



Stakeholder involvement



Stakeholders are critical to the success of new initiatives, having a direct influence on the project goals. Winning their endorsement can make implementation easier, more vibrant and more successful.

Key Findings

- Stakeholders define the conditions for the project, can act as opinion leaders and attract public awareness on issues of walking and cycling and influence political and social will to bring about change.
- Stakeholders in a community include local politicians, local authority managers and staff, the media, local clubs and institutions, shopkeepers, doctors, business leaders, school staff, police and church leaders and academics.
- It is essential to identify and analyse your stakeholders to understand their opinions, potential influence and capacity to implement measures for active travel before approaching them. It is also important to understand what their priorities and motivations are generally and to align your objectives for active travel with the other demands on their time.

- As well as influencing the project goals, stakeholders are also transport users themselves and have habits and preferences too, which the project can seek to influence. Members of the target groups can also become stakeholders and influence others to adopt active travel habits, such as school children persuading their parents and peers.

Our Activities

To engage and inspire stakeholders within the Active Access project, the partners undertook a range of specific activities.



- **Stakeholder Involvement Plan** – the first step to identify local stakeholders, analyse their priorities and positions in relation to active travel and to ascertain how to best approach them.
- **Walking Audits** – experiential learning on-street to ‘open their eyes’ to the reality of walking within the project communities, to engage a variety of groups and to imagine what might be possible.
- **Workshops and Presentations** – to bring research, results and best practice from other communities into focus and to build understanding of the imperatives for active travel.
- **Stakeholder Exchange Event** at the Walk21 conference in The Hague 2010 - a key knowledge and networking opportunity for stakeholders from participating communities to meet and share their experiences, learn from others and feel inspired.
- **Reports** – documentation of the results of research, activities and evaluations.
- **Meetings with project partners and other stakeholders in the community** – to build a sense of shared purpose, camaraderie and sometimes friendly competition. Shadowing visits also provided time to learn from others and influence stakeholders with outsider input.
- **Involvement in public events and project activities** – provided exposure for local businesses, high profile media opportunities for politicians and forums for community groups to connect and share ideas.
- **Media events** – to present the positive aspects of the project, promote involvement and reward those for participation, e.g. awarding prizes for photography, drawing and film competitions.

Steps to Success

Engage with stakeholders as early as possible

Identify stakeholders at the very beginning of a project and engage them in the planning and development stages of a campaign. This enables them to grow their understanding of active travel as the project progresses, to build a sense of ownership and investment and to ensure time-frames and expectations are compatible with other activities and priorities.

Prepare a clear presentation of convincing arguments and empirical data

Illustrate the current situation with some basic empirical data and local research into attitudes and behaviours and combine that with a set of convincing arguments. Aim to form a common opinion on what is the issue and what can be done. Demonstrate how they will benefit from being involved.

Set up a realistic timetable for coordinated action

Take into account the school year and holidays, local elections, the seasons, town festivals and other key events, as well as umbrella events such as European Mobility Week or Car Free Day, to map out a timetable for events that allows sufficient time for preparation, coordination and delivery of initiatives.

Define clear roles and responsibilities

Encourage ownership of actions both during the campaign and afterwards, outlining what each stakeholder can do and when they do it. Be open to their suggestions and variations to enrich the project.

Provide opportunities for experiential learning

Invite stakeholders to participate in a walking audit, a workshop or campaign activity, to more fully understand the dynamics of walking and cycling within their community, to demonstrate their support and to encourage others to be involved.

Recognise their contribution

Reward stakeholders for participating, acknowledge their contribution on campaign materials, with media exposure and don't forget to celebrate the success of projects with everyone involved.



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