

Community Opinions

Aims:

This exercise helps the group to record their findings in a visual and effective way. This is useful not only as a reference point for the group, but also as a marketing tool highlighting big issues in the community!

Time: 1 hour

Equipment: Pens, paper, glue and other art materials.

Method:

- As a group, the young people should stick together some sheets of paper and then try to draw a rough version of their local area - it doesn't have to be a work of art, but it should be colourful so that it stands out for the group and for the community members that see it. (You can always print a map of your area from the web and blow it up on a photocopier if the group feel their arts skills are truly lacking!). For ease, draw on roads, and include landmarks so that the map is easily recognisable to those in your area.
- Ask them to draw on any specific places (schools, youth groups, religious centres) they have visited, in the appropriate places.
- On a separate piece of paper, draw a number of big colourful arrows.
- Ask each group member to write brief bullet points summarising the concerns raised by people in each place that they visited. These should be written on the arrows.
- Then they should stick these arrows to the map, pointing to the appropriate place. You might also want to mark on places or facilities that local people identified as being particularly good or bad.
- In your group, stand back and look at the finished map again.
- Ask participants to read out what is written. Are there any common themes or areas of concern? What are the different issues identified by the different groups?
- This can be used as a starting point to help the group choose their issues and start planning.

This is a great planning tool to help generate discussion among your group and will help to point out the common needs in the community.

It could also allow other residents in your area to see some of the big issues across the whole locality. Perhaps the group could run a presentation evening at a local community or faith centre. This would raise awareness of some of the issues and promote the group and its work.

If money/resources allow, why not reproduce your map in the form of a flyer or poster to raise the profile of community concerns?

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS:

