Arnstein's Ladder of Participation

CITIZEN

Stakeholders have the idea, set up the project and come to facilitators for advice, discussion and support. Facilitators do not direct, but offer advice for citizens to consider.

DELEGATED POWER The goal is likely to have been set by the facilitator but the resources and responsibility for solving the problem are passed to the stakeholders. There are clear lines of accountability and two-way communication with those giving away the power.

PARTNERSHIP

Stakeholders have direct involvement in the decision making process and actioning the decision. Each stakeholder has a clear role, set of responsibilities and powers - usually to achieve a shared common goal. Two-way communication is vital.

PLACATION

Stakeholders have an active role as shapers of opinions, ideas and outcomes, but the final decision remains with the facilitators. Two-way communication is essential.

CONSULTATION

Stakeholders opinions and views are sought though various means, but final decsions are made by those doing the consulting.

INFORMING

Stakeholders are kept informed of what is going on, but are not offered the opportuntiy to contribute themselves. Communication is one way.

THERAPY

To educate or cure the stakeholders. The idea is defined and the participation is aimed only to gain public support. 'If we education the stakeholders, they will change their ill-informed attitudes and they will support our plans.'

MANIPULATION

Non-participation

Degree of tokenism

Degree of citizen power

Source: Adapted from the original by S Arnstein