



Consultation Guidance

Strategic Policy and Planning
Chief Executive's Office
Tel: 0141 287 0242
Email: stephen.frew@glasgow.gov.uk

Contents

Introduction	Page 3
Background	Page 3
Definition of Consultation	Page 4
Consultation Standards and Principles	Page 5
Planning Consultations	Page 6
When to Consult	Page 7
When NOT to Consult	Page 7
Stakeholders and the General Public	Page 7
Sampling	Page 8
Timing	Page 9
Methods of Consultation	Page 9
Data Protection (GDPR)	Page 11
Equalities Monitoring	Page 11
Publication and Promotion	Page 12
Analysis, Reporting and Feedback	Page 12
Evaluation	Page 14
Useful Links	Page 15
Appendix 1: Questionnaire Design	Page 16
Appendix 2: Methodology: Advantages and Disadvantages	Page 19
Appendix 3: Equalities Monitoring Questions	Page 21

Introduction

These consultation guidelines are based on a number of good practice guidelines for involvement, participation, engagement and consultation in the public sector. They are not intended to be prescriptive and they are not exhaustive; instead they are designed to prompt staff and other stakeholders who may be involved in the planning and delivery of a consultation to consider a range of areas, issues and options when deciding how to consult. No two consultation exercises are the same, and how to consult on a particular area/issue or proposed policy/service change or development will need to take account of relevant factors set out in these guidelines. In general, any consultation needs to take a flexible approach.

Background

The Council's new Strategic Plan (2018 -2022) emphasises the role of residents in the decision making process. The plan aims to *'empower our citizens, giving them a stake, and a say, in what happens in their local communities and communities of interest'*. To do this the plan includes themes and priorities which relate to community engagement and empowerment.

Theme:

- Resilient and Empowered Neighbourhoods

Priority:

- Develop a neighbourhood empowerment policy.
- Extend participatory budgeting, giving local people a say in how local budgets are spent and services delivered and examine options to establish a new community and equalities unit to support communities in this process.

Theme:

- A well governed city that listens and responds

Priority:

- Reform our decision-making arrangements to improve transparency and accountability and opportunities for citizens to take part in decisions, particularly local ones.
- Consult with our citizens at the earliest stage on policy and service design, demonstrating how we have addressed their views.

The council has a variety of long established mechanisms and tools for consulting with the public, service users and stakeholders. With the introduction of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 further importance has been placed on residents and service users being given the opportunity to participate in the decision making process. The Act has introduced number of additional mechanisms which will increase community involvement, including;

- Participation Requests
- Participatory Budgeting
- Asset Transfer
- Right to Buy (Land)

Definition of consultation

The word consultation is a blanket term for a range of words and phrases used to describe the involvement of people and stakeholders in the decision making process, shaping and influence services and working in partnership to deliver services. Other terms used, sometimes interchangeably include participation, engagement, involvement, dialogue, etc.

The Scottish Government defines consultation as:

‘a time limited exercise when we provide specific opportunities for all those who wish to express their opinions on a proposed area of our work (such as identifying issues, developing or changing policies, testing proposals or evaluating provision) to do so in ways which inform and enhance that work’ (Consultation Good Practice Guidance, 2008)

Consultation is only one of a number of ways in which the public and stakeholders can get involved in informing and influencing the Councils decision making process. Other ways including;

- [Public Petitions](#)
- [Participatory Requests](#)
- [Community Budgeting \(Participatory Budgeting\)](#)

There are various levels of community involvement, as can be seen from the diagram below. However this document will only provide guidance on the first three levels.

- • **Informing** Telling people what you are already doing or plan to do
- • **Consulting** Asking people what they think about predetermined questions
- • **Participation** Asking people about their priorities
- **Collaboration** Working directly with people to develop strategies

Consultation Standards and Principles

The Council has its own [Consultation Principles](#) which are based on the [National Standards for Community Engagement](#). The principles provide the public with information about what they can expect from us when we consult with them. The principles cover a wide range of issues within the consultation process, including:

- **Planning**
We will fully explain the reasons why we are consulting with you. You will also be told how and when your feedback will be included in any decisions. Terms of reference and timetables identifying key stages of the process will be encouraged.
- **Support**
We will provide support and help to overcome barriers to participation. We will make it as easy as possible for you to get involved and will quickly address any issues which prevent you from participating.
- **Inclusion**
We will make sure all relevant groups, communities, stakeholders with an interest or likely to be affected by an issue, will have the chance to participate in the consultation. In line with equalities legislation, we will make sure that consultations are available in different formats, if needed for example, larger print, other languages and so on.
- **Ethics**
The consultation process will be honest, open and fair. Your feedback will be kept confidential, if necessary and all information will be held and used in accordance to data protection laws.
- **Methods**
There are many ways to consult with you both formally and informally such as at public meetings, by survey, through focus groups and councillor surgeries. We will aim to use the most appropriate and cost-effective methods to consult with you.
- **Timing**
The length of time available to undertake consultations will vary depending on the nature of the consultation but we will aim to give as much time as possible to allow you to have your views heard.
- **Communications**
We will make sure you have the necessary information to make an informed view. For example, when consulting on new or changes to a policy, strategy or plan we will make sure they are made available to you.

- **Restrictions**

We will explain from the start if any issues will affect a decision. For example, if there are any financial, legal or technical issues which will be taken into consideration along with your views and opinions. In line with data protection laws and the need in some instances for confidentiality some information will require to be restricted.

- **Results and Feedback**

We will give you feedback on the consultation outcome, highlighting what, if any, decisions and changes have been made as a result.

- **Impact**

We will assess the impact of the consultation and use what has been learned to improve our future consultation.

Planning consultations

Before starting any consultation exercise it is worthwhile spending some time on planning.

In preparing a plan, you should consider:

- The reasons you are carrying out this consultation
- Who the target audience is
- What methods to use to consult with your audience
- What is already known in this subject area? What previous examples can be referred to?
- How will you get people to respond to the consultation? Look at promotion, publicity, press releases, etc.
- How long will it take? Think about all the stages involved such as designing surveys, distribution and analysis. If using meeting rooms for events or focus groups. Think about transport arrangements, access etc. Also consider how long the analysis and final reporting will take
- Who is responsible for each part of the process?
- What is the budget? Think about the resources that are needed for each stage e.g. printing questionnaires, venue hire, refreshments, etc.
- How much information do you need to provide in order for participants to make an informed decision?
- How will you analyse the results?
- How will the results be presented?
- How will the results be fed back?
- How will you evaluate the consultation?

When to consult

Involving local people in decision-making is a means of ensuring that we are meeting the needs of our residents and service users and in some instances it is a statutory duty. However there are many other advantages to carrying out consultations such as:

- Improving service take-up
- Building better relationships with the community
- Collecting service information
- Helping to inform policy

When NOT to consult

Circumstances where it is not considered appropriate to consult include:

- Where there is little likelihood of the results being fed into the decision making process
- Where there are restrictions (budgetary, statutory) that will severely limit the input from the participants
- Where a similar consultation has recently been carried out. Overkill can lead to cynicism of the consultation process especially if participants see little impact from their contribution

Stakeholders and the General Public

Whenever consultation is being undertaken, consideration should be given to which individuals, groups and/or organisations should be consulted and the most appropriate method for consulting each.

Consultation should be made available to everyone whom you think will wish to contribute both internally within the Council and externally with other organisations and agencies, as well as member of the public. Detailed below is a list of possible external and internal consultees which you should consider when determining who your target group is.

External Customers

- General public
- Services users
- Tourists/Visitors
- Businesses
- Students

Non-Users

- Unaware of service
- Previous service users
- Future service users

Internal Customers

- Staff
- Elected members
- Trade unions

Partners

- Public Organisations
- Community Planning Partners
- Voluntary and Community Groups

Stakeholders/Interest Groups

- Community Council
- Trade Associations

The Council is committed to ensuring that those who want to participate and share their views should have the opportunity to do so. It is the responsibility of the Council to inform potential respondents about the opportunity (see publication and promotion section) and identify and remove any barriers to participation.

It might be necessary in some cases to put in place additional resources to address groups which might be harder to contact, including:

- Older people
- Children and young people
- Asylum seekers
- Refugees
- Faith Communities
- LGTB+
- Ethnic Minorities
- Offenders/Ex-offenders
- Homeless people
- Substance misusers

Sampling

Sample size is the number of people in a population to be studied. The sample size should be big enough to have a high likelihood of detecting a true difference between two groups.

The confidence interval is the plus or minus figure usually stated when figures are reported. For example, if you use a confidence level interval of 4 and 47% of your sample picks an answer you can be sure that if you had asked the question of the entire population between 43% and 51% would have pick that answer.

The confidence level tells you how sure you can be. It is expressed as a percentage and represents how often the true percentage of the population who would pick an answer lies within the confidence interval. The 95% confidence level means you can be 95% certain; the 99% confidence level means you can be 99% certain. Most researchers use the 95% confidence level.

A Sample Size Calculator (see Useful Links section) can be used to determine how many people you need to select in order to get results that reflect the target population. You can also find the level of precision you have in an existing sample.

Timing

Before undertaking your consultation it is important that you are aware of other consultations which are planned or ongoing during the period when you intend to consult. This is not just the consultations which are being carried out by your own service, but also across the organisation. You should not undertake a consultation if there is currently one ongoing or recently completed in the same or similar geographical area or topic. Strategic Policy and Planning maintain a record of planned consultations and should be contacted if you require more information. The [Consultation Hub](#) also contains details of 'completed' consultations which will show what has been undertaken in the past.

When undertaking consultation it is recommended that respondents are given as much time as possible to respond. If you are using a quantitative method (survey, questionnaire, etc.) then it is recommended that you give respondents up to **12 weeks**. Where this is not possible consultations should be available for no less than 6 weeks. . As well as giving you sufficient time to undertake promotion and marketing, it allow individuals and especially groups enough time to form a response and submit it.

Consideration should also be given to particular times of the year when the public and stakeholders might not be able or will be less likely to respond. Holiday periods particularly Christmas, New Year, should definitely be avoided.

Methods of consultation

There are a variety of methods which can be used to consult and in some cases a range of methods will need to be used to ensure that everyone who wishes to participate will have the opportunity to do so.

When developing your approach the method selected for your consultation should reflect the specific nature and purpose of your consultation. Consideration should be given to:

- What am I trying to do? (engagement or information provision)
- What kind of information do I need?
- How much time do I have?
- What resources are available?
- Who am I consulting?
- What has been done previously?

There are a variety of different types of consultations. It is unlikely that any single method of consultation will sufficiently capture the views of everyone with the target group. Your consultation should provide various channels which respondents can select from to submit their views.

In the simplest term consultation methods can be split into two types:

Quantitative

These provide statistical information using samples of people. It answers “how many” or “what” type questions. Quantitative methods include surveys, questionnaires and referendums. (Appendix 1: Questionnaire Design)

Qualitative

These are more interactive and discursive in nature and are used to gain more detailed understanding of issues – answering “how” and “why” questions

Qualitative and quantitative methods, although different, are complementary. Often, the best and most useful consultation is developed using a combination of the two

Consultation Methods

Qualitative	Quantitative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters/Leaflets • Customer Comment Cards • Public Meetings • Workshops • Focus Groups • Open Space (events) • Interview (structured, paired, in-depth etc.) • Vox Box (Diary Room) • Area Forums • Road Shows • Open Day • Diaries • Citizens Panels/Juries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys/Questionnaires (appendix 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post - Telephone - Face-to-face (street, home, other) - Online (Smart Survey) • Petitions • Referendums • Polls

Appendix 2 provides information on the advantages and disadvantages of each method.

Data Protection (GDPR)

As of 25th May 2018, the Council and its associated Arms' Length External Organisations will process personal information under the new data protection laws. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has greatly expanded the information which might be considered personal to include anything which directly related to the individual. The regulation now requires those undertaking consultation to ensure that respondents are aware of why we collect information, what we will do with it, who it will be shared with and how long it will be retained.

A privacy statement has been created specifically covering consultation, research and statistics. If you are undertaking a consultation exercise then you will need to provide information to potential respondents. This can be done by including a link to the relevant privacy statement.

General Privacy Statement - <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=22066>

Research Privacy Statement - <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=22567>

Example wording:

'The Council is now required to process personal information in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For more information about this please visit <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=22066>.'

No respondent should not be identified as part of the reporting of consultation findings.

Equalities Monitoring

The Council have approved standard questions when there is a requirement to collect equalities information. Equalities information should be included in all consultations and research unless there is a good reason not to.

It is recommended that this information along with any other personal data is included together at the end of your questionnaire/survey as part of an 'About You' section. It is important that you inform respondents why we collect this information and what it will be used for (equalities monitoring, analysis purposes and to inform any related equality impact assessment).

Appendix 3 provides equalities questions and options which can be included in your questionnaire.

To comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and ensure that all consultations are accessible to everyone, you are required to make consultation documents available in different formats and languages upon request i.e. British Sign Language, large print, braille, Urdu, Gaelic, Polish, Cantonese, etc.

Sample wording:

'This document can be made available in a variety of alternate formats and community languages on request. If you would like more information about this or would like to request an alternative format or language, please use the contact details provided at the start and end of this consultation.'

If a potential respondent contact you and you need further information on this or equalities, contact: equalities@glasgow.gov.uk or 0141 287 0411

Publication and Promotion

It is important to ensure that the public and stakeholders are made aware that we are looking for their views and opinions and give them the opportunity to respond or participate.

When deciding how to publicise and promote your consultation it is important to think about who uses a particular service or will be affected by any change or decision. It is likely you will need to use a range of communication mechanisms and platforms. Detailed below are examples of the ways which you can publicise and promote your consultation and useful information on who to contact.

It is important that we also provide a range of options on how people can respond to consultations. As well as completing a survey or questionnaire respondents should be able to send their response through email or speak to someone by telephone.

Consultation documents, including surveys and questionnaires should also be made available in alternative formats and languages on request including braille, BSL, large print, alternative languages, etc.

To help promote your consultation it is advisable to use a short or memorable URL. This will make it easier to market it, particularly online, for respondents to remember it and share it with others. If your consultation is being hosted on the [Consultation Hub](#) you will be able to use www.glasgow.gov.uk/consultations which will take potential respondents straight to the hub's home page.

Analysis, Reporting and Feedback

Analysis

After the consultation has closed and the results have been collected you can start the analysis. Generally allow a couple of weeks to complete the analysis as this will involve collating results, any manual data entry and report writing.

If you require any assistance please contact Strategic Policy and Planning.

When analysing the results you should think about –

- Are people satisfied/dissatisfied?
- What are the areas of agreement?
- Where do opinions differ? And why?
- Are you meeting expectations? Why not?
- How can you improve?
- Can you benchmark against other councils?

When drawing the results together think about –

- Which things can you change in the short term fairly easily?
- Which things do not need action e.g. results that are good?
- Which things will require long term change?
- Which things highlight a need for immediate action?
- What are the next steps?

Reporting

It is likely that findings will need to be reported to either or both management and elected members, through the committee process.

When reporting consultation findings you should provide details of the process undertaken, the number of respondents and when the exercise was undertaken. Quantitative findings should be displayed in tables and charts with qualitative information read, coded and summarised. Details should also be provided about how this information will be fed into the policy development or decision making process.

Where possible and appropriate when reporting findings, it is useful to include statistical information for example response rate, base numbers, confidence intervals, etc.) which will help the reader better understand the findings.

Feedback

It is vital that you feedback the outcomes of the consultation so that people know that their input is valued. If you do not provide feedback it will likely discourage people from wanting to participate in future consultations.

In your plan you will have decided how you are going to feedback information to participants and told respondents how and when this will occur.

If you have not completed the process in the time you had allowed yourself, keep the public updated so that they know when they can expect some feedback.

They might wish to receive feedback via –

- Website
- Letter/email
- Public Meeting
- Leaflet

The Consultation Hub (www.glasgow.gov.uk/consultations) has the ability to host feedback to consultations.

Evaluation

Every consultation exercise should be evaluated at the end to assess how the consultation activities undertaken worked; the impact that they had on the policy/service change or development and the lessons learned for future consultation activity.

The process should be a positive and constructive one, designed to highlight both good practice and what worked well, and areas where improvements can be made. Evaluation need not be lengthy or time-consuming, and any findings (for example, reports) should be made available to interested stakeholders.

Evaluation Guidelines

- Determine how to evaluate the effectiveness of the consultation exercise during the planning stage.
- Time and resources spent on the evaluation should be commensurate with the scale of the consultation
- Carry out evaluation following each stage of the consultation or at the end of the exercise
- Ensure the evaluation is both an internal review of the consultation process, and where possible, discuss it with external stakeholders who participated in it. It is good practice to ask those participating in a consultation to provide feedback on the process and ways it can be improved in the future. This should be inclusive
- Consider reviewing who participated in the consultation, to see whether there were any patterns or obvious gaps. This may identify any groups who were not reached by the consultation methods used. It may also be useful to look at the methods on the outcomes. For example, if a particular consultation method provided a set of views that significantly varied from others, then consider whether this was due to differences in the method or actual differences in the views of the participants
- Share the findings and lessons learned, through a report and/or meeting. It is good practice to publish an evaluation report, particularly if external stakeholders have been involved. This can form part of the consultation report if timescales allow. Dissemination of the evaluation should be considered in the same way as the dissemination of consultation findings.

Evaluation Questions

1. Were all the objectives achieved? If not why not?
2. Were the chosen methods successful? If not why not?
3. Did you achieve a wide range of views?
4. Was there enough done to involve the 'hard to reach' groups?
5. Was it accessible? e.g. Plain English, translation, etc.
6. Was sufficient time allowed?
7. Was the budget kept to?
8. Did it lead to a change of policy/strategy?
9. What could you do better next time?

Useful Links

Glasgow City Council Resources

- [Consultation Hub](#)
 - [Current Consultations](#)
 - [Completed Consultations](#)
- [Education Consultations](#)
- [Consultation Principles \(Glasgow City Council\)](#)
- [Dialogue Tool](#)
- [Public Petitions](#)
- [Participatory Requests](#)
- [Community Budgeting \(Participatory Budgeting\)](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#)

External Web Resources

- [National Standards for Community Engagement](#)
- [Consultation Principles \(UK Government\)](#)
- [Calulator.net – Random Sample Calculator](#)

Appendix 1: Questionnaire Design

The wording of individual questions is a very important part of designing a questionnaire. Often poorly designed questionnaires lead to many problems, including uncompleted questionnaires, inaccurate answers, low response rate and increased time for analysis. The key to good questionnaire design is concise questions that are easy to interpret and give accurate information.

Generally speaking, there are two types of questions: **Open Format or Closed Format.**

Open format questions are those that ask for unprompted opinions, with no predetermined set of responses and the participant is free to answer however they choose e.g.

“What improvements, if any, could be made to make your neighbourhood a better place to live”?

An obvious advantage to open questions is that the variety of responses should be wider and more truly reflect the opinions of respondents. It is common for questionnaires to end with an open question asking respondents for any other comments.

However, open format questions have several disadvantages:

- They require to be read individually;
- There is no way to automatically code or statistically analyse them;
- They are more costly in both time and money;
- They require more time on the part of the respondent, which in turn could increase the chances of them not responding at all.

Closed format questions usually take the form of a multiple choice question and offer many advantages in time for the person completing it, and also cost and ease of analysis. They can come in various different styles, such as single or multiple response and ranking or rating.

Single response questions ask respondents to choose one option from a provided list when answering e.g.

*“What is your **main** means of transport when travelling to work”?*
(Tick one box only)

Bus Train Car Underground Bike By foot

Multiple response questions allow respondents to choose more than one option from a provided list when answering e.g.

“Which of the following means of transport do you use when travelling to work”? (Tick all that apply)

Bus Train Car Underground Bike By foot

Ranking questions allow respondents to rank a set of options by numbering them in order of importance e.g.

Place in order of importance to you, the following features of your local sports centre.
(Indicate by numbering from 1-5 in order where 1 is the most important)

Overall Cleanliness Clean Changing Rooms Good Equipment Friendly Staff Classes

Rating questions allow respondents to rate a set of provided features e.g.

Please state how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the following features of your local sports centre.

	Extremely Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Extremely Dissatisfied
Overall Cleanliness					
Changing rooms					
Equipment					
Staff					
Classes					

Use an equal number of positive and negative categories for choice questions.

Where a scale is being used for rating, there should be the same number of categories on each side of the scale with the strength of opinion balanced, with a neutral option.

Very Good	Fairly Good	Neither Good Nor Poor	Fairly Poor	Very Poor
Extremely Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Extremely Dissatisfied

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Strongly Support	Tend To Support	Neither Support Nor Oppose	Tend To Oppose	Strongly Oppose

Keep the questions short and vocabulary as simple as possible.

For example, if asking a question on frequency, rather than supplying choices that are open to interpretation, use choices that are more specific.

Instead of using:	Very Often	Try and use:	Everyday
	Often		5 – 6 days a week
	Sometimes		3 – 4 days a week
	Rarely		1 – 2 days a week
	Never		Never

Avoid Double Barrel Questions.

Do not use questions asking for information in relation to two different topics; this leads to inaccurate responses and it will be impossible to know which part of the question the respondent is answering e.g.

“Regarding exercise taken and diet, how would you rate yourself”?

“How satisfied are you with refuse collection and street cleaning in your local area”?

Avoid Numerical Scales

Try not to use numerical scales such as 1 to 10, to rate services etc. Verbal categories can provide more in-depth information for analysis.

For example, more can be taken from someone being satisfied as opposed to choosing option 7.

Appendix 2: Methodology Advantages and Disadvantages

Type of Consultation	Advantages	Disadvantages	Other Considerations
Leaflets and Newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be creative in design • Familiar – easy to understand • Can target specific groups • Can reach a wide audience or blanket cover a particular area • Can explore issues in depth • Can provide regular updates on an issue • Tear-off slips can be incorporated for feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming • Will require additional formats (language and larger type) • Usually requires a long-term commitment • Limited feedback • Difficult to measure outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of production, printing and distribution should be considered. • Can be distributed and made available on-line (e-newsletter)
Surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post • Telephone • Face-to-face (street, home, other) • Self-response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can reach a large number of respondents • Can target specific groups • Can apply 'scientific methods' (representative samples etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming • Inflexible – set questions • Disabilities (self-completion) • Level of knowledge required in subject area • Sample size and bias • Cannot explore issues much depth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs involved are dependent on the type selected and numbers involved • Return rate for Surveys dependant on the type selected • Open ended questions are time consuming to analyse
On-line Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above for surveys • Low Cost • Quick • Higher response rate (compared to postal methods) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above for surveys • Sample may not be representative • Internet availability • Questions have to be simplified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires access to on-line tools and/or software (www.smartvsurvey.co.uk, Achieve Forms etc.) • Can be carried out in conjunction with paper based version. • Consider those without internet access who may be excluded.

Type of Consultation	Advantages	Disadvantages	Other Considerations
Public Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps develop a culture of participation • High profile • Direct contact with participants • Can help identify solutions to problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turnout could be low • A self-selecting group are not representative • Difficult to measure success • Outcomes may be inconclusive • Some people may dominate the group if not properly managed • Mainly centres on big issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires facilitation • Information will need to be available for meeting. • Requires considerable organisation and administration.
Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost effective • Flexible • Spin-off benefits from networking • Allows issues to be explored in-depth • Can target specific groups • Informal nature helps participation • Mixed groups allow better understanding of other point of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample in not representative • Outcomes may be inconclusive • Only limited time available • Some people may dominate the group if not properly managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful to identify areas which require to be quantified or alternatively to investigate results which are unclear • Cost consideration should include facilitation, venue etc. • Equality issues require to be considered.
Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spin-off benefits from networking • Allows participants to raise issues • Participants feel valued • Draws on local knowledge • Explore issues in-depth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample may be too small to provide reliable conclusions • Requires skills to ensure everyone can participate equally • Outputs are not quantitative • Requires experienced moderators/facilitators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to target specific group (age, gender, ethnicity etc.) • Can be used to test opinions on specific target groups

