

# Building Trust with Communities

David Brazier  
Nuclear Waste Assessment Team

Post Normal Science workshop  
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**We are the Environment Agency. It's our job to look after your environment and make it a better place – for you, and for future generations. The Environment Agency. Out there, making your environment a better place.**

# Creating a better place



New  
Corporate  
Strategy  
2010 - 2015

Out for  
consultation  
now

Put people  
and  
communities  
at the heart of  
what we do

# Building Trust in our organisation

- Training for planning & delivery
- Initial target Communications staff
- 60 mentors across 8 regions / 20 Areas
- Workshops for management teams and other staff
- BTwC slot in training programmes
- Aim: to support area teams with engagement
- Training now available for specific functions
- Recognised brand

# Six Steps Approach



## **Why? Key messages and goals**

Step one - what do you want to achieve?

Step two - why do you need to work with the community?

## **Who? Target audiences**

Step three - who do you need to involve?

## **What? Activities to achieve our goals**

Step four - how will you involve the community?

Step five - lets do it!

## **How? Measuring success**

Step six - how did it go and what did you learn?

# Why bother with Building Trust?

...issues of high public interest!

**High public profile**

**Loads of complaints**

**Bad press**

**MPs involved**

**Time  
consuming**

**Stressful!**

# Why work with the public...?



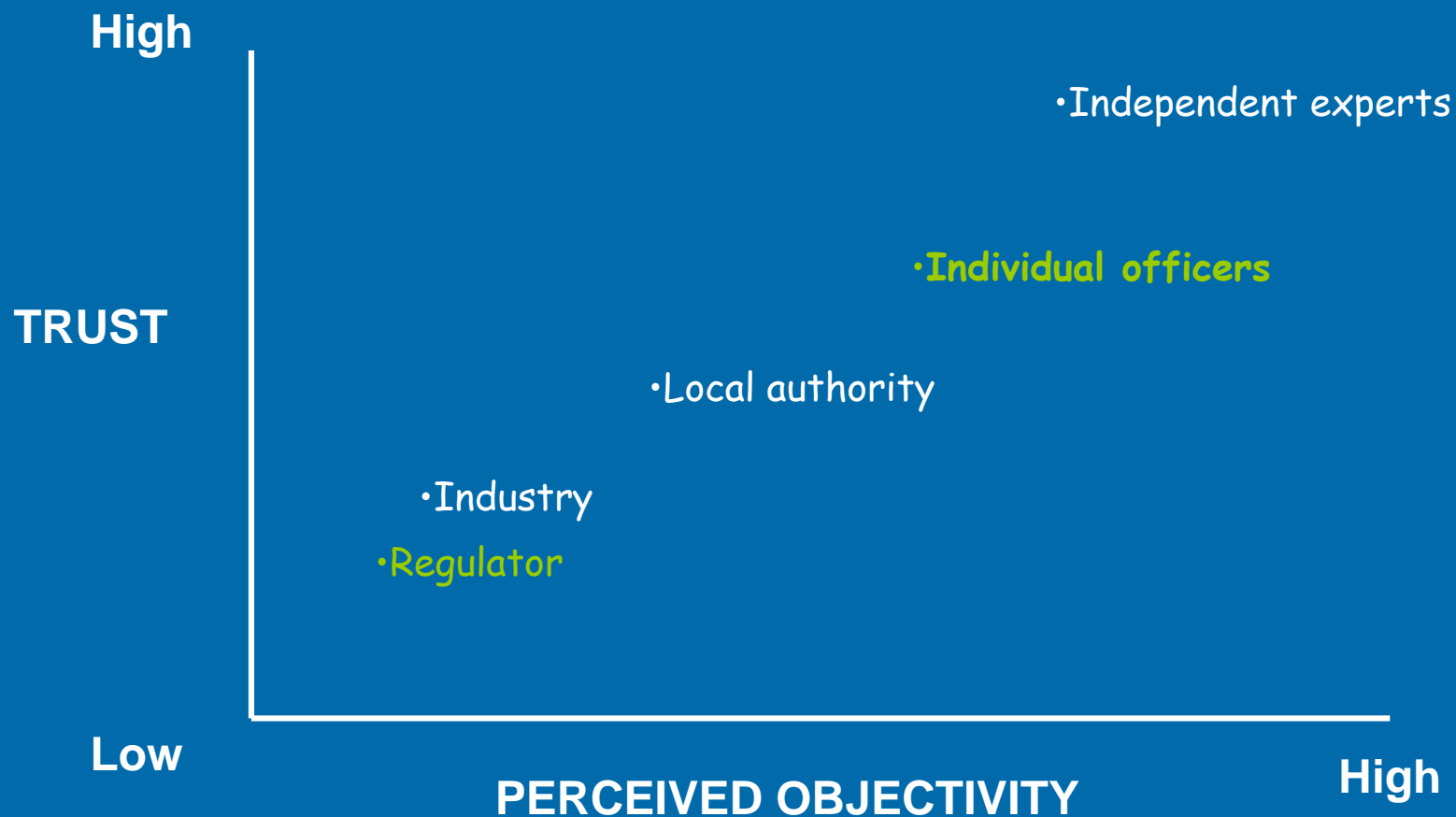
# What is trust?

Rarely the most significant aspect

- Competence
  - knowledge and expertise
- Consistency
  - predictability of arguments and behaviour
- Commitment
  - to obligations and responsibility
- Independence
  - lack of bias
- Openness
  - how easy is it for people to understand our decision-making processes? Our role? Are we transparent?
- Empathy
  - caring, dedication, acting in 'my interests'

(Source: Renn & Levine, 1991; Kasperson et al, 1992)

# Do people trust us?



# Imagine for a moment that you are a local resident ...

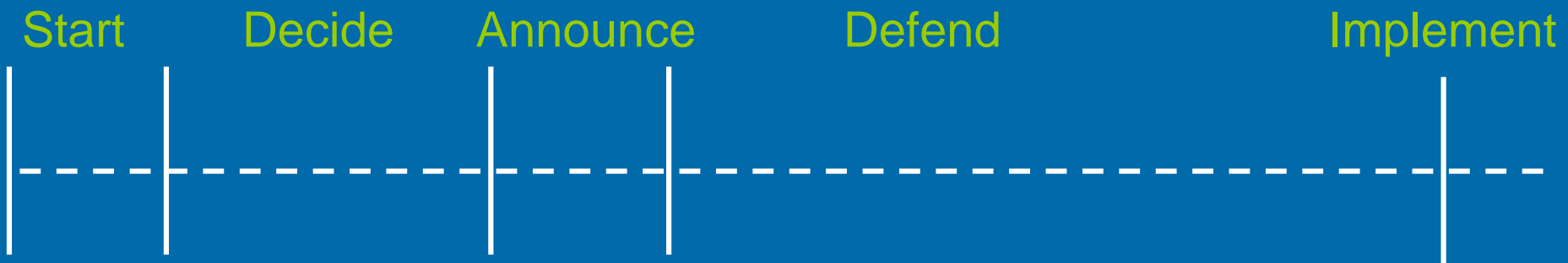
- Nearby landfill site smells horrible and rubbish is blowing on your property
- You have written to EA lots of times complaining and keep getting same, standard response letter but nothing on the site improves
- Public meetings have been ineffective and confrontational
- You have just found out through the local paper that the site is expanding



**How would you feel?**

# Why we need to change

## Decide-Announce-Defend



## Engage-Deliberate-Decide

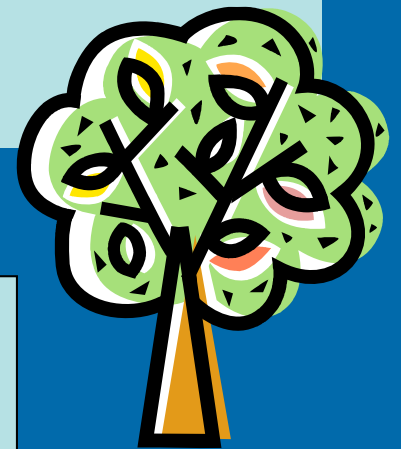


# Benefits for our teams

- Reduced complaints... (less resources and stress!)
- Understand the views, concerns and values of the community
- Understand the issue better
- Encourage the community and others to own the problem, the solution and their role in it



**Better regulation = Better environment**



# How much engagement?

1. How affected will others be by the decision and how many?
2. Are there different perspectives / views about the issue?
3. How much support or ownership of the decision or implementation by others is required?
4. How much risk and uncertainty is involved?
5. When do actions/decision have to be made?

Inform	Mixed approach	Engage
Very little Few people	Some Some people	Severe Many people
No significant	A number of	Wide range of
Alone	More easily with others	Only with support
Low	Medium: understood but not by others	High: poorly understood
Very quickly	Over months	Over years

# What does the answer tell us?

INFORM?	MIXED?	ENGAGE?
Low conflict / uncertainty & little control over situation or decision / decided by others / procedure / few resources / crisis	Need buy in / understanding from stakeholders (individuals / groups / organisations) to make sure the decision is well informed AND to reduce risk of non delivery through resistance / opposition	High conflict / uncertainty / risk &/or need to share ownership of solution / high risk of non delivery through opposition

# IMPEL

## Guideline FOR SELF-EVALUATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD DIALOGUES



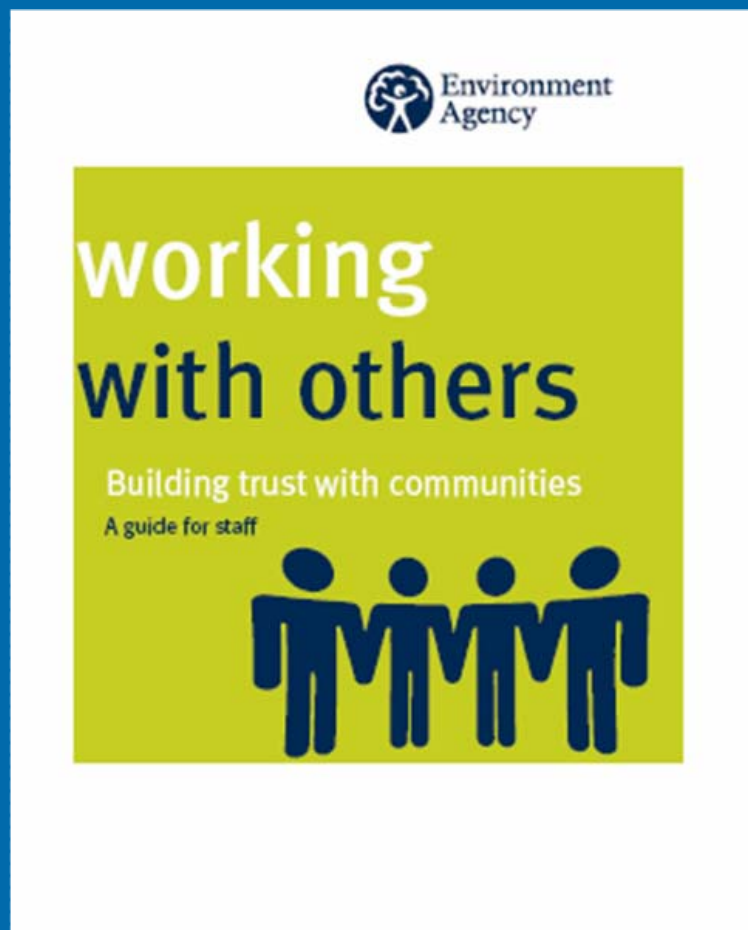
**European Union Network for  
the Implementation and  
Enforcement  
of Environmental Law**

# How learning together with experts helps us



# The help we provide

Guidance...



How to guides...

Case studies...

Mentors in each area...

Training courses &



Expert Help

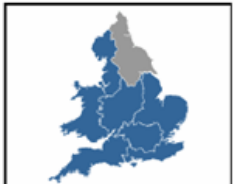


## working with others

Building trust with communities case study

**Case study name:** Aldwark  
Land spreading of non agricultural waste

**Location:** Aldwark, Yorkshire



*"We kept getting lots of complaints about smells from land spreading in Aldwark. We worked with our External Relations team and decided to hold a public drop-in session at the local pub. Some people were angry - they didn't like that we couldn't do much about the smell but they really appreciated us listening and now know what we can and can't do to help. The issue is by no means over but people can now put a face to a name and know who to contact. We are now more aware of the impact of the activity on the village, and will be scrutinising new applications much more thoroughly."*

*Environment Management Team Leader, Dales Area, North East*

**Summary:**

The residents of the village of Aldwark and neighbouring villages were complaining to us all the time about the horrible smells coming from land surrounding their villages. The smells were so bad that people couldn't sit in their gardens or hang out their washing. We were spending hours dealing with the complaints and going out to investigate the problem. The smells were coming from non agricultural waste e.g. food and abattoir waste which was being spread on the land to improve the soil. This land spreading activity is something which we authorise through paragraph 7(a) exemption for waste management licensing. The villagers were frustrated because they thought that no one was listening to them. By giving people an opportunity to come and talk to us at a public drop-in at the pub we really got to the bottom of their concerns and found out more about the problem. We did this with the support of the local authority and it was viewed as a positive step in the eyes of the community. We can't ever guarantee that this operation won't generate smells but at least now people know what we can and can't do, and they understand our role. Working with the public gave us knowledge which can help us do a more effective job - the information they gave us also helped us to identify an area of illegal land spreading activity. We are now more aware of the impact of this activity on the local population and will be scrutinising new applications more thoroughly from now on.

Detail	
Site name	Aldwark land spreading
Location	Aldwark, Yorkshire
Region/Area	North East, Dales
Category (i.e. landfill, flood risk)	Land spreading
Status (ongoing or complete)	Ongoing information giving
Timing (i.e. March 06 – Sept 06)	April 2007 – October 2007

building trust with communities

# Contact

[Cath.brooks \(at\) environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Cath.brooks@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Community Relations Manager

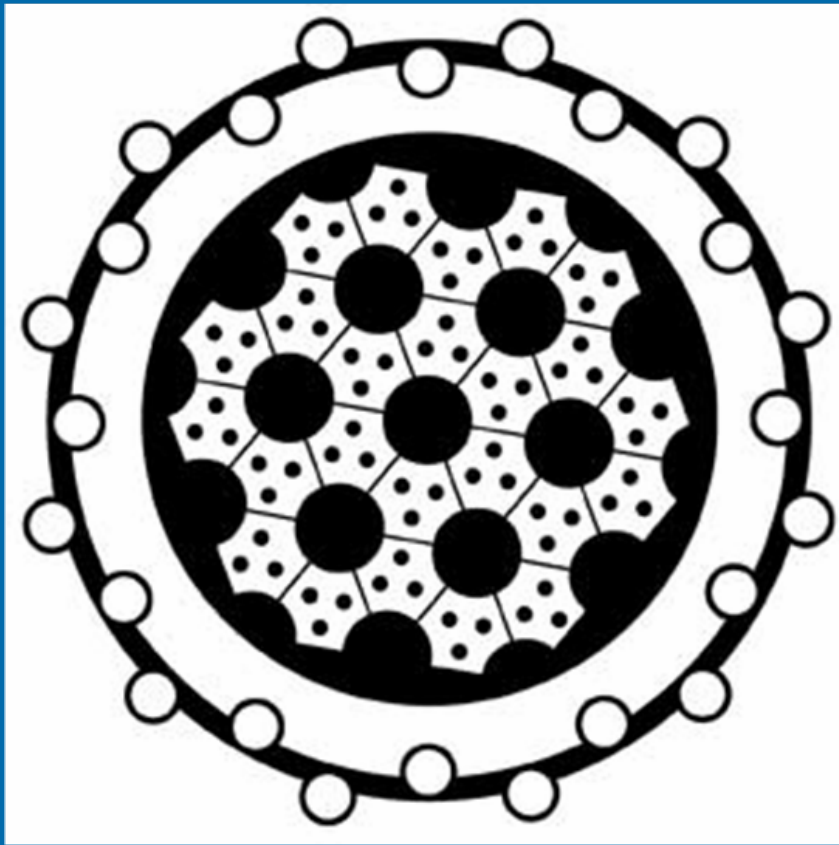
[Ruth.johnston \(at\) environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Ruth.johnston@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Community Relations Manager

[www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

# More for the PNS audience

# Transition network



*“Power is shifting from institutions that have always been run top-down, hoarding information at the top, telling us how to run our lives, to a new paradigm of power that is democratically distributed and shared by us all”.*

Trippi, J. (2004) *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*. Harper Collins.

# The seven principles of Transition

- Positive Visioning
- Help People Access Good Information and Trust Them to Make Good Decisions
- Inclusion and Openness
- Enable Sharing and Networking
- Build Resilience
- Inner *and* Outer Transition
- Subsidiarity: self-organisation and decision making at the appropriate level

# using science to create a better place

## Environmental Citizenship: Literature Review

ea/b/e/sci/v1

SC000056JOC-E-P

Environment Agency

R&D SC0700 Application of 'futures' research to strategic planning

*Task 2 Key Issue Report*

Centre for Urban & Regional Ecology

Version 0.2

20-01-09

Report #4

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## Citizen and Community:

Mobilizing the public for environmental action

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## Publics, Understandings and Science

JEROME RAVETZ

Now that we are engaged in the process of choosing the successor to our present Charles Simonyi Professor in the Public Understanding of Science, a look at the whole issue is opportune.

The present incumbent has had a highly stimulating conception of his role. He has been a doughty warrior against any tendency that conflicts with the metaphysical and political philosophies of Thomas Hobbes. Sir Isaac Newton would certainly have attracted our Professor's ire. Not merely did he solve his astronomical problems with an invisible, immaterial entity called 'gravity'; worse, he abused his great talents in prolonged studies in the pseudo-sciences of alchemy and theology. Our Professor first gained fame for his espousal of 'the Thatcherite gene', and more recently he has entered the lists against all theories that accord reality to anything beyond Hobbsean corpuscles. He still carries on the good fight, arguing from science that any extension of altruism beyond next of kin is unnatural.

Although it is unlikely that the successor in his Chair will even try to follow that act, the terms of reference of the appointment may well constrain him or her to promote a rather limited conception of science in relation to the public. I call it 'public understanding of the wonders of science', all about the excitement of research and its benefits to humanity. It is redolent of an earlier age, when leaders of the scientific community could sincerely believe that 'to understand us is to love us'.

Of course, we all agree about the excitement of research and its great benefits to humanity. Promoting them is doubtless a Good Thing. But to ignore the other aspects of science when they are quite obvious to the public is to risk being dismissed as irrelevant or antique. The public's understanding of science has become considerably more nuanced since the period of five years after 1990, when the Great and Good of Science were assuring us that British beef is safe for humans in spite of being dangerous for cats. To ignore this change among the public is to risk ridicule or contempt.

The state of British research science is actually quite exciting, indeed even edifying, in many ways. Considering the current leadership, with men (alas) like Blundell, King, May and Rees, we could say, if it were not an illegitimate mixing of discourses, that we are blessed to have them here. And the institutions of research science have shown great social responsibility, even taking on powerful vested interests in their campaigns for safety in the natural and socio-technical environments. Yet science is not restricted to the research community, and the public's understanding of that large and complex social enterprise relates as much to its other sectors as to the highly visible leadership in research and policy advice.

We can imagine science as divided into these 'visible' research and advisory sectors, plus two wings. One can be called 'corporate science'. This consists of science that is not 'public knowledge', but which is produced in or for mission-oriented institutions, variously private, state-

civil, and military. Some time ago a spokesman for the think-tank Demos recommended that in the interests of improved public understanding, scientists should 'talk about the choices they make and the purposes of their research' [James Wilsdon, 'Scientists need to reconnect with people', *Financial Times*, 2005/9/05]. How this was to be accomplished, for the employee-scientists working on problems set by superiors under conditions of commercial or state secrecy, was not mentioned. Yet it is in those institutions that the bulk of the money for 'science' is spent. Also, they increasingly exercise control over priorities and styles of management in the research sector. To pretend that science is still basically an affair of independent lone researchers is to ignore everything that has happened since the Manhattan Project.

The other wing might be called the 'fringe'. Here we start with 'critical science', employing the methods of mainstream research in conjunction with politics to oppose current policies on a variety of issues, ranging from nuclear power (civil and military) and GM crops, through 'electronic pollution' and fluoridation over to factory-farming and animal experiments. Their proponents regularly claim that the scientific debate is rigged against them, but in spite of that they occasionally have great political influence. Some see such successes as the result of the public's misunderstandings of science. For others, it's a case of science's misunderstanding of the public.

Deeper into the fringe we have what I have called 'the aromatherapy counter-revolution'. This tendency, including much of beauty therapy as well as Complementary and Alternative Medicine, has effectively made an end-run around the medical and scientific establishments, by finding an independent economic base among satisfied customers and clients. It is actually quite important, as it involves a return to what we might call a pre-Hobbsean metaphysic, well expressed in the term 'good vibrations'. Sorting out the empirically sound from the patently nonsensical is not easy; it is hard to imagine how a placebo effect could be responsible for the commercial success of homeopathic farmyard veterinary practice. Now even Healing is on the way to being regularised as a valid CAM, in spite of being at the very edge of sanity for our Professor. His colleague in Bristol (Kathy Sykes) currently advocates meditation, and reportedly claims that this spiritual practice can alter the material structures of the brain [Barbara Lantin, 'Changed my mind', *The Times*, body & soul/science p.9, 2008 March 15].

The positive reaction of a large section of the public to many of these practices on the fringe, and the negative reaction to some of those in the corporate sector, can be explained as quite rational forms of understanding. For that, I will use two ideas, safety and trust. We all know that thanks largely to science, life (at least for the world's rich) has more convenience, comfort and safety than was ever conceivable before. But increasingly in recent decades, that safety has been compromised and threatened. We have the menace of global climate change, an unin-

*"I believe that the problems of achieving a positive public understanding of science are closely related to the issue of safety. And safety is closely related to trust. For a long time the term 'safety' was displaced by quantitative 'risk' ... But gradually the point was established that quantitative measures of risk are not adequate for determining either industrial policy or public attitudes. The crucial concept once again is 'safety', which actually depends on trust.*

*... I am 'safe' if I trust those operating and regulating the system to have competence and integrity. Otherwise I am in danger, subject to chance or fate."*