

Appendix 1

BHCC Community Engagement Statement

Our Commitment

Brighton & Hove is a city where everyone should have fair, equitable, safe and accessible choices on how they participate and influence decision making on issues and challenges which matter to them.

- As a council, we are committed to ensuring that those who live and study, visit and work in the city have opportunities to shape council services, priorities, actions and decisions so we can better serve the city, provide best value for money, and make the greatest positive impact for communities.
- We are committed to ensuring that those who have taken the time to be involved feel confident that their views inform decisions and are used to improve our systems, policies, and practices.
- We use best practice, remove barriers to participation, and have clear standards to ensure our engagement is inclusive, safe, accessible and provides equal voice and opportunity.
- We work together as one council and share insights across our different services to improve our collective practice, learning from what our engagement and consultations tell us.

Representation of Different Voices

We are committed to sensitively and empathetically continuing to learn and better understand our diverse communities' requirements including but not exclusively Black & Racially Minoritised people, Disabled people (including visibly and non-visible disabled and D/deaf, blind, neurodivergent people), LGBTQIA+ and QTPOC, and those who may experience disabling and discriminatory outcomes like socio-economic status, literacy, and digital exclusion.

We undertake engagement that recognises the breadth and diversity of minoritised and excluded communities, and takes an intersectional approach, using positive action where necessary.

Our Engagement Approaches

We take a considered and nuance approach to engagement using a variety of methods, recognising one-size does not fill all.

To engage as many diverse people as possible we use different types of engagement:

Informing	Consulting	Involving	Collaborating / Co-Design	Co-production	Empowering
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents and communities are aware and informed through good communication and information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask for feedback on formal proposals and feedback how their input influenced decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working directly with diverse and representative groups to improve and advance service delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working together with residents and communities on all aspects of decision making and preferred solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service users and providers join-up to plan, design and decide best actions for services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate residents to hold the responsibility for the planning, design and decisions of services

Our Principles of Engagement

1. **Inclusive:** We centre accessibility, anti-racism, the social model of disability, equity, and intersectionality; recognising here is no 'one size fits all' approach to carrying out engagement.
2. **Communicative:** Our communication is two-way, timely, inclusive, and tailored to the needs of our residents using clear and jargon free language and providing translations and accessibility support as standard.
3. **Responsive:** We are a responsive Council learning from our interactions with residents and we'll be agile adapting our actions to the feedback we receive.

Our Standards of Engagement

Purpose:

- **Explain:** We clearly explain and communicate why we are engaging, how we are going to use input and be clear from the outset about the scope of influence, including legal and budget constraints and where final decisions will be made.
- **Involve:** We enable the participation of the widest diversity of residents and stakeholders, providing equal opportunity to contribute, especially for those from under-represented, marginalised, excluded, and seldom heard groups.
- **Include:** We actively identify the people and organisations that are most affected by the issue including those who are under or not represented in places/forums of voice and decision-making.

Planning:

- **Support:** We identify and remove actual and potential barriers to participation and provide support to overcome them.
- **Organise:** We plan and create engagement spaces that are meaningful, convenient, and accessible to the people whose views we are seeking while using the most appropriate and cost-effective mechanisms and methods to include them.
- **Work together:** We identify and collaborate with relevant stakeholders, partner organisations, council services and councillors; listening and working together effectively to achieve the aims of our engagement activity.

Review and Report:

- **Communicate:** We report back and keep people informed throughout the process and ask for feedback to improve future engagement activity. We share what people have told us, the decisions that have been made based on engagement feedback, and the actions we will take.
- **Practice:** We use engagement insights, data, and feedback to make informed decisions and take or change actions. We analyse our findings using established data standards and interpret fairly considering different views and lived experiences.
- **Assess:** We learn from and assess the impact of all engagement activity and use it to improve our future engagement practice and approach.

Graphic showing how our principles and standards of engagement operate:



