

July 2008

## Challenge

*How do I hold to account the people who exercise power in my locality and how can I remove them?*

*Communities in control: real people, real power* was launched on 9 July 2008. This White Paper is about passing power to communities and giving real control and influence to more people. Please visit [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk) for more information.

We would like to encourage community groups to discuss and feedback to us about the topics raised in the White Paper. Please use this topic discussion guide in conjunction with the Community Power Pack which is also available from our website.

## Points to consider

The White Paper outlines the how people can hold officials to account through new powers of petitioning and ways in which we will establish more visible and accountable local leaders by encouraging more powerful elected mayors.

It also sets out new proposals for the overview and scrutiny function and the accountability of local services including police and health.

## Key policies

- Introducing a new system of **visibility and accountability for public officials** – for example through a new right to petition to hold local officials to account
- Raising the visibility of the **overview and scrutiny** function in local authorities
- Making **police forces and health services** more accountable to local people
- Making it easier for people to demand that their local leaders move to establishing a **directly-elected mayor**.

## Questions for discussion

- In your view has the White Paper captured the correct points on how to give people a greater say in decisions being made on their behalf?
- How far do you think that these policies will address the issues raised?
- What more do you think needs to be done to address these issues?