



Interactive displays

Interactive displays can be a part of a forum, a workshop or other event. They are used in conjunction with a display of general information to offer viewers a chance to 'vote' on various options displayed on a board. For example, one poster may describe the forest management planning process in general, while a second will illustrate several different potential uses or appearances of a particular area, and a viewer is asked to place a coloured self adhesive dot beside a preferred alternative. An Interactive display in a local library or town hall can be a useful addition to other ways of soliciting input from community members. Careful attention should be paid to the design of the display so that it will stimulate public interest and receive responses.



An Interactive display using computer projector and screen (Red Rose Forest).

Resources and requirements

Skills

- Good writing and graphic design skills are essential.
- Good personal communication skills are needed to make the display interactive.

Equipment

- Equipment needed includes poster materials, display easels, coloured stickers, as well as standard office writing and printing facilities.

Time

- Time requirements for designing and preparing depend on the type of display.

Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

Strengths

- An Interactive display is one way of engaging people who would otherwise be unlikely to participate.
- It may contribute to raising awareness of a project.
- This type of display is an interactive form of working with a broader public.

Weaknesses

- An unappealing display is unlikely to gain extensive public attention and stimulate public interest in the process.
- If design experts are used, the costs may become very high.
- The display requires regular maintenance to ensure that the interactive elements are working.
- Some monitoring mechanism may be needed to prevent abuse of voting activity.

- Normally preparations need to be started early, at least one week in advance, or several weeks in advance if professional designers are used.
- Time will be required to maintain the display while it is being presented.

Useful sources of information

Books

- Community planning handbook. N. Wates ed. (2000). Earthscan Publications, London.
- Creating involvement. Environment Trust Associates (1994). Local Government Management Board, London.
- Public involvement in environmental permits: a reference guide. US Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Available from: www.epa.gov

This toolbox is designed to assist Forestry Commission staff when they are considering which tools they could use to involve the public in the forest and woodland planning process. For more information please visit the website at: www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox