

Places for Everyone

Community Engagement Guide

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Places for Everyone

Sustrans: Join the Movement

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Transport Scotland. Còmhdhail Alba.

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# 1) Introduction

Effective community engagement is central to achieving the Sustrans vision:

A society where the way we travel creates healthier places and happier lives for everyone.

## 1.1 Community Engagement and Places for Everyone

The aim of Places for Everyone is to create safer, more attractive, and inclusive places which are enjoyed equitably by increasing and diversifying the number of trips made by walking, wheeling or cycling for everyday journeys.

The six Places for Everyone design principles have been developed to ensure funding can have the biggest possible impact, and infrastructure is truly designed for everyone:

- 1 Develop ideas collaboratively and in partnership with communities.
- 2 Facilitate independent walking, cycling, and wheeling for everyone, including an unaccompanied 12-year-old.
- 3 Design places that provide enjoyment, comfort and protection.
- 4 Ensure access for all and equality of opportunity in public space.
- 5 Ensure proposals are context-specific and evidence-led.
- 6 Reallocate road space, and restrict motor traffic permeability, to prioritise people walking, wheeling and cycling over private motor vehicles.

All projects will be assessed against how well they meet the design principles. Effective and inclusive community engagement is central to achieving these principles.

Community engagement is a process of connecting with stakeholders in a meaningful way, so communities are informed about and involved in the project. Through gathering local expertise, lived experience, views and concerns, and responding to feedback, the process of community engagement can lead to active travel infrastructure that better meets the needs of communities and results in higher usage once in place.

Successful community engagement is based on respect, openness and inclusion. The earlier that communities are engaged, the more meaningful input they can have into shaping what is needed. Community engagement is not a single action but an ongoing process that develops over time, enabling trust and relationships to grow. It is made up of a range of activities that enable diverse groups to participate in a meaningful way.



Community engagement also enables projects deliver the following Scottish Government National Performance Framework Outcomes, which underpin Transport Scotland's Active Travel Framework:

- We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.
- We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally.
- We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely.

## 1.2 Purpose of this Guide

The guide provides an overview of community engagement best practice in the context of Places for Everyone projects. It aligns the National Standards for Community Engagement to the RIBA stages of construction in relation to walking, wheeling and cycling. RIBA sets out the process of building projects into eight stages and explains the outcomes required at each stage.

This guide provides:

- guidance for effective engagement in the context of Places for Everyone projects.
- examples of good practice.
- resources for planning engagement activity.
- signposting to resources and organisations to improve quality and effectiveness of engagement.
- understanding of what support Sustrans can provide.

### 1.3 Why engage with communities in Places for Everyone projects?

Community engagement is fundamental to infrastructure projects, but poorly resourced, tick-box engagement exercises will miss opportunities to improve outcomes and deliver a project that is truly fit for purpose.

Well-planned and resourced community engagement should result in:

- Better understanding both by communities and by the delivery partner.
- Shared decision-making and opportunity to influence, resulting in greater trust between organisations and communities.
- Community-informed design of both infrastructure and behaviour change activity.
- Higher levels of participation in any community involvement aspects of route design or maintenance.
- Greater local buy-in and usage once built.
- Greater engagement in behaviour change activity.
- Fit-for-purpose infrastructure.

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## 2) National Standards for Community Engagement

Places for Everyone adopts the seven National Standards for Community Engagement. The good practice principles underpin effective and purposeful relationships between services and the communities they serve. These standards are relevant for any engagement activity but are outlined below in the context of active travel infrastructure projects. They are:

- 1 Inclusion
- 2 Support
- 3 Planning
- 4 Working together
- 5 Methods of Engagement
- 6 Communication
- 7 Impact

### 2.1 Inclusion

Identify and involve the people and organisations that are affected by the planned project.

The purpose of Places for Everyone projects is to create practical active travel solutions that meet the needs of diverse users. Inclusive engagement is key to achieving this.

- Engage in an inclusive way to connect with stakeholders representing a range of protected characteristics.
- Focus attention on groups that in the past have been excluded or marginalised. Make time for listening to a diversity of lived experience.
- Involve local organisations that reflect the diversity of communities where a project is located (e.g. Cycling Without Age groups, dementia friendly walking groups, regional Equality Councils, LGBTQIA+, Health and Wellbeing groups).
- Adopt a joined-up approach by working across Local Authority teams with a focus on engagement and inclusion (e.g. Community Learning and Development, Community Planning Partnerships). Third Sector Interfaces (TSI) often have Community Engagement teams, such as Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise - connecting across them will build on the networks and skills of various organisations.
- Consider who is truly 'representative'. It cannot be assumed that self-appointed spokespeople or those who only represent particular groups have a full understanding of the needs and aspirations of a wider group or whole community.

## 2.1 a) Diversity and Equality

Effective engagement should reach the greatest possible number of community members and stakeholders, but it should also be inclusive; engaging with the range of views and experiences which exists in most communities. The engagement plan must outline how to enable those who face the greatest barriers to participation to be informed and heard.

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against people who possess one or more protected characteristic. Therefore, those responsible for designing and delivering the engagement must plan activities in a way that is inclusive and accessible, offering diverse and bespoke opportunities for different groups to engage<sup>1</sup>.

The public sector equality duty is also relevant and its requirements that those subject to the duty must have due regard to:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- advancing equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without.
- fostering good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without.

A fuller understanding of what constitutes a representative group usually results in better outcomes. Remember that diversity exists within groups, and membership of a group does not dictate a particular stance.



## 2.1 b) Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

The EqIA enables you to consider the impact of a proposed infrastructure change across the protected characteristics and ensures that any potentially negative effects have been considered. Assessing the impacts of a project can help to identify the people who may be most affected and help to inform engagement.

Begin the EqIA as early as possible and add to it as you engage and gather new insights. The EqIA is not just a final output but should inform and shape the plans from the outset. The impact on diverse communities should influence engagement activity as well as construction and behaviour change activity. Consider how you can consult with different groups to understand challenges and opportunities together and use this to inform how you address challenges in a meaningful and project-specific way.

The needs and concerns of the wider community should always be kept in mind. They will be the main users of infrastructure, or participants in behaviour change activity programmes you design.

Should your organisation not have its own EqIA template, Places for Everyone can provide one.

Further reading:

- Fife Centre for Equalities – [Engaging with Easy to Ignore communities](#) (2021)
- Glasgow [Inclusive Cities](#) project

## 2.2 Support

Identify and overcome barriers to engagement.

Once stakeholders and audiences for engagement are identified, take time to understand how they want to be engaged with, what may negatively impact on their ability to engage, and how best to remove those barriers. If you're not sure how best to engage with a particular audience, ask them and work with relevant organisations. Don't assume that groups of people with a shared characteristic face the same barriers, or that one approach to engagement is right for every audience.

- Supportive and accessible engagement enables more diverse voices to be heard, is better for everyone and leads to well-informed Places for Everyone projects.
- Plan and invest in supportive engagement processes from the outset. This reduces the risk of opposition or costly retrofitting of active travel projects later.
- Some individuals may require additional support to engage. This may include:

### Alternative forms of communication

- Alternative written formats; braille, large print.
- Translation or interpreting services.
- Verbal instead of written communication.

### Physical access

- Fully and easily accessible venues.
- Transport to engagement events.
- Physical adaptations and / or technology.
- Alternative meeting room or room set-up.
- Prior information on the room set-up.

### Additional support

- Additional support staff / volunteers to facilitate participation.
- One-to-one contact or verbal rather than written engagement.
- Alternative or bespoke engagement opportunities.
- Childcare availability at engagement sessions.
- Advocacy: some people may choose to be supported by an advocate to take part in engagement activities. Specialist organisations provide advocacy.
- Expenses for members of advisory or focus groups.

Work with organisations with the experience, skills and connections with specific groups. Many charities and voluntary organisations work with under-represented groups. Local authorities often have dedicated officers, such as youth workers and equalities officers.

Further reading:

- Involvement Knowledge Base and blog section

## 2.3 Planning

There is a clear purpose to the engagement based on shared understanding of community needs and ambitions.

A stakeholder map and community engagement plan are both project deliverables across all project stages, to be regularly reviewed and updated throughout. To be effective, community engagement needs to be embedded within the project plans. Engagement is not a one-time check box activity but an ongoing, integral element of the process and essential to success.

Community engagement must be properly resourced and budgeted for throughout Places for Everyone funded projects for both infrastructure and behaviour change activities.

### 2.3 a) Background research

For community engagement to be effective, there must be a thorough understanding of the community. Background research is vital. Research must begin early and be comprehensive, so engagement can proceed backed by as much context as possible.

As a live document, the community engagement plan can evolve over time and respond to the local context which will shift and change as the project progresses.

### 2.3 b) Clarity of purpose and scope

Set effective and clear ground rules with the community and partners, including defining boundaries and agreeing contacts for specific activities. Agree how the project will engage with local people at each stage.

Clarify what is fixed and what is negotiable as part of the project. Make clear what the purpose of the engagement is and what its limitations will be. This is important for both the organisation leading on the engagement and the stakeholders.

### 2.3 c) Stakeholder map (also known as a stakeholder record or list)

The stakeholder map is a live document that changes over the course of your project. It should begin during the desktop background research phase. Further stakeholders will be discovered as the project progresses through the engagement process.

A stakeholder map is context specific and shows exactly who you have identified as audiences for communication and engagement.

Mapping stakeholders helps to:

- build a project specific engagement plan with stakeholder-appropriate engagement.
- understand the volume of stakeholders that require engagement.
- inform resourcing and budgeting needs for community engagement.

You can request from Sustrans a simple stakeholder mapping template and guide to stakeholder groups that should be considered for engagement.

### 2.3 d) Engagement Planning Tools

There is a range of tools available to aid community engagement planning and delivery.

VOiCE is an online tool, based on the National Standards for Community Engagement, that supports organisations to plan engagement activity. The tool can be used online or offline using this template.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland has a helpful checklist to aid planning for meaningful engagement.

### 2.3 e) Developing relevant and meaningful questions

Once you have defined the scope of the project, consider what questions you want to ask the local stakeholders. Consider what questions bring answers from on-the-ground experts to provide lived experience perspectives that can *truly* help your project team to design a great walking, wheeling and cycling project.

Other recent local engagement activities and their outcomes can contribute to informing your project. This could include Local Place Plans, Community Climate Action Plans, and litter picking campaigns. It helps you to understand what has already been asked. Base your engagement on existing knowledge and address the gaps specific to your project.

## 2.3 f) Resourcing

Resource the project to ensure that it happens effectively at each stage, establishing an agreed delivery plan with realistic timescales. Don't underestimate the resource needed to engage effectively and in an inclusive way; online, face-to-face, or hybrid.

We have produced a resourcing calculator to work out costs (software, tools, time, staffing) associated with particular activities. More information on resourcing can be found in the appendix. Please note that figures used in the calculator are guide costs and can be edited to develop a more accurate figure for your needs.

Further reading:

- Dialogue by Design: A handbook for stakeholder engagement (2012)
- What Works Scotland: How to design and plan public engagement processes: a handbook (2020)
- PAS (Planning Aid for Scotland): Successful Planning = Effective Engagement and Delivery (SP=EED). A Practical Guide to Better Engagement in Planning (last updated July 2022)

## 2.4 Working Together

Effective engagement should not feel it is “done to” people but involve people.

Engagement should be considered a knowledge sharing opportunity between the project team and stakeholders rather than for the benefit of the project only.

Engagement must be based on trust, respect and mutual understanding of the purpose of engagement. It is important to set out an agreed scope and parameters for engagement, including who you are going to engage with and how.

Involve stakeholders meaningfully and design with them as far as practical. This is the key to long-term, sustainable change through Places for Everyone projects. Link in with locally embedded organisations such as a Business Improvement District or Community Development Trust to understand how active travel might link with their goals.

The more power that can be transferred to local stakeholders for decision-making, the more ownership they will have in the project and the more truly collaborative the project will be.

### 2.4 a) Respect everyone’s expertise

Respect everyone’s voice in engagement communication; both community-based stakeholders and the project team. Consider what expertise community-based stakeholders can add, such as a wide variety of lived experience, and how they interact with the experiences of your designers.

### 2.4 b) Levels of engagement

Places for Everyone funded projects will be expected to consider a spectrum of community engagement activities, from informing and consulting communities through to devolved decision making.

Determine the level of engagement from the start and clearly set this out to all stakeholders. Different stages in an engagement process may require different levels of engagement input

The diagram below sets out a spectrum of engagement, from information giving through to fully devolved decision-making. The role and responsibility of communities steadily increases with each stage<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> [Involve guidance on public participation](#)

## Levels of Engagement

### Inform

Purpose: Provide people with accurate and up-to-date information to assist understanding.

Example(s): Fact sheets ([benefits of active travel & health](#)).

### Gather information

Purpose: Collect information about attitudes and opinions to assist understanding and decision-making.

Example(s): Surveys, questionnaires, and focus groups ([bring people together](#)).

### Consult

Purpose: Consultation influences decision making and people are informed of the influence they have had.

Example(s): Consultation papers, public meetings ([online](#) or [offline](#)) and surgeries.

### Involve

Purpose: Involve people throughout to ensure their concerns are understood and considered.

Provide opportunity to shape process, influence on and ownership of decisions.

Example(s): [Deliberative workshops](#), stakeholder dialogue processes, and [community-led action research](#).

### Collaborate

Purpose: Bring people into partnership and agree sharing of resources and decision-making.

Example(s): Advisory Panels (local transport partnership [panels](#)), and Local Strategic Partnerships

### Empower

Purpose: Transfer of sufficient resources and decision-making to enable autonomy over decision-making and implementation.

Example(s): Ballots, referenda, and delegated decision-making ([Participatory Budgeting](#)).

It is unlikely that the whole project can be at the *collaborate* and *empower* end of the spectrum. However, there is value in identifying a discreet area of the project that lends itself to more devolved decision making or fuller control of an element of the budget (participatory budgeting). Aesthetics, artwork, and activities to encourage use of the new infrastructure (behaviour change) are particularly suited to *Collaborate* and *Empower*.

### Further reading:

- [IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation](#) – created to help with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process.





## 2.5 Methods of Engagement

Use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose and suit the audience.

By applying a range of engagement techniques in a creative way, you will maximise participation, enable people to be involved on their terms and obtain a breadth and depth of responses.

A combination of online and face-to-face engagement approaches will meet the needs of different groups and different engagement purposes. Carefully planned hybrid events can also aid inclusion of diverse groups and enable more people to participate.

A combination of general open-access community engagement and target audience engagement will enable specific groups of people to participate.

Engagement methods should reflect:

- Needs of the project and community.
- Culture and demographics.
- Preferences of how to be engaged.
- Any history of engagement.
- Available skills and resources for delivery.

Whatever the method, engagement should be underpinned by openness, dialogue and interaction, listening and responding to the views and ideas of the community.

## 2.5 a) Creative approaches to involving diverse groups

Using methods that resonate with the audience will result in more successful engagement. Two such examples are:

- Minecraft<sup>7</sup> (sandbox video game) as a placemaking tool for young people.
- Art for people living with dementia to imagine how a space could look as part of a placemaking conversation.

Always link it back to your scope and use methods that allow meaningful participation that advances the project. Be careful with tokenistic or novel engagement exercises that may draw a crowd but could waste time for project teams and stakeholders.

Further reading:

- Healthcare Improvement Scotland participation toolkit
- Involve (public participation charity)

## 2.6 Open and accessible communication

Appropriate, clear and regular communication throughout engagement with people, organisations and communities.

### 2.6 a) Language and terminology

Infrastructure projects and language around them can be difficult to understand. The language and terminology used to engage with communities is particularly important:

- Plan communications to suit the communities being engaged.
- Be aware of diversity within the community.
- Use plain English in a clear and direct style (imagine a 12-year-old as your audience).
- Use the language the audience uses.
- Don't underestimate intelligence but avoid acronyms, technical terms or jargon, such as LTN, SUDS, Segregation. If it needs to be used, make sure it is explained first.
- Explain proposals and issues in a local context.
- Present content in a way which invites the audience to share views and experiences.
- Accommodate non-English speakers wherever possible. Similarly, alternative formats like Braille, large print and audio resources should be considered.
- Format websites to be screen-reader friendly.
- Ensure websites are user-friendly across different devices (mobiles, tablets, laptops).
- Use plug-in software – such as Recite Me – so stakeholders to modify the appearance of websites suit their needs.

### 2.6 b) Provide updates and feedback

A programme of engagement will usually have multiple stages. Keep communities informed of progress and how their participation is shaping proposals. Building and holding active relationships with stakeholders is core to community engagement and updates through newsletters, local media and social media are key to this.

### 2.6 c) Manage expectations

Time scales can be perceived as long from inception to construction. Communicate your process and progress regularly and be transparent. Continually share the great work and effort your project team is putting into the project, using all information gathered through engagement. If you face setbacks, communicate openly, and bring the community with you.

## 2.6 d) Communication preferences

Different stakeholders will prefer to be kept up to date in different ways. Newsletter communication, such as project updates and invitations to future events, is a common way to be in touch with stakeholders. Ensure you respect privacy and comply with data protection law. Ask stakeholders how they want to be communicated with and what about.

## 2.6 e) Two-way communication

Set your engagement opportunities up in a way that there are two-way learning opportunities between the project team and community stakeholders.

## 2.7 Impact

Review the impact of engagement and learn from the process to improve future engagement.

The community engagement process has the potential to really shape the decisions or actions around the project. This is achieved through careful planning, clarity of scope and developing community engagement activity based on the stakeholder mapping.

The greatest impact can be achieved by identifying what meaningful decisions or actions local stakeholders can take, and at what stage. Your project will have different opportunities: for example, at the start you might discuss *where* benches could go and a bit later you might discuss what colour or materials should be used.

### 2.7 a) Communicate the impact of engagement

Use stakeholder communications to inform how the engagement process has influenced decisions and what has changed as a result. Make explicit the connection between the engagement and its influence, demonstrating to communities that their participation is valued and instrumental in shaping proposals.

Ensure that any agreements and plans made with or communicated to stakeholders are implemented, and the appropriate stakeholders are informed that they are implemented.

### 2.7 b) Assess the impact of engagement activity

Start with clear, intended outcomes of engagement and consider whether these outcomes have been met.

Assess the impact of community engagement on projects and the communities involved and learn from this for future projects so engagement activity can continually improve. Gather feedback from participants in engagement activities to understand whether it has met their expectations and needs, whether it was accessible and whether they felt they were able to influence plans.

This feedback should inform future engagement activity to ensure community engagement is continually improving.

Look back at what impact the engagement has had.

Look forward at how this can be improved for future engagement.

## 2.7 c) Embed a legacy of ongoing impactful engagement

Help create an ongoing culture of participation by planning opportunities for continued involvement beyond the life of a funded project.

Further reading:

- [Sustrans Research and Monitoring Unit](#)
- [Evaluation Support Scotland](#)

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### 3) Engagement deliverables by RIBA stage

#### **Community Engagement activity by RIBA stage**

Community Engagement activity is required at each RIBA stage. The table on the following page outlines what deliverables are required in relation to community engagement, and a brief overview of what outcomes the project should prioritise at each stage.

- Stakeholder map (all projects)
- Community Engagement Plan (all projects)
- Equalities impact assessment (all projects)
- Establishment of community advisory group (high value / complex projects / to be agreed)
- Community Asset Map (high value / complex projects / to be agreed)

Further reading:

Please refer to the RIBA Stages Deliverables in the Places for Everyone applicant guidance for [Stages 0-2](#) and [Stages 3-4](#).

## RIBA Stages 0-2: Concept

Note: some Concept deliverables listed below may not be relevant for your project and are more likely to be required for high value or large impact projects. This will be agreed with your Grant Advisor.

Stage 0: Strategic Definition – The best means of achieving the Client Requirements confirmed (Business Case.)

Engagement deliverables:

- Stakeholder map
- Community engagement plan (outline)
- Identify community advisory group (CAG) (not required in all projects)

Engagement outcomes (by end of stage):

- Maximise awareness of project.
- Promote aims and objectives.
- Consider existing information and research about local area (including related projects).
- Establish requirements of stakeholder engagement to inform engagement plan.
- Research who the local stakeholders are.

Stage 1: Preparation and Brief – Project Brief approved by client and confirmed it can be accommodated on site.

Engagement deliverables:

- Updated community engagement documents
- EqlA
- Plan CAG (not required in all projects)
- Community Asset Map (not required in all projects)

Engagement outcomes (by end of stage):

- Establish and share clear community engagement goals with stakeholders.
- Agree key messages.
- Identify engagement opportunities.
- Listen and understand views of diverse and traditionally excluded groups.



Stage 2: Concept Design – Design Concept approved by the client and aligned to the Project Brief.

Engagement deliverables:

- Updated community engagement documents
- Updated Community Asset Map (not required in all projects)

Engagement outcomes (by end of stage):

- Listen to and understand stakeholder needs, especially lesser heard groups.
- Designs informed through stakeholder engagement, considering diverse needs.
- Increase confidence in designs by both project team and stakeholders.
- Build project support.

## RIBA Stages 3-4: Design

Stage 3: Developed Design – Architectural and engineering information, spatially coordinated.

Engagement deliverables:

- Updated community engagement documents
- Updated EqIA

Engagement outcomes (by end of stage):

- Test designs with diverse stakeholder groups and address feedback.
- Demonstrate how designs have been informed by engagement.
- Stakeholders review design and understand proposed design changes.
- Engage stakeholders on barriers they face to inform behaviour change plans.

Stage 4: Technical Design – All design information required to manufacture and construct the project.

Engagement deliverables:

- Updated community engagement documents
- Updated EqIA

Engagement outcomes (by end of stage):

- Inform stakeholders of proposed designs and invite feedback on final designs.
- Communicate what can still be influenced and seek input.
- Inform stakeholders of changes based on design testing.
- Engage with stakeholder groups likely to be affected by construction.

## **RIBA Stages 5-6: Construction**

Stage 5: Construction – Manufacturing, construction and commissioning completed.

Engagement deliverables:

- Updated community engagement documents

Engagement outcomes (by end of stage):

- Maintain engagement throughout construction.
- Engage with and support stakeholders affected by construction work.
- Anticipate and mitigate negative impacts.
- Inform of progress and impacts of works.

Stage 6: Handover and Close Out – Building handed over. Aftercare initiated. Building Contract concluded.

Engagement deliverables:

- Updated community engagement documents
- Opening event with community

Engagement outcomes (by end of stage):

- Involve stakeholders in and invite to opening celebration of infrastructure.
- Involve stakeholders in opening event.
- Gather feedback from stakeholders on new infrastructure.

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## 4) Responsibility for Community Engagement

The project team has responsibility for ensuring all elements of the project, including community engagement, are delivered to a high standard.

A community engagement lead must be identified as part of the project team, who is responsible for planning and delivering the community engagement plan and for managing relationships with stakeholders. They will have knowledge of and experience in applying community engagement good practice such as National Standards of Community Engagement.

### 4.1 Community Advisory Group (CAG)

A Community Advisory Group may be established in high value or more complex projects but can be good practice for any project.

The CAG is a group of diverse representatives from the local community who can be consulted, review and input into community engagement plans, and support with ongoing stakeholder mapping and engagement activities. The CAG can also help assess the efficacy of community engagement and identify the best engagement approaches for different stakeholders.

The CAG does not replace the need for community engagement. It is there to enable effective, inclusive and impactful community engagement.

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## 5) Further Resources and Support

This guide is a starting point for embedding inclusive and effective community engagement activity within your project.

Additional support on community engagement can be requested through your Sustrans Grants Advisor.

Further resources are explained and referred to in greater detail in the associated Places for Everyone Community Engagement Guide Appendices below, including:

- 1 Scottish Government Guidance on Community Engagement
- 2 Online tools for Engagement: The Place Standard and online mapping tools
- 3 Introduction to other sources of community engagement support
- 4 Introduction to the Resource planning calculator tool (available from Sustrans PfE team)

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# Engagement Guide – Appendices

These appendices direct Places for Everyone partner organisations to excellent tools and support to achieve good practice Community Engagement.

This section contains a range of resources for understanding the context of community engagement and for conducting it. It is not an exhaustive list, and Sustrans supports the use of innovative techniques.

## Useful Resources

### Scottish Government guidance on Engagement

- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 – The aim of the Act is that communities gain greater influence and control over decisions and circumstances that affect them.
- Planning Advice Note 3/2010 Community Engagement (2010) – PAN 3/2010 provides advice on the legal requirements for community engagement in relation to planning applications.

### Tools for Engagement

Once you know what you want to achieve (your scope) think about how you can get there using different tools and techniques for engagement with the public and key stakeholders to inform and influence designs.

Think through what you want to achieve with your engagement process before choosing a tool or technique.

The below tools and methods are a short selection to illustrate some of what is available.

## Place Standard

The Place Standard tool is a free, easily accessible and user-friendly resource which provides a simple framework for discussions about the quality of both the physical and social aspects of a place.

It can be used to evaluate places that are well-established, changing, or still being planned. The online and paper versions of the tool, plus guidance on how to use it, are available at the [Our Place](#) website.

There are several versions available:

- Original
- Children and Young people
- Design (particularly useful for Places for Everyone projects)
- Additional lenses to focus on air quality and climate impact (in development)

There are additional toolkits available on the [OurPlace website \(toolbox section\)](#), such as the Town Toolkit or the Young Placechangers Toolkit.

## Online map-based engagement tools

There is a variety of digital platforms to choose from, with overlapping features but each with specific benefits. You should choose based on your needs, team capacity and resource available.

For a general overview of a variety of digital tools and platforms visit the digital tools database created by the public participation charity, Involve. They list tools for digital engagement activities such as crowd mapping, meeting, idea generation, voting and prioritisation.

A non-exhaustive selection of digital crowd mapping engagement platforms is shown below for your reference. Digital platforms regularly develop new features and new platforms emerge.

### Commonplace

[Commonplace](#) is a commercial map-based online platform for community engagement. Clients are provided with a 'dashboard' to manage data which can be used to monitor, respond and adapt engagement through time.

Stakeholders can input location-based feedback, which other stakeholders can interact with.

For a Places for Everyone project example, visit [Walk Cycle Live Stirling](#).

## Social Pinpoint

Social Pinpoint is a commercial platform that provides a range of digital tools to enable inclusive community and stakeholder engagement to inform decision-making.

For a Places for Everyone project example, visit [Arbroath: A Place for Everyone](#).

## Scoop Digital

Scoop Digital is a commercial kit of innovative digital tools to support community engagement and collaboration. The scoop suite of digital placemaking tools is ready-made for most communities but can also be tailored to specific requirements.

For example, Scottish Land Commissions' page [MyLand.Scot](#).

## ArcGIS StoryMaps

Data-driven mapping and analysis tool to gather and present location-based information.

ArcGIS StoryMaps is a user-friendly tool that helps you to tell impactful stories with interactive and custom maps.

For a Places for Everyone project example, visit [Leith Connections](#) (City of Edinburgh Council).

Further example tools and methods:

- Healthcare Improvement Scotland has created a useful [participation toolkit](#). They set out a range of methods for different levels of engagement.
- Involve (public participation charity) provides an [extensive list of methods](#) and digital tools database.

We will continue to add examples of tools that are particularly relevant for engagement with the public and key stakeholders to inform and influence designs. We will share updated versions of this document on the [Sustrans Scotland Showcase website](#).

If you have examples of tools or methods you have used, let us know by emailing our team at [PlacesForEveryone@Sustrans.org.uk](mailto:PlacesForEveryone@Sustrans.org.uk) so we can showcase them.



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# Resource Planning for Community Engagement

## Estimating costs

As every project is different, there is no standard for what specific proportion of a project budget should be spent on community engagement, or for required staff numbers and time. Places for Everyone, however, allows for (and requires) community engagement activity to be budgeted for. If it is in your budget, then the funding will cover these costs, so it's worth taking the time to resource engagement work properly. There are several factors to consider that will inform your engagement budget, including:

- Engagement scope
- Techniques/activities being used/conducted
- Demographics and meeting the needs of diverse groups
- Geographic spread of the community
- Nature and location of the project

## Resourcing

Ensure any community engagement activity, no matter if online or face to face, is staffed by enough people to achieve the intended engagement purpose. Engagement roles can involve volunteers. However, remember that managing volunteers also requires a resource.

Online events: On initial consideration, online events may be considered less resource-intensive to set up and deliver; no travel time, refreshments, room set up, welcome team. However, a well-run online event also needs to be well facilitated, will take adequate preparation, and will benefit from a support team to ensure all technical elements of event facilitation work well.

Facilitation: Trained facilitators can play a valuable role in an effective event (online or face to face), planning and driving event schedules and managing any disagreements between participants. Your Engagement Lead might take this role on where practicable.

## Resource planning tool

The associated resource planning tool (excel resource calculator) will help you calculate how much time and financial resource to budget for engagement activities. This can be requested from your Grant Advisor.