

Appendix 3 – Community Engagement objectives and principles
(established in collaboration with the Partnership Board).

Objectives of Engagement for the North Paddington Programme

It is acknowledged that historically, WCC's relations with communities across North Paddington have not always been positive or connected with clear communication of action that had been taken because of the consultation. Community Engagement for the North Paddington Programme aims to:

1. To listen to, understand and identify the main concerns of local community members and to address these.
2. To inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower local communities and residents within the three wards of Queens Park, Harrow Road and Westbourne.
3. To build a more positive relationship between community members and the council, improving trust, ensuring transparency and demonstrating that action will be taken as a result of consultation.
4. To raise awareness for the North Paddington Programme as a whole.
5. To collaborate with community members and provide ongoing opportunities to influence and shape the actions taken as part of the longer term transformative North Paddington Programme.

Principles for North Paddington Programme Community Engagement

Openness and Transparency

We will foster openness between the council, community organisations and residents within North Paddington.

We will do this by:

- Clearly communicating objectives and purpose of engagement,
- Avoiding over-promising,
- Flagging the boundaries of input and influence they are being given.
- Showing the rationale behind our decisions,
- Being honest and open about bumps in the road.

Partnership with North Paddington Community Groups

Recognising and valuing the significant work of VCS organisations in serving and supporting residents in the three wards. We will work in partnership with the North Paddington Voluntary and Community Sector and other community groups to connect with those they support, recognising that they are a key conduit between the council and residents and are a vital source of information on local needs.

We will do this by:

- Going to locations and timetabled activities and services where people already meet, recognising that these environments will feel safer and more familiar and will allow opportunities for peer support and facilitation by existing group leaders.
- Working with community groups to cast the net as wide as possible for individuals who might be interested in getting involved.
- Working with community groups to ask for their help in nominating, identifying and brokering engagement by individuals in their networks.

Ongoing Dialogue

We take a person-centred and relational approach to our engagement.

We will do this by:

- Taking time to engage effectively with communities by being truly present in our conversations.
- Not rushing our conversations so that people feel truly listened to, seen and understood.
- Treating our engagement as ongoing dialogue and not as an endpoint.

Being Present

North Paddington communities have told us that they would like to see an increased council presence in the area, including Programme officers. Consistent presence on the ground will be important to building relationships and demonstrating commitment.

In our engagement we will:

Aim for the majority of our consultations to be held face to face/ in person in either community settings or on the doorstep.

- We will enhance links with the Community Hubs Programme in the council to enhance council offering in the area.
- We will actively consider focused outreach to maximise participation and overcome access barriers.
- Our outreach will seek to link community members with appropriate support, services and activities through signposting and referrals.
- We acknowledge that residents are likely to view us as one entity and won't recognise distinctions between Services. We will equip those carrying out engagement with the tools to record and triage issues and ensure that the residents have a response from the relevant service.
- We will attend local settings and will encourage organic conversations without a specific agenda.

Diversity and Inclusion in our Engagement

We will encourage a breadth of participation from across our communities. A significant priority is reaching those groups that we have traditionally not engaged so effectively or comprehensively with.

We will do this by:

- Developing our understanding of those who make up North Paddington Communities and seeking to maximise engagement.
- Proactively considering potential barriers to accessing our engagement, including through carrying out EQIAs in our engagement plans.
- Engaging closely with a range of community groups, in particular small scale grass roots organisations

Joined up Approach with Meaningful Impact (Feedback)

We will ensure that community input through engagement is valued and has a meaningful impact on the North Paddington Programme and service delivery.

We will do this by:

- We will seek to coordinate and streamline engagement to avoid duplication across the North Paddington Programme;
- We will seek to engage with community members early so that their input can be fed into decision making early.
- We will share key insights from our engagements across the Programme and relevant Council services, and with seniors.
- We will work closely with colleagues from different WCC teams and wider public sector organisations (e.g. Public Health and NHS), breaking down silos, and building strong and effective relationships to coordinate and affect change.
- We will return to those we engage to update and feedback to them on the changes that have been made as a result of their input; or why changes might not have been made.