# Norfolk Island Community Engagement Framework: A guide for the Department working in partnership with the community

**The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development**

**Change log**

- April 2019: Initial draft developed for co-design with the Norfolk Island community

- May 2019: Final draft in development

- September 2019: Updated Department name. Published on website.

# Introduction



**Purpose of this document**

The Community Engagement Framework (the Framework) is a guide for all community engagement conducted on behalf of the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities (the Department) on matters that apply to Norfolk Island.

All staff in the Division will need to familiarise themselves with this Framework before undertaking any community engagement with Norfolk Island. For the Norfolk Island community, it outlines the Department's approach to community engagement.

**What is community engagement?**

Community engagement is any activity that helps to inform, listen to or encourage more active participation with the community through different means to connect and create ideas together to deliver outcomes.

**Connection to other frameworks**

This Framework is intended to complement existing frameworks and strategies on community engagement that are in use by the Norfolk Island Regional Council and other Departments. As a practical resource, it should be applied alongside and in alignment with other engagement plans and frameworks that apply to particular programs of work. It is the responsibility of each project team to determine how the Framework applies in their context.

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*The Framework has four sections:*

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1. **The Context** This section outlines what the community told us about the way the Department has engaged with them in the recent past, what the community values, and how we might work together for mutual benefit in the future.

2. **Our Vision** The second section details a shared vision between the Department and Norfolk Island for how the community would like to be engaged. The principles are the shared values we hold with the Norfolk Island community and the mindset we will demonstrate when engaging

with them. The commitments are the standard for engaging the Norfolk Island community that we aspire to achieve.

3. **A Framework for Community Engagement on Norfolk Island** The third section provides a shared language and a shared approach for engaging with the Norfolk Island community. The framework blends best practice in community engagement with practical learnings to meet the Norfolk Island cultural context. This section introduces the engagement spectrum (inform, listen, connect, create), how to decide your level of engagement and provides a step-by-step process to undertake your engagement.

4. **Practical steps to Improve Engagement** The last section is a useful resource to the staff engaging with the Norfolk Island community, including lessons learnt from past engagements, and advice on how to tailor engagement methods to the context and culture of the Norfolk Island community. This section is not, however, an exhaustive repository of community engagement knowledge and should not be the only resource considered when preparing to engage on the island.

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*How this framework was developed*

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The Community Engagement Framework was developed between January and May 2019, through a process of co-creation with the Norfolk Island community.

The work was carried out by a project team consisting of Department staff based on the mainland, Department staff based on Norfolk Island and ThinkPlace design consultants who spent fifteen days conducting an array of engagement activities with the community on Norfolk Island over two full-week visits.

**Visits to Norfolk Island**

The first visit in February was focused on understanding the experience and the perspective of Norfolk Islanders on how the department engages in the community.

The second visit in April focused on a) reflecting back insights from the first visit to ensure that the community had been heard, and b) inviting people into our team to co-design the framework itself.

In particular, the vision, the principles, commitments and engagement approaches have all benefitted from the feedback we received from the community during the second visit.

**Community contribution**

Contents of the framework are thanks to the contribution of 18 interviewees, 30 focus groups participants, 40 workshop attendees, as well as the 36 people who spoke with us on the street, at pop up events, or dropped in to see what we were making at NI Connect.

We received 11 submissions through email and invited the community to share their current experience of engagement on an online platform.

The ideas wall let people comment anonymously and was visited more than 700 times, with around 500 registering as unique site views. 98 comments were left on the ideas wall, and the online survey received 127 submissions from people in the Norfolk Island community.

From the survey results, around three quarters of site visitors were living on Norfolk Island, while one quarter were from the broader Norfolk Island community living or working off the island.

More details about what the team heard from the community is available in the Emerging Insights report below.

# Section 1: The Context

The Department observed an opportunity to move beyond traditional methods of engaging with the Norfolk Island community. This opportunity has enabled us to take a more open and human-centred approach and find solutions that will work for the Norfolk Island community.

We acknowledge there have been some negative experiences of community engagement on Norfolk Island. Some members of the community have felt disengaged, dissatisfied and disappointed in decision making about government service delivery and their inability to have a say about important topics. Some members of the community have also expressed a view that the lack of engagement has led to inefficient and ineffective processes, projects and decision making.

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*"We're over-consulted. People vanish. We want to see action."*

*- Community member*

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**Emerging Insights Report**

## Our approach

The intent of ThinkPlace's week-long natural system engagement on Norfolk Island during 17-22 February 2019 was to gain a clearer understanding of how to engage the Norfolk Island community.

The findings from this discovery research phase will inform the next phase, which involves co-designing and testing the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities' Community Engagement Framework with the community.

Our approach focused on discovering more about the following key areas:

- the different cohorts within the community and their current engagement with government

- the community's culture, sense of identity, value and concerns

- opportunities and ideas for creative and culturally appropriate methods of engagement

We conducted a mix of explorative structured and more informal engagement activities as qualitative research.

The aim was to experience a wide range of engagement activities to help inform which approaches are suited to what community issues.



## How did we engage?

This is an overview of the activities we conducted on Norfolk Island with the community, as well as the activity we received either through email or the website.

We aimed to capture a range of perspectives from the Norfolk Island community via digital channels and through shorter engagements.

We also sought to dig deeper through longer one to two-hour engagements in focus groups and in-depth interviews.

| On island | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 Drop in sessions | 10 Conversations at 2 pop-up stalls | 6 Informal interviews | 12 Meet and greets |
| 4 Communications pieces* | 30 Focus group attendees | 13 In-depth interviews | 4 Meetings observed |

* Newsletter advertisement, postcard flyer and radio interviews

The total number of people we engaged through various activities on island, via email and the website: **581**

| Digital | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 Email submissions | 495 Visitors to the website* | 98 Comments* | 127 Survey responses* |

* As at 1 March, 2019. Total site visits: 761. Unique contributors: 68. Average time on site: 12 minutes



Photos from activities during focus groups and comments on the digital engagement platform.

## Emerging insights at a glance

We brought together researchers and observers from the field to reflect on their research notes and experiences.
We synthesised what we heard and saw and drew out converging themes, diverging insights and potential areas that need further exploration.
The following are the key emerging insights and these are explored further over the next few pages.

We **didn't feel respected** during the reform changes. We **felt a loss** of control and we **feel uneasy because we don't know** what will happen to us.

We hear a lot of different information and it's **difficult to separate fact from fiction**. Trust has broken down and some of the louder voices are **intimidating**.

Norfolk Island's geography and history makes it the **unique place** we know and love. **Respect our culture** and **acknowledge and involve our local expertise**.

We are tired of consultation **without any action**. We want to **have a say** in our future. **Work together** with us for the **benefit of this community**.

We want to **know what the vision and plan is** and **be involved** in any changes. Help us **navigate the bureaucratic system** and understand how it works.

Make sure messages are **easy to understand** and emphasise what it **means to the community**. Start conversations **early and across multiple channels**.

**1.** We didn't feel respected during the reform changes. We felt a loss of control and we feel uneasy because we don't know what will happen to us.

The community overall was dissatisfied with how the initial reform changes were implemented.

Some felt a loss of control and we heard some did not think DIRDC was respectful to the Norfolk Island community.

Some members of the community thinks the Australian government has an ulterior motive to govern Norfolk Island.

The community feels that they are kept in the dark about the changes to happen on Norfolk Island and this makes them feel uneasy.

Most want to see a change in DIRDC's approach to the reform and acknowledge that previously the process did not go well.

Members of the community want to understand how and why decisions are made in regards to changes on Norfolk Island.



"In the past we've been shafted. That's the stuff that happens all the time to people on the island here"

"We need to see a shift in the thinking in DIRDC"

"I'm hurt, not respected and I've been lied to."

"What does Australia want with Norfolk Island?"

"We saw that Australia can say sorry and it didn't crumble."

How might we improve communications to better inform the community about key changes?

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**2.** We hear a lot of different information and it's difficult to separate fact from fiction. Trust has broken down and some of the louder voices are intimidating.

Differing opinions have caused many divisions on Norfolk Island within family structures, community groups and amongst friends.

Some members of the community prefer not to voice their opinions because of the negativity or because they fear intimidation and hostility from opposing perspectives.

When there is little or no communications from the government, misinformation on what the government is doing fills the void.

It is difficult for the community to know whether these are rumours or facts. This adds to the distrust of the government amongst some members of the community.



I HIDE IN IMPORTED ROCK

"There are elements in the community and they are against each other."

"The bully boys get away with it. There aren't many of them but they're a problem."

"I received a highly abusive email with some legally defamatory things said against some one else."

"People are beaten into submission" [reluctant to keep sharing feedback]

"We can't respond so therefore it's true."

How might we empower all voices on Norfolk Island?

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**3.** Norfolk Island's geography and history makes it the unique place we know and love. Respect our culture and acknowledge and involve our local expertise.

Norfolk Island faces unique challenges because of its geographic remoteness and relatively small population size.

The community was heavily involved in many aspects of the island in the past and hold knowledge about the local context.

There is a sense of pride within the community and reform changes need to acknowledge their past efforts.

There are passionate members of the community looking to help progress changes in Norfolk Island.



"There is a strong sense of ownership over the island."

"I don't want to lose my identity."

"Train people up. There are incredibly talented people here."

"We're a dot in the Pacific. There needs to be considerations for this."

"I want the new generation growing up loving Norfolk."

"We are experts in where we live. Official experts need to listen."

"[Norfolk Islanders] are intelligent, articulate people. They can design something that works."

How might we make changes while respecting their culture and leveraging local knowledge?

**4.** We are tired of consultation without any action. We want to have a say in our future. Work together with us for the benefit of this community.

The community is constantly consulted on different issues but does not receive feedback or see action from these activities.

They want decisions to be made with them and be involved with the changes that will shape the future of Norfolk Island.

There is a lack of trust in their relationship with government and this takes time to develop.

For sustainable development, it is crucial to leverage the local DIRDC team, build up local capability and partner with local leaders in the community.



"Talk with us. Involve us and the decision is ours"

"Give us just one or two people to work with."

"Isn't it good to have trusted locals involved"

"Just get on with it and do it"

"I see consultants come and go. I think why are you getting other consultants to do the same job? What in that report didn't you like?"

"We need a level playing field not the Department looks after the Norfolk and this is how it is"

"There's a need to invest in the capability around governance and systems"

How might we establish local partnerships and work with the strengths of the community?

**5.** We want to know what the vision and plan is and be involved in any changes. Help us navigate the bureaucratic system and understand how it works.

The community wants to be informed of the vision and plan for reform changes in Norfolk Island and understand when and why changes are happening.

Norfolk Island had a different system of governance and many members of the community are unfamiliar with the new system.

The involvement from multi-levels of government adds to the complexity. The community perceives it as a fragmented system in which they have no representation.

The community wants timely updates on the reform process and better clarity of the bureaucratic system.



"The Department needs a plan to communicate what it is we're doing."

"Give us assurance that you have a plan. Show us the way forward"

"Focus on communications, companies, child welfare, criminal law and consumer protection."

"We get things many change but keep us updated as to progress"

"The way it is is ridiculous. We need to sort out the political situation"

"They need time to understand the system and we need to translate"

How might we clarify and communicate the plan and pathways within the system?

**6.** Make sure messages are easy to understand and emphasise what it means to the community. Start conversations early and across multiple channels.

Effective communication is fundamental to building a trusted relationship between government and the community.

Messages directly from the Department needs to be clear and consistent.

Discussions around key community issues should begin early. Emphasis should be placed on how it will impact the community.

The community receives information through a variety of channels, including the radio, newsletter, emails and letter box drops.

Also on Norfolk Island, more often than not, information goes around through word-of-mouth (dem tull).



"Don't dumb it down. Just make it clear"

"There's not a lot of 'what's in it for you?' in the messaging. It makes sense to me but why? What are the benefits?"

"Tell them what you're going to tell them. Tell them. Tell them what you told them."

"People don't like things sprung on them"

"Not hard to get your message out on the island. Radio. Paper. Class. Email list. Join community things. Keep doing the same thing. The message is the tricky bit."

How might we ensure the community knows what the government is doing on Norfolk Island?

**What the community said they value:**

- Inclusion in decision making and respect for the community's depth of understanding;

- Their language and history, especially the heritage in Kingston and Arthurs Vale Historic Area (KAVHA);

- Culture and traditions, such as Bounty Day, island dancing and funeral days;

- Their island home including the beaches, the biodiversity and the Norfolk Island pines.

**The people of Norfolk Island take pride in:**

- Being resourceful, sustainable and the self-sufficiency in looking after their island and each other

- The deep inter-generational relationships and the respect for elders in the community

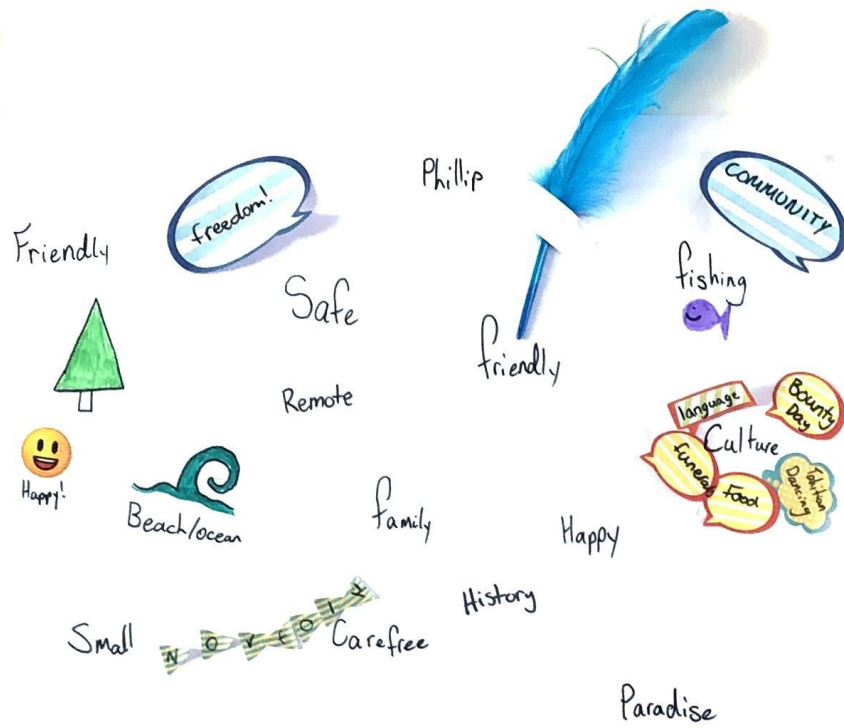- The decades of expertise and knowledge gained through decades of self-governance

*Posters were created by young leaders at the Norfolk Island Central School during a workshop on the Community Engagement Framework. They explain what they love about the island, and what makes it unique to live on Norfolk.*

Friendly

freedom!

Safe

Phillip

COMMUNITY

fishing

Remote

Happy!

Beach/ocean

Family

friendly

Happy

language

Bounty Day

Culture

funeral

food

Tahitian Dancing

Small Norfolk Carefree

History

Paradise

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N.I.C.S small school

NI

landscape

freedom

WHAT'S GREAT about

NORFOLK

ISLAND!?

traditional food

safe!

Sport clubs

LEARNERS

all of the nice beaches,

● Not far between places

● all of the traditions/languag

● All respecting elders

● Make-do with the resources
we have.
(fruit, many shops)

● Cultural dances and cooking

● We all know each other & each others
names, at school.

Supporting
local
food, business

● We learn our
traditional
language.

Own
radio station

feel safe because we know
everyone.

• freedom
when your 15 motorbike licence

- Freedom from a young age
- Culture/traditions
- Beaches
- Waving
- Natural Beauty
- Islander families
- Norfolk Pines
- Fishing
- People
- Isolation/remoteness
- Lack of pests/danger
- Ruins/history
- Chickens

- Language
- Holidays
- Tahitian dancing
- Foods (Pili, pies)
- Interactions

- endemic species
- reefes
- bird life

- no snakes
- no spiders w venom

- KHAVA
- Poleynisian

Mind map: What's great about Norfolk Island?

- closeness of communities
- language
- weaving
- Bounty Day
- Island dancing
- funeral
- strong culture & tradition
- early ties/existence.
- sense of community
- freedom
- sport
- safe
- food
- beach!
- small school
- landscape

Culture

Traditions
e.g. bounty day, foundation day, thanks giving, funerals, reeve making.
Food e.g coconut bread, tahitian fish.

Belonging

Friends & family
close community

School is engaging & close.
- always trying to include culture.

Language
- lingo
- keeping it alive.

Recycling
- prinky
- boomerang
- sorting rubbish

History

funerals
· when prosetion drives past, everyone (islanders) stop & pay respect, also don't drive / pull over untill past.
· Reeve making all the woman gather in the morning and make them.

freedom

the land
→ emily bay / BEACHES
- history of land
- historic landmarks

Supporting the local economy
- farmers
- buisnesses
- familys.

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*"You can't change the past. It's happened. What's the direction from here?"*

*- Community member*

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**Moving forward**

The Department acknowledges that the community have had some negative experiences of engaging with government, and this framework is a genuine effort to establish a collaborative relationship grounded in trust and respect.

This framework can be used to inform collaborative engagement methods with the community, as well as to understand how the Department and the community can work together to deliver mutually-beneficial outcomes.

The following vision encapsulates the intent of all community engagement on Norfolk Island by the Department.



## Section 2: Our vision

*Working together respectfully towards a sustainable future for Norfolk Island.*

The Department and the community are both highly invested in the long-term sustainability of Norfolk Island. This view of sustainability is all-encompassing. It applies to the economy, environment, heritage, population, education, healthcare, infrastructure, governance, and government services.

In the future, the relationship between community and the Department will also be sustainable -- built on a solid foundation of respect and understanding of each others' strengths and differences. By engaging meaningfully, the community and the Department have more opportunities to work together to identify and enact sustainable solutions that recognise the experience, expertise and resourcefulness of the Norfolk Island community.

The vision is long-term, and a lot of work is needed to establish a foundation of trust and respect. This effort is worthwhile, because the best solutions and the best outcomes for Norfolk Island will be achieved by working together with an empowered community.

**New ways of doing things**

For the development of this Framework, the project team was open to new ways of doing things and worked together...

throughout the project to design something that is effective in the real world and will work for real people.

This Framework aims to provide you with some knowledge and shared experiences.

Use this as a basis to undertake the work needed to better understand the community to help deliver outcomes for the Norfolk Island community and the Department.

Be prepared to explore and experiment with different approaches.

Work with different people to get feedback and iterate the approach when needed.

# Our Principles

Our commitment to improve community engagement on Norfolk Island means the Department will adhere to the following principles.These haven been drafted and refined with the community. They are the shared values that we hold, and the mindset will we adopt when engaging on Norfolk Island.

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*Inclusive and respectful*

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Everyone on Norfolk Island will have opportunities to voice their views, including to raise issues for consideration and discussion.

It is important to treat everyone with dignity and encourage mutual respect for all. Listen and try to understand differing perspectives and views from within the community.

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*Transparent and responsive*

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Be as open and genuine throughout the engagement process as possible. It is important to maintain accountability and ensure the community has access to information, support and services provided by the government.

Establish acceptable and clear expectations and time frames for the engagement process. Ensure communication isa two-way process and give people enough time to think and respond.

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*Purposeful and practical*

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All engagement activities are planned and align to the Department's strategic approach to community engagement as detailed in this Framework. It is important to learn from past efforts and continuously improve engagement approaches and methods.

*Trusting and responsible*

Trust needs to be mutual, built together over time and is essential for effective community engagement.

We all have responsibility for making Norfolk Island the best community it can be and there needs to be a willingness to work with others towards common goals.

## Our commitments

The commitments below have been developed with the community. They outline the pillars for positive engagement, and will be the foundations of developing a trusting and collaborative relationship between the community and the Department over time.

## Commitment 1

*We will engage the community in ways that are culturally and contextually appropriate to Norfolk Island.*

**What success looks like:**

- People in the Department are aware of the unique culture and history of Norfolk Island, that is separate while also connected to the culture and history of Australia.

- Engagement approaches consider the context and culture of Norfolk Island.

- The Department has oversight on how community engagement occurs, and is able to adjust where feasible when members of the community raise concerns around engagement approaches or staff behaviour.

*For example...*

Staff are aware of the need to work within the Norfolk Island context

The Department has the capability to resolve complaints about culturally inappropriate behaviour

## Commitment 2

*We will proactively keep the community informed about what we are doing and how they can be involved.*

**What success looks like:**

- The ongoing plan and forward strategy is communicated to the public about what we can when we can. When there are changes, the community is notified.

- The Department is aware of all engagement opportunities that are happening within a 30 day time horizon.

- The Department regularly employs a mix of communication channels to ensure that important messages are heard by the community.

- All projects that engage with the Norfolk Island community have planned activities to communicate the outcomes of the project back to people who participated in the engagement.

*For example...*

The community is aware of engagement opportunities in a timely fashion

The community participates in engagement opportunities

The community is aware of final reports or project outcomes

The Department utilises a mix of engagement channels

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## Commitment 3

*We will continuously improve our capability to engage with the community.*

**What success looks like:**

- The Department has a clear line of sight of its capability and capacity to conduct community engagement.

- Engagement efforts are co-ordinated across the Department and duplication is minimised.

- The Department invests in growing the capability of its staff to conduct community engagement.

- The Department leverages the expertise and the potential of the team of island based staff and recognises that they are also a part of the community.

- The Department can acknowledge to the community when past approaches have not succeeded.

*For example...*

The Department invests in capability development for staff to engage the Norfolk Island community effectively

Utilise on-island team where possible

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## Commitment 4

*We will increase collaboration  and partnership on Norfolk Island.*

**What success looks like:**

- The Department, as appropriate, hosts collaborative and co-design sessions with members of the community that are mutually inclusive and respectful.

- The Department actively encourages all voices to participate in collaborative co-design sessions, and is able to attract a cross-section of views.

- The Department provides enough time for the community to provide comments and participate in engagement activities.

- The Department has a plan to share key advisory roles and decision-making authority with trusted voices in the community on certain projects.
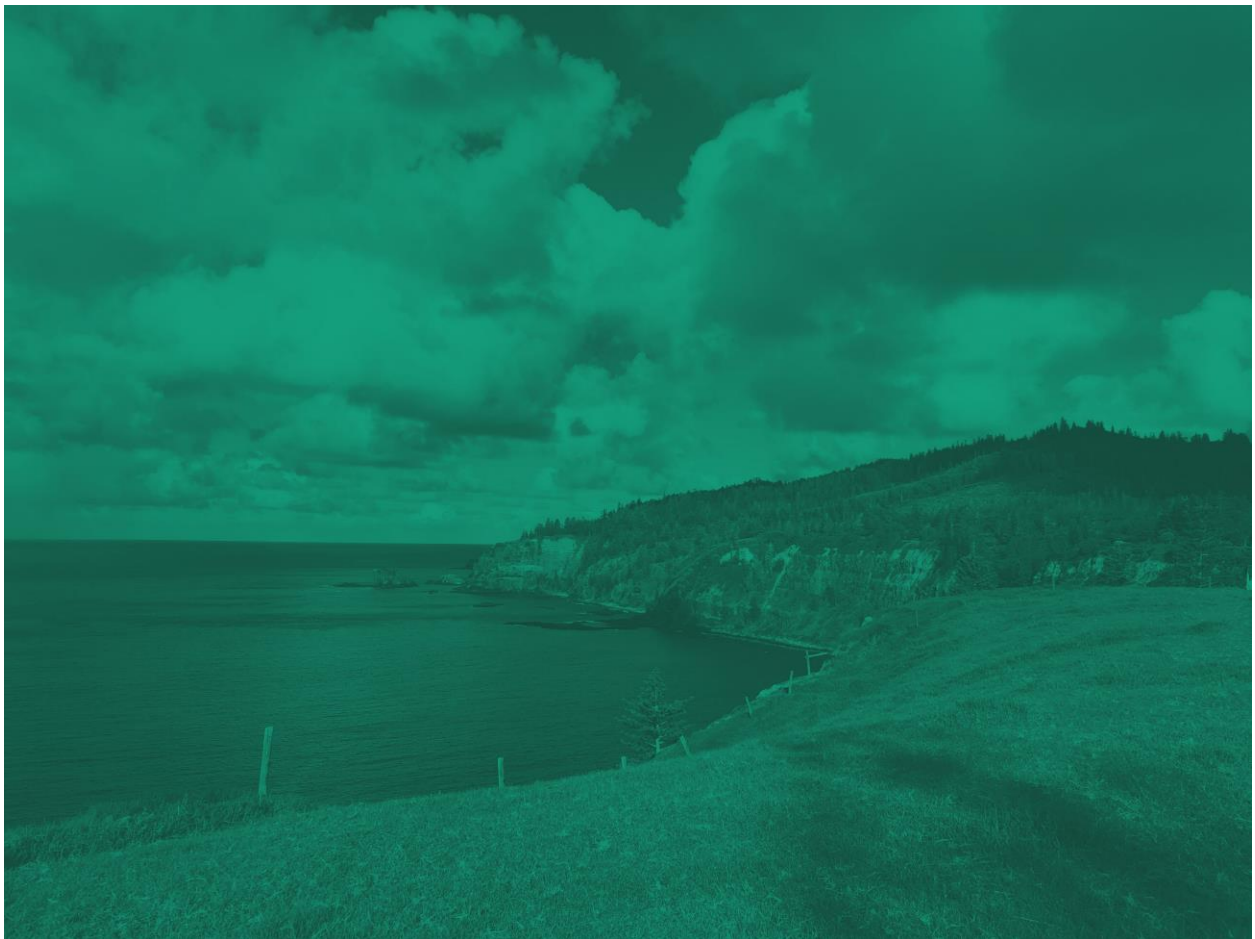
*For example...*

The community has increased trust in the Department

The community participates in engagement opportunities

The Department offers opportunities to partner and collaborate with the community

The Department reduces duplication of engagement topics

## **Section 3:** Community Engagement Framework for Norfolk Island



*"Public participation is any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and uses public input to make sustainable decisions."*

*- International Association for Public Participation*

The **Engagement Spectrum** is based on the International Association for Public Participation Spectrum, which has also provided the foundation for the Norfolk Island Regional Council's Community Engagement Strategy. It provides a common language for the different levels of community engagement.

The **Engagement Model** is a key enabler for how we achieve our vision for working together with the Norfolk Island community. It sets the standard for how we will engage with the community, and outlines the steps we will take to ensure that our community engagement activities are sensible, practical and tailored to the context and culture of Norfolk Island.

The **Engagement Matrix** is an aid to deciding the appropriate form of engagement, by considering the impact to the community, and the ability for the community to be involved in the final decisions. Finally, the Engagement Model provides a step-by-step guide for undertaking high quality community engagement.

**Things to note**

Don't plan engagement activities on significant days on Norfolk Island, such as Bounty Day or Thanksgiving.

It is also considered disrespectful to engage or call on funeral days.

"Don't forget it's a beautiful place, some people don't wear shoes." Feel free to leave your suit at home.

For more information on cultural practices on Norfolk Island and other topics, visit [My Norfolk Island guide](#).

## The Engagement Spectrum



It is important to note that the spectrum does not describe a linear process of informing to creating (from left to right) nor is creating with the community the goal of every issue.

The aim is to decide on the appropriate level of engagement for the community issue you are addressing.

Depending on the complexity of the issue and the progress of the project, you may need to increase or decrease the level of engagement over time.
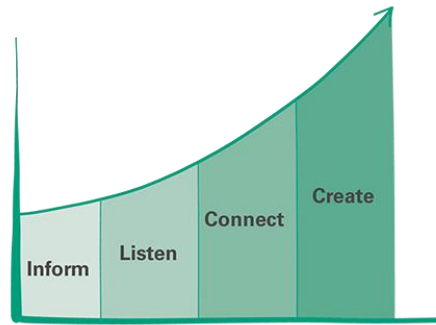
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**The community is provided with factual information that helps them understand the issue or decision and the impact.**

Informing the community means providing them with objective information, keeping them updated on what's happening, and keeping communication transparent and responsive. It goes beyond just providing information, and instead focuses on providing a broader and deeper understanding of the issue or decision.

*For example, the community is kept up to date with the progress of a particular project.*



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*Listen to the community*

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**The community provides feedback on the  issue or decision.**

The community know what they need and what will work. Having open communication channels for input and feedback allows the community to be active in the decision-making. Keeping these channels open and creating a feedback loop allows the community to have a voice on issues and decisions that directly affect them. Listening does not always mean the government can do what the community advises, however it is important part of the process to make the best informed decisions.

*For example, the P&C committee conducted a survey to take the pulse of how the community felt about the service transition in education. The survey received more than 100 responses, and the P&C provided a summary report on the community attitudes about how education services were provided on the island.*



*Connect with the community*

**The community is involved early in the decision-making process and public concerns are addressed.**

Building trust requires a deeper connection with the community. Without trust, there is little chance of success. Connecting means reaching out early, making an effort to understand and engage, and learning from community members. This is usually not a one-off activity, rather an approach which will be ongoing to ensure a deeper level of dialogue to connect on a topic.

*For example, an advisory committee, which represents a cross-section of perspectives from the wider community, was established to discuss key projects in the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area (KAVHA).*

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**Drawing from their knowledge and expertise, the community collaborates with the Department in decision-making and co-creating solutions.**

Engaging with the community is about sharing the tools and information to work in partnership to deliver an outcome. It's evident that there is a broad range of skills and expertise among community members, and a desire for the community to draw from their own knowledge pool. Taking a co-creation approach allows the Department and community to create sustainable and impactful solutions.

*For example, as part of the process of developing this Framework, the project team worked with groups of community members to write sections of the Framework.*



## Our engagement model

The geographic isolation of Norfolk Island presents a number of logistical challenges when planning your engagement and connecting with the community. Having a clear purpose, testing your messages internally and keeping people informed can increase the likelihood of achieving your program goals.

*"This is a unique place. This is not a suburb in Australia."*

- Community member

**Before you start**

Before thinking about how to design an approach to engagement on a particular issue, you will need to consider the goals and objectives of the engagement. Think about what you are seeking from the community in regard to the issue.

Are you seeking their input into the design of a particular policy or program (connect with me), are you interested in what they think are the challenges and opportunities around something of importance to them and the best way to do something (listen to me), or are you letting them know about something that might be of interest or that they need to know (inform me)?

*"What the community can achieve is phenomenal."*

- Community member

Being very clear at the start will help you to clearly articulate what you are requesting from them and work out the best way to engage. It will also help the community understand what you are seeking and enable them to make informed decisions about how they will engage.

Our Engagement Model

1. Plan
2. Partner
3. Decide
4. Notify
5. Engage
6. Reflect

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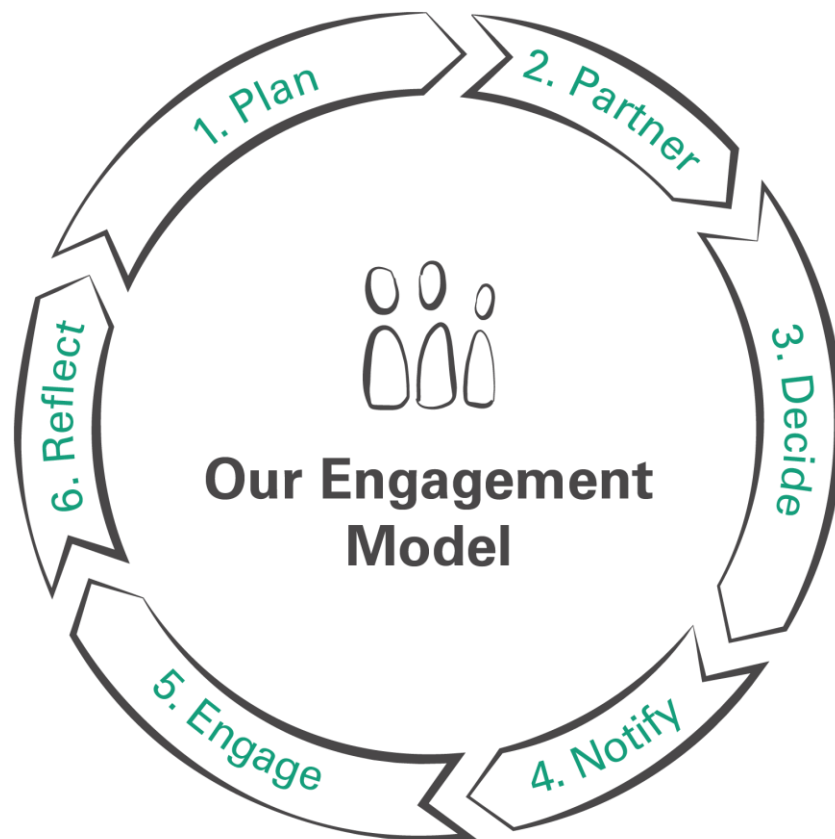
*1. Plan*

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- **Need** What is the need behind this engagement? What is the driver?

- **Purpose** What is the purpose of this engagement? Is it to inform, listen or connect with the community? What are the goals/objectives of the engagement? What are the questions that you are seeking to answer through this engagement?

- **Audience/impacted groups/interested parties** Who are the audiences or potential participants of this engagement?

- **Sensitivities** What are the potential sensitivities of this engagement? Consider departmental or whole of government policies.

- **Opportunities** What opportunities exist for the Department to engage with individuals and community groups on this topic?

- **Key messages** What are the key messages that you want to share during this engagement? Consider which things are open for discussion and which things are not? Have agreed positions on key messages prior to beginning.

- **Stakeholders** Who else is interested in this engagement and/or has a stake in the outcome? e.g. other government agencies, service providers, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs).

- **Links** Are there links to other engagement activities that may be related to or dependent on this activity? Consider doing joint activities to maximise impact and reduce costs and effort. Also consider timing of other events and activities that may have an impact on participation in yours.

- **Resources** What do you need to undertake this engagement? who do you need? what specialist skills and responsibilities are required?

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## *2. Partner*

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*"Collaboration, Co-operation and Partnership"* **-** Mayor Robin Adams

Connect with others who have engaged with the Norfolk Island community to gain insights and lessons to shape your engagement approach and get the level of engagement right.

Connecting early with departmental staff on Norfolk Island will demonstrate a willingness to listen, a desire to engage meaningfully, and recognise the expertise and experience of people in the community. Sharing your engagement plans early with the Department's on-island team will ensure alignment with other planned engagements.

Being connected to the on-island team will help inform you of any issues or sensitivities that might arise in your engagement, and help to refine key messages so that they will reach the people they need to reach.

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## *3. Decide*

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This will require careful planning and execution, including being clear about the purpose of engagement and the boundaries. This framework lays out two dimensions for determining the level of engagement required.

See **'Engagement Matrix'** below for more detail on how to determine the impact to the community and the level of community participation.

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## *4. Notify*

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**Promote Engagement**

Once your key messages have been tested internally (with people who understand the various positions of the community) get your message out. Use multiple channels and don't assume that everyone will receive your message immediately.Set up channels for feedback and questions during the term of the engagement and make sure that you have sufficient resources during that time to be responsive.

## 5. Engage

**Take Action**

Put your plan into action while making sure that you allow sufficient time for people to provide their considered thoughts and inputs.

Remaining flexible and responsive means you can change directions if you need to during the activity. Sometimes people will make suggestions that are worth putting to the broader group or ask questions that are of interest to others in the conversation.

- Make it easy for people to be part of the conversation.

- Be clear in your messaging, what is it you are asking them to do?

- Be responsive. People need to know that you are listening even if you can not give them everything they want. If people make inappropriate comments in an online forum, take the comments down.

## 6. Reflect

**Feed back to participants and the community**

Once your program of engagement has concluded, it is vital that you provide feedback to the participants and the broader community on the outcomes of the engagement, regardless of the project outcome.

Explaining how their input and suggestions were considered and included in the final product (policy, program) builds trust with the community and means they are more likely to engage next time.

This is essential to building strong relationships with the community. There may be occasions where you will have to explain why particular suggestions were not taken up and explaining these are as important, if not more so, than where they are taken up.

**Evaluate and learn**

As part of the ongoing process of building trust between the community and the Department, it is important to understand where your approach has been successful or not.

There are two components to this: seeking feedback from participants on your approach, and understanding whether the desired outcomes were actually delivered.

Before you engage, think about what methods and indicators you will use to measure these things. For the first part it may be a basic online survey.

## Engagement Matrix



When do I need to inform the community? When can I create with the community? What are the risks of over engaging or not engaging?

The Engagement Matrix below is an aid to decision making. It is based on the ISO31000 Risk Matrix, which uses the consequences and likelihood of a risk occurring to understand how much effort should be applied to mitigating the risk.

It helps you to understand how much effort should be applied to community engagement, so you can mitigate against the risk of under-engaging and over-engaging.

The two dimensions of the Engagement Matrix are

- **Impact to the community** What are the likely impacts on the sustainability of the island? Think about how your topic impacts the environment, economy and traditions of the community. How will the change be felt by the different groups within the community? What is the history of the topic in the community and the willingness to accept change?

- **Level of community participation** Practically speaking, how much decision making power can be shared with the community? How much will change based on community input? Who holds ultimate responsibility for success? How many parties share an interest in the outcome and are those interests the same?  What is the capacity of the island to contribute to decision making and deliberations?

The dimensions provide a way for thinking through the factors that should be taken into account when making your decision. A higher score in the decision making tool indicates that a deeper level of engagement is desirable.

It is important to note that the community's perspective on the dimensions may differ from yours and your approach may change over the engagement process.

In the development of your community engagement plan, test your ideas with the on-island team to help determine level of community participation and impact to the community.

**Co-design in project teams**

Co-design is an approach to designing that actively engages multiple and diverse perspectives in the design process.

In co-design, project success comes from all participants having equal power and the opportunity to contribute.

Representatives from four broad groups are required:

- Voice of intent

- Voice of design

- Voice of experience

- Voice of expertise

Consider forming a small project team of people who bring a depth of knowledge in different areas of relevant expertise and experience to bear the project.

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*Determining impact to the community*

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| Term | Defintion |
|------|-----------|
| Negligible | The issue has a direct effect on a small number of people in the community, and a negligible effect on the sustainability of the community. |
| Low | The issue has a significant and direct impact on a small number of people in the community, or a measurable short-term effect on the sustainability of the community. |
| Moderate | The issue is likely to directly affect a large percentage of the community, or has the potential to have a long term effect on the sustainability of the community. |
| High | The issue is almost certain to have a long term affect on the sustainability of the community. The issue is almost certain to impact a large percentage of the community directly. There is a risk that the community will not be able to absorb the short-term affects of the change. |
| Significant | The issue will have a long term effect on the sustainability of the community. The issue will impact a large percentage of the community directly. The community may have difficulty adapting to the change in the short term. |

When considering the impact, think about how your topic may impact the sustainability of the island. Impact may not be overall positive or negative, but involve changes to the way things are done. When considering sustainability, think broadly about the economy, environment, society and culture. Culture includes (but is not limited to) language, rituals, symbols, artefacts, heritage, history and individual identity.

Also, when considering impact, think about the range of views in the community. It isn't always appropriate to think of the community as a whole, there are often very diverse opinions and views. What concerns have people in the community expressed? What issues have arisen in the past? How well is the community's position known?

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*Determining level of community participation*

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| Role | Defintion |
|---|---|
| Minimal | There is no scope for sharing decision-making authority with the Norfolk Island community due to legal constraints, or other significant constraints imposed on the program of work. |
| Minor | The community is invited to provide their views to ensure that programs are delivered in contextually appropriate ways to Norfolk Island. |
| Advisory role | The Norfolk Island community has the capability, capacity and authority to be a trusted advisor to decision makers on an issue or topic. |
| Significant advisory role | The Norfolk Island community is part of a formal advisory group that has delegated authority to explore an issue or topic. The determinations of the advisory group have significant weight to decision makers. |
| Formal decision-making authority | The Norfolk Island community is part of a decision-making group that has delegated authority to make final determinations on an issue or topic. The group is established within a legal framework. |

A principle of the way we engage with the community is to be Inclusive and Respectful. This means that all voices should be empowered to contribute.

Be clear on the role of the community to participate in the decision making on an issue. Over-engaging has the potential to result in people choosing not to participate, or the engagement feeling 'tokenistic'. Under-engaging may feel like our willingness to engage is not genuine.

The level of community participation may change over the course of the engagement process. For example, with increased trust and more partnerships with community groups, level of participation could increase.

## Impact to the community

| Level of community participation | Negligible | Low | Moderate | High | Significant |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Minimal | | | | | |
| Minor | | | | | |
| Advisory role | | | | | |
| Significant advisory role | | | | | |
| Formal decision-making authority | | | | | |

**Level of engagement**

- Inform
- Listen, then inform
- Listen, then connect
- Listen, connect and create

# Section 4: Practical steps to improve engagement



The table below outlines some of the different methods the Department can take when engaging with the community. While some methods are better suited to a particular approach (these are indicated in bold), they can be used across other approaches in a different way (i.e. a focus group is an ideal method to 'Listen' however, with a few alterations, it may also be used to 'Connect'). This is not an exhaustive list of methods and the approaches listed are not the only approaches you can use. As the department continuously improve our community engagement capability, teams will try, test and learn about new ways to engage with the Norfolk Island community.

| | Inform | Listen | Connect | Create |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Letterbox drop | ● | | | |
| Print media | ● | | | |
| Electronic media | ● | | | |
| Social media | ● | ○ | | |
| Issues paper | ● | | | |
| Information repository | ● | ○ | | |
| Survey | | ● | | |
| Written submission | | ● | | |
| Focus group | | ● | ○ | |
| Interview | | ● | ○ | |
| Advisory committee | | | ● | |
| Expert panel | ○ | | ● | |
| Workshop | | ○ | ○ | ● |
| Working group | | | | ● |

## Ways to inform

The community is provided with factual information that helps them understand the issue or decision and the impact.

Informing the community means providing them with objective information, keeping them updated on what's happening, and keeping communication transparent and responsive. It goes beyond just providing information, and instead focuses on providing a broader and deeper understanding of the issue or decision.

**Letterbox drop**

*What:* Fact sheets, flyers, newsletters, brochures

*Benefits:* Tailored and topic specific; wide coverage; accessible to everyone; people can keep (on their fridge) as a reminder

*Limitations:* Cost; paper waste


- Identify the key messages and think about what you want your audience to know and understand. For example, if it's an event, the key information is what, when, where, what's in it for me, and what do I have to do?

- Select the best way to present your material. Use words, drawings, diagrams to get your messages across. Make it clear and easy to read and think about the language and tone you are using.

- Include details of a website or email where people can get further information or ask questions. Encourage people to get in touch with their thoughts and concerns as this will let you know what follow up information you need to provide in subsequent communication pieces and at the event itself.

**Norfolk Island mail**

Some families share a mailbox

Some mailboxes indicate 'No Junk Mail' and residents may not receive communications via letterbox drops

Residents protest against the amount of information they receive by leaving unwanted mail beside the bin at the post office

Material should be easy to read and understand, use visuals and keep the message short


**Print media**

*What*: media releases, newspaper inserts, editorial articles, advertisements

*Benefits*: Wide coverage

*Limitations*: Not targeted and people may not read it (scatter gun approach)


- Identify the key messages and think about what you want your audience to know and understand.

- Check the deadlines for local publications and allow enough time for people to read and respond. If you are broadcasting an event, make sure it gets out at least two weeks before.

- Include details of a website or email where people can get further information or ask questions. Encourage people to get in touch with their thoughts and concerns as this will let you know what follow up information you need to provide in subsequent communication pieces.

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*"We need more than just media releases. We don't know where the truth is."*

*- Community member*

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**Electronic media**

*What*: radio announcements, website announcements, radio interviews

*Benefits*: Wide coverage, feels more personal, can be framed as an invitation to participate

*Limitations*: Not targeted (although can be if done at a specific time)

- Similar to print media, identify the key messages and think about what you want your audience to know and understand.

- Think about the time of day or program when your target audience is likely to be listening to the radio.

- Electronic media allows changes, updates and further information to be added as situations change.

- You will then be able to adapt your messages as you receive feedback.

**Local community radio**

Many in the community listen to the local radio and get their information through this channel

For example, residents hear updates of flight schedule on the radio

Radio announcements can be made right up until the event takes place

The radio station welcomes guests to join their morning program for an interview

Include details of a phone number or email where people can get further information or ask questions

_____

**Social media**

*What*: Online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube and LinkedIn allow for engagement in a relaxed and participatory manner

*Benefits*: Many community members already on social media platforms; allows the department to inform and gather information; can track engagement, directly engage with individuals, provide information quickly; wide coverage

*Limitations*: Excludes participation from those not online; requires staff to update information and engage online

- Research how community members use social media. Explore and use existing opportunities for contributing individual and group opinion on, or information about, specific issues.

- Keep social media channels well organised and up to date, including responses to community members.

- Keep track of engagement to evaluate how best to communicate with the community.

**Online engagement**

There is high engagement on social media within the community.

However, these are mostly closed groups...

and not an appropriate channel for the Department to use for communications with the community.

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**Issues or consultation paper**

*What*: Papers are often used in the legislation context to communicate on technically complex issues

*Benefits*: Provides explanation and technical information to a wide range of stakeholders

*Limitations*: Can be costly to produce; no way to know whether people read or understood information

- Prepare consultation papers and highlight the overarching issues and/or aims of the project.

- Publicise when papers are available and alert interested or affected community groups.

- Integrate this new information into other methods of providing information the community.

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**Information repository**

*What*: A "one stop shop" with information on community engagement activities and government services. This could take the form of a drop-in centre, website or a service desk.

*Benefits*: Brings together all the information community members need about the project, it can be a way to involve community members and gather input.

*Limitations*: Not targeted, it depends on community members being proactive, depends on someone keeping information up to date, time and cost to set up.

- The service should be informative and up to date.

- The community should be able to clearly see and understand the plan and encouraged to engage.

- Include a way to gather input and a system for feedback. It's  important that feedback is recognised and fed into the project deliver, and any concerns are addressed.

*"When I have a problem, I don't know who to go to."*

- Community member

## Ways to listen

The community provides feedback on the issue or decision.

The community know what they need and what will work. Having open communication channels for input and feedback allows the community to be active in the decision-making. Keeping these channels open and creating a feedback loop allows the community to have a voice on issues and decisions that directly affect them.

**Survey**

*What*: Paper surveys that are mailed out, online surveys

*Benefits*: Great way to get quantitative and qualitative feedback on an idea or issue, useful to sense check ideas, allows people who wouldn't otherwise engage to provide anonymous input

*Limitations*: If it is too long or not clear, people may not bother; possible privacy concerns

- Be clear about what you are seeking to find out with the survey.

- Make it clear what you are asking the participant to do right up front.

- Keep it short - you are more likely to get participation with fewer questions.

- Consider how you are going to provide feedback to people who have participated. People won't engage again if they don't see what happens with their input. Consider a summary report of findings.

**Things to note**

The community want to know the statistics that come out of surveys (i.e. how many responded)

Some community members said they receive a lot of surveys

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*"If you're going to do a survey, do it properly."* - Community member

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**Written submission**

*What*: Letter, short document or substantial paper outlining a response from a community group or member

*Benefits*: Allows community to have their say on an issue through a formal process; satisfies statutory or legal requirements; provides decision makers with detailed information from a range of perspectives

*Limitations*: Does not allow for discussion, requires time to write submission and this may discourage responses;  limited to written form

- Put out a call for submissions and proactively reach out to different community groups for responses to proposal. Make sure you have given people enough time to respond.

- Be open, flexible and transparent throughout the process. Provide clear submission criteria and contact details for the community to ask questions about the submission.

- Keep track of contact details and send out an acknowledgement that their submission has been received.

**Interview**

*What*: One-on-one interview

*Benefits*: Enables the interviewer to uncover deep contextual information and the interviewee's opinions on an issue; provides opportunities to really understand what it is important to them and encourages story telling about their experiences

*Limitations*: Not able to be extrapolated to make assumptions; private and personal information needs to be handled carefully and respectfully so that participants are not identified

- Think about how you are going to make the interviewee comfortable to talk about themselves and assure them that what they say will be kept confidential.

- Use active listening techniques to encourage sharing of personal stories.

- Think about a few key questions that you would like to explore with them, but don't be limited by these questions. Allow the conversation to flow.

*"Let the people know what is planned and proposed, not we've already decided what we will do but we might change the method based on your input."*

*- Community member*

**Focus group**

*What*: Small group discussions with a facilitator

*Benefits*: Provides opportunities to explore topics in more detail; enables sharing of more complex detail with participants and to dig deeper into issues; provides opportunities to 'spark' off others in the group; may be more comfortable for people who don't like speaking at larger gatherings

*Limitations*: May result in 'group think', where people are not willing to voice differing views to avoid disagreement within the group; not everyone will volunteer to participate and it may be difficult to have a representative sample

- Be clear about what you are trying to explore in the discussion.

- Identify and invite people to participate or allow people to nominate and then consider the composition of the group/s to create the best opportunity for success.

- While not being too prescriptive, think about the questions and prompt material to use to spark discussion.

- Design the session so there is time for individual reflection and contribution as well as group discussion.

- Be clear about the 'rules of engagement' and explain to people how it is going to work.

- Have at least two facilitators in the room - one to facilitate and one to capture the discussion.

- At the end of the session, do a quick wrap up of the key things to come out of it.

- Consider how you are going to provide feedback to people who have participated. People won't engage again if they don't see what happens with their input. Consider a summary report of findings.

---

*"Some people feel uncomfortable around others in open sessions"*

- Workshop participant and community member

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## Ways to connect

The community is involved early in the decision-making process and public concerns are addressed.

Building trust requires a deeper connection with the community. Without trust, there is little chance of success. Connecting means reaching out early, making an effort to understand and engage, and learning from community members.

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**Advisory committee**

*What*: Input from representatives of groups into planning and decision-making

*Benefits*: Allows a consistent group to be involved in decision-making and consultation processes; enables the Department to engage with a representative group; participants are able to gain an understanding of other perspectives leading toward agreed compromise and/or outcomes

*Limitations*: Potential for conflicting views on the committee or the committee may not be able to reflect the extent of views within the community; can become a reactive role rather than being action-based and empowered in decision-making

- Involve the committee early in the process as a key stakeholder group. Continue their involvement through establishing an open feedback and consultation channel.

- When organising meetings, ensure plenty of notice and the committee has been provided with all the required information.

- If there is specific information the committee can provide, make them aware of this well ahead of the meeting and give them time to gather it. This may involve them meeting with community groups to hear concerns, ideas etc.

- There needs to be a formal mechanism for advisory committees to feed directly into the decision making process, otherwise it may be tokenistic.

- The terms of reference and focus of the advisory committee need to be clearly defined.

**A note on connecting with community**

Connect with someone on the island before you go

Partner with community groups and have a continuous team working within the partnership

Be involved in the community as much as you can. Grab a coffee with someone or volunteer if you can

Connect with the on-island team. Try to plan these engagements a month in advance

Be mindful of how you engage. This is a chance to learn and listen.

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**Expert panel**

*What*: Interactive discussions with highly specialised input when required for a project

*Benefits*: Incorporates technical assistance into decision-making and planning process; potential to draw from deep expertise to ensure high quality projects are delivered

*Limitations*: Experts may not be experienced in working closely with the community and may not be faimiliar with specific community concerns; resource availability may be limited

- Before bringing the panel into the project, ask whether the technical skills and/or knowledge can be sourced from the community, or whether the panel can collaborate with existing groups or individuals on Norfolk Island.

- Ensure the panel has access to information about the community's knowledge and attitudes. Establish open communication channels between community members and the panel.

- Plan question/answer session for the community and expert panel to engage and provide information to each other. This can be an opportunity for community members to learn more about the project and develop deeper trust.

- The panel needs to be engaging, clear and inclusive in their communications.

**A note on experts and decision makers**

The community respect the knowledge of experts.

They would like to see the same level of respect for their local skills and knowledge.

The community values:

- A willingness to listen

- The community being brought along on the journey

- Less consultants

- Credible technical expertise

For example, invite someone with domain knowledge to inform the community about legislation changes.

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*"No one's done any research on what the local expertise is. Find out who's here. Don't just bring experts over"*

- Community member

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## Ways to create

Drawing from their knowledge and expertise, the community collaborates with the Department in decision-making and co-creating solutions.

Engaging with the community is about providing the tools and information to create their own pathway. There is a broad range of skills and expertise among community members and a desire for the community to draw from their own knowledge pool. Taking a co-creation approach enables the department and community to create sustainable and impactful solutions.

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*"We want to work with someone with the authority to make decisions"*

- Community member

*Workshops*

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**Workshops**

*What*: An informal meeting that may include presentations, exhibits, and interactive working groups

*Benefits*: Excellent method for discussions, idea generation, analysis of solutions, and gaining feedback; fostering community ownership in solving the problem; multi-stakeholder collaboration; engaging directly with community members and key stakeholders with differing views

*Limitations*: Needs availability of facilitators and technical expertise to be effective; needs engagement from community members

- Know how you plan to use public input before the workshop. Work out the intent, the key outcomes for the session, and who will be involved.

- Workshops are a chance to bring together a range of stakeholders. Send out invitations two weeks in advance and provide a clear message on why the workshop is being held and how they will be engaged.

- Begin by reviewing insights from focus groups, interviews etc. to provide some context for participants.

- Use warm-up activities to get participants in the right frame of mind for generating ideas and activate their creative thinking.

- The first half of the workshop should be about rapid brainstorming. This means setting a time-limit, generating ideas quickly, and feeding back to the group before repeating several times.

- The second half of the workshop is about prioritising ideas. This means developing ideas further and working out which ideas to take forward.

**A note on facilitation**

The facilitator encourages participants to actively build off each other's ideas

The facilitator may introduce other elements or challenges during the rapid brainstorming to get participants thinking from a different perspective

The facilitator and support team can engage with the small working groups during the workshop so each person is heard and valued

Visual scribing in the room is a great way to reflect back to people that they have been heard

It also helps people keep track of the conversation and demonstrates transparency and responsiveness to community input

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**Working Group**

*What*: A core project team made up of experts and representatives, formed to develop a specific product or policy recommendations.

*Benefits*: Provides a collaborative, action-based approach to addressing issues

*Limitations*: There may be conflicting interests and attitudes which inhibit a consensus being reached (this can be mitigated through establishing a clear intent and vision for the project)

- The core project team should be made up of people from different groups who can contribute different perspectives and ensure the project follows a co-design process. It is a consistent, core team of people working towards the same outcome. Those involved include:

1. Community members who can represent the differing needs, desires, and attitudes of the community.

2. Experts who understand what might be possible and what will be viable.

3. The person overseeing that the intent of the project is being carried through and the desired outcomes are being achieved.

4. The project manager or designer who is brokering the collaboration and driving the project forward.

- The working group uses information and insights to inform the direction of the project. They set activities, communicate and collaborate with stakeholders and community groups, and progress the project through to completion.

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*"Any community 'think tank' needs to be action-based."*

*- Community member*

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# Appendix

**Acknowledgements**

The project team would like to acknowledge and thank individuals who participated in the process for their time, expertise and collaboration in the development of this Framework.

In particular, we would like to acknowledge the invaluable contribution from:

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- • The Administrator for his guidance;

- • Mayor Robin Adams and Councillors of Norfolk Island Regional Council for their insights and experience with the community;

- • NI Connect, Governor's Lodge Resort Hotel, South Pacific Resort Hotel, Paradise Hotel, Castaway Norfolk Island and Norfolk Island Central School for hosting us;

- • Radio Norfolk for announcing details of engagement activities.

We would like to thank the community for their openness, especially the people who welcomed us to their homes.

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**Further reading**

My Norfolk Island Guide

DIRDC Legislation Updates

DIRDC Legislation Consultation Framework

IAP2 public participation spectrum

International Organization for Standardization

Norfolk Island Regional Council: *2018 Community Engagement Strategy*

Norfolk Island Community Engagement Project Digital Platform

The State of Victoria Department of Environment and Primary Industries: *Effective Engagement building relationships with community and other stakeholders, Book 3: The engagement toolkit*