COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Speaking to people in Local Communities to find their football

Having people on your side is important when it comes to delivering large scale projects – trust us, we know! Use this information sheet together with the Community Engagement Fact sheets for advice on how to engage with individuals and communities to design a project that meets people's needs.

Community engagement doesn't need to be complicated. You just need to be open and transparent. It's important that you speak to people, understand their needs and get them involved.

To grow the number of people becoming active through football we need to target people who are less likely to be playing. Those groups are:

- People on lower incomes or living in more deprived areas
- Women and girls
- Disabled people
- BAME communities

These groups make up a large proportion of our population. It's important for us to speak to these groups to find out what they want from football so we can transform lives and get more people playing football.

Why is community engagement important?

- To help deliver projects and activities that meet the needs of local people
- Helps you understand the views people have on your project from those it's being designed for
- Get more people playing football by bringing people back to the game or by attracting a new audience
- Make football more appealing, by helping people find their football so that everyone can enjoy the benefits of playing
- Keeping people playing helps to sustain teams, clubs and facilities and ensures that grassroots football can grow

So, where do I start?

Below is a six-step guide which will help you develop and delivery community engagement activity. You will also find links to the Fact Sheets which will help at different stages of the process.

Community Engagement works best as an ongoing process which allows relationships and trust to build and strengthen over time. This means that you might work through these steps several times during a project.

Step 1: Set clear aims and objectives

- *Agree why you are carrying out your community engagement and the outcomes you want from the project*

For help on how to do this go to the Defining your Audience Fact Sheet

Step 2: Who is your audience?

- *Be as specific as possible when describing the people you are designing this project for*

For help on how to do this go to the Know Your Audience Fact Sheet

Step 3: Is there existing information to help understand your audience better?

- *Is there any information that tells you about the lives of your audience, the place they live in, what they do and where they go.*

go to the Understanding Your Place Fact Sheet

Step 4: Find and meet with local partners who can help you understand and reach your target audience

- *These could be local community groups, organisations, businesses or charities – can they help with step 3.*

For help on how to do this go to the Where, When and How to Engage Fact Sheet and the Having Conversations Fact Sheet

Step 5: Plan and carry out your engagement activity

- *Go out and speak to people – talk to them about your project, find out what they think and ask them how they would like to be involved and what would help them to take part*

Step 6: Feedback and keep people involved

- *There are a range of methods to keep people updated on your plans. Perhaps trial some activities with your target audience to see what they think. Think about how you can involve and collaborate with them and perhaps even involve them in making decisions or running sessions.*

Before you start your community engagement here are a few top tips to keep in mind.

- Be open to people's opinions and ideas
- Make it easier for people to get involved by meeting them in places they feel comfortable in
- Don't assume people are aware of the project or make assumptions about what they might need and like
- Consider how everyone can be involved and have a voice
- Feedback on progress throughout to keep people updated and involved
- Find out about the lives people live and not just their views on football
- Ask simple and open questions that give people the chance to express themselves