

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT *TOOLKIT*

Featuring templates,
resources, and
engagement tools
and techniques.



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**Related resources
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SECTION 1

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit complements Hobsons Bay City Council's Community Engagement Policy (the Policy). It includes templates, key considerations, resources, detailed information on engagement tools and techniques, as well as information about how we report on consultations.

It is important to note that most projects require an approved engagement plan and the project lead must notify the customer service team of upcoming engagement activities.

Below are Council's engagement values, which underpin the design and delivery of community engagement activities. These values are applied across all stages of an engagement process.

Community engagement values



Purposeful

We develop community engagement activities that have a clear intention, purpose and scope



Inclusivity

We create engagements that are accessible and inclusive to all our community



Influence

We share what you can influence in a project, as well as what aspects are negotiable and non-negotiable



Transparency

We are transparent with the steps involved in consultation and the reasons behind the outcome of a project



Close the loop

We close the loop with the community by sharing the consultation results online

SECTION 2

TYPES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement may include multiple levels of public participation at different stages of the process, as different stakeholders choose to engage differently. The type of engagement activities conducted are broadly described as either *deliberative* or *participatory*.

Deliberative engagement

Deliberative engagement is where the community has a high level of influence. This type of engagement is outlined in the IAP2 spectrum as 'Collaborate' or 'Empower'.

Examples of deliberative practices are:

- working with advisory groups,
- online proposals and ideas are discussed by a panel of community members,
- participants are asked to consider and prioritise ideas, and
- a community-representative group takes part in a series of sessions of information exchange to reach a consensus.

Participatory engagement

Participatory practices take place at the first two levels of influence on the [spectrum](#), 'Inform' and 'Consult' and involve one-way information exchange either from Council to community or community to Council.

Participatory engagement typically occurs when feedback is invited on ideas, alternatives, or draft documents.

Examples of participatory practices are:

- surveys,
- polls,
- ideas gathering, and
- submissions.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

Increasing impact on the decision

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

SECTION 3

YOUR HOW TO GUIDE

This section takes you through the five stages of community engagement projects, from planning all the way through to evaluation.

To help you complete each step properly there are templates available in Section 4 of this guide.

Step 1: Purpose

The first step in any engagement activity is to identify the project's goal, objective, scope and stakeholders.

- Use your project plan to determine the level of community influence for your project.
- Document and identify who your project's stakeholders are.
- Define the objectives, negotiables, and non-negotiables.
- Pop the above into an engagement plan.
- Avoid conducting community engagement around key dates, such as the December/January holiday period, public holidays, and school holidays, unless it allows specific stakeholder groups to participate.

[Template 1: Project assessment](#)

[Template 2: Gender impact assessment](#)

Step 2: Inclusivity

Define your community and stakeholders.

- Understand the community you are targeting - what is their likely level of interest in the project? What are their values?
- Ensure all flyers, letters, webpages, and other materials are written in plain English.
- Consider if you need to include Language Line details or translate your materials into other languages.
- Design your engagement activities to be [accessible and inclusive](#).
- Use a variety of engagement methods and tools to provide people with accessible options to participate.
- Show sensitivity to social issues and trends.

[Template 3: Stakeholder analysis](#)

Step 3: Influence**Design your engagement activities.**

- In creating your engagement plan, you will need to consider how you will conduct engagement activities.
- Teams with low-risk projects can create their plans independently, but medium- to high-risk projects usually require collaboration with the community engagement team to create an engagement plan.
- Use a range of engagement methods and activities. This ensures the community have opportunities to engage throughout the process.
- Work with the community engagement team to develop engagement content and Participate Hobsons Bay webpage (if applicable); and with the communications team to develop project collateral and promotional material.
- Provide the community with enough notice of upcoming engagement activities, including time to read information prior to conducting any activities.

Step 4: Transparency**Delivering engagement activities.**

- Email customer service to advise them of the engagement activities, with dates, times and a contact for customers.
- Define each team member's roles and responsibilities during the engagement activities.
- At a minimum, all engagement activities should run for four weeks. As such, it is important to provide appropriate lead times when promoting the project.
- Clearly communicate beforehand how the community's involvement will influence certain aspects of the project.
- Use structured agendas and engagement materials. Ensure the most appropriate team is delivering the engagement (ie subject matter experts).
- Deliver engagement activities at days, times and locations that meet the needs of the community and stakeholders.

[Template 4: Engagement Plan](#)

[Template 5: Communications Plan](#)

[Template 6: Participate Hobsons Bay](#)

Step 5: Close the loop

Analyse the results, promote next steps, and close the loop.

- Use the findings of the engagement to inform project decisions and other relevant initiatives.
- Communicate the engagement process, what happened, the key findings, outcomes and how any decisions were made to all contributors.
- Publish updates and final outcomes of community engagement on key communication channels.
- Upload the engagement findings report to the Participate Hobsons Bay page if the project has one.
- During the reporting, it is important to provide clarity to the community around why certain feedback cannot be actioned. At times, it isn't possible to use all feedback provided, but you must ensure this is communicated back to the community in the reporting stage.

Template 8: Reflections and lessons learnt



SECTION 4

TEMPLATES

These templates are designed to help guide you through your engagement activities from start to finish. You may only need a few templates, or you may use them all.

If you require any assistance, please reach out to the community engagement team.

TEMPLATE 1 Project assessment

Before starting to design any engagement activities, first complete the community engagement assessment below. Project managers are responsible for completing this assessment, and ensuring that the engagement is planned, delivered, and evaluated.

	Very low 1	2	3	4	Very high 5
What level of influence into the project does the community have?					
How interested will the community be in your project?					
What is the expected cost of the project?	< \$10k	\$10k–\$25k	\$25k–\$65k	\$65k–\$100k	\$100k +
What impact will the project have on HBCC's reputation?					
What impact will the project have on the community?					
What is the risk if no engagement occurs?					
Total score					

Risk rating	Low (1-10)	Medium (11-20)	High (21-30)
Engagement process responsibility	Managed entirely by project manager with service unit/team support	Managed by project manager with support from service unit/team as well as input or advice from the community engagement team	Managed by project manager with support from service unit/team as well as input or advice from the community engagement team
Sign off on the engagement plan	Service unit coordinator	Service unit manager	Relevant director
Engagement level	Inform/consult	Consult/involve	Involve/collaborate/empower
Suggested types of engagements	Minimal amount – survey, and basic communication to the community (i.e letters to affected residents)	Medium level of engagement – workshops, face to face consultations, survey	High level of engagement – citizen jury, survey, workshop, working group
Reporting on engagement	Snapshot report	Snapshot report	Medium to long report



TEMPLATE 2

Gender Impact Assessment

You may need to do a Gender Impact Assessment before you begin your consultation. To find out more, reach out to Council's Organisational Development team, or visit the [Gender Impact Assessment guide](#) (sharepoint.com)

TEMPLATE 3

Stakeholder analysis

It is important to define and understand the community you are targeting, as well as what their likely level of interest in the project is.

Before defining stakeholders:

- Connect with service units across Council who regularly interact with certain groups or stakeholders.
 - Review local community profile or ABS Census statistics to get a better understanding of the people who make up the community you are engaging.
 - When completing a stakeholder analysis, remember it is a 'snapshot in time' and requires constant review and monitoring.
- Use the below stakeholder analysis template to list all your project stakeholders, along with their level of interest, influence, and their barriers to engagement.

Template 2
continued on
following page



TEMPLATE 3

Stakeholder analysis

Example

TEMPLATE 4

Engagement plan

Fill out form below or download your own copy: [Engagement Plan - Template \(1\).docx](#)

Project name:	
Project location:	
Linking projects:	
Overview:	
Purpose (including level of influence):	
Type of engagement:	

TEMPLATE 4
Engagement plan

Consultation timeline:

Brief and plan	Implementation	Live consultation	Reporting/ evaluation	Updates/ next stage

Relevant stakeholders:

Example
→

Location:	Other demographics (e.g. age):	Other details:	Included for benchmarking?	Estimated population size:
Altona Meadows	Any age	None	Yes	18,665

TEMPLATE 4
Engagement plan

Engagement activity matrix:

Example
→

Example
→

Activity/ tool	Platform	Promotional requirements	Dates	Any external requirements	Purpose/ stakeholders	Activity/ messages/ outcomes
Survey	Participate	Social Media Postcard/ Mail drop	Survey from 1 May to 31 June	May need assistance with Participate platform	Areas Altona and Seaholme Entire Hobsons Bay	Survey for feedback on concept design, which features community like
Drop-in session	Newport location	Social Media Postcard/ Mail drop	14 July 1-3pm	Will require extra staff to assist	Newport residents – particularly named street	Information session- community submissions accepted

TEMPLATE 5

Communications plan

[Download a copy of Council's Communications Plan.](#)

For advice on undertaking communications, including webpage development on Hobsons Bay City Council website, or social media posts, please reach out to the communications team. Or visit the [page on the Pulse](#).

TEMPLATE 6

Participate Hobsons Bay request

For engagement plans that require a Participate Hobsons Bay page, please complete the below templates, and send on to the community engagement team.

Template 6
continued on
following page
→



TEMPLATE 6
Participate Hobsons Bay request

Each Participate page must feature the below mandatory project questions:

1. What is the scope of works for this project?

2. What can you (stakeholders) influence?

3. Who are the key stakeholders identified for this project?

4. How will you (stakeholders) be engaged throughout this project?

5. How will your (stakeholders) feedback and participation inform the project?

TEMPLATE 6

Participate Hobsons Bay request

For guidance on how to complete the below template please see the supporting documents – [crafting content guide](#).

BRIEF

Title:	
One sentence summary:	
Call to action:	

SHORT KEY MESSAGES

Key message/ aim/point 1	
Key message/ aim/point 2	
Key message/ aim/point 3	

FEEDBACK STATEMENT

What will feedback do?	
Is there anything that feedback will not shape?	

TEMPLATE 6
Participate Hobsons Bay request

PROJECT SUMMARY

Background:	
Project inclusions/ aims:	
Project future:	

PROJECT DESIGNS (optional section – heading can be changed)

Point 1:	
Point 2:	
Point 3:	

TIMELINE

Stage 1:	Key activity:
	Dates:
Stage 2:	Key activity:
	Dates:
Stage 3:	Key activity:
	Dates:

TEMPLATE 6
Participate Hobsons Bay request

EVENT INFORMATION

Event 1:	Key activity:
	Location:
	Date and time:
Event 2:	Key activity:
	Location:
	Date and time:
Event call to action:	

CONTACT US

Team:	
Email:	
Phone (if required):	

ENGAGEMENT TOOL

Title of activity:	
Call to action:	
Further instruction (if required):	

TEMPLATE 6
Participate Hobsons Bay request

FAQS (include as many as needed)

FAQ 1:	Question:
	Answer:
FAQ 2:	Question:
	Answer:
FAQ 3:	Question:
	Answer:
FAQ 4:	Question:
	Answer:
FAQ 5:	Question:
	Answer:
FAQ 6:	Question:
	Answer:
FAQ 7:	Question:
	Answer:
FAQ 8:	Question:
	Answer:

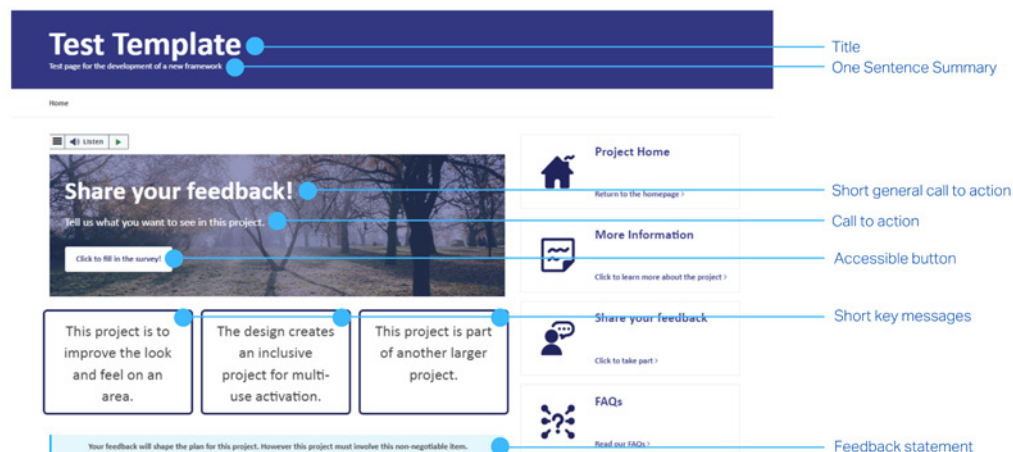
TEMPLATE 7

Participate Hobsons Bay content

For consistency and user experience purposes across Participate, we have a general template for pages. Below outlines this template and what is required to create the page.

PARTICIPATE CONTENT GUIDE

For use with the crafting content document.



TEMPLATE 7
Participate Hobsons Bay content

PARTICIPATE CONTENT GUIDE

For use with the crafting content document.

The screenshot displays the Participate Content Guide template with the following sections and optional content:

- More Information:** Includes a link to read more about the project.
- Share your feedback!** Includes a link to take part.
- FAQs:** Includes a link to see our FAQs.
- Timeline:** Includes a timeline with three stages (Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3) and a link to see less.
- Document Library:** Includes a link to see less.
- Contact Us:** Includes a link to see less.
- More Information (Project Summary):** Includes a link to see less.
- Background:** Includes a link to see less.
- Project Inclusions:** Includes a link to see less.
- Project Future:** Includes a link to see less.

Optional changes if required:

- Optional to include one sentence summary
- Short call to action and main call to action
- Optional changes if required.
- Timeline information
- Optional changes if required. - Key dates/event section can also be added here.
- Contact information
- Optional changes if required.
- Background information
- Project aims
- Project future

PARTICIPATE CONTENT GUIDE

For use with the crafting content document.

The screenshot displays the Participate Content Guide template with the following sections and optional content:

- More Information:** Includes a link to read more about the project.
- Share your feedback!** Includes a link to take part.
- FAQs:** Includes a link to see our FAQs.
- Timeline:** Includes a timeline with three stages (Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3) and a link to see less.
- Document Library:** Includes a link to see less.
- Contact Us:** Includes a link to see less.
- More Information (Project Summary):** Includes a link to see less.
- Design 1:** Includes a link to see the design.
- Design 2:** Includes a link to see the design.
- Design 3:** Includes a link to see the design.

Optional changes if required:

- Optional changes if required.
- Space for points or designs
- Space for points or designs
- Space for points or designs

TEMPLATE 7
Participate Hobsons Bay content

PARTICIPATE CONTENT GUIDE

For use with the crafting content document.

Open

Simple 3 question survey

Share your feedback using the survey below.

Start

Engagement tool

Other ways to share your feedback

Other contact info for feedback

FAQs

FAQs (include as many as needed)

What is a FAQ?

What does that mean?

Missing some information?

Section to cover any lost or missing info for users

Open

Feel free to ask any further questions about the project and the team will provide answers in a timely manner.

Ask a Question

Who's Listening?

Search the questions

Filter by: Status Sort by:

No questions found

At times, this template may not be suitable for your project, if this is the case, please reach out to the community engagement team.

TEMPLATE 8

Reflections and lessons learnt

A critical aspect of community engagement is reflecting on the engagement activities, debriefing on the feedback given, and analysing what worked well and what did not.

PROJECT NAME	
Month and year	
Project manager	
Description of the project	
What was the desired outcome of the engagement process?	
What engagement tools were used?	
Who participated in the engagement?	
What were the key findings?	
How will the feedback be used?	
What surprised you?	
What concerned you?	
What worked well?	
What would you do differently?	
What advice would you give someone working on a similar project?	

SECTION 5

BENCHMARKING YOUR ENGAGEMENT

We benchmark and evaluate engagement activities to determine if they were successful. A successful engagement means we are confident that if we were to recreate the same engagement with different residents, we would receive the same feedback and results.

What is benchmarking?

Benchmarking is a set of targets that engagement activities are scored against. These targets ensure a consistent approach to our consultations.

We benchmark engagement activities by using sample sizes to create a scoring system, then score the activities against it.

What is a sample size?

A sample size is a group of people who represent sections of a population.

We use sample sizes to establish if the feedback received is a true representation of the broader population. It ensures we receive feedback from enough people affected by the project, policy, strategy, or change.

What is the ideal score?

80 per cent and above.

This score means that if we repeat the engagement with different people, 80 per cent of the responses will fall within the exact average of the original engagement.

Step 1: Find your sample size/ contribution target

Please do this before your engagement activities.

A. Ensure you have a defined stakeholder population amount.

B. Calculate your contribution target based on the below:

Stakeholder population less than 5000:

Use: www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/sample+size+calculator to calculate sample size using guide below.

Stakeholder population greater than 5000:

Contribution target = 97

Calculate the sample

[Click here to use the sample size form](#)

Fill in as below:

The form is titled "Determine Sample Size" and is set against a green background. It contains several input fields and radio buttons. Annotations with blue lines point to specific elements: "Select 95% as the confidence level" points to the "Confidence Level" dropdown menu which is set to "95%"; "Enter your population size here" points to the "Population Size" text input field; "Enter 0.5" points to the "Proportion" text input field which contains "0.5"; "Enter 0.1" points to the "Confidence Interval" text input field which contains "0.1"; "Your sample size will appear here" points to the "Sample Size" text input field, which is enclosed in a dashed blue box; and "Click calculate to see sample size" points to the "Calculate" button. There are also information icons (i) next to the "Confidence Level", "Population Size", "Proportion", "Confidence Interval", "Standard Error", and "Relative Standard Error" fields. The "Calculate" and "Clear" buttons are at the bottom.

Determine Sample Size

Confidence Level: 95%

Population Size:

Proportion: 0.5

☐ Confidence Interval: 0.1

Upper:

Lower:

☐ Standard Error:

☐ Relative Standard Error:

☐ Sample Size:

Calculate **Clear**

Select 95% as the confidence level

Enter your population size here

Enter 0.5

Enter 0.1

Your sample size will appear here

Click calculate to see sample size

Step 2: Calculate the engagement score

Score system:

Our benchmarking targets are a range of parameters that we have varying levels of direct control over. The contribution target has a score calculated using the below.

Metric	Total available score	Score breakdown
Contribution target (CT):	5	Below 40.0% of target - 0 40.0% -49.9% of target - 1 50.0% -59.9% of target - 2 60.0% -75.9% of target - 3 70.0% -99.9% of target - 4 Above 99.9% of target - 5

Score	Meaning
0-1	Consultation targets not met – please reach out to community engagement to provide guidance.
2-3	Consultation targets met as satisfactory – no action needed
4-5	Consultation targets met as excellent – no action needed

Population	Contribution target	Actual contributions	Total score

If your project affects a large cohort of the population, or is high risk, you will require a more extensive benchmarking report. You can complete [this benchmarking report](#) or reach out to the community engagement team.

SECTION 6

REPORTING BACK

If you are presenting the report to Council or using it to secure state or federal government funding, you may require different content in your report.

Key tips to help report findings to the community:

- Decide the appropriate type of engagement report to use.
- Analyse the data to identify themes, priorities and overall preferences.
- State any limitations that could have potentially affected the process.
- Use word cloud, verbatim quotes to illustrate sentiment.
- Once the report has been written and approved, keep in mind that it must be shared with contributors and the community.
- Prepare a report using the table of contents examples below.

The community engagement team can support you in analysing the data and feedback to create the engagement report.

One page snapshot

Section	Information
Background	Brief description of the project's background and context around when the engagement occurred and the purpose of it.
Engagement approach	Information about who participated Demographics of the participants presented as a summary graph How they participated Engagement activities and number of people who participated in each
Key findings	What did we hear? What did people say? Summary of key themes
Next steps	How the feedback from the engagement will be used. The next steps for the project.

Medium and long key findings report

Section	Information
Background	A description of the project's background and context around when the engagement occurred and the purpose of it
Engagement approach	Information on how the engagement process was conducted The type of engagements rolled out Materials used during the engagement process Details on how the engagement targeted specific audiences
Target audience engaged	Information about who participated Demographics of the participants presented as a summary graph How they participated Engagement activities and number of people who participated in each
Key findings	What did we hear? What did people say? Summary of key themes
Next steps	How the feedback from the engagement will be used The next steps for the project



SECTION 7

CLOSING THE LOOP

Following all engagements, it is critical to close the loop with our contributors and community. There are a few ways we can do this:

- Upload a copy of the 'what we heard' snapshot or report to Participate, and/or
- Take the engagement report to an Ordinary Meeting of Council, and/or
- Update the Participate page followers with the outcomes of the engagement activities, and/or
- Notify directly affected residents, groups, or community areas of the outcome through key communication channels.

Closing the loop on Participate

Once consultation is complete, the project's Participate Hobsons Bay webpage will follow these steps:

1. The project's page will move from 'Open projects' to 'Under review until the 'what we heard' report is added'. It will remain in this section for four weeks.
2. Following the four-week period to showcase the 'what we heard' report, the page will move to 'Closed projects'.
3. Before the page moves to 'Closed projects', it is important to ensure there is a link to the project's Hobsons Bay City Council website page.

If you are unsure how to close the loop with your stakeholders, reach out to the community engagement team.

