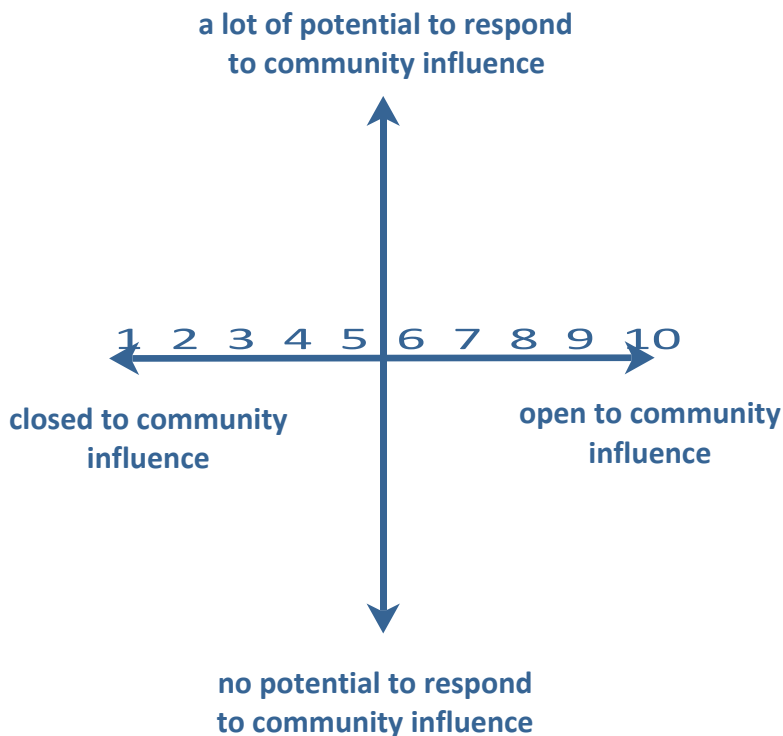


# echo<sup>©</sup>

echo is a 'tool' for public agencies and partnerships to assess and develop  
**how open they are to community influence**  
in relation to their  
**potential to respond to community influence**

The relationship between 'assessing how open you are to community influence' and 'your potential to respond to community influence', are demonstrated on an axis which is designed to encourage discussion and debate in agencies and across partnerships.



There are 10 positions on the horizontal axis, which illustrate a shift from doing things **to** communities to doing **with**. Each position has a set of characteristics reflecting a different experience for agencies - and for the communities they serve.

The vertical axis suggests ways for officers to talk about the factors which impede their potential to respond to community influence.

*"The vertical axis works as a way of introducing barriers – getting people to face up to the need to think creatively and think about opportunities. It focuses you on involving people in decision making, makes you think of options and encourages a participative approach"*

Improvement & Efficiency West Midlands Joint Learning participant

## Supporting partnerships and agencies to:

- ✓ meet requirements of the Duty to Involve: helping them to organise what they do and identify gaps in activity
- ✓ implement delivery plans for community engagement strategies
- ✓ identify characteristics of a thriving third sector
- ✓ hear and respond to community priorities
- ✓ work better with the voluntary & community sector to commission services
- ✓ improve community engagement
- ✓ plan for customer-led transformation
- ✓ develop strong partnerships

Members of Wolverhampton Partnership can see potential in echo to help them to

- develop shared outcomes – share the opportunities and the risks – increase commonality
- help organisations gain insight into how they are perceived, and the impact of their behaviour on communities
- break down barriers between parts of the Partnership
- get 'Joe (& Joanne) Public' on board – to encourage pride and concern in local services

# Who else is interested in echo?

Developed with support from the National Empowerment Partnership, Community Development Exchange and West Midlands Improvement & Efficiency Partnership, echo features in the Inon-statutory guidance on the Duty to Involve.

Over the past 12 months, interest in echo has been expressed by:

- Local Strategic Partnerships: Dudley, Wolverhampton, Shropshire
- Thematic Partnerships: Crime & Disorder Reduction, Children & Young People, Health and wellbeing
- Elected Members - including Town and Parish Councillors
- Take Part Pathfinders: Black Country and nationally
- National Empowerment Partnership and Regional Empowerment Partnerships
- Large voluntary sector organisations, consortiums, partnerships & federations
- Housing Associations
- Local Authorities: Regeneration, Neighbourhoods, Community Development, Climate Change, Policy, Community Safety
- Strategic Health Authority, Primary Care Trust, Local hospital
- Fire & Rescue Service, Police Service

## Find out more about echo

### Read about it - download:

- The original research report, which outlines the process for developing echo in its initial stages.

### Talk about it - join our networking site: <http://changesuk.net/network>

- Start discussions
- Contribute to discussions
- Share ideas and experiences
- For echo facilitators - access the latest resources

### Hear about it - look out for:

- Presentations or workshops in your area, or commission us to deliver a half-day presentation for up to 60 people

### Learn how to do it - look out for:

- Training for facilitators to work with echo, which may be coming up in your area, or commission us to deliver a 2-day facilitator course for up to 20 people

*"We got a lot out of using echo – it gave us a rationale to end the current set up and develop an approach with a new clarity of purpose".*

*Dudley Children's Trust Participation Board*

### Echo can be used to help:

- prompt discussion about your agency and community influence
- identify your position on the framework
- compare your position with others, with partners
- recognise why things are – or are not – working
- understand and articulate the complexities of community engagement
- identify the things you need to do to be more open to influence
- plan improvement

During echo's development and piloting in the West Midlands, officers said:

*"echo is directly relevant to my work"*

*"I have used echo as a tool to help managers in Transport and Highways think about how open they are to influence and from whom"*

*"I included echo as a tool in one of the actions when compiling our comprehensive partnership community engagement delivery plan"*

*"Working with echo is a useful method to help us stand back and see if children and young people are getting what they need"*

*"Working with echo has really expanded my vision - It makes you think about how things need to be improved"*

[changesuk.net/resources](http://changesuk.net/resources)

