



Influence

There are eight key areas to help guide the Local Conversation. These are:

- Action
- Approach
- Context
- Governance
- Influence
- Involvement
- Leadership
- Relationships

This section looks at **influence**. We consider:

1. What we mean by influence
2. Why influence is important in the Local Conversations programme
3. Some theory and approaches
4. Equity, diversity and inclusion
5. Ways to influence - what you can do including some practical examples
6. A summary
7. Some helpful do's and do not's
8. A final exercise.

1. What we mean by influence

Influence is about the **power to change** or affect someone or something. If you have influence, this might mean you have made an impact on a person, on a group of people, or on something tangible - on a service, a way of working, a place, or a policy for example.

At the simplest level, influence is simply the effective combination of three elements:

1. *A communicator* -- the person or group who wants to influence someone
2. *A message* -- what the communicator wants the audience to do or believe
3. *An audience* -- the recipient (or recipients) of the message.

(From [Community Toolbox](#))

You can influence in several ways. Some examples of direct forms of influencing include:

- **Persuading** - Convincing those individuals or groups who have the power to make

significant change to do so. This is sometimes known as lobbying.

- **Amplifying** - Making sure the voices of people who are not often listened to are heard through good external communication, targeting specific groups or people with power.
- **Campaigning**, organising or taking **direct action** - Picking up a specific cause or issue, being clear about what you want, and taking action or campaigning publicly for that change.

2. Why influence is important in the Local Conversations programme

The Local Conversations programme was set up to help local people come together and develop their priorities towards the things that residents want to see delivered locally. Importantly, this process should change the way things are done and influence what happens locally.

The key principles of the programme are:

1. The purpose of the Local Conversation programme is to improve health by addressing the social determinants of health, including the local environment, jobs and income, the local economy, housing, and education and skills. Community power and social connections are also critical social determinants that cut across all of your work.
2. Lead organisations support residents to build social connections and to take greater control locally so that they can improve things in ways which are meaningful to them. This must be through a collective and transparent process where residents can understand and shape what is happening.
3. Residents increase their collective control and influence over things that matter to them locally and which address one or more of the social determinants of health in 1 above. Residents are supported to make key decisions on priorities for the neighbourhoods and the way in which the Local Conversation money is spent. This can include taking decisions to respond to changing circumstances, for example, changing priorities or spending.

Improving, shaping or changing the way things are done can mean anything from the kind of neighbourhood services which are delivered, to changing the opening times of the local community centre. It could mean influencing the way a housing programme works, to helping groups of people who are opposed to each other to get along better and become more cohesive for the sake of the neighbourhood. It could also mean campaigning to have more local people hired by big businesses in the area, or pushing for employers to bring their businesses to the area so that local people can benefit.

Reflection:

- Think of some examples of direct influencing that you have done. Did you seek to persuade, or lobby, people? Were you amplifying the voices of those who are not often listened to? Did you campaign? What was effective in your experience?

Exercise: influencing change

- Ask your steering group (or similar) to share examples of when people have made their voice heard - this might be locally, nationally or globally. Write each example onto a flipchart on the wall and then identify:

What they wanted to change
How they went about it
The ways in which they were successful.

- Discuss what the Local Conversation can learn from these examples.

3. Some theory and approaches

For change to take place, residents first need to understand what the problem or issue is and identify the changes they want to happen. The next step is to develop an approach that will convince other residents, partners or decision-makers to help achieve that change. You can read more about ensuring residents' voices are heard and amplified in the Involvement and Approach sections of this guide.

Understanding how influence works

Influencing often involves changing someone's mind or getting those who have power over an issue to give it more priority/change their practice. You could have totally different views or ideas and therefore your task is to change someone's point of view so that they understand and agree with you.

In order to change someone's mind and behaviour, you have to understand some of the ways in which changes come about. This section looks at some of the theory behind what you do. If you can understand the theory, you may start influencing people more effectively.

Herbert Kelman¹ noticed three key ways in which conflict and disagreement may be resolved:

- **Compliance** - This is where someone agrees to do something because they are told to. This usually happens because they either want to earn a reward or they want to avoid a punishment. To resolve conflict in this way, you usually need to be in a position of power and be able to reward or punish. The person who agrees may or may not

¹ Kelman, H. (1958). *Compliance, identification and internalization: Three processes of attitude change*, Journal of Conflict Resolution. 2 (1): 51-60.

actually agree with the final outcome, but they agree to go along with it in order to secure the reward or avoid the punishment.

- **Identification** - This is where someone agrees to do something because they admire you and what you are trying to do. They want to be seen to be like you and so go along with what you say. Again, the person who is influenced may or may not actually agree with the influencer, but they see themselves as having something to gain from agreeing.
- **Internalisation** - This is where someone takes on board the arguments and values in full, and agrees to do something because they genuinely see it as the right thing to do.

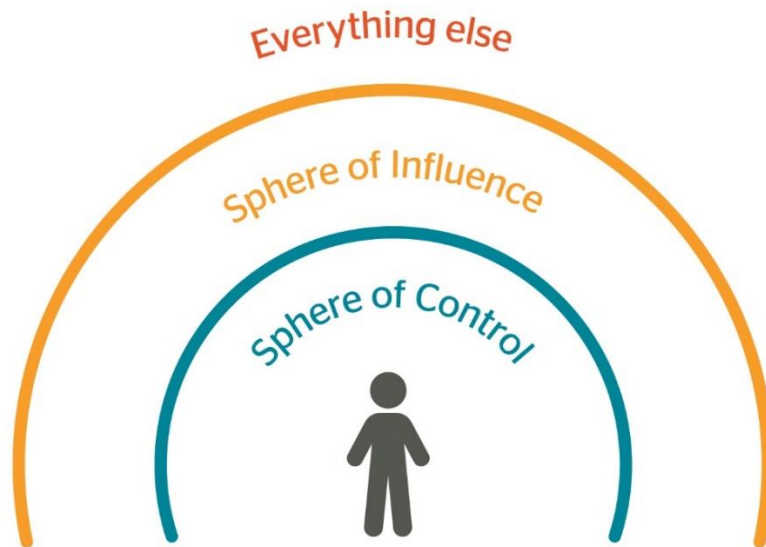
Reflection:

- Has an issue you're trying to change been addressed in other communities?
- What form of persuasion do you think they adopted in order to change minds? Can you learn from this in your neighbourhood?

Spheres of Influence

A useful starting point is to consider what is known as your Sphere of Influence. You could look at this at either a personal (individual) level, or at a group (or organisational) level. In most cases, there are three levels of influence:

- **The sphere of control:** These are things that you can make decisions about and make happen on your own. You don't need to involve anyone else. This is your 'sphere of control'
- **The sphere of influence:** Here, you might need to be able to get other people or organisations to physically do something or to agree to something being done in order to achieve the outcome or result that you want. This is your 'sphere of influence'
- **Everything else, which is outside of your control or influence:** Here, you feel like you cannot control or even influence what is going to happen.



This way of looking at the world is, perhaps, a little simplistic. It is not quite as clear-cut as this. Where the analysis is useful, however, is in helping us to understand that often we cannot simply make things happen and we need to think who else we need to involve or influence in order to achieve what we want.

Often the problems that happen over and over again in our lives can seem unchangeable. These would be 'everything outside our sphere of control or influence'. In these cases, we need to get creative and think about how we might extend our sphere of influence to make the changes we want.

Reflection:

- Can you think of a time when, as a group, you have had to find another way to influence someone, or to be heard, when you felt you had no influence?

Stakeholder mapping and power analysis

One way we can look at our sphere of influence is to map who is important, and for what reason. This helps us to know who it is we need to influence, and to develop a more targeted approach. This exercise is sometimes called stakeholder mapping.

Exercise: Mapping significant people and organisations

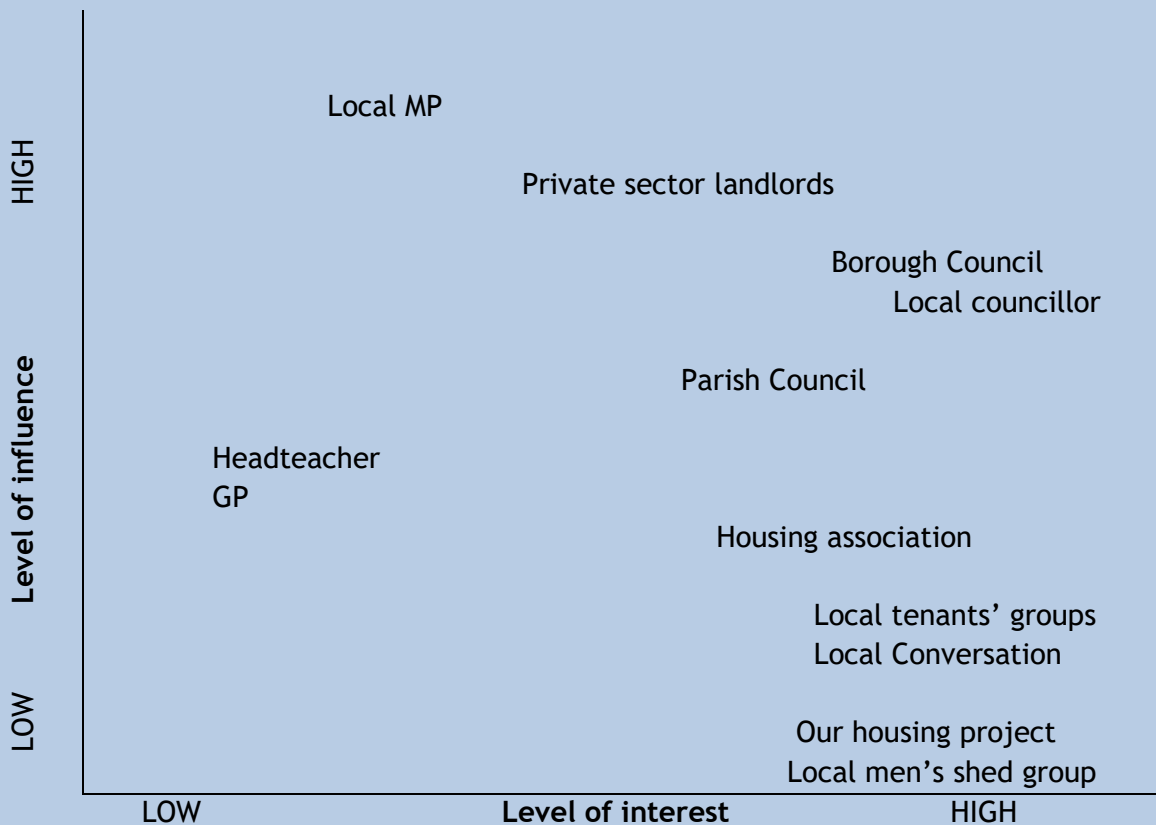
Step 1 - Identify stakeholders

Identify all of the individuals or organisations who have an interest in what you are doing (the stakeholders). With organisations, try and be specific about whose mind it is you want to change. So, rather than identifying 'the council', think about who you want to reach within the council - for example, if it is a parking issue, you might want to influence the Director of Highways or a councillor with transport responsibilities. Once you have noted down all of your stakeholders, you can then note down the different ways in which they are involved. In doing this, you should think about:

- **Their level of interest** - how involved they are, how important what you are doing is to them and, if applicable, if it is part of their legal responsibility
- **Their level of influence** - whether they are people who have the power to make decisions or change what you are trying to do. They might also be able to support you to carry out the work.

Step 2 - Mapping interest and influence

By mapping who has interest and who has power, you can direct your energy to where it can really make a difference. Think about the level of interest and the level of influence that each of these stakeholders may have over the issue that you are wanting to address.



Step 3 - Getting in touch

From the people/organisations above, start to think about who you already have connections with, and who you might need to develop connections with:

- Who knows them?

- Are there existing public meetings you can attend and ask them a question?
- Can you get them to come to meet you to hear what you have to say?
- Can you write to them setting out your concerns?
- Do you have a proposal to put to them?

Step 4 - Influencing

Now you need to think about how you might go about influencing these people or organisations. It is important to:

- Work out exactly what you would like them to do - what is the change you would like to see happen, and what do you think they can do (your view)
- Work out what the person you want to influence can actually do (their view).

Look for where you have common ground - they are more likely to support you if you show them how what you are trying to do fits with what they are doing and will be helpful to them in achieving what they are wanting to achieve. If they see what you are doing as being opposed to what they are trying to achieve, they are more likely to either ignore you, or worse, to actually try to put blocks in your way.

Step 5 - What next

This will depend upon who your stakeholders are, and their positions. If a stakeholder shows interest in meeting and hearing your concerns, respond positively. If you have a selection of stakeholders who are interested, it is worthwhile inviting them all to a meeting of your Steering Group or sub-group and developing a plan together. But make sure that you are clear what it is that you want to happen.

If your stakeholders are hesitant, or disagree with you, but are happy to meet, then you should still take the opportunity. This is the chance to highlight the importance of the issue, and why something needs to be done. Remember to showcase your Local Conversation's strengths: a representative voice of the community, which is led by residents, and takes action to make your neighbourhood a better place to live. You have a collective voice and collective power.

If they ignore you, contact them again. See if residents can organise for a number of letters to be sent concerning the issue. Use social media, or your newsletter. Think about who they do listen to and see if they will use their influence to represent your views. Ensure your voice is heard, and demonstrate the strength and size of your coalition.

Reflection:

- Who in your neighbourhood has successfully done this kind of influencing before? Who might have skills and experience and could be useful to talk to, or involve.

Example: Local Conversation in Lozells, Birmingham

The Lozells Neighbourhood Forum has supported residents to discuss topical issues and ways forward with heads of departments in the council as well as elected officials. The Neighbourhood Forum and councillors' surgeries are now held in the *Aspire & Succeed*

offices. It was recently decided with local residents to do a survey of the local GP services in the neighbourhood and what residents feel needs to change. This will be presented to the local CCGs, GPs and the hospital trust.

Example: A scenario showing different viewpoints, and common ground

- You want to do something about a housing development in the neighbourhood. You establish from stakeholder mapping that the MP is the best person to talk to. You want her to make the developers pay attention, and make adjustments based upon your concerns within the next couple of months (your view).
- The MP wants to make sure that her constituents, who voted for her by a very small majority, see that she is working hard for them. She *has now got the power* to influence the future of the development. She can raise the issue in parliament, and represent and promote your views with other decision-makers locally and through the press (her view).
- **Common ground:** You both want to do something to make life better for residents.
- **Short-term** help could be you asking the MP to:
 - write to a number of councillors and the developers highlighting the worst of the issues, the suffering the housing changes will cause individuals and the neighbourhood and asking them to a meeting with her. People with power (councillors, the local authority, the developers) respond to the MP faster than they will to residents.
 - talk to the councillors and the local authority about the powers they have to take some action.
- **Longer-term**, the MP can also consider the current powers that the local authority has to deal with developers and resident concerns, and whether it is adequate. She can begin to work to understand the issues (by meeting with residents and other stakeholders) and looking at ways to change the law to ensure that the developers cannot provide substandard housing.
- **What is the lesson?** Your stakeholder mapping, above, showed your MP as having more influence in terms of **direct** action than she actually may have had, but she did have much stronger interest than you thought - and was keen to impress you. This, coupled with her ability and position to try and change the law, **supports your learning to grow for next time, and means real action can be taken on the issue.**

Resource:

Mapping of stakeholders can be done as a visual exercise with you at the centre. This [short video clip](#) shows how you can go about doing this.

4. Equity, diversity and inclusion

Equity is about ensuring people have the right amount of resources, support and information to ensure that they have as equal an outcome or chance of success as any other person or group.

Diversity is about recognising, respecting and valuing differences in people. The diversity of the local population for example, should be reflected in governance and decision-making groups.

Inclusion is about ensuring people are valued, involved and influencing . It involves taking deliberate action to create environments where everyone feels respected and able to achieve their full potential.

Communities are made up of diverse groups of people, including people of different genders², ethnic backgrounds³ and religions⁴, disabled people⁵, older people⁶, young people⁷, members of LGBT+ communities⁸, people with mental health needs⁹, people with learning disabilities¹⁰, and people from different socio-economic backgrounds.¹¹ It is critical therefore that all Local Conversations take a proactive approach to equity, diversity and inclusion. It is not enough to be open and welcoming, you must also challenge the way in which your Local Conversation works, whether it is designed to be inclusive and whether it centres the needs of more marginalised people. You must positively target the involvement of under-represented groups and those whose voices are seldom heard and create allyships which help to increase and champion their voices. Local Conversations should be speaking out about the key issues affecting underrepresented groups of residents in their neighbourhood (including local and national government policy changes and legislative developments) and providing opportunities for people and communities that are less visible or traditionally less involved to participate. See further guidance on this in the section on Involvement.

Lead organisations and Steering Group members need to build the skills, confidence, tools, and techniques to ensure that they understand and practice equity, diversity and inclusion. It is critical when thinking about equity, diversity and inclusion that all Local Conversations should be taking an anti-oppression approach. This means that they not only support the equality and inclusion of groups but that they also take an active stance opposing the systems and behaviours which cause harm, for example through anti-racism work, anti-ableism work, anti-misogyny work. People's Health Trust will be providing more guidance on this.

It is also important to acknowledge and to understand the additional inequalities or stigma

² LSE Commission on Gender, Inequality and Power, [Confronting Gender Inequality](#), London School of Economics (2015)

³ Cabinet Office, [People living in deprived neighbourhoods](#), Ethnicity facts and figures (2020)

⁴ Welsh Government, [Analysis of protected characteristics by area deprivation: 2017 to 2019](#) (2020)

⁵ DWP, [Disability facts and figures](#) (2014)

⁶ Public Health Scotland, [Older people](#) (2021)

⁷ Public Health Scotland, [Young people](#) (2021)

⁸ Equalities Office, [National LGBT Survey](#) (2017)

⁹ NHS England, [The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health](#) (2016)

¹⁰ Public Health England, [Learning disabilities: applying All Our Health](#) (2018)

¹¹ Cabinet Office, [Socio-economic background \(SEB\)](#) (2019)

faced by certain groups of people in the area, such as people from a minority ethnic community who are also disabled. These additional inequalities and stigma are significant in terms of the potential for these groups to influence. If you are to influence, it is important that you really understand the views of people from all groups or you could unintentionally cause harm, for example, by asking for a change which is inaccessible to some people and further marginalises them.

In terms of influence, power dynamics within neighbourhoods are significant as they can impact the ability of certain groups to have their voices heard. Where certain groups are traditionally marginalised and isolated it is important to mitigate the power imbalance and enable these residents to voice their views as part of wider neighbourhood influencing.

Reflection:

- How confident are you that you have actively listened to the voices of the diverse communities in your neighbourhood and you understand what is most important to them?
- How regularly are you checking in with these communities to ensure your work is relevant to their aspirations?

5. What you can do to support influence, including some practical examples

Choose your issue

Bombarding an organisation, such as the council, with lots of things at the same time rarely works. You will be more effective if you can pinpoint a key change you want to see and express this in a clear and concise way. If you can suggest what might make a difference, and how you can help, you are more likely to be successful. Additionally, once you are clear about what you want to change, the easier it is to target the most relevant and appropriate people - allies as well as decision makers. We have covered how to identify significant stakeholders above.

Building pressure and influence

There are many approaches and tactics you could adopt and you might use some of them at the same time, (also see the Action section of this guide):

- **Do your research:** there may be a lot of information available which will support your case - try to find it and use it. For example, if you want to reduce the speed of traffic on your road, find out the number of road traffic accidents which have been recorded or the number of speeding tickets which have been given out.

Example: Local Conversation in Claremont, Blackpool

Residents have been attending the Police and Community Together and the Local Neighbourhood Partnership meetings. They are now calling the council when rubbish gets dumped (in addition to the alley cleans that residents are doing themselves). This is resulting in prompt removal of larger items, which is helped by residents having a good relationship with the local council worker.

Claremont residents are now developing a system for reporting anti-social behaviour, which will involve incident reports being compiled by a Steering Group member and patterns of incidents and reporting being taken to police through the North Central Business Action Group. The project has links through a resident on both groups.

- **Emails and letter-writing:** Ask people who agree with what you are trying to achieve to write to the people that you are trying to influence (such as the Chief Executive or Chair of an organisation, the local MP, or the local councillor). You can help people to do this by providing them with a letter they can copy or some points showing the kind of things that you want them to include in the letter, and telling them the name and email/postal address of the person that you want them to write to.
- **Petitions:** You could get people to sign a petition to show that they support what you are doing. Make sure that the words of the petition are clear and unambiguous however, otherwise the recipients of it may be able to say that it is not clear what the people who signed it actually want. You can do these online very easily, and they are free.

Resources:

There are many places you can start online petitions:

- [38 Degrees](#)
- [Change.org](#)
- [petition.parliament.uk](#) - Specifically to petition Parliament.

- **Storytelling:** You could get someone who has been directly affected by something to tell their story. This can be a very powerful way of getting a point across and often helps you to win the emotional side of the argument. The person's story could either focus on what the problem is and why something needs to change, or it could highlight what you are doing to help and why this is so valuable and needs further support. Or it could do both. You could tell the story at a live event, by someone talking about their experience at a meeting or by making a video or audio recording and using social media. There are lots of things to consider in doing this, not least that a story can go far and wide, but it can be a good way to influence.
- **Surveys:** Use surveys locally to build your case and show how people feel. It adds weight to your argument. It's easy for someone in power to dismiss one person, it's more difficult to dismiss the views of 200.
- **Campaigning:** It is always valuable to have an online and offline campaigning presence. Strong campaigns require strong evidence, a passionate argument, and a unifying brand as foundations: from there, you can focus on building recognition of the issue in order to grow your movement of supporters and increase pressure on those who the campaign is targeting.
- **Lobbying:** As outlined at the start of this section of the guidance, and in the scenario from ACORN that focuses on housing, lobbying is working to persuade decision makers

(for example, MPs/MSs/MSPs or councillors) to take action on an issue.

- **Networking:** always look for opportunities to form new connections. This broadens the potential for greater influence - who you know, and who they know, matters. People are always more willing to listen to and help someone they consider a friend or an ally. Even if someone who doesn't know you is willing to talk, he or she probably won't listen as well as they would if you had a strong connection.
- **Organising:** Forming relevant committees / working groups of people with direct experience of the issue to focus specifically on the change you seek. Organising can be effective in surfacing issues and building momentum towards using some of the techniques described here to have an influence.
- **Offering your expertise:** volunteer to be part of commissioning processes as a local expert or to work with service providers to redesign and shape services.

Example: West Cheshire Poverty Truth Commission

The West Cheshire Poverty Truth Commission found that there was not enough information about the support services available in the area. Members worked with council officers to update the council website so that it was more user friendly and offered up to date information. From this they developed a *Navigator Project* designed to help people navigate their way to local sources of support.

- **Events:** These can bring the issue to the attention of the wider public.
- **Show and tell:** for example, photographs of lots of people helping to clean up a park can show how much support you have. With participants' consent, you could use the photographs to produce a newsletter, or you could put them online, to raise the profile of what you are trying to achieve with the people you are seeking to influence, as well as mobilising more residents to get involved.

When the going gets tough...

Shaping and making change can be hard work. Be prepared to take a break if your attempts to influence change do not seem to be having the desired effect. You may feel like banging on the town hall door but that is unlikely to win you many friends. Instead, assess the situation and review your approach - are the people you are trying to influence the right people, are there other local allies who can help, do you need to present information in a different way, can you identify some common ground and present the change you want to see as a win-win - where all parties will benefit?

Example: Ethical Lettings Campaign in Bristol

ACORN (Association of Community Organisations for Reform Now) supports members to deliver campaigns to address local housing issues. Its Ethical Lettings Campaign in Bristol enabled members to build power and leadership and influence local decision makers.

This sparked a series of campaigns that have significantly improved living conditions for local tenants.

One in three renters live with damp and poor repair, according to ACORN. Such conditions can have a negative effect on health and wellbeing, often leading to people feeling powerless and isolated. Costs, agency fees and eviction fears can also prevent people from speaking out.

Initially, members campaigned to implement the Ethical Lettings Charter, a code of conduct to raise rental standards. Members helped design activities and led on different aspects of the campaigns such as outreach activities, research and communications. Within the first six weeks of the campaign, three letting agents and six landlords, who deal with over 500 local private tenants, had signed up. Soon after, it was incorporated into housing policies for Bristol City Council and various other local authorities.

The project's scope broadened as members gained more knowledge, skills and confidence. This encouraged them to run a number of other successful campaigns to make rental housing more affordable, increase voter registration, and promote a ban on unfair agent fees. These achievements significantly improved living conditions for local tenants.

Project members formed support networks and meaningful friendships within their volunteer teams and also with members of the wider community through the activities. For example, the group held advice sessions and networking events, encouraging local renters and homeowners to come together, bridging divisions and misunderstandings.

The 'Big Housing Conversations' programme, a community forum facilitated by ACORN and Bristol City Council, was also set up to improve the dialogue between local authorities and tenants.

The Ethical Lettings Campaign, run by ACORN, was a project funded by People's Health Trust, based in Easton, a neighbourhood in Bristol with a high proportion of private housing tenants. More information on this story is available on our website [here](#).

Resources:

There are lots of places you can find useful guidance, toolkits and information to support influencing, and how you pitch your arguments. Some include:

- New Economy Organisers Network (NEON)'s [campaigner resources](#)
- Lloyds Bank Foundation's [Change Maker's Toolkit](#)
- Campaign Bootcamp's [resources](#), including guides to setting up petitions, lobbying, fundraising and campaigning
- Sheila McKechnie Foundation's [Social Change Project](#)
- Act Build Change's [learning community for change makers](#)
- Working Narratives' ['Storytelling and social change: A strategy guide'](#)
- Community Toolbox [Influencing People](#). This online resource also has sections on

6. Summary

Influencing is one of many things that Local Conversations will do. It is a way of making change happen for the better. You can influence in a small way (about very local matters), or in large way about bigger issues which affect you.

To be able to influence, you have to understand who all of the people and organisations who have an interest in the topic are, and who has influence (often called 'stakeholders'). You can map the stakeholders to work out who they are. You need to then work out what their level of interest is, as well as the extent of their influence.

You should ensure that your influencing 'agenda' isn't determined by only those with the loudest voice or greatest agency in your area. It should also respond to the influencing priorities of those people with least power or confidence, whose views are often overlooked by the majority. You need take positive steps to reach out to them, to present what you are trying to achieve in a way they will understand, and to ensure that they can see that what they have said has been taken on board.

To do this, you need to think about:

- What you want from them (your viewpoint)
- What they want / can do (their viewpoint)
- What the common ground is, and whether you can work together.

It helps if you understand how people's minds are changed. The examples above about compliance, identification and internalisation might help with this. Some people will be more persuaded by evidence: facts and figures, while others will be more swayed by the emotional appeal of an issue, and people's testimonies. It is always useful to have both prepared, and built into your resources and your strategy.

Think about the best method of influencing. Meetings, emails, letters, online 'noise', peaceful demonstrations, petitions, storytelling, documenting and networking are just some of the ways which you can help build your influence.

7. Some helpful do's and don'ts

Do:

- **Stay calm.** If you have a meeting with someone with power to change something, stay calm. Even if you get passionate about your point, don't get angry. Shouting, not listening, and talking over someone are all ways to lose your audience.

- **Use facts as evidence for your position.** Gather some important information before you meet. Surveys, statistics and quotes from relevant people and results are useful arguments to deploy in support of your case.
- **Ask questions.** Use questions to understand the viewpoint of others. If you understand where others are coming from you are more likely to be able to address their concerns.
- **Use logic.** Show how one idea follows another.
- **Be emotional (wisely).** As well as logic you can use emotion to appeal to people, ‘Shouldn’t we all be working to make the roads safe for our children?’. Tell the stories of how this has impacted on people you know.
- **Listen carefully.** Many people are so focused on what they are going to say that they ignore what other people think, say or feel. Don’t assume what other people think or feel. Take time to find out.
- **Be prepared to back down when a good point is made.** Don’t argue every point for the sake of it. If other people make a good or valid point, be prepared to acknowledge this. Equally, stand your ground when needed.
- **Look for a win-win.** Be open-minded to a compromise position that helps everyone win.
- **Be realistic with time.** Influencing can take time. Be realistic about how slowly something changes.

Don’t:

- **Get personal.** Direct attacks on someone are never good! Attack the issue not the person. If the other party attacks you, then you can take the high ground, for example, “I am surprised at you making personal attacks like that. I think it would be better if we stuck to the main issue here rather than attacking individuals.”
- **Get distracted.** Your opponent may try to throw you off the scent by introducing new things. Try to remain focused and be firm. “That is an entirely different issue, which I am happy to discuss later. For the moment, let’s deal with the major issue at hand.”
- **Water down your strong arguments with weak ones.** If you have three strong points and two weaker ones, then it is probably best to just focus on the strong ones. Make your points convincingly, and ask for agreement. If you carry on and use the weaker arguments, then the person you’re trying to influence may use them against you and make your overall case look weaker.

- **Give up.** Negotiating and changing minds takes time. Don't be down-hearted if you don't win people around immediately.

Reflection:

In this section of the framework, we have talked about influence - including what it means, some theory, and some practical examples.

- What three things have you taken away from this section that you can use to support greater influencing in your Local Conversation?
- What could you add to this section in terms of theory around influence?
- What practical examples or tips around influencing could you add to this section?

8. A final exercise

To bring everything together in this section we would like you to do one more exercise:

Exercise 4: Enabling your Local Conversations Steering Group to understand the power of influencing and how they can exert it to bring change to their neighbourhood

In this section of the guide, we have talked about how the Local Conversation can deliver both shorter and longer term, structural change by influencing the local social determinants of health.

Although this guide is aimed at Local Conversations practitioners, it's really important that residents also have access to the tools and resources we have discussed in this section - not least your Steering Group, or whatever it is called locally.

Having read through this section of the guide you should now feel (even more) confident about supporting residents to use their collective voice to influence people and agencies that have the power to address some of the social determinants of health.

As a final exercise and using the tips, resources and case studies in this section, we would like you to support your Steering Group (or one of your subgroups - if you have them) to design a focused influencing plan that relates to one area within the agreed Local Conversation priorities. As you go through this process, please note what worked well and where you/they struggled.

Having done this, please let us what we could add to this section that might help others in terms of exercises to try, or sources of information from which to better understand approaches to influencing.

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