

**Centre for
Participation
+ Action**

Supporting Wider Community Involvement in Plans and Decisions

How to widen involvement beyond a core group, using practical, accessible approaches that engage a broader and more diverse cross-section of the community.

Learning Outcomes

- Recognise the importance of going beyond a core group
- Learn practical, creative engagement methods
- Understand how to design welcoming, accessible participation
- Learn how to map networks for deeper engagement

IMPORTANT CONTEXT!

Participation methods and engagement practices are becoming common practice. This session is about looking at what practices exist, what's working and where we can deepen our engagement practice.

OPENING REFLECTION (paired reflection)

Think about a recent participation or engagement process you've been involved with

- Who showed up?
- Who didn't?

GOING BEYOND A CORE GROUP

Core groups are often committed, skilled and generous.

Over time, participation can 'narrow' rather than widen.

- Where do new people, energy, ideas or leadership naturally come into your participation work — without you having to force it?
- Where does it feel like the same people are carrying it?

STORIES FROM NORTH BIRKENHEAD

Participation and engagement North Birkenhead Development Trust

- Safer Streets Fund
- Cradle to Career
- 'Save the Library' Campaign

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REFLECTIVE QUESTION

What stood out to you about where and how people were involved?

PRACTICAL AND CREATIVE METHODS FOR ENGAGING WIDER VOICES

- Which groups are consistently under-represented, despite good intentions?
- What are the limits on current engagement methods for engaging wider voices?
- What assumptions might be built into those methods?

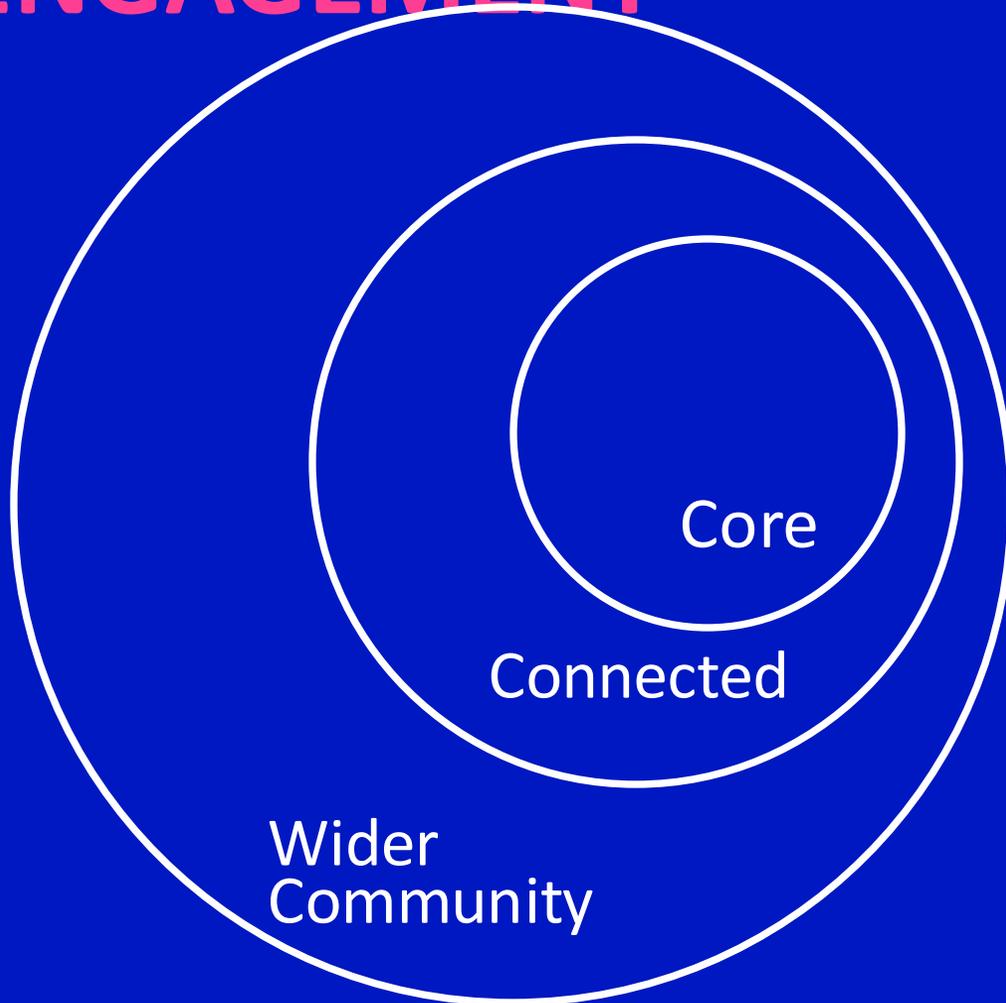
UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT

- “Lack of time” – Does our design process assume availability?
- “Low confidence” – Does our design privilege more confident voices?
- “Language” – Does our design assume familiarity with concepts and language?

MAPPING NETWORKS FOR DEEPER ENGAGEMENT

- Core – actively involved
- Connected – known, occasional contact
- Wider community – limited or no connection

MAPPING NETWORKS FOR DEEPER ENGAGEMENT



Reflective questions to increase the 'core'

- Where is one opportunity to deepen a relationship?
- Who could be a potential bridge?

FINAL QUESTION

What's one small shift you'll test to widen involvement?

CONTACT DETAILS

Nick Gardham | nick@centreforparticipation.uk

Eve Mellor | eve@nbd.org.uk

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