Case study: Online consultation around new nuclear power stations

By: Pippa Hyam
What I will cover today

• Applying best practice rules to online consultation
• The background to the UK nuclear consultation
• The experience for the user
• working with online and offline submissions
• Analysing and reporting on results
• Integration of methods
Principles of consultation

1. What do you want to have at the end that you don’t have at the beginning?
2. Who do you want to involve?
3. What are you going to do with the findings?

http://designer.dialoguebydesign.net/
Principles of online consultation

- Inclusive
- Transparent, open and clear
- Accessible
- Accountable
- Responsive
online consultation in particular

- Being clear about objectives is even more important online because if your potential participants are at all uncertain they will move on immediately. Language needs to be short and sharp for the same reason:
- Be highly visual: pictures and graphics keep people engaged; blocks of text are a turn-off.
- Always make it clear that there are offline alternatives for those who prefer them.
- People expect speed and transparency, people want feedback on their views within days or weeks rather than months.
Background to the UK new nuclear consultation

- UK government consulted on a new energy White Paper in 2006 including a section on the need for new nuclear
- Greenpeace challenged the consultation in a judicial review... and won
- The judge required the government to consult again on the nuclear element of the White Paper again
The challenge

- To run a consultation where the government already had a clear and public policy position
- To make the consultation meaningful
- To be transparent and open throughout
What questions could government consult on?

- To what extent do you support our proposition?
- Enable people to challenge the government’s conclusion
The structure we developed

- A website using the departmental website brand
- Simple registration page
- A layered approach to information
- Open questions asking people to challenge the government's policy proposition
A clear user interface even when there is lots of information
5. Have we provided enough information about the consultation process?

It seems to be adequate. The main concern has to be that residents and interested organisations have their views considered and reported on time.

6. Would you like more information on any aspect of the proposed consultation process?

We are still not sure why the existing 1.25 million will not be added to the new arrangements. This could be kept as separate in option 1, option 2, or option 3. Either is needed or it isn't.

7. Is there anything else we should be taking into account?

The impact upon wildlife, especially larger birds of prey, should be considered. The new line needs to be wildlife-friendly.
Principles of analysis of consultations

- Systematic and transparent
- Balanced and Impartial
- Maintain in the context of the whole submission
- Handling of quantitative and qualitative data
Collated results: interrogation by questions

Our energy challenge: climate change and energy security - View groups

From these pages you can see all the responses that fitted the question structure. You can look at these in different ways:

- All responses against each of the questions.
- The entire response from an individual or organisation (by clicking on the name or organisation).

The table below shows the groups people's comments have been put into. While some responses have only been placed under one group heading, a great many responses make multiple points and these have been collated under several group headings. (This is why the numbers of responses displayed add up to more than the total number of people who responded to each question.) Our methodology for collating responses is explained here (opens in a new window).

Please click on group headings to see all the responses placed under each heading.

Next section

1. To what extent do you believe that tackling climate change and ensuring the security of energy supplies are critical challenges for the UK that require significant action in the near term and a sustained strategy between now and 2050?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Heading</th>
<th>Number of comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree - both are critical challenges</td>
<td>1045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree - security of energy supply is critical</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree - security of supply is more critical</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree - tackling climate change is critical</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree - tackling climate change is more critical</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree with qualification(s)</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree with question but oppose nuclear power</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon capture - arguments against</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon capture - explore/improve utilisation</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interrogation by: groups

Our energy challenge: climate change and energy security - View comments

This page shows you all the responses placed in the group:

Agree - tackling climate change is critical

Click on the links to view all responses made by an individual user or the other comments in a group.

1. To what extent do you believe that tackling climate change and ensuring the security of energy supplies are critical challenges for the UK that require significant action in the near term and a sustained strategy between now and 2050?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User</th>
<th>Groups applied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>183 Adams, Teresa, Ms</td>
<td>Agree - tackling climate change is critical, Demand-side management/efficiency - explore/improve, Nuclear - general opposition, Renewables - support/explore/improve utilisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tackling climate change is extremely important but I believe that energy in the UK should be used more prudently and that more should be done to make better use of existing sources that we have. Maintaining a high quality of life isn't dependent on the vast and increasing quantities of energy that we use and we should be looking at dramatically reducing energy requirements and then focussing on renewables and not on nuclear power.
Interrogation by: users

All comments submitted by - Ambrose, Ann, Ms. (User 1341)

Click on a group link to see all of the comments placed in that group. Responses submitted by post, email or fax, or additional comments that did not fit in the question structure can be found at the bottom of this page.

Online or response form comments

Section: Our energy challenge: climate change and energy security

Question: 1. To what extent do you believe that tackling climate change and ensuring the security of energy supplies are critical challenges for the UK that require significant action in the near term and a sustained strategy between now and 2050?

The following groups have been applied to this response:
Agree – tackling climate change is critical,
Economic growth challenge/lifestyle change

Response:
I agree wholeheartedly that it is extremely important for both Government and individuals to tackle climate change as a priority. Both climate change and securing energy supplies require significant action well before 2050. I do not agree with point 7, that our aim should be to continue to raise living standards and the quality of life by growing the economy. I think that our society needs to adapt to the idea that we will have to have less if we are to have any hope of tackling climate change. We cannot keep growing and expect to solve the problems of climate change.
Open and transparent
Integrating data analysis systems with face-to-face engagement

- Managing radioactive waste safely
- Current and ongoing
- A discussion guide developed, 1,200 printed and offered to community groups throughout the region
- Self-managing and facilitated discussions
- Outputs on a proforma, inputted into database and then analysed as if an online consultation
- Website can be made public in real time, showing feedback and analysed results
Using discussion guides offline

Dialogue by Design

West Cumbria: MRWS
Managing Radioactive Waste Safely

Instructions — organisers please read this before your meeting

What you will need
- A group of up to 10 people.
- Two hours to meet.
- A place to meet.
- If possible, a DVD player and a TV, or a computer with speakers.
- This pack: discussion materials, DVD and response form. You may wish to photocopy or print the topic handouts sheets in this pack (also available on this website — see box to the right) before your session for each participant.
- A pen or pencil to write your responses.

How to hold your discussion

1. Read the Introduction and instructions pages of this pack. The organiser should understand the instructions before any discussion takes place.
2. Watch the DVD. If you cannot watch the DVD, skip straight to the Background Information. Even if you have watched the DVD, you might find it useful to refer to the Background Information before you start.
3. Choose one person to write on the response form. After the discussion, hand responses online, or post the form back in the envelope provided.
4. Spend 10 minutes on the Warm-up exercise (see page 4).
5. Read through the first topic.
6. Discuss the questions and write down the group members' views on each question of the response form.
7. Repeat steps 6 and 7 for the remaining topics.
8. Discuss and record any final points under the last question on the response form.
9. Fill in your group details on the response form. If you would like to stay in touch with the Partnership, you can also give us your contact details.

When you have finished
- Give us your responses. You can do this by typing in your responses online at www.westcumbriamrws.org.uk by clicking on ‘Discussion packs’ under the Setting up your Drop-in Session or by posting your response form back in the envelope provided.
- Why not stay in touch with people in your group and with us? You could check out more about the topics you discussed in your group and sign up to receive our information letters.
- Let other people know about this pack. We want to involve as many people as possible, so please spread the word. Anyone who wishes to request a pack can receive an email or through the website. The deadline for responses is Friday 11th February.

Topics

Topic 1: How public and stakeholder views will inform our work

Introduction
The Partnership’s advice to the Councils has to be informed by discussion with the public and other interested groups, or “stakeholders”. We want everyone to know what is going on and to have his or her say. The Government also wants to be sure that if a council decides to continue with the process, it has genuinely considered public and stakeholder views to inform the decision making.

Who makes the final decision?
The Partnership will consider public views in its advice to Allerdale Borough, Copeland Borough and Cumbria County Councils. It will not make any decisions. The Councils, as formal representatives of the local community, will decide whether or not to move to the next stage of the process of finding a site. This decision will not be made until 2012.

How we involve people
To make sure we reach as wide a number of people as possible, we have a number of ways of engaging with the public and other groups, including:
- Email bulletin
- Public meetings
- Residents’ panels
- Opinion survey
- Website and e-mail
Online response system

West Cumbria MRWS Discussion Pack

Topic 1: How public and stakeholder views will inform our work

Please type your response in the text box below, then click the 'submit' button to save your entry. For a more detailed exploration of the use of this page please click on instructions (link opens in a new window).

Question 1: What do you think about the indicators we have suggested? Please explain if you particularly agree or disagree with any of them.

2500 characters left

Question 2: Are there any other indicators that you think should be considered to judge how well we have used public views in making our final recommendations?

2500 characters left

Please ensure you submit any information you wish to save before you move to the next section.
Finally….

- There are lots of ways of using the internet to support open and transparent consultations.
- The challenge is to use the most appropriate tools based on the propose of the process

Thank you for listening

Pippa Hyam