

Putting participatory planning into action

This worksheet provides you with advice on how to involve the community in planning and steering your residency.

Think about...

- ... your role in supporting the key principles of good participatory planning;
- Facilitating the planning process with the community**, so they generate and own the outcomes and also learn.
- Ensuring the community takes responsibility** for what is done rather than relying on the authority of others or rigid rules.
- Helping the community share in the process** of planning, doing and reviewing the project.
- Being self-aware**, so that you continuously and critically examine your own behaviour.

“ I find it useful to get involved in civic engagement activities in my personal life. I volunteer and join local groups. This helps me get a sense of perspective on what it is like to be a participant in civic engagement initiatives. I see it from a new perspective now – it can be difficult to get your voice heard, or manage the group dynamics.”
Sukhvinder Chandah, Community Artist

Top tip

Set aside a little time to go through the agenda with the Chairperson before each meeting. Plan meetings with the Chairperson to debate issues where you need input from the steering group and consultation with the community.

Help & advice

Local charities, community or voluntary organisations might provide advice on how they have involved the community in their planning.

Put together a steering group for your residency that is credible, well organised, and able to represent the interests of the community.

Identify a Chairperson who has the respect of the local community and skills in managing people and meetings.

Recruit others to the steering group, making sure it is broad based and includes all relevant sections of the community.

Where appropriate, make sure you have the involvement and commitment of high level, visible leaders.

Involve local service providers and local authorities who grant permissions or licences for activities that you are planning.

Check the steering group has fair and shared decision making and that issues are debated before decisions are made.

Think about the timing – is the community ready to work together on this project?

Make efforts to overcome mistrust or scepticism.

Make sure the Chairperson has support to provide leadership and keep people involved through difficult periods.

Set out and enforce the ground rules of the group.

Celebrate small successes along the way.

As the steering group matures, encourage people to focus more on the broader interests of the community.