

Top Tips for Inclusive Engagement

Owning land or buildings is an exciting step for a community group. As you move forward with your plans for ownership, it is important to involve everyone.

This document helps community groups consider how they engage with their local community and get ideas for improvement.

This Top Tips was produced by Govanhill Baths and Community Land Scotland. First, Community Land Scotland gives key considerations. Then Govanhill Baths explain what they've achieved and how they work to involve everyone.

We always welcome feedback. Let us know if this document is useful and what your most important considerations are to engage with everyone.



**COMMUNITY
OWNERSHIP
HUB**
GLASGOW AND CLYDE VALLEY



Where to start?!

In engaging with everyone who lives in a local area remember to:

- Be clear about your plans.
- Give opportunities to influence outcomes, and explain how you've taken comments on board.
- Treat everyone with respect.

Inclusive Community Engagement

8 steps to make your engagement as inclusive as possible:

Quick inclusivity tips:

- Be welcoming.
- Be open to new ideas and be ready to make changes.
- Work with others and bring in new perspectives

1

Are your engagement plans clear?

Start by making a plan

What are you engaging about? Who are you engaging with? How are you going to do it? How long will it take? Have you checked the [National Standards for Community Engagement](#)?

2

Deepen your understanding of your area



What is needed?

What is needed locally which your project can help to address?



Who is in your area?

Who might be particularly interested in your project or plan?

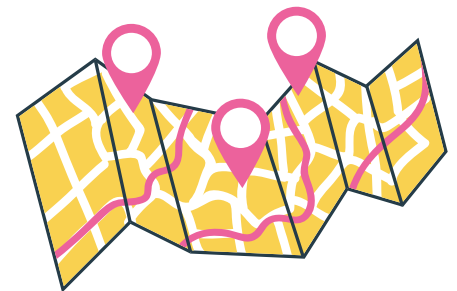
Who lives in your area but might be missed by your communications? For example, are young people and old people involved?

3

Are you working with others?

Is anyone already working on a similar project you can team up with, or learn from?

Build partnerships with other community groups, local businesses, community hubs, charities, and statutory services. Start by talking about what is needed in the local area. Establish relationships where local organisations can work closely together.

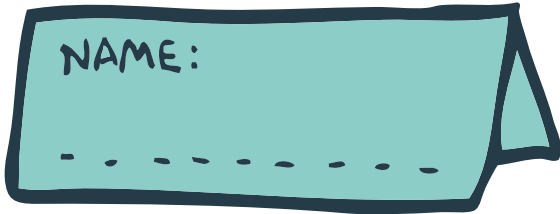


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How are you going to communicate? Could this include more people with a few changes?

Language

Is the language you're using easy to understand?
Can you ask people what language and names they'd like to use?



Ways to communicate

Are you providing information in different formats such as written and spoken? Can you subtitle, provide translators, or use text to speech software?

How are you going to reach out to those without digital access? Does your digital engagement cover more than one social media platform?

Representation

Are people of different genders, ethnicity, age and ability visible throughout your work in language and imagery?

Is your language neutral or are you making assumptions about gender (and activities)?

Can you hold meetings at different times, to accommodate different personal schedules?



5

Supporting your community to be involved

* Can you pay for travel or childcare for volunteers? What about a fee for speakers?

* Are there training, education or work opportunities you could include in your project?

6

In person events

Can everyone access your event easily?

Do you need people with different language skills?

Is there a need to consider different ways of interacting? For example, can you provide a quiet space for people who are sensitive to loud crowded areas? Can children come?

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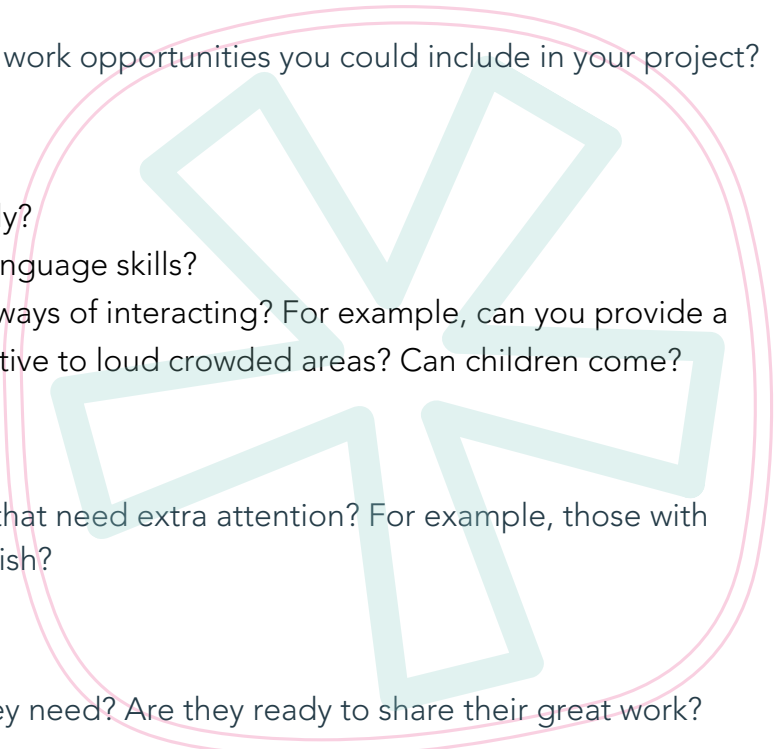
Intersections

Are there any combinations of traits that need extra attention? For example, those with caring duties and less fluency in English?

8

Supporting your Team

Does your team have all the tools they need? Are they ready to share their great work?



The Perspective of Govanhill Baths

Govanhill Baths Community Trust was born from a community-led campaign to save Govanhill Baths from closure back in 2001. The community, refusing to lose this important resource, occupied the Baths for 141 days. The longest occupation of a public building in British history. Local people from many different backgrounds were inspired to come together to save their pool. It was this act of unity that saved Govanhill Baths for future generations to use and enjoy. The people of Govanhill will swim again because a community stood together to protect what it knew it could not lose; and because of this solidarity won the fight to save it! This is why 2021 was a landmark year for us, with Govanhill Baths coming into community ownership once and for all. After twenty years, we are proud to say that work to turn it into a new wellbeing centre is now well underway.

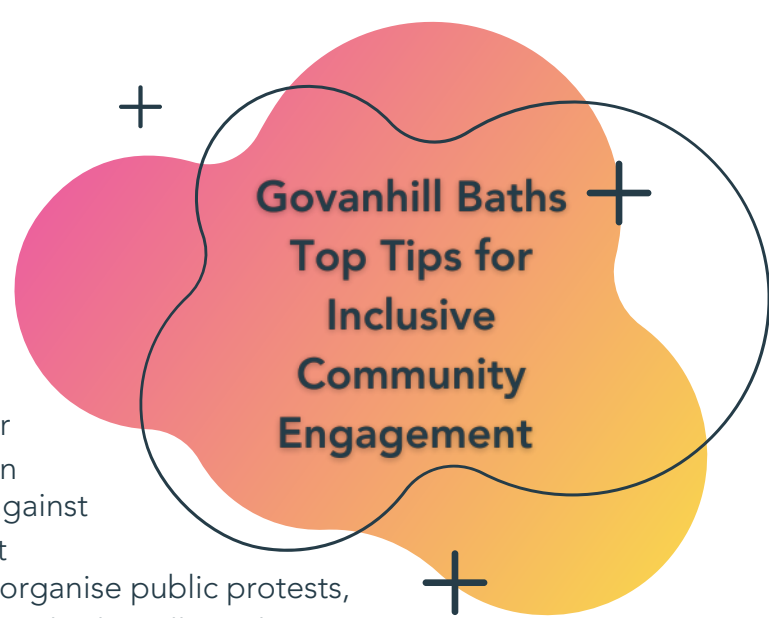
The 'Save Our Pool' campaign showed how important a role Govanhill Baths had played in the cultivation of community spirit and pride. What was clear to everyone fighting to reopen the Baths was that a community had real power to make a difference when it worked together. At GBCT, we aim to make Govanhill a more welcoming and inclusive place by building upon the unity at the heart of the campaign. With Govanhill being one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse areas in Scotland, increasing community involvement of marginalised communities relies on our ability to make people feel that they are valued. We do this by creating opportunities which celebrate diversity and that bring people together. As we all have different starting points, we've had to ensure that our projects are easy to reach for everyone who needs them. This has meant identifying and working to remove the barriers which have historically kept people from having access to resources and services which could improve their wellbeing and their quality of life.

We believe that no matter your background, origin, ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality: we all belong here. This community is ours and we all have a stake in it. Govanhill Baths has always been a place that has brought people from all walks of life together and made them feel welcome. It will be that again. The people of Govanhill can count on us to listen and to take what they say seriously so that the new Wellbeing Centre will serve the needs of this vibrant and diverse community; making it a happier, healthier, and more fulfilling place for everyone to live.



1 **Activism** **'Occupy, Occupy, Occupy!'**

Community ownership of Govanhill Baths is a testament to what people can do when they stand together. From the picket line to the present day, local activism has been essential to achieving wider inclusion of the community in our work. We stand in solidarity with campaigns around anti-racism and against prejudice to create a culture of action to stamp out discrimination. Using a bottom – up approach, we organise public protests, talks and events with other campaigners for change. This has allowed us to work more closely with marginalised communities to build a more equal and fairer society for us all. Every year we support key dates such as International Roma Day, International Women’s Day, and Trans Visibility Day; to name only a few. We believe that to engage successfully with diverse communities we have to show that we are on their side. For people to have confidence in us, they need to know that when they make a stand against any form of discrimination, they have allies. They are not standing alone; we are with them.



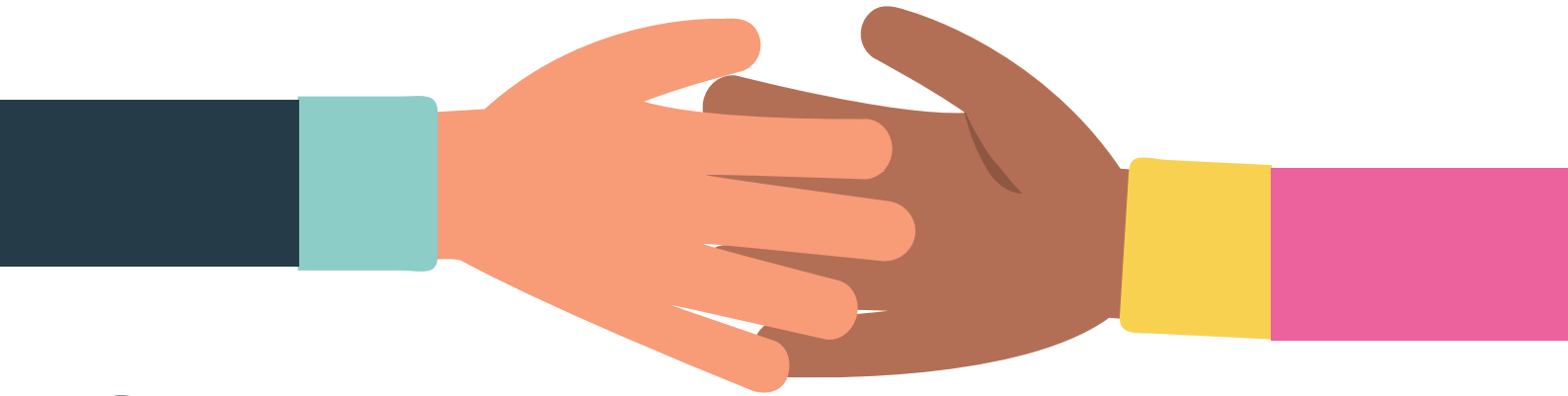
2 **'Nothing About me Without Me'**

'Nothing about me without me' is our general approach to engagement. We co-produce plans with the community so that the programme for the new Wellbeing Centre will be shaped by the people it will serve. We have developed a Heritage Learning and Outreach programme to maximise participation through direct engagement with local people, schools, and families. When we engage personally through one – to – one discussion we are able to listen to what matters most to people and create a space where people feel they can express, in their own words, what they would like to see become part of the activity plan for the new Wellbeing centre. We've found that this is a great way for people to feel involved in the Baths refurbishment and has meant more people have joined the conversation about what its purposes will be. There are many ways that we engage directly: organising free and accessible public workshops, hosting stalls in public places and attending wider events taking place in the community. We use social media to keep the community informed about the work we are doing and the impact we are having locally. As well as this, we publish an annual report to feedback our progress. This is a vital part of being accountable to the community and means we can demonstrate how we have responded to what we have heard.

3

Building United Fronts

GBCT has a long and proven track record of building coalitions to overcome barriers that stand in the way of wider inclusion. These united fronts have helped us tackle issues such as food poverty, inequality, and racism. We have also joined a number of local steering groups to share knowledge, resources and improve co-ordination with other grassroots organisations to achieve these common goals. In 2020, we established a Community Action programme to ensure funding was secured to build capacity and confidence within marginalised communities to self-organise and run their own groups and events with our support. Our partnerships with local organisations such as Friends of Romano Lav, Unity Sisters and the Somali Association continue to be strengthened by clear aims agreed by all involved. These partnerships promote diversity and harness the valuable skills and expertise of members of those communities themselves who have made Govanhill their home. The Community Action Programme was set up to empower marginalised communities to play a more prominent role and contribute to their local area in the ways that they saw fit and on their own terms.



4

Opportunities for Connection

We continue to provide an ongoing programme of wellbeing activities to connect with the most vulnerable in our community. We offer a wide range of activities so that there's something for everyone. This gives people a chance to form strong ties through attending high quality arts and wellbeing. We offer a wide range of activities so that there's something for everyone. This gives people a chance to form strong ties through attending high quality arts and wellbeing workshops where they can meet their neighbours and learn new things together. Wellbeing group meet-ups are held in easy to access spaces in local venues which bring people with different histories, cultures, and languages together to support each other. Our activities have helped forge friendships which challenge an 'us and them' mentality and break down stigmas. All workshops and classes are open, welcoming, and free to attend so that cost is no barrier to participation. Our aim is to offer reassurance that everyone has the same rights to a happy and healthy life; and that our focus is on mitigating any factors which prevent that.

"I like the fact that it is a friendly group everybody makes it easy to fit in and everybody supports each other. I like going to meet ups and doing activities. For a long time, I was stuck in the Govanhill area not doing anything. Sometimes feeling alone, so the group has helped with that..."

- Crosspoint, Wellbeing Group Participant

5

Being Informed

Our ability to challenge inequality is dependent on how informed we are about the issues that affect people in their everyday lives. Taking time to learn about the ways that poverty and prejudice work against integration allows us to tailor our projects to promote wider inclusion. Last year, we took part in training on the Third Sector's Role in reducing health inequalities to better grasp what local services were available to vulnerable groups. This has enabled us to signpost people to the relevant services when they turn to us for help. From our experience, not knowing where people can seek culturally appropriate support causes a breakdown in trust and leads to a situation of disengagement. We also took part in diversity and inclusion training to think about the ingrained attitudes and negative behaviours that are rooted in society and how we can work together to challenge the status quo.

6

Think creatively

Cultural activism is a powerful tool to bind a community together. You can create wider community involvement through activities, events, and public art. At GBCT we believe art has to be there for everyone to see, access and enjoy. Creativity can be used to show how each our lives are made more interesting and colourful because of our differences and not in spite of them. With this in mind, we invest resources in local artists and creative projects to support the rich and varied cultural communities that live in Govanhill. We use the streets, public buildings, and local parks as sites to embed clear messages of allyship and belonging. An example of this is GBCT's annual International Festival and Carnival; an 11-day free event celebrating diversity and culture. Every year it is attended by thousands of people from all over Scotland. In 2020, our GBCT Arts programme worked with dozens of partners and over 80 local creatives to continue to offer people the chance to share their personal stories and histories with the wider community through music, art, performance, and poetry. The festival creates space for communities to find common ground for connection, discussion, and reflection. It focuses on inspiring curiosity and creating opportunities for us all to learn more about the cultural life of our local area and feel more connected to the people who we share the community and our lives with.

"I believe it is a unifying experience to have an accessible, free event that showcases Govanhill's rich cultural offerings and talents. It makes me proud to live here..."

- Govanhill Street Music Festival Musician.



7

Empowerment through Employment

Meaningful inclusion of marginalised communities requires serious considerations about promoting equality and diversity through employment. Job opportunities are a great way to increase participation and confidence from within communities that have historically been excluded from having a say in how their local area is run. At GBCT we are committed to supporting the skills development of local volunteers, and when possible, to offer them paid work with us. This enables people to take on bigger and more ambitious projects in their area. As an organisation, we're always looking to further diversify and become more inclusive through offering paid roles to people with protected characteristics when and where we can. We feel strongly that people should be paid for their contributions and their time and that this emphasises the value that we place on the work that has been done and the skills involved. We know that assets that stay in the community can generate income that can be put back into the area. Employing people to run assets and projects in the community means they can be more involved in the regeneration of their area in a meaningful way while also improving their standard of living.



This document has been co-produced by Govanhill Baths and The Community Ownership Hub: Glasgow and The Clyde Valley, a project of Community Land Scotland. If you are interested in understanding more about inclusive community engagement or if you have any feedback, please feel free to get in touch.



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