

Community & Stakeholder Engagement Strategy: A Public Guide





Introduction

Overview

The Land Development Agency (LDA) is a commercial, State-sponsored body established in 2018 to coordinate land within State control for more optimal uses where appropriate, with a focus on the provision of housing.



The Agency is positioned to become the State's biggest builder of new homes within the next five years. Progress on meeting our home building targets will continue to ramp up over the coming months and years.

This document, 'Community & Stakeholder Engagement Strategy: A Public Guide' is intended to demonstrate the LDA ethos and commitment to developing communities and placemaking. It sets out the purpose, role, and function of the LDA and provides information to the public on when and how they can engage with the Agency on its projects.

Purpose of the LDA

The LDA's purpose is to maximise the supply of affordable and social homes on public land in a financially sustainable manner, supporting the creation of thriving communities and delivering ongoing positive social impact. Its overall vision is to provide affordable and social housing to meet the needs of the nation, delivering a social return from the development and renewal of communities and a stable national capacity to support sustainable, inclusive, and vibrant communities.



Strategic Theme 1:

Expedite Housing Delivery

To **accelerate** the **pace, scale,** and **availability** of **affordable** and social housing in Ireland.



Strategic Theme 2:

Build Collaboration

To **unlock challenges** and **drive results** through **collaboration** with delivery partners, suppliers, and other stakeholders involved in developing and managing affordable and social homes across Ireland.



Strategic Theme 3:

Find Ways

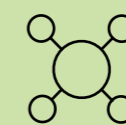
To foster innovation and enhance capability in the housing system to facilitate the ongoing delivery of affordable, low carbon, and climate resilient development designed to meet the public's needs in an efficient and sustainable manner.



Strategic Theme 4:

Expand Land Capacity

To lead a focused approach to strategic land assembly to ensure a consistent pipeline of sites in areas of greatest demand.



Strategic Theme 5:

Strengthen Organisational Framework

To scale the LDA's organisational capacity, structure, and size to ensure it is well-positioned to deliver its full mandate, operating responsibly and serving its stakeholders transparently and effectively.



Policy statement

In progressing its plans and proposals, the LDA promotes a proactive and inclusive approach to community and stakeholder engagement, starting from the earliest stages in the planning and design process, through to construction and eventual occupation of a housing scheme.

The LDA supports proportionate engagement processes, aiming to provide opportunities to hear the views of communities at key stages. The LDA believes that adopting this ethos will support improved design and planning outcomes, and ultimately the delivery of sustainable, inclusive developments that are well integrated with existing communities.

The views of stakeholders vary and are diverse – the LDA is committed to finding resolutions that balance common concerns and reflect the wider public interest in a manner consistent with the goal to build sustainable, affordable / cost rental housing developments.

The Agency adopts a tailored, project specific approach to each community and stakeholder engagement process it undertakes. The scale, scope and method applied to undertake non-statutory engagement vary according to specific requirements and conditions.

CSES Objectives

Through this Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (CSES) and on all LDA projects, the Agency is committed to working alongside communities and stakeholders to achieve its central goal of delivering new homes. To this end, there are three objectives driving our CSES:



1

To inform the public on the purpose of the LDA, our plans and projects, and our commitment to meaningful engagement, placemaking sustainable communities and quality standards.

2

To communicate effectively with the public, build understanding and provide opportunities for engagement during key stages. This means listening to and carefully considering the views and suggestions of community stakeholders as we plan and design our developments.

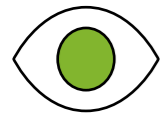
3

To inform the public on the purpose of the LDA, our plans and projects.



Engagement Principles

Our Engagement Principles help us to shape how we plan, develop, and deliver our developments, and helps us to make better decisions throughout this process:



Transparent: The LDA maintains a transparent planning and design process. Clear updates on plans and projects are made publicly available at regular intervals and on request to all interested parties.



Time: The LDA takes the time to engage with communities and stakeholders. Time is allowed for the public to review plans at key stages. We want to hear their views at opportune times in a plan or project lifecycle so that design processes can be tailored to address issues raised and incorporate suggestions, where it is appropriate to do so. This will contribute to more efficient planning and design processes and ultimately will result in more successful, integrated, and sustainable developments.



Inclusive: The LDA aims to reach all members of the community so that interested parties and groups have opportunities to express their views on plans and projects. It is the Agency's belief that inclusive engagement processes contribute to more inclusive, integrated developments.



Feedback: The LDA aims to be accountable in terms of how key areas of feedback have been considered and have potentially informed the design development process. Public views on development projects are often wide ranging and diverse. The Agency has a responsibility to balance issues raised and reflect decisions back so that the public understands how its diverse concerns were considered.

Why Engagement is Important

The Rationale

Community and stakeholder engagement describe the myriad of ways in which the LDA communicates with the public on its projects and plans. Engagement is a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit. The LDA develops a tailored project specific approach to each community and stakeholder engagement process we undertake. There are many opportunities to engage on a voluntary basis. The scale and scope of non-statutory engagement is at the discretion of the LDA, as is the engagement model / method chosen. The decision on these aspects is on case-by-case basis.



Our responsibility to engage

We recognise our responsibility to work with local partners to create sustainable and inclusive communities that are well integrated with and connected to existing neighbourhoods. Most of our sites are situated in busy towns and cities where people live, work, and play. We want to further enhance these areas and contribute to their vibrancy.



Moving beyond statutory requirements

The LDA abides by all statutory consultation processes embedded in the planning system. However, we are dedicated to engagement processes that move beyond statutory requirements to consult. The Agency undertakes proportionate voluntary engagement with interested parties at opportune stages in a strategic plan or development project process - not limited to mandatory consultation requirements.



We appreciate your support

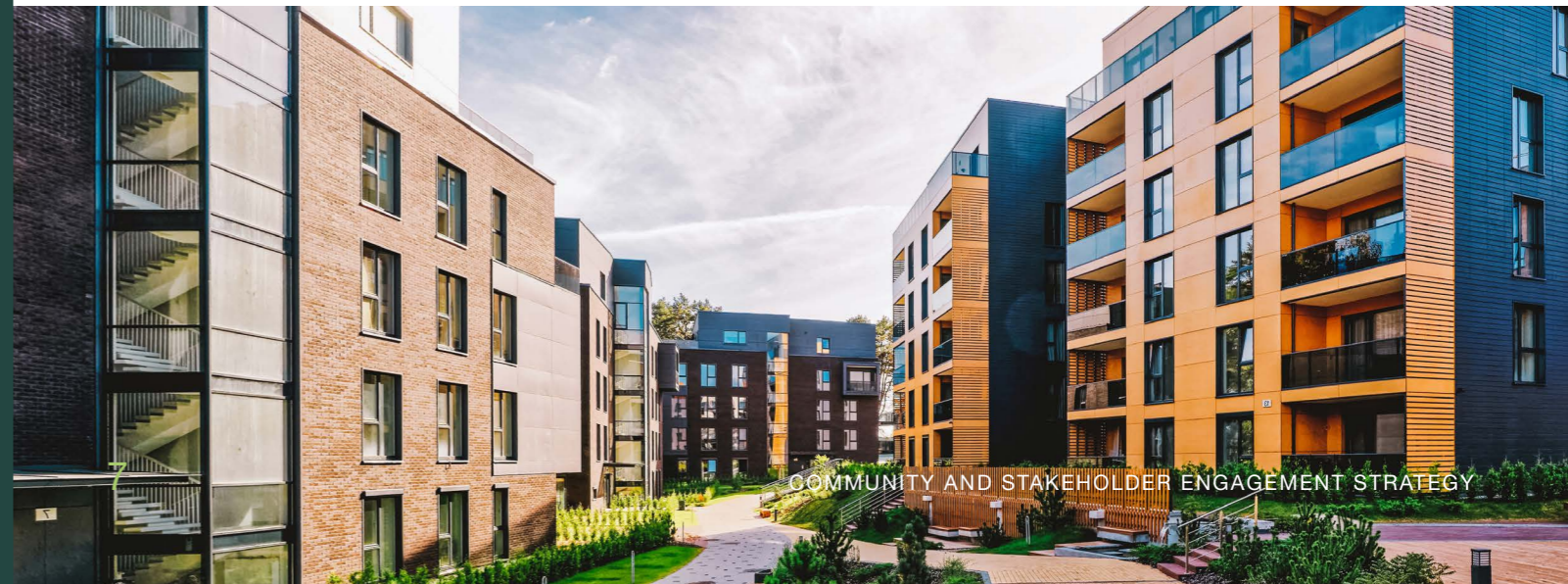
We are proud of the essential role our agency will play in improving access to housing for people in Ireland and we're excited to continue our work with pace. In order to design, construct and manage our plans and projects, we need the support of our neighbours and the wider communities in which our homes will be delivered. We acknowledge the challenges that large home building programmes can bring. We want to work with communities in overcoming any challenges met along the way, to ensure our planning, design, construction, and management processes are successful, with minimal adverse short-term impacts, and no long-term adverse impacts.



Acting on LDA Principles

The LDA has a responsibility to create sustainable communities, that support enhanced quality of life, social inclusion, improved public spaces & amenities and integration with the locality. A key principle of the engagement strategy is to be inclusive in all we do – the Agency wants to reach a wide demographic and hear the views of all members of the community irrespective of gender, marital status, family status, age disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community¹.

¹ Equal Status Acts 2000-2018. Available at: <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/8/enacted/en/html> Accessed 02/11/21.



Legislation, Policy and Guidance

The development of this CSES has been informed and guided by legislation, national policy and guidance on citizen engagement, some of which include:

-  Aarhus Convention
-  Lisbon Treaty with the European citizens' initiative
-  Planning Legislation in Ireland
-  The Land Development Agency Act (2021)
-  Housing for All
-  OECD's Innovative Citizen Participation programme

Other Guidelines & Resources

A list of public guidelines and resources of relevance to community engagement and participation is provided below:

-  Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (2016) Consultation Principles & Guidance
-  The Office of the Planning Regulator - A Communications Toolkit, 2020
-  Consultations.ie
-  The Department of Rural and Community Development (2019-2024) Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities: A five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland

Furthermore, community and stakeholder engagement has a solid grounding and long-established evidence base which has evolved from decades of planning theory and practice. The LDA draws key learning and guidance from this theoretical foundation of which modern engagement practice has emerged.

	
A ladder of Citizen Participation – Sherry Arnstein	Pluralism in Planning – A Concept of Advocacy Planning
	
Communicative Planning Theory	Collaborative Planning Theory

Our Plans and Projects

LDA Strategic Plans and LDA Projects

The LDA has two main work streams – strategic plans sometimes referred to as Masterplans, and projects.

A

Strategic Plans / Masterplans – for some of the larger or more complex land parcels, a Masterplan or Planning Framework may be required to allow for the phased planning and development of the lands over time. A Masterplan is an overarching planning document and spatial layout which is used to shape and inform land use and development.

It is important to note that LDA Masterplans can range in scope and duration depending on site-specific conditions and the development ambitions for the site. Planning policy such as zoning objectives can also influence the timing and phasing of a development for Masterplan lands.

B

Projects – LDA projects are those which are proposed or expected to progress straight to planning application stage following on from the acquisition of the lands by the LDA.

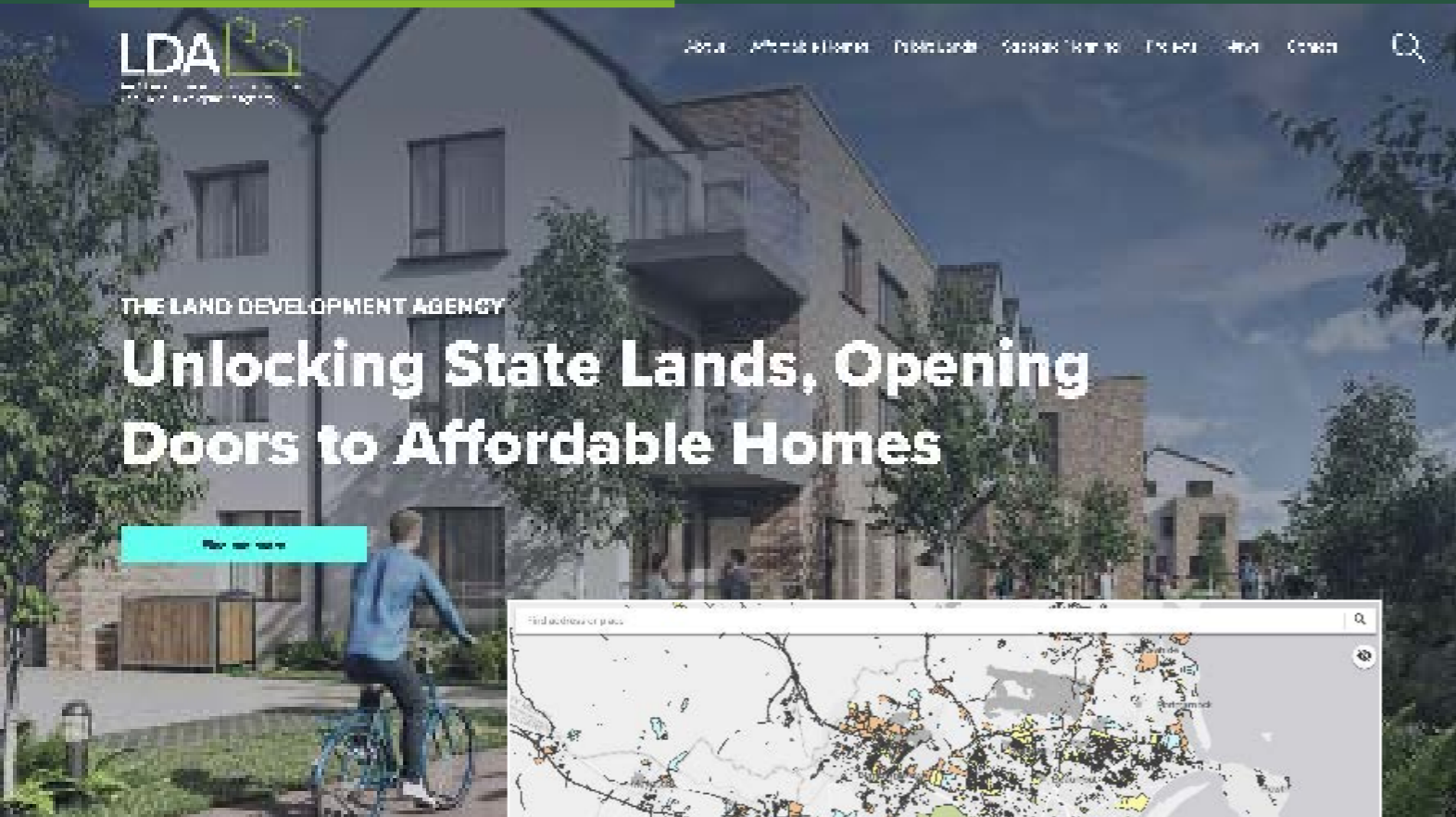


How We Engage

Learn about our plans and projects

We want to ensure that the public is fully aware of the plans and projects we have for the communities in with they live. We communicate with the public a number of ways – you can hear about new projects and plans by doing the following:

Check our website



The website hosts our key departments and sections providing information on all of our work : Affordable Homes/ Strategic Planning /Projects & Public Lands

Public Lands: State Land Database: An Interactive WebMap showing all State-owned lands. The WebMap is easy to use by a simple zoom function that allows the user to navigate to the specific area of interest. The user can then click on specific sites to learn more.

FAQs

Group Emails / Mailshots

Sign up to join our mailing list and receive email updates on specific plans and project.

Local Notices and National Newspaper and Radio:

We advertise and place notices in national and local media informing communities.

Social Media Updates

Follow us on social media for announcements on plans and projects for new developments

Contact our Community Liaison Office

Our Community Liaison Office is dedicated to responding to your queries and providing information on the LDAs plans and projects. Each project will have a Community email and Liaison office connection where feasible

Share your views

Our Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy is designed to be dynamic in how we communicate with and hear the views of the public. We undertake a broad range of engagement activities to ensure our principles of inclusivity and transparency are upheld. The engagement techniques we use are carefully selected on a case-by-case basis. A selection of some of the ways we engage with the public is provided below:



Online Surveys



Phone Submissions



Webinars



Virtual Consultation Platforms



Written Submissions (post or digital)



Emails



Public Consultation Seminars/ Workshops



Focus Groups



Café Consultations



Open days



Street Surveys



Interviews

Accessibility



Venues

In terms of venues, we try to always select a venue located close to the site being developed and that is easily accessible by public transport (wherever possible).



Time

We try to schedule our engagement sessions at times that are convenient for local people. To do this, we review local demographics such as the working age cohort, parents of school going children etc.



Translation Services

We are very happy to translate any communication materials on plans or projects to a language of your choice and we can arrange for translators to attend our engagement events.



Braille and Signers

We can also provide braille versions of communication materials, on request. Signers can also be arranged for any engagement session we undertake.



Feedback Forms

Your feedback on the value and effectiveness of the consultation and engagement session is really important to us. It allows us to continually improve how we engage with communities and stakeholders.

How your input is used

While it is not always possible to respond to individual / single submissions / comments received, the findings of all engagement sessions are captured in a Report on Community and Stakeholder Engagement. This report is published on the plan/project website and disseminated via mailing lists. Those who made submissions will be notified of its publication, where feasible.

Data Protection

The LDA Data Protection Policy lays out the obligations by the LDA regarding data protection and the rights of staff, members of the public that engage with us, service providers (contractors/sole traders) and business contacts (“data subjects”). This includes obligations in dealing with personal data, in order to ensure that the organisation complies with the requirements of the relevant Irish and EU legislation, namely the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Irish legislation including Data Protection Act (2018).

At the LDA we take data protection seriously and we aim to be clear about how we process Personal Data. Within the Consultation and Engagement process for all projects, very careful consideration is given to abiding fully by this policy.

The full Data Protection Policy is available on line at <https://lda.ie/privacy-policy/>

The LDA Code of Conduct

The LDA Employee Code of Business Conduct² provides guidance to all employees and Board members in complying with responsibility and obligations (including legal) and the ethical behaviour required in conducting their duties. It is vital for the Land Development Agency (LDA) to build a reputation, among its numerous stakeholders, for transparency, fairness, and accountability and to carry out its duties with integrity and openness. This is a critical step in ensuring the overall success of the Agency. It is therefore essential that all employees conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the Agency’s strong ethical values. The principles set out in the Code of Business Conduct are of particular relevance to all employees involved in public engagement activities. LDA personnel are encouraged to re-familiarise themselves with the code prior to engaging with members of the public.

The Full LDA Code of Conduct is available online at <https://lda.ie/about-us/publications/lda-board-code-of-conduct>



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