Participation 101: Christchurch

We wanted to use PBBC to make a difference to our work- we asked ourselves how could catalyze better participatory practice?

What did we think would make a difference:

1. Create a bit of cognitive dissonance by introducing new ideas- both theory and practice. Why: to broaden minds and create an appetite for more.
2. Provide a framework for improving practice whilst trialling some tools for use NOW. During the workshop we did activities to stimulate thinking around:
   i. What motivates participation aka how do you extend participation?
   ii. Building aspirations and respecting a communities’ context
   iii. Managing expectations and competing interests
   iv. Setting priorities and building consensus
3. Bring together a diverse community of practices- and sectors to generate mutual respect for different practices and the limitations within their context. People came from communities, voluntary organisations, public sector, architecture/design.

Workshop Content

• Thought about each individual facilitator having a practice: We did an exercise about how we relate to others and heard in detail about one person’s participatory practice.
• Thought about the assumptions we bring to our practice: we did some thinking around stereotypes, power v. agency and our attitudes/understanding of different types of participation.
• Try out tried and tested tools. We did exercises that are well known e.g. Participatory Learning Appraisal: Cultural Beliefs and Practices exercise and Delphi Technique
• We started to understand each others learning journey e.g. trying out evaluation techniques to evaluate the workshop and share that amongst ourselves both during and after the workshop.
• We met new people, which in a small city is not that usual. We also connected with old friends round a new theme.

The workshop was fully booked and will be run again in a few weeks time.
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