



Cities
Commission
For Climate
Investment

The path to net zero: three steps for effective community engagement

3Ci – Cities Commission for Climate Investment



A Connected Places
Catapult Initiative



Foreword

As co-chair of the steering group for 3Ci (Cities Commission for Climate Investment), I am delighted to introduce this comprehensive guide on community engagement for net zero projects. Our mission at 3Ci is to facilitate the transition to net zero in a manner that is equitable and inclusive, ensuring that the places where we live, work, and travel can thrive sustainably.

3Ci was founded by Connected Places Catapult, London Councils, and Core Cities UK, and has since expanded into a wider partnership. This partnership includes the UK Government, Innovate UK, UK Mayors Group, Scottish Cities Alliance and Key Cities, as well as a growing network of private investors, financiers, advisors, developers, and built environment technology professionals. Together, we strive to unlock the funding and create robust plans necessary for local authorities to spearhead the journey towards net zero emissions.

Local authorities are pivotal in the UK's transition to net zero. Their unique position enables them to directly engage with communities, making them essential leaders in this critical transition. This guide, produced by 3Ci and Connected Places Catapult, is designed to empower local authorities by providing them with the tools to foster effective community engagement and create impactful net zero initiatives.

Community engagement, as outlined in this guide, goes beyond simple communication. It involves actively involving communities in shaping decisions that impact their lives, fostering sustainable outcomes, and deepening trust between local authorities and the communities they serve. Through real-world case studies, this report illustrates the crucial role of community engagement in the success of net zero projects.

The guide is structured around three main steps: co-plan, co-design, and co-deliver, supplemented by ongoing processes of co-communication and co-evaluation. This dynamic framework is intended to help local authorities engage communities throughout the entire lifecycle of a project.



We hope this guide serves as a valuable resource for local authorities dedicated to achieving net zero emissions. By following the steps outlined here, projects can become not only technically and economically viable but also socially supported. Your feedback and experiences are vital to improving this guide, and we encourage you to share your insights as we work together towards a sustainable, net zero future.

Kate Josephs CB

Chief Executive, Sheffield City Council and Co-chair of 3Ci's Cities Commission for Climate Investment Steering Group

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Context

Who is this guide for?

Are you

Working for a local authority or a combined authority and want to ensure net zero projects are both investible and impactful?

Or

a potential investor in a local authority net zero project (or project portfolio) but first want to know how to enhance the project's viability, sustainable impact while reducing the risk?

Do you want to

- Engage communities actively and inclusively.
- Cultivate trust and support within communities.
- Leverage local insights for your net zero projects.
- Mitigate investment risks by ensuring community alignment.
- Unlock investment in net zero projects.
- Deliver net zero beyond electoral cycles?

To do this you need to

- Engage with communities effectively to produce locally relevant and long-term solutions beyond the project lifecycle



How to use the guide

This document comprises three sections:

- 1 Introduction:** sets the scene for the guide.
- 2 The guide:** includes a three-step collaborative framework: co-plan, co-design, and co-deliver, and two ongoing processes: co-communicate and co-evaluate. These steps are dynamic and may be adapted as needed, while emphasizing the joint effort ('co-') between local authorities and other stakeholders throughout the process. It includes a list of good practices and case studies.
- 3 The How:** includes further reading materials, toolkits and complementary guides that will help you with planning and conducting your engagement process.

The guide is intended to be exactly that: a guide, offering timely and ongoing steer and resources, with flexibility to adjust to specific context, needs and requirements.

And remember:

“Bad engagement is worse than no engagement at all: tokenistic engagement, tick boxing. It’s better to not do it than do it badly.”

Roundtable participant from community organisation



Introduction

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Any conclusions drawn in this report are those of 3Ci and Connected Places Catapult alone.

About the guide

This guide is designed to support local authorities in engaging their communities in net zero projects and other related initiatives. The guide complements 3Ci's previously published Net Zero Neighbourhood Model.

This guide was developed by Connected Places Catapult and 3Ci through continuous dialogue with local authorities, community engagement specialists, academics, and investors. It consolidates their experiences in the field into a concise three step guide championing engagement beyond consultation while advocating for the highest levels of collaboration and co-production.

The premise is that effective community engagement will result in net zero projects that are relevant to local needs, increase sense of ownership and pride, and as a result decrease backlash, leading to de-risked projects that are desirable for investment.

Call for action: This guide has been used to help teams at the City of Doncaster Council, and Sheffield City Council, shape their community engagement plans, and iterated accordingly.

However it is yet to be tested on the ground, and we are looking for partners to test this in the near future. If you're interested, please send us an email on: 3Ci.org.uk



About 3Ci

3Ci, the Cities Commission for Climate Investment, is an innovative collaboration of local government and the private sector aimed at supporting local authorities across the UK to secure the necessary long-term finance for achieving net zero.

3Ci are working to mobilise finance and drive investment into local net zero projects across the UK aiming to deliver investment, jobs and green growth, revitalising local communities, tackling fuel poverty, improving quality of life and charting a course toward a just transition.

3Ci's place-based experience, expertise across political and financial landscapes and ability to convene government, community, industry and financial institutions, makes us perfectly placed to help deliver the investment needed to get cities and regions to net zero – and get there fast.

3Ci were initially established as a partnership between Connected Places Catapult, Core Cities UK, London Councils and a number of private investors, financiers, advisors, developers and built environment technology professionals. Membership has rapidly expanded to include representation from the M10 group of Metro Mayors, Key Cities Group, Scottish Cities Alliance, County and District Councils and the Local Government Association. We work closely with UK Government, Innovate UK, the Green Finance Institute and UK Infrastructure Bank.

The Net Zero Neighbourhoods (NZN) Model



The [Net Zero Neighbourhood model](#) takes a multi-asset approach to neighbourhood decarbonisation operating across domestic and commercial property retrofit; renewable energy; transport; and waste. It is based on the UK's goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The programme aims to identify and address the obstacles that may prevent achieving this goal and provide solutions that benefit the community.

The programme has several objectives:

- Promote a place-based approach that encourages community and local authority buy-in and participation
- Facilitate the delivery of multiple interventions in one place in order to scale up-delivery, generate efficiencies and derive wider socio-economic benefits
- Provide a blended funding model designed to leverage private sector capital on top of public finance, with practical place-based implementation

- Generate revenues that make it an investable programme, can be used to fund the programme (repayable finance) and removes the need for individual residents and asset owners to personally fund the significant up-front costs of decarbonisation, whilst providing an incentive to participate (reduced energy bills)

The 3Ci NZN programme delivers a range of technical interventions together, which are necessary to reduce carbon emissions in line with the UK's Net Zero ambitions. By addressing the challenges associated with large-scale decarbonisation, the programme aims to enable rapid implementation and create a strong demand for sustainable solutions. This presents a significant investment opportunity for long-term capital to support the transition to net zero, benefiting both investors and communities as a whole.

The guide: Three steps for effective community engagement

The guide will be tested on the ground by you, local authorities, for review and lessons learnt to optimise potential future iterations. If you are a local authority interested in testing this guide, we want to hear from you at <https://www.3ci.org.uk/contact/>



Community engagement definition

Community Engagement refers to the process of actively involving communities in shaping the decisions that affect their lives.

The process utilises lived experience and local knowledge in making better public decisions for all. Effective community engagement goes beyond informing and communicating. It results in sustainable outcomes, equitable decision making, deepens the trust with local authorities and empowers communities to take action and make change.

The term “community engagement” implies a unified community with a shared set of beliefs, needs and challenges. However, the reality on the ground often means a variety of intersecting communities with differing beliefs, values and priorities. Understanding

those differences and including diverse communities in the process is essential. Thus, our use of **‘Community Engagement’ encompasses a broad spectrum of groups, each offering unique perspectives and needs.**

The [International Association for Public Participation](#) (IAP2) widely used spectrum of public participation (see Figure 1) describes five general modes of participation that fall on a progressive continuum of increasing public influence over decision-making. While all five modes are used in this guide, there is an emphasis on the fourth and fifth modes, collaborate and empower.



IAP2’s Spectrum of Public Participation



IAP2’s Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public’s role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

Increasing impact on the decision

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution	To place the final decision making in the hands of the public
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision	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 influences the decision	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible	We will implement what you decide

Figure 1: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

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Why community engagement?

Faced with significant business pressures, you might be wondering if why you should bother with community engagement. It may be tempting to devise your NetZero projects from the comfort of your offices without building in the communities’ knowledge, interests and potential into the process. We demonstrate that by not effectively engaging your communities you risk alienating your communities and enhance the feeling that they will be unlikely to share in the benefits from net zero transition. The recent backlashes to some net zero projects worldwide had reverberating effects, with investors and place leaders seeing that as an added risk.

Engaging your communities effectively brings significant benefits. It leads to an increased sense of ownership and pride. Through designing projects that embed local needs and maximises lived experiences, you enact a fair and just transition. The communities will not only desire the transition but will be spreading the message of the projects’ importance and value to those around them. Having communities on your side will derisk the delivery of your projects and in turn make your portfolios more desirable for potential investors.

Step 1: Co-Plan



Description: Understand the local context and prepare the groundwork for effective community engagement for your net zero project.

To do

- Develop a comprehensive map of stakeholders, including diverse community groups (e.g. socio-economic profile, level of education).
- Create a core team of local authority staff, stakeholders and communities to run the co-plan step. Leverage existing structures and networks from community groups and organisations.
- Conduct a thorough analysis of the local context (where your communities stand on issues like the climate crises, and net zero interventions, their levels of trust in you as a local authority, and how these views differ across demographics and other characteristics) using different methods.
- Review previous engagement activities using a structured template or criteria for assessment to identify lessons learned and successful strategies.
- Agree on the methods that will be used for the co-design step.
- Clearly assign responsibilities for setting the project brief, follow-up and feedback to establish accountability mechanisms.
- Allocate necessary resources and establish timescales and deadlines for project feedback.
-
- Produce and share a co-plan report with engaged communities for feedback.
- Invite community members and other stakeholders to take part in the co-design step.

Good practice

- Engage diverse communities on the ground, especially those underrepresented, not usually consulted and most affected by the climate crisis.
- Address engagement barriers (e.g. time, childcare, language, physical accessibility).
- Consider governance structures of relevant staff, community members and other stakeholders (e.g. planning/design committee) within the Local Authority and ability to affect decisions.
- Assess time needed from staff, and recruit additional staff if needed.
- Understand lessons from local authorities with similar past projects and embed learnings into the project plan.
- Account for fair compensation (equivalent to living wage) for community members part of the participatory process and project delivery.



Case Study

Planning for a Fair Transition to Net Zero in Toynbee Hall



Description: In 2022, Toynbee Hall's study supported by Fair by Design in London focused on economic fairness in net zero energy transition, involving 13 peer researchers and 38 community members experiencing the poverty premium. The participatory approach provided vital insights into energy poverty. Iterative workshops led to a communication strategy and three roadmaps for increasing green energy awareness, aiding vulnerable

consumers, and promoting green technology access among low-income groups.

Outcomes: Key outcomes included a comprehensive communication strategy and three strategic roadmaps aimed at: increasing awareness of green energy options among low-income consumers, identifying and supporting vulnerable consumers, and facilitating access to green technology for this demographic.

Step 2: Co-Design



Description: Collaboratively design net zero projects with community input. This step emphasizes shared decision making and governance, ensuring that community needs and ideas shape project design.

To do

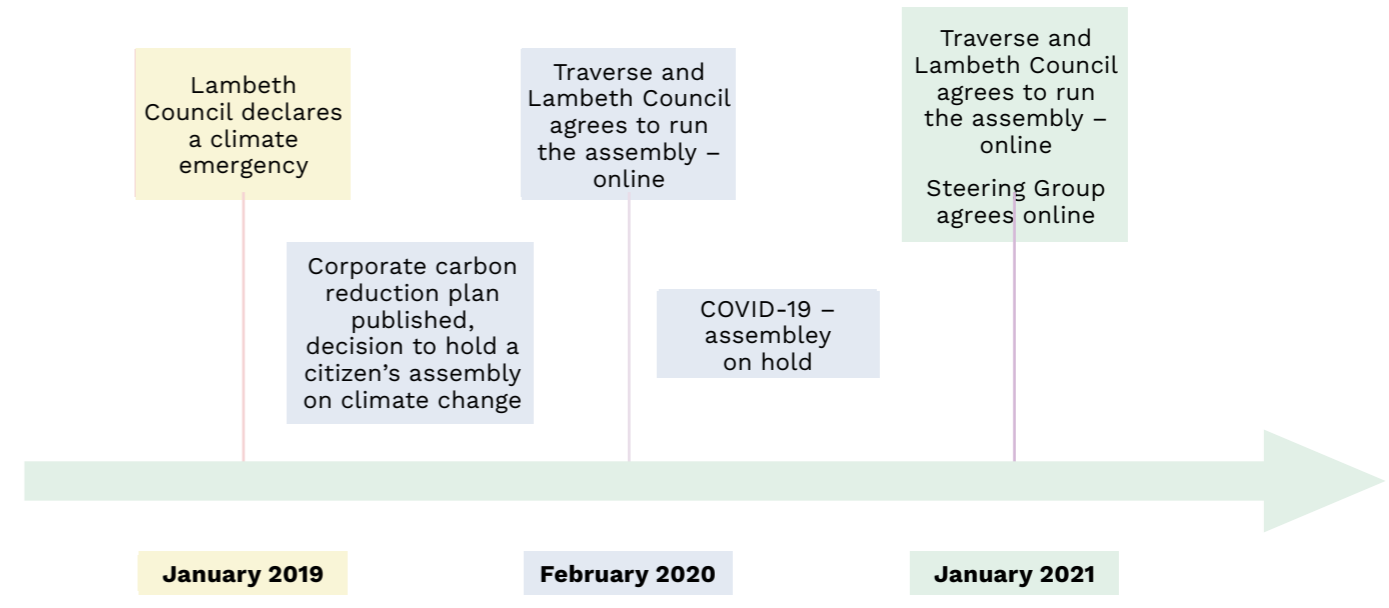
- Convene a diverse array of community members and other stakeholders in clearly defined workshops and meetings.
- Design net zero interventions tailored to the local context with communities and other stakeholders (e.g. in-person workshops, pop up stalls), ensuring improved cohesiveness in approaches with net zero goals.
- Detail the process of establishing an effective governance structure, including diverse and equitable community representation.
- Set up delivery groups with clear roles and responsibilities.
- Agree on next steps and timelines for the co-delivery step.

Good practice

- Understand and address the power dynamics in the room between different community groups, and between community representatives and other stakeholders.
- Acknowledge and address any mistrust or communal rifts that have arisen in previous steps to ensure a smooth co-design process.
- Build on existing structures and avoid reinventing the wheel. This helps in achieving agreement on project aims and governance structures more efficiently.
- Assess and enhance your team’s capacity and skills for facilitating the co-design process.
- Identify local players who can help you bridge your team’s capacity gaps, to facilitate and enable effective engagement (e.g. third sector leaders, community energy groups, local action groups academics and students).
- Before starting, revisit the results from the previous co-plan step to address any unresolved issues and to utilise shared knowledge among all participants effectively.

Case Study

Reducing the Borough of Lambeth’s carbon emissions



Timeline of Lambeth steering group (London Borough of Lambeth)

Description: In 2021, Lambeth Council embarked on a governance project to engage local communities and businesses in forming a collective response to the climate crisis, with the goal of significantly reducing carbon emissions across the borough. Through a Citizen’s Assembly, composed of 47 diverse Lambeth residents, the council co-designed recommendations to address emissions from transport, domestic, and commercial energy use. The assembly, facilitated by iterative workshops and online engagements, aimed to inform Lambeth’s climate action plan with a community-driven approach.

Outcomes: The assembly’s collaborative process led to a heightened awareness of climate impacts among local communities and identified priority areas for carbon emission reduction. It fostered a dialogue between residents and the council, establishing a shared understanding of the social costs and community impacts of carbon reduction efforts. The assembly developed a set of actionable recommendations, marking a significant step towards inclusive and effective climate action planning in Lambeth.

Full report: [Lambeth’s Citizens’ Assembly on Climate Change](#)

Step 3: Co-Deliver



Description: Involve communities in project governance as decision-makers and delivery partners, alongside local authority staff and other project partners.

To do

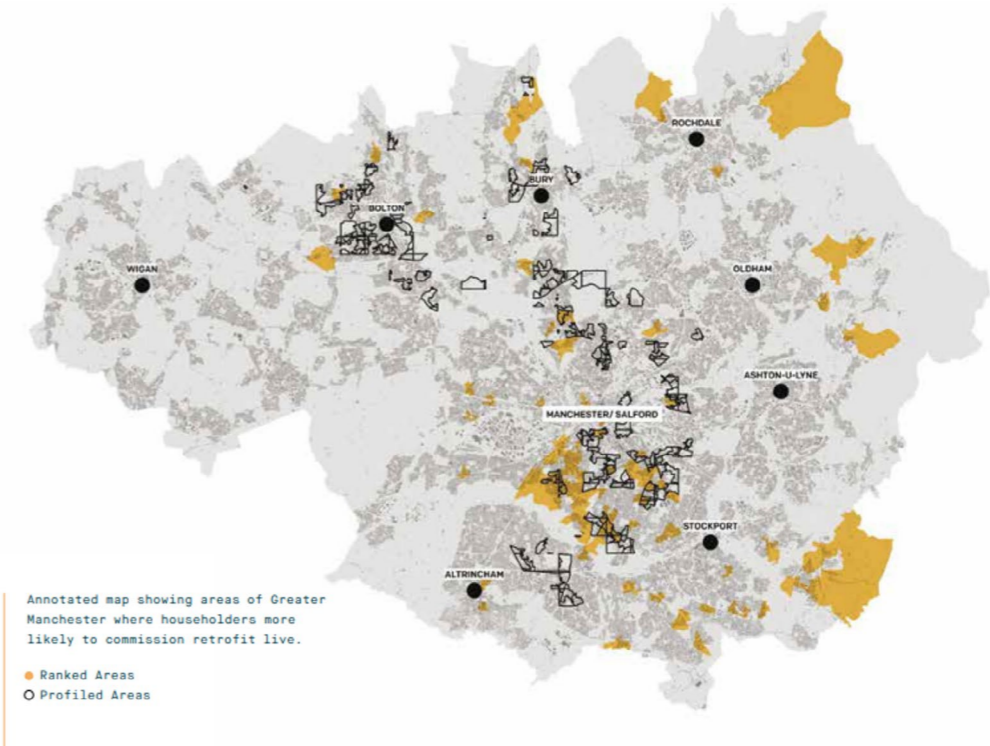
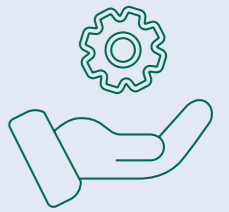
- Detail delivery plans for the projects.
- Secure resources for ongoing community involvement.
- Deliver interventions: with maximum uptake and minimum backlash.
- Utilise existing investment knowledge, and invite experts to upskill local authority staff and community members in how to secure investment for the co-designed net zero projects.
- Secure funding for the co-designed net zero projects.

Good practice

- Understand the transferability of existing skills in communities to deliver the project. Embed learning and iterate it throughout the project lifecycle.
- Understand who is accountable for monitoring and evaluation processes through project governance.
- Develop measures to ensure continued participation in the face of conflict or resignation.
- Engagement with less heard communities e.g. holding pop-up events at targeted locations to cover gaps in engagement through traditional avenues.
- Make sure that the governance body is embedded within appropriate governance structures in relation to the local authority.
- Ensure clear communication with communities on what can and cannot be changed at phase so that all understand their area of influence.

Case Study

Creating a new market for people powered retrofit in Greater Manchester



Analysis of likely retrofit commissioners in Greater Manchester (People Powered Retrofit)

Description: In 2019 Carbon Co-Op and URBED collaborated on a project aimed to stimulate a bottom-up market for household retrofitting in Greater Manchester, focusing on energy efficiency improvements. The strategy involved community engagement through surveys to gauge retrofit interests and barriers, social marketing for awareness, and hands-on workshops. The goal was to understand and create conditions for a new local retrofitting market, identifying funding sources and providing comprehensive support to homeowners throughout the retrofitting process.

Outcomes: The initiative successfully provided end-to-end support, including architectural guidance, contractor networks, and training, with energy assessments and design development. This comprehensive approach ensured homeowners received full support from assessment to handover, significantly enhancing the local retrofitting market's viability and homeowner engagement.

Ongoing Process: Co-Communicate



Description: Leverage existing community structures and networks to foster wide understanding and involvement in net zero projects. It aims to build alliances and keep local communities well-informed, ensuring that communication is effective and inclusive.

To do (Co-Plan)

- Build partnerships with community entities identified during stakeholder mapping, ensuring broad and meaningful engagement.

To do (Co-Design)

- Set up a co-communication group or committee responsible for actioning this step.
- Share outcomes and findings with the wider community to create a sense of pride and ownership in the net zero strategy.
- Produce and disseminate accessible materials like flyers, videos and web content, and provide different opportunities to clearly explain net zero projects' benefits, challenges and opportunities.

To do (Co-Deliver)

- Develop a detailed co-communication plan, specifying roles and responsibilities, and clearly outlining community involvement opportunities throughout the project lifecycle.
- Produce and disseminate accessible materials like flyers, videos, web content, and provide different opportunities to clearly explain net zero projects' benefits, challenges, and opportunities.

Good practice

- Have a clearly identified methods of communication. e.g. a named person - who the community can contact as needed.
- Use clear, jargon-free language and relate net zero to everyday experiences.
- Delegate communication tasks wisely, leveraging the expertise of community leaders and groups for wider reach.
- Choose diverse communication channels that ensure all community segments are reached effectively.
- Keep the community informed about progress, next steps and opportunities to contribute, closing the feedback loop with transparency.
- Address potential conflicts proactively, with designated team members skilled in conflict resolution.



Source: <https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/artists-of-change-with-teatro-vivo/>

Case Study

Community engagement by Teatro Vivo in Lewisham

Description: In 2022, Teatro Vivo, an immersive, site-specific theatre company known for transforming familiar spaces into magical storytelling venues, they were appointed as 'Artists of Change' for Lewisham Borough of Culture, embarked on a street theatre project to engage the Lewisham community in dialogue about reaching Net Zero carbon neutral targets by 2042. The project involved embedding theater practitioners within Lewisham's climate resilience team, conducting street conversations, and running workshops across all 19 wards. This immersive approach aimed to capture residents' thoughts on climate change and envision a 'Green Lewisham,' culminating in a 20-minute show, "Lewisham Speaks," performed in public spaces borough-wide.

Outcomes: The project successfully engaged over 5,000 Lewisham residents, fostering a meaningful dialogue between the community and the council. Through its innovative street theatre approach, Teatro Vivo captured the community's concerns and aspirations regarding climate action, emphasizing the desire for systematic change over individual guilt. The performance in council chambers and its incorporation into council induction processes signify a potent medium for conveying community sentiments to policymakers, potentially influencing future climate resilience strategies in Lewisham.

Link to Website: [Artists of Change with Teatro Vivo - Julie's Bicycle \(juliesbicycle.com\)](https://juliesbicycle.com)

Ongoing Process: Co-Evaluate



Description: Involve communities as evaluators to assess the success of the different elements and overall program. The evaluation is based on metrics and desired outcomes co-identified by the communities and local authorities.

The ongoing process to co-evaluate extracts lessons learnt, barriers to participation, and inclusion metrics to embed learnings across the three steps.

To do (Co-Design)

- Involve local communities in co-developing a set of metrics and methods for evaluating both the participatory process and the impact of the net zero projects.
- Create a co-evaluation group responsible for actioning this step.

To do (Co-Deliver)

- Set regular sessions to monitor progress of interventions and effects on communities.
- Create an evaluation plan by gathering existing data and research, formulate metrics against existing participatory processes and net zero interventions.
- Obtain lessons learnt by connecting with other local authorities who have delivered similar projects and incorporate this into your project delivery.
- Develop tailored outputs to communicate the evaluation results and lessons learned.

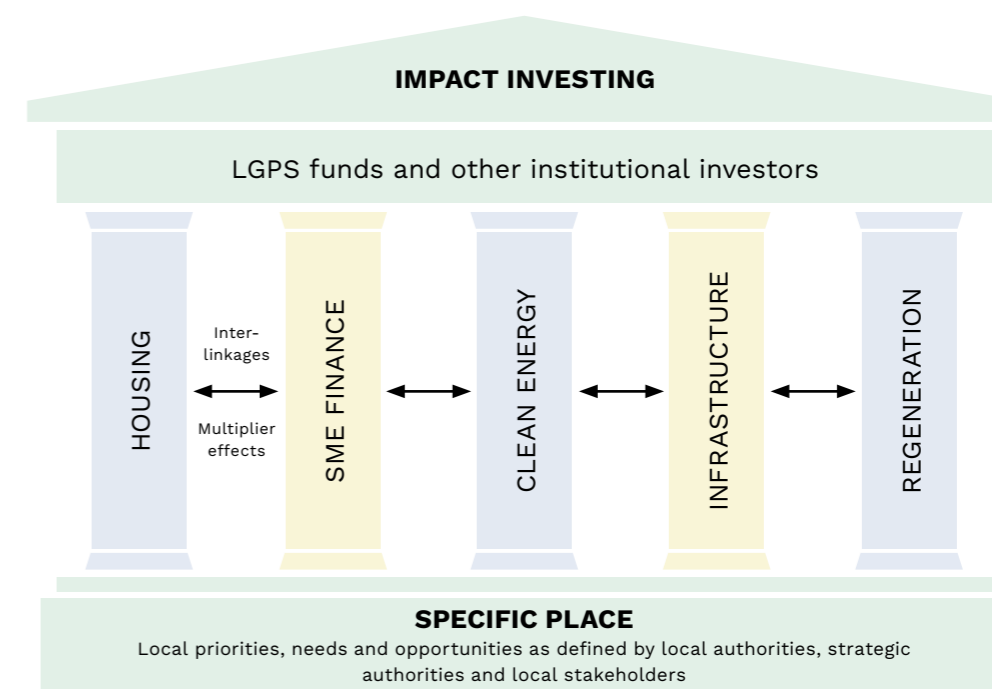
Good practice

- Embed evaluation across the lifecycle of the participatory process and net zero projects, to ensure lessons learnt are fed back and ways of working are iterated.
- Equip local authority staff and communities with skills and tools to evaluate project success.
- Build in time within project plans to account for change and ensure communities are part of decision-making.

Case Study

Identifying metrics for place-based impact investing

PBII Conceptual model



Place-based Impact Investing Conceptual Model

Description: In 2021, the Impact Investing Institute carried out a project to evaluate the effectiveness and geographic spread of place-based impact investing within the UK, focusing on Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds. It explored how to monitor and evaluate (M&E) practices to align investment objectives with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The methodology included analysing different spatial resolutions and engaging key stakeholders like local governments, fund managers and communities to shape investment directions.

Outcomes: The project resulted in five strategic categories of action: raising awareness, enhancing capacity and competency, promoting reporting on place-based impact, connecting investors with opportunities and scaling up institutional-grade investment funds. These actions aimed to facilitate a more inclusive and sustainable economic development across the UK, demonstrating the potential of place-based impact investing to contribute meaningfully to local resilience and prosperity.

Full report: <https://www.impactinvest.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Place-based-Impact-Investing-White-Paper-May-2021.pdf>

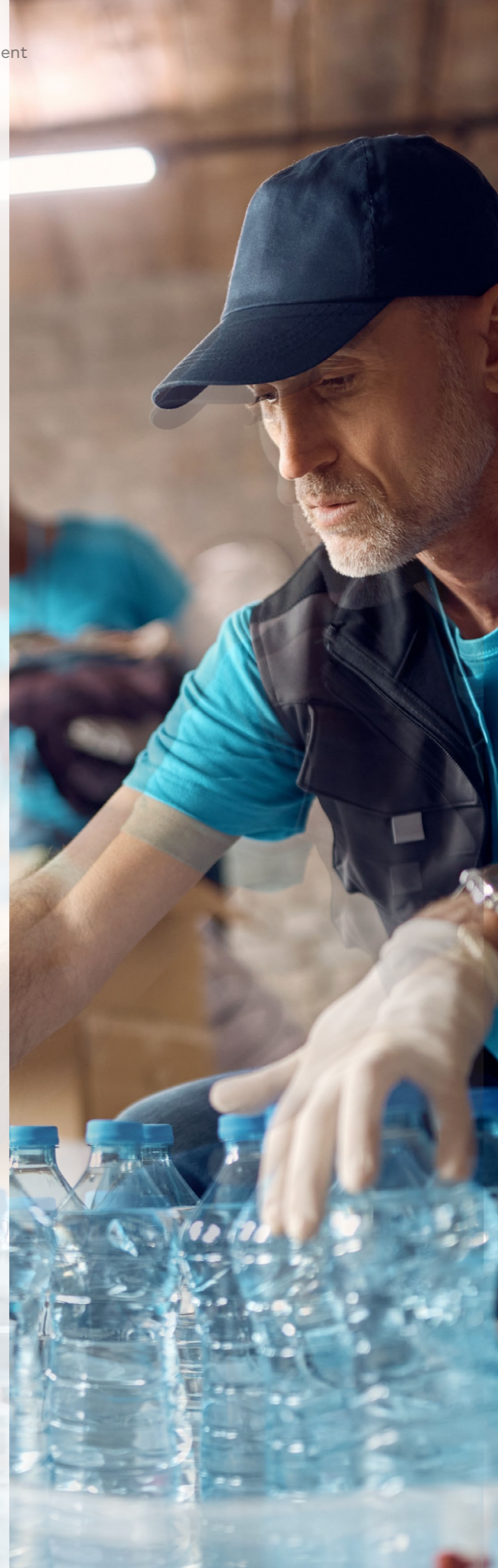
Stakeholders

Successful community engagement requires not only identifying and engaging your communities, but also a collaboration with a diverse array of stakeholders, each bringing unique perspectives, resources, and capacities.

Understanding these stakeholders is pivotal to navigate the complexities of community dynamics and ensure inclusive effective engagement.

We produced a list of stakeholder cards to help you think about who should be involved in the process, what they bring to the table and their potential level of involvement. You can adjust these cards according to your context and after your stakeholder mapping exercise, use the template provided in the supporting materials' section.

TIP: We encourage local authorities to broaden their considerations of potential stakeholders involved in the net zero projects. We have compiled a comprehensive list of stakeholder mapping strategies in the how to section, these are designed to provide the necessary tools and techniques to guarantee a thorough listing of stakeholders, enhancing their engagement process and ensuring a wide range of perspectives and needs considered in the project.



Human

Public Sector



Description
Parish councils, local authorities, and combined authorities, they are the instigators of the work, and the conveners. They bring with them the trust people have in them, and the knowledge of the local area, existing strategies, local governance, decision making processes and structures.

Purpose

- Reach net zero goals
- Secure funding for net zero projects
- Reduce backlash to net zero projects

Shared purpose
A just, desirable, viable and feasible transition to net zero

Concerns

- Cost of process
- Backlash to process
- Securing enough funds

Challenges

- Lack of time and resources
- Resistance to power sharing
- Political pressure
- Address the power imbalance

Stages involved

- Co-plan
- Co-design
- Co-deliver


Level of participation 

Level of leadership 

Level of ownership 

Value exchange
Policies, Local Authority procedures, rules & regulations, strategies, lived experience

Private Sector



Description
Local businesses from SMEs to large enterprises, local investors, and the bodies that represent them. They bring with them the knowledge of the local business ecosystem and how to navigate the large investor world.

Purpose

- Prosperous local area
- Incorporating their solutions into the portfolio of net zero projects

Shared purpose
A just, desirable, viable and feasible transition to net zero

Concerns


- Effect of net zero on their businesses
- Effect of net zero on the local area


Challenges


- Might be focused on a single solution
- Might want to sell their own solutions/ interests

Stages involved

- Co-plan
- Co-design
- Co-deliver

Level of participation 

Level of leadership 

Level of ownership 

Value exchange
Monetary governance, securing funding, strategic planning, managed resources, knowledge of local business needs, lived experience

Communities



Description
Diverse place based communities, community groups, community organisations, charities and academics. They bring with them knowledge of the local area, lived experiences and varied experiences from their fields of expertise.

Purpose

- A just net zero
- Local prosperity
- Reducing negative effects of transition to net zero
- Embedding local needs into net zero delivery

Concerns

- Negative effects on communities
- Not benefiting from the transition to net zero
- Having their say in the design and delivery of net zero projects

Challenges

- Level of trust in the public sector
- Level of trust in participatory processes
- Differing challenges, needs and priorities

Shared purpose
A just, desirable, viable and feasible transition to net zero

Stages involved

Co-plan

Co-design

Co-deliver


Level of participation 

Level of leadership 

Level of ownership 

Value exchange
Lived experience, varied knowledge, local needs, environmental needs, ancestral knowledge

Internal Investors (optional)



Description
External investors looking for profitable investments in net zero projects. They bring with them money, the knowledge of what matters to them, and how to shape an irresistible investment portfolio.

Purpose

- Invest in profitable net zero portfolios
- Decrease risk of investment

Concerns

- Profitability of investment
- Risk of investment

Challenges

- Resistance to power sharing
- Level of interest in sharing knowledge, and aiding the process
- Addressing the power imbalance


Shared purpose
A just, desirable, viable and feasible transition to net zero


Stages involved


Co-plan

Co-design

Co-deliver


Level of participation 

Level of leadership 

Level of ownership 

Value exchange
Shape of a good investment portfolio, metrics that matter to them

Designers (optional)



Description
Specialists in participatory and design methodologies, they can be freelancers, or work in design agencies, participation charities etc. Their participation in the process is optional and depends on an invitation from the local groups. They bring with them the knowledge of participatory and design processes and facilitation skills.

Purpose

- Reach net zero goals
- Secure funding for net zero projects
- Reduce backlash to net zero projects

Concerns

- Aligning everyone's needs and goals

Challenges

- Resistance to power sharing
- Effective ways of knowledge sharing
- Addressing the power imbalance










Shared purpose
A just, desirable, viable and feasible transition to net zero

Stages involved

Co-plan

Co-design

Co-deliver


Co-plan	Co-design	Co-deliver
Participation 	Participation 	Participation 
Leadership 	Leadership 	Leadership 
Ownership 	Ownership 	Ownership 

Note: Designers' role should be to help kickstart and run the initial phases of the participatory process, ensuring that the sustainability of the work after their role is done

Value exchange
Design methodologies, facilitation skills, governance design, participatory models, systems thinking

Non Human

Nature



Description
All local nature stakeholders that will be impacted by net zero interventions, it might be a butterfly or a newt that depends on a certain field, or peat marshes, forests and national parks. They bring with them ancient knowledge, different needs and challenging questions.

Purpose

- To thrive
- To be part of the decarbonisation journey
- Not be negatively impacted by net zero projects
- To have a voice on the decision table

Concerns

- Inability of humans to empathise with non-human actors
- Misrepresentation of their needs


Challenges


- Expressing their needs clearly
- Different needs and goals from human actors


Shared purpose
A just, desirable, viable and feasible transition to net zero

Stages involved

- Co-plan
- Co-design
- Co-deliver


Level of participation 

Level of leadership 

Level of ownership 

Value exchange
Systems thinking, local knowledge, lived experience, ancestral knowledge, natural recovery ways

Other non-human Stakeholders



Description
Any other non-human stakeholders from assets like buildings, to infrastructure like streets, energy masts, technology. They bring with them subtle messages and indicators.

Purpose

- Decarbonise
- Reduce their impact on the environment
- To have a voice on the decision table

Concerns

- Inability of humans to empathise with non-human actors
- Misrepresentation of their needs


Challenges


- Expressing their needs clearly
- Longevity and sustainability of their existence


Shared purpose
A just, desirable, viable and feasible transition to net zero

Stages involved

- Co-plan
- Co-design
- Co-deliver

Level of participation 

Level of leadership 

Level of ownership 

Value exchange
Use indicators, guiding messages, useful insights

Resources Needed: Human Resources

	Steps			Ongoing Processes	
	Co-Plan	Co-Design	Co-Deliver	Co-Communicate	Co-Evaluate
Local Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior management (sponsor & decision-maker) • Project managers (delivery and day-to-day) • Communications (marketing & events) • Climate Champions (optional) • Community engagement officer (optional) 				
Communities	A representative, inclusive and independent representation of your communities Community groups (e.g. housing associations, charities, religious/political groups, theatre groups etc...)				
External (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts in participatory processes • Experts in monitoring and evaluation • Investors 				
	Recruitment company	Experts in project design	Experts in project delivery	Local artists	

Resources Needed: Operational Costs

Co-Plan	Steps		Ongoing Processes	
	Co-Design	Co-Deliver	Co-Communicate	Co-Evaluate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant costs or appropriate reimbursement (e.g. participation, travel, accommodation) • External advisory services (e.g. experts, educators, artists, etc) • IT Platform for online events, meetings and discussions • In-person venue, dietary and accessibility requirements 				
Publication of project plan		Pop up stalls, check-ins		Publication of project findings
Allocation of budget, times, and capacity of each stakeholder	Design materials	Tracking invoices and expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital media presence • Avenues for dissemination 	

The How

In this section, we compiled a list of 'how to's for the steps in the guide, supported by a list of toolkits, playbooks and case studies that should facilitate your journey through the steps.

Setting the Scene

Before we begin with the how-to's for each step it's imperative to set the scene for co-creation.

To implement the guide we suggest a structure for co-creation borrowed and adapted from Peter Jones' and Kristel Von Ael's book on designing through complex systems.¹ The structure involves creating four different groups of stakeholders to participate in the different steps of the guide. These groups may be convened in person, online or a mixture of both, depending on needs and capacities.

Co-Plan

Catalyst

Up to 10 people

Description: What are we inviting people to do?

- Identify a small group of stakeholders to undertake the Co-plan step
- Design the first few co-plan workshops/ meetings

Corner Flags: What is not up for discussion?

- The end goal: Investible net zero projects
- The Co-design process (should be discussed in studios)

Playing Field: what are we co-creating?

- The Co-plan group (studio)
- The initial methods and logistics for the studio

Studio

Up to 30 people

Description: What are we inviting people to do?

- Undertake the Co-plan step

Corner Flags: What is not up for discussion

- The end goal: Investible net zero projects
- Designing the net zero projects

Playing Field: What are we co-creating?

- Refer to the Co-Plan step

Co-Design

Arena

Up to 100 people

Description: What are we inviting people to do?

- Identify a small group of stakeholders to undertake the Co-plan step
- Design the first few co-plan sessions

Corner Flags: What is not up for discussion?

- The end goal: Investible net zero projects
- The Co-design process (should be discussed in studios)

Playing Field: what are we co-creating?

- The Co-plan group (studio)
- The initial methods and logistics for the studio

¹ Van Ael, K. and Jones, P. (2022) Design Journeys through Complex Systems: Practice Tools for Systemic Design. BIS Publishers.

Co-Deliver

Studios
Up to 15 people

- Description:** What are we inviting people to do?
- Understand the Co-deliver step
 - Design the first few co-plan sessions
- Corner Flags:** What is not up for discussion?
- The end goal: Investible net zero projects
- Playing Field:** what are we co-creating?
Refer to the Co-deliver step

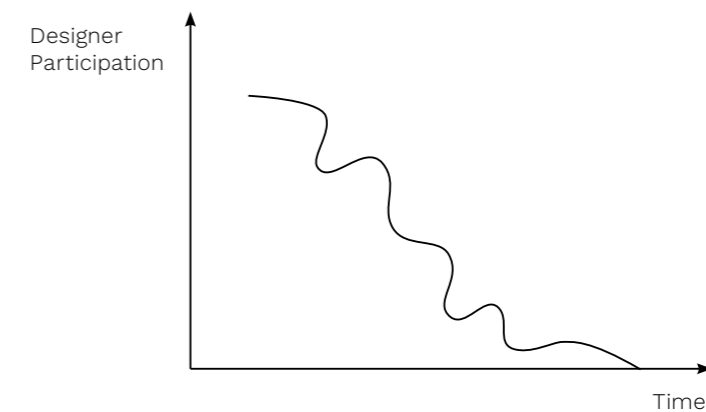
Furthermore, within the groups, we recommend adopting Victor Udoewa's Idea of radical participatory design (RPD)². This means that the lines between local authority staff, designers and communities are dissolved, so that the designer and local authority staff become community members, community members designers and facilitators and so on, delineating the usual hierarchal structures prevalent in participatory processes.

As this constitutes a major shift from the current state of doing things, we suggest a gradual move to full radical participatory design, where power relationships and hierarchies are continually checked and dissolved across the participatory process as follows:

Co-Communicate & Co-Evaluate

Studios
A large selection of the community

- Description:** What are we inviting people to do?
- Participate in the Co-communicate and Co-evalute steps
- A space for the wider community to listen and engage with the work being done



² Udoewa, V. (2022) 'An introduction to radical participatory design: decolonising participatory design processes', Design Science, 8, p. e31. doi:10.1017/dsj.2022.24.

Supporting Materials

Co-Plan

To kickstart the work, we recommend setting up a small catalyst group to identify and engage communities, as well as put the groundwork for the co-plan session, we recommend having a mixture of local authority staff, community group and local investors that you already have connections with.

This should lead to setting up a studio of up to 30 people to undertake the co-plan step. below are a few guiding points for successfully undertaking this step:

Identify and engage communities – Catalyst

It's important to acknowledge that any stakeholder mapping exercise is biased by those in the room, i.e. by your immediate connections and networks, to overcome that we recommend using, [evolutionary stakeholder discovery](#) which is an iterative stakeholder sampling process, developed to reduce biases and ensure a fair and inclusive selection. We have also included two other guides on stakeholder mapping. Refer to supporting materials 1-3.

Participatory research – Studio

To understand the context, it's important to do research with the community, participatory action research is one way you can do that. Refer to supporting materials 4-5 below.

A democratic lottery (sortition) is one method that can help with that, which is a tool for obtaining a representative sample of communities through random selection. Refer to supporting materials 12 and 13.

Participatory and co-design methods – Studio

There are many participatory methods you can use for the co-design step, but which one suits your needs? And which one is within means? We compiled a list of guides and methods for you. Refer to supporting materials 6-11.

Participants selection – Studio

For the Co-Design step we suggest creating a wider group of up to 100 people (Arena) to take part, but how do we invite such a large group, in an inclusive way?

Co-Plan		
No	Title	Description
Stakeholder mapping		
1	evolutionary stakeholder discovery	An iterative stakeholder sampling process designed by Peter Jones, Redesign Network.
2	Stakeholder mapping guide	A detailed guide on how to run stakeholder mapping by Tractivity.
3	Guide to actor mapping	This Guide introduces a the systematic way of doing stakeholder mapping, it has the added value of understanding the relationships between the different actors within the system and understand the blockages and opportunities. Actor Mapping from the FSG shared under the Creative Commons licence CC BY-ND 4.0 Deed Attribution-NoDerivs 4.0 International Creative Commons.
Participatory research		
4	Navigating participatory research: a visual guide	A visual guide by Durham University that will help you plan and deliver research in a participatory way.
5	Rent-Move-Repeat Participatory Action Research Approach	A report by Toynbee Hall on a participatory action research project, detailing their methodology step by step and their findings.
Participatory and co-design methods		
6	How do I plan a participatory process?	A guide how to plan a participatory process by Involve.
7	Participatory methods by Involve	An extensive list of participatory methods with the how, resources needed and some case studies by Involve
8	Playbook: Inclusive Community Engagement	A playbook by C40 Cities, Citi Foundation and ARUP intended to provide you with practical support to develop a comprehensive and effective communities' engagement strategy when undertaking climate action planning.
9	Britain talks climate	An evidence-based toolkit for engaging the British public on climate change by Climate Outreach and the European Climate Foundation. It provides strategic understanding of British public against a backdrop of increasing polarisation and identifies ways to engage across the community.
10	Collective Intelligence Design Playbook	A Playbook created by NESTA, offers a wide range of tools, tactics and methods to engage collective intelligence to solve societal challenges.
11	How Waltham Forest engaged its community to take climate action	A detailed case study from Waltham Forest Council, produced by Ashden and Friends of the Earth.
	Developing-a-Net-Zero-Citizens'-Assembly-for-Devon-final-report.pdf (exeter.ac.uk)	Developing a Net-Zero Assembly for Devon: a rapid review of best practices by the University of Exeter for Devon Climate Emergency Response Group and Devon Net Zero Task Force.
Participants Selection		
12	Democratic Lottery – A Guide to Sortition	A guide to democratic lotteries (sortition) by Graham Wetherall-Grujic'. This guide defines approaches to selection for Citizen Assemblies and helps to ensure transparency and maximise representation including disengaged communities.
13	South Yorkshire Citizens' Assembly Selection Process	A report on how democratic lottery was used to select participants for the South Yorkshire Citizen's Assembly shares experiences of the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA).

Co-Design

For this step, we list articles and guides to help with addressing power dynamics, creating community cohesion and facilitating participatory processes. Refer to supporting materials 1-5 below.

No	Title	Description
Addressing Power Dynamics		
1	Shifting the Powerplay in Co-design	A blog post by Lauren Weinstein – a US based designer – exploring different methods to address power dynamics in co-design workshops.
2	Design Processes and Tools as Oppression? Rethinking our Design Practice for more Just Design Outcomes	An article by Manuhua Barcham published in DISEÑA discussing ways of adjusting design practices for more just outcomes.
Community Cohesion		
3	Community cohesion and participation – a practical framework	A framework detailing how to achieve community cohesion through engagement activities by Involve. Involve's research evidence links between cohesion and public participation and provides practical guidance on maximising engagement with diversity of voices.
Facilitation		
4	Diversity in Facilitation: Mapping Differences in Deliberative Designs	A research article discussing different facilitation methods in deliberative mini publics by Dirk von Schneidmesser and team from an Institute of Advanced Sustainability Studies, Germany.
5	How do I facilitate a participatory process?	A guide on facilitating participatory processes by Involve, which will help to ensure improve or develop facilitation skills including managing conversations with challenging participants.
6	Toolkit-final.pdf (exeter.ac.uk)	Online public deliberation toolkit: a guidance for online methods for public engagement from Alice Moseley, Emily Reed, Rebecca Sandover and Patrick Devine-Wright, University of Exeter.

Co-Deliver

How do we go about participatory governance? What are the main elements, and what does that look like for local authorities? Please refer to the supporting materials below to get answers for these questions and more.

No	Title	Description
Participatory Governance		
1	Participatory approach in Implementation	A guide for city practitioners on participatory approach in Implementation, by the Urbact III Programme, funded by the EU ERDF.
2	Co-Management Models	A complimentary document to the guide above, detailing different co-management (co-delivery) models from the Urbact, also funded by the EU ERDF.
3	Participatory Governance Toolkit	A Toolkit for participatory governance, by Civicus including guidance on budgeting, participatory monitoring, evaluation and public oversight.
4	Beyond Engagement and Participation: User and Community Coproduction of Public Services	A paper by Tony Bovaird at University of Birmingham on user and community coproduction of public services, with a diverse set of case studies.
5	Community Action Plans : An Approach to Place Based Strategic Planning	A myriad of case studies focusing on participatory budgeting, one of the elements in the co-deliver step.
6	What is a community council?	A place-based approach to strategic planning in Community Action Plans, by Scottish Community Alliance. It outlines an ideal process for community action which is impactful, affordable and accessible. This guide covers the process for governance and informs who would be key local players to co-deliver.
7	Brief overviews of experiences of Participatory Budgeting	A guide explaining the governance structure of community councils in Scotland. The website has many case studies and is managed by the Improvement Service on behalf of the Scottish Government.



Co-Communicate

A guide and a case study on co-communication

No	Title	Description
1	Participatory Communication – a Practical Guide	A guide on Participatory communication, by Thomas Tufte and Paolo Mefalopulos, the World Bank.
2	BARNET-ZERO	A dedicated website by Barnet Council to publish the results and artifacts produced from their net-zero community engagement, to get feedback and get people involved.

Co-Evaluate

How to evaluate with your communities.

No	Title	Description
1	Participatory Evaluation	Toolkit on participatory evaluation and when to use it, by Intrac.
2	Mapping alternative approaches to impact from co-produced research	A paper useful for rethinking of how we define impact for co-produced research from Durham University for the N8 Partnership.

Additional Case Studies

A few extra case studies.

Title	Description
Environmental Justice Measure, 2022	The EJM is a data tool created by Westminster Council to help measure how people are differently impacted by their environment and climate change. Even though not co-produced, this tool will help the council plan a just transition to Net-Zero, and empower citizens with the information they need.
BARNET-ZERO, May 2022	A dedicated website by Barnet council to publish the results and artifacts produced from their net-zero community engagement, to get feedback and get people involved.
Council for Disabled Children: Delivery of social care to disabled children in West Sussex	The council for disabled children co-produced a video and a leaflet with disabled children in West to improve the communication between young disabled people and social workers
Devon Climate Assembly Report, July 2021	Devon brought together 70 residents, carefully selected to represent the demographic characteristics of the region, to discuss and address some of the key challenges in how Devon is responding to the climate emergency.
Royal Docks Public Realm Design Guides, Community Engagement, 2021	The Royal Docks Enterprise Zone (RDEZ) initiative revitalizes London's docks by involving local communities in its transformation. Through continuous engagement, it strengthens community capacities and resilience, ensuring diverse input in developing a vibrant, unique area
Waltham Forest Community Engagement Strategy for Climate Action, 2022	Waltham Forest's 'Enjoy Waltham Forest' project conducted community engagement through surveys, workshops and participatory planning to align contentious urban changes with resident feedback.
Barnsley Community Energy Scheme, 2023	Barnsley's renewable energy project combats fuel poverty and supports community projects through solar installations in vulnerable households. A partnership with Energise Barnsley has reduced bills and CO2 emissions, funding neighbourhood improvements.
LILAC Mutual Ownership Society, Leeds, 2013	LILAC, the UK's first Mutual Home Ownership Society in Leeds, emphasizes sustainable living through community-led housing. Engaging 50 residents, it fosters low-impact, affordable living, utilizing natural materials and cooperative governance.
How Do I Set Up a Citizens' Assembly, Involve	Estimated costs and timelines to set up a citizens' assembly, by Involve
Fostering impact: An investor guide for engaging communities in place-based impact investing	A guide by Impact Investing Institute and Involve UK detailing the importance and benefit of community engagement to investors. It includes a plethora of codesign methodologies that you can use for inspiration.
Delivering a place-based just transition in industrial clusters	Description: a guide produced by Hui-Ling Lai, and Patrick Devine-Wright from the University of Exeter, and others, focusing on community engagement for net zero in industrial communities where technologies like CCUS and Hydrogen will be deployed.



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