

Appendix 1

Developing a Community Engagement Plan

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The Community Engagement Plan should not be seen as an onerous exercise producing a long report, but instead it is a user friendly working document, and may take the form of a spreadsheet, if you prefer.

The table below is an example of how the information can be captured:

Action	Location	Date/Time	Type of Activity	Publicity	Target Audience
Stakeholder /service provider meetings					
Focus Groups					
Drop in sessions					

To develop the Community Engagement Plan, you need to think about the following questions:

What is the vision and objectives for the community mapping?

Before embarking on the community mapping activity, determine the current status of your community and what it is you want your community to accomplish. A well-defined vision statement is the cornerstone of any well-planned endeavour. It should be challenging, innovative and forward thinking. A vision gives a clear, consistent message of what you're trying to achieve. Writing a vision statement requires synthesizing, concentrating, and / or summarising many ideas into a concise statement. The purpose of the vision statement is to develop a shared image of the future.

A clear vision statement guides each step of the mapping process, clarifies the information you need to know and sets the standard against which projects can be evaluated, as well as helping to gain the interest and involvement of new stakeholders. Developing a strapline linking to the vision also helps give a recognisable branding.

After reaching consensus about the vision statement, careful attention should be placed on formulating clear and accurate objectives. The objectives need to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Action orientated, Realistic and Time orientated). Objectives need to be slightly out of reach, but not so distant that there is no hope of achievement.

Who needs to be engaged?

Involving the right stakeholders is critical to achieving your vision. The choice of stakeholders to recruit depends on the intent of the mapping process. This is a useful checklist of all the types of groups within the community you could engage with:

- School children (5 to 16)
- Young people (aged 16 to 30)
- Older people

- Families
- Single parent families
- People with physical needs
- People with learning needs
- Black and minority ethnic groups
- Migrant workers
- Commuters (people living in the community but working outside)
- People employed in the community
- Local businesses
- Housing estate representatives
- Community groups / societies
- Faith groups
- Voluntary bodies acting in the area
- Service providers

You can use different approaches to engagement with the different groups of people in the community (refer to the Stage 2. Mapping).

Where to consult?

Most communities have a range of community facilities and activities going on which can be accessed for community mapping, including:

- Community centres / village halls
- Schools
- Libraries
- Place of worship
- Existing community clubs and societies
- Community days / village fetes / shows / summer festivals / carnival
- Public meetings such as Parish Council / Resident's Associations / Forums
- Doctors surgery / dentists / hair dressers / shops / post office / pubs

Equally a lot of valuable information can be gathered from informal discussions on the street, particularly capturing those people who would not normally engage with existing community activities.

How to engage?

You need to think about what type of engagement is most suitable within the community. There are various forms of engagement including preparing questionnaires / surveys, focus groups / workshops, public meetings, open days / drop in sessions and social media / website promotion. **Stage 2 Mapping** gives ideas for different activities you can do to engage with the community.

It is useful to know what other events are taking place in the area and how you can link into them. You need to decide how many events to hold and when the events will be held. It is important to offer a range of dates and times of day for events.

How to publicise?

Once you've decided how you're going to engage you need to think about how you're going to publicise the events.

It is important to use language that everyone understands and make it relevant to them. The term community mapping may not be familiar to all so may be better to say 'Your place, Your Say' or something similar.

When getting to know what's going on in the community it is useful to find out what existing local newspapers, parish magazines / local newsletters there are, as well as community facebook / twitter accounts, to help publicise your event. Regular press releases are a good way to keep the community up to date with what is going on. Regular posts on social media are an effective and cheap way of getting out to the community.

You may want to produce your own leaflet, poster, banner or flier to publicise the events. Also consider correct protocol for publicising the event, including authorisation of articles and translation (eg into Welsh). This may impact on your deadlines for publication. Having developed a network of contacts you should also have a good email circulation list to send out regular progress updates.

What are the barriers to engagement?

There are a number of barriers which may deter people from engaging. Solutions should be considered on how to overcome barriers.

Barriers

- The capacity and ability of different stakeholders to participate
- 'Hard to reach groups' such as young people, older people, minority groups or socially excluded groups
- Levels of community infrastructure
- Contested or divided communities
- Rural isolation
- Gaps in information
- Literacy and numeracy levels.

Solutions to consider

- Need for independent facilitation
- Location and accessibility of the venue
- The number and type of engagement events
- Transport requirements
- Childcare needs
- Format and content of communication and publicity materials
- Use of interpreters and signers
- Use larger font size for leaflets, posters questionnaires, and activity sheets
- Need for outreach activities