Volunteer Centre Merton

Problem Solving Steps

What is the Real Problem?
- Gather information and feelings on the current situation
- Clarify and prioritise the problem
- The real problem is observable, and there is only one real problem
- Who needs to be involved in solving this problem?
- Who doesn't need to be involved in solving this problem at this time?

What is/are the cause or causes of the problem?
- Identify and list
- Clarify and prioritise the causes

What is your desired outcome – what do you want to happen as a result of this process?
- Describe it clearly
- What are the consequences of this desired outcome

Are there other ways of achieving the desired outcome?
- Brainstorm as widely as you can
- Encourage the ideas – the more wide-ranging the better
- Do not discount any ideas – however "off the wall" they might be
- Write them down

Going through the list – what are the consequences of each one listed?
- It might be a good idea to set up "selection criteria"
- How achievable would it be?
- Who would this affect?
- Who would have to be involved to do it this way?

Choose the best alternative
- Keep in mind the second and third best in case the first one doesn't work

Develop an Action Plan
- How, who and when will this best alternative be implemented?
- Who should be involved?

How and when will the new solution be monitored to check it is working?
- How and when will this take place to ensure problem is solved?
- How will you know it is solved – what are the criteria?