



# Communicating, engaging and branding during project delivery

Copper Consultancy



# Agenda

- Introduction
- Key challenges, solutions and approaches
- Branding and bringing your project to life
- Maintaining engagement
- Measuring engagement and top tips





# INTRODUCTION

## THE STORY SO FAR

- Awarded funding
- Submitted Business Cases
- Delivering projects

Maintaining relationships with stakeholders and keeping them informed and engaged is important as you move into delivery, construction and beyond.



## WHY DO TOWNS NEED TO KEEP ENGAGING ACROSS DELIVERY STAGES?

- Projects should be designed with everyone across the community in mind
- Inform and consult your stakeholders again
- Build and maintain relationships, foster active participation
- Reflect and build upon previous engagement and insights you have learned from earlier on in the Towns Fund programme
- Reduces the risk of challenges or delays to projects and makes a positive outcome more likely



# Challenges, solutions and approaches



## CHALLENGES



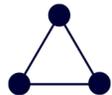
### Engaging with seldom-heard groups

The people who your project will impact the most often speak up the least.



### Project delays

Things do not always go to plan.



### Keeping messaging aligned

A single source of truth.

## SOLUTIONS



### Be proactive and purposeful

- Research demographics.
- Ask them how they would like to be engaged with.
- Tailor engagement tactics to suit the stakeholder group.



### Keep internal comms sharp

- Regular work in progress meetings.



### Review and adapt

- Review and update messaging to reflect project journey.
- Refine and tailor key messaging with audience considerations.

**Be clear and honest**



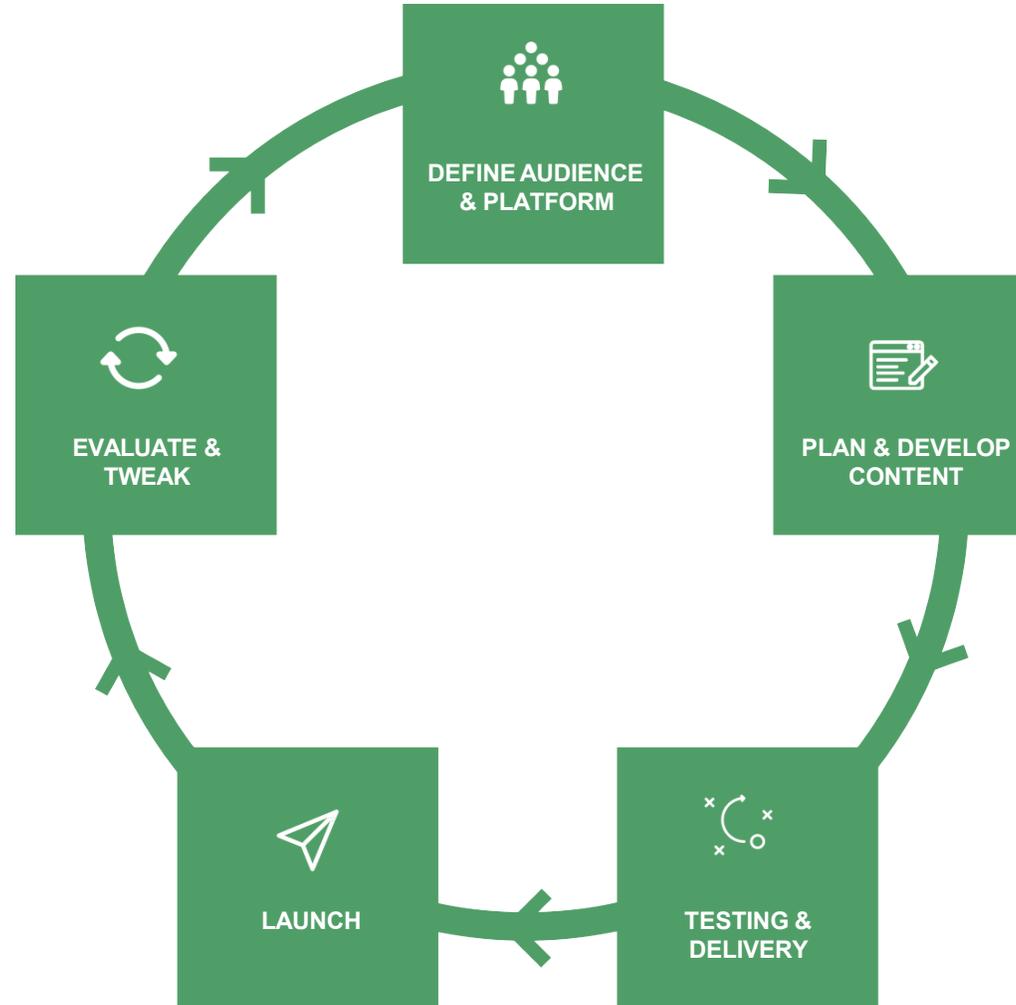
2-minute discussion:

What communications/engagement challenges have you faced and how did you overcome them?





# COMMUNICATIONS APPROACH





# ENGAGEMENT APPROACHES

	INFORMING	CONSULTING	DECIDING TOGETHER	ACTING TOGETHER	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDER ACTION
OFFLINE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public meetings</li> <li>Mail out</li> <li>Local press</li> <li>Billboards/posters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drop in-in sessions</li> <li>Roadshows</li> <li>Pop-ups</li> <li>Interviews</li> <li>Focus groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steering group</li> <li>Co-production</li> <li>Consensus workshops</li> <li>Planning for real</li> <li>Citizen Assemblies</li> <li>Participatory budgeting</li> <li>Creative workshops</li> <li>World cafe</li> <li>Action planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steering group</li> <li>Task and finish groups</li> <li>Stakeholder partnership</li> <li>Scrutiny panel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commissioning</li> <li>Grants</li> <li>Access to buildings and spaces</li> <li>Responding to campaigns</li> </ul>
ONLINE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website</li> <li>Digital marketing</li> <li>Mailing list</li> <li>Local press</li> <li>Social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey</li> <li>Crowdsourcing</li> <li>Digital engagement platform</li> <li>Online mapping tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online polling</li> <li>Digital mapping activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enabling online advocacy with stakeholder packs and social media content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media promotion</li> </ul>

## COMMUNICATIONS PLAN – EXAMPLE

A high-level communications plan will help you develop and deliver your activities over the project lifecycle. It will also help keep your branding consistent and in line with your overall aims and objectives, improving the chances of buy-in from potential investors.

OBJECTIVE	AUDIENCE	AIM	TIMING	COMMS ACTIVITY	PLATFORM	RESPONSIBILITY	KPIs
To communicate status of project	Investors	Provide update and maintain momentum	After next Board meeting [date]	Blog	Local Press news outlets  Council website	Council Comms Team	Website views  Post impressions
Increase awareness of XXX project	Local businesses	Create interest and excitement	Every quarter [dates]	Social media “fact” cards	LinkedIn	Comms Team & TDB	Post impressions  Post shares



# Branding and bringing your project to life

## Government guidance

1. **Funded by UKG Branding Manual** – published on gov.uk in December 2022 by the Cabinet Office
2. **Levelling Up Recipient Guidelines** – will be published on gov.uk by DLUHC in due course
3. **Towns Fund Branding Guidance** – incorporates steers from both of the above and will be published on the Towns Fund website by the end of June



# Why is place brand important?



**Better  
engage  
your target  
audiences**



**Instill  
confidence**



**Build  
recognition**



**Communicate  
your messages  
with clarity**



**Create visual  
impact**



I   
INY



Milton Glaser, concept sketch 1976, MOMA





**Storytelling  
narrative**

**Positioning  
your town**



**Visual  
narrative**

**Vision:**

What you strive for

**Proposition:**

Your promise to your stakeholders





2-minute discussion:

In one word, how would stakeholders sum up your Town?

Name one visual asset you have used to represent your place brand.





# Maintaining engagement



## COMMUNICATING DURING QUIET PERIODS



At certain points throughout project delivery, you may not feel you have much to say to communities and stakeholders.

But it's important to keep building momentum, trust and relationships throughout the project lifecycle.

### REMEMBER

- Inclusive communication is key
- Remind your stakeholders that project delivery and activities are very much ongoing – even when they can't physically see it!
- Diverse voices should be at the heart of your planning

It is important to keep channels of communication open throughout a project lifecycle, so your stakeholders are regularly updated and engaged. This could include:

- Thematic / interest working groups or workshops to discuss specific issues
- Engagement channels via established but informal community networks and organisations
- Digital communications and engagement platforms
- Opinion polling and market research
- Community and schools outreach
- Spotlight articles



# MAINTAINING MOMENTUM

When you first launch your projects there is often a lot of excitement and buzz. To ensure this doesn't dwindle as you reach more advanced stages of project delivery, you can maintain momentum to continue to build stronger advocacy and buy-in.

The following methods can help you achieve this:



Dedicated project websites or social media pages



Newsletters with 'good news stories'



Historic 'fun facts' and local interest stories presented in visual formats



Project timelines



'Meet the team' profiles



Pop-up events



Utilising branding and creative assets



# STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

There is not a ‘one-size fits all’ approach to engagement, it requires different approaches during different stages of the project lifecycle.

There are five different levels of stakeholder participation.

By understanding which one applies to your stakeholders, it will help you define the most appropriate engagement and communications approach.

Levels of Stakeholder Participation





## MAKE IT PERSONAL

When planning engagement methods and key messaging for your project, you will need to implement different approaches for target groups.

Mostly, stakeholders are interested in how a project will impact them or those closest to them.

To engage different groups, messaging needs to outline the need and benefits.



**Remember: Sometimes the messages you want to shout the loudest, might not be the ones the target groups are most interested in.**



## Pick up the phone

You will need to understand your audience needs, and consider the most appropriate method to reach them. By phoning, you can:

- Ensure that you have the correct contact details to continue further engagement
- Promote your project and the targeted messaging for that group
- Add personality to your projects, which is easier to portray on the phone
- Build a more personable relationship, demonstrating your commitment to engaging the individual or group
- Discover any barriers to engagement early on
- Reduce the risk of challenges or delays to projects and makes a positive outcome more likely



2-minute discussion: Give an example of when you have tailored communications to a particular stakeholder group.

- What stakeholder group were you talking to?
- What comms method did you use?
- What was the outcome?





# Measuring engagement and top tips



# Measuring engagement

## Events hosted

Tracking the type and number of events you have held

## Social media

Keeping track of social activity and recording key KPIs i.e. number of share and post impressions

## Website visits

Number of visits to your website within a certain period to measure information and content engagement

## Event attendance

How many attendees at digital and in-person events i.e. consultations

## Media engagement

Media monitoring and tracking how many articles are written about your project

## Surveys

Conducting feedback surveys and recording number and type of responses received

## Contacts

A database for keeping track of correspondence with investors and interested parties

## Project reporting

Regularly conducting internal project reports, outlining what engagement has been done and lessons learned

*What are your markers for success?*

*This will guide your engagement strategy so you can adapt your approach in real-time as well as being able to provide evidence.*



## TOP TIPS

To help inform your engagement and best utilise your place brand, consider these top tips for engaging during delivery:

- **Be clear, engaging and accessible**
- **Leverage place brand in comms**
- **Build on existing engagement**
- **Be flexible**
- **Stay in touch**
- **Be open**





Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

# Questions





Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

**copper**

**Towns<sup>®</sup>  
Fund**   
Delivery Partner

