

ENGAGEMENT TOOLS:

The following table contains a list of the most common techniques that can be utilised at a variety of engagement activities and events to aid the engagement process

TOOL	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	WHERE SUITED
Comments Tree	Pre printed schematic or photographic tree. Ideas and comments are written onto post-it notes/leaves and stuck onto the tree	Very good technique suited to all events where anonymous feedback is required and where people may need to be encouraged to leave ideas and comments. This would be well suited to the streetscene project at Longley Four Greens where the issues being discussed are not contentious. (See worked example in Toolkit)
Comments Box	Similar to the above, but the comments and ideas are posted into a ballot box.	Good technique suited to all events where anonymous comment is required and where we do not want consultees to read each other's comments.
Parking Lot	Blank poster simply titled Parking Lot where thoughts that might initially seem irrelevant to the engagement can be captured.	Suited to any participatory event or activity such as Focus Groups, Exhibitions and Street Consultations
Photographs	Photographs which may depict before and after shots of a particular project or show past successes stories in an effort to stimulate local opinion and comment	Visual images are very good at stimulating ideas and comment, allowing consultees to see what could happen in their communities E.g. When engaging people regarding the Longley Four Greens streetscene photos of other successful streetscene projects can be displayed to show the impact that such a project can have. (See worked example in Toolkit)
Mad, Sad and Glad Board	A three sectioned board inviting people to say what angers them, makes them sad or makes them happy within their communities or with regard to a particular project.	Very flexible technique particularly good for gathering general background information regarding how people feel about their communities.
Jelly Bean Tree	A pre-printed schematic showing a large number of "Jelly Beans" in different situations on a tree. E.g. one may be sitting comfortably, another hanging precariously, another trying with difficulty to climb up. Consultees are invited to chose a "bean" which represents their current mood or feeling towards a project	A simple technique for gathering simple information and very useful for "breaking the ice" and encouraging people to get involved in the engagement process, but best used in conjunction with other tools which can offer more detailed information.
Canvas Cards	A5 cards pre printed with questions suited to the project or issue	A successful tool if the questions are well thought out and the cards are colourful and inviting. They can also be used to collect monitoring information. Generally these are liked by the community as they are not as daunting as full questionnaires, are private and small and so easy to manage
Dictaphone/Open Mic	Machine for recording conversation that can later be transcribed.	Excellent for Focus Groups and such events as Open forum meetings. They ensure that no information is missed, however transcription can be time consuming.
Tick Box Forms	Similar to canvas cards, simple forms for recording opinion by	These are not Questionnaires but simple tools that can be used at most engagement events to gather

	using tick boxes to answer a small number of simple questions	opinion. They are most successful when only a few, carefully thought out questions are asked about a particular project or service or issue.
Maps	Printed maps of a particular area of neighbourhood	Maps can be used as a stimulus at most events such as Focus Groups, planning for Real days and might even be included in Questionnaires to help the engagement process
3D Models	Large often scale models of an area, collection of streets or building.	Very useful as a visual stimulus. Particularly important at Planning For Real events and Open Days, but can also be used at Creative Events or left in community projects for a long period of time to inspire engagement. A key drawback is that such models tend to be relatively expensive.
Graffiti Boards	Large Boards of Posters that invite both comment and creative ideas in a random and unstructured way.	Though apparently similar to many tools mentioned above, this is particularly good for encouraging young people to express themselves and so is suitable for use at larger less formal events such as Open Days

EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL & CREATIVE TOOLS

TOOL	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	WHERE SUITED
Local urban myth film-making project	Involving local people – any age- in researching, storyboarding and filming ‘urban myths’ those things everyone knows but aren’t true. Starting with outrageous but funny or scary and can work through to reputation – of area or particular groups.	Good for areas or groups wanting to change perceptions. Needs to be handled sensitively. Can help to draw out prejudices in non-confrontational way. Finished product can be used as a discussion point with similar / different groups.
‘Forum Theatre’ project to discuss a difficult community issue	Short (15 minute) play, performed once, then repeated, but this time with audience stopping action and saying how they would do things differently. The actors then incorporate these changes	Very powerful tool for helping groups to see how their actions impact on others, to show how people feel in certain situations and to help them to change their behaviour. Can be used by people with no power, lots of power, or, for maximum impact both in the same session
Open-air communal film showings, with projection onto walls	Preferably films made with / by local groups. Can be consultative – what you want from area – informative – this is how we feel about.. or fun. Can be combined with other short films and digital projections	Can be used as part of opening / celebrations of streetscene etc, as part of highlighting the area, or as part of street party Best if people involved in all aspects including of celebration
Estate gateway design project	Artists working with all ages / users on ideas for identity of area then turning them into practical designs.	Encourages community cohesion and reduces vandalism, particularly with young people. Involvement can range from ideas designs workshops to selection of final designs, visiting

		fabrication sites, 'direct mark making' (contributions from community) in finished work or creation of celebration event.
Song-writing project, with recording/ Producing skills	Anything from a rap writing project with young people about their lives/ area/needs to an intergenerational project with schools and older people at a luncheon club	Can be used as way of finding out how people feel about their area / themselves, how they would like to be portrayed or as a development and celebration of participants skills
Junk sculpture project – using recycled material	Could be an add on to a larger public art project, or, using litter, to raise environmental awareness, Structures can be temporary or permanent, can be abstract or send a message. E.g. how I feel about my neighbourhood: how I would like to see my neighbourhood change.	Useful for areas where's it's easier to be heard than be seen and people are reluctant to come to a consultation event but will be attracted by the noise. Sculptors with big noisy tools e.g. chainsaws and angle grinders can be very attractive to people who wouldn't engage with other creative processes. Often engages men with a background in craft or industry.
Photography project – focus on local environment	Can be used in many ways e.g. Before and after photos of rebuild areas Home is...capturing what's important to people Behind every door – identical exteriors and individual interiors	Useful for gathering opinions on where people live, and for promoting an image of area. Can work at many levels from hiring professional photographer to take quality images, to training local people to work alongside, or giving people disposable cameras. A clear theme and use of final photos is key to good projects. Show them on hoardings, in launderettes, project on walls.
Summer arts in the park – a range of outdoor workshops	A whole range of activities and workshops for all ages in the outdoors.	Gets people out in the open working together. Important that results end up in something good, not just taster sessions. People like to feel that their gardens are contributing to something. Could be activities around the flower meadows and peoples
Community Story	Book produced by and with local people, working with writers/designers/photographers To tell the story of a community. Can be instant desktop publishing or properly produced depending on context and funds.	Useful to capture distinctiveness of area. Telling a story gives a different perspective than focusing on issues, and can be about people, places, events, or all 3. Can be done from different perspectives – older people who moved on to estate when it was new, or young people writing a story about their present day experiences.