Meaningful Consultation, Lasting Impact

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

A best practice guide for pre-application consultation

Infrastructure (Wales) Act 2024

Contents

Sidebar

1 — Purpose of this guidance

2 — Understanding the value of engagement

3 — Defining your consultation strategy

4 — Delivering a meaningful consultation

5 — Analysing and reporting

6 — Responding to feedback

Appendices

Contents

2 Understanding the value of engagement

3 Defining your consultation strategy

4 Delivering a meaningful consultation

5 Analysing and reporting

6 Responding to feedback

Appendices

1. Purpose of this guidance

3

1.1 Statutory context

This guidance is aimed at developers undertaking pre-application consultation on a significant infrastructure project.

It sets out advice and guidance for designing and carrying out consultations that, as well as being compliant with statutory requirements, also delivers meaningful engagement that can support project success.

In line with commitments set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act, the Welsh Government encourages a best practice approach to collaboration and consultation in relation to infrastructure projects coming forward in Wales. This means developers will be expected to go beyond minimum statutory requirements, whilst being proportionate to the scale, impact and local context of each project.

Importantly, **by engaging early and undertaking an iterative consultation process** that engages a range of stakeholders, developers are more likely to fully understand key issues and opportunities, resulting in a better project and smoother planning process.

Through **collaborative working** with public bodies, stakeholders and the community, issues can be resolved and common ground established.

As well as being for developers, this guidance can also be used as a reference document by other stakeholders, such as planning authorities, town and community councils and Planning and Environment Decisions Wales ("PEDW") as the standard of engagement the Welsh Government expects prospective applicants to undertake.

Separate guidance to support public bodies and communities engaging in the infrastructure consent process is also available.

1.2 About the Infrastructure (Wales) Act

Planning for significant infrastructure projects in Wales is a devolved matter, with decisions being made by Welsh Ministers under the Infrastructure (Wales) Act 2024 ("the Act) **[7]**.

The 'Act' sets out the infrastructure consenting process for Significant Infrastructure Projects ("SIP") in Wales.

Under the Act, an Infrastructure Consent Order (ICO) provides a **one-stop-shop for obtaining consents, licenses and other requirements in a single consent.**

Consultation requirements are set out within the Act and associated regulations, and include how consultations must be publicised and who must be consulted.

The Act also includes a duty for statutory consultees to provide a substantive response within 42 days of being sent a formal consultation notice.

1.3 What is a Significant Infrastructure Project (SIP)?

A SIP is a major infrastructure project of a certain type and size, as specified in the Act, which requires infrastructure consent from the Welsh Ministers rather than planning permission from the local planning authority.

Part 1 of the Act (see sections 1-8) details when a development falls within the definition of a "SIP". SIPs include large-scale projects in energy, transport, waste, and water (e.g. new power stations, onshore wind farms, major highways and rail lines, and large dams or reservoirs).

Part 1 also provides guidance as to when specific projects, such as the construction or alteration of a rail freight interchange, harbour facility or airport (see sections 9-11), fall within that definition.

The Act also allows the Welsh Ministers to amend Part 1 by regulations to add new types of projects to the definition of a significant infrastructure project, or to vary or remove the significant infrastructure projects currently defined in the Act.

Ministers also have the power to bring other projects outside those defined in the Act into the infrastructure consenting process, such as in the case of novel technologies or other projects that could be considered to be of national significance.

1.4 Infrastructure planning and consultation requirements in Wales

The statutory requirement for pre-application consultation

Section 30 of the Act places a mandatory requirement on prospective applicants (developers) to carry out pre-application consultation on a proposed application. The Infrastructure Consent (Pre-Application and Application Procedure and Transitional Provisions) (Wales) Regulations 2025 ("the regulations") specify the statutory minimum requirements developers must undertake in relation to their pre-application consultation activities.

Page 6 summarises the statutory requirements for a compliant statutory consultation process. Further details on the statutory requirements are set out and highlighted throughout the document at the relevant point in the consultation process.

A compliance checklist is also available in the Appendices. Whilst the legislative requirements in the regulations set out the minimum pre-application consultation and engagement required for proposed SIP applications, the Welsh Government wants to encourage broader best practice delivery.
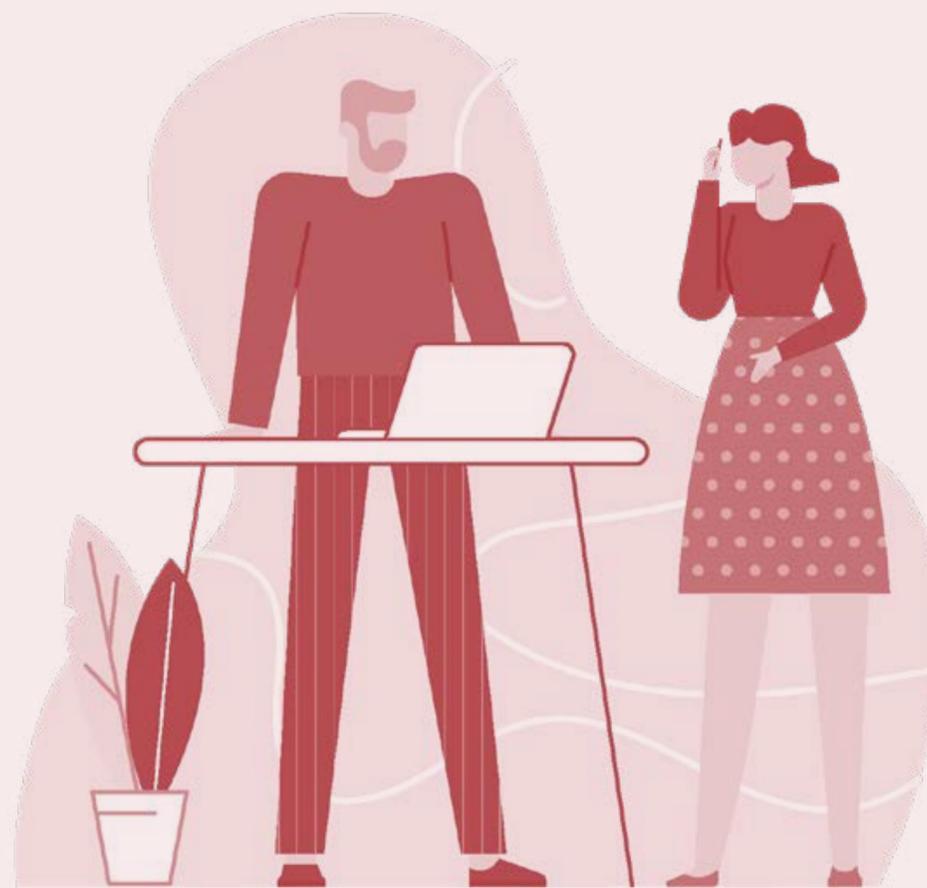
Summary of statutory requirements:

Website (Regulation 6)
Requirement

Project website to be set up within 3 months of the pre-application notification being validated.

Statutory information to be included

Site Notice (Regulation 7)
Requirement

Notices to be displayed for a minimum of 42 days.

Displayed on or near the site

Templates in Appendix 2

Written notifications (Regulation 8)
Requirement

The developer must give written notice of the proposed application to:

1. Any owner or occupier of land adjoining site
2. Relevant planning authority in which the proposed development is located
3. All relevant statutory and specialist consultees (as per the Schedule)
4. Community councils, Members of the Senedd, Member of Parliament representing the area which the proposed development is located.
5. All persons who own, occupy or have another interest in the land which the proposed development is located.
6. Any other persons the applicant feels is appropriate – individuals, groups or societies.

Notices in local paper (Regulation 9a)
Requirement

Publish a notice in a local newspaper for a minimum period of 7 days.

Consultation Report
Requirement

Requirement to submit report summarising consultation activities.

Consultation and publicity for development in the Welsh marine area (Regulation 10)
Marine Requirement

In the case of a proposed application for development in the Welsh marine area, you must give notice to (Regulation 10a):

- any planning authority considered appropriate by the applicant;
- all relevant statutory consultees and specialist consultees, including Natural Resources Wales;
- any relevant community council, Member of the Senedd, and Member of the House of Commons considered appropriate by the applicant;
- any other person or persons the applicant considers appropriate, including individuals, groups or societies identified by any pre-application services provided;

Publicity for Welsh marine area applications (Regulation 10b)

You must publish the statutory notice for at least 7 days in:

- local newspapers
- a fishing journal
- Lloyd's List
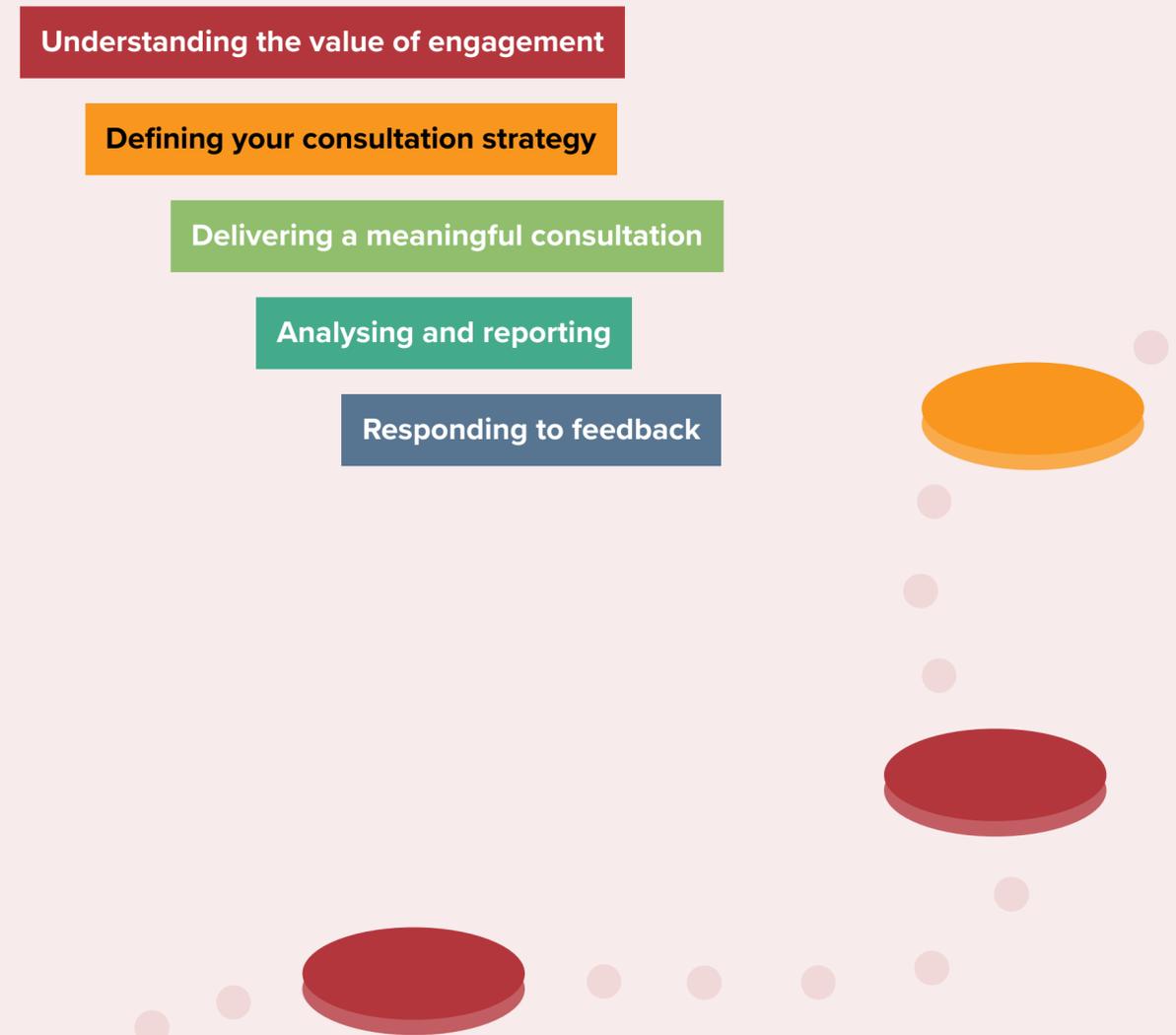
Website content required after 3 months as above.

No event required but may be advisable.

1.5 How to use this guide

The aim of this guidance is to explain how best practice consultation can be delivered, that both meet statutory requirements, whilst also enabling meaningful engagement with stakeholders and local communities.

This guidance provides a step-by-step guide on how to plan and deliver a compliant and effective consultation for a Significant Infrastructure Project in Wales.

The guide covers the following themes:

Understanding the value of engagement

Defining your consultation strategy

Delivering a meaningful consultation

Analysing and reporting

Responding to feedback

This includes:

Compliance process and checklists

Best practice methods and approaches

Practical 'top tips' for delivering impact

'Did you know?' facts to help develop your strategy

Consultation Cycle

This guide is structured around a best practice Consultation Cycle, which ensures a continuous, iterative approach to engagement. Importantly, it ensures the feedback loop is always closed so that stakeholders and communities can understand how their comments have influenced the project.

The four key stages of the Consultation Cycle:

Define

Planning and clearly setting out your approach at the start of your project, including identifying stakeholders and having clarity on what you are consulting on. This should then be a phase for review, reflection and refining of your approach at each stage of consultation.

Deliver

The active consultation period involving raising awareness of your project and going out to talk to stakeholders and communities to obtain feedback.

Feedback

Communicating back to stakeholders and communities about the feedback received, how the plans have changed, and next steps for the project.
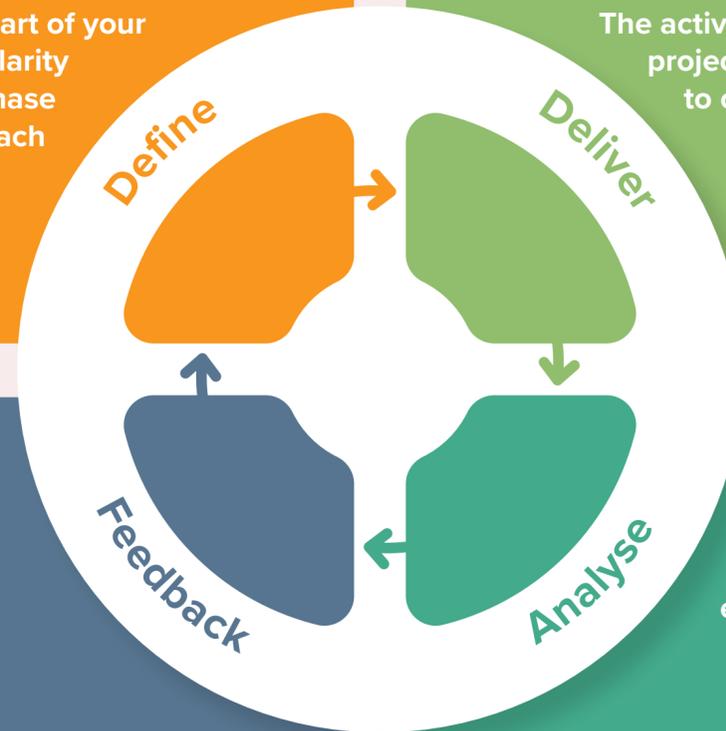
Analyse

Processing and analysing feedback to help inform the evolving plans.

Contents

2. Understanding the value of engagement

2.1 Why undertake best practice consultation?

Delivering SIPs in Wales is essential for ensuring future prosperity and wellbeing in Wales, whether through the delivery of green energy to support the net zero transition, ensuring future energy security, or providing essential transport infrastructure.

Ensuring collaborative working with host communities for these projects is critical in terms of:

- ensuring projects can be delivered in a way that is sympathetic to local environmental heritage and cultural contexts;
- minimising local impacts and concerns;
- trying to reach all parts of the community including the silent majority so their views can also be taken into consideration; and
- looking at opportunities to deliver positive community benefit and socio-economic opportunities and outcomes.

In order to achieve this, it is essential to undertake an **iterative process of engagement**, that enables focused and useful feedback on the project plans.

This provides the opportunity to build trust, dialogue and collaboration focused on positive outcomes.

When done well, this can help remove issues, address concerns and reduce opposition within local communities.

Starting this process early is also important, to ensure conversations get off on a positive footing from the outset.

Effective early engagement with stakeholders and communities that provides a meaningful opportunity to influence proposals, at the earliest possible stage of the process, can therefore benefit all parties involved in the project.

A non-statutory consultation is an opportunity to introduce the project to the community and seek feedback on initial proposals. The statutory consultation is an opportunity for stakeholders and the community to comment on the draft outline application before it is submitted to PEDW.

Consultation Cycle: best practice guide map

This guide has been structured around the four parts of the consultation cycle.

Here is a map of all sections of the guide with clickable links to take you straight to the section you need.

Welsh culture

When?

Who?

What?

Define

Deliver

Feedback

Analyse

Planning

Raising awareness

Materials

Activities

Recording

Analysing

Reporting

Feedback

2.2 Why do individuals want to have their voices heard?

- Consultation respects people's freedom to make their own choices and acknowledges their ability to influence decisions. This supports the idea that people thrive when they feel in control of their actions **[1]**.

- Involving people in decision-making improves their well-being because it shows that their values and preferences matter. This boosts their motivation and makes them feel more connected to the decisions being made **[4]**.

- Consultation motivates people by giving them a sense that their contributions matter and that they are capable. As a result, they become more engaged and develop greater trust in the organisations or institutions involved **[1]**.

- Open discussion helps people understand each other and build trust, which in turn strengthens democratic participation and people's shared confidence in their ability to act collectively **[6]**.

2.3 The engagement cycle

Best practice engagement should be based around creating collaborative ongoing relationships with stakeholder and local communities.

This should be based around:

- Early engagement from the start of the project
- Iterative engagement and consultation throughout the life of the project
- Regular updates and timely feedback to communities
- Demonstrating and implementing project changes

All of the above should enable project teams to deliver better projects that minimise local issues and concerns, and maximise environmental and socio-economic benefits and opportunities for the life of the project.

In order to achieve an iterative and effective approach to engagement, the four-step consultation cycle can be used at each phase of activity, whether undertaking early stage engagement, focusing on a specific issue such as transport or community benefit, or undertaking statutory consultation.

Top Tip

Preventing misinformation

Being proactive and transparent with updates on the project from the outset, helps ensure accurate information and messaging from the developer is available, removing the opportunity for an information void to occur that can lead to the spread of misinformation.

Did you know?

Reputation management

Consultation and engagement is centered around effective communication and relationship building within local communities.

Transparency, honesty and proactive communication is key to building trust and ensuring a positive reputation for the project and developers.

Conversely, failure to deliver a robust and effective consultation can have a negative impact on reputation. Reputation management is therefore a key consideration and benefit of taking a strategic, best practice approach to consultation on SIPs.

3. Defining your consultation strategy

Ensuring purpose and clarity

This section provides guidance on how to create a clear strategy to ensure the delivery of effective pre-application consultation tailored for each specific project.

Having a clear plan and approach at the outset of the project helps ensure the delivery of a compliant process that meets all the statutory requirements (set out in Chapter 2). It also ensures that developers understand and communicate effectively with the local community and key stakeholders. This is key to enabling productive dialogue, reaching more people, building trust and delivering positive project outcomes locally.

It is a good idea to create a Consultation Plan, also sometimes known as a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) to map out your planned approach to consultation. This will provide a useful reference for the wider project team and can also be used as a tool for discussion with local community representatives about your planned approach to sense check things like your choice of event venue or approach to raising awareness. This can also be produced as a public facing document and published on the project website, as a way to demonstrate your commitment.

Below are the key building blocks to think about when developing a strategic consultation approach and planned activity.

3.1 What?

The first question to ask is 'what do we want to achieve' through the consultation process? And what will success look like for your consultation process?

Here is a list of things to consider when defining the aims and objectives of the consultation process.

Consultation Scope: What are you consulting on?

Defining the scope of the consultation is key to designing a meaningful consultation. Invariably, there will be some elements to a project that cannot be changed, such as access to the grid or commercial pre-requisites to ensure a viable project.

These questions may help when considering what stakeholders and communities need to understand about the scope of the consultation in order to engage:

- **Have you clearly defined your project and what it includes?**

- **What are the key parameters of the project?**

- **What things can and can't realistically change?**

- **Are there any local insights that could particularly assist in shaping the project (such as environmental, heritage knowledge)?**

- **What are the key elements that can be influenced that you are looking for feedback on?**

- **What is your social value and community benefit proposition and if/how can the community help shape this?**

Project need: What is this project and why is it being proposed?

Every SIP being brought forward will inevitably sit within a much broader policy, political, economic and technological context.

Setting the scene for these projects is therefore critical in terms of helping stakeholders and local communities understand why this project is being proposed, alongside the rationale for it being located within their local community.

It cannot be assumed that there will be widespread knowledge or understanding about the technology or infrastructure proposed, or the wider agenda it sits within. Consider how much context to provide, and how to point people to further information as part of the overall communication approach.

For example, in the case of renewable energy infrastructure it is important to set the scene in terms of the wider net-zero transition, as well as providing context around energy security and cost of living implications.

Local understanding: What are the key local issues?

As part of the strategy and planning process, undertaking a simple SWOT analysis exploring the project Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats can help highlight some of the key issues of interest and concern relating to the project.

This helps ensure that project information and consultation materials can focus on the issues most relevant to local communities and stakeholders, creating a clearer and more positive engagement experience. It also supports the development of detailed Q&As so the project team can respond to enquiries in a timely and helpful manner.

Social Value: What can the project deliver for the local community?

Within a Welsh context, social value is acknowledged as a broad term that primarily refers to the social, environmental, cultural, and economic benefits from actions taken by communities, organisations, governments and individuals [7]. It is a key part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 [8], aiming to improve the long-term well-being of Wales by ensuring public spending has a positive impact, such as creating employment, supporting local businesses, or protecting the environment.

Beyond the broader need for the proposed infrastructure, achieving a positive and productive pre-application consultation depends on having a clear and well-defined social value proposition.

Enabling meaningful discussion around social value and community benefit at an early stage can often be a positive element to the pre-application consultation conversation. This can be an impactful part of the project that can be extensively shaped by local communities. Ensuring that the design of the delivery of social value and community benefits remains open to community choice and participation can enable continued positive public awareness of projects and developments.

Although the social value proposition will vary between different project types, the opportunities for delivering positive social value have the potential to cover a wide range of areas, such as:

- Environmental mitigation and improvements (biodiversity net benefit)
- Local infrastructure improvements (such as roads and footpaths)
- Skills, training and job opportunities
- Community benefit funds
- Local ownership

Defining success: What does a successful consultation look like?

Identify at the outset what a successful consultation would look like for your project. This could be a mix of numbers as well as more qualitative outcomes such as:

- Number of people engaged
- Stakeholders and community groups reached
- Quantity and quality of feedback received
- If the people engaged reflect a range of voices within the local community
- Number of substantive changes made to the project as a result of feedback
- Any change in local sentiment around the project

Success will look different for each project. However this is something that can be discussed with key local representatives or planning officers at an early stage to help define success for the consultation process.

15

3.2 Who?

Who to consult

Understanding who should be consulted is central to delivering a best practice consultation. At the start of any project, a stakeholder mapping exercise should be completed to ensure the project team has a complete picture of all the stakeholders likely to have an interest in and/or be impacted by the project.

Identifying key stakeholders

Summary of key stakeholder groups to consider when undertaking a stakeholder mapping exercise:

Statutory and Specialist Consultees

Owner and occupiers - includes all persons who own, occupy or have another interest in the land which the proposed development is located. It is advisable to get this information from Land Registry at the earliest stage to ensure that all relevant owners and occupiers are consulted.

The relevant planning authority in which the proposed development is located.

All relevant statutory and specialist consultees (as per the Schedule – see Appendix 3). This list of consultees will however vary according to the type of development being applied for.

Community councils, Members of the Senedd, Member of Parliament representing the area which the proposed development is located.

Marine consultees in the case of Marine or coastal projects, as appropriate.

Non-statutory consultees

Community organisations (such as resident groups, community venues etc)

Local interest groups (such as environmental, access or heritage groups)

Local campaign groups

Local schools and youth organisations

Local business groups and businesses

Disability groups

Ethnically diverse groups

Public / emergency services

Local media

Community groups

There are a range of community organisations run by active community leaders and activists that are likely to be interested in the project and able to provide productive feedback. An understanding of the grassroots activity going on within a local area provides an opportunity for the project team to engage with a wide range of people within a local community. Building positive working relationships with active members of the local community can provide an opportunity for project teams to actively visit existing groups.

Interest groups

Numerous local or regional interest groups, which have significant expertise in specialist areas (such as local environment or heritage groups), exist throughout Wales. Engaging with these groups proactively helps provide in-depth insight into the project site and history and identify any potential challenges, as well as future social value opportunities. For example, sightings of rare species on site could impact the location of development and construction programming.

Understanding the local community

The Well-being of Future Generations Act's 'Ways of Working' requires public bodies to ensure that people involved in decision-making reflect the diversity of their communities. Although this duty does not extend to the private sector, collecting and reporting demographic data helps both industry and Welsh Government understand who is and is not taking part. This provides a strong evidence base for boosting participation among underrepresented groups and helps build trust through transparency.

Often during consultation processes there can be a skew in terms of members of the community most likely to engage, with a strong correlation to capability and confidence, as well as time and availability. As consultations by their nature are self-selecting in terms of the range of views provided, this in itself is not an issue in terms of the credibility of the process.

However, it can present a challenge in understanding the views and perspectives of all parts of the local community.

Therefore, understanding the demographic make-up of the local community, and considering how to engage with all parts of the community, can be hugely beneficial in providing a full range of views, and gaining valuable insights around local impacts and opportunities.

A useful tool for understanding the local community can be found on the Office for National Statistics website **here**, which allows developers to define custom areas and access the key demographic data such as age, gender, disability, sexuality and socio-demographic status, collected during the 2021 census.

This demographic information can then be collected as part of feedback data. It is important that this is collected through systematic approaches to enable comparability.

For example:

- Using age category definitions that align with the ONS census data;
- Wording questions in a way that aligns with how data is collected through the census; and
- Using postcode data aligned to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation to understand the area's socio-economic situation.

Top Tips

It is important that you disclose to participants how and for what purposes their data will be used. If the data is used for equality monitoring purposes, then this should be stated at the outset of any survey through a clear GDPR statement.

Did you know?

Empowerment through engagement:

Positive consultation in itself can have positive community impacts. Sociologically, consultation acts as a mechanism for social inclusion and legitimacy [11] [16]. Conversely, exclusion can lead to perceived inequities and disempowerment [6].

Top Tips

Remember:

It is important that you disclose to participants how and for what purposes their data will be used.

If the data is used for equality monitoring purposes, then this should be stated at the outset of any survey through a clear GDPR statement.

Engaging underrepresented groups

Numerous barriers can prevent individuals from participating in consultation. Over time, this leads to certain groups being underrepresented in decision-making, as their voices and opinions are not captured, such as young people and those with a disability.

These barriers can be 'hard' or 'soft'. **'Hard' barriers** generally refer to capability, such as the ability to physically walk into a venue, drive there by car, or speak the language that the consultation is in. **'Soft' barriers** tend to refer to willingness and/or motivation, such as apathy towards a subject or feeling that their opinions are inconsequential or will otherwise not have a tangible impact on an outcome.

Additional support can be provided to help underrepresented groups take part. For example, using more engaging techniques and methods, such as digital surveys, 3D models or explanatory videos can help break through the 'apathy' barrier and reach people who are less motivated, less literate or less confident.
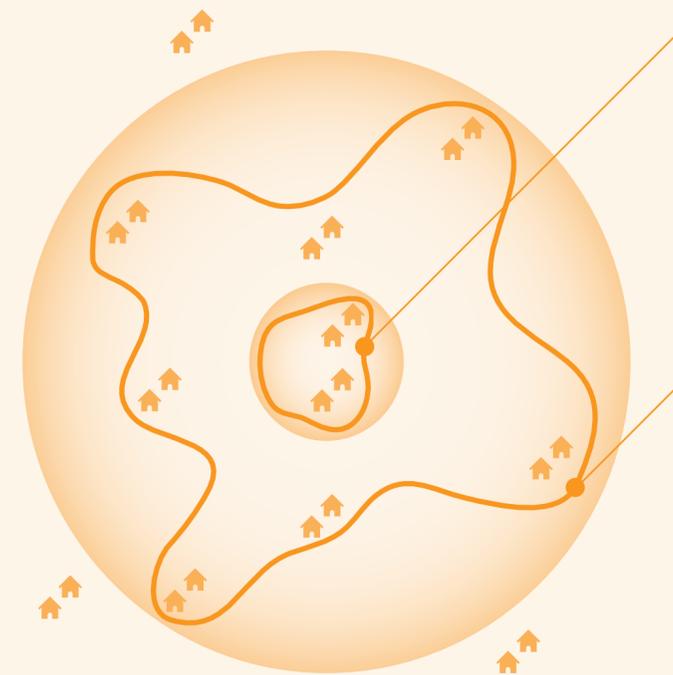
Support for reaching underrepresented groups should be guided by robust evidence or host communities may become wary. By collecting and reporting key demographic data, you can assess how effectively these groups are being reached and demonstrate an inclusive consultation process.

Did you know?

Anecdotal evidence of previous research **[15]** highlighted that the demographic make-up of those participating in the consultation process tended to skew towards older, male and less socio-economically deprived populations.

This presents a number of ethical and moral considerations as these viewpoints might not present the view of the wider community.

Did you know?

Representation and participation are core concepts within public engagement.

Public participation has been criticised for failing to access the diversity of voices and multiple knowledges in the communities it seeks to engage **[9]**, with individuals from more socio-economically deprived communities, or those with language and literacy skills, being likely underrepresented **[10]**.

Anecdotal evidence from Wales-based communications agencies indicates that participation within previous DNS consultations tended to skew towards older, male populations.

Consultation zone guidance

Identifying a consultation zone provides clarity to the project team. It is useful to share your draft consultation zone with local authority officers and local elected representatives to inform them of your approach to the consultation. This can then be adjusted based on feedback as the project progresses if required.

Outlining the logic of how you designated a consultation zone can help build trust in local communities through transparency. Depending on the scale of the development, it may be useful to have more than one 'Core Consultation Zone', with different communities being reached by different methods.

A hypothetical example of this is illustrated below.

ZONE A

All properties within close proximity to the red line boundary

Newsletters posted to all residential and business addresses within the Zone

ZONE B

Communities within wider proximity to the red line boundary

Engagement with all Community Councils located within the Zone.

3.3 When?

Timing and phasing for the consultation needs to be proportional to the proposed development and needs to be carefully planned to ensure communities and stakeholders are able to:
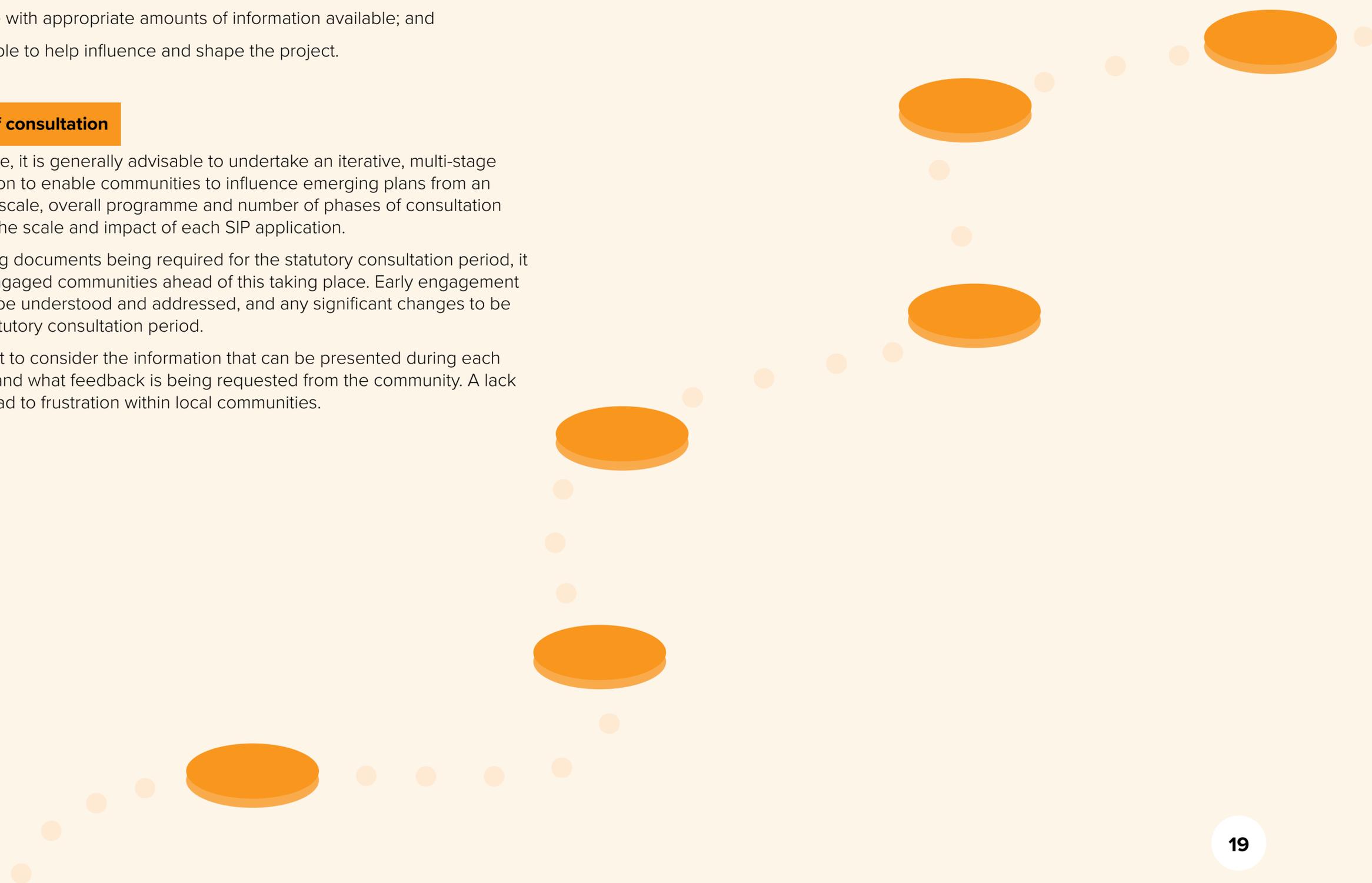
a. effectively engage with appropriate amounts of information available; and

b. meaningfully be able to help influence and shape the project.

How many stages of consultation

In terms of best practice, it is generally advisable to undertake an iterative, multi-stage approach to consultation to enable communities to influence emerging plans from an early stage. The exact scale, overall programme and number of phases of consultation will be dependent on the scale and impact of each SIP application.

Due to all draft planning documents being required for the statutory consultation period, it is advisable to have engaged communities ahead of this taking place. Early engagement enables key issues to be understood and addressed, and any significant changes to be made ahead of the statutory consultation period.

However, it is important to consider the information that can be presented during each stage of consultation, and what feedback is being requested from the community. A lack of clarity on this can lead to frustration within local communities.

Here is an example of a phased consultation for a SIP:

Consultation Stage	Scope of Consultation	Approach to Consultation
Early engagement	Feedback on early plans and approach to consultation	Engagement with elected representatives, community councils and local authority officers
Stage 1: Informal Consultation on Emerging Plans	Focus on issues and options, and community benefit approach	Engagement with community groups, nearby neighbours and landowners, and key stakeholders
Stage 2a: 42 Day Statutory Consultation	Full set of draft Infrastructure Consent Order (ICO) application documents	Compliant and comprehensive consultation with local communities and stakeholders
Stage 2b: Further consultation and engagement if required	Focused additional engagement to any further changes to the project. This could, for example, be with specialist consultees only, depending on the nature of the issue.	Targeted engagement with specific consultees that have raised issues.
Submission		Drafting Consultation Report, responding to issues and finalising Infrastructure Consent Order (ICO) application
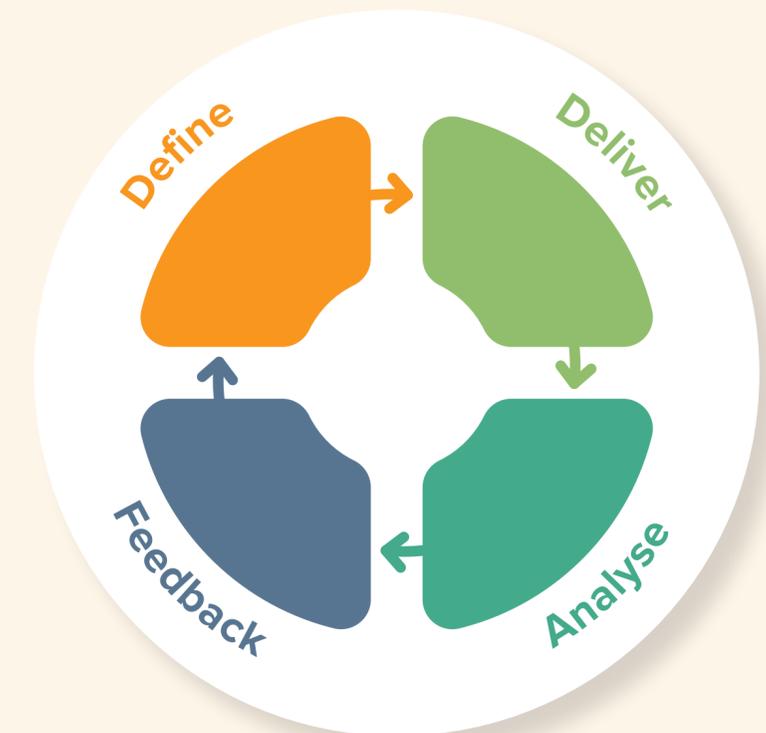
Programming your consultation

There are a number of factors that should be considered when planning the timing and programme for your consultation:

- The 18-month window from acceptance of the project by PEDW, to submission of the application. This can be extended by 56 days if a statutory consultee advises you of concerns or objection. Welsh Ministers and relevant statutory consultees need to be notified of this extension.

- The technical programme and when sufficient technical information will be available to enable a meaningful statutory consultation period.

- The statutory consultation period needs to be a minimum of 42 days, however increasing this timeframe can be beneficial to allow for issues such as holiday periods.

- Other projects and consultations: if there are other nearby planning projects being taken forward, having an understanding of the programme around these and how this may relate to your project can be beneficial to reduce confusion as well as consultation fatigue.

- Outside factors: taking into account outside factors that may impact the ability of local residents and stakeholders to engage in the consultation process is also important – such as considering bank holidays, school holidays, and major national events.

3.4 Welsh language and culture

Having consideration for Welsh language and culture needs to be considered when defining your consultation strategy for any project within Wales.

Ideally, every consultation should have some level of regard for the Welsh language and culture, and enable people to engage in the language of their choice. However, this may be more important in some areas where there are higher numbers of Welsh speakers. In this case, being able to engage in Welsh is likely to be very important to some parts of the local community and local stakeholders.

Therefore, having an understanding of the local area and the number of Welsh speakers is important when considering your exact approach to Welsh language.

To reach best practice standards for the Welsh language, you should aspire to reach the standards set out by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 for public bodies. The measure aims to work towards ensuring that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.

In the context of public consultation, this means delivering all key consultation documents bilingually and in line with the Welsh Language Commissioner's guidelines which require parity in terms of:

- Presentation
- Position
- Prominence
- Publication timing

In addition, consultations should ensure that Welsh speaking team members are present at events and that they are easily identifiable as such. Responses to enquiries should be in the language of choice, as with telephone communications and answering machine services.

Even if parity across both languages is not achievable, a proactive approach to Welsh language is generally welcomed within all communities.

4. Delivering a meaningful consultation

4.1 Planning your consultation

Having set out in your strategy why you're undertaking your consultation, what you want to achieve, who you want to consult and when you want to consult them, this section provides insight, tools and tips to successfully deliver your consultation.

Once you have an overarching Strategy in place, it will be possible to create a **detailed Consultation Plan** setting out the range of communication and engagement tools and channels you intend to use to deliver an effective consultation.

We have broken this chapter into three engagement campaign sections:

Raising awareness:
How are you going to make sure local communities and key stakeholders are aware of the consultation and able to therefore engage?

Consultation materials:
Putting together a package of consultation materials that is engaging and accessible.

Events and meetings:
Integrating effective face-to-face or virtual events into your consultation programme is not only a statutory requirement for onshore SIPs, but also offers an opportunity for high quality consultation and engagement that can provide deep insights into local perspectives and priorities.

Top tips

Accessible Design

It is important to remember that using digital publicity channels, such as emails and social media, can be positive in reducing the carbon impact of your campaign, compared to paper mailouts for example.

However, you need to consider the range of tools you plan to use and the best way to reach all local residents as well as a wide spread of people.

Similarly, digital events can be an effective and practical way to engage with certain audiences, particularly when used in addition to face-to-face events.

However, local digital access needs to be considered, and face-to-face events generally remain most effective in terms of building meaningful local relationships and dialogue.
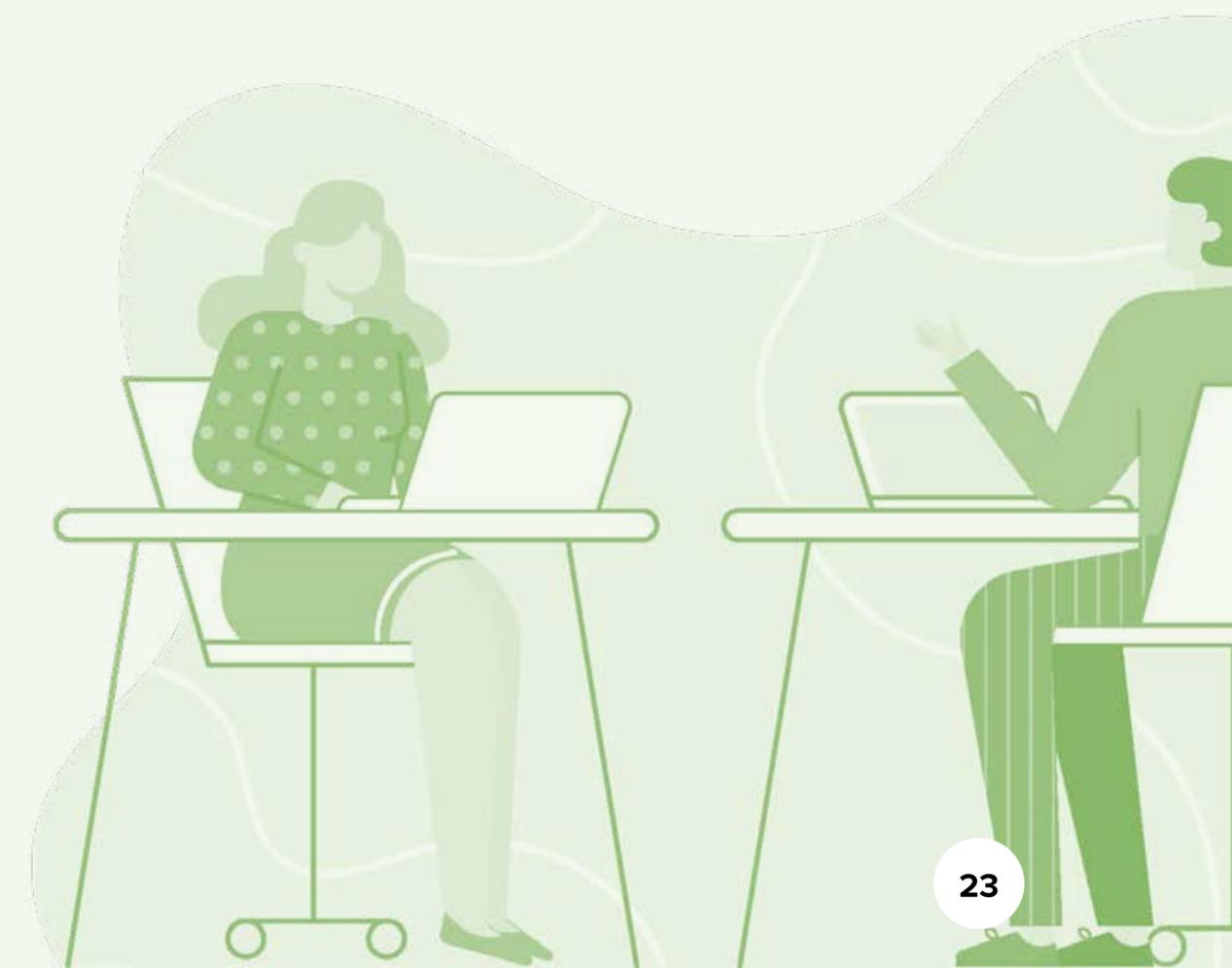
4.2 Raising awareness

Notices | **Direct engagement** | **Publicity**

A summary of how to raise awareness and encourage engagement in your consultation. People cannot engage if they don't know you're consulting!

Preparing statutory notices (Regulation 11)

Compliance

You are required to produce site notices to notify statutory stakeholders, place notices around the site and publish in the local press.

The statutory notices must include the following information:

- Name, address, email and telephone number
- Location of development
- Non-technical summary of the proposals including if the proposals involve the compulsory acquisition of land
- Details of consultation events
- Project website address
- Deadline for feedback to be received.
- Appendix 2: Template site notice

Site notices (Regulation 7)

Compliance

Notices to be displayed for a minimum of 42 days.

- Displayed on or near the site (for linear developments site notices must be displayed at least at 5km intervals from start to end
- Site notices need to be checked and if required replaced to ensure they remain in place for the consultation period

Publicity (Regulation 9a)

Compliance

Publish a notice in a local newspaper for a minimum period of 7 days.

This can either be a single notice in a weekly paper (covering a 7 day span), or a notice to appear in a daily newspaper every day for 7 days.

Written notice (Welsh Marine Area) (Regulation 10a)

Marine Compliance

In the case of a proposed application for development in the Welsh marine area, you must give notice to (Regulation 10a):

- any planning authority considered appropriate by the applicant
- all relevant statutory consultees and specialist consultees, including Natural Resources Wales
- any relevant community council, Member of the Senedd, and Member of the House of Commons considered appropriate by the applicant
- any other person or persons the applicant considers appropriate, including individuals, groups or societies identified by any pre-application services provided

Site Notices

Top tips

Site notices should ideally be in Welsh and English and treated equally.

Use design to create a notice that is appealing to read.

Written notice (Regulation 8)

Compliance

Regulation 8 includes a Schedule that sets out the statutory and specialist consultees who must be given written notice of the proposed application to ensure a compliant consultation. This includes:

- Any owner or occupier of land adjoining the site
- The relevant planning authority
- All relevant statutory and specialist consultees (Appendix 3.3)
- Community councils, Members of the Senedd, Member of Parliament

Early engagement with these consultees is always encouraged to help inform the emerging plans for the project, as well as ongoing proactive engagement as the project progresses. If any changes are made to the proposals, it is important to speak to consultees again to obtain further feedback.

Publicity (Welsh Marine Area) (Regulation 10b)

Marine Compliance

You must publish the statutory notice for at least 7 days in:

- local newspapers
- a fishing journal
- Lloyd's List

Postcard

Best practice

While at an early stage, you may not be ready to share details or start gathering views. A postcard can be a simple, cost effective way to introduce the proposal and give contact details and the website details.

It's a great way to start the conversation and start collating details of those who would like to be kept informed as the project progresses.

You could also produce a self-addressed postcard that can be completed and returned to enable details to be logged of those who want to be kept informed.

You need to ensure that the returned postcard can be sealed to protect the individual's personal information.

Newsletter

Best practice

Keeping the community informed from the start helps to manage misinformation and address concerns. It is good practice to send the local community and community groups a newsletter, outlining the project, the consultation process and how they can get in touch.

The use of visuals and plans in a newsletter format is a more engaging way to capture the interest and understanding of local communities, compared to a plain letter or notice.

The newsletter can also be sent to community representatives and placed on the website, and update newsletters in both hard copy and digital form can be used throughout the life of the project.

Stakeholder letter

Best practice

It is up to you whether you use the same draft notice for all consultees, or you tailor your notice for different consultees.

It can be simpler to use one consistent notice, but use a clear, concise and friendly cover letter to explain why consultees are receiving the notice, their statutory obligation to respond (if applicable), and how they can find out more and engage in the process.

This can be issued by email in many cases, or may need to be posted in the case of landowners for example.

Reflecting on Current Practice

Information

Previous research **[15]** has highlighted that while the significant majority of projects demonstrated a genuine willingness to go beyond mere compliance, they did not appear to deliver the anticipated community trust-building. The research observed a propensity for an over-reliance on 'traditional methods', including:

- Delivered passively through (mostly) non-digital methods
- Events in site-specific community spaces
- Events during the working day

From anecdotal evidence, this results in only those who are highly motivated or most opposed being able to participate. The general result is a skewed representation of the community, in terms of demographics and (potentially) opinion.

Accessible Design

Top tips

It is important to ensure designs work for everyone, including those with visual, cognitive, or motor impairments.

Top tips for accessible design include:

- Using appropriate text sizes – is the text big enough to read easily
- Choosing fonts that are readable, such as Arial or Times New Roman
- Using colours that do not clash or have a low contrast rating
- Not relying on colour alone
- Clear layouts with headings
- Using intuitive, easy to follow document structures
- Adding alt (alternative) text for image - a brief, descriptive phrase that can be picked up by screen readers
- Include captions for videos

Copywriting

Top tips

Ensure materials are designed in an engaging and easy-to-understand format, to account for variances in literacy and numeracy. Reading grade can be assessed through the Flesch-Kincaid scale, with the estimated UK average reading grade being between 9 and 11. Previous research **[15]** highlighted that the majority of DNS PAC reports were produced at a Post-graduate level.

Posters

Best practice

Designed and branded posters are a good tool to be placed across local community locations to help raise local interest. QR codes are a good way to encourage people to find out more and visit the project website.

Advertising

Best practice

Paid for advertising in local press as well as online is an effective way to widen awareness of the project, that can be used in addition to the statutory notices in the local press.

Likewise, paid for social media advertising is a great way to reach targeted parts of the local community that may be less inclined to engage usually, to broaden the range of people engaging.

Social media

Best practice

Research [15] found that less than 25% of developers used social media to promote infrastructure consultations in Wales.

Yet, social media can engage with a significantly larger population, such as young people and those who are time-poor.

It also helps to convey accurate details about the project and address misinformation that may also proliferate on social platforms.

Media relations

Best practice

Issuing media releases and briefings to the local media about your proposals and community engagement at an early stage and key stages throughout, can help to ensure that members of the local and wider community are kept informed and encouraged to participate.

It is also important to try to develop positive relationships with the local media, so that your project is accurately reported and any questions and misinformation directed to you for a response.

Average daily social media use:

Did you know?

In 2025, people in the UK spent an average of 1 hour and 37 minutes per day on social media.

Time spent online by age:

Young adults (18-24) spend the most time online, averaging 6 hours and 1 minute daily, while those aged 65+ spend the least, at 3 hours and 10 minutes.

Facebook usage by age:

Facebook's overall reach is extensive, reaching more than 55% of the UK population. However, those aged 18-24 spend an average of just 15 minutes per day on the platform, compared to the overall average of 39 minutes.

Instagram's popularity among young adults:

Instagram has overtaken YouTube and Facebook to become the second-most-visited smartphone app among 18-34-year-olds, with reach of 81.2%.

(Source: UK Social Media Statistics for 2025 | Sprout Social)

Advertising standards

Top tips

It is important to ensure that all information within your publicity material is accurate and verifiable, in line with UK Advertising Standards Agency (ASA).

UK ASA rules require direct marketing and advertising to be clearly identifiable, truthful and not misleading. Full information and advice is available on the UK ASA website.
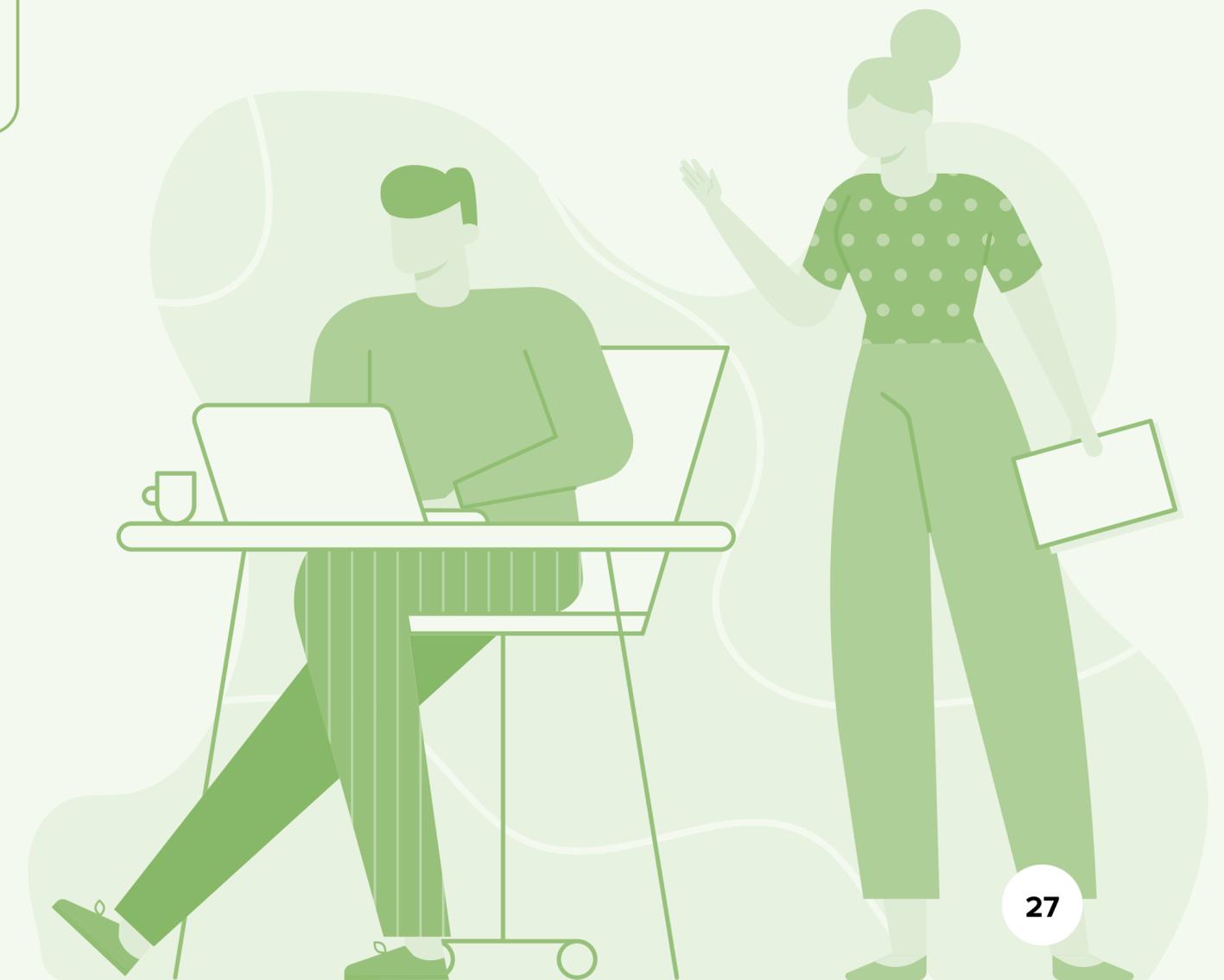
4.3 Consultation materials

Website   Exhibitions

Ensuring high quality, accessible materials are available to guide stakeholder and communities through the project and draft planning documents is essential when designing a best practice consultation. Although the statutory requirement is for a website to be available within 3 months of registration, it is recommended that a webpage is available from the point the project enters the public domain, such as at the point the Scoping Opinion is issued.

However, it is at the 3 month mark that all of the statutory specified information needs to be fully available on the website, even if some elements are in early draft form.

These documents should be kept up to date through to submission, with updates being made at key milestones, such as the launch of the statutory consultation.

During the statutory consultation period, the documents on the website need to contain a sufficient level of detail to enable meaningful engagement. This will help ensure that meaningful feedback can be provided by consultees.

Website materials
Best practice

The website can be used to host a range of engaging materials to help engage and inform users, such as:

- feedback mechanisms (survey link, form)
- maps, including interactive maps
- plans
- graphics
- 3D visualisations
- project videos
- links to further resources

Technical documents
Best practice

It may be useful to break down technical documents (such as the draft Environmental Statement) and the appendices into downloadable chapters so it is easier to navigate.

Providing a summary of available documents and their purpose is also useful to consultees and stakeholders less familiar with the planning process.

Website (Regulation 6)
Compliance

You must have your project website live with information about the proposed development live within 3 months of the acceptance notice by the Welsh Ministers.

The website should be kept updated through the lifetime of the project.

The following information is required on the website:

a. the draft application form, including draft Infrastructure Consenting Order (ICO) and Explanatory Memorandum

b. notice of proposed application

c. draft community benefit statement

d. non-technical description of the proposal

e. a site plan drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of north, or for development in the Welsh marine area, co-ordinates which identify the location to which the proposal relates

f. non-technical descriptions of any documents, plans, drawings and information

g. drafts of any other documents, plans, drawings and information necessary to describe the proposed development

h. details of consultation events undertaken or proposed to be undertaken

i. project updates, timescales and changes made to the proposal

j. Welsh Ministers acceptance notice

k. where applicable, a draft of the environmental statement for the proposed development

l. in a case where it is proposed that an Infrastructure Consenting Order (ICO) should include either a deemed or extinguished consent, a draft statement about such consents

m. contact details including postal and email address and telephone number

All plans or drawings produced to support the application must be to an identified scale and for plans they must show the direction of north.

Exhibition materials

Best practice

It is important to have clear materials to display at any events which simply explain the project. These need to be clearly designed using large text to make it easy to read for the public.

Exhibition boards should be in both Welsh and English

Consultation brochure

Best practice

A consultation brochure is a useful tool to provide a succinct overview of the project. This can be used at events, sent to people on request, and made available to download from the project website.

The brochure can provide information about the project, the consultation process and what is being consulted on, with a clear map of the project and details on how to feed back.

It can, if useful, also be closely aligned with the feedback form, summarising key issues and directing people to specific questions, such as around environmental mitigation or community benefit.

Digital exhibitions

Best practice

Digital means of communication and engagement now represent a significant proportion, with 92% of individuals regularly accessing the internet at home, work, or on the move. Digital exhibitions provide scope for wider engagement, particularly for hard-to-reach groups.

However, for older populations, 29% of households aged 75+ and 10% of households aged 65-74 still have limited digital access (Ofcom, 2024) so rely on physical and in-person communication.

For those who aren't able to attend the events, it is useful to be able to display the information that is at the events, in an interactive manner on the website. This may include the exhibition boards, interactive maps and easy links to the feedback mechanisms.

Digital materials

Top tips

Using digital means of engagement can bring a host of benefits to a project as it enables connection with a significantly larger population, who, for a variety of reasons, may not be able to engage through traditional approaches.

Examples include video, fly through / 3D visualisations of proposals and interactive games.

Contents

1 Purpose of this guidance

2 Understanding the value of engagement

3 Defining your consultation strategy

4 Delivering a meaningful consultation

5 Analysing and reporting

6 Responding to feedback

Appendices

4.4 Engagement activities

Events   Meetings

Despite the increase in digital engagement tools and opportunities, events and face-to-face engagement remain one of the more effective ways to build meaningful dialogue with local communities and key stakeholders. An innovative approach to events can be a great way to gain in depth insights into your project and the local community.

Although a traditional 'community drop-in' exhibition style event remains the most common approach to consultation for planning, there are a number of other formats that can be considered, particularly relevant when managing health and safety considerations for more controversial projects.

For example, requiring individuals to register to attend a more structured event, can be a way to help manage numbers and event safety.

For example, a workshop style event can be integrated as part of, or held in addition to, a drop-in style event as a useful way to facilitate more productive feedback.

Event health and safety

A full health and safety risk assessment should be undertaken before all events, and having dedicated team members attending events to help manage the safety of team members and attendees can be considered as part of this.

It is not unreasonable for developers to set out expectations to event attendees, in terms of ensuring respectful and safe behaviour.

Abusive or threatening behaviour towards project staff in advance of or during an event should not be tolerated and the relevant authorities notified as appropriate.

Community events

Best practice

Holding community exhibitions in more than one venue on more than one day and at different times helps to reach a wider section of the community.

You could also consider having a presence and information available at other planned community events, such as a spring fair.

Compliance

Regulation 9(b) states the developer must hold 'at least one public engagement event in the locality of the land to which the application relates.

It is open to the developer to choose the most appropriate event format, and in terms of compliance it is essential that the event is open to anyone to attend.

A face-to-face engagement would be considered best practice for this purpose, and is invariably the most effective in terms of enabling meaningful conversations and local understanding.

However, there may be situations where an online event could be considered as an additional or alternative option. In the case of an online event, this would need to ensure that team members are present and able to answer questions from the public.

If an event is held and cut short for any reason beyond the developer's control, such as health and safety considerations, it would still be considered a compliant event provided sufficient justification was demonstrated.

Holding more than one event is a good way to both encourage attendance, and also minimise the risk associated with an event not happening at all due to reasons beyond the control of the developer.

Organising an event

Top tips

- Choosing event venues that are designed for universal accessibility to enable individuals with a disability to attend and participate.
- Hosting consultations at a time and place which is convenient for people who are 'time poor', such as single parents or shift workers.
- Ensuring venues are located near public transport stops, and have sufficient quantity and space for parking
- Making the room layout easy for people to navigate, including those with mobility issues.
- Security and safety need to be taken seriously. As well as a risk assessment, a briefing should be provided for the team attending to include dealing with challenging behaviour. Where it is a high interest project, consider having a security presence, but ensure they are fully briefed to deal with any incidents sensitively and effectively.
- Having a child-friendly area makes it easier for someone with children to attend.
- Events provide an opportunity for feedback. However, consultees are usually encouraged to make their views formally known by one of the other channels.

Community Liaison Groups

Best practice

Building on the Workshop format, establishing a focused group of stakeholders to meet regularly throughout the life of the project is another way to establish ongoing dialogue and meaningful local relationships.

It is important that a Terms of Reference is drawn up that sets out the purpose of the group, how it will be run and who will attend.

Ensuring this group is chaired effectively and that this individual has the broad support of the group is also key to creating a discursive but safe and productive environment.

Workshops

Best practice

An opportunity for stakeholders and community representatives to input into the developing plans and can be held at more than one phase of the engagement process.

Integrating local community members into this can be a really positive way to broaden engagement, but thought should be given to covering costs (such as for childcare and transport) or providing renumeration to attendees for providing their time and input.

Key stakeholder meetings

Best practice

Meeting with key local community representatives is an important way to understand more about the local community and build positive relationships.

As a minimum, meetings should be sought with the following to help build understanding of the plans as well as the consultation process:

- MSs and MPs
- Local authority ward members
- Town and Community Councils

Meeting with other local community and interest groups can also be a productive way to build local knowledge and understanding, such as local environmental or heritage groups.

It is advisable to go prepared with a presentation, clear plans of the site and a pre-prepared FAQ. Where a meeting is not possible, a briefing note may be welcomed.

5. Analysing and reporting

5.1 Recording feedback

Critical to a successful consultation is enabling consultees to effectively feedback and help shape the developing plans.

Although any major changes would ideally be at an early stage and the focus of early engagement, feedback at all stages should be encouraged.

Establishing feedback channels

Providing a range of feedback channels is a positive way to enable a mix of people to engage in a way that suits them. Options include:

- Online form or survey: this can provide an efficient and structured way to obtain detailed feedback on a range of issues. Make the feedback form available at events as well as on the website.
- Email: some prefer to give feedback by email rather than completing a feedback form.
- Phone number: as well as allowing people to discuss concerns, a phone number enables those with language or literacy barriers to voice their feedback and have it written down on their behalf. Always make sure you read it back to check that their view has been accurately captured.
- Post: some people prefer to use pen and paper and send back a letter or completed feedback form, so a postal address is also useful.

Designing a feedback form

Best practice in questionnaire design has been the focus of academic research and testing for over 40 years and is equally relevant in the design of feedback forms.

- Decide which are the most important questions and put these first.
- Group the questions into subject sections to make it easier to navigate.
- Ask one question at a time.
- Don't make statements – ask questions. And try to avoid Agree / Disagree.
- When using a scale, use at least five response options.
- Allow discretionary responses to the questions so consultees can respond to some or all of the questions.

Additionally:

- Avoid it being too long.
- Keep the feedback form to the point.
- Focus questions on aspects of the project that can meaningfully be influenced.
- Use plain language, and avoid jargon and technical words.

Did you know?

Previous research [15] shows that developers are already implementing a wide range of tools to gather feedback. This approach reduces reliance on a singular method, which can potentially alienate sectors of the community.

Collecting information about consultees

Collecting data is a key part of any consultation process. To ensure that your consultation methods and approach are reaching all the community, it is useful to collect and report on personal data as part of your overall analysis.

It is important that when this data is collected, it is done in secure ways and with valid informed consent. This means that individuals are made aware ahead of completing a survey how and for what purposes their data will be used, and that they understand that they have the option to either not participate or not provide specific information.

Data collected about individuals may be **Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and so should be handled sensitively and with care. It is recommended that additional security features be used when collecting and processing PII.

For example:

- Not leaving event sign-in sheets where they can be photographed or seen by members of the general public;
- Not allowing filming or photographing of individuals at events;
- Anonymising datasets;
- Password protecting data files with Personally Identifiable Information.

Due to the nature of SIP projects and the PEDW process, all feedback forms and materials asking for personal information must have a clause about permissions as data may be shared with PEDW, as the decision making body, to provide evidence if required.

Data sharing

Top Tips

It is advisable to explicitly ask consultees if they wish for contact details to be shared with PEDW, in order to enable ongoing notification of post-submission consultation activity being carried out by PEDW.

Managing data

How data is managed will depend on the size of the project; however, for medium – large-scale projects, a **Stakeholder Management System (SMS)** is advisable.

A reputable SMS not only ensures that sensitive data is securely stored and complies with GDPR, but also has the benefit of compiling everything related to a project in a single place. This includes the details of consultees, consultation undertaken, enquiries and responses, and feedback.

It also helps to assign consultee categories against individuals, as well as the stage of consultation, such as informal engagement and statutory consultation, which can help when writing the consultation report.

It can also help to ensure all evidence of the compliant consultation process is logged, which can be particularly invaluable during the examination process or if the compliance of the consultation at any point is called into question.

5.2 Analysing feedback

Sorting and analysing feedback is an essential part of the consultation process. This includes both quantitively – how many people responded and said what, and qualitatively, a more detailed exploration of what people said.

Things that should be factored into analysis include:

- The number of responses received
- Number of references to each issue (ecology, visual impact etc)
- Nature of feedback around each subject area and key issues raised
- Geographic spread of respondents
- Breakdown of response by channels used

Particularly in the case of large quantities of feedback, coding sections of each response is as an effective way to group and analyse responses, a function available on a number of software platforms.

To be able to analyse the responses qualitatively, you need to first identify your parameters - the breakdown of topics that are being analysed. It can be useful to align this with the headings within the Environmental Impact Assessment or other technical documents.

Statutory and specialist consultees should be dealt with separately with an individual response to each included in the Consultation Report.

All other responses are dealt with collectively and the developer's response included against each topic or issue.

As well as reporting any response during the statutory consultation, it can also be beneficial to report early engagement and feedback, and how this has shaped the final plans.

Anomalies

Where it is clear that someone has completed a number of feedback forms repeating their views each time, both the person and individually raised issues are treated once in the analysis.

Petitions can be treated as one response, however for transparency, ensure you detail the petition, the views expressed and how many it was signed by in the report.

Similarly, sometimes high levels of similar responses may be received driven by campaigns. For example receiving a high volume of identical or similar emails or letters but from a range of different individuals. In this case the letters should be handled in a similar way to a petition.

Offensive content

In the case of response content that is offensive or threatening in nature, these should be removed from the consultation process, and reported to the relevant authorities if necessary.

5.3 Consultation reports

Structuring the report

Previous research **[15]** showed that, on the whole, reports that used the following structure were easier to navigate and more comprehensive:

- Introduction and overview, including how consultation complied with regulations
- Informal engagement, including feedback and changes made as a result
- Statutory consultation
- Feedback and responses
- Conclusion

Using a clear structure provides a logical road-map, enabling readers to understand the complete process from identifying stakeholders and consultation zones, through promotion and materials used, to feedback received and how that in turn influenced the scheme.

To enhance this, it can help to include an executive summary that provides an at-a-glance summary of the consultation process, including key feedback and the developer response.

Representing feedback and data

Consultation reports to date have varied in detail. For transparency, all data should be fully included for every stage of engagement and consultation. This includes:

- the number of events
- how many consultees engaged, and by category, including the general community and landowners
- the number of responses received
- other engagement metrics such as website hits

Feedback from statutory consultees needs to be fully recorded and responded to in the report, while feedback from the general public can be collated under themes or issues with a corresponding response.

Making the report accessible

Although the report forms part of the Infrastructure Consenting Order (ICO) application, to demonstrate compliance, it will also be made available to consultees and the public on PEDW's website.

It is therefore important that the report be written in easy-to-understand language, avoiding industry jargon, technical words and acronyms. Where these have to be included, include a clear explanation up front or in a glossary.

Try to keep the report as black font on a white page and where coloured images and graphics are used, be mindful of people who may experience difficulty in reading coloured fonts, particularly when against a coloured background.

Creating a community focused summary

Community consultees and members of the public are often interested in the consultation process, and in particular, how views were listened to. However, due to the amount of information that needs to be included, consultation reports tend to be lengthy and can be off-putting.

Based on an executive summary, you may want to consider producing a community summary document. This can provide an overview of:

- consultation activity undertaken
- with whom, when and where
- the main feedback received
- changes made to the scheme

This can help demonstrate a commitment to transparency and proactive engagement, as well as helping allay concerns.

Top Tips

Why not create a 'You said, We did' style summary of your consultation feedback and how this has influenced the plans.

Top Tips

GDPR compliance

Make sure any names or features, such as house names are redacted so that the identity of respondents are protected.

6. Responding to feedback

6.1 Why is it important for individuals to 'see' their voices being heard?

Sometimes, consultations can seem to end abruptly. Individuals may have been involved in a project for a long time, only for all contact and updates to suddenly stop.

Communities will continue to have an interest in the progress of the application and project through to decision, construction and operation. Therefore websites should be updated and stakeholders and consultees contacted if they've requested project news.

Specifically, it is required that developers keep websites up to date through to submission. Reg 6(2)(i) requires the website to include 'details of up-dates, timescales and changes made to the proposed development'.
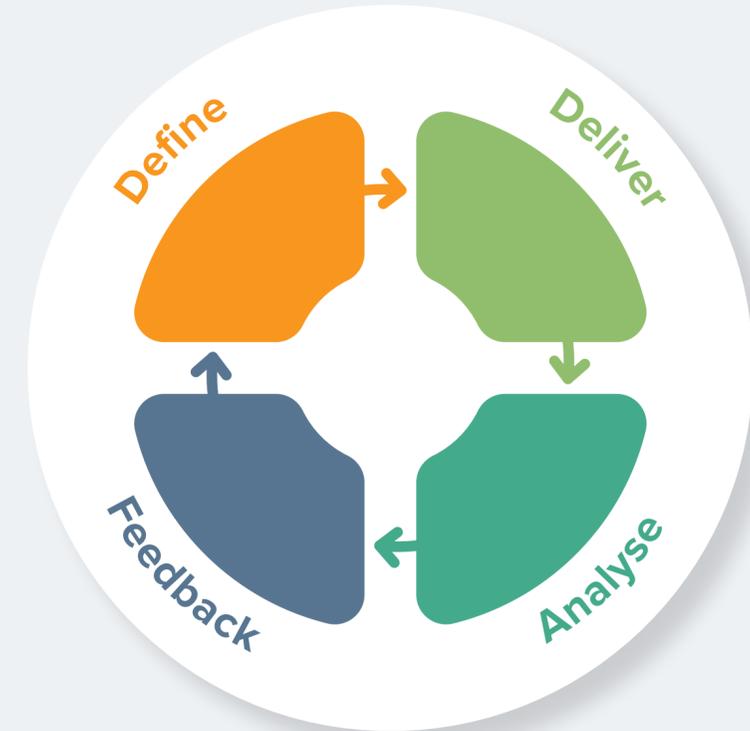
You might also consider updating consultees and respondents once the application has been submitted, directing them to the project website and informing them of the next steps, including how to make their views known to PEDW.

Ongoing engagement

In order to lay the foundation for a positive relationship with local communities during the construction and operation of the project, ongoing dialogue through the validation and examination process is advisable.

There are a range of tools that can be implemented from early stages of the project to maintain an engagement loop for the life of the project:

- Community Liaison Groups
- Community benefit and social value workshops
- Digital newsletters
- Website updates
- Social media updates
- Media releases
- Presence at community events

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1: Compliance checklist for statutory consultation

Process	Requirements	Complete?
Website (Regulation 6)	Project website to be set up within 3 months of the pre-application notification being validated. Following information needs to be on the website: • Draft application form including draft ICO and Explanatory memorandum • Statutory notice of proposed application • Draft community benefit details • To scale site location plan • Non-technical project description • Non-technical descriptions of all documents, plans, drawings and information • Drafts of other documents, plans, drawings • Draft environmental statement where applicable • Details of consultation events • Details of updates, timescales and changes to proposed development • Copy of acceptance notice • Draft statement about any 'deemed' or 'extinguished consents' • Contact details for the applicant – address, phone, email.	◯
Site Notice (Regulation 7)	Notices to be displayed for a minimum of 42 days. Displayed on or near the site (for linear developments site notice must be displayed at least at 5km intervals from start to end. Site notices need to be checked and if required replaced to ensure they remain in place for the consultation period.	◯
Written notifications (Regulation 8)	The developer must give written notice of the proposed application to: • Owner and occupiers of land adjoining the site. • Relevant planning authority in which the proposed development is located • All relevant statutory and specialist consultees (as per the Schedule) • Community councils, Members of the Senedd, Member of Parliament representing the area which the proposed development is located. • All persons who own, occupy or have another interest in the land which the proposed development is located. • Any other persons the applicant feels is appropriate – individuals, groups or societies.	◯

Notices in local paper (Regulation 9a)	Publish a notice in a local newspaper for a minimum period of 7 days.	◯
Events (Regulation 9b)	Hold at least one local public engagement event as part of the pre-application consultation process - the detail of this to be left to the discretion of the developer. However, the intent is that the event is held in the locality of the land to which the application relates, but can be held virtually if the applicant considers this to be more appropriate.	◯
Content on notices (Regulation 11)	The following detail is required to be included in the notice: • Name, address, email and telephone number • Location of development • Summary of the proposals • Details of consultation events • Project website address • Deadline for feedback to be received.	◯
Consultation and publicity for development in the Welsh marine area (Regulation 10)	In the case of a proposed application for development in the Welsh marine area, you must give notice to (Regulation 10a): • any planning authority considered appropriate by the applicant; • all relevant statutory consultees and specialist consultees, including Natural Resources Wales; • any relevant community council, Member of the Senedd, and Member of the House of Commons considered appropriate by the applicant; • any other person or persons the applicant considers appropriate, including individuals, groups or societies identified by any pre-application services provided; Publicity for Welsh marine area applications (Regulation 10b) You must publish the statutory notice for at least 7 days in: • local newspapers • a fishing journal • Lloyd's List Website content required after 3 months as above. No event required but may be advisable.	◯

7.2 Appendix 2: Statutory notice template

Below is a suggested approach for the pre-application statutory notice to consultees. This is not a statutory template and the notice can be tailored as required, as long as it includes all statutory information.

We'd like to let you know that **[Name of applicant]**, based at **[Address]**, is planning to submit an application to the Welsh Ministers for a Significant Infrastructure Project under the Infrastructure (Wales) Act 2024.

You can contact the applicant at:
Email: **[email]**
Phone: **[number]**

1. Where the Project Will Be

The project is proposed to be located at:
[Insert location and grid reference / clear description]

2. What the Project Involves

Here's a summary of what's being proposed:
[Short description of main elements of development]

The application will / will not include a request to buy land compulsorily.
If it does, here's a brief explanation:
[Insert summary]

3. Consultation Events

Before the application is submitted, the Applicant will be holding public consultation events. These are chances for anyone to come along, find out more, and ask questions.

Event details:
[Dates, times, venues, accessibility information]

4. Viewing the Project Documents

All of the project information—plans, environmental documents (if relevant), and supporting material—will be available on the project website:

Website: **[Insert website]**

You can also view paper copies or access the documents in person at:
[Insert location, opening times, access arrangements, any charges for hard copies]

5. How to Send Your Comments

Anyone can send comments or feedback on the project.

Please submit your response by **[Deadline date]**. This must be at least 42 days from the day after this notice is published.

Responses can be sent to:
[Postal address / email address / online submission details]

6. Want More Information?

If you have any questions or want more details, you can get in touch with the Applicant at:
[Insert contact details]

7.3 Appendix 3: Identifying specialist consultees

Statutory Consultees

Schedule (Regulation 3(2)) Consultations before the grant of Infrastructure Consent

Paragraph	Description of Development	Relevant Statutory Consultee	Relevant Specialist Consultee
(a)	All applications	Natural Resources Wales The relevant water and sewerage undertaker National Air Traffic Services Ministry of Defence Public Health Wales Transport for Wales	Canal and River Trust Distribution Network Operators
(b)	Development likely to result in a material increase in the volume or material change in the character of traffic— entering or leaving a trunk road; using a level crossing over a railway.	The Welsh Ministers The operator of the network which includes or consists of the railway in question and the Welsh Ministers	
(c)	Development which involves the provision of a building or pipeline in an area of coal working notified by the Coal Authority to the Welsh Ministers	The Coal Authority	
(d)	Development which has a physical impact on a scheduled monument Development likely to be visible from a scheduled monument, **see full regulations for details.**	The Welsh Ministers	
(e)	Development involving any land on which there is a theatre		The Theatres Trust
(f)	Development which involves — the loss of not less than 20 hectares of grades 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land which is for the time being used (or was last used) for agricultural purposes, or the loss of less than 20 hectares of grades 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land which is for the time being used (or was last used) for agricultural purposes, in circumstances in which the development is likely to lead to a further loss of agricultural land amounting cumulatively to 20 hectares or more.	The Welsh Ministers	
(g)	Development which— is likely to prejudice the use, or lead to the loss of use, of land being used as a playing field, or is on land which has been: used as a playing, allocated for use as a playing field. See full regulations for details.(iii) involves the replacement of the grass surface of a playing pitch on a playing field with an artificial, The Sports Council for Wales Certified copy from legislation.gov.uk Publishing 31 man-made or composite surface.	The Sports Council for Wales	

(h)	Development— involving waste development (involving the provision of a building where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more	The Fire and Rescue Authority concerned	
(i)	Development that includes a requirement for a deemed marine licence	The Crown Estate The Joint Nature Conservation Committee The Maritime and Coastguard Agency Trinity House Reserved Trust Ports Local harbour authority Local ports Welsh Ministers Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities	The Royal Yachting Association Concerned Welsh archaeological trust UK Chamber of Shipping National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations Welsh Fishermen's Association
(j)	Developments likely to affect the maritime or coastal environment, or the shipping industry	The Maritime and Coastguard Agency	
(k)	Development which may impact the marine environment	Joint Nature Conservation Committee	
(l)	Development which may affect the marine environment within English territorial waters	The Marine Management Organisation	
(m)	Developments likely to affect navigation in tidal waters	Trinity House	
(n)	Development relating to airports or which are likely to affect an airport or its current or future operation	The Civil Aviation Authority	
(o)	Development likely to affect the Crown Estate or is located on Crown Land	The Crown Estate	
(p)	Development likely to affect an area under control of a harbour authority	Harbour Authority concerned Navigation Authority concerned Associated British Ports	
(q)	Development which includes railway or is likely to affect railway	Network operators	
(r)	Development which includes the provision of electricity infrastructure		Distribution Network Operators

7.4 Appendix 4: Reference List

[1] UK Government (2024) Infrastructure (Wales) Act 2024. Available at: **https://www.legislation.gov.uk** (Accessed: 6 February 2026).

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7.5 Appendix 5: Further Reading

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