

Practitioners' Manual for Public Engagement

This Practitioners' Manual for Public Engagement has been developed to support the implementation of the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales and to provide an on-line resource for public sector practitioners.

This Manual was produced by Participation Cymru, on behalf of the Welsh Government, in association with public sector practitioners, using material developed by the Enhanced Consultation Strategy."

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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Engagement with service users remains a critically important pillar of the new Government's drive. Creating the Wales of the future is something that involves all of us, we can achieve little without the input and partnership of the people of Wales, and our key stakeholders, at every level "

Carwyn Jones, First Minister, Welsh Government (2011)

Introduction

The key role of the citizen in the design and delivery of public services.

In 2004 the Welsh Government published Making the Connections which set out a distinctive framework for achieving public service improvement in Wales. In 2006 the Beecham Report critically assessed the potential to deliver citizen-centred local services through what it referred to as the 'citizen model'. The report identified citizen engagement as one of four '*critical success factors*' essential to transforming public services in Wales.

In Making the Connections (2004) and subsequently in "Better outcomes for tougher times" (2009), the Welsh Government has made a commitment to public engagement as a means of achieving its agenda for citizen-centred services stating that '*Giving people a stronger voice in public services is at the heart of Making the Connections: only by listening closely to the needs and concerns of people and communities, and working with them, is it possible to design and deliver services that meet their needs.*' (Making the Connections 2004) and in its commitment to "*Offering public services that are more responsive to citizens – by using the voice and experiences of citizens to drive change.*" (Better Outcomes for Tougher Times 2009)

Over the years, training and sharing of knowledge have proved important elements of improving citizen engagement and customer experiences. The role and activities of Participation Cymru aim to capture and share good practice and provide coherence and guidance across the Welsh public sector organisations in all aspects of effective engagement.

Following the Welsh Government's endorsement of the [National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales](#) in March 2011, this "Practitioners' Manual for Public Engagement' had been produced by Participation Cymru, in association with a wide range of public sector engagement practitioners to provide a consolidated "step by step" approach to undertaking consultation and engagement in the context of current statutory obligations and the Welsh national citizen engagement agenda.

This Manual has been developed using the material developed by the [Enhanced Consultation Strategy \(ECS\)](#) and its fieldwork. This document has been endorsed by the cross public sector public engagement advisory groups: [Participation Cymru Advisory Panel](#) and the [Public Engagement Working Group](#).

[Home Page](#)

This document is intended to be a user friendly accessible on-line resource for practitioners and others that are interested in developing and undertaking effective public engagement with their communities in and accordance with the National Principles of Public Engagement.

If you have any suggestions, comments, experiences, case studies or documents that you would like to share please contact participationcymru@wcva.org.uk.

Section 1: Whether to consult / engage or not.

Definitions:

These are working definitions for the purposes of this manual and the National Principles for Public Engagement (2011). It is recognised that different organisations will use a variety of terminology to mean similar things.

Engagement: An active and participative process by which people can influence and shape policy and services that includes a wide range of different methods and techniques.

Consultation: A formal process by which policy makers and service providers ask for the views of interested groups and individuals.

Participation: People being actively involved with policy makers and service planners from an early stage of policy and service planning and review.

We consult or engage when we need or want information from another's perspective, in order to make decisions or plan ahead. But before we jump in and starting planning a process we need to ask some important opening questions:

- Does this particular decision or service change require a consultation or engagement process? Will it make a difference? If the answer is no, then there is no point in doing it.
- Do we or someone we know already have this information, perhaps from another survey or performance indicator? If so, is it available to you to use?
- Is there any other exercise in preparation locally for the same audience and is there an opportunity to pool resources and work together?

1.1 Different types of consultation / engagement

Statutory Obligation is when organisations have a legal duty to consult laid down by the government.

Policy Commitment is when a particular service provider has its own clear policy to consult or engage on particular issues.

Discretionary Engagement is when consultation / engagement may be considered by services in order to learn from the experience of others, to confirm stakeholders' priorities, or simply communicate change and collect views.

1.2 Ten reasons why citizens choose to participate:

- To raise a point that decision makers might not have considered;
- To help decision makers decide which option to choose when making decisions;
- To help decision makers understand how to do something new or differently;
- To influence the decision about a service that directly affects them or their family;
- They are unhappy with the current situation and want things to change;

- They want to make a difference to their community or individual lives;
- They feel it is their duty as a citizen;
- They want to make things better for themselves or their communities;
- They like being involved and being part of the solution;
- They want to complain about current service provision.

1.3 Beneficial outcomes for an organisation

The gathered information:

- reinforces existing information;
- helps identify service user's preferences;
- helps target services better.

But if engagement is done well there are also much wider benefits for all.

Research has repeatedly shown that real benefits can be gained from good engagement. Here are 8 benefits of good engagement, summarised from Steve Skinner's book, "Strengthening Communities" (CDF 2006).

Real benefits include:

- **Effective services and programmes** by meeting identified local needs and leading to better decisions.
- **Greater credibility** by creating support for services and programmes.
- **Lasting impact** by creating sustainability through community sense of ownership.
- **Stronger communities** by increasing skill levels and creating greater confidence.
- **Strengthened democracy** by encouraging people to be actively involved in the democratic process between elections.
- **Increased resources** by identifying local assets.
- **Added value** by working with communities to provide specialist services, innovative approaches and to engage with excluded groups.
- **Improved rights** by demonstrating that people have a right to influence decisions that affect their services, group or neighbourhood.

1.4 Making the wrong decision on whether to consult / engage or not can have a negative impact when

- Calling the process consultation or engagement when it is really an information giving event;
- The drive to consult or engage has come from a national agenda with little meaning for a locality and therefore seems tokenistic;
- When the information gathered is never used;
- When participants do not receive any feedback or updates on how their contribution has been used.

1.5 Making a Decision

Consultation / engagement are a means to an end, and never an end in itself. Below are two aspects that you need to consider that will help to get you started. Don't begin anything until you have thought through all the issues.

1.5.1 Ethical considerations

There are certain ethical considerations that you need to be aware of when gathering information from the general public.

The main considerations are that:

- Participation in engagement should be based on willing and informed consent.
- In practice this means that those taking part should have a clear understanding of why information is being gathered from them and what it will be used for.
- Those taking part should be aware of who is undertaking the engagement work and who it is being undertaken for, including contact details of these organisations.
- Those taking part should be able to check the identity and credentials of the individuals conducting the engagement activities.
- Taking part is entirely voluntary. Those taking part can refuse to answer any questions or withdraw at any point, without having to explain why.
- Engagement should not be unduly intrusive or harm the participant in any way.
- Engagement should be undertaken honestly and objectively. Objectivity means that the feelings or opinions of those conducting the engagement should not have an influence on the implementation or outcomes.

In practice this means that those closely involved with the subject of the engagement may not be best placed to conduct it themselves. Other benefits of involving an objective third party to undertake engagement work are that they may have greater competence and capacity and it can, in some instances, be more cost-effective.

- Those taking part in engagement activities should be told if, and how, their contributions are being recorded, observed or monitored.
- Those conducting the engagement should be clear, at the outset, about the amount of time and nature of the input required from those taking part. Assurances given on this, such as the length of time a focus group will take, should be honoured.

1.5.2. Data Protection

People may agree to take part in engagement activities as individuals or as representatives of an organisation or a business. Protection afforded by The Data Protection Act is predominantly aimed at those taking part as individuals, as well as sole traders and partnerships.

- Individuals should have a clear understanding of why information is being gathered from them. If personal information is being gathered from them they must be informed as to how this will be used and they must give permission for this. They will also need to give permission for any subsequent use of this personal information.
- Personal information is any information which identifies a living, individual person. It includes such things as the person's name, address, national insurance number, recording of their image or voice.
- Personal information can be gathered from people, as part of an engagement activity, either anonymously or confidentially.

Anonymity means that you cannot identify or link a response to a particular participant.

- Confidentiality means that you can identify or link a response with a particular participant but you agree not to do so. To achieve this, information must be stored securely and no unauthorised access to the information allowed. Information from an identified individual can only be identified if that individual has given their consent for this. Any personal information held must be removed as soon as it is no longer needed.

Practical steps that you can take to ensure that individual identity is protected include:

- Ensure a good sample size, to reduce the likelihood of being able to identify particular individuals
- Self-completion and one-to-one interview methods allow for the greatest degree of privacy
- Not attributing responses to individuals when reporting on the engagement

See also “Participation - The Next Generation” TPAS Cymru’s tenant participation practices in social housing.

[Participation - The Next Generation \(502.59 kB\)](#)

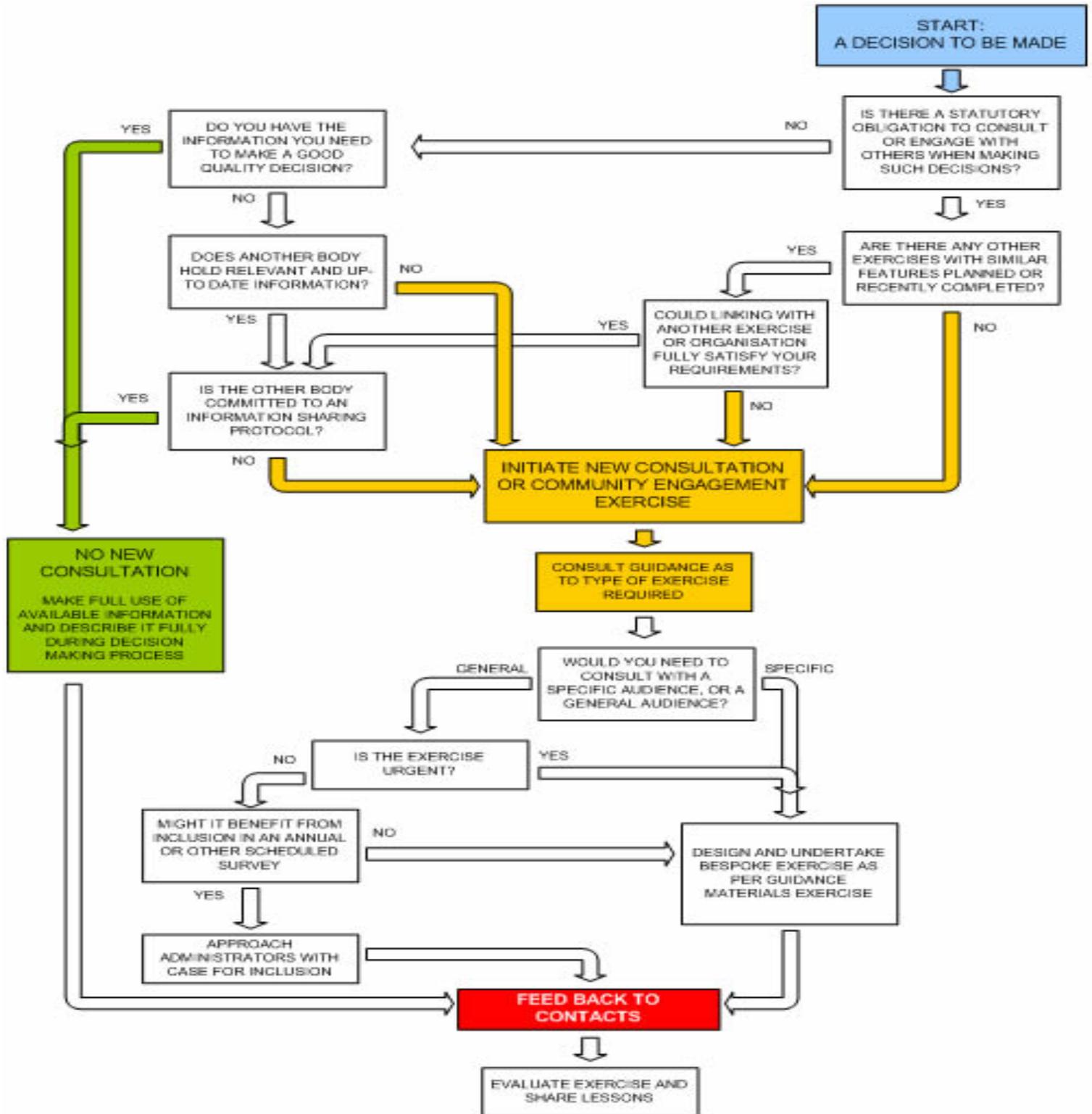


Figure 1: Flowchart of how to undertake a consultation or engagement exercise
(Enhanced Consultation Strategy Revised 22/08/2011)

1.6 Engagement Project Initiation Document (PID).

Use this template to help you plan and think through what you intend to do. It will give you confidence that you are making the right decision and will also help to keep you on track further down the road.

The other sections of this manual will guide you through the questions in this PID in more detail.

1	<p><u>Clarity of Purpose</u></p> <p>Why are you seeking to engage? Does this contribute to your organisation's business objectives? What information do you need? Do you need to generate new ideas, explore a new area or do you need incontrovertible evidence to support a controversial decision? Understanding this will help to ensure that you correctly identify your target audience and select the most appropriate method of gathering information</p> <p>What do you want the outcome to be?</p>
2	<p><u>Timescale</u></p> <p>What timescale are you working to?</p> <p>Is engagement realistic?</p>
3	<p><u>Target Audience</u></p> <p>Who do you want to engage?</p> <p>Which sections of society or which geographical areas?</p> <p>Where are these people and how will you find them?</p>
4	<p><u>Partnership</u></p> <p>Which organisations are already working with these people?</p> <p>Have you spoken to them about how to engage or working together?</p>
5	<p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>What resources do you have available?</p> <p>Will you need to work with others to achieve effective engagement?</p>
6	<p><u>Pre engagement</u></p> <p>Have you spoken to community leaders for example County/ Town and Community Councils and local ward councillors is an issue specific to a certain community)?</p> <p>Have you spoken to specialist organisations relevant to the target audience?</p>
7	<p><u>Communication</u></p> <p>Have you communicated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the rationale for engagement?- the level of resources available?- the type of outcome that is reasonable?- the barriers from your perspective that could stand in the way of new ideas?

8	<u>Roles and responsibilities</u> Are roles and responsibilities clear? What are you expecting the community to do e.g. disseminate information, canvas opinion?
9	<u>Methods</u> Which tools are you going to use? Which method will most effectively provide the type of information that you need to address the issue about which you are engaging?
10	<u>Developing Projects</u> Do you need to set up a project group? Is its purpose clear? If so have you thought about who needs to be on it? Are roles clear? How long will it last?
11	<u>Evaluation</u> How are you going to know if engagement has been effective?
12	<u>Maintaining Relationships</u> How are you going to feedback to communities? How will you maintain engagement channels?

Section 1 looked at the **initial assessment** stage. Now you have decided you are going to engage, you need to move to the **planning** stage.

Section 2 Planning for engagement

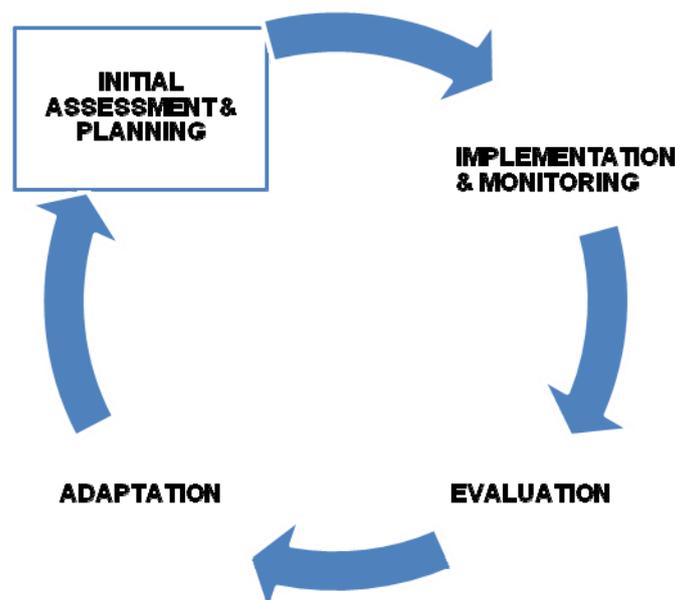
Once a need to engage has been identified you need to plan carefully how the engagement will happen. Spending time planning at this stage will reap reward and ensure the organisation doesn't spend money on consultation activities which don't meet the original objective.

2.1 The Process of Engagement

A simple process of engagement is given below.

- The process starts with the **initial assessment and planning**. Here the decision about whether to engage is made (initial assessment), then the engagement itself is planned.
- The **implementation and monitoring** relate to when the actual engagement activities are carried out.
- During **evaluation** the feedback collected from the engagement is collated and analysed.
- The final stage is **adaptation** – where decisions are made about how the feedback is acted on; e.g. how services will change given what people have said about them.

The process is shown as an ongoing cycle as engagement should be a continuous process: when adaptation has been delivered the services should be reviewed at some point again, to engage people in discussion on whether the new service meets their needs.



**Figure 2: Process of engagement cycle
(Enhanced Consultation Strategy Revised 22/08/2011)**

2.2 What to do next

2.2.1 Project team

One of the first things you might wish to do is consider drawing together a group of people who will act as the project team. This will depend on the available resources but you will find it useful to share the work with other people: there will be a lot to do; you can get ideas from other people; and each member of the team can take responsibility for different parts of the project.

If you are going to set up a project team, discuss and complete item 10 of the PID [See section 1.6 Engagement Project Initiation Document \(PID\)](#)

2.2.2 Completing the project PID

Clarity of Purpose

1	<p>Why are you seeking to engage? What information do you need? Does this contribute to your organisation's business objectives? Do you need to generate new ideas, explore a new area or do you need incontrovertible evidence to support a controversial decision? Understanding this will help to ensure that you correctly identify your target audience and select the most appropriate method of gathering information?</p> <p>What do you want the outcome to be?</p>
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You will need to be very clear about why you're engaging with people. Be clear about the ultimate aim – is it to improve services? Make cost savings or both?

Engagement is about gathering information that will help you to improve the quality of planning and decision making, which in-turn, should lead to better policies and services, and an increase in customer and stakeholder satisfaction.

Knowing what sort of evidence you need will help you ensure your activities meet your engagement needs as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Most engagement gathers information about one or more of the areas below:

- experiences of services;
- satisfaction with services;
- opinions, views and attitudes;
- priorities on given issues;
- knowledge and awareness of services;
- ideas for improving services.

You should clearly identify engagement needs. What decision(s) will be taken as a result of the engagement exercise? What type of evidence will be needed to support these?

Different types of information:

- **Exploratory** – developing initial ideas and providing direction for further engagement
If you want ideas from service users on how a service you provide could be developed to better meet their needs in the future, or suggestions from a group of young people on possible names for a new youth centre, then you'll be gathering exploratory information
- **Descriptive** – building a picture of something, describing it in as much detail as possible
If you want to know who uses a local leisure centre, what they use it for, how often they visit, how long they stay for, what they think about the services/facilities on offer etc, then you'll be gathering descriptive information
- **Explanatory** – where you set out to explain the relationship between things
If you want to know why people are no longer using a once popular bus route then you'll be seeking explanatory information

If you want the outcome of your engagement to be decisive, then you will need to gather descriptive or explanatory evidence or, what is known as, 'conclusive' information.

Conclusive information will help you rule out one option or course of action in favour of another.

Understanding what type of evidence you need to gather will help you to decide whether you need to gather quantitative or qualitative information which, together with resource considerations, will help you to identify the most appropriate method and target audience.

If you want to gather conclusive information then you will need to work with a relatively large sample (number of people) in a structured standardised way. This will provide quantitative information, which is about understanding the extent of something or of measuring something. Findings are usually expressed as numbers in charts, graphics etc

Qualitative information is, typically, collected from relatively small sample sizes. The findings are expressed in words (or pictures) but rarely as numbers. It is concerned with rich and detailed description, understanding and insight rather than measurement. It aims to get below the surface, beyond spontaneous or rational responses to a deeper and more emotional response. While findings can help to deepen understanding they can not, however, be regarded as conclusive because the sample sizes are generally too small to be representative of a community or population.

Engagement can also be undertaken on an ad hoc or continuous basis.

Ad hoc engagement is one off, designed to answer a specific problem at a certain point in time.

Continuous engagement is undertaken on an ongoing basis, or repeated at regular intervals. It can help to provide you with a clear understanding of changes taking place over time.

Continuous or regularly repeated engagement can either repeatedly involve the same group of people (sample) or a new group (or fresh sample) can be identified. If you want

to draw comparisons between sets of information gathered at different times you will need to make sure your samples are matched.

Objectives

Once you have identified your engagement needs it is a good idea to set specific objectives for the activity. These should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound). These will help to ensure that your engagement activities are conducted effectively and efficiently and that you are better able to evaluate them at a later date.

Scope

The scope of the activity must be carefully considered and clearly communicated to participants. Be clear about exactly which areas people can influence, and which are non-negotiable. This will help you to be clear about what you need to know from people and how you will approach the engagement. This will focus people's input and manage their expectations. You might need to take into account organisational and policy considerations here.

Think about how you will manage the feedback you receive. You clearly won't be able to meet **everyone's** needs, so consider how you will reach decisions where compromise is necessary. Being upfront about these issues will establish open and honest communication and build trust between yourselves and participants. It will also enable you to think clearly about the issues you might face before you begin.

Timescale

2	What timescale are you working to? Is engagement realistic?
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Develop a project plan to schedule the tasks you need to achieve and required timescales. A project plan is provided in the appendices (iv), or other tools can be used to schedule activities. Ensure that you have planned adequate time for each activity, including evaluation and feeding back. Review your timetable and identify any major events which might delay things (holidays, other events within the area or organisation etc) and review your timescales accordingly. Be realistic!

Be considerate of timing when planning your engagement activity and consider the needs of the audience you are targeting. [See section 4: Understanding specific audiences.](#)

Target audience

3	Who do you want to engage? Which sections of society or which geographical areas? Where are these people and how will you find them?
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When considering who you're going to engage with, a stakeholder analysis can help you to identify each person who has a stake in the issue.

In more traditional research terms, this is known as identifying your population of interest and developing a sampling plan.

It is important to do this every time you engage over a different issue as your information needs will change and different people will be affected by different issues. [See section 4: Understanding specific audiences.](#)

Once you have identified who the target audience for the engagement activity is, you can plan which methods you're going to use to engage them.

Partnerships

4	Which organisations are already working with these people? Have you spoken to them about how to engage or working together?
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Before embarking on an engagement exercise for your own organisation it is worth considering who else might be engaged with your stakeholders and to speak with them to work out what scope there is to collaborate.

Partnership working can reduce consultation fatigue and ultimately cost. Other partnerships may already have good engagement mechanisms in place which you can use and/or regular users groups who could contribute.

Resources

5	What resources do you have available? Will you need to work with others to achieve effective engagement?
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You will need to identify the resources you have available to you well before you start. Think about how you can make the best use of resources - what other organisations and partners can you work with on this? Are they holding events where you could run your activities, to save you holding separate events? [See section 3: Getting resources in place](#)

Pre engagement

6	Have you spoken to community leaders for example County/ Town and Community Councils and local ward councillors if an issue is specific to a certain community)? Have you spoken to specialist organisations relevant to the target audience?
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Listening to and seeking out the views of those who may have added insight into your stakeholders or geographical area of engagement activity can be useful ahead of launching into a full activity.

Local or specialist knowledge can help you consider all aspects and test out your engagement ideas ahead of launching a fuller activity.

Communication

7	Have you communicated: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the rationale for engagement?• the level of resources available?• the type of outcome that is reasonable?• the barriers from your perspective that could stand in the way of new ideas ?
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Effective communication is required throughout the process of an engagement activity. At the start it is vital that the manager seeking the data is clear about their objectives and that their expectations are realistic in terms of how any findings are used by the organisation. It's also important to set a budget and consider barriers and how to overcome them.

Roles and Responsibilities

8	Are roles and responsibilities clear? What are you expecting the community to do e.g. disseminate information, canvas opinion?
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Being clear about the role each member of the project team plays in an activity helps to ensure the data received is relevant. Equally it's important to consider at this stage what the role of the participant is so that the data collected is of use and expectations are managed. If an engagement activity is too vague, undefined and results in masses of qualitative information it is difficult to analyse.

Methodology

9	Which tools are you going to use? Are they appropriate to the purpose of engagement and the target audience?
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When choosing **how** you're going to engage you will need to consider a number of factors:

- The needs of the target audience (language / literacy / accessibility). Will the method be accessible for the people you want to engage with?
- Your capacity to implement the method. Do you have the resources, skills, and knowledge necessary to do this?
- Is the method appropriate to what you want to know? Will the method enable the right type of information to be generated to answer the questions you're asking?

Consider working with other organisations and with colleagues in your own organisation, utilising existing communications or events. For example promote it in a newsletter / website. Are groups meeting anyway, can you go along and conduct a brief focus group?

There are relative costs per-consultee (in terms of money, time and staff input) for different approaches that should be considered when designing the consultation and

engagement. The diagram below gives a general picture of the relative resources needed for different consultation methods.

Where standardised, structured information is collected from a large sample it can be relatively low cost per person taking part, but high cost overall. For methods such as face-to-face interviews and focus groups, where a lot of time is spent with a small number of people, costs can be high per person but relatively low overall.

In summary, costs generally increase with the level of contact and time spent 'with' people. Thus online or postal surveys, with little if any direct contact with the consultee, costs far less per consultee to undertake than a telephone version of the same survey, which in turn costs far less per head to complete than a focus group. In short, more engagement doesn't necessarily mean better engagement.

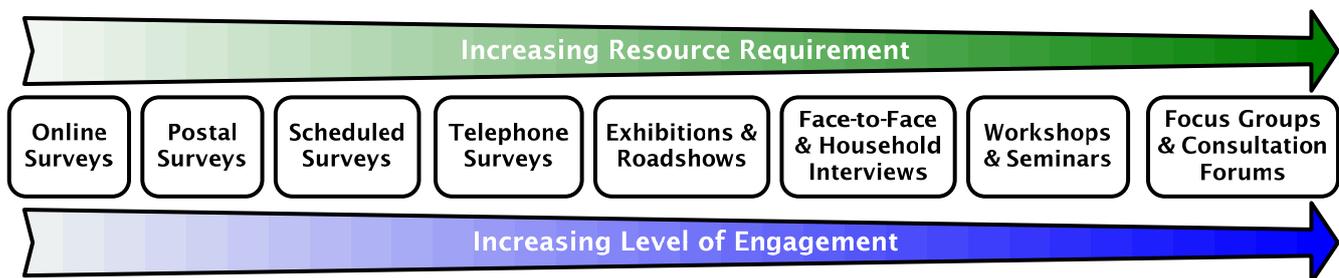


Figure 3: Relative resource requirements (per-consultee) and level of direct engagement by method
(Enhanced Consultation Strategy Revised 22/08/2011)

It makes sense to ensure that the methods used are proportionate to the scale of the engagement. On larger projects a range of approaches might be used, such as a questionnaire with a follow up interview. On smaller scale issues, it may be more cost-effective to have just a single element to the consultation or engagement. In every case, managers should consider the type of information they need to support the decision(s) to which the engagement activity relates:

- Accounts of experiences? (e.g. – what do you feel about local recycling facilities?)
- Agreement or disagreement with statements or proposals?(e.g. – the Health Board is considering A,B,C – do you agree or disagree that this will achieve its aims in relation to...etc)
- Levels of satisfaction with a service? (E.g. were you very happy, happy, undecided, unhappy, and very unhappy with the service you received?)
- Numbers of times a service is used? (E.g. how many times did you visit facility X in the last year?)
- All of the above.

The original point of the engagement must be kept in mind at all times: is this new information and will it help anyone? [See section 6: Techniques and methods of engagement](#)

Developing Projects

10	Do you need to set up a project group? Is its purpose clear? If so have you thought about who needs to be on it? Are roles clear? How long will it last?
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See also [Project planning toolkit](#)

Evaluation

11	How are you going to know if engagement has been effective?
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At this stage start to think about how the data will be analysed. Plan in time for this and consider whether you have the resources to do this in-house. Will you need to purchase this? [See section 10: How did it go? - evaluating the process.](#)

Maintaining Relationships

12	How are you going to feedback to communities? How will you maintain engagement channels?
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When planning out an engagement activity it is important to factor in how, when and how often feedback is going to be given to those taking part and what detail is going to be given at the various points in time.

Feedback - even if it may not be what the participants want to hear - is an important part of any engagement activity.

Knowing how you are going to feedback to people before you launch an activity shows you have put thought and effort into the whole process. Respondents are likely to want to know how their views have shaped or changed plans/policies or projects and being unprepared for this can be very damaging to an organisation's reputation.

Think about feedback at the start of the planning process and make every effort to feedback to say "we are still analysing the results" if timescales slip. A lot of organisations fail to provide adequate feedback which can lead to future apathy from respondents who feel there is little point in contributing when they don't feel they've been listened to in the first place or don't know how or what happened to their comments.

Some activities may only require a final feedback mechanism which could be anything from an article in the local media announcing the results and next stages to an email sent to all those who requested feedback at the original point of engagement. If an activity is more of a long term of staged process then there is scope to take details of people who'd like a chance to get more involved at later stages.

2.2.3 Developing the project plan

There are many ways to write a project plan.

Suggested project planning activity

- With the project team, brainstorm all of the actions you need to do to achieve your project (if you do not have a project team, you might find it useful to work with a colleague who understands the piece of work you are doing to help you to explore ideas in more depth)
- Write each action on a separate post-it note and keep going until you have exhausted your ideas
- Arrange the actions in chronological order. As you do this, discuss how long you expect the action to take, when it needs to start and finish, and what actions it depends on (i.e. what needs to have been completed previously before this action can start). This will help you to be clear about what needs to happen when and where blocks may occur. Be realistic about how long things will take
- Identify someone within the project team to be responsible for each action
- Transfer all of this information to the project plan. When writing down the actions make sure they are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound). State exactly what needs to be done, by when, by whom. This will ensure you are clear about what the action is and will know when it has been achieved
- The update column is provided for monitoring.

Variations

This basic project plan can easily be adapted to include more columns e.g.:

- Traffic light system (red - overdue, yellow – on target, green - achieved)
- Dependencies (give each action a number or letter to identify it, add a column where you list the actions on which that action is dependent)

2.2.4 Monitoring arrangements

On your own, or with the project team, think now about how you're going to monitor the engagement work so you can keep on top of actions and manage the process closely. The project plan becomes an extremely useful tool here and it will help to focus you on progress to date and your key priorities. You can also see which actions are slipping and how it might affect your overall project.

You might decide to meet in formally as a team, have a weekly 'check-in' by having a telephone conversation with each person involved, or each person might submit a regular return by updating their section of the project plan with a brief note about how they are performing against the target.

Section 3: Getting resources in place

Consultation and particularly community engagement can be resource intensive. Staff time, materials, communications, IT and other factors are all used extensively in any consultation or engagement exercise. How do you cost that resource? What is it that you should be spending money on? How do you make sure you don't waste resources, and how do you co-ordinate work to get the most value out of your limited budgets?

Having a clear understanding of what information you need to address the decision(s) to be made will help to ensure you select the most appropriate method of engagement and target audience.

3.1. Completing the PID – Part 5

This section relates to [Section 1 Completing the PID- part 5](#). It is important that you are as realistic as possible as to what you can do with the resources you have.

Budgets for consultation and engagement work vary from department to department and organisation to organisation. The general consensus is that resources for this work are limited and sometimes non-existent. Here are some questions that you need to ask about resources before and during the planning your consultation / engagement activity:

- Are you sure that the information you are looking to gather is new? Has someone else addressed the same issue recently (in say the last six to twelve months) in a way that you can use? Is another agency regularly gathering such data? Can this reduce the size and therefore the costs of your task?
- Are you focusing on the most appropriate audience?
- Is the approach you are looking to take cost-effective for the level of information you need?
- Do you know that you will get the exercise completed as required in the timescales you have?
- If you need to procure services from somewhere else, are they the right ones? Has any other local practitioner used an alternative approach? Is there a better price available for the same product elsewhere?
- Has any other local agency or partnership got a similar aim to consult or engage on the same general topic?
- Is anyone else looking to consult with a similar audience within your timescales, or close to them?
- Does any local partner have a level of expertise on a particular topic or with a specific audience that you can benefit from? Do you have expertise that others could use?
- Are there any local partnership or policy commitments that would be served by carrying out consultation and engagement with other organisations?

It might be that some or all of these questions need to be directed to more senior personnel. If you are in doubt then you will need to discuss this with your line manager or consultation / engagement officer.

3.2. Existing local channels of communication

Use could be made of existing local channels of communication with different groups, to advise on your approach and ensure equality of access in consultations. These might include:

- Local Service Boards
- Community Planning partners
- Voluntary sector networks
- Health social care and wellbeing partnerships
- Community Safety partnerships
- Older Person's Strategy co-ordinator
- Schools, Youth Service and Children and Young People's Framework Partnership
- Communities First Boards
- Service user groups
- Equalities representatives
- Tenants and residents committees
- Business partnerships

3.3 Other Considerations

3.3.1 Single Integrated Plan

The Programme for Government [Welsh Government | Programme for Government 2011-2016](#) is an agenda for the whole public service in Wales.

A single integrated plan can be used to meet statutory responsibilities in relation to the development of plans and strategies. The process partners must undertake, amongst other things, is underpinned by the role of Local Service Boards (LSB) providing local strategic collaborative leadership, outcomes focused approach and engagement of citizens and workforce. A single integrated plan should include an engagement strategy as to how partners intend to engage with citizens and communities. Single integrated plans should be in place in all areas by April 2013.

The draft guidance is currently being consulted and will be published in due course.

3.3.2 Community First

From April 1st 2012 Communities First will be a Community-Focussed Anti-Poverty Programme. It will be a new programme in many respects but will build on the achievements of Communities First and in particular continue much good work in local communities. The programme will continue to have a geographic focus, concentrating on the 10% most deprived communities in Wales, as defined by WIMD 2011, but there will be increased emphasis on ensuring that the most vulnerable individuals, families and groups in those communities are supported in these areas.

Partnership working between communities and key service providers including the voluntary and private sectors will be supported and encouraged.

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Grant Funding will be allocated in future to Communities First Clusters, which will be larger than the majority of existing CF areas. There will be a designated Lead Delivery Body (LDB) for each Cluster. Any prospective LDB will need to undergo Due Diligence before being confirmed in this role.

Good Governance, strong **Community Involvement** and effective **Delivery of Outcomes** through partnership working will be essential requirements for each Cluster. "Community Involvement" is intended to include a wide range of levels and forms of engagement by local people in the Programme, including information-sharing, active participation, development work and empowerment of local people. Sustained and increased Community Involvement will be assured through a Community Involvement Plan for each Cluster. This plan will need to be bespoke for each Cluster, to reflect local circumstances, but it should build on existing structures and aim to increase levels of involvement above present levels, especially of people most affected by poverty. Further guidance on Community Involvement Plans is included in the supplementary guidance which forms part of the application pack for Communities First funding. It reinforces the key message that local people must retain a strong stake and ownership in the Communities First programme and that no individuals, cliques or organisations should predominate. Including people of all ages and vulnerable people in particular is very important.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/regeneration/communitiesfirst/?lang=en>

For further information contact the Communities First Unit:
0300 0628284 communities.first@wales.gsi.gov.uk

3.3.3 NHS Wales Engagement & Consultation Guidance

This document provides guidance to local health boards and trusts on the conduct of engagement and consultation with citizens, on changes to Health Services.

NLIAH and The Consultation Institute provided three training sessions throughout May 2012 on the application of the [NHS Wales Engagement & Consultation Guidance](#).

The intention was to help Boards apply the demanding Guidance issued by the NHS in Wales on engagement and consultation on changes to Health Services. In the Guidance, it calls for consistency in their application and we believe that one of the best ways to do this was to develop a detailed training course based upon the existing activities of Health Boards and Trusts, and addressing the issues they had identified arising from the Guidance.

Speaker presentations and additional resources will be made available on the [Partnership Development Pages](#) of NLIAH website.

Continuous engagement

In some instances, where you are working with the same sample and where you need to understand changes taking place over time, it will be important to see consultation / engagement work as a continuous process rather than one off projects or activity. What needs to be achieved is an on-going relationship with the citizen (although care should be taken not to compromise objectivity). Initially this will be labour and resource intensive but over time can prove to be the most efficient and effective way to engage for some projects.

Section 4: Understanding specific audiences

Understanding who you need to gather information from is fundamental to gathering the right type of evidence to meet the needs of your engagement objectives and the engagement activity itself so that this supports the final decision(s) being taken.

Targeting the right audience is fundamental to involving the right people and obtaining accurate, useful information. Identifying and overcoming barriers that might exist and which typically prevent or deter people from getting engaged will help you to maximise the response from your target audience. It's about making sure you are engaging the right people in the way or ways that best suit their needs.

4.1 Identifying stakeholders

A stakeholder is any individual, community, group or organisation with an interest in the outcome of a project, either as a result of being affected by it positively or negatively, or by being able to influence the activity in a positive or negative way. To ensure the engagement activity includes as many of the relevant stakeholder groups as possible, a stakeholder analysis will enable you to identify who will be affected by this, their interests and their importance to the project.

In traditional research terms this is known as identifying your population of interest. Once you have identified your population of interest you need to decide whether it is practical to try and gather information from every member of that population or whether you wish to gather information from a sample of the members of that population.

Gathering information from an entire population is often unfeasible, time-consuming, expensive and more importantly actually unnecessary! Identifying and collecting information from a representative sample of your population of interest is the most effective way of gathering reliable and valid data.

By reliable we mean results that would like to be replicated should the exercise be repeated on an equivalent basis. By valid we mean the extent to which we can draw conclusions for the population as a whole on the basis of the information gathered from the sample.

Details of random sampling, a technique which provides the most reliable and valid type of information, are given in Section 6.6.8 of this manual.

The details of stakeholder analysis given below describe a process of non-random sampling known as judgement sampling. It is down to the expertise of those conducting the engagement activity as to whether individuals are selected to take part or not. The chance of being selected is unknown and incalculable.

The greatest risk with this type of sampling is that those conducting the engagement activity do not act objectively. Because of this, findings may be rejected by decision makers as being invalid and unreliable.

There are, however, a number of practical steps that can be undertaken to minimise this risk:

- Have a thorough understanding of the characteristics of the population of interest that is relevant to your engagement activity (these are usually logical conditions such as age, employment status, location etc). You will need to know the proportions each of these characteristics is present in your overall population of interest. Once this is established you can invite individuals who represent these characteristics to take part in the engagement activity in the proportions to which they are represented in the overall population. For example, if 10% of people in your population of interest is aged 16 – 18 then you will need to gather information from 100 people aged 16-18 in a sample of 1,000.

This is a non-random technique known as quota sampling (see also Section 6 – Sampling). It will not provide a representative sample that can produce information that is as valid and reliable as a random technique would but it can provide information from individuals that represent key characteristics within your population.

You will also need to:

- Keep an accurate record of why and how you select people, which you can refer to if the validity and reliability of your findings are challenged.

Or you may want to:

- Consider asking an independent third party to undertake the engagement activity on your behalf.

4.2 Stakeholder analysis allows you to identify the key people and interested parties who may have a stake/be affected by the consultation/engagement objective. It also allows you to then consider ways of ensuring both those in favour or against are given equal opportunities to comment.

4.3 How to do it

Stakeholder analysis should be undertaken with all stakeholders. The analysis is done to identify all stakeholders – it's the engagement that is carried out in proportion to the planned activity? However, you may need to use your judgement over the practicality of doing so if the stakeholders are widely spread. At the same time, it is important to avoid skewing the analysis — and possibly threatening the viability or success of the activity — by failing to take into account the legitimate concerns of stakeholders simply because they are hard to reach or difficult to incorporate into your planning.

There are different ways of undertaking such an analysis, but what is important is that any particular analysis, and the methods used to achieve it, meets the needs of the project at that particular point in time. Workshops, focus group discussions or individual interviews are three out of a range of techniques that can be used for this purpose. Whatever methods are used, the basic steps in any stakeholder analysis are:

- Identify the key stakeholders and their interests in the activity
- Assess the influence and importance of each of these stakeholders in the activity
- Decide which stakeholders to prioritise
- Decide how best to reach and engage stakeholders including those whom may be seldom heard

4.3.1 Identifying stakeholders and their interests

As a group you should identify all of the stakeholders for the proposed activity. It might be helpful to think it terms of:

- Service users
- Communities
- Organisations
- Partners
- Local / national Government;

The list goes on...

Having other stakeholders there will help to identify everyone who needs to be involved and will highlight people you might not be aware of.

Stakeholder table

Once you have identified the stakeholders, use the table below to identify their interests in the project, and whether that interest is positive or negative. This will help you to understand the needs of your stakeholders and to plan for and mitigate any potential risks (e.g. opposition).

Stakeholder	Interest in project	+ve / -ve

4.3.2 Assessing influence and importance of stakeholders in the activity and prioritise

Influence is the power a stakeholder has to facilitate or impede the achievement of an activity's objectives.

Importance is the priority given to satisfying the needs and interests of each stakeholder.

For each stakeholder, consider whether their importance and influence is high or low using the table. Then plot the stakeholders on the importance / influence matrix.

Table of importance and influence

Stakeholder	Importance	Influence

Importance/influence matrix

High Importance / Low Influence	High Importance / High Influence
A	B
C	D
Low Importance / Low Influence	Low Importance / High Influence

This tool can help you to make some important decisions about how you will prioritise stakeholders and how you might allocate your time and energy. Those included in Boxes A, B and C are the key stakeholders in the activity: they can significantly influence it or are most important if the activity's objectives are to be met.

Box A shows stakeholders of high importance to the activity, but with low influence. They require special initiatives if their interests are to be protected.

Box B shows stakeholders of high importance to the activity who can also significantly influence its success..

Box C shows stakeholders who are of low priority but may need limited monitoring. They are unlikely to be the focus of the activity.

Box D shows stakeholders with high influence, who can affect outcome of the activity, but whose interests are not the target of the activity. These stakeholders may be able to block the activity and therefore could be seen to be high risk in terms of a positive outcome.

4.3.3 Involving elected members

The input and advice of elected members to various organisations can add to the information you use when considering the consultation audience, and are stakeholders in their own right. It is recommended that any consultation which has a specific local area focus should include an invitation to the elected member/s for that area to give a view on the design of the work at the earliest practicable opportunity.

In local authorities there are arrangements which allow decisions to be looked at carefully by elected members other than those responsible for making decisions. These scrutiny committees focus on themes or groups of services, and they should be informed of consultation and engagement activities that may come under that theme.

There are many examples of local authority overview & scrutiny functions seeking to engage with the public as part of their work. Ways in which overview & scrutiny functions might engage with the public could include for example consulting on the content of scrutiny work programmes or gathering evidence from the public as part of scrutiny reviews/inquiries/investigations. The WLGA recently produced a guide 'Citizen-Centred Scrutiny: Engaging the Public in Overview & Scrutiny' (2010) in partnership with the Centre for Public Scrutiny and Scrutiny Officers from local authorities in Wales. The Guide contains case studies, ways in which the public can be engaged in scrutiny processes and tips for engaging the public through scrutiny and can be accessed [here](#). The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 also "Introduces provision to require local authorities to make arrangements to enable the public to express their views in relation to any matter being considered by the (overview & scrutiny) committee."^[1] Statutory guidance on this aspect of the Local Government (Wales) Measure is anticipated later in 2012 ([the draft guidance has recently been published for consultation](#)).

^[1] Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, Explanatory Notes, Crown Copyright, 2011"

4.3.4 Engaging 'hard to reach' / 'seldom heard' people

People who you find hard to reach might more accurately be referred to as being 'seldom heard'. It might be useful to identify who you seldom hear from and try to identify why that is. There may be barriers to them getting engaged which you will need to reduce or remove.

You must consider whether your consultations are accessible to these groups, and must ensure that their potentially valuable experiences and views are not overlooked. Specific phases of the consultation may need to be geared to engaging with these citizens, in the spirit of enriching the data. It is recommended that larger consultation exercises are screened to gauge whether an equalities impact assessment is needed. It is impossible to make broad generalisations about how best to engage with people as one size does not fit all. The best thing to do is to ask them how best to engage with them.

Equality Monitoring

Each local Authority will have its own approach to equality monitoring and may have a standard set of equality monitoring questions. These are designed to allow people to share information about themselves based on the characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Asking questions about peoples characteristics can be useful in a number of ways:

- It gives you an idea whether or not all groups have been represented in the consultation/engagement and can help you to decide if further work is required to ensure you understand their views.
- In turn this can help you to make decisions about future consultation design. Might a quota approach be more useful? Might a general survey need to be supplemented by a focus group for a particular hard to reach group?
- In the case of administrative data and for large samples it may be possible to disaggregate data by protected characteristic. This would allow you to determine whether one protected group has a different view or experience than another.

When considering disaggregating data from a sample survey remember that by separating out some of the sample group for separate analysis you are obviously going to be looking at a smaller number of people. This can cause problems because the level of confidence you can have in smaller samples is inevitably less. You are unlikely to be able to get statistically significant results, from a general random sample survey, for protected groups with few people, but this may be possible for larger groups such as Male/Female or broad age bands etc. Other methods will need to be employed to garner the views of groups with few people.

This problem does not arise when you are examining administrative data. However, there can still be a disclosure problem associated with protected groups with few people in administrative datasets. Data protection guidelines should be followed to ensure that people's individual views and identities remain confidential and cannot be deduced from the data.

[See section 6.5.3](#) – Questions and statements that need to be included in interviews and questionnaires”

[Home Page](#)

If you don't have experience or don't know how to reach the "seldom heard" ask someone who does for example your organisations Equality Officer, local Association of Voluntary Organisations etc.

See also TPAS Cymru's "Are you being equal – encouraging equal tenant participation in Social Landlords in Wales"

<http://www.tpascymru.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/04/Housing-and-Equalities-Report-Final-for-Publication-E.pdf>

4.3.5 Keeping it fresh

You will need to identify the population of interest for each different piece of engagement work you undertake and decide whether to try and gather information from all of them or whether to gather information from a sample of them.

For some pieces of engagement work it may be appropriate to go back to the same population/sample again (i.e. continuous or regularly repeated engagement). This would be most appropriate if you wanted to be able to assess changes over time.

However, you should be aware that involvement in engagement itself will have an impact on members of the sample over time, meaning that they can no longer carry on being regarded as being reliably representative of the population of interest as a whole. (It is generally classed as respondents becoming more sympathetic to an organisation over time and thus not being as neutral in their views as previously).

The population itself will, also, inevitably change over time. Again this means that any sample could not go on being regarded as reliably representative.

You must identify the stakeholders for each project, every time. Don't rely on the list you used for the last engagement work you did – there is likely to be a different target audience. Complete a new stakeholder analysis for each new piece of engagement work and really think about who is affected by it. By all means, then contact people with whom you have developed a relationship.

People who regularly participate in engagement activities are often disparagingly referred to as the 'usual suspects'. These people are usually the most organised people who take the opportunity to get involved and have their say. However whilst having regular contributors and people who are active in your community, it is really important to obtain feedback from lots of different people who represent different standpoints. Do not rely on the feedback from a small number of voices as you're only seeing part of the picture.

Consider your population of interest and decide how best to reach them. This could be a postal survey, a focus group, a drop-in session with plans or an exhibition, a Facebook page or a mix of all of these things.

The key is to try and provide a good mix to ensure all those affected can voice their views in a way that is easy for them.

[See Section 6: Techniques and methods of engagement](#)

4.4 Things to Consider when holding events.

Communication methods:

- Promoting the event –do this in a way that they will get to know about it
- Language is clear, avoids technical terms, materials are written and presented clearly
- Materials are made available in appropriate languages and formats if is proportionate to do so
- Promoting engagement opportunities in a way that does not exclude people and reaches the most people

Venues:

- Are physically accessible for people with mobility needs
- Appropriate for the audience for example: if a religious building is used for an open meeting, people of other faiths may not wish to attend, some people would not wish to attend an event in a pub/bar etc
- Geography – think about how people will get there. Is it accessible by public transport, is it in a part of the community that people will feel safe going to?
- People of certain faiths might need to go to separate male/female groups

Timings:

- Holidays – Holding events during religious holidays, school holidays etc may affect the number of people able to participate and may exclude specific groups of people
- Time of day – meetings held during the day will likely exclude people who work, best to avoid school-run for people who have children. Not too early or too late in the day
- Accessible time scales may also mean that an extended timescale might be offered to those who need reasonable support in order to respond (e.g. translation, time to arrange caring support)

4.5 Incentives

Incentives might be tangible or intrinsic. Many people will participate because they want to, but you might be able to get more people interested by offering tangible incentives.

Remember, however, that participation in engagement activities should be based on willing and informed consent (i.e. the person taking part should have a clear knowledge of what the engagement is about and have given their full agreed to take part in it). This should not be skewed by inappropriate or disproportionate incentives.

Incentives do not need to be tangible. People will have lots of reasons for engaging. For example:

- To improve services / their community
- Opportunity to be a part of change
- To have a voice
- Build self-confidence

- Meet other people

Some ideas for tangible incentives:

- Refreshments (this is always a good idea when hosting an event)
- Coming to an event and the engagement being secondary (eg a music event)
- Freebies / a goodie bag
- Cash
- Vouchers
- Entry into a prize draw

There are no set 'fees'. Incentives are offered at an organisation's own discretion. It is always advisable for participants to at least be reimbursed for any expenses incurred as a result of their attendance or involvement in engagement exercises. In the majority of cases the ability to claim for refreshments or travel expenses is viewed as sufficient. It would be considerate to also offer to cover childcare costs or the costs of carers accompanying the participant.

For some people with support needs covering the cost of additional support hours (i.e. that are over and above their usual hours, but needed to attend the event) may also be required.

Important: receiving an incentive has been known to affect receipt of state benefits. This has been known to happen and participants should be made aware of this. It is the participant's responsibility to check with their local benefits office whether this will affect them.

It would be good if this could be clarified in advance where possible, as some people may be wary of approaching a benefits office with this query. Or they may not feel they have sufficient information to be able to ask. It would also be useful for support staff and care managers to know this in advance.

Section 5: Good communications

Once you have understood the issue you're consulting or engaging on and you have planned the process and identified your audience you can start the practical work. Where and how this process takes place must be decided as early as possible. It is vital that participation is straightforward and that the way you communicate your ideas and questions does not exclude people.

5.1 When you should do it

The timing of a consultation or engagement exercise is crucial to its success. Think about when people may not be able to take part, which could include:

- Holiday periods
- The time of day if you are holding a meeting or focus group
- Times of religious importance (e.g. feast days, prayer, fasting). [See Section 4: Understanding specific audiences.](#)

You also need to think about when the consultation and engagement happens within the overall work. Some work may have statutory obligations to consult at specific stages, while others may be flexible. This work ALWAYS takes longer than you think so plan well in advance and work backwards from when decision makers require the key findings to ensure analysis isn't rushed at the end of the process.

5.2 What you should say

You need to be very clear to potential participants about:

- What difference their involvement will make
- Who the organisation is
- What decisions have already been made and what can be changed
- What you cannot deliver, as you may disappoint participants

5.3 Reaching potential participants

What is the best way to get the potential audience to the right level of awareness to discuss the topic? Firstly, it is important that people are aware that the engagement process is taking place and how they can get involved. It is important to provide clear information to potential participants about the subject and to explain the issue in order to get them on board with the issue or problem. You should set the scene and context for why you are engaging, as the potential participants will be more likely to commit their time and will be more comfortable taking part if they are appropriately informed of what is at stake for them. You can use:

5.3.1 The Internet & Social Media

The internet provides many opportunities for you to engage with the public. Your organisation's website is a good place to start, where you will be able to advertise the activity as a news item, through a press release on the site or a positive good practice

story about your engagement work. Some organisations may have forums that are active amongst service users that could be interested in your consultation.

Social Networking sites such as Facebook are now commonly used by organisations. As people must click to register their interest to receive updates you can access people with a specific interest in your organisation's activities.

Some members of organisations also write blogs on their activities, and many organisations have now embraced micro-blogging through Twitter, where short messages can be posted to a large community of users.

Your organisation's communications department may also issue electronic press releases, or send out newsletters via e-mail, which are likely to access a variety of different people and organisations. You can increase the advertisement of your work by including articles in the newsletters of partner organisations.

See also

New and Social Media in the Voluntary Sector <http://www.wcva-ids.org.uk/wcva/2085>

[Good practice Wales](#)

5.3.2 Newsletters

Many organisations produce hard copy newsletters in tandem with their electronic communication. There may be opportunities to include an article in the newsletter itself or alternatively to include a flier with it. These may be sent to a pre-defined mailing list, or included at a community or drop-in centre.

5.3.3 Newspapers

A local newspaper can be a great place to advertise an event or consultation, as it will reach people that are not part of existing groups that are involved in activities. An article will also reach a large audience in a specific area so involve your communications and media experts and ask them to help you issue a catchy news release to promote your event.

5.3.4 Leaflet drop

Leaflet drops can reach a large audience that are not tied into existing work, but are also easily discarded. It can be useful when you want to advertise an activity to a specific geographical area that is affected by a project.

5.3.5 Face to face

Face to face contact gives you the opportunity to have dialogue over an issue rather than convey specific information. It can help you to build relationships with people that may be interested but could be disillusioned. You can access social groups by approaching community venues such as shops, libraries, post offices or doctor's surgeries; sitting in a public place; or going to local events. You can also put up posters in these places as they are frequently visited by the surrounding community.

The above are all good ways to communicate, but there are limitations as to who will access each one. Even the choice of which website, newspaper or newsletter could affect responses, so you may need to use a variety of methods.

Once participants have agreed to take part, it is important that they can access as much clear information on the topic and the process itself as possible so that they can think through the issues, formulate their views and think about how they can best respond. If you are holding a focus group, it is good practice to give these questions to participants before they attend so that they are not put on the spot.

Existing groups can give you advice on your approach and make sure that everyone can access your activity. These groups may include:

- Schools, Youth Service and Children and Young People's Framework Partnership;
- Communities First local partnership boards;
- Voluntary sector networks;
- Service user groups in social services and patient groups in health and associated service providers and advocacy organisations;
- Equalities networks;
- Co-ordinators for work relating to Older People;
- Community Planning networks;
- Other stakeholder groups.

You can also test questionnaires or survey tools, publicity materials or general communications with representatives of the group that you are consulting with, as there can often be a difference in the language you and the audience use and how you may describe the same issues. You can then revise your questions or methods in light of their feedback if necessary. [See Section 4: Understanding specific audiences.](#)

5.4 Accessible Communications

Clear language should be a key feature of all consultation and engagement exercises. To give clear information is not 'dumbing down'. If participants are going to give appropriate feedback then they will need to be able to relate to and understand the exercise. It is important to:

- Summarise the key points;
- Make sure that information is made available in enough time so that participants can fully take part and consult others if they wish to;
- Ensure that the design and the presentation of consultation materials are accessible to everyone.

There are a number of guidelines that can help you make your communications accessible for people with different needs and preferences. The details vary, but in general, accessible communications guidelines can cover:

- The design and format of printed materials (including checklists for printed documents, and the use of Plain English)
- Advice on effective and appropriate channels of communication and distribution
- Producing documents in alternative formats - large print, audio tape
- The appearance and delivery of presentations

- Meeting the practical access needs of disabled participants
- The provision of communication support (interpreters for British Sign Language [BSL] and other community languages, palantypists, type-to-talk and so on)
- The timing of meetings / focus groups (including detailed advice on religious calendars / religious observances);
- The selection and preparation of venues (including checklists for accessible venues);
- The provision of appropriate refreshments at consultation events;
- language needs of stakeholders and translation time.

Such guidelines may be updated occasionally, so it is important to make sure that you're using the best and most recent information. [See Appendix vii Useful links.](#)

Your own organisation will probably have its own accessible events document and guidance on format. It might also be worth speaking to the equalities team in your organisation for advice and guidance on meeting your equalities policy.

5.5 How you are going to feed-back to participants

It is important to give feedback after the consultation, which should be as open as possible, and should report the consultation findings as well as their interpretations. [See Section 8: Feeding back in a positive way & making use of the results](#)

Section 6: Techniques and Methods of engagement

Each consultation / engagement event will be different, work with a variety of people and utilise a variety of different engagement methods.

You need to have a clear understanding of the type of information that you need to gather. [See Section 2 –Different types of information](#). This will help you to make the right choices about who to involve and how you involve them.

6.1 Recording activities

You will also need to ensure that you keep clear and accurate records of the engagement activities that you undertake. This will help to ensure that your engagement process are transparent and will help you to demonstrate objectivity, as well as providing evidence should your findings be challenged.

Keeping records is more straightforward with surveys, where the questionnaire itself can form the record, than with interviews and focus groups, which you may need to make arrangements to record (either film or an audio recording).

When making and maintaining records, however, you should have due regard to the ethical and data protection considerations outlined in Section 1.

6.2 Writing questions

This guidance on writing questions applies whichever method you choose to use. The quality of responses is reliant on asking the right questions:

- What do you hope to achieve (your aim/s)?
- Will asking this question tell you what you want to know?
- Is it relevant?
- Will the target audience understand this question?
- Draft the questions with help from colleagues / expert in the area / member of public who is in the target audience;
- Review the questions if necessary;
- Use the same questions for all participants to ensure consistency.

Also ask yourself whether your target audience will be willing and able to answer your draft questions. Only ask questions which you absolutely need to – remember engagement should not be unduly intrusive or harm the participant in anyway. Try and avoid asking questions about subjects they will have no knowledge or experience of or anything likely to overtax a participant's memory.

Asking closed questions is a straightforward way of gathering quantitative information. A list of possible responses is provided for participants to choose from, with each answer being pre-coded to facilitate the accurate analysis of large volumes of information.

Closed questions require the participant to choose a response from a list of options. These types of questions are good for collecting. For example:

- Yes/no questions e.g. 'Do you use the out of hours service?'

- Circling a rating on a scale e.g. 'on a scale of 1-10, how important is the out of hours service to you?
- Tick the age category / area you live
- How often do you use the service e.g. more than once a month, about once a month, less than once a month?
- Circle which statement you agree with/option you prefer

Open questions are a traditional way of gathering qualitative information.

Open questions Begin 'Why...?', 'How...?', 'When...?', 'Which...?' and allow space for people to respond freely (in writing or in a focus group/ interview) to allow the participant to give a full reply in their own words, without being guided by categories or choosing a response from a limited list. These are very good for understanding participant's views in more depth, and reasons for choosing their responses to closed questions.

Open questions generate large volumes of verbatim information which is traditionally regarded as more time-consuming to analyse than quantitative information.

[See section 7 - Making sense of the data](#)

6.3 Ratings

When designing questions with a 'rating' type response, be consistent with the language you use. For example when asking about the extent to which people 'agree' with an idea, use this throughout i.e. 'strongly agree / agree / disagree / strongly disagree. See the table below for other examples.

	Strongly Agree	Very Satisfied	Very Likely	
	Agree	Satisfied	Likely	
	Disagree	Dissatisfied	Unlikely	
	Strongly Disagree	Very Dissatisfied	Very Unlikely	

6.4 Sitting on the fence

When designing response options, you should consider whether you will allow people to 'sit on the fence' by providing a middle (or 'non-substantive') option at a halfway point eg 'don't know', 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' etc.

These responses don't really help you to understand people's views, and might offer people an opt-out of making a firm choice. If there is no 'don't know' response, they would be forced to decide one way or another. However there are no set rules for providing a middle option. You may feel that missing out the central option forces an inaccurate response from the participant.

If a question might not apply to people, you might provide a 'not applicable' option.

You should be careful to avoid prompting people to give a response that does not reflect their true opinion i.e. asking leading questions, as this can compromise the integrity of your engagement activity.

In terms of measuring attitude (see example above) best practice is to use a response format that provides those answering the question with a balanced set of responses with a neutral mid point (e.g. five point Likert Scale):

Strongly agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly disagree

6.5 Methods of Engagement

6.5.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are a list of standardised, structured questions which are often completed by an individual on their own, in their own time. They might be completed electronically or in paper format. For example:

- Produced in a paper format and sent out to participants or placed in a public place for people to pick up – complete it and post it back/ put in a box
- Printed in a newspaper/magazine – complete it and post it back
- Emailed out to people
- Developed using software e.g. Survey Monkey, allowing people to fill in the questionnaire online

Features of questionnaires:

- Can reach a large quantity of people
- Standardised questions and responses – evaluation is often straightforward
- Response rate is variable
- Lacks human interaction
- Lack of open questions – responses can be limited
- Can be time consuming
- Dependent on asking the right questions

Questionnaires are often a popular choice as they seem simple to design, but they need to be carefully worded, structured and presented, and should be more sophisticated than a basic list of open questions. There are a number of basic points that should be considered. Training courses on designing questionnaires are available. Here are some basic tips and guidance for creating a good quality questionnaire.

Checklist for a good questionnaire

- **Supporting information** is needed as people will be completing the questionnaire on their own so provide a background note or supporting information about the issue. Be transparent about how people's feedback is going to be used.
- **Clear instructions** about how to complete the questionnaire are essential. eg 'tick one box only', or 'if you answer no, go to question x'. Try to keep the questions clear and the number of instructions to a minimum to avoid confusion. Provide contact details in case people want to speak to someone about the questionnaire.
- **Language / literacy** Important to consider the language and literacy needs of your target audience. See also the section on good communications. People may have diverse needs and might need support to complete the questionnaire (therefore - if a signature is required signal that signing on someone's behalf is

acceptable) or it may be needed in a different language. Be mindful of the language you use, whether people will understand technical terms

- **Accessibility** Consider the needs of your target audience. For example, people with a visual impairment may need a questionnaire in a different format. People with a physical or learning disability may need support to complete the questionnaire. See advice in Good Communication on producing printed materials. If in doubt, ask people what format they would like the information in. Consider resourcing – cost of translation, adaptation
- **Test out the questionnaire** on your target audience, get feedback and adapt the questions before you send it out widely. Did people understand it? Are the questions clear? Did their responses tell you what you need to know – ie are they the right questions to ask?
- **Timescales** Recommendations for minimum time periods vary significantly across organisations and partnerships, with some advising response periods of up to 12 weeks. Any closing date should be printed clearly on the questionnaire.
- **Returning completed questionnaires** Providing a stamped, addressed envelope for people to use will increase the number of completed questionnaires you receive back. If this is not possible, consider using drop-boxes in central locations. The return address for completed questionnaires must be displayed clearly.

6.5.2 Interviews

Interviews are conducted in person either face-to-face, or over the phone. Interviews can either be used to administer quantitative style surveys and questionnaires or as a tool for gathering qualitative information. Interviews for gathering qualitative data are known as in-depth personal interviews (IPIs). These types of interviews enable issues to be explored in more depth. They might be used as a follow-up to a questionnaire to explore issues that are raised by the questionnaire.

Interviews can have a rigid structure or a more open style. If gathering quantitative information, interviews should be based on a standardised, structured questionnaire and conducted in the same way each time to ensure consistency.

If gathering qualitative information it is a good idea to develop a 'discussion' or 'topic' guide as a basis for the interview. This will help to ensure the interview covers all the topics that need to be addressed, while allowing sufficient scope to explore in the respondent's own words and to give room for other important issues that arise during the course of the interview.

Designing the interview:

- Logical progression through the questions to explore the issues in the same way each time (quantitative)
- Resourcing – its done in person, time consuming
- Question flow
- Training for staff

- Translation facilities

It is important that where interviews are taking place outside of the normal work environment, that the health and safety of the interviewers is considered, and that any potential risks to their person are understood and managed. Advice should be taken on the subject of lone working for interviewers particularly if the interview programme involves door-to-door or home visits. If the interview schedule is likely to involve potentially sensitive topics or vulnerable groups, interviewers may need to undergo a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. Advice on health and safety can be obtained from your personnel or human resources colleagues.

6.5.3 Questions and statements that need to be included in interviews and questionnaires

Monitoring There exists a set of standard and required questions to include in surveys, or to be put to an interviewee and recorded for equality monitoring purposes. These give you a profile for the participants, allowing you to compare responses between different groups, benchmark information and most importantly, allow you to monitor that the consultation has been inclusive.

If these monitoring questions are not included, those running the consultation or engagement must explicitly account for their reasons to omit them, and will be expected to defend their decision in external audit by equalities agencies or others who may legitimately enquire. Advice should always be sought from equalities professionals from your organisation or a partner organisation if omission is likely.

[See section 4.3.3](#) - Engaging hard to reach /seldom heard people

Data protection Questionnaires and interview questions will involve the individual's personal views on various topics, as well as their gender, age, ethnicity and other details, and the participant should receive a guarantee that it is given in the strictest of confidence, and is needed for the reasons stated above. A statement should be clearly given in each interview or questionnaire to assure the participant of this fact, and advice can be sought from your information manager or a partner organisation's information manager if needed.

Thank you. Participants should always be thanked for their time, and ideally given an indication of how their comments might be used. See Feeding Back in a positive way. It is also good practice if conducting a lengthy type interview to check that the person is happy to continue with the interview and at the beginning tell respondents that they are free to stop at any point during the interview.

6.5.4 Focus groups, workshops and public meetings

Interactive sessions are very useful to bring groups together to discuss issues that are important to them. Group discussions will often spark more ideas and build up a sense of the community. Beneficial for participants who will get to meet other people interested in the same issue, discuss and explore topics with a facilitator and perhaps a decision maker in person. They can generate a good deal of information and new ideas.

Require resources to do well. Suggest seek support from colleague/ training to facilitate.

Any event which involves invited participants or the general public should of course be designed with reference to guidelines on accessible venues and accessible communications to make sure that it is as inclusive as possible. Any promotional activity for public events and exhibitions should also follow the communications advice, particularly in terms of the appropriate location of publicity materials.

Invitations to focus group participants

Need to decide who the target audience is and how you're going to let them know the event is happening – see Understanding audiences and good communications. Once you have identified the target audience, you need to send out an invitation, or put a notice in the press/poster etc.

Keep invitations brief and clear. You need to include:

- The date and time of the event
- Venue
- Topic to be discussed
- Background information
- The questions that will be asked
- Any incentive that is being offered
- Contact details for people to reply to

Some organisations do not confirm the venue until closer to the event to avoid unexpected additional participants attending. This is not good practice as the venue where the event will be held might be an important factor in whether someone is able to attend, and is needlessly secretive.

Around 6-8 people per group is the maximum to enable everyone a chance to participate. If there are more people interested, run several groups at the same time. It is usual to offer refreshments to attendees. Have regular breaks approx every 1-1.5 hours. Meet during the morning or afternoon; keep it to a few hours.

Ideally you will need a facilitator and a separate scribe for each group. This allows the facilitator to concentrate on facilitating and for someone to ensure that they note down everyone's feedback.

Holding public meetings

Public meetings are usually much larger than focus groups and although they have a clear (and sometimes legally defined) structure, they can feel more flexible due to the dynamics and open discussions.

Weekend or evening times are likely to be the most accessible to those wishing to attend a public meeting. Publicity and recruitment may be similar to that of focus groups, but with wider coverage (perhaps working with local groups, local press and media). The time, date and topic should again be clearly stated in the publicity or invitation, but with the venue included. The capacity of the venue should be stated and an explanation that health

and safety issues may mean that once that limit is reached it may be necessary, to turn people away. Advice on accessible venues can be found in [Section 4: Understanding specific audiences](#).

When managing such an event it is important to clarify the aims and objectives of the session at the outset as well as the format that the event will take. Splitting the attendees into smaller groups for round table discussions and reporting back can alleviate the occasional issue of the meeting being dominated by one or two individuals and ensure that everyone has the opportunity for their views to be heard and recorded. Sometimes, participants who know they will have specific questions are asked to give them in writing before the meeting starts to make sure the facilitators can cover them. It is not however easy to manage a large discussions with 'questions from the floor' and this can become very unstructured.

It is recommended that feedback is routinely given on both focus groups and public meetings, and advice is given in [Section 8: Feeding back in a positive way](#).

6.5.5 Specialist community engagement approaches

In order to consult fully with both stakeholders and communities or communities of interest, it is important to have a good understanding of the many forums and networks that already exist in your area whose purpose includes influencing policy and planning processes. There will be a number of potential routes to accessing the forums and networks in your area, including:

- Via County Voluntary Council or other 'third sector' umbrella organisations;
- Through outreach workers attached to particular services (such as the police, health projects, youth workers etc);
- Through area-based partnerships such as Communities First Partnership Boards or other neighbourhood renewal / improvement bodies;
- Partnership and Communities Together (PACT) meetings.
- Children and Young People's partnerships
- Health, Social Care and Wellbeing partnership

Examples of fora and networks include:

Third Sector Networks – each County Voluntary Council in each local authority area in Wales runs at least one voluntary sector network in its area and most run a lot more. Their purpose is to provide opportunities for sharing best practice and to provide a voice for voluntary and community sector organisations on strategic partnerships. In addition, the role of third sector organisations also has a role in "championing the voice of the citizen and service user at every level of provision" and as highlighted in [Beyond Boundaries, Citizen Centred Local Services for Wales](#) (2006).

Community Forums and Councils – while some areas may have a local Community Council and others a Community Forum, others may have none. All Communities First areas in Wales either have or are in the process of developing a Local Partnership Group for their areas. What all of these bodies have in common is that they focus on a defined geographical area and aim to involve a range of citizens and service providers.

A Voluntary Sector Compact is an overarching mechanism for engaging with the voluntary and community organisations at local level and amongst other things will provide guidelines on the amount of time that should be made available for consulting with the third sector. You will be able to access your local Compact from the website of your County Voluntary Council.

Service user networks and fora – they are often run by third sector agencies but should not be confused with Third Sector Networks. Their purpose is to give service users an opportunity for mutual support and learning, exchange views and experiences and provide a voice at strategic partnerships. There may also be an overarching Service User Panel or Forum in your area, which you should be able to find out about via your Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy.

Children and Young People's networks and fora – they include school councils; and children and young people led groups supported by the Local Authority Youth Service or run by third sector organisations. Their purpose is to give children and young people a say in the running of organisations and services which make decisions about their lives. All of these networks and forums are expected to comply with the [Welsh Assembly Government's Participation Standards for Children and Young People](#). There may also be an overarching Children and Young People's Forum or Parliament in your area, which you will be able to find out about from your Children and Young People's Partnership.

Other networks and fora – these include groups run by the Community Health Council, which has a special watchdog role in relation to the NHS; citizens' panels run by statutory organisations; local business networks; and the BBC Viewers' Panel.

Engaging with forums and networks

One advantage of consulting via existing forums and networks is that they already bring together actively engaged citizens who are likely to be interested in responding to consultations. More importantly, they will expect to be consulted directly on topics that are directly relevant to them and may feel overlooked if they are not.

Other points to bear in mind when working with existing forums and networks are to try and:

- Identify the main contact. It may be an employee or representative as is the case with some voluntary sector networks or it may be the chairperson or it may be both.
- Establish a long term relationship if at all possible
- Find out how they work, when they meet and whether they have a website or publications they are happy for you to make use of
- Offer to write a paragraph for their newsletter or website in relation to the consultation you are undertaking
- Offer to attend one/some of their meetings to undertake the consultation
- Find out what incentives might be appropriate – for community events providing refreshments is often very welcome
- Find out what they feel their specific 'barriers' to engagement might be and discuss how they could be overcome
- Provide opportunities for the network or forum to learn from the experience of being consulted, in line with Community Development principles

- Make engagement a positive and enjoyable experience
- Acknowledge the contributions given contribution and provide [feedback](#) on how their responses influenced final decisions

6.5.6 Open consultations and 'document response' consultations

A common method of consultation for larger organisations (not necessarily engagement) is the production of documents for others to consider and respond to. This approach is often used for the preparation of long term strategies for a whole area, or where a major change in services or policy as being considered. Examples might include the compilation of the local Community Plan, Housing Strategy, or the Programme for Health Service Improvement.

The principles of understanding the target audience, accessible communications, budgets and the management of the information gathered from responses are identical to those for questionnaires or interviews. Open Consultations should have a response period that gives people, organisations and businesses time to acquire the materials, consider them carefully and in the case of organisations, discuss the issues internally according to their own working timescales.

It has often been said that voluntary and community based organisations can suffer in open consultations as they need more time to bring a formal response together, for the same reasons. A three week period is again considered to be an absolute minimum, but would not be considered as good practice. Eight to twelve weeks may be more appropriate, depending on the context.

6.5.7 Citizen and service user panels

A citizens' panel aims to be a representative body of local residents and is typically set up by larger agencies, particularly local authorities and their partners, to identify local priorities and to consult service users and non-users on specific issues.

When citizens agree to participate in a panel, they are usually invited to take part in a rolling programme of consultation exercises. This typically involves regular surveys and, where appropriate, further in-depth research such as focus groups and workshops. Not all members will be invited to take part in all panel activities and care is taken to 'rest' members and avoid consultation fatigue. This is why it is important to be clear at the recruitment stage about what is expected of each panel member, how long their membership will last for, how often they might be contacted and what their membership is likely to entail in terms of type of contact and frequency.

Citizens' Panels can range in size from a few hundred to several thousand people. Care should be taken to recruit a panel that is representative of the population it represents. It may be possible to identify sub groups of panel members who can be surveyed or consulted about issues specific to their needs or interests. It is advisable to speak to an equalities focused colleague or local partner agency if intending to use sub-groups related to gender, age, ethnicity, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

Costs can be reduced the panel serves more than one agency (for instance where Police and local authority share a common panel). However, when sharing panels there needs to

be agreement on the rolling programme of consultation to avoid respondent fatigue and support effective co-ordination of work.

It is good practice to keep contact with panel members regularly and to vary the approach so that participants have a choice in how they can get involved. A regular survey is acceptable, as long as there are other opportunities for members to express their views, such as through focus groups. Planning a sensible programme of research and consultation is important to ensure that a variety of topics and research methods are employed, and that activities are spaced out throughout the year.

Panels are commonly used to gauge and track opinion on local issues and priorities, and can be a quick and easily accessible resource for more in-depth research such as focus groups. They can also act as an initial sounding board for larger consultations on new policy areas and service changes, and are particularly useful for developing a picture of public opinion over time.

Citizens Panel members are usually selected using random sampling techniques or, in some cases, non-random quota sampling techniques ([See section 6 – Sampling](#)). They therefore provide a very effective and efficient means of gathering robust information to support decision making.

However, if they are not regularly refreshed Panels can become unrepresentative over time. This is because the population from which members are drawn will itself change. There may, for example, be demographic shifts or an influx of migrant workers from different ethnic backgrounds. In addition, members may drop out and those that remain on the panel will age, which will have an impact on the Panel's overall demographic profile. Taking part in the Panel will also mean the experience of members is different from that of the population as a whole. The increasing familiarity that they gain with the activities of local public sector bodies, through participation in the Panel, may mean that they become representatively 'professional' in their responses to questions.

You will need to refresh all or a proportion of members on a regular basis to ensure that the Panel continues to be representative of the overall population.

6.5.8 Sampling

This is potentially the most technical part of this guidance. The advice deals with the key principles, and specific advice is available from [Appendix vii- Useful Links](#)

In large consultation exercises there are significant logistical and cost issues in contacting all of the people or organisations that you need to consult with, so a representative sample of these stakeholders must be taken.

A simple random sample can be generated by drawing up a 'sampling frame' that contains all the potential consultees in your population, and randomly selecting a set number to consult with. An example may be listing all 2000 known users of Service X and selecting any 200 of them to represent the whole list. This is called random sampling. Alternatively in this example you could select a random starting point in that population and then select every n^{th} person on the list so that the sample comes from every part of the list. This method is known as *systematic* random sampling.

Random samples can also be 'stratified' locally in order to reduce the chance that the sample is unrepresentative. For example electoral division data from the Electoral Register Property Database can be used to ensure that a sample contains representatives from each local electoral division or ward. Specific advice if needed can be found from the <http://www.dataunitwales.gov.uk> and from your local authority.

To reduce the element of chance in the selection of consultees, non-probability sampling methods can be used. The most common non-probability sampling technique is quota sampling, where a predetermined number of consultees are sought from specific sectors of the population. For example, the design stage may indicate that the consultation would be most effective if 50% of the sample were male, 25% unemployed, 25% under the age of 25. If used, quotas should be gauged from available data, for example census information, and allow for a sample to be more representative of the population as a whole.

You need to know how big samples should be, so that you can confidently say that our results reflect what the views of the whole population might be. Specific advice on working out sample size can be found online at <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>

- The larger your sample size, the more certain you can be that their responses reflect the views of the whole population;
- Overestimating the necessary sample size should be avoided as it may involve unnecessary costs and staff time to manage the work, while a sample size that is too small is likely to make the results more uncertain, and making the exercise of very limited value;
- Statistical considerations are involved in calculating sample size, such as margins for error and confidence levels;
- In an authority-wide consultation survey, a general rule of thumb would be that securing full and valid responses from 400 individuals will give a minimum sample for the whole of the area that allows you to make statements for the rest of the population. This represents a $\pm 5.0\%$ Confidence Interval and a 95% Confidence Level. In short you can be 95% certain that you do not arrive at a specific outcome by chance;
- However – the profile of that minimum number may not necessarily match that of the area. Care should be taken to ensure that as far as possible the information contained in that minimum number is representative of all residents.

See also TPAS Cymru's:

Compendium of tenant participation activities in social housing

<http://www.tpascymru.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/docs/Participation%20next%20generation%20-%20final%20%28E%29.pdf> ; and

Monitoring & evaluation methods in social housing

<http://www.tpascymru.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/04/Monitoring-evaluation-methods.pdf>; and

See also Public Health Wales:

[Public Health Practitioner's Public Engagement Toolkit.](#)

Section 7: Making sense of the data

If you have planned your consultation / engagement activity well then analysing the data should be the more straightforward part.

Numerical data can be processed by trained staff with current software, and if the consultation is well structured, analysing non-numerical responses can be carried out relatively easily if staff resources are available. Analysis should also be informed by the needs of those who will view the results – overly technical reports are not always informative, and basic analyses sometimes need further investigation to have any real impact.

7.1 Managing Data

The consultation design should have included explicit references to the service providers capacity and resources for managing the information gathered, and plans for analysis. Those systems should be in place as early as possible, ideally, before the first consultation data starts to arrive. This ensures that the information is managed immediately, rather than filed to await processing.

Data that comes in as a hard-copy, such as self-completed questionnaires or focus group transcripts, need to be validated (see below) and input into an appropriate database for storage, ideally with a facility to analyse. Microsoft Access, Microsoft Excel, SPSS and SNAP Surveys are examples of such systems. Information from questionnaires is likely to be pre-coded, while focus group transcripts will need to be reviewed and coded before they can be validated.

A common way to manage / input data is to apply codes to the responses, and then record codes against the question or discussion topic. A very basic example is shown below:

Question	Option	Tick	Coded As
Q1 Gender	Male	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A
	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	B
Q2 Your age	Under 16	<input type="checkbox"/>	A
	16-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	B
	25-34	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C
	35-44	<input type="checkbox"/>	D
	45-54	<input type="checkbox"/>	E
	55-64	<input type="checkbox"/>	F
	65-74	<input type="checkbox"/>	G
	74+	<input type="checkbox"/>	H
Q3 How do you feel about policy XYZ?	Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	A
	Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	B
	Disagree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C
	Strongly	<input type="checkbox"/>	D

Disagree

In order to avoid confusion it is advised that a less common symbol is used to code a non-response or missing data, for example a cross (x):

Question	Option	Tick	Coded As
Q4 How often do you use this facility?	Always	<input type="checkbox"/>	A
	Often	<input type="checkbox"/>	B
	Rarely	<input type="checkbox"/>	C
	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>	D
			4X <i>(no response)</i>

It is advisable to allocate an individual reference number to each interview transcript or returned questionnaire as it is input, either by automatically assigning a record number in the database, or adding it manually if necessary.

Web-based questionnaires or those carried out via telephone should be designed so that data is entered straight into the database when respondent or interviewer hits 'send' or 'submit'. This greatly reduces the amount of time spent on inputting responses manually, which is often the main cost within a consultation or engagement exercise. This facility is well developed and can be done in an HTML format or in certain software packages (such as SNAP Surveys)

Analysis and coding of qualitative (more textual or non-numerical) data from more open questions relies on the themes and issues that come up in the response. A reference code can be assigned to a particular theme, and how often it appears in the responses can be recorded. A simple example may be where an open question addresses the respondent's feelings toward a proposed course of action - you can assign codes for both positive and negative comments that the consultee may make, and note where and how often they occur. Such 'content analysis' can be very complicated and the number of codes eventually used can be substantial. For example, in the ECS survey of resident views of consultation, over 200 codes were used initially.

7.2 Validation

It is vital that only valid responses are entered into database. Valid responses are those which answer the question asked, in the requested way. Common examples of invalid responses might be ticking two boxes in a response, when only one was asked for, or making a written note in a margin when only a yes-no response was called for. It is difficult to overemphasise how disruptive an error can be in a large dataset. It is advisable that an initial check through the raw data should be made before it is added to the database, to identify any rogue values that might have been recorded. This can be done by the operator before inputting data from a hard-copy, or automatically flagged up in some software packages as an invalid entry, while the record is being created online. Reference numbers can be used to check anomalies against hard-copies if necessary.

7.3 Analysis of Findings

Analysis should begin with a basic description of the data that has been gathered – starting with a general description of the profile of those who responded and moving on to frequencies of responses, the most popular response, average values, and response rate and so on. The data must therefore have been stored in a way that allows such description. At the most basic level, tables of figures can be drawn up and calculations can be done manually. However, more sophisticated tools are available in many organisations and should be used fully. Data can be stored and interrogated using commonly available software packages such as Excel, Access, SPSS or SNAP software. These will allow not only basic descriptions and comparisons, but will also perform cross-tabulations and more powerful statistical tests on numerical data (if necessary).

7.4 Response Rates

In some consultation and engagement exercises, respondents will be very keen to participate. In others, uptake of the opportunity to participate will be low. There are many possible reasons for this and it is often frustrating to develop a consultation exercise that others do not seem attracted to. The reasons that people do not take the opportunity to engage with you when you consult might include:

- People feel that their input will have little or no impact on decisions
- They have other priorities
- The process is felt to take up too much time
- They have little interest in or affinity with the issues under discussion
- (Particularly in the case of local authorities) they prefer to leave decisions to the elected members voted for at elections

Conversely, there are sometimes specific reasons why people do enter into a consultation process:

- If they feel their input can secure some direct physical benefit to themselves or an interest of theirs
- To show support for the process as much as the outcomes
- To introduce themselves or boost their visibility in the area (particularly in the case of new voluntary organisations)
- They are regular participants in any exercise

Deeper analysis comes after the description of the data and the appreciation of the response rate – asking what the differences between results / responses may mean, whether they are significant variations or just apparent variations, and looking for patterns in the data that reveal another layer of information. Comparisons and cross-tabulations (where one feature of the data is compared to another to give additional information) may be used for example to examine relationships between responses. For instance, there may be differences in the perception of crime amongst males and females, or between people living in different neighbourhoods, or those of a certain age group. This type of additional analysis works best with a large sample size.

Section 8: Feeding back in a positive way & making use of the results

What you do with the results of a consultation or engagement process is very important. Knowing that their input was used in some way is often extremely important to participants and can affect whether they take part again in the future. You should bear this in mind right from the planning stages of the activity. This should help your organisation think about how it will use the results in its decision making.

The consultation / engagement exercise that you're running should have a vital role in the decision making process, but many people will still have the perception that taking part in such exercises can be a waste of time. This can be because of the work that your organisation may have been involved in previously, or even experiences from other organisation's engagement activities. To counteract this it is important that you have a good process in place to support your feedback work. This transparent way of working will help to build trust between the participants and your organisation. If this is done well, they will be able to see that their opinion is valued and that they can influence decisions. The process of engagement or consultation will then be much easier in the future.

8.1 Preparing the results

When you put the report together, you will need to think about who will need to access the report. Feedback materials should be routinely offered to these groups, which will include:

- Participants
- The general public
- Chief Executives
- Directors
- Corporate level management
- Other staff within your organisation
- Committee Chairs and elected members
- Other stakeholders
- Auditors
- Appropriate networks and any local co-ordination agreements (subject to any legal or data protection considerations)

Communication and feedback needs to be open, accessible and should report any interpretations as well as findings. The information should be presented in such a way that makes sense to decision makers and those who may want to examine the processes that you went through. However for most audiences, overly technical language should be avoided in reports and feedback or you run the risk of your document not being transparent. The following general points could also be considered, along with the guidelines listed in [Section 5: Good communications](#).

- Avoid the use of complex visual effects, graphs produced in 3D or in colour can be difficult to read and can photocopy badly
- Ensure that tables and graphs are clearly titled, and that the message they are trying to convey is clear

- Avoid the use of jargon and abbreviations
- Pick out the main points and summarise in a few words
- Consider sharing a draft with a non-expert to get their view on the clarity and structure of your output before distributing widely

You may wish to standardise the format of your feedback for **ALL** of your organisation's engagement and consultation work. This will help to ensure that everyone is clear about what kind of feedback they can expect from the exercise at the very beginning of the process.

8.2 What form should the feedback take?

Different audiences may prefer different types of communication of the results, at differing levels of detail and language and at different times. All these factors can affect the form that your feedback will take. You may be:

- Saying an initial thank you;
- Asking people to verify the data (e.g. notes from the focus group);
- Sending an evaluation, findings and recommendations (which might or might not include the organisation's plan of how they will address the issues raised).

Participants will want to know how things are going to be changed in light of them taking part. The organisation may take a long time to decide how services will change and how they will include the views when making decisions. It is important to keep people updated at all stages and if there are delays in making decisions, people should be told that there is a delay and why, rather than not hearing anything after giving their time to the process.

A range of options should be considered based on your understanding of the consultees, and the needs of those who might make use of the results. The best way to find out what the ideal form of feedback would be is to ask the participants during the consultation process.

- **As part of a thank you letter to participants**

A letter of thanks to participants shows that their contribution has been appreciated, and can also be used to provide feedback information to show that your organisation has found their contribution valuable. You can also say that other forms of feedback are available from your organisation should they wish. This is a very personal way of feeding back and gets the information to the individual rather than them having to go and look for it themselves online, in a newspaper or other ways.

- **In person**

By meeting people directly you can have contact with the audience and give them the opportunity to ask questions about the process, how the outcomes will be implemented and how they will be affected. They can help to diffuse any tension around the outcomes of the process when consultations have been on contentious issues and end any misconceptions about the process. It is important for your organisation to go to people rather than expect them to come to you. The feedback could be part of an existing meeting the participants are having. However, you should bear in mind that if people have attended one event to give their views, they

may not attend another to hear the feedback. This method is demanding of people's time and is also costly.

- **Posters**

Posters will allow you to display feedback where an activity took place, which means that you can reach some people that took part this way, as well as others that may not have that could also be affected. You can also display posters in areas or community centres that are directly affected by the results. Be aware that your poster will be competing against other posters for people's attention.

- **Leaflets**

You can reach a large amount of people through a leaflet drop in an affected community, or leave leaflets freely available in community venues for people to take should they be interested. However these can easily be discarded.

- **Newsletter / newspaper articles**

These will reach a large audience, including those that may not have been part of the original activity. An article can therefore give you the chance to get good PR in a specific geographical area, and could encourage people to get involved in future processes.

- **Email**

A large amount of people can be reached with very little expense by using email. You can also provide links to different forms of feedback within the email so that each person can access the document that they feel is most appropriate to them.

- **Summary reports**

Not everyone will have the opportunity or the desire to examine every output and every outcome from the process. A summary report will give people the opportunity to briefly examine how they are affected when they might not access a full report, which could be because of time or because it may appear daunting.

- **Detailed reports**

Although not everyone will want to access detailed reports, they are essential for those who wish to learn from your practices and to examine in depth how your conclusions were reached.

- **Detailed analytical tables**

These will be quite dry, but they will enable people to examine lots of data and draw specific conclusions from your work, including anyone who would wish to undertake similar exercises for their work. These should be offered to people who are interested, but they should not be used as the primary way of feeding back.

- **A technical summary**

This summary should be prepared for those managers and practitioners who will look to use the consultation and engagement results and learn from your general approach.

- **Maps**

Maps will enable you to show how a specific environment will be affected in a

geographical area and can be used to allay fears that developments could physically affect a specific community.

Following this step, you may wish to invite participants to the launch of a project or piece of work that you have had their help in creating, or invite stakeholders to see developments take place.

8.3 Where should the feedback be made available?

Those that took part should be able to easily get hold of feedback. You should give participants the option of signing up for feedback during the consultation or engagement process, noting any special requirements that they may have. Where appropriate, you should make copies of any of the communications that are listed above available as well. These should be made available:

- Internally to other staff in your organisation
- In any internal communications within partner organisations
- On your organisation's, your partner organisations' or any other relevant and accessible websites, which should include where you advertised the initial activity;
- In newsletters or mailings (in electronic or hard copy form)
- In local residents' magazines
- In the local press

It would also be important to share these outputs with other consultation practitioners, and request that they make the materials available to their own audiences.

Section 9: What to do with the results

After initial feed back to participants, the information that you gathered during the engagement process must be used to inform decision making and service delivery.

Develop an action plan

Departments directly affected by the report will need to develop an action plan and take forward their own actions. Partners who are involved in the service in question will need to be involved in developing the action plan and tasked with appropriate actions.

Some other things to consider:

- Pick up on issues which need to be addressed immediately, for example health and safety, breach of policy etc and make relevant changes to procedures
- Positive feedback should be used to share good practice, inform service delivery, training etc
- Departments should be speaking to each other throughout the whole process
- Refer to feedback from previous engagement activities when developing new plans

Remember than engagement is a cycle. After changes have been made to a service, you should continue to engage with stakeholders about the new service.

Communicating the findings

There is likely to be learning which the whole organisation can learn from so share the report as widely as is appropriate within the organisation and to partner organisations.

Section 10: How did it go? – evaluating the process

Evaluation is the process of looking at the consultation or engagement process and making an assessment of the quality of work that you have done. It is a chance to highlight what you are doing right and to look at where change might be needed for future work.

Evaluation is not just a one-off, end-of project activity. Every consultation should be informed by earlier activities and it should in turn inform the next one. It should not be an end in itself, but an opportunity for your organisation to take its consultation work forward in the future.

Interesting fact from the Enhanced Consultation Strategy (ECS) project: Nearly 25% of the exercises had been followed up with a detailed evaluation, and a further 28% were subject to a broad evaluation. Meanwhile, 15% of the consultation and engagement activities described had no evaluation planned after their completion.

You will be able to evaluate elements of the activity as it takes place, but the full evaluation will happen at the end of the work when you draw together everything you have learnt and look at how it has affected the results. There are a number of questions that you should ask about the process:

- Were the original objectives clear?
- Were these objectives clearly achievable?
- How closely did you meet the original aims?
- What did you learn during the process?
- What resources did you use? Was there value for money?
- How do you measure or perceive success? What was the impact?
- How useful were the results?
- What would you do differently if you did the work again?

The original aims of a project can sometimes be challenged or amended. It is ok to change these aims, but make sure that you can still accomplish what you set out to achieve. If possible you should track any changes throughout the life of the exercise and you should be open about it happening in any written evaluation. There will be fewer changes if the work's original aims and objectives are:

- Clear;
- Informed by other work;
- Achievable.

If you are evaluating your own work you must be willing to accept constructive criticism and feedback about the project by all participants. You must be ready to learn from your mistakes and be willing to make changes for future engagement work if that is what is needed. If not then there is little point in evaluating the work.

The information that you include should be clear, efficient and relevant, and it should answer the questions that you want answering. You should ensure that you can repeat the evaluation process in the future if necessary, in case it needs any further evaluation..

10.1 Baseline data

You should have baseline data from the start of the process, which will be facts and information about how things were before the consultation or engagement took place. This could be information that you have gathered from previous exercises or information that you may have gathered at the beginning of this piece of work. You can then compare this information to similar information that you can gather as your work comes to an end so that you can prove that your work has been useful.

10.2 Qualitative and quantitative data

For a good evaluation you will need quantitative data (which will be numerical evidence e.g. how many people took part) and qualitative data (which will be descriptions about how the quality of something has changed e.g. 'the process was effective').

10.3 Outputs and outcomes

It can be important to separate the idea of outputs and outcomes. An output is a planned result of a piece of work, which can be:

- A strategy
- An arrangement
- An agreement
- An idea

Outcomes are what you can achieve from outputs. For example, an output of an exercise could be a strategy for cleaner streets in a community, but an outcome might be a feeling of pride within this community. If outputs are not put into action then no outcome can result from the process.

10.4 Impact

What was the effect of your work? You can use information on what you have achieved in the short term (gathered the information that you needed to change a service) as well as mid to long term (have you gained the trust of a community?).

10.5 Aims

At the end of the process it is vital to examine whether the information was gathered:

- in enough time
- to the right depth
- was of a high enough standard

In short, **did you do the work that you aimed to?**

The aims of the process as a whole may take time to come clear. These can include changes in satisfaction with service, efficiency savings or any other aims, but there will need to be a point where the changes you hoped to see must be measured: **did the exercise bring about any change in a service or influence any decisions?**

If the answer to these two questions is 'no', then there has been a flaw in the exercise and the results will not be useful. The effectiveness of the process as a whole will then depend on whether you have uncovered any useful new ideas or if you have a new understanding on the topic of the exercise.

Interesting fact from ECS project:

42% of organisations and partnerships that responded to the ECS survey said that the results of their activities had informed decision making on policy, and only 49% of organisations said that they had become part of any operational decision making.

Even if the aims of the work were not met, you can still learn from how you did things and improve the way that you work next time around. In an evaluation it is good practice to write a list of ways you can improve a consultation or engagement process. An independent view from your peers should also be part of the evaluation if possible.

10.6 Measuring for evaluation

The findings of your evaluation should be based on data from the exercise and the perceptions of people that were involved in the process. These measures could include:

Response rates

- The numbers of those who took part: were they as expected? Did you reach any targets that you put in place?
- Did you reach the stakeholders that you needed to?
- What was the profile of those that did take part?
- Did you reach diverse groups?

Feedback

- Comments from participants about the process, which can be from feedback forms, questionnaires, interviews or from focus groups
- Comments from other people that were involved in the work on key aspects of the process and its overall aims
- What were the experiences of those collecting the data?

Perceptions of success

- How do service users feel about the changes?
- Do those peers that work close to the service under consideration feel that the work did what it aimed to do?
- Observe the service taking place – how does it feel to be a service user for a day?
- Use public information to see what has changed (e.g. information on crime, unemployment, health etc.)
- Benchmarking – how do you compare with other departments in your organisation or with other organisations that have done similar work?

10.7 Resourcing the evaluation

Evaluation should be resourced just as with any other consultation or engagement activity. A larger or more complex project will need a wider and perhaps more intensive evaluation, but it should take place no matter what the size of the project.

10.8 Writing the report

When you're writing the evaluation report there will be key things that you should include:

- Background information
- Who evaluated the process
- How the process was evaluated
- How service users were involved
- What information was collected and how
- How this information was analysed and what it shows
- What outputs and outcomes you expected at the start of the process
- What else was achieved – were there any unexpected outputs and outcomes?
- Baseline data to compare results against
- The lessons that you learnt

The outcomes of evaluations should also be presented if possible, and (data protection considerations allowing) shared between organisations, partnerships and any local practitioner networks that may exist.

In larger exercises it is not common practice to communicate results back to each individual consultee, but it is important that those who have contributed should be able to see what has happened to their input. Please see [Section 8: Feeding back in a positive way & making use of the results](#) for more information on ways you can go about this. A good evaluation will show that your organisation is both accountable and transparent.

See also "Showing Evidence" TPAS Cymru's Monitoring and Evaluation Guide and Toolkit for tenant participation practice in social housing
[Getting Results; Showing Evidence" TPAS Cymru Monitoring and Evaluation Guide and Toolkit" \(560.95 kB\)](#)

Appendix i

Introduction

In 2009 Participation Cymru hosted an open meeting to gauge opinion and views around principles or standards for public engagement. It was agreed by all involved that some form of national guidance was needed to ensure a consistency of approach. These results with recommendations were then published and submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government.

In response to the open meeting report it was proposed that national principles should be developed by members of the Participation Cymru Advisory Panel, to be endorsed by the Welsh Assembly Government, and TPAS Cymru proposed an initial set of principles for discussion. A meeting was held between the Welsh Assembly Government and members of the Participation Cymru Advisory Panel (representing many of the umbrella organisations for public services in Wales), where it was agreed that a set of National Principles, endorsed by the Welsh Assembly Government, should be developed. These overarching set of principles will allow organisations to share a consistent and effective standard for public engagement whilst allowing them the scope to develop strategies that reflect their own size and structure and can be related to other specific standards and guidance for their sector.

These Principles have been finalised following a lengthy process of informal engagement and more formal consultation facilitated by Participation Cymru and TPAS Cymru. A report on the results of these consultations is available on Participation Cymru and TPAS Cymru web sites.

These Principles have been long awaited by many public service organisations across Wales.

- They are a set of national principles aimed at statutory and third sector Public Service providers to encourage effective, efficient and consistent public engagement across Wales. By their very nature they are ambitious and aim to set a high standard that can be expected by the people of Wales.
- They are overarching principles and not a 'how to guide' on public engagement. It is the intention that these principles be adopted by individual organisations so that everyone is working to a consistent and effective standard for public engagement. Whilst some guidance notes have been included under each principle further guidance, advice and resources are available from Participation Cymru, TPAS Cymru, Participation Unit (Save the Children) and other similar organisations.
- This is a working paper setting out the finalised principles; publicity materials will be produced in due course to present and promote the National Principles.

[National principles for public engagement in Wales - Participation Cymru](#)

[National Principles of Public Engagement in Wales Guidance Notes](#)

Appendix ii

Engagement Requirements of the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Duties

What?

A listed body in Wales must:

- involve people who it considers representative of one or more of the protected groups and who have an interest in how an authority carries out its functions. Protected groups are those who share one or more of the protected characteristics which are: Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion or Belief; Sex; and Sexual Orientation.

A listed body in Wales may:

- consult and involve other people that it considers appropriate. In reaching the decision as to who is appropriate, an authority must consider the need to involve or consult people from one or more of the protected groups who have an interest in the way the authority carries out its functions, where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

When?

This engagement must take place in relation to:

- setting equality objectives
- preparing and reviewing a Strategic Equality Plan
- identifying how an authority's work and activities may contribute to meeting the general duty
- assessing the likely impact on protected groups of any policies or practices being proposed or reviewed.

Further Information

The Equality and Human Rights Commission in Wales has produced more detailed specific guidance relating to the Engagement duty. This can be found on their website alongside wider guidance on all the specific duties or from the link below

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/Wales/PSED_Wales_docs/3_engagement_bk.doc

A list of which bodies must comply with the Public Sector Duties (Wales) can be found in Part 2 of Schedule 19 of the [act](#).

Appendix iii – Useful Links

General resources and contacts

- [Participation Cymru](#)
- [Involve](#)
- [Children in Wales. Third Sector Partnership Council.](#)
- [Wales Council for Voluntary Action](#)
- Data Unit (formerly the LGDU) [Survey Support](#)
- [One Voice Wales](#) – ‘The Voice of Community Councils in Wales’
- [CWYVS](#) The Council of Wales Youth Voluntary Sector
- [Beyond Boundaries](#): Citizen Centred Local Services for Wales
- [TPAS Cymru | Participation Works](#)

Accessibility

- [Learning Disability Wales](#)
- [The Equality and Human Rights Commission](#)
- [The Plain English campaign](#) and [Bangor University's 'Cymraeg Clir'\(Clear Welsh\) Unit](#)
- [The Royal National Institute for the Blind \(RNIB\)](#)
- [The Royal National Institute for the Deaf \(RNID\)](#)

Sampling

[Creative Research systems](#)

Appendix iv

Participation Cymru Advisory Panel Terms of Reference

Developing and supporting participation in Wales

Background

Participation Cymru is a leading agency concerned with building the skills of those people who work with citizens & communities in Wales. We work with service providers, practitioners, advocates and other public bodies, to ensure that citizen and community participation is practised effectively by all.

The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has demonstrated its commitment to public engagement and participation in policy documents such as Making the Connections and the Beecham Review. The Third sector is championing the rights of the citizen to be heard and in shaping service provision and delivery.

Partnership working between WAG, various statutory agencies and sectors is vital to ensure the goal of citizen centred working is achieved. The partnership of the Participation Cymru Advisory Panel will help support this drive to increase effective citizen centred design, development and improved delivery of public services.

The role of an Advisory Panel

Participation Cymru's aim is to help develop the capacity and practice of those working to ensure the full participation of citizens in decision-making in Wales and to ensure community and public engagement and participation are given full recognition as part of a democratic process.

A partnership approach has been adopted in order to maximise effectiveness and achieve added value through organisations sharing their expertise and co-ordinating activity in Wales. The Participation Cymru Advisory Panel will play a key role in making Participation Cymru a key player within the field of participation in Wales.

The Participation Cymru Advisory Panel will:

- establish and direct the strategic priorities for Participation Cymru
- identify new and relevant opportunities for Participation Cymru
- ensure that action is planned and resources identified to address effectively the needs of participation practitioners in Wales
- ensure clear and regular communication about the aims and objectives of the partnership and its related sub groups with the wider group of stakeholders to ensure that strategic priorities are understood

Activities

Participation Cymru will convene the Advisory Panel. Members of the Panel are asked to undertake to actively support Participation Cymru by:

- making a commitment to the underlying principles of participation
- promoting Participation Cymru
- contributing to a strategic and co-ordinated development approach to participation in Wales
- attending and contributing to meetings on a regular basis
- offering their expertise
- promoting the diversity of work undertaken on participation in Wales
- sharing information and providing feedback to their organisations, sectors and networks
- foster collaboration and co-operation between stakeholders

Panel members are expected to play an active role, not just in guiding the work, but also in taking the programme forward within their own constituencies. Reporting arrangements should include work undertaken by the panel, as well as staff members.

Rules of engagement

1. The Participation Cymru Advisory Panel will meet quarterly.
2. Agenda management will be the responsibility of all members of the Panel.
3. Partners should strive to attend all meetings. In exceptional circumstances, a well-briefed substitute with decision-making powers may attend in their place.
4. Participation Cymru will convene and support the Panel. Participation Cymru in turn is managed by WCVA.

Membership

Membership includes statutory and voluntary organisations undertaking a significant contribution to the development of participation in Wales.

The agencies involved in the Panel at present are:

Arts Council for Wales, Association of Chief Constables in Wales, Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency Wales, Her Majesty's Court Service, National Leadership and Improvement Agency for Healthcare, Participation Unit – Save the Children in Wales, Tenant's Participation Association Cymru, Welsh NHS Confederation, Wales Audit Office, Welsh Assembly Government, Wales Association of County Voluntary Councils, Wales Council for Voluntary Action, Welsh Local Government Association.

Additional organisations may be invited to join the Panel due to their relevance or experience at a particular time.

Management

Participation Cymru is managed by WCVA who are responsible for the staff, financial management and reporting arrangements.

In accordance with WCVA governance arrangements a member of the WCVA Board of Trustees will be chair of the Advisory Panel.

Membership of the Participation Cymru Partnership Advisory Panel

Anne Stephenson	WCVA trustee (Chair)
Derek Walker	The Wales Co-op Centre (Vice chair)
Emyr Williams	Save the Children – Participation Unit
Wayne Jepson	NLIAH
Elaine Cabuts	National Museum of Wales
Clover Rodrigues	Welsh Local Government Association
Helen Keatley	Wales Audit Office
Huw Evans	HM Courts Service
John R. Jones	Medrwn Môn (WCVA Trustee)
Margaret Peters	Countryside Council for Wales
Jane Green	The NHS Confederation in Wales
Phil Jarrold	Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Colette Paul	Association of Chief Police Officers
John Drysdale	TPAS Cymru
Lyn Cadwallader	One Voice Wales
Richard Shearer	Welsh Government
Wendy Jones	Welsh Association of Voluntary Councils

Appendix v

Public Engagement Working Group Terms of Reference

Developing and supporting collaborative engagement in Wales

Background

The Welsh Government (WG) has demonstrated its commitment to public engagement and participation in policy documents such as Making the Connections and the Beecham Review.

Partnership working and effective collaboration between WG, various statutory agencies and sectors is vital to ensure the goal of citizen centred working is achieved. The group will through bringing together the strands of existing work into a coherent programme support the drive to increase effective citizen centred design, development and improved delivery of public services.

The role of the group

A partnership approach in order to maximise effectiveness and achieve added value through organisations sharing their expertise and co-ordinating engagement activity in Wales.

It should be a task and finish group that will cease its work once the approach to participation is embedded and should review its progress and need to continue in 2013.

The group will:

- establish a collaborative and coherent programme of engagement events;
- identify new and relevant opportunities for events and/or training;
- ensure that action is planned and resources identified to deliver programme;
- ensure clear and regular communication about the content aims and objectives of the programme with stakeholders
- evaluate short and long term impact and return on investment of the programme

Activities

Participation Cymru will convene the group. Members of the group are asked to undertake to actively support its work by:

- making a commitment to the National Principles for Public Engagement In Wales
- promoting collaborative participation and engagement
- contributing to a strategic and co-ordinated development approach to participation and engagement in Wales
- attending and contributing to meetings on a regular basis
- sharing expertise and knowledge
- promoting the diversity of work undertaken on participation in Wales
- sharing information and providing feedback to their organisations, sectors and networks

- foster collaboration and co-operation between stakeholders

They are expected to play an active role, not just in guiding the work, but also in taking the programme forward within their own constituencies. Reporting arrangements should include work undertaken by the panel, as well as staff members.

Rules of engagement

5. The group will initially meet monthly and thereafter will meet quarterly, synchronized with PC Advisory Board
6. Agenda management will be the responsibility of all members of the Panel.
7. Members should strive to attend all meetings. In exceptional circumstances, a well-briefed substitute with decision-making powers may attend in their place.
8. WAO will initially convene and support the group.

Membership

Membership includes lead organisations making a significant contribution to the development of public engagement in Wales:

Wales Audit Office
Welsh Government & LSB/ESF Project
Welsh Local Government Association
National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare (NLIAH)
Participation Cymru
Cardiff Business School
NHS Confederation

Additional organisations may be invited to join due to their relevance or experience at a particular time.

Management

The group may elect a chair and deputy to aid the planning of and conduct of its business.

Programme of Public Engagement events

Learning events and activities in the programme should aim to deliver the following objectives:

- promote national participation agenda
- share good practice and knowledge
- enhance skills and capacity
- to identify further training opportunities and solve problems collaboratively
- to embed sustainable practices

Appendix vi

Case Study Proforma

Sharing and learning from each other's experiences is a good way of developing effective methods of engagement. It also promotes your organisation and the work you are doing. This proforma has been developed to make the drafting of your submission as time effective as possible. Its good to share!

Case study pro-forma

Case Study Title

**Partner
Organisation (s)**

Key words

Case study text

1. Brief Introduction
2. Details of the issue addressed
3. Actions/approach taken
4. Benefits such as: improvements to service, improved dialogue about service planning etc
5. Sustaining and or building on the benefits realised
6. How do you feel the approach met the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales?
7. How would you rate your approach to the project against the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales?

Principle	Evaluation				
	1= very poor: 2 = poor: 3 = average: 4 = good: 5 = excellent				
Engagement is effectively designed to make a difference	1	2	3	4	5
Encourage and enable everyone affected to be involved, if they so choose	1	2	3	4	5
Engagement is planned and delivered in a timely and appropriate way	1	2	3	4	5
Work with relevant partner organisations	1	2	3	4	5
The information provided will be jargon free, appropriate and	1	2	3	4	5

Case study pro-forma

understandable					
Make it easier for people to take part	1	2	3	4	5
Enable people to take part effectively	1	2	3	4	5
Engagement is given the right resources and support to be effective	1	2	3	4	5
People are told the impact of their contribution	1	2	3	4	5
Learn and share lessons to improve the process of engagement	1	2	3	4	5

Aim for 400 words

Contact details

Name:
 Title/role:
 Organisation:
 Email:
 Telephone:

Website and or useful links

If you would like to discuss your case study further with a member of Participation Cymru's staff please call 029 2043 5761 or email participationcymru@wcva.org.uk.