

The Workshops

Within the *SAUL* key issues, our proposal for Interreg funding laid strong emphasis on approaches to spatial planning which engage civil society; and planning through partnerships (or co-operative planning) is one of our objectives. The Application sets out (in 2.3) a wide range of practical methods for involving local people and stakeholders in spatial planning and environmental change, and these are also included in the Toolkit for Joint Planning Groups (JPGs).

The *SAUL* Partners have different traditions of engaging local stakeholders in spatial planning, and the recent round of JPG meetings and site visits has provided a first opportunity to share experiences. These Workshops at the Launch Conference will seek to draw out and capture some of that knowledge, to be built upon as the *SAUL* project progresses.

Planning through partnerships will be addressed both at the level of regional strategies, and at the level of practical projects.

Some questions we should address:

- What previous experiences do we have of using co-operative planning / planning through partnerships methods in our own regions?
- How can we test different methods of co-operative planning through *SAUL* actions and investments?
- From the JPGs so far, what do we think the planning through partnerships approach could contribute to regional strategies for open space, and how can it help to create a sense of regional identity in our metropolitan regions?

The Workshops will be facilitated and led by the Steering Group Partners.

GROUP A (Red Stars)

Steering Group members:

Andrea Hartz*, Philippe Peters, Michiel Firet, Kirsten Adamczak, John O'Neill, Sabine von Bebenburg

GROUP B (Green Stars)

Steering Group members:

Rainer Kestermann*, Reinhard Henke, Jos Gadet, Myriam Bentz-Haycock, Anita Konrad, Jane Carlsen

* Workshop Group Chair



Public and Community Involvement Actions

Following are some examples of community involvement methods including the tried and tested versions that have stood the test of time, such as questionnaires and personal interviews, as well as some newer, cutting-edge techniques, like *Prove It!* and 'Planning for Real'®. The techniques listed below cross-reference SAUL actions and investments.

Methods of engaging communities in planning for and improving open spaces

1. A wide range of **planning and design participation methods** will be used including **community planning forums, design assistance teams, virtual reality studios, design charettes and workshops, reconnaissance trips and roadshows**. These are typically open, multi-purpose events which may have some or all of these aims: to gather information, to generate ideas and 'out of the box' thinking, to stimulate interaction and debate between groups and individuals, to familiarise people with the physical environment and key issues. **Photo surveys** may be incorporated into these events or done as an independent exercise. They involve having local people photograph things that are important to them in their open space environments.
2. **"Planning Laboratories"**, a Dutch method, engage residents as well as community stakeholders in co-operation with designers and planners in the planning and designing process from the beginning of the development of town plans and parks. **'Planning for Real'**®, developed in Britain, uses three-dimensional models of a neighbourhood as a focus for people to put forward and prioritise ideas on how their areas can be improved. It is a highly visual, hands-on community development and empowerment tool, which people of diverse abilities and backgrounds have found easy and enjoyable to engage in. **Action planning events** are often incorporated or follow on from 'Planning for Real'® workshops. These events involve people in producing action plans at carefully structured sessions at which all those affected work creatively together. They can be used at any stage of the development process.
3. ***Prove It!*** (developed by The New Economics Foundation in partnership with Groundwork and Barclays) is an evaluation technique for measuring the effect of community projects on local people, on the relationships between them and on their quality of life. The approach involves local people in both choosing the indicators (at the start of the project) and collecting survey data (and the start and finish of the project). *Prove It!* is a cutting-edge technique with promise for a range of benefits including increased social capital in communities. It is also labour-intensive and requires a good deal of community capacity-building and training on survey techniques and development of locally-determined evaluation indicators.
4. **Consultation exercises and displays** showing existing conditions and proposed design alternatives can be used in **site visits and field workshops** or in places where local people gather, such as shopping areas, employment locations or even carnivals. **Questionnaires, personal interviews, interactive displays and street stalls** are often incorporated as part of consultation exercises.
5. **Personal interviews, surveys and questionnaires** may also be used on a more targeted basis, such as directly **door-to-door** to households and businesses, by **direct mail**, or **on location** with users of open space.
6. **Artwork, logo design, and park and garden naming competitions/projects with children and young people** are all good ways to stimulate creative thinking and to generate interest and ownership. **Art workshops** engage people in designing and constructing artworks to improve their local environments. The artwork can be an end in itself or incorporated into a wider regeneration initiative. Community arts projects are particularly useful with young people to enable them to express their creativity, build confidence, develop skills, and develop a sense of identity and community pride.
7. **Discussions, events and briefing workshops with a range of community groups including 'Friends' groups, residents associations and steering groups** are helpful in ensuring communication is clear and on-going. These can be simple and easy to organise and can be used to inform groups and people about planned projects; to establish key issues for planning a project; to get people involved; to build ownership; to identify local talent and potential contributions; and to determine next steps. **Celebration events** can be a great way to launch the project, to build social networks, and to remind people of their progress and the rewards of getting involved.
8. **Planting days with local residents, young people and school children** are a good way to build ownership and social networks and to channel help from volunteers. This can be incorporated with **gardening and landscaping training sessions**.
9. **... and more -- telephone hotlines, social events, launches with local heroes, web sites, press releases ...** There is no limit to the number of community involvement techniques! In fact, ways of engaging people should evolve as their needs and lifestyles change. It is important to adapt the techniques to the needs and aspirations of the different preferences, backgrounds and ages of people in the community



Community Initiative Programme funded by the European Union

Workshop Key Points

Red Star Group

1. Finding an appropriate way to address the stakeholders or the local people by creating an atmosphere of trust or 'love and pride'. Face to face contact, an atmosphere of reliability without suspect of self-interest and try to create win-win situations. Create a sense of responsibility and identity.
2. Make use of models, images, computer visualisation, mental map sensor 1 and to enable people of different ages, educational and cultural background to participate and make planning a vital and creative process. Programmes and projects seem to be better than plans because they are more tangible and it's rather planning 'with' than 'for' people anyway.
3. Tools used: create common grounds, about communication.
 - a) set the framework, rules and make them explicit
 - b) Create transparency by giving minutes, reports and documentation so everybody knows what you are talking about
 - c) Use common terms. We refer to the Euro glossary that is available to everyone on the website of another Interreg project, SOS (Sustainable Open Spaces) because when we talk about terms like community, co-operative planning, it may well be that everyone has a different understanding of what we are talking about. e.g. regional co-operation. We find that between our regions we have to make it very clear what sort of scale we are talking about and that there are a lot of underlying sub processes such as cross-sector co-operation, co-operation between municipalities and of course since we have both formal and informal planning processes we need to think a bout integration and a sound compromise between those forms.

Green Star Group

1. Cooperative planning is an art, a difficult process with lots of pitfalls and we spent a lot of time discussing the pitfalls. I think some of us had the view that it was done very well in some of the other countries. I think we reaslie from this that actually the experience was quite similar and we all felt that we were at a similar level.
2. The amount of time that it can take – that it's important to nurture a community to work with it for a long time, that you can't just go in when you need an answer. Quite often it can take 3 to 5 years and that might not necessarily fit in with the formal structure of having to produce plans to a certain timetable and there was a tension there. Related to that was that people in all the countries were quite often sceptical to start of with and that it's important to have a few e.g.s of success and build up that credibility and the second you consult them they were more open and there was better response.
3. The difficulty of the scale of consulting at regional level. We all had examples of where local consultation had been quite successful but it was felt that when you get to a larger, more regional scale that the level of response was a lot lower and when you do get representation they're not necessarily representative of the populations and so it we talked about a few innovative ways of identifying target groups, and going back to those target groups and particularly focusing on them to make sure the spread of responses was good and more creative ways of contacting people.
4. There is tension between the formal political process and this sort of informal, local agenda 21, community consultation. And quite often they're in competition and ways have to be found quite early on to involve the formal political process otherwise there will be problems later on.



Workshop Red Stars

Kirsten Adamczak	Emschergenossenschaft
Sally Arscott	Groundwork Thames Gateway London South
Friedhelm Blume	Planungsverband Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main
Dieter Buelte	Stadtverband Saarbrücken
Nick Burton	London Parks and Green Spaces Forum
Adrian Combrinck	Groundwork Thames Valley
Gerd-Rainer Damm	Ministerium für Umwelt, Landschaftsplanung
Pieter de Greef	Municipality Rotterdam, department of city development
Nic Durston	Groundwork London / Groundwork Southwark
Marco den Heijer	Municipality Rotterdam, department of city development
Michiel Fiert	Staatsbosbeheer
Marcia Harris	Groundwork London
Andrea Hartz	Planungsgruppe agl Saarland
Tim Houghton	Groundwork West London
Martin Jones	Groundwork London
Anita Konrad	Groundwork London
Dr. Hubertus Lehnhausen	SaarForst Regionalbetrieb
Thomas Maertens	Planungsverband Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main
John Merivale	Groundwork Merton
John O'Neill	Greater London Authority
Philippe Peters	Ministère de l'Intérieur, Luxembourg
Jutta Sankowski	Municipality Dortmund, Planning Department
Jens Scheller	Planungsverband Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main
Irene Seijo	Groundwork Southwark
Paul Stephenson	NWE Project Developer
Femke Vergeest	Staatsbosbeheer
Sabine von Bebenburg	Planungsverband Frankfurt / Kulturinitiative Rhein-Main
Thomas Voßmerbäumer	Emschergenossenschaft

Workshop Green Stars

Karin Akkers	City Council of s-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands
Myriam Bentz-Haycock	Ministère de l'Intérieur, Luxembourg
Valerie Bowles	Groundwork Merton
Sabine Brinkmann	Emschergenossenschaft Jane Carlsen Greater London Authority
David Crosby	Consultant
James Dacosta	Groundwork Southwark
Dr. Rainer Danielzyk	ILS
Hans Martin Derow	Ausbildungszentrum Burbach



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Rowena Estwick	Groundwork Southwark
Jos Gadet	City of Amsterdam Physical Planning Department
Simon Geikie	Groundwork Kent Thames-side
Tanja Helmes	Ministry of Environment, Saarland
Reinhard Henke	Planungsverband Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main
Paul Hodgson	Groundwork Thames Valley
Norbert Jaehrling	Planungsverband Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main
Rainer Kesterman	ILS
Eamon Pryle	Groundwork Camden & Islington
Dr. Lorenz Rautenstrauch	Planungsverband Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main
Dr. Peter Schirmbeck	Museum Rüsselsheim
Dr Marijke van Schendelen	Staatsbosbeheer
Anke Schüler	Projekt Ruhr GmbH
Thomas Steinmetz	Saarforst Landesbetrieb

