

# Walking in each other's shoes: Partnership working group exercise

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# Introduction

- This exercise can be used as an approach to foster and maintain levels of partnership working, and also as a joint problem-solving tool to achieve a common purpose and better decision making. This is achieved through understanding and appreciating different perspectives by working through a series of steps that are taken walking in each others' shoes.
- The tool can be used to support partnership working between employers and trade unions, it can be used in organisational social partnership forums/joint negotiating committees, ICS/STP SPFs and regional SPFs.
- This approach was used at the East Midlands regional Social Partnership Forum in March 2018 as part of an organisational development intervention, supporting the group to work together to enhance and create positive working environments. You can read about this on the [SPF website](#).

# The challenge: car parking in a community trust

- 30 sites.
- Parking issues.
- Demand exceeds capacity.
- Patient complaints are escalating.
- Need to keep staff and patients happy.
- Staff frustration, especially when moving between sites.
- The sites are congested and already short of space.



# The exercise:

## Step 1. Place yourself in the other's shoes

### **Trade Union side**

- What are you looking to achieve?
- What is your position?
- What are your wants?

### **Management side**

- What are you looking to achieve?
- What is your position?
- What are your wants?

## Step 2. Group discussion

- Trade Union colleagues to role play being management side.
- Management side to role play being Trade Unions.
- Work through the three questions in slide four.



# Some ideas to start your discussions

- Permits – space not guaranteed.
- Enforcement regime – for staff, for patients.
- Having parking free.
- Other sustainable options.
- Site by site solutions.
- Wellbeing initiatives.



## Step 3. Reflections

- How did it feel taking the role you were assigned?
- How did it differ from your actual role?
- How was it similar to your actual role?
- What reflections do you have about the two groups' ideas / wants / what they are trying to achieve?
- Any final reflections?



## Further information

- This exercise was designed and run by Katherine Bassey, head of staff engagement and innovation at UNISON and Anne Linsell, head of OD at Northamptonshire NHS Foundation.
- The full story can be followed on the [SPF website](#) including the qualitative and quantitative improvements the OD intervention has led to.