



# Developing an Engagement Plan for Decisions Relating to Land

## Introduction

This Practice Guide has been produced by the Scottish Land Commission to support the practical implementation of the Scottish Government's publication of [the \*Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement\*](#). It specifically supports Principle 6 of the Statement: ***“There should be greater collaboration and community engagement in decisions about land”***, and the Scottish Government's [Guidance on Engaging Communities in Decisions Relating to Land](#).

It forms part of a broader toolkit which includes a Protocol on Community Engagement, guidance, case studies, and links to wider best practice. Links to all these materials are available on our [website](#) or through the contact details at the end of this document.

The Scottish Government Guidance sets out how Ministers expect those who make decisions about land to engage with those who will be affected by the decisions. It supports positive behaviours by all interested parties, to make sure interactions take place in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding, ensuring that appropriate interests are considered in a reasonable and fair way. Landowners and other people with significant control over land are expected to engage with local communities where management decisions about land and buildings are likely to impact on them.

This Guide is to help the people who have decision making powers about how land in urban or rural areas is used or managed to develop an engagement plan to effectively communicate and engage with communities. Its aim is to support a culture that encourages them and local communities to see each other as potential partners, collaborating to achieve beneficial outcomes.

An engagement plan should always be developed in consultation and partnership with groups in the community who are or may be affected by your decisions. We encourage the plans to be developed jointly wherever possible. There is much that community organisations can do to support this, and we refer throughout the Guide

to the positive actions that both decision makers and community organisations can take to develop a locally appropriate engagement plan.

A plan may be a very short one-page communications statement, or a more complex engagement strategy, depending on the type and nature of your business or project, your local context and the potential impact of the decisions. If your activities are limited to routine day to day activities and no major changes are planned, your engagement will be more informal than if you are proposing a new development or significantly changing the way in which land is used. There is no set way to do things and this Guide is therefore not prescriptive. It is important that each plan is proportionate and reflects the needs of the community in which it will operate.

This Guide and associated template documents are all part of a living toolkit. It will be revised and added to as practice across the sector develops. We very much welcome feedback. Please let us know both your good experiences and the challenges you face so that we can improve and add to it as the experience and practices of engaging communities in land use decisions grows.



## THE NATIONAL VISION:

**‘A Scotland with a strong and dynamic relationship between its land and its people, where all land contributes to a modern and successful country, and where rights and responsibilities in relation to land are fully recognised and fulfilled’**

Scottish Government, Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement, September 2017

***Note: This Practice Guide relates to engaging with communities about decisions that affect a group or groups within it. Where you have individual leaseholders, residential tenants or tenant farmers, individual rights to consultation and notice periods will still apply. A community engagement strategy does not over-ride other statutory obligations or good landlord-tenant requirements and best practice.***

## 1. What is community engagement?

When we talk about community engagement in land-based decisions, we are broadly talking about a process by which community organisations can work in collaboration with the owners and managers of land to contribute to decisions about how land is used or managed - when the outcomes will have an impact on them.

Engagement is an active exchange of information between those who own or control land and its use, and the communities connected to it. Good engagement can range from regular good neighbourly contact, consultation, involvement in decision making, through to community groups delivering projects and services themselves or in a partnership with the owner or manager of the land. It is about building relationships and trust, and so it can take time and will work best when it is an ongoing and evolving process.

Difficult decisions may still have to be made, and engagement is not a magic wand. It does not guarantee that everyone will be happy. If it is not done in good faith it could seem to be manipulative or tokenistic, or false expectations may be raised. If only dominant voices are heard, other sections of the community may feel ignored. That is why it must be done in a clear and transparent way; to give other people a realistic understanding of your decision-making process, what any limits of the communities' influence can be, and with honest transparency about the possible outcomes available.

Strong relationships can help to foster mutual understanding of the issues and support better decisions about how land and buildings are used. Where communities are supported to express their views and become involved in the decisions that affect them, this can lead to creative and innovative solutions; and can create better economic, environmental, social and cultural outcomes for all parties.

Here are a few of the benefits of community engagement can achieve:

- People with control over land are valued members of a local community, who contribute to its wellbeing and sustainable development
- Relationships and dialogue are established, and the value of community views are recognised
- People are better informed and understand the decisions made
- All parties better understand the wishes, concerns and constraints of others
- Evidence of local needs and aspirations to support proposals
- Opportunities for economic, social, cultural and environmental improvements are increased
- Priorities and options are tested
- More ideas are brought forward
- Resources are used more efficiently
- Conflict and delay can be reduced
- Communities feel more involved and better connected to local land
- Outcomes reflect community aspirations and support sustainable growth
- Sustainable development is supported, and mutually beneficial solutions to local issues can be developed
- Engagement can also help to build communities by bringing people together

## 2. Why Have an Engagement Plan?

Whether you have been involved in community engagement for a long time or are just starting to think about it, it is a good idea to have a strategy or plan to guide you. Our [Protocol](#) sets out the circumstances in which an engagement plan will always be expected. You will need an engagement plan where your land management plans change or involve decisions that have a **significant<sup>1</sup>** impact on communities. You are also expected to develop one jointly with a community where they, or an elected representative, has made a reasonable request for one.

It can be good practice to develop an engagement plan in a range of other circumstances, and we recommend that this becomes a normal part of your business planning process wherever possible. This practice note will go on to explain how you can identify decisions or changes that you should be talking to the wider community about and how to take your engagement forward.

If you are reviewing a previous plan or have already worked with the community, you may also want to include a short overview of your activities and outcomes over the last plan period.

- What have you achieved?
- Do you have case stories to tell?
- What feedback have you received and how have you used it to develop new plans or revise your practices?

## 3. How to Start

The [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) are nationally agreed good practice principles designed to support and inform effective community engagement in Scotland across any sector. They provide detailed performance standards that everyone involved can use to help plan how to involve communities in shaping local plans, services, and developments; and to make sure that engagement processes are fair and effective. They provide a useful framework for planning, including a series of questions for each standard to help ensure that engagement is appropriate for the circumstances under consideration



The National Standards are also supported by a free online resource, [VOICE](#), which includes tools to help plan, monitor and evaluate your community engagement practice, including Key Questions and Handy Hints and planning templates that can be used online or in paper form. A link to the PDF version of the VOICE template is available [here](#)

<sup>1</sup> See the engagement planning matrix template and Section 8 for more guidance on identifying a significant impact.

#### 4. Define your Purpose

It is useful to start your plan with a short statement to record why being involved with your community is important for you and what all parties want the outcomes to be. A simple statement can explain your aspirations and commitments.

Think about what you already know about your community and their needs and aspirations. For example:

- What do they already know about your land management activities and plans?
- What do you need to know?
- Are the community's interests the same or different from yours?
- How will you present your purpose or plans?
- How might people react?
- Who will be interested in any or all of your land management activities?
- Why might they want to engage with you?
- What outcomes will the community be looking for?

#### 5. Who to Engage With: Identify your community

When we talk about community, we are generally meaning the individuals who live in a **place**. This can be an urban or rural area. It can include whole towns, single streets, large geographic areas or a small village or neighbourhood.

People who are connected to a community or place through a shared **interest** are also important, and there may be times and circumstances where it is important to engage with them too. But the primary focus of this guidance is on those who live locally and are affected by decisions about how land or buildings are used and/or managed.

*'An estate community includes the landowning family or organisation, direct and indirect employees and tenants (residential, agricultural and commercial)'...it also includes the residents of adjacent villages, other people living within the estate boundaries, estate visitors and others with a sense of belonging to it.*  
UHI Centre for Mountain Studies 'Working Together for Sustainable Estate Communities' (2012)

*'Any community is a complex constellation of individuals and groups. There are usually important differences within a community; people have different perspectives, beliefs and motivations, and different needs and circumstances.'*  
Chris Dalglish; 'Community Empowerment and Landscape' (June 2018)

Many people who make decisions about how land or buildings are used or managed live in and are very much part of the community where the land is situated. Others may have less regular or distant contact. Existing knowledge and relationships will therefore be different in every case.

So, before you start your plan, think about who makes up the local community so that you can make sure that people who need or want to have a say are not

excluded or overlooked. Your plan should set out clearly where your community is and how it is defined.

Wherever possible, your plan should be produced in partnership with the community. A **community council**, where there is one, will normally be the main organisation to engage with and will be a good place to start. In some places, the community may also be represented by a development trust or similar organisation. Where you do not have an active community organisation to work with, or where a wider cross-section of the community needs to be involved, a short-term steering group drawn from a network of representatives could also help you to develop and test your plan. A representative community body or steering group can help you to agree the boundaries of the community, and to map out any groups in the area that cover different interests.

It is also important to make sure that you work with your community group to find out what is important locally, how your activities or proposals impact on or support these issues, what the community would like to have a say on, and how they want to be engaged. Where other organisations are engaging with a local community, it is a good idea for your own plans to be aligned wherever possible to reduce 'engagement fatigue' within communities and increase effectiveness. Ideas about how to join up engagement with others are included in the [Scottish Government Guidance](#) (see paragraphs 59 to 62).

## **6. Being Inclusive**

When developing your plan, refer to your community 'map' and think carefully about any groups in the community whose voice is not always heard. Think about different age groups, cultural interests, what they do, where they live and what they have access to. Use all the information to think about how you can be as inclusive as possible engaging with a diverse range of people within the community

You need to think about potential barriers for people within the community and how they can be removed – For example, making sure meetings are advertised in plenty of time, held at a suitable time and in a place that is easy for people to access. All communication materials should be jargon free and in simple language. Accessible formats or translations of written materials may need to be available for people who have sight impairments or don't read English well, for example. Some communities have a strong oral tradition, and events that help people to come and discuss things in person may be more valuable than formal surveys. Other people will prefer to write things down or use more creative methods such as photography, art activities or site visits. (our 'How To' Section and the Useful Links at the end of this document and our [Case Studies](#) provide more suggestions and examples of appropriate activities)

Working with your community organisation/s, think about how the groups you don't usually hear from get their information, and use that where you can, such as local radio, social media, noticeboards, bus stops and local shops. There may also be other groups in the area that you can work with to reach as many people in the community as possible. These will vary in each community and might include the following;

- Local resident groups
- Faith based groups
- Cultural groups
- Local voluntary groups
- Local activity groups
- Local youth groups
- School or education groups
- Business groups
- Farming associations
- Local support and advice organisations
- Web-based communities

If your plans are complicated or include a lot of technical issues, it can be helpful to have clear examples or case studies available to show how it is likely to affect people. Models, maps and pictures and simplified time-lines can all help. You might also want to have the right 'experts' available to explain things objectively and answer questions and give specialist advice about different aspects of a plan in one place. Don't assume people will always want to come out and hear about your plans. If the decision being made is important and likely to have a significant impact on people in the community, you may need to be creative about venues and events or go to them directly – ask to drop in to existing activities or knock on doors of the people affected.

**This will not apply in every case and your activities should always be proportionate to the level of impact any decisions may have on the community and the resources available to all parties.**

What Land Owners & Managers Can Do	What Community Organisations Can Do
Up to date contact information should be easily available to the public.	
Make sure people in your community know what your plans are, and how they can to find out more information.	Know the profile of your community and how different groups within it can best be reached.
Identify what barriers might affect anyone who should be involved, and the resources needed to overcome them	
Identify what resources are available for you to use? (skills, experience, facilities, time, budgets etc)	
Identify whether there is a need for specialist advice or support and if so, where it will come from	Identify whether there is a need for independent community development support or advice, and if so which organisations or agencies can help
Identify what the appropriate engagement methods are for your land management activities or changes When and how will these take place?	
Keep people informed. Let them know how their views are being / have been considered in the decisions making process and what the outcomes are.	Encourage and support people in the community to get involved and contribute appropriately

## 7. What to engage with communities about

We expect that communities will be formally engaged in decisions with a **significant** impact. Where a significant development or change is being proposed that could impact on the lives, wellbeing or development prospects of a community, your community should be given the opportunity to ask questions, let you know how the plans will impact on them, let you know their concerns and be able to make suggestions. Examples of the types of activities this might include are given in the table below. Remember that sometimes several minor activities can also have a significant cumulative impact.

In some cases, there will also be a statutory requirement for consultation – for example planning proposals or forestry development. You *must* consult with community organisations on these matters regardless of what has been agreed in a community engagement plan, and before any decisions are made.

There is no need to engage where the impact of your decisions are minimal. However, regular contact is always encouraged and having regular conversations with your community and listening to their local aspirations and concerns, even where you have no immediate plans for your land, can help to build trust and long term constructive working relationships.

It is important to be clear and explicit from the outset of the engagement about any limitations or issues that are not up for discussion – for example because of legal restrictions, decisions that have already been made, confidential information or budget restrictions. You will be able to explain why and make sure that any restrictions are reasonable and ideally agreed in advance with all parties concerned. Be clear about what people can influence and how decisions will be made.

To know what level of involvement communities want or expect, you may need some prior discussion with your community organisation/s, or even some advance consultation with the community. Being clear about your plans and finding out what people in the community would like to have more of a say on will help you to shape this. For example, some organisations are engaging with local communities to shape their estate or land management strategies. Others are looking at the types of decisions they will be taking over the course of a business or management plan period, and how they will engage communities in ways appropriate to the different impact of their potential actions. Examples of these are available through our [Case Studies](#).

Dialogue with key groups in your community will help you to plan out the types of activity or decisions that you need to discuss. Depending on how big or complex your business is, you might do this yourself, or in collaboration with another group. Where there has been a recent local assessment such a **Community Action Plan** carried out, for example, this will help you to identify key issues and community needs and aspirations. The evidence may inform how your land management or development plans have an impact on or help to support other local plans for mutual benefit.

	Type of Decision / Level of Impact	Examples
Good neighbour communications	Most day to day decisions relating to land or buildings where the impact in the local community is small or non-existent.	Most routine urban and rural land management activities including day to day farming, forestry, estate management and business activities, when the activity is carried out with reasonable consideration.
Informal Engagement	<p>Decisions which can lead to <b>moderately significant</b> impacts on the local community</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Short term but disruptive activities</li> <li>○ Activities carried out in irregular circumstances</li> <li>○ Changes to regular activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Activities which disrupt business or transport</li> <li>○ Activities causing significant light, smell or sound pollution</li> <li>○ Activities carried out at unusual times, or causing more disruption than usual</li> <li>○ Other disruptive activities in urban or rural environments</li> </ul>
Formal Engagement	<p>Decisions which may <b>significantly</b> impact on the social, economic or cultural development of a community, access to a good quality environment, and community viability</p> <p>These include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Long term or permanent changes with significant impact</li> <li>○ Long term disruptive activities</li> <li>○ Activities which impact significantly on the local economy, society, culture or environment</li> <li>○ Decisions likely to alter the local population level or structure, including through intergenerational impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Significant long-term changes to land use, for instance changes between agricultural land, forestry, nature reserves, green spaces, industry, housing, regeneration and development</li> <li>○ Estate management where a significant proportion of land in a community is controlled by one party</li> <li>○ Decisions impacting on business or service that significantly contributes to local employment or provides vital services</li> <li>○ Decisions impacting on the viability of vital local institutions such as schools, doctors' surgeries, sports centres and cultural centres</li> </ul>

(Extracted from Scottish Government: Guidance on Engaging Communities on Decisions relating to Land (2018))

## 8. How to engage

You can use the table above and our **engagement matrix** to think about the level of impact that different activities on your land will have on a community and what type of engagement will be needed for each of them (good neighbour, informal or formal engagement). Once you have done that and spoken to your community to find out what they need or want to be engaged on, your plan should set out the likely methods you will use. You may use one or more techniques depending on who should be involved and what will get the best level of response. Discussions with community representatives will help you to agree which methods are most appropriate. They will vary depending on the issue arising and your local context. Examples are provided below:

- For **day to day decisions**, you will generally be keeping people **informed** about your activities. Examples of how you can do this include:
  - Individual letters or emails
  - Newsletters
  - Blogs
  - Notices on a community notice board or at other local gathering places
  - Regular updates on your website or social media
  - Phone calls
  - Personal visits
  - Information signs
  - Exhibitions, displays, street stalls

Even when not very significant decisions are being taken or changes made, regular and thoughtful communication can help to build good relationships and prevent problems arising in the future.

- For decisions with a **moderately significant** or **significant** impact you will need to **consult** people in the community more formally. This type of engagement needs to be planned out, ideally in collaboration with others. Examples of the range of techniques available include:
  - Surveys
  - Local meetings
  - Accompanied site visits
  - Community events
  - Working groups / Advisory panels
  - Ballots
  - Consultation documents
  - Workshops or focus groups, which may be with a facilitator
  - Web-based discussion forums
  - Interactive planning meetings
  - Creative or arts-based events
  - Community mapping
  - Community planning

Different tools and methods will work better in different circumstances. You may need to experiment a little to see what works best with your community. Be prepared to ask and listen to feedback and to try another way if something simply isn't working. Look out for good practice in other areas that you can learn from or adapt for your own area.

It is important to allow for flexibility as many things could change during the life of your plan. Unexpected circumstances, external changes, people coming into or leaving the process or challenges from stakeholders can all cause plans to be reviewed and revised.

There is a lot of good practice and examples of community engagement to draw from – including from other sectors. Never be afraid to ask how other people have done it and to learn from their experiences. Links to some useful sources of practical guidance and information are also available at the end of this document and on our website.

### 9. Building Consensus

In any process where people are asked to give their views, differences of opinion will inevitably arise. These doesn't necessarily need to result in conflict, and in most cases, it will be possible to solve disagreements in a way that most people can be happy with. Useful techniques are provided by Scottish Natural Heritage in their 'Talking About Our Place' toolkit. You can get access to the full guide [here](#) (Section B4, page 54).

A consensus building model can be a useful approach to help people move from positional/adversarial behaviour to principled/co-operative behaviour. The differences are illustrated in the table below:

<b>Positional/adversarial</b>	<b>Principled/co-operative</b>
Withhold information	Share information
Make threats	Ask questions
Argue from positions	Explore others interests and needs
Attack others' knowledge or credibility	Explore knowledge and perspectives
Defend position	Seek solutions
Work on each other	Work on the challenge
Actively seek win/lose	Actively seek win/win

Different techniques are used at different stages of the process, but in summary, the overall pattern is to:

- First, open up the discussion, away from adversarial behaviours;
- then start generating ideas and looking for those that are mutually acceptable;
- next, test support for each so a shortlist emerges;
- and finally, work on the shortlisted solutions to mutually beneficial solutions.

## **10. Plan your Resources**

You will need to decide what resources you will have available and be realistic and honest about what can be done. The following resources will be needed for most types of engagement;

- Time input by staff, volunteers, members of the community and other interested parties
- Communications, including background papers, reports, newsletters, adverts,
- Venue hire and meeting costs, which may include transport, childcare, translation (other languages or deaf signing, for example) where required

You may also need to think about

- Support for community groups, such as specialist support, facilitators to help people understand and respond to information and proposals
- Research and survey costs

We recommend that routine engagement is built in as part of your day to day business management and carried out within your existing resources as far as possible. Once established, it will quickly become part of your normal working practices rather than an additional activity. But you will need to be clear about any limits set on time available or budgets.

For special projects or decisions that have potentially significant investment requirements or revenue potential, the costs of meaningful engagement should be built in to your project plans and financial forecasts.

Sometimes community or project groups might be able to attract funding to pay for support from professional consultants or facilitators.

Always plan for the unexpected and build in some flexibility. Circumstances can change. People might challenge the process or ask for more information or time. Your focus should be to accommodate changes and keep meaningful discussions and channels of communication open wherever possible.

## **11. Think about timing**

In an ideal world, you will start discussions with a community at an early stage in developing or reviewing your plans so that there is the most opportunity to develop clear lines of communications, to consider options and to explore solutions that are mutually advantageous.

The earlier in a decision-making process that engagement begins, the more opportunity there will be for the land owner or manager and the community to find solutions that are mutually advantageous. Even where there is a regulatory process such as statutory consultation timescales for a planning process, for example, engagement should be considered at the earliest possible stage. This can help to identify potential areas of concern and avoid conflicts during the formal process.

## 12. The importance of feedback

You are expected to provide feedback to your community about the decisions made after their input and the reasons for them.

One of the most common complaints from any community about engagement is not knowing what happens afterwards. Keeping people up to date about the outcomes and decisions made is one of the most important things to do. Providing feedback will reassure people that their views and concerns have been heard and considered. It will also help to build up trust and confidence and encourage more active engagement in the longer term.

And so, when you are thinking about your engagement plan, you need to think about how you will do this and might need to ask your community about how they would prefer to get feedback.

- Make sure your plan is clear about how decisions will be made, what will happen after any engagement, likely timescales, and whether there will be further opportunities for people to have a say or become involved
- Make sure you can provide timely feedback after any formal engagement on any decisions taken. You may not be able to take all comments or suggestions forward, but not hearing the outcome or reasons for a decision will be a lot more frustrating for people if they have given up valuable time to give you their views.
- Agree how you will provide feedback in a way that is appropriate for your community or project. You might use one or more of the following examples depending on your context and the impact of the decision/s being made.
  - Published report summaries
  - Letters to people who have taken part
  - Summary results of any surveys or polls carried out
  - A presentation to a meeting
  - Website / social media updates
  - Newsletters
  - Face to face conversations

Getting feedback from the community will also be valuable for you so that you evaluate the best methods of engaging with groups in your area, the most appropriate venues and times. The feedback should inform your future engagement plans.

### **13. Next Steps**

Once you have published your plan it should be easily accessible to members of the public. We recommend that it is available on a website and circulated to interested parties.

Remember, not everybody will want to be engaged in everything. They may not be interested, or simply have busy lives and other things to concentrate on. Where engagement has not been the norm or has gone wrong in the past, it can also take time for people to build up their trust and be confident about having a say. Don't be disappointed if not everyone wants to join in straight away. The important points are:

- as many as people as possible know about your plans
- it is easy for them to find out more and have a say if they want to
- people can be sure that their views will be listened to seriously, with respect and without personal repercussions.

### **14. Review your Plan**

Your Plan will be a living document and you will need to review it and update it at appropriate intervals. This will help you and your community partners to monitor and evaluate whether it has achieved the purpose you originally intended, and to adapt to changing circumstances.

The National Standards for Community Engagement provide a useful framework for review and evaluation, which includes the following self-assessment questions.

- How well did you communicate with people affected by the engagement?
- How well did you involve the people and organisations that are affected by the decisions made about land use and management?
- Were members of the community clear about the purpose of the engagement?
- How well were barriers to engagement identified and overcome?
- How well did all parties work together?
- Were there aspects of your plan that you were not able to implement or that you did differently?
- What impact has the engagement had on the decisions made?
- Were there any unexpected outcomes, and are there significant implications?
- What have you learned that could improve future engagement with the community?
- What will you do next?

Feedback from the community will help you to complete your assessment and update your Engagement Plan. Some of this might come directly from events or surveys, such as the number and range of people who took part and comments received. It may also be useful to carry out a follow-up survey with members of the community and / or community organisations.

Knowing whether you achieved what you set out to do will help both you and the community to learn from your experience and adapt future plans.

## 15. Useful links and sources of further information

There is a lot of good guidance and help available. We have mentioned some of it in the document and provide links here to other documents or reports that may be useful. It is not an exhaustive list. If there are other resources that you think should be included or you cannot find what you need, please get in touch and let us know.

- **Scottish Government: Guidance on Engaging Communities in Decisions Relating to Land (April 2018)**  
<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/guidance-engaging-communities-decisions-relating-land>  
*Guidance to ensure people have an opportunity to be involved in decisions about land that affect them; to support change across urban and rural Scotland so that collaboration becomes the norm; and to guide land decision makers on how to be proactive and make positive working relationships*
- **Scottish Executive: Scottish National Standards for Community Engagement**  
[www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards](http://www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards)  
*A national framework with 7 standards for supporting participation and empowerment of communities across every aspect of decision making*
- **VOiCE: Visioning Outcomes in Community Engagement**  
[www.voicescotland.org.uk](http://www.voicescotland.org.uk)  
*Guidance on the practical implementation of the National Standards*
- **Community Places: Community Planning Toolkit – Community Engagement (2014)**  
<https://www.communityplanningtoolkit.org/community-engagement>  
*Provides guidance on issues to consider when planning and designing community engagement.*
- **DTAS Community Ownership Support Service: Involving Your Community**  
[https://dtascommunityownership.org.uk/sites/default/files/COSS\\_Involving\\_Community\\_WEB.pdf](https://dtascommunityownership.org.uk/sites/default/files/COSS_Involving_Community_WEB.pdf)  
*A practical guide to the benefits and techniques for involving and consulting local communities in community asset based projects*
- **Forest Research: Public Engagement Toolbox and Guidance**  
<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/public-engagement-in-forestry-toolbox-and-guidance/toolbox/>  
*Lots of useful, easy to read and practical advice about when and how to engage members of the public – not just for foresters*
- **Forest Research: Public Engagement and Forestry: key lessons for working in urban areas (2011)**  
<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/public-engagement-in-forestry/public-engagement-in-forestry-toolbox-and-guidance/>  
*Practical advice on public engagement in an urban context that summarises key lessons, experience and methods, with relevance to a wide range of contexts.*

- Scottish Natural Heritage: 'Talking About Our Place'  
<https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/201811/Talking%20About%20Our%20Place%20Toolkit.pdf>  
*A comprehensive toolkit to help understand and shape their local place. It includes a range of guidance and practical tools on how to talk about places, celebrate them, and consider ways to improve them, including guidance on engagement techniques.*
- McKee, A & Roberts, D: 'Good Practice in Overcoming Barriers to Community Engagement in Land Based Activities' (June 2016)  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/good-practice-overcoming-barriers-community-land-based-activities>  
*Identifies a number of principles for good practice by communities and landowners*
- UHI Centre for Mountain Studies: Working Together for Sustainable Communities (2012)  
<https://www.perth.uhi.ac.uk/t4-media/one-web/perth/news/images/Working-Together-for-Sustainable-Estate-Communities.pdf>  
*A report of our projects carried out between 2007 and 2012 to explore the potential for collaborative initiatives between privately owned estates, communities and other partners*
- What Works Scotland: 'Hard to Reach or Easy to Ignore' (Dec 2017)  
<http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/events/hard-to-reach-or-easy-to-ignore-a-review-of-evidence-about-equality-in-community-engagement>  
*Promoting equalities in community engagement*
- HIE: Community Assets Team  
<http://www.hie.co.uk/community-support/community-assets/ten-steps.html>  
*Web based route maps, resources and guidance including easy to use guides for running meetings, early community engagement, keeping a community involved, and running ballots*
- The Guardian Voluntary Sector Network: 'Top Tips on Community Engagement'  
<https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2013/jan/17/top-tips-community-engagement>

## Contact Us At:

Scottish Land Commission  
 Longman House  
 28 Longman Road  
 INVERNESS, IV1 1SE

[info@landcommission.gov.scot](mailto:info@landcommission.gov.scot)

tel: 01463 423300

[www.landcommission.gov.scot/lrrs/communityengagement](http://www.landcommission.gov.scot/lrrs/communityengagement)