

Wind Farms Community Engagement Good Practice Review

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Project Background

- Sept. 2013 – Feb. 2014
- commissioned by Scottish Government through ClimateXChange
- Goals:
 - Identification of good practices in community engagement by comparing different international case studies
 - Exploration of impact of different engagement strategies on public acceptance of wind farms
- Focus on opportunities, timing and procedures of community engagement

Review Process – Methodology

- Case studies where public engagement had an impact on the planning outcome
- Scotland, England and Wales
- Denmark, Germany, France and Sweden

- Secondary Data:
 - policy documents (local authorities, governmental ...)
 - planning documents (PAC reports, environmental statements)
 - academic articles
 - websites (project developer, protest groups)
 - local media

- Primary Data:
 - telephone interviews with representatives from developers, community councils, planning authorities of UK case studies

Case Studies

<i>Time</i>	Zoning / Pre-Project Stage	Pre-Application	Post-Application	Post-Approval / Construction	Post-Commissioning
Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on plans and SEA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-binding pre-application consultation Information provision; public events on site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written comments and representations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community funds depending on developer
England		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compulsory pre-application consultation, but no standardised approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written comments and representations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provision appeals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community funds
Wales		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compulsory pre-application consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written comments and representations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provision Potential appeals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community funds
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public consultations and hearings while developing plans Initiation of projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions on content and scope of EIA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public consultation period; written comments, representations and alternatives Non-compulsory citizen meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appeals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits through various ownership schemes
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public display of draft plans Written comments on local and regional development plans 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public display of documents Written comments during approval procedure public hearing 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential financial benefits through (co)-ownership
Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early consultation on local plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public hearings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several rounds of public consultation Written comments 		
France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal of zones for wind farms Consultations on zone designation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provision Public inquiry 		

Tab.1: Key features of the planning systems in case study countries for onshore wind farms

Case Studies

a)	Name of Wind Farm:	Burton Wold - South
	Developer/Operator:	Infinergy
	Size of Proposed Development:	5 turbine extension to existing 10 turbines (plus another 7 turbine extension) – total capacity: 45.5 MW
	Current Status:	Consented March 2012
	Community Engagement Methods Used:	Information Leaflet; School Visits; Open Days; Adverts and Press Releases; Door-knocking; Website; Freephone number; Freepost address; Comment Cards; Local Energy Organisation
	Points of Interest:	This is an extension of the Burton Wold Wind Farm. The developer adopted a pre-application community involvement strategy despite no legal regulations dictating such a process for a relatively small wind farm.
b)	Name of Wind Farm:	Argyll Array
	Developer/Operator:	Scottish Power Renewables
	Size of Proposed Development:	Initial scheme 1800 MW, up to 300 turbines
	Current Status:	Abandoned at pre-planning stage
	Community Engagement Methods Used:	community liaison officer; public consultation; consultation meetings; steering group (master planning)
	Points of Interest:	The Tiree Community Trust as part of Argyll Renewables Communities Consortium (ARC), and member of steering group in master planning process.

Tab.2: Key features of case studies (examples)

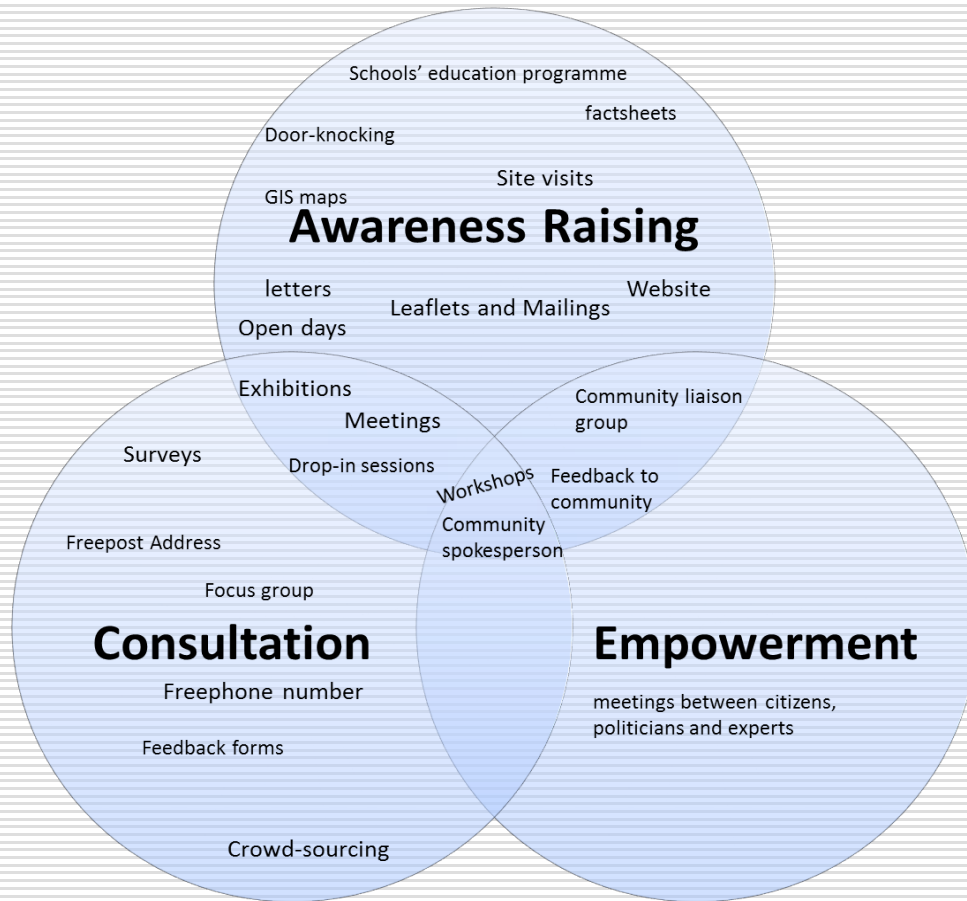
Findings: Rationales of Community Engagement

- Public engagement used for different reasons
- *Instrumental* – overcoming opposition and increasing planning success
- *Normative* - legitimising projects and drawing on local knowledge
- *Substantive* - fostering positive relationships with public

Findings: Stages of Engagement

- Usually at pre-application stage in the UK, after key decisions about location and design
- European cases give evidence of public engagement in early spatial planning (designation of suitable areas ...)
- Engagement should be an ongoing and open process based on trust and communication

Findings: Classification of Engagement Methods



- prevalent methods on awareness raising and information provision
- only a few innovative methods
- mostly 'in-house' guidance
- 'one-size-fits-all' approach inappropriate
- should be tailored to specific location
- different impacts on social acceptance

Lessons Learnt / Recommendations

- ❑ obligation for developers to undertake community engagement
- ❑ How and why responses have been addressed !
- ❑ gathering public responses not only at pre-application stage, but also at spatial planning stage
- ❑ wide-ranging and flexible engagement methods that facilitate ongoing dialogue
- ❑ clearer guidelines for community engagement for wind farms with some autonomy and tailored to the local context

Thank you for your attention !

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