

# CONSULTATION WORKSHOPS

## LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK COUNCIL

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Report on air quality available on City Council [web site](#).

### The Aim And Purpose Of The Event:

To discuss, prioritise and assign action responsibility for a range of options for inclusion in Southwark's Air Quality Action Plan. The event was also an opportunity to engage a wide range of professionals with the air quality action planning process and make links to other policy areas.

### Description Of Event - Officers' Forum, 29th May 2002:

The event was organised in conjunction with Forum for the Future, who are also undertaking a sustainability review of Southwark's UDP, and were contracted to facilitate and report on this event and two Community Focus Group sessions later in the year. The reports will effectively form the socio-economic impact section of the finalised action plan. The officers' forum was a full day event (9:30 - 3:30) and was attended by 25 representatives from a range of professions, out of a "professional" stakeholder list of approximately 150. The forum was split into five separate issue groups, and each was given 15 action proposals to assess against a series of sustainable development indicators (used in the UDP Sustainability review) using large scale a pro-forma. Lead officers/professions, funding sources and timescales were also assessed for each of the proposals. The groups were also able to generate new proposals, modify existing ones, or even remove those thought to be wholly unworkable. The proposals then went through a two stage, "sticky dot" prioritisation process, first by the groups themselves, then by the forum as a whole. A number of different professionals were also invited to discuss the impact air quality had on their work area.

### Part of process or stand alone?:

The event was part of an overall process which included:

- information provision through a summary leaflet;
- three community engagement workshops organised through the Council's Community Development Group (following a similar format to the officers' forum);
- two community focus groups, organised with Forum for the Future;
- a number of special events including one for the Bangladeshi Community using specialist translators.

The department have also used the opportunity provided by other events, exhibitions and networks to publicise the plans and invite comment and contributions.

**Follow up reporting:**

Forum for the Future has provided a report on the event which has been circulated to all participants.

**Resources Used:**

Forum for the Future charged £2,500 for their services, which included facilitating officers' forum and community focus groups, and producing reports for both. Other costs associated with the events (postage, venue hire, printing, etc.) amounted to around £1300. These figures do not include officer time. In addition, the community engagement workshops generated an internal charge of £2800, but this was resolved on a quid pro quo basis.

**Advantages/Disadvantages:**

In terms of the whole process, the key advantages have been:

- the use of existing groups and networks as a way of contacting stakeholders, especially those set up in developing Southwark's Community Plan. Using groups such as this has allowed the message to be spread through non-official routes, which can increase people's interest and trust.
- a diverse range of stakeholders has been allowed to provide real input.
- a number of potential conflict areas have been addressed before the plan is finalised, which should ease the process of implementation.
- officers have gained a better understanding of the concerns and priorities of different groups. These can be greatly variable depending on the profession, area of the borough, etc. and helps in understanding the source of some of the positions initially taken up by those groups.

No new options have been generated by the public, although their input will modify the way in which existing proposals are presented, priorities and implemented.

**Pitfalls To Be Avoided:**

The special session for the Bangladeshi community has stimulated interest in other ethnic communities for something similar. In addition, a number of resident's groups are interested in becoming involved in a far more active way. While this is a positive outcome, a strategy for dealing with this additional demand needs to be developed. The use of self-help action packs, with some back-up training is being considered.