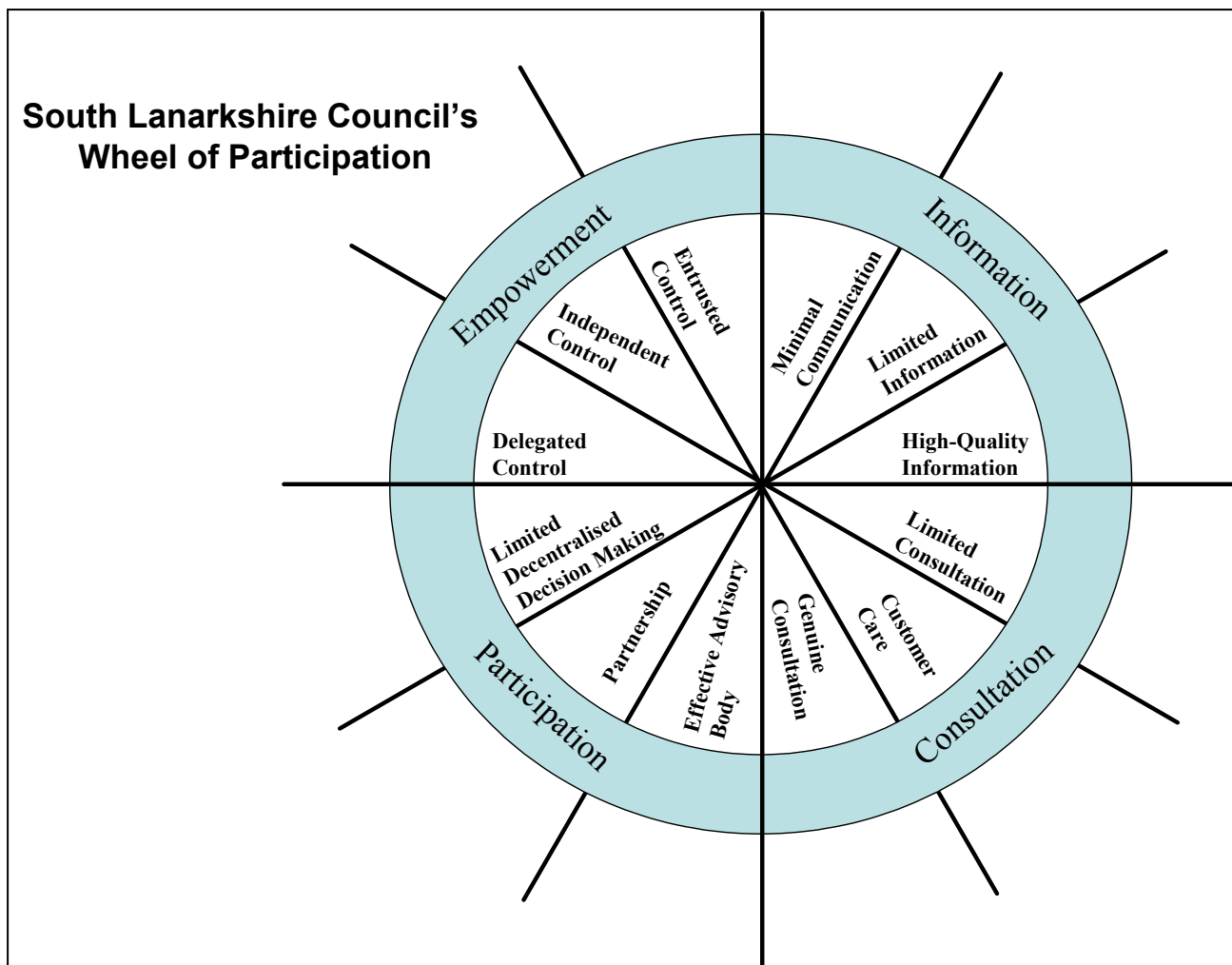


The Wheel of Participation



Sherry Arnstein's 'Ladder of Participation' is often used to help understand the difference between participation and involvement.

South Lanarkshire Council developed this ladder of participation into the 'Wheel of Participation'. Under this scheme, one moves from the extreme of no community input, with the Council taking all the decisions, through consultation and participation to citizen empowerment, where the community make their own decisions on issues that affect them.

South Lanarkshire, near Glasgow City, is one of Scotland's most diverse areas, located in the central lowlands and combines a modern urban economy with a rural setting.

The 12 stages are described in the table on the following page.

South Lanarkshire Council's Wheel of Participation - Definitions

	Stage	Definition
Information:	Minimal communication	Council deciding on all matters itself, without community consultation (except when legally required to do so), i.e. Where professional judgement is used or a political decision is made and the public hear of it after the event, e.g. via the minutes of committee meetings.
	Limited information	Telling the public only what you want to tell them, not what the public wants to know.
	Good quality information	Providing information that the community wants and/or needs, e.g. promotional campaigns about uptake of welfare benefits, discussion papers/exhibitions for development plans, guidance notes for conservation area development/upgrading.
Consultation:	Limited consultation	Providing information in a limited manner with the onus often placed on the community to respond, e.g. placing a notice in the press regarding planning/licensing applications.
	Customer care	Having a customer-oriented service, e.g. introducing a customer care policy, and providing a complaints/comments scheme.
	Genuine consultation	The Council actively discussing issues with communities regarding what it is thinking of doing prior to taking action, or what they think of existing services, e.g. housing services liaising with tenants' groups, customer satisfaction surveys.
Participation:	Effective advisory body	Inviting communities to draw up proposals for council consideration, e.g. Planning for Real, citizens' juries, disability forums, Plain English Campaign.
	Partnership	Solving problems in partnership with communities, e.g. Hamilton Ahead (a formal partnership), Larkhall Joint Neighbourhood Project, and Douglas Valley Partnership.
	Limited decentralised decision-making	Allowing different communities to make their own decisions on some issues, e.g. non-statutory traffic signs for Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, the powers of Divisional Roads Engineers and Tenant Participation Officers to involve the community.
Empowerment:	Delegated control	Delegating limited decision-making powers in a particular area or project, e.g. Tenant Management Organisations, Shopmobility and school boards.
	Interdependent control	The Council may be obliged to provide a service but chooses to do so by facilitating community groups and/or other agencies which provide that service on their behalf, e.g. the delivery of care services contracts by the voluntary sector, Tenant Management Organisations.
	Entrusted control	Devolving substantial decision-making powers to communities, e.g. Tenant Management Organisations.