

Bedford Town Investment Plan – Future Stakeholder Engagement Plan & Actions

Stakeholder Groups	Project	Objective for Engagement	Type of Engagement	Frequency
Bedford Town Deal Board	All Progressed Bedford Towns Fund Projects	<p>To monitor progress and continue to set direction of Bedford Town Investment Plan implementation.</p> <p>Provide engagement activities feedback and responses to inform Board and assist with strategic decisions.</p>	<p>On-line / teams / zoom meetings.</p> <p>Utilise feedback from all engagement activities as an agenda item at appropriate Board meetings to inform of stakeholder opinion and as a topic of discussion to develop proposals.</p>	Bi-Monthly
Members of the General Public and those who live, work and visit the Bedford Town Deal Area	All Progressed Bedford Towns Fund Projects	<p>Enable all members of the public to have opportunities to feed back on the Bedford Town Investment Plan especially individual Towns Fund projects.</p> <p>Capture insight and maintain engagement with key influencers from across Bedford community.</p>	<p>Engage public through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Inform partnership networks and regular board and individual workgroup meetings – Public exhibition for each scheme (physically if possible but potentially virtual) – Presence on social media platforms – E-Newsletters – General and Business – Information Leaflets / Brochures <p>Facilitate public events which are COVID compliant:</p> <p>Design individual project opportunities to encourage members of the public to engage with the scheme through participation.</p> <p>[Promotion, and events, provide opportunities to facilitate exhibitions]</p>	<p>As required on a scheme by scheme basis</p> <p>Events Annually</p>

			<p>A consultation and communications plan will be developed on an annual basis, taking into account changing social circumstances, level of involvement seen to date and the projects undertaken.</p> <p>Constant development of Bedford Towns Fund online resources to maximise chances for all members of public to participate with the Town Investment Plan delivery.</p> <p>It could be done by incorporating a variety of response methods, from leave comments to questionnaires, to concentrate on each of the Bedford Town Plan schemes as they progress.</p> <p>Utilise social media to encourage current and present feedback.</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of engagement by encouraging representatives to feedback on how engagement has been received and which areas need to be improved over time.</p>	
Groups that are difficult to access / engage	All Progressed Bedford Towns Fund Projects	<p>Ensure engagement is maximised from groups that are hard to reach to feedback on Towns Fund projects.</p> <p>Capture insight and to maintain engagement with key influencers from across Bedford community.</p>	<p>Work closely with Bedford Borough Council Community Engagement Officer to focus on networks of local groups and people that have not been engaged previously.</p> <p>Develop 'two-tier' engagement events and training opportunities.</p> <p>Encourage participation by,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sending information to local community centres / hubs – Sending information to local schools. <p>Hold events held in the town centre if possible.</p>	Bi-Annually

			Evaluate the impact of engagement by encouraging representatives to feedback on how engagement has been received and which areas need to be improved over time.	
Young people and Job Seekers	Health Science and Digital Skills Centre	<p>Raise awareness and generate interest in access to learning opportunities.</p> <p>Capture insight and to maintain engagement with key influencers from across Bedford community.</p>	<p>Link with the Job Hub and Skills / Trainings Manager and local Educational Provider to develop co-operative, one-day educational / taster events.</p> <p>Fundamentals of College Project to enable the curriculum to be extended to degree, sub-degree and advanced levels, so that existing students can progress further and achieve higher levels of skill in areas where employers say there is a need.</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of engagement by encouraging representatives to feedback on how engagement has been received and which areas need to be improved over time.</p>	Annually
Landowners, agents and investors	All Progressed Bedford Towns Fund Projects	<p>Identify potential investment and development opportunities in Bedford town centre.</p> <p>Capture insight and to maintain engagement with key influencers from across Bedford community.</p>	<p>Engage with commercial agents, landowners, investors and other key stakeholders to ensure investment opportunities for Bedford are maximise, complementing the Towns Fund investment package. Engage in discussions on individual basis as required.</p> <p>Utilise established Bedford Commercial Agents breakfast network to pass information for attendees to disseminate to their networks and contacts.</p>	Quarterly
Bedford Business Groups	All Progressed Bedford Towns Fund Projects	Capture insight and to maintain engagement with key influencers from across Bedford community.	<p>Utilise contacts and relationships with groups and request / encourage them to disseminate information and project progress to their members via group meetings and e-newsletters.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bedford for Business e-newsletter - Bedford Business Improvement District - Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce - Federation of Small Business 	As required on a scheme by scheme basis

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1921 Surveyors Club - Bedford Breakfast Club 	
Midland Road Business and Building Owners	<p>Station Quarter</p> <p>Midland Road Regeneration</p>	<p>Generating interest and maximising take-up of the shopfront improvement scheme on Midland Road.</p> <p>Capture insight and to maintain engagement with key influencers from across Bedford community.</p>	<p>Engage with Midland Road businesses and building owners through personal correspondence, providing scheme / grant details and a point of contact for enquiries.</p> <p>Contact local estate agencies and inform about the scheme, to maximise publicity for potential new business and building owners.</p> <p>Communicate programme details, events and news with relevant networks.</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of engagement by encouraging representatives to feedback on how engagement has been received and which areas need to be improved over time.</p>	Regular Contact (by Project Officer)
Midland Road Area Residents Association (MARA)	<p>Station Quarter</p> <p>Midland Road Regeneration</p>	<p>Raise awareness and gain feedback from local residents.</p> <p>Capture insight and to maintain engagement with key influencers from across Bedford community.</p>	<p>Workshop and focus groups / online.</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of engagement by encouraging representatives to feedback on how engagement has been received and which areas need to be improved over time.</p>	As required on a scheme by scheme basis
Local cultural networks and organisations	<p>Station Quarter</p> <p>Midland Road Regeneration</p> <p>St Paul's Square</p>	<p>Align with cultural activities to maximise benefits from Towns Fund investments.</p> <p>Capture insight and to maintain engagement with key influencers from across Bedford community.</p>	<p>Workshop and focus groups / online.</p> <p>Send information to two churches located on Midland Road - Mount Zion Apostolic Pentecostal Church and Holy Child & St Joseph RC Church and mosque on Brereton Road (in close proximity of Midland Road Bedford Central Jammee Masjid, also Bedford Islamic Centre, also located on Brereton Road and the Bangladesh Islamic Centre Bedford on Commercial Road and Polish British Integration Centre (PBIC).</p>	As required on a scheme by scheme basis

			Evaluate the impact of engagement by encouraging representatives to feedback on how engagement has been received and which areas need to be improved over time.	
Cycling & Pedestrian User Groups	<p>Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure</p> <p>Transporting Bedford 2030</p> <p>Station Quarter</p>	<p>Raise awareness and gain feedback to encourage take-up of active travel.</p> <p>Capture insight and to maintain engagement with key influencers from across Bedford community.</p>	<p>Workshop and focus groups / online.</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of engagement by encouraging representatives to feedback on how engagement has been received and which areas need to be improved over time.</p>	As required on a scheme by scheme basis
Bedford Commuters Association / Train and public transport user groups	<p>Station Quarter</p> <p>Transporting Bedford 2030</p>	<p>Raise awareness and gain feedback; encourage take-up of active travel.</p> <p>Capture insight and to maintain engagement with key influencers from across Bedford community.</p>	<p>Workshop and focus groups / online.</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of engagement by encouraging representatives to feedback on how engagement has been received and which areas need to be improved over time.</p>	As required on a scheme by scheme basis
Creative sector / Arts incl. Digital / Media	<p>St. Paul's Square Public Realm</p> <p>Health Science and Digital Skills Centre</p> <p>Full Fibre Broadband</p>	<p>Align with cultural activities to maximise benefits from Towns Fund investments.</p> <p>Encourage take-up and raise awareness of enhanced digital infrastructure, and enhanced skills provision locally. Capture insight and gain feedback.</p>	<p>Workshop and focus groups.</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of engagement by encouraging representatives to feedback on how engagement has been received and which areas need to be improved over time.</p>	As required on a scheme by scheme basis

Methods of engagement across groups:

A consultation and communications plan will be developed on an annual basis, taking into account changing social circumstances, level of involvement seen to date and the projects undertaken.

During the first six months of the programme, engagement will be print, online and social media and a focus on building relationships with key community members to help develop plans for the latter part of the first year and the start of the second year.

Press releases have been issued regarding the Town Investment Plan to date and letters sent to Midland Road stakeholders for the MRAZ scheme.

To develop these plans, the Bedford Town Deal project team will:

- Work closely with experienced in-house departments and to engage with a variety of existing stakeholder and networks.
- Host general events in the Bedford Town Plan area if possible due to COVID, or otherwise online to raise awareness of the programme and invite communities to participate in more specialised events.
- Offer to attend focus groups meetings with specialist stakeholders to cater for individual projects:
 - Midland Road Area Residents Association
 - Cycling and bike user groups
 - Bedford Commuters Association
 - Train and public transport user groups
 - Road user groups
 - Creative sector / Arts incl. Digital / Media
- Work with project owners to take on leading roles in the management of individual projects:
 - Design, manage social media platforms and webpage
 - Media based evaluation [based on video, interviews, participation in public events, exhibition and training]
 - Installations, exhibitions, performances etc.
 - Public events, promotion and engagement
- Work closely with Bedford College as a project owner and Bedford Borough Council Jobs Hub and Skills Team to encourage participation of other educational institutions to develop trainings opportunities related to the following subjects:
 - Construction
 - Digital skills
 - Overview of work opportunities
 - Careers advice and access to training incl. an overview of available qualifications

- Engage Bedford Borough Council Analytics, Insight and Performance Team to gain feedback on engagement and design evaluation process to ascertain success of interventions. Embrace feedback and change approach if required.
- Utilise local media – producing press releases but also digital media.

Bedford will utilise its local media networks to maximise engagement and awareness, including:

Media	Detail
<u>Newspapers / News Websites</u> – <u>Print Media and Online</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bedford Independent - www.bedfordindependent.co.uk – 160,000 unique visitors per month - Bedford Today - www.bedfordtoday.co.uk - Bedfordshire Bulletin – https://rosettapublishing.com/bulletin/
<u>Local Radio</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heart Radio – www.heart.co.uk - BBC Three Counties Local Radio - www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/live:bbc_three_counties_radio
<u>Online</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bedford Borough Council Website – 260,000 Hits per month
<u>Targeted e-Newsletter</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 30,000 – e-Newsletter subscribers in total - 12,000 – Main Borough News e-Newsletter - 7,500 – Bedford for Business e-Newsletter
<u>Social Media</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Twitter @investinbedford – 1,498 followers - Twitter @BedfordTweets – 12,200 followers - Facebook @bedfordboroughcouncil – 9,740 followers - LinkedIn @ Bedford Borough Council – 3,254 followers