



Engagement, Participation and Consultation



Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder mapping and the PSS teams' understanding of individual stakeholder's roles will need to be updated and iteratively developed as the project advances. This will need to reflect the differing influence and levels of interest of Stakeholders at the various stages.

Listed here are just a few of the key points that can support the creation of a successful Protected Site Strategy:

- Clear 'terms of reference' for stakeholder groups can help to define the role, responsibility and manage expectations.
- Time frames can also be included to give participants confidence there will be a beginning, middle and end to the process
- Some stakeholders will be very influential on action and delivery for the PSS but may have less input or contribution to offer at the outset, when the strategy is initially being developed. Ensure they are still kept informed throughout.
- It may not be possible to engage every interested and/or influential stakeholder equally, all the time. It is also key to remember that interest doesn't always equate with influence, or that size- in terms of either economic weight or influence- should not be the sole measurement to be used to prioritise engagement.
- There will be some stakeholders that need to be kept updated on progress, but it may not be appropriate for them to have a steering role in the strategy. Keep communication lines open and listen. Making responsibilities and roles clear at the outset will reduce potential conflicts and enhance collective understanding.
- If there are large numbers of stakeholders, representatives can be chosen to act on behalf of others to reduce the stakeholder group size. Make sure these people genuinely speak on behalf of their group i.e. what is their reporting mechanism, who are they accountable to, and for what?
- There can also be a small, focused key stakeholder group that meets frequently and a wider group that meets less often but is kept updated through your communications.

Managing stakeholder's expectations:

It is important to plan stakeholder engagement to enable management of stakeholder's expectations.

What is already known?

- You should map and/or capture relevant prior engagement e.g. the LNRS process, local plan preparation (etc)

Communication:

- Confirm best communication medium, routes and regularity
- Link with other partnerships in the area outside of the nature/environment sector that may have an interest in the site or nature e.g.
 - active partnerships,
 - health providers and support organisations,
 - arts, culture & tourism,
 - education,
 - travel and Highways agencies,
 - sports and pastimes groups,
 - local food producers,
 - business clusters etc