

# The case for people and communities having more power

## *Why empowerment?*

*Communities in control: real people, real power* was launched on 9 July 2008. This White Paper is about passing power to communities and giving real control and influence to more people. Please visit [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk) for more information.

We would like to encourage community groups to discuss and feedback to us about the topics raised in the White Paper. Please use this topic discussion guide in conjunction with the Community Power Pack which is also available from our website.

## Points to consider

*Communities in control: real people, real power* aims to pass power into the hands of local communities, generating vibrant local democracy in every part of the country and giving real control over local decisions to more people.

We want to help ensure that everyone has the opportunity to get involved in local decision-making, which should improve the quality of decisions made on peoples' behalf by councillors and MPs.

The local political activity carried out by councillors is extremely worthwhile. *Communities in control* will aim to restore people's faith in politics by encouraging a wider group of people to stand for these and other civic roles.

Charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises (referred to as the 'Third Sector') have much to offer in terms of showing people how to give up their time for their local community.

## Key policies

- A new **Duty on local authorities to promote democracy** to help councils promote people's involvement through clearer information, better trained staff and more visible councillors in the community
- Extension of the **Duty to Involve** local people in key decisions to a new range of agencies and bodies
- Consulting on the draft prospectus for an **Empowerment Fund** to support existing national third sector organisations.

## Questions for discussion

- In your view has the White Paper captured the correct points on why empowerment is needed?
- How far do you think that these policies will address the issues raised?
- What more do you think needs to be done to address the issues raised in this topic guide?