

# Engaging children and young people in community planning

Community Planning Advice Note



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SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

# Engaging children and young people in community planning

Community Planning Advice Note

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**Annex A** – a series of prompts under the National Standards for Community Engagement – INVOLVEMENT, SUPPORT, PLANNING, METHODS, WORKING TOGETHER, SHARING INFORMATION, WORKING WITH OTHERS, IMPROVEMENT, FEEDBACK, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

**Annex B** – provides examples of existing approaches to engaging children and young people in Scotland and what has been learned from these

**Annex C** – lists organisations and resources offering additional sources of information and advice

# Community Planning Advice Note – Engaging children and young people in community planning

As part of their work in building a picture of the views and concerns of communities, Community Planning Partnerships should be developing an awareness of the diverse needs of the children and young people in their area. This responsibility is shared by all members of the Partnership and all services, not just those traditionally recognised as having a role in working with children and young people. This Advice Note sets out why engagement is so important and looks at the factors which contribute to effective engagement planning and activity.

## Introduction

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child provides that children and young people have a right to have their views taken into account in decisions made about matters that affect them, and that adults in a position to help them have a duty to provide them with support. Community Planning provides a mechanism for everyone's views to be included in developing the public services in their communities, from childhood on.

*“Organising public services around the needs and aspirations of service users and citizens is fundamental in our approach to reforming public services. Children and young people are an important and challenging group in this. Involving them now is an investment in the future of our public services, ensuring that they are responsive to our changing needs in coming years, but also an investment in citizenship for Scotland.”*

Tom McCabe, Minister for Finance and Public Service Reform

This Advice Note aims to help Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) and their individual partners to interpret their responsibilities under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and other relevant legislation in relation to engagement with children and young people. This can involve a range of activities, from providing information to them, listening to their views (consultation), enlisting their help (participation) and involving them in decision-making, monitoring and evaluation (empowerment). To illustrate existing practice and to help to stimulate an exchange of ideas, the Advice Note includes examples (at Annex B) of engagement in practice that others have found effective or have learned from. These examples are not exhaustive or necessarily right for all situations: there is no easy, off-the-shelf game plan for engagement and new ideas are constantly evolving. The potential audience for the Advice Note is very broad and it therefore gives a high-level overview and offers further contacts and links for investigation. Annex C contains links to a number of organisations with expertise in the area and points out relevant publications and tools. The note is not intended as a hands-on toolkit, although Annex A, based on the National Standards for Community Engagement, does provide a framework for thinking through how engagement is planned at a CPP level.

This Advice Note adds to existing Community Planning Advice Notes (especially Advice Note 5 on Effective Community Engagement), published to build on the Statutory Guidance issued under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, and on the National Standards for Community Engagement (Communities Scotland, 2005).

## 1. Who is this Advice Note for?

The Advice Note aims to encourage Community Planning Partnerships and individual partners including:

- Local Authorities
- NHS Boards
- Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise
- Joint Police Boards and Chief Constables
- Joint Fire Boards
- Communities Scotland
- Regional Transport Partnerships
- Community bodies
- Voluntary sector organisations
- Private sector organisations

to develop or adapt processes so that all children and young people can become aware of their rights and routinely have opportunities to exercise them through Community Planning. The Note is not only intended for those involved directly in working with children and young people. It is aimed at people who make decisions about planning, resources and priorities who need to consider how children's and young people's views can be taken into account and to think about how their decisions can contribute to the organisation's overall approach to engaging and involving children and young people. The Advice Note is a high level document and does not relate to defined age ranges, as it is important that all age ranges are captured. While age can be a useful shorthand in identifying groups, approaches used for engagement should be appropriate to the capacity of the individual or group to engage and the situation of the children and young people involved, rather than relating to numerical age. For example, a young person may also be a parent or carer themselves and will want to be involved in discussions relevant to that role.

*As part of Local Democracy Week, the Local Government Association has produced a guide for Councillors and MPs on engaging with young people in their area. [www.lga.gov.uk/Publication.asp?ISection=0&id=-A7833880](http://www.lga.gov.uk/Publication.asp?ISection=0&id=-A7833880) More organisations, tools and information sources can be found in Annex C.*

## 2. Why engage with children and young people?

In short, because organisations should want to engage, and because they are required to. There are incentives for engaging, such as achieving better service design and promoting citizenship, but there are also requirements to do so, for example under statutory duties. The main reasons are outlined in the rest of this section. The National Standards for Community Engagement (see paragraph 3 and Annex A) set out good practice in community engagement to help support better working relationships between communities and agencies delivering public services. While there are particular considerations in working with children and young people, the underlying principles for engagement are the same for all communities.

**2.1 Scottish Ministers** – have set out a high-level vision for children and young people in Scotland:

*“We have ambition for all our young people and we want them to have ambition for themselves and to be confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens. All Scotland’s children and young people need to be nurtured, safe, active, healthy, achieving, included, respected and responsible if we are to achieve our ambition for them.”*

*Getting it Right for Every Child, 2005*

*“Our children are our future. That is why we have committed ourselves to creating a Scotland in which every child matters, where every child, regardless of their family background, has the best possible start in life.*

*Much has already been done over the past few years to develop the services we offer our children. We believe, however, that more can and must be done. Particularly for the most disadvantaged children it is essential for all agencies to work together to achieve the best outcomes. That is a task for everyone in universal services such as health and education: it is not only about social work services.”*

*For Scotland’s Children, 2001*

Developing good engagement processes can help deliver this vision, in particular in relation to enabling children and young people to be effective contributors, responsible citizens and in demonstrating that they are included, respected and responsible.

### 2.2 Service planning and Best Value –

Engagement with the community and partnership working are the two fundamental principles underpinning Community Planning. Dialogue with children, young people and families gives policy makers and service providers the information they need to improve the relevance of their policies and services. This is true of mainstream services such as transport and health, where children and young people make up part of the wider community using the service, and of dedicated services for young people. By designing services which more closely match the needs of users, partnerships are contributing to the achievement of Best Value in

*“We need to talk to young people about their health needs in a language that they understand. And when they respond, we must show we are listening – We will encourage the NHS to work with and listen to young people to make sure that local services are shaped in ways that effectively meet their needs.”*

*Our National Health – a plan for action, a plan for change, 2000*

their individual organisations, while not involving children and young people at the appropriate time can result in wasted or inappropriate use of resources. Developing an understanding of what children and young people are interested in and how they see their futures supports both effective engagement and long-term service planning. Participation by children and young people is also an aid to protection: a consistent theme of successive abuse enquiries has been the failure to listen to children and young people. Engaging children and young people in processes can therefore promote child protection as well as improving decision-making.

Community Planning structures offer the potential to improve co-ordination of local arrangements for engagement across agencies, for example on particular strands of work, such as Integrated Children's Services Plans, Joint Health Improvement Plans and Community Learning and Development Strategies, which form part of the Community Planning process. Guidance for Regeneration Outcome Agreements, which will continue

*"It's not about 'men in suits' deciding what's best for a community when they don't even live there."*

Young person, *What Community Planning is to young people*, Young Scot

to form a major strand of work for many CPPs, identifies engaging young people as one of the five national priorities for community regeneration.

**2.3 The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** – The UNCRC is a public declaration by all signatory nations that children are especially vulnerable and have a right to expect special consideration. It came into force in the UK on 15 January 1992. The Convention contains 54 Articles covering all aspects of a child's life. One of the key principles of the Convention is that children's views must be considered and taken into account in all matters which affect them. Article 12 States:

- 1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.*
- 2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.*

The UK Government has ratified the Convention but it has not been incorporated in domestic law and it is not, therefore, enforceable through the courts. It is current Scottish Executive policy to reflect, where possible, the articles contained within the Convention when taking forward policy and introducing legislation that has an effect on the lives of children and young people. The full text of the UN Convention is available at: [www.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm](http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm)

**2.4 Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and other statutory duties** – Under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, CPPs must have regard to guidance issued by Scottish Ministers. The Statutory Guidance on Community Planning states that:

*“Local Authorities, in their initiation and facilitation of the Community Planning process should consult and co-operate with a wide range of interests including... bodies such as: young people and youth work bodies who already make a valuable contribution to the planning and provision of services through their involvement in youth forums and their active citizenship.”*

In addition to this, there are specific statutory duties to involve children and young people in decision-making on services which fall under the remit of CPPs, for example under the Standards in Scotland’s Schools Act 2000, the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004.

## **2.5 The citizenship agenda –**

Children and young people will become the voters, leaders and decision-makers of tomorrow. Early experiences can influence later behaviour and meaningful inclusion gives children and young people opportunities to demonstrate their ability to be citizens in their own local environment through practical experiences and activities. Inclusion in the processes that shape society in a way that is appropriate to their age

*“Promoting responsible citizenship in a challenging, yet at the same time enjoyable atmosphere, using teamwork and goal setting activities identifies previously untapped potential and self belief and enables the young people to exceed their expectations of their own abilities.*

*The resulting development of a wide range of positive life skills contributes significantly to the development of safer and more responsible communities.”*

Stephen Hunter, Chief Fire Officer,  
Tayside Fire and Rescue

and ability can contribute to their growth into mature, responsible, active members of society. One of the National Priorities in Education is Values and Citizenship. Engaging children and young people in Community Planning should also help them enjoy their childhoods, feel valued and respect their own environments – there is always a need to balance the needs of children and young people now with their development as citizens in the future. Participation can also be a mechanism for re-engaging children and young people who have become disengaged by creating a better sense of belonging. The aim should be to break down barriers, where they exist, between young people and the rest of the community and young people and organisations; to move away from their being viewed as a problem to be dealt with and towards their being valued members of society.

**2.6 Scotland’s Children’s Commissioner –** Kathleen Marshall was appointed as Scotland’s first Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP) in April 2004. Her job is to make sure that people listen when children and young people have important things to say about their lives. This might include people in schools, parliament and law courts.

SCCYP’s job is to make sure the promises made under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are kept. The Commissioner has a legal duty to remind everyone of the promises and can also set up an investigation if she thinks the promises are not being kept. If the Commissioner believes that a public, private or voluntary organisation is not keeping the promises made to children and young people, she can require them to attend a

public investigation, examine them under oath and force them to produce documents. Naturally, she prefers to work in partnership with people and will generally only use those powers when people do not co-operate; but it is important that they are there.

Another way the Commissioner might use those powers is if an issue has been raised by children and young people themselves. If this happens, she might want to make it clear how seriously she takes it by setting up a formal investigation to raise the profile of the issue and perhaps give children and young people an opportunity to ask questions.

**2.7 Scrutiny – Audits of Best Value and Community Planning** – Under a rolling programme of Best Value and Community Planning Audits of Local Authorities, Audit Scotland reports (to the Accounts Commission) on performance in Community Planning, including approaches to community engagement. The reports aim to describe how successfully obligations under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 are being met. Audit Scotland can highlight a failure to comply with the Act and, in the most extreme case, there is a power of Ministerial intervention. The following is an extract from the report issued to West Lothian Council:

*“At the heart of the modernising agenda is the recognition that services should be provided in ways that suit the user.... The council identifies a focus on service users as one of its guiding principles: ‘a customer-focused council... organised around the needs of the citizen’. It uses a range of mechanisms to consult with people. The council has a community engagement strategy and action plan outlining the range of activities being developed to inform, consult and involve people in the community planning process. This includes more ways of involving young people.”*

*West Lothian Council: The Audit of Best Value and Community Planning,  
Audit Scotland, June 2005*

**2.8 Young people want to participate** – One of the most compelling reasons for engaging with young people is that they themselves tell us that they want more and better opportunities to participate in decision-making. A major research programme, Viewfinder 2, conducted by MORI Scotland and Edinburgh Youth Services with over 5,700 young people in Edinburgh provides direct evidence:

*“Over half of all young people would like their views to be listened to by involving young people when important decisions are being made (52%); through newspapers, television, videos and websites (52%) and through organised events for young people (49%).”*

However, this is not always the case. Due to feelings of disempowerment and exclusion all too many young people do not yet want to participate and attention needs to be given to how a real cross-section of the young population can be involved. Part of the role of each CPP is to provide information to children and young people about how their views are represented in various forums, for example, Public Partnership Forums for Community Health Partnerships, in Schools, consultations, etc. and how their comments can make a difference.

*“Things will start happening, communities working more as a team than an individual, funds being raised and projects moving forward. Not a ‘them and us’ feeling.”*

*Young person, What Community Planning is to young people, Young Scot*

### 3. What makes for effective engagement?

Levels of engagement with young people, as with any community group, can range from simply providing relevant information and consulting on particular issues, to involvement, to full partnership approaches where those involved are empowered to have responsibility for funding decisions, monitoring and evaluation. An assessment should be made in advance of engagement to determine which approach is most appropriate to the context, the group involved, the decision to be made and the resources available. Examples at Annex B aim to highlight just a few of the varied approaches already being used in Scotland. “Your Place or Mine?”, a research study exploring young people’s participation in Community Planning, offers a discussion of models of participation and an overview of literature on citizenship as well as information on current practice in Scotland and two detailed case studies – see Annex C for details.

Thought needs to be given to the role of individual partners in undertaking engagement on behalf of the CPP, how links will be made with other pieces of work and how the information will be used to inform plans. There is a vast amount of activity under the umbrella of

*“It is up to the public authorities to bridge the gap between young people’s eagerness to express their opinions and the methods and structures which society offers.”*

*A New Impetus for European Youth,  
European Commission White Paper, 2001*

the CPP, both in community engagement where links may be made, for example with local Community Planning structures, the Public Partnership Forum for the Community Health Partnership, the local Dialogue Youth Unit, Community Councils, etc. and opportunities through service provision, for example in Health Promoting Schools or Eco Schools. In East Renfrewshire (Example 11), it is recognised that the engagement of young people is not only the responsibility of Education Departments or youth services but of all partners. Active support and contributions were made by social workers, Health Promotion Officers, school nurses, youth workers, teachers and Community School staff to developing a Dialogue Youth Health Network.

*Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Education (HMIE) collates, analyses and publishes evidence from its evaluations to inform parents, schools, colleges and other providers of education and Scottish Ministers about standards and quality in all areas of education including, for instance, how schools work with the wider community. The HMIE website includes examples of good practice drawn from inspections, including in the area of Community Learning and Development, [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk). More organisations, tools and information sources can be found in Annex C.*

**The National Standards for Community Engagement,** These were developed ‘bottom up’ by Communities Scotland with over 500 people involved, the majority of them from communities. They are a practical, flexible tool which will help to improve the practice of engaging communities in the planning and delivery of services. The work identified ten key standards for engaging with all communities, including young people. The definition of engagement, in formal settings, is:

*“...developing and sustaining a working relationship between one or more public body and one or more community group to help them both to understand and act on the needs or issues that the community experiences”.*

The Standards apply to engagement in both formal and less formal settings and as part of day-to-day work, which is particularly relevant in working with children and young people. The Standards have been endorsed by many Community Planning partner organisations, and Audit Scotland’s June 2006 study “Community Planning: an initial review” recommends that CPPs should champion their use. Annex A lists some particular points, covering a mixture of strategic and practical issues, to bear in mind in planning or working with children and young people, set out under the headings of the Standards. The Standards are stretching, and organisations will need to work towards achieving them over a period of time. Findings from pilots of the Standards suggest that it may be appropriate to select and focus on a few Standards which require particular attention rather than trying to achieve them all at the same time. Communities Scotland will also be publishing further advice this year, to sit alongside the National Standards and other support materials, focusing on equalities issues. “Don’t Treat us all the Same” is intended to prompt thought about equalities and community engagement and to provide practical tips on how to make community engagement more inclusive.

**3.1 Commitment**

The clear message from those working with children and young people is that effective engagement requires significant planning, time, effort and sustained support, even more so in the case of excluded or harder to reach groups. This implies a significant commitment and a requirement for effective coordination on the part of the partnership, to bring together the contributions of different partners, avoid overlap in engagement

*“Children and young people are the future. Community Planning is an evolutionary process that is just beginning but has long term implications. It is vitally important therefore that we involve children and young people at the earliest opportunity in order to ensure that they have a chance to shape our direction of travel.”*

David S Sawers  
Chief Executive, Angus Council

activity and monitor how the information is being used. The North Lanarkshire Partnership, for example, has developed a database of community engagement activities to ensure that all partners are aware of consultations being undertaken in an attempt to avoid consultation fatigue. Part of the responsibility of the partnership is to recognise the potential of the groups they are working with and provide for capacity building so that partner organisations, voluntary and community groups can participate and support future engagement. Amidst the complexity and challenges of Community Planning structures and community engagement

approaches, it is worth remembering that the overall aim of the process is to achieve improvements in services as a result of the engagement, whether large or small.

**3.1.1 Sustainable Structures and Strategic Commitment** – Several partnerships have sustainable structures for ongoing involvement rather than engaging around particular issues or projects, for example the Angus Young Citizens Panel (Example 1) or through Dialogue Youth Units such as in Argyll and Bute (Example 6). In some cases, these structures allow for real sharing of power in decision-making. Youngedinburgh (Example 3) allows young people to take real decisions on policy and budget allocations on an equal footing with Councillors and others on a standing Committee of the Council. Young people involved in the YouthBank (Example 9) have become empowered

decision-makers effecting change and bringing resources to their local communities. Involving children and young people in decision-making is wholly consistent with ensuring that Best Value is achieved with resources, as long as appropriate procedures are in place.

**Community Learning and Development (CLD) Partnerships**, which have responsibilities for both youth work and building community capacity, involving a range of agencies from across sectors, can be a valuable resource for CPPs in co-ordinating and developing support for young people to engage and participate. Each CPP has overall responsibility for the CLD Strategy in its area, which is co-ordinated by the local authority through a CLD Lead Officer. Some areas also have a youth strategy which can support engagement by, and with, young people.

The Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) has shown a commitment to engaging children and young people through its Youth Strategy. By recognising the important contribution that young people make to communities, identifying good practice and involving young people in the planning and development of services which directly affect them, ACPOS hopes to meet the needs and expectations of the communities they serve. The Strategy sets out a series of overarching principles which will be applied to their engagement with young people, including:

*“The Scottish Police Service will, through the process of Community Planning, work with partner agencies, private sector and voluntary organisations and young people to deliver a service to their community, compatible with the needs of all.”*

Similarly, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services will soon publish a Youth Development Plan:

*“The plan represents a policy commitment to work with young people to improve the quality and range of services provided for young people by Fire and Rescue Services in Scotland.”*

*The Fire and Rescue Service have also developed a child and young persons fire education portal called “blaze aware”, designed around the 5-14 school curriculum, [www.infoscotland.com/blazeaware](http://www.infoscotland.com/blazeaware). More organisations, tools and information sources can be found in Annex C.*

**3.1.2 Resources** – Time, effort and commitment of resources are required to achieve worthwhile engagement, in particular in working with excluded and hard to reach groups. In addition to money, equipment and other physical resources, experienced staff with a prior knowledge of the group or area are a key resource. Partner organisations will have different resources to contribute, for example in information sources or access to particular groups. The voluntary sector and youthwork organisations are key sources of expertise and knowledge. Time and resources

*“Involving children and young people in the community planning process is essential if you want to plan services that truly reflect their needs. In doing so it is essential that planners recognise the importance of allocating adequate resources and time to make this happen, in particular resources needed to be targeted at those that traditionally have not had adequate means to have their voices heard.”*

Kathleen Marshall, Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland

need to be invested over a sustained period to build relationships and trust in order to achieve effective engagement and participation in the longer term. Resource implications are long term due to ongoing requirements for training and capacity building. Engagement activity is now relevant to a far wider group of professionals than it was in the past, and the time and resource implications of this should not be underestimated. It is recognised that decisions on resourcing community engagement activity are made against a background of financial pressure and competing priorities. However, there is evidence that engagement results in real benefits in terms of improved services and personal development for both the adults and children and young people involved.

**Volunteering:** The Scottish Executive's Volunteering Strategy defines volunteering as "the giving of time and energy through a third party, which can bring measurable benefits to the volunteer, individual beneficiaries, groups and organisations, communities, the environment and society at large. It is a choice undertaken of one's own free will, and is not motivated primarily for financial gain or for a wage or salary". Many of the forms of engagement described in this note constitute volunteering and good practice in volunteering should be followed, e.g. reimbursing all out-of-pocket expenses incurred, such as travel expenses and ensuring that children and young people are given information and support required in order to participate fully.

**3.1.3 Policy proofing** – It may be helpful to use an assessment tool to check that relevant groups have been taken in to account in the policy making process. The Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People is in the process of developing a tool for looking at decisions, policies, laws or practice and identifying and measuring their effect on children and young people's rights, more information is available on the Commissioner's website: [www.sccyp.org.uk/webpages/pr\\_single.php?article=&id=27](http://www.sccyp.org.uk/webpages/pr_single.php?article=&id=27). Partnerships may also choose to build in tailor-made systems to ensure diverse groups are included, for example in grant funding decisions or planning templates.

*"It's important for young people to all get their views heard."*

Sam, young person, 2005

*As part of Patient Focus and Public Involvement, Scottish Executive Health Department and NHSScotland use The Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment toolkit (EQIA) as a strategic document to help support consideration of equality and diversity issues in the design, development and delivery of new and re-designed policies and services across NHS Scotland. The toolkit covers Black and Minority Ethnic Communities (including Gypsy/Travellers and Refugees & Asylum Seekers), Women and Men, Religious/Faith Groups, disabled People, Older People, Children and Young People and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community, [www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/health/eqdiat-00.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/health/eqdiat-00.asp). More organisations, tools and information sources can be found in Annex C.*

**3.1.4 Culture change** – While we tend to think in terms of educating children and young people in the skills required to participate, in many cases it is the adults involved who need to acquire skills to engage more constructively. The move towards involving and empowering communities, and in particular children and young people, as part of mainstream work involves a significant cultural shift for many organisations, embedding new values and ways of working. Adults need to avoid making assumptions

in dealing with children and young people and to be confident enough to build open, honest relationships, based on mutual respect. In Highland (Example 2), experience of engaging with children and young people, including on the Integrated Children's Services

*"Young people need different things from adults and not many adults know what kids need."*

Young person, *What Community Planning is to young people*, Young Scot

Plan, has led key agencies to seek out youth involvement pro-actively through the supported youth participation mechanisms. This shift represents a significant opportunity for innovation, but consideration needs to be given to how this will be supported and sustained, both at a strategic level, in developing infrastructure and building organisational capacity, and with frontline staff in training and development programmes. Several universities and colleges provide training and offer qualifications in community learning and development and working with children and young people in particular.

*Communities Scotland's CeVe (Community Education Validation and Endorsement) endorses professional training in community learning and development. This includes the main professional qualifications for CLD, at graduate and post-graduate level, but also a range of courses for part-time workers and volunteers, some of which are youth work specific. This link gives more information about CeVe: [www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/cs\\_006467.hcsp](http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/cs_006467.hcsp). There are, however, many other sources of training and development. More organisations, tools and information sources can be found in Annex C.*

### 3.2 Tailoring your approach

Treating children and young people as a homogenous group won't work; for example, those with disabilities or black and minority ethnic groups may have additional needs. Younger children often rely on their parents or carers to represent their views, whereas young groups are able to represent their own viewpoint. The key is to start from the position of the children or young people involved, from their view of the world, whatever their age or ability. It is important to plan engagement properly in advance, to understand the issues for the group you are working with in order to build a constructive relationship. Experienced staff or people with existing relationships with young people can provide an insight and may already have established trust. Methods can then be designed so that the engagement is geared towards the interests, understanding and experience of those involved. Examples of tailored approaches are in developing the Sauchie Green Map (Example 8), the Snakes and Ladders game developed by Barnardo's (Example 10) and the use of drama in developing the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy for Dundee (Example 7).

*"...the things that they (young people) are talking about aren't just young people's issues but they are the issues that young people have concerns about for the whole city."*

Councillor Rev Ewan Aitken, Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council

There needs to be a range of ways of engaging, structures for continuous involvement as well as one-off events. There are benefits in consulting young people in their own area or at events that they are already involved in, for example fun days, through schools or youth clubs, but it is also important to recognise engagement that takes place alongside the adult population, as part of the mainstream. One option is to use existing structures/services rather than creating new ones, or to adapt mainstream structures, for example youth themed committee meetings.

*Edinburgh Youth Social Inclusion Partnership and Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council (EVOC) have developed a resource to support young people involved in group meetings such as management committees, youth forums, housing association groups, school councils and boards. **Bored Meetings** is available from EVOC on 0131 555 9124 – email: [jennyhaines@evoc.org.uk](mailto:jennyhaines@evoc.org.uk). More organisations, tools and information sources can be found in Annex C.*

Some particular points to bear in mind in designing engagement for children and young people:

- There are many competing demands on young people's time, incentives may be needed for them to be motivated, for example accreditation, social opportunities, remuneration, achieving quick wins on their priorities.
- Approaches can be fun, user friendly and interactive, for example using artwork, drama, music, video, photography, peer research, campaigning, fund raising, developing resources, etc. Texting and electronic voting systems can be particularly useful in rural areas where travel is a barrier.
- Young people need a range of information and communication channels. Information should be clear and jargon free, in relevant formats and languages. Body language is also an important form of communication in face to face engagement.
- Young people quite often want to speak to other young people rather than to adults, young people can act as interviewers to draw in views.

Children and young people grow up quickly, which creates challenges for continuing engagement. It is important not to engage repeatedly with the same group. In West Dunbartonshire the aim is to establish a 'rich dialogue' between public sector and voluntary organisations and young people, making links across different policies, mixing consultation with representative structures. A network of contacts gives a range of ways of disseminating information and access to young peoples views as a matter of routine, without the need to set up formal consultations.

**3.2.1 Monitoring and evaluation** – Systems should be in place to evaluate the impact of engagement on decision-making and policies but also to ensure that processes are being refined and improved to increase participation levels. Monitoring and evaluating approaches to identify the most effective mechanisms for engagement supports the change to a new way of working. To achieve real engagement with children and young people, it is important not to think just in terms of ticking boxes. However a self-assessment is a useful tool to determine whether the engagement is producing meaningful results and to suggest aspects which may need to be revised.

The monitoring and evaluation section in **Annex A** sets out some suggested questions based on a UNICEF checklist and the National Standards for Community Engagement can be used in evaluation. Links may also be made to evaluation processes such as the Quality Improvement Framework which sits alongside Integrated Children's Services Plans, aiming to develop a coherent and sustained approach by inter-agency children's services partnerships to raise quality across all services for children and young people.

**3.2.2 Involving children** – Particular consideration needs to be given to how best to engage with younger children. It may not be appropriate to use the same consultation methods for younger children as those used for older children and young people. However younger children are able to express views and comments and can provide useful insights to those who plan, commission and deliver services that affect them. It is important to develop good practice with children from early years. By involving children at an early age in discussions on minor issues, they become familiar with the concepts and develop the skills to engage more fully as they get older. While views should be sought directly from them where possible, advocates can help express children's views, particularly in difficult situations.

*"Children and young people know what they want. We are the best people to represent ourselves."*

Robert, young person, 2005

*This research carried out into children's and young people's experiences of advocacy support and participation in the Children's Hearings System includes information on what children and young people want from advocacy support: [www.childrenshearingscotland.gov.uk/pdf/review/advocacy%20research.pdf](http://www.childrenshearingscotland.gov.uk/pdf/review/advocacy%20research.pdf). More organisations, tools and information sources can be found in Annex C.*

There are a number of sources of advice on how to consult and engage with young children, for example on the Early Years pages of the NCB website at [www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk). Depending on circumstances and the issues being considered, bodies need to plan how best to listen to the views of young children, for example, Stirling Council has produced a guide to consulting with very young children and empowering them to participate effectively, to support staff in nurseries and early years establishments. A copy is available for a small charge from Linda Kinney – email: [kinneyl@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:kinneyl@stirling.gov.uk).

### **3.2.3 Reaching and involving excluded groups**

– The CPP should have an awareness of the communities of interest in its area and can further build a picture of the needs of children and young people in these communities, for example black and minority ethnic groups, gypsies, travellers and asylum seekers, those with physical or learning impairments, or those coping with drug abuse. Links with Social Work Services, the Children's Hearings System and others may be useful in this. It is important to be sensitive to particular interests and needs, including those of children and young people who are excluded or discriminated against in a range of ways. The key is to start from the child's or young person's perspective and think about the barriers to participation and how these might be overcome. For example, remuneration can help to tackle financial exclusion or taking the service out to where the young people are for territorial gangs or

*"It's about everyone deciding what happens in your town as it belongs to everyone."*

Young person, *What Community Planning is to young people*, Young Scot

street youths. It may be necessary to take the advice of specialist workers in approaching engagement with groups with particular needs for example, those with chaotic lives or in abuse situations or young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). It may require an additional investment, more innovative approaches and a longer time to build up the capacity of these groups to engage fully. Some organisations with expertise in dealing with hard-to-reach groups are listed in Annex B. YouthLink Scotland is also a good source of information on organisations with specialist experience.

**3.2.4 Supporting personal development** – The results of the engagement are vital: children and young people need to see changes as a result of their input. However, the experience of being involved is also important, supporting the personal development, enjoyment and the sense of well-being of those involved. Accredited training, for example through the Duke of Edinburgh Awards or the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) is a valuable form of personal development. Involvement in Community Planning can help to develop empowerment and a stronger sense of local identity among young people, a desire to have ownership of their own future. This can help to counteract disengagement as a result of lack of self belief and self confidence. North Ayrshire’s consultation with a group of young people with disabilities and their parents (Example 4) about current issues facing them in the transition to adulthood had the effect of empowering the young people, giving them the confidence to challenge ideas, identify what they wanted to do and what would help them achieve their aims.

**Youth work** is an education process which supports young people in realising their

*In supporting personal development in engagement, links may also be made with work under ‘Determined to Succeed’ [www.determinedtosucceed.co.uk](http://www.determinedtosucceed.co.uk) and with the ‘Curriculum for Excellence’: [www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/cerv-00.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/cerv-00.asp).  
More organisations, tools and information sources can be found in Annex C.*

potential and addressing life’s challenges critically and creatively. Youth work approaches can enable young people who might otherwise be alienated from support to get services they need. Links may be made with voluntary sector bodies engaged in youth work or a youth work approach may be taken by the Partnership/organisations itself.

**3.2.5 Managing expectations** – Children and young people may be less familiar with timescales and any limitations on an organisation’s ability to respond to their views. It is good practice to be clear about the potential for change in any engagement, and it may be necessary to manage the expectations of children and young people more carefully. Accurate information should be provided at regular intervals, including an honest assessment of the scope for change and feedback on action, highlighting how views have been taken into account. People are turned off if nothing appears to happen and they don’t know why.

*“We are having the right to say what we think and we’re having the opportunity to help you to work together to make Edinburgh a better place for young people.”  
Louise, young person, Youngedinburgh 2005*

Providing accurate information to children and young people can help generate a discussion that moves away from a 'wants' exercise to a dialogue in which young people share their perspective equally with professionals who are honest with them about expectations and limitations. There is a difficult balance to be struck between making children and young people aware of the constraints on public services and stifling motivation, raising expectations of what they should expect from public services but not to the point that they will be disappointed and not want to be involved in the future. As identified by Highland Council (Example 2), young people's agendas often relate to issues such as the need for more facilities, cheaper access to facilities and better transport. In many cases, these cannot be fixed in the short term – young people may have grown up before experiencing tangible benefits. Time may be a difficult concept for some groups and shorter term goals may be needed to maintain interest and motivation.

Equally, organisations need to understand that community engagement is a process and will take variable amounts of time, depending on the capacity and willingness of the group involved. There is a need to plan ahead to ensure that there is time to bring children and young people to a point where they can be involved effectively.

**3.2.6 Making connections with personal interests** – There are both positive and negative drivers to participation, and it is important to ensure that a range of methods is available to children and young people to make sure that their views can be fed into policy development. Like everyone else, children and young people have an interest in issues which have a direct impact on them. Engaging on an issue of general interest, for example in relation to new or improved leisure facilities, can be a way of establishing a contact that can be built on, as in South Lanarkshire Youth Partnership (Example 5) where bussing children and young people to a skate park resulted in representation on a transport forum.

**3.2.7 Avoiding tokenism** – Children and young people can identify tokenistic participation in the same way as other community groups. Where engagement is driven by a need to be seen to be consulting rather than genuine commitment to making changes, it is likely to have a detrimental effect.

*“To create a responsive service and strike the correct balance between the diverse groups within communities we serve requires that we listen to all concerns. It is therefore vitally important that we engage with young people to understand their concerns and address them appropriately.”*

David Strang, Chief Constable, Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary, President, ACPOS

### **3.3 A safe environment**

Children and young people are especially vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and other harmful outcomes. So, as well as the usual safeguards required when engaging with any group, additional safeguards are often required for this group in making sure that they are properly protected and kept safe.

**3.3.1 Child protection** – It is essential to ensure that all staff working with children and young people are suitably experienced and/or qualified as appropriate. There need to be robust child protection policies and procedures in place which staff clearly understand and comply with, and issues raised by children should be taken seriously and treated sensitively. The Children’s Charter and Framework for Standards on the Scottish Executive website (address below) provide the overarching framework for child protection.

Care should be taken that those working in what would be considered a child care position under the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003, are not disqualified from working with children. An enhanced disclosure check by Disclosure Scotland will confirm whether someone has been disqualified, in which case an organisation would be committing an offence if they employed them in a childcare position. Guidance on the Act can be found on the Scottish Executive website at [www.scotland.gov.uk/childprotection](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/childprotection). Having a disclosure check does not remove the need for organisations to have robust recruitment practices and sound child protection policies and procedures.

**3.3.2 Ethical standards** – High ethical standards must be maintained in order to protect and respect children and young people in gathering information to develop and evaluate responses to their needs. It is important that there is a clear process with the child/young person, and in many instances their parents, to ensure that they have understood what is involved and have given their consent to be involved or for information to be shared. However, the welfare of children is paramount, and information should be shared where there are child protection concerns.

## **Conclusion**

Community engagement is at the heart of Community Planning and is acknowledged by all to be a complex and challenging process. Children and Young People are an important part of our wider communities, as well as having specialist interests of their own. Many of the same challenges and principles apply in working with them as with other groups, with important additional considerations. It is widely agreed that there are significant benefits in involving children and young people in Community Planning but also that it requires commitment, resources and imagination to do so effectively.

## ANNEX A

### National Standards for Community Engagement

The following are some points to bear in mind in engaging with children and young people, under the headings of the National Standards for Community Engagement. A full copy of the Standards is available at:

[www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/cs\\_010771.hcsp](http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/cs_010771.hcsp)

**INVOLVEMENT:** *it is important to identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of the engagement*

- Which are the relevant groups – children, young people, parents and carers, youth workers, teachers?
- Are there representative bodies such as student or pupil councils, youth councils or other youth forums that should be involved?
- How can we engage children and young people about the whole range of services they use (e.g. housing, transport, employment, community safety issues) and not just dedicated services for their use?

**SUPPORT:** *it is important to identify and overcome any barriers to involvement – timing, costs, addressing equalities issues*

- Who are the people with the right skills and experience to make sure that children and young people are properly involved? Should voluntary organisations and specialised youth workers be involved, for example to draw in expertise in working with excluded and hard to reach groups?
- What practical issues should we take into account, for example availability and accessibility of transport, communication support, cultural/language issues, the safety of children? Are there potential financial barriers to involvement and how can we overcome them?
- Can we offer some sort of reward for involvement – for example with accreditation, an award?

**PLANNING:** *it is important to gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to design the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken*

- What are the activities of the partnership which have the most impact on children and young people – are their views being taken into account?
- Could children and young people's views be systematically built into wider decision-making and planning processes at critical points? Can we move towards involving children and young people as partners in strategic decision-making?
- Does the partnership offer a mix of formal and informal opportunities for children and young people to make their views heard?

- What is the purpose of the engagement and how will the outputs be used. What is the appropriate mechanism for the engagement, are existing mechanisms appropriate or is something new needed?
- What resources are required and who can supply them?

**METHODS:** *it is important to identify and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose*

- What sort of methods can make engagement fun, relevant and appropriate, for example, involving high levels of participation, can you use images or technology?
- What models of practice are available that would provide a structure for the engagement, e.g. appreciative enquiry, open space?
- What methods are most appropriate to reach excluded or hard-to-reach groups?
- What are the most appropriate methods for the age group? The particular needs of children need to be taken into account.

**WORKING TOGETHER:** *It is important to use clear procedures that enable participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently*

- How can we work in partnership with young people at a range of levels:
  - in local community planning?
  - in planning at partnership-wide level?
  - in all our key strategic partnerships?
  - in service planning at organisational level?
- What are the major cross-cutting planning exercises for the partnership – how are children and young people’s views reflected in these?
- How and what can all partners from public, voluntary and private sectors contribute to the process?
- Are there existing community engagement events and mechanisms where children and young people’s interests should be covered?

**SHARING INFORMATION:** *it is important to ensure that necessary information is communicated between the participants*

- Are there mechanisms in place that allow children and young people to raise issues proactively at a central point in the partnership, rather than having to find the right individual to speak to in each organisation? Do we tell them how they can get involved?
- Can we provide ‘young person friendly’ information such as:
  - papers and recommendations for discussion in plain English?
  - young person’s versions of policy documents and action plans?

- Is there a need to manage the expectations of those involved? Children and young people may be less familiar with timescales and any limitations on an organisation's ability to respond.
- Are there any sensitivities or restrictions on the information that should be passed on about individual cases?

**WORKING WITH OTHERS:** *it is important to work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement*

- Are there places where children and young people already gather, offering an opportunity for contact, for example sports clubs?
- Can the local Dialogue Youth and Young Scot Unit provide support for the involvement of children and young people in Community Planning?
- Have links been made with Connect Youth and the Scottish Youth Parliament to seek their support?
- Are there potential links with the Youth Development workers in Volunteering Centres?
- What is the link with the local Community Learning and Development Partnership?

**IMPROVEMENT:** *it is important to actively develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants*

- How can we find out about existing good practice and share experience?
- Is there a need for capacity building and skills development both for children and young people and for the adults involved?
- Would training for partnerships support culture change and promote real involvement?
- How can the partnership promote mutual support, for example if some members lack confidence in this area?

**FEEDBACK:** *it is important to feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected*

- How can we demonstrate the effect that the engagement has had?
- Are we giving regular accurate information at each stage of the process?
- Is there a need to produce special versions of existing material in a format that is more accessible to children and young people?

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION:** *it is important to monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purposes and meets the national standards for community engagement.*

The following suggested questions are based on a UNICEF checklist. Indicators included in the Monitoring and Evaluation Standard in the National Standards for Community Engagement can also be used to evaluate progress.

- Does the activity put the child or young person first?
- What steps have been taken to prevent any form of discrimination?
- How have the most disadvantaged and marginalised children and young people been provided with opportunities to participate and are their voices heard?
- What evidence is there that children and young people are actively participating?
- How have children and young people made a difference in decision-making processes?
- How are children and young people kept up to date on progress?
- What are the views of children and young people on the process?
- Is communication in a form and language that children and young people understand?
- What has changed as a result of the engagement?

## ANNEX B – Examples

### 1. Young Angus Citizens' Panel

Successful planning initiatives for the wider community can be built on by recognising that children and young people react positively when asked directly for their input, as happened in Angus:

Launched in autumn 2003, the **Young Angus Citizens' Panel** is designed to give 12 to 16 year olds a say on issues that are important to them. Like the main panel, set up three years previously, it is representative of the young people of Angus in terms of age, sex, etc.

**Activity:** Publicised through the region's Dialogue Youth website, postcard drops and notice boards in schools, potential members were asked to fill in a short application form – which can also be downloaded from the region's website. Members are sent short surveys, at regular intervals, covering Community Planning themes of interest to children and young people such as safety and the economy.

#### Lessons:

- The initial idea of including an older group (18 to 25 year olds) was soon dropped due to feedback which revealed that this age group felt they had more in common with the main panel, to which they were added.
- Notices in libraries, newspaper ads and press releases were less successful than the school-based approach which attracted the younger members, so other initiatives were employed to consult with the older age group.
- Lengthy surveys using numerous sheets of paper and involving complicated methodology were dropped in favour of shorter versions taking up no more than two sides of A4.
- Monitoring of the adult survey showed that it took a number of years for the concept to be taken on board as a useful tool by other departments within the authority. The junior survey has followed a similar timeline with issues raised – such as bullying and provision of water in schools – starting to be pushed forward now.
- Recent survey questions regarding the under-age purchasing of spray paints, for example, have helped to focus testing for the authority's trading standards team.
- As respondents became accustomed to participation, their comments have guided development of the initiative. The early surveys were printed in full colour on high quality paper but feedback revealed that people were happier with a mono version on lower grade paper – and that some would prefer it sent in electronic format – these changes have resulted in better value for money.
- Projects like this, with a set age group, mean that new children and young people must be attracted to join the panel as older members move on. This involves continued effort in advertising the project and encouraging new panellists to respond.

For more information contact: David Richards, Angus Council – [richardsd@angus.gov.uk](mailto:richardsd@angus.gov.uk), Telephone 01307 473789.

## 2. Integrated Children's Services Planning – Highland

Highland was a pilot area for **Integrated Children's Services Planning** through the Council's Joint Committee on Children and Young People.

Highland's CPP – the Wellbeing Alliance – has a strong commitment to engagement with children and young people, core mechanisms include Highland Youth Voice, youth forums and pupil council structures.

**Activity:** Children and young people were involved throughout the planning process. This ranged from meetings with specialist groups such as looked after young people and young people with additional support needs, to contact with key intermediaries such as the children's rights officer, youth development staff and voluntary organisations including Barnardo's, NCH Scotland, Who Cares? Young Carers Project and Highland Children's Forum. Discussions were also held with the Executive of Highland Youth Voice, including a session at their annual summer conference. School and community learning staff, social work and health practitioners also take on direct and supporting roles.

### Lessons:

- Involving children and young people in a meaningful way in a high level planning process is challenging.
- The Community Planning ethos, local joint planning structures across Highland and the commitment of staff resources are essential pre-requisites.
- The Integrated Children's Services Plan encompasses Highland's strategic direction for youth work and engagement of young people. This needs to be translated for more focused dialogue and marketing with young people, development staff and practitioners.
- A real culture shift has occurred in Highland. Key agencies now pro-actively seek out youth involvement through the supported youth participation mechanisms – for example, direct consultation on the development of the Sexual Health Strategy.
- There is a necessity to manage expectations. Young people's agendas often relate to issues such as the need for more facilities, cheaper access to facilities and better transport. In many cases, these cannot be fixed in the short term – young people may have grown up before experiencing tangible benefits.
- There has also been significant progress in addressing smaller or more local issues directly relevant to children and young people through a system of Children's Champions. These are Elected Members who can engage directly with local children and young people and respond to issues they raise – for example, school meals, facilities and transport.

To find out more about Highland's Integrated Children's Service Strategy, contact Pablo Mascarenhas (Highland Council) at [pablo.mascarenhas@highland.gov.uk](mailto:pablo.mascarenhas@highland.gov.uk) or Colin Macaulay (Highland Council) at [colin.macaulay@highland.gov.uk](mailto:colin.macaulay@highland.gov.uk).

**3. Involving children and young people in strategic level decision-making – Youngedinburgh** is the city's ground-breaking youth services strategy. It reflects a commitment by the City of Edinburgh Council and its Community Planning partners – including young people – to the improvement of services for all young people aged 11 to 21 years.

**Activity:** Young people are central to the development of Youngedinburgh through their participation in the Viewfinder 2 study – 5,728 young people completed questionnaires – and through ongoing involvement in planning and prioritising of objectives. A key feature of the approach taken is the recognition of young people as equal partners with decision-makers such as elected councillors, officials from the City of Edinburgh Council and Community Planning partners – Lothian and Borders Police, NHS Lothian, Edinburgh Leisure, Edinburgh Young Scot, the voluntary sector and many others.

The Youth Services Advisory Committee (YSAC) which oversees the strategic direction of Youngedinburgh is a unique committee of the Council in that it comprises cross-party political representation, nominated representatives from partner agencies and an equal representation of young people's representatives. Young people play a full part in strategic level decisions on the overall content and focus of the strategy including budget allocations and emerging priorities. YSAC is also recognised as a strategic partnership within the Edinburgh Partnership – the body with overall responsibility for Community Planning in the city.

In January 2005, an historic full City of Edinburgh Council meeting was held on an agenda set by young people – a first for a Scottish council. Young people's representatives delivered presentations to councillors and took part in discussions on an equal basis with councillors. A similar meeting will be held each year.

#### **Lessons:**

Much has been achieved since the launch of Youngedinburgh in 2003. For example dedicated youth programmes have been extended at leisure centres, support and advice has been enhanced for young tenants, £50,000 has been awarded to student councils in schools. In 2005, a new young people's consumer advocacy service was established and new opportunities for work experience placements were created.

The culture of the city with regard to young people is changing. They are now routinely being asked for their views where they were never consulted before, from proposed changes in the health service to arrangements for Community Planning locally.

There remains a great deal to be done and the Youngedinburgh strategy 2006-10 sets out plans over the next four years. Commitments are deliberately aspirational – aiming to see real changes in the lives of real young people and, as a result, for the city as a whole.

For further information see [www.youngedinburgh.org](http://www.youngedinburgh.org).

**4. North Ayrshire Council Social Services and Playback – Transition into Adulthood.** A consultation process actively involving and empowering young people with disabilities in freely expressing their views, opinions, hopes and fears for the future.

**Transition into Adulthood** – All young people, irrespective of their abilities or circumstances find the transition into adulthood a demanding and emotional experience. It needs to be recognised that this transitional period is far more difficult and emotionally demanding for a young disabled person and their parents/carers as they encounter additional decisions and barriers that generally limit their choices to live an independent adult life.

**Activity:** Based on their experience in consulting and supporting young people with disabilities and their parents/carers, Playback was invited by North Ayrshire Social Services to consult with a group of young people with disabilities and their parents about current issues facing them in the transition into adulthood stage. It was agreed that Playback should develop a programme of consultation that actively involved young people in developing, through media, a visual expression of their hopes and concerns for the future. A video record of the consultation process and a presentation video were produced. Both parents and young people had the opportunity to express their views, concerns and experiences directly to camera, with young people being encouraged and supported to develop individual scenes and scenarios based on their experiences and reflecting their key concerns.

Overall the broad aims of the consultation were:

- To provide opportunities for parents and young people with disabilities to freely express their views and opinions
- To identify and highlight the key areas/issues of concern in the transition service provision
- To provide information to inform the development/improvement of future social service provision in the transition to adulthood services and the Children's Services Plan.

#### **Lessons:**

The core message that emerged from the young people's discussion related to Person Centred Planning. It was evident that they wanted to be seen, respected, valued and supported as an individual. Service provision and the care package needs to be appropriate to their individual needs, not just about basics such as feeding but about the whole person: their physical, emotional and social well-being. The findings suggest that the young people need and want service providers to adopt a holistic approach to planning, provision and delivery of services.

The most positive outcome from this process was how empowered the young people became. They really engaged in the tasks, felt at ease in both group and individual activities, were able to express and debate issues openly and were confident enough to challenge ideas. They were able to praise their own achievements and to critically evaluate their own contribution. The process has enabled them to isolate their main concerns, what it is they want to do, and what will help them achieve it.

## 5. South Lanarkshire Youth Partnership – Developing Leisure Facilities

Engaging with children and young people regarding activities in which they keenly participate, particularly in popular leisure pursuits, can be a good way of introducing them to engagement on wider issues.

Through South Lanarkshire's own Youth Learning Services a partnership – **South Lanarkshire Youth Partnership** – was formed to look at what young people want from their community. This group consults through the local Young Scot website and Active Break Workers – who go into schools to talk with young people during break times, including looked after children and young gypsy travellers.

**Activity:** Three years ago the message coming through was that children and young people wanted to have leisure facilities – primarily skate parks – closer to home, avoiding the need for difficult and expensive travel to those outwith their rural area. As a result, three skate parks were developed – in Blantyre, Carluke and East Kilbride – each employing different mechanisms and with varying outcomes.

### Lessons:

- In Blantyre, young people were involved from the start in planning the facility, how it would look, what would be attractive to their peers, the lighting and its wider use for BMX bikes and in-line skates.
- The Carluke facility saw young people raise almost £25,000 themselves towards the facility through events such as band nights. They formulated and made their own bids to partners, making the case that if they had a skate park of their own, perhaps they wouldn't be perceived as a nuisance in neighbourhood areas.
- In East Kilbride, meanwhile, the children and young people were not as involved in the development of their skate park, which has seen a lower volume of use than expected and is now undergoing redevelopment. Learning from this, young people have been more involved in the planning and reconstruction of the park, with the aim that the end result will be what they really want from the facility, providing better value.
- The RADWORX Extreme Sports project was piloted in 2004 by South Lanarkshire Youth Learning Services, supported by Blantyre and North Hamilton SIP. It focuses around the newly established skate parks and offers free lessons and use of equipment at a variety of levels in skateboarding, BMXing and in-line skating for children and young people. The six week summer programme includes special events and professional demonstrations and last year attracted over 400 youngsters. This has led to training opportunities for some of the young people involved.
- *“The skate parks are busy all the time. And when the parks are not there, they're missed.”* During the reconstruction of the East Kilbride facility, young people were bussed to other skate parks. This has led to young people being represented on the Council's transport forum, children and young people being able to access the dial-a-bus service and, through listening to their views, the Council providing bus services for young people involved in other leisure activities.

For further information contact South Lanarkshire Council on 01698-457392.

## 6. Argyll & Bute Young Scot Dialogue Youth Unit

More remote rural areas often require a strategic but less mainstream approach, joining up with a variety of partners in innovative ways to cover the wider geographical and cultural spread.

The **Argyll & Bute Young Scot Dialogue Youth Unit** provides a focal point for youth issues in the area and currently supports over 10,000 young people throughout the region.

**Activity:** The Project Co-ordinator is based in Lochgilphead and supports six bases – in Oban, Campbeltown, Rothesay, Islay, Helensburgh and Dunoon. Each base has its own youth worker actively involved in recruiting young people, supporting youth groups, and marketing and promoting Young Scot and Dialogue Youth. The Unit ensures that priorities identified by children and young people get a fair hearing within the council and the CPP and is used to inform how services are delivered by the Council and other partner agencies. It also aims to increase the number of young people who are actively consulted on decisions in their local communities, using the Young Scot website, posters, youth forum, video conferencing and text messaging.

### Lessons:

Action plans and activity have centred on the main areas of leisure, health, transport, lifelong learning, employment and housing:

- The annual conference and report informs all parties of the real value of involving children and young people. The 2002 conference was both a critical view of the project and highly entertaining for young delegates and agency attendees. Council and health service representatives led feedback sessions on the key actions which the project delivered in its first year including discounts at council swimming pools, discounted air travel with Loganair and an increase in confidential health advice through the Young Scot website and health drop-ins.
- It can be helpful in simple, practical ways. With assistance from Trading Standards, NHS Argyll and other partners, the Argyll & Bute Young Scot Licensee Pack was introduced in 2003, and hand delivered to licensees by members of Strathclyde Police. This aimed to increase awareness of the Argyll & Bute Young Scot card as proof of age. A follow-up survey found that a fifth of card holders did use their card for this purpose.
- Broadening the use of technology promotes inclusion. With many remote areas and islands in Argyll & Bute, facilities such as video conferencing have been used to include more children and young people in, for example, youth forum meetings.
- At an International Rural Network Conference, held in Inverness, Young Scot volunteers led a workshop presentation looking at ways young people can help contribute to the sustainability of rural communities.

[www.dialogueyouth.org/whatson/index.asp?a=article&id=5&articleID=118&sectionID=28](http://www.dialogueyouth.org/whatson/index.asp?a=article&id=5&articleID=118&sectionID=28)

## 7. Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Development in Dundee

Under the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004, Local Authorities and Chief Constables have a duty to consult young people in the development of Antisocial Behaviour Strategies.

Approaches involving young people talking to each other can highlight areas that may not register when young people discuss community issues with older adults.

As part of **Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Development in Dundee**, for example, Tayside Police, the local authority and other interested parties ran a parallel youth conference to their own group discussions.

**Activity:** The young people joined the main event to hear various speakers' input then broke off to hold their own discussions in a plenary session.

- During their event, the young people conceived and acted out a related drama which they filmed for a DVD. This was then shown to the delegates at the main conference later in the day. This proved a very effective way of involving young people and getting their perspectives.
- The children and young people who took part were among those who youth workers were in contact with, so the organisers knew they would be 'hitting the appropriate market'.
- The involvement which the young people had in both the plenary session and the dramatic production was seen to have quite an impact on the other partners as it was both powerful and positive, and has been viewed as an approach which should be repeated.

For further information on the initiative, contact the Communities Department at Dundee City Council at [www.dundecity.gov.uk](http://www.dundecity.gov.uk)

## 8. Sauchie Community Green Map

Many areas have used innovative approaches in an effort to include children and young people often viewed as hard to reach.

The **Sauchie Community Green Map** is a community mapping initiative that promotes sustainable development at a grassroots level, linking the common ground that people share to produce a life map of the natural and cultural environment through the eyes of all members of its community.

**Activity:** Sauchie, in Clackmannanshire, was a pilot Green Map project in Scotland, initiated by the Clackmannanshire Voluntary Services Council (CVSC) and sponsored through Challenge Unlimited. This charity, working to promote active citizenship in the young people of Clackmannanshire, is a partnership between Central Scotland Police, Clackmannanshire Council Children and Youth team, CSVC and young local residents.

With a focus on 'What works?' rather than 'What's the problem?', a series of workshops, one-to-one interviews and questionnaires sought to find out the positives about living in Sauchie with a view to producing a living map of the area. Young people were paired with retired residents as they discussed the area's existing assets, limitations and future possibilities across the generations while teenage girls from the local Dialogue Youth Oor Toon Project took part in a workshop covering similar issues.

### Lessons:

A number of positives involving children and young people have already come from the initiative:

- young people, and the community as a whole, enjoyed the appreciative inquiry and small workshop style of engagement, particularly as they perceived an end result useful to the whole community – the Map!
- both young and old enjoyed the inter-generational dialogue which brought common issues to light. The community learning and development approach makes it an ideal tool for engaging children and young people in Community Planning
- production of the Green Map creates a tangible outcome for children and young people, which can be used to validate their community and help them express their hopes for future development
- the potential for linking local issues to a wider global initiative via the internet is an accessible and favoured option for children and young people
- it broadened the net for involvement to Sauchie's two schools, both of whom are currently involved in the Eco Schools award project
- in conjunction with Forth Valley Police, the project is including work around community safety and young people
- children and young people can become involved as the facilitators, not just the objects of research – for example, interviews were carried out by participants in Duke of Edinburgh Award schemes, as part of their challenge.

For more information contact Enid Trevett (CVS Clackmannanshire) at [Enid.Trevett@cvsclacks.org.uk](mailto:Enid.Trevett@cvsclacks.org.uk) and for further details on Green Mapping in general, log on to [www.greenmap.org](http://www.greenmap.org). To find out more about Eco Schools, access the website at [www.eco-schools.org.uk](http://www.eco-schools.org.uk).

## 9. Greater Easterhouse YouthBank

**YouthBank** is a youth participation model which builds on the skills, experience and knowledge of young people. All aspects of YouthBank are youth led; locally, regionally, nationally and at UK level.

**Activity:** In the spring of 2004, the Greater Easterhouse Social Inclusion Partnership manager attended a Scottish YouthBank networking meeting run by YouthLink Scotland and recognised the potential of YouthBank as an appropriate method of empowering young people in their area. During the spring and summer the Social Inclusion Partnership sourced funding to engage support staff and create the grant funding budget.

A part-time Youthbank support officer was recruited in December 2004 and along with the Youthbank development officer from YouthLink Scotland set about the recruitment and training of young people.

The Scottish YouthBank training event in January 2005 was used as a springboard to develop their action plan, to agree criteria and application processes.

Twelve young grant makers have met on a weekly basis to work towards their net grant award meeting. The young people design the application forms, set the decision-making process, assess the applications and inform the applicants of the outcome (including those who have not been successful). £3,000 has been distributed to eleven groups and 345 young people have directly benefited.

### Lessons:

Youthbank is one element of the Greater Easterhouse empowerment strategy and the young people, local youth projects and community are all direct beneficiaries of the process. It impressed the local councillor and has led to three other areas of Glasgow applying to be licensed as Youthbanks. Young people involved in the YouthBank have become empowered decision makers effecting change and bringing resources in their local communities.

Through YouthBank training, young people have challenged their own attitudes and values to develop a strong understanding of equality and diversity, resulting in further funds being secured to diversify their grant scheme and encourage more applications. Ongoing recruitment is essential to the efficacy of any YouthBank. Knowledge gained through participation has increased confidence and encouraged further participation in wider community life. Members have gone from participants in training to facilitators of training for new recruits.

## 10. Barnardo's – Snakes and Ladders Game

The game creates a framework for decision-making for children and young people, tailored to the issue they are working on.

An experiential training package, based on the old favourite Snakes and Ladders, has become a widely used tool for direct work with children and young people including promoting their active involvement in staff training.

**Activity:** The package consists of a 10ft square board, based on the snakes and ladders format, with young people recreating the board to reflect the real life issues/ experiences in their lives, e.g. life as a young carer. Positive experiences will lead players up a ladder while the negative experiences will result in players having to slide down the snakes. Once the young people are happy that the board reflects their real life experiences the training is then facilitated for a relevant agency, e.g. Social Work Department with staff playing the game.

The board also includes features such as an exclusion corner, where participants in the game can be sent at any time to reflect on feelings associated with exclusion. This fun, visual tool, which has been rolled out across the UK over the last four years, has been part of nearly 500 training sessions providing agencies working with an opportunity to learn directly from young people, identify gaps in service, explore attitudes and discover how professional practice could be improved. Children and young people are also involved in delivering snakes and ladders training sessions for their peers in a variety of community settings.

### Lessons:

The Snakes and Ladders work has highlighted the need for agencies to understand the issues that young people identify as being important and has created opportunities for young people to play an active role in service/policy development. A key learning point has been the importance of effective communication in promoting the active involvement of children and young people.

For more information on the Snakes and Ladders package, contact Selwyn McCausland on 0141-222-4700 or by email – [selwyn.mccausland@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:selwyn.mccausland@barnardos.org.uk)

## 11. Dialogue Youth Health – East Renfrewshire

In East Renfrewshire, youth participation is viewed as a health improvement action and contributes to the work the local authority does in its role as a Health Improvement organisation.

The Patient Focus Public Involvement agenda of the NHS involves a duty on the NHS to seek the public's views from the earliest stages using modern means of communication and involvement to ensure the widest range of individuals and communities affected by change are reached.

**Activity:** In East Renfrewshire, Dialogue Youth is represented on the Children and Young People's Health Improvement group which is linked directly to the health theme of the Community Plan, the Joint Health Improvement Plan and the Children's Services Plan. Using the overarching aim of these plans as a starting point, workers from the Local Health Board, Social Work, Youth Services Team and Community Schools formed a Dialogue Youth Health network to actively encourage and support youth involvement in a variety of settings.

The network commissioned a Health Needs Assessment that was carried out in all secondary schools using the local Dialogue Youth website. The aim was to find a systematic way of reviewing the health issues facing young people and produce information that would lead to agreed priorities and allocation of resources amongst Community Planning partners. The needs assessment assisted partners to identify improvement actions, for young people, based on up to date survey results.

The Dialogue Youth Health network also commissioned external consultants to carry out a Patient Focus Public Involvement workshop which 70 young people participated in. This forum provided a place where young people had the opportunity to prioritise their health needs and highlight other issues in relation to access to health services, information and advice.

### Lessons:

The use of on-line surveys, via the Dialogue Youth infrastructure, provided a method that young people were comfortable with and associated with confidentiality, which led to a high quality of information being produced. The survey was also made available on paper and young people participated in the survey during PSE classes. The results were collated by the Dialogue Youth resource base and distributed amongst partners.

This first step was a clear demonstration of East Renfrewshire Council and partner organisations' commitment to listen to young people, as stated in their Community Learning and Development strategy.

A significant outcome was the call from young people to have two places 'ring-fenced' for youth representatives on the Community Health Care Partnership Public Partnership Forum. As it was recognised that this would provide young people with an opportunity to influence structures for youth involvement and presented a perfect opportunity for youth participation to be a fundamental activity of the Community Health Care Partnership.

For the local Dialogue Youth contact in your area: [www.dialogueyouth.org/contacts](http://www.dialogueyouth.org/contacts)

## **ANNEX C – Organisations and Resources**

### **Barnardo's**

The UK's leading children's charity, Barnardo's supports 100,000 children and their families through 361 services in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The organisation believes that all children and young people have a fundamental right to be a part of communities, groups and activities which enrich them and works in both urban and rural communities with local people, groups and organisations. This enables the whole community, working in partnership, to identify a neighbourhood that needs help, what has to be done and how change will be achieved. Barnardo's website includes resources, research and publications.

Weblink: [www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)

### **Careers Scotland**

Provides career planning services, underpinned by strategies in inclusion, employability and enterprise, to people of all ages. Young people using their products and services are encouraged to take ownership of their career planning and decision making and to develop skills that will enable them to move forward with confidence along their chosen career paths.

Careers Scotland works closely with Community Learning and Development Partnerships to develop and implement Community Guidance strategies and action plans that are aligned to or integrated with Community Learning and Development strategies. This supports the engagement and participation of young people and supports individual, organisational and community capacity building.

Weblink: [www.careers-scotland.org.uk](http://www.careers-scotland.org.uk)

### **Carnegie Trust**

The Carnegie UK Trust is an independent, not-for-profit foundation that supports research, public policy analysis and grass roots social action initiatives, dedicated to achieving practical results in people's lives.

**Carnegie Young People Initiative (CYPI)**, the Trust's programmes for young people, seek to promote their involvement in public decision-making at community and national levels.

The **Measuring the Magic** report examines the different ways in which involving young people in decision making can be measured and evaluated. It recommends a number of different ways of effectively evaluating work in a variety of settings. As a result of this report, Carnegie YPI is now planning the production of an evaluation toolkit.

Weblink: [www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk](http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk)

## Children 1st

Children 1st works to give every child in Scotland a safe and secure childhood. Children 1st has 33 local services across Scotland, many of whom work directly in helping children and young people to participate in decision making and be aware of their rights.

Weblink: [www.children1st.org.uk](http://www.children1st.org.uk)

## Children in Scotland

Children in Scotland is Scotland's national agency for organisations and professionals working with and for children, young people and their families. It exists to identify and promote the interests of children and their families and to ensure that policies, services and other provisions are of the highest possible quality and are able to meet the needs of a diverse society. The participation of children and young people in decision-making is a central area of work for the organisation which has been involved in a variety of projects including **Citizenship in Practice**. This two-year project aimed to promote and increase the participation of children and young people with disabilities in decision-making with a particular focus on those with learning disabilities. Results are available through the publication: **Consulting with children and young people on accessibility strategies: a good practice guide**. More details on this and information on Children in Scotland's Participation Map and Participation Network, are available on the Children in Scotland website.

Weblink: [www.childreninscotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk)

## Children's Commissioner

Kathleen Marshall was appointed as Scotland's first Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP) in April 2004. Her job is to make sure that people listen when children and young people have important things to say about their lives. This might include people in schools, parliament and law courts. In 1991, our country signed up to an international agreement – the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is a set of promises to do certain things to make life better for children and young people. SCCYP's job is to make sure those promises are kept. The Commissioner has a legal duty to keep reminding everyone of the promises and can also set up an investigation if she thinks the promises are not being kept. If the Commissioner believes that a public, private or voluntary organisation is not keeping the promises made to children and young people, she can require them to attend a public investigation, examine them under oath and force them to produce documents.

Naturally, she prefers to work in partnership with people and will generally only use those powers when people do not co-operate; but it is important that they are there. Another way the Commissioner might use those powers is if an issue has been raised by children and young people themselves. If this happens, she might want to make it clear how seriously she takes it by setting up a formal investigation to raise the profile of the issue and perhaps give children and young people an opportunity to ask questions.

The Commissioner for Children and Young People has completed a **consultation with more than 16,000 children and young people** across Scotland. A summary of the results of the consultation is available on the SCYPP website and a breakdown by local authority area, age, gender is available from the Commissioner's office.

Weblink: [www.sccyp.org.uk](http://www.sccyp.org.uk)

## Children's Parliament

The Children's Parliament aims to provide sustainable and meaningful opportunities for children of 14 and under to engage in local, national and international democratic processes. The Children's Parliament has several inter-related goals:

- to allow children to develop their self-confidence, self-awareness and self-esteem and to create opportunities for them to meet and give their views on what matters to them and what is happening in the world around them;
- to develop and run specific projects and events that demonstrate ways in which the rights of the child, as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, can be practically implemented;
- to encourage opportunities for children to participate in local, national and international forums and decision making processes; and
- to help adults understand the meaning of children's rights and citizenship and enable them to deliver them in their day-to-day lives and professional practice.

Weblink: [www.childrensparliament.org.uk](http://www.childrensparliament.org.uk)

## Communities Scotland

Communities Scotland's aim is to work with others to ensure decent housing and strong communities across Scotland. The Communities Scotland website includes reference materials and '**how-to**' guides to support community engagement and community regeneration. The How to Guide to Community Engagement includes links to a range of publications, techniques and case studies. **The National Standards for Community Engagement** offer a practical tool to help improve the experience of all participants in Community Engagement, to achieve the highest quality of process and results.

**Learning Connections**, part of the Regeneration Division of Communities Scotland, includes a Community Engagement Team which works with communities to help them take decisions and develop solutions for the regeneration of their local areas. It also includes a Community Learning and Development (CLD) Team which supports the implementation of Scottish Executive policy on CLD, through development of good practice in CLD, for example through a programme of support to CLD partnerships to assist implementation of **Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities**, supporting development of training in CLD, and promoting the use of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCOF). **Illuminating Practice – Case Studies in Community Learning and Development** was commissioned by Learning Connections. The document includes specific case studies relating to work with young people.

Weblink: [www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk](http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk)

## **Connect Youth**

Connect Youth is an inclusive Network of organisations who work with young people in the public and voluntary sectors. Delegated youthwork practitioners, known as connect Youth Co-ordinators represent each organisation on the Network. There is currently a wide range of field workers, policy officers and managers involved. The purpose of the Connect Youth Network is to share practice, debate and develop strategy and influence policy in relation to youth participation and the empowerment of young people in Scotland. The Network also aims to engage with young people themselves at local and national levels, bringing them together and supporting them to address the issues which affect their lives.

Weblink: [www.YouthLink.co.uk/connectyouth](http://www.YouthLink.co.uk/connectyouth)

## **Dialogue Youth**

A partnership between Young Scot, COSLA, local authorities, the Scottish Executive and young people, Dialogue Youth is designed to give young people a real and effective say in all the services that affect them at a local level. Dialogue Youth works with young people, local organisations and council departments to gather information and carry out research into issues affecting them. The findings are then used to inform services in the future, which means that young people play a real part in the Community Planning process. Young people are also involved in the planning and management of Dialogue Youth locally, and there is a strong link with local youth forums, pupil councils and local members of the Scottish Youth Parliament.

Weblink: [www.dialogueyouth.org](http://www.dialogueyouth.org)

## **Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE)**

By collating, analysing and publishing evidence from its evaluations, HMIE informs parents, schools, colleges and other providers of education, and Scottish Ministers about standards and quality in all areas of education including, for instance, how schools work with the wider community. The HMIE website includes examples of good practice drawn from inspections, including in the area of Community Learning and Development.

**Citizenship in Youthwork (2003)** – This report examines changing conceptions of citizenship, the relationship between local authorities and the voluntary sector and how services are being delivered within new planning frameworks, including Community Planning. It identifies key success factors and areas for improvement as well as key challenges for youthwork in the new policy environment.

Weblink: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk)

## Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS)

LTS Scotland encourages the development of an open, participatory ethos in education for citizenship, so that schools and early education settings can function as active learning communities. Education for citizenship is intended to motivate young people to be active and responsible members of their local, national and global communities. This involves building bridges between schools or early years settings and their communities to help children and young people develop knowledge and understanding of, and respect and care for, the wider world. The LTS website offers examples of good practice and ideas to encourage pupil participation, including **Primary and Secondary School Council toolkits**.

Weblink: [www.ltscotland.org.uk/citizenship/practice/participation.asp](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/citizenship/practice/participation.asp)

## NCH Scotland

NCH Scotland supports over 7,000 of the most vulnerable and difficult to reach children and young people in our society, and their families, in 63 projects across Scotland so that they have the opportunity to reach their full potential, and to make the best of their lives. They are committed to promoting the engagement and empowerment of children and young people in society, and a significant aspect of their work across Scotland is ensuring that children and young people have a say in key areas affecting their lives, including the development and delivery of children's services.

Weblink: [www.nch.org.uk](http://www.nch.org.uk)

## The National Youth Agency

The National Youth Agency (NYA) does not operate in Scotland, but there are a number of resources including case studies and publications available from its website which might prove useful. One of its initiatives, **Hear by Right**, offers tried and tested standards for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors. These can be used, along with children and young people, to map current participation practice, create a strategic plan for improvement and then identify what has changed as a result of the activity.

**Act by Right** is a participation skills programme, written by young people, for young people. It allows children and young people to lead their own initiatives to effect change in their communities.

Weblink: [www.nya.org.uk](http://www.nya.org.uk)

## Participation Works

Participation Works is an online gateway for children and young people's participation issues including policy, practice, networks resources and links to other sources of information.

Weblink: [www.participationworks.org.uk/Home/tabid/62/Default.aspx](http://www.participationworks.org.uk/Home/tabid/62/Default.aspx)

## The Prince's Trust

The Prince's Trust's top priority is to make sure young people are confident, independent and capable of making a positive contribution to their communities. Increasingly, the difficulties many young people face are complex and interconnected, requiring a similarly complex combination of assessment, advice, personal development, education, training, work and financial help. The Trust works with four key target groups: unemployed young people, young people underachieving in education, young people leaving care and young offenders and ex-offenders.

Weblink: [www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk)

## Save the Children

Save the Children fights for children in the UK and around the world who suffer from poverty, disease, injustice and violence. For the past 40 years, the organisation has been working in Scotland to help children, their families and communities to tackle the effects of poverty and inequality, helping young people build confidence, learn new skills and get actively involved in, for example, its **Community Partners Programme**. This initiative has used a rights based approach to target children and young people in disadvantaged urban and rural areas to help them explore their community, decide on what they want to change and develop activities to make it happen. Current issues include dangerous roads, lack of play areas and their local environment. The project has produced **A DIY Guide to Improving Your Community** available from the Save the Children website. Other resources from Save the Children:

**So you want to consult with children? Re:action toolkit** – This is a practical guide from Save the Children on how to consult with children and young people on policy-related issues. Written for community workers, youth workers, teachers, local authority workers, facilitators and other organisations and individuals working with children and young people. It's also aimed at children and young people who may themselves be involved in organising a consultation exercise.

**Recruitment Pack: Involving children and young people in selection of staff.** Produced by Save the Children and Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights, this pack is for anyone who works with, or in the interests of, children and young people and wants to involve children and young people in recruitment processes.

**Children are service users too** – A guide which aims to help organisations improve the way in which children's and young people's needs are taken into account in service design and delivery. The guide aims to help organisations to focus on children and young people as service users, and includes practical ideas on how to make this happen.

Weblink: [www.savethechildren.org.uk/scotland](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/scotland)

## Scottish Community Development Centre

The Scottish Community Development Centre – the designated National Development Centre for community development in Scotland. The SCDC works:

With communities to:

- support community groups to set their own agenda
- strengthen local action
- build community capacity.

With Agencies and Partnerships to:

- achieve effective community participation
- assess community needs and issues
- plan and evaluate practice
- enable staff to work effectively with communities.

On Policy By

- researching issues and disseminating lessons
- contributing to government working groups and committees, e.g. Community Planning Task Force, National Advisory Group on Mental Health and Wellbeing, Community Learning and Development Task Group, Active Communities Forum.

Weblink: [www.scdc.org.uk/index.asp](http://www.scdc.org.uk/index.asp)

## Scottish Youth Parliament

Launched in Edinburgh in 1999, the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) represents young people aged 14-25 across Scotland. 200 elected MSYPs work locally and nationally to voice the opinions of their peers, ensuring that all of Scotland's youth have the power to affect change and have their say. SYP works together with National and Local Government, voluntary organisations and many groups Scotland-wide to ensure they do the best they can for Scotland's young people. As well as activating young people and encouraging local participation, MSYPs meet nationally around four times a year, to debate issues, make policy and propose innovative ideas and solutions to Scotland's challenges.

Following the success of the SYP's campaign document **Louder than Words** launched in late 2005, the SYP is currently developing a youth manifesto – **Getting the Message Right** (GTMR) – to influence the 2007 elections. It aims to stir debate, make the views of young people heard in an innovative way, and in consultation with young people across Scotland will give them a conduit for their voicing their views and provide a catalyst for change.

Weblink: [www.scottishyouthparliament.org.uk](http://www.scottishyouthparliament.org.uk)

## Young Scot

Young Scot offers incentives, information and opportunities to people aged 12 to 26 to help them make informed choices, play a part in their communities, take advantage of opportunities open to them and become confident citizens.

The organisation does this in lots of different ways, including the Young Scot card, website, information handbooks, magazines and phone lines. It also works in partnership with local authorities as part of the Dialogue Youth initiative.

Young Scot's consultation toolkit, **Loud + Clear**, offers both national Young Scot and local Dialogue Youth units a menu of online and offline consultation mechanisms to use when consulting with young people. These include online surveys, discussion boards, voting, e-petitions, event registration and more.

Weblink: [www.youngscot.org](http://www.youngscot.org)

## YouthLink Scotland

YouthLink Scotland is the National Youth Work Agency. YouthLink Scotland and its member organisations help 40,000 youth workers across Scotland to deliver a wide range of quality services to over 300,000 young people, to improve Scottish youthwork services and unlock the potential of young people nationwide. YouthLink Scotland can also provide advice on and contacts for voluntary organisations that have links with particular groups of young people, including harder to reach groups. The commitment given by Peter Peacock to include children and young people in guidance on Community Planning was given in response to an amendment laid on behalf of YouthLink during the Stage 3 Debate of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

**Your Place of Mine** is a research study exploring young people's participation in Community Planning, carried out by Dundee University in partnership with YouthLink Scotland, funded by Carnegie UK Trust. The focus of the research was on whether Community Planning Partners want the involvement of young people and address the consequences of such involvement and whether young people want to be involved with formal planning structures. The research offers a discussion of models of participation and an overview of literature on citizenship in a Community Planning context as well as a geographical comparison of partners' priorities, factors that influence young people's involvement in Community Planning and two case studies taking an in-depth look at the perceptions and views of participants.

**The Being Young in Scotland Research in 2005** was a Scotland-wide survey of young people aged 11 to 25 years. The survey aimed to explore what it means to be young in Scotland and to generate information on young people – on their interests and opportunities, their attitudes and aspirations and the barriers and challenges they face – in order to inform the development of policy. MORI Scotland surveyed 3,178 young people throughout Scotland. The survey partners were the Scottish Executive Education Department, the Big Lottery Fund, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People and Young Scot. For further information access [www.youthlink.co.uk](http://www.youthlink.co.uk)



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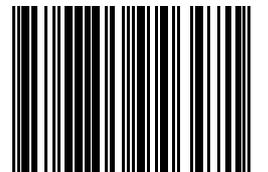
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