

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Guidance Note 2015



Confor
Promoting forestry and wood

Stakeholder Engagement: the process of involving people in the decisions that affect them.

Consult: To have regard for a person's feelings or interests in making plans or decisions

When?

Planning or Developing Activities

e.g. New Planting, Revision of LTFPs, Significant Felling.

Management of Existing Activities

e.g. Access and Forest Management Interactions.

Tackling Problems e.g. Timber

transport disruption, fly tipping, unauthorised mountain bike trails.

Who?

- Neighbours
- Community (Community Council, Development Trust, User Groups)
- Clients/ Agents
- Legal Interests e.g. wayleaves
- Special Interest Groups
- FCS & Statutory Consultees
- National NGOs
- Vociferous Detractors

- Neighbours
- Community (Community Council, Development Trust, User Groups, Local Schools)
- Clients/ Agents
- Legal Interests e.g. wayleaves
- Special Interest Groups

- Neighbours
- Community (Community Council, Development Trust, User Groups)
- Local Authority
- Local Councillors, MSPs, MPs

How?

- Site Visits
- Small Informal/ Formal Meetings with key stakeholders
- Telephone contact with key stakeholders
- Attend meetings of relevant local groups.
- Website
- Advertisements/ Articles in Local Press
- Interactive workshop/ event
- Leaflet drop to all households

- Establish a Forestry Contact within Community Council or similar
- Advisory Committee
- Attendance at suitable local events e.g. shows, galas, etc.
- Newsletters
- Annual Surgery
- Annual Meeting with key stakeholders
- Notice Board at Forest Gate
- Website

- Site Visits
- Small Informal/ Formal Meetings with key stakeholders
- Awareness Raising via Local Press
- Attend meetings of relevant local groups.

Helpful Resources

- Forestry Commission Toolbox for Public Engagement in Forest and Woodland Planning (www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox)
- Scottish Government National Standards for Community Engagement (applies to public agency but handy guide) (www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards/)
- Royal Town Planning Institute Guidelines on Effective Community Involvement and Consultation (www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/publications/)

Lessons Learnt

- One size does not fit all – it's about the right thing at the right time. Knowing what works takes time.
- Speaking to people in advance of an activity rather than after can identify issues before they arise.
- Style and tone are as important as what is said/done.
- Make yourself known and available to stakeholders/ communities as this can help avoid problems escalating.
- Listening skills are essential. Often foresters want to solve problems and take action when just listening works.
- Take time to understand the problem. It may not be what you first think.
- Face to face always works better in difficult situations.
- Avoid 'town hall' style public meetings.
- Visual aids (but not just maps) and 'active' feedback sessions work well.
- Admit mistakes, rectify and move on.