Prove it!

Measuring the effect of neighbourhood renewal on local people

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Printed by RAP on recycled paper

ISBN: 1 899407 28 6

Who is behind this handbook?

Groundwork

Groundwork is a leading environmental regeneration charity putting the theory behind sustainable development into practice. We work with local people, local authorities and businesses to bring about economic and social regeneration by improving the local environment.

From small community projects to major national programmes, Groundwork believes in using the environment as a way of engaging and motivating local people to improve their quality of life. Our activities reach over a third of the population and we are increasingly working with the most deprived and disadvantaged groups within society. These activities join together the themes of people, places and prosperity and range from landscaping former coal tips to cross-community youth projects in Northern Ireland.

Groundwork is a federation of 43 local Trusts based across the UK from Tyneside to South Wales, Northern Ireland to Hackney.

Specific projects include:

- Reclaiming derelict and neglected land for new community uses
- Working with young people on projects designed to reduce nuisance behaviour in high-crime neighbourhoods
- Helping small businesses improve their environmental performance through environmental 'health-checks' and consultancy
- Providing training and jobs for long-term unemployed people as part of the government's New Deal strategy
- Working with schoolchildren on a range of environmental initiatives such as energy efficiency schemes and practical landscaping exercises.

Groundwork involves 80,000 adults and over 160,000 schoolchildren in sustainable development projects each year. Over 1 million schoolchildren have benefited from Groundwork's Schools for Sustainability programmes.

Groundwork's activities are funded by 100 local authorities, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR), the Welsh Assembly, Northern Ireland Office, private sector supporters and other agencies such as the European Union and the Millennium Commission.

The New Economics Foundation (NEF)

The New Economics Foundation (NEF) was founded in 1986 and has become one of the UK's leading research, training and policy organisations. Its mission is to put people and the environment at the centre of economic thinking.

NEF works in the UK and internationally with a wide range of partners, and at all levels from the village hall to United Nations Plaza. It has 25 full-time staff based at its London office, and 2,000 community activists and supporters around the country.

NEF is committed to developing practical methodologies for indicators that work, and promotes the use of innovative and participative new indicators in the corporate, voluntary and public sectors. We have been working with community-based indicators for the last five years. Other areas of work include community finance, local money flows, participative democracy, corporate accountability and the global economy.

Barclays PLC

The overriding objective of the Barclays community programme is to achieve real and lasting mutual benefit both to the community and to Barclays. We aim to build successful partnerships with local communities and charitable groups which produce lasting and tangible benefits.

Barclays SiteSavers recognises that the way in which the process of transforming derelict or underused land is tackled is equally as important as the end result. Involving local communities in all stages Is vital not only for the success of the project, but also in acting as a spur to tackle other pressing issues.

Our other major sponsorship schemes include Barclays New Futures, which makes £1 million available each year in cash and resources for school/community partnership projects, and Barclays Stage Partners, which helps top quality productions to tour regional theatres nation-wide.

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Our thanks to. . .

Our partners:

Katie Martin, Dawn Peace and Chris Bestwick from Groundwork UK, Lucy Mason, Head of Community Affairs, Barclays PLC, and the Groundwork officers (past and present) for the pilot projects: Chloe Aspinall, Mandy Brown, Gaye Calvin, Clare Dykes, Dave Frame, Peter Herbelet, Joanne Hendren, Val Holden, Tony Lund, Ally McEvoy, Bernie McEwan, Fiona Mather, Mick Moreton, Nigel Potter, Ruth Pryor, Emma Ramet, Steve Roberts, Fiona Scapens, Lee Turner, Paul Turrell, David Urion and Carl Wilson

Particular thanks to the old friends above who are now Proving It as far afield as Kenya and Canada. . ...

All the community participants who have generously donated their time both to the make the pilot projects happen, and to measure their impact. In particular we thank those who contributed to the workshop that shaped the entire project, or who welcomed touring NEF members on their visits to far-flung Groundwork Trusts: Carol and John Ashden, Wayne Blagdon, Sarah Cox, Alex Fairweather, Michael Helene, Anne Lyons, Cath Lister, Stuart Neale, Becky Russell, Karen Smith, Linda Southam and Karen Weisberger.

A host of people whose combined talents, from publicity to proof-reading and researching to reviewing have made Prove It! come to life:
Andrea Buckley, Mark Bunting, Graham Duxbury, Martin Fodor, Simon Forrester, Stuart Hashagen, Marcus Hellquist, Markus Larson, Lindsey Lavender, Bea Malleson, Peter North, John Salkeld, Tricia Stewart, Rachel Thackray, Lucinda Roberts, Alice McQuillan, Pete Wilde, and Mandy Wilson.

The Steering Group for advice: Alan Brown, Ian Christie, Gabriel Chanan, Tony Hams, Nina Kowalska, John Seargeant, Marilyn Taylor and Ken Webster.

And all the people who will in the future go and melt in the sun, stand in the rain or clamber up yet another flight of stairs to talk to people about things that really matter.

Contents

Foreword

Groundwork aims to make a difference to the lives of thousands of people living in some of the UK's poorest communities.

We have set ourselves ambitious targets. Being able to measure whether or not we hit these is crucial for us, for the communities affected by our activities and for our partners and supporters.

However, it is no longer enough to simply concentrate on measuring those things that are more easily quantifiable, like the number of trees planted, new facilities created and hectares of land improved. Attention has been switched to finding ways to measure the effects such projects have on local people, for the projects' long term success relies on their active participation and involvement.

But how can we quantify the impact we have had on someone's life?

Like many organisations, Groundwork has struggled to capture accurately the true worth of its work with local people. Through support from Barclays PLC, and in partnership with the New Economics Foundation, the method detailed in this handbook is our contribution to this on-going debate.

With the launch of the Government's national strategy for neighbourhood renewal, finding a solution to this problem has become increasingly important. The strategy offers two very clear lessons that have been learned from years of regeneration practice.

Firstly, it recognises that, if we are going to improve the prospects of deprived neighbourhoods, we have to begin by improving the prospects of the people that live there.

Secondly, it states that local people should be in the driving seat, making the decisions about their own neighbourhoods.

Attempts to improve deprived areas should be judged not just on whether houses are better kept, streets are cleaner and spaces greener, but on how people living in these areas feel and act. We need to be able to measure whether their attitude has changed, whether they have more or less confidence, greater or fewer skills and whether we have helped them achieve their hopes and aspirations.

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We hope the methodology we have developed, and which we will continue to develop, will provide a useful starting point for anyone wanting, like us, to make a real and lasting difference to deprived communities across the UK.

Tony Hawkhead
Chief Executive, Groundwork UK

Introduction

1: Introduction

What this handbook is and who it is for

'I know that half my advertising works, but I don't know which half', complained the first Lord Leverhulme, the soap baron. Neighbourhood improvement projects are similar. We know that some of them work, but we don't know which ones. Hence the cry, 'Prove it!'

Proof needs measurement, which can come in the form of indicators – tools that measure, simplify and communicate important issues. The temptation is always to measure what is measurable, rather than what is important. So measures tend to cover two aspects of projects. First there are physical changes: the number of houses built or trees planted. Second there are activities: the number of training places provided or the number of jobs created.

Not measured are the effects on people who have taken part in these projects and on the community of which they are part. Yet this is what is really important. It matters because improving people's quality of life is the aim of most projects. It also matters because unless people feel that they benefit, they will not support these and future projects.

This handbook describes a method for measuring the effect of community projects on local people, on the relationships between them and on their quality of life. The method involves local people in both choosing the indicators and collecting data. It has been tested in 16 areas of the country as part of Groundwork's Barclays SiteSavers programme. This handbook is written by the New Economics Foundation (NEF), who acted as consultants for the project.

The interest the project has simulated so far leads us to believe that there will be great demand outside Groundwork for this approach. (It is because we are eager to meet this demand that we are producing this handbook before the Barclays SiteSavers measurement is complete). We had an enthusiastic response from some 400 regeneration practitioners from around England and Wales, to whom we presented the method in June 1999. This is what they said they liked about it:

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1. Being participative increases the community's sense that it owns the measures
2. The indicators validate social as opposed to physical outcomes
3. Participative measurement becomes part of the project, in that it contributes to the building of trust
4. Flexibility and adaptability
5. Useful in educating policymakers and funders
6. Will help to stimulate action.

We also asked where they thought it might be useful. Their suggestions included:

- sectors such as health and transport
- initiatives such as Local Agenda 21, New Deal, Best Value.

Other comments were that it could be used to assess:

- Partnership working
- The effectiveness of a local council
- Commercial projects.

People also thought that it could provide evidence for the need to provide revenue support to develop community capacity for an initiative before 'squandering' capital monies.

There are three audiences for this handbook:

- Project officers from agencies and from local government, like those from the 16 Groundwork Trusts in the pilot. They are likely to lead and manage measurement.
- Citizens, who are likely to be invited to take part in such measurement.
- Decision-makers, who are likely to commission such measurement and to use the results.

The contents

The next chapter, chapter two, describes the Barclays SiteSavers pilots. The three reasons for providing this early on are that it:

- Provides a case study, so you can see this approach at work
- Explains the context of the project. You can then decide what to adapt to fit your context
- It also shows you where our experience is greatest. We learned more in some areas than in others.

The rest of the main part of the handbook is divided between 'Deciding' and 'Doing'. 'Deciding' has three chapters on the main issues on which to decide when measurement is being considered:

Chapter 3. Whether to evaluate at all
Chapter 4. Whether to involve local people and how far to take participation
Chapter 5. What to measure: quality of life, or something else.

'Doing' is relevant once the decision on whether and how to proceed has been taken. It is far more practical. The chapter titles, which should be self-explanatory, are:
Chapter 6. 'Getting started'
Chapter 7. 'Agreeing issues'
Chapter 8. 'Choosing indicators'
Chapter 9. 'Gathering information'
Chapter 10. 'Communicating progress'
Chapter 11. 'Taking action'.

The titles in 'Doing' are the same as in NEF's handbook on local indicators of sustainability, 'Communities Count!' We have repeated them because 'Communities Count!' contains more detail on how to work with local people than we have room for here. (Communities Count! will be available from NEF's web-site from July 2000. http://www.neweconomics.org)

Finally there are three appendices. The first provides background on the concept of 'social capital'. This is the academic version of trust. Academic research shows the many ways in which gains in trust lead to improvements in quality of life. The second gives a long list of possible indicators for those who want neither to adopt the Barclays SiteSavers indicators wholesale, nor to start from scratch. The third contains the questionnaires used in the Barclays SiteSavers surveys, and a sample form of guidance for interviewers.

A word about language

There are several different terms related to measuring:

- 'Measurement' is the general act of measuring something, for example with a survey
- An 'indicator' provides a measure of something. 'People leaving their keys with neighbours' is an indicator or measure of trust
- 'Data' is information about the value of an indicator. Most data for indicators on the effects on people of community projects, such as that on keys above, will come from asking people, from surveys
- 'Monitoring' is a formal process of measurement during a project. It is likely to cover the choice of indicators and arrangements for gathering data
- 'Evaluation' is a formal process of measurement at the end of a project. It is likely to cover reviewing and learning from data

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- One piece of jargon in this area is 'PM and E', which stands for 'Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation'. 'Participatory' means that local people are involved, although how far they are involved varies from project to project.

2: Measuring the impact of the Barclays SiteSavers programme in Groundwork

Introduction

At any one time Groundwork is involved in over 3,000 projects. The section below describes one of them, to give a feel for the sort of projects that were being measured. Next is a description of Barclays SiteSavers. This is the programme for which Groundwork wanted to measure the impact. The final part of this chapter tells how that was done.

Groundwork at work: the Gellideg Estate, Merthyr Tydfil

The Gellideg Estate, known locally as the Swansea Road Estate, lies on a prominent hillside to the west of Merthyr Tydfil and has some 600 mainly terraced houses and 12 blocks of flats.

For years the estate has suffered from high levels of unemployment, ill health and high crime rates. Police records from 1993 showed that 38 per cent of all car crime and 35 per cent of all criminal damage in Merthyr Tydfil took place on the Gellideg Estate.

Youth nuisance was repeatedly identified as the major problem facing residents on the estate, closely followed by a lack of communal facilities and the vandalised and run-down appearance of the area.

To try and address these issues and stop the rot, a number of residents got together with the help of Groundwork Merthyr & Rhondda Cynon Taff to form the Gellideg Foundation Group. An estate-wide environment strategy was drawn up in consultation with other residents on the estate and the group secured funding through the European Regional Development Fund to start carrying out the work identified.

The central shopping area has been transformed from a dreary parade of rundown properties into a vibrant central zone with traffic calming measures and lively mosaics produced by children from Gellideg Junior School. Heol Bryn Padell, a street which is home to 82 children, now has a safe play area where once quad and trial bikes used to tear up the grass. A contaminated sand pit at the end of Heol Parc Maen has been converted into a toddlers' play area designed and decorated by residents.

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The local newspaper, the Merthyr Express, now carries a weekly column advertising the range of activities taking place in Gellideg. Volunteers have stepped forward to offer football training sessions for local youngsters. The Foundation Group's weekly meetings are well attended, with other residents wanting to get involved.

The next major project is to build a new community centre for the people of Gellideg. The Foundation Group has commissioned a feasibility study for the centre as part of a five-year plan to improve facilities on the estate.

The success of the initiative is clearly apparent to those living and working on the estate. Of the 450 council properties in Gellideg, only 10 are void, well below the national average. According to South Wales Police, total crime on the housing estate has fallen by 34 per cent. The number of burglaries and thefts from cars has been halved.

To make sure the good work continues, the Gellideg Foundation Group has recently applied for charitable status. Colette Griffiths, Chair of the Group, says, 'Before there was no community spirit, a total lack of motivation to improve our estate or any facilities. With the financial assistance from Europe and the support and involvement of Groundwork, working with the people of Gellideg, we have managed to turn the estate around.'

Barclays SiteSavers

Barclays SiteSavers is managed nationally by Groundwork and delivered through a partnership with two other leading environmental organisations - the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and the Wildlife Trusts. It was created to transform derelict and redundant land on deprived estates in urban and rural areas throughout Britain. The programme was launched in response to a 1995 MORI poll which found that 71 per cent of people believed that derelict land reduces the quality of life. Asked how this land could be improved, two out of the three most popular answers were the creation of recreation or play spaces. The survey also showed overwhelming support for the involvement of local people in the regeneration process.

Since its launch in 1995, over 200 community groups have received Barclays SiteSavers awards for projects that seek to transform derelict and under-used land into new community leisure and recreation facilities. The scheme has involved some 30,000 adults and young people from urban and rural areas across the UK and has released over 348 hectares of land back into community use. It has provided a means for people both to improve the quality of their local environment and to develop a wide range of new skills, enabling them to go on to tackle other issues of local concern.

The 1999 Barclays SiteSavers programme was redesigned in line with the evolving regeneration agenda. As well as environmental action, it focused on three objectives:

- Sustainable development
- Participation and skills
- Inclusion.

The main aims of the 1999 programme were to:

- Involve local people in the process, improving their sense of ownership and galvanising action
- Explore and develop the potential contributions of participants, building skills and capacities
- Develop wider local level strategic partnerships with other voluntary, public and private sector organisations
- Enhance participants' understanding of how the physical transformation of land can result in greater social and economic regeneration
- Develop the capacities of Groundwork staff as well as members of the community
- Develop new ways of measuring the impact of the projects.

Measuring the impact of Barclays SiteSavers

Over the last three years, each Barclays SiteSavers project has collated quantitative and anecdotal evidence of its impact on communities and the environment. However, the methods used have not been sufficient to establish the full social, economic and environmental benefits. This has restricted the learning potential of the scheme.

To overcome this, Barclays PLC and Groundwork commissioned the New Economics Foundation (NEF) to work with Groundwork Trusts and local communities to develop sustainable impact measurements. These were trialled on 16 of the 66 projects selected to receive funding from Barclays SiteSavers in 1999.

Staff from the pilot Trusts, together with community representatives from some of the pilot areas, met in early 1999 to choose the indicators. In May and June the first set of surveys were conducted, to collect information on the 'baseline' position at the start of the projects. Over 1000 questionnaires were sent to a market researcher for analysis. The second set of surveys, to gauge the effect of projects, are due in May and June 2000, a year after the first set.

Deciding

3: Whether to measure

Measuring the impacts of projects offers several benefits. Different benefits will appeal to different people. The first two benefits are:

- **Demonstrating value for money**
  This is of course especially important for funders.

- **Accounting for how resources have been used**
  This covers time as well as money. This too is important for funders, but it is also important for the community which benefits to see that resources devoted to it have been used wisely.

The remaining benefits are likely to increase the more local people are involved. The justification for involving local people is in the next chapter.

- **Understanding how a project has done**
  Did it achieve what we hoped? Did it produce benefits (or disbenefits) that we didn't expect? Knowing more about what happened is an aid to learning and to identifying good practice for wider dissemination. Furthermore, calculating achievements can be a powerful motivation. For example, community workers at Groundwork West Cumbria felt that measuring boosted their morale, because they could see what the project had achieved beyond the physical output.

- **Understanding the wider context of a project**
  For example, it helped young people who had been involved in measuring a community project in Manchester to think about changes in the quality of life on their estate.

- **Building community capacity**
  Firstly, measuring develops practical skills such as doing surveys, interviewing people, and analysing information. Secondly, it encourages people to reflect on and learn from their experiences.

- **Networking**
  Measuring encourages project staff to get feedback from local people on a project. Someone from Groundwork Camden got good ideas for the project and made valuable contacts while conducting a survey.

If you want these benefits and decide to measure, you need to face and overcome three challenges:

1. Some people in your organisation and elsewhere may be hostile to measuring. It may seem like policing or a way of highlighting the weak parts of their projects. There are three things you can do in response. First, involve them, so that measuring feels like something they do, not something that is done to them. Second, decide which of the benefits listed above are most important to them. Put them into your own words, with examples from your own experience. Third, but more long-term, create a climate in which mistakes are seen as opportunities to learn, not reasons for blame.

2. Measuring requires time and money. You need to find some resources from the project budget or elsewhere. People may need convincing. As in the previous point, use the benefits listed above to sell the idea to them.

3. It is hard to attribute changes in the quality of life of a local area to a single project. Suppose that the setting up of a community garden project is followed by more people becoming actively involved in taking action on local issues. This increase in involvement might be the result of the community project, but it might also be due to the media, other projects and programmes, or the arrival in the area of several families with commitment and enthusiasm. Overcoming this challenge has two features. Firstly, carefully choose the projects and/or programmes to be evaluated. (More on this in chapter 6). Secondly, try to understand what may be influencing changes apart from your activities.

4: Whether to involve local people

What is good evaluation?

In measuring the impact of the Barclays SiteSavers programme, the indicators have been chosen and the data gathered by a mixture of local Groundwork staff and local people. Market researchers have **not** been involved in selection and gathering, but have assisted in analysis of the data.

This chapter justifies that approach. It does so because the conventional view is that evaluation should be objective, and therefore carried out by outsiders. We feel that this is outweighed by the advantages of using local people. First, measurement is likely to be better as a result. Secondly, the measuring becomes part of the overall community involvement and increases the impact of the project. These points are spelt out in the next two sections. We accept, though, that the effect of local involvement is not always for the good. We look at possible pitfalls in the final section.

Local people can improve measurement

The first way in which local people can improve the measurement is through the choice of indicators. The aim of this handbook is to provide a method to measure the effect on local people of neighbourhood improvement projects. The more that local people and people who know local people well are involved in choosing indicators, the more those indicators will reflect the impacts that local people think are important.

Next comes data collection. One of the most reliable data sets used by the UK Government as a headline indicator of sustainable development has been put together by hundreds of amateur bird watchers over 30 years. This is because local people have an advantage over researchers: they understand local circumstances better. Outsiders may simply not record much of what is going on, and misunderstand the significance of it.

A crime survey undertaken by local schoolchildren in Merthyr Tydfil in 1996 was recognised as more reliable than the local police records. The reason was that people were more prepared to tell them the truth.[ii]

Local people may be more willing to take time and trouble. One of the Groundwork Trusts found that young people started by saying that everything was fine, but that after a while their real feelings started to emerge. A professional market researcher allowing ten minutes per interview wouldn't have got past that initial response.

Finally, there are the skills needed to interpret data. Writer Margaret Wheatley explains this in her book, 'Leadership and the New Science', in a chapter called 'The Participative Nature of the Universe'. 'In the traditional model', she says, 'we leave the interpretation of information to senior or expert people. Although they may be aware, to some extent, that they are interpreting the data, choosing some aspects of it, and ignoring others, few have been aware of how much potential data they lose through acts of observation. A few people, charged with interpreting the data, are, in fact, observing very few of the potentialities contained within that data.'

The effect on the project

Evaluations of community projects that are done to the community, not by the community, can easily reduce the overall impact of the project. This may be due to questionnaire fatigue, suspicion of outsiders or lack of timely feedback. It is especially likely in deprived neighbourhoods that may well already have experienced such treatment. Such evaluation often does feel like policing. A member of staff at Groundwork summarised the situation by saying, 'The history of evaluation is the history of fear.'

Conversely, there is growing evidence that the act of measuring, done correctly, can itself contribute to the aims of the project. Most of the benefits of measurement listed in the last chapter increase if the measurement is participative. People enjoy choosing indicators, gathering data and arguing over the results in the pub. Most of the people who came to the launch of one of the Groundwork projects were people who had been surveyed. The survey had acted as awareness raiser as well as information gatherer. Another survey, on the Colshaw estate in Wilmslow, got people more interested in the project than standard consultation would have done, according to the project officer.

Local involvement also raises awareness in another way. If outside evaluators are used, they are given their brief and they go away and fulfil it. If local people are involved, much more thought has to be given to how the surveys will be done. This helps make people aware of the processes of participation, an often neglected area. One member of staff at a local Groundwork said, 'Even the landscape architects are talking about process now!'

The pitfalls of local involvement

At the regional briefings, there were several worries that local involvement might lead to bias. The comments included:

- Local indicators should not be set by local pressure groups
- Danger of the loudest voice
- People may fill in what you want to hear
- Danger of excessive influence by powerful stakeholders
- Danger of lack of influence of weak stakeholders.

In our advice on how to do the surveys (see chapter 9) we suggest how these pitfalls can be avoided to some extent. We do not believe that they can be overcome completely. It is very hard to stop someone who is telling you what they think you want to hear. That may be more likely when a local person is doing the interviewing. We also believe that these disadvantages are far outweighed by the advantages.

Finally, be honest about local involvement. Don't trumpet your indicators project as 'community owned' if you chose all the indicators and showed them to residents over a cup of tea.

5: What to measure

What are the options for measurement?

You are interested in measuring and demonstrating how regeneration projects affect local communities. There are three aspects that can be measured:

- **Inputs** refer to money and time (resources) spent by the project on different activities intended to achieve a particular goal. For example, time spent to foster the ability of community group workers to raise funds.

- **Outputs** refer to the project activities (some call them deliverables) carried out with the resources. This would include community group workers going through training to foster their ability to raise funds.

- **Outcomes** refer to the impacts or effects of the project activities. Quality matters as well as quantity – not just how much training was there, but also, how good was it? Measuring outcomes would mean the effect of the training on community workers. How far has their ability and confidence to raise funds increased?

Measuring outcomes

Measuring outcomes is the most meaningful exercise if we are interested in how far the goals of a project have been achieved or how long-lasting the difference will be. However, it is at the same time the most challenging one.

Example: outcomes of building a local park with a playground

A local Tenants Association decided to build a new play area for children, including a little garden with a seating area. The garden was situated next to two housing blocks in a densely populated area in the London Borough of Camden (Barrington Court Garden).

The work was carried out with Groundwork Camden. Members of the Tenant Association and local residents participated actively in project planning and physical work. The facility is now in use.

The easiest measures are the number of hours put into the project (input). Or the amount of people using the garden (output). But measuring the difference that the garden makes (outcome) is less easy. It involves, for example, asking people whether they feel less isolated and more proud of their neighbourhood. This takes time and skill, but without this information it is hard to say that the project is a success or how it could be improved.

The following diagram sums up the definitions, strengths and challenges of measuring the different stages in a project.

	Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes
Definition	Resources (money, time) used for achieving particular aims	Project activities (deliverables) carried out in order to achieve aims e.g. a community garden	The effect or impact of the project activities
Measuring	How much resource has been spent on activities aimed at achieving this goal?	What activities have been carried out in order to achieve the aims? How have they been carried out – good/bad practice?	What has been the impact of the project activities? How far have aims been achieved?
Features	• Easy to measure, can be measured early in project life • Less meaningful in terms of project aims	• Easy to measure later, or at the end of a project • Fairly meaningful regarding project aims	• Most directly related to project aims • Impacts on people take time. Lots of them tend to happen after the lifetime of a project • The impact of a local project can be influenced by external factors

What sort of outcomes?

It is hard to know whether long distance runners protect themselves from heart disease in old age – or bring on stiff joints. Some outcomes take a long time to emerge. So usually we measure something that we can see sooner, like their resting heart rate. Community projects also have different consequences over time, as this community insulation scheme in Glasgow shows.

Example of consequences over time

A reduction in dampness
↓
Fewer children sick and off school
↓
Mothers spending less time tending their children
↓
More mothers able to take part-time jobs
↓
More income
↓
Better food
↓
Healthier children
↓
and so on...

What sort of outcomes do we want to measure? There are two criteria worth following most closely:

1. The outcomes should be visible at the end of the project or soon after. Once a project is completed, most organisations are under pressure to move on to the next one. It often isn't practical to evaluate several years later. Even if it was, the ability to see longer-term results is offset by the increase in the number of factors that could account for changes.

2. They should show people working together so that the project is sustainable and will produce benefits for years to come, even if the agency or group responsible has moved on.

Here are two examples to help us understand the type of outcomes that meet these criteria. The first is one of the Barclays SiteSavers projects.

Whelar Street Croft

Residents of terraces backing onto a 'croft' open courtyard in Openshaw, Manchester, were suffering a weekly assault on their homes through attempted burglaries, joy riding, dumping and youth nuisance. The neighbours also didn't know each other, adding to the climate of fear and isolation.

After witnessing a Barclays SiteSavers project elsewhere in Openshaw, three residents decided to take action and persuaded other residents of the croft to form an action

group. Twelve months on, the group had changed the courtyard into a secure community garden, cutting off the access to burglars and joy riders. Residents now hold keys and have drawn up agreements over behaviour within the communal space. Hanging baskets and other personal additions are in evidence, but, most importantly, there has not been a single successful burglary in the six months since the courtyard scheme was put in place.

As a result of the network created, residents have set up a home watch scheme and 'phone round each other if they hear and see suspicious behaviour. When going on holiday, residents also trust neighbours with keys and possessions. The action group is still expanding in numbers.

The second example is reported by a consultancy called Comedia which was studying arts projects.

Batley Bands Coop

'Batley Bands Coop had inspired young people to help develop similar opportunities for other people in the town. Forming a band had been a struggle; having reclaimed their self-esteem, they were fired up to fight back on behalf of the town. Batley had become a place where they had the opportunity, as someone put it, "to live with their dreams".' [iv]

Two tangible results from this project were that the proportion of people on the estate feeling safe from crime rose from 56 per cent to 67 per cent, and that there was a dramatic fall in council spending on vandalism.

Both projects had significant results in relation to crime and safety. What makes them sustainable, however, is people working together: the action group in the first example and the young people's band in the second. In both cases, people got together during the project, satisfying the first criterion as well.

These are just two examples. Is it generally true that if people work together there are continuing benefits? Fortunately, there is a lot of research that we can draw upon. Furthermore there is evidence that an organisation like Groundwork makes an important, often unrecorded, impact on the factors that enable people to work together. These factors are collectively known as 'social capital' and they are a special focus for measuring impacts because they often get missed.

Social capital

Robert Putnam, one of the gurus of this subject, explains the concept: 'By 'social capital' I mean features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives.' Below, these features are defined. The 'features of social life' normally include reciprocity, so that is also covered.

Networks and connections

Networks are groups of people linked either by strong ties (as between friends) or by weak ties (as between acquaintances).

Trust

Trust is the expectation that other members of a community will be honest and co-operative.

Norms

Norms cover standards of behaviour, sanctions for breaking those standards and shared aims and objectives. Norms create expectations that others will be trustworthy and will take part in activities that benefit the group.

Reciprocity

Reciprocity here means that I am prepared to help you when you need it because I know that someone else will help me in my hour of need.

One possible sequence of events is that if people make connections, that makes them willing to do favours for other people. If this is reciprocated, it leads to trust. In practice, all four elements both rely on, and nurture, the other three.

There is plenty of evidence linking increasing social capital with a variety of benefits. These include: finding a job; social integration; better health; falls in crime; better performance at school; better government; and higher economic growth. One dramatic example is a Harvard University study showing that violent crimes were 40 per cent lower in neighbourhoods where residents willingly mingled and worked together than in those areas where no such interaction took place. So we can be pretty sure that if Barclays SiteSavers and other neighbourhood improvement projects lead to a rise in social capital today, they will also generate more benefits in future years.

The idea of social capital is now recognised by government. In May 2000, David Blunkett, education and employment minister, told a conference: 'If we are going to change the way government operates nationally and locally and give communities the opportunity to be the solution, we have to take substantial risks with social capital in the way people are prepared to take risk in terms of economic capital.'

Human capital and social capital

Social capital is about relationships between people. Human capital is about individuals, about people's relationship with themselves. It covers features such as skills, attitudes and behaviour. It also includes the self-esteem and self-confidence that people need in order to learn new skills and behaviours.

The quote about Batley Bands Coop above refers to people reclaiming their self-esteem as they worked together. However, human and social capital do not always develop in parallel. This is the reason why we give pride of place to social capital, since we are mainly concerned with what makes it possible for people to co-operate.

An example of human and social capital in conflict is given by a local regeneration project. The locals with most 'get up and go' found themselves jobs in the project office. They developed new skills and contacts - their human capital rose. They then used these skills and contacts to get out of the area - social capital fell.

A second example, from a community arts project for women, shows how complex the link can be between changes in people's relationship with themselves and their relationship with others. The project was aimed at developing the confidence and skills of its participants. On evaluating the project, the research team expected to find that skills and confidence had risen. The researchers also thought that new friendships might be made and that trying something new would be liberating for the women and give them a taste for the unknown.

Being good researchers, their feedback session allowed time to uncover unexpected findings. In this case they found out that a number of the participants had left their partners. Their increased self-esteem and confidence improved their independence and made such breaks possible.

If you are intrigued by social and human capital, Appendix 1 is for you. The short section in this chapter was written for readers who want to understand the idea of social capital enough so that they can set about measuring it. The table on page 34 turns the idea of social capital and human capital into a checklist, which can be used to help people identify the issues important to them.

Are there other approaches?

Of course. There are many models for evaluation and many indicator projects. The DETR's 'Local Evaluation for Regeneration Partnerships Good Practice Guide' is very clear. It is, however, mainly for larger projects than those covered here, and, partly because of that,

not participative. Here we describe one family of approaches, which provides a contrast and highlights some of the features of our method.

'Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Development in Northern Ireland' (comprising a report and a handbook for practitioners) is outstanding in its thoroughness. There are 10 'building blocks of community development' each with an average of at least twenty suggested indicators. (Some of these are listed in Appendix 2). This work, carried out by the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC), has evolved and is now known as ABCD - 'Achieving Better Community Development'. Revised materials (a handbook, resource pack and policy impact study) are in the pipeline.

The ABCD framework provided a starting-point for Yorkshire Forward's 'Active Partners, Benchmarking for Community Participation in Regeneration'. The consultants (COGS - Communities and Organisations - Growth and Support) carrying out the work involved people active in a range of communities across the region. COGS first used the ABCD framework to help them to reflect on their experience of community development. They used this to identify four key dimensions that need to be strategically addressed in order to enable effective community participation.

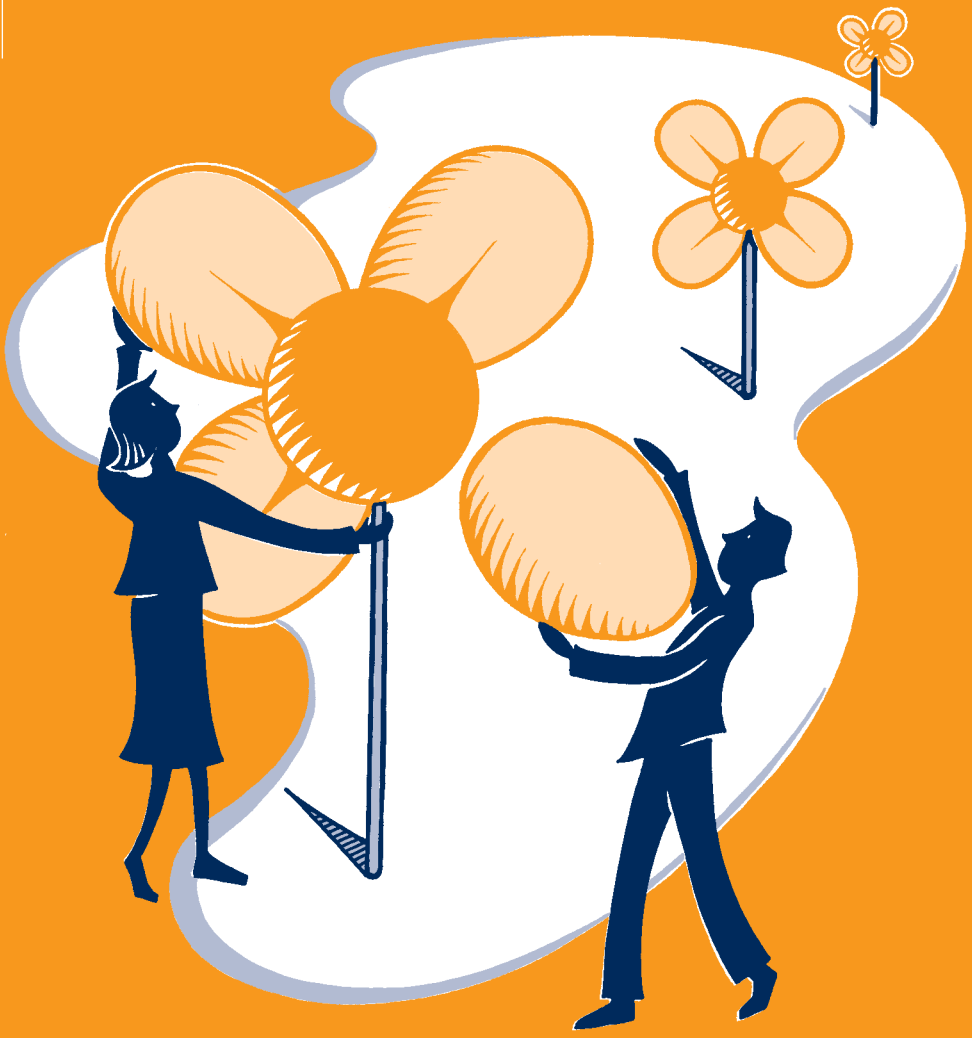
The four dimensions are: influence (of the community on regeneration); inclusivity; communication; and capacity. A total of twelve benchmarks, each with suggested indicators, has been developed in relation to these four dimensions.

For example, one of the benchmarks for 'influence' is 'there is meaningful community representation at all decision making bodies from initiation'. One of the indicators for this benchmark is, 'community representatives are elected by, and accountable to, the wider community'. People are free to add their own.

There are some clear differences between the various approaches. ABCD is concerned with the long-term process of community development. Yorkshire Forward's approach is about community participation in regeneration. Both provide a lengthy and comprehensive set of indicators covering inputs, outputs and outcomes. This handbook recommends a much smaller set of indicators - maybe a dozen. It does not cover all aspects of community participation - only those that build social capital. It concentrates on outcome indicators.

A further difference is in data collection. ABCD suggests a range of methods: consulting records (such as constitutions, policies and minutes), observation and surveying. What is appropriate depends on the indicators chosen. Most of the indicators of social capital are indicators of relationships, such as trust. If you want to know whether people trust each other, for example if they leave their keys with each other, you generally have to ask them. So the core indicators suggested in this handbook mainly depend on surveys.

Doing



6: Getting started

Which projects to measure?

We saw in chapter 2 that Groundwork runs a vast array of projects. In future it will face a dilemma that many others may also face. Should it evaluate all its projects? If not, which should it choose? Working through the following four questions offers a way forward.

1. Is there a minimum size of project worth evaluating and if so what size?

The pilot Groundwork Trusts disagreed about this. Some felt that they couldn't spend more than 5 per cent on evaluation (with 10 per cent as an absolute maximum), so £50,000 was the minimum size of project to provide enough (£2,500) to work with. This, of course, is an enormous amount from the point of view of most community groups.

Other Trusts felt that you could evaluate any size of project. With a small project you would simply survey a small number of people. We feel that this leads to an unrepresentative sample from which it is hard to draw conclusions. Many of the Barclays SiteSavers projects struggled to survey a representative sample, but at least it remains an aim to be worked towards.

For small projects we recommend:

- Evaluating several small projects in the same geographical area together, or
- Finding low cost ways of surveying, such as the use of a Citizens Panel (see chapter 9), or
- Using indicators that don't need surveys (see appendix 2).

2. Evaluate a single project or a cluster of projects?

Chapter 3 noted the difficulty of attributing cause and effect to projects. Its hard to say, 'I feel a lot more self-confident and its 70 per cent due to planting trees with Groundwork and 30 per cent due to a Women's Institute course I went on.' There is, however, an example in chapter 11 where two people attribute their growth in self-confidence to one particular project.

If, on the other hand, you evaluate all or most of the projects in an area, the more likely you are to be able to claim that the effects you observe are due to those projects. You still won't be able to claim all the effects though. Some may be due to social capital created - or destroyed - long before any of these projects began. Think about this issue from the point of view of a community. Local people are less likely to be interested in the effect of a particular project and more likely to be interested in what is going on in their community, whatever the cause.

So we recommend evaluating a cluster of projects in one area. (For example, Groundwork Thames Valley might evaluate all its projects in the Borough of Hillingdon). This also helps to spread costs over several projects. These costs might relate not only to the evaluation itself, but also to the accompanying community development which builds the capacity of the community to get involved. It may be harder to find a suitable time to do the surveys if the projects start at different times and finish at different times. Easiest of all to evaluate may be a programme, where a number of projects start at around the same time. Indicators that referred to the whole programme could of course be combined with those that referred to a particular site.

3. How good are the organisation's relations with the area concerned?

The better those relations, the easier it is to find local people to work with. Groundwork Erewash have been working for 10 years in the area where the project they evaluated was based. They have helped both to rejuvenate a church hall and to set up a community association to run it. Without such a background, participatory evaluation is certainly harder and may be impossible.

The length of time that an organisation has been around in a particular community is of course not the only factor influencing its relations with the area. Nonetheless, we suggest that organisations choose projects to evaluate in areas in which they have been around for a while.

4. Is there a community group that is able and willing to be involved in the measurement?

This is similar to question three. If there is a group, then the measurement is both easier and contributes to building the capacity of that group. If there isn't, it can be harder work and there won't be spin-off benefits.

The answer to the question may depend not only on how well established the group is, but also on the type of people it consists of. For example, Groundwork Trusts, with one or two exceptions, found it difficult to persuade youth groups to get involved in surveys of the wider community. This subject is covered in more detail in Chapter 9.

How much time does it take?

Each pilot trust budgeted for 12 days to be spent on measuring. Four of those days went on a training event, a gathering of pilots after the first surveys and on spending time with NEF staff visiting their project. This left eight days for the two surveys. This seemed enough for some and a squeeze for others. The first survey took longer than the second because of the unfamiliarity of the exercise. Most Trusts, however, surveyed fewer people than statistical analysis suggested they should.

One or two Trusts used up all their time on the first survey. In one case, a single interview, over a cup of tea in someone's home, took an hour and a half, with the interviewer dropping questions into the conversation every 10 minutes or so. This is how Groundwork Caerphilly's staff member used the time:

Activity	Days
Working with a youth group, including surveying them as the people directly involved with the project.	2
Planning the survey of users of the facility	.5
Carrying out the survey with the youth group and three members of staff from Groundwork	2
Communicating with colleagues at Groundwork	.5
Total	**5**

How to build measuring into a project

At the start

When Groundwork start to work in a particular area, they start with an assessment, which includes community consultation. This leads to a 'community plan' which has a shopping list of local issues and needs. This is an ideal time to be thinking about indicators, since people are already identifying what matters to them, and so thinking about what they might want to measure. One project officer commented: 'I think this approach will work best when community appraisals are being undertaken. It can be used as another tool alongside Planning for Real™ and model work, community audits, street surveys, like/dislike exercises etc. Then it could be used to measure the effects of community strategies and plans.'

Timing of evaluation is also important. Evaluation has to be thought about early enough to be part of the budget, so you aren't scrabbling around for resources later on.

At the end

There is a separate point about timing at the end of a project or programme. Ideally, there would be surveys at intervals to discern the evolution of social capital and its effects. The second survey should, if possible, be around three months after the end of the physical work. This means that the evaluation aspect continues after the end of the rest of the project or programme.

Who to involve - the stakeholders

Stakeholders are people or groups who are either affected by whatever activity is being measured, or those who can affect it. Measurement needs a commitment from key stakeholders that the work should be done. The next two sections cover:

1. identifying stakeholders and what they get from measuring
2. clarifying who will be involved at the different stages of measurement.

Take the example of a project that aims to strengthen the capacity of community organisations. Stakeholders and their interests include:

- The funders of the project, who are ultimately paying for the measurement
- The organisation that is running the project and would manage the measurement
- The staff who would carry out the measuring
- The community who are the intended beneficiaries of the project, who may be actively involved in measurement and who can often provide the best insight into the impact of projects.

The next figure shows what sort of benefits different stakeholders can gain from measuring. We recommend that you draw up a similar diagram for whatever you want to measure.

For funders, measuring:
- ensures good use of funds
- highlights good practice worth replicating
- identifies gaps in project delivery - for example, is the project reaching socially excluded groups?
- informs policy

For organisations, measuring:
- ensures that resources are used efficiently
- helps to clarify aims and objectives
- provides evidence on impact
- sets standards and provides quality control
- uncovers unexpected impacts on people
- helps validate new approaches

For project staff, measuring:
- provides feedback on performance
- challenges assumptions and confirms impressions
- suggests areas for further development
- helps staff to see their work in a wider context

For the community, measuring:
- offers a chance to have a say
- represents an opportunity for active participation in measuring and learning skills
- provides information about the project's strengths and weaknesses

Source: adopted from Charities Evaluation Services (1998:2)

Building support within your organisation

Your own organisation will provide examples of the different stakes in measurement different people have. The Executive Directors of Groundwork Trusts, for instance, are likely to be aware of pressure from funders for measurement. Design sections in Groundwork are becoming involved in community development and want to learn about the tools they can use.

How easy it is to secure the support of individuals depends on whether the culture of the organisation supports measurement. Groundwork has traditionally had a culture of 'let's do it.' That makes it harder to stop doing for a while in order to measure what has been done and to reflect upon it. But the culture has changed in one way; community development is now widely seen as necessity, not luxury, as local people have become more central to Groundwork's purpose. Attitudes to measurement may change in the same way, especially with the pressure likely to come from funders.

Whether you are concerned with an entire organisation or individuals within it, use the benefits in chapter 3 to show what is in it for them.

Building support in other organisations

It is possible to get other organisations involved in the evaluation of your project or interested more generally in local measuring. This also fits with the point above about timing measurement to fit in with what else is going on in the neighbourhood.

Participation in different stages of the Groundwork pilots

Different stakeholders will be involved in the various stages of measurement. This too needs planning. The table below shows how two of the stakeholder groups, project staff and the community, have taken part in the different stages so far and may take part in the future.

Stage	Participation
Getting started	Groundwork staff and NEF explain the project to Groundwork Trusts, of which sixteen are chosen to be pilots.
Agreeing issues	NEF's framework of social and human capital provides long list of issues for staff from pilots and some local people to use.
Choosing indicators	Staff from pilot Trusts, together with local people from half of the pilot areas, choose indicators. In doing so they concentrate on some parts of the framework and ignore others. They also add issues, such as safety.
Gathering information	Some staff do it themselves, others involve local people/groups.
Communicating progress	Staff communicate the results to project helpers who can both feel good about the results, and decide on a course of action together. Most Trusts are waiting for the second survey results to communicate fully.
Taking action	Staff and community members can mobilise other groups/local figures to make changes. This can involve all of the wider community. Some issues are obvious after the first survey, but most action will happen after the changes have been monitored with the second survey.

Learning from the experience of others

Learning from other people who've tried measuring impacts in their communities is a great boost for confidence. Communities Count! lists 35 local indicator projects, though these mainly measure quality of life in the context of Local Agenda 21.

Redefining Progress, a U.S. organisation, provides a listserve on a website which links over 450 community indicator practitioners world-wide, to provide a continuing dialogue about the 'nuts-and-bolts' of indicators work, There's also a searchable web-based directory cataloguing over 200 projects. All this at http://www.rprogress.org

7: Agreeing issues

By now we hope that the idea and value of measuring is becoming clearer. Once the process is started, with groups and individuals getting involved, it can be tempting to build on the momentum and start identifying indicators straight away. But this can cause problems.

A set of indicators tells a story. To make sure that all the important parts of a story are told, they need to be organised according to issues. This provides a focus for subsequent indicators, and reduces the chances of missing out the things that matter to you and your stakeholders. Instead of trying to deal with what to measure and how to measure it at the same time, it is useful to separate these steps. That's why we have divided the next phase of developing the indicators into two:

1. Agreeing issues (this chapter)
2. Choosing indicators to measure the issues you've agreed (next chapter)

The tension between the framework and freedom of choice

Coming into the pilot work with Barclays SiteSavers, a clear framework for measurement was in place. This is because social capital was seen as a 'missing link' for the impact of the programme. So the issues (and indicators) look at skills, local connections and trust.

In agreeing issues, there is a fundamental tension between:

- The existence of an underlying theory – in this case social capital - and
- Giving people freedom to decide their own issues, which increases their sense of involvement.

In reality, the value of people pursuing their own issues depends on two main things:

- How perverse can things get and
- What gets missed?

In the case of perversity, suppose that people have freedom to choose. They use it to select the strength of relationships between people on an estate as a key issue. The danger is that this is not necessarily a sign of high social capital, as the example below shows.

Take two estates in Luton. One has close relationships between its inhabitants, the other doesn't. Which estate do you think has the healthier residents?

In fact it's the second one. Although relationships within the estate are few, its residents have better connections with people outside the estate than do residents on the other, more introverted, estate. This means, for example, that they have better opportunities for finding jobs. (There is more on this in appendix 1). So, just looking at the relationships within the community gives only part of the picture – and potentially misleading at that.

The second, related point, is what is usually left off the list of issues. History shows that the evaluations of programmes like Barclays SiteSavers often miss impacts like social connections and local trust. The list below is what people at the regional briefings wanted to measure. Notice that the vast majority are about human capital. They are about the attributes of individuals, rather than the relationships between people or the relationships between people and organisations. This is perhaps not surprising in an individualist world. But the social and human capital framework suggests that this is not enough to build successful communities.

How suggestions from the briefing days fit into the social capital framework

HEADING	WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO MEASURE
Human capital	
Self-confidence etc	Six references to confidence
Attitudes	Attitudes towards an open space Morale Satisfaction/pleasure and enjoyment Community cohesion and identity Reduced feeling of isolation Optimism and energy Sense of control Aesthetic - what people value

HEADING	WHAT PEOPLE WANT TO MEASURE
Skills and knowledge	Know-how Belief in new skills
Behaviour	Sports activity Whether residents are kept in the area
Social capital – trust in each other	
Networks and connections	New friendships sustained Effect of contacts between conference delegates Changes in community interaction Inter-age group co-operation

The greater the chances of perversity and missing important impacts, the greater the value of a framework.

A framework may not be enough. In a recent indicators project starting from issues and moving onto indicators, it was acknowledged that there were some issues were still missing. These include rural issues, and race and gender discrimination.

Managing the tension

So how do we manage the tension between providing a framework for issues and allowing these to emerge more organically? An 'all or nothing' approach is likely to antagonise as much as it facilitates. We therefore offer two suggestions. The first makes more use of the framework. The second gives people more freedom.

First, you could use the following as a checklist and ask people to discuss and/or vote on which elements are the most important for a successful community.

PART OF FRAMEWORK	LOCALLY RELEVANT?
HUMAN CAPITAL	
Self-confidence	
Self-esteem/self-respect/self-confidence	
Attitudes towards place: e.g. sense of belonging	
Attitudes towards getting involved	
Skills and knowledge	
Behaviour, e.g. trying new things	
SOCIAL CAPITAL	
Trusting each other	
Trust	
Standards of behaviour	
Reciprocity, e.g. people look out for each other	
Networks and connections: places to meet	
Networks and connections: friends	
Networks and connections: participation, e.g. in community	
organisations and events	
Networks and connections: diversity, e.g. learning about other people's cultures	
Trusting them	
Community and voluntary organisations and agencies	
Number	
Services provided	
Effectiveness	
Community involvement: knowledge e.g. of what organisations there are	
Community involvement: participation in these groups	
Community involvement: democracy and accountability e.g. are there organisations controlled by local residents?	
Community involvement: equal opportunities	
Networks and partnerships between organisations	

Notice that this doesn't cover connections outside the estate, important as the Luton example above showed them to be. Several pilots felt that their image in the outside world was important. None, however, came up with a practical way to measure it in the first surveys. Analysing references to the estate in the local paper was suggested but not tried.

There's a lot of detail here, but there is still quite a bit of work to get from an issue, e.g. social capital, to an indicator.

The sequence below shows the steps from social capital as an issue to an indicator (in this case the uses of community centres):

Social capital
▼
Trust in each other
▼
Social networks
▼
Meeting places
▼
Number of uses of community centres

The second approach is to start with a brainstorm, and to see how ideas fit into the framework. Below is a simpler version of the framework for this purpose:

	Personal	Relations between people	Relations between people and outside agencies
Attitudes			
Abilities			
Actions			

Attitudes cover how people think or feel about themselves or others. Abilities highlight the skills that exist to nurture social capital. Finally, actions describe some behaviour locally that contributes to trust or is a sign of trust e.g. meeting other local people.

Brainstorming was the approach taken by A.O.R.T.A. (An Oakwood Tenants and Residents Association). Oakwood is a housing estate in the Llynfi Valley. With some help from Groundwork Bridgend, they identified the following priorities for any regeneration of the estate:

- Crime
- Housing and infrastructure
- Youth
- Community
- Traffic and transport

Other frameworks

Other frameworks for understanding and measuring impacts exist. The Government developed a framework for sustainable development as part of a national strategy.

This provided the framework for the Central-Local Government Information Partnership (CLIP). The CLIP project involved 29 Local Authorities, testing out over thirty issues and indicators, within a framework of sustainable development. Cumbria County Council, one of the pilots, took on the framework of the issues and indicators, but added some local flavour. They organised a conference in October 1999. Working from a draft list of issues and indicators, participants from local authorities, NGOs and community groups suggested their own issues and indicators and refined these into a manageable list through voting.

The example of A.O.R.T.A. shows that communities will, of course, be interested in many aspects of their quality of life that are not covered by social capital. The following list of issues for a sustainable community may help. It has been developed by local and central government from a major project to devise sustainability indicators for ten local authorities. Note that there are three broad goals for a sustainable society, and 18 more detailed issues.

Common issues: a checklist for sustainable communities

A sustainable society seeks to:	
Protect and enhance the environment	☑ use energy, water and other **natural resources** efficiently and with care ☑ minimise **waste**, then re-use or recover it through recycling, composting or energy recovery, and finally sustainability dispose of what is left ☑ limit **pollution** to levels that do not damage natural systems ☑ value and protect the **diversity** of nature
Meet social needs	☑ create or enhance **places**, spaces and buildings that work well, wear well and look well ☑ make **settlements** 'human' in scale and form ☑ value and protect **diversity** and local distinctiveness and strengthen local community and cultural identity ☑ protect human **health** and amenity though safe, clean, pleasant environments ☑ people live without fear of personal violence from **crime**, or persecution because of their personal beliefs, race, gender or sexuality ☑ emphasise health service **prevention** action as well as care ☑ ensure access to good **food, water, housing and fuel** at reasonable cost ☑ meet **local needs locally** wherever possible ☑ maximise everyone's access to the **skills** and knowledge needed to play a full part in society ☑ **empower** all sections of the community to participate in decision-making and consider the social and community impacts of decisions
Promote economic success	☑ create a vibrant **local economy** that gives access to satisfying and rewarding work without damaging the local, national or global environment ☑ value **unpaid work** ☑ encourage necessary **access** to facilities, services, goods and other people in ways which make less use of the car and minimise impacts on the environment ☑ make opportunities for **culture, leisure and recreation** readily available to all

Source: Sustainable Local Communities for the 21st Century, 1998

8: Choosing indicators

Having decided the particular issues around human and social capital that are important to you and your group, it is time to consider the indicators to measure these. There are a number of ways in which we can help to ensure that indicators are meaningful. Before going on to these it is worthwhile us being clear about what is meant by an indicator.

What are indicators?

Indicators are tools that:

- Measure
- Simplify and
- Communicate. . .

important issues and trends.

Indicators measure - they provide a dimension to something: how big; how long. 25 per cent of pupils with five or more GCSEs and three months for an operation on the NHS are examples of this measurement.

Indicators simplify – they present a potentially complex piece of information as a pocket sized one. A number of meteorological factors are encapsulated into the symbol of the sun placed on a weather forecaster's map.

Indicators communicate – they tell a story. Knowing that 3.7 million Americans claim to have been abducted by aliens tells us something. But what it tells us often depends on what you know and believe. If you are an avid fan of the X Files you might think that this figure suggests significant under-reporting!

Indicators communicate most effectively when they are put back to back with comparative information – from another place or time. One striking example is being used to advertise one of the zones at the Millennium Dome. This says that the speed of London road traffic in 1899 was 11 mile per hour. In 1999 it was still 11 miles per hour.

This type of indicator arouses interest and can be the basis for further exploration. Often, indicators cannot provide solutions, but can help to pose meaningful questions.

What do indicators do?

So what is the role of an indicator? Below are two thoughts on the subject. The first is from a local government body in England and Wales (the former Local Government Management Board). The second comes from the European Environment Agency (EEA):

1. *'Some [indicators] will help to galvanise political commitment; some are useful in monitoring and managing change; while others may be best at stimulating public participation.'*

2. The EEA label their indicators in the following way:
   - Descriptive indicators: measure a particular state of affairs, e.g. the state of neighbourhood feelings.
   - Performance indicators: measure how well (or badly) something is going. To encourage better performance they may have some kind of target or behaviour associated with them. An example is school exam results or hospital waiting lists.
   - Efficiency indicators: measure the cost of achieving certain results. Usually this involves outputs per unit of input, for example the number of items borrowed per member of library staff.

The table below shows that these two views of indicators are compatible.

Type of indicator	Prime aim	Example
Descriptive	*Stimulating public participation*	In Seattle, USA, 400 citizens chose the number of wild salmon in local rivers as their top indicator.
Performance	*Monitoring and managing change/ political commitment*	The UK government and school heads use school exam results as a signal of school performance. There are also targets for improving these pass rates.
Efficiency	*Monitoring and managing change*	Cost of operations at different NHS hospitals.

In Chapter 5 we explained the importance of outcome indicators. The following examples, from the London Borough of Richmond, show the relationship between the input/output/outcome split and the descriptive/performance/efficiency categories:

Performance indicators	1998/99	1999/00 estimate	Target for 2000/01
Net spending per head of population on sport and recreation	£15.75	£15.60	£15.80
Number of people aged 65+ helped by the authority to live at home per 1,000 (people aged 65+)	91.03	90	92

Although labelled as performance indicators, the first is really an efficiency indicator. It is also an input indicator, the type for which local government has traditionally been criticised. It doesn't say whether people enjoy the sport and recreation or which sections of the community feel the benefit and which miss out. The second indicator is an outcome indicator as it tells us about the impact of the council on the quality of life of older people.

In Barclays SiteSavers the emphasis is on the second type of performance measure – looking at the way in which the activity of the programme impacts on quality of life. It is likely that your indicators will have this emphasis as well.

It is very important that indicators are fit for their purpose. Like clothing, different fits work in different circumstances – baggy and light trousers for dancing, tighter and thicker for sitting on football terraces in January.

Using the first table in this chapter, it is important to start to think about what type of indicators will fit your purposes. *It is definitely worth taking time out to address this issue now to avoid disappointment in the lack of action later.*

Making good indicators – some pointers

For indicators to be effective they need to fit the task at hand. They also need to meet certain criteria. These handily form the acronym – AIMS.

AIMS criteria for indicators

Criteria	Example
Action focused	Indicators inform action. If you can't imagine what to do with the indicator once it has data then think again. Performance indicators are relatively action-focused because they look at the impact of certain behaviour (which can be changed). Targets can help indicators to focus on action.
Important	In Reading a famous indicator exercise took place to measure dog mess in a park. Dog mess emerges time and again as an important local issue. Remember, what is important to you may be only important to you. Work with a group of people to see what matters most.
Measurable	Can data for the indicator be collected? Remember to think creatively. Surveys are costly but important ways of gathering information. The British Trust for Ornithology uses data collected by birdwatchers to compile useful, trusted and affordable information.
Simple	Einstein could have been talking about indicators when he said the following: 'everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler'. Simplicity needs to be appropriate to the audience of the indicator. In Santiago, in Chile, a simple and therefore relevant indicator to the public is: the number of days that the peak of the Andes is not visible. This indicator simply and vividly captures pollution and smog levels.

You can keep an eye on the criteria while developing indicators, or you can use them to weed out a long list of indicators into a shorter one. A table like the one below can help you to test your indicators against the criteria. This indicator comes from a set developed by the Central-Local Government Information Partnership (CLIP).

	Action	Important	Measurable	Simple
How do school children usually get to school?	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓

✓ = low score
✓✓ = medium score
✓✓✓ = high score

The way that children travel to school is a metaphor for modern times. The 'school run' chokes up rush hour roads, denies children exercise, causes pollution and is driven by school locations, public transport and safety fears.

The main problem with this indicator is its measurability. It is difficult to get schools to get involved in the measurement. As a result, the sample of those who do take part is likely to be biased. There is, as yet, no clear way forward on the measurement process. The indicator is in the CLIP menu because of its performance against the other criteria.

Two other indicators were chosen mainly because, in different ways, they should spur action. 'Changes in population of selected characteristic species' is not the most robust indicator of biodiversity, but it is descriptive and is likely to be good at raising the public profile of the issue. Different in nature is 'new homes built on previously developed land (including conversions).' This is a useful performance indicator for local authority planners to see that they are working according to DETR (Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions) planning targets.

Generating the indicators

You are now almost ready to get together with a group of people to 'brainstorm' some indicators that will measure, simplify and communicate something about the things that you care about.

For your brainstorm you will need the following ingredients:

- A note of the key issues (see Chapter 7)
- A clear idea of what you plan to do with the indicators
- A definition of an indicator to keep people on track
- A set of criteria to prune the number of indicators.

If you are going to engage people to sit up and take notice of a set of indicators you will need to work with others. We all have our pet issues, and some of us have our pet indicators. But it's the shared ground where there can be most energy to change things.

Where to start

There is a host of experience of using indicators to measure a multitude of issues. Where you can get hold of it, use the benefit of the experience of others. Once it is decided what are the important issues for your project you can use appendix 2 of this handbook and other resources to draw up a list of potential indicators. These can be thrown into the mix in your brainstorm. The indicators can of course be rejected.

Core and local indicators

If you are measuring the effect of various projects in various places, you might want to copy the Barclays SiteSavers split between:

- **Core indicators**, i.e. the set in Appendix 3 plus the two non-survey indicators on page 52, which were chosen and used by all the pilots. This eases comparisons and cross-project learning.
- **Local indicators**, which were chosen locally by some pilots to reflect local circumstances. For example, A.O.R.T.A., one of whose key issues was crime, added indicators on:
  How many people are firstly, afraid of, or secondly, affected by, crime against a) themselves or b) their property?

The brainstorm

The brainstorm for indicators could come as part of the session to identify issues. But this work takes quite a bit of energy. So if you think you can get people to turn up more than once, then split the sessions.

You could have separate sessions for the different stakeholder groups you have identified. This can be important when you want to clearly hear the voices of particular sections of society. This happened in a series of sessions at Lancaster University in 1995. Groups included Asian women and unemployed people. When people were quizzed about their quality of life, one participant felt free to say, 'quality of life, we don't have any quality of life'.

Where a group is more homogenous and used to working in a group, it can make more sense to have one or more mixed group sessions. Participants can benefit from hearing different perspectives. This is part of the engagement aspect of the measurement process. This can lead to greater tolerance, understanding and maybe even social capital.

Once you have people at the meeting, the event needs to be carefully run and recorded. It is best to record indicator ideas next to issues on a flip chart so that you can keep track of progress. Below are some other things to think about.

- Check the venue is easy to get to with lots of natural light. Try to get people sitting in a circle where everyone can see everyone else. Eye to eye contact is important.
- Do state the purpose of the day and how the time spent together is to be allocated. Tell participants what will be different when they leave the room compared to when they entered.

- Check that people are clear by what is meant by an indicator. Use everyday examples like body temperature as an example.
- Give everyone their shout. Watch out that a few individuals don t dominate things.
- Think about whether you need to break into smaller groups, perhaps each take a couple of issues and propose some indicators.
- Valuing everyone's voice means all ideas are recorded at this stage.

Brainstorming indicators is a freeform exercise. You want people to think how an indicator could measure, simplify and communicate a particular issue.

Part of definition	This means. . .
Measure	How big, small, tall etc. e.g. per cent of respondents agreeing that an area has community spirit.
Simplify	Some details but not all. Instead of measuring every aspect of trust, e.g. why it exists, why not etc. we look at something like per cent of respondents saying that 'generally speaking, most people can be trusted.'
Communicate	There is a story about something worth knowing. In 1996, 40 per cent of people asked agreed that 'quality of life in Britain is best improved by looking after ourselves which ultimately raises standards for everybody.'

Bearing the definition in mind, participants can shout out suggestions. If you have a number of issues to get through it is probably better to assign smaller groups to subsets of issues. They can each present to the main group and their suggestions get discussed or added to.

Don't worry if the indicators are not perfect at this stage, there is time for refinement. It is a bit like a fishing trawl. You'll land things that you want to throw back in. For now record all suggestions on a flip chart next to their relevant issue.

Fine-tuning

After this process of developing indicators for issues, it's time for some fine-tuning. You might have around 40 indicators by now, some from other relevant work, some developed specifically at the event. You will want to work on both quantity (have you got the right number?) and quality (is the wording of the indicator correct?).

You can use the meeting or a subsequent one to refine these indicators down. Alternatively you can assign a smaller working group to carry out this process and to report back to the main group.

To refine the indicators, use the **AIMS** criteria shown earlier. To be clear, Measure/simplify/communicate and show whether something is an indicator at all. Satisfying the **AIMS** criteria will tell you if an indicator is a good indicator.

On the number of indicators, our advice is that much above 20 indicators could lead to a lack of focus. Less than half a dozen is unlikely to give a rounded picture. For Barclays SiteSavers there were thirteen indicators. This was because most of the indicators needed to be part of a survey to gather the data. We felt that we had to keep the survey to under fifteen main questions if people were not to be put off (although some questions have more than one part, such as do you feel safe 1. at night and 2. in the day), and this allowed some space for locally developed indicator questions to be added as well.

On the wording of indicators, there are two issues: meaning and clarity. For meaning, you need to be sure that the indicator will tell you what you want to know. Look at the following statements from which indicators can be drawn:

1. 'I get on well with neighbours - we look out for each other'

2. 'I keep my neighbours' keys'

This second indicator says a lot about trust in a specific way. It is vivid and concrete evidence for a level of trust. But what if the prevailing culture is not to leave keys with neighbours? It is possible that good neighbours might never go into each other's house and that they build their trust over the garden fence. So the wording of an indicator must be culturally appropriate.

Clarity is vital and difficult to achieve. Some years ago, the Australians changed a question about length of residence on their census because too many people went out and measured their houses. One example from the Barclays SiteSavers set is the percentage of people who thought that their neighbours and themselves looked out for each other. Some people in one area thought that looking out for your neighbours meant checking that they weren't about to burgle you! So this indicator is potentially ambiguous. In practice it was clear to most people, so we didn't change the wording. Instead, we now ask interviewers to explain the indicator, if there is any danger of misunderstanding.

Here is an example where a single word made a difference. In the CLIP project, one indicator, used by a national survey body, was: 'Percentage of respondents satisfied with their area as a place to live.' However, local authority pilots felt that 'area' was too vague and left too much to the interpretation of the respondent. Instead they changed the wording from 'area' to 'neighbourhood'.

In this way they can look at where the respondents live and target specific areas for follow up work and action.

In some cases, minor working changes can make questions easier to understand. After the first set of interviews, the Groundwork pilots found that the indicator on trust in agencies was hard to understand. So the indicator 'If you want to change things around here, do you know who to contact to help you in the following groups' had some options changed from 'voluntary groups' to 'local community groups', and 'in other agencies like Groundwork', as agencies alone sounded a bit like the FBI!

What's out there?

Indicators of social capital are being collected at local, regional and national level. It is somewhat surprising to see that the indicators can be found in relatively 'mainstream' publications such as the British Social Attitudes Survey and the Survey of English Housing. Here are some examples:

Indicator	Source
'Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?'	British Social Attitudes
Percentage of respondents satisfied with their area as a place to live	Survey of English Housing
Percentage of respondents satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live	CLIP pilot
Percentage of householders who thought their area had a lot of community spirit	National Sustainable Development Indicators

Appendix 2 provides a long list of indicators that are being used to measure some aspect of social capital. The list may be a useful resource to help you to think about your own indicators of social capital. The examples below are set out in bite-size chunks organised according to its different aspects.

The indicators below are not a recommended set, more a menu. They are indicators that are interesting, important or are in use elsewhere. It is not our intention to prescribe a set of indicators in this publication. What matters is that many different organisations try many different indicators, so that any consensus emerges from testing indicators in a variety of circumstances.

About me

These indicators emphasise human capital.

Indicator	Details	Source
I was able to put my point of view and ideas into [the project] I feel I could help change attitudes and improve things around here	These look at people's perceptions of how they can influence local affairs	Groundwork Arts Consultancy (GAC) Barclays SiteSavers (BSS)
I am more creative than I thought I was before I got involved in the project	This is about the raising of self-esteem and skill levels that they possess	(GAC)
I have learned new skills on [the project] in the last 6 months	This looks at the way in which people's human capital develops	BSS

About us

The following indicators reveal the extent of community social capital.

Indicator	Details	Source
Within the last 6 months I have enjoyed several conversations with a new person from a different.. • age • background.	This was true for nearly 60 per cent of participants in Barclays SiteSavers.	BSS
I feel safe out and about.. • in my community • using the (BSS) facility.	As we saw earlier, trust has a real impact on people's perceived and actual safety.	BSS
How many new friends have you made through the project?	In the case of 16 Barclays SiteSavers projects, the average participant makes seven (and a half) new friends.	BSS

Indicator	Details	Source
Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?	Overall, 44 per cent of the British public take the view that 'most people' can be trusted (compared to 38 per cent of Americans).	British Social Attitudes (BSA)
Is there a sense of a desired future for the community?	This shows the quality of connections in a community.	National Civic League
Percentage of householders who think their area has a 'lot' of community spirit	In 1997/98, 46 per cent of all households thought that their area had a lot of community spirit.	Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions

About us and them

These indicators measure the degree of trust and strength of networks between 'official' agencies like the council and the community.

Indicator	Details	Source
Those we elect as councillors lose touch with people pretty quickly	In 1994, 47 per cent agreed with this statement. In 1999, 55 per cent agreed.	BSA
Councillors don't care much what people like me think	36 per cent agreed that councillors don't care in 1994, this rose to 40 per cent in 1999.	BSA

The core set of Barclays SiteSavers indicators is set out in full in Appendix 2.

9: Gathering information

Introduction

Having put a set of indicators in place, now is the time to work out how to get hold of the data for them. It can be quite daunting to realise how much information you need to draw in. The key is to look for short cuts and, especially, to get lots of people to help. Gathering information can be one of the most enjoyable and active parts of the project, and lead to lots of new people becoming involved and unexpected learning about the area.

The community indicators groups in West Devon found that half their data was accessed from existing sources, others came from surveys of businesses, shops, schools and homes, and a public survey covered 13 questions of people's perceptions.

For the Barclays SiteSavers measurement, most of the indicators needed a survey of people's attitudes, although two indicators could be collected without surveys of local people. Many indicators of social capital will require a lot of survey questions to capture the impact on people and their communities. (See Chapter 8 and Appendix 2 for examples of these indicators).

These surveys, as noted in the previous chapter, are costly in terms of surveyors' time, but invaluable in finding the hidden and real benefits of a project. You can only find out what people think by asking them! It's worth investing time in this, as it's a great opportunity to talk to people about the project. It's also a chance for you to reflect on why you're doing it rather than worrying about the next consignment of paint or manure all the time! The next section looks at indicators that don't require a survey of people's attitudes. The following sections take the mystery out of surveying.

Non-survey indicators

Non-survey indicators fall into two categories:

- The 'quick wins': information about some of the things you want to measure will already have been collected. Think creatively about who might already have

collected it. If they're local, use the conversations you have with them to get them interested in the project. For example, the local traders association might have information about the number of locally owned shops. Other indicators might be available nationally. For example through the survey of British Social Attitudes, we know about to what extent people think others are trustworthy. Collecting these first can make you feel that you are getting somewhere fast. But don't leave the tricky stuff too long. See the table below for useful sources of information.

- **DIY:** Some things you'll have to measure yourself; this could be the number of people using a park at certain times of day. Think about who might want to help with gathering this information. In Oldham, schoolchildren counted the number of local ponds with frogs or newts to measure biodiversity. Pensioners monitored how well and regularly council services such as cleaning and dustbin-emptying were carried out in Watford.

The two Barclays SiteSavers indicators that didn't need a survey of people's attitudes both fell into the DIY category:

- How many new people (previously unknown to Groundwork) have been involved in the project over the last six months?
- Number of agencies working with Groundwork on the project (Voluntary and other agencies e.g. council).

Checklist of local sources of data

Here are some ideas of places that might have information about the indicators that you choose.

- ☑ the local council
- ☑ chamber of commerce
- ☑ libraries, museums
- ☑ Environment Agency office
- ☑ job centre
- ☑ local green group (Wildlife Trust/ WWF/FoE etc.)
- ☑ training and enterprise council
- ☑ schools and colleges
- ☑ health authority, hospitals, clinics
- ☑ regional government office
- ☑ local businesses
- ☑ police & emergency services

The Local Government Association is planning to set up a database of statistics from the 2001 census, which will be available to local authorities. This detailed local information will be useful to future collectors of indicators, and the planning department of your local authority should be able to help you to access the statistics nearer the time.

Surveying people's attitudes

About surveying

Often it takes too much time and money to survey everybody who might be affected by a project. The good news is that by asking a good sample of people, you can get nearly as good results as by asking everyone! There's a whole area of science devoted to sampling and statistics. The trick is to design your survey so that you capture enough information to make it really meaningful, while still making it a manageable and enjoyable experience. There are sections below on sampling and who to survey, designing the questionnaire and carrying out the survey, as well as the questionnaire we used for the Barclays SiteSavers social capital indicators.

Even with a sample, you need to find out the views of a reasonably large number of people (more details in 'how many people?' on page 61) on exactly the same question. This is why we recommend using a structured survey that is fairly simple and quick to use. However, a 'quantitative' figure such as 'x per cent agreed with the following statement', needs to be supplemented with a 'qualitative' understanding of the stories and background that explain why people answer as they do.

When local people do face-to-face interviews about local issues, conversations often happen about their feelings and experiences which are invaluable in understanding the needs of the area and the impact a particular project is having or could have. These less formal outcomes of the survey will be just as important to the evaluation of the project as the indicators produced by the actual answers to the questions. Do bear this aspect in mind when designing your survey process, and try not to get too lost in figures.

The Barclays SiteSavers Survey

There are two groups of people affected by Groundwork projects. The local people who are regularly involved in the project we called 'community participants'. People not directly involved with the project but who live close by, we called 'wider community'. The 'wider community' was made up of people living in the area which each Groundwork Trust defined as being affected by their project. Community participants could be the local residents on the management committee, the youth group, members of the tenants association who initiated the project. There were typically about 10-20 per Trust. We would expect most projects to have a similar distinction between people directly involved in helping to create a project, and local people who can benefit from the results.

Most of the questions we asked the two groups were the same. However, there were some that were only relevant to the community participants, such as 'have you benefited from being involved with Groundwork?' and 'how many new friends have you made through the project?'.

All of the community participants were surveyed. In most cases they either completed the forms themselves, or surveyed each other. In the youth group at Merton they invented group games to make the survey more enjoyable (see below for more details).

For the wider community, a sample of people were interviewed. Details of how they were chosen are in the sampling section on page 59. In many cases, the community participants also helped to survey the wider community.

The survey forms we used for the Barclays SiteSavers survey are given in Appendix 3. Slightly different questions were used for community participants and wider community members. Questions on whether people in the wider community knew of or had used the facility or project replaced questions for community participants about whether they had benefited from being involved with Groundwork, enjoyed conversations with a new person from a different age or background, or made new friends on the project.

If you want to design your own survey, the next section gives some tips.

Designing the survey

If you're thinking of using your own questionnaires, we recommend you seek advice on questionnaire design. West Devon Environmental Network are pioneers in using community indicators, and the University of Plymouth helped them to get started. Here are some ideas to get you started.

A survey needs to capture the information you need quickly and efficiently. The survey in appendix 3 can be completed in under 10 minutes. However, you'll get much more value out of the surveying exercise if you also allow some time for chatting about any issues that arise, and particularly for collecting the stories that people often tell. In Merton, one interview lasted one and a half hours – time-consuming, but very interesting for the people running the project.

Some tips for designing the survey form:

- We recommend using a 5-point Belbin scale e.g. very good, good, don't know, bad, very bad. Five options are manageable but provide a variety of possible responses.
- Include 'don't know' – it's ok if people don't!

- Group questions that have similar ways of answering together – e.g. have all the 'do you agree with this statement' questions together, and all the 'how many...' questions together.
- Don't have prompts for people - if you're asking a 'why' question, let people tell you why in their own words. You can record it against several popular categories afterwards. For example, question 1c in Appendix 3 asks why people feel proud of their area. The interviewer shouldn't read out the options given, but should just tick whichever of the commonly-used answers is given, or write the answer in if it is more unusual.

Initial planning of feedback

At the same time as designing the survey, you'll want to think about how you are going to feed back the results of the survey to the people who have been interviewed. Perhaps you could line up an article in the local paper for a certain date, or arrange to have a display in a village hall or community centre. Deciding at least one communication channel in advance means that you can tell people who are interviewed where they can find the results, even though you will probably want to decide how to do the bulk of the communication once you have seen the results (see Chapters 10 and 11 for more ideas).

Who surveys?

Chapter 4 spelt out the benefits of doing a survey participatively. Assuming that you do want these benefits, you could use project staff members, local people, or a mixture of these to conduct the survey. Some of the main benefits of the measuring project come from the direct contact with the community and hearing all the asides that don't get recorded on the survey form. Below we look at the pros and cons of using project staff or local people as surveyors.

Project staff

Pros: This is a great way to become more widely known in the area, find out what people think, and generate enthusiasm. If there is a thorny conflict surrounding the project, it may be better for an outsider to talk about the project with local people and find out what the shades of opinion are. In some pilot areas, one Groundwork staff member did the whole survey. They found it good for one person to have all of the comments people make in their head and build up a complete picture.

Cons: However – can you make sure you pass on all the local knowledge you've gained back to the community? Don't forget the staff time involved. Do you have time to carry it out?

In Groundwork West London, the project manager found that interviewing people at the playground site enabled him to make links with lots of people who'd like to help with the project, for example on planting days. He said that as a result, local people felt part of the project, and much more involved than in previous Groundwork projects. The first two social capital questions sparked a lot of discussion about neighbourhood issues and sense of place – far more than he had expected. People also suggested improvements to the design of the playground that were taken on board.

Community members

Pros: Local people are the ones likely to be around if a project finishes and the agency moves on. So the more they understand how people feel about issues and about the data for the indicators, the better. Like project staff, they too often find that they make a lot of contacts through interviewing people, especially through door-knocking. This is an excellent training opportunity for those conducting the survey and it is a way to engage local people and spread a message about what you are doing.

Cons: Some people may give biased answers if they know the person carrying out the survey. You may therefore have to ensure that interviewers go to an unfamiliar area.

In Wilmslow, residents on the Colshaw estate found that the survey gave neighbours, who used not to communicate at all, something to talk about. It stimulated a lot of discussion about life on the estate. It also gave the interviewers more profile as leaders of the project, and increased their confidence in talking informally to their neighbours and attempting to get other people involved.

The local people do not have to be limited to the ones you are working with presently. In Stoke-on-Trent, Groundwork employed people from the wider SRB partnership group who were not otherwise involved with the project to help with the survey. This meant that the 'extra' learning from the conversations while carrying out the interviews was not captured by the main people involved in the project. So for the second survey, they hope to have local residents as surveyors.

In some places, particularly in inner cities, so much market research is being done that people feel surveyed to death. Some places and projects are paying people to both conduct and answer surveys. In Stoke-on Trent the rate for the interviewers mentioned above was £1 per survey. The other projects used people already involved with the project and didn't pay them. They found that the people who surveyed and who were surveyed became excited about, and committed to, the project. This may not have happened if it had seemed like just doing a paid job.

Safety issues

It's important to make sure that interviewers feel safe when interviewing either in the streets or door-to-door. In some of the Groundwork pilot areas, people felt safe going out alone, and in others, they went out in pairs, particularly in the evening.

In one place people went out alone or in pairs depending on which part of the estate they were covering. These perceptions of safety are useful in their own right as giving more information about the social fabric of the area, in addition to the information in the surveys themselves.

About young people

Many of the Groundwork pilot projects were working particularly with young people, and naturally tried involving them in different aspects of the surveys. Whilst it can be more difficult to involve young people in attitude surveys than physical or environmental surveys, there were many benefits from the opportunity to reflect on local issues and interact with others while working on the surveys. The Groundwork pilots tried several different approaches, and it is useful to learn from their experiences.

Young people as interviewees

It is not easy to include the views of young people outside of a group situation, as it is illegal to ask children under 16 for their views without written permission from their parents. So you can't stop children as part of a street survey. You can, however, ask children in school, as teachers are legally considered guardians of children at that time, or during a door-to-door session as long as the parents give permission.

Surveying young people in a group, as opposed to as part of a street survey, can be energising and stimulate a lot of discussion. However, it needs to be done imaginatively; in Thames Valley, youth club workers reported that it was rather boring for young people just to complete questionnaires.

However, group work on the indicators can really generate excitement. In Macclesfield, the youth group, who were participants in the Barclays SiteSavers project, discussed the issues behind the indicators. This was the first time young people had really listened to each other rather than all shouting at once! They then helped each other fill in the questionnaires. This again sparked lots of in-depth individual communication on important issues. The group hope to build on this by taking a more in-depth look at local issues on a weekend away.

Young people who had taken part in a group indicators session at school in Merton had obviously talked about it to their friends. By the time people from other classes got to the youth group that evening, they already knew about the indicators. The youth group went into more depth, playing all the games described in the 'Groups' section on page 63. On the next evening they were captured on camera being interviewed. This meant they could make a video about how people felt about the area.

In West Durham, adults tended to open the door and answer the questions. Groundwork hope to get a better spread of ages next time by specifically asking to speak to young people. One teenager however was around when the man from Groundwork called. He interviewed her mother, heard a young person in the background, and asked if he could ask her a few questions. She agreed, but only after she went back upstairs, changed, did her hair and put on her makeup.

Young people as interviewers

Young people can make enthusiastic and reliable researchers, particularly for 'practical' measuring surveys on e.g. derelict sites, types of shop in a neighbourhood or counting frogs in ponds. Working on a 'real' project can help build connections with the wider community, gives a sense of achievement and builds up confidence through interacting with adults as equals. Such projects also link well with several parts of the national curriculum, in for example mathematics, geography and citizenship.

In several of the Groundwork pilots, the young people involved in the project surveyed each other as community participants, so were both interviewers and interviewees. This they enjoyed.

Several of the Barclays SiteSavers pilots tried involving young people in doing the surveying of the wider community, rather than just of each other as community participants. Again, you need written parental permission for young people under 16, and shouldn't work with young people under 14 years of age in any case. 'People' survey work is often very challenging for young people and they needed a lot of training and support to interview members of the community. In Merton, young people who had enjoyed doing the participants survey were interested in surveying the wider community, but didn't quite have the confidence to move out of the youth centre and interact with other people.

In Caerphilly, the YouthWatch group carried out the first survey with help from the community centre management committee. Pairs of young people went out with an adult, and were told not to go into people's houses. The Groundwork project officer says they gained enormously in confidence through interacting with non-peers, but

didn't particularly enjoy it. However, some found some of the words, such as 'the questionnaire is anonymous', difficult to pronounce.There was a feeling that some residents told the young people what they thought they wanted to hear, or replied to questions they appeared not to understand, so as not to seem stupid. They might have been more honest with adults.

Who to survey?

Understanding the local area

The first step is to define the geographical 'area' or 'community' that you are referring to in the questions. People within this form the wider community. If it's a relatively well-defined area, this will be simple; otherwise you will have to use your judgement. The planning department at your local authority may be able to say which areas are served by which open space or amenity, for example.

Often it takes too much time and money to survey everybody who might be affected by a project. So you will have to choose a sample of people living (and maybe working) in the chosen geographical area to survey.

Choose your sample

You want your sample to give the same results as if you had asked everybody. You can attempt to sample randomly through street or house-to-house polls, but you'll still need to check that you've not been unwittingly biased towards one particular group. The smaller the number of people you survey, the more relevant this is.

To be reasonably sure that the sample will give reliable results, you must 1) use a large enough sample (see table below) and 2) ensure that the sample of people you survey are similar, as a group, to the entire group of people affected by the project. But what does 'similar' mean? Must they support the same football teams or eat the same food? Given the nature of your project, you must decide which are the most important personal factors that may affect the answers people give. These might include: gender; age; social background; ethnicity, and disability status, according to the make-up of your area and focus of your project. Alternatively, it may be car ownership or location of home. If your council has a Citizens Panel, the organisers of the panel should be able to tell you about the demography of the area.

In choosing the factors, for the Barclays SiteSavers social capital survey we focussed on the four target groups from the national programme: young people, older people, ethnic minorities and unemployed people. There is space on the survey form to collect this information. However, you could take into account other factors relevant to you

locally and add these to the form as well. Make sure that if the project is aimed at a certain group of people, e.g. children, that you include them as a category in the survey.

Once you've decided which categories of people you want to concentrate on, work out what proportion of the population they represent. For example, some estates have much higher numbers of families or older people than the general population, so you'll want to make sure that this is reflected in who you survey. You can get statistics on the local population from your council to help you set targets for each category. Ring them up and ask which department handles demographic statistics from the latest Census for the area you are interested in. They will probably put you through to the policy or planning department. They should be free of charge at the level of a ward (usually around 1500 households) but may cost or not be available for smaller areas.

The simplest way to check that you are reaching the right mix of people in your sample is probably for one person to check the survey forms after about half have been completed. You may find that your interviewers haven't picked up the right geographical spread of people, or are falling behind on the overall target for young people or one of your other categories. If so you can alter the way people do the remaining surveys to compensate. For example, they may need to go out at different times, or do some street surveys at a place where your missing target groups gather.
Do make sure that you get an adequate sample from groups which are hard to reach. Examples of these are 18 - 24 year olds, because they don't like surveys, or full-time workers, because they aren't around their local area during the day – so do make sure that you do some surveying in the evening too.

The role of the person co-ordinating the surveys is crucial in making sure that this happens (the equivalent person to the Groundwork project officer in the pilots). It is very easy, particularly where lots of people are helping with the survey, for everyone to be so concerned with getting any surveys at all that they forget about seeking representativeness.

Many of the pilot trusts didn't set targets scientifically, but rather had a good idea of the population makeup and knew whether their results reflected that or not. On reflection, many of them said that next time they would make sure they checked the results half-way through, as this would have enabled them to make changes to their method and get a more representative sample.

For the detailed analysis, with the results broken down according to different characteristics of people, it is important to have the right classification questions. For example, at the bottom of the Barclays SiteSavers survey form (in Appendix 3), there are classification questions of gender, age, race etc. As these were standard across all 16 pilots, we could do both local and national analysis to compare whether the results were

different for, say, Afro-Caribbean women or white men. One pilot Trust wanted to add the category 'Welsh' to the ethnic background questions. This would have confused the results, as it would no longer be possible to distinguish between Welsh Afro-Caribbean and Welsh Asian etc – they could all have come out as Welsh. Having 'Welsh' as an option in a separate category under 'nationality' instead of under 'ethnicity' would, however, work.

How many people?

Obviously the greater the sample size, the greater the accuracy of the results. With a big enough sample size, you can get a margin of error of up to 3 per cent either way – for example, if your survey says that 26 per cent of people were very proud of the area, the real figure may vary between 23 per cent and 29 per cent. For social capital surveys we need a good idea of what people think, but also have to be realistic about the number of people it is possible to survey. The table below gives suggested figures for a reasonable margin of error. As a guide, anything under 50 is statistically useless (unless you've only got seventy people in your project area!). 100 is the minimum for a reasonably accurate result, and 1500 is the maximum you need to interview (even if you're surveying the whole country, anything over this doesn't yield much more accurate results!). Bear in mind that the closer you can get to the number suggested, the greater the accuracy of your results.

Numbers look precise, so remember that this is only supposed to be a guide. For numbers affected different from those below, you will obviously have to use your judgement. For example, if 5,000 people are affected, 300 - 350 looks about right.

How many people are affected by the project?	How many people to survey?	Proportion
100	50 - 100	Everybody or 1 in 2
1,000	200	1 in 5
10,000	500	1 in 20
100,000	1000	1 in 100

When to survey?

The baseline, or first survey, should be done as near to the start of the project as possible. Even though any volunteers helping with the project will be keen to get stuck in to designs and planning, its important to do an initial survey before the project has had any effect at all. You'll probably need to convince people of the benefits of knowing just what an impact their hard work will make. In the pilots' experience, once people started surveying they could see the value of it, but getting started was hard!

Some found that doing the survey among the community participants first made them far more enthusiastic about doing the wider community survey.

You'll want to think carefully about the timing of the second and later rounds of indicators. For surveys, people prefer standing outside and knocking on doors in the summer. However, you need to have the surveys far enough apart so that things will have changed, but not so far in the future that everyone has forgotten about the project. Also, if the surveys are not done at the same time of year, there may be some seasonal bias. For example, some people may be more depressed in the winter, or you may get a different cross-section of people out-of-doors on a school holiday than in term-time. Try to pick the best balance between having the surveys at similar parts of the year, and fitting in with the timing of the rest of your project.

How to survey?

Street

For a street poll, choose places where different sorts of people gather. The interviews should be done at different times of day, and with a balance of weekend and weekdays, in order to catch different sorts of people; also choose the locations carefully to mamise coverage of the area concerned. Advice on sampling is given on page 59.

Door-to-door

Check with local residents that people feel comfortable opening doors to strangers – in some estates we found that people only open the door to the council. It is important to have identification visible.

If all the people affected by the project live in a very compact area, you could knock on, say, every third door instead of doing a sample of people in the street. You need to make sure you still interview a mix of ages, sexes etc. if you use this method. So for example, if you want to interview young people, it is a question of asking if there are any at home and moving on if there aren't. Going out at different times of day may help here too.

Check with your insurers whether members of the public doing this on your behalf would be covered under your public liability insurance. Most charities which work with members of the public, such as Groundwork Trusts, will have this – surveying is less dangerous than using a chainsaw – but it is wise to make sure.

Telephone Interviews

Sometimes surveys are conducted by telephone. Telephone surveys do not tend to lead to as much interaction between interviewer and interviewee, and therefore we did not recommend this method for the Barclays SiteSavers pilots. The personal contact of face-to-face interviews led to a lot of additional stories and background knowledge being passed on, as well as generating a lot of interest in the project – in Stoke, 30 per cent of interviewees went on to become involved in the project. If you want to do a large number of surveys however, telephone surveys are a good way of getting a random spread of households across an area, but it will obviously only cover people who have a telephone and are not ex-directory.

Groups

In the Barclays SiteSavers measuring project, the most innovative ways of gathering data involved working with groups.

Group work is particularly relevant when you are surveying community participants, rather than trying to get a random sample of people in the neighbourhood. However, there are occasions when you can collect a relatively random group of people. In Erewash, for example, there was a marquee at a fair to attract people. This allowed people to discuss the wider issues around the project together. Group work can also be useful if you know that your 'random' survey has actually missed a whole section of people out, such as young people, and you can do some groups work with them to correct the balance of the survey.

It is also more fun than filling in forms in the street or at the front door, especially for young people. This is true if people are filling in survey forms and helping each other with reading and writing. It is even more true if games are used. Games are especially good where reading and writing are difficult.

With such games, it is vital to 'track' individual responses so that you can make comparisons about the survey results afterwards. You may later want to check whether the same people who feel that neighbours look out for each other also feel safe in their area, or whether there is a difference between young people and older people in sense of being able to effect change locally. (In Merton, where a lot of innovative group work was pioneered, the results couldn't be fully analysed because individuals' answers couldn't be identified).

The best way we've found so far is the 'sticky dot' method:

1) Give each person several sticky dots (at least one per question) to put their initials on (check people don't have same initials, add a letter if they do!)
2) Devise games for recording answers to different questions. For example,
   Corners: Assign each corner of the room and the centre to one of the possible responses 'strongly agree', 'agree', don't know', 'disagree', 'strongly disagree'. For each question, people move to different corners and stick their dot on a flipchart labelled with the appropriate response. Each station has a different flipchart or other poster for each question. The leader can ask some groups why they chose that corner, and record stories at the same time before moving on to the next question. This can leave you with lots of flipcharts to make sense of, so make sure each one is carefully labelled.
   Bullseye: Draw a bullseye with 5 concentric circles. Label each circle according to the possible answers to the question. People show how much they agree with the statement in the question by how close to the centre they put their dot.
3) The leader can then collate the answers of people to different questions and fill in the forms for the group members according to where they placed their dots.

One potential problem is bias due to people 'following the crowd'. It may be tempting for young people to run to whichever corner is the most popular. However with careful preparation and discussion beforehand about why this is being done, and also a chance for people to say why they've gone to each corner and maybe move to a more appropriate one, this can be minimised.

Instead of using the dots, people could sign their names on the flipcharts (although dots are sometimes easier to read!). However having people simply tick the flipcharts doesn't work, as you can't then tell who answered what.

Linking with existing surveys

You may be able reach a large number of people by linking your questions to a survey being carried out by another agency. However, the chances of them surveying people in exactly the same area as you want to cover, and having enough space for all the questions you want to ask, are very slight. Your best chance might be to ask questions through a Citizens Panel. Some local councils have set these up as a way of finding out the views of about 1000 randomly selected residents over a period of time. You could explore whether you could survey the Panel members who live in the relevant neighbourhood.

Guidance for interviewers

You may find it helpful to give out a guidance form to the people helping you to interview. A sample form recommended by John Salkeld consultants, who analysed the Barclays SiteSavers surveys, is in Appendix 3. If it suits you, please copy and use it.

Trial run/training

If you are using local people to do the interviews, it is important to give them at least a brief training session. The key points to make to them are:

- Start by introducing yourself and the project
- It is essential to have and to show identification, for example a letter from Groundwork naming the person as an interviewer for the project, and a telephone number for anyone with any qualms to ring. If you have a leaflet about the project, offer it
- Before they ask the questions they should emphasise, first, confidentiality - names of interviewees will not be used in any report, and, second, what feedback interviewees will receive
- They should be able to explain what the project is, and what the survey is for, clearly and concisely
- They should be sensitive to the position of the interviewee. For instance, they should not push for long supplementary answers if someone is starting to look bored
- When they ask the questions, they should use exactly the words on the form. Consistent answers need consistent questions.

They should then have the opportunity to practice, initially under supervision so that you can provide feedback. Groundwork Caerphilly's project officer responded to his young interviewers' questions with, 'What right have you to ask me that?', 'I don't understand' and 'So who are you then?'. They were rather shocked, but much better prepared when they did it for real.

Collecting stories as well

People will often come up with stories or snippets of information while they're answering the survey questionnaire or discussing the indicators. These are invaluable, so be sure to record them as soon as possible. Make a note next to the story of which question or indicator it refers to most. They'll be really useful when you come to try and understand the results afterwards, and will help you to tell the whole story of your project or area. The stories can be used anonymously – a girl in the estate said that... . If you know who the person was and you want to use the story with their name, you'll have to seek permission, as the questionnaire process is strictly confidential.

A group debrief session for all of the interviewers after the surveys are finished is a good way to share and collect the 'soft' information like stories and perceptions of safety that people collect during the interview process.

Do the interviews

Provide interviewers with identification and a leaflet about the project, if you have one.

Decide how many interviews each person will conduct. Allocate times and places.

Street interviews should be done at different times of day, and with a balance of weekend and weekdays, in order to catch different sorts of people. Also choose the locations carefully to cover the whole area.

Remember that you need to check who's been interviewed part way through to see if you're getting a good balance of people. Keep track of how many people from different categories have been interviewed. If you are short of interviews from certain categories you have to concentrate on these categories in later interviews. For example, if you have less people from one part of the estate, you can go there for the later interviews. Or if you don't have enough young people, you could go to a youth club and do some group work (see section on working with groups on page 63).

Analysing the surveys

Once you have the survey results in, you need to get as much information from them as possible! This means not only finding out how many people agree with each statement, but also spotting patterns and trends. For example, you may want to know how many people who are proud of their area also think they can change things. Or you may notice that there's an increase in how much older people look out for their neighbours but no change among young people – or vice versa.

You'll need to do some serious number-crunching to get full value from the statistics. To do all this analysis yourself would take a long time, but there are special computer packages that can make it relatively easy. Unless you're very experienced in this, we recommend teaming up with someone who can help. This may be your local authority or a university or even your local Council for Voluntary Services.

Pat Mayston from the West Devon Environmental Network says: 'We obtained invaluable advice from the university on questionnaire design. The results were analysed by Devon County Council's Research and Intelligence Services. We doubt that we could have carried out this part of the process without the professional expertise of these organisations. It's important for community groups to be able to show that their

questionnaire data stands up to scrutiny, and has been analysed properly with standard statistical methods.'

Initial DIY

It's important to produce some results pretty quickly to feed back to the people who took part, and maintain momentum. The detailed results may come especially after a second survey so that you can track the changes. Whoever analyses the results may also give advice about what indicator changes will grab the local headlines. For example, in a previous Barclays SiteSavers survey on 'Community Matters', the consultant picked out statistics of particular interest. These included 'people in the North and Midlands are far more likely to recognise their neighbours than are those in the South of the country' and 'twice as many people under 30 say they rarely or never smile at people in the street, compared with the over 45's'.

Professional analysis

If you want a full understanding of the results we recommend professional help with the analysis of the surveys, unless your organisation has a lot of experience in this type of work. This could range from friendly advice from a local expert, to arranging for the local technical college or council department to analyse them for you, to engaging a market researcher to help you with both the questionnaire design and the analysis of the results.

The stages at which you might need advice or help are:

1) Designing the questionnaire
2) Coding the replies
3) Numerical analysis of the data according to different categories
4) Interpreting the data and pulling out the most interesting and significant results.

Research companies and colleges etc normally offer (or even insist) on doing the collection of the survey data as well. If you want to maximise the benefits of doing the surveying participatively, you'll have to make it clear that you'll be doing this stage and find a partner who is willing just to do the analysis. If you would like to use the researcher who helped to design the questionnaire forms for Barclays SiteSavers, and is also doing the analysis of the results, you can find his details in the endnotes.[xi] He will either analyse the standard forms for you if you are using the Barclays SiteSavers forms in Appendix 3, or help you design your own as well as analysing them.

As a guide, current costs for coding, numerical analysing and set of tabulations (e.g. male/female etc) are from £225 for 100 forms, £350 for 200 forms or £510 for 500

forms. Writing a narrative report would be an additional £950. Designing a questionaire costs £310 for a day. If a design meeting is needed in addition, this is charged at a proportion of the £310 day rate. Expenses for travel, postage of the set of forms etc. are extra.

You can hire or form a partnership with people depending on the size of your project and your experience. You may already know of local colleges or council departments who would be able to help.

Comparing results with other places

As well as being useful to you locally, it can be interesting to compare what's happening on your project with what happens elsewhere. For the Barclays SiteSavers social capital indicators, we hope to build up a national picture of the impact on people and communities of taking part in environmental projects. We may be able to track differences according to whether projects happen on outlying estates or inner cities, or to look at the different factors affecting community pride. Together, the indicators will cover a large number of people throughout England and can help to give a picture of our diverse communities.

Starting to understand the indicators

You'll probably all find yourselves breathing a sigh of relief at the end of the data collection and analysis. Take another deep breath because the most important stage is yet to come - understanding the results, and using them to create change locally.

Key pointers from the first Barclays SiteSavers survey

Many of the major points from the surveys have been mentioned already. But as a reminder, here are some of the main tips to emerge.

Getting started on the surveys

Local people already volunteering with the project will be more enthusiastic about helping with the wider surveys if they do the surveys on each other first. This will also give people a 'trial run', so that everyone is confident about what all the questions mean, and even about pronouncing all the words.

Designing the survey form

Make sure that this is clear and easy-to-use, preferably on one page.

Use a five-point scale for questions about attitudes. This can cover whether people strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree with a statement or whether they are not sure. This is better than a three point scale, as it enables you monitor more sensitively how things change over time. People may move over time from 'agree' to 'strongly agree', as well as from 'not sure' to 'agree'. However, you need to make clear to the people doing the interviewing why there are several answers rather than simply 'yes' or 'no'.

Be clear to people that they can't change the questions once they've been agreed, but they can explain them if necessary.

Carrying out the survey

Before you start, think carefully about where and when to carry out the survey to make sure that you get answers from a good mix of people in the area. Once you all start surveying it may be too late as most of the surveyors will probably focus on getting the numbers in!

Make sure that one person checks the survey forms part way through. If you are missing one group, e.g. young people, you can change the places you go to if you're surveying in the street, or who you ask to speak to if you're door-knocking, to compensate.

After the survey

Make time to discuss the results with everyone who helped. Often this was the only time some Groundwork staff had had to actually discuss the wider issues about why they were doing the project. Usually time spent reviewing with community members was filled by 'what shall we do about the underground subsidence' and 'I've had a great new idea for the plans'. One Trust found it particularly useful to discuss the project and the surveys with an outsider as well. Asking the 'obvious' questions to a group of community participants actually brought out a lot of new insights, e.g. about to what extent the project had been responsible for their increase in confidence.

Checklist

You may find it useful to use this checklist to ensure that you have thought about all the stages of surveying.

Checklist: surveying

☑ Identify data sources for the non-survey indicators	☑ Decide how to survey – street, door-to-door, in groups, etc
☑ Plan the timing of the first and follow-on surveys	☑ Establish a target for the number of people you need to survey, and randomly sample
☑ Design the questionnaire survey form for the indicators about people's attitudes	☑ Put in place a way to collect the 'soft' evidence like the stories people tell when doing the survey
☑ Plan who will do the surveys, arrange necessary training	☑ Decide on how to analyse the surveys – maybe with professional help
☑ Define the important categories of people to include in the survey	

10: Communicating progress

The why, when, what, who and how of communication

Why communicate?

The whole point about doing the indicators is to measure and promote positive change. The more people who are aware of them, the greater the chance of this being the case.

When to communicate

Some indicators may be relevant after the first round of measurement because they give a snapshot of the community. It has been useful to learn that in the 16 pilot project areas, over half of all people felt safe out and about in their communities at night. However, the second and later rounds will tell more of a story about the impact of the project. After the second round you can see whether things really are changing locally or not.

What to communicate

What changes do you want to see, and who could help make the changes? Once you've worked this out, you can start thinking about what to communicate to the people who can really make a difference – probably different people / groups for each indicator.

Who to communicate to

An important part of the getting started phase of the project is identifying relevant stakeholders. Certain indicators will be more relevant to some stakeholders (people affected by the project in different ways) locally, and you can target the message you send to them accordingly.

It is important to give feedback to those who participated in the survey. If people have spent time answering questions they deserve to find out about the results! Invite interviewees and others to a presentation, distribute the results in the local paper, in a

mail-out or on notice boards. This is also a way for you to get their feedback on the results. Be as creative as possible.

The survey can deliver a much-needed boost for volunteers and community workers alike. Sometimes community workers can feel undervalued, and some have found that the social capital survey meant they could at last prove their worth and that they were having an impact.

There may be messages from the indicators that need to reach those it has been difficult to involve in the project, for example local government and business. Don't forget to communicate with them.

How to communicate

You need to make sure that you use whatever language (words, pictures, images) will stick most in people's minds. This will be different for different groups.

It may be that certain audiences respond to something a little more visual! In a Reading park, a class of children who were fed up with the dog mess decided to take direct action. One Saturday morning, they planted 900 flags in each pile of dog mess, and invited the press to take pictures. The message obviously got through, as on the next count, only 250 flags were used.

What's the story?

Before you communicate the results of the indicators you need to clarify the story of the impact being made. In reality there are likely to be a number of themes to emerge from the process. Some will be more or less meaningful to different audiences.

In order to work out the main messages, do sit down with everyone who has helped with the surveys to tell stories, have a laugh about the glories of surveying in the rain, and dissect the information. Even if just one person has done the actual surveying, it is worth discussing the results in this way with other local people involved in the project. This should enable you to pull together the wider learning, distribute it among local people, and pool your creative resources for working out what to do next.

The story from the process

The process of doing the surveys participatively can itself reveal a lot about the state of the community and the main messages to emerge. One encouraging observation from many of the pilots was that people are often all too willing to get involved in local projects if they only know that they are happening. Several projects found that 30 or 40

per cent of people who were interviewed became involved in the project as a result. A lot of people obviously also have views and ideas about the local area which they don't usually discuss with their neighbours, and the surveys in many cases acted as a spur to get neighbours talking about these issues with each other. This would imply that people are more willing than might be imagined to get involved locally, if they are only given the right opportunities.

The surveys can also reveal a lot about people's feelings of safety. Whether interviewers are able to go round individually or in pairs, or not at all to certain places can show the differences in the area. Also, the willingness of people to answer the door can be revealing.

The willingness or otherwise with which young people offer to get involved on surveying the wider community shows the level of engagement and self-confidence they have. In one case, a girl said that this was the first time she'd had a 'proper' conversation with an adult other than family, teachers or youth workers.

In one estate some people felt uncomfortable asking the classification questions about ethnicity, as race issues were very sensitive on the estate. This highlights an area of concern that the survey might not have picked up. Sometimes it is also better to have someone from outside of the immediate area doing the surveying if there are particularly sensitive issues. In one area, the use of the proposed site for the community project was under dispute. It was felt that the sensitivity of issues around the project made it unwise for the local residents to do the interviewing, so the Groundwork officer did it all himself – and gained a lot of insights into the local culture at the same time.

One youth group brought up the issue of drugs as something they were concerned about both in terms of safety and whether it was a good place to live. This was the first time they had ever openly discussed drugs, and previously the youth worker had thought that only adults were concerned about this.

The story from the indicators

We describe below some of the learning that came out of the Barclays SiteSavers first round of surveys as an example of what you may find.

One common result was that people didn't feel confident that they could bring about change locally. Why not? Many areas had a similar story to tell, of neglected areas coupled with initiatives from outside agencies that started but never actually finished or delivered change locally. There is a huge amount of suspicion about anyone, like Groundwork, who suggests a local project. When NEF visited a lot of the projects

they were in the half-completed stage, and community participants expressed hope but also scepticism about completion. People in Macclesfield and West Cumbria said that the biggest contribution that the Groundwork project could make would be simply to get finished, and prove that local people could help to make real, lasting improvements on the ground.

One area found a big difference between the percentage of people who felt they and their neighbours looked out for each other, and the number who felt safe in their area. When they talked about this, they realised that because the flats on the estate are organised in small groups, people did feel they knew and trusted their immediate neighbours; however, once leaving their area, in the wider estate, people felt very alienated and afraid of each other.

People gave a variety of reasons for pride (or otherwise) in their areas in the first round of the surveys. The most common were 'I've lived here all my life', 'The people are great', and 'Good community spirit'. Conversely, the things that destroyed pride were 'Vandalism and dirt', 'Bad reputation', and 'Nothing to do'. In some cases both older and younger people said that they were proud of their area, but still listed a number aspects.

In many areas the strength of the community was essential in keeping up people's morale, but physical improvements could also have a great impact. The example on page 81 of young people trying to destroy broken buildings because they made it too embarrassing to bring their friends home from school is a case in point. In Merton, the older people thought that the estate was OK, whereas the young people were the ones who noticed all of the vandalism and boarded up shops. In each case, the findings were a good starting point for discussion and they highlighted the need to develop an area for young people to be proud of.

In Merton, young men were more willing than expected to say that they felt unsafe. Contrary to public opinion, they are the ones actually most targeted for violence. They were also able to identify which features and places were particularly unsafe, which could be addressed as part of a later project.

Letting the outside world know

Now turn this material into a story for the outside world. For example:

Celebrate! 80 per cent of people think we can change things round here – and look what we've done!

Shock! No one knows the councillor! Adults think things are getting better, but young people think they're getting worse! The reason no-one uses the beautiful new park is that they're all afraid of strangers lurking behind the trees - so let's do some thinning out of branches.

Act! Nobody knows who's who in the voluntary sector, so we'd better produce a directory quick!

Report

You need a basic, visual report for local people. This could be in the form of a display, but you'll probably want a written one as well.

A good report should include:

- Visuals! For example show the rise/fall of indicators over time as a graph. Belfast used the height of chimneys to track air pollution and piles of briefcases to track visitors to the city
- Explanations of what you hope will happen with each indicator, and a couple of stories
- Ideas about what people can do next
- Clear contact details
- Ways for people to feed back ideas and get involved.

Papers & press

Over 80 per cent of people over the age of 15 read a regional paper in the UK. The press can be a great help if you invest in the relationship. Measuring can give positive news about areas that often get bad press. Indicators and statistics can provide good news stories as well as visuals, particularly if you've worked out who you need to target to make things happen. The paper may even be willing to print the indicators on an ongoing basis. Here are some suggestions for media to include:

Print & broadcast media	☑ the report itself ☑ newspapers and free papers ☑ community newsletters & parish magazines ☑ in-house journals of local companies ☑ handbills and leaflets ☑ worksheets for schoolchildren ☑ council journals and publications ☑ radio ☑ television

DIY: creativity, displays & events

Show how things were, how they've changed, how you'd like them to be. West Devon has developed a 'Swingometer' which shows which way the indicators are going.

Here are some more ideas for creativity from Groundwork staff.

- Flags on school fence illustrating good and bad things
- Swingometer
- PC terminal with results
- Interactive exhibits
- Create local leaflets or booklets, or a walking trail through the area
- Make banners
- Ask people to take pictures or draw things for the display when you present the information.
- Get a local artist or pupils at the school to design an interesting display
- Parish 3D Map
- Photograph the area and residents before starting the projects and after completion
- Make a very large scale wooden jigsaw
- Link to a local history/futures project with tape recordings of people telling the stories behind the indicators
- Video of young people 'telling it how it is'
- Drama workshops/show: (this is how it is/this is how we would like it/this is how we'd achieve it)
- Involve a celebrity
- Have an event with a theme linked to some of the survey findings e.g. Area pride with different people / groups contributing.

11: Taking action

Using the surveys to improve human and social capital

A key aim of this measuring work is to spotlight the effect of projects on the people and communities involved in terms of human and social capital. The skills and confidence that people develop, the ability of people to work together and break down the barriers that divide them, and the experience of interacting successfully with outside agencies, can be key factors in the success of existing and future projects.

Both the initial surveys, and the process of surveying itself, give an insight into the current state of the community. Armed with this knowledge, you can start to think about actions to change things for the better. Of course actions don't have to wait until the end of the measuring process. In the LITMUS (Local Indicators To Monitor Urban Sustainability) project in Southwark, as well as doing measuring, community participants were to start taking action straight away. This involved setting up a gardening club and working with the local refugee community.

It's a good idea to include things for everybody to do at the same time as publicising the indicators. 'Belfast Counts - small steps to a better Belfast' is the report on local indicators of sustainable development in Belfast, and it really does suggest small steps for people to take. Each indicator comes with suggestions for action and follow-up contact details. For the indicator on number of businesses in Belfast, the action point is 'you could check to see if the products that you buy are locally produced', and the telephone number of the Business Start Programme is given. For 'mental health and well-being', the action point is 'perhaps you could phone or visit a friend you haven't spoken to for a while', and the contact group is the Samaritans.

Experience suggests that action does not happen on its own. You can do (at least) three things to give action a helping hand:

1. Reflecting on current actions/projects taking place in light of what you have learnt about local human and social capital
2. Thinking creatively about what new actions or aspects of projects that would enhance it even more
3. Planning and implementing action.

Reflecting on current action

One issue which the Barclays SiteSavers project uncovered in several areas was low expectations for local improvement amongst the community. Nevertheless, in each of these areas, there are several people who have taken a major lead in organising the project, and developed skills in fundraising, meeting councillors and encouraging the ideas and participation of other people especially schoolchildren.

The lesson for action by Groundwork, in terms of developing confidence and realistic expectations seems to be the ability to stick in there, show commitment to an area and to work with the community at every stage.

The pilots have also had a chance to think about which parts of their projects are likely to enhance human and social capital, and to think about what changes to their projects would make even more of an impact.

Building skills and confidence

It is perhaps too early to see how indicators have changed action amongst Groundwork Trusts. But clues about what they might do in the future are given by projects that are being successfully carried out now. The example of training below is an approach that could meet a skill deficit identified in the process of measuring.

Projects can give people the chance to develop leadership as well as practical skills. The energetic chair of the trustees group, which Groundwork has set up to manage the Maryport Millennium Green project in West Cumbria, is 21. This is his first major leadership role in the community. He became involved when his boss (also a trustee) recognised his potential and suggested that he come along to the meetings. Training for trustees has been organised and will cover fundraising, motivating people, celebrating, being on committees, legal mechanisms, and practical conservation. The youngest member of the group can't be a formal trustee until his 18th birthday next year. He'll do the training with the others though.

Building community connections

Many Trusts put a lot of thought into how to make links between different parts of the community. Sometimes this is by working together, and sometimes groups need to build up respect for each other before working together is possible. In West Cumbria as in many other pilot areas, links between generations are developing slowly on the Millennium Green pilot project. Early attempts to have older and younger people work together failed as older people were too critical. So the youth group and schools have done most of the design for the project, together with the

community artist, and the trustees have liaised with outside agencies on planning and how to implement the design. When planting happens, Groundwork and the trustees hope that age groups will work together much more as originally intended. Practical activities tend to be fun and a provide a good opportunity for people see each other in a different light.

However, some individuals working on the project have built up strong links. For example, trustee Moira, a pensioner, has been to Egremont Skate Park to get ideas for the project! The children have been working with the designer Karen about the complexities of actually getting something from the ideas stage to action on the ground. Because local people wanted a play area, which was not allowed under the rules of the national Millennium Green programme, they've had to be creative about the use of materials. For example, Karen has been back to them several times to refine details such as how high the knee rails at the side of the footpaths should be so that skateboarders can jump on them.

Local firms have also linked in with the Millennium Green, donating or supplying a lot of the materials, including large chunks of granite to be made into seats which will double as climbing objects, and making a giant wave sculpture which doubles as a slide.

In Merton, the success of the young people has won over the initial scepticism from others, especially from the residents association. Young people are starting to be seen by the residents association as part of the solution, rather than the problem. A key indicator is that older people don't refer to youth centre members as 'yoblets' any more. Young people now have a 'can-do' attitude, are asking for things to do and driving projects, because they see that they can change things. This is a good example of the young people initially working within the confines of the youth centre, being recognised for this, and gradually developing the confidence to interact with other residents. Indeed, some individuals who used to be considered particularly 'dodgy' are now meeting once a week as part of the new youth council and liasing with other residents.

Thinking creatively about new actions

Look at what is happening now to provide inspiration for new action. Also think beyond this to see how things might develop. Some of the current actions shown above may also be future priorities. It is also possible to think about what is not necessarily being done to meet some local needs.

A lot of places would like to increase community pride. Thinking up ways to do this can be one of the most fun parts of a project. Entrance enhancements, gateways, and

children's competitions for a new name sign with landscaping have all been used to enhance local pride in an area. Annual community festivals get all the groups sharing, and help to celebrate the community.

Once pride has started to increase, it tends to continue in a self-increasing spiral. In Bridgend, pride has increased to the extent that people look after common areas. For example, when a drainage trench flooded, someone dug it out. No trees have been vandalised, even when there's no metal surround, and someone has put up a new greenhouse. The Groundwork project worker said, 'they wouldn't have dared to put that up six months ago!'

In several cases, people said that they didn't feel safe, particularly when using environmentally landscaped sites. In Stoke-on-Trent, people didn't use the neighbouring wild area because the bushes were too thick and they didn't know who might be hiding in them. In the most popular action of the project, some volunteers started thinning out the bushes at one end of the area, and other people came out to help with the bushes opposite their front door, forming a giant slow-motion Mexican wave!

Planning and implementing action

You'll want to set targets to set out how you hope the indicators will change due to the project. The Barclays SiteSavers projects have yet to reach this stage. The DETR's Good Practice Guide on evaluation gives the example of the Peckham Partnership, where targets include:

- Reducing the fear of crime
- Reducing the number of assaults and reported juvenile and street crime to the London average
- Doubling the number of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs.

You may want to modify your work to ensure that you meet your aims! For example, several pilot staff hoped that the project would build networks between people of different age groups. In some cases this has worked well, but in others the original idea of having meetings between older people and young people didn't work because the very negative perceptions of the older people about young 'yobos' meant that they didn't give the young people a chance.

It was decided instead to let the young people work independently on aspects of the project e.g. design, and prove their capabilities that way. Then they will bring the age groups together for practical work such as planting seedlings, where the young people can probably learn from the older people's experience. Providing the right opportunities for people to interact, and being willing to modify the original ideas seem to be key to making community projects realise their full potential in building communities.

Think whether the project needs changing in the light of the indicators. For example, you may have realised that no young people or middle-aged men feel they can effect change locally, and find ways to enable them to get involved in your project. An estate in Devon decided to take community drama and models of the estate along to the betting shop and the launderette to reach new people!

In some cases the indicators start an exploration. Who could change perceptions of pride? How can we communicate them? Maybe it's time for a new project? One estate desperately wanted their name associated with a positive initiative. A fun day was a start, but they are campaigning for a community centre with the same name as their estate, rather than the existing centre outside the estate which carries the name of a neighbouring village. They have also held meetings with the local paper to explain the damage inflicted by repeated references to their 'problem estate'. More positive articles about the estate have begun to appear.

Not all action is planned. On the same estate, children were so fed up with derelict buildings with boarded up windows and barbed wire that they tried to burn them down. This was partly because the buildings were such an eyesore. This stimulated the residents to put in a successful funding bid to the Department for Environment, based on the wishes of the young people.

Here is an example of how action happened once the right person had been reached. In Merton, the indicators on 'do you know who to contact' showed that none of the young people could name the local councillors or knew how to contact them. A youth worker passed this information on to one councillor, who was horrified at his lack of profile, having always thought of himself as an approachable sort of chap. Result? The councillor has decided to do lots more work with young people.

Does the action make all the difference?

Just as we explained at the start of this handbook, it won't always be obvious whether it is your actions or changed actions that are the cause of a local transformation. Sometimes a few questions to the right people will help. In Ramshaw, West Durham, two women have become local councillors since starting the play area project with Groundwork. The Groundwork project officer doubted whether this was all due to their involvement with the play area, as they had always seemed pretty confident people to him. But when asked, they said that it was indeed a direct result of the confidence they'd gained during the project. At first they hadn't understand what was going on at the local partnership meetings. They found all the acronyms very confusing. The Groundwork officer provided explanations and they gradually got more confident. Now they are willing to say, 'Excuse me can you explain that better', if something is unclear.

They then realised that the if the parish council had kept a better eye on the old play area, it wouldn't have got so bad and have to have been shut down by Health and Safety, and, having built up their confidence on the play area project, decided to stand for election.

The two ladies are now on the parish council. As a result of their efforts, the council now rotates between three villages, rather than meeting all the time in the largest one. Other achievements include getting the village connected to the gas supply network, and setting weight restrictions on big trucks going by.

Celebrate!

By now you may have identified and measured some really important local issues and have some ideas about actions that need to happen. This is already a huge achievement. Renew your flagging energy by having a celebration of all the work to date. As well as rewarding volunteers, it's a good chance to connect people again. There's nothing like realising that you've actually achieved something to get the brain cells ticking away on the next steps.

Evaluation

Evaluating an evaluation sounds an odd thing to do but it isn't. You have evaluated a project or programme in order to learn how to do it better next time. Likewise, by evaluating the evaluation you will learn whether it was worthwhile and (if it was) how to make measuring impact better in the future.

So find time to take stock. What surprised you? What have you learned? What would you do differently next time? How participative was each stage? Could it have been more participative? Can it be more participative next time because, for example, the youth group you are working with is becoming more confident?

How is this learning shared with the rest of the organisation and with the community? Are there presentations you can make? Are there newsletters or newspapers you could write an article for?

Whatever you feel you achieved, to have got this far is a great leap forward. Well done!

Appendix 1: Bluff your way in social capital

We first look at the views of three thinkers in the field and then move on to examine the individual components of social capital.

Robert Putnam

The classic demonstration of the value of social capital is Putnam's study of the effectiveness of regional government in Italy.

Putnam's measure of how well the new regional governments performed was an index based on a dozen different factors, including the governments 'effectiveness in providing a wide range of services..., their responsiveness to postal and telephone enquiries, the quality of their legislative record, and their promptness in approving annual budgets'. The results showed large differences in governmental effectiveness.

He concluded that good governance was closely correlated to civic engagement. For example, membership of choirs, soccer clubs and co-operatives. Detailed correlation analysis over time shows that this is not just a coincidence. According to Putnam: 'Communities don't have choral societies because they are wealthy; they are wealthy because they have choral societies - or more precisely, the traditions of engagement, trust and reciprocity that choral societies symbolise'.

Successful regions were mainly in the north. By contrast, Putnam found a stark dearth of civic community in southern Italy, reflected in such measures as the smaller number of associations like literary guilds, sports and hunting clubs, local press, music groups, labour unions and the like. Italians in the South were much less likely to read newspapers, belong to unions, vote, and otherwise take part in the life of their communities. Moreover, people in the South expressed a much lower degree of social trust and confidence in the law-abiding behaviour of their fellow citizens.

Building on his work in Italy, Robert Putnam, who is Professor of International Peace at Harvard, famously spotted that US citizens increasingly go bowling alone rather than in teams. This was one small manifestation among many that, according to his mid-1990s paper *Bowling Alone*, social capital was a wasting asset in the USA. Putnam identified TV as a major cause of the decline in networks, norms and trust.

Jane Jacobs

Another important strand of social capital at the local level was developed by that doyenne of urban planning, Jane Jacobs. Jacobs was more activist than academic, who led successful campaigns against freeways in both New York and Toronto. This pragmatism showed in her early identification (1961) of social networks as a form of capital: 'Lowly, unpurposeful and random as they may appear, sidewalk contacts are the small change from which a city's wealth of public life may grow'.

She added: 'The sum of such casual, public contact at a local level - most of it fortuitous, most of it associated with errands, all of it metered by the person concerned and not thrust upon him by anyone - is a feeling for the public identity of people, a web of public respect and trust, and a resource in time of personal or neighbourhood need. The absence of this trust is a disaster to the city street.'

Albert Hirschmann

An alternative metaphor to 'social capital' was developed by Albert Hirschman to account for the dynamism of grass roots development projects in Latin America supported by the Inter-American Foundation. (Albert O Hirschman, 1984, Getting Ahead Collectively: Grassroots experiences in Latin America, New York, Pergammon Press). It was used and amplified by Norman Uphoff in a splendid book called, 'Learning from Gal Oya'.

Hirschman's description of the components of social energy makes for a fascinating contrast with those of social capital. The first element is friendship. This is a 'friendlier' word than 'norm' and 'network': more the language of trust than that of social capital.

More analytically, the term 'friendship' has its weaknesses, such as under-emphasising the value of 'weak ties'. But it has the great strength of pointing up the personal impact of social capital. I feel differently about a person when he or she becomes a friend.

The essence of friendship is that it shifts us from quadrant I towards quadrant IV in the diagram below. Friendship means we have regard for the well-being of other people, so are not completely selfish. Uphoff's book is about irrigation in Sri Lanka. He describes how outside workers were able to shift farmers between these two quadrants in a matter of weeks.

Orientation to action

Co-operative

Orientation to outcomes	III Self-regarding co-operation	Other-regarding co-operation	
Selfish	I Selfish individualism	II Individual generosity (charity)	*Generous*

Individualistic

Hirschman's second component of social energy is ideals. For NEF, ideals is the big gap in much writing on social capital, and the reason why such writing is often pessimistic about the possibility of transcending historic forces. We believe that the form that ideals most powerfully take is that of shared vision. Vision is well described as 'a statement of values projected as a future reality'.

How does vision shared between people work? Marjorie Parker charted a visioning exercise in Hydro Aluminium, part of Norsk Hydro, Norway's largest industrial group. (Marjorie Parker, Creating Shared Vision, Dialog International Ltd, Illinois, 1990.) She argues that 'the desire to act was a result of being tuned into values. Work life takes on new meaning when we are aware of our values - what we care about most.'

At one point in 1987 the highest values that emerged were good health, a meaningful work place, and a balance between work and family life. The employees also envisioned good health as being manifested in 1992. By the spring of 1989 the accident rate had been reduced by more than half. The company's Safety Inspector stated that, 'A lot more people here are just taking responsibility for their own health.'

Hirshman's third and last component of social energy is ideas. These, like ideals, help us to escape from the trammels of the past. 'Learning from Gal Oya' (pp360/361) contains an example. Norman Uphoff is describing an initiative to stimulate farmers to organise themselves to manage water:
'Something as simple as the designation farmer-representative, instead of the widely used term farmer-leader, affected the behaviour of thousands of people. Farmers acting as 'representatives' rather than as 'leaders' saw themselves, and were seen, in quite a different light. The latter, widely used designation had made fellow farmers into followers, not what a programme promoting self-reliance needed. Officials could not make deals with farmer-representatives to be enforced from the top down. A process of negotiation and consensus building resulted from the introduction of a new word, conveying a powerful new idea.'

The components of social capital

Robert Putnam describes social capital as 'features of social organisation, such as networks, norms and social trust, that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit'.

The four components of social capital are generally reckoned to be trust, norms, reciprocity, and networks and connections. Together they generate a sense of community, as shown by this definition: 'A community is a web of relationships defined by a significant level of mutual care and commitment'. One possible sequence of events is that people make connections that make them willing to do favours for the other person. If this is reciprocated, it leads to trust. In practice, all four elements both rely on and nurture the other three.

Below we examine each in turn. Note that the Hirschmann/Uphoff approach has different components. We leave readers to work out for themselves how they would best fit with those below.

Trust

Francis Fukayama defines trust as 'the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest and co-operative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of that community.' [xiii]

Norms, rules and sanctions

This also covers standards of behaviour and shared aims. These create expectations that others will be trustworthy and will take part in activities that benefit the group. Notice how the following definitions of effective communities emphasise different aspects:

- 'a network of people with a sustained recognition of common interests'
- 'there is agreement amongst local people about public behaviour'
- 'they can achieve a working consensus on goals and priorities'.

One researcher concluded: 'It would seem that sanctions imposed by relatives, friends or a personally relevant organisation collectively have more effect on criminal behaviour than sanctions imposed by a remote legal authority'.

Reciprocity

We are not much concerned here with transactions where one person reciprocates another immediately. A market transaction, where one person supplies and another pays, may have very little to do with trust. Rather, we are concerned with transactions

where the reciprocity is not immediate, since these are the transactions that rely on and create trust. The Jewish commandment to bury the dead when there is no-one else to bury them is archetypal. [xiv]

Networks and connections

Our connections with others are often separated into 'strong ties' and 'weak ties'. This corresponds to Putnam's distinction between two forms of social capital: 'bonding', within a like-minded community, and 'bridging', that occurs between such communities. He argues that a balance of the two is needed. An example of the value of bridging capital is that: 'The best kind of social network for finding work is rich in 'weak ties' to a wide range of people who are unlike oneself' [xv]. An American study, which showed that church membership was the best predictor of getting a job in the inner cities, was originally interpreted as a sign of the value of religion. In fact, it is simply that churches provided more chances to mix with people from different social backgrounds.

To many people, this emphasis on 'weak ties' is counter-intuitive. Our idealised view of community may be one full of strong ties. However, a community of strong ties tends to be exclusionary, everyone knowing everyone else. Internal secrets obstruct the flow of information and repel outsiders. But a group that excludes is, by the same token, cut off and easily excluded by other groups. Strong ties are best only for certain dependent categories of the population such as infants, elderly people, the handicapped and the chronically infirm.

The example of Roseto

A story might bring some of these abstractions to life. In the middle part of the last century, the small town of Roseto in eastern Pennsylvania attracted attention for its low death rates, especially from heart attacks. It turned out that the population was largely made up of Italian-Americans descended from migrants from the Italian city of Roseto in southern Italy. It had 'close family ties and cohesive community relationships'.

A local priest described the sanctions that reinforced these relationships. People whose obsession with earning money went beyond the pale suffered social rejection. The rich dressed and behaved in the same way as the poor: there was no ostentation.

This cohesion reduced stress levels and so kept heart attacks down. In the 1960s community ties loosened and young people began to move away. As researchers had predicted, Roseto lost its health advantage. [xvi]

What affects people's connections?

We now pick out networks and connections as an aspect of social capital to look at in more detail. Many of the factors that influence who people know relate to place. Here is a particularly striking example:

'Thirty years ago, residents on three San Francisco streets , one with light traffic, one with moderate traffic, and one with heavy traffic – were interviewed to find out how traffic levels and speed erode the social networks of a neighbourhood. ' The housing type and population profiles were similar for each street, except that there were more families with children on the light-traffic street. On the light-traffic street, residents were found to have three times as many local friends and twice as many acquaintances as those on the heavy-traffic street. People living on the light-traffic street felt a sense of ownership – that the street was an important part of their community.'

In contrast, there was little social interaction on the heavy-traffic street: people seldom stopped to chat with neighbours, and there was a sense of loneliness among residents. As traffic levels on their street deteriorated, [many residents moved out]. Those residents remaining were those who could tolerate high traffic levels and those who were too poor or too old to move.'

Another example, more likely to be relevant to projects and programmes being evaluated, is that of meeting spaces. These are vital, as this quote illustrates:
'It is the lack of anything on which the life of the estate can centre which makes the network of talk so important. Once the mothers got out for that couple of hours a week you'd find that they were better to the children. They'd got more time for the children, having had the break. But now they have got no outlet [because developers pulled the hall down]. They are tensed up, the mothers, and they haven't got time for the children. Going round the estate you can see the difference in the kids.'

These quotes from Bea Campbell's splendid book, 'Goliath', show the terrible pressure that meeting space, both public and private, can be under in deprived areas:
'Full of good intent, the [Meadowell Action] Group (MAG) hoped to entertain elderly tenants, and to intervene against neighbourhood terrorism by offering space to young people. It was a disaster. "It became really frightening", said Linda Cralk, one of the organisers. "They thought they should have the place all the time. It's true they were bored, they had nothing, but they couldn't let us have it in peace"... The lad's piece-by piece destruction of the MAG House humiliated the women and became a community legend... . It was also in the conquest of space, other people's space, that these boys were constituting themselves as men.'

Another study reports the economic disbenefits of a lack of social capital. 'Limited social networks mean that people lack both appropriate information on job or training prospects and the social resources to maintain employment when they find it'. The environmental benefits of the UK's 500 community-based recycling schemes would also be diminished without social networks. It is these that encourage recycling and make collections worthwhile.

Some health warnings

We make great use of the concept of social capital in this handbook. Readers should therefore be aware of a number of health warnings.

First, social capital is harder to define than, say, financial capital. Fukayama comments that, 'Since social groups in any society overlap and crosscut each other, what looks like a strong sense of social solidarity from one perspective can seem to be atomisation, divisiveness and stratification from another.'[xvii]

Secondly, high social capital is not always a good thing. An American comedian noted that a higher proportion of murders in New York were being committed by killers who knew their victims, and asked if this showed that New York was becoming a friendlier place.

More seriously, 'because people know one another does not necessarily mean they like one another. Recent Canadian crime statistics indicate that about 80 per cent of homicide victims die at the hands of family, friends and associates, not strangers.'[xviii]

Another way in which the fact that people know and trust each other can be abused is shown by the celebrated experiment conducted by Asch:

His subjects were invited to match the length of a given line with one of three unequal lines. The groups consisted of eight persons, and the judgements were given aloud. 'Seven of the members of the groups, however, had been put up by the experimenter to agree on a judgement that was quite clearly wrong. The unfortunate naive subject was thus faced with a group that violated the evidence of his senses. What was he to do? In the majority of cases, it is true, the naive subjectsm followed their own judgement against the majority, but many of them showed acute embarrassment in doing so. A third of them, however, yielded to pressure... '[xix]

The general point here is that many of the elements of human and social capital are beneficial up to a point, but harmful beyond it. Self-esteem can turn into vanity, sanctions into oppression and close-kindness into corruption. In general, however, there is little danger that the people and communities in regeneration areas will reach that point. Next, don't forget the national and global context. For example, in Meadowell, an

estate in Newcastle, 'In 1988 ...changes.. in social security legislation... left forty-three per cent of the poor worse off'. History can leave a mark that is hard to erase. People who are brought up in emotionally insecure environments are likely to suffer higher levels of stress as adults - whatever the support networks they have around them. ' [xxi]

Finally, remember that trust is very fragile and much easier to destroy than create. Francis Fukayama ends his book on trust with the comment that 'Social capital is like a ratchet that is more easily turned in one direction than another; it can be dissipated by the actions of governments much more readily than those governments can build it up again. Now that the question of ideology and institutions has been settled, the preservation and accumulation of social capital will occupy centre stage.'

He gives several examples of how governments have done this:

- France at the end of the Middle Ages had a dense network of civil associations, but the French capacity for spontaneous sociability was effectively destroyed beginning in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by a victorious centralising monarchy.
- The Leninist State set out deliberately to destroy all possible competitors to its power, from the 'commanding heights' of the economy down through the innumerable farms, small businesses, unions, churches, newspapers, voluntary associations and the like..
- Slum clearance [in the US in the 1960s and1970s] uprooted and destroyed many of the social networks that existed in poor neighbourhoods.

Social capital and quality of life - the example of health

Nearly half a century ago, the great sociologist Durkheim stated that in a cohesive society with high social capital, 'there is a constant interchange of ideas and feelings from all to each and each to all, something like a mutual moral support, which instead of throwing the individual on his own resources, leads him to share in the collective energy and supports his own when exhausted.'

Here are a number of examples of the effects of a lack of trust and social cohesion on people's health. Conversely they show how many ways there are in which increasing social capital can improve health.

Effect	Mechanisms	Evidence
Rise in mortality	Stress leads to a rise in alcohol and drug abuse, in turn leading to a rise in deaths from chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	A study of Harlem, one of the most deprived areas of New York City, found that deaths from cirrhosis, homicide, alcohol and drugs accounted for 30 per cent of all deaths

Effect	Mechanisms	Evidence
	Stress leads to smoking which leads to heart disease	Smoking declined among the richest three-quarters of the UK population between 1976 and 1990, but increased among the poorest quarter, who became relatively poorer
	People who are isolated are at increased risk of mortality from several causes	One study found that men and women who lacked ties to others were 2-3 times more likely to die over a nine year period
Deterioration in health	Parental irritability and disharmony harms children's health	15,000 ten year olds born in 1970 were studied. Children with parents in unskilled manual occupations had rates of conduct disorder four times as high as children with professional parents.
	More visits to GPs	In one study of housing insecurity, the number of tenants attending their GP varied according to whether the council threat to demolish their housing estate was currently 'on' or 'off'.
	More colds	A trial with volunteers suggested that high levels of stress increase the chances of catching a cold by 75 per cent
Driving accidents rise	Road users are less courteous towards each other	Accident rates are higher in countries with higher income differentials
More accidents to children in the home	Depressed mothers are less attentive	Accidents doubled among children of unskilled manual workers if their mothers were depressed

Appendix 2: Indicators, definitions and sources

The following set of indicators is mainly a resource for measuring aspects of social capital. Towards the end, there are also sample indicators on health and crime. It does not replace work by you and others in developing your own indicators, but it could help you to avoid re-inventing the wheel.

Before you start measuring, please look at the full range of indicators below. In each case a definition of the indicator is provided as well as details of where it has been used.

The social capital indicators divide into two chunks of three. The first chunk covers indicators for different relationships. These are about the personal (about me); about the interaction of people (about us); and are about people and their relationship with agencies from outside the community (us and them). Each of these categories can be divided into three sub-headings – attitudes, abilities and actions. **Attitudes** cover how people think or feel about themselves or others. **Abilities** highlight the skills that exist to nurture social capital. Finally, **Actions** describe some behaviour locally that contributes to trust or are itself signs of trust e.g. levels of depression.

An example of an indicator about us and them that falls under the action category is:

- Number of voluntary group representatives co-opted to council committees /sub-committees

Source: LA21 Oldham and CLIP pilot

Table 1 is about the individual and how they feel and act in terms of social capital. It includes their view of the local area and their capacity to contribute to it.

Table 1: 'About me' indicators

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
ATTITUDES ***Personal attitudes to trust and social capital***		
Local activism	Do people have positive expectations for the future?	Voluntary Activity Unit (VAU)
	Are people confident that change is possible and worthwhile?	VAU
	Percentage who have become interested in something new	Comedia
	Percentage who have become keen to help in local projects	Comedia
	I would like to help in the local community	Barclays SiteSavers
Place	I feel as if I belong in my neighbourhood: agree/disagree	Barclays SiteSavers
	Getting on with the neighbours is important to me: agree/disagree	Barclays SiteSavers
	All things considered my neighbourhood is a pretty good place to live	Barclays SiteSavers
	There is a good community spirit around where I live	Barclays SiteSavers
	It's important to me to feel part of the local community	Barclays SiteSavers
	I'm proud of my neighbourhood If the community got together we could change things for the better I prefer to keep myself to myself	Barclays SiteSavers Barclays SiteSavers Barclays SiteSavers
Trust	Can most people be trusted? 'Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?'	US General Social Survey British Social Attitutdes (BSA)

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
ABILITIES ***Personal abilities to bolster trust***		
	Apart from those next door, how many of your neighbours would you recognise if you passed them in the street?	Barclays SiteSavers
	Do any of these (local community opportunities) lead to qualifications which can be used elsewhere?	VAU
	'I was able to put my point of view and ideas into [the project]'	Groundwork Arts Consultancy
	'I am more creative than I thought I was before I got involved in the project'	Groundwork Arts Consultancy
ACTIONS: ***Personal actions that illustrate trust or are a result of it***		
Place/ Neighbourhood	Do you work and socialise in the neighbourhood?	Temkin and Rohe
	Do you use neighbourhood facilities for worship and grocery shopping?	Temkin and Rohe
	Do you normally smile at people you pass in your local street?	Barclays SiteSavers
	Apart from saying Hello, do you normally talk to people you pass in your local street?	Barclays SiteSavers
	In relation to your neighbours, do you: visit them, borrow small items, discuss local problems, or help them with small tasks?	Temkin and Rohe
	When did you last - Go inside a neighbour's home?- Have a chat with a neighbour?	Barclays SiteSavers
	How often do you spend a social evening with a neighbour? When I need help I'll ask my family or friends, not my neighbours	US General Social Survey Barclays SiteSavers

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
Project impacts	Percentage making new friends [from arts projects]	Comedia
	Percentage who have tried things they haven't done before	Comedia

Table 2 shifts focus from the individual to the community. Instead of questions on what individuals do and think, the indicators present an aggregate picture on the state of community. The indicators are about the capacities that exist in the community and the behaviour of the community in relation to trust. This covers vandalising of community property, for example. There are also indicators that show community attitudes to the local area.

Table 2: 'About us' indicators

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
ATTITUDES ***Attitudes to trust and social capital in the community in general***		
	Percentage (and percentage in particular categories of disadvantage) who feel concerned with how the locality develops	CDF
	Percentage (and percentage in particular categories of disadvantage) who believe that they make use of local opportunities to meet people and engage in enjoyable or useful activities	CDF
	Percentage of respondents satisfied with their neighbourhood/area as a place to live	British Social Attitudes (BSA) and CLIP pilot
Valuing the area	Number of people happy and able to make use of parks and open spaces Do people living or working in the community feel that the community is a good place to live?	LA21 Brighton and Hove VAU

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
Safety	The extent to which people feel it is safe to let their children make their own way to school (by bike or on foot)	LA21 Merton
	Percentage of population (and disadvantaged groups) feeling safe to go out at night	LA21 Islington
	How many people are afraid of crime against (a) ourselves (b) our property	LA21 Hertfordshire
	How many people are affected by crime against (a) ourselves (b) our property	LA21 Hertfordshire
ABILITIES ***Abilities within the community to bolster trust and factors which shape this***		
Leadership	Is there strong leadership in the community, and is it open and accountable?	VAU
	Are local people active in community affairs and able to tackle problems using skill and knowledge?	VAU
Infrastructure	Focal points in a community where the residents can meet together	LA21 Dundee
	Facilities for all ages in the community	Mole Valley
	What informal networks exist in the community?	VAU
	Percentage aware of the existence of three or more local community or voluntary organisations	CDF
	Number of opportunities for people to participate provided by voluntary bodies	LA21 Vale Royal
	Access to village shops	LA21 Somerset
	Proportion of the population that live within 1km of an accessible green space with recognised wildlife interest	LA21 Croydon

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
	Proportion of the population that live more than 400 metres from a local park	LA21 Croydon
	Number of secure, well-maintained play areas for children and young people within the community	LA21 Dundee
	Percentage with nobody to call on when in need	Doyal and Gough
	Percentage without close, confiding relationships	Doyal and Gough
	Percentage with no/very low social contacts	Doyal and Gough
Skills	Percentage who have learned about other people's culture	Comedia
ACTIONS ***Actions and behaviour in the community that point to the level of trust***		
	Number of unvandalised lamp posts and unvandalised public telephone boxes in the community	LA21 Dundee
Community organisation	Increase in the number and use of community centres	LA21 East Hampshire
	Levels of participation by individuals and organisations in community events	LA21 Vale Royal
	Number of community or voluntary organisations functioning in the community (whether wholly locally based or not)	CDF
	What services and facilities are provided by community organisations?	VAU
	Percentage of community or voluntary organisations who believe they achieved their aims well or fairly well during the past year	CDF

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
	Percentage of community or voluntary organisations judged effective by users, residents and relevant professionals working in the locality	CDF
	Are you involved with any local groups or associations?	Barclays SiteSavers
	Number of people in the community who have become involved in community groups in the past twelve months	LA21 Dundee
	Number of uses of community or voluntary organisations by local residents ('use' = attend an activity or receive a service at least three times in the past year)	CDF
	Percentage (and percentage in particular categories of disadvantage) who are actively involved in at least one local community or voluntary organisation ('involved' = attended events, used services or helped in an activity at least three times in the past year)	CDF
	Are there business and enterprise activities controlled by the community?	VAU
	Percentage of community or voluntary organisations that are primarily controlled by local residents in a voluntary capacity (e.g. residents are majority on the board)	CDF
	Percentage of community or voluntary organisations which co-operated with three or more other local organisations during the past year	CDF
	Are there support and exchange networks between community organisations?	VAU
Volunteering	Number of volunteer hours mobilised by responding organisations over the past year	CDF

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
	The number of people participating in voluntary work	LA21 Exeter
Diversity	Do minority community members participate in community groups and their activities?	VAU
	Are different cultures and identities recognised and affirmed?	VAU
	Are people free to celebrate their diversity?	VAU
	Do minority group members feel involved and valued?	VAU
	Level of sectarian segregation and perceptions of community relations	LA21 Northern Ireland
	Do projects and programmes consider everybody's needs and do projects and programmes record any discrimination?	VAU
Health impacts	Decrease in mental health referrals	LA21 East Hampshire
	Increase in number of people using preventative and complementary health care	LA21 East Hampshire
	Number of people taking regular exercise	LA21 East Hampshire
	Percentage families with high health needs	LA21 Bristol
Impacts of trust	Percentage maternal depression	LA21 Bristol
	Decrease in non-essential visits to GPs surgeries	LA21 East Hampshire

Finally, table 3 shows the connection between the individuals that make up the community and those agencies who impact upon the community. These agencies can vary from the police to the local council. In most cases we have not included relationships of local people to community organisation in the 'us and them' category, although the representativeness of community organisations are important.

Table 3: 'Us and them' indicators

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
ATTITUDES ***Attitudes to agencies in local areas***		
	Do people feel their comments are being responded to?	LA21 West Devon
	Are community organisations effective in influencing policy and practice?	VAU
	Do agencies try to identify and remove any obstacles to people making their views known?	VAU
	Do agencies have positive action to encourage people to take part in planning and carrying out their work?	VAU
	Do agencies have policies which recognise the right of people to participate?	VAU
	Do agencies understand the values of community development?	VAU
	Which agencies are the best and worst communicators?	Audit Commission
Representatives	Do you trust local councillors of any party to place the needs of their area above the interests of their party?	British Social Attitudes
	'Those we elect as councillors lose touch with people pretty quickly'	British Social Attitudes
	'Councillors don't care much what people like me think'	British Social Attitudes
ABILITIES ***Abilities of local people to engage with outside agencies, and of members of outside agencies to engage with people on the ground***		

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
	Number of elected members attending LA21 training	LA21 Oxfordshire
	Percentage (and percentage in particular categories of disadvantage) who believe that they know what is going on in the locality, how decisions are made about its development and what the responsibilities of the public authorities are.	CDF
	Do local people have the knowledge they need - e.g. of the way decisions affecting them are made; of the way decisions can be influenced?	VAU
ACTIONS **Actions taken which build or demonstrate trust between local people and outside agencies**		
	Number of agencies involved in the community safety strategy	LA21 Middlesborough
Activism	Percentage of eligible population who voted in the last election	CDF
	Percentage who took any form of action on a local issue three or more times in the past year (e.g. attended public meetings, wrote to papers, had discussions with local councillor, contributed to fundraising)	CDF
	Percentage who are active members or supporters of at least one non-local voluntary organisations	CDF
	In what ways are the views of the community sought?	VAU
	Number of residents who have attended community consultations in the past twelve months	LA21 Dundee
	Community attending forums	LA21 Greenwich

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
Corridors of power	Number of voluntary group representatives co-opted to council committees/sub-committees	LA21 Oldham
	In what ways are community organisations involved in other local bodies (for example in planning boards, area committees)?	VAU
	Existence of forums or mechanisms to represent the views of the community and voluntary sector to authorities and resource-holders. Percentage of known organisations in membership.	CDF
	Number of pupils involved in school/community decision-making	LA21 West Devon
	Percentage of unauthorised absences from school	LA21 Bristol

Other aspects of quality of life

As mentioned in chapter 7, as part of the issue identification and measurement process you may decide to move beyond the boundaries of human and social capital. This was the approach taken by some Barclays SiteSavers pilots. Starting from an examination of social capital, they soon found themselves looking at environmental issues (such as rubbish and derelict properties) and wider social issues.
Various communities have developed indicators of local quality of life. You might be able to draw inspiration from these indicators. The most useful one-stop shop for these is the CLIP set of indicators. They are not quite in the public domain yet, but by August they should be. Try the website of the DETR (http://www.detr.gov.uk) around this time.

Two themes which keep recurring are health/stress and safety/crime. Below are some examples of indicators of health and safety from Local Agenda 21 groups around the country.

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
Health/stress	Average GP consultation rate	LA21 Bristol
	Decrease in non-essential visits to GPs surgeries	LA21 East Hampshire
	% families with high health needs	LA21 Bristol

THEME	INDICATOR	SOURCE
	needs	
	% maternal depression	LA21 Bristol
	Decrease in mental health referrals	LA21 East Hampshire
	Increase in number of people using preventative and complementary health care	LA21 East Hampshire
	Number of people taking regular exercise	LA21 East Hampshire
	% unauthorised absences from school	LA21 Bristol
Safety	How many people are afraid of crime against (a) ourselves (b) our property (%)	LA21 Hertfordshire
	How many people are affected by crime against (a) ourselves (b) our property (%)	LA21 Hertfordshire
	Percentage of population (and disadvantaged groups) feeling safe to go out at night	LA21 Islington
	The extent to which people feel it is safe to let their children make their own way to school (by bike or on foot)	LA21 Merton
	No. of people happy and able to make use of parks and open spaces	LA21 Brighton and Hove
	An assessment of public confidence in using parks and open spaces	LA21 Merton

The core Barclays SiteSavers Indicators

For convenience we lay out all of the core indicators used in BSS pilots. Other indicators were identified as part of the BSS process. These are organised according to the different types of trust laid out above.

Indicator	Additional Details	Type of Trust
I feel I could help change attitudes and improve things around here	This looks at people' perceptions of how they can influence local affairs	Trusting ourselves
	This is a good place to live	Trusting ourselves
	I am proud of this area	Trusting ourselves
'I have learned new skills on [the project] in the last 6 months'	This looks at the way in which people's human capital develops	Trusting ourselves
Percentage of respondents saying: Within the last 6 months I have enjoyed several conversations with a new person from a different: • Age • Background	This was true for nearly 60 per cent of participants in Barclays SiteSavers	Trusting each other
Percentage of respondents saying: I feel safe out and about at day/night • In my community • Using the (BSS) facility	As we saw earlier, trust has a real impact on people's perceived and actual safety.	Trusting each other
Percentage of respondents saying: Neighbours around here look out for each other		Trusting each other
Percentage of respondents saying: I think that the project/facility will survive the community not to vandalise it	Indicates trust in capability of community to run things long-term, and of	Trusting each other
How many new friends have you made through the project?	In the case of 16 Barclays SiteSavers projects, the average participant makes seven (and a half) new friends.	Trusting each other

Indicator	Additional Details	Type of Trust
Percentage of respondents saying: I know who to contact to help me change things locally in : • Local community groups • At the council • In other agencies like groundwork • Among people in the neighbourhood		Trust and agencies
Percentage of respondents saying: I have benefited from being involved with Groundwork		Trust and agencies
How many people (previously unknown to Groundwork/the lead agency) have been involved in the project over the last six months?	Indicates agencies ability to work with local people. NON-SURVEY	Trust and agencies
Number of agencies working with Groundwork (or working together) on the project (voluntary and other agencies e.g. council)	NON-SURVEY	Trust and agencies

Appendix 3: the Barclays SiteSavers questionnaires

Below are the Barclays SiteSavers questionnaires, which were used for the social capital surveys. Do photocopy them if you would like to use them for your area.

QUESTIONAIRE FOR WIDER COMMUNITITY MEMBERS

QUESTIONAIRE FOR WIDER COMMUNITITY MEMBERS

QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNITITY PARTICIPANTS

QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNITITY PARTICIPANTS

Guidance for interviewers

WHO TO ASK

We need a total of _____ FULLY COMPLETED questionnaires from a representative sample of residents aged 16 years or over in the _____ area.

The questionnaire is designed to be completed in no more than 6 minutes and experience shows that one person can complete 50 interviews in a day. Suitable interviewing points are main shopping areas, high streets, outside post offices etc - please do not interview inside shopping centres or on other private property. You should carry some form of badge or other identification with the name, address and telephone number of your local Groundwork project office. If house-to-house interviews are involved please ensure that you cover a representative sample of local households - i.e. not all in one street please.

It is vital that all questionnaires are **fully** completed and that a broad mix of people are interviewed.

INTERVIEW SCRIPT AS ATTACHED

If house to house interviews are involved simply record the respondent's details as indicated on the questionnaire.

PLEASE ENSURE YOU NUMBER EACH QUESTIONNAIRE AT THE TOP & TICK ALL BOXES CLEARLY IN BALL POINT/FELT TIP PEN

Completed questionnaires will be collected by _____ and

delivered to _____ at _____ by _____

DRAFT INTERVIEWERS SCRIPT FOR _____ PROJECT SURVEY

Good Morning/Afternoon...

We're carrying out a survey into local community issues and I wonder if you would spare a few minutes to answer a few questions? Do you live or work in the _____ area?

IF NO Thank and move on

IF YES...

The survey is on behalf of _____

Today we want to ask a few questions about what it's like to live around here.

Go through questionnaire - reading out each question and possible responses and ticking their answers as appropriate.

Questions 1b & 1c - PLEASE DO NOT READ OUT LIST
Use it as a guide to check off nearest to their answer. If answer is not listed WRITE IN BOX. If they mention more than one concern tick appropriate boxes.

THEN
Thank and move on to next interview.

References

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[iv] *Use or ornament?: the social impact of participation in the arts*, Comedia, London, 1997, p40
[v] *Local Evaluation for Regeneration Partnerships*, Good Practice Guide, 1999, DETR web-site: www.detr.gov.uk/regeneration/info/gp/lerp
[vi] *Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Development in Northern Ireland*, Voluntary Activity Unit, for Department of Social Services, Castle Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3PP tel: 01232 520 504
[vii] Contact Stuart Hashagan at SCDC on 0141 248 1924
[viii] Active Partners, Benchmarking for Community Participation in Regeneration, Yorkshire Forward, 2 Victoria Place, Leeds LS11 5AE tel: 0113 243 9222 fax: 0113 243 1088 web-site: www.yorkshire-forward.com
[ix] Contact COGS on tel/fax: 0114 255 4747 e-mail cogs@cogs.solis.co.uk
[x] Local Government Management Board, 1995, Sustainability Indicators Research Project, London, LGMB
[xi] John Salkeld Research, 22 Spencer Gardens, London SE9 6LX tel: 020 8850 0456 e-mail: john@jsresearch.demon.co.uk
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[xx] *Goliath, Britain's Dangerous Places*, Beatrix Campbell, Methuen, 1993, p241
[xxi] *Trust*, Francis Fukayama, Penguin 1996, pp362, 28, 54/5,313