



Community Engagement Strategy

INFORM
CONSULT
INVOLVE
COLLABORATE
EMPOWER

Revised February 2025

INTRODUCTION

We aim to make community engagement a part of everything we do as a local authority and in our partnership working. It helps us to deliver our Corporate Plan. We recognise however that successive surveys of our residents find they feel under informed about what we do and unaware of how to influence decision making.

This Strategy supports the Council's corporate vision. Working to deliver an approachable, responsive and efficient Council that aims to foster happy communities thriving in an economically ambitious and sustainable way. This includes supporting our communities:

- **to contribute to service improvement by being better informed and engaging in consultation opportunities**
- **In being involved locally, participating in decision making and feeling empowered to influence outcomes.**

This Strategy also supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities:

Priority 1: Providing High Quality Services and Facilities

1

Our ambitions

- Develop a Council that is as effective and efficient as it can be
- Listen to people and drive a customer focused ethos
- Become digital by default, moving with the technology and bringing our customers on a journey with us
- Ensure that, as a borough Council, we are fit for purpose and deliver value for money in the services we provide

Priority 2: Proud and Connected Communities and Places

2

Our ambitions

- Engage with and support our communities, working with key partners, including Lancashire County Council and our Town and Parish Councils, particularly in these challenging times
- Encourage and foster community pride for a safer, cleaner and greener environment
- Continue to work with our local Community Safety Partnerships and communities to tackle any issues to keep us safe and feeling safe
- Protect our parks and local environment by taking pride in our green spaces and surroundings
- Continue to develop our digital connections and seek to increase community confidence in accessing services online

**Priority 3:
Good Growth**

3

Our ambitions

- Achieve economic prosperity and development in our local economy
- Develop quality new housing, which are well designed, sustainable homes
- Focus on sustainable, green and inclusive growth across the borough
- Work in partnership with our local education providers to seek to improve education and skills
- Drive campaigns to improve infrastructure and connectivity for transport and roads, by influencing Government organisations and partners

**Priority 4:
Healthy Communities**

4

Our ambitions

- Improve existing housing stock across the borough, by working with our private landlords
- Develop a wider sustainable leisure offer, to enhance health and wellbeing for those who live, work and study in Pendle
- Work with our local health and wellbeing providers to tackle health inequalities and improve outcomes for all



This Strategy, will guide staff, councillors and local communities to achieve the following engagement aims:

- **Delivering efficient and effective services** that meet community needs, ensuring satisfaction and value for money
- **Empowering communities** by building on positive experiences, like those developed during initial consultation for the Plan for Neighbourhoods, to increase engagement opportunities, supporting problem-solving, minimising damage from misinformation and encouraging participation in decision-making
- **Strengthening partnerships and sharing best practices** to measure engagement success, collaborate on initiatives, and support community-led solutions.

EMBEDDING SOCIAL VALUE INTO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Social Value refers to the additional benefits that projects, policies, and services bring to people, communities, and the environment beyond their primary purpose. It focuses on economic, social, and environmental improvements, ensuring that public initiatives create meaningful, long-term positive change.

How Social Value Can Strengthen Community Engagement in Pendle

- **Healthier, Safer, and Resilient Communities:** Engaging with young people and communities through our community and voluntary sector and partners to encourage public participation.
- **Promoting Social Innovation:** Encouraging co-design workshops and digital inclusion programs to ensure diverse groups can engage meaningfully.
- **Supporting Local Businesses:** Encouraging local businesses to take part in community events, helping to boost the local economy.

- **Enhancing Skills and Employment:** Supporting local businesses in running apprenticeship schemes, job fairs, and training programs to support workforce development
- **Protecting the Environment:** Encouraging litter picking initiatives, community gardening, and sustainable travel in engagement projects such as Nelson’s Town Deal and Plan for Neighbourhoods
- **Inclusive Engagement:** To ensure vulnerable residents are included through digital literacy training, and pop-up community activities
- **Community-led Design:** Supporting partners on projects such as Town Deal and the Plan for Neighbourhoods by using public input for construction projects, local organisations for artwork competitions, and temporary community spaces to enhance civic pride
- **Better Monitoring and Impact Measurement:** Strengthening data collection and reporting to track how engagement efforts contribute to lasting community benefits.

By embedding Social Value into Pendle’s Community Engagement Strategy, through a number of key principles the Council can ensure that all engagement efforts create lasting positive change, strengthen social ties, and build a more resilient and inclusive borough.



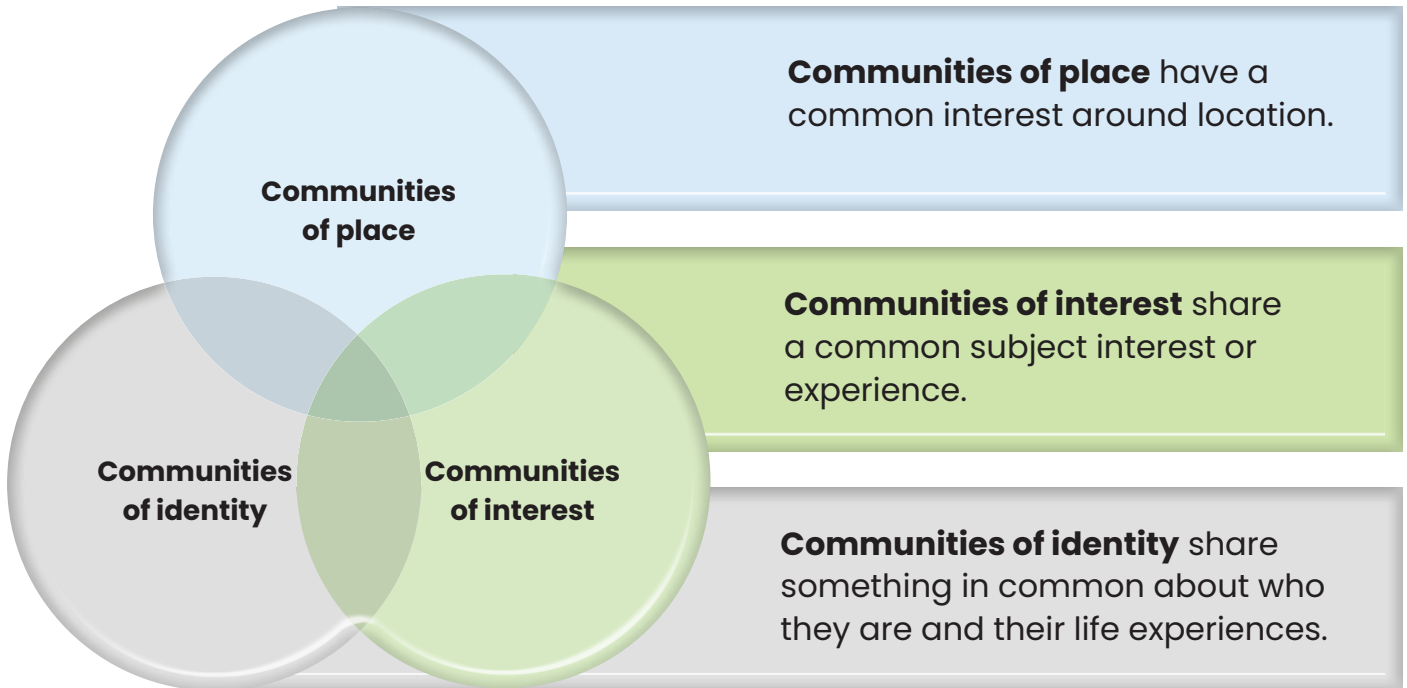
OUR PRINCIPLES TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **Inclusive Engagement:** Ensuring information is clear and easy to find; our methods of engagement are inclusive for all communities and that our methods of engagement do not directly or indirectly exclude any of our communities and that all have a voice in decision making.
- **Accessible Communication:** Use a mix of digital and in-person methods, including visual aids, and accessible venues.
- **Early and Ongoing Involvement:** Engage communities from the start and maintain communication throughout.
- **Creative and Interactive Methods:** Supporting partners to use workshops, pop-up events, and digital tools to encourage participation, especially from young people.
- **Removing Barriers to Participation:** Address issues such as transport, literacy, and digital exclusion to make engagement easier for all.
- **Provide alternative methods:** Use online platforms to reach out to new audiences who prefer not to attend public meetings and events or may otherwise be socially isolated.
- **Partnerships with Community Groups:** Collaborate with schools, faith groups, and local organisations to reach underrepresented communities.
- **Clear Purpose and Feedback:** Ensure participants understand how their input is used and provide regular updates on outcomes.
- **Use of Public Spaces:** Incorporate engagement activities into local events, markets, and festivals to increase reach and participation.
- **Managing Expectations:** Recognise that in raising awareness and the level of involvement there is also a need to manage expectations by embedding these principles, Pendle Borough Council can create a meaningful, effective, and inclusive community.



WHO WE ENGAGE WITH

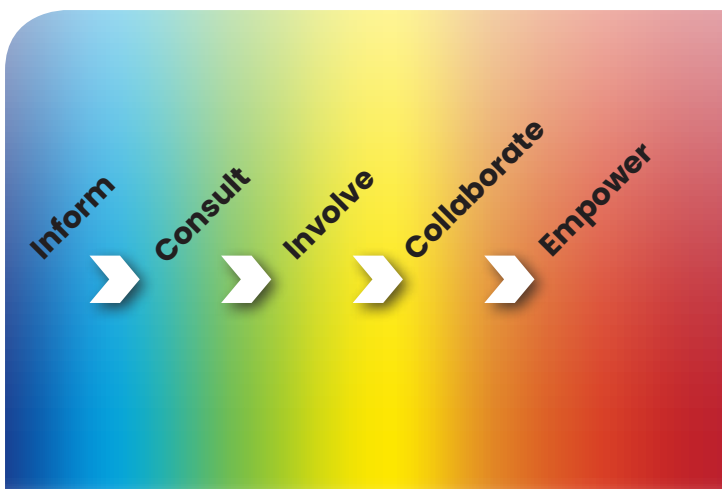
We engage with communities of place, communities of interest and communities of identity.



HOW WE WILL SUPPORT ENGAGEMENT

We will support community groups by providing information, consultation, and opportunities for involvement, collaboration, and empowerment. Engagement should go beyond specific groups or council services, allowing broader participation in local issues.

Spectrum of Public Participation



The Spectrum of Public Participation helps decide when and how communities can be involved in decision making. The steps of participation and how the Council can support communities are in five steps.



LEVEL 1

Inform – provide communities with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, the alternatives and/or solutions.

We will keep you informed

LEVEL 2

Consult – obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and /or decisions.

We will listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

LEVEL 3

Involve – work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are understood and considered.

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.

LEVEL 4

Collaborate – partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decision to the maximum extent possible.

LEVEL 5

Empower – to place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

We will we will implement what you decide.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

As part of the Council's Customer Contact Strategy, we intend to use technology to ensure we are making our digital channels so good that customers prefer to use them for our services and as a tool for consultation and engagement. We will use technology more widely to engage with residents, businesses partners and other organisations.

We will however keep in mind that not all our customers are able to contact us digitally and we will support them to build digital confidence. We will continue to keep our non-digital services, as well as exploring public facing opportunities for engagement for those who still need them.

HOW WE WILL DELIVER ON THIS STRATEGY

- Through Communications Plans we will keep messages clear and consistent, raise awareness of engagement opportunities, and use different ways to communicate with all community groups.
- We will share information in different ways, including word of mouth, digital platforms, and targeted outreach, so that everyone, including rural and hard-to-reach communities, stay informed.
- We will build on good practice and help and support the promotion of local projects.
- We will give clear and fair information about initiatives, explain their purpose, and regularly update the community on progress.
- We will engage communities early in decision making to shape policies and services, instead of just asking for approval after decisions are made.
- We will work with the community and voluntary sector to engage with people and through forums such as the People of Pendle group, LTTP Board, Pendle Youth Forum, CSP etc..

MONITORING

Officers from across the Council have been involved in the development of this Strategy and different Council services can learn from each other's approaches and methods of community engagement.

A staff toolkit will be developed to support this strategy and help to identify future engagement opportunities, track their impact, and share best practices.



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