

Quick guide to questionnaires



Issues first

1. Find out what the issues are first – use a variety of methods to engage with people to find out
2. A questionnaire can then be used to find out more about the issues and what people would like to do about them
3. You can then look at possible solutions or ways forward

Design

Easy to complete – people don't have the same level of reading skills

Easy to read – make sure the font is big enough and use one like "Arial"

Avoid jargon – keep the language simple e.g. use roads rather than infrastructure

Avoid putting busy or dark backgrounds behind text – people may not be able to read it

Design the questionnaire for the "whole" of your community to get back the widest range of responses

Questions

Use the "so what?" test to decide how useful it is to ask a particular question – how will you be able to use the information? Will this help you understand the issue and take action?

Avoid lots of open comment questions – random comments are a nightmare to input & analyse better to include an option as part of a question so comments are relevant to the subject.

Arrange the questions logically so that people feel the questions are leading somewhere.

Avoid:

Yes/no questions – they have their place but in general just a yes or no will not take you further forward

Leading questions – you are looking to encourage people to express their views not bolster yours

Two or more questions in one – easy to do, but impossible to answer.

Questions you know the answer to – ask something instead you don't know the answer to.

Population profile questions

What would it be useful to know about who is completing the questionnaire?

1. Male or female
2. What age group they fall into
3. The area they live in (using a map to define the areas is easiest)

By asking them you can analyse by:

- **Area** – is something an issue in one area or more than one
- **Age groups** – do different age groups have differing views or need different things
- **Gender** - do men and women have different views or is an issue affecting them differently

You can also use all three together to help you drill down further into the issues

There is far more in the big guide!