



Involving communities in consultation

Case Study: National process in the UK allowing groups to take part in the consultation by using integrated processes

Objective: To gather views, from a variety of public groups on managing radioactive waste in the UK

Significance: The results informed the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM) and their recommendations to government on what the UK should do with its radioactive waste

Process

- Stage 1:** Recruitment & invitations sent to participate in the discussions
- Stage 2:** Distribution of 'Discussion Guide Packs' to interested groups and individuals
- Stage 3:** Self-managed discussions amongst groups
- Stage 4:** Receiving responses to the guide via both online and paper-based methods
- Stage 5:** Collation & grouping of responses into common themes
- Stage 6:** Reporting for CoRWM to compile their recommendations to Government

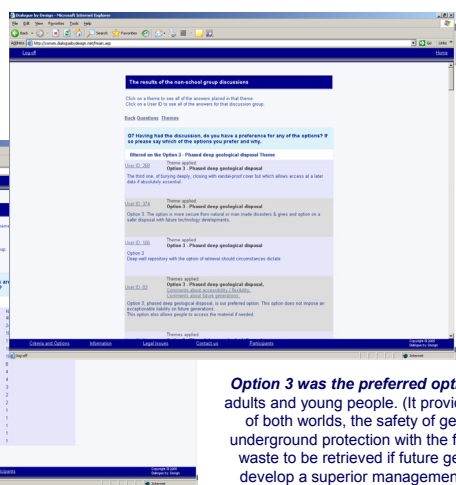
Participants

- Environmental Groups** – Local Friends of the Earth groups, Wildlife Trusts & Conservation Societies
- Educational Groups** – School & College classes, and University of the Third Age groups
- Community Groups** – Civic Forums, Parish Councils, Local Women's Institutes, Family and Neighbourhood groups, Site Stakeholders
- Industry Groups** – Businesses, anti-nuclear action groups, and groups supportive of nuclear power

Results

- 568 reply forms received** from groups across the UK, and at least **2826 individuals participated** in a discussion using the guide.
- Within the discussion guide over **5000 individual responses** to the 8 questions were received.
- Over **60%** of participants were from schools or colleges – interestingly views of adults and young people were very similar
- Results were collated using an innovative collation tool**
- Results were then displayed on a website which made for an open and transparent process**
- Participants could read everyone's answers by navigating through each of the different groupings, and view a summary report of the responses received.

- 4 most important criteria** – environment, long-term public safety, short-term public safety & security
- 3 least important criteria** – cost, local amenity & implementability



Option 3 was the preferred option by both adults and young people. (It provides the best of both worlds, the safety of geological / underground protection with the flexibility for waste to be retrieved if future generations develop a superior management method.

Lessons Learnt

- Integrated participation methods allow for a more robust consultation
- This process allowed for deliberative self-managed discussions on a National scale, alleviating the need for people to travel to workshops and meetings in one location.
- The Discussion Guide and online material assisted groups in understanding technically complex issues
- The Guide helped people to consider others' views, attempt to find group consensus and understand the dilemmas for decision-makers by exploring options through a series of questions
- This process is not for asking technical expertise or for the general public to make the decision but instead to find out what would be publicly acceptable and why
- The online process can be provided at an International scale, avoiding the need for International travel to attend meetings to consult on a particular issue

