



YOUNG PLACECHANGERS TOOLKIT

WHAT IS THE YOUNG PLACECHANGERS?

The Young Placechangers programme is a fun and interactive programme that engages and empowers young people to take the lead in changing places where young people live, go to school and work.

Young Placechangers is a programme developed in partnership with greenspace scotland and Youth Scotland.

Why get involved in Young Placechangers?

- Young Placechangers offers a great opportunity to be active in your local community and meet others
- Gain new skills and work with a range of professionals
- Make positive changes in your local community
- Take the lead in developing projects with others in your community
- Become a local legend

The aim of this toolkit

This toolkit aims to inspire young people to take the lead in their local community, to voice their opinions and help make positive change happen.

Using this fun toolkit, you will learn new skills about how to evaluate places, map your community and influence local decision making. This toolkit gives examples of icebreakers, place activities and further reading and information you can use with your group.

ICEBREAKERS

What are icebreakers and why do we do them?

Icebreakers are fun games delivered at the start of a session to help participants get to know one another, ease any nerves and have fun! When participants are having fun they are more likely to participate and learn.

You probably know lots of icebreakers already that you could use here. We have selected a few and changed the focus to help participants to think about their place. You could do the same with your favourite icebreakers!



01

My name is...

Time needed: 10 minutes.

Number of players: 6–12 works best but can be done with bigger groups.

Materials needed: Balls of different shapes/sizes; bean bags; kush balls.

Preparation time: None.

Instructions: Everyone stands in a circle. A ball is thrown from one person to another throughout the group. When the catcher receives the ball he/she shouts out their name.

Explain to the group that the ball will again be passed around the circle and to remember who it is that they are throwing to. Keep this pattern going (same throwers/receivers) for a couple of rounds then introduce another ball following the same pattern of catchers/throwers. Challenge the group to see how many balls they can have at one time being thrown around the circle.

Safety Notice: Only use soft balls.

Top Tips: Change shape/size of balls being introduced and ask group if that made exercise more/less difficult.

Debrief points: How did the participants get on with the activity? How did the participants feel when the instructions were changed? Explain that sometimes we get focused on doing things in just one way but if we change our focus we can have more fun.

02

Say your name and your favourite place

Time needed: 5 minutes.

Number of players: 3–20 people.

Materials needed: None.

Preparation time: None.

Instructions: ask each participant to introduce themselves to the rest of the group and ask them to say their name, their favourite place and explain why it is their favourite place.

Debrief points: Reflect on the different answers you have been given. A favourite place, means different things to different people. What makes a place special? It could be things like:

- Memories—you used to go there when you were little, you went there on holiday
- Activities—great stuff you did there, it was fun!
- Beauty—it looked amazing
- People you met—friends you made

03

Getting to know you; quick questioning

Time needed: 10 minutes.

Number of players: 6–20 works best but can be done with bigger groups.

Materials needed: Large space.

Preparation time: None.

Instructions: Ask the participants to get into pairs, then ask the pairs to number themselves i.e. 1 or 2. Ask all the 1s to line up and ask all the 2s to line up (they should both be facing their partner and be no more than half a meter away from each other).

Explain that in their pairs they are going to have a one-minute conversation about a question you will read out. Once they have finished the conversation, the 2's will move up one space which means they should all have a new partner. The 2 at the top of the line will come down to the bottom of the line to meet their new partner. Then you ask another question, and as before the new pair will discuss this question.

You can start off with general questions such as, "what is your favourite food?" or, "who's your favourite singer?" and then move onto more relevant questions such as, "what's your favourite place?" or "if you could live anywhere in the world where would it be?"

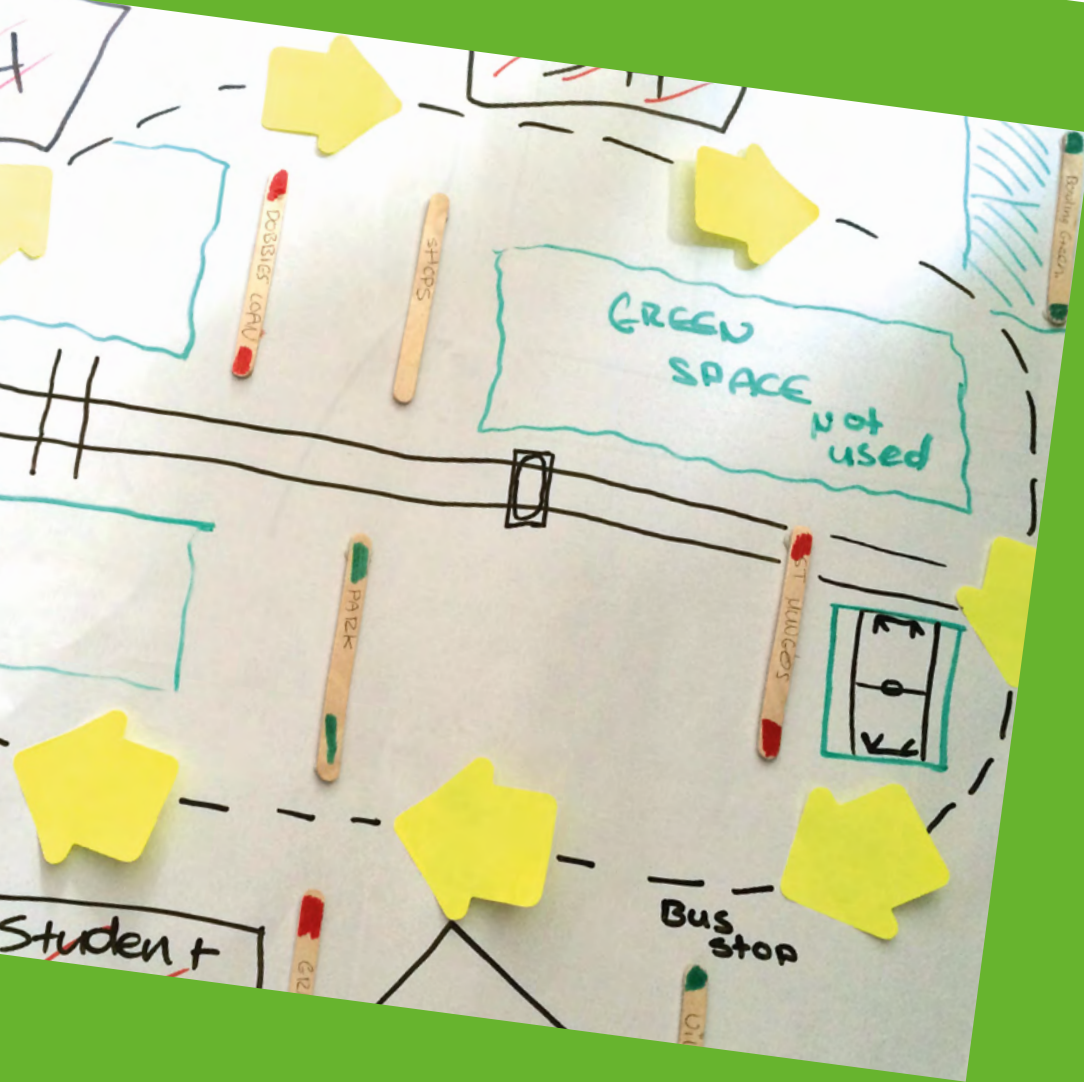
Speed questions suggestions:

- What's your favourite food?
- Who's your favourite singer/artist?
- If you could have any superpower what would it be and why?
- If you could do any job in the world what would it be?
- What's your favourite film?
- If you could meet any celebrity in the world who would it be?
- What is your favourite place?
- If you could live anywhere in the world where would you live?
City of country?
- Where is your favourite holiday destination?
- Think about where you live—if you could change one thing, what would it be?

Debrief points: Ask for feedback from each question. Reflect especially on the relevant questions, what do you like about your favourite space? What is it about that place that means you want to live there? By doing this you are gradually introducing the idea of place and what makes a good place/space.

YOUNG PLACECHANGERS ACTIVITIES

These activities are designed to help facilitate discussion around what makes a place a great place, to inspire young people in their ideas of placechanging and to give the participants space to be creative in thinking about place and what could change.



01

What makes a great place?

Time needed: 20–30 minutes.

Number of players: 6–20 (or a larger number).

Materials needed: Pictures of 10 different places (you may want to put this on a PowerPoint presentation for a large group or have print outs for a smaller groups), red and green cards (approximately A5 size) for each participant—you can download these from <https://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/young-placechangers-toolkit>

Preparation time: 10 mins.

Instructions: Go through pictures of different places on a PowerPoint presentation/in the group. You can download a variety of different place pictures or use the template pictures provided by us. You could insert a few pictures from your local neighbourhood, too. The kinds of places you want to show are:

- Places that are busy/buzzing
- Parks & greenspaces
- Play parks
- Great wilderness—hills/lochs/countryside

- Streets
- Sociable places where people hang out, have events, play music
- Outdoor spaces where people are active, run, exercise, play
- Spaces that need TLC—with nothing going on, litter, broken equipment

Ask the participants to hold up a green card if they like the place/space or a red card if they do not like the place/space.

Debrief points: Ask the participants what made them decide it was a red or green card place i.e. what made it a bad place or a good place? Introduce the “What makes a great place” circle. You may want to consider mentioning the existing resources regarding placechanging such as the Place Standard Tool and Community Placemaking. These are ways to evaluate places others are using.

02

Place evaluation

Time needed: 20 minutes–1 hour.

Number of players: 6–20.

Materials needed: Flipchart paper, picture frame cut outs (templates provided), cameras, risk assessment. Flyers with the Four Place Evaluation questions—you can download these from <https://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/young-placechangers-toolkit>

Preparation time: 1 hour.

Instructions: Mention to the participants that you are going to go on a walk around the local community or the place you want to focus on: This could be a park, street or public place nearby. Identify a route, risk assess the route, make sure participants have proper information and that they are wearing appropriate clothing, have water bottles or suns screen etc.

Introduce the four place evaluation questions to the participants. Ask the participants to identify places or items they like or places or items they don't like or they think needs improved in the community. If the participants think that something is really nice—for example, potted plants—ask them to use the green frame to identify it and take a picture.

If participants find something in the community that they don't like, i.e. litter, ask them to use the red frame and take a picture.

You will want to put the large group into smaller groups of 4–5. Give each group red and green frame cut outs and camera. Give each person a place evaluation flyer and pen. Make sure there are enough adults to properly supervise the walk. At the middle of the walk stop and take notes answering the place evaluation questions. At the end of the walk ask each group to feedback what they liked or did not like about the area.

Debrief points: What was in the green frame, i.e. what did the participants like about the area? What made the participants like it? What was in the red frame i.e. what did the participants not like about the area? What made the participants not like it? How could it be improved? Think small quick changes, but also big bold ideas.

This is getting the participants to think about what is good or what is bad/needs improved in the area and how they could make a difference.

Capture all the information on flipcharts in smaller groups or all together depending on numbers.

03

Community Mapping

Time needed: 1 hour.

Number of players: 3–20 people (3–5 people per group).

Materials needed: Paper, felt tip pens, blue tack, lollypop sticks, example of a community map—you can download these from <https://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/young-placechangers-toolkit>

Preparation time: 15 minutes.

Instructions: Divide your group into groups of 3–5. Give each group a set of the resources mentioned above. Ask the participants to draw their local community or the space they want to change on a piece of flipchart paper (you may want to provide an example), once they have done this ask them to identify areas they use, areas they like or areas they want to improve by using lollypop sticks and blu tack to highlight areas they like or don't like.

They might want to use a colour scheme: green for things they like, red for things they don't like. They can also write on the lolly pop sticks what they like or don't like about the area. Once they have completed this, ask each group to present their community map (if they are happy to do so), back to the rest of the group.

Debrief points: Reflect on what made the participants decide whether something was good/bad or an area they want to improve.

04

Circle of influence—who needs to be involved?

Time needed: 30 minutes.

Number of players: 3–20 (3–5 people per group).

Materials needed: Paper, pens, bull clips and cut out people.

Instructions: Divide the group up into groups of 3–5. Explain to the young people about the circle of influence we have i.e. we all have a circle of influence and people in our lives that can help/support us. In order to get something done, we have to work with others so that our ideas are actioned.

You may want to create and show them your circle of influence. The first circle should look at who is in your social circle i.e. family, friends, people from the school, work colleagues. The second circle is the environment circle, i.e. who in your local community can give support i.e. local stakeholders, shops, schools, church, and organisations. Lastly the outer circle, the Government, policies, National circle i.e. MSPs, Funders, Police, local council, councillors, newspapers, national body organisations. Ask the group to create their own circles of influence i.e. who will they work with to assist in placechanging ideas.

Once they have finished this, they may want to get a paper person cut out and name specific people that they can go to for support, they can put the paper person in the bull clip and thus the person is standing up, they can then move the paper person to their relevant circle and thus build a 3D circle of influence. Once they have done this ask the groups to feed this back to the larger group.

Think about the circle of influence and the people you have identified—how will you reach out to them? Maybe through events, face to face meetings, flyers, social media, local media?

Debrief points: Ask participants what people they had in their circle of influence? Reflect on the importance of working together. Also reflect on that all the participants have influence and support in their ideas and that they now know who they can reach out to in the community for support.

Think about the people you identified and the best way to get them involved—there is no one size fits all—different people need different ways of communication.

05

Play with the Place Standard Tool

Time needed: 45 minutes.

Number of players: 3–20 (3–5 people per group).

Materials needed: flipchart paper, pens, A3 sheets with Place Standard themes and prompts—you can download these from <https://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/young-placechangers-toolkit> You can find the Place Standard Tool here <https://placestandard.scot>

Preparation time: 30 minutes.

Instructions: Divide the group up into groups of 3–5. Explain to the young people about the Place Standard Tool and how it is a way to evaluate or rate your community. It has 14 themes that we want to look for where we live, work or play. If you use it to rate your place you end up with a spiderweb diagram.

Give each group 2 or 3 themes to explore—What does the theme mean to them? How would they ask the prompt questions of other young people? Make a poster they can present back to the wider group.

You can end the session here or move onto option 1–3.

Debrief: The Place Standard Tool can make us think about all the different things that makes a place a great place.

Option 1: As a big group try to rate your community on each of the themes where 7 is good and 1 is bad—draw the spiderweb diagram together.

Option 2: Go outside and do the Place Evaluation game (Activity 02) Use the Place standard theme posters as inspiration for what to look for on your walks.

Option 3: Download the Place Standard App onto several phones/tablets and set up a group on the app. Then in groups or as individuals (depending on the number of phones/tablets) rate your community on each of the themes where 7 is good and 1 is bad. The App creates a spiderweb diagram based on all your input.



USEFUL LINKS/ FURTHER READING

- Place Standard Tool <https://www.placestandard.scot/>
- greenspace scotland—community place making/place evaluation <https://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/community-placemaking>
- Architecture and Design Scotland <https://www.ads.org.uk/>
- Youth Scotland Creative consultations and evaluation <https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/training-events/fun-and-creative-workshops/>
- UN Habitat—Block by Block Approach <https://www.blockbyblock.org/>
- Project for Public Places, New York <https://www.pps.org/>

TEMPLATES/ RESOURCES

- Frames
- Place pictures
- “What makes a great place” from PPS
- Place evaluation questions
- Basic walking route risk assessment
 - Community map example

You can download these from:

- <https://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/young-placechangers-toolkit>
- <https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/resources/young-placechangers-toolkit/>

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