

Community and stakeholder engagement for infrastructure projects (draft)

February 2015



About Sustrans

Sustrans makes smarter travel choices possible, desirable and inevitable. We're a leading UK charity enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. We work with families, communities, policy-makers and partner organisations so that people are able to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in.

It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today.
www.sustrans.org.uk

Head Office

Sustrans
2 Cathedral Square
College Green
Bristol
BS1 5DD

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Issue level:	01
Owned by:	NCN Director
Contact:	tony.russell@sustrans.org.uk

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This chapter of the Sustrans Design Manual should be read in conjunction with Chapter 1 "Principles and processes for cycle friendly design." That chapter includes key guidance on core design principles, whether to integrate with or segregate from motor traffic, the space required by cyclists and other road users as well as geometrical considerations. Readers are also directed towards the "Handbook for cycle-friendly design" which contains a concise illustrated compendium of the technical guidance contained in the Design Manual. This chapter has initially been issued as a draft and it is intended that it be reviewed during 2015; feedback on the content is invited and should be made by 31 May 2015 to designandconstruction@sustrans.org.uk

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1. Key principles

- effective community and stakeholder engagement is a key part of delivering successful projects
- effective community and stakeholder engagement can help to improve the efficiency of project delivery, by ensuring that it meets local needs and overcoming local obstructions
- when planning community and stakeholder engagement be clear what the purpose is: who do you want to engage? Are you giving and collecting information or involving people in decision making?
- make it accessible and inclusive – everyone affected by the issue should be able to contribute. Ensure that people are not excluded through barriers of language, culture or opportunity
- make sure there is a clear overall process for the engagement that has been agreed by all key parties
- make it fun and engaging – community and stakeholder engagement does not have to be limited to traditional methods. Interesting, creative methods using arts and events can engage a wider audience
- communicate – make sure that the results and the process of engagement are widely communicated

2. Introduction

2.1

Stakeholder and community engagement is a crucial part of the delivery process. Successful community engagement leads to successful schemes that address the needs of users, stakeholders and the local community.

2.2

Successful community and stakeholder engagement will ensure:

- the scheme meets local needs, addressing the real issues of the community and stakeholders
- the views of people affected by the scheme are taken into account during the design stage and can help reduce objections to scheme, ensuring a smoother formal consultation and delivery through the planning system
- the local community feels ownership of the scheme, maximising usage of the scheme and volunteers may be more eager to help maintain and promote the route in the future
- reputational risk is managed, as all stakeholders are invested in the process and understand the benefits of delivery
- promotional opportunities are realised during the planning and launch stages
- there are opportunities provided to promote sustainable travel to the local community
- the wider benefits of the scheme, such as public realm improvements, additional green space, safety and improved accessibility are communicated
- increased support for future development

3. Who are the community? Who are the stakeholders?

3.1

The first step when planning community and stakeholder engagement is to identify who you want to engage with. For an infrastructure project the community is anyone who will be affected by the project. This could be people who currently use the space, people who will use the infrastructure in the future and anyone else who will be affected.

3.2

Stakeholders are key individuals and organisations who will have an impact on the success of the project. This could be:

- statutory stakeholders, people and organisations who need to be involved by law such as the Local Authority and Environment Agency
- local organisations including people in voluntary roles
- special interest groups who represent specific groups such as a people with a disability or local conservation groups
- individuals with specific experience or knowledge that could contribute to the programme

3.3

When identifying community stakeholders it is important to be aware of how they represent sections of the community. Working with only established community leaders is not always an adequate substitute for engaging the wider community.



4. Planning community engagement

4.1

When planning public engagement it is vital to be clear what the purpose of the engagement is, what has potential to change, how you will use the information you collect and the available budget/resources.

Checklist for engagement

4.2

Before you engage the community make sure you can answer the following questions:

- is there clear agreement about what the engagement is for and what is up for grabs?
- are you clear about what information you will collect and how it will be used?
- are you going to explain to participants why they are being consulted and what their answers will be used for?
- do you know how you will feed back to the community?
- do you have sufficient time for engagement?
- do you have sufficient budget and resources to engage properly?
- is it worth bringing in outside resources or specialists in engagement to run this part of your process for you?

Correct level of engagement

4.3

It is vital to select the most effective level of engagement for any project, both in terms of the intensity of the engagement and the role that the local community have in decision making. Factors to take into account include:

- is the project is likely to be controversial (e.g. will it affect access or parking)?
- will the scheme affect lots of people?
- is there flexibility in the design and can local stakeholders be involved in the design process?

Formal consultation

4.4

In some cases there will be a need to conduct formal consultation. If a proposed intervention will change how a road is used then it is likely that the Highway Authority will need to issue a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which requires formal consultation.

Ladder of engagement

4.5

The different levels of engagement are not better or worse than each other, they have different purposes and will use different methods. This is illustrated in the Ladder of Engagement (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Ladder of engagement	
Information giving:	Provide people with information to assist their understanding
Goal:	Information given will be accurate, balanced and up-dated as necessary
Information gathering:	Collect information about attitudes, opinions and preferences that will assist understanding and decision-making
Goal:	Information gathered will be treated and used responsibly and reported honestly
Consultation:	Obtain feedback on specific policies or proposals.
Goal:	Feedback will be taken seriously, decisions will be influenced, and people will be informed of the influence they have had
Participation:	Involve people actively at all stages to ensure their concerns are understood and considered, and to give them some influence on and ownership of decisions
Goal:	People will be able to shape the process, it will be transparent throughout, and they will have some influence over decisions
Collaboration:	Bring people into active partnership and agree sharing of resources and decision-making.
Goal:	Decision-making will be shared and resources will be held in common
Delegated authority:	Transfer resources and decision-making
Goal:	Sufficient resources will be transferred to enable decision making, and that what is decided will be implemented

Source: Arnstein (1969), *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*

Community engagement stages

4.6

The typical stages involved in a community engagement process, and questions to consider at each stage, are summarised in Table 4.2.

Stage	Things to think about
Pre-design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what is the local support for the project? • can we work with communities to develop support? • what are the needs, requirements and aspirations of the local community/ is there a community or neighbourhood plan? • who are the stakeholders?
Design and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how can we involve the community in the design? • what engagement is required for the planning? • how to engage with negative feedback?
Build	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to make sure the community are informed? • how do we keep the community involved? • how will you manage negative impacts and delays during build?
Launch/opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to involve the wider community?
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep people informed about the project through effective communication: it is vital to let people know what happened as a result of their engagement. • what is the ongoing role for volunteers and champions? • how will volunteers and champions be supported?

5. Engaging stakeholders



5.1

Members of local communities with an interest in developing potential schemes can approach a range of stakeholders to seek advice and offer support. In addition to the lead officers who will generally be from the Local Authority and other scheme sponsors, these can variously include:

- local authority
 - elected member/councillor - lead on transport or environment
 - ‘technical’ representative: Cycling Officer and Traffic/Bridge/Highways Engineer
 - Public Health/Health Promotion, Sports Development, Community Development, Play and/or Youth Services
- local schools and colleges, School Travel Advisor/Sustrans’ Bike It Officer
- large local employers
- cycling and walking groups
- environmental and community organisations
- volunteers, representatives of special interest groups e.g. wildlife, heritage and sport.
- other potential partner organisations e.g. Canal and River Trust or Network Rail

5.2

When identifying stakeholders it can be useful to think of who is affected and who has influence. See Appendix 1 for an Influence/Affected Matrix which can be used to manage stakeholders.

Steering/planning group

5.3

Interested members of the community and local stakeholders may wish to form a steering/planning group to advise upon and support the delivery of a scheme.

5.4

It is sometimes advisable to consider forming sub-groups to focus on specific work areas such as technical and design, and community engagement or public relations which may help to optimise members’ time and capabilities.



5.5

Appendix 3 provides suggested objectives for a steering/planning group. Events and activities make it engaging and get beyond the usual suspects.

5.6

Sustrans engagement of communities in redesigning their streets has found that fun, interactive engagement can be a successful way to boost participation and involve people in decision making. It is common when thinking about engagement to concentrate on questionnaires and public meetings, but engagement can be much more than this.

5.7

Creative, interactive and flexible techniques such as using art, music, storytelling, humour and hands-on practical activities are an excellent way to engage people that might not get involved in more traditional approaches.



Key aspects to consider

5.8

Timing: what is the best time to engage? Activities during work hours will exclude people who are at work, activities in the evening can be difficult for people with children.



5.9

Engaging children: think about how to make your event appealing and engaging to children. Children will often have really good ideas, and if you engage children you will often be able to speak to their parents too.



5.10

Make it fun: think about using informal methods for collecting information such as using sticky dots to record priorities, flipcharts or graffiti walls to record information, using luggage tags on a tree or washing line. Informal activities should be quick, simple to understand and visually engaging.

5.11

Where to reach people: are there existing events and groups that you can talk to? Rather than creating a standalone event that you will need to promote, can you attend an existing event or group activity?

5.12

Online methods: online engagement can provide a way to engage with a wide range of people in a convenient way. People can decide to choose where, when and for how long they want to participate. There are a variety of online engagement tools including social networks and specific consultation tools such as Citizen Space. Online engagement needs to be integrated into the project rather than added as an afterthought.

5.13

Appendix 2 provides more information on community and stakeholder engagement methods.

6. Recording, measuring and reporting engagement

6.1

It is important to record and review the engagement process. This allows you to know which methods have worked or not worked. Recording the process also allows you to show to the community and funders what you've done and how the information you have gathered has been used.

6.2

It is important to think about how you will monitor and record engagement at the planning stage.

6.3

Potential methods of recording projects include:

- recording the numbers of engagement activities held and number of people engaged
- documenting the project using photographs, video and capturing online engagement
- feedback from participants

Feedback to the community

6.4

It is vital to feedback to the community what happened as a result of the engagement process. This should include what you did, how many people you engaged, what you found out, what will happen as a result of the engagement and what the next steps are. This should form part of the ongoing communication with the community throughout the project.

Feedback to the funder and partners

6.5

Keep the funder and partners informed about the engagement process. The report should include the number and type of events run, attendance figures and the key feedback from participants. Photographs, video and online comment can help to make feedback lively and interesting.

Case study 1:

Community-led street design Turnpike Lane, London Borough of Haringey

The challenge

Consultation with the community revealed the area was suffering from a number of challenges:

- high traffic speeds and rat running, which led to concerns over safety for pedestrians and cyclists
- walking and cycling infrastructure was disconnected and poor quality, with under used green and public spaces
- anti-social behaviour concerns, with fly tipping and dog fouling an issue
- residents felt disempowered and disconnected from local decision-making

Sustrans solution

Community-led street design helps residents to redesign their own streets affordably, making them safer, more attractive places to live. The project took place between 2010 and 2012 and led to the creation of high quality public spaces that made the area cleaner and more welcoming. Infrastructure improvements and better lighting resulted in a more joined up and safer local walking and cycling network. Over 40 trees were planted along the streets, electric car charging points and public art were installed with drivers encouraged to slow down.

Impact

The project focused on a neighbourhood of around 1,000 households and evidenced:

- 23% increase in all traffic travelling 20mph or less
- 34% increase in the number of residents who felt the street is a place to socialise

Residents felt so empowered that, following the initiative, they created a campaign group to continue making improvements to the area.

The project was runner up in the Local Government News Street Design Awards 2012.

Case study 2:

Stakeholder and community engagement Padiham Connect2 Greenway

Sustrans engaged the community to convert a disused railway line into an attractive greenway and linear park that has revitalised the community of Padiham.

As part of the Connect2 programme Sustrans worked with local authorities and partners to connect Padiham and Burnley with a network of high quality greenways.

Key to the designs was community input, to develop a public space the whole community can enjoy.

The project was designed to be much more than just a physical change to the built environment. The greenway was designed to be a popular public space in its own right where people could come to meet friends, sit and chat.

Residents were involved in the project from start to finish to ensure it met their needs. The project used a varied of engagement methods to help foster a greater sense of community cohesion and local ownership of the path. These events included garden parties, tree and shrub planting, litter picking and the creation of a collection of portrait figures, voted for by the public.

Impact

A recent survey found:

- 84% of people using the route were doing so because it felt safe
- the number of people using the route to get to work or school has tripled

Since completion the community has taken ownership of the project. The project won a European Greenway Award for Social Integration in 2011.

Key facts

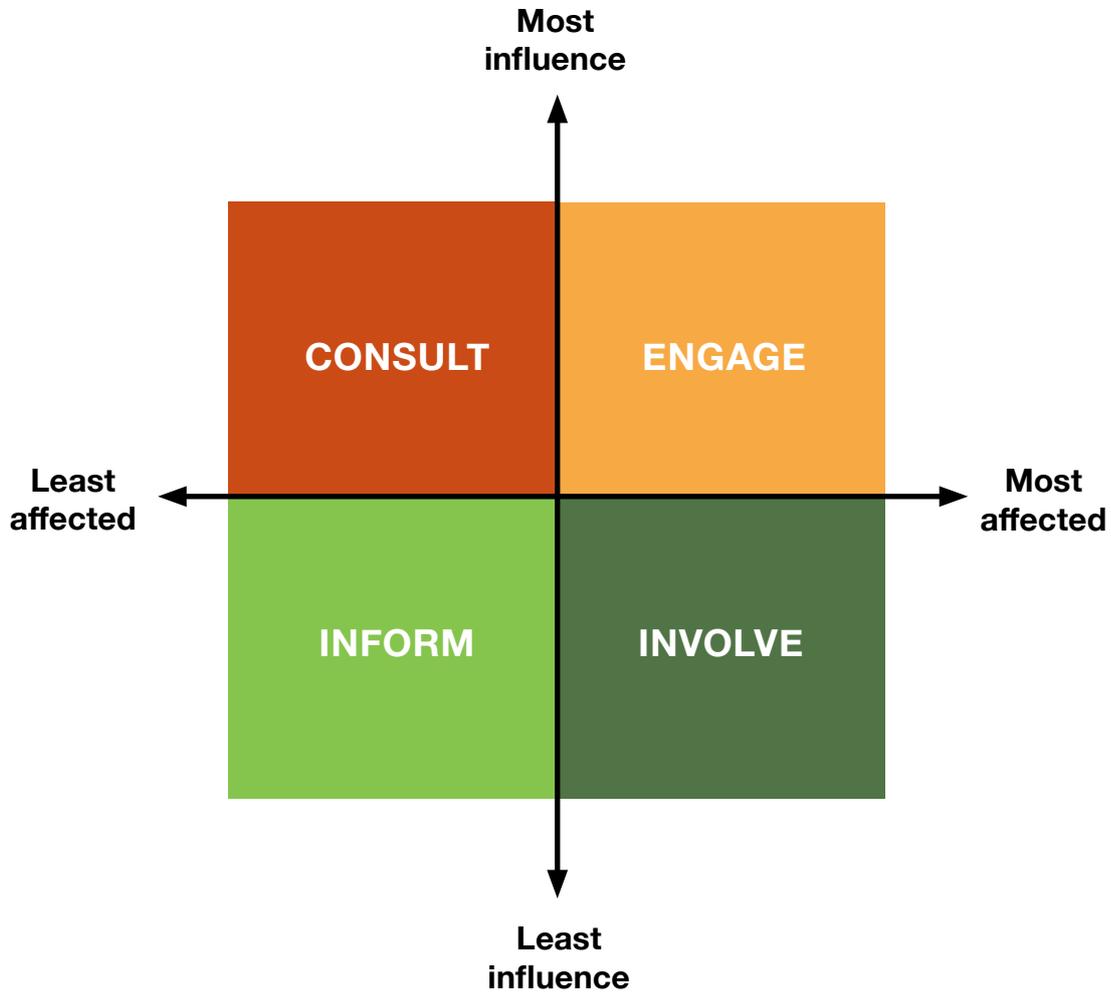
Project funders:

- Big Lottery Fund
- Department for Transport
- Lancashire County Council
- Network Rail
- Burnley Metropolitan Borough Council
- Canal and River Trust
- Mid Pennine Arts Remade

Project costs: £1.75 million

Project completed: February 2012

Appendix 1: Influence / affected matrix



Source: Imperial College London, 2006

Appendix 2: Community and stakeholder engagement methods

Approach	Description
Stakeholder meetings	Meetings to discuss the scheme and intervention with stakeholder groups
On-street pop up events	On-street events to engage passers-by and residents
Design workshops	Facilitated co-design workshops with a model kit where attendees are encouraged to contribute ideas for street re-design
Community Mapping	Community maps can be used to understand how people use a place and gather their views
Bike breakfasts	Events designed to target cyclists to gather feedback about junction redesigns on roads already with a cyclist presence
Door knocking	Targeted engagement designed to gain feedback from specific individuals such as residents or traders in the immediate vicinity of an intervention
Distribution of flyers inviting feedback	Design and delivery of flyers that introduce the scheme and give an overview of proposed changes, including team contact details
Online engagement	Range of online methods to inform and engage the community
Trialling temporary interventions	Trial and monitoring of interventions that may be temporary to investigate their impact before a permanent change is made
Led rides and walks	Led rides and walks can be used to help stakeholders understand the area better, including how it is used by cars, cyclists and pedestrians
Ongoing engagement activities	Ongoing activities provide a way for the community to be involved in the scheme. There is a huge range of creative ways to get people involved in a project, such as arts or practical projects

For a comprehensive list of community and stakeholder methods see:
<http://participationcompass.org/article/index/method>

Appendix 3: Draft terms of reference for a steering/planning group

Objectives of (name of scheme):

- to increase levels of walking and cycling
- to involve communities in planning and delivering (name of scheme) to enable people to choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment
- to identify and take opportunities to integrate this (name of scheme) with other successful sustainable transport projects and initiatives

Roles of the steering group:

- to ensure strong local stakeholder and community involvement in advising and practically supporting (name of organisation) in the planning, designing and building, and sustaining the maintenance, promotion, usage and monitoring of the (name of scheme)

Governance/accountability:

- establish and agree a terms of reference outlining the tasks of the steering/planning group and roles of its members
- ensure that the steering/planning group establishes and supports formal reporting/ accountability arrangements to the appropriate local authority (or other lead agency) committee
- consider the merits of possibly establishing sub groups to use members' time and capabilities more effectively e.g. technical and design, community engagement and public relations

Stakeholder involvement:

- identify and involve an appropriate and representative range of key local stakeholders including members of the community
- appoint an experienced and committed chairperson, and ensure steering group servicing and regular working arrangements
- ensure that a high level "champion" is nominated and acts as and when appropriate in progressing the scheme (e.g., the chair, senior officer, lead elected member, or appropriate local resident or volunteer).

Community engagement:

- encourage the identification and involvement of interested members of the local community including volunteers
- develop agreed roles (as part of the Terms of Reference) and tasks for the community representatives to undertake

Networking/additionally:

In order to optimise the impact of the (name of scheme), the Steering Group will:

- link the scheme to other key national, regional and local policies, provision and programmes
- seek to attract additional resources in order to further develop other aspirational plans and/or other local forms of sustainable transport