



# Community cohesion impact assessment and community conflict prevention tool

# Acknowledgements

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# Introduction

## Purpose of the tool

To test if activities you are planning will have a positive impact on community cohesion and community conflict in your area.

## When to use this tool

- when deciding on an alteration to service, spend or allocation of local funds
- when embarking on a new project or introducing a new activity in an area
- when deciding what policies and activities to support
- when deciding how to engage with the public or media
- when planning community celebrations or sports activities.

## How to use this tool

We suggest you bring together a small but diverse group with different local perceptions and knowledge, including those who have access to demographic information and local intelligence. Different perceptions may be challenging but valuable.

There are four stages:

- Stage One            Information gathering
- Stage Two            Preliminary Assessment
- Stage Three           Full Assessment – undertake this only if indicated by preliminary assessment
- Stage Four            Action planning

Throughout the tool we have inserted website addresses that you may find helpful in providing background information. These are not a core part of the tool.

**Community cohesion** is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another.

Our vision of an integrated and cohesive community is based on **three foundations:**

- People from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities
- People knowing their rights and responsibilities
- People trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly

And **three key ways of living together:**

- A shared future vision and sense of belonging
- A focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside a recognition of the value of diversity
- Strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.

**Community conflict** is most often generated by/about issues of power, identity, difference, resources, information, perceptions of fairness or unfairness, rumour.

## Feedback

The authors, Jo Broadwood and Nicola Sugden, welcome feedback on your experience of using this tool. Please contact Jo or Nicola at:

jo.broadwood@btinternet.com

nsugden@resolutionuk.org

 [www.communities.gov.uk/communities/racecohesionfaith/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/racecohesionfaith/)

# STAGE ONE

## Information gathering

You will need current and detailed information on who lives in the area in which the activity will take place.

 [www.coventry.ac.uk/researchnet/d/373](http://www.coventry.ac.uk/researchnet/d/373)

### Activity

#### What is the Activity to be assessed and in what area will it have an impact?

By Activity we mean:

- a new project or a new activity in an area (eg merging schools, opening a new community building, starting a new identity based support service)
- an alteration to service or spend, (eg Sure Start, NDC, etc)
- a new policy affecting the area (eg housing, regeneration, transport)
- community celebrations or sports activities
- engaging with the public or media.

<p><b>What is the Activity to be assessed?</b></p>	
<p><b>In what area will the activity have impact?</b></p>	

## Local demographics

You may wish to access this information yourself from the ONS website, but we strongly recommend you contact the person in your local authority who will be familiar with this data. They can help you to read the statistics in a way that will be most useful for you in identifying the groups relevant to your activity and area. Please try to seek the most up to date information.

 [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

In Stages 2 and 3 of the Assessment we will make reference to 'groups.'  
By this we mean the groups you have identified in Stage 1.

### Who lives in your area?

Summary information is available at: [www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk)

Click on Neighbourhood tab, fill in your postcode in Neighbourhood Summary on right hand side of page, scroll through the tabs of interest.

Particular sub-groups of interest may include employed / unemployed, NEET, etc

	Overall %	Sub-groups	Local %
<b>Young people</b>			
<b>Older people</b>			
<b>Ethnic and/or nationality groups</b>			

### Who lives in your area? (continued)

#### Different faith groups

#### Asylum Seekers

Some information may be available on [www.icar.org.uk](http://www.icar.org.uk) and on [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk) under theme population and migration statistics, particularly UV23.

Local information may be best sought through your local asylum seeker service providers.

## Local intelligence

What do you or your colleagues know about any of the following based on your specific local knowledge? Use anecdotal evidence, if available, but be wary of using just one source of information.

Groups who can be identified by any of the following:	Groups
<b>Territory:</b> postcode, estate, park	
<b>Geography:</b> where the physical landscape divides communities	
<b>History:</b> where alliances or conflicts have been created locally or internationally	
<b>Language</b>	
<b>Political groups</b>	
<b>New arrivals</b>	
<b>Global events</b>	
<b>Existing conflicts</b>	
<b>Areas of relative wealth/deprivation</b>	
<b>Housing:</b> clusters of housing type	
<b>Crime:</b> including hate crime	
<b>Anti-social behaviour</b>	
<b>Gypsies and Travellers</b>	
<b>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans.</b>	
<b>Any other groups who are a priority in your area</b>	

## Local indicators

The indicators below will contribute to your understanding of the levels of cohesion in your area. Together with the information above these will help you to form a clear and up to date picture about the area in which you are planning the activity. Your local authority will soon be collecting some or all of the following data through the Places Survey.

Communities and Local Government are collecting the data nationally through the Citizenship Survey. National baseline figures for comparison with your local figures will be available from spring 2008. This information will also be found in the Corporate Area Assessments in 2009.

 [www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/E/9/pdr\\_crs07\\_psa21.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/E/9/pdr_crs07_psa21.pdf)

Indicator <i>Percentage of people who:</i>	Local	National
believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area		
have meaningful interactions with people from different backgrounds		
feel that they belong to their neighbourhood		
feel they can influence decisions in their locality		

## Summary of information gathered

After gathering the information above, you will now be in a position to identify the specific groups who will be affected by this activity and whether or not they are taking part in it. This information will be used on the next page.

You will also be able to identify any other issues of concern about the area (eg a high level of vandalism, an increase in hate crime, significant population change over a short period of time). You may want to make a note of these below so they can form part of the final action plan.

### Issues of concern about locality



# STAGE TWO

## Preliminary impact assessment

### Aims and benefits

**What are the aims of this activity?**

**Who will benefit from this activity?  
(Eg groups/communities identified in Stage 1)**

**In what ways will they benefit?**

**Who will be affected by this activity but will not benefit directly?**

## Assessment

You may wish to record the sources of your evidence for future reference.

### Equalities (Q1)

Inequality between groups / communities (real or perceived) can drive conflict. So alertness to equalities issues and effective management of equalities is good cohesion practice.

### Relationships and contact between groups (Q2, Q3, Q4)

An increase in contact between groups / communities can improve cohesion, but is risky unless there are strong relationships already or the process is effectively managed to good practice guidelines.

➔ [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

➔ [www.youngfoundation.org.uk/files/images/Miles\\_Hewstone.pdf](http://www.youngfoundation.org.uk/files/images/Miles_Hewstone.pdf)

		YES	UNSURE	NO
1	Is there equality between those who will and won't benefit from this activity?			
2	Are there strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities participating in this activity now?			
3	Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?			
4	Does the activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other? (Eg in schools, neighbourhoods, workplaces)			

## Outcome of preliminary impact assessment

<b>If you have answered</b>	<b>YES</b> to	<b>1</b>	<b>Go straight to action planning</b>
	<b>YES</b> to	<b>2</b>	
	<b>YES</b> to	<b>3</b>	
	<b>NO</b> to	<b>4</b>	
<b>Any other combinations of answers</b>	<p><b>Do a full impact assessment</b></p> <p>This is because your answers to the Preliminary Impact Assessment indicate that this activity has the potential to heighten community tension or reduce cohesion. You therefore need to undertake a further more detailed assessment.</p>		

# STAGE THREE

## Full impact assessment

You may wish to record the sources of your evidence for future reference.

### Clarifying the aims and process of the activity

	YES	NO
Will this activity help groups to develop a vision of a shared future?		
Will this activity help groups to improve their understanding and respect for each other?		
Will this activity focus on what groups have in common, whilst recognising and respecting diversity?		
Does this activity actively engage and involve young people in the locality?		
Have local stakeholders and community leaders been engaged in the planning of this activity?		

If you have answered **NO** to any of the questions above please outline the reasons, and consider if and how this work needs doing

Please move onto the next section

## Making social justice visible

This phrase is a quote from the Shared Futures report. It means ensuring that fairness and equality are prioritised and openly discussed.

 [www.intergrationandcohesion.org.uk/Our\\_final\\_report.aspx](http://www.intergrationandcohesion.org.uk/Our_final_report.aspx)

	YES	NO
Will this activity increase inequalities between the different groups?		
If you have answered <b>NO</b> move onto the next set of questions. If you have answered <b>YES</b> please respond to the questions below:		
Why is this justified?		
What will you do to communicate that this activity is justified?		
Please move onto the next set of questions		

	YES	NO
Could this activity be perceived by any of the groups involved as increasing inequality between different groups?		
Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another?		
If you have answered <b>NO</b> to either question above move to the next section. If you have answered <b>YES</b> please respond to the questions below:		
What will you do to communicate/demonstrate to all groups that this activity will increase social justice?		
How will you monitor the impact of the activity on perceptions of inequality?		
Please move onto the next section		

## Understanding more about the different groups

If possible consult with representatives from the groups to answer the questions below.

Fill out a separate page for each group.

 [www.ippr.org/publicationsandreports](http://www.ippr.org/publicationsandreports)

Group:	Yes definitely	Moderately	Not at all
Does this group have a sense of belonging to their local area?			
Does this group have leaders who speak for the interests of their group <b>and</b> who can work with others for wider community benefit?			
Does this group demonstrate a willingness to tolerate and respect others from different groups?			
Does this group's vision of a shared future for the area include other groups?			
Is this group adequately represented in local forums and institutions including government?			

If you have answered **YES DEFINITELY** to the questions above move onto the next section.

If you have answered **MODERATELY** or **NOT AT ALL** to any questions above you will need to engage the group in careful preparatory work.

What will you do to prepare the group for the activity?

How will you monitor if the preparatory work has achieved its aims?

Please move onto the next section

## Contact between groups

If you have said in the Preliminary Impact Assessment that the activity **WILL NOT** bring groups into increased contact with each other (Q4) please move onto the next section.

The places where an increase in contact occurs can have significance for community relations. Please name the specific places in which groups may be brought into increased contact with each other.

Schools	
Workplace	
Streets	
Sports/leisure	
Other	

	YES	NO
Are any of the places identified above perceived by any group as belonging strongly to them?		
Are any of the places identified above perceived by any group as being a 'no-go' area?		
Do any of the places identified above have a recent history of community conflict or tension?		
Is it likely that increased contact between the groups could create or increase community tension or conflict?		

If you answered **NO** to the questions above please move onto the Conclusion Section.

If you have answered **YES** to any of the above questions you will need to do careful preparatory work with groups to prepare them for the increase in contact.

What will you do to prepare groups and local stakeholders (eg businesses, services) for an increase in contact in these places?

How will you monitor the impact of this preparatory work and assess whether it has achieved its aims?

Please move onto the Conclusion Section

## Conclusion

To complete the assessment please answer the following questions.

	Yes definitely	Moderately	Definitely not	Not applicable
Will this activity improve local integration and cohesion?				
Will this activity increase equality between groups and/or make it more visible?				
Are the affected groups prepared for the activity?				
Are the affected groups prepared for an increase in contact with other groups?				
Are the groups meeting in places perceived as neutral and/or welcoming?				

## Outcome of full impact assessment

If you have answered **YES DEFINITELY** to **ALL** questions above it is likely that the activity will have a positive impact on community cohesion. Please move onto Action Planning.

If you have answered **YES DEFINITELY** to some of the questions above, and **MODERATELY** to others it is likely that the activity will have a positive impact on community cohesion. However you will need to build preparatory work into the activity. Please move onto Action Planning.

If you have answered **DEFINITELY NOT** to any questions above it is likely that the activity will pose a significant risk to community cohesion. We therefore expect that you will not continue with this activity. **If you propose to continue with the activity** involve your Board or Senior Managers in making the final decision. **If you decide not to continue with the activity** there may still be actions you will need to take to ensure that this decision does not itself have an adverse affect on cohesion. Please move onto the relevant section in Action Planning.

# STAGE FOUR

## Action planning

**IF YOU HAVE DECIDED TO CONTINUE WITH THE ACTIVITY WITH OR WITHOUT ALTERATIONS:** please use the table below to summarise the actions you have decided on.

	Actions
<b>Stage 1</b>	
<b>Stage 2</b>	
<b>Stage 3</b>	
<b>Evaluation</b>	How will you monitor and evaluate the impact of the activity on all groups affected?
Please move onto Communicating with others	

**IF YOU HAVE DECIDED NOT TO CONTINUE WITH THE ACTIVITY:** you may still need to take some actions, particularly if you have already engaged with local stakeholders and community organisations in a consultation process. The questions below may help you to consider how best to communicate your decision:

How would this activity pose a significant risk to community cohesion and/or increase inequalities between groups?

What is your evidence to support this?

Who has been involved/consulted in Impact Assessing the Activity and are they representative of the groups affected?

Who do you need to communicate your decision to, and how will you do that? (If there has been a wide consultation process it may be useful to refer to the questions in the COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS section to develop a Communications Strategy)

Please move onto Communicating with others

## Communicating with others

A key ingredient to maximising cohesion success is judging when and how to communicate with others about your activity. If you decide not to communicate about this activity it may impact on the perception of the activity's success. Your Action Planning should include the following considerations:

What do you want others to know about this activity, ie its aims, and its achievements? You need to agree this with participants and stakeholders.

When and what do you want others to know?

How might you respond if others are critical of this activity and what evidence will you base your argument on?

How could you use the following communication channels to communicate your message? (radio, papers, websites, blogs, TV, newsletters, emails, texts).

How might you also use local art, music, theatre, cultural projects?

If you decide not to communicate about this activity is there a risk of a negative impact on cohesion?

Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E 5DU  
Telephone: 020 7944 4400  
Website: [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

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