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Wayshaper helps to simplify, accelerate and support the process when developing a community led housing group model. It provides a way for groups to explore the needs and preferences of their members, map out priorities, explore options and make decisions. The toolkit comprises guided workshops using a card based information system and online information resources. Wayshaper is designed around four key concepts:

Participation

Workshops can be held physically and virtually, allowing all group members to participate, and allowing advisors to engage remotely.

Exploration

The toolkit helps groups to explore the full range of options available to them, not just those which they are most familiar with.

Information

Each card links to online resources, providing deeper information, helping groups to reach informed decisions.

Holistic planning

Wayshaper has been designed to reveal the interdependencies which exist between options at the very earliest stage of a group's development.

The process

Priorities workshop

Every group should begin the process with this workshop which lays the foundation for the options workshops. The workshop helps the group to prioritise 16 components of their model. A group with clear and agreed vision, values and aims will find this a swift process whereas a group early in its development will require several workshops to uncover members' needs and preferences.

Options workshops

These workshops help the group to explore and choose from 70 options across the 16 components prioritised in the previous workshop. The group can prototype multiple group models over these workshops to navigate the interdependencies between options.

Group model

The development of a stable group model takes place over multiple workshops and research periods. Adjustments may be needed to respond to group members joining or departing, or changing conditions such as funding or site opportunities.

Priorities workshop instructions

① Lay out the priority cards

There are a total of 16 priority cards. Virtual workshop participants should each lay out their own set of priority cards. Lay them out in any order.

The facilitator should state the purpose and duration of the workshop, and remind the group of their agreed decision-making process, vision, values and aims.

② Group the cards into 3 sets

Set A: Things about which the group has already made decisions (there may be none).
Set B: Things which are considered important to meeting the group's vision, values and aims.
Set C: The remaining cards.

Physical workshop participants can discuss the sets together. Virtual workshop participants should each read out the cards they selected in their sets. The facilitator should keep a record of choices, then help the group to reach agreement about the final selections in each set.

Set A   Set B   Set C

③ Prioritise the cards

Order the cards within the sets according to their importance to the group's vision, values and aims. Sets A and B should be completed before embarking on an options workshop. Set C can be tackled at this point or returned to at a later stage, after options workshops have commenced. The facilitator should keep a note of the card order.

Set A   Set B   Set C

High priority ← .... → Low priority

Options workshop instructions

Before the workshop

Lay out all 70 of the options cards in numerical order with the coloured sides face down, including any cards which were turned face down in a previous workshop. All virtual workshop participants will need their own set of cards, and should position them near their computer screen to allow easy access throughout the workshop. Do not move the cards out of the grid other than when picking them up to read them.

The diagram shows the space needed using a suggested grid of 14 x 5 cards but any arrangement can be used as long as they can be reached by hand. A large desk or table is helpful, but a floor space or bed would be sufficient.

60cm

140cm

① Select a priority card

Start with the highest priority card in set A (or set B if set A is empty) tackled in the priorities workshop. Go to the numbered option cards noted, e.g. for the finance priority card, go to options cards 17–23. It's vital to include priorities which the group has already decided on, as the choices will often affect other options.

② Review the options

Options cards show green bullet points to indicate some common matches for an option and amber bullet points to indicate some of the necessary considerations. Further information can be accessed via the web address and QR code shown on each card. To progress the workshop swiftly the group may opt to make 'best guesses' based on the card information alone, leaving the online information to be researched after the workshop.

③ Choose an option

The group should choose an option, or multiple options where an appropriate hybrid can be created. The chosen option card shows a list of 'incompatible options' at the bottom. These cards must be turned face down, along with any other option cards relating to that priority which are not being chosen. It's important that the group reviews each incompatible option to ensure the loss of that option is acceptable or else reconsider the choice.

④ Record and repeat

Repeat this process working through the priority cards in order, Note the options chosen at each step. A group model prototype is complete when all 16 priority cards have been tackled. At the next workshop lay out the full grid of cards including those which are face down.

⚠ Changing options

When changing an option which was chosen at an earlier stage it is vital to reset the entire card grid to face up position, then work through the priority cards following the original choices until meeting the option which needs to be changed. This ensures that there are no incompatible options which would render the group model unviable.

Workshop facilitator's preparation

A facilitator should be appointed for each workshop. They will be responsible for organising the physical space and / or setting up the video call for remote participants, defining and observing a time schedule, moderating the discussion, and helping the group to follow its decision-making process. The facilitator might be a Community Led Homes Accredited Advisor, an external facilitator (perhaps a member of another group) or a member of the group. A group member facilitator will have less opportunity to fully engage with exploring options, since their main attention will be given to the smooth running of the workshop and in particular, to balancing the conversation between participants. Accredited advisors can be found at www.communityledhomes.org.uk/community-led-housing-advisers

Group vision

Before embarking on a workshop it is essential that the group members have explored and agreed their shared vision, values and aims. These will provide direction when establishing priorities and assessing options.

Toolkit contents

The toolkit contains 16 priority cards and 70 option cards. If a card is missing a printable PDF file can be obtained by emailing support@wayshaper.co.uk at least 5 working days ahead of the workshop. The cards are available in two sizes: Large facilitator cards (105 x 148mm) designed for use in physical workshop settings and small virtual workshop cards (74 x 105mm) for use by individuals participating in virtual workshops. Additional sets of cards can be ordered at www.wayshaper.co.uk

Virtual workshops

Each virtual workshop participant should have their own set of cards. They should read the instructions and lay out their cards accordingly before the workshop starts to avoid time consuming delays. It is not possible or necessary for the facilitator to show their cards on screen.

Decision-making process

The group should have agreed and practiced a decision-making process before embarking on workshops. Guidance can be found at www.wayshaper.co.uk/decision-making

Terms

Group members may be unfamiliar with some of the terms used. A facilitator such as a Community Led Homes Accredited Advisor or someone versed in community led housing will be able to guide the group. If the group is self-facilitating they may need to research the terms ahead of the workshop.

Documenting the process

The process is intended to run over multiple workshops and research periods. It is therefore important to decide how to document group models as they develop. Cards which are chosen in workshops should be noted, allowing them to be set up accordingly at each new workshop.

Table or floor space

A large area is required to allow the entire set of 70 option cards to be laid out together. The cards should be arranged so they can be easily reached by hand. The diagrams below show the space needed for large facilitator cards and small virtual workshop cards using a suggested grid of 14 x 5 cards. Ensure virtual participants have laid out their cards before the workshop begins. Keep all cards laid out in the grid throughout the workshop. Do not move them out of the grid other than to read them.

Subscriptions and updates

From time to time cards will be updated or added, in line with new legislation and conditions. Information about updates will be sent to the email address registered under the Wayshaper account.

Online information resources

Each option card shows a password protected web address where information related to that card is located. Before the workshop begins check access by visiting www.wayshaper.co.uk/my-account and log-in using the group's Wayshaper username and password. If the workshop is being held virtually over a video call the facilitator or a participant could access the resources and share their screen with the other participants when necessary.

A QR code on each card links to the same web address. If intending to use these, carry out a test before the workshop by pointing a smartphone camera at a code and log-in using the group's Wayshaper username and password.

Facilitator cards (148 x 105mm)

90cm

190cm

Virtual workshop cards (105 x 74mm)

60cm

140cm

wayshaper.co.uk

Inquiries and feedback
hello@wayshaper.co.uk

Support for paid subscribers
support@wayshaper.co.uk

Community
facebook.com/wayshaper

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About Wayshaper

Wayshaper is owned by the Confederation of Co-operative Housing and is licensed to Community Led Homes.

Community Led Homes is a partnership between four leading community led housing organisations: Confederation of Co-operative Housing, Locality, National Community Land Trust Network and UK Cohousing.

Community Led Homes exists to make community led housing a mainstream housing option. We provide training and practical support to local groups, enablers, councils and developers. By bringing people together from the grassroots to those in power, communities can create the homes they want and need.

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www.cch.coop   www.communityledhomes.org.uk

Wayshaper
The decision-making toolkit for community led housing groups

Workshop checklist

- Facilitator appointed
- Group vision, values and aims
- Group decision-making process
- Cards for all virtual participants
- Check card sets are complete
- Research unfamiliar terms
- Check online information resources log in
- Set up cards before workshop
- Note taking and sharing with the group