

# **Taking Action**

## **Involving People in Local Heritage Places**



### **Part of the Heritage and Community: Theory and Practice project**

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This report was prepared by Ms Chris Johnston (Context Pty Ltd) in association with Dr Annie Clarke (ANU). It is the second of two reports arising from the project *Heritage and Community: Theory and Practice*.

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Top Photo: Members of the Friends of Lirra Lirra Bush Reserve, join in revegetation activities at the reserve located in Templestowe, Victoria.

Bottom Photo: Members of the Thanawal local Aboriginal Land Council discussing the management of sites with the Department of Defence Environmental Officer, at Holesworthy Military Training Area, NSW.

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# Introduction

This Guide looks at how communities can get involved in local heritage places. It is designed for communities, heritage professionals and local government.

It is part of a web site designed to help you network and exchange ideas, learn about what others have done, find out about tried and tested community involvement techniques or link to useful resources.

The web site has three main parts:

- Online Conference - let's talk!
- Projects from Australia & Beyond
- Taking Action

This guide covers the *Taking Action* section. On the web site, you can use links to move around this guide, and to link to specific case studies contained in the *Projects from Australia & Beyond* database.

## Background

This guide is one of the products of the *Heritage and Community - Theory and Practice* project, funded under the National Estate Grants Program.

The project involved finding out about current approaches to community participation in heritage conservation around Australia. It has produced information on recent projects - the *Projects From Australia & Beyond* database; resources on how to involve communities in heritage - this *Taking Action* guide; and the *Involving People in Heritage* website. (<http://heritageforum.truenorth.net.au>)

Through a wide publicity campaign, people were asked to tell us about recent projects. A literature review helped identify emerging themes and issues.

The project to date is documented in *Heritage and the Community - Theory and Practice Project Report (Part A)*. A final report will review the success of the website and on-line conference. Reports on the project are held by the Australian Heritage Commission (part of Environment Australia, Canberra).

# Involving communities

## What are communities?

Communities are groups of people who share a sense of common purpose or identity. The commonality may be created by the sharing of culture, ethnicity, experience, belief, activity or most often living or working in the same locality.

Often the word community is used instead of 'public' and 'citizens', but each of these terms still have important meanings. The public usually means everyone, and doesn't differentiate between those who have a special connection to a heritage place, and everyone else. Citizen implies a person with a right to vote. Stakeholder is another common, often overused, term. Stakeholder is often used to limit those who should be involved to those with a 'real stake'.

In this guide the term community has been used throughout as it reflects common usage.

## What is community involvement?

Fundamentally, community involvement is part of participatory democracy. The extent to which communities hold the power of decision-making or delegate it to an elected government determines the extent of active participation that occurs with a democracy.

This is simple to say, but is complex in practice. Throughout our society, governments and communities are in a constant state of negotiation over how decision-making power is to be exercised and by whom.

Broadly speaking, community involvement<sup>1</sup> usually refers to processes initiated by government, that is where the government decides the extent of "community involvement" either in relation to its own processes, or it sets the rules which both government and non-government organisations abide by.

However, community involvement also arises when a community initiates and directs a project or process.

This Guide is relevant to both community-initiated and government-initiated involvement.

## Why involve communities?

Community involvement is a vital part of protecting heritage places.

Perhaps there are two fundamental answers to the question 'Why involve communities?':

- First, because it's ethical. In a democratic society those whose livelihoods, environments and lives are at stake should be consulted and involved in the decisions which affect them directly.

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<sup>1</sup> Involvement includes the terms participation and consultation.

- Second, because it's pragmatic. Support for government policies and programs often depends on people's willingness to assist the process.<sup>2</sup> And today people expect to be involved, so why try and keep them away.

By involving the community it's possible to:

- Understand community aspirations and values
- Find out about community needs
- Learn about the locality and the community
- Share perspectives and learn from each other
- Find out about differences as well as similarities
- Create new solutions by drawing on a wider range of ideas.

## Different ways of involving people

### The sky's the limit!

There are many ways that communities can become actively involved in heritage projects. The techniques in this Guide are a starting point only. Many techniques are easy to adapt to your particular needs and circumstances, and if you have a great idea - go with it.

Over time, some methods gain their own name. For example, the "community heritage workshop" started out as a series of workshops being held in one region. The idea worked well, and has since been applied to many other regions. Along the way it gained a name, and all of the components have become more structured.

A tried and tested method is often very appealing. The new user hopes that all the bugs have been sorted out, and that it will be easy to apply. This isn't always the case. As a user of this Guide, it is important to think about your goals, circumstances and community, and to make sure that the method will work for you. If not, adapt it to suit your needs. The best source of advice will be those who created the method, or those who have successfully adapted it. And when you are using someone else's method, please acknowledge them.

### Helpful checklist

In creating or adapting techniques, use the following checklist to help you think it through:

**Goals** - What are you trying to achieve?

**Who** - Who should be involved? For example: who has an interest? Who will want to be involved? Who do you want to be involved? Are there people who should not be involved?

**Invite** - What are the best ways to invite people to get involved? Who is likely to participate willingly, and who will you need to entice?

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<sup>2</sup> Sarkissian, W & Perlmut, D (1988) *The Community Participation Handbook*. 2nd Edition, Institute for Science & Technology Policy Murdoch University & Impacts Press, NSW.

**How** - How will you involve people? Will everyone be involved in the same way? What approaches will people feel comfortable with? How much participation is possible or practical in each set of circumstances?

**What if** - How will you manage the unexpected? For example, conflict between participants; differing objectives; hidden agendas; could existing issues cloud the process; what if there is no interest (etc).

**Barriers** - What might stop people becoming involved? Can you identify and remove any of these barriers?

## Active involvement?

Community involvement may be active or passive. It can offer participation in decision-making, or it can just keep people informed. When a government body is initiating a community involvement project, it can choose how much or how little of the decision-making power it wants to share with the community. While communities can and do initiate projects, they have to negotiate a share of the power with government.

The following chart presents a way of looking at the different relationships between government and the community from both sides of the fence.

<i>Government perspective</i>		<i>Community perspective</i>
Joint-decision-making Jointly agreeing to a decision	<b>Decision-making</b>	Joint-decision-making Jointly agreeing to a decision
Share all responsibilities	<b>Partnership</b>	Share all responsibilities
Work together openly	<b>Collaborate</b>	Work together openly
Offer community an influence over the decision	<b>Interact</b>	Offer government an influence over the decision
Listen to community before making decision	<b>Listen to and advise</b>	Listen to government before community makes a decision
Inform community of government actions	<b>Inform</b>	Inform others of community actions
Act	<b>Act alone</b>	Direct action and protest

Specific techniques can be evaluated against this framework to see what degree of influence they might offer, with some techniques being quite flexible in their applications.

Techniques	Type		Framework categories						
	Group	Individual	Decision-making	Partnership	Collaborate	Interact	Listen to and advise	Inform	Act alone
Action research	✓		✓	✓	✓				
Art	✓	✓		✓	✓				

Techniques	Type		Framework categories						
	Group	Individual	Decision-making	Partnership	Collaborate	Interact	Listen to and advise	Inform	Act alone
Charrettes	✓			✓	✓	✓			
Collecting community knowledge	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
Committees	✓				✓	✓			
Community groups	✓								✓
Community heritage workshops				✓	✓	✓			
Consumer panels						✓			
Cultural planning & cultural mapping				✓	✓	✓			
Displays		✓						✓	
Education	✓					✓			
Facilitators and facilitation	✓				✓	✓	✓		
Field study	✓	✓		✓	✓				
Focus group	✓					✓	✓		
Forums		✓				✓			
Games	✓				✓	✓			
Internet					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hands-on/works crew				✓	✓	✓			
Heritage and character workshops				✓	✓	✓			
Information materials		✓						✓	
Interpretation	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	
Interviews		✓					✓	✓	
Joint management committees	✓		✓	✓	✓				
Lobbying									✓
Local government advisory committees				✓	✓	✓			
Market research		✓					✓	✓	
Media		✓						✓	
Mediation	✓	✓		✓	✓				
Migrant heritage places				✓	✓				
Negotiation				✓	✓				
Open house information events	✓	✓					✓	✓	
Open space technology	✓		✓	✓	✓				

Techniques	Type		Framework categories						
	Group	Individual	Decision-making	Partnership	Collaborate	Interact	Listen to and advise	Inform	Act alone
Oral history interviews		✓			✓				
Petitions	✓							✓	✓
Public meetings	✓						✓	✓	
Public protest	✓								✓
Researching	✓	✓				✓			
Sampling		✓							✓
Search conferences	✓					✓			
Site visits & back-tos	✓				✓	✓			
Strategic questioning	✓	✓		✓	✓				
Submissions	✓	✓				✓v	✓v	✓	✓
Surveys and questionnaires		✓					✓	✓	
Volunteers	✓	✓			✓	✓			
Working groups	✓					✓	✓		
Workshops	✓					✓	✓		

# How to use this Guide

This Guide provides you with some tools to use. It is divided into sections:

- Taking Action
- Techniques (A to Z)

As well, the web site includes

- Case studies - *Projects From Australia & Beyond*
- References, funding and internet sites - *Finding out more about heritage*
- Tell us about your project - you can also submit new projects through the web site and they will be added to *Projects From Australia & Beyond*.

## Taking action

Protecting heritage places involves many different kinds of actions. *Protecting Local Heritage Places: A Guide for Communities* (AHC, 1998) provides a step-by-step process for heritage place management that is very useful when applied to a specific place. It follows the broad steps of identifying the place and its values; protecting and managing the place; and monitoring and review.

This Guide divides these three big steps into smaller topics.

- Finding heritage places
- Research and data gathering
- Planning for and protecting heritage places
- Emergencies and crises
- Hands-on management
- Building community awareness
- Working together

The best way to start is by selecting the kind of heritage activity you are planning. Under each activity, there are suggestions about ways to involve the community. There are detailed descriptions of specific techniques (*Techniques A - Z*) and case studies where these techniques were used (*Projects From Australia & Beyond*).

## Techniques A - Z

The *Techniques A - Z* section is an alphabetical listing of useful community involvement techniques.

## Case Studies - Projects From Australia & Beyond

The website contains a database - *Projects From Australia & Beyond* - featuring a wide range of projects that were submitted during the first stage of this project. Each includes a brief description of the project, the community involvement techniques used and the contact person for more information.

## **Finding out more about heritage**

The *Finding out more about heritage* section contains a short list of useful references, information on funding and links to *heritage on the internet*.

## **Tell us about your project**

Go to this section of the web site if you want to share a new project. Your contribution will be posted to the web site during the next update.

# Taking Action

Where text appears in *italics* in this section (excluding ‘Finding out more about heritage’), it either refers to a technique that can be found elsewhere in this document or a case study that is documented in the *Projects from Australia & Beyond* database.

## Finding heritage places

Communities can play an important role in identifying heritage places. Until recently, many heritage studies were done by heritage professionals (architects, historians, planners, archaeologists), with the knowledge of local people drawn on in a limited way.

Today, there are several well tested methods to actively involve communities in identifying heritage places important to them. These methods include:

### **Community heritage workshops**

- *Heritage Assessment of the Alstonville Plateau*
- *Community Heritage Places in North Coastal Geraldton*

### **Heritage and character workshops**

- *Childers: Community Workshops about Heritage*

### **Migrant heritage places**

- *Migrant Heritage Places in Australia*

### **Workshops**

- *Cessnock Heritage Study*
- *South Gippsland Shire Council Heritage Study Stage 1*

Understanding people's connection to places - reflected in the Register of the National Estate criterion on social value 'importance as a place highly valued by a community for reasons of religious, spiritual, symbolic, cultural, educational, or social associations'. A new focus on this criterion has also led to exploration of some new ways of working with associated communities, including focus groups.

### **Focus groups**

- *Port Arthur Historic Site Conservation Plan*

## Research and data gathering

A major part of finding out about local heritage places is gathering information to help with understanding the significance of each place. Much of this research can be done at the local level and provides a good opportunity for community involvement. It may also enable people to develop additional skills.

Research and data gathering can involve:

**Researching** using books, unpublished documents, maps, plans, photographs etc

- *East Gippsland - Creating a Community Heritage Plan*

## **Field study**

- *The Great North Road Convict Trail*

**Collecting community knowledge** through oral history interviews and workshops.

- *Assessing cultural values in natural areas: the Upper Mersey Valley*
- *Multiculturalism and National Parks*

## **Planning for and protecting heritage places**

Ensuring that an important heritage place will be protected for the future usually involves seeking some form of protection or heritage listing for the place.

Heritage listing usually involves a process of nomination of the place, accompanied by thorough documentation, to a government organisation. There are many potential roles for communities including:

*Researching and documenting the place*

- *Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study*

*Consulting with and seeking the cooperation of the owner*

- *Kiama Dry Stone Walls Project*
- *Front Up with Style - verandah restoration and reconstruction project*

*Campaigning and lobbying government to ensure they act to protect a place*

- *Restoration of the Warrandyte Post Office and the development of the Warrandyte Historical Society*

The next step is often to develop a conservation plan for that place, or for all significant places in a locality. The latter may be called a strategy plan or heritage plan. A management plan usually refers to a plan for a specific place or area that also includes how it will be managed to ensure its long-term conservation. There are many other types of plans described in *Protecting Local Heritage Places* (p. 77).

A community can play many different roles in helping create a conservation plan, including:

*Creating a strategic plan*

- *Community planning for ecotourism: pathways for sustainable futures*
- *River and Soil Care - Cleared Catchment - Warren, Gardner and Donnelly*

*Lobbying government to do the plan*

- *Community Contract for Berowra Creek*

*Participating in a government-initiated planning process for example through workshops or displays.*

- *Noosa River Catchment Management Strategy*

## **Emergencies and crises**

Despite the best efforts, things can go wrong. A place may be facing an immediate threat, such as a redevelopment proposal. Or there may be a long-term threatening

process at work, such as weed invasion of a significant area of bushland. Or finally, an unpreventable disaster may be happening right now, for example, a major storm.

How a community responds will depend on their awareness of what is happening, their readiness, and their resources. There are probably three important steps to take: analyse the situation, investigate options and take action. Some of the specific things that you might need to do are covered in this Guide or in 'Protecting Local Heritage Places' including:

- *Researching* and documenting the heritage value of the place
- Understanding the laws that could protect the place
- Looking for support in the community and by government through processes such as *lobbying*, using the *media* and *public protest*.

## **Hands-on management**

Keeping the heritage values of a place usually depends on its long-term and day-to-day management. Management involves a range of things from setting goals through to doing the practical work.

Practical works should occur within the framework of a conservation plan or management plan (see 'Planning for and protecting heritage places').

Community involvement in hands-on management can include participating in:

Developing a management plan

- *North Head Quarantine Station Conservation Management Plan*
- *The Great North Road Convict Trail*

*Joint management committees*

- *Evans Shire Heritage Committee*
- *Ipswich Heritage Program*

Being a *volunteer* and helping with physical works

- *Mason Park Wetlands Rehabilitation Project (located in Homebush, Sydney NSW)*
- *Friends Group - Fagan Park, Galston*

Contributing to *monitoring*

- *Valema Farms - Putting Sustainability to the Test*
- *Regional Facilitator & Community Water Monitoring Network*

## **Building community awareness**

Community awareness and appreciation of heritage places is important if such places are to be retained in the long-term. As well, communities have a lot to gain by understanding their local history.

For heritage places to be appreciated they need to be understood. Interpretive programs can help explain the importance of a place and how its story fits forms part of the local history.

Community groups are often actively involved in *interpretation* - telling stories about people and places in the past and present, often through museums, heritage walks and publications.

- *Bathurst to Bourke Cobb & Co Heritage Trail*
- *Jondaryan Woolshed Land Army*

Art can also provide evoke powerful connections with the past, as well as offering an understanding of local identity.

- *Images from the Edge!*
- *Maroondah Federation Estate*
- *Tuuram: Hopkins River Estuary and Coastal Environs*

Celebrations of place, community and local identity can occur in many ways, through events, *site visits or back-tos*, local festivals, and ceremonies top mark important occasions.

- *Tom Roberts Festival*
- *Irwin Shire Heritage Awards*
- *Australian Heritage Festival*

## Working together

The key to successful community involvement in heritage is in the way that people work together. It's about developing commitment and cooperation, and about getting organised.

There are many practical steps that can help build successful working relationships, from working out who might be interested right from the start, establishing successful ways of meeting and sharing ideas, building commitment and responsibility and maintaining open communications throughout the project. Two useful guides are: 'Landcare languages: A communication manual for Landcare' (Dept. Primary Industries and Energy, Canberra, 1996) and 'Protecting Local Heritage Places: A Guide for Communities' (Australian Heritage Commission, 1998).

## Finding out more about heritage

### Guides

Useful references on involving the community in heritage projects:

*Australian Natural Heritage Charter: Standards and principles for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance* (1996) and *The Natural Heritage Places Handbook* (1999): available from the Australian Heritage Commission and on their web site.

*Community Consultation Information Kit*, Australian Capital Territory, 1997, Canberra.

*Community Participation Handbook*. Wendy Sarkissian & Don Perlgut (eds) 2nd Edition, Institute for Science & Technology Policy, Murdoch University & Impacts Press, 1988.

*Community Participation in Practice: Casebook.* Wendy Sarkissian & Kevin Walsh (eds), Institute for Science & Technology Policy, Murdoch University & Impacts Press, 1994.

*Community Participation in Practice: Practical Guide.* Wendy Sarkissian et al, Institute for Science & Technology Policy Murdoch University, 1997.

*Community Participation in Practice: Workshop Checklist.* Wendy Sarkissian & Kevin Walsh (eds), Institute for Science & Technology Policy Murdoch University & Impacts Press, 1994.

*Consultation with Aboriginal People - About Aboriginal Heritage.* Prepared by Bill Jonas for the Australian Heritage Commission, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1991, Canberra.

*Do it yourself social research.* Prepared by Yoland Wadsworth for VCOSS, Melbourne Family Care Organisation, Allen & Unwin, 1984.

*Fixing the government: Everybody's guide to lobbying in Australia.* Written by Katherine Beauchamp, Penguin Books, 1985.

*Indigenous Cultural Heritage Protection Program Guidelines (Draft),* Dept. Communications and the Arts, 1997

*I Protest! Fighting for your rights.* Written by Phil Thornton, Liam Phelan, Bill McKeown, Pluto Press, 1997.

*Landcare languages: A communication manual for landcare* (Dept. Primary Industries and Energy, Canberra, 1996.

*Listening To All The Voices-* video. Institute for Science & Technology Policy, Murdoch University, Western Australia.

*Looking after heritage places.* Written by Michael Pearson & Sharon Sullivan, MUP, 1995.

*People's Places: Identifying and Assessing Social Value for Communities* Technical Workshop Series No. 6 Australian Heritage Commission, 1994  
Report on the social value workshop held at the University of Melbourne on 20 October 1993.

*Protecting Local Heritage Places: A Guide for Communities* published by the Australian Heritage Commission and available on their web site.

*Protecting the social value of public places: an illustrated guide.* Prepared by Meredith Walker for the Australian Council of National Trusts, 1998.

*The Burra Charter (the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance)* - the latest version (November 1999) contains new articles on involving communities.

*The cultural planning handbook: An essential Australian guide.* Written by David Grogan and Colin Mercer, Allen & Unwin, 1995.

*What is Social Value?* Prepared by Chris Johnston. Technical Publications Series No. 3, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1994.

*What we need is ... a community education project.* NSW EPA, 1997.

Publications that cover particular techniques are listed under that technique in Techniques A - Z.

## Funding

For information about state government heritage funding, look at Australian Heritage Web Sites, an excellent entry point for all State, Territory and Commonwealth government heritage sites (<http://www.heritage.gov.au/>).

### Commonwealth Funding Programs

#### **Regional Solutions Program**

Department of Transport and Regional Services:

\$90 million over 4 years.

- Funding is available for heritage projects that meet the broader criteria for this program.
- Aims to help communities undertake projects leading to economic diversification and strengthened social structures.
- Grants of between \$1000 and \$500 000 are available.
- Projects may involve: community planning, local project implementation, community adjustment initiatives, regional heritage tourism development, regionally-based enterprise or infrastructure projects that address service disparities, or to employ community-based development officers.
- Eligible applicants must be not-for-profit and community organisations based in regional, rural and remote areas.
- Applicants must demonstrate strong community support.
- More information is available on the web at [www.dotrs.gov.au/regional/solutions/](http://www.dotrs.gov.au/regional/solutions/)

#### **Regional Tourism Program**

Department of Industry, Science and Resources:

- Funding available for 2000/01 will be \$4million.
- Aims to help boost capacity of businesses and organisations to deliver higher quality tourism attractions, products and services in regional Australia. Heritage tourism projects can meet these criteria.
- Grants are generally between \$30 000 and \$100 000 - matching cash is generally required from proponents.
- Project proposals due 5 October 2000.
- Eligible groups include: private sector businesses, businesses specialising in indigenous tourism, peak and/or national tourism industry associations, regional tourism or development organisations, non-profit organisations, educational or research institutions, State/Territory or local government agencies, joint initiatives from a combination of the above.
- Eligible projects include:
  - Development or expansion of existing regional tourism businesses;
  - Development of tourism niche markets;

- Development of tourist attractions and facilities which build on and complement existing industries (e.g. agriculture, viticulture, sport and recreation, forestry and mining);
- Development of regionally significant cultural heritage tourist attractions; and
- Regional tourism industry enhancement, including initiatives to promote best practice in all aspects of the tourism industry, and regional tourism industry leadership.
- More information is available on the web at [www.tourism.gov.au](http://www.tourism.gov.au) under 'Programs'.

### **Cultural Heritage Projects Program**

Australian Heritage Commission:

- This is a Commonwealth Government initiative that provides financial assistance to support the conservation of heritage places of national significance.
- Funding available for 2000/2001 will be \$3 million and applications close 2 March 2001.
- Eligible groups include: not-for-profit and community groups, local government bodies and private owners of heritage properties.
- A guide and application form are available on [www.environment.gov.au/heritage/awhg.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/awhg.html)

### **Heritage on the Internet**

Australian Heritage Web Sites - [www.heritage.gov.au](http://www.heritage.gov.au)

Australian Heritage Commission - [www.ea.gov.au/heritage](http://www.ea.gov.au/heritage)

National Trust - [www.austnattrust.com.au](http://www.austnattrust.com.au)

Australia ICOMOS - [www.icomos.org/australia](http://www.icomos.org/australia)

National Library - [www.nla.gov.au](http://www.nla.gov.au)

National Archives of Australia - [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au)

# Techniques A - Z

This is an A to Z listing of useful community involvement techniques. Where text appears in *italics* it either refers to a technique that can be found elsewhere in this section or a case study that is documented in the *Projects from Australia & Beyond* database. This listing includes the following techniques.

Action research

Art

Charrettes

Collecting community knowledge

Committees

Community groups

Community heritage workshops

Consumer panels

Cultural planning & cultural mapping

Displays

Education

Facilitators and facilitation

Field study

Focus groups

Forums

Games

Hands-on/works crew

Heritage and character workshops

Information materials

Internet

Interpretation

Interviews

Joint management committees

Lobbying

Local government advisory committees

Market research

Media

Mediation

Migrant heritage places

Negotiation  
Open house information events  
Open space technology  
Oral history interviews  
Petitions  
Public meetings  
Public protest  
Researching  
Sampling  
Search conferences  
Site visits & back-tos  
Strategic questioning  
Strategic planning  
Submissions  
Surveys and questionnaires  
Volunteers  
Working groups  
Workshops

## Action research

Action research is a specific approach to (social) research. Research is a process of finding out, usually starting with a question or questions followed by a process designed to answer the questions. Research can involve many different kinds of activities, some of which are covered in this list of techniques - for example, surveys and questionnaires, focus groups, interviews.

A good research process has a clear focus and purpose, asks essential and unambiguous questions, involves the right people in the process, is clear about how the evidence it uncovers leads to stated conclusions, is honest and accurate, and presents its conclusions and recommendations in a way that leads to action.

Action research is based on the idea that research is really part of a cycle of observation, reflection, conclusions, recommendations for change, and action, rather than a discrete activity unrelated to change. In action research, the recommendations for change are not the end of the process, but rather the start of a new cycle of action. Action research is also essentially participatory research, where those who are to be involved in the change process involved in designing and implementing the research process.

'Do it yourself social research' (Yoland Wadsworth, VCOSS/Allen & Unwin, 1984) is an easy-to-read guide to all kinds of research including action research. There are also excellent web sites including Action Research Resources ([www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arhome](http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arhome)) and Action Research on the Web ([www.cchs.usyd.edu.au/arow/](http://www.cchs.usyd.edu.au/arow/)).

## Art

Art expresses meanings and ideas. There are many kinds of art, from the works done by appointed artists through to community art where locals are the creators. All forms of art can be considered: word, music, dance, theatre, visual, sculptural. Art can be permanent, temporary or ephemeral. Art is powerful, evocative and inspirational. It can also be educational and interpretive.

Public art is one kind of art. It brings art and society together in civic and other public spaces. Community art is usually public art, but it is created at the local level and with strong local involvement.

Art can be used in many different ways in heritage projects. For example, art can be used as:

- A *public protest* to draw people's attention to a place or issue.
- An *interpretation* of local history.
- A way of building community awareness and involvement through the making of the art.

At a community level, the process of creating art can be a powerful way of working together and building a sense of community. It can also be an evocative way of understanding the connections between people and place. For example poetry and photographs were used to capture the essence of a place in *The Valuing of Ballarat East* project.

## Charrettes

The term charrette refers to an intensive, often design-oriented, workshop where representatives of all interest groups work together over a short period to come up with a "solution". In Australia, charrettes have been used to explore design and planning solutions for specific sites and whole suburbs.

A charrette differs from other participatory processes mainly because of its intensity and limited duration, one of the arguments advanced in its favour. In addition, the planning and design work is done in front of all those participating. A charrette would commonly include an initial public meeting, site visits, presentations from and consultation with stakeholders, intense and facilitated design sessions and a final public meeting or meetings to present the results.

A good summary of the strength and weaknesses of charrettes can be found in 'Practical Guide' (Community Participation in Practice series). Wendy Sarkissian et al, Institute for Science & Technology Policy Murdoch University, 1997.

## Collecting community knowledge

Local communities are important repositories of all sorts of information about heritage places. There may be local archives, personal collection of documents and photographs, oral history, field study information. There is a good section on collecting heritage information in Chapter 5, *Protecting Local Heritage Places: A Guide for Communities*.

(<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/infores/publications/localheritage/ahc-2.html>) See also the specific techniques of *oral history interviews* and *community heritage workshops*.

## Committees

There are many kinds of committees. A community group might set up a committee to help administer the group, or for a more limited purpose, such as a project committee. See *community groups* for more information.

Government bodies also often set up committees (or boards or councils), and many of them would include members from outside the organisation. Some are very formal and members would be appointed following public advertisement. Local government often invite community representatives to participate in ongoing or project advisory committees (see *Local government advisory committees*).

## Community groups

Community groups are often formed when there is a need to address an issue or fill a particular need. Some groups will have a limited life, forming to tackle a task and then disbanding when that work is completed (eg. Save Our Bandstand group). Other groups will form to fill a local need, for example an historical society could be formed to establish an historical collection, do research and publish a local history.

Most community groups need to have some rules (a constitution) and may need some formal legal status (eg. an incorporated association).

Useful guides to setting up and running a community group include 'Community Management Handbook' (Victorian Council of Social Service, 1998).

## Community heritage workshops

The community heritage workshop method was developed for the East Gippsland Comprehensive Regional Assessment project in 1993, and since formed part of the national estate studies for forested regions throughout Australia.

Community heritage workshops are designed to find out about the places local people value and gather initial information about these places.

They are best used at the start of a heritage study of a locality or region, being an effective way of quickly gathering a long list of potential heritage places as well as finding out about local people who are knowledgeable and interested.

The key steps in organising a community heritage workshop are: defining the extent of the area; planning the agenda, including date, time, and place; recruiting people to participate; gathering or printing the materials you'll need; running the workshop; documenting the results; giving participants and the community feedback and a chance to add extra places.

An example of the use of the community heritage workshop method is the *Heritage Assessment of the Alstonville Plateau* which combined workshops with street stalls, questionnaires and a high school photographic project. The community workshop method has been written up in *Protecting Local Heritage Places: A guide for communities*.

The community heritage workshops method was originally developed as part of the East Gippsland Heritage Workshops Project undertaken for the Australian Heritage Commission and DCNR (Vic) in 1993.

## Consumer panels

A consumer panel is a group of people gathered together on a number of occasions to engage with a particular issue. They differ from focus groups in that the group meets together on a number of occasions. They also differ in the way that information may be introduced during the process. A consumer panel is therefore providing an increasingly informed response rather than a simple statement of personal values or opinions. Consumer panels are similar to forums but are usually quite small, perhaps six to ten people.

Like a focus group creating a consumer panel involves selecting people to represent specific interests or positions and then bringing them together to work as a panel over a period of time. The key issues in planning a consumer panel include: identifying potential participants, recruiting them, planning the agenda and panel process, resourcing the panel throughout its period of meeting, reporting the results.

Consumer panels can play major roles in projects where the issues are complex and the information likewise. Sometimes projects will use a group of people in this way but refer to them as an advisory group or reference group or by some other name. Sometimes such a group will be by invitation only but on other occasions there would be a public call for expressions of interest in participating in a consumer panel or similar kind of group. Never the less, those running the process would select from the nominations to ensure that all required interests were represented.

## Cultural planning & cultural mapping

Cultural planning is about planning at the local level to enable people to express, explore and support their culture/s. Cultural planning involves understanding the local culture/s that help give a locality and its people their sense of identity, planning for the tangible and intangible resources that support that culture, finding out if people's cultural needs are being met, and proposing policies and plans for the future.

Cultural mapping is a specific method of understanding how people experience their locality and culture. Heritage places may be one of the features recognised through this process. In this way, cultural mapping can be linked to other methods of identifying heritage places.

A comprehensive source on cultural planning that also covers cultural mapping is 'The cultural planning handbook: An essential Australian guide' (David Grogan, Colin Mercer, Allen & Unwin, 1995).

## Displays

A display or exhibition of materials is a useful way to inform people about a project. A display can be held at any time during the project but is most commonly used when there are draft or final materials available for community review and comment. Displays can be staffed or unstaffed and they can involve feedback or not.

Key steps in organising a display include: deciding on its content; planning the practicalities (location, display boards, protection from theft, feedback forms); receiving comments.

Displays can be located in one place or can be mobile, including a display set up in a van or tent. Displays can also be interactive, inviting people to record their response immediately on the display (on butcher's paper for example or annotated on the

drawings). Displays are usually thought of as presenting plans or drawings but they can also include objects. For example a display could include a drawing of an open space area and participants could place their preferred uses on that drawing by putting symbols undertaking that activity in the right spot. The result that each individual came up with would then be photographed or recorded in another way.

## Education

Education is about building knowledge and understanding so that individuals and communities have the resources to address issues of concern and make desired changes. This involves creating awareness, enhancing people's knowledge, understanding and skills, influencing both values and attitudes and changing behaviour.

Education can be an important part of involving communities with heritage places. Communities can initiate an education process as a way of exploring local values and attitudes, or alternatively government may identify the need for community education. Education help can build networks, enable sharing of information and skills, create better communication, and establish the circumstances in which solutions rather than conflict will emerge.

A great guide is 'What we need is ... a community education project' (NSW EPA, 1997). Environment Australia's EnviroEd homepage (<http://ee.environment.gov.au/>) is a useful web starting point, with good links to other sites, as is the Victorian Environmental Education Association's page ([www.netspace.net.au/~vae/](http://www.netspace.net.au/~vae/))

## Facilitators and facilitation

Often a facilitator will be used to help guide a community involvement process. Usually, the facilitator will be someone with special skills in helping a group of people work creatively together to address a problem, consider options, look for solutions. Unlike a chairperson who is required to follow formal meeting procedures, a facilitator should have the skills to design a process that suits the particular group of people and the issue they are wanting to address.

There are many different processes used by facilitators. Some of these processes have names - for example *search conference* or *open space technology* (there are many others) - while others are invented for a group and perhaps only used once. For example, in reviewing each of the *Coastwise* projects with the participants, the facilitator asked them to tell the story of the project. Using a ball of wool, participants told their story, handing the ball to the person who could best tell the next part of the story. The result was a wooly web of interconnections between the storytellers, a visual reminder of the complexity and interaction during the project.

There is an Australasian Facilitators Network with a discussion list ([bdick@scu.edu.au](mailto:bdick@scu.edu.au)). An interesting web site is [www.thefacilitator.com](http://www.thefacilitator.com).

## Field study

Field study or recording provides information about a place, either at one time, or through repeated visits monitoring any change at the place. *Protecting Local Heritage Places: A Guide for Communities* provides a simple guide to field recording of places.

## Focus groups

A focus group is literally a small, selected group of people gathered together to focus on a particular topic. Focus groups are commonly used to find out about values and opinions. Those participating in a focus group are selected to represent a "population"; The "population" might be a whole community, or it might be a particular segment of the community (eg. people who remember World War 1). A process of *sampling* is used to ensure that those selected represent the population. Typical factors considered when sampling include social, cultural and economic characteristics that are usually known for the whole population (eg. age, gender, place of birth, income etc).

## Forums

The term forum is usually applied to a once-off or repeated gathering of community interests and organisations to discuss a specific topic. A forum differs from public meeting in that the numbers are limited to ensure that all relevant interests/organisations are represented and are able to have a say. A forum would usually have a clear agenda and a *facilitator*. Everyone representing an interest/organisation at a forum would expect to be able to contribute.

A forum can also have an audience who may be allowed to participate, for example by asking questions through the chair or facilitator. For example, a government authority could set up a community forum to enable sharing of information and discussion of complex issues related to a development proposal. The forum would enable those involved to learn about the proposal, to ask questions, and offer their ideas in response. It would enable the initiating government body to understand the issues and concerns of a wide range of community interests/organisations. Such a forum is also a good way of achieving a public airing of information, questions and issues. Potentially, forums can also come up with options and could assess the benefits and costs of each, arriving at a preferred solution.

Key components in organising a forum include: defining the topic/issue; identifying the interests/organisations to be represented; appointing a facilitator; getting agreement to terms of reference, processes and agendas; planning a program of forum events; recording the process and outcomes.

## Games

Involving people can be fun. People enjoy playing games, creating things, and learning (see *education* and *art*). Often, such activities are the best ways to engage a wide range of people, from the young through to the elderly, and can break down barriers between people. A game can have a serious purpose but still be fun.

The Wheel of Fortune game created for the Coastwise project *Images from the Edge* was a creative way of surveying community values.

## Hands-on/works crew

On-the-ground works are a vital part of conserving heritage places, and volunteers are often involved in activities such as tree planting, weeding, *field study*, monitoring and more. Well-known programs which are built around volunteer efforts include national programs such as LandCare or Water Watch, through to site-management at the local level. (See also *volunteers*).

## Heritage and character workshops

The heritage and character workshop model has been developed to assist local communities identify what they value about the local heritage and character.

The workshop process lasts one day, starting with a briefing. Most of the day is taken up with participants working in pairs and taking photographs of the places and features that they value as part of the local heritage and character. They then mount these photographs and captions on boards to form a workshop display. Participants present their results, and issues affecting the future of the heritage and character of the locality are discussed and potential actions determined. The results of the day are compiled into a report that is sent to the local government authority and made available to the wider community. This provides the basis for any follow-up action.

Based on the experience of workshops in many places, Meredith Walker has prepared a guide to this method for the National Trust of Queensland – ‘Model workshop for identifying heritage and character’ (1999). The model was originally developed as the *Childers: Community Workshops about Heritage*.

## Information materials

Information can come in many shapes and sizes. The information can be once off (eg. a media release) or can continue throughout a project (eg. an update bulletin issued monthly). The information can be in the form of a newsletter, media release, poster, news article, radio broadcast, postcards, banners etc.

The key to successful information is that it is very clearly written, in plain English or translated into appropriate community languages and concise. Information should also explain what is expected of the reader - do you want them to take some action in response to the information, and how can they find out more if they want to.

Throughout Australia there is Freedom of Information legislation which enables citizens to get access to certain Government materials. There are procedures for accessing this information. Private organisations are generally not subject to Freedom of Information legislation however there may be other reporting requirements that apply to them. For example certain information on companies and incorporated associations is available through the Australian Securities and Investments Commission ([www.asic.gov.au](http://www.asic.gov.au)).

## Internet

Today, there are many ways of connecting with other people through the internet and email. On-line "communities" can do most of the things that a real community can do, and of course many groups meet in person as well as exchanging information on-line.

There are numerous ways of meeting and exchanging information on-line. Email (electronic mail) can be between individuals or from one person to many others. To send an email, you need that person's address. Newsgroups are places where people log-in to discuss specific topics. Discussion or mailing lists are email-based forums. Some are moderated by a convenor who might edit out some material, while most are unmoderated. Once you have registered for and been accepted on a discussion list, you will receive emails from anyone on the list and can reply or post new messages.

On-line conferences or forums can combine a "paper" or a media presentation with the opportunity for questions, answers and discussion. For example, the ABC often holds on-line forums following radio and TV programs ([www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au)).

Web or internet sites are created by an organisation or individual. Like a book, they contain many "pages"; unlike a book, there are cross-references throughout a site that enable you to move around easily. Many sites allow you to search that site for information, and many sites allow you to sign-up for a regular emailed newsletter or to join a discussion or mailing list. Some sites require a subscription and pre-payment.

A cyber café or internet café is a place where you can go to collect and send email, and use the internet. These cafes usually charge for use of the computer by the hour. Many also sell food and drinks. Public libraries also provide access to email and the internet. Bookings may be needed at busy times.

## Interpretation

Interpretation is becoming a common word in relation to heritage conservation. It describes a way of communicating meaning and relationships using artefacts, by first-hand experience of a place and by illustrations. Examples of interpretation include guided walks, explanatory signs, performance, audio-visuals, models, displays, story-telling, watching conservation works in progress, participating in events.

Individuals and community groups can get involved in interpretation in its design, in doing the research or by being part of the interpretation as guides, story-tellers, or actors.

'Looking after heritage places' (Michael Pearson, Sharon Sullivan, MUP, 1995) provides a good introduction to interpretation.

## Interviews

Interviews are a good way of gathering information and opinions. Interviews can involve just two people, or a small group. Interviews can be conducted in person or by telephone (see also *Surveys and questionnaires*).

Typically, an interview involves someone asking questions and the other answering. The interviewer is responsible for working out the scope of the interview - topics, length, questions. Usually these would be negotiated with the interviewee. If there were several interviewers, they would divide up the questions between them. A group interview is a more complex process to facilitate and record (see also *Focus groups*).

Individual interviews are the main way of gathering oral history information. Holding such interviews at a particular place can be a powerful way of evoking memories. Group oral history interviews can be done as part of *site visits and back-tos* and other events at a place. See also *oral history interviews*.

Often, interviewing one person leads to a suggestion to interview another person, and another and another. This snowball technique is a recognised and very useful way of following leads and community connections. An alternative approach is to sample from a group of people who have similar characteristics - see *Sampling*.

There are many things to think about in designing and conducting interviews. 'Do it yourself social research' (Yoland Wadsworth, VCOSS/Allen & Unwin, 1984) provides many valuable clues.

## Joint management committees

A committee established for that purpose may be responsible for managing a heritage places. A management committee may be set up by local or state government, and will often involve community representatives. Participation in a management committee can be an effective way for individuals and communities to share in the decision-making, contribute skills and knowledge and be kept informed of what is proposed.

## Lobbying

Lobbying government of government is an important part of community campaigns. Lobbying is designed to influence the outcome of government decisions. Anyone can take on the task of lobbying, and it can be done in many different ways ranging from meetings with government representatives through to letter-writing campaigns and use of the media.

Some organisations - peak groups - take on the task of lobbying for smaller organisations. For example, the Australian Council of Social Service is a major lobby organisation for the welfare sector in Australia. And some people gain employment as lobbyists, working for a particular industry or sector and representing their interests to government.

A useful starting point is 'Fixing the Government: Everybody's Guide to Lobbying in Australia' (Katherine Beauchamp, Penguin, 1985). There are web sites that explain the Commonwealth Parliament ([www.aph.gov.au/parl](http://www.aph.gov.au/parl)), each State/Territory parliament, and list the members of parliament.

## Local government advisory committees

Local government often uses advisory committees as a way of bringing external advice, expertise and perspectives into the organisation. For example, many Councils have heritage advisory committees that provide advice to Council and/or officers. Each committee would have its own terms of reference. Typical roles include advice on annual priorities; review of grant application; advice on local issues and planning applications.

Advisory committees can be established for a particular project, giving them a limited lifespan or can be ongoing, with members appointed for a specific term. The law governing local government varies across Australia, as does the potential roles of such committees.

## Market research

Market research is a kind of type of research. The term usually applies to research done by the commercial sector to see what the market is for a particular product. Market research techniques can include *focus groups*, *surveys* and *questionnaires*, *interviews*, *consumer panels*.

## Media

The media, whether local, regional or national, is an important way of getting information out widely. The most common ways of using the local media are by placing a paid advertisement; seeking to have your project included in an article or news item; writing a letter to the editor.

Newspaper advertisements can be placed in the main body of the paper or in the classified section. Advertisements in the main part of the paper are called display advertisements, and they are usually charged by the column centimeter, often with a surcharge for placing in the best positions. You would need to do the artwork for the advertisement, or pay the paper to do it for you. Display advertising is much more likely to be read than an item in the Classified section. Deadlines for advertising may differ from deadlines for news items.

An article or news item often starts with a media release that you write and send to the media. A journalist may follow it up, seeking an interview or photographs or more information. Alternatively, journalists may pick up your story from another media source, or may follow it from week to week as it unfolds. Another type of news article is a What's On or Diary column. Usually, you just submit brief details of an event (topic, date, time, place) for it to be listed.

A letter to the editor needs to be topical and timely, and to follow the guidelines set down by each paper as to length. At election times special rules apply.

There are several guides to media organisations available to purchase, for example Margaret Gee's Australian Media Guide. A useful site listing media contacts and resources is [www.ozemail.com.au/~pwessels/](http://www.ozemail.com.au/~pwessels/)

Complaints about the media can be made to the Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA). It is the regulator for free-to-air radio and television, pay TV, digital broadcasting and Internet content in Australia. The ABA's role is defined by the Broadcasting Services Act 1992. You can find out more on the ABA's web site [www.aba.gov.au](http://www.aba.gov.au)

## Mediation

Mediation is a method of resolving conflicts and disputes, commonly those that arise at the neighbourhood, family or local level. Some heritage and planning issues are well-suited to mediation.

Mediation is a voluntary process. The mediator is someone who is independent of those in dispute. Their role is to help those in dispute find their own solution by helping them identify the issues in dispute, to develop options for their resolution and to reach an agreement which accommodates the interests and needs of all the disputants. The mediator does not impose a solution upon the disputants, nor is it their role to attempt to coerce a party into agreement. This advice is drawn from the Law Society of NSW on-line Mediation and Evaluation Information Kit ([www.lawsocnsw.asn.au/practice/mediation\\_kit](http://www.lawsocnsw.asn.au/practice/mediation_kit)).

## Migrant heritage places

The Australian Heritage Commission has supported development of a process to help migrant groups identify the Heritage Places that are important to them and seek their protection.

The method is well documented through a guide and has been tested in a number of pilot programs. The key steps in organising a migrant heritage places project are: identifying a migrant group and working with them to agree on the process to be followed, the guide proposes a series of meetings which would enable the group to discuss their heritage in their original country and in Australia, the specific Australian places that may reflect this history, the ways that customs have been adapted in

Australia and finally the places that reflect aspects of that migrant communities history that should be kept for the future. The guide is set up in a work book format to enable the discussion at these meetings to be structured and recorded. It also includes useful information about how heritage places are conserved in Australia.

'Migrant Heritage Places in Australia' consists of 'A Guide: How to Find Your Heritage Places and A Handbook for Group Coordinators', both published by the Australian Heritage Commission and also available on their web site.

## Negotiation

Negotiation is a process where individuals or groups seek to find a mutually agreeable solution. In a negotiation, the parties can represent their own interests or can have someone else as their representative. It differs from *mediation*.

## Open house information events

An open house information event is very like a staffed display as well as information in a written or visual form, people would be at the event to explain that information and to record any comments that people made. Unlike a public meeting, an information event may be held over a day or several periods of time allowing people to drop in whenever it suited them. See also *displays*.

## Open space technology

Open space technology is a method of gathering people together into a self-organising group to deal with complex issues creatively and within a short timeframe. The name *open space technology* combines two ideas. First, the idea of opening a space is about creating an environment in which issues can be worked on, second the technology is about using available technology (computers, printers etc) - to record the discussion and share the results immediately.

The key elements of an open space technology event are: defining the theme or topic; letting people with a likely interest know; setting the time and date; setting up the space; creating the agenda; working sessions; reporting the results.

An open space event is ideal for all kinds of forward planning processes, whether within an organisation or involving different interests and groups.

Described like that, the method seems remarkably simple. A good guide is: 'Open Space Technology a user's guide' (Harrison Owen Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1997). There is an Australian Open Space Institute ([briansb@mira.net](mailto:briansb@mira.net)) and email newsletter. Web sites include: [www.openspaceworld.org/](http://www.openspaceworld.org/).

## Oral history interviews

Oral history is remembered history. It is drawn from memory and experience, and most often such history is passed down through the telling of stories, hence its name. Oral history can be recorded and transcribed, becoming a form of written history, but nevertheless retaining its roots in personal experience. The term oral traditions reflects the idea that in many cultures, information is passed on by word of mouth. Even in cultures that use the written word, a lot of information is rarely written down.

Oral history and written history complement one another. Each will have something to contribute to the understanding and interpretation of a heritage place.

Gathering oral evidence is a valuable way of involving people, either individually through a personal *interview*, or as part of a group discussion. *Site visits and back-tos* or use of photographs are valuable ways of helping people recall their memories of a place.

Some useful references include: 'Oral History: A Handbook' (Louise Douglas et al, Allen & Unwin, 1988); 'Oral tradition' (Jan Vansina, Penguin, 1973); 'The voice of the past: oral history' (Paul Thompson, OUP, 1978); 'Oral History Handbook' (Beth Robertson, Oral History Assoc. SA Branch 1996).

## Petitions

Petitions are often used to gather a large number of names in support of or against a particular proposal. Because petitions only contain a limited amount of information and are easy to sign, they are often criticised as being a poor indicator of community opinion.

Petitions addressed to the members of the State or Commonwealth Parliaments can be tabled by a Member of that Parliament. In this way, the petition becomes part of the public record. There is a specific form of wording required. Contact your local member of parliament for advice or look at petitions in 'Fixing the government: Everybody's guide to lobbying in Australia' (Katherine Beauchamp, Penguin Books, 1985).

## Public meetings

Public meetings are open to anyone who is interested and can attend at the scheduled time. Public meetings can be called by anyone. They can be held indoors or outside. Public meetings need to be widely publicised to ensure that they are open to the "public".

Public meetings usually have an agenda with speakers and then questions and discussion from those attending. Many people are reluctant to speak in this kind of large gathering, so they are not a good way of ensuring that everyone has a chance to express their views. Public meetings can also easily be dominated by the loudest voices.

But public meetings can also be structured so that there is time to talk in small groups, and to report the results of each small group back to a plenary session.

A good public meeting needs to be well-planned, have a clear agenda, a skilled chair or facilitator and be held at a time and place that will suit the likely participants. Good public meetings also need to be structured to allow opportunities for information and viewpoints to be shared in plenary, and for individuals to have a chance to express their views, either in small groups or via another feedback process.

There is a useful section on public meetings in 'Fixing the government: Everybody's guide to lobbying in Australia' (Katherine Beauchamp, Penguin Books, 1985).

## Public protest

Protests can take many forms, from a street stall in the local shopping centre to a public demonstration or march. Public protest is a method of demonstrating mass support. Many public protests also use clever or humorous or interesting "stunts" to attract the attention of the media to that cause. This is a way of spreading the message to wide audience.

Public protest covers a wide range of potential activities. To be successful a public protest needs to either demonstrate mass support and gain the sympathy of those who are influential positions within the community or to grab media attention thus spreading the word about the issue and also building support. Public protest can easily fail if there is little community support, little media interest or if a peaceful protest becomes unruly or violent. Public protest is a more extreme version of a public meeting as there is no control on who attends nor on the agendas people may bring to the event. On the other hand it is a powerful way of letting the ordinary person stand up for what they believe in.

A guide to protest as a campaigning tool is 'I Protest! Fighting for your rights' (Phil Thornton et al, Pluto Press, 1997).

## Researching

Research can involve a wide range of activities, from finding out more about a place (its history, change over time, significance species etc) through to finding out how to protect the place (the law, threats, who will make the decision etc). Research can involve working with documents in an archives or library, searching the *internet*, contacting people, and many other ways of seeking out the information you want. Research also involves keeping a record of what you have found out, and the source of this information (both to give the information credibility and to enable you to retrace your steps if you need to). See 'Protecting Local Heritage Places: A guide for Communities' Chapter 5, Collecting heritage information.

## Sampling

Sampling means finding a smaller number of people to represent a large group (or population). Sampling is a common practice in social surveys where it is not practical to survey everyone. A "representative sample" is one that matches the characteristics of the whole population for key social, cultural and economic variables that are known for that larger population (eg. age, gender, place of birth, income etc). There are statistical tests that can be applied to determine whether a sample is representative.

## Search conferences

A search conference is an event designed to bring together a selected group of people with a common interest to address a particular issue and find solutions or directions. Search conferences typically follow a step-by-step procedure of:

- Understanding the current environment and examining broad future possibilities and trends
- Focusing on specific issues to identify possible directions and the strengths and weaknesses of each for those participating (and those they represent)
- Translating specific issues into objectives and programs for action.

Search conferences are a useful technique for bringing together a diverse group of people with a common interest to work together within a structured time frame and agenda.

There is a useful description of search conferences in 'The Community Participation Handbook' (Wendy Sarkissian & Don Perlgut [eds], 2nd Edition, Institute for Science & Technology Policy, Murdoch University & Impacts Press, 1988).

## Site visits & back-tos

There is nothing more powerful than being at a place to evoke memories and to get a response to current issues and concerns. A visit to a place can be organised fairly simply and may just involve a few people. Alternatively it can be part of a major event such as a “Back-to ...” or a local community festival at that place.

Back-tos are a common part of celebrating the importance of a place to a community, and school reunions are one of the best known examples. Often Back-tos are used to gather oral history information that will go towards a book. Or sometime the book is produced first and the Back To is part of the process of sharing the book with the people who have created and enjoyed the place in the past.

Back-tos can be large events to organise and probably require a team of dedicated people. Key steps would include deciding on a suitable date such as an important anniversary, working out the kind of event and whether or not a publication will be launched at the event. There are many tasks then to be done including publicity, invitations to special guest, organising the book, planning for all the practicalities on the day.

Site visits can also be used to gather information about the place. Some projects have combined a site visit and a focus group as a more structured way of finding out about the history of the place or of its value to that particular group of people.

## Strategic questioning

Strategic questioning is closely related to action research. It is a process for “encouraging people to find there way through the rapids of change, and for groups to listen for the strategies for change imbedded in all social contexts”. Strategic questioning is therefore parallel to the question process in action research by asking the right kinds of question, strategic questioning proposes that new answers can open up. It is also based on the idea that a person or group knows or can find the answer within themselves through a process of reflection and discussion.

Strategic questioning can also be seen as a more sophisticated version of the open and closed question. Strategic questioning aims to open up people’s thinking- that is an open question- rather than close it down to get single word response. Some sources of information on strategic questioning include materials written by Fran Peavey such as ‘Strategic Questioning for personal and social change’ (1992), *Heart Politics Revisited* (Peavey, 2000) and a book called ‘Strategic Questioning’ by Ronald T Hyman (out of print).

## Strategic planning

Strategic planning forms part of town and regional planning practice in Australia. Typically strategic planning is undertaken by a level of Government on behalf of the community and opportunities are offered for the community to get involved at particular times in the process. There are other models of strategic planning however where the community takes responsibility for the collection, use and analysis of information and development of a strategic plan for a local community or district.

One example is the US Natural Resources Planning Program. The process involves a series of steps where the community is supported in its work by a Government Agency that provides information and technical support but does not do the work itself. The basic steps are first getting organised - this involves discussion at a

community level of the program and gaining agreement between the community and the Government Organisation as to how the work will be done. Second the inventory phase involves the collection of information, base maps and inventories. This is followed by an evaluation and analysis phase to identify assets, common needs and issues. An analysis report enables building of visions and options, leading to specific action plans. This method is well documented and widely tested overseas but has not been formerly applied in Australia. The key reference is 'A Natural Resources Planning Program Handbook' produced by the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, 1977.

## Submissions

Participating in government processes often requires individuals and community groups to prepare a submission, usually in response to a draft plan or document. Other kinds of submissions may include submissions for funding or to highlight the need for government action.

Submissions are often required in writing, however there may be an opportunity to present your submission in person, speaking to the written submission and presenting other material such as photographs or plans. At times, you may want a submission to be treated as confidential. At other times, it may be a public document that is also used as part of *lobbying* for example.

An excellent section on preparing submissions is contained in 'Fixing the government: Everybody's guide to lobbying in Australia' (Katherine Beauchamp, Penguin Books, 1985).

## Surveys and questionnaires

Surveys and questionnaires are useful ways of finding out about attitudes, values and behaviours. Surveys can be completed in writing by the person responding, or can be in the form of an interview where the interviewer writes down or records the interviewees response. The questions asked can be "closed" meaning that the respondent can only choose from the possible answers offered. Alternatively, a question can be "open" allowing the respondent to answer as they wish. Many surveys combine open and closed questions.

Some surveys are based on observation as well as questioning. For example, a survey of littering behaviour may involve observing people and then asking those who have just littered (or those who have put litter in a bin) to complete a survey on littering behaviour.

An excellent guide to surveys and questionnaires is 'Do it yourself social research' (Yoland Wadsworth, VCOSS/Allen & Unwin, 1984).

## Volunteers

Many people "work" as volunteers. A volunteer is someone who provides a service to the community, of their own free will and without monetary reward. Volunteers might get involved in response to a specific request (eg. come and help clean up our local creek). Or they might identify an activity or organisation where they could make a contribution, and then offer their services.

The contribution made by volunteers needs to be planned for, managed and most of all recognised. A good guide to planning for volunteers is *Volunteering: A current*

*perspective.* GoVolunteer is Australia's first national volunteer recruitment website ([www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au)), an initiative of Volunteering Australia.

## Working groups

A working group is usually a *committee*, but with a specific task to complete. Once that task is completed, a working group would usually be disbanded, having achieved its purpose.

## Workshops

Workshops are events designed so that people can work together on something. Today, the term workshop usually means people with common interests getting together to work in a planned way on a specific topic or issue. Workshops can invite participants by personal invitation or by public advertisement.

Unlike public meetings, workshops are designed to allow everyone to participate. Public workshops and large gatherings are therefore likely to involve small group activities or discussions, combined with plenary sessions. Workshops can focus on discussion and reflection, or be activity-based or a combination.

For example, in the *community heritage workshops*, participants work individually and in groups, doing a range of tasks including listing places, discussing priorities, mapping. In the *heritage and character workshops* participants work in pairs taking photographs of places and features of the locality that they regard as part of the heritage and character of the town, paste their photos and captions on a display board and present the results.

# A list of sources

## Publications

Here is a full list of the publications referred to in this Guide.

*A Natural Resources Planning Program Handbook*. United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, 1977.

*Australian Natural Heritage Charter: Standards and principles for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance* (1996) and *The Natural Heritage Places Handbook* (1999): available from the Australian Heritage Commission and on their web site.

*Community Consultation Information Kit* (Australian Capital Territory, 1997).

*Community Participation Handbook*. Wendy Sarkissian & Don Perlgut (eds) 2nd Edition, Institute for Science & Technology Policy, Murdoch University & Impacts Press, 1988.

*Community Participation in Practice series. Casebook*. Wendy Sarkissian & Kevin Walsh (eds), Institute for Science & Technology Policy, Murdoch University & Impacts Press, 1994.

*Community Participation in Practice series. Practical Guide*. Wendy Sarkissian et al, Institute for Science & Technology Policy Murdoch University, 1997.

*Community Participation in Practice series. Workshop Checklist*. Wendy Sarkissian & Kevin Walsh (eds), Institute for Science & Technology Policy Murdoch University & Impacts Press, 1994.

*Consultation with Aboriginal People - About Aboriginal Heritage*. Prepared by Bill Jonas for the Australian Heritage Commission, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1991, Canberra.

*Do it yourself social research*. Prepared by Yoland Wadsworth for VCOSS, Melbourne Family Care Organisation, Allen & Unwin, 1984.

*East Gippsland Heritage Workshops Project*. Chris Johnston and Nigel Lewis, Australian Heritage Commission and DCNR (Vic), 1993.

*Fixing the government: Everybody's guide to lobbying in Australia*. Written by Katherine Beauchamp, Penguin Books, 1985.

*Indigenous Cultural Heritage Protection Program Guidelines* (Draft), Dept. Communications and the Arts, 1997.

*I Protest! Fighting for your rights*. Written by Phil Thornton, Liam Phelan, Bill McKeown, Pluto Press, 1997.

*Landcare languages: A communication manual for landcare* (Dept. Primary Industries and Energy, Canberra, 1996).

*Listening To All The Voices*- video. Institute for Science & Technology Policy, Murdoch University, Western Australia.

*Looking after heritage places*. Written by Michael Pearson & Sharon Sullivan, MUP, 1995.

- Open Space Technology a user's guide* Written by Harrison Owen, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1997.
- Oral History Handbook.* Written by Beth Robertson, Oral History Assoc. SA Branch 1996.
- Oral History: A Handbook* Written by Louise Douglas, Alan Roberts & Ruth Thompson, Allen & Unwin, 1988.
- Oral tradition.* Written by Jan Vansina, Penguin, 1973.
- People's Places: Identifying and Assessing Social Value for Communities* Technical Workshop Series No. 6 Australian Heritage Commission, 1994  
Report on the social value workshop held at the University of Melbourne on 20 October 1993.
- Protecting Local Heritage Places: A Guide for Communities.* Published by the Australian Heritage Commission in 1998 and available on their web site.
- Protecting the social value of public places: an illustrated guide.* Prepared by Meredith Walker for the Australian Council of National Trusts, 1998.
- Strategic Questioning for personal and social change.* Written by Fran Peavey, 1992.
- Heart Politics Revisited.* Fran Peavey, 2000.
- Strategic Questioning.* Ronald T Hyman (out of print).
- The Burra Charter (the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance)* - the latest version (November 1999) contains guidelines on involving communities.
- The cultural planning handbook: An essential Australian guide.* Written by David Grogan and Colin Mercer, Allen & Unwin, 1995.
- The voice of the past: oral history.* Written by Paul Thompson, OUP, 1978.
- Volunteering: A current perspective.* Written by Joy Noble, Volunteer Centre of South Australia Inc, 1991.
- What is Social Value?* Prepared by Chris Johnston. Technical Publications Series No. 3, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1994.
- What we need is ... a community education project.* NSW EPA, 1997.

## Web sites

- Action Research Resources ([www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arhome](http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arhome))
- Action Research on the Web ([www.cchs.usyd.edu.au/arow/](http://www.cchs.usyd.edu.au/arow/))
- Environment Education - EnviroEd ([ee.environment.gov.au/](http://ee.environment.gov.au/))
- Environment Education - Victorian Environmental Education Association ([www.netspace.net.au/~vae/](http://www.netspace.net.au/~vae/))
- Facilitation - [www.thefacilitator.com](http://www.thefacilitator.com)
- Information on companies - Australian Securities and Investments Commission ([www.asic.gov.au](http://www.asic.gov.au))
- Internet forums - for example the ABC ([www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au)).

Parliament - for example Commonwealth Parliament ([www.aph.gov.au/parl](http://www.aph.gov.au/parl))

Media contacts and resources - ([www.ozemail.com.au/~pwessels/](http://www.ozemail.com.au/~pwessels/))

Media complaints - ([www.aba.gov.au](http://www.aba.gov.au))

Mediation - Law Society of NSW on-line Mediation and Evaluation Information Kit ([www.lawsocnsw.asn.au/practice/mediation\\_kit](http://www.lawsocnsw.asn.au/practice/mediation_kit))

Open Space Technology - ([www.openspaceworld.org/](http://www.openspaceworld.org/))