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## NHF IT conference game instructions

These instructions are for the ICT planning game demonstrated by Drew Mackie and David Wilcox at the National Housing Federation IT conference July 21 2003. They are available here, with cards and planning sheet, for general use. Original work was supported by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

- More about the conference session [here](#) >
- JRF-supported 'Making the Net Work for residents and their landlords' [here](#) >
- More games by Drew Mackie and David Wilcox [here](#) >

### Preparation for playing the Game

In order to play the game you need a venue with flexible seating - so people can work in groups - plus flip charts, pens, sticky notes (Post-it or similar). You will also need the game planning sheets and cards.

- The cards are available as pdf download [here](#) >
- The sheet is an A4 pdf, which you should redraw to A1 size. Download [here](#) >
- These instructions as a pdf download [here](#) >

## Playing the Game

There are four phases to playing the Game. First of all, ask people to form groups of not more than eight people. Then the phases are:

- 1 - Describing the situation
- 2 - Choosing the cards
- 3 - Planning action
- 4 - Presenting the solution and discussion

### 1 Describing the local situation

When the Game is being used with communities or agencies to explore a real situation, players begin by describing that situation, identifying the main characteristics and listing those on a flip chart.

Alternatively, the facilitator can ask people to describe the strengths and weaknesses of the community, and the opportunities and threats it faces. This is sometimes called a SWOT analysis.

If the game is being used for awareness raising, perhaps at a seminar, participants who have no common backgrounds can be asked to invent a fictitious scenario. Different groups can be asked to prepared different situations - say inner city, peripheral housing, rural village - and then exchange scenarios. That way each group can prepare a tough challenge knowing they won't have to solve it.

### 2 Choosing the cards

In this phase, each group receives and familiarises themselves with a pack of cards. Each card shows:

- a cartoon - to distinguish cards easily from each other
- a project title and description - which can be interpreted by players according to their experience and expertise
- an indication of the resources needed for the project to happen (e.g. staffing)
- a point number in the bottom right hand corner to indicate (broadly) how much the project - costs -. Facilitators should give each group a budget. This is usually represented as 15 points but you can decide how tight things are.



Each group now selects a set of cards which addresses the challenges in their local situation, or invented scenario, form a sensible plan, and doesn't add up to more than the budget.

Players may write their own cards to include in their set using sticky notes or blank cards. These can be for projects they have already (in the real situation or in the invented scenario), in which case they don't carry a cost against the budget. Players can also create new projects and these will count towards the budget. The cost (or point number) must be negotiated with the facilitator.

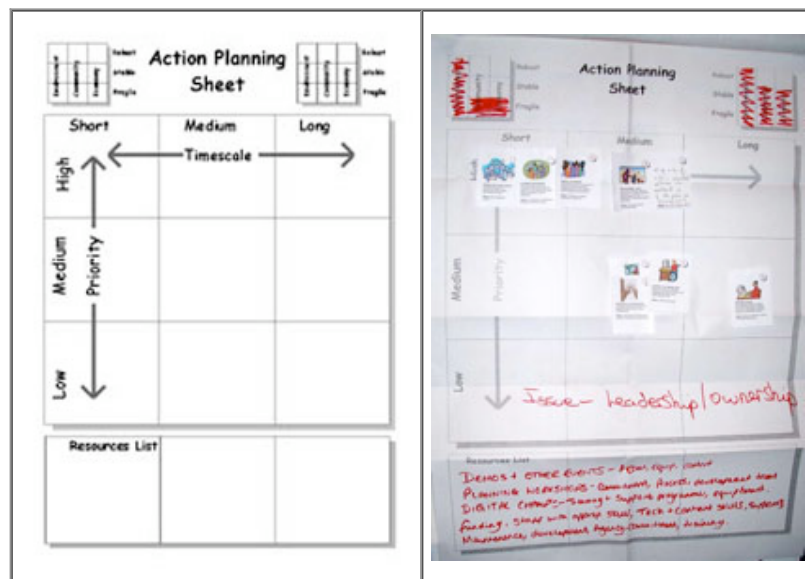
### 3 Planning action

Once groups have selected their cards they move on to the planning phase using the Game Planning Sheet (redraw larger on a flip chart). The Sheet has two main elements: two small sustainability indicator grids - or models; and a large planning matrix.

In the general version of the game - which you can see [here](#) - the small sustainability indicator grids are used by players to assess the Environment, Community and Economy of their context or scenario in terms of how Robust, Stable or Fragile they are.

In the housing context we have used different indicators on the planning sheet: Infrastructure, Services, Capacity.

This assessment is done before the issues and problems have been addressed by the group, and again after the discussion and planning have happened. Players shade the left-hand grid to start with and end by shading the right-hand grid.



The large matrix on the Planning Sheet is the main planning tool. It has two dimensions, timescale and priority, and players should stick cards - using Blu-tack or similar on to the sheet to create an action plan.

Players should then look at the 'needs' on each of the cards and add up these resource requirements at the bottom of the sheet. This summary should prompt discussion about what funding, staff resources, volunteers and collaborations are needed.

### 4 Presenting the solution and discussion

When each group has completed their action plan, they should present their solution, discuss key points to emerge, and next steps.

This page is at <http://www.makingthenetwork.org/pgame/nhf/nhfgame.htm>