Shetland Partnership
Methods and Techniques

Ongoing Dialogue and Participation

These methods involve proactive and personal approaches to connect with community members.

They are designed to foster strong relationships, gather feedback, and encourage participation. They tend to include:

- Personal interaction, engaging with residents face to face to build trust

- Accessibility, making it easy for community members to participate or share their views

- Inclusivity, ensuring that all voices can be heard, especially those who might not attend larger, formal events.

Examples include door to door visits, community pop-in events, street surveys, community fairs, local walkabouts, and mobile information booths.

Suitable for:

Maintaining regular, ongoing communication with community members and keeping them informed about community developments. They are also useful when continuous improvement is required as feedback can be gathered to continue improving community services and programmes. They can also be useful for introducing programmes, promoting events, gathering feedback, building relationships and addressing issues.
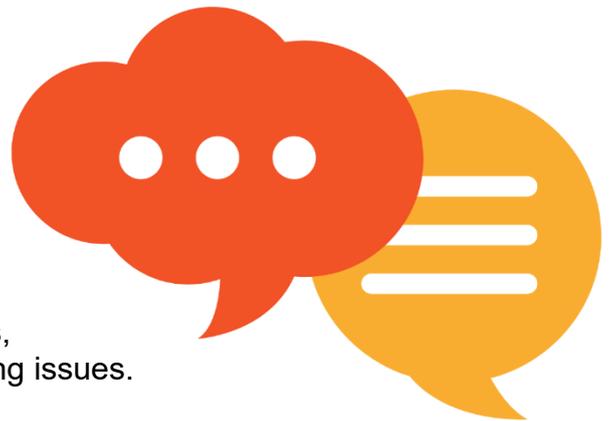
Type of engagement:

Consult | Involve | Inform

How to do it: 💡

- Plan and prepare by identifying the goals of your engagement – are you gathering feedback, promoting an event or services, or building relationships?

- Identify who you want to reach in the community

- Prepare any resources and materials such as flyers, surveys, information packs or promotional items

- Follow up and evaluation by looking at any feedback or suggestions collected

- Take action to address any concerns or issues raised by residents or attendees

- Share the outcome of the engagement effort with the community, highlighting any changes or improvements made based on their input
- Use the insights gained to refine and improve future engagement methods.

Example: Community Pop-In Events (See case study Community Pop-Ins)

- Select accessible and welcoming locations for the events.
- Use, social media, local newsletters, and posters to promote the events.
- Arrange the space to be inviting and comfortable, with areas for information sharing, feedback collection, and social interaction.
- Encourage residents to interact with each other and community leaders, share their views, and participate in activities.

Example: Door-to-door visits (See case study Island Resilience Visits)

- Ensure that community workers or volunteers are trained in effective communication and engagement techniques.
- Plan the visits at times when residents are likely to be home and available.
- Use the visits to personally invite residents to upcoming pop-in events or other community activities.
- Collect feedback, concerns, and suggestions during the visits.

⭐ Advantages	⚠️ Challenges
• Direct contact encourages more meaningful participation from community members • Immediate feedback is gathered • Stronger community bonds are created • There can be a broad reach – these methods can reach individuals who might not attend larger, formal events • Events are held in accessible locations, making it easier for residents to participate • Regular feedback helps improve community initiatives and addresses residents' needs.	• These events can be resource intensive and require organisation from community workers and volunteers • Pop-in events may have unpredictable attendance, making it difficult to plan effectively • Not all residents may be willing or able to participate in door-to-door visits or events • Some residents may feel uncomfortable with visits, perceiving them as intrusive • Ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the feedback collected can be challenging • There is a risk of miscommunication or misunderstanding during face-to-face interactions.

Further information: 🔍

Scottish Community Development Centre information and resources

Case study: 📖

Island Resilience Visits

(see online at: https://www.shetlandpartnership.org/examples-community-participation/building-community-resilience-island-visits-organisation-leaders)

Community Pop-Ins

(see online at: https://www.shetlandpartnership.org/examples-community-participation/community-pop-ins-2)