



THE PRINCE'S  
FOUNDATION

# Placechecks

*How local people can investigate how their locality  
can be improved: the Placecheck method*

5 February 2002

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Urban Design Group

URBAN  
DESIGN  
GROUP

A one-day training seminar organised by  
**The Prince's Foundation** in association with  
**The Civic Trust** as part of **The Community Planning  
Training & Development Programme 2001/02**

the  
CIVIC  
TRUST

# Placechecks

Placecheck is a method for investigating how a place can be changed for the better. A Placecheck assesses a place's qualities and shows what improvements are needed.

Finding that out is often just a matter of asking the right questions. That is what the Placecheck method does.

Changing a place for the better often depends on a range of different people with a variety of interests and viewpoints understanding each other and working together. That is more likely to happen if questions about who should be involved and how they can work together are asked from the very start. Placecheck is a method of asking those questions.

A Placecheck can cover a street (or part of one), a neighbourhood, a town centre, or a whole district or city.

The setting might be urban, suburban or a village. People who initiate a Placecheck may have a clear idea of where it will lead to, or they may use it simply as a means of understanding the place and deciding the next step. A Placecheck can also prepare the ground for the sort of documents that councils, regeneration partnerships, developers and local communities produce to guide future development in an area: an urban design framework, a development brief, a masterplan, a neighbourhood plan or a local design statement.

**Participants will learn** how to carry out a Placecheck using material freely available on the internet and by undertaking a live exercise in a nearby area.

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**Robert Cowan** is Director of the **Urban Design Group** and a consultant. He devised the Placecheck method for the Urban Design Alliance and was joint project manager of UDAL's Placecheck initiative, which ran ten pilot Placecheck projects funded by the DETR and English Partnerships. Previously he was a community planner and a journalist.

# Programme

10.45	<b>Registration and coffee</b>
11.15	<b>Introductions</b>
11.30	<b>Illustrated presentation</b> The ideas behind Placecheck and when to use the method.
12.00	<b>How to carry out a Placecheck</b>
12.30	<b>Discussion</b>
13.00	<b>Lunch</b>
14.00	<b>Live exercise</b> Carrying out a Placecheck in a nearby area.
15.00	<b>Report back</b>
16.00	<b>Tea and discussion</b>
16.30	<b>Close</b>

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Lunch and tea will be provided.

After the seminar, participants are invited to continue discussion informally over a drink or meal in a nearby wine bar as part of **The Community Planning Club**.

# Community Planning Training & Development Programme 2001/02

This seminar is part of the Community Planning Training and Development Programme, launched by The Prince's Foundation in association with The Civic Trust.

The Programme has been designed in response to growing interest in the practicalities of involving communities in planning and regeneration, in part due to new requirements of national policy. It provides training and support from leading experts on a range of specific techniques and approaches. It is aimed at both professionals and community representatives in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

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## **Venue: The Prince's Foundation**

19-22 Charlotte Road  
London  
EC2A 3SG

**Cost:** £150 + VAT (£176.25 incl VAT). Concessions: £75 + VAT (£88.13 incl VAT). Urban Village Forum members: £100 + VAT (£117.50 incl VAT). Price includes lunch and information pack. 20% discount if booking for 3 sessions or more.

To **book** your place or for **further details**, about this session **or other aspects of the programme**, please contact the Community Planning Training Administrator at The Prince's Foundation or visit the website.

Email: [cpt@princes-foundation.org](mailto:cpt@princes-foundation.org)

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