

**Shetland Community Planning
Partnership**

**Community Consultation and
Engagement Guide**

May 2011

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	2
2. Background and Context	3
2.1 Local Context	
2.2 National Context	
3. What to Consider Before Carrying out Consultation and Community Engagement	5
3.1 What is a Community?	
3.2 What is Consultation and Engagement?	
3.3 The Ladder of Participation	
4. The Shetland Approach	7
4.1 Shetland's Principles for Community Engagement	
4.2 The Principles in Practice	9
4.3 Roles	9
4.4 Links with Community Planning and Organisational Planning and Performance Management Frameworks	10
Appendix 1: National Standards for Community Engagement	11
Appendix 2: The VOiCE Tool	12
Appendix 3: Identifying Stakeholders	13
Appendix 4: How to Involve Stakeholders within Shetland	14
Appendix 5: Methods of Consultation and Engagement of Communities	17

1. Introduction

This guidance has been developed on behalf of Shetland's Community Planning Partnership, to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the way organisations involve local communities in Shetland. It is essential that an agency's relationship with communities is constructive and respectful. Therefore, this guidance has been designed as a reference and a learning source for those planning or wishing to carry out community engagement during the planning or delivery of services. It sets out the public and voluntary sector's approach to how dialogue and discussion with communities should take place, by establishing some guiding principles. These build on the National Standards for Community Engagement (see Appendix 1)¹.

¹ Scottish Community Development Centre: <http://www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards/>

2. Background and Context

2.1 Local Context

Publically funded services in Shetland exist to provide a range of flexible, efficient and effective services. Some services are regulatory or inspection based, predominantly around ensuring people have access to safe services. Some services are based on specific needs, such as community care or planning advice, whilst other services are generally available to everyone, such as the library service. Services are expected to be flexible and innovative in their approach, building services around individual, family and community needs. It is no longer appropriate for public services to dictate a model of service delivery, based on a 'one size fits all'.

Listening and responding to communities and individuals by way of feedback is an important part of developing and delivering services that are flexible and meet identified needs. Engaging with individuals and communities around difficult issues and problems creates an open dialogue of information sharing, mutual understanding and debate, to try to reach the best outcome possible, given a range of constraints.

2.2 National Context

The Local Government in Scotland Act (2003) places a statutory obligation on agencies and local strategic partners to engage with communities about issues that affect them.

In May 2005, the Scottish Community Development Centre published National Standards for Community Engagement, to develop and support better working relationships between communities and agencies delivering public services. Audit Scotland, in their initial review of Community Planning in 2006, recommended that Community Planning Partnerships should champion the National Standards as good practice. The 10 National Standards for Community Engagement can be found in Section 7.

2.2.1 Best Value: Community Engagement

In addition to their recommendation to champion the National Standards for Community Engagement, Audit Scotland designed and published a Best Value community engagement toolkit in 2010. This acts as a set of principles that public bodies must deliver on, ensuring a consistent approach to consultation and community engagement across the public and voluntary sector. Through effective consultation and community engagement, and bringing community views into the decision-making structure, there is a potential to save money and improve efficiency in service delivery.

The characteristics of an organisation delivering best value, in regards to Community Engagement are outlined below².

Commitment and Dialogue:

- The organisation understands the needs of its different communities and involves them in developing a local vision, setting priorities and shaping services. It has clear strategies for consultation, representation and participation, which reflect the national standards for community engagement.
- The organisation is clear about the outcomes it wants to achieve from its community engagement activity and adopts appropriate engagement approaches to achieve them.
- The organisation uses a range of approaches to inform the community about its services, activities, and performance and decision-making, which are accessible to all.

² http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/best_value/2010/bv_100809_community_engagement_toolkit.pdf

- The organisation provides relevant information in understandable and appropriate languages and formats. Information promotes positive images of all population groups in the community, avoiding stereotypes.
- The organisation regularly evaluates its communication methods and adapts these in response to citizens' feedback.

Involvement and Support:

- The organisation has staff with the skills needed to work effectively with communities, asking people's views and taking them on board: it makes appropriate resources available to remove practical barriers to people taking part in community engagement activities.
- The organisation takes consultation and other forms of engagement seriously, and gives proper consideration to the outcomes of these before making decisions.
- The organisation always feeds back the results of community engagement exercises to those who participated, setting out what actions will be taken as a result of it.

Impact and Change:

- The organisation evaluates and monitors its communications with the public to assess the impact it has had on policy and strategy development and in shaping services, and whether it has achieved its purpose and met people's expectations.
- The organisation can demonstrate that its community engagement activity is securing improved outcomes for local people: for example, better public services.

3. What to Consider Before Carrying out Consultation and Community Engagement

3.1 What is a Community?

Communities are diverse; communities can be based on geographical areas or based on different groupings or interest groups within society. A 'community of place' can be defined as an area with physical boundaries (for example, an island, neighbourhood, parish, village or town) and a 'community of interest' can be defined by a shared interest, experience or demographic characteristic (for example, young people, people with disabilities, working population, or ethnic minorities). Thinking about ourselves as individuals, we all belong to a number of different communities. Some communities or groups are more challenging to reach or engage with. Therefore it is important to plan an engagement process, ensuring that barriers are tackled, and groups are able to engage and express their views.

3.2 What is Consultation and Community Engagement?

Public and voluntary agencies are here to provide services that meet the needs of the community, and in order to do this, the community must confirm and identify their needs. During decision-making processes, it is therefore good practice to involve as many people as possible during the process, ensuring that the local community have been able to express their views, feel that their views have been taken into account, and weighed against the views of others, when decisions are made which affect them. It is also essential to recognise that views and opinions can only be acted upon with the resources available at the time.

Communities are complex. It is important to recognise this, and develop a multi-faceted approach to gaining views, moving away from simple forms of consultation to working at relationships, engagement and ongoing dialogue with communities.

Many terms are used to describe public involvement in policies, programs and decision-making processes. The level of engagement can generally be broken down into three areas: informing, consulting and engaging.

- To **inform** means an agency, group, community or individual is going to tell people what they plan to do, to inform people of a decision already made or to persuade them of the merits of such a decision.
- To **consult** means seeking communities views and responses to proposals, whilst retaining control over the final decision. Typically restricted options will be offered to choose between.
- To **engage** means to take a shared decision, and allow communities to influence options and choices of action, but also that communities will share in any action taken. It means the development and sustaining of a working relationship between one or more public bodies and one or more community groups, to assist both of them to understand and address the needs and issues experienced.

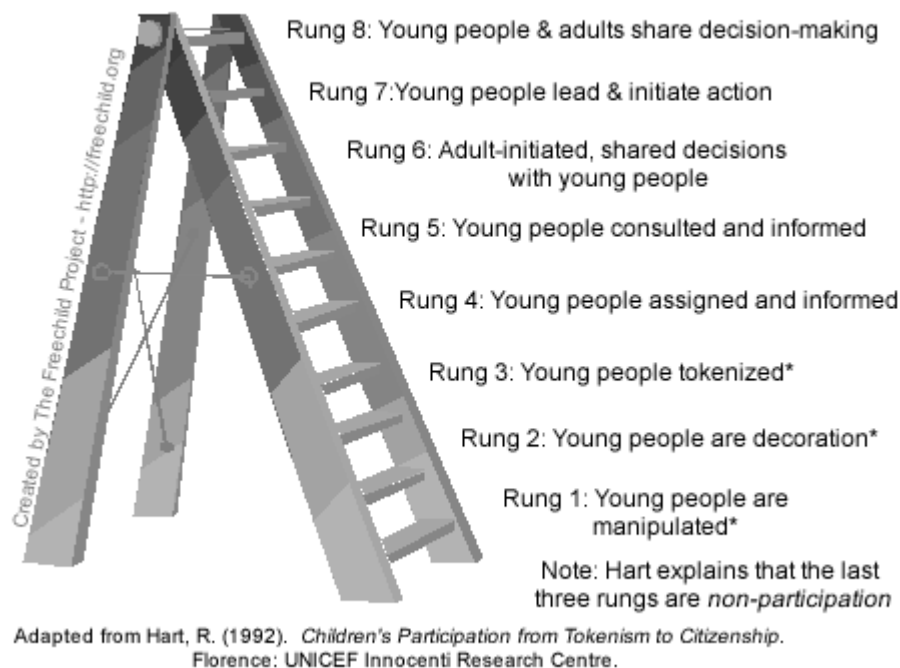
There is a place for each of these types of engagement, and their differences need to be understood before community consultation or engagement is carried out. The differing levels of engagement mean it is essential to plan and analyse the type of engagement that is appropriate for the project in mind. To help with this, a ladder of participation can be found in Section 3.3 below.

3.3 The Ladder of Participation

The ladder of participation provides a means of evaluating the quality of engagement with communities and individuals. It allows service providers to assess which level of participation their

engagement falls under. Services should strive to fall upon “rung 8” of the Ladder of Participation. Although the ladder of participation below references young people, this can easily be applied to other target groups as well as the wider community. An adaptation of participation, in the context of communities, can be found in the text below.

Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation



Rung 8: This happens when the target group initiates the project or program and decision-making is shared. These projects empower the target group.

Rung 7: The target group initiate and direct a project or programme. Staff are involved only in a supportive role.

Rung 6: Staff initiate the project or program, but the decision-making is shared with the target group.

Rung 5: The project is designed and run by staff but target groups are consulted. The target group is informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made.

Rung 4: The target group are assigned a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved.

Rung 3: When the target group appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.

Rung 2: Happens when a target group is used to help or 'bolster' a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by the target group.

Rung 1: Happens when staff uses a target group to support causes and pretend that the target group inspires the cause.

4. The Shetland Approach

4.1 Shetland's Principles for Community Engagement

Shetland's Community Planning Partners recognise the importance and value of Community Engagement, and therefore wish to collectively and individually commit to the following principles³:

- We wish to have constructive and respectful relationships with communities, developing an on-going dialogue about issues and solutions.
- We wish to hear the views of as many people as possible, recognising that communities are diverse and can be based on geographical areas or based on different groupings or interest groups. As individuals, we all belong to a number of different communities.
- We will undertake community engagement across services and organisations and will always share relevant information obtained, unless there is a legitimate reason not to do so⁴.
- We recognise that the information obtained through community engagement is one part of the evidence base within which decisions are taken. Other issues which may also be part of the decision-making process include: legislation, funding etc.
- We understand that there are different levels of community engagement, each of which has a role, and we are clear with communities what level of involvement they are able to have. For example:
 - To inform means an agency, group, community or individual is going to tell people what they plan to do, to inform people of a decision already made or to persuade them of the merits of such a decision.
 - To consult means seeking communities views and responses to proposals, whilst retaining control over the final decision. Typically restricted options will be offered to choose between.
 - To engage means to take a shared decision, and allow communities to influence options and choices of action, but also that communities will share in any action taken. It means the development and sustaining of a working relationship between one or more public bodies and one or more community groups, to assist both of them to understand and address the needs and issues experienced.
- We take a consistent approach to the way we engage with our local communities, by:
 - Being clear about the outcomes we want to achieve from community engagement activity and adopting appropriate engagement approaches to achieve them;
 - Gathering any current information already available;
 - Identifying and involving the people and organisations that have an interest in the focus of engagement;
 - Supporting people, as necessary, to be involved;
 - Providing sufficient resources and time to ensure engagement is well planned, implemented and concluded;
 - Always feeding back the results of community engagement exercises to those who participated, in an accurate and timely fashion, setting out what actions will be taken as a result;
 - Evaluating and monitoring community engagement to assess the impact it has had on policy and strategy development and in shaping services, and whether it has achieved its

³ Approved by Community Planning Delivery Group in March, 2011.

⁴ This would include information about individuals, for example.

purpose; met people's expectations; delivered results within constraints; and to continuously learn from experiences.

- We will systematically use information obtained through community engagement to assist with strategic and service planning, through our organisations' Planning and Performance Management Frameworks.
- We recognise the role community engagement has to play in building the capacity of communities and sharing ownership of the outcomes.
- We recognise that there are three tiers to consultation and engagement. These are not mutually exclusive, but provide guidance on the approaches to use:



- **Strategic Level** consultation and engagement informs higher-level strategic documents and policies. Such examples include the Transport Strategy, Land Use Policy and the Local Housing Strategy. The focus is on linking these consultations together, ensuring community engagement that informs strategic documents, are carried out jointly. This will ensure engagement makes sense from a community perspective. Over time engagement will replace consultation as an ongoing relationship between agencies and communities that produces a more coherent approach to planning and policy development.
- **Service Specific** consultation and engagement is undertaken about discrete services, on specific issues or services, and usually involves a defined set of stakeholders.
- **Local and Ongoing Dialogue** recognises the importance of ongoing dialogue within communities, ensuring that information and views are heard, responded to and recorded, on an ongoing basis. It ensures people living and working in a community are able to influence the way services are operated at a local level, rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach. Local Service Delivery Groups (LSDGs) provide a basis for service planning at a local community level. This requires ongoing engagement with local communities around the planning and delivery of services⁵. LSDGs cover the seven localities in Shetland⁶, each producing their own community profile for each of their wards. Community profiles provide up-to-date baseline data on population, health, community safety, employment etc.

⁵ Shetland's Public Participation Forum (PPF)

⁶ North Isles, Whalsay and Skerries, North Mainland, West Mainland, Central, Lerwick and Bressay, and South Mainland.

4.2 The Principles in Practice

In order to ensure these principles are adhered to, all Community Planning Partners will:

- Ensure the National Standards for Community Engagement are used, at all times (see Appendix 1);
- Ensure all staff managing and /or undertaking Community Engagement have attended relevant training, such as the 'Involving Communities Training', available through Train Shetland⁷;
- Ensure all Community Engagement is planned, implemented and monitored using a robust method, such as the VOiCE (Visioning Outcomes in Community Engagement) tool (see Appendix 2);
- Ensure appropriate policy support is available within the engagement process or project. The Council's Policy Unit is available to provide support in collaboration with the Council's Community Work Team. Voluntary Action Shetland Development Workers would also be involved, as relevant.

By adopting these principles, Shetland's Community Planning Partners are meeting their statutory requirements under the Local Government in Scotland Act (2003), in particular in relation to Best Value, Community Engagement and Partnership Working. They also reflect the requirements of NHS Shetland's PFPI Framework and Voluntary Action Shetland's Single Development Framework – 2011/14.

4.3 Roles

There are two key roles involved in any engagement exercise: the role of the service(s) / agency leading the consultation exercise, and the role of the service(s) supporting the process.

Lead Role

- To ensure any consultation or engagement process is analysed, planned, undertaken and evaluated in a way that delivers on Shetland's Principles for Community Engagement;
- To provide sufficient time and resources for each stage of the process, so that others involved have time to be involved in the most constructive way. For example, it is essential that **eight weeks** is available from the planning to implementation stage.

Supporting Role

This role is primarily provided by the Council's Community Work Team and Policy Unit⁸. As a supporting role, they are not responsible for leading on, meeting the objectives of, or the timely completion of the exercise.

- To provide support to those leading the process. This includes advice and guidance to assist the process, such as:
 - The level of participation required. For example, is this communication, focused consultation or community participation;
 - Awareness of other activity planned or underway;
 - Awareness of suitable information, such as through Community Profiles and Local Service Delivery Groups;
 - The National Standards for Community Engagement, and the Community Planning Partner's commitment to adhere to these;
 - Training opportunities available;

⁷ www.trainshetland.com

⁸ Email: policy@shetland.gov.uk, Tel: (01595) 743728

- o Knowledge of support available from staff with the skills to assist, such as Community Workers and facilitators.

4.4 Links with Community Planning and Organisational Planning and Performance Management Frameworks

Each organisation will have slightly different timescales when key parts of the planning process are finalised and approved. However, the following table is an attempt to set out key timescales for when relevant information gathered as a result of ongoing and specific community engagement and consultation is up-to-date and available.

The key document for achieving this is the Community Profile. These documents are available for each of the Multi-Member Wards in Shetland / LSDG areas.

Timescale	Community Profile Activity	Planning and Performance Management Activity (CPP and Individual Organisations)
May	Community Profile Update to date (information from community groups / Community Councils / local research, signed off via LSDG).	Commence detailed planning and budget setting for forthcoming financial year, utilising information from community profiles.
June-September	Update on regular basis, informing relevant organisations of significant changes.	Ongoing, as above.
October	Ongoing, as above.	Community Plan annual refresh approved.
November-March	Ongoing, as above.	Final plans and budgets and other resource implications finalised.
April	Annual final update.	Implementation of plans for current financial year.

APPENDIX 1: National Standards for Community Engagement

The National Standards for Community Engagement set out below demonstrate the best practice guidance for engagement between communities and public agencies. The standards were developed from experience of communities and agencies with extensive participation.

The national standards are based on the following principles:

- Fairness, equality and inclusion must underpin all aspects of community engagement;
- Community engagement should have clear and agreed purposes, and methods that achieve these purposes;
- Improving the quality of community engagement requires commitment to learning experience
- Skill must be exercised in order to build communities, to ensure practice of equalities principles, to share ownership of the agenda, and to enable all viewpoints to be reflects;
- As all parties to community engagement possess knowledge based on study, experience, observation and reflection, effective engagement processes will share and use that knowledge;
- All participants should be given the opportunity to build on their knowledge and skills;
- Accurate, timely information is crucial for effective engagement.

The National Standards for Community Engagement

1. Involvement: we will identify and involve the people and organisations that have an interest in the focus of engagement.
2. Support: we will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement.
3. Planning: we will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and actions being taken.
4. Methods: we will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.
5. Working together: we will agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently.
6. Sharing information: we will ensure that necessary information is communicated between the participants.
7. Working with others: we will work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement.
8. Improvement: we will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants.
9. Feedback: we will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected.
10. Monitoring and evaluation: we will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purposes and meets the national standards for community engagement.

Each of the National Standards above are assigned a number of indicators to measure and assess performance of community engagement. Regular assessment of performance against the indicators enables all participants to be involved in achieving continuous improvement. The indicators for the standards and full details of the National Standards for Community Engagement can be found via the following link: <http://www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards/>

APPENDIX 2: The VOiCE Tool

To help public agencies follow and implement the National Standards for Community Engagement, the VOiCE (Visioning Outcomes in Community Engagement) tool was created, and is now in use within Shetland.

VOiCE, created by the Scottish Community Development Centre, is a database planning and recording tool designed to assist individuals and organisations to design and deliver effective community engagement. It supports organisations to plan, monitor and record the process and evaluate the outcomes, all in the context of the National Standards for Community Engagement, and asks key questions related to good community engagement that need to be addressed at each step.

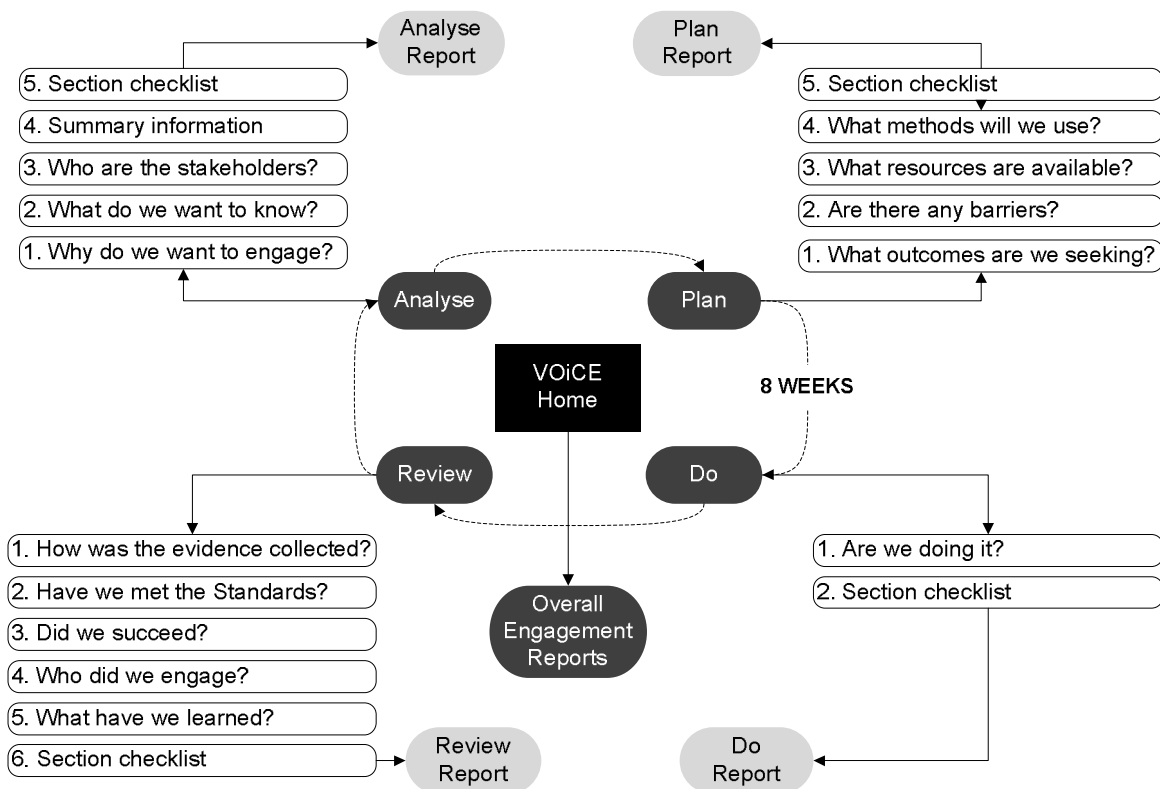
VOiCE builds on two widely adopted and effective tools – the National Standards for Community Engagement, and Learning, Evaluation and Planning (LEAP) – and bridges the gap between the principles of best practice and the systems for putting them into practice.

VOiCE is an online resource that requires users to set up an online username and password. Any input into this resource is saved online, or can be downloaded and saved onto a computer. To start using VOiCE online, go direct to the VOiCE Scotland website:

<http://www.voicescotland.org.uk>

Alternatively VOiCE can be downloaded from the web site of the Scottish Community Development Centre for use on your own computer or a server shared with colleagues or partners: www.scdc.org.uk/voice/download/. This is the original version of the tool, which was developed using Microsoft Access Software.

Training for the VOiCE tool is available through the Policy Unit, Shetland Islands Council. Please contact either Train Shetland on telephone: 01595 744744, or contact the Policy Unit on telephone: 01595 743728, or email: policy@shetland.gov.uk.



APPENDIX 3: Identifying Stakeholders

This list of people and organisations is to assist in customising your own list of those who should be involved. Once stakeholders have been identified, Appendix 4 will assist in how to reach these stakeholders.

Allotment holders	Local history groups
Archaeological groups	Media groups and organisations
Archaeologists	Migrants
Architects	Minority groups
Builders	Mothers' unions
Businesses	Museums
Chambers of commerce	Non-governmental organisations
Charities	Parent teacher organisations
Children	Photographers
Churches	Planners
Civic societies and groups	Playgroups
Colleges	Police
Community associations	Utility providers
Community-based organisations	Voluntary Groups
Community leaders	Wildlife groups
Community Councils	Women's groups/institutes
Community hall committees	Traders
Companies	Transport operators
Conservation groups	Teachers
Council Members	Tenant group and associations
Countryside management officers	Tourist Board
Craftspeople	Tourists
Designers	Postmen/women
Developers	Professional institutions and groups
Disability groups	Property owners
Ecologists/Environmental groups	Public
Economists	Public works departments
Engineers	Publicans
Ethnic groups	Ramblers
Estate agents	Religious groups
European Parliament	Schools
Farmers/crofters	Senior citizens
Financial institutions	Scottish Parliament
Footpath and access groups	Scottish Government
Funding agencies	Shopkeepers
Health workers	Sports groups
Homeless people	Staff
Industrialists	Statutory agencies
Journalists	Street cleaners
Land managers	Student groups
Landowners	Surveyor
Landscape architects	Workforces
Lawyers	Young People
Local authorities	Youth clubs, guides and scouts

APPENDIX 4: How to Involve Stakeholders within Shetland

Once stakeholders have been identified, the next stage is to establish how to reach them. In order to ensure that information is up to date and that individuals and communities are involved in the most appropriate way, the following list of individuals will be able to assist in your planning.

Their role is to:

- Provide information on the groups and organisations available to assist, including their role and remit;
- Provide guidance on how best to engage people within these groups and organisations, including practical information such as contact details, venues etc.; and
- Support involvement, if necessary, such as providing introductions.

A) By Equalities

Faith	Anna Sutherland Policy Officer Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 744510 Email: anna.sutherland@shetland.gov.uk
LGBT	Anna Sutherland (above)
Disability	Via Disability Shetland (contact Anna Sutherland, in first instance, above)
Age: - Young People - Working Age/Workplaces - Older People - Parents	Martin Summers Youth Development Worker Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 743894 Email: martin.summers@shetland.gov.uk Anna Sutherland (above) Anna Sutherland (above) Via workplaces and childcare facilities (see Anna Sutherland above)
Ethnicity	Contact Anna Sutherland, in first instance (above) Nancy Heubeck Adult Learning Manager Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 743881 Email: nancy.heubeck@shetland.gov.uk

B) By Geographic Area

Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations (Shetland-wide)	Catherine Hughson Executive Officer Voluntary Action Shetland Tel: (01595) 743901 Email: catherine.hughson@shetland.org
Voluntary and Community Development Organisations (area based)	Bill Crook Community Work Manager

	Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 744060 Email: bill.crook@shetland.gov.uk
--	--

C) By Interest / Sector

Sports Groups	Bob Kerr Sports Development Officer Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 744045 Email: bob.kerr@shetland.gov.uk
Economy (including Industry Panels)	Tommy Coutts Project Manager, Business Development Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 744902 Email: thomas.coutts@shetland.gov.uk
Transport	Billy Thompson Service Manager, Transport, Planning and Support Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 744735 Email: billy.thompson@shetland.gov.uk
Housing	Allison Christie Senior Policy Officer Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 744348 Email: allison.christie@shetland.gov.uk
Community Safety	Jenny Wylie Community Safety Officer Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 744527 Email: jenny.wylie@shetland.gov.uk
Anti-Social Behaviour	Billy Mycock Anti-social Behaviour Co-ordinator Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 744374 Email: billy.mycock@shetland.gov.uk
Childcare Organisations	Rosemary Inkster Childcare Partnership Co-ordinator Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 745403 Email: rosemary.inkster@sheltand.gov.uk
Health	Elizabeth Robinson Health Improvement Manager NHS Shetland Tel: (01595) 743311 Email: elizabethrobinson2@nhs.net
Heritage	Website: http://www.shetlandheritageassociation.com/
Environment	Mary Lisk Environmental Management Officer Shetland Islands Council Tel: (01595) 744818

APPENDIX 5: Methods of Consultation and Engagement with Communities

Public consultation and engagement has a range of purposes including informing, consulting and engaging.

The following table indicates which methods can be used to meet these purposes. The more stars, the more closely the method meets the purpose. It should be emphasised that it is only an indication; the appropriateness of the method depends on the size nature and objective of the particular exercise.

The text following the table below provides more information on each method and provides links to useful guidance pages written and produced by the Scottish Health Council.

	<u>Informing</u>	<u>Consulting</u>	<u>Engaging</u>
Campaigns	* * *	*	
Displays and Exhibitions	* * *	*	
Local press	* * *	*	
Leaflets and newsletters	* * *	* *	
Circulating documents	* * *	* *	
Social networking	* * *	* *	
Customer comment cards		* *	
Surveys		* * *	
Public meetings	* * *	* *	*
Conferences	* * *	* *	*
Select committees	* *	* *	*
Priority search		* * *	*
Deliberative opinion polls	*	* * *	*
Citizens' panels	*	* * *	*
Workshops	* *	* * *	* *
Focus groups	*	* * *	* *
Open space		* * *	* *
Community visioning	*	* * *	* *
Users' panels	*	* * *	* *
Citizens' juries	* *	* * *	* *

Campaigns

A campaign makes use of a variety of techniques to inform the public of a particular issue, or to publicise a service or service changes. It is usually a high profile affair using the local media (newspapers and radio), together with posters and leaflets, exhibition materials etc, to engage a large section of the community. A campaign can be run over a set period of time, or at a particular time of the year. See "Displays and Exhibitions", "Local Media" and "Leaflets and Newsletters" below.

Displays and Exhibitions

An exhibition is a visual presentation of information, e.g. photographs, charts, maps, video, interactive technology. Exhibitions can be portable and moved to various appropriate venues, or can be static and remain at one site for a long time, depending on your target audience and your objectives for the exhibition. Having a staff member on hand provides an opportunity for informal contact and feedback from the public. It is often appropriate to include within the display/exhibition the opportunity for visitors to provide their comments in response to the overall engagement programme. Please see link below for more information:

http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Displays_and_Exhibitions

Local Media

Local media can be used to advertise a consultation exercise or to raise awareness of an issue. This can be done by planning an advert or public notice through your own organisation, by issuing a media release, or by contacting the newspaper and discussing their possible interest in running an article.

Leaflets and Newsletters

Leaflets are an effective, accessible way of informing the public of an issue or of changes to a service. They can be used in conjunction with other methods, e.g. as part of an exhibition or campaign. Newsletters are used to provide more detailed information or for providing regular updates in a lengthy consultation exercise. They can be used to summarise and explain long or complex documents. By incorporating an email address or telephone response line, leaflets can be used for receiving limited feedback on an issue. The distribution of a leaflet or newsletter determines who reads it. You need to think about the best way to reach your target audience.

Circulating Documents

Useful for receiving feedback on documents or reports, or simply to circulate these reports for information. When sending out a document for consultation, enclose a letter that gives the date by which you will need to receive comments, and that explains the different ways that comments can be made, such as by telephone, email or meetings. You should make clear any limits there are on what can be influenced through the consultation.

Social Networking

More and more the internet is being used as an outlet for discussion and debate, providing a real opportunity and an accessible resource for consultation and community engagement. Social networking can be useful for reaching out to young people; groups who tend not to engage with more traditional forms of communication. Please follow link for more information:

[http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Text Messaging and Social Networking](http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Text_Messaging_and_Social_Networking)

Customer Comment Cards

Customer comment cards are simple cards or slips that allow members of the public to comment on a particular service or issue. They are left at an obvious place, perhaps on the reception desk of a building or sent to the customer's homes. Please follow link for more information:

[http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Comments Cards](http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Comments_Cards)

Surveys

Surveys are used to gather the views of a sample of local people or service users to act as an indication of the views of the whole target population. Surveys can be in a variety of formats, for example postal, electronic or online, face-to-face and telephone. Electronic questionnaires eliminate the costs associated with printing and distributing paper questionnaires and can be an effective way of consulting with a wide audience. Other benefits include: instant feedback, anonymity, and reduction in the time and cost required for data processing. Please follow links for more information:

[http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Surveys and Questionnaires](http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Surveys_and_Questionnaires)

[http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Electronic Questionnaires](http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Electronic_Questionnaires).

Survey Monkey is currently widely used within Shetland Islands Council. Please contact: policy@shetland.gov.uk for details.

Public Meetings

A public meeting provides people with information on a subject and can allow discussion and feedback. Public meetings are one of the most traditional ways to consult local people, and in some cases people may not feel that they have had their say unless a public meeting has been offered. Attendance at a public meeting will depend on a number of factors, including the subject matter, the location, advertising and other preparatory work. Please follow link for more information: [http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Public Meetings](http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Public_Meetings)

Conferences

Conferences are extended meetings which give interested people the opportunity to discuss a number of related issues and, perhaps, to reach a consensus on how to progress the topic. A common format is to have at least two plenary sessions with the whole group together, and smaller workshops in between.

Select Committees

Select committees investigate or monitor an issue by listening to a wide range of views from interested parties, both inside and outside the Council. The committee members then draw conclusions from the evidence presented, and make recommendations on the issue. They are made up of Councillors, reflecting the political make-up of the Council, and may involve the public, service users, staff, interest groups and experts in submitting evidence and views.

Deliberative Opinion Polls

A deliberative opinion poll measures what the public would think about an issue if they had an adequate chance to reflect on the questions at hand. It involves selecting a representative sample of the target population, giving them information on the issue you require feedback on, inviting them to participate in a meeting and/or discussion group on this issue, then taking a poll of their views at the end of the discussion. Deliberative opinion polls observed the evolution of the views of a number of people as they learn more about a topic. For more information follow link: <http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/Methods/Deliberative+Polling>

Citizens' Panel

A citizens' panel is a group of people, representative of the population, who have agreed to be consulted periodically for their views. The number of people on the panel can vary from 750 to 2,000. A larger number allows sub group sub groups to be identified (e.g. young people, elderly, geographical location). The membership of the panel is changed regularly to allow for people dropping out, and to ensure it remains representative. For more information follow link: <http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/Methods/Citizens%27+Panels>

Workshops

Workshops bring together a group of individuals to examine and discuss an issue in some depth. This method works well when there is a relatively clear topic to be discussed. Bringing together people with a range of experiences on a relatively equal footing can help to create shared ideas from different starting points. For more information follow link: [http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Round-Table Workshops](http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Round-Table_Workshops)

Focus Groups

Focus groups are guided discussions of a small group of participants (around eight or ten people) who are selected to discuss an issue or series of issues in depth to stimulate ideas. The participants should be representative of the target group. Follow link for more information: <http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/Methods/Focus+Groups>

Open Space

Open space creates a democratic framework from which participants create their own programme of discussion around a central theme. The organisers prepare a large, blank timetable of times and spaces where workshops can be held. The event begins with participants identifying those issues around the central theme they wish to discuss, and then allocating a slot on the timetable to discuss that issue. When all the topics have been announced, all delegates sign up for whichever topics they wish to partake in. The key characteristic of open space is that a central theme is set in advance but the agenda is flexible enough to respond to participants' needs and flow of the discussion. Follow link for more information:

http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Open_Space

Community Visioning

Community visioning techniques create the opportunity for one or more diverse groups of people to meet together to develop ideas about what they would like their community ideally to be like. The outcome of the meeting would be to develop a vision of what they want in relation to a particular area in the future. The group then goes on to consider the actions needed to bring that vision about. A number of formats can be used, such as conferences, focus groups and workshops.

Users' Panels

Users' panels are a system of regular contact between service providers and service users, thereby encouraging service users to become involved in the development of the service. Users' panels are used to obtain feedback from service users about their experiences and expectations, which can then be used in service planning and review. Please follow link for more information:

http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/shc/pfpi/toolkit/Users_Panels

Citizens' Juries

A representative, but very small, sample of the population meet like a court jury to deliberate a particular issue over a number of days. In a typical four day process, day one is spent bringing jurors up to speed on the issue, days two and three concentrate on witness presentation on the different ways of dealing with the issue, and the fourth day is spent by the Jury developing its recommendations. Citizens Juries are often used around current, often controversial, public policy issues where opinion is sharply divided and policy makers cannot decide what to do. For more information follow link: <http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/Methods/Citizens+Jury>

In addition to the methods featured above, please take a look at the webpage below. This resource provides a wider number of consultation and engagement methods, and detailed descriptions of each: <http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/Methods/Browse+Methods>