

grasshopper

Tools of Engagement

*RTPI Cymru Spring Conference:
Engaging and Listening for Placemaking*

20 March 2019

www.grasshopper-comms.co.uk



Key considerations

It's unlikely a single tool of engagement will be enough – and there will be a number of factors to consider before designing your engagement strategy and determining which will be most effective...

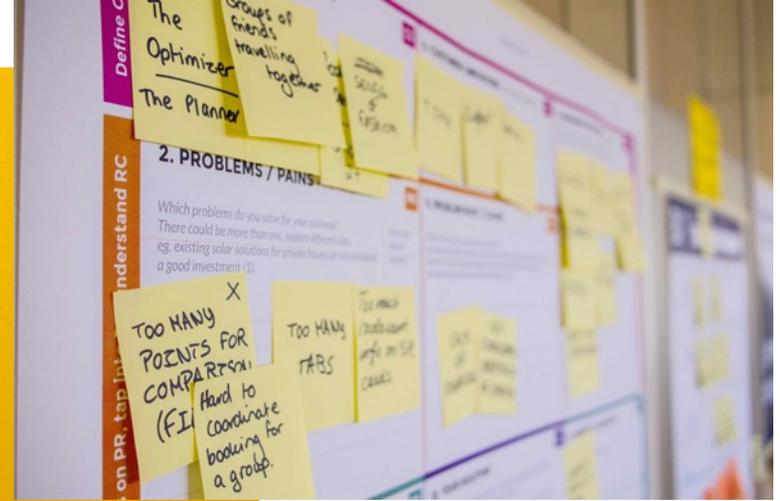


Who to engage?

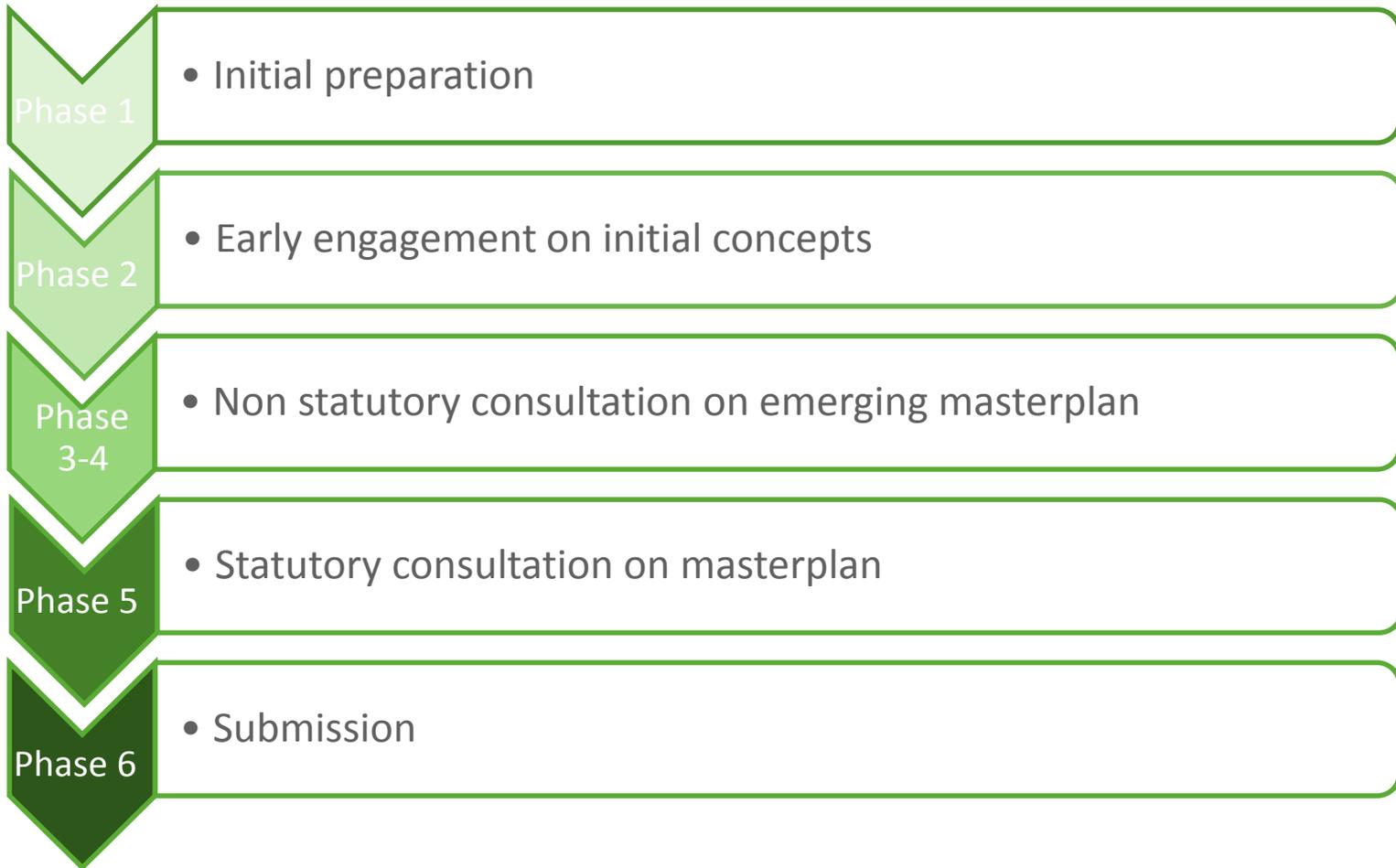
- Who is your target audience?
- What times of day are they most likely to be available?
- Face-to-face or online?
- Why should they engage?
- How much do they understand?



When to engage?



Phased approach?



How to maintain interest?



Explain the approach
and how/when people
will be involved



Provide feedback



Show how you have
listened and used results
of the engagement to
inform placemaking



If changes can't be made
– explain why

Budget?



Cost vs benefit

££££



★★★★



Public exhibitions:

££-££££ ★-★★★★

Target audience	Neighbours, local community and wider public - includes opportunities for stakeholder/targeted previews
Information/ material	Exhibition boards * Handouts * Models/CGIs * Fly-through Audio/visual displays
Team resource	Representations from key discipline, likely to include urban design, transport and environment/ecology
Key outputs	This can include questionnaires (with qualitative and quantitative answers), annotated plans, post-its and comment forms
Post-event opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unmanned exhibition in community spaces• Online – with the potential for an interactive approach• Taking materials to established events – eg Community Council meetings, community group meetings etc.

Workshops/Charette:

££-£££ ★★★★★

Target audience	Invited stakeholders – local elected members and representatives from community councils, community groups and specialist interest groups
Information/material	Plans and images, pens, post-its etc.
Team resource	Facilitator and representation from key disciplines, likely to include urban design, transport and environment/ecology
Key outputs	A report that pulls together all the issues/comments raised – that is sent to attendees for review/sign off and add any additional points they have thought of post event
Post-event opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publish the signed off report on the project website• Opportunity for future workshops – and the potential to set up a working group/forum if it is a long term project – from planning through to delivery

Focus groups:

££ ★★ ★

Target audience	Specific groups with an interest that might not otherwise engage through a wider consultation – eg hard to reach
Information/ material	Presentation, plans, images, flythrough...
Team resource	Facilitator and 1-2 relevant members of team. These are usually for groups of 12-20 people and can focus on key areas of particular interest to the group targeted
Key outputs	A report that pulls together all the issues/comments raised – that is sent to attendees for review/sign off and any additional points they have thought of post event
Post-event opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publish the signed off report on the project website• Opportunity to continue and cultivate dialogue with group

Website:

££-££££ ★★☆☆

Target audience	Stakeholders, local community, wider public
Information/ material	Plans, exhibition boards, details of engagement events, online feedback options, reports etc.
Team resource	Once established, it's a case of updating at key stages
Key outputs	Online repository of information – and can invite people to register for updates and to participate in future engagement. This is a good way to ensure ongoing interest in the placemaking plans and feedback so people understand how they are helping to influence the proposals
Post-event opportunities	Ongoing

Some other examples

	Cost	Benefit
One-to-one meetings	£	★★★★
Presentations to groups/organisations	££	★★★
Questionnaires/surveys/opinion polls	£-£££	★★-★★★★
Webinars	££	★★-★★★★
Apps	£££-££££	★★-★★★★

Other considerations



It's not just about events.



The team you choose to engage with stakeholders and the community are also key – as well as being knowledgeable, they need to be approachable and able to actively listen.



Don't underestimate the value of independent facilitation – this will help ensure everyone involved has an opportunity to participate and proceedings are not dominated by vocal individuals with specific agendas.

Closing thoughts

- Develop the narrative and take them on a journey with you
- Respect people's opinions – and the time they are taking to contribute to the
- Give sufficient notice
- Provide feedback
- Where possible, create opportunities for stakeholder and community buy-in



