



CIVIC

Quality Enthusiasts

Sourcebook

Project CIVIC, Mansfield

Only Solutions LLP



EUROPEAN UNION
European Social Fund
Article 6 Innovative Measures



Dedication

Project CIVIC's *Quality Enthusiasts Sourcebook* is dedicated to the communities of Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale in Mansfield - including all those who live or work in these neighbourhoods - as well as to the people of Jokkmokk in Northern Sweden.

Only Solutions would like to offer our special thanks to everyone who participated in Project CIVIC's Quality Enthusiasts Group.

We hope that this *Sourcebook* will be of practical value for anyone wishing to use quality tools to support community development.

Med vänliga hälsningar,
(With gentle salutations),

Shlomo and Lorraine Downen

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There are no problems, Only Solutions...

Forest Town, Mansfield
July 2006

The **CIVIC *Quality Enthusiasts Sourcebook*** answers the following questions:

- What are community development values?
- What are quality management values?
- How have these values been added together?
- What are our results so far?
- What more can be done?

This *Sourcebook* provides:

- Explanations of ***community development values*** and ***quality management values***
- Some ways they have been combined to produce ***quality management tools***
- ***Concrete examples*** of how these quality management tools have been used
- A ***quality management toolkit*** for use in the community
- Signposting to ***additional resources***

Contents

Introduction	4
What are community development values?	5
What are quality management values?	6
Lulea Technical University (Sweden) on Total Quality Management (TQM) and the Progressive Development of Quality	7
Peter Senge and Learning Communities	8
How have these values been added together?	9
Approaches adapted from business management	10
Approaches adapted from systems thinking	11
Approaches adapted from TQM	12
What are our results so far?	
Examples of results arising from Project CIVIC's application of approaches adapted from:	
Business Management	13
Systems Thinking	18
Total Quality Management (TQM)	20
What more can be done?	
Quality Management Toolkit	22
Business Management Tools	22
Systems Thinking Tools	25
Total Quality Management (TQM) Tools	29
Additional Resources	
Community Development	33
Quality	39
Web-based Resources	
Community Development	42
Quality	43

Introduction

'CIVIC' stands for 'Cultural and Industrial Values in Change'. Communities and organisations all over the world are experiencing a great deal of change. An increasing number of government policies and initiatives seek to support a shift in our view of the world, or 'paradigm', from one based on competition (associated with industrial values) to one based on cooperation (post-industrial values). This has implications for community organisations and businesses.

Project CIVIC is a two-year (2005-2006) European-funded project, operating in Jokkmokk, Sweden and Mansfield, England, designed to: "*Develop and introduce a system for continuous improvement of our community based on the theory and values of Total Quality Management (TQM) and the application of TQM tools*".

Project CIVIC has created novel ways of 'adding value' to support communities to manage change, by adding together *community development values* and *quality management values*. These two sets of values have been combined to underpin the production of a range of quality tools for communities to use.

This *Sourcebook* features descriptions of some of these approaches, along with concrete examples of their use in Mansfield as part of Project CIVIC. The final section of this *Sourcebook* (beginning on page 22) is intended as a toolkit, with additional resources, advice about further reading and a list of relevant web sites, that we hope will be useful if you wish to apply some of these approaches as part of the development of your own community. An aide memoir, entitled *Quality Improvement toolkit for Tenants & Residents and Community Groups*, has also been produced to support the use of quality management approaches for community development.

What are community development values?

Community development is described as a process that joins up environmental, economic, social, demographic, technological, political and other issues by empowering communities to work on their own agendas to improve their quality of life. Community development starts with a clear set of values and commitments, rather than predetermined structures and solutions. In the 1960's community development efforts focussed on anti-poverty initiatives. By the 1980's there were more than 5,000 full-time 'community workers' in the UK.

Community Development Values

- **Social Justice** - enabling people to claim their human rights, meet their needs and have greater control over the decision-making processes that affect their lives.
- **Participation** - facilitating democratic involvement by people in the issues that affect their lives based on full citizenship, autonomy, and shared power, skills, knowledge and experience.
- **Equality** - challenging the attitudes of individuals, and the practices of institutions and society, that discriminate against and marginalise people.
- **Learning** - recognising the skills, knowledge and expertise that people contribute and develop by taking action to tackle social, economic, political and environmental problems.
- **Co-operation** - working together to identify and implement action, based on mutual respect of diverse cultures.

Community Development Commitments

- **Challenging** discrimination and oppressive practices within organisations, institutions and communities.
- **Developing** practice and policy that protects the environment.
- **Encouraging** networking and connections between communities and organisations.
- **Ensuring** access and choice for all groups and individuals.
- **Influencing** policy and programmes from the perspective of communities.
- **Prioritising** the issues of concern to people experiencing poverty and social exclusion.
- **Promoting** social change that is long-term and sustainable.
- **Reversing** inequality and the imbalance of power relationships.
- **Supporting** community led collective action.

More from the *Strategic Framework for Community Development* is included from page 33.

What are quality management values?

There are many descriptions of values associated with quality, and indeed many descriptions of Total Quality Management (TQM).



Luleå is located in Northern Sweden. Luleå Technical University's (LTU) Division of Quality and Environmental Management has been involved, for a number of years, in developing and delivering programmes that adapt TQM for application in communities. When those in Jokkmokk chose Mansfield as their European project partner, LTU's approach became available to the communities of Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale. Residents and service providers living and working in these neighbourhoods have helped adapt the ideas from Sweden and apply them locally.

Some of the most important sources of the quality management values applied as part of Project CIVIC in Mansfield include the work of Bengt Klefsjö, Maria Fredricksson, Magnus Svensson and other academics from Luleå Technical University (Sweden). We have also drawn upon the work of Peter Senge and his notion of learning organisations.

Many additional useful sources are readily available, and brief descriptions of some of these are included from page 39 of this *Sourcebook*.

LTU on TQM and Progressive Development of Quality

The acronym 'TQM' is used to refer to Total Quality Management. In Sweden several other terms, based on the Swedish language, are also used. One popular translation for TQM is 'offensiv kvalitetsutveckling', which could be translated back into English as 'progressive development of quality'.

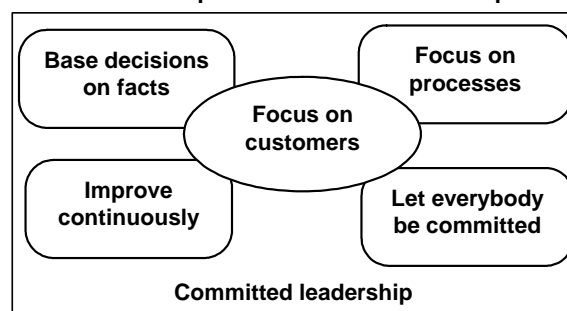
TQM = Progressive Development of Quality		
<i>Progressive</i>	<i>Development</i>	<i>of Quality</i>
Active work characterised by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proactivity• Changes• Improvements.	A continuous process of developing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Products• Processes• People.	The quality of a product, goods or service, is its ability to satisfy the needs and expectation of the customers.

From Bo Bergman and Bengt Klefsjö, 1995, cited by Svensson, 2004.

Core quality values include:

- Focus on customers
- Management commitment
- Everybody's participation
- Focus on processes
- Continuous improvement
- Fact-based decisions

Bo Bergman and Bengt Klefsjö produced the following simple illustration of the relationship between these quality values:



In 2004, a doctoral student at Luleå Technical University, Maria Fredriksson, applied the progressive development of quality to community development in several communities in Sweden. As the result of her research, Maria developed a cooperative model for community development based on TQM. Maria's model exerted a strong influence in the design of Project CIVIC.

Peter Senge and Learning Communities

Another important source for the quality improvement work undertaken by Project CIVIC in Mansfield is the writings of Peter Senge, Director of Systems Thinking and Organisational Learning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Senge's seminal book, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization*, contains his ideas for learning organisations. These have also been applied to communities, resulting in the term 'learning communities'.

Senge says that we, as a society, are taught to approach problems by breaking them apart, fragmenting the world in our attempts to make complex tasks more manageable. The hidden cost of this approach is that we cannot see the consequences of our actions; we lose our sense of connection to the larger picture. Listing and organising the separate pieces of a problem does not give a whole picture, just as assembling the pieces of a broken mirror does not provide a true reflection.

Many successful businesses have found that a learning organisation approach is more effective than a top-down hierarchic model, in terms of both competitiveness and cooperation. The organisation that does best taps into people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels. Learning communities follow this ethic, learning together to solve mutual problems and create shared 'win-win' outcomes.

Peter Senge describes what he calls the Disciplines of a Learning Organisation, all five of which need to be in place for an organisation, or community, to fully benefit. These Five Disciplines are:

- Building a shared vision
- Team learning
- Mental models
- Personal mastery, also known as Personal Empowerment; and
- Systems thinking.

Senge says that a vision needs to be anchored or rooted in the governing ideas of any project. Building a shared vision is only part of a larger activity that also includes developing the purpose, or mission, of the project, and identifying its core values. Together, these three: vision, purpose and values, constitute a venture's governing ideas. Senge's ideas have implications for both community development and quality management, as his approach to learning is in sympathy with both sets of values.

How have these values been added together?

To review, **community development values** focus on social justice, human rights, mutual respect, democratic involvement (community engagement), community empowerment, equality and diversity (and anti-discriminatory practices), learning, cooperation and partnership-working. **Core quality values** include continuous improvement, customer-centred orientation, management (top-down) commitment, universal (bottom-up) participation, focus on processes, and fact-based decision making.

Project CIVIC combined these two sets of values in the application of a range of quality management approaches used to support community development. These approaches can be grouped in several ways. This *Sourcebook* briefly describes the use of approaches adapted from business, systems thinking and TQM.

- Approaches adapted from **business**, such as:
 - Quality Circles and Learning Organisations
 - Visioning and Mission Statements
 - PEST Analysis / Environmental Scan and
 - Luczkiw's Global Entrepreneurship Monitor

- Approaches adapted from **systems thinking**, such as:
 - 'Brain Storming' and Mind Mapping
 - Systems Maps and Affinity Diagrams
 - Rich Picture Diagrams
 - Other Diagrams (Influence, Multiple Cause, Sign Graph)

- Approaches adapted from **TQM**, such as:
 - Improvement Cycles (PDSA and SUDA)
 - Self-Assessment (Evaluative Reflections, PQASSO)
 - Feedback Forms
 - Recognition (Certificates)
 - Force-Field Analysis

PEST = Political, Economic, Social and Technological

PDSA = Plan → Do → Study → Act →

SUDA = Sense → Understand → Decide → Act →

PQASSO = Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations

Approaches adapted from business

Businesses use **Quality Circles** to bring together people working at each stage of a process in order to pool knowledge and create an atmosphere where improvement ideas can be explored.

Businesses that have applied **Senge's 5 Disciplines** required to create a **Learning Organisation** have found it beneficial to develop a shared vision and to encourage team learning. **Visioning**, whether with a small team or a large organisation, can be described as a process of sharing understandings and perspectives that may result in reaching agreement on a **Mission Statement**.

One method used by businesses to understand the environment within which they operate is known as **PEST Analysis**, because it looks at **Political**, **Economic**, **Social** and **Technological** factors that influence the organisation and their potential customers. This approach is also known as an **Environmental Scan** (or 'Environmental Audit').

The Director of the Institute of Enterprise Education, Eugene Luczkiw, uses environmental scanning as the starting point for his approach to business development and learning. **Luczkiw's Global Entrepreneurship Monitor** has been used by businesses, and even whole industries (like car manufacturers), to help them plan the future.

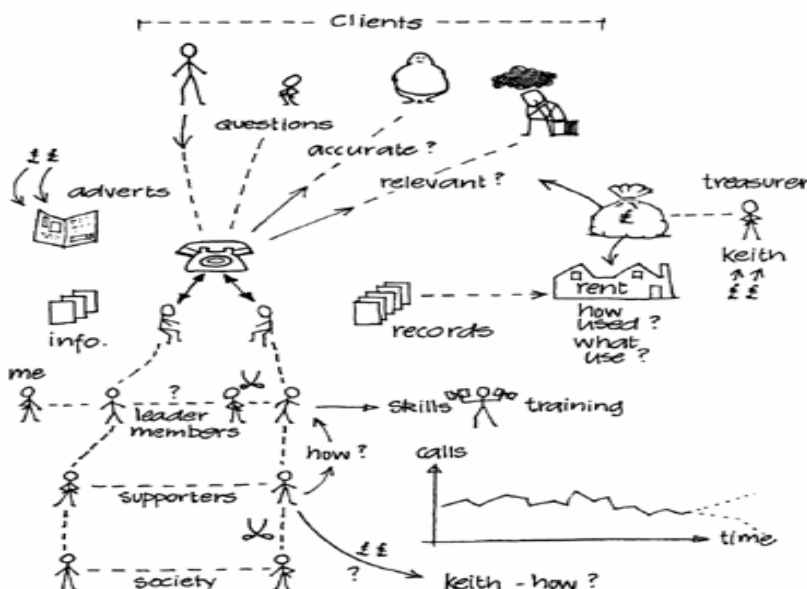
Approaches adapted from systems thinking

The way we think influences the way we see situations and the actions we do or do not take. **Reductionist thinking** breaks things down into bits; the whole is considered to be nothing more than sum of its parts. These parts are treated as isolated entities or as separate components. **Holistic thinking** deals with wholes; the whole is considered to be greater than the sum of its parts (because it also recognises the relationships between the parts). Reductionist thinking attempts to reduce its explanations to a single cause, while holistic thinking explores multiple causes.

A **system** is a set of interconnected parts grouped together (organized) for a purpose. Systems always exhibit 'emergent properties' that are not reducible to these parts because they 'emerge' from the relationships between them. Systems are distinguished from their background (environment) by a boundary. **Systems thinking** is a type of holistic thinking that looks at the relationships between a system and its environment.

Systems thinkers have developed a range of ways to help describe, or 'map', complex situations. **'Brain Storming'** is a useful way of generating ideas, while **Mind Mapping** is a way of recording these ideas (and the connections between different ideas), sometimes in the form of a **Spray Diagram**. **Affinity Diagrams** provide another way of grouping ideas. **Systems Maps** are used to show the structure of a system.

Rich Picture Diagrams are used to help explore complicated situations. These diagrams are made up of pictures, symbols and some key words. There are many other types of diagram that systems thinkers use to describe and analyse difficult and complex ('messy') situations.



Part of a rich picture diagram of a telephone helpline situation (from the Open University System Thinking course material).

Approaches adapted from TQM

TQM, which stands for **Total Quality Management**, is used to describe a set of approaches used to measure, monitor and manage the 'quality' of an organisation (or aspects of an organisation, such as 'performance'). It has been said that: "Quality is a journey, not a destination". This journey is considered to be the responsibility of every person within the organisation, and is expected to touch upon every aspect of the organisation. TQM is described as a process of continuous improvement, and as the **progressive development of quality**.

This process can be seen as one that repeats itself in a cycle. **PDSA** and **SUDA** provide two models for this improvement cycle. PDSA begins with **Planning** and **Doing**. Results are then **Studied**, and used to inform subsequent **Action**. The SUDA cycle is similarly made up of **Sensing** and **Understanding** phases that lead to **Deciding** and taking **Action**.

An important way to manage quality is through some sort of **self-assessment**. This involves making an **evaluation** based on thinking about strengths and areas for improvement. These **reflections** are recorded and used to monitor attempts to improve. The Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (**PQASSO**) provides a framework that enables voluntary and community groups (and projects) to review the quality of their organisation and the services they provide, and then to undertake improvements.

Other methods used to support quality improvement include various sorts of **Feedback Forms**, and a variety of ways to offer **Recognition**, such as awards and certificates. A method known as **Force-Field Analysis** provides a way to represent and explore the combination of positive (driving or reinforcing) forces and negative (restraining or limiting) forces that impact on a particular area of focus. There are many other tools and techniques associated with TQM.

What are our results so far?

Project CIVIC's mission, to apply TQM to community development, involved the production of a range of quality tools for communities to use. This Section provides some concrete examples of the results obtained through their use with participants from the Mansfield communities of Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale, during 2005 and 2006. Project CIVIC's participants included people who live in these neighbourhoods, alongside people who provide services for these communities.

Examples of results arising from Project CIVIC's application of approaches adapted from business

Project CIVIC adapted the business approach known as Quality Circles to bring together residents and service providers working to bring about improvements in the quality of their area. This group became known as the ***Enthusiasts Group***, based on the aim of building on participants' enthusiasm for quality improvements and community development.

The first six Enthusiasts Group meetings were designed to guide participants through a learning process that touched upon a range of key concepts and supporting concepts. Enthusiasts pooled their knowledge in an atmosphere that was conducive to exploring improvement ideas and developing the habits of a learning community. The first session provided an opportunity to begin developing a ***shared vision*** of both the Group and the Project, resulting in agreement on a ***Mission Statement*** (see overleaf).

Some of the topics explored in the initial six themed Enthusiasts Group sessions included:

- Vision and Visioning
- Quality Management (Tools and Values)
- Strengths and Areas for Improvement
- Self-assessment and PQASSO
- Managing Social Change
- SUDA and PDSA Improvement Cycles
- PEST Analysis and Demographic Trends
- Systems Thinking
- Paradigm Shift

PROJECT CIVIC **MISSION STATEMENT**

CIVIC stands for Cultural and Industrial Values in Change. Project CIVIC is about managing social change. In both Mansfield and Jokkmokk, Project CIVIC will support a change in ideas from industrial / competitive values to post-industrial / cooperative practices and community praxis, through the progressive development of quality. In this way, Project CIVIC supports the sustainable development of learning communities.

In Mansfield, Project CIVIC will work with each of the three new Neighbourhood Management Teams (Ravensdale, Bellamy, and Oak Tree) to focus on managing social change through quality management methods. It will assist each of the Neighbourhood Management Teams in working toward achieving the PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance Systems for Small Organisations) Level 1 Quality Mark with the support of development workers from Nottinghamshire County Council, Mansfield District Council and Enable. Project CIVIC will also promote community engagement methods and development throughout the process.

In the spirit of Peter Senge's *Five Disciplines of a Learning Organisation*, the Enthusiasts Group's shared vision was rooted in governing ideas, a sense of purpose and certain core values. The Group provided a forum for team learning and the application of systems thinking. Participants were provided with opportunities to explore their own and each others' 'mental models', while enhancing their 'personal mastery' (also known as empowerment).

Project CIVIC engaged Enthusiasts Group participants and others in the production of a **Community Development Monitor** (CDM). This entailed a process of environmental scanning, based on an adaptation of Gene Luczkiv's Global Entrepreneurship Monitor and an extension of the widely used PEST Analysis approach.

Business managers recognise the importance of examining both the internal environment (within the organisation) and the external environment. In this context, an organisation's external environment is itself comprised of physical, social and competitive environments. Project CIVIC's CDM focuses on aspects of the social environment. Neighbourhoods, like businesses, interact with their external environment, receiving inputs (such as funding, ideas, physical material, and 'customers') and contributing outputs (goods, services, waste, etc.).

Although the CDM includes a wider range of factors, this approach originates from analysis of four key environmental factors: Political, Economic, Social & Technological (PEST).

Politics affects organisations and neighbourhoods in many ways. Changes in political control can influence public priorities and funding arrangements. Commercial and community organisations operate within an environment governed by laws. These laws are set by Parliament, and therefore depend upon political considerations.

Some of the **political factors** affecting the neighbourhoods of Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale as reported by participants include:

- The Thatcher Government's pit closure programme and associated political changes (e.g. privatisation of national industries and large-scale redundancies).
- The Commission on Social Justice's vision and 15-year plan that became the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. This Strategy contributed to the formation of Local Strategic Partnerships (such as the Mansfield Area Strategic Partnership (MASP)) and to the creation of Neighbourhood Management Teams (NMTs) in Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale. MASP hosts a Social Strategy Group for Mansfield, and there is also a Mansfield-wide Neighbourhood Development Management Group. All of these political structures are intended to delegate (devolve) power to communities.

The state of the **economy** affects all organisations, commercial or otherwise. Economic growth is considered an indicator of increased demand.

Some of the **economic factors** affecting the neighbourhoods of Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale as reported by participants include:

- Growth then rapid collapse of local (and national) coal and textile industries, leading to a dramatic fall in the number of jobs available in the ('former coalfields') area.
- The rise of the global and New Labour emphasis on 'knowledge economy' and 'social capital' and the emergence of social enterprises from the 1990's onwards.
- The shift from large employers to niche markets, self-employment, 'micro businesses' and e-commerce.

Socio-cultural factors affect the make-up of the population and the lifestyles of society. The social and cultural environments are constantly changing. Identifying trends can assist with planning for the future. The study of population changes and trends is known as demography because *demos* means 'people'. Demographic trends provide a picture of how people (and societies) are changing. It has been observed, for example, that the UK's population is shifting, with an increasing proportion of older people.

Some of the **social factors** affecting the neighbourhoods of Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale as reported by participants include:

- People moving to Mansfield during the early- and mid- 20th century, to work in the coal and textile industries.
- The drop in Mansfield's population and the increase in 'worklessness' associated with the collapse of these industries.
- The stabilising of Mansfield's population by 2001.
- A more transient population, making for greater diversity on the one hand, and a break-down of the social order associated with mining communities. Whereas once older generations were seen as role models, this was felt to no longer be the case. This lack of positive role models was identified as a contributing factor for a decline in 'discipline' and an increase in unruly behaviour.

Technological changes have had a profound impact on all of us, at home and at work. Technological change is considered to have rapid, persistent and profound effects on our lives.

Some of the **technological factors** affecting the neighbourhoods of Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale as reported by participants include:

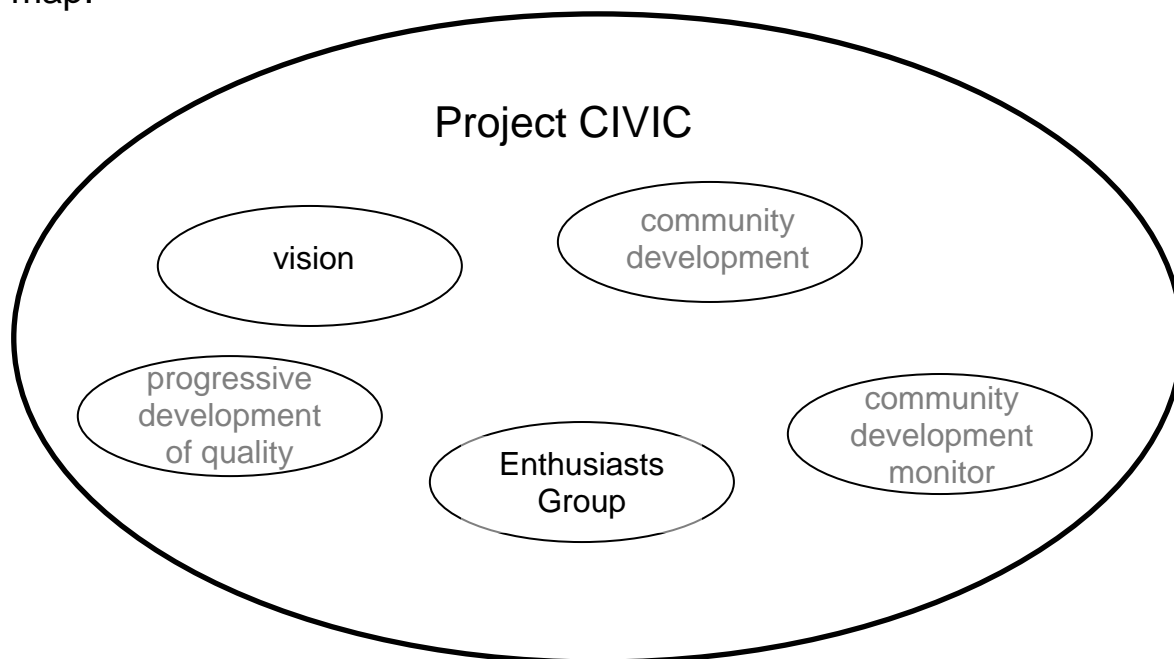
- The rise of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), including personal computers, the Internet, mobile 'phones, etc.), and e-commerce (on-line shopping), coupled by an increased expectation of ICT skills in schools, work and in our daily lives (banking PIN numbers, etc.).
- The gap, known as the 'Digital Divide' between those with the skills and resources to benefit from new technologies and those 'left behind' by a lack of access to such resources.

The process of planning for the future has been shown to benefit from starting with a better understanding the current situation and how it came about. When coupled with visions, the 'planning gap' can be identified. The planning gap is the space between the current situation and the desired situation, and includes the plans for getting from where we are to where we would like to be.

Project CIVIC's Community Development Monitor considered additional environmental and ethical factors. These environmental factors related to both the natural and the built environments, while the ethical considerations included issues such as social justice, participation, equality, learning and cooperation. The complete CDM is available as a separate document.

Examples of results arising from Project CIVIC's application of approaches adapted from systems thinking

'Brain Storming' and Mind Mapping techniques were used as part of the Enthusiasts Group sessions to generate and record ideas. These records were used again to support the evaluation process. Several **systems maps** were used to help explain Project CIVIC to potential participants as part of recruiting Enthusiasts. Bergman and Klefsjö's illustration of the core quality values, included on page 7, provides another simple example of a systems map.



An example of one of the 'top level' systems maps used to help explain Project CIVIC

Participants in the first Enthusiasts Group session worked in small groups to discuss a series of questions:

1. What are the important issues facing your neighbourhood
2. What are some important changes that you have seen in your neighbourhood
3. Describe 1 or 2 of your wildest dreams for your neighbourhood
4. Describe 1 or 2 of your most worrying fears for your neighbourhood
5. How do you feel your neighbourhood could be 'improved'

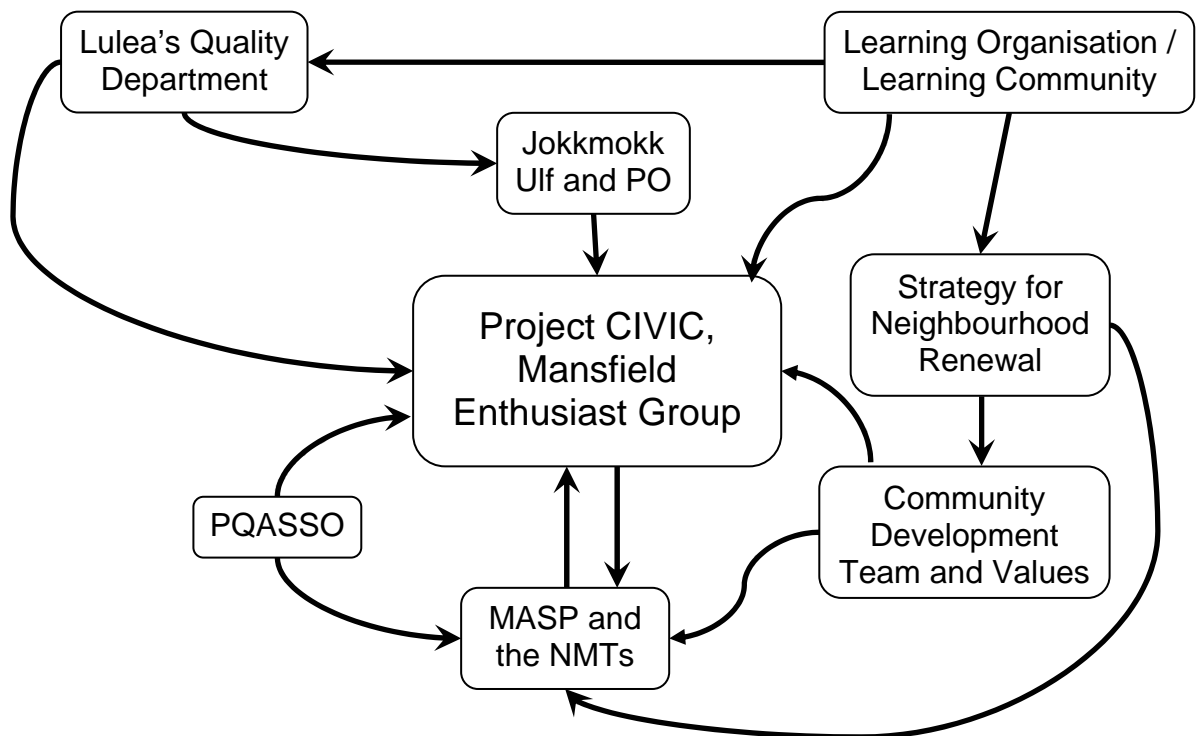
Participants were then asked to draw images that conveyed something of their discussions, leading to the production of a **rich picture diagram** of social change. The rich picture triggered further consideration of participants' concerns as well as their positive visions for their communities. This was followed by a brief discussion of social change and how it can be managed.

Images included positive visions of the kind of neighbourhoods Enthusiasts wanted to see: drawings of happy residents, activities for all ages, a friendly and reassuring police presence, affordable housing, and improved public transportation. Communities were shown responding to changes (such as pit and factory closures and job losses) by pulling together, listening to each other (and being listened to) and by accessing funding to improve their communities. The pictures showed people who felt safe to leave their doors open, with increasing community spirit so that the town thrives once again (and grows into a sustainable community).

According to participants, this process should include:

- Describing the current situation in its context and in relation to visions of how our neighbourhoods could be →
- Looking at the gap between how things are and how we want them to be →
- Generating ideas about how to bridge that gap →
- Developing a strategic plan to implement these ideas →
- Evaluating the results →
- Redrafting plans in light of outcomes

A simplified ***influence diagram*** was also used to describe the central influences on Project CIVIC.



Examples of results arising from Project CIVIC's application of approaches adapted from TQM

Both the **PDSA** and **SUDA** improvement cycle models were used repeatedly as part of Project CIVIC's Enthusiasts Group to shed light on various processes. These models have already been described on page 12, alongside the use of **feedback forms** and methods of **recognition**. Enthusiasts used both structured and 'open' forms to provide feedback, comment on the content and delivery of sessions, and to offer suggestions for improvement. Enthusiasts Group facilitators produced **evaluative reflections** on the strengths and areas for improvement following each session.

Another important dimension of Project CIVIC was the use of **Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations** (PQASSO). Project CIVIC was assisted by Enable (the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Voluntary and Community Sector Learning and Skills Consortium) in the introduction and application of PQASSO, both in relation to the Project itself and to the Neighbourhood Management Teams (NMTs) of the three neighbourhoods involved (Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale). This was the first time that PQASSO, a system designed for voluntary organisations, was used with NMTs! Enable provided the PQASSO software computer programme and a PQASSO mentor.

Project CIVIC's use of PQASSO has helped with the following:

- Clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Confidence building
- Financial systems
- Help building up databases
- Help facilitating committee meetings
- Production and distribution of promotional material, and
- The development of Health & Safety policies and procedures

Points to consider included:

- Volunteer time & commitment
- Volunteers moving on
- Constraints on Service Providers
- The need for open communication, and
- The need to view this approach as an ongoing process

One of those involved in supporting this process described PQASSO as “a tool that helps the NMT to look at where it is at and to celebrate the things it has done (achieved). PQASSO also helps identify areas of improvement and suggests things that could possibly be in place...The fact that PQASSO and the software is also something very visual means that teams can see how they’re doing by looking at the progress indicators. This helps keep teams motivated and helps identify areas of improvement...”

It was also noted that enthusiastic buy-in is difficult “...when the teams are already focussed on other things or the members are very busy. They appreciate its value but it is very difficult to get them actively involved”.

As a direct result of using PQASSO with the NMTs we have seen:

- Better communication between committee members
- Minutes and agendas are starting to look better and get out more frequently
- Equal opportunities policies have been produced
- A set of ‘House Keeping Rules’ was adopted as good practice
- More focussed work with the Secretary and Treasurer
- New action plans are being formulated
- There is a feeling on the ground that things are improving and hopefully the NMTs will have turned the corner after a very difficult period

Other positive points include:

- More focussed support for NMT’s
- Provides a focus for Development Workers
- Identify specific issues e.g. training needs, absent policies, or gaps in processes (systems)
- Self evaluation allows teams and workers to see progress, monitor it, and review it
- Led to some clear outputs e.g. Action Plan
- Long Term benefits include good practice, and the development of self-evaluation skills

Problems encountered included:

- Getting buy-in from the community
- Convincing sceptical NMT members that PQASSO could add value to their efforts
- Fear of having to take on something extra

What more can be done?

Having considered some of the ways that community development and quality management have been combined as part of Project CIVIC, we can now look at what more can be done beyond the lifetime of the Project. The quality 'tools' described in this section can be adapted to suit your community, campaign group, voluntary organisation, Tenants and Residents Association (TRA), Neighbourhood Management Team (NMT), and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). There are many other useful sources of information and support for quality management and community development that are available, some of which are included in the Additional Resources section.

Quality Management Toolkit

Business Management Tools

Quality Circles

Community groups, organisations and partnerships can set up a *Quality Circle* to bring together people who are working on various aspects of the community's development. This could involve residents and service providers, including local politicians. Such a Quality Circle would provide opportunities to explore improvement ideas, to pool local knowledge and to challenge assumptions.

There are no strict rules about how to organise a Quality Circle. Quality Circles usually consist of between 6 and 12 participants. The group can be self-organising and self-managing, although most benefit from the guidance and support of a leader or facilitator. Additional 'outside' (expert) training and assistance will also be helpful.

Quality Circles are intended to support 'continuous improvement', and this happens best in an atmosphere where trust is built and where there is no blame. Participants in Quality Circles take part voluntarily; they 'opt in' to attending regular meetings, and sometimes to delivering a presentation to the rest of the group. It is recommended that the group is kept small enough to ensure all members can contribute effectively. Members are expected to agree on a clear plan (agenda) and purpose (objective) for each meeting.

The group may choose to start by identifying problematic situations and situations that they feel could benefit from improvement. If the solutions and improvements suggested by the Quality Circle are to be implemented (and the results studied), the active cooperation of those in positions of authority to enact these ideas is essential. This is known as 'top-level buy in'. If the suggestions are to be successful they also require the support of all of those involved. This is known as 'bottom-up participation'.

PEST Analysis

Business managers talk about identifying strategies to bridge the 'planning gap'. This 'gap' is the distance between the way things are and the vision of how they could be. This process requires creative thinking ('visioning') about the most desirable way that things could be, and a thorough understanding of the current situation. *PEST Analysis*, also known as Environmental Scanning, is one tool that can help inform an assessment of the current situation and how it can about.

As was mentioned earlier, PEST Analysis involves looking closely at a variety of influential factors. This analysis can focus on any levels that seem appropriate, including the local neighbourhood, district, county, sub-region, region, country, continent, hemisphere and even the whole planet. Factors to be considered could include more than political, economic, social (and cultural, historical and demographic) and technological factors, taking in additional aspects such as environmental, legal, ethical, organisational, and even personal factors. The analysis can look back in time as far as is helpful to gain a more complete understanding of current circumstances.

This approach to environmental scanning can contribute to managing social change and enhancing the quality of community development in several ways.

- Describes a starting point for discussion and analysis
- Draws on people's sense of 'what is really going on'
- Provides information about the origins of the current situation
- Contributes to a better understanding of 'what we're up against' (i.e. the challenges faced and barriers to overcome)
- Enhances the local knowledge economy, helping identify local solutions and previously unrecognised opportunities
- Helps identify unintended consequences (of past actions)
- Can be easily linked to SUDA and PDSA cycles of continuous improvement

Systems Thinking Tools

Brainstorming

*Brainstorming** is a quick and simple way for a group of people to generate a large number of ideas. Impractical ideas are not excluded, but are seen as useful contributions that could lead to more practical ideas. There is no one 'correct' way to Brainstorm. What is most important to remember is that everyone's contributions are to be treated as equally valid, and all ideas must be recorded (no matter how bizarre). Only once all of the ideas have been recorded do those involved move on to eliminate the ideas considered unlikely to work.

The process of Brainstorming usually begins with a issue, problem or focus (or even simply a title) that is written on a board or flipchart. A facilitator, or 'scribe', is selected to record people's responses. Group members call out ideas that address the issue, and all of these ideas are written down. These ideas should not be criticised by any of the participants. This non-judgemental attitude is meant to encourage creative thinking and risk-taking, which in turn can lead to building trust within the group. Brainstormers are often encouraged to 'think the unthinkable'.

*Note: The term 'brainstorming' as used in this context has nothing to do with epilepsy. To avoid this confusion some people use the term 'thought-shower' instead.

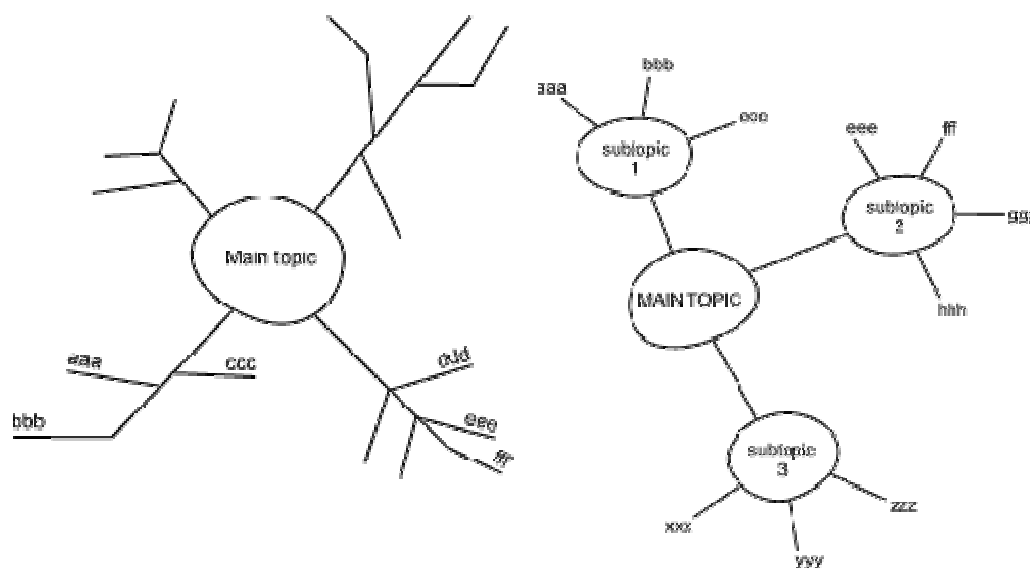
Spray Diagrams

Spray diagrams can be useful as both a product (the diagram itself) and as a process (drawing the diagram). Sometimes spray diagrams are referred to as tree diagrams or mind maps. They can be used in the early stages of analysis, for thinking about a topic from scratch, for taking notes, and for setting out the structure of an argument. They can show connections in trains of thought and can indicate ways that ideas can be grouped. The diagram itself can be used as a communication tool, for example to give an overview during a presentation or act as a memory aid.

Spray diagrams are created by writing down the central idea to be explored, leaving plenty of space around it. Then, identify branches from that idea that you want to explore further. Write them down around the central idea and link each to it with a straight line. The lines simply mean that in your mind there is some association or connection.

Keep going by considering each branch to see if further branches (ideas) link to it. If you get stuck or lose the thread, start with a new central keyword and create another spray diagram rather than clutter up the original. Alternatively, leave your spray diagram or mind map for a while to allow time for fresh thinking before adding to it or redrawing it, combining or grouping similar ideas.

Spray diagrams often look very messy while you're drafting them, and you can go through numerous drafts as you think of better ways to structure your ideas into related groupings, and as space becomes needed for new ideas. It's often worth producing a final draft which makes the tree-like structure clear, so that it can easily be read at a glance.



Two formats for a spray diagram or mind map

Source of diagrams: Open University *Systems Thinking and Practice Diagramming CD* (2005)

Rich Picture Diagrams

Professor Peter Checkland introduced rich pictures for use in the early stages of his Soft Systems Methodology. Soft Systems Methodologies (SSM) were developed by Checkland as a way of dealing with “messes”. Messes are problem situations with social, political and human aspects, where there may be no one correct resolution. Messes differ from well-defined ‘hard’ (mathematical or technical) problems with ‘correct’ answers that can be calculated.

Rich pictures offer a way of moving from this state of messy confusion, where all you know is that you’re dealing with a problematic situation, to a state where you’ve identified one or

more themes (known as 'systems of interest') that you want to address.

One of the difficulties in thinking and learning about a messy situation is that different people in the situation have different perceptions of and assumptions about what is going on. Looking at each other's pictures can be an effective way of revealing these differences because they express things *you wouldn't think of saying*. And sometimes they allow you to say things that might have seemed rude or frivolous in a simple and unthreatening way.

It can be hard to face other people's different assumptions, because this makes us question our own assumptions, which can be demanding and unsettling. It can mean throwing away the solutions we thought we had, going back to the beginning and starting afresh. But that is sometimes exactly what is needed!

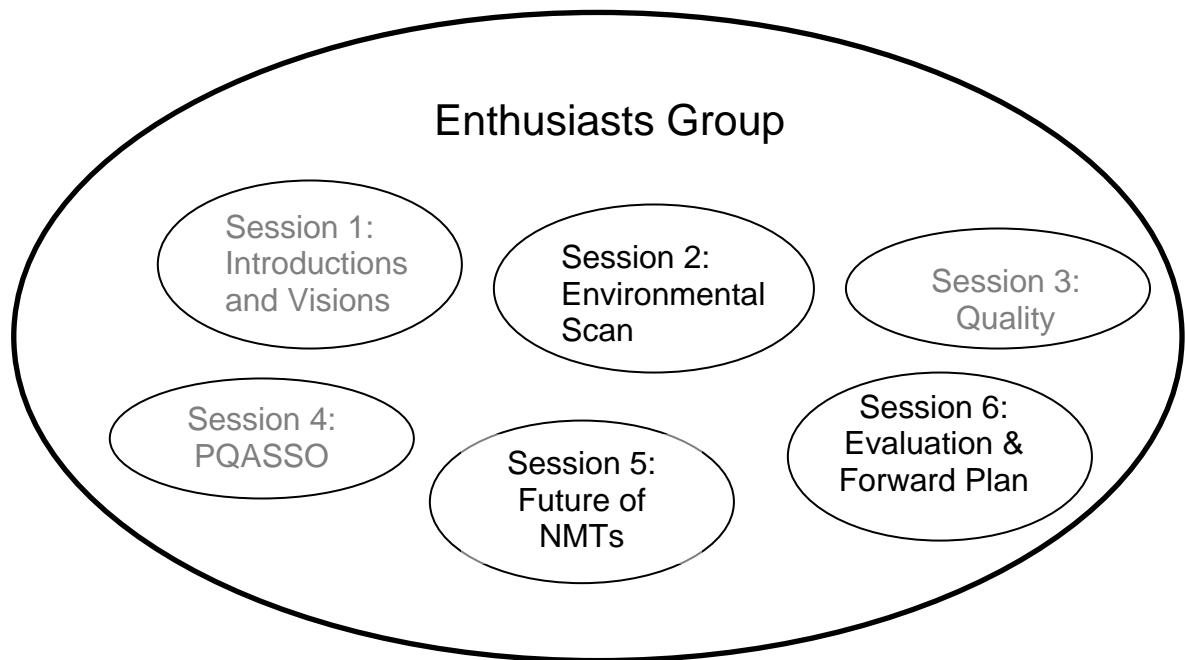
Rich pictures can include pictures, symbols, keywords, cartoons, and sketches. Symbols, scenes or images that represent the situation are drawn, using as many colours as necessary. Words are used only when no images come to mind to express the idea. The picture includes not only factual data about the situation, but, more importantly, subjective information (feelings, opinions, beliefs, etc.). Rich picture diagrams represent a personal perspective, allowing you to put yourself in the picture!

Systems Maps

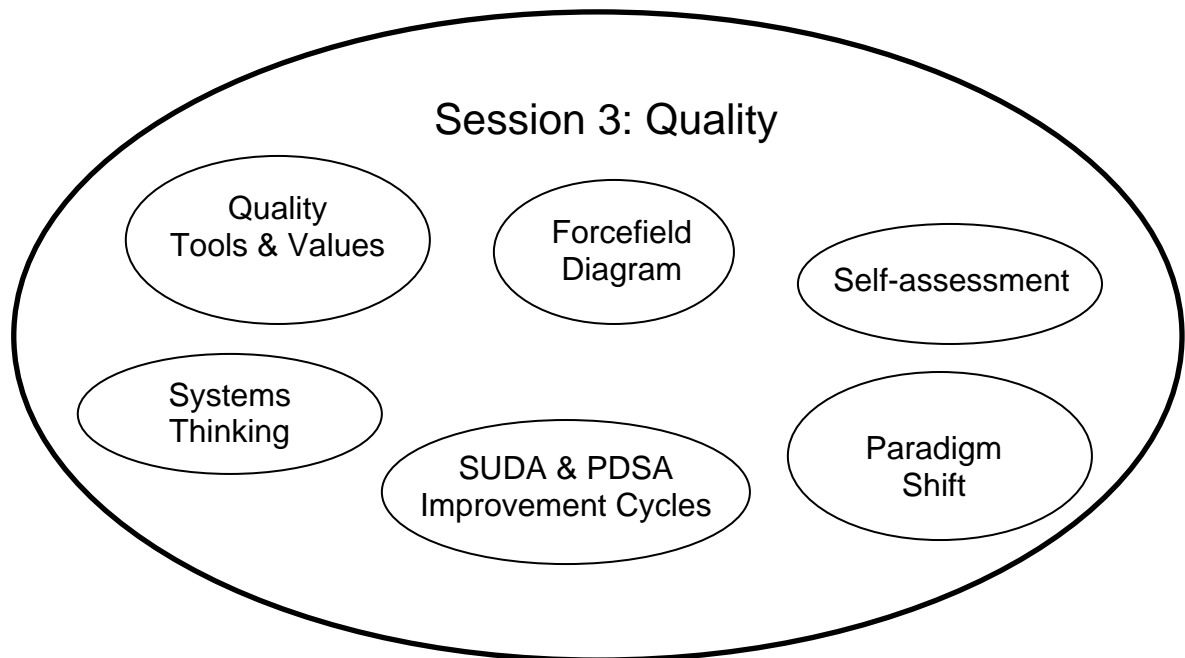
Like other types of systems diagrams, systems maps are used as thinking and communication tools. They have a simple form, consisting of blobs and words. Systems maps show the structure of a system of interest at a point in time, using a hierarchy of groupings. The diagram on page 18 is a 'top level' systems map of Project CIVIC. This can lead to any number of lower level maps; for example, maps with more details about the Enthusiasts Group sessions (see overleaf). These elements are known as 'sub-systems'.

A systems map can be used to provide a model of an existing structure, such as your Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) or Neighbourhood Management Team (NMT). If you draw a map that shows your understanding of the way your LSP or NMT works, and then show it to someone who might know more, you can add their information to your map. It is often the case that it is only when someone sees an incomplete map of the situation that they become aware of the knowledge gap and the missing pieces of information needed to fill it. This whole process helps increase

your understanding, and provides you with a model that you can share with other members of your group or organisation.



A systems map showing more detail of the Enthusiasts Group sub-system



A systems map showing more detail of the Session 3 sub-system

Another way of using systems maps is to create a new model, that names and groups components according to the purpose you have in mind. This enables you to structure your thinking about the system, and to discuss it with others. It's like a map of the system. Systems maps show only structure, so once you start thinking about the processes that occur in this territory - about relationships, sequence, influence, cause and effect - then you need to go on to a different diagram type which shows connections between these components.

One way to draw a systems map is by starting with the boundary and then considering what sub-systems might be included. Then, moving down a level, you'd consider what sub-systems and components might be needed in each of these. You'd repeat this process, moving down the levels, until you reached the degree of detail required. Another way is to start with the components your system is likely to include, grouping these sub-systems, and then going up a level to group your groupings, and so on, until you were ready to draw a boundary around the whole of your system.

Affinity diagrams

Affinity diagrams are another way of sorting ideas, problems or issues into related groups. Affinity diagrams are usually constructed by a team of people. The team identifies the possible issues, problems or ideas. Each issue, problem or idea identified is recorded on a separate card or Post-it note. The cards or notes are laid out randomly, and the team groups each of the cards or notes, moving those that they do not agree with until everyone is happy with the grouping. A short description is then produced for each grouping. Finally, the team identifies how the headings relate to each other.

Influence Diagrams

Drawing an influence diagram can help you to think about situations where many different bodies, groups and individuals influence each other in various ways, and where perhaps you would like to influence the situation yourself. Blobs represent the entities that influence each other, and arrows represent the flows of influence between them.

As with rich pictures, drawing an influence diagram, like the one on page 19, involves a process of discrimination. If you include every influence you can think of, you'll end up with too much information for the diagram to be useful. It is therefore important to identify the most significant influences in relation to your particular interest in the situation.

The elements exerting or experiencing influence might be individuals or groups - or they could be other things which exert influence in the situation, such as culture, mood, legislation, etc. The thickness of the arrow is generally used to indicate different strengths of influence. You might use colour or line-style to represent specific *types* of influence, in which case you would need to provide a key.

Influence diagrams are tools for both individual and group thinking. As with all systems diagrams, it is the process, as much as the product, which is of value. The process of mapping influence flows can help you to think more clearly about exactly how influence operates in a situation, and how you (or your group) might act in order to most effectively influence the situation. Working on such diagrams in a group can reveal differences in perceptions, which lead to constructive discussions and new understandings. In both individual and group work, standing back and looking at what you have constructed can lead to unexpected insights about how best to take action in a situation.

Influence diagrams resemble systems maps with added influence arrows. As with a systems map, an influence diagram represents a snapshot of the situation at a point in time. It does not show how the situation changes over time (and in particular, it is not used to show sequences of events).

If you can lay out the diagram to show how the primary influences *flow* through your system of interest, you can begin to analyse how influence operates in the situation. For example, you might see a chain of strong influences, with just one weak link. Or you might notice a missing link in what would otherwise be a powerful flow of influences. Or you might notice the significance of an otherwise overlooked relationship.

Total Quality Management (TQM) Tools

Force-Field Analysis

Force-Field Analysis provides a way to represent and explore the combination of positive (driving or reinforcing) forces and negative (restraining or limiting) forces that impact on a particular area of focus. It can be used to help an organisation or group see positive aspects to maintain and negative aspects to be dealt with.

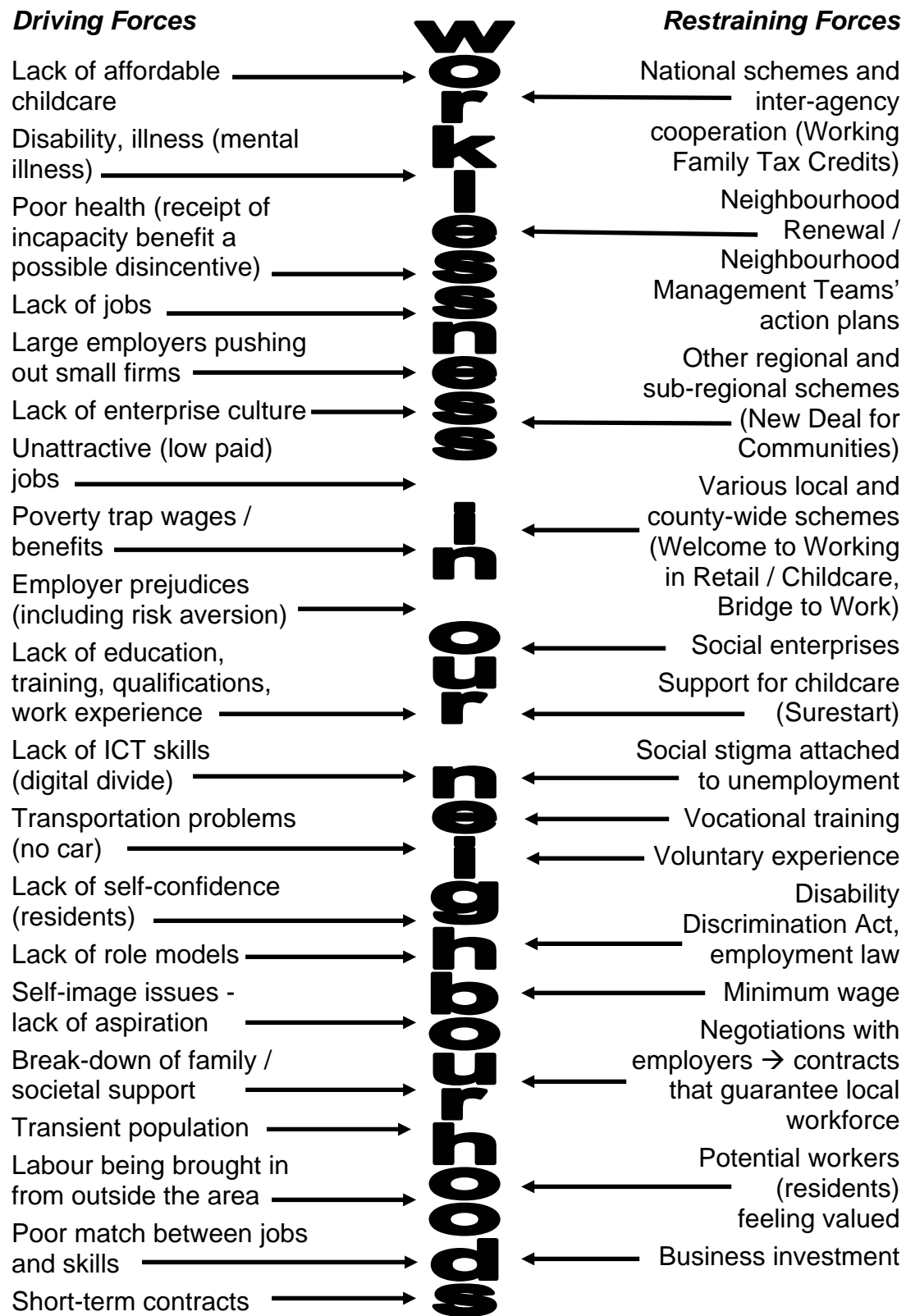
A title, representing the process being analysed, is drawn down the centre of a sheet. Drivers and barriers are then added, drawn as arrows pointing towards the central shape. Positive forces (drivers) are drawn from one side and negative forces (barriers) from the other. To give additional detail the arrows can be 'weighted' (drawn in proportion to their influence on the process).

The first activity of the third Enthusiasts Group session engaged participants in the production of a *Force-field Diagram of Worklessness in the communities of Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale*. This activity was accompanied by animated discussions, and clearly resulted in participants gaining a deeper understanding of the complexity of the issue of worklessness and the reasons some initiatives have failed (e.g. because although they address some of the factors driving worklessness in the area they may not address other factors crucial for success).

Using a brainstorming approach, participants quickly came up with long lists of positive and negative factors, in response to the questions: *What are the forces driving (or encouraging) worklessness in our neighbourhoods?* and *What forces restrain (or limit) worklessness in our neighbourhoods?*

Following the production of a force-field diagram (see overleaf), participants considered the further question: *How could this quality tool be helpful for managing social change?* The discussion included an exploration of the value of the SUDA and PDSA improvement cycles and the way force-field diagrams can help record a shared sense of the driving and restraining factors that could lead to greater understanding that in turn would inform fact-based decision-making, resulting in potentially more effective joint action. Enthusiasts Group participants also noted the value of adopting a more holistic approach that recognises the connections and the complexity of issues associated with worklessness.

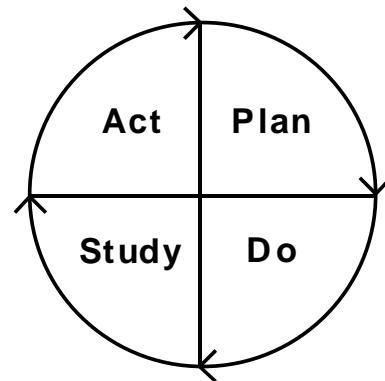
One outcome of this session was a series of Opportunity Days, held in each neighbourhood, to help address local worklessness. These involved a range of service providers, covering different positive and negative aspects of worklessness.



Improvement Cycles (PDSA and SUDA)

Continuous improvement is at the heart of Total Quality Management (TQM) and the progressive development of quality. All TQM tools can be seen as methods designed to support the process of continuous improvement. Various models, including *PDSA* and *SUDA*, have been developed to help explain the repetitive 'improvement cycles' that are involved in efforts to progressively improve.

PDSA stands for Plan → Do → Study → Act → The cycle starts with **planning** (e.g. planning the improvement project), based upon an idea of what should be improved. The next step is to execute the test that has been planned (**doing**). The results of any tests (or 'trial runs', pilot studies, etc.) should be **studied**. Finally, in the **Acting** phase, decisions are made, based on the results of the study undertaken.



The SUDA cycle is similarly made up of **Sensing** and **Understanding** phases that lead to **Deciding** and taking **Action**.

Some are confused by the concept of continuous improvement, saying that if something is 'perfect' it cannot be improved; if it's not broken, why fix it? But even if processes do exactly what they were designed to do, it is unlikely that by simply doing the same thing products or services will continue to meet customer needs. Customers' needs change over time. External customers are the people or organisations that are the main reasons for the existence of the organisation - those for whom we wish to create value. Both internal and external customers tend to expect higher standards and shorter timescales. The only way to ensure that a process continues to meet changing needs is to review it regularly.

Continuous process improvement is a systematic method of analysing data, identifying root causes of problems, understanding likely future changes to product or service requirements, and acting on the results. It involves ensuring that feedback from internal and external customers (i.e. the people or organisations that are the main reasons for the existence of the organisation - those for whom we wish to create value) and staff is actually fed back to the right people and that the information is used to review and improve the process. Problems with the process are then identified and solutions are developed using a variety of quality tools.

Additional Resources

Community Development

In May 2001, the Standing Conference for Community Development (now known as CDX) produced its *Strategic Framework for Community Development*. An electronic copy of this *Framework* is available from the CDX web site, at: <http://www.cdx.org.uk/resources/library/docs/sframework.doc> This *Framework*, endorsed by both the Community Development Foundation and the Local Government Association, outlines these values and commitments as follows:

Community development is about building active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect. It is about changing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives. Community workers support individuals, groups and organisations in this process on the basis of the following values and commitments...

(see <http://www.cdx.org.uk/resources/library/docs/sframework.doc>)

From the late 1960's, in both the US and the UK, community development (also known as community work or community organization) efforts focussed primarily on anti-poverty initiatives (e.g. the 'War on Poverty' initiated by US President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964, and the 'Community Development Projects' programme launched in the UK in 1969). By the early 1980's there were more than 5,000 full-time 'community workers' in the UK, as distinct from youth workers and those working in adult education. 60% of these community workers were employed in the voluntary sector (see <http://www.infed.org/community/b-comwrk.htm>).

What is...?

Community is the web of personal relationships, groups, networks, traditions and patterns of behaviour that exist amongst those who share physical neighbourhoods, socio-economic conditions or common understandings and interests.

Community workers undertake community development as their main role. They work in accordance with recognised occupational standards. They may focus on specific issues with communities, e.g. health, or have a generic brief.

Community activists are people who are active on a voluntary basis in the development of their communities.

Community groups and organisations are located within communities of geography or interest. They are controlled by their users and are usually small and informal with no paid staff. They are often referred to collectively as the community sector.

Community capacity building supports individuals, groups and organisations to enable them to play a part in the regeneration of communities. It is about building skills and competencies and is increasingly being used amongst policy makers and managers to increase their understanding of communities.

Community involvement is about involvement in community activities in a variety of different ways. Community involvement often starts with agendas and programmes that originate outside the community.

Community participation is about enabling people to become active partners in the regeneration of communities by contributing and sharing in the decisions that affect their lives. Participation should enable people to have a degree of power and control in the processes with which they are involved.

Community enterprise combines community-led action with business activities aimed at economic development and social gain. Community enterprises have explicit social aims and are accountable to their communities. They are independent but work in partnership with others.

Social entrepreneurs are individuals who initiate ideas and activities in communities but not necessarily with reference to existing traditions, activities and relationships.

Partnerships are structures that exist to deliver programmes. They bring together a number of formal organisations, for example statutory authorities, private companies and voluntary organisations. It has been unusual for community sector groups and organisations to be represented, although there are now attempts to include community interests.

Stakeholders are groups and organisations with an interest (stake) in what happens with a project, programme or development.

Community Development and its Role

Community development is undertaken with communities of place, identity and common interest. This includes communities based on faith, those with a shared culture or heritage, users of public and other services, those with common interests arising from their work, and people working together to promote the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Community development takes place in a context of social, demographic, technological, economic, environmental, political and other change. These changes have global, European, national, regional and local dimensions. Communities initiate changes and through networking have wider influence. There are also changes which are not initiated by communities that present both threats and opportunities. The community development process works with communities to analyse, initiate and influence social change.

If community development is to fulfil its potential it is important that its role in achieving equal opportunities, accessibility, participation in democratic processes and sustainable economic, social and environmental change is recognised. These themes are important across government and within the private and voluntary sectors. Organisations in all sectors can provide crucial support to community development, for example by adopting this framework and ensuring that it applies in all the work of their organisation.

A community development approach starts with people in communities coming together to address these themes. It supports the connections that exist between them and the fact that individuals, groups and organisations need to learn from each other and co-operate if consistent and sustainable change is to be achieved. Community development spans the traditional boundaries of organisations in a way which is flexible and responsive to the priorities and concerns of communities.

This does not mean that communities can do everything or that the resources of statutory, private and voluntary organisations are no longer required to achieve change. A community development approach does mean that government and organisations in the private and voluntary sectors will:

- Act on the basis of the values and commitments of community development
- Support action by community groups and organisations, community businesses and neighbourhood councils
- Have clear processes which enable communities to influence their policies, programmes and priorities
- Recognise the right of communities to propose alternative courses of action
- Value different types and levels of participation
- Build local, regional and national strategy through dialogue with people and organisations active in communities
- Recognise the function of community development and allocate resources to it in their strategies
- Recognise the resources, information and support required by community representatives and organisations when working in partnerships
- Change working practices and time scales to enable participation by communities

Community Development Processes

Community development processes enable people to work together around common issues and aspirations. This includes people coming together to pursue an activity for its own sake, developing organisations which provide services, participation in partnerships including management responsibilities, and involvement in broader movements to achieve social change.

Community workers employed by statutory agencies, voluntary associations and occasionally by community groups themselves support community development. They work with individuals, groups and institutions in ways which enhance learning, participation, and democratic decision-making. They enable communities to establish and develop networks and more formal types of collective organisation.

Empowerment

Community development does not seek to impose solutions or structures, or to provide services or events *for* people. Rather it is about working *with* people to define and deal with problems, and assert their interests in decision-making. This requires empathy and an ability to engage with individuals, working to develop and maintain appropriate forms of organisation. It may also involve changing existing organisations so that their practices and culture embrace the empowerment of communities. In this process the role of the community worker requires expertise, diplomacy and courage. By helping communities to develop informal networks and formal organisations, the worker will inevitably challenge and re-negotiate existing power relations, seeking to create alliances which are to the advantage of disadvantaged groups.

Learning

Informal education and mutual learning are important aspects of community development. Through their involvement in community groups and activities, people acquire and re-discover talents, skills, knowledge and understanding which enable them to take on new roles and responsibilities. This contributes to life-long learning by creating opportunities for reflection and evaluation of experience, allowing knowledge to be shared through critical dialogue and building confidence amongst people who have neglected or abandoned their formal education at an earlier age. Community development encourages people to overcome those fears, prejudices and attitudes which restrict their participation and limit their self-esteem.

Democracy

Community development strengthens democratic processes, opening up political debates and procedures to disadvantaged communities. People become more aware of issues which affect their lives, and more determined to take action to address these. This might involve acting as a community representative on local partnerships, or taking on leadership positions in voluntary organisations. It will entail dealing with tensions, tackling stereotypes and assumptions and helping people to identify the things that they have in common, as well as respecting their differences. Community workers are concerned with building consensus amongst diverse partners, and empowering and enabling those who are marginalised and excluded when there are conflicts of interest.

Outcomes

The process of community development is complex and demanding. Many of the outcomes seem intangible and cannot always be predicted. The Scottish Community Development Centre has developed the ABCD (Achieving Better Community Development) framework for evaluating community development. This framework suggests the following as the outcomes of community development:

Community empowerment	
Process	Outcome
Personal empowerment	A learning community
Positive action	A fair and just community
Community organising and volunteer support	An active and organised community
Participation and involvement	An influential community

Quality of life

Process	Outcome
Community economic development	A shared wealth
Social and service development	A caring community
Community environmental action	A safe and healthy community
Community arts and cultural development	A creative community
Governance and development	A citizens' community

Source: Achieving Better Community Development

Networking and strategic support

Effective community development requires opportunities for community activists and volunteers, community workers, and managers to share ideas and experiences and take joint action on issues of common concern. Some of this networking will be face to face and it is important that time and resources are allocated to enable this to happen. Increasingly the internet is used as a tool to enable more frequent contact and networking over longer distances.

The importance of networking

Networking is important because it provides access to information, support, resources and influence. It enables co-operation between practitioners, researchers and policy makers in different sectors through the development of trust and understanding. This co-operation depends on establishing and maintaining both organisational links and personal relationships. Connections which span agency, geography and identity, are especially useful because they bring new perspectives and challenges. These are also the links, which can be most difficult to sustain, and their development may need particular attention accompanied by practical measures to counter prejudices and institutional discrimination.

Networking opportunities are important locally, within regions, countries, and on a UK, European and international basis. Networks related to specialist aspects of community development such as health and the environment are of increasing significance. Networks concerned with urban or rural issues and the perspectives of people experiencing discrimination, for example due to race, gender, disability age or sexuality also have an important role in effective community development.

Networks can draw together a range of voices into a collective whole, thus adding weight to individual perspectives. Clear links with strategic decision-making across sectors are important to achieve maximum influence.

Support for networking

Community workers facilitate networking by putting people in touch with one another, by creating opportunities for people to meet, and by providing safe spaces for interaction and learning. They may assist links between different organisations, or provide support to membership organisations, cross sector partnerships and coalitions.

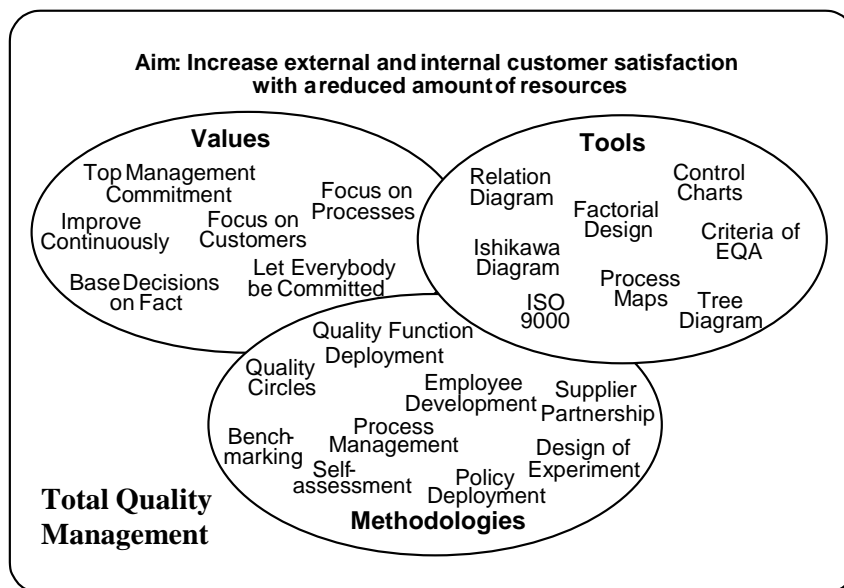
This aspect of community development needs greater recognition through funding to membership and support agencies, along with careful evaluation of how this supports the development of communities based on social justice and mutual respect.

Also see <http://www.cdx.org.uk/resources/what%20is%20cd.pdf> and other web-based resources (listed on page).

Quality

Lulea Technical University (LTU) and the Progressive Development of Quality

The word “progressive” in this context indicates that an organisation has to be proactive to accomplish changes in order to obtain improvements, instead of working in a reactive manner through inspections and repairs. “Development” suggests that quality improvement work is a continuous process that deals with the development of processes within the organisation and the products that are outputs of these processes. “Development” also refers to development of the people working in the organisation.



TQM is as a continuously evolving management system consisting of values, methodologies and tools, with the aim of increasing external and internal customer satisfaction with decreasing resources (Hellsten & Klefsjö, 2000).

The progressive development of quality, can be described as a management system consisting of core values, methodologies (techniques) and tools. These three components are interdependent and mutually supportive.

In 2004, a doctoral student at LTU named Maria Fredriksson applied the progressive development of quality to community development in several communities in Sweden. As the result of her research, Maria developed a cooperative model for community development based on TQM. Maria's model exerted a strong influence in the design of Project CIVIC. Maria's thesis, *From customer satisfaction to citizen interaction: a cooperation model for community development based on Total Quality Management*, is available from <http://epubl.luth.se/1402-1544/2004/39/LTU-DT-0439-SE.pdf>

Peter Senge and Learning Organisations

Peter Senge described a benevolent cycle of vision building. Visions spread because there is a reinforcing process of increasing clarity, enthusiasm, communication and commitment. As people talk the vision grows clearer and enthusiasm for the benefits build up. Confidence is built through a deeper understanding of forces shaping current reality. When people in an organisation learn how existing policies and actions are creating their current reality, the quality of the vision improves. Senge found that the most effective people and organisations are those who can hold their 'vision', while remaining committed to seeing current reality clearly. For more, use "Senge" and "Learning organisation" as search terms.

Jane Owen

Jane Owen's booklet, entitled *Making Quality Sense: a guide to quality, tools and techniques, awards and the thinking behind them*, is part of a series of quality resources made available jointly by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA), the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), and the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE). All of the publications in this "raising quality and achievement programme" series focus on applying quality approaches to the provision and evaluation of adult community learning. Many are accompanied by additional staff development and training material. For further details of these resources, see the Toolkit and Additional Resources Sections of this *Sourcebook*.

Owen suggests that quality management theories and terminology can be "off-putting for people who are not part of the quality profession". As its name suggests, *Making Quality Sense* attempts to show how "quality is based on common-sense principles that most people can easily understand".

Since the series was produced, the LSDA has evolved into two separate organisations. Its policy and strategic work have moved to the Quality Improvement Agency for Lifelong Learning (QIA) (responsible for quality improvement across the learning and skills sector); while responsibility for delivering LSDA programmes, research, training and consultancy projects is transferred to the Learning and Skills Network.

Quality Improvement Agency

QIA has been set up by the government to create a strong strategic focus on improving quality throughout the sector. It is leading development of an integrated sector quality improvement strategy. It helps providers respond to government strategic priorities for learning and skills, and it commissions and funds research, programmes and services to support performance improvement and strategic change. For more information and for access to The National Teaching and Learning Programme (Subject Learning Coaches), Skills for Life Quality Initiative, Support for Success, Learning and Skills Beacon Status and the Learning and Skills STAR Awards, please visit www.qia.org.uk

Soft Systems Methodologies

Soft Systems Methodologies (SSM) were developed by Professor Peter Checkland as a way of dealing with “messes”. Messes are problem situations with social, political and human aspects, where there may be no one correct resolution, as distinct from well-defined ‘hard’ (mathematical or technical) problems with ‘correct’ answers that can be calculated.

SSM is divided into seven distinct stages. These are;

1. Finding out about the problem situation. This is basic research into the problem area. Who are the key players? How does the process work now? etc.
2. Expressing the problem situation through Rich Pictures. As with any type of diagram, more knowledge can be communicated visually. A picture is worth a 1000 words.
3. Selecting how to view the situation and producing root definitions. From what different perspectives can we look at this problem situation?
4. Building conceptual models of what the system must do for each root definitions. You have basic "Whats" from the root definitions. Now begin to define "Hows".
5. Comparison of the conceptual models with the real world. Compare the results from steps 4 and 2 and see where they differ and are similar.
6. Identify feasible and desirable changes. Are there ways of improving the situation?

Recommendations for taking action to improve the problem situation. How would you implement the changes from step 6?

Web-based Resources

The following short list of web links are intended as a starting point for your exploration of the vast web-based resources available on the Internet. Many of these links contain further links for you to 'surf', and a wide range of search engines are also available. You can use any combination of search terms taken from this Sourcebook, and the search facility will be able to locate the most up-to-date information, related publications and resources.

Community Development

- *Strategic Framework for Community Development*
<http://www.cdx.org.uk/resources/library/docs/sframework.doc>
- The *infed* (on-line) encyclopaedia of informal education article on community development
<http://www.infed.org/community/b-comwrk.htm>
- **The Community Development Foundation (CDF)**
<http://www.cdf.org.uk/>
- Community Engagement resources
<http://www.communityplanning.org.uk/documents/cptfwg3information-sources.pdf>
- Renewal.net Toolkits, for example:
<http://www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Overview/How%20To/Buildpartnership.doc>
- NIACE *Emancipatory Learning Briefing Sheet*
http://www.niace.org.uk/information/Briefing_sheets/Emancipatorylearningmar00.html
- *Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation*
<http://www.partnerships.org.uk/guide/ideas.htm>
- Urban Forum *Community Involvement in Local Strategic Partnerships research summary*
http://www.urbanforum.org.uk/pdf_files/comm_inv_in_lsp.pdf
- *Active Partners: Benchmarking Community Participation in Regeneration*
http://www.yhregforum.org.uk/publications_resources/knowledgebase/500/560/91.pdf
- *Evaluating community projects: A practical guide*
<http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1859354157.pdf>

Quality

- Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Voluntary Organisations (PQASSO)
<http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm?pg=42>
- Quality and Adult Learning (can be adapted for community development)
http://www.qualityacl.org.uk/quality/t2_Resource.aspx
<http://www.qualityacl.org.uk/quality/publications.aspx>
- Support for Success Quality improvement practice guides
<http://www.s4s.org.uk/index.php?mod=page&page=home&id=108>
- Owen's *Making quality sense*
<http://www.lstda.org.uk/files/PDF/1201A.pdf>
- *From TQM to TRM* (Total Responsibility Management) by Sandra Waddock and Charles Bodwell
<http://www.greenleaf-publishing.com/pdfs/jcc7wadk.pdf>
- Brighton Resource Centre *Systems for improving your organisation: a brief guide to Quality*
http://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/policies_procedures/info_pdf/quality.pdf
- Total Quality Partnerships *Quality in the Community: An overview of progress in the UK* (1995)
<http://www.tqp.com/articles/qic.pdf>