An Introduction to Participatory Budgeting in Wales (PB)

Jez Hall and Alan Budge
PB Partners
PB PARTNERS

Independent social enterprise that is working to empower citizens

- Supporting new ways of doing PB
- Community engagement specialists

PB Network: Advocating for PB across the UK

[Website Link] and supporting PB in Scotland
Participatory Budgeting is Worldwide
EUROPEAN PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Latin countries... Reformist, participatory

Germany ... Consultative, transparent

250 municipalities on their map of participatory budgeting processes

Portugal: 80,000 voters in its 3m euro national PB

Paris: 426m euros <2020, <5% of the city budget.

USA and CANADA

Chicago: first major programme $1m in 49th Ward (now $4m)

New York: 8th year growing < $35m per year (50,000 voters)

City of Boston: 4th consecutive year of $1m of PB capital funds branded as Youth Lead the Change:
THE START OF PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Began in Porto Alegre, Brazil in the 1980s
End of dictatorship and rebirth of democracy
Public finances were empty (stolen), citizens had unmet expectations, and wanted...
Democracy to be done differently

= Democratic innovation!

Something drives the need for PB?

- e.g.... The 141+ experiences in Scotland
- like... The Scottish Independence Referendum 2014???

Or... Brexit??
From 2006 to 2010

The English PB Unit supports a nascent Wales PB Unit.

The Coedpoeth Participatory Budgeting Pilot 2006

“More of the same please!” “Informative and helpful. Thank you”

“This is different because it is trying to involve local residents in deciding what and how to improve the community”.

Participatory Budgeting in Pen Y Gelli Junior School

“linked to the above process to involve more young people.”

St. Asaph "Your City, Your Choice" Denbighshire, 2008

“Small sums can facilitate huge changes.
Initial detractors, once involved, become committed supporters.

Blaenau Gwent ‘Your Voice, Your Choice’ Participatory Budgeting, 2010

£30,000 was available for local people to decide which community safety projects would be funded in their neighbourhoods. The pilot was supported by the Home Office.
PB grants from 2011 up to now

Residents vote on upper Denbigh park: July 2011.
About 120 residents take part in a vote on how to spend £26,000 on children's play.
Mr Bill Ellis-Jones said success "due entirely to the time, dedication and commitment of residents"

Youth focussed PB in Colwyn Bay in 5th year and growing: 2014
Fifth round in Colwyn Bay
£42,000 via support from the Welsh Government’s Vlbrant and Viable Places Community Fund.

Citizens decide online on the proceeds of crime in North Wales, 2014 and 2015
Anglesey and Gwynedd residents have their say on how money seized from criminals is spent.
£42k available for projects.
Rolled out in 2015 to Wrexham and Flintshire.

Plus many other small processes, mainly in North Wales, such as The Llangollen Town Council’s PB, that may restart this year, after a few years pause.
PB Policy papers/blogs from Wales

Welsh Government children’s PB toolkit:
In 2012 the Welsh Government published a toolkit on using PB with Young People.
In 2009 the Welsh Government said “PB represents an opportunity for local authorities and their partners to involve young people ... The Welsh Government feel very strongly that children and young people should be given the opportunities to be involved in making budgetary decisions on issues that affect them.”

PPIW Publication: PB Evidence Review, August 2017
The Welsh Government is exploring the role Participatory Budgeting (PB) could play in the Welsh Government budget. To help inform this work, a new report by the PPIW provides evidence on the different types of PB, how they have been used, and the key considerations for designing a PB process.

Institute for Welsh Affairs blog, Sept 2017
It doesn’t have to become a bun fight!
Could a blend of participatory budgeting and citizen juries help solve some of Wales’ policy dilemmas?
WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?
WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?

‘PB directly involves local people in making decisions on the spending and priorities for a defined public budget.’

Or…

‘Local people deciding on how to allocate part of a public budget’

Or…….

‘If it feels like we have decided ---- it’s PB. If it feels like someone else has decided, it isn’t’”

(Brazilian resident)
Connecting and complimenting existing democratic processes

- Only a small percentage of any public budget will be allocated using PB

- Formally mandated and ‘signed off’ by the elected legislature... ... but then the decision is ‘the communities’

- Supports:
  Representative Democracy
  Public Service Reform
  Community Development
UK PB MODELS

- Small grants allocation
- Mainstream Investment (the 1% commitment)
- Commissioning, community planning and budget development and consultation
PB in Scotland 2014-18

➢ Over £10 million has been allocated by PB across Scotland to date.

➢ 30 of 32 Local Authority areas engaged in some form of PB

➢ Scottish Govt have invested £4.9m in support to PB

➢ Community Choices fund, support to PB programme development

➢ Participatory budgets ranged from £750 to £500m

➢ Projects have been delivered under a wide range of themes – health and social care, economic development, transport etc.
The Scottish Policy Context

Referendum – September 2014
“Harnessing the Democratic Energy” (Nicola Sturgeon)

Commission on Strengthening Democracy (2014):
“that a process of participatory budgeting, covering tax and spending options, is adopted by all local governments …”

Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
Provisions for public participation on decision making (including resources)

Programme for Government 2017 and the COSLA 1% agreement

“the best people to decide the future of our communities are the people who live in those communities.”
Objectives of PB In Scotland

- Increase quality and quantity of community engagement (more deliberative, inclusive and transparent);
- Increase trust in politics and in politicians;
- Stimulate dialogue and positive action within communities;
- Encourage well targeted public investments.
How PB might support Democracy

Margo Howe, a local Councillor said:

I think it’s revealing that people themselves have grabbed the opportunity and seen the benefit of it. It’s their ideas and, because of this, they will make it work. They’re loving it!“.

“Democratic power should be delivered from communities up, not drip down from above.”


PB brings new opportunities for engagement with voters and, perhaps most importantly ...

building trust in the democratic process.
Scottish PB infrastructure

- Training and capacity building – on how to ‘do PB’
- Resources - how to guides, briefings for elected members
- Research, testing, and implementation of digital platforms
- Scottish PB identity and network
- PB advisory group
- PB evaluation
- Trained facilitators and advocates
- SG funding and leadership
- A critical mass of processes from which to learn
ONLINE PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Digital tools and engagement

Connecting on and offline participation

To reinforce and amplify…

Ideas, engagement, deliberation and voting
ONLINE PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Council grant funding to support Local Communities

£2.5k per project

150 ideas generated online

1,300 people taking part in discussions online

Map shows the spread of ideas

The Democratic Society
ONLINE PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Dundee Decides

£1.2 million Community Infrastructure fund.

11,500 votes cast - over 10% of entire eligible voting population.

72% new to engaging in community planning.
SMALL GRANTS ALLOCATION

A grants pot / initiative funding
- community chest, etc

Bidders present proposals to residents,
who vote on which to support

Limited impact on mainstream

Effective at engaging, networking
and enthusing local people
THE NEED FOR PB

Christie Commission (September 2011) - Four P’s’

• a decisive shift to Prevention;
• continually improving Performance
• working in Partnership (nationally and locally)
• engaging and developing our People
MAINSTREAM PB – SOME COMMON ELEMENTS

THE ANNUAL CYCLE

PB budget cycle = participatory activity at all stages

Evaluation and Learning → Design

Scrutiny and Monitoring

Delivery of new projects

Decision Making

Develop budget Ideas

Setting of Priorities

Informing and engaging
MAINSTREAM PB –
A NEW COMMUNITY CHARTER

Localism in practice?

• Local Governance
• Widening of participation
• Co-production
• Rights AND Responsibilities
Mainstream PB – examples from Scotland

EDINBURGH: £500K of youth provision budget.

WESTERN ISLES: £500K rural transport programme

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY: £240k to address poverty

GLASGOW: Committed to spending between £10m and £20m by 2021 per year
PB budget cycle = participatory activity at all stages

- Evaluation and Learning
- Design
- Scrutiny and Monitoring
- Informing and engaging
- Delivery of new projects
- Setting of Priorities
- Decision Making
- Develop budget Ideas
Key challenges

Reconciling representative democracy with open, direct participatory democracy.

When resources are tight, and people worried about the withdrawal of cherished services, will vested interests try to unfairly influence the opening up of decision-making?

Concerns about ‘up-front’ costs to implement PB.

Inclusivity and connecting with seldom heard groups.

Strategic/sensitive issues (not amenable to PB?)
PB Resources:

The UK PB Network Website: [www.pbnetwork.org.uk](http://www.pbnetwork.org.uk)
PB Resources:

PB Scotland Website: [www.pbscotland.scot](http://www.pbscotland.scot)

Welcome to PB Scotland - The latest events, news & ideas on Participatory Budgeting in Scotland.

**Reports & ideas**
See PB voting in action

![Community Choices Scotland](image)

**Community Choices events near you in 2018**
Community Choices funded events are taking place across the country during 2018. Catch up on everything that's happening.

**News**
Read the latest

- **Your Place, Your Priorities Event**
  Stirling Council is delighted to announce a fund of £130,000 open now to community groups to deliver activities that will improve their community - **DEADLINE for applications is 16 March 2018.**
  Mar 6, 2018
  
- **Lots of PB happening in East Ayrshire!**
  Vibrant Communities is supporting a number of PB events during 2018.

**About**
What is PB?

- **Participatory budgeting (PB)** is a way for people to have a direct say in how local money is spent.

**Where is PB happening?**

A 60-second guide to PB

Get started
PB Resources:

NI PB works Website: participatorybudgetingworks.org
PB Resources:

Democratic Society Scotland

http://www.demsoc.org/participatory-budgeting-in-scotland/

The Democratic Society
Better democracy, everywhere.

Digital PB Case Studies

The Democratic Society has been actively working with local Councils and community groups to select, implement, test and embed digital tools for participatory budgeting (PB).

Below you can read some case studies which capture key learning points from participatory processes at a local level. Please note that a PDF file will open in a new window.

To read more about our 'Digital Tools for Participatory Budgeting In Scotland' Into digital tools, please visit our main PB page.

CASE STUDIES

We've written about some of the processes we've supported to use digital tools for PB in Scotland. Click here to read them.

The programme is informed by research, workshops and discussions with 18 councils working on PB around Scotland. We released our first report in February 2016 and we're planning to undertake further research in Autumn 2017. Read about the research that informs the programme.

RESEARCH

We published research into digital tools for PB in February 2019. We will be refreshing our research in Autumn 2017. Click here to find out more.
PB PARTNERS

W: www.pbpartners.org.uk
E: jez.hall@pbpartners.org.uk
E: alan.budge@pbpartners.org.uk