

Community Consultation



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culture ~ evaluation ~ learning

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Who are our communities?

Communities of:

- Interest – e.g. railways
- Location – e.g. people who live near the museum
- Identity – e.g. people of a particular religion or nationality
- Age – e.g. under 5s, teenagers, elderly people
- Ability – e.g. people with physical or learning disabilities

Good reasons for working with communities:

- ✓ Raise the profile of your museum
- ✓ Get more funding
- ✓ Work with other organisations to help them achieve their aims
- ✓ Increase social capital
- ✓ Enable people to take an active part in their local community

In England, museums have to consult with their local communities as part of the Accreditation Scheme.

Local Authorities in England have a Duty to Involve local people in their plans and proposals, so Local Authority museums have to consult with local communities.

For Accreditation, museums must consult with users about services provided:

1. The museum must carry out consultation in order to establish the views of users on for example, visitor facilities, opening arrangements, services, etc., and the user consultation process must take place at regular intervals.
2. The museum must have a mechanism for analysing and responding to the results of the consultation.
3. Methods of user consultation are many and varied, and may be very simple. The museum should use whatever methods are most appropriate to it – e.g. visitor books, comments cards, complaints mechanisms, consultation with the Friends group, focus groups and interviews.

(from Museums, Libraries & Archives Council guidance on Accreditation)

Raise the profile of your museum - Case Study

Head of Steam - Darlington Railway Museum (local authority museum, large town)

<http://www.darlington.gov.uk/Culture/headofsteam/welcome.htm>



The Stockton to Darlington Railway – first steam-worked passenger railway, 1825

Locomotion No. 1 - George Stephenson's engine built for the opening of the railway

The museum consulted with people who live very close to the museum.

- Have they visited the museum?
- What did they do?
- What would make it better?

Consultant contacted individuals and groups through the Community Partnership.

Met with 20+ local groups.

Opportunity to tell people about the museum and what it does.

Main problem identified: admission charge is a problem as people who live nearby have low incomes.

Darlington Railway Museum

Family Album project - a project to involve people who live in the streets surrounding the museum.

Do you live in Barningham Street?

Do you get your daily newspaper at Sainsbury's in Corporation Road?

And have you ever wondered whose cat it is you see every morning on your way to work?

The Head of Steam Darlington Railway Museum would like to know about how you experience the place where you live.

That is why we invite you to take digital photographs of your daily life and share them in a Family Album only for your area.

Meet new people, get to know your area from a whole new perspective and feel part of your community.

Get more funding – Case Study

Seaton Delaval Hall, Northumberland – National Trust

100,000 people took part in the campaign for the National Trust to acquire Seaton Delaval Hall from Lord Hastings. The level of community involvement and enthusiasm, enabled over £3m to be raised.



http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-vh/w-visits/w-findaplace/w-seaton-delaval-hall/w-seaton_delaval-saveit/w-seaton_delaval-feedback.htm

“In a radical departure from previous acquisitions, we asked the public to take a central role in shaping our plans for Seaton Delaval Hall’s future.

Through tours, events, public meetings, phone calls, online forums, social networking, emails and letters, thousands of people have contributed their views.

We've reached out to everyone from school kids and Scouts, local residents and businesses, to voluntary organisations and public services.

Here are some of the most popular themes that have emerged from our 'Shape it' campaign...

Performance and the arts

Community activities and weddings

More access to the wider estate for walking, cycling and camping

Local people's history, especially workers, industry and military connections

More medieval banquets like in the 1970s and 80s!

Family-friendly and fun

Get more funding - Case Study

Housesteads Roman Fort (English Heritage & National Trust, rural area on Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site)

www.english-heritage.org.uk/housesteads



English Heritage and the National Trust applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant for a complete redevelopment of the visitor facilities at Housesteads.

They had to do an extensive consultation with local people, to see how they would like Housesteads to be developed.

- Stalls at farmers' markets and other public events
- Pub quiz, to reach local residents and non-visitors
- Visits to Housesteads by group of disabled people; youth group; teachers; under 5s and their families



Work with other organisations - Case Study

Museums can help other organisations achieve their aims.

Woodhorn Museum and Bellingham Youth Group

Working with young people in an isolated rural area

Woodhorn Colliery on Flickr - Photo Sharing! - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.flickr.com/photos/23434676@N03/2703628361/in/photostream/

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Woodhorn Colliery on Flickr - Photo Sharing!

Woodhorn Colliery



Local youth "pimp my ride" project.

Would you like to comment?

Uploaded on July 27, 2008 by TREACLE JON

TREACLE JON's photostream

535 uploads

This photo also belongs to:

- Woodhorn Colliery (Set)
- THE GROUP FOR HAPPY SNAPPERS. (Pool)

Tags

- woodhorn
- colliery
- mining
- northumberland
- mines
- museum
- noth east
- pit

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Work with other organisations - Case Study

Museums can help other organisations achieve their aims.

The Tyne & Wear Museums' Outreach Officer, based at Woodhorn, worked with the young people at Bellingham to decorate a car, which was raffled to raise money for the youth group.

- Young people learned new skills – graphic design, research
- Local people respected what the young people had achieved
- Youth workers offered young people an activity which they could not do without the museum.

Increase social capital - Case Study

Bailiffgate Museum, Alnwick, Northumberland (independent museum in a small town)

Social capital:

“Networks, understanding and values that shape the way we relate to each other and participate in social activities.”

The museum held a fair for local charities. Charities had stalls; the event encouraged new people to volunteer with the charities.

Local groups now hire the museum for events.

Local people know more about the museum, and visit more often.

A photography class is held at the museum, to teach basic camera skills. The class uses photographs and archive material from the museum's collection as inspiration.

Increase Social Capital – Case study

The Leeds City Museum – new museum in a big city

<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/cityMuseum/>

Community History Curator and Learning Officer

Exhibitions and events with community groups to inform development of new museum

Films to record contemporary life in Leeds

Active focus group

Works within Leeds City Council's community programme



Problems!

Lack of support from senior management staff

Lack of interest from community groups

Suspicion

Groups might feel they are being “used” by the museum, for its own aims

Need for sustainability – groups must not be dropped as soon as the project is over

It can take a long time to build up relationships with groups and work effectively with them

How to do successful consultations

Ladder of participation



Useful references:

Heritage Lottery Fund guidance:

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Pages/Thinkingaboutcommunity>

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Pages/Firststepsinparticipation.a>

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Pages/Firststepsinworkingwithy>

Listen Up! Guidance from the Audit Commission

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/localgov/Pages/listenup.aspx>

Links to other consultation resources:

<http://www.angelfire.com/home/consultation/firstpage/consultationlinks.htm>

Techniques for working with groups

Use a variety of techniques:

- Some people are confident and talk a lot
- Some people are shy
- Some people are not good at reading and writing
 - ✓Take photographs
 - ✓Post-it notes
 - ✓Sticky dot voting
 - ✓Video room
 - ✓Diaries

Ask group members to interview their friends, neighbours etc.

This will give a wider range of opinions, and will bring in people who you would not meet otherwise.

Writing up the consultation

Write a full report for colleagues

Write a shorter version for participants

The results can also be presented as a display, DVD, etc

Beware of generalisations; are the group's views truly representative?

Measuring the impact of museums' work with communities:

Generic Social Outcomes

Stronger and Safer Communities

1. Improving group and inter-group dialogue and understanding
2. Supporting cultural diversity and identity
3. Encouraging familial ties and relationships
4. Tackling the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour
5. Contributing to crime prevention and reduction

Health and Well-being

1. Encouraging healthy lifestyles and contributing to mental and physical well-being
2. Supporting care and recovery
3. Supporting older people to live independent lives
4. Helping children and young people to enjoy life and make a positive contribution

Strengthening Public Life

1. Encouraging and supporting awareness and participation in local-decision making and wider civic and political engagement
2. Building the capacity of community and voluntary groups
3. Providing safe, inclusive and trusted public spaces
4. Enabling community empowerment through the awareness of rights, benefits and external services
5. Improving the responsiveness of services to the needs of the local community, including other stakeholders

Refer also to:

<http://www.seco.org.uk/laatoolkit>

Delivering Local Area Agreements – the contribution of cultural activity
(London)

http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/raising_standards/improvement/~media/Files/pdf/2

Digest of research for the above:

http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/raising_standards/improvement/~media/Files/pdf/2

Preston Hall Museum Consultation Policy

1. Museum will consult with people relevant to the topic.
2. Consultation will be accessible – no physical, intellectual or social barriers to involvement
3. Methods of consultation will be appropriate
4. Conclusions will be made available to a wider audience
5. Feedback will be given to the participants



Preston Hall Museum & Park