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Local Government and Business: the Future of Commissioning and Partnerships

Understanding the Local Community

9 December 2008

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Programme

- Roles of the local community in commissioning and partnerships
- The ladder of engagement
- User and community co-production
- … and the political and professional implications?

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Introduction

- “They only ask us our opinions when they’ve made up their minds – and then they wangle it so that we appear to give them the answers they first thought of” (service user)

- “They said they wanted us to participate in designing a new service for the elderly – but they meant that they wanted us to explain their ideas to all the members in our organisation, because they didn’t want to take the flak themselves” (community group)

- “We have found that when the public sector proposes a ‘partnership’, what they generally mean is that they want to transfer the responsibility for a particularly difficult service or issue to us, and give us a lower budget to deal with it than they were previously spending themselves” (voluntary organisation)

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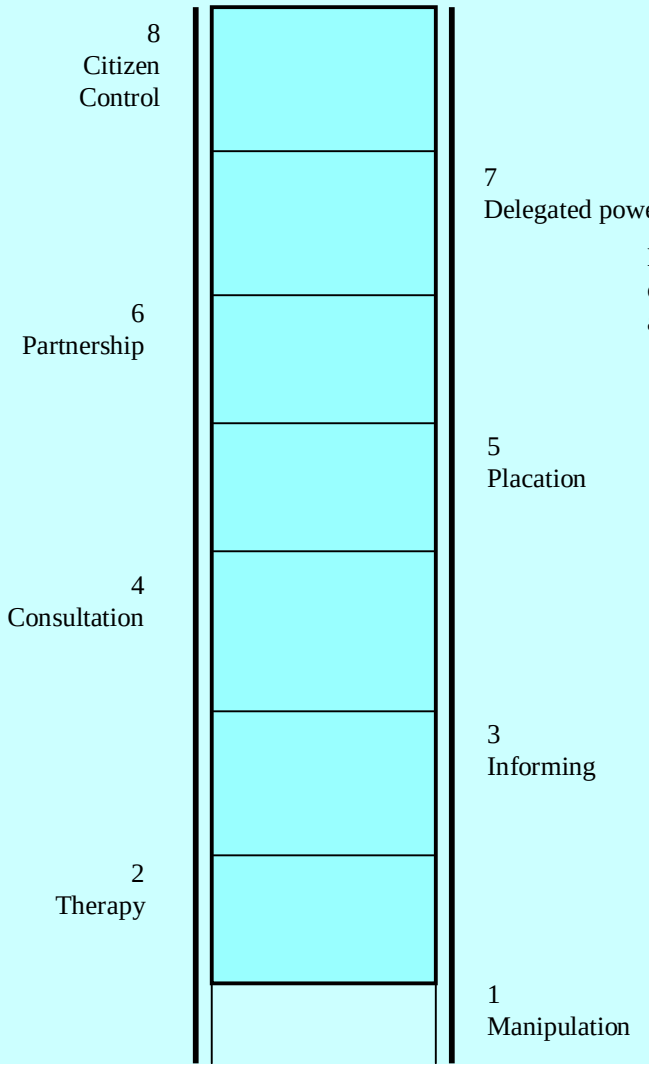
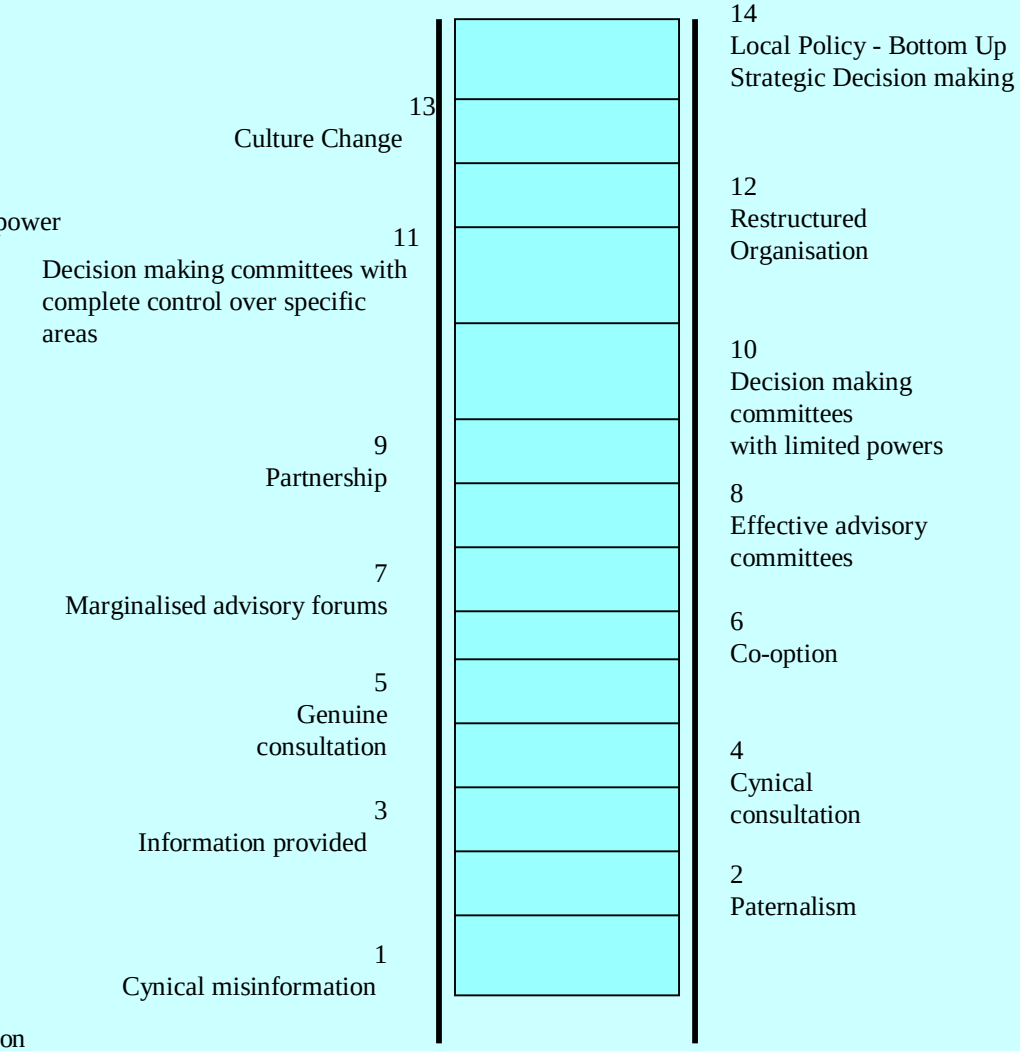
Ladder of Participation

‘Sherry Arnstein’ Model



A New ladder of Participation



Lessons from stakeholder analysis

- **Not all stakeholders are equal**
- Not all stakeholders can be pleased simultaneously
- Not all stakeholders can be pleased all the time
- Not all stakeholders know what they want, without help
- **The communication strategy needs to be tailored differently to each group of stakeholders**
- The key stakeholders should be considered as partners, even if they don't see themselves in that role – especially those who 'know and care'

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Representativeness

- Those who engage with us are quite unrepresenative – and probably always will be!
- ANYWAY we already HAVE community representatives – councillors!
- So what we want is to work with
  - THOSE WHO KNOW AND CARE (‘Partners’)
  - THOSE WHO CARE BUT DON’T KNOW (‘enthusiasts’)
  - THOSE WHO KNOW BUT DONT’ CARE (‘reluctant resources’)
  - THOSE WHO DON’T KNOW OR CARE (‘majority who wish to remain silent’)
- But we normally wish to ensure that these ‘unrepresentative’ people at least come from a convincing cross-section of social groups”!

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CO-PRODUCING SERVICES WITH USERS

Services need to be 'produced' at both ends – in most services, neither party is really a 'consumer'

- Users who get involved make themselves better (healthier, more educated, safer …)
- This is partly because they become better informed, partly because the service can capture their natural enthusiasm and energy
- Started with self-service restaurant, supermarkets, petrol stations, bank ATMs, etc. Now spread to on-line form-filling for insurance quotes, loan quotes, tax returns etc.
- Central to government's approach to higher education and many elements of training
- Clearly important in health ('self-dosage', 'expert patients')
- In social care, often relies on carers rather than 'service recipients'

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CO-PRODUCING SERVICES WITH COMMUNITIES

- Communities who get involved raise their own quality of life (healthier, more socially active and integrated, safer …)
- ‘It takes a village to raise a child …’
- Over 95% of all social care is given free of charge – but is not well trained or coordinated
- Street litter is a social control problem, not a street cleaning problem
- Community groups with ambitious arts and entertainment programmes can reduce anti-social behaviour and youth crime by at least a third, often by half, within a year
- One village managed to slow cars down in a ‘rat run’ by placing sofas, tables and chairs alonside the road, creating a ‘domestic’ setting
- Communities can establish enabling environments in which better social behaviour is much more likely – or disabling environments, with the opposite effects

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Definition of co-production

- User and community co-production is …

"the provision of services through regular, long-term relationships between professionalized service providers (in any sector) and service users or other members of the community, where all parties make substantial resource contributions"

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Different types of co-production

- Co-planning of policy – e.g. deliberative participation, *Planning for Real, Open Space*
- Co-design of services – e.g. user consultation, *Smart Houses*
- Co-commissioning services – e.g. devolved grant systems, *Community Chest*
- Co-financing services – fundraising, charges, agreement to tax increases
- Co-managing services – leisure centre trusts, choirs
- Co-delivery of services – expert patients, volunteer firefighters, *Neighbourhood Watch*
- Co-monitoring and co-evaluation of services

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Co-production has been around a long time

- Private sector - Lovelock and Young; 1979; Zeleny, 1978; Normann, 1984
- Public and voluntary sectors - Ostrom *et al*, 1982; Warren *et al.*, 1982; Brudney and England, 1983; Percy and Parks, 1981; Percy, 1984; Hood, 1991
- Community-based development and social capital - Kretzman and Knight, 1993; Putnam, 1993 and 2000; Etzioni, 1995

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A slight difference of opinion ...

Interviewer
How important is the role of citizens in public services?

Public official
“Well, I don‘t really know ... but not very, I would say”

Citizen
“VERY important – I’m active on on environmental and health issues, a bit less active in safety”

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A European picture of the role of citizens in public services: What we found out

(1) There is no typical “European citizen” - levels of co-production vary between different countries
(2) Levels and forms of co-production also vary between sectors
(3) Citizens best like co-producing alone and with little effort
(4) Citizens who are elderly, female and not in the labour market are most active
(5) 80 percent of citizens, in particular, young people are willing to do more …
(6) Citizens who co-produce only show a weak tendency to be more satisfied with the performance of public agencies
(7) Citizens who co-produce only show a weak tendency to believe that their co-production can make a difference

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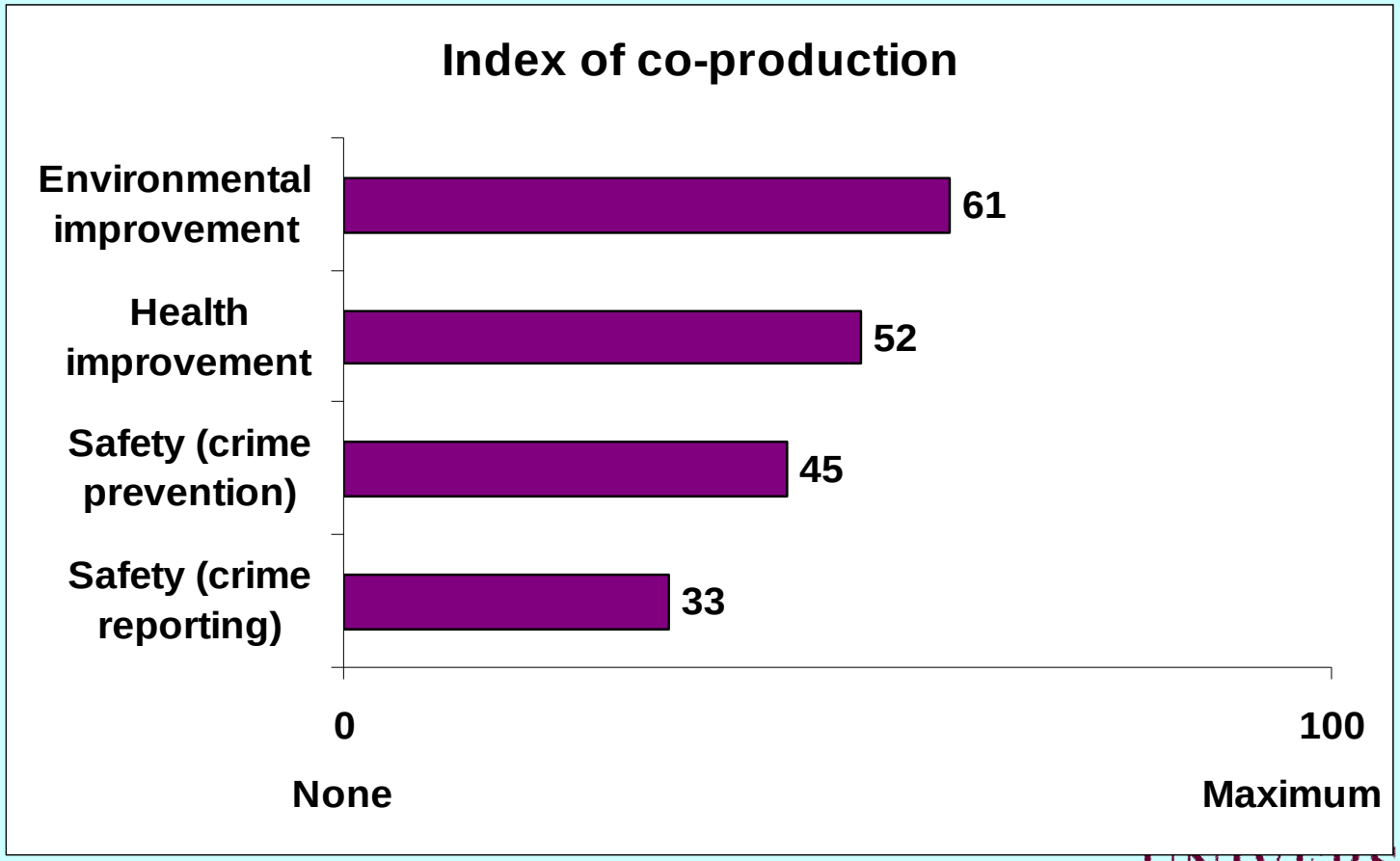
Levels of co-production across sectors

Total level of co-production in community safety, local environment and health issues



The index is a min-max (0-100) scale, with 0 representing minimum co-production (answering "never" to all the co-production questions) and 100 representing maximum (answering "often" to all the co-production questions).

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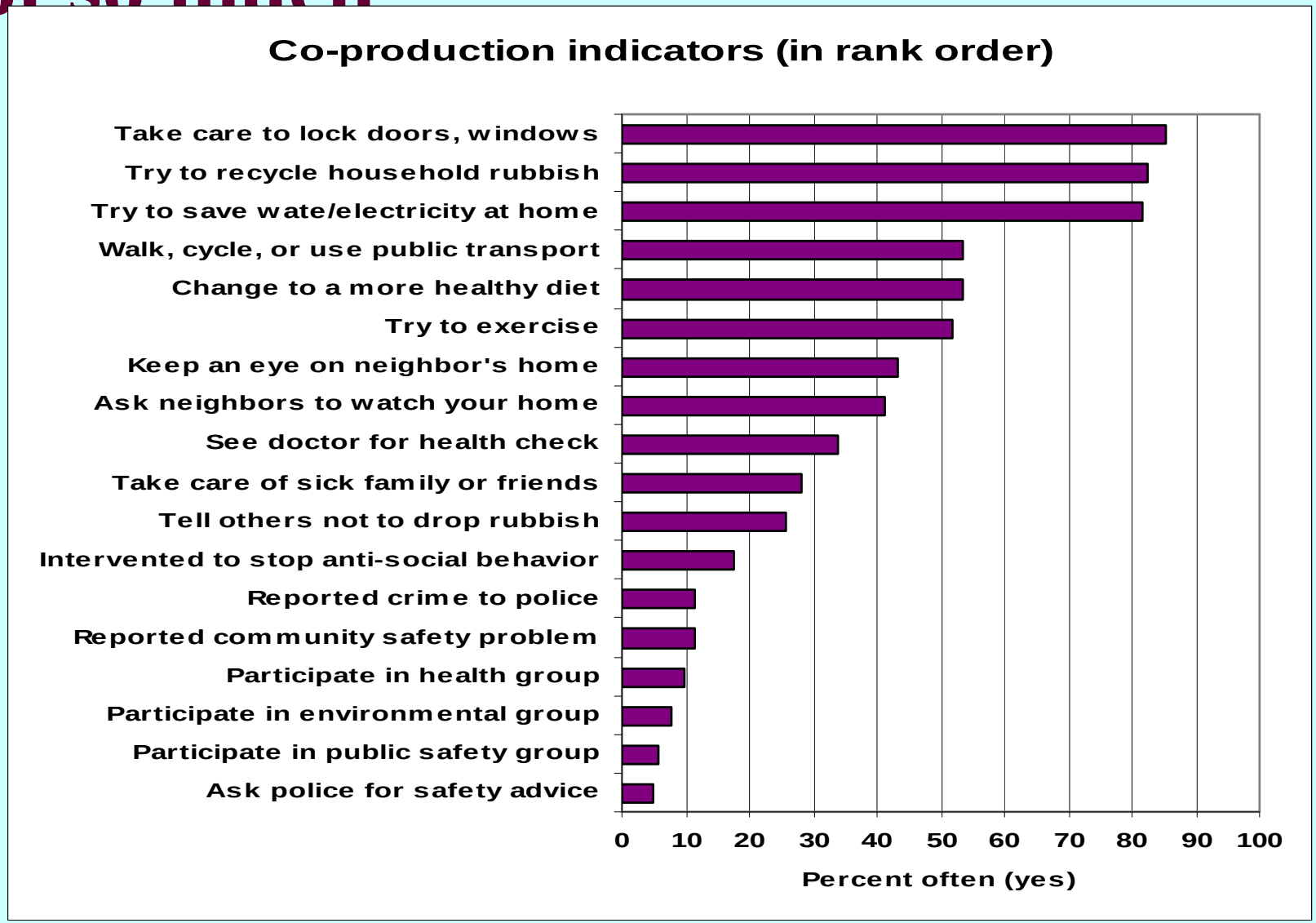
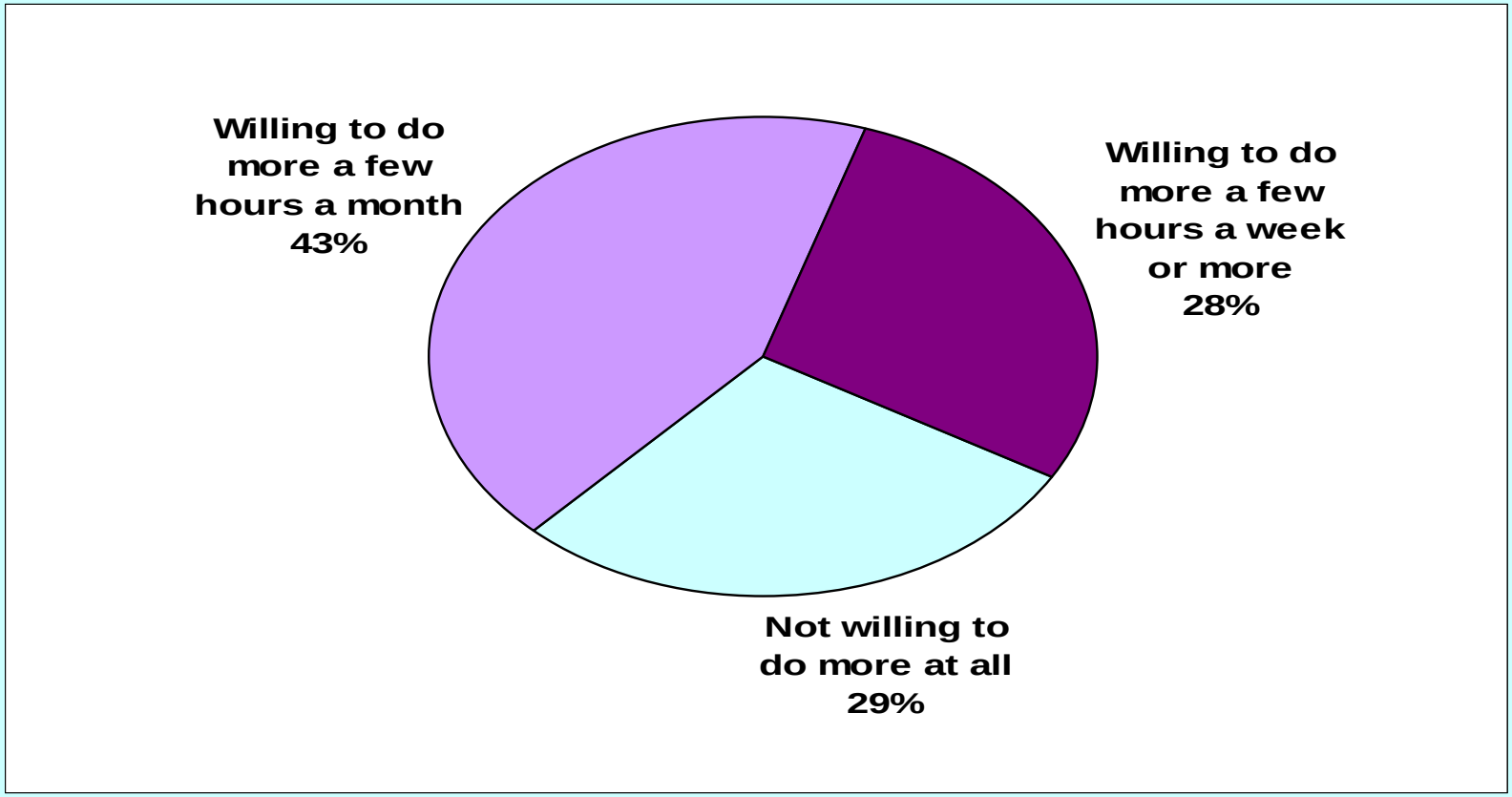
What citizens like doing most and not so much



The future role of citizens in services



- More than 70% of citizens are already willing to do more
- Many people who actively co-produce in health or community safety or the local environment have little interest in the other fields.

Emerging issues

- Need for **community co-production** as well as **user co-production** where there are ‘knock-on’ effects, e.g. pre-school breakfast clubs
- Provides more meaningful basis for **‘joined-up’** and **‘seamless’** services, based on **holistic user needs**
- Provides **direct** empowerment rather than indirect
- … but there is often **professional resistance**
  (many professionals NEED dependent users …)
- … and need for both sides to take **risks** (based on trust)
- … and does **EVERYONE** need to get involved?

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Types of PB

Citizen influence on local spending through involvement in:

- User-based budgets
- Neighbourhood community chests (including councillors' budgets)
- Issue-based community chests
- Stakeholder-specific community chests
- Local authority or agency investment budget
- Local authority or agency revenue budget
- LSP budget

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Worldwide expansion of PB

- 12m people in over 300 cities (130 in Brazil) using some form of participatory budgeting
- From Montevideo (Uruguay), Rosario (Argentina), Villa El Salvador (Peru) to 50 areas in Europe including Grottomare (Italy), Cordoba (Spain),Paris St Denis (France), Cologne and Berlin Lichtenberg in Germany
- Guelph, Vancouver (Canada) and Seattle (USA) plus Cameroon, Kenya & Sri Lanka
- Praised by World Bank, UN, EU
- Now 32 pilots in UK

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Key characteristics of PB

- Citizen involvement in priorities/budget decisions - choices across sectors, geography, citizen groups
- Capacity-building to enable citizens to do it
- Annual budget/priorities cycle
- Current and capital budgets
- Link between citizen choices and ‘needs’ in each area
- Transparent process open to all
- Interplay between representative and participatory democracy

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How PB fits with Local Area Agreements

- Ongoing surveying and consulting citizens by LSP
- PB could provide the specific mechanism for engaging citizens in annual debate on LAA/SCS
- Forums for debate on priorities and budgets at neighbourhood, thematic issue, client group and LSP-wide level to go into LAA/SCS
- PB could provide mechanism for the annual cyclical process of citizen involvement in reviewing LAA progress that LSP makes
- PB could provide means of communication back to citizens of outcomes and new plans …
- … and protection from critical judgements in CAA!

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Conclusions

- Traditional conceptions of service planning and management are now out-dated – most public services ARE co-produced already – but this is not sufficiently recognised by government and the professions
- Almost ALL public services are likely to involve MORE co-production in the future
- This can make services **more relevant** ... and **cheaper**
- ... and mobilise **more resources** for those services
- Of course, co-production can't always overcome conflicts of interest, free riders, burn-out, lack of skills, blurring of accountability and undermining of lobbying capacity
- There is a need for a **new compact between service users, their communities and service professionals** …
- … and **new types of governance relationships** recognising how users and communities play a direct role in services, not just indirect through their representatives

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