

New Politics and Citizenship: Getting the Governance Right

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Triumph of democracy?

- Democracy now the established form of governance across the globe
- Yet evidence of disengagement: turnout, party dealignment , opinion survey indicators in decline
- Matched by disappointed activists
- The subtlety of local government's position

Explaining the problem

- Politics has become unaccountable: lobbies decide rather than citizens
- Culture of politics worn thin by the demands of mass media and adversarial style
- Lack of civic culture: the decline of collective institutions and the growth of personal democracy
- People misunderstand politics

The nature of politics

- Politics as practised is centralized form of decision-making and quite careless of your interests and concerns as an individual
- Rationing is imposed and external , contrast that to the market experience in developed countries
- Politics requires sustained dialogue, it is prone to failure
- Contradiction between what's in people's heads about the way it should work and the way it does work is immense
- We need to design a democratic governance for amateurs

Allowing citizens into the government decision-making

- Building a realistic base of participation
- New forms of engagement: variety and scope
- Not too time consuming: against the deliberation obsession
- Participation sometimes, not always
- Making representation more open
- Building in a capacity to respond: learning lessons

IT'S CLEAR WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

Factor	Audit check	Policy Response
Can do	The resources that people have as well as confidence to use them	Capacity Building aimed at individuals or communities
Like to	A sense of involvement with the public entity that it the focus of engagement	Sense of community, civic engagement, social capital and citizenship
Enabled to	The civic infrastructure of organizations that organize participation	To support the civic infrastructure: a set of viable civic institutions
Asked to	Mobilizing people into participation by asking for their input can make a big difference	Public participation schemes that are diverse and reflexive
Responded to	Participate if they are listened to and able to see a response	A public policy system that can show a capacity to respond

Citizens Doing It For Themselves

- Finding solutions beyond government
- Local government can lead the way
- Spreading the power of democracy to other fields
- Building community and user capacity
- Being realistic about what politics is about and what it can deliver : collective decisions when we disagree