation. Consultation often takes longer than expected because things happen that they didn't anticipate. Therefore it is important to think through all the possible constraints that could delay the process. Simple things like Christmas and summer holidays are often not taken into consideration when planning a schedule and yet they obviously affect people's willingness and ability to participate.

How much does it cost to consult? The same applies to cost as it does to time – primarily because time is money. But also because consultation incurs costs that are sometimes unexpected, for example huge phone bills, or the costs of renting space. Therefore, however much you budget for the consultation, it is worth having a contingency amount in case of unplanned expenditure. In preparing a budget, think through the logistics of the activities planned. Different methods cost different amounts of money. Money has to be spent on things that appear to be trivial but can be crucial to the project's success – for example spending the time to get positive press coverage. The budget should consider materials, postage, space, printing, office, staff, administration, telephone, IT services, computer and software etc.

Further to these issues of time and funds are the issues of where and when the consultation process should happen. These decisions are, again, affected by the objectives of the consultation, the methods identified to achieve them and the available funds. For example, if a broad in-depth consultation process were required in a small town where renting central office space is affordable, the consultation would benefit from establishing a local base. However, if the process requires intermittent information dissemination the costs involved in establishing a local base may not be justified.

Many consultation methods are affected by the time of year. People respond to changes in weather and the length of days. Few people will stop in the street on a rainy day to talk about a wind farm, and the short days of winter deter many people from going to meetings in the evenings. In the summer generally people are brighter and more motivated but in the long summer holidays many groups do not meet and many facilities close. Furthermore, people's lives are determined by events, celebrations, sports and television programmes, which consequently determine their availability to participate in a consultation process.

Personnel & information

The people you employ to undertake the consultation process will clearly affect its nature and effectiveness. Firstly, as in point two above, employ people who have experience of working with communities. Whether you employ people local to the area or not depends on the nature of the methods used and the depth of consultation and probably the base from which the process is managed. Whoever you do employ should receive clear and regular briefings on the nature and progress of the scheme itself, on broader issues of RE and other factors of concern to the project. Furthermore, the personnel should have enough technical information to be able to answer most questions posed by residents and they should receive training where necessary. They should have ready access to further information and support where required.

7 Identify constraints and obstacles to the consultation process

- **What factors could undermine the success of the consultation process?**
- **What measures can we take to protect against these happening?**

With careful planning and contingency measures identified, most obstacles can be overcome in a consultation. But there are usually some things that happen that are unexpected and can influence the effectiveness of the consultation. It is therefore wise to think through the possible constraints and be prepared to deal with them if they occur. Part of this is being prepared generally in the overall strategy, for example, as already mentioned above, the amount of time a consultation takes is frequently underestimated. If this is the case it could push back other aspects of the project and have cost implications.

One major obstacle likely to be faced is organised opposition to the project. This is clearly something that could undermine the success of not only the consultation process itself, but the overall scheme and therefore the way of dealing with it needs to be considered carefully.

People oppose things for all sorts of reasons, but fundamentally because it poses a threat to some element of their livelihood. It may be that they oppose it because their friends oppose it, and supporting it could mean damaging their friendship. It may equally be that they oppose it because they don't understand what the implications would be for their lives and they are not prepared to risk any aspect of their livelihood for the sake of the project. It may be that they feel the impacts identified by the developer (e.g. the visual impact of a wind farm) are a threat to their livelihood (e.g. impact on tourism for a B&B). Equally their experiences of changes in the area may cloud their view of new developments so that they are not prepared to even

consider the options. Whatever the reason, there are likely to be people who oppose the development of RE projects. It is important to understand their position and to find out what the reasons are for their opposition. It may be that they have concerns that are answered easily, for example in terms of disseminating information about the technologies themselves.

A memorandum from the then Welsh Chairman of the Country Guardian "confused global warming with the depletion of the ozone layer and also argued that global warming was unproven"..."It claimed that an entire population of golden eagles was wiped out by turbine blades in the state of Montana, USA. We pursued this claim with the state government of Montana, whose Director of Natural Resources and Conservation informed us that there were no operating wind farms in Montana. It seems that the reference was intended to be the Altamont Pass area in California, where in fact recent studies appear to suggest that there is an unusually large and very stable population of golden eagles"
Welsh Affairs Select Committee 1994 2nd Report. Wind Energy.

On the one hand, the consultation process aims to elucidate people's opinions, address their concerns, and feed their ideas into the scheme. On the other hand, as has been demonstrated over the last ten years in the UK, there are people and organisations that set out to deliberately undermine the development of RE schemes particularly wind farms often spreading misleading information (see box). The existence of this type of opposition, which can have a substantial impact on residents' opinions, makes the consultation process particularly valuable, but care has to be taken not to place too much emphasis on the views of a minority.

In dealing with organised opposition, it is worth bearing in mind their objectives and their methods of achieving their objectives. In most cases they seek to undermine the scheme on the basis of various sets of criteria, which are important to local residents:

Undermining the people or company involved in the project
- *Their commitment to the area*
- *Their morals and ethics*
- *Their financial trustworthiness*
- *Their skills and experience*

Undermining the consultation process
- *The information disseminated*
- *The fairness and legitimacy of the process*

Undermining the RE scheme itself
- *The technical feasibility*
- *The environmental value of the individual project*

Undermining the potential benefits and exaggerating the potential threats to the area
- *Economic*
- *Environmental*
- *Social*
- *Health*

Undermining the broader issues of RE and the environment.
- *Climate change*
- *Limits of RE*
- *The value of energy conservation over RE*

Where residents become concerned about any of these issues it has substantial impact on the way they view the scheme. It is therefore important to ensure that residents can gain access to information that can address their concerns, and allay their fears. The development of a local action group will use the same tactics to undermine the project and often draw on informational resources that are inaccurate or out-of-date. Because there are few RE projects in the UK, many people do not have enough experience to counter mis-information.

Nevertheless, it is important to distinguish between an informed concern and an outright rejection based on inaccuracies. The latter tends to be in the minority. As graphically described by a resident in Awel Aman Tawe area: 'Contrary to the *blah-blah-blah* from the small but barkingly vocal group of "anti" campaigners, the windmills make almost no noise – just a faint "thwup-thwup-thwup" when you stand directly under the blades'.

The impact of a local opposition group can influence local opinion substantially, and their networks in the area support them in achieving their objectives. They are one step ahead of an external developer in terms of their access to information in the area – they know the communication channels, the facilities for placing a petition, the media contacts etc. Furthermore they live on the doorstep, they have social networks in the area and can draw on local voluntary support easily. Predetermining their tactics in the preparation of a strategy will help to ease the flow of the consultation process.

Furthermore, by being rigorous in the consultation, providing clear consistent information, avoiding arguments, and ensuring a transparent process, many of the tactics used to undermine the process can be challenged.

Other potential constraints to the consultation are negative press coverage, limited participation by local people, and limited awareness of the issues. These constraints should all be addressed when planning the consultation strategy.

8 Identify the process for feeding local ideas into the project

- **What kind of ideas do we want?**
- **How could they be built into the project?**

'The traditional approach to public demand for greater participation has been described as "decide, educate, announce, defend" otherwise known as DEAD" (Roseland 2000).

The overall objectives of a consultation process are to consult; i.e. something along the lines of: to present an idea and find out what people think about it. If the consultation process is to have any value, people's thoughts and ideas should essentially be able to influence the scheme itself. This requires the project to have a process by which local ideas can be fed into the scheme. It is pointless to ask people for their opinions and then to ignore them. Furthermore, it is unfortunate when local people make contributions that would greatly enhance a project only to find that there is no scope for integrating them into the scheme.

In order to identify a process for feeding ideas into the scheme, therefore, there are various points to consider:

What sort of ideas are you looking for? This will clearly depend on the objectives. In a fairly limited consultation it might include ideas on how the project might have an impact on the local area. In other words, residents could be asked to raise their concerns about the project itself. Another consultation exercise may be to explore a range of potential RE schemes, and residents might be asked to consider the pros and cons of various options. This might include getting ideas on the criteria on which they would assess each option and then inviting people to consider the strengths and weaknesses of each. A different type of process still may be to seek ideas on whether a proposed scheme should go ahead at all.

Feeding local ideas into the project. The ideas identified above are only valuable if they can be used within the project itself. They are all different ideas and if they are fed into the project they can empower local residents to a varying degree. The table overleaf gives examples of how those ideas could be fed into the project, with an increasing level of power given to local ideas.

Local ideas	Feeding ideas into the project
Concerns about the impact of the project on the local area	Identify local concerns, investigate concerns and disseminate results of investigations to local people
Criteria for assessing a range of 5 RE schemes and pros and cons of each scheme	Make residents' ideas the basis of a decision made about the choice of RE schemes in the area
Whether the project should go ahead or not	Project only goes ahead if residents approve.

Table 4. Examples of how local ideas could be fed into a RE scheme.

In accessing local ideas it is important to remember, however, that how you approach getting the local ideas will affect the ideas that you get, so issues to consider are: Whose ideas are they? Are they representative of the general feelings and how can we ensure that enough people participate to provide an adequate representation of ideas. In order to do this a range of *indicators* needs to be built into the strategy that will enable you to gauge whether the consultation process is being undertaken effectively.

9 Identify indicators for evaluating and monitoring the consultation

- **What information would help us to measure the effectiveness of the consultation?**
- **How would we get that information?**

Just as there is technical information that assesses the scheme (like the wind speed) and means of getting that information (wind speed testing and analysis), so in order to measure the effectiveness of the consultation process a series of indicators needs to be developed as part of the strategy. This will enable you to monitor and evaluate the success of the process. For example, if you were hoping to gauge whether residents in an area thought the scheme was a good idea or not, it would be considered ineffective if you only asked one or two people. Furthermore, a range of techniques (means of verifying the indicators) is needed to measure these indicators.

Indicators measure different things, so it is important to choose indicators carefully and likewise to choose the means of verification appropriate to the indicators. For example if you were to measure the effectiveness of your press strategy you might decide that your indicators would be 1) 30 pieces in the local media about the project and 2) that there is at least an equal number of positive articles as negative articles. In order to measure these indicators, it would be insufficient to only monitor one local paper for stories.

The table below shows some examples of possible indicators which could be used to monitor the how effective the consultation has been in seeking local ideas. Furthermore, it suggests different means of verifying those indicators. They are not the only ways of monitoring the process. Different methods are equally valid but might apply to different circumstances. For example to assess whether local people overall think the project is a good idea, you may decide that you require at least 30% participation in making the decision. Rather than a referendum, you may choose to undertake a random sample survey throughout the area.

In the example given below, the indicators and means of verification should enable you to say that you believe the local ideas identified to be representative in the area. Feeding those ideas into the project therefore contributes to an effective consultation and supports you in achieving your objectives.

Local ideas	Indicators	Means of verification	Feeding ideas into the project
Concerns about the impact of the project on the local area	• All households contacted with a request for concerns • 5% of population respond with concerns • Responses are received from three defined areas	• Contact diary (monitoring all forms of correspondence disaggregated by location of residence) • Comments books at events and displays	Identify local concerns, investigate concerns and disseminate further information to reassure people
Criteria for assessing a range of 5 RE schemes and pros and cons of each scheme	• Criteria for assessing range of schemes identified • Pros and cons for all 5 schemes identified • 3% of population contributed ideas	• Questionnaires undertaken with 3% of population	Make residents' ideas the basis of a decision made about the choice of RE schemes in the area
Whether the project should go ahead or not	• 30% of residents involved in making decision	• Referendum results	Project only goes ahead if residents approve.

Table 5 Examples of possible indicators and means of verification to monitor how effective the consultation is in seeking local ideas.

By identifying a range of indicators for the range of objectives, the process of the consultation can be monitored easily and methods adapted and adopted accordingly. It may be felt necessary to alter the indicators during the course of the consultation. For example, if after a

while the same concerns are addressed over and over again with no new ideas, it may be decided that further information ought to be disseminated about those concerns without requiring 5% of the population to contact the office.

Furthermore, the indicators need to be as specific as is felt necessary for the consultation to be. For example if there are three distinct areas that are to be consulted, the indicators will need to reflect that, and consequently the monitoring system should allow for assessing the participation of people in the three areas. Likewise, if there are other boundaries, e.g. ethnic groups, gender, age groups etc that you want to ensure are adequately represented in the project, you will need to build that into the monitoring system, and identify any constraints that this could pose.

10 Develop a schedule

Once the overall strategy has been identified, with clear objectives, methods, indicators and means of verification it is a straightforward process to develop a schedule. Clearly the points raised throughout this section apply in the development of a schedule. Choosing a range of methods, with an approach that will enable enough people to participate that can be carried out in the timescale with the funds available is all part of developing the schedule. Choosing methods appropriately and allowing for preparation time, appropriate order of activities and contingency arrangements are key factors.

Table 6 An example of a schedule for initial consultation regarding a wind farm in three estates

Objectives:
• To disseminate information throughout the local area
• To identify main concerns that people have about the proposed wind farm ensuring that all 3 estates are represented and a range of age groups and ethnic groups participate.
• To write a report documenting the process undertaken and findings.
Timescale: 10 weeks

Week	Activity
1	Undertake audit of local area (inc. organisations, social groups, facilities etc.) Contact Post Office & plan information dissemination
2	Continue audit and input onto databases Design information pack (including leaflets and poster)
3	Continue information pack Collect and collate fact sheets ready for inquiries Prepare letters to groups and organisations
4	Prepare press release Identify criteria for monitoring consultation and prepare monitoring systems Print information pack Contact press Arrange surgery times in a range of venues
5	Press release to all local papers, radio and TV stations. Leaflets distributed by post office Letters to community groups and facilities Put up posters in local shops and facilities
6	Respond to correspondence (telephone, email, fax, letters, face-to-face) Maintain list of concerns Monitor level of participation and identified concerns from the various groups
7, 8, 9, 10	Continue as 6 Investigate concerns Carry out surgeries in different locations Presentations to community groups Identify and carry out measures to enhance involvement from groups under-participating
9, 10	Write up report: • Identifying concerns and the level at which each is a concern to various groups and overall. • Identifying level of participation across the area, disaggregated by age, ethnic group and estate • Reporting on investigations relating to each concern.

Part Three: Using methods of consultation

Introduction

The key aspect of consultation is communication. Either verbal, visual, in the written or broadcast media. People feel happy with different forms of communication. Some find speaking to somebody on a one to one level far easier while others find it intimidating. Some prefer to pick up news from the TV while others will read a paper. Pictures can be more powerful than words and one positive conversation with a key social player can in some cases have a greater impact than all sorts of publicity and information distribution.

Communication flows in different directions: up, down and across. It is worth visualising this in terms of a consultation process:

Downwards
Information designed
and disseminated
by developer/organisation

Upwards
Participation.
Local input
decision-
making

Horizontal
People talking to peers.
Discussion and debate
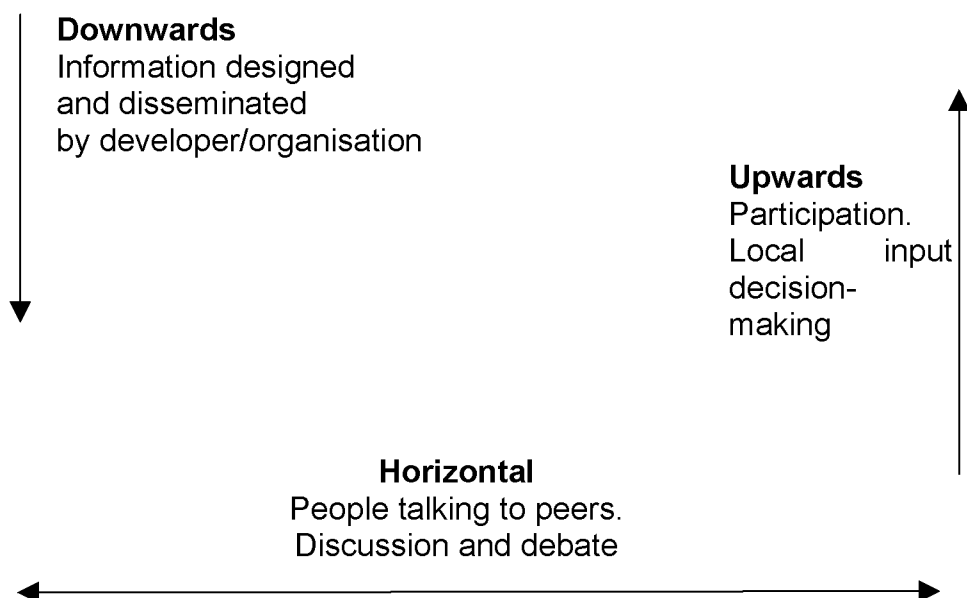
(Diagram based on 'Channels of Communication' in Burke 1999)

An effective consultation will use a variety of different methods and will ensure that communications flow in all three directions. A strategy therefore needs to address how to integrate these three so that they can flow into each other. It will ensure that horizontal flow will feed into the upwards flow, that the upwards flow will feed into the downwards flow enabling participation and discussion to help frame further information disseminated. And furthermore so that actions taken by a developer will be taken on the basis of conditions agreed to by local people.

This section looks specifically at a range of methods for consultation regarding a Renewable Energy scheme. It is divided into three

sections roughly corresponding to the three directions of communications flow:

1. **Information dissemination - the downwards flow of communication**
2. **Facilitation of discussion and debate – the horizontal flow of communications**
3. **Feeding ideas into a Renewable Energy scheme – the upwards flow of communications**

There is clearly overlap in the following methods. For example many of the methods within the section on discussion and debate could be used as participatory methods of decision-making, likewise they can be forums for disseminating information. The divisions are therefore blurred but are inserted for ease of use of the guide.

The table overleaf gives a guide to the methods described and gives a rough indication as to their potential for reaching people, for generating discussion and for drawing in ideas from the community. Furthermore, it gives a rough guide to the time and cost required for their implementation. This is clearly dependant on how the method is adopted and the size of the population of the consultation area.

	☆	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
Number of people potentially reached	<50	50-100	100-1000	1000-5000	>5000
Potential for generating discussion	very poor	poor	average	good	very good
Potential for drawing in ideas from community	very poor	poor	average	good	very good
Quantity of information able to disseminate	very small amount	small amount	medium amount	large amount	as much as possible
Costs involved (this does *not* include time)	free	less than £100	£100 - £500	£500 - £1000	more than £1000
Time to administer - a one-off event	1 hour or less	approx. half day	approx. 1 day	1-3 days	more than 3 days
Time to administer - ongoing	1 hour or less per month	approx. half day per month	approx. 1 day per month	1-3 days per month	more than 3 days per month

Scale for Table 7 (overleaf)

	Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
Leaflets	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	-
Displays and Posters	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆	☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	-
Local press	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆	☆☆	☆☆
TV & radio	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆	☆☆	☆	☆☆☆	☆
Website	☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆
Community group contact	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆	-	☆☆
Maps & Photomontages	-	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	-
Videos	-	☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆	-	-
Email updates	☆	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆	-	☆☆
Public meetings	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆	-
Community group presentations	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	-
Visits to existing RE sites	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	-
Open days	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	-
Education sessions	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆	-
Promotional materials	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆	☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	-
Focus group discussions	☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆	-
Semi-structured interviews	☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆	-
Questionnaires	☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	-
Community liaison committee	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆
Leaflet with reply slip	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	-
Participatory methods	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	-
Evaluation forms	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆	☆☆	☆☆	-
Referendum	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	-

Table 7 Overview of methods and their potential effectiveness within a consultation process. (Scale on previous page)

There are issues that cut across all types of methods and are worth drawing out:

- **The information that you are disseminating:**
  Needs to be: Up-to-date
  Consistent
  Relevant
  Understandable
  Accessible
  Be prepared to undertake specific research responding to individual inquiries
  Find appropriate examples and case studies to illustrate points
  Make it accessible
  Give people the option to find out for themselves – give them numbers to call, website addresses, directions to sites etc.

- **The people whom you are consulting**
  Show respect for their opinions, knowledge, skills and experiences
  Respond to their inquiries
  Maintain contact with people - keep them informed of your progress
  Don't exclude people – remember people use different networks
  Target specific people (e.g. users of site, powerful individuals, environmental interest groups)
  Make sure all are represented (e.g. age groups, gender, ethnic groups etc.)
  Involve people at all levels (not just key figures)
  Make it easy for people to participate

- **The process of consultation**
  Be clear about the level of involvement that you want
  Choose a mix of methods that will enable you to achieve your objectives
  Have a clear identity
  Be contactable
  Only invite participation where people's contribution will be valued
  As far as possible go to people rather than expect them to come to you.
  Leave enough time to consult people

Also cutting across all methods is the issue of the consultation base. Where you carry out the consultation from is clearly dependant on a range of factors. It is worth looking at the pros and cons of having a local or external base and local or external staff.

The Consultation Base

- **Who carries out the consultation process?**
- **From where do you carry out the consultation?**

Who carries out the consultation process?
Clearly for different objectives, different personnel would be required. Employing somebody local to the area has both advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages of employing staff local to the area:
- ✔ **They know the area, and the local context**
- ✔ **They know the many of the facilities and networks**
- ✔ **They use the local language and dialect**
- ✔ **Demonstrates commitment to the area**
- ✔ **No need to move existing staff, or cuts down on travelling**
- ✔ **Local staff will usually gain a greater level of trust**

Disadvantages
- ✗ **It is harder for local staff to be objective**
- ✗ **It is harder for them to switch off at the end of the working day**
- ✗ **They have their own boundaries and values which can influence the way they implement the consultation process**
- ✗ **Costs of recruitment**

If local staff are not employed, serious consideration ought to be given to developing partnership links with, and possibly commissioning some contract work to, local community development organisations, LA21 groups or environmental networks etc. Given that trust is a key issue when presenting an unfamiliar idea, the value of local people carrying out part or all of the consultation ought to be acknowledged.

It is also important to recognise the difficulties that local staff could face in becoming the 'middle person' between the external developer and the community. These difficulties are accentuated in a controversial project like a Renewable Energy scheme. It is important to remember when employing local staff to give them:

- Clear guidelines on their remit (including objectives, outputs and timescale).
- Support and supervision (and training if necessary).
- Regular updates on the overall scheme and clear explanations if project alterations are necessary.

From where do you carry out the consultation?
Fundamentally this depends on whether the organisation proposing the scheme is local or external. If it is local it seems logical to have a local consultation base. If it is an external organisation it is important to consider carefully where the consultation base should be. Firstly, should you have a base in the locality or work from your existing offices external to the locality?

Advantages of a local office:
- ✔ **Can be easily accessible by local people** (people pop in to pick up information, and can call by to discuss the idea)
- ✔ **People can see who you are and get to know you as a person** (this is what leads to trust and respect)
- ✔ **Materials readily at hand for presentations**
- ✔ **You can get to know local people and local area (e.g. facilities) and start to understand the issues of the area.**
- ✔ **Use local facilities and services** (e.g. printers, coach companies) **and support local firms**
- ✔ **Demonstrates commitment to the area**
- ✔ **Could be used as a base for other work,** (such as technical surveys).

Disadvantages of a local base:
- ✗ **Need to rent space – can be costly and logistically difficult**
- ✗ **Could be a long way to travel for an existing employee**
- ✗ **Could mean transporting a lot of office equipment for a relatively short period of time**
- ✗ **May not be easy to integrate with local community**

Fundamentally, having a local base enables the project to build up a rapport with the local community and have materials and equipment at hand for the consultation process. The disadvantages are primarily to do with costs involved and the organisational capacity to set up an office in the local area. This would need to be considered when developing a strategy for the consultation.

In making this decision, therefore there are certain factors to consider and possible compromises that can be made. Accepting the fact that a local presence is required to a degree in a consultation, it may be possible to consider one of the options overleaf according to the objectives of the consultation.

		Advantages	Disadvantages
Maintain existing office outside area	Enter community for events only	• No need to move base • Minimal investment	• Cannot build up trust easily • Hard to develop dialogue
External office with regular visits to the area	Have a regular surgery in local community (say 1 day a week)	• Can be relatively easily contacted • No need to move base • Low investment	• Have to transport materials regularly • Dependent on finding an appropriate space • limited ability to develop a dialogue
Rent office space in local area	Open to local community at set times or all the time	• Can build up trust • Can be easily contacted • Have materials at hand for activities	• Financial investment • Dependent on finding appropriate space • May be logistically difficult for existing staff.

Table 8 Options for consultation base

Information dissemination:
The downwards flow of communication

The objectives of information dissemination are:

- To get information to people through a variety of means
- To respond to specific queries
- To clarify and correct misinformation

Key issues relevant to information dissemination:

- *Different people want different amounts of information:* some people are happy to understand the basics about a scheme, others require far more information about, for example, the financial returns, the projected electricity output, the detailed timetable of events etc. before they feel they have received enough information.

- *People respond to different ways of receiving information:* people pick up information through different means. Many people read the local paper, others pick up the latest gossip at the club. People pick up information from a variety of sources and places. Information dissemination needs to target different 'information exchanges'. This makes it less likely that certain groups will be excluded.

- *People have different levels of understanding:* some people are able to grasp new ideas and issues easily, while others require very clear, simplified explanations in language they are familiar with. This is particularly the case with Renewable Energy schemes where there are many issues, unfamiliar to a lot of people: the technology itself, systems of electricity generation, distribution and trading, planning process, global warming and other environmental factors etc.

- *Some people are suspicious of information that is distributed by the organisation proposing the scheme:* therefore developing a database of independent organisations and individuals who would be able and willing to answer questions is a valuable process.

- *People want information about aspects that may seem irrelevant to the scheme, but are relevant to local people.* At the end of the day, in order to support the project, people need to be able to trust:
  - The **concept** behind the scheme: i.e. climate change, RE policy in UK, Agenda 21 and global targets and policies.

- The **technology** itself: whether it is efficient, able to contribute to reduction in CO_2 emissions, whether it is safe and has minimal impact.

- The stated **impacts** of the scheme on the local area: either positive or negative impacts

- The **people** behind the project: 'are they trying to pull the wool over our eyes', 'are they making money out of our resources' etc.

A consultation process, therefore, needs to be able to address these and reassure people by providing up-to-date, consistent, relevant, understandable, accessible information.

- People follow the opinions of those they respect. It is wise to target key individuals as part of the consultation process, e.g. local MPs or community councillors. Many people, especially if they feel unconfident about the new technology, feel happier to remain open minded until those they respect have given their opinions. Identifying and targeting key local figures early on helps them to feel part of the process and provides greater scope for information dissemination.

What information do people want?
Given the complexity of Renewable Energy schemes, there is a vast amount of information required to get a project off the ground: technical, social, financial, political, planning etc. It is unlikely that anyone in the local area will want to access all the information available, but different people are interested in different aspects amounting to a large body of information. It is important to be prepared for what people are likely to ask. Much information about the issues and technologies is already available from organisations like the trade associations (BWEA etc), ETSU, energy advice centres, and other organisations dealing with specific renewables. There is other information, like 'what does a turbine sound like' that is best answered by hearing an actual turbine. The types of questions and range of issues that come up are best dealt with in ways that are appropriate.

The main types of information that people requested within the Awel Aman Tawe project is summarised in Table 9.

Possible methods for information dissemination are:

- Leaflets
- Displays & Posters
- Local press
- TV and radio
- Website
- Community group contact
- Maps and photomontages
- Videos
- Email updates

The following section gives details and examines these methods in terms of their advantages and disadvantages.

Table 9 Questions frequently asked by residents during Awel Aman Tawe'sconsultation

∗.....................less than 10 ∗∗...................10 - 50 ∗∗∗ ....50 - 100 ∗∗∗∗..............100 - 200 ∗∗∗∗∗ ....over 200	Number of people asking question

• **Environmental factors and RE general**	
Are wind turbines noisy?	∗∗∗∗∗
How likely is it that we are going to see a wind farm up there anyway in years to come?	∗∗∗∗
Why don't they build wind farms offshore?	∗∗∗
What impact will 4 or 5 turbines have in cutting emissions?	∗∗
How much power do wind farms generate?	∗∗
Isn't energy conservation more effective?	∗∗
Are wind farms efficient?	∗∗
Is the technology safe?	∗∗
Isn't climate change all media hoo ha?	∗
Does the power from a wind farm displace that from coal or nuclear power station?	∗
Are wind farms subsidized?	∗
Is this the government worming its way in the back door?	∗
Doesn't Wales already have disproportionately too many wind farms?	∗
Why don't you try geo-thermal or hydro-electric?	∗

• **Impact of the wind farm itself**	
Will we end up with hundreds of turbines covering the mountain?	∗∗∗∗∗
Do they kill birds? Won't they fly into the turbines?	∗∗∗∗
Why here?	∗∗∗∗
How big will they be?	∗∗∗∗
Will we hear them?	∗∗∗∗
Where exactly will they be?	∗∗∗∗
Do they cause epilepsy?	∗∗∗
Where will the electricity go?	∗∗∗
Will it affect animals grazing?	∗∗∗
Will the house prices go down?	∗∗∗
What happens when it is not windy?	∗∗∗
Will we see them?	∗∗∗
How much land will be taken up?	∗∗∗
Could they damage the environment?	∗∗
What do they look like?	∗∗
Will it affect the TV reception?	∗∗
Where will the access road be?	∗∗
Will it mean we won't have any more open cast?	∗∗
Are you allowed to build it on common land?	∗∗
Will the sheep get scared?	∗∗
Would they have to be white?	∗∗
What about electro-magnetic radiation?	∗
Will birds stop breeding?	∗
Will it cause more fly-tipping?	∗
Won't we get more motorbikes and joy riders up there?	∗
How can you make sure they won't get vandalised?	∗
Will children get hurt?	∗

	Number of people asking question
*.................. less than 10 **............... 10 - 50 ***............. 50 - 100 ****........... 100 - 200 *****......... over 200	

● **Potential for wind farm to benefit the area**	
Will we get cheap electricity?	*****
How many jobs will it create?	*****
Will the community really own the wind farm and how?	***
How much profit would it make?	***
Who would decide what the profits would be spent on?	***
Where will the money come from to build the wind farm?	**
Would tourists visit a wind farm?	**
Will local companies build it and supply components?	**
Can you ensure that all villages would get an equal share of the profit?	**
How many houses could the wind farm supply with electricity?	**
Can it supply cheap electricity to an industrial estate?	*
Where would you have the visitors centre?	*
Why don't you split the money between everybody?	*

● **People**	
Who is involved in the scheme?	*****
Whose idea was it?	****
Where do the steering group live and how long have they lived in the area?	***
Why are they involved?	***
What about the commoners? Will they get compensation?	***
What do the landowners think?	***
What benefits are the steering group getting as a result of being involved?	**
Are they in cahoots with a private developer?	**
Why are people in AAT getting paid?	*
What experience do they have of big business?	*
Are they going to make their money and leave?	*

● **The consultation process**	
Is it a fix?	***
How long will the project take?	***
Why are you asking us?	**
Why are 16 and 17 year olds allowed to vote?	**
How can I vote when I don't know enough?	**
Why haven't you got an agreement from the commoners first?	**
What exactly is the money being spent on?	**
Did you advertise the consultation jobs?	*
Are we guinea pigs for projects elsewhere?	*
How were those questioned chosen?	*
Why is tax payers money being spent on this?	*
Why didn't you have a website at the beginning?	*

Leaflets

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	

Leaflets can be made up into a range of styles to meet different informational requirements. Existing leaflets and fact sheets can be used to disseminate information about specific aspects. They can be distributed throughout the area to every household – it is possible to arrange this through the Post Office, although you need to book it several weeks in advance. They can also be used at events and left in batches in community spaces for people to take. They can include reply slips inviting comments.

Advantages of using leaflets:
✔ Can ensure that every household receives one, and therefore that there is a wide distribution.
✔ Can be used at different types of events, distributed through shops and sent to general inquirers.
✔ People can read them in their own time
✔ Can ensure consistency of information throughout the area
✔ Can be easily tailored to the informational needs of the organisation;
✔ Can be multi-lingual
✔ Can be printed on a limited budget.
✔ Can include visuals and photos
✔ Can be administered from inside or outside the community

Disadvantages of using leaflets
✗ Cannot include a lot of information
✗ Distribution via the Post Office needs pre-booking some time in advance
✗ Cannot guarantee that people will read them, or that all in the household will get to see the leaflet

Time required for: Design & printing leaflet; logistics of distribution.
Costs include: Printing and distribution.

❣ Think through carefully what information is included in the leaflet, how long will it be valid for? Is it consistent with other information you are distributing? Will it fulfill your objective?
❣ Are there existing leaflets you could use rather than printing new ones?
❣ Make it simple, clear explanations, easy to follow, clear references to area and potential impact
❣ Use local printing firms
❣ **Distribution requires an audit of community spaces etc and post-codal information for house-to-house distribution.**

Displays & Posters

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★★	★★★	★	★	★★★	★★★★	

The best places for posters and displays are in places where people go and preferably wait, like at adult education centres, childcare facilities, libraries, community centres, leisure centres, post offices. Finding the right location for a display is often the hardest task, and an understanding of the facilities and people's movements is important. Furthermore, making it attractive and eye catching is one of the keys to a successful display.

Advantages of using displays and posters
✔ Can target specific audiences
✔ Can be multi-lingual and include diagrams and photos
✔ Can be carried out on a limited budget.
✔ Once a space is agreed for a display, it is possible to update the information
✔ Displays can invite comments
✔ Can be administered from inside or outside the community
✔ Can generate discussion among groups of people who use the facilities
✔ Can be used by supporters in their windows
✔ Mobile displays are a valuable resource to use at events and meetings. Once developed they can be used in all sorts of venues and updated accordingly.

Disadvantages of using displays & posters
✘ Cannot include a lot of information – need striking images that attract people to it
✘ Difficult to get quality space for a large display or even an A3 poster
✘ Time involved in putting up and updating posters and displays can be lengthy

Time required for: Design & printing/preparation. Distribution of posters/ displays
Costs include: Printing & distribution. Materials for display. Display panels for stand alone display.

❣ Poster needs to be striking - eye catching visual images to attract.
❣ Choose locations carefully for posters
❣ Use local printing firms
❣ **Distribution requires an audit of community facilities and appropriate shops/local businesses and places where people wait.**

Local press

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★	★	★★	★★

Having a positive relationship with the local press is crucial and it is vital to keep feeding the papers with information, correcting any misconceptions, responding to any written concerns and misunderstandings and answering letters written to the papers about the scheme. However, the media often thrives on controversy and can often stir things up in order to create a disturbance. Furthermore, a lot of people enjoy controversy too, and will gravitate towards such stories.

Advantages of using local press:
✔ Gets information out to a large number of people
✔ Can answer people's queries
✔ Can publicise events
✔ Is cost-effective in the long run
✔ Can keep a positive view of the scheme in people's minds
✔ Gives local people the chance to weigh up the pros and cons
✔ Can be administered from inside or outside the community

Disadvantages:
✘ Cannot guarantee that the press will print your information or that they will print it accurately.
✘ Can be time-consuming

Time required for: monitoring press, writing press releases and maintaining contact with journalists and editors.

Costs include: nothing but time and communication modes (fax, email, telephone or letter)

❢ when writing a press release make sure there is a story. Keep it short and straightforward
❢ Use the local information pages to publicise events
❢ Answer people's letters
❢ Keep press cuttings
❢ Send press releases to all local papers
❢ **Sending out press releases requires an audit of all press contacts (papers, phone numbers, fax numbers, email, addresses, key correspondents, types of stories, types of audiences).**

TV and radio

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★★	★★★	★	★★	★	★★★	★

Using broadcast media is a powerful way of getting images across. It is therefore a good idea to send press releases to TV and radio simultaneously to press. The amount of time required to work with TV and radio depends on the station, the programme, and the resources of the company. Make sure you choose appropriate people to be interviewed who will present the information clearly and consistent with other information disseminated.

Advantages of using TV and radio:
✔ TV and radio often attract different audiences to the newspapers
✔ Portrays the scheme using visual and audio images, which can be more appealing to many people and will make an impact in a different way.
✔ Can generate useful programmes for recording and showing at discussions and presentations
✔ Can be administered inside or outside the community.

Disadvantages of using TV and radio
✗ Media like controversy
✗ Cannot guarantee they will broadcast the scheme appropriately
✗ Unless it is prime time TV/radio it will have minimal potential to reach people

Time required for: preparing press releases, discussion and preparation with journalist, interview time.
Costs include: nothing but time and communication modes (fax, email, telephone or letter)

❣ Maintain positive links with TV and radio stations sending out regular press releases (see section on local press)

❣ Choose appropriate people to represent the scheme in an interview - think about how residents will relate to them

❣ **Requires an audit of local radio and TV stations as well as relevant national Radio and TV stations (phone numbers, fax numbers, email, addresses, key correspondents, types of stories, types of audiences)**

Website

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆

People have varying but increasing access to the World Wide Web. Gradually more and more people are turning to the web for information about new ideas, and therefore a proportion of the community will expect to be able to find information about the scheme and answers to their concerns on the net. Once it is up and running, it is a very useful place to post information and to direct people to links where they can find answers to their concerns.

It is particularly useful for contacts outside the area, e.g. press, and media and other inquirers and saves a lot of time and can result in media coverage, journal articles, and presentations in other parts of the UK.

Advantages of developing and maintaining a website

✔ Can be accessed by other organisations interested in similar work which can lead to new possibilities
✔ Can be accessed by a percentage of the community
✔ Lots of information can be posted and updated regularly
✔ Can have a comments form and questionnaire to draw in people's opinions.
✔ Can be interactive - people can source the information that they personally require.
✔ Can have written, visual and audio images on website
✔ It is possible to get a website up and running on a limited budget, although it can be time-consuming
✔ Once up and running it requires minimal time input to update
✔ It can be administered from outside the local area

Disadvantages

✘ Only a small percentage of local population will be able to access the site
✘ Setting up a new website is time-consuming, and updating the website requires personnel with appropriate IT training.

Time required for: Preparing and designing web pages, uploading and maintaining the website, responding to comments posted.
Costs involve: Web space and software.

❢ Develop web pages that are clear and attractive
❢ Keep information consistent and updated regularly
❢ Identify a range of links for users to access further information
❢ Request other organisations to have links to your website.
❢ Respond to people's comments, queries and e-mails
❢ Advertise your website locally

Community group contact

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★		★★

Linking in to existing community groups is a very valuable exercise. All sorts of groups meet regularly and are interested in what is happening in the local area. Usually these groups discuss ideas and issues amongst each other and provide an ideal forum for disseminating information. They range from clubs, societies and associations based on age, interest, religion, locality, sport and leisure. Some groups have over 100 members. Not all groups will have an interest in the proposed scheme, but all notices and information sent to the secretaries of these groups will usually be passed on the members of the group.

Advantages of linking into community groups
✔ Links into an existing range of networks that represent a variety of people
✔ Relatively easy to administer information dissemination to community groups (once an audit is undertaken)
✔ Information can be disseminated regularly, and a relationship can be built up with individual groups
✔ Extremely cost effective
✔ Variety of information can be disseminated – visual, written, video,
✔ Information dissemination can be undertaken from inside or outside the community.
✔ Can draw in ideas from groups

Disadvantages
✘ The level of response from different groups can vary - many won't respond.
✘ Requires a thorough community audit
✘ Because of the nature of formal groups, a community group can make a decision to support or oppose the scheme, and turning round a rejection that has been formally agreed at a community group can be difficult. See section on community group discussions

Time required for: developing and maintaining relationship with group secretary; preparation and distribution of letters and updates
Costs involved: Photocopying or printing of information. Postal and telephone charges

❣ It can be worth tailoring information to appropriate groups,
❣ Keep information simple especially at the start
❣ Use community groups as sounding boards for ideas
❣ **Requires an audit of community groups (details of contacts, interest, when they meet etc.)**

Maps and Photomontages

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
-	★★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	

A diagram or photograph can hold a huge amount of information. People want to know *where* the proposed site might be and *what* it might look like. While maps can be useful in pinpointing an exact location, they are not so good for giving an idea of the likely view of, say a wind turbine. A photomontage, simulating possible views of the proposed scheme, can be invaluable.

Advantages of maps and photomontages:
✔ Give residents an idea of what the proposed scheme might look like and where it could be.
✔ Photomontages are eye catching and a discussion point
✔ They can be used on posters and leaflets and disseminated widely

Disadvantages:
✗ Photomontages are costly to produce
✗ By distributing maps and photomontages there is less flexibility for change of location
✗ Some people find maps difficult to read and misleading

Time required for: accessing maps, photographing location and simulating Renewable Energy scheme onto photograph for photomontage, dissemination via whatever means chosen
Costs include: purchase of map, costs of photographer and process of creating photomontage, costs of printing and distribution.

❢ Think carefully about the best views for the photomontages - it is important to choose locations that people are familiar with.
❢ Choose maps that are clear, legible and show identifiable landmarks.

Videos

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
-	☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆	-	-

For getting across certain pieces of information videos can be powerful methods of communication. Videos combine visual and audio images to produce a range of different products. There are all sorts of videos available about Renewable Energy schemes. Some are promotional videos, others campaigning, other educational and documentary. A lot of information can be disseminated through videos that are both interesting and enjoyable to watch.

It is also possible to make your own video about the scheme you are proposing. This could be taken to events or distributed to community groups, organisations and key individuals.

Advantages of showing videos:
✔ A lot of information can be disseminated via a video
✔ Images - both animation and real - are a good way to explain to people what a Renewable Energy scheme looks like and how the technology works.
✔ Videos are useful for initiating discussion
✔ Videos are available that target a variety of audiences

Disadvantages:
✘ Videos can not be reproduced easily
✘ Relatively few people will get a chance to see a video
✘ Many venues do not have TV and video equipment, therefore it is important to carry and set up heavy equipment when showing videos at events.
✘ To produce a quality video is costly and time-consuming

Costs involved: purchasing or hiring videos and video equipment

❢ Showing videos works well when part of an existing meeting, presentation or discussion.
❢ Show videos appropriate to the audience – the language, the messages – as far as possible people want to see images that they are familiar with and can relate to.
❢ Show videos that are contemporary and consistent with messages you want to put across.

Email updates

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
☆	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆		☆☆

Still relatively few people have access to email outside of their workplace. Nevertheless, developing an email address book of local residents is a valuable database of people who can be informed of events and progress at the touch of a button. Gradually as people get greater access to email, this form of communication will become more common.

All sorts of information can be disseminated via email, including visual and sound effects.

Advantages of sending email updates:
✔ Fast and cheap information dissemination
✔ Can keep people updated very easily
✔ Range of information can be disseminated by email
✔ People have their own email networks that they can pass information onto
✔ Useful way of keeping people external to the area informed
✔ Can draw in people's comments easily through email
✔ Can be administered from outside

Disadvantages:
✗ Not all systems are compatible, especially when sending attachments
✗ Few people have access to email

Time required: preparing and dispatching update, maintaining email address book, responding to inquiries.
Costs involved: IT equipment (modem, software, telephone etc)

❣ keep your address book maintained with current email addresses and check emails regularly
❣ respond to people's emails
❣ use the email system for drawing in ideas.

Facilitating discussion and debate:
the horizontal flow of communication

Through discussion and debate, people:

- think about, talk about and inquire about the idea
- identify what they know, what they don't know and what they want to know about various elements of the idea
- form an opinion about the idea.

Therefore facilitating a discussion is a useful process within a consultation because:
- pros and cons are clarified
- local context is identified
- residents' criteria for judging a scheme are drawn out
- it can be facilitated in such a way as to draw out opinions
- discussion makes people feel more involved
- discussion encourages investigation

Key issues relevant to facilitating discussion:
- *Formal and informal networks:* It is inevitable that people will talk about the idea whether there are formal discussions facilitated or not. Where a project is perceived as making a large impact in an area, it will be the subject of much discussion through informal networks. Indeed the more controversial the idea, the more likely it will be discussed informally. Rumours, excitement, belief in or concerns about RE all motivate people to discuss the idea. Making sure residents have access to sufficient information on which to base their discussions is clearly important, but also giving them a chance to air their opinions in a structured setting is also vital. This way exaggerations, misinformation and assumptions can be identified by the facilitator and hopefully challenged or corrected by others in the discussion.

- *Information is required for a fruitful discussion:* Many people feel intimidated and tested if they are asked to discuss something about which they know little, and clearly there is little point in forcing a discussion in this situation. Nevertheless, residents often hold strong opinions without always examining the reasons why they feel that way. Quite often it is simply because they adopt the opinions of people whom they respect. Part of the purpose of facilitating discussion is to unpick those opinions and to explore with residents the issues that they identify as important. Given the level of misinformation that exists around Renewable Energy schemes it is vital that discussion is supported by clear information. This can be via any of the forms of information dissemination, but it works well to prime the discussion with a video or presentation.

- *Think through when and where to hold the discussions:* Discussions work well with groups of people that meet together

anyway. They are used to interacting with each other and so little time is needed to break down barriers and help people to feel comfortable. But constructive discussion can equally happen when a group of individuals meet solely for the purposes of discussing the idea. In convening these meetings, consideration should be made to the times and places arranged. These will have an impact on who all be able to participate and who will be excluded.

-   *Respect people's knowledge and experiences:* Facilitating a discussion is more than giving a presentation and answering questions. Facilitating a discussion is supporting a process by which residents discuss issues between themselves with a moderator there to help structure, guide and keep the heat out of the debate. Furthermore, a facilitator has the skilled job of keeping the balance between enabling people to tell their stories but avoiding the discussion veering off at a tangent. Quite often, however, an experience that, on the surface, appears to be irrelevant can turn out to be a key factor in someone's opinions of a scheme. It is important, therefore to acknowledge and listen to people's experiences.

-   *Facilitating discussion:* There are many guidance documents on facilitating discussion that are worth referring to (see Annex 1). Key points though, are:
    -   Use experienced facilitators
    -   Prepare clear objectives for the discussion
    -   Introduce people and use icebreakers to help them to feel comfortable.
    -   Explain clearly the purpose of the discussion and what it will lead to
    -   Ensure that all participants have an equal chance to contribute
    -   Keep the discussion moving, while probing into issues in some detail.
    -   Deal with conflict carefully
    -   Stick to times agreed with the participants
    -   Thank participants for their time, and explain what the discussion will lead to.

-   *Partaking in discussions should be fun:* A discussion needn't be boring or dry. It is important that those participating have not only felt that their contribution is valued, but that they enjoyed the event in itself and learnt something themselves. This is partly why events such as trips to existing Renewable Energy sites are so successful. But all discussions can retain a fun element, and it is worth bearing in mind the importance of this when planning a consultation.

-   *Plan events with other organisations:* Getting a high attendance at events can be difficult and require substantial publicity. It is worth identifying possible organisations in the area that may put on an

event in partnership with you. For example, energy efficiency outreach programme or a LA21 working group. This will not only serve to strengthen your links in the area, but would help to raise attendance levels by making the overall event appealing to more people and linking into existing local issues.

The following methods (described in this section) can be useful forums for holding discussions:
- Public meetings
- Community group presentations
- Visits to existing RE sites
- Open days
- Educational sessions

In most cases they can be occasions for disseminating information as well as drawing in people's opinions and ideas.

The use of promotional material is also included in this section, in their capacity to initiate discussion within the local area.

Public meetings

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	-

Public meetings are a standard consultation tool. They are used by planners in public consultation processes, and they are used by many organisations to elicit public opinion. They are not necessarily the most appropriate tool however for all aspects of a consultation process. They can be intimidating, exclusive and can fuel controversy. Nevertheless, there are times that a public meeting serves a useful purpose.

Advantages of public meetings
✔ Relatively straightforward to administer
✔ Can bring together interested individuals that are not otherwise part of a group
✔ Can elicit public opinion
✔ Can distribute a range of information via different media: e.g. video, photomontages, and fact sheets.
✔ Can invite speakers from nearby an existing RE site
✔ Are often expected by local people
✔ Can enable people to participate in discussion and debate

Disadvantages
✗ Only a small percentage of local people can and will attend
✗ Often attracts opposition groups and therefore fuels controversy and exacerbates the 'us and them' syndrome
✗ Many people feel intimidated speaking at a public meeting

Time required for: designing & disseminating publicity; planning logistics (including hall & equipment hire, speakers etc), gathering, printing, collating and displaying information, setting up hall and undertaking public meeting.
Costs include: Hall & equipment hire, speakers, publicity materials, information costs (e.g. video, printing of fact sheets etc.).

❣ Choose an appropriate venue –which people use and where transport is good. Check accessibility for wheelchairs. Check use of sockets and appropriateness of space for displays, video etc.
❣ Choose appropriate times of the day – who will and who will not be able to come?
❣ Choose the speakers carefully. Think about language & dialect, what information people want to know, what questions are likely to be asked.
❣ How are local people going to be able to contribute?
❣ **Requires audit of facilities & services for publicity and choice of venues.**

Presentations to community groups

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★	-

Most community groups meet regularly and plan their schedules well in advance. In many cases community groups are used to participating in community ventures and have an interest in local issues. Members are used to and feel comfortable discussing issues among themselves. This provides a good forum for discussing a RE project.

Advantages of community presentations:
✔ They comprise groups of people who meet regularly usually in a defined location. They are familiar with discussing ideas amongst each other, and therefore they are less likely to become heated and aggressive.
✔ Groups welcome speakers, especially those that don't charge.
✔ Community groups can have a lot of members, all of whom are part of a range of informal social networks, and many of whom would otherwise not come to a public meeting, open day or other event.
✔ Little administrative work involved in preparing community presentations
✔ Presentations can be tailored to the interests of the group
✔ Giving a presentation to a group can establish a positive dialogue, which can be maintained throughout the project.
✔ Community group members tend to be active members of the community and therefore important people to consult.
✔ Can use different media: videos, information sheets etc
✔ Lot of scope for participation and discussion

Disadvantages
✘ Groups usually break for a lengthy period over the summer
✘ Groups often plan their speakers a long time in advance
✘ Some groups may not see the relevance of the presentation.

Time required for: contacting groups (usually more than once) to arrange visit, preparation of presentation materials, travel and presentation itself.
Costs include: Postage, telephone and materials

❢ Tailor the presentation carefully and think about the audience. Is it appropriate to use a video or OHP? What about language and dialect? What are the groups' interests? What questions are likely to be asked?
❢ **Requires an audit of community groups**

Visits to existing RE sites

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	-

There is nothing quite like seeing an example of the RE technology that is being proposed. Although only certain people will be able or willing to give up a block of time to go on a visit, their experiences can have a substantial impact on them and their social networks. People tend to enjoy going on an outing especially if they go with friends or family. Although it can be costly, requires substantial administration and will attract a small proportion of local people, it is extremely worthwhile because of the knock-on effects.

Advantages of visits to existing projects:
✔ Residents get a chance to see and experience the technology.
✔ Local people can get a chance to talk to other people that live nearby the site and find out 'from the horses mouth' whether there are problems and whether they can be rectified.
✔ Enables local people to ask questions in an informal setting
✔ Can combine the trip with a presentation and can elicit opinions
✔ Can develop a database of interested people through which to distribute further information
✔ People enjoy going on trips, and will usually talk about the trip to their friends and families

Disadvantages
✗ Only a small percentage of people will go
✗ Requires substantial preparation in order to get enough people to go, and to facilitate a successful trip.
✗ Is costly in terms of time and logistics relative to the number of people on the trip.
✗ People particularly opposed to the idea are unlikely to participate.

Time required for: publicity, administration, planning journey (route, stops for toilets, refreshments etc), organising structure of visit, arranging speakers,
Costs include: Publicity, travel, speakers, refreshments.

‼ Choose an accessible location (check restrictions for wheelchairs, children etc). Give people a chance to enjoy the trip as well as making it informative. Make sure they get a chance to speak to people who live nearby
‼ Choose an example that is similar to the proposed site; make sure it is likely to be working
‼ Use a local travel company
‼ **Requires audit of community facilities & services for publicity**

Open Days

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	-

Open days are events where a huge amount of information can be disseminated using a variety of media: videos, presentations, one-to-one discussions, fact sheets, displays etc. They can also be venues for small discussions, education sessions and for using participatory methods, drawing out people's opinions. Furthermore, open days enable people to drop in, meet the people involved, find out information important to them, without spending more time than they can afford.

Advantages of open days:
✔ A lot of information can be disseminated at an open day and a range of media used
✔ A range of age groups and interests can be catered for
✔ Can combine education, awareness and fun
✔ Less likely to become heated in the way that a public meeting might
✔ People can drop in and out of an open day at a time appropriate to them
✔ Can initiate discussion and draw in opinions and ideas
✔ Can be planned in partnership with other groups to increase attendance.

Disadvantages of open days:
✘ Open days require a lot of preparation
✘ Need to be well advertised to get a high attendance

Time required for: preparation of information, preparation of venue, publicity, setting up time, implementation.
Costs involved: publicity materials, room & equipment hire, refreshments, display panels, printing and preparation of information materials.

❣ Make sure venue is accessible
❣ Advertise the event well
❣ Think about what may attract people to come e.g. 'see pictures of what the RE scheme may look like from your area, or 'Build a model turbine' or 'meet your community representative'.
❣ Think through how residents could contribute their ideas
❣ **Requires audit of facilities & services for publicity and choice of venues.**

Education sessions

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★	-

Given that RE is on the National Curriculum it is appropriate that as part of the consultation local comprehensive (and possibly primary) schools are contacted. While this can generate ill feeling on the part of local people who oppose the project ('brainwashing the children'), schools can be very positive about the idea. There are excellent education materials that support the understanding of RE technology and related issues (see Annex 1). These have been developed for all age groups and are structured carefully to fit in with the National Curriculum. It is also worth contacting local youth clubs to see if they may be interested in education sessions (e.g. Girl Guides do a badge which specifically refers to Renewable Energy).

Advantages of conducting education sessions:
✔ Various parts of the National Curriculum require students to study aspects of RE, and therefore schools tend to be keen to have access to up-to-date information in order to teach the units.
✔ Young people tend to be less judgmental of new technologies and more willing to consider change
✔ Through learning about RE technologies at school, students are in a good position to discuss the ideas with their friends and families.
✔ Good educational resources exist which can be used in sessions with schools

Disadvantages:
✗ Teachers can be overwhelmed by activities offered and may not have the time or the scope to incorporate it into their schedule.
✗ The uptake by schools depends on who you are dealing with in the school. Your letter of introduction may not go further than the head teacher.
✗ People opposing the project may criticise the organisation for being underhand and brainwashing children.

Time required for: Contacting schools and youth groups, preparation of materials, transport, sessions themselves.
Costs include: Postage, telephone, education materials (although many are available free of charge).

‼ Tailor the material carefully according to the participants' ages
‼ Combine fun with information
‼ Ensure the teachers have adequate information to continue the discussion after you have gone
‼ Discuss presentations with the teachers beforehand.
‼ **Requires an audit of schools and youth groups**

Promotional materials

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★★	★★	★	★	★★★★	★★★	-

While promotional materials do not in themselves carry much information, they can be a catalyst for discussion in informal networks. It is possible to produce all sorts of promotional materials such as badges, car stickers, pens, mirrors, postcards, notepads, rulers, cups etc. As long as they are not rigidly against the idea, most people are happy to receive and use freebies. This keeps the issue alive in people's minds, it helps them to remember a logo or image, and can familiarise people with an idea. Furthermore, they can be given out with other information about the project. On the downside, those opposing the scheme often label promotional materials as a method of blackmailing residents.

Advantages of distributing promotional materials:
✔ Gets basic awareness of the scheme out to people who may not otherwise have any interest
✔ A range of goods can be used for promotional materials
✔ They can stimulate discussion in informal networks
✔ Some materials (like car stickers, or postcards) can be disseminated widely with other information

Disadvantages:
✘ Can be viewed by some as blackmailing
✘ Hold very little information
✘ Dissemination is not straightforward, especially for bulky items. Mostly they can be distributed at events.

Time required: design and creation of materials, distribution
Costs involved: making of the promotional materials, post (if distributed by post)

❣ Given that only a very limited amount of information can be put onto promotional materials, think through carefully what you will put on: e.g. logo, contact number, reference to the area the scheme could be in etc.
❣ Think about language used and what a phrase may mean to people - how do you want people to remember the scheme?

Feeding ideas into the Renewable Energy scheme:
the upwards flow of communication

A consultation strategy should identify to what extent decisions will be based on local people's opinions and views. Furthermore, the process by which their contribution is drawn into the scheme needs to be clarified. These objectives should have clear indicators for the level of participation and representation required (see Part Two). Whose ideas do you need to get in order to ensure representativeness? How many people do you need to contribute to those ideas?

There is a range of methods that can be used to help identify people's ideas. In many cases, discussion venues described in the previous section can be used as forums for identifying people's opinions and ideas. Further examples are given in this section. There are several key factors to note about the process of gathering ideas:

- *Ensuring that enough people participate:* when planning a decision-making process the issue of representation is clearly important and emphasis should be placed on getting a clear balance of gender and age groups in contributing to decisions. Further to this, local identifiable divisions (like ethnicity, local authority boundaries etc.) need to be clarified and built into the indicators. There are various methods used by social scientists to address how to ensure that your system of sampling can include those boundaries that you have identified (e.g. random sampling and quota sampling). There are other methods, which may be appropriate to your specific objectives, e.g. targeting certain stakeholders, self-selection, and 100% household surveys (see Annex 1).

- *Identifying the right questions:* In order to have people responding with ideas and views, you need to determine what are the right questions to ask, and clearly the type of information that you want will influence this. Questions can reveal data that is qualitative or quantitative. So for example, you may ask people what they like or dislike about a proposed hydro scheme. This would draw in qualitative data. If you gave people a set of concerns and asked them to prioritise them in an order of decreasing concern, you would draw in data that could be quantified. It is important therefore to think through what type of information you want at the different points in your consultation process.

  Qualitative data can elucidate very detailed explorations into issues. For this reason qualitative data is often collected as a way of understanding complex issues, while quantitative data collected to see how many people share opinions and views on issues.

  Furthermore, the way you frame a question and the language used influences people's responses and the likelihood of them participating at all. These are many social research guides that help to design questionnaires and develop checklists of questions for qualitative methods (see Annex 1)

- *Interpreting the results:* The process of interpreting the results is made far easier if this is considered at the point of identifying the questions. Furthermore, qualitative data requires a different type of analysis to quantitative data. But fundamentally, whatever the data it needs to reveal results in such a way that they can be fed into the project. This not only requires asking the right questions, getting a representative sample of people to participate, but also that the scheme is flexible enough to accommodate community decisions and opinions.

Some examples of ways of drawing in people's views and opinions are:

- Focus group discussions
- Semi-structured interviews
- Questionnaires
- Community liaison committee
- Leaflet with reply slip
- Participatory methods
- Evaluation forms
- Referendum

These are detailed below.

It is important to remember that in order to draw in opinions, there needs to be a degree of information dissemination, and preferably discussion as well.

Focus Group Discussions

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆	-

Focus groups are groups of about 6-10 people led by a trained facilitator who meet to discuss issues surrounding a given topic. They allow you to explore issues in considerable depth with people from similar backgrounds and with similar interests, for example people who use the land of the proposed site for farming, or recreation. While the administration time involved in planning focus group discussions can be high, they are very useful for eliciting opinions, teasing out *why* people feel the way they do and understanding how people have formed their opinions.

Advantages of facilitating focus groups:
✔ Can convene a controlled debate about a range of issues
✔ Can identify issues specific to certain groups
✔ Can help to understand the reasons why people feel the way they do
✔ Can draw out a lot of information
✔ Can be used to identify issues prior to designing information or questionnaires etc.

Disadvantages of facilitating focus groups:
✘ Time consuming to arrange
✘ It can be difficult to identify people for groups
✘ Cannot be undertaken from outside
✘ The data collected can be hard to analyse
✘ Requires a note-taker or recording device
✘ Can be hard to facilitate if it gets heated

Time required for: identifying appropriate groups, identifying people for the groups, arranging logistics (venue, refreshments, facilitator & note-taker), contacting participants, undertaking discussion, analysis.
Costs include: telephone, post etc. Room hire, refreshments & recording equipment.

❣ Should be moderated by a trained independent facilitator
❣ Participants should feel able to discuss issues openly and share their true opinions
❣ Identify people for groups by contacting appropriate organisations, e.g. Ramblers Association for recreational users, local branch of the Farmers Union for local farmers.
❣ Explain clearly the purpose of the group, the agenda, the venue the time - and remind participants near to the time.
❣ It can be very difficult to attract people to participate in a focus group discussion. Think through whether you want to provide an incentive (e.g. a sum of money).

Semi-structured Interviews:

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆	-

Semi-structured interviews (SSIs) are interviews conducted to explore issues in some depth. Unlike questionnaires, SSIs allow you to explore using open-ended questions and to follow interesting leads, and have the advantage that those being interviewed can add ideas and opinions that are important to them. SSIs are particularly useful when you want to look at an issue in more depth than it is possible in a simple questionnaire.

Advantages of using semi-structured interviews:
✔ SSIs are useful for obtaining in-depth understanding of why people feel the way they do about an issue
✔ Gives people a chance to describe their own way of judging the issues rather than responding to your criteria
✔ Supports a feeling of involvement and valued contribution
✔ Useful for identifying case studies

Disadvantages of using semi-structured interviews:
✗ They are time-consuming to carry out
✗ It can be difficult to identify people willing to be interviewed
✗ Cannot be undertaken from outside the area.
✗ Can be harder to analyse the data than from a questionnaire
✗ Requires a note-taker or recording device.

Time required for: developing a checklist of issues, identifying people, arranging logistic of interviews, interviews, analysis of data.
Costs include: process of identifying people (e.g. publicity, or letters to specific groups or locations), hire of venues if necessary, incentive to be interviewed (if felt necessary), and recording facilities.

❧ Develop a clear checklist of issues, identifying issues and criteria on which comparison is to be made with other individuals
❧ Interviewer needs to remain impartial, and allow interviewee to speak openly and freely about his or her opinions.
❧ The session should be clearly introduced explaining why the interviews are being carried out, what is expected in the interview and what will happen to the information after the interview.
❧ Questions should be clear and in plain language, avoiding double negatives, leading questions and those with yes/no answers.
❧ Interviewee should be prompted with questions that include *Who? Why? What? Where? When? How?*
❧ Interview should be conducted by a trained interviewer with skills in listening, prompting, probing and summarising.

Questionnaires

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	-

Questionnaires can be a very useful way of collecting information about people's opinions and views. This information can be qualitative or quantitative depending on the questions, but they are particularly useful for gathering information that is quantifiable. Consequently they can be relatively quick to carry out, but a lot of thought needs to go into planning the questions to ensure they are smooth flowing, understandable and still yield clear information.

Advantages of using questionnaires:
✔ Can draw out a lot of information, especially quantifiable information
✔ Can be designed specifically for the needs of the organisation
✔ They can be carried out by post, by phone, or face-to-face (with respectively increasing cost and response levels).
✔ If done via post or telephone, they can be undertaken from outside the area.
✔ Can disseminate information at the end of the questionnaire

Disadvantages of using questionnaires:
✗ Need careful preparation to ensure appropriate wording, length.
✗ People can feel intimidated and answer what they think you want to hear.
✗ Time-consuming if face-to-face, low response rate if by post.

Time required for: designing & piloting questionnaire, developing sample and contact details of interviewees, undertaking questionnaires, analysing results.

Costs include: Printing questionnaires, transport, and software for analysis. It may be appropriate to commission a research consultancy to undertake the interviews.

❣ Be careful with the wording of the questionnaire
❣ Do not make the questionnaires too long - otherwise people may become bored half way through the questionnaire
❣ Interviewers should be trained in carrying out questionnaires and briefed clearly on the questionnaire itself, ensuring that they are clear about the order and coding of the questions
❣ Prepare the sample carefully
❣ If postal questionnaire is carried out, it may be necessary to send out reminders or repeat forms
❣ **Sampling may require electoral registers, lists of businesses, local phone books or post codal books etc.**

Community liaison committee

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★

Developing a community liaison committee has distinct benefits and disadvantages. Once it is up and running the committee can act as a sounding board for issues of consultation, but it important to question how representative it is of local residents. The process of identifying people for the committee therefore needs to be considered carefully, as well as the remit for the group. There may be some issues that need a wider level of consultation.

Advantages of developing a community liaison committee:
✔ Provides a clear structure for community representation
✔ Acts as an ongoing sounding boards for ideas
✔ Consultation activities can be planned and discussed with committee members
✔ Low costs and time required
✔ Can be liaised with from outside the area

Disadvantages of developing a community liaison committee:
✘ Minimal community involvement
✘ Fair election procedure can be difficult to organise
✘ Often attract 'committee lovers' who sit on a variety of committees.
✘ Members may have their own agenda
✘ Ensuring a fair representation can be difficult.

Time required: publicity, logistics of identifying members (co-option, election etc), training, briefing and updating on a regular basis, committee meetings. Other aspects according to the level of involvement the committee would play in the scheme.
Costs include: publicity materials, materials for training and updating, hire of committee meeting rooms. Other aspects according to the level of involvement the committee would play in the scheme.

❣ Set up a transparent structure whereby committee ideas can be turned into decisions. Otherwise there will be little incentive for local residents to put the time and energy into joining a committee.
❣ Identify a clear remit for the committee
❣ Ensure the committee has a balance of gender, age groups and other key identities in the community
❣ Allow the committee to develop ground rules
❣ Support committee members with training, expenses and their informational requirements
❣ Develop with the committee a structure for them to adequately discuss ideas with the broader community (where necessary) and ensure that they have expenses to cover costs they incur.

Leaflet with reply slip

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★★★★	★★	★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	-

One way of drawing in information is to attach a mini-set of questions to an information leaflet, requesting people to return the form with their answers. While there is a limited amount of information that can be disseminated and requested, it can be a useful method of drawing in ideas. Nevertheless, the response rate can be low and incentives are often added to increase the likelihood of people returning the forms. For example, having a reply-paid slip means that people won't be expected to pay for the postage, or the incentive of being entered in a prize draw is often attractive to people. The same issues apply to this as to general leaflets.

Advantages of using leaflets with reply slips:
- ✔ Can be distributed to every household, thereby increasing the level of response. Also they can be left in community spaces and used at events as appropriate.
- ✔ Can include some information
- ✔ Can be administered from the outside
- ✔ Can help to identify interested individuals or to ask basic questions
- ✔ Relatively cheap to administer
- ✔ Little time involved

Disadvantages of using leaflets with reply slips:
- ✘ Generally have a low response rate unless there is a clear incentive
- ✘ Minimal amount of information can be gained.

Time required for: Planning & piloting of questions. Design & printing leaflet; logistics of distribution.
Costs include: Printing and distribution.

- ❣ Think through carefully what information and questions are included in the leaflet. Is it understandable, do people know where to send their replies?
- ❣ If the scheme is particularly controversial, you may find that some people choose to fill in a lot of leaflets to try to weight the results in their favour. Therefore consider whether this is likely to happen and how to avoid it.
- ❣ Make it simple, clear explanations, easy to follow, clear references to area and potential impact
- ❣ Use local printing firms
- ❣ **Distribution requires an audit of community spaces etc and post-codal information for house-to-house distribution.**

Participatory methods

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	-

There is a range of techniques developed within community and social development that have been designed to optimise their potential for people's participation and contribution to development projects. Originally developed within the overseas rural social development context, these techniques are being used increasingly in the UK in both urban and rural communities. They are particularly useful for gathering qualitative information with individuals or groups of people using visual imagery as much as verbal discussion.

Essentially participatory methods (PMs) employ a particular approach and methods can be tailored specifically to the needs of the investigation. The approach[1] stresses a need for:

- **Triangulation:** a form of cross-checking. Accuracy is achieved through diverse information and different kinds of information, not statistical replicability. Variety of sources of information is sought, a mix of techniques is used and a team of different people facilitates the process.
- **Multi-disciplinary team**: Different team members bring diverse skills, knowledges, and experiences. Working well together, this diversity compliments each other.
- **Mix of techniques**: PMs are taken from a wide range of possible tools, which are tailored to the specific requirements of the investigation.
- **Flexibility and informality**: Methods are semi-structured and revised, adapted, and modified as the investigation proceeds.
- **In the community**: PMs are conducted in the community, in spaces where people meet, with a wide range of residents
- **Optimal ignorance and appropriate indecision**: the team should avoid unnecessary detail, accuracy and over-collection of data.
- **On the spot analysis**: Learning takes place while carrying out the methods, and analysis of the information gathered is an integral part of the data collection itself. The team constantly reviews and analyses its findings in order to determine in which direction to proceed. It builds up understanding and narrows the focus of the investigation as it accumulates knowledge.
- **Off-setting biases and being self-critical**: the team has to be careful to analyse its own biases in order to prevent the investigation from turning into a collection of rumours. It is important that they seek out a clear representative sample of the local area. The team reflects on what is said and not said, seen and not seen, who is met and not met. The team should be as independent as possible trying to avoid value judgments about others.

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[1] Extracted from Theis J. & Grady H (1991)

A range of tools has been developed by practitioners using participatory methodology. There are various manuals for their use which ought to be referred to if planning an investigation using PMs (see Annex 1) Data collected through the range of possible methods is mostly qualitative and drawn from a small proportion of residents. Because it is labour intensive and undertaken by a team, careful selection of respondents and techniques is vital. Furthermore, clear objectives must be decided among the team prior to the start and regular team meetings convened in which to analyse the data and refine the methods.

Methods can be carried out with individuals or groups, inside or outside, with the barest of facilities. Overall they encourage creativity, and constructive discussions regarding local issues familiar to those participating.

Examples of PMs are:

- **Mapping exercises:** participants are asked to draw maps to illustrate their area, their resources, their access, problems facilities etc in their area. For example, it could be used to map RE resources.
- **Flow diagrams:** participants work together to draw a diagram explaining causes, effects and relationships between key variables. This helps to explain how and why certain things are perceived to have happened or will happen in the area. E.g. it could be used to examine what people think might happen if a wind farm was built in their area.
- **Timelines:** participants construct a chronological chart of events (past or future). E.g. it could be used to explore with residents their experiences of previous external developers.
- **Seasonal calendars:** this shows the main activities, problems, and opportunities throughout the annual cycle. E.g. it could be used to find out useful information for planning a consultation schedule.
- **Venn Diagrams:** participants are asked to construct diagrams with various sized circles to demonstrate the links and overlap between organisations (and key individuals) in the area. E.g. it could be used to identify key stakeholders relevant to the proposed scheme.
- **Ranking:** Ranking is used for understanding people's priorities. It consists of supporting people to identify criteria to judge the issue and then scoring them. E.g. it could be used to identify the criteria on which residents would judge a range of RE schemes, have them prioritise the criteria, and then to score various possible schemes in their area on the basis of their criteria.

These are just some of the many methods that make up the PM toolkit.

Advantages of using participatory methods:
- ✔ Very good for facilitating discussion and involving residents in identifying their own criteria and indicators.
- ✔ Enables residents to contribute their ideas in a constructive framework
- ✔ Generates quality information
- ✔ People enjoy participating
- ✔ PMs are very versatile and can be used for collecting a range of information from a range of different people
- ✔ Flexible in terms of locations used
- ✔ Minimal materials required
- ✔ Can significantly contribute to the shape of the project

Disadvantages of using PMs:
- ✘ Requires substantial preparation
- ✘ Time consuming to undertake
- ✘ Requires team of experienced practitioners
- ✘ Demanding of local people's time and energy
- ✘ Few people will be able to participate
- ✘ Cannot be carried out outside the area.

Time required for: preparation of PMs with team, some planning of logistics within the community, but this can be minimal, PM investigation itself (usually at least 3 days), ongoing analysis and final analysis at end of investigation

Costs involved: publicity, refreshments, materials, use of rooms (if necessary).

- ⁑ Use experienced facilitators
- ⁑ Have a feel for the area before starting, or at least recognise the time required for this in planning the schedule
- ⁑ Identify clear objectives with team
- ⁑ Think about the time of year, month, week, day that activities are planned. The weather and the light will affect people's willingness to participate.

Evaluation forms

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★	★★	★★★★★	★	★★	★★	-

Evaluation forms are a simple and straightforward way of drawing in people's ideas at a specific event. They are easy to disseminate and as long as they are short and clearly written they are easy to fill in as well. They can ask for qualitative information, such as 'what did you find most interesting about your visit to the biomass plant?' and quantitative information, such as 'on a scale of 1 to 5 how did you rate the noise of the wind turbine where 1 = extremely quiet and 5 = extremely noisy'.

Benefits of using evaluation forms:
✔ Simple to disseminate at events
✔ Little cost or time required
✔ Enables you to assess the effectiveness of the consultation method and tailor it accordingly to ensure greater success next time.
✔ Can draw in people opinions of the proposed idea.
✔ Evaluation forms can be used for a variety of different events with some wording adjusted accordingly

Disadvantages of using evaluation forms:
✘ Some people do not like filling in forms, therefore the level of response is not necessarily representative of all who came to the event.
✘ At some events it is difficult to ensure that forms are distributed to people, and it is not always easy to make sure that people return the forms.
✘ At some events there is not the time to distribute forms. Furthermore, some people like to spend a lot of time thinking about their answers.

Time required for: designing and printing forms, distribution and collection at event, analysis of information.
Costs include: Printing forms.

❗ Keep the forms short and easy to fill in.
❗ Read them afterwards and use them to plan your next set of activities
❗ It is useful to ask people for basic background data (like age, gender, area of residence) as this will help you to monitor people who are participating in the consultation.
❗ Although it is inadvisable to ask people for their names on an evaluation form (as this may affect how free they feel to be honest in their evaluation), it is possible to include a tear-off section for people to express an interest in getting more involved.

Referendum

Numbers reached	Generate discussion	Draw in ideas	Quantity of info	Cost	Time one-off	Time ongoing
★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	-

A referendum is a democratic way of drawing out people's ideas about a proposed scheme. It generates quantifiable information regarding one or more basic questions. It is one of the only ways of ensuring that everyone in the area has a chance to contribute their opinion to the decision-making process, but the complexity of the questions asked is clearly extremely limited.

Benefits of carrying out a referendum:
✔ Democratic decision-making process - everyone has an equal say.
✔ Reassures local people that the consultation process is valid and rigorous
✔ It is relatively easy for people to participate and therefore increases the chances of people feeling involved in the project.
✔ Can identify clearly people's overall opinions on a defined issue
✔ Can be administered from outside the area
✔ Can be multi-lingual

Disadvantages of carrying out a referendum:
✘ Costly and time consuming
✘ Requires an independent organisation to administer the ballot
✘ Cannot ask for much information
✘ Can be difficult to get hold of full contact information for all in the area.

Time required for: identifying ballot questions, developing & designing ballot papers, acquiring contact information for residents, managing referendum process (best done by independent body)

Costs include: Acquisition of sample information (e.g. electoral registers), printing & distribution of ballot papers, administration of referendum process.

❗ Use an independent experienced organisation to carry out and give advice on ballot process
❗ Use ballot methods that will enable as many as possible to participate (e.g. postal and telephone ballot)
❗ Make sure the questions and process for voting are clear.
❗ Make sure it is clear why people are being asked to vote, and what the results will lead to.
❗ Think through carefully who should be eligible to vote, and why?
❗ Publicise the referendum well in advance so that people are prepared and can ask questions prior to receiving their ballot papers.
❗ Disseminate the results

Choosing a combination of methods:
Upwards, downwards and horizontal

As indicated in Part Two the choice of methods depends largely on the objectives of the consultation. Nevertheless, there are some basic principles to choosing methods:

- Make sure you have a range of methods that contribute to the 3 directions of communication flow: downwards, horizontal and upwards.
- Make sure your combination of methods can meet your objectives both in terms of who you consult with and what information you feed into the overall project.
- Make sure your methods are achievable both logistically and financially, and within the time period that you have allowed yourself.
- Remember to tailor your use of methods carefully to the needs of your project and to the local context.

Overleaf is an example of a short consultation strategy to examine local residents' opinions of 5 possible Renewable Energy schemes in their local area. In particular the consultation aims to identify the criteria on which local residents would judge the schemes, and then to identify the pros and cons of each scheme. Furthermore, the consultation aims to gather quantifiable information that prioritise the schemes in terms of how favourable they are for the local area, bearing in mind the pros and cons of each site.

Each of the five sites has been identified by a desk-based study and therefore the consultation strategy has to bear in mind that this is the first contact and therefore very important. The sample strategy overleaf is just one of many possible variations. In this hypothetical situation, it is a developer carrying out the consultation from an office outside the area. However, several visits are made throughout the course of the consultation at points where the methods require it.

Sample Strategy for Consultation
NB the preparation required for each of the methods has not been identified.

Location: semi-rural area
Time scale: four months
Objectives:
- to identify the criteria on which local residents would judge 5 possible Renewable Energy schemes,
- to identify the pros and cons of each scheme.
- to gather quantifiable information that prioritise the schemes in terms of how favourable they are for the local area, bearing in mind the pros and cons of each site.

Activity	Information flows
1. Social Audit	1. Gather informational requirements
2. Leaflet distribution with reply slip, letters out to community groups and key individuals and press releases	2. **information dissemination.** Aims to disseminate information as widely as possible throughout the area, targeting formal and informal networks and key individuals as identified in the audit. By targeting widely there is substantial scope for initiating **discussion**. Furthermore, by including a reply slip inviting those interested in participating in further consultation, there is scope for **identifying interested individuals**
3. Semi-structured interviews and small group discussion (using some participatory methods) with interested individuals.	3. **Discussion** with individuals and several groups to start to **identify criteria** for assessing Renewable Energy schemes.
4. Publicity & letters to groups, interested & key individuals.	4. **Information dissemination** maintaining **dialogue**. Informing residents of next part of the consultation process.
5. Series of events: trips to existing RE sites and to proposed sites, open day/s and community presentations. Evaluation forms used and some participatory methods (like mapping and ranking).	5. **Discussion** refining the set of criteria identified in stage 3. **Identify pros and cons** of the five different schemes through discussion and evaluation forms. Start to **prioritise** criteria, pros and cons, schemes and sites.

6. Publicity and preparation for random sample questionnaire ↓	6. **Information dissemination** regarding consultation progress and the forthcoming random sample questionnaire in which **residents ideas** have formed the basis of the questions.
7. Random sample questionnaire ↓	7. **Short Questionnaire** asking people to **prioritise** local possible RE schemes identifying which pros and cons they consider to be risks and opportunities.
8. Analysis of results, preparation of Phase 2 (more in-depth site surveys on more favourable sites). Dissemination of results and schedule for next phase (via local press, letters to participants and community groups)	8. **Feeding the results** of questionnaires into Phase 2 of project. **Information dissemination** regarding the next phase.

Summary

Renewable Energy (RE) projects in the UK have always involved a degree of consultation. In many cases, however, it is limited to statutory consultees and key individuals in the locality of a proposed site. But as sustainable development moves up the agenda, and as the UK generation of RE is falling behind its European counterparts, the views of communities are becoming more of an issue.

If priority is to be placed on sensitive and successful RE development, then it is vital to recognise local people as key stakeholders. They need to be acknowledged as potential catalysts for change, rather than as obstacles or sources of resistance to new technologies. A greater emphasis on community involvement (at all levels in RE development) represents a strategic move. It is both ethically important and cost-effective in the long run.

This guide intends to fill the gap between the demonstrated need for greater community participation and the limited practical guidance for Renewable Energy developers on *how* to consult with communities. Drawing on experience from community development, this guide demonstrates the need for community consultation and participation to be integrated carefully within a Renewable Energy project. Rather than an 'add-on', consideration ought to be given to developing a strategy for addressing the social components of a scheme.

The guide identifies and addresses 10 aspects of developing a strategy for consultation, stressing the need for clear objectives, appropriate personnel, and an integrated approach. In implementing a strategy, it is important to select carefully a combination of methods that will support the fulfillment of the agreed objectives. Furthermore, key indicators ought to be defined at the start as a way of monitoring progress and evaluating the success of the consultation process. Perhaps most importantly, the process by which the results of the consultation can feed into the scheme needs to be identified and adhered to. Consistency and transparency are key factors within a consultation.

A toolkit of methods are identified in Part Three. These are assessed on the basis of their potential to get information to a large number of people, to generate discussion and to draw in ideas. Their cost and time involved is also assessed. Methods should not be chosen indiscriminately - they should be adopted according to their appropriate role in fulfilling consultation objectives.

Annex 1 details a range of organisations, documents and websites that can provide information and support in the development and implementation of a community consultation strategy.

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Annex One: Guide to useful documents and organisations

This is divided into three sections:

- Community involvement in sustainable development
    - organisations and individuals
    - documents
- Community focused-renewables
    - organisations and individuals
    - documents
- Useful Renewable Energy websites (mostly educational)

Community Involvement in Sustainable Development

This list is not exhaustive and is made available to users without any explicit or implicit endorsement by the DTI or ETSU

- ## Organisations & Individuals

Active Community Unit Home Office Horseferry House Dean Ryle Street London SW1P 2AW Telephone: (020) 7217 8400 Fax: (020) 7217 8500 Email:public_enquiry.acu@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk Website: www.homeoffice.government.uk/acu/acu.htm	ACU aims to create a step change in voluntary and community involvement by creating increased opportunities; by making it easier for people to get involved, by raising awareness of the importance of community involvement.
Appreciative Inquiry Group 303 Bankside Lofts 65 Hopton Street London SE1 9JL Telephone: 07000 077 011 Fax: 07000 077012 Email: annelondon@aol.com Website: www.aradford.co.uk	Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is an approach to dealing with change, working at all levels, and looking constructively towards future visions. Appreciative Inquiry Group website has AI resources, contacts and lists events relating to Appreciative Inquiry.
Catherine Butcher 109 Carr Road Sheffield S6 2WY Telephone: (0114) 285 4007 Fax: (0114) 285 4006 Email: CathKhor@aol.com	Consultant social development practitioner. Trainer in Renewable Energy consultation methods.

Centre for Development Studies University of Wales Swansea Singleton Park Swansea SA2 8PP Telephone: (01792) 295977 Fax: (01792) 295682 Email: I.Barney@swansea.ac.uk Website: www.swansea.ac.uk/cds	CDS is a research, consultancy and teaching institution working in social development in the UK and overseas. It has provided training in renewables consultation methodology and supports organisations in developing consultation strategies.
Common Ground Gold Hill House 21, High Street Shaftesbury Dorset SP7 8JE Telephone: (01747) 850820 Fax: (01747) 850821 Email: info@commonground.org.uk Website: www.commonground.org.uk	Common Ground focuses on the positive investment people can make in their own localities. It links arts and environment, nature and culture
CitizensConnection.net www.citizensconnection.net	Citizensconnection.net is created by Common Purpose (an independent educational organisation). It is designed to be a toolkit for active citizens to engage fully in society.
Community Development Foundation 60 Highbury Grove London N5 2AG Telephone: (020) 7226 5375 Fax: (020) 7704 0313 E-mail: admin@cdf.org.uk Website: www.cdf.org.uk	CDF promotes community strength by ensuring the effective participation of people in the decision-making processes, which effect their lives. It produces information and provides a range of services regarding community development.

Electoral Reform Services
Independence House
33 Clarendon Road
London
N8 0NW
Telephone: (020) 8365 8909
Fax: (020) 8365 8587
Email:
    enquiries@electoralreform.co.uk
Website:
          www.electoralreform.co.uk
	Electoral Reform Services is the specialist balloting and related services wing of the Electoral Reform Society. It provides ballot advice and administration services for community groups, public and private sector.

Institute for Citizenship 62 Marylebone High street London W1U 5HZ Telephone: (020) 7935 4777 Fax: (020) 7486 9212 Email: info@citizen.org.uk Website: www.citizen.org.uk	The aim of the Institute for Citizenship is to promote informed, active citizenship and greater participation in democracy and society.
Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation The Poplars Lightmoor Telford Shropshire TF4 3QN Telephone: (01952) 590777 Fax: (01952) 591771 Website: www.nif.co.uk	NIF is a national charity specialising in community participation, training and development working with local authorities, voluntary organisations and community groups.
New Economics Foundation Cinnamon House 6-8 Cole Street London SE1 4YH Telephone: (020) 7407 7447 Fax: (020) 7407 6473 Email: info@neweconomics.org Website: www.neweconomics.org	New Economics Foundation promotes practical and creative approaches for a sustainable economy. Many of those involve new ways in which people can participate in creating their own futures. NEF have developed visioning techniques of public involvement.
Partnerships Online Email: david@partnerships.org.uk Website: www.partnerships.org.uk	Partnerships Online is a web resource for communities and community practitioners. It includes guides to participation and partnership working among other useful resources.

Regen.net Planning Exchange Tontine House 8 Gordon Street Glasgow G1 3PL Telephone: (0141) 248 9441 Email: info@planex.co.uk Website: www.regen.net	regen.net is a network sharing information on urban and rural regeneration. It details current events, training, guidance and publications relating to community involvement and participation among other regeneration issues.
Projects in Partnership 3rdFloor Skyline House 200 Union Street London SE1 0LX Telephone: (020) 7633 0944 Fax: (020) 7620 0246 email: pip@pship.demon.co.uk	A registered charity. Its core areas are effective public and stakeholder engagement at a strategic and operational level. It undertakes work for socially and environmentally responsible corporate initiatives. It specialises in renewable energy and energy efficiency projects and also undertakes training.
Public Involvement Programme Institute for Public policy research 30-32 Southampton street London WC2E 7RA Email: v.combe@ippr.org.uk Website: www.pip.org.uk	PIP is a collaborative project furthering the development of new ways of involving the public in decision-making. PIP is run by the Institute of Public Policy Research and currently funded by a grant from the National lottery Charities Board.
Rural Futures PO Box 26 Knighton LD8 2WB Email: ruralfutures@onetel.net.uk Website: www.ruralfutures.org	A countryside initiative comprising a range of organisations: Friends of the Earth, The International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC), The Land is Ours, The National Trust, RSPB, The Small Family Farms Alliance, The Soil Association, The National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI) and the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs.

Save the Children Fund UK Save the Children 17 Grove lane London SE5 8RD Telephone: (020) 7703 5400 Fax: (020) 7703 2278 Website: www.savethechildren.org.uk	SCF are committed to involving young people in decision making. They have produced useful information guides to community participation and involvement.
Standing Conference for Community Development 4th Floor Furnival House 48 Furnival Gate Sheffield S1 4QP Telephone: (0114) 2701718 Fax: (0114) 276 2377 Email: admin@solis.co.uk Website: www.communities.org.uk/sccd	SCCD is an umbrella organisation with a membership of national organisations, regional groups, local organisations and individual workers. It brings together the different strands of community development activity throughout the UK.
Sustainable Measures PO Box 361 North Andover MA 01845 Telephone: 978 975 1988 Fax: 978 975 2241 Email: mhart@tiac.net Website: www.sustainablemeasures.com	Sustainable Measures develops indicators that measure progress toward a sustainable economy, society and environment. The website has training materials, searchable database of indicators, online resources including 'Guide to sustainable community indicators' M.Hart.
The UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development Priestgate House 3/7 Priestgate Peterborough PE1 1JN Telephone: (01733) 311644 Fax: (01733) 312782 Website: www.ukceed.org	An independent charity working to develop and promote practicable sustainable development solutions for government, industry, non-governmental organisations and individuals.

Community Involvement in Sustainable Development

- **Documents**

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106

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Wilcox D. *The Guide to Effective Participation* Available from www.partnerships.org.uk

Community-focused Renewables

• Organisations & Individuals

Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE). Somerford Court Somerford Road Cirencester Glos GL7 1TW Telephone: (01285) 653 477 Fax: (01285) 654 537 Email: acre@acre.org.uk Website: http://www.acre.org.uk	ACRE is a partnership of England's Rural Community Councils. It is able to take action across a wide range of fronts to tackle the problems faced by people living in rural communities, small towns and villages including Renewable Energy.
Awel Aman Tawe Ysgol Gynradd Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen Heol Newydd Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen Amanford SA18 1UN Telephone: (01269) 822954 Fax: (01269) 825628 e-mail: awelat@freenetname.co.uk website: www.awelamantawe.co.uk	Awel Aman Tawe is a community initiative. It was set up to develop a community owned wind farm with the purpose of using profits from the sale of electricity to support local regeneration. It also provides a consutlancy service to companies and community groups undertaking community renewable energy projects. See page 7.
Baywind Energy Co-operative Ltd. Unit 38, Trinity Enterprise Centre, Furness Business Park, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA142PN. Telephone: (01229) 821028 Fax: (01229) 821104 e-mail: baywinduk@netscapeonline.co.uk Website: www.baywind.co.uk	Baywind is Britain's first wind energy co-operative. It was originally set up by a Scandinavian developer and is now owned by shareholders mainly from the local community.

Centre for Alternative Technology. Machynlleth, Powys, SY209AZ. Telephone: (01654) 705950 Fax: (01654) 702782 Email: info@cat.org.uk Website: http://www.cat.org.uk	CAT is concerned with the search for globally sustainable, ecologically sound technologies and ways of life. The centre's 40-acre site includes a visitors centre with excellent examples of RE technologies.
Centre for Sustainable Energy The CREATE Centre, B-Bond Warehouse, Smeaton Road, Bristol, BS16XN Telephone: (0117) 929 9950 Fax: (0117) 929 9114 e-mail: cse@cse.org.uk Web: http://www.cse.org.uk	CSE is a charitable company. It has produced reports on community renewable energy policy and is actively involved in encouraging the further development of such projects, awareness raising and educational work
Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) Warwick House 25 Buckingham Palace Road London SW1W 0PP Telephone: (020) 7976 6433 Fax: (020) 7976 6373 Email: info@cpre.org.uk Website: http://www.cpre.org.uk	The CPRE is a national charity formed in 1926. The CPRE helps people to protect and enhance the countryside, keep it beautiful and productive.
Council for the Protection of Rural Wales. Ty Gwyn 31 High St Welshpool Powys SY21 7YD Telephone: (01938) 552 525 Fax: (01938) 552 741 Email: info@cprw.org.uk Website: http://www.cprw.org.uk	The aim of the CPRW is to help the conservation and enhancement of the landscape, environment and amenities of the countryside, towns and Villages of rural Wales.
Dave Toke Telephone: (0121) 472 8095	Green Party Energy Spokesperson and independent consultant specialising in community renewable energy policy.

Dyfi Eco Valley Partnership Andy Rowlands, Unit 1, Dyfi Eco Parc, Machynlleth, Powys, SY208AX. Telephone:　(01654) 705018 Email:　　　ecodyfi@gn.apc.org Website:　　under construction	The partnership helps local individuals and organisations to set up small-scale community-based Renewable Energy projects.
Earth Centre Denabymain Doncaster DN12 4EA Telephone:　01709 513933 Fax　　　　:　01709 512933 Email　　　:　info@earthcentre.org.uk WEB　　　:　www.earthcentre.org.uk	Earth Centre is a Millenium Commission funded environmental education venture near Doncaster. The Earth Centre is built over the remains of two collieries.
ECOTEC ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd Priestly House 28-34 Albert Street Birmingham B4 7UD Telephone:　(0121) 616 3600 Fax:　　　　(0121) 616 3699 Email:　　　welcome@ecotec.co.uk Website:　www.ecotec.com	Consultancy business specialising in Renewable Energy including community renewable projects in the UK and Europe. Reports available from ETSU.
EcoTech Centre Charitable Trust EcoTech Centre Swaffham Norfolk PE37 7HT Telephone:　(01760) 726100 Fax:　　　　(01760) 726109 Email:　　　info@ecotech.rmplc.co.uk Web:　　　　http://www.ecotech.org.uk	An information centre on eco-sustainability and allied issues. There is a large wind turbine with a visitor's viewing platform at the top

Energy 21 PO Box 154, Stroud, Glos, GL5 4YS Telephone: (01453) 752277 e-mail: info@energy21.org.uk Web: www.energy21.org.uk	Energy21 is a Stroud-based renewable energy group and the UK branch of Eurosolar. It holds conferences, exhibitions, educational courses and publishes information. It plans to develop a Renewable Energy Park with electricity generated from a range of RE resources.
Energy for Sustainable Development Ltd Overmoor, Neston, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN139TZ. Telephone: (01225) 812102 Fax: (01225) 812103 e-mail: esd@esd.co.uk Web: www.esd.co.uk	ESD is a Renewable Energy consultancy firm providing services in the UK and internationally to government, business and community clients.
Environment Resource and Information Centre University of Westminster 35 Marylebone Road London NW1 5LS Telephone: (020) 7911 5000 x3135 Fax: (020) 7911 5171 Email: rossa@wmin.ac.uk Website: www.wmin.ac.uk/eric	ERIC assists the public sector – especially local authorities – in the UK with their sustainable development responsibilities. ERIC publishes eg magazine
ETSU Renewable Energy Enquiries Bureau ETSU Building 165 Harwell Oxfordshire OX11 0QJ Telephone: (01235) 432450 Website: http://www.dti.gov.uk	ETSU is responsible for managing the DTI's renewable energy program. Calls for project proposals are made regularly and further information can be obtained from the DTI website. ETSU also houses a library of useful reports on the full range of issues affecting renewable energy development in the UK.

Friends of the Earth 26-28 Underwood Street, London, N1 7JQ. Telephone: (020) 7490 1555 Fax: (020) 7490 0881 Email: info@foe.co.uk Website: www.foe.co.uk	Friends of the Earth is the largest network of environmental groups in the world. FoE campaign on a variety of issues related to renewable energy and produce useful information sheets and booklets.
Gaia Energy Centre Deli Delabole Cornwall. PL33 9BZ Telephone: (01840) 213321 Fax: (01840) 213428 Email: info@gaiaenergy.co.uk Website: www.gaiaenergy.co.uk	Gaia Energy Centre (due to open to public August 3rd 2001) is a centre for the promotion of and education about renewable and sustainable energy and energy conservation. It is linked to Delabole, the UK's first wind farm.
Greenpeace UK Canonbury Villas, London, N1 2PN Telephone: (020) 7865 8100 Fax: (020) 7865 8200 e-mail: info@.uk.greenpeace.org Web: www.greenpeace.org.uk	Greenpeace is environmental campaigning organisation. It also funds scientific research and educational projects in the UK. It is active in campaigning for renewables and produces useful information.
Institute of Energy and Sustainable Development De Montfort University Netherleys Building Scraptoft Campus Leicester LE7 9SU Telephone: (0116) 257 7970 Fax: (0116) 257 7981 Email: pdwright@dmu.ac.uk Website: www.iesd.dmu.ac.uk	A multidisciplinary unit committed to sustainable development through research and educational work. IESD has worked in partnership with local communities, local authorities and the private sector in enabling renewable energy schemes to be developed, managed and evaluated.

National Assembly Sustainable Energy Group (NASEG) Unit 1, Dyfi Eco Parc, Machynlleth, Powys, SY20 8AX Telephone: (01654) 705000 Fax: (01654) 703000 Email: janet.sanders@dulas.org.uk Website: www.naseg.org	NASEG was set up in 2000 as a forum in Wales for bringing together industry, community and environmental organisations and other interested parties.
NEF Renewables National Energy Foundation, Davy Avenue, Knowlhill, Milton Keynes, MK5 8NG. Telephone: (01908) 665555 Fax: (01908) 665577 Email: renewables@greenenergy.org.uk Web: www.greenenergy.org.uk	NEF Renewables is a section of the Milton Keynes based National Energy Foundation, developing services to promote renewable energy.
Network for Alternative Technology and Technology Assessment. c/o Energy & Environment Research Unit, Faculty of Technology, The Open University, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA Telephone: (01908) 65 4638 Fax: (01908) 85 8407 Email: s.j.dougan@open.ac.uk Website: www.tec.open.ac.uk/eeru/natta	NATTA is an independent national network based at the OU Energy and Environmental Research Unit. NATTA is a voluntary and non-profit making organisation aiming to promote the development of alternative technology. It publishes a bimonthly journal, RENEW, which examines renewable energy issues.

Parliamentary Renewable And Sustainable Energy Group (PRASEG) 145 Fourth Floor 35-37 Grosvenor Gardens London SW1W OBS Telephone: (020) 7233 5887 Fax: (020) 7630 9122 Email: info@praseg.org.uk Website: http://www.praseg.org.uk	PRASEG is a cross party group that exists to promote sustainable energy issues in the UK parliament. PRASEG holds an annual conference and regular seminars in Westminster to discuss policy barriers to the development of the market for sustainable energy technologies – renewables, energy efficiency and combined heat and power.
Renewable Energy Forum John Crookal-Greening 14 Shakespeare Rd, Bedford, MK40 2EA. Telephone: (01234) 261066 Email: john@sustainable-energy.fsnet.co.uk Website: www.sustainablepower.org	The Renewable Energy Forum seeks to stimulate the development of RE projects in Bedfordshire. It is developing a World Wide Web guide to renewable energy projects in the east of England.
Sherwood Energy Village Unit 1, Boughton Pumping Station, Brake lane, Boughton, Nottingham, NG229HQ Telephone: (01623) 860222 Fax: (01623) 863373 e-mail: sev@netcomuk.co.uk Website: www.sherwoodenergyvillage.co.uk	The organisation behind Sherwood Energy Village is the Sherwood Energy Village Ltd – an Industrial and Provident Society. The society was formed by members of the Ollerton Community with the aim of acquiring and developing the Ollerton colliery site into an environmentally sustainable development. Ollerton colliery was closed in 1994. The Sherwood Energy Village will utilise renewable energy to provide heat and power. The project will include residential, industrial, tourism and leisure developments.

Scottish Parliament Renewable Energy Group (SPREG) Contact: Robin Harper MSP Constituency Address: 14 Albany Street Edinburgh Telephone: (0131) 348 5927 Fax: (0131) 348 5972 Email:Robin.Harper.msp@scottish.parliament.uk Website: http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/msps/cpg/cpg-re Secretary: Robert Forest Telephone: 01786 825836	The purpose of this group is to bring together Members of the Scottish Parliament and others with an interest in renewable energy in Scotland. The group meets to ensure an exchange of information between members of Parliament, industry, NGOs and other interested parties.
Triodos Bank Brunel House 11 The Promenade, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 3NN. Telephone: (0117) 973 9339 Fax: (0117) 973 9303 Email mail@triodos.co.uk Website: http://www.tridos.co.uk	Triodos Bank supports a range of local environmental projects, including several renewable energy projects.
North Tawton Environmental Trust 12a The Square, North Tawton, Devon, EX20 2EP Tel/Fax: (01837) 89069 e-mail: envtrust@northtawton.freeserve.co.uk Website: www.northtawton.freeserve.co.uk	A community renewable energy project. They have produced a detailed feasibility study on the different energy options for the local community.

Wales OPET Cymru Unit 1, Dyfi Eco Park, Machynlleth, Powys, SY20 8AX Telephone: (01654) 705019 Fax: (01654) 703000 Email: janet.sanders@dulas.org.uk Website: www.naseg.org (operational from August 2001)	Organisations for the Promotion of Energy Technologies (OPET). OPET is an initiative of the European Commission which aims to disseminate information and promote the benefits of new innovative technologies. Wales OPET Cymru gives advice on renewable energy and rational use of energy for communities and businesses and help with finding funding sources.
West Wales ECO Centre West Wales ECO Centre The Old School Business Centre Lower St Mary Street Newport Pembrokeshire SA42 0TS Telephone: (01239) 820 235 Fax: (01239) 820 801 Email: westwales@ecocentre.org.uk Website: http://www.ecocentre.org.uk	West Wales ECO centre was set up by the West Wales Energy Group in pursuit of its aims and objectives: the promotion of the consideration of issues surrounding energy use; including generation, conservation, pollution, and alternative technologies for electricity generation. The centre is also home to the West Wales Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, where callers can get free, impartial advice on energy saving measures.
Wind Prospect Ltd, Colin Palmer, 3rd Floor 7 Berkley Square Clifton Bristol BS8 1HG Telephone: (0117) 925 7798 Fax: (0117) 945 2493 Email: colin@windprospect.com Website: www.ecocentre.org.uk	Have developed community wind farm at Haverigg and are looking to develop similar projects elsewhere.

Community-focused Renewables

- **Useful Documents**

British Wind Energy Association (1994) *Best Practice Guidelines for Wind Development* BWEA London

Centre for Sustainable Energy. (1997). *Scoping Study into Community Based Renewable Energy Projects.* ETSU K/PL/00135/REP. ETSU, DTI.

Devine-Wright, P; McAlpine, G. & Batley-White, S. (2001) *Wind turbines in the landscape: an evaluation of local community involvement and other considerations in UK wind farm development.* Proceedings of the 32nd annual meeting of the Environmental Design Research Association Conference, Edinburgh, Scotland, July 3 - 6, 2001.

ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd (1999). *RE Community schemes in Europe – Relevance to the UK Market.* ETSU K/BD/00194/REP. ETSU, DTI.

Edwards R, Leaney VC & Stevenson R (1999) *Overcoming barriers to greater active community and local involvement in wind farms in the UK* in 'Wind Energy Comes of Age' Peter Hinson (ed), BWEA (Proceedings of the 21st BWEA Wind Energy Conference, September 1999).

ETSU (200) *Developing a community renewables scheme. An overview* ETSU K/BD/00190/REP/S ETSU for the DTI

Friends of the Earth (1995) *Planning for Wind Power. Guidelines for project developers and local planners* Friends of the Earth Pub London

Land Use Consultants (2000) *Local Agenda 21 and Renewable Energy* ETSU K/BD/00179/REP ETSU DTI

Lee A. and Gledhill F. (Eds) (1999) *Sustainable Projects in Gloucestershire.* Energy 21

Mitchell. R. (1994). *Community involvement in renewable energy project.* ETSU K/FR/00095/REP. Rubicon Link. ETSU, DTI

Stevenson R. and Vawser M. 1999). *Commercialisation of small hydro through community participation.* ETSU K/BD/00190/REP. Dulais Ltd, Wind Prospect. ETSU, DTI. (especially section 5)

Set of **Renewable Energy case studies** available from ETSU.

EG magazine. *Promoting local sustainable development.* Environment Resource and Information Centre. University of Westminster.

RENEW. A bimonthly journal which examine Renewable Energy issues. NATTA, Energy and Environmental Research Unit, Open University.

Useful Renewable Energy websites
(mostly educational)

http://www.greenenergy.org.uk **NEF Renewables**	Renewable energy, green electricity and NEF renewables projects.
http://www.natenergy.org.uk **National Energy Foundation (NEF).**	Domestic energy efficiency, renewable energy NEF projects. Contains links to other energy sites.
http://www.learningalive.co.uk/ **U.K. Education Web Pages.**	Provides educational information on renewable energy.
http://www.bbc.co.uk **BBC Education service**	The BBC education service allows you to search for pages and lists when programmes on renewable energy are scheduled; a good site for teachers and students.
http://www.pluggingintothesun.org.uk./ **Schools and Homes Energy Education project Ltd**	Provides information about renewable energy in schools and at home. It details how to save money on certain energy types and how use renewable energy in a more effective way.
http://www.bpes.com/content/info3.htm **BP Amoco – Science across the World (SAW).**	An interactive educational site that provides science information for schools. It provides information on renewable energy.
http://www.shell.com Shell around the world.	Information on different areas of renewable energy.
http://www.jxj.com/ **James and James (Science Publishers) Ltd.**	Online bookshop for science publications, including energy. It also supplies information about renewable energy suppliers, contact details and prices.
http://www.howstuffworks.com/ **How stuff Works**	As the title suggests there are stepped explanations as to how things work, with moving pictures and text. The information is well illustrated.

http://www.wpm.co.nz/ **Windpower Monthly.**	A monthly magazine that provides detailed information on wind power.
http://www.foe.co.uk/ http://www.foe.co.uk/climatecha nge **Friends of The Earth.**	A good site with useful areas on environmental issues as well as information on renewable energy. There is an excellent section on climate change. Select 'Hot Contacts' and you can find good links to renewable energy sites such as SOLEIL, CREST and ETSU.
http://www.cat.org.uk **The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)**	Information about educational visits, a virtual tour whilst on line, publication lists, information on aspects of renewable energy which can be down loaded free, Courses at the centre (including courses specifically for teachers, current news, member information etc.
http://www.etsu.com/ **Energy and Technology Support Unit (ETSU)**	A renewable and energy efficiency organisation that hosts a number of sites for the UK and European Governments and Industry. The links to hosted sites are excellent.
http://www.bwea.com/ **British Wind Energy Association.**	Excellent fact sheets on wind energy and links to other renewable energy sites.
http://www.itdg.org/ **Intermediate Technology (IT)**	IT is an independent charity that promotes the use of appropriate small-scale technologies, including renewable energy, with local communities throughout the world.
http://www.dti.gov.uk/renewable/ ed_pack/ **Planet Energy**	An informative site with good links and details of other organisations who have information on renewable energy. Developed by ETSU for the DTI. The site is aimed at school children, university students and teachers.

http://www.solstice.crest.org/common/crestinfo.html **Solstice - run by CREST**	Information service of the Centre for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technology (CREST). Provides information on the different areas of energy including renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable development. It is an American site.
http://www.crestuk.org **Centre for Renewable Energy Systems Technology (CREST)**	Renewable energy research, education and training
http://www.eco-web.com/ **Green Pages**	The global directory for environmental technology.
http://www.vivid.net/corp/commonpurpose/news.html **Renewable Energy Online**	Information on renewable energy. This is ideal for school students or teachers who are researching the subject.
http://www.eren.doe.gov **Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Network (EREN)**	This site is provided by the US Department of Energy, and has good illustrated information on renewable energy. Fun activities are labeled appropriately for different age groups.
http://www.solarelectric.com/welcome.htm **Alternative Energy Engineering.**	Information about using alternative energy to make electricity including equipment, outlets and prices.
http://www.cee.org.uk **Council For Environmental Education.**	The council for Environmental Education (CEE), provides a national focus and a voice for those committed to education for sustainable development and aims to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are at the heart of education policy and practice.
http://www.bwea.com/edu/teachers.html **AMEC Border Wind Ltd.**	Border Wind Ltd have produced a set of three booklets covering Key Stages 1,2 and 3 & 4. Each booklet investigates wind power as an alternative source of energy, and provides information

	and contacts for teachers to support them in the teaching of wind power within the National Curriculum. The booklets can be downloaded for free from this site.
http://www.create.org.uk **Centre For Research, Education And Training In Energy (CREATE)**	Provides a focus of expertise for people who want to know about energy matters.
http://www.farmenergy.com **The Farm Energy Centre**	Information on the application of energy based techniques in farming and horticulture.
http://www.schools.detr.gov.uk/global/index.htm **Global Warming**	An interactive site for seven to sixteen year-olds. The site has information on the causes and effects of climate change. It shows how children and young people can make a real difference. The site has activities, quizzes and games, and links to other sites. The site is organised by the Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions (DETR).
http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/windfarms/ **Country Guardian**	A UK group acting as a clearing house for information and advice, serving groups which oppose wind farm development.

Annex Two: Some examples from Awel Aman Tawe's consultation:

This annex includes some examples of material used during Awel Aman Tawe's consultation process. All information was produced bilingually, but this annex only includes the English versions. For ease of documentation, the material reproduced here is not in its original format.

A2.1: Initial dissemination leaflet to every household

This was an initial information leaflet distributed to every household in the area.

A2.2: Evaluation form from the coach visits to see a wind farm

On every coach trip, participants were asked to fill in an evaluation form. Coach trips were to Carno and Taff Ely wind farms. Eight trips were organised on which a total of 265 people attended. 154 people filled in evaluation forms on the coach visits. Similar evaluation forms were filled in at public meetings and open days.

A2.3: Structured questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was undertaken at the start of the consultation and at the end. This was to monitor whether people changed their opinions over the course of the consultation. Additional questions were included in Part two of the questionnaire to assess the consultation process itself. In the first round, 259 people were interviewed. In the second round, the same people were returned to and 167 people were interviewed. Respondents were chosen through a random sample from the electoral registers.

A2.4: Focus group discussion and semi-structured interview checklist of questions

This checklist of questions formed the basis of discussion for semi-structured interviews and small focus group discussions. In all cases, these questions were simply the starting point and the discussions evolved from there. Most interviews and groups lasted between an hour and an hour and a half. Thirty-eight semi-structured interviews were carried out with people who were pro and anti the project in Welsh or English as requested by the interviewee. Respondents were self-selective, and Awel Aman Tawe advertised throughout the consultation period for people interested in a full interview on their views and ideas about the project. Nine small group discussions were facilitated. These focused more specifically on the issues of concern to those participating. The groups convened were: *residents from Tai'rgwaith, residents from Cwmllynfell, People who use the mountain for recreation, farms and smallholdings on the mountain, parents of school-aged children, men over 65, women over 65, women under 20, people interested in environmental issues.* In order to identify people for the groups, appropriate organisations were contacted, group discussions were advertised in the local press, individual farms

and smallholdings contacted, all parents were given a leaflet via the schools, and individuals that had expressed an interest in the project were contacted.

A2.5: Activity sheet for primary school children visiting a wind farm with Awel Aman Tawe
Several children attended the coach visits and came to the open days. Awel Aman Tawe designed a short activity sheet for children to fill in on their trip.

A2.6: Ballot paper for final referendum
This details the conditions on which it was agreed that the project should go ahead. 8,810 people were sent ballot papers and 4,252 people voted either by post or by telephone in the final referendum.

A2.1: Initial dissemination leaflet to every household

125

A2.2: Evaluation form from the coach visits to see a wind farm

English version. Reduced for ease of reproduction

Awel Aman Tawe Evaluation Form

Coach Trip
Visit to: **Date:**

What is your opinion of the wind farm you saw today?

How did you rate its:
a) Noise:

1	2	3	4	5
extremely noisy	noisy	didn't notice noise	quiet	extremely quiet

b) Visual appearance:

1	2	3	4	5
Extremely unattractive	A bit unsightly	Neither ugly nor beautiful	Quite attractive	Extremely attractive

Other comments about the wind farm:

What did you enjoy most about the visit?

What did you enjoy least about the visit?

What is you opinion of Awel Aman Tawe community wind farm project?

1	2	3	4	5
A terrible idea	A bad idea	No feeling either way	A good idea	An excellent idea

Village:	Age:	Male/Female:

A2.3: Structured questionnaire

English version. Reduced for ease of reproduction

Questions asked during the structured questionnaires:
Part One: Questions 1-14
Part Two: All questions

1. **Have you heard about the project Awel Aman Tawe Community Wind Farm?** YES / NO   If NO skip to question 6

2. **How did you hear about the project?**

3. **When?**

4. **What do you think of the idea?**

1	2	3	4	5
terrible idea	bad idea	no feeling either way	good idea	excellent idea

5. **I will read out a list of statements - can you tell me which ones you would say apply to the Awel Aman Tawe project?**

Awel Aman Tawe is a community project   YES/ NO/ NOT SURE

Awel Aman Tawe is an outside company   YES/ NO/ NOT SURE

Money has been raised to consult local   YES/ NO/ NOT SURE
people about whether to build a windfarm

Money has been raised to build a wind farm YES/ NO/ NOT SURE

The wind farm will go ahead whatever local YES/ NO/ NOT SURE
people say

The wind farm will only go ahead if local   YES/ NO/ NOT SURE
people support the project

6. **Have you ever seen a wind farm?**   NEVER   ±

                                          FROM A DISTANCE ±

                                          TELEVISION   ±

                                          CLOSE UP   ±

7. **What do you like about wind farms? (record verbatim)**

8. **What do you dislike about windfarms? (record verbatim)**

9. Overall what is your opinion of wind farms?

1	2	3	4	5
terrible	bad	no opinion	good	excellent

10. Do you think this area has anything to gain from setting up a community wind farm?   YES / NO   If   yes, what?

11. Do you think this area has anything to lose from setting up a community windfarm?   YES / NO   If   yes, what?

12. If a wind farm is developed would you like to see an educational centre as part of it?   YES/NO

13. Could you say whether you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Windfarms should not be   AGREE/ DISAGREE / NOT SURE
developed unless they are owned by the community

I see windfarms as an inevitable AGREE/ DISAGREE / NOT SURE
development

Energy produced by wind farms AGREE/ DISAGREE / NOT SURE
should be used locally

Windfarms should always be   AGREE / DISAGREE / NOT SURE
developed in partnership with local communities

Windfarms should not be   AGREE / DISAGREE / NOT SURE
developed at all

Windfarms should only be   AGREE / DISAGREE / NOT SURE
developed if profits are put back into the local community

14. Do you have any other comments? (Part One)

15. Over the past 9 months, Awel Aman Tawe have been consulting people throughout the area about the idea of the community wind farm. Have you:

Been on a coach trip to see a wind farm?

Been to a public meeting?

Been to a presentation about the project?

Received information about Awel Aman Tawe through your door?

Been part of a small group discussion

Looked at Awel Aman Tawe's website?

Read about the project in the paper?

      (once)

      (a few times)

      (regularly)

Visited the office?

Had any other contact with the project?

16. Have you heard of the Tairgwaith Action Group? YES / NO   if yes:

17. Are you a member? YES/ NO

18. How do you rate the quality of the consultation?

1	2	3	4	5
extremely poor	poor	not sure	good	extremely good

19. Have you talked about the project with your friends?

      YES/ NO If yes:

What do they think of the idea?

1	2	3	4	5
terrible idea	bad idea	no feeling either way	good idea	excellent idea

a) I don't know what they think_____

b) They all have mixed opinions_____

c) Some are for and some are against_____

20. Have you talked about the project with your family? YES/ NO
If yes:

21. What do they think of the idea?

1	2	3	4	5
terrible idea	bad idea	no feeling either way	good idea	excellent idea

a) I don't know what they think_____

b) They all have mixed opinions_____

c) Some are for and some are against_____

22. Have you talked about the project with the people you work with? YES/ NO If yes:

23. What do they think of the idea?

1	2	3	4	5
terrible idea	bad idea	no feeling either way	good idea	excellent idea

a) I don't know what they think_____

b) They all have mixed opinions_____

c) Some are for and some are against_____

24. Do you feel proud of living in this area?

1	2	3	4	5
not proud at all	not proud	not sure	proud	very proud

25. Do you plan to vote in the coming referendum? YES/NO/Don't know

26. Do you think the project should go ahead? YES / NO

27. How well do the following words describe you as a person?

1	2	3	4	5
not well at all	not well	not sure	well	extremely well

28. Imaginative   1   2   3   4   5

(Someone who uses their imagination a lot)

29. Uninquisitive   1   2   3   4   5

(Someone who is not very curious about new things and ideas)

30. Philosophical   1   2   3   4   5

(Someone who thinks about and analyses ideas)

How long have you lived in this area?_____

Age:_____ Sex: _____

Do you work?_____

What is your job?_____

A2.4: Focus group discussion and semi-structured interview checklist of questions

English version.

Language of interview:
Respondent's name
Gender:
Age
Village:
Length of residency:
Date: Time:
Interviewer

1. Renewable Energy: (Knowledge and opinions)

i)   What is your understanding of the term Renewable Energy?
ii)   What forms of RE do you know of? Have you seen any RE technologies? What are the differences between RE and other forms of generating energy?
iii)   What would you say are the advantages / disadvantages of using RE?
iv)   What is you understanding of the terms: climate change, global warming, "hole in the ozone layer'?
v)   In what way do you feel that these environmental issues are linked to the use of RE?

2. Wind farm: (Knowledge & opinions.

i)   Have you seen a wind farm? (Where? When? How close?)
ii)   What have you heard about wind farms? (Tell us what you know?
iii)   Have you any reason to believe that wind farms have an effect on the environment?
iv)   What would you say are the advantages / disadvantages of wind farms?
v)   Are you in general, in favor of the development of wind farms in the UK?
vi)   How would you feel if a commercial developer developed a small wind farm in the UK?

3. Community ownership and control: (meaning, importance, concerns, ideas, mechanisms)

i)   What do you consider to be our local natural resources?
ii)   Who do you think should own the local resources?
iii)   What do you think of the local community collectively owning and controlling some of our resources? (What concerns you about this idea? What benefits could it bring?)
iv)   What do you think is meant by share ownership?
v)   How could share ownership be organised so that everyone in

the community benefits?

4. Awel Aman Tawe project: (Knowledge, opinions, concerns, & ideas)

i)   What do know about Awel Aman Tawe project?
ii)   What do you think of the idea of the community wind farm? (concerns / expectations, etc.)
iii)   What do you think about the aims of the Awel Aman Tawe project? (e.g. putting money into local area, generating an environmental education centre, attracting tourists etc./ are these aims realistic ?
iv)   How do you think that wind farm could affect the community?
v)   If the wind farm goes ahead, how would you like to see it developed? (e.g. how many turbines / developed into a fully fledged environmental centre / total local control etc. etc.) - i.e. what is their vision ?

5. Potential gains and losses to the area of setting up a wind farm: (ideas, fears & opinions)

i)   What do you think the area could gain by setting up a community wind farm ? (This is likely to start with basics but could generate into a substantial amount of ideas. Including local employment, visitors centre and associated trade, tourism and spin offs etc.)
ii)   What do you think the area could lose by setting up a community wind farm?
iii)   What might happen if a community wind farm is set up in our area?

6. If the wind farm does go ahead - what should the profits be spent on? (ideas, mechanisms, fairness)

i)   If a wind farm goes ahead what would you like to see the profits spent on?
ii)   How do you feel that the profits should managed so that they are distributed fairly?
iii)   What concerns do you have about the spending of profits?

A2.5: Activity sheet for primary school children visiting a wind farm with Awel Aman Tawe

English version. Reduced for ease of reproduction

Carno Windfarm Activity Sheet

There are some activities and questions for you on this sheet. Don't worry if you don't know the answers straight away! You can always ask for help.
Some Top Tips:
- *Read the sheet carefully.*
- *Listen carefully when you are given information.*
- *Use your eyes and ears.*
- *Take your time.*
- *Work together. Two heads are better than one sometimes!*
- *Have a good time!*

Section A: First Impressions.

1. What does a wind turbine look like? Use words to describe one.

2. Listen carefully, then write down all the different sounds that you can hear.

3. Draw a turbine and label the blades, the tower and the anemometer.

Section B: How much do you know?

1. What does a wind turbine produce?

2. Wind energy is "renewable". What do you think renewable means?

3. Why do you think we need to have renewable energy?

4. Can you think of any other kinds of renewable energy?

5. How often do *you* use electricity? What do you use it for?

6. Where does your electricity come from?

Section C: About Carno
There is a choice of answers. Write in the one you think is correct.

1. Carno is the _____ windfarm in the UK. *(Biggest, smallest)*

2. Carno has_____ turbines. *(65, 56, 650)*

3. Carno can provide enough electricity for _____ homes. *(25, 250, 2,500, 25,000)*

Section D: About your day at Carno.

1.   What did you like best about Carno? Why?

2.   What did you like least? Why?

A2.6: Ballot paper for final referendum

English text reproduced for information. Not original version

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:1em;">

Awel Aman Tawe
Community Wind Farm Referendum

BALLOT PAPER

You may vote by Post or Telephone using the Security Codes printed below

Security Code Part 1
Security Code Part 2

FOR BALLOTING OPTIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS, PLEASE SEE OVERLEAF

For residents of Rhiwfawr; Cwmllynfell; Tai'rgwaith; Cwmtwrch; Ystradowen; Cefnbrynbrain; Rhosaman; Brynaman Uchaf; Brynaman Isaf; Gwaun Cae Gurwen; Cwmgors; Garnant; farms and houses on the mountain

Awel Aman Tawe will **only** go ahead on the basis of these conditions:

1. **The windfarm will consist of 4 or 5 turbines and will be situated on the Mynydd Uchaf (y Gwryd) between the villages of Rhiwfawr, Cwmllynfell and Tai'rgwaith.**
2. **Anyone aged 16 and over, living in the villages listed above, is entitled to become a Member of Awel Aman Tawe at the cost of £1.**
3. **All profits from the electricity generated will be held by a charitable trust.**
4. **The charitable trust will be managed by Trustees. Residents in each village elect their own Trustee.**
5. **Funding will go to projects that generate local jobs, develop community facilities and services and respond to the needs of all age groups.**

Please place a cross 'x' in ONE box only below

Taking the above into account, do you support the development of the Awel Aman Tawe community wind farm?

a) Yes ☐
b) No ☐

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