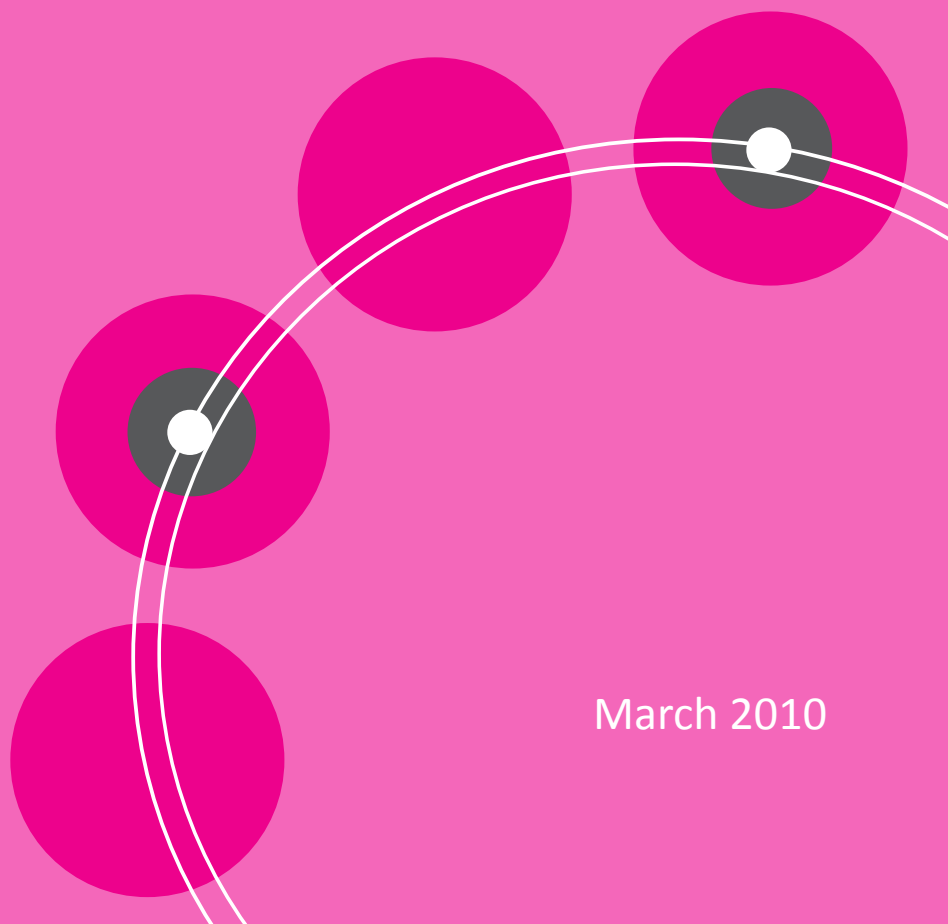


**A review of online resources for
community led design**

The Glass-House
Community Led Design



March 2010

Contents

1. Executive summary	2
2. Introduction	4
3. Capacity building findings	9
4. Scale and theme findings	18
5. Conclusions	24
6. Summary of key resources	28
7. Information sources	37

1

Executive summary

Introduction

The Glass-House Community Led Design charity has developed this study to explore the level of design support currently available online for communities. The project has reviewed resources which give communities the skills and confidence to be active contributors, partners and project leaders in neighbourhood design and physical regeneration projects in their local area, rather than simply being commentators. The most useful resources for communities have been identified; the overall accessibility and quality of resources assessed; and gaps in provision identified. This has enabled conclusions to be drawn on how online design resources for communities could be improved in the future.

Method

Resources produced by central and regional government, advisory bodies, professional organisations and charities have been assessed for relevance to community audiences and a checklist provided for the types of projects they cover, including, neighbourhoods and streets, open and play space, schools and community uses. Each of the identified resources was reviewed for accessibility in terms of navigation and language and seven key capacity building criteria assessed, based on the tasks communities will have in undertaking a project. This included provision of practical urban design guidance, advice on engaging with others and procurement advice. For each of these criteria, resources were given a mark between 0 and 5 (5 being the strongest) depending on how well the topic was covered.

A database of 72 resources has been developed which includes an overview of each resource, an assessment of the capacity building criteria and its recommended use by communities. Conclusions have been drawn from the key quantitative information in the database along with anecdotal evidence of the search process.

Key findings

Capacity building potential

Many of the community resources available cover two or three of the tasks required by communities to undertake a project but do not give an all round guide, meaning that communities will need to track down additional information elsewhere. A particular gap appears to be between design support and guidance on engaging with others - resources tend to focus on one of these key elements rather than integrating the two. CABE has provided some exceptions to this rule, including the *Spaceshaper Users Guide*, but the level of design guidance here is pitched at a simpler level than the earlier *Councillor's Guide to Urban Design*. This report could provide a good model for a detailed but accessible community design tool in the future. Recent CABE documents have also been far more effective at addressing all seven of the tasks identified for communities, with the recent *Creating Excellent Primary Schools: A Client Guide* (2010), indicating that more all-round guidance could be released over the coming year, changing the picture.

Engagement advice has been well developed in Scotland, with *An Introduction to Consultation Methods* (Fife Council, 2007) providing a particularly detailed and practical tool. Peer-to-peer engagement is not covered, though the framework for this appears to be emerging in London with Fundamental Architectural Inclusion and the Discover Centre Children's Forum.

Limited procurement advice is available for communities (20 of the 72 resources) though it is covered in reasonable detail where it is addressed. Funding advice is covered by even fewer resources (17) and is not covered in detail where it is addressed. Communities currently need to research this separately. Lastly, little information is provided to communities on engaging with the local planning authority, so that they can be sure their plans are taken on board.

Project scale and type

A reasonably large resource pool exists for the creation and improvement of children's play spaces and open spaces, and a small but effective resource pool exists for school design projects. It is for these project types that design and engagement issues tend to be covered evenhandedly, with links between the two. The two resources which address all seven of the community project tasks have a school design and children's play space focus.

Advice for neighbourhood and street scale projects tends to be aimed at a professional audience, perhaps as communities are less likely to undertake such projects. However, with the number of town centre and neighbourhood regeneration projects now undertaken, it would be valuable to provide resources for communities to engage with these in a meaningful way. Perhaps of greater concern, very few resources exist which provide advice on community and arts uses. This is particularly important at a time when community halls and centres around the country are under increasing financial pressure and communities are exploring means of developing and maintaining their own centres with support from local councils.

Sustainability issues do not currently seem to be well integrated within resources, with these instead being provided at dedicated sites such as *Building for Life*.

Resource accessibility

Resources are currently found at a wide variety of government, professional organisation and charity websites and communities do not benefit from an overall map or guide which can identify where these might be. This can force communities into an unstructured 'needle in a haystack' search approach.

In addition to this, resources aimed directly at communities comprise such a small part of the overall design resource pool that it can be difficult to pin-point the relevant websites or the relevant resources within a website. The diverse structures of websites within the field adds to these difficulties, with similar tools filed under different headings on each site. The *Planning Aid* website proved particularly difficult to navigate, and whilst the CABI library represents a good example of browsable resources, this also presents obstacles, with resources found in some sections but not in other relevant sections.

Individual reports tend to have useful further reading lists and links to other resources at the end, but a central, high profile, and comprehensive list of links does not currently exist. Communities must first find one of the more relevant reports to track down links to useful further resources. Shorter resource links from websites also exist but information gaps mean the whole picture is not provided in any one place. A network of organisations and design resources did emerge following detailed research, but this network would not be apparent to communities beginning a project. It would be useful for this to be mapped at an accessible location.

The number of existing online design resources aimed squarely at a community audience is currently very limited and communities would benefit from referencing the more accessible resources designed for a general or professional audience, which often have useful sections. However, there is ambiguity for communities regarding which professional resources would be useful and it would be difficult for communities to track down the relevant sections within these. This gives added weight to the role of a central resource base which could identify suitable reports and chapters and provide links to these.

2

Introduction

Context

With the introduction of the new planning system in 2004, the role of public and community participation in England has increased significantly. The Government recognises the valuable contribution that local communities can make, as local experts, in helping to shape the future of their neighbourhood and community facilities; and the importance that communities have a sense of ownership of open spaces and facilities in their area.

In line with this, a number of good practice guides regarding public participation and community involvement have been produced in recent years. These set out effective methods for public engagement, to help to ensure that communities have meaningful input to the process rather than simply being given an opportunity to be informed of, or comment on, plans which are ultimately beyond their control.

The role of quality design in helping to create sustainable neighbourhoods and places which can provide for a high quality of life has also been identified as critical to the development of villages, towns and cities. The Government advisor on the built environment, The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) has developed a library of valuable resources over the last 10 years, covering practical design and process guidance covering individual buildings to large masterplans.

Whilst valuable information for these two important strands has been produced, the point at which they meet does not yet have a set of resources which fully reflects the gains made in either area.

In order to help address this, The Glass-House, the community led design charity, has commissioned research to assess the current online resources available which can help to provide communities with the skills and confidence to be active contributors, partners and project leaders in neighbourhood design and physical regeneration projects. From the charity's experience in working with local communities, particular areas identified for the study for which information would be particularly useful are:

- Open space;
- New build and refurbishing of community buildings;
- Neighbourhoods; and
- Housing estates.

The types of resource which have been identified as useful for communities include handbooks, fact sheets, glossaries of terms / jargon busters, toolkits, templates / checklists to help guide one through a process and information on any free face-to face support that is available to groups

The study has been undertaken to assess whether a new on-line resource which provides an accessible and clear one-stop shop for local communities regarding design, local participation and the procurement and development process would be useful and provide a service which is not currently met online.

Method of research

In order to assess the level and quality of online resources which currently exist for local communities, a thorough review of internet resources has been undertaken, including:

- Central and regional government departments related to communities and the built environment;
- Government advisory bodies relating to communities and the built environment;
- National and regional charities and voluntary groups working in the community and built environment sectors;
- Professional organisations related to planning and the built environment; and
- National and international organisations working in the built environment and participation fields.

The research is thorough and covers the existing resources which are readily available and have a reasonable profile within the UK to be found online. However, the review has not been exhaustive and it is expected that additional, lower profile, resources do exist, both in the UK and internationally. This is addressed further in the conclusions of the report.

Within each of the search areas covered above, on-line and free downloadable resources were reviewed, and where relevant, were included in a overarching database of resources, which should be read in conjunction with this summary report. In all, 70 on-line resources were found to be useful to community groups.

Each of the resources included in the database was categorised and grouped according to the type of project which community groups may be undertaking. These are:

- Schools;
- Neighbourhoods and street;
- Individual buildings;
- Community and arts uses;
- Open space and children's play space;
- General subject matter related to design; and
- Sustainability.

Each resource has then been assessed according to a number of criteria, with each of this set out in colour-coded sub-section. These are outlined below:

1. General information

This section covers key information relating to the resource, so that it is accessible for people using the database. This includes:

- The organisation responsible for the resource;
- The title of the resource, with a hyperlink;
- The date the resource was produced;
- The type of resource;
- The intended user of the resource; and
- A brief description of the resource.

Method of research continued

2. Accessibility

This section sets out the general accessibility of the resource in terms of how you find it and how accessible it then is in terms of navigability, either on a website or within a document, and whether the language is accessible or technical.

3. Context

This sets out the context of the on-line resource in terms of whether it relates to a specific scale of project or type of project and whether it has been developed with a specific geographic location in mind. This also assesses whether the resource sets out the wider context for its use, in terms of design or engagement, and whether it contains useful links to similar resources or organisations which might have further information.

4. Capacity building

This sets out the seven key assessment criteria for the resources, with a number of key fields which would be particularly useful for communities wishing to lead their own project. The capacity building criteria are:

Value of design

Whether the value of quality design is set out in the resource, in terms of the positive impact it can have on places and the long term implications for a neighbourhood of bad quality design

Practical urban design guidance

Whether the resource clearly sets out methods for achieving high quality design within a neighbourhood, which would usually be addressed in urban design strategies and masterplans. This might include the role of pedestrian connections, active frontages on to streets and appropriate scale and density.

Case studies

Whether the resource includes case studies to help illustrate particularly positive examples of design, development process or participation and engagement. This includes whether the case studies are practical or just provide an overview.

Engagement with others

Whether the resource provides practical advice for communities to hold their own events or participation exercises. This could include information on different types of engagement and the benefits and challenges with these, or practical how-to information on organising an event or discussion.

Procurement

Whether the resource provides advice for community groups on commissioning an architect or design professional for a project, or advice on commissioning the construction of a project. This might include choosing a professional, negotiating contracts and managing the project.

Funding

Whether the resource provides information on funding sources for a community project and whether practical advice is given on applying for funding initially or demonstrating value for repeat funding.

Integration with the Local Authority

Whether the resource provides practical advice for communities, to help ensure that the engagement or design work they undertake can be coordinated with the local authorities priorities within their Local Development Framework, so that communities can genuinely provide input to development in a local area and work with the Council's support.

A score of 0 to 5 was attributed to each online resource for each of these seven criteria, with 5 representing the most successful treatment of the criteria, and 0 representing a resource which does not attempt to address that particular criteria.

This scoring system is not designed to be a detailed judgement of the resource, but rather, to provide an at-a-glance overview of each resource's relevance for someone using the database. This will avoid users having to read every entry and instead enable them to quickly pick out those resources which cover the area they are particularly interested in.

5. Summary

This section provides a brief anecdotal assessment of each resource, setting out its strengths and any weaknesses and its most suitable use for community groups.

6. Extra information

This section is provided in case any additional information is useful. This may be a link to a summary report which accompanies a full report which has been included on the database.

7. Type of project / field of interest

As many projects, and therefore resources designed to support these, do not fall within a single category, a checklist has been provided to highlight which particular areas a resource covers. The different project types are similar to the initial groupings of resources, but include reference to whether young people's engagement and design input are covered. So, to recap, they are:

- Schools;
- Neighbourhoods and street;
- Individual buildings;
- Community and arts uses;
- Open space and children's play space;
- Sustainability; and
- Young people.

Structure of findings

The key findings from the review of online resource for community led design are set out in this report. The key messages have been drawn out according to a number of groupings.

In **chapter three**, the capacity building categories have been reviewed, to assess which of these is most effectively addressed by existing online resource and where there might be gaps in the current offer. This chapter also assesses the extent to which resources cover more than one of the criteria and whether any 'all round' resources exist.

Chapter four addresses the themes and types of projects, to assess the level of support available dependent upon the project that communities wish to undertake. Again, particularly useful documents and gaps in the provision are identified.

Chapter five provides a summary of the most useful resources which were identified during the research, either because they address one or two of the capacity building criteria very well or because they provide a good overview of all the criteria. The information provided here is the same as that in the database, simply set out within a table.

Chapter six sets out the key conclusions from the research regarding the information available, particular strengths and gaps in provision and opportunities for improving the online resources available.

Lastly, **chapter seven** lists the key sources which were used to identify the most useful online resources available for communities. This can serve as a basis for future searches and be added to.

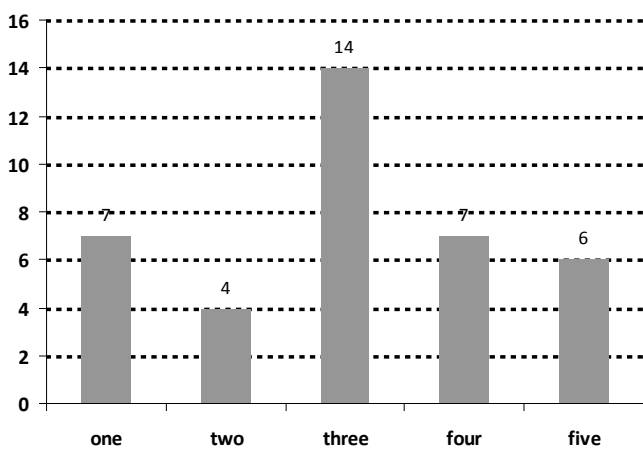
3

Key findings: capacity building

Value of design

It is important for a community resource to set out the value of design and its impact upon neighbourhoods, streets and public spaces so that communities can understand the wider context and the over-arching objectives for a new play space or community centre. Whilst this alone cannot provide a practical guide for communities, it is very important in setting the scene and can help to make practical urban design guidance more digestible for a community audience.

Of the 72 resources which were found to be useful for community audiences, 38 included information setting out the value of design, with varying levels of detail. Using the 1-5 scoring mechanism it was most likely that this subject was addressed reasonably well, with a score of 3 being the most popular (14 resources being awarded this). The breakdown of the scores for the 'value of design' field are set out below.



Overall resource scores out of 5 for the value of design

Six online resources were considered to address the value of design successfully and in detail, scoring five points. These were:

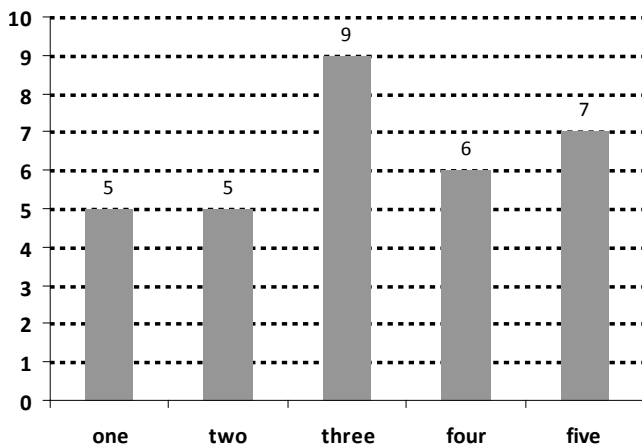
1. Manual for Streets (Department of Transport, 2007)
2. The Value of Good Design: How Buildings and Spaces Create Economic and Social Value (CABE, 2002)
3. The Value of Public Space: How High Quality Parks and Public Spaces Create Economic, Social and Environmental Value (CABE, 2004)
4. Design For Play: A Guide to Creating Successful Play Spaces (Play England, 2008)
5. The Lifetime Homes standards website
6. The Building for Life website

The majority of these resources are aimed at a professional audience and they have been included in the community resource database because they set out information in a clear and accessible format which could be used by communities. Many of the resources which scored four here are also professionally focused, including CABE's 'By Design' and RIBA's 'Better Homes and Neighbourhoods' and the Urban Design Compendium website. CABE's Building in Context Toolkit, developed with English Heritage, does set out a number of principles for good design which are useful to the general public. However, these results do highlight the fact that the value of design is addressed most successfully by professional resources and this hasn't yet been carried over to community resources.

Practical urban design guidance

The provision of practical urban design guidance is critical in giving communities the capacity to participate in community led design and to ensure that engagement can move beyond simple comment by local residents to constructive involvement.

Of the 72 resources considered to be useful to communities, 32 of these directly addressed the practical means for creating high quality streets, buildings and/or public spaces. The level to which this was addressed varied, with a fairly even number of resources scoring each of 1-5. The overview of the scores is set out below



Overall resource scores out of 5 for practical UD guidance

Seven resources were considered to address practical urban design guidance successfully and/or in detail, scoring five points. These were:

1. Manual for Streets (Department for Transport, 2007)
2. Spaceshaper Users Guide (CABE, 2007)
3. Design for Play: A Guide to Creating Successful Play Spaces (Play England, 2008)
4. Inclusive Design for Play (Kids.org.uk, 2009)
5. By Design (CABE, 2000)
6. The Councillors Guide to Urban Design
7. The Lifetime Homes Standards website

The results here illustrate a larger resource aimed directly at a community audience, with the Spaceshaper Users Guide and Inclusive Design for Play written for a general user. However, the reason that professional resources again dominate the list is because these set out the principles and key steps to good design more systematically than those found in community resources.

The CABE report 'The Councillors Guide to Urban Design' has a useful balance of detail and accessibility within the practical urban design guidance, but is written with a clear focus towards Councillors. The Spaceshaper Users Guide, whilst being aimed at communities, does not set out urban design guidance in quite the same detail. A document or resource similar to the Councillors' Guide but aimed at a community audience, as the Spaceshaper is, would be very useful.

Other high scoring resources here included the London Development Agency's draft London Housing Design Guide (2009), though this uses technical language in places. The Sensory Trust's 'Inclusive Play' summary guide (2009) provides accessible design guidance for ensuring that play spaces are designed inclusively, as

does CABE's It's Our Space: A guide for Community Groups Working to Improve Public Space.

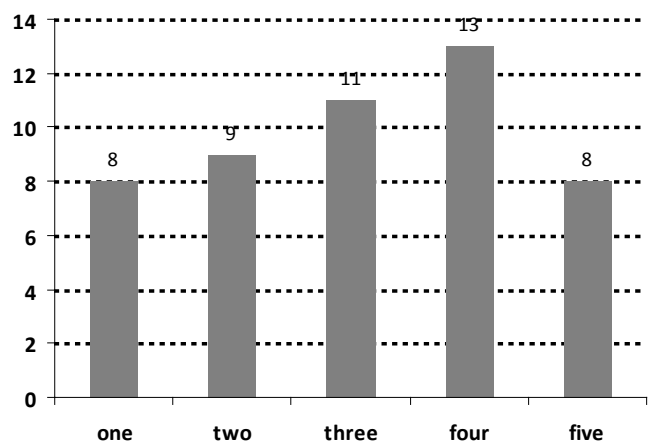
Other resources aimed at the general public which address the value of design reasonably successfully include the Renew Northwest report, 'Creating Inspiring Places'; the Building Living Neighbourhoods website; and the Playful Communities website.

As with the value of design, many of these documents are focused upon open space and play spaces. Streets and neighbourhoods are also addressed to a lesser extent, but there are few resources which cover community uses or singular buildings.

Case studies

Case studies are particularly useful in illustrating either technical design principles for communities, or for highlighting particularly successful projects or processes which users can use to inform their own project. They help to bring an issue or a process to life and are invaluable to community users.

Of the 72 resources featured in the community resources database, 49 included case studies of some sort, whether this be for design projects or consultation methods. Many of the resources provided useful and detailed case studies, with eight resources scoring 5, thirteen resources scoring 4 and eleven resources scoring 3. The overview of the scores is set out below.



Overall resource scores out of 5 for case studies

Seven resources were considered to provide very useful and detailed case studies examples either within a document or as part of a website resource. These are listed on the following page.

Case studies continued

1. Being Involved in School Design (CABE, 2004)
2. Creating Excellent Primary Schools (CABE, 2010)
3. It's Our Space: A guide for Community Groups Working to Improve Public Space (CABE, 2007)
4. Spaceshapers Users Guide (CABE, 2007)
5. Design For Play: A Guide to Creating Successful Play Spaces (Play England, 2008)
6. CABE case studies website
7. HCA case studies website
8. Building for Life website

The results here indicate that the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) has developed a very effective formula for creating case studies which cover specific themes, which are engaging and which contain key project details which a reader would find relevant and useful. These are searchable on the CABE website but are also featured in a number of key documents aimed at communities involved in planning their area.

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and Building for Life websites also provide a useful resource for case studies, with the former covering development and regeneration projects and the latter specialising in sustainable factors in homes and neighbourhood design. The scope of fields covered by useful case study resources is also wider here, with play space, open space, school design, general neighbourhood and individual building design covered. Of the resources scoring 5 points, three of these are dedicated website resources, so don't necessarily sit alongside guidance or illustrate particular processes or principles.

The three CABE documents and Play England document do incorporate case studies as part of a wider guide, which helps to give a fuller picture.

It is worth noting that a large number of resources scored both 4 and 3 points in this section, indicating that there is a reasonably comprehensive supply of useful case studies available for communities online. The other high scoring case study resources, with a particular community focus, include:

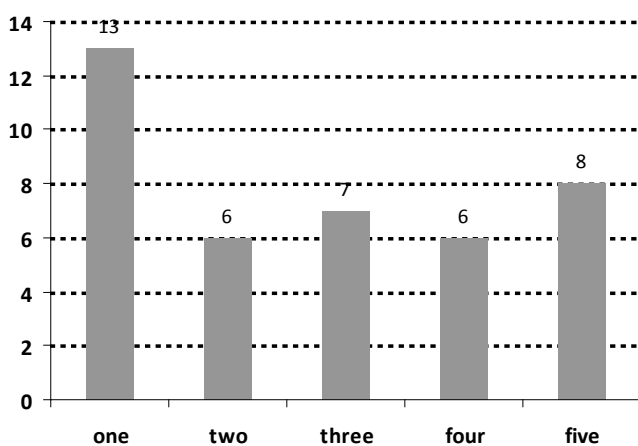
- The Energy Savings Trust's Green Communities website;
- The Groundwork website, covering past projects;
- How to Involve Children and Young People in Designing and Developing Play Spaces (Participation Works, 2009);
- What Would You Do With This Space? Involving Young People in the Design and Care of Urban Spaces (CABE, 2004)
- Helping Community Groups to Improve Public Spaces (CABE, 2009);
- Your Community Building Counts (Every Action Counts, 2008);
- Reclaim Your Streets toolkit (Living Streets, undated);
- Creating Inspiring Places (Renew Northwest);
- Designs On My Learning: A guide to involving young people in school design (The Lighthouse, 2005); and
- The Community Planning website.

The resources which categorised case studies by type of project were the most useful. Those which provide a search tool option were more difficult to browse.

Engaging with others

An integral part of equipping communities to lead their own planning and design processes is providing adequate guidance for groups to plan and facilitate an engagement process so that other members of the community can participate.

Of the 72 documents which were found to be useful to communities, 40 included information on the types of engagement that can be undertaken by communities and how to go about organising consultation. A large number of resources (13) touched on this subject but did not provide detailed guidance, making them a good starting point but not a practical guide. Eight resources provided detailed an practical advice on engaging with others and were given 5 points. The overview of the scores is set out below.



Overall resource scores out of 5 for engaging with others

The resources which were considered to most effectively address the theme of engaging with others are as follows:

1. The School Works Toolkit
2. Designs On My Learning: A guide to involving young people in school design (The Lighthouse, 2005)
3. The Community Planning Website
4. Reclaim Your Streets (Living Streets)
5. Spaceshaper Users Guide (CABE, 2007)
6. The Community Power Pack (CLG. 2008)
7. The People and Participation website
8. An Introduction to Consultation Methods (Fife Council, 2007)

The scope of consultation guidance seems to be a critical factor in the direct relevance of documents for this section. The resources above all cover consultation options very effectively. However, two of them deal very specifically with school design and one deals very specifically with the pedestrian environment (Reclaim Your Streets). At the other end of the spectrum, the Community Power Pack, Introduction to Consultation Methods and People and Participation website, all deal very effectively with general consultation methods which can be used for any policy area, so do not have a design focus.

The Community Planning website and the Spaceshaper Users Guide deal specifically with consultation that has a general design and regeneration focus. The Community Planning website is particularly useful in setting out options for design focused community engagement.

Engaging with others continued

Other resources which scored well and have a community design focus include:

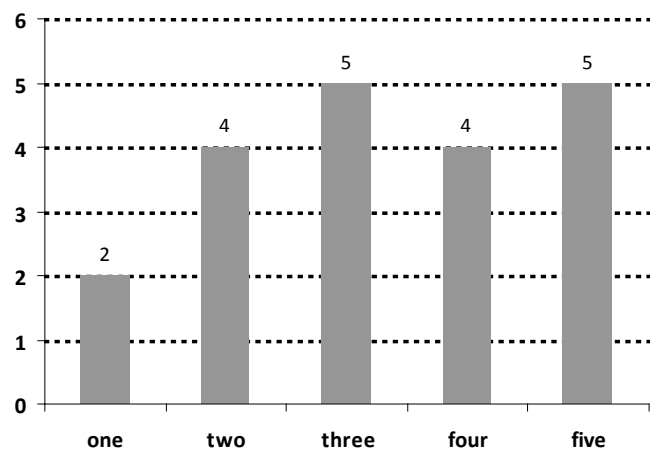
- The Playful Communities website, dealing specifically with play spaces
- The Placecheck website, by UDAL
- Your Town Planning and Design Studies Handbook (Ball State University)
- It's Our Space: a guide for community groups working to improve public space (CABE, 2007)
- How to Involve Children and Young People in Designing and Developing Play Spaces
- The Playful Communities website
- Green Space website (communities section)
- Community Engagement summary Guide (Sensory Trust)
- Engaging Young People Toolkit (Community Matters)
- Fundamental Architectural Inclusion website

Whilst many of these deal more specifically with the design of neighbourhoods and spaces, they do not provide a step-by-step guide to engaging with others, as those on the previous page do.

Procurement advice

In many cases, communities undertaking their own design and regeneration projects will need to commission design professionals to undertake work for the project. This can be a complicated process and clear, accessible guidance on this is very important for helping to ensure that communities can lead design projects.

Of the 72 resources found to be useful to communities, 20 provide advice on procuring external work as part of the project - a significantly lower proportion than for other capacity building categories. Of these, five resources were considered to cover this successfully and in detail. An overview of the scores is set out below:



Overall resource scores out of 5 for procurement advice

The five resources which provided a useful guide to procurement for local communities were:

1. The School Works Toolkit
2. Selecting Design and Development Partners (CABE, 2009)
3. Agreeing a Procurement Strategy (CABE, 2009)
4. Working With an Architect for Your Home (RIBA)
5. Client Guide for Arts and Capital Programme Projects (CABE, 2002)

Of the five resources, two of these are aimed at the community, in general, with the School Works Toolkit dealing with school design and Working With an Architect for Your Home covering individual residential buildings. The other three resources are CABE client guides, aimed at Local Authority readers, but have been included as they provide the clearest step-by-step guide to commissioning a design professional, including topics such as inviting proposals, choosing between designers, the likely costs and managing the design and development process.

However, these are not aimed at local communities and some of the language may be on the technical side and slightly too detailed. This highlights a gap in the resources available for communities to commission an architect for a community facility or landscape architect for a local park.

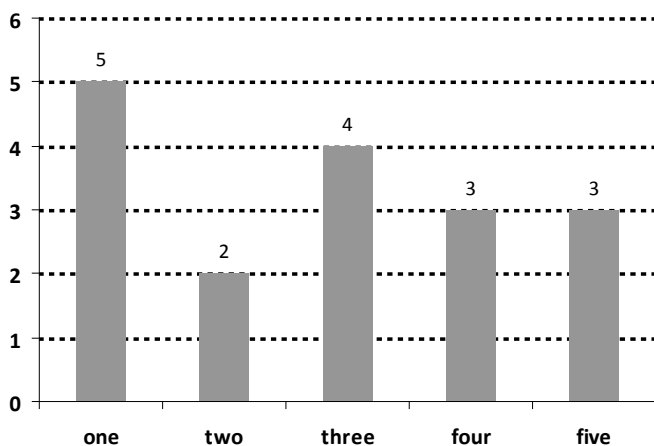
Other resources which were considered reasonably useful included:

- The Playful communities website
- It's Our Space: a guide for community groups working to improve public space (CABE, 2007)
- Creating Excellent Primary Schools: A Client Guide (CABE, 2010)
- Putting You in Control: The RIBA client Design Advisor
- The RIBA website (find an architect section)
- The Urban Design Compendium
- The CABE Guides, Creating Successful Masterplans and Creating Excellent Buildings.

Funding advice

Communities may not have the funds to undertake design or community projects themselves, and it is important that funding sources and advice on how to apply for funds and demonstrate the success of projects for repeat funding is available for communities.

Of the 72 resources considered useful to communities, 17 addressed funding issues for community projects. Again, this is a very low proportion in comparison to other capacity building categories. Of these, three resources were considered to provide detailed and useful advice for community groups, scoring 5 points. An overview of the scores is set out below:



Overall resource scores out of 5 for funding advice

The three resources which provided a useful guide to funding opportunities and applications for communities are set out to the right.

1. The Playful communities website
2. The Community Garden Starter Pack (Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, 2005)
3. Sust.org's grant aid for design web pages (Scotland only)

These resources are particularly type specific, with advice and funds available for children's play spaces, community gardens and sustainability initiatives in Scotland. This highlights a lack of coordinated information for funding community projects, with communities instead needing to go directly to funding sources.

Other resources which were reasonably useful for funding advice include:

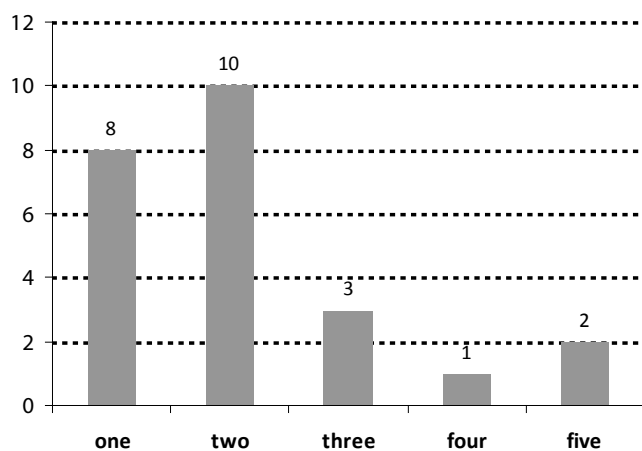
- Green Communities website, for energy saving community projects (Energy Savings Trust)
- The Community Spaces Grant Programme on the Groundwork website
- The Fields in Trust website
- The Green Space website (communities section)
- It's Our Space: a guide for community groups working to improve public space (CABE, 2007)

Again, these resources are focused very specifically on funding for either energy saving and sustainability initiatives or projects for play spaces and small green spaces. It would be very useful for greater information to be available for community buildings or other projects.

Local authority integration

It is important that communities can ensure their design and regeneration projects are integrated with the local planning authority's Local Development Framework, so that any design or engagement efforts undertaken by the community can meaningfully inform change in the local area, rather than taking place in parallel to the Council's plans without then having a tangible outcome.

24 of the 72 resources included in the community resources database include information on coordinating with the local planning authority. In some cases, advice is provided on commenting on plans and in others, the planning process is explained so that community groups can coordinate with this. Only two resources were considered to address this completely effectively, and most resources simply touched on this or provided related information. The summary of results is set out below:



Overall resource scores out of 5 for local authority integration

The two resources which addressed local authority integration in detail were:

1. The Playful Communities website
2. The Community Plans Toolkit (ACRE, 2007)

Other resources which were considered to be useful to communities in ensuring coordination between their plans and the local authority are:

- It's Our Space: a guide for community groups working to improve public space (CABE, 2007)
- The Councillors Guide to Urban Design (CABE, 2003)
- The Handy Planning Guide (Urban Forum, 2006)
- The Planning Portal website

4

Key findings: scale and theme

Cross-theme documents

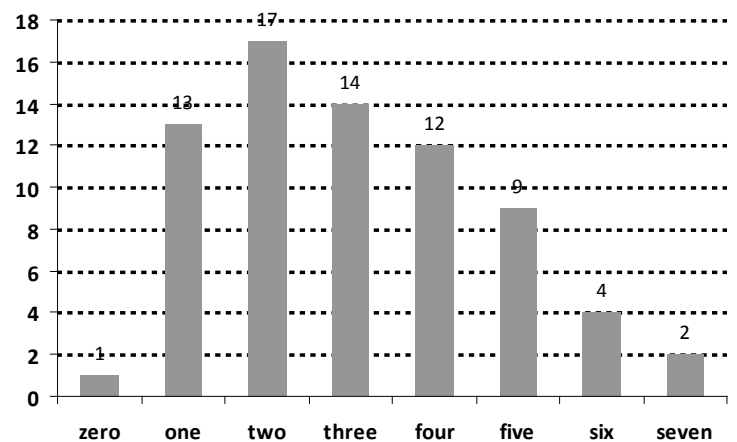
This section sets out an overview of the documents according to the capacity building theme and according to the project type, whether this be scale or type of building.

The research showed that a large number of the resources which were of use to communities focused on two or three of the capacity building themes which have been identified. This means that there are relatively few all-round resources which communities can turn to guide them through the process or undertaking a design or regeneration project in the local area.

One such gap appeared to be the focus either on design issues or on engagement and consultation issues, with few documents addressing both of these key themes. Instead, engagement advice was either too general or focused upon a very specific project. There are a few notable exceptions to this rule, which appear on a few of the 'top scoring' lists, but highlight therefore that there is a limited pool of all-round resources for communities.

The chart to the right illustrates the number of resources that covered one of the themes, two of the themes, three of the themes, and so on. The Architecture Centre Network jargon buster, whilst useful, did not fit within any of the categories and so is registered as zero on the chart. Only two resources covered all seven of the capacity building criteria in one form or another, which were:

- It's Our Space: a guide for community groups working to improve public space (CABE, 2007)
- Creating Excellent Primary Schools: A Client Guide (CABE, 2010)



Overview of the number of themes which resources address

The It's Our Space report provides the most useful overview to all of the project elements that communities will need to consider when developing their own project. More documents or online resources such as this one are needed so that communities can benefit from a complete picture of a project and access a one-stop shop resource to develop a project. The Creating Excellent Primary Schools report covers all subjects well though is directed at school managers rather than communities. The resources which addressed six of the seven themes were:

- Spaceshaper Users Guide (CABE, 2007);
- Design for Play: a guide to creating successful play spaces (Play England, 2008);
- The Playful Communities website; and
- The Fields in Trust website.

Project scale and type

In addition to addressing a number of themes in terms of capacity buildings in the community, many of the resources available online for communities dealt with specific project types, each varying in scale and complexity. These project types have been identified as:

- Schools;
- Neighbourhoods and streets;
- Individual buildings;
- Community and arts uses;
- Open space and children's play space;
- Sustainability; and
- Young people.

Many resources actually straddle a number of themes and a tick box system was established so that the relevance of documents to particular project types could be easily referenced.

An overview of the number of resources which address each project type is set out to the right. This shows that streets and neighbourhoods and open space and play spaces are addressed far more comprehensively than the other project types included in the analysis, with 43 resources each.

Following these two project types, resources covering individual buildings and young people (mostly these are engagement related), with 23 and 24 resources respectively.

Sustainability issues are specifically addressed by 17 of the resources, though many sustainability issues are built in to design resources so this may not be a true reflection.

Arts and community uses and schools each only have 10 and 9 dedicated resources respectively. During research, a number of additional school design documents were found but the clear focus of these towards teachers and school facilities managers put them outside the scope of resources for communities. Arts and community buildings therefore stand out in particular as having a dearth of online resources available for communities to use. Some of the resources available for individual buildings may be relevant here, but they are unlikely to cover the unique considerations which are required for community or arts uses.

Number of resources	Project type
43	Neighbourhoods and streets
44	Open space and play spaces
26	Young people
23	Individual buildings
18	Sustainability
10	Arts and community uses
9	Schools

Number of resources available for each project type

Over the following pages, a brief review is provided regarding the most useful documents for each project type or scale.

Neighbourhoods and streets

The resources which cover the neighbourhoods and streets scale, which scored more than 10 points in the overall capacity building analysis and are therefore considered to be most useful are set out below. The resources which stand out as speaking directly to communities here are highlighted in pink.

- [The Community Planning Website](#)
- [Reclaim Your Streets \(Living Streets\)](#)
- The CABE Building in Context Toolkit
- [Creating Successful Masterplans: A Guide for Clients \(CABE, 2008\)](#)
- [Agreeing a Procurement Strategy \(CABE, 2009\)](#)
- [Manual for Streets \(Department for Transport, 2007\)](#)
- [Creating Inspiring Places \(Renew Northwest\)](#)
- [Urban Design Compendium website](#)
- [By Design \(CABE, 2000\)](#)
- [The Councillors' Guide to Urban Design \(CABE, 2003\)](#)
- [Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment \(LDA, 2006\)](#)
- [Building for Life website](#)

Many of these resources have been written with a professional audience in mind, but could be used as a useful reference for community groups. The Councillors' Guide to Urban Design might be added to this group to reflect the non-technical nature of its language.

Open space and play spaces

The resources which cover open and play spaces and scored more than 10 in the capacity building analysis are set out below. The resources which stand out as speaking directly to communities here are highlighted in pink.

- [It's Our Space: a guide for community groups working to improve public space \(CABE, 2007\)](#)
- [Spaceshaper Users Guide \(CABE, 2007\)](#)
- [The Playful Communities website](#)
- [The Green Space website](#)
- [The Fields In Trust website](#)
- [The Community Garden Starter Pack \(Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, 2005\)](#)
- [Reclaim Your Streets \(Living Streets\)](#)
- [The Councillors' Guide to Urban Design \(CABE, 2003\)](#)
- [Creating Successful Masterplans: A Guide for Clients \(CABE, 2008\)](#)
- [Design for Play: a guide to creating successful play spaces \(Play England, 2008\)](#)
- [Creating Inspiring Places \(Renew Northwest\)](#)
- [Urban Design Compendium](#)
- [By Design \(CABE, 2000\)](#)

Many more of these resources speak directly to a community audience and this theme is generally far more effectively covered than for wider neighbourhood plans.

Young people

The resources which cover engagement with young people and scored more than 10 in the capacity building analysis are set out below. The resources which stand out as speaking directly to communities here are highlighted in pink.

- [Being Involved in School Design \(CABE, 2004\)](#)
- [The Community Planning Website](#)
- [The Playful Communities website](#)
- [The Fields In Trust website](#)
- [The Community Garden Starter Pack \(Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, 2005\)](#)
- [Reclaim Your Streets \(Living Streets\)](#)
- The School Works Toolkit
- Designs On My Learning: A guide to involving young people in school design (The Lighthouse, 2005)
- Design for Play: a guide to creating successful play spaces (Play England, 2008)
- Creating Excellent Primary Schools: A Client Guide (CABE, 2010)

These resources generally fall into two categories: design focused resources for planning spaces which young people use such as schools or play areas; and resources for general spaces which highlight activities for young people, not necessarily as part of the planning process. Other specific resources for young people exist, such as those by Fundamental Architectural Inclusion and the related Architecture Crew group of young people. It is interesting to note that no resources exist for peer-to-peer engagement for young people, at least that were accessible during this search, and not many of the resources speak directly to young people. The Architectural Crew could be a good format through which to explore peer-to-peer engagement.

Individual buildings

The resources which cover individual building design and planning and scored more than 10 in the capacity building analysis are set out below:

- [Creating Excellent Buildings: A Guide for Clients \(CABE, 2003\)](#)
- [By Design \(CABE, 2000\)](#)
- [The Councillors' Guide to Urban Design \(CABE, 2003\)](#)
- [Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment \(LDA, 2006\)](#)
- [Lifetime Homes website](#)
- [Building for Life website](#)

These documents speak almost exclusively to a professional audience, with the Councillors' Guide to Urban Design and the two website resources potentially providing more accessible information.

As with the resources covering young people, other resources for individual buildings do exist, such as the RIBA guide Working With an Architect for Your Home. This did not score highly as it focuses purely on the procurement aspect of a project.

Given the lack of guidance for community and arts uses and the potential for this category to help plug that resource gap, it is disappointing that so few of the resources speak to a community audience in a clear and accessible format.

Sustainability

The resources which cover sustainability initiatives such as sustainable energy projects or -sustainable building design and scored more than 10 in the capacity building analysis are set out below. The resources which stand out as speaking directly to communities here are highlighted in pink.

- [The Community Garden Starter Pack \(Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, 2005\)](#)
- [By Design \(CABE, 2000\)](#)
- [Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive](#)
- [Creating Excellent Primary Schools: A Client Guide \(CABE, 2010\)](#)
- [Environment \(LDA, 2006\)](#)
- [Lifetime Homes website](#)
- [Building for Life website](#)

The majority of these resources are again aimed at a professional audience, though provide a clear outline of a process which could be of use to community groups. These cannot, however, serve as an alternative to community resources, highlighting the need for more of these to exist. Some other resources do exist, such as those provided by [sust.org](#) and the Energy Savings Trust. These do not feature on the list above as they focus solely on sustainability so could not score more than 10.

Arts and community uses

There are incredibly few resources for communities which address projects for arts and community uses, such as a community hall or local groups facility. Of the 10 resources identified in the database which deal with community uses, only one scores more than 10 according to the capacity building criteria. This is:

- [The Community Garden Starter Pack \(Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, 2005\)](#)

This lack of resources is highlighted further by the lack of community focused resources available regarding individual building design and construction, as highlighted in the earlier sub-section. Given that community buildings are one of the key projects that local communities are likely to want to be involved with and perhaps instigate, this represents a real gap in resources.

Schools

The resources which cover school design and scored more than 10 in the capacity building analysis are:

- [Being Involved in School Design \(CABE, 2004\)](#)
- [The Community Garden Starter Pack \(Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, 2005\)](#)
- The School Works Toolkit
- [Creating Excellent Primary Schools: A Client Guide \(CABE, 2010\)](#)
- [Designs On My Learning: A guide to involving young people in school design \(The Lighthouse, 2005\)](#)

These all represent detailed tools for engaging students and the local community in the design of new schools, and while the resources are few in numbers, research shows that a good resource exists here, with further resources for teachers also available.

5

Conclusions

Capacity building themes

- Many of the community design resources cover two or three themes within the capacity building criteria, but very few documents give an all round guide covering six or seven of the themes.
- There is a particular focus to many of the resources, addressing either design issues or engagement issues, and these are rarely combined.
- Overall, there is a lack of information on how local communities can plug into the local authority Local Development Framework process and ensure that their input is taken on board by the Council. This will help communities to contribute at an earlier stage in the process so that they are not simply commenting on plans.
- Funding information for community led projects is limited, with dedicated websites dealing with this, but without any cross over regarding information on design, process or engagement.
- Very little information is available on peer-to-peer engagement with young people or for members of the community in general. In terms of developing community led design in the future and putting control into the hands of local residents, this would be a very important area to provide more practical guidance.
- Whilst community focused design documents have been produced in the past, it is not felt that these pitch the balance of detail and accessibility quite accurately. The Councillor's Guide to Urban Design by CABE provides a useful base for pitching practical design guidance for communities.

Project types

- A useful resource pool exists for school design and the engagement of students and local communities for this, both in England and in Scotland. Both design issues and engagement issues are well addressed. Further information directed at teachers, which is not included in the database could also provide a useful cross-over resource.
- A large number of community resources exist for the design or improvement of local green spaces and of children's play spaces. These cover design issues and engagement issues very well.
- Little if any guidance is available for community groups wishing to undertake community or arts building projects. This is exacerbated by the fact that guidance for individual buildings, which could be relevant for community buildings, is almost exclusively aimed at a professional audience.
- The design focused documents in the neighbourhood and street design are overwhelmingly targeted at a professional audience. Not much design guidance exists which is aimed at community readers.
- Sustainability issues still seem to be in a 'silo' to a certain degree, with dedicated resources for this, either through websites or sets of standards, but issues are not specifically set out as part of the wider design considerations in more general documents or resources.

Ease of searching for resources

- The structure and ordering of information varies from website to website. Relevant information may be under a communities section on one site, under a publications section on another site, and in a resources section on a third site. This makes it more difficult for communities to find relevant information.
- Information is sometimes hidden on lower levels within websites, with priority given instead to professional and practitioner resources, making it more difficult for communities to find suitable resources.
- Community focused resources comprise such a small element of the resources available online that simply in terms of numbers, it is often difficult to sift through information and find the most relevant resources for communities.
- Links to other resources are often provided at the back of documents, but a useful list of relevant guides is rarely provided in a high profile location on an actual website. This means that communities need to look through a high number of documents in order to come across references to other guides which might meet their needs more effectively. This is made doubly difficult as communities would not know which documents would have the most useful links and references - there is an element of lottery here.
- Often, links are provided to general organisations but not to specific documents, meaning that communities then need to track down relevant information on that site. As referenced elsewhere in the conclusions, this is not always an easy process.
- The CABE resource library is well organised, but the sheer volume of information available can make it difficult to find some resources. Communities may not know which sub-section to look in, and whilst the library is often organised so that a resource could be found in any of the relevant locations, this is not always the case.

For example, the Resources > Community groups section only provides links to resources that are aimed exclusively at communities, whilst many resources are very useful for communities, whilst not being aimed directly at them.

Elsewhere, the recent publication *Creating Excellent Primary Schools: A Client Guide* can be found in the Publications > School design section, but not in the Client guides > Education section.

Whilst resources can be found by searching through a number of the sections, this might be too time consuming or difficult for community audiences.
- There is a duplication of some information by national and regional charities, with similar information being found in a number of places but the whole picture not being provided in any one place

Accessibility of each resource

- Many documents exist which have useful elements – a chapter or sub-section – but would be labour intensive for community groups to search through in order to identify and access the relevant information
- Some website resources are particularly confusing, with resources grouped under headings which are not intuitive or which are buried in levels of information that are hard to access. Sites are most useful when they have clear sections and only 3 or 4 layers of information. The Planning Aid website is a particular example of a site with useful resources which are very difficult to find.
- Case studies are more difficult to access if searchable terms are the only way to find them - you cannot be sure that the users term will exactly match those which are tagged in the site. Case studies are easier to access when organised according to sections or categories, so it is possible to browse through them.
- Design and layout is incredibly important for both websites and reports. Pages need to be clean and easy to navigate - too much information, too many colours or changes in font can be confusing for the reader.
- It is useful for the links to relevant organisations and further reading to be grouped at the back of a document or on one page on a website, along with a glossary, even if references are also scattered throughout a resource. This acts as a more effective reference point.

General observations

- There is an ambiguity about which documents not specifically aimed at communities would still be useful for community groups. There is no one place available which pulls together documents aimed directly at community groups, along with those which can provide useful guidance despite not being produced specifically for communities.
- Scotland has developed some very useful practical guides on undertaking engagement. England is trailing in this area. Fife Council's guide is particularly useful if not as visually appealing as other documents.
- A number of useful documents have come out in 2008 and 2009 and there is a sense that connections between the different capacity building themes are being addressed more effectively in more recent documents. If this trend continues, there might well be some new resources which are released in 2010, which could add significantly to the quality of the community resource base. The recent *Creating Excellent Primary Schools: A Client Guide* is a good example of this.
- The research undertaken for this study was thorough but not exhaustive and it is likely that other resources do exist which have not been identified in the study. Many smaller third-sector organisations are producing material which may not have the profile to feature in this study but which would be very useful for communities.

- The previous two conclusions highlight the fact that further research into this area is likely to identify not only more community led design resources in terms of quantity, but also potentially change the analysis conclusions, with more effective linking between design and engagement and more effective guidance available for community buildings, for example.
- A number of organisations repeatedly feature in the useful contacts section of resources and it would be useful to develop a picture of the informal network which seems to exist and explore how links and cooperations could be further developed.
- Whilst this informal network does appear following a thorough review of all online resources, it would not be apparent to a community group using a small selection of the resources and it would be useful to this to be drawn out more explicitly in a central resource hub.

6

Summary of key resources

Over the following pages the key information from the most useful online resources identified during the assessment is set out.

Documents which has scored over 15 points overall in the capacity building analysis. This does not therefore include resources which might address one of the themes exceptionally well and it is worth cross referencing with the database in order to ensure that these are not missed when deciding which resource might be useful.

The resources covered here represent the websites or documents that cover 3 or more of the capacity building criteria reasonably well.

Organisation		CABE
Title		It's our space: a guide for community groups working to improve public space
Date		2007
Resource type		Client guide
Audience		All those involved in the design of a public space
Brief description		A guide to help anyone involved in a public space project for the first time. It gives examples of outdoor spaces led by community groups and highlights lessons from their experiences. It is not designed to replace professional design input and does not provide a full participation guide.
Access		CABE website > resources > publications > value of design
Language		Clear
Navigable		Yes, pdf brochure
Area specific		No
Type specific		Neighbourhood scale
User specific		No
Wider context set out?		Yes - wide ranging evidence for benefits of well designed buildings and spaces
Links to other resources?		Links to relevant resources and reference to relevant documents provided at the back
Capacity building	Score	
Value of design	3	Covered in the general introduction
Practical design guidance	4	Characteristics of good open spaces are set out
Case studies	5	Detailed case studies with budget details provided for each stage of the process, with links for further information
Engaging others	3	Information on identifying, involving and consulting people (p26)
Procurement advice	2	Information on appointing a design consultant (p34) and a construction contractor (p73). Not detailed.
Funding advice	3	Reference to relevant source and tips on making a case for funding
Integration with the LA	3	Reference to planning policy and guidance on engaging with local council
Recommended use		This document is squarely aimed at a community audience and provides a valuable tool for anyone wanting to transform a local space. It provides a shorter and non-technical version of the general CABE client guides, with a how-to guide for the four stage process, relevant case studies, a checklist and workbook at the back, and a glossary of terms
Capacity building score	23	

Organisation		School Works
Title		<u>The School Works Toolkit</u>
Date		Undated
Resource type		How to guide
Audience		Schools reps involved in school design
Brief description		This practical 'how to' book takes schools through the School Works participatory process on a step-by-step basis and provides contacts and mechanisms for obtaining design advice. A clear structure sets out the rationale for design; the development of a participatory process, including examples of events; and the development of a design brief for architects.
Access		The School Works site, 'involving users' and 'sharing good practice' sections.
Language		Clear
Navigable		Yes, pdf document
Area specific		No
Type specific		Schools but could be transferable
User specific		Schools but could be transferable
Wider context set out?		Yes - benefits of good design for education purposes clearly set out
Links to other resources?		Yes - education and architecture links from the website. The site has a large reference materials section, though some links are broken
Capacity building	Score	
Value of design	4	Rationale for approach is clear
Practical design guidance	3	Role of developing a design brief is clearly set out
Case studies	2	Lessons from the Kingsdale School design project are referenced throughout
Engaging others	5	Clear guidance on developing a participatory process with school users
Procurement advice	5	Practical guidance for commissioning an architect and the user's role as client.
Funding advice	0	0
Integration with the LA	0	0
Recommended use		The tool kit is specific to school design but has a good structure which could be adapted to other design projects, particularly in terms of the participatory process and developing a design brief.
Capacity building score	19	

Organisation		The Lighthouse
Title		<u>Designs on my learning: A guide to involving young people in school design</u>
Date		2005
Resource type		How to guide
Audience		Schools reps involved in school design
Brief description		This document clearly outlines the importance of good design in schools. It sets out the viewpoints of designers and users involved in school design, to explore the issues It then provides 'how to' guides for the 10 key steps to designing a new school, including checklists and work book space for the user.
Access		Through the Scottish parliament website
Language		Reasonably clear
Navigable		Yes, pdf document
Area specific		No
Type specific		Schools but could be transferable
User specific		Schools but could be transferable
Wider context set out?		Yes - benefits of good design for education purposes clearly set out
Links to other resources?		Yes - further resources provided at the end of each section. These are weblinks and books.
Capacity building	Score	
Value of design	4	Rationale for approach is clear
Practical design guidance	2	Guidance on developing a strong client relationship with architects and guidance on design briefs
Case studies	3	A small number of relevant case studies are included at the end. These are explored in detail.
Engaging others	5	Clear guidance on developing a participatory process with school users
Procurement advice	3	Guidance given on commissioning architect.
Funding advice	0	
Integration with the LA	0	
Recommended use		The document is specific to school design, but the how to guides are transferable resources for developing a participation process and commissioning an architect.
Capacity building score	17	

Organisation		Community Planning website
Title		Community Planning website
Date		Ongoing
Resource type		Website resource
Audience		General
Brief description		This website provides an overview of a range of methods for community planning. Material is presented in a how-to-do-it style to aid anyone concerned with the built environment to create a strategy for community engaged design using participatory methods such as design workshops, mapping, participatory editing, interactive displays and many more. The website is laid out as a list of methods, a list of scenarios and case studies to help method selection, a glossary of terms.
Access		Community planning website
Language		Clear
Navigable		Yes, clear sections to website
Area specific		No
Type specific		No
User specific		No
Wider context set out?		Yes - the about community planning section covers the benefits of community engagement
Links to other resources?		Yes - websites A-Z provides a long list of other resources
Capacity building	score	
Value of design	2	The general principles section includes information on this
Practical design guidance	3	Guidance set out in the principles section, though more of an overview
Case studies	4	Detailed case studies provided
Engaging others	5	Accessible and detailed information on engaging other
Procurement advice	0	
Funding advice	0	
Integration with the LA	2	Information on the role of community engagement in the planning system set out in the law and policy section
Recommended use		A very good starting point for anyone trying to organise a community-led design workshop for the first time. It provides guidance for the structuring of workshops and gives examples of the kind of methods that can be used for community involvement in design. However, there is little in the way of examples of the content that could be used with these methods. This website is also a very comprehensive guide to all resources related to community planning. The 'projects A-Z' and 'case studies' sections provide good links and overviews to other community-led design projects. The 'glossary' section is very good for quick reference and serves as a good jargon buster. The 'video & slideshow' section is a good resource for inspiration and learning with links to films on youtube related to community planning. The toolbox section is a good source of checklists, timetables and forms to help plan events. This does not provide a start to finish guide to a project, as how-to guides might.
Capacity building score	16	

Organisation		CABE
Title		<u>Spaceshaper Users Guide</u>
Date		2007
Resource type		How to guide
Audience		Communities, general public
Brief description		A practical toolkit for use by anyone – whether a local community activist or a professional – to measure the quality of public space before investing time and money in improving it. It includes practical steps for planning a space-shaper workshop in the community.
Access		CABE website > resources > publications
Language		Clear
Navigable		Yes, pdf document
Area specific		No
Type specific		Public space
User specific		No
Wider context set out?		No - focused and non technical document
Links to other resources?		No
Capacity building	score	
Value of design	1	Mentioned briefly on contributing to quality of life
Practical design guidance	5	Clear guidance and exercise with accessible language on assessing the quality of a space
Case studies	5	Detailed case studies on areas which have undertaken spaceshaper workshops
Engaging others	5	Clear guide on how to set up a spaceshaper workshop with a checklist worksheet
Procurement advice	0	
Funding advice	1	Mentioned briefly in terms of using the spaceshaper findings to support funding bids
Integration with the LA	1	The policy framework to support the spaceshaper agenda is set out
Recommended use		This document is squarely aimed at a community audience and provides a valuable tool for anyone wanting to transform a local space. It is a focused 'how-to' guide rather than a background information summary. It does this clearly and accessibly, ensuring that only relevant information is included. The level of detail provided regarding urban design is perhaps not as informative as provided in the Councillors guide to urban design. It would be useful for similar toolkits to be created for other fields than public space, so that urban design more generally is covered.
Capacity building score	18	

Organisation		Play England
Title		<u>Design For play: a guide to creating successful play spaces</u>
Date		2008
Resource type		How to guide
Audience		All involved in design of play spaces - professional focus
Brief description		This report sets out a comprehensive guide to designing, commissioning and developing place spaces. Detailed design considerations are covered according to the design process and procurement of a designer is covered in detail. Case studies are provided, further reading and a glossary of terms
Access		Play England website > resources
Language		Clear, technical in places. A glossary is provided in appendix 1
Navigable		Yes, pdf document
Area specific		No
Type specific		Children's play spaces
User specific		Commissioners of play spaces
Wider context set out?		Yes, the funding and national policy agenda for play spaces is outlined in the introduction, along with why children play and the value of this
Links to other resources?		Yes - chapter 6 has links to further resources, and a bibliography is included
Capacity building	Score	
Value of design	5	10 principles for designing play spaces are set out, with the benefits of these in chapter 2
Practical design guidance	5	Designing places for play (chapter 3) sets out more detailed design advice according to the process of designing a new space
Case studies	5	Detailed case studies with photos and plans are included in appendix 3
Engaging others	1	This is referenced in chapter 3 but not covered in any detail
Procurement advice	4	Yes, this is covered in reasonable detail
Funding advice	3	The costs of different elements of play spaces is considered and funding source links are provided
Integration with the LA	1	The planning process is referenced in the document but the lack of community focus means practical advice isn't included
Recommended use		Whilst this document has slight focus towards professionals in the design sector and LA s, it is intended for anyone commissioning a play space and has been designed as accessible and easy to use. It is excellent in terms of setting out the value or design, practical design guidance, case studies and the procurement process. It does not deal with engagement in detail and falls short on providing community advice regarding integration with the LA planning policies. This would be a challenging but rewarding tool for communities, with a glossary, clear examples and photos/diagrams helping to explain technical issues.
Capacity building score	24	

Organisation		Playful communities website
Title		Playful communities website
Date		Ongoing
Resource type		Website resource
Audience		General public, communities
Brief description		This website is a resource for local communities who wish to develop or improve a play space in their local area. It covers engagement, design, funding and process issues in a clear and accessible manner.
Access		Playful communities website
Language		Clear
Navigable		Yes, clear sections to website
Area specific		No
Type specific		Children's play spaces
User specific		Communities wanting to improve play spaces
Wider context set out?		Set out clearly in the 'why play matters' section
Links to other resources?		Yes, though these are scattered throughout the site rather than in one place
Capacity building	Score	
Value of design	3	A good overview of design principles are included in making it happen/design and develop your provision/using good design principles
Practical design guidance	2	This is partly covered in the 'using good design principles' though these are more objectives than practical advice
Case studies	0	
Engaging others	4	The 'who should I involve' sub-section within the 'getting started' section has detailed advice on this, with plenty of links for step-by-step guides elsewhere (which aren't provided on this site)
Procurement advice	3	Information is provided on writing a design brief in making it happen/design and develop your provision/ commissioning and building, though the process isn't covered in detail.
Funding advice	5	5 - detailed advice on sources of funding for play spaces and on how to demonstrate the benefits of your play space to secure continued funding
Integration with the LA	5	The 'engaging your local authority' sub- section within the getting started section clearly sets out the LA's responsibilities and how community groups can work with them on this
Recommended use		This website forms an online toolkit (which was formerly only available to purchase as a CD-ROM) for communities wishing to develop and improve place spaces. It has practical advice, summary design guidance which is not too intimidating and a host of links to further resources should the reader want more detail. The site impressively covers 6 of the 7 capacity building themes, with only an absence of case studies. It is suggested that the case studies in Design for Play be used to supplement this.
Capacity building score	22	

Organisation		CABE
Title		Creating Excellent Primary Schools - A Guide for Clients
Date		2010
Resource type		Client guide
Audience		Those commissioning school design
Brief description		This report takes readers clearly through the process of school design, providing step-by-step guidance and a series of case studies to illustrate good practice in design and process.
Access		CABE website > resources > publications > school design
Language		Clear, with glossary at back of document
Navigable		Yes - pdf document with colour coded sections
Area specific		No
Type specific		Schools
User specific		For school development clients, but useful reference for communities
Wider context set out?		Yes, changing patters of learning and their implications for design are set out, along with the importance of school design
Links to other resources?		Yes, useful organisations and further information section, including contacts for case studies
Capacity building	Score	
Value of design	3	The importance of Good Design and Can Design Quality be Measured in Chapter 1 cover this well
Practical design guidance	3	This is included throughout the document in ch 1, How to Achieve Good Design, and ch 3, Creating a Brief, Ch 5 Getting the Design Right. This could involve some flicking back and forth to absorb all design related info.
Case studies	5	Detailed case studies with images further info links are provided, and these are featured at the end of each chapter, to illustrate specific points, making them easy to reference.
Engaging others	2	The key participants involved in school design are set out in section 2.1 and information on engaging stakeholders in section 2.6, but this is not detailed.
Procurement advice	4	Ch 3 outlines the overall process and helps to develop a brief. Ch 4 is very useful in choosing a procurement route and a design team. Ch 6 covers managing the project
Funding advice	3	3- Ch 4.1 introduces funding for schools and sets out a matrix of funding sources, the type of projects they fund and procurement implications
Integration with the LA	2	This is touched on in the funding and procurement section and in 2.1 and in 2.3 The Role of the Local Authority, which stresses LA knowledge regarding procurement
Recommended use		This report is very well written and organised, and covers all of the key areas set out in the capacity building themes. The case studies are particularly useful, having been organised within the chapters to illustrate specific sections. The audience for the report is those commissioning school design work and local communities are mentioned as stakeholders. However, this is very useful reference material for communities and also represents a very good structure and model for guidance aimed at communities, covering as it does all the key fields in a clear and accessible fashion.
Capacity building score	21	

7

Information sources

No. of resources found	Streets and neighbourhoods / general organisations	Information available
1	ACRE	Useful
2	Architecture centre network	Useful
1	Architecture Crew	Useful
	Architecture Foundation	Events but no documents
1	Architecture Week	Useful
	Arts Council	No documents on community design
	BDP	No documents
	BREEAM	Technical documents for professionals
	BTCV	Books - specific to habitat management
	Buildingconnections.co.uk	Teaching materials
1	Building for Life	Useful
1	Building living neighbourhoods.org	Useful
	BURA	Events only
15	Cabe	Useful
	Carbon Trust	Technical, businesses related docs
	Centre for Accessible Environments	Technical documents for purchase
	Change Works	Specific energy and waste info
	Changing Places	Very specific to public toilets
	Civic Trust	Awards but not organised by theme
	Code for Sustainable Homes	Technical document - not very accessible
1	CLG	Useful
	Coin Street Community Builders	No general advice - local events only
	Common Ground	Interesting, docs for purchase, 'rules of distinct'
	Community Development Foundation	No direct resources - perhaps in members section?
1	Community Matters org uk	Useful
1	Community Planning net	Useful as site, no publications
	Demos	Academic articles on subject
1	Department for Transport	Useful
1	Design Council	Dott Cornwall, potentially useful
	Design for London	No documents for download or on-site guidance
	dqi.org.uk	For professional audience - case study potential
	dsc.org.uk	Books to purchase. Links to funds could be useful
	Emda	LA audience - potential gi report
1	Energy Savings Trust	Useful site in general
1	Engaging Places	Useful
1	Every Action Counts	Useful
1	Fundamental Architectural Inclusion	Useful website in general
	Gaia Architects	Good selection - either for purchase or out of print
1	HCA	Technical focus - not targeted at communities - case studies useful

No. of resources found	Streets and neighbourhoods / general organisations	Information available
	http://upo.unesco.org	Academic books for purchase
	iied.org	Books for purchase
	International Futures Forum	Leadership work
	involve.org.uk	Research documents for professionals (people and participation net)
	IPPR / Centre for Cities	Economic and academic focus to documents
	Joseph Rowntree Foundation	Academic articles about place shaping and involvement
1	Lifetime Homes	Quite useful
1	Living Streets	Useful
2	London Development Agency	Useful
	low carbon buildings.org.uk	technical low carbon info for the individual home
	m4i.org.uk	Website no longer in operation. Construction excellence technical info
	MADE	No specific relevant resources
1	National Youth Agency	'Hear by right' briefings are useful
	navca.org.uk	Local authority and formal organisation audience
1	Neighbourhood Initiative Foundation	Quite useful
	New Economics Foundation	Extremely interesting, but with an academic focus
	Opun	Part of regen E Midlands - LA focused
1	People and participation.net	Useful
	Places Matter	See RENEW
1	Planning aid	Quite useful
1	Planning Aid London	Quite useful
1	Planning portal	Quite useful
	Regeneration East Midlands	Very local authority focused
1	RENEW	Useful
	Rias.org	Scotland based
4	RIBA	Useful
	RUDI	Useful, but reports produced by others so credited elsewhere
	Scottish Executive	Reports produced by subsidiary so credited elsewhere
2	sust.org	Useful
	The Building Exploratory	This doesn't have online resources but is a useful community resource
	The Young Foundation	Academic policy documents
1	UDAL	Useful
1	Urban Design Compendium	Useful
	Urban Design Group	No online resources for communities
1	Urban Forum	Useful
	Women's Design Service	Useful documents, but not free

No. of resources found	Open space organisations	Information available
	cabe	Useful (see general)
	Learning through landscapes	School resource specific
1	greenspace.org.uk	useful
	Landscape institute	Technical word documents
2	Sensory trust	Useful
1	Fields in trust	Useful
1	Groundwork	Useful
1	Green flag awards	Useful
1	farmgarden.org.uk	Useful
1	Kids.org.uk	Useful
1	Play England	Useful
1	Playful communities	Useful
1	Participation works org uk	Useful
	Landscape character.org uk	Useful but information too technical

No. of resources found	Schools related organisations	
	teachernet.gov.uk/exemplars	Technical and architectural based
	Joined up design for schools	Books for purchase
1	Schoolworks	Useful
1	The Lighthouse	Useful

No. of resources found	Individual building organisations	Information
	Building Futures	Technical information for professionals
	Housing Forum	Technical information for professionals
	Peabody Trust 'designers handbook'	Related to Peabody Homes and residents
1	Building for Life	Useful

No. of resources found	International organisations	information
1	http://www.iap2.org/	Useful
	Citizenship Development Research Centre	Academic papers
1	PPS.org	Useful
	UN Habitat	Publications for purchase
	Urban Institute (US)	Academic and technical information

For reference	Funding organisations	Information
	bitc.org.uk	
	ccnet.org	
	nof.org.uk	
	acf.org.uk	
	fundsnetsservices.com	
	Community builders fund	
	Grass roots grants	

Credits

This report was commissioned and overseen by The Glass-House Community Led Design charity.

The report was researched and written by Louise Mansfield, an independent researcher working on behalf of The Glass-House Community Led Design.

Produced March 2010.

