





Guidebook

Modules 1 – 4







Introduction to this guidebook

This guidebook is designed to be used by communities and third sector organisations to introduce the Place Standard tool and its benefits and to help them to complete a Place Standard assessment. However, it also extends to any group looking to benefit from undertaking a Place Standard assessment. It should be used alongside the existing supporting materials available from **Public Health Scotland** and the **Our Place** website.

The Place Standard tool is a way to assess places. It provides a simple framework to structure conversations about place and can be used in a variety of settings. It allows you to think about the physical elements of a place, as well as the social aspects. The tool provides prompts for discussions and pinpoints the assets of a place as well as areas where a place could improve.

This guidebook outlines the steps required to plan your use of the Place Standard tool, offers suggestions on the best ways of carrying out this plan and gives guidance on what you can do with your findings. The purpose is to ensure that your overall engagement is successful from start to finish, and culminates with an action plan on how to carry your place's priorities forward.

This guidebook is split up into modules so you can use each one when it is relevant to you and at a speed to match your needs. Within each module you will find information, activities, questions to stimulate discussion and templates to fill in. These templates will help you complete each section and at the end of the process, they can be compiled into your final report and actions.

If you would like support to carry out your Place Standard plan, you might find it helpful to get in touch with your local authority's community planning partnership. You can find information about this here.

http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/PublicServiceReform/CP

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Module one: Introducing the Place Standard tool

What is place and why is it important?

A place is made up of many different elements. It includes the physical environment, such as the buildings, streets or greenspaces, and also social aspects, such as the community and the way individuals feel about the place they live.

Issues such as wellbeing and health are all impacted by the places where we spend our time. When places are designed and maintained well, people often have a better quality of life. Giving everyone the same opportunity to live and work in a good environment can reduce inequalities across a range of different measures.

Understanding the existing and potential strengths of places can help to target and improve areas that need it most. The Place Standard tool can be used to do this and support the design and delivery of successful places, where people benefit from good quality environments.

National context

Good Places, Better Health (launched in 2008) is the Scottish Government's strategy on health and the environment. It provides supporting information for the development of the Place Standard.

The Scottish Government policy Creating Places (2013) commits to developing Place Standard.

The Scottish Government's **National Outcomes** show the commitment to making Scotland a better place for everyone to live. Using the Place Standard tool can enable you to work toward them in your local context.

The Place Standard tool can impact these outcomes:

- We have tackled the significant **inequalities** in Scottish society.
- We live longer, healthier lives.
- We have strong, resilient and supportive **communities** where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.
- We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.
- We live in well-designed, **sustainable places** where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.
- Our **public services** are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

What is the Place Standard tool?

The Place Standard tool is a way of assessing places. It was designed to:

- Assess and improve the quality of both new and existing places.
- Bring communities, the public sector, private sector and third sector together to deliver high quality places.
- Promote consistency so everyone across Scotland has an equal chance of living in a good quality area.
- Ensure people's physical and social environments support them to live healthy, happy lives.

The Place Standard tool provides you with a framework to have structured discussions about your area. You can use the tool to find out what your community thinks and feels about their place and help you to identify the strengths of your area and priorities for improvement. An accessible toolkit is also available, which includes prompt cards, symbol sets and a video explainer that can be used to support engagement of individuals regardless of their communication and engagement needs and preferences.

Watch the Place Standard introductory video here. https://youtu.be/JAsvhiU534c



Using the Place Standard tool

The Place Standard tool can be completed on paper or online at the Our Place website.

The tool can be used as part of a series of public consultations, or in one to one settings – see pages 22–25 for examples of different methods.

The tool is built around 14 themes. These themes cover a broad range of both physical (such as streets and spaces) and social (such as feeling safe) characteristics that make up a good place.

The themes help you to think about the practical things you need from a place (for example shops, doctors' surgeries or schools) and also how you feel about a place (for example whether you feel a part of the community or if you feel your views are important to your area).



All of the themes are connected and sometimes appear to cross over, reflecting the complex nature of places and the wide range of factors that impact them. This helps you to think broadly about your area, rather than getting stuck on one positive or negative aspect. It also encourages a wide range of stakeholders to work together to successfully improve your highlighted areas of concern.

Using the Place Standard is easy. For each of the themes, the tool has a series of questions and prompts to spark discussion and a space to score from one to seven. See pages 28–29 for detailed guidance.

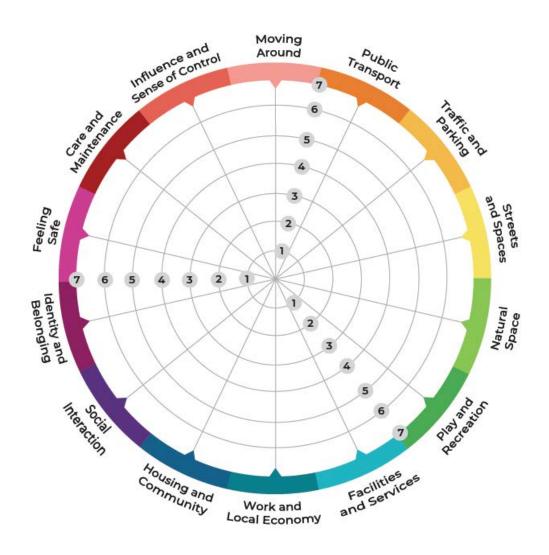


Figure 1: The Place Standard tool

Everyone's comments are compiled and analysed to understand if there are specific areas that need improvement or if there is an area that people particularly like. Scores can be used to prioritise where resources might best be invested to improve the place.

You can use these final results to start a discussion about how, when and who will make these improvements and maintain the areas that people like.

Who is it for?

The Place Standard tool is for everyone to use. The tool treats local people as the experts, gives everyone an equal say and makes no assumptions about what should or could be done to improve a place. It is written using language that most people will understand, even young children.

Communities, the third sector, the public and private sectors can all use the tool. The table below is taken from the Our Place website and gives some examples of who can use it, what it can provide and some of the benefits to using it.

If you are a community group using the tool, it can help you to bring together everyone's views and reach consensus. It can help to empower other local people to express their views and be confident that they will be heard.

Your community's views can then be presented in a nationally recognised framework, meaning the public, third and private sector can be confident in the process you have used to consult your community.

Because it can bring together a wide range of individuals, community groups and different sectors, the Place Standard encourages you to work collaboratively. This means you will find it easier to access support and involve others where appropriate.

For	lt provides	Benefits
Local residents	A template for assessing your own neighbourhood and expressing your views.	Developing a starting point for changing things for the better by working out the strengths and weaknesses of your place.
Community groups	A framework for expressing views, sharing and developing local knowledge and reaching consensus.	Building a stronger, better informed and influential voice for local people.
Community Planning Partnerships	A means of identifying community needs and shape partner priorities through workshops that are comparable over time and between places with similar characteristics.	Prioritising investment through structuring community views as an evidence base. Repeated assessment can make benefit from investment more apparent.



Where and when can it be used?

Because the Place Standard tool is so flexible, it can be used in a wide range and scale of places. It can be used in a neighbourhood, village, town or city – or anything in between.

The tool can be used at any time when a discussion is needed about a place. This might be the early stages of development, such as designing a new housing estate, or during an area's development, to understand the needs and preferences of the community and invest where it is most needed. It can also be used to monitor and review progress of an existing area, as the framework will be consistent and comparable over time.

A good example of when the Place Standard tool can be used is when it is time to create a plan of improvement for the area. Whilst there is a responsibility for Community Planning Partnerships to create Local Outcome Improvement Plans and Locality Action Plans, community members might want to start their own action planning process to inform the work of the Community Planning Partnerships.

For example, a community group might be concerned that a part of their town is starting to look a bit tired and run down. As this is really important to their pride in the area, they decide to get the views of the wider community to understand how everyone would like to see it developed. They can then present their overall plan to the local authority.

The Place Standard tool has been successfully used to consult and gather the views of the community to inform the creation of plans like this. You might like to read about the East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership project:

https://www.keepscotlandbeautiful.org/media/1560091/ksb-place-standard-report-final-31-05-17.pdf

Please note that this project used the first version of the Place Standard Tool.



Why should I use it?

Using the Place Standard has a wide range of benefits. Whilst it is often used by Community Planning Partnerships, community groups can equally benefit from using it.

Practically, the Place Standard tool:

- Is easy to use. It is written in simple, understandable language and gives visual outputs.
- Is flexible in where, when and with whom you can use it.
- Has multiple uses. It can be used to understand, prioritise and monitor improvements.

Equally importantly, the Place Standard tool:

- Aims to address inequalities and challenges social isolation, making everyone's views equally important.
- Enables and empowers people to give their views by providing a simple structure for discussion.
- Brings communities together with the third, public and private sectors.
- Encourages broad thinking about place and an understanding of how themes impact each other.
- Promotes joint working across a range of services and bodies, with the community at the heart of the process.

Module two: Developing your plan

This section helps you to prepare to use the Place Standard tool. Planning will make sure you can reach out to everyone in an appropriate way, and that you have the skills, resources and partners you need to do this.

The key to any successful project is keeping 'plan – do – review' in mind throughout. Once you have made your plan, make sure that you continue to refer to it throughout the project to ensure you are on track and to review your process.

At the end of this module you will have a project management plan including a plan for engaging others.

This guidebook includes templates to support you through the planning stage and beyond. The templates used in Module 2 are:

Project management template on **page 45** Engagement plan template on **page 47**



Your aim

Why do you want to use the Place Standard tool?

- Creating a Locality Action Plan or a local place plan?
- Getting the local community's views on a new housing development?
- Consulting your community when applying for funding?
- Or something else?

Being clear about your purpose will help you manage people's expectations of what you will and will not achieve by using the Place Standard tool. It will also allow you to clearly communicate why you are engaging with them and why they should get involved.

Defining your place

The most important thing to consider when defining and agreeing the place you are assessing is the local context that impacts it.

Take time to reflect on the people you intend to engage with and how to reach them, the local factors such as history and culture that might affect people's thinking and what outcomes you are hoping to achieve. It might help to do some research to find out which groups are in your area and if any community consultations have happened previously.

Also consider when defining your place whether it has a strong sense of identity. This might not be in relation to the geographical boundaries of a place, but how it is viewed locally and how one area is connected to or impacts another. For example, some small villages or settlements are so closely linked that the use of the Place Standard tool should incorporate views from both areas into one place assessment. In other cases, a part of a place might have a distinct local identity and be considered on its own.

All of these points will help you to capture the uniqueness of your place and will bring your final report to life with people's perceptions of the history, culture and community in the area.

Two contrasting examples of the different scale of place where the tool has been successfully used are Belville Community Garden in Greenock and the Shetland Islands Council.

In 2015, Belville Community Garden was at the early stages of development. It had just been established upon the demolition site of an old block of flats. The Place Standard tool was used to gather the thoughts of the people who were going to use it, to understand what community and educational activities would be beneficial to include in the garden's development. It was a small scale use of the tool with only a small number of people taking part.

https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/belville-community-garden-greenock-place-standard-tool-case-study/

At the other end of the scale is the Shetland Islands Place Standard consultation. Over 2016, the whole of the Shetland Islands were included within this consultation and over 900 people gave their views. All of the assessments were compiled into an overall plan for the entire Shetland area, also bringing together a number of the public services in the area.

https://www.ads.org.uk/place-standard-housing-in-shetland/

Your team and partners

Your team will be the group of community members driving your plan forward. This might be an existing committee or a new team with individuals representing different groups.

Try to include these key skills:

Organising skills

Give someone the role of organising the Place Standard exercise from start to finish. This should be someone who is able to keep everyone to the timeline and be the main point of contact for anyone with questions.

Facilitation skills

Have someone with experience of working with or speaking to the public. They can share their experience on guiding group discussions, such as supporting others to have their say. This will allow you to accurately capture, without bias, everyone's views

Analytical skills

Using the Place Standard tool will give you lots of comments and feedback to include within your final report. Ensure you properly represent your community's views by having someone who is able to make sense of the information you collect.

You don't have to do it all yourself!

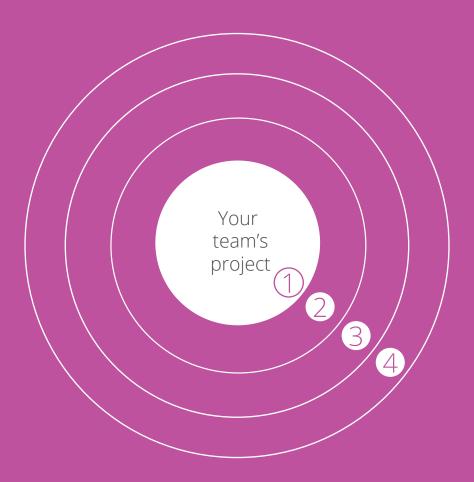
Identifying and recruiting other individuals and groups to partner up with will help you reach more people.

If you are missing any skills, target people who you think can fill these first to build your core team.

Your local authority might be able to support you through their community engagement or Community Planning Partnership teams. They will also be able to advise if there are any planned activities or strategies for your area. Further support can also be accessed by emailing the Place Standard team at placestandard@gov.scot

Local charities, other community groups or local businesses will all have networks who will be interested in your Place Standard activity. There are some helpful national charities and tools listed on page 26.

Activity: circles of influence



Write the name of your team's project in the centre circle (circle 1).

Next, write on Post-it notes the names of all of the organisations, groups and individuals in the community that might work with you to deliver your plan, who will be interested in learning about the results and who may be responsible for making the improvements.

Place the Post-it notes on the circles. Circle 2 is for organisations, groups and individuals you already work closely with. The third is for organisations or individuals you have some connection with and the fourth for the ones that you have no connection with.

Think about any links you have to the organisations you have further out on the diagram – you may need to meet with them to learn more about them and encourage their participation.

How will the Place Standard exercise be of interest/benefit to the organisations you've just mapped? Do you have similar aims or are there benefits for them?



How to approach other groups or individuals

Decide how much support your potential partners might need

The people or groups you have identified will need different levels of support and information from you. For example, you might need to have extra meetings with groups you have less contact with to introduce yourselves and the project.

Be flexible and build their capacity

The person you first approach might not be able to help, or might suggest someone else to approach instead of, or as well as, them. Be prepared to explain the Place Standard tool to them – use this guidebook to help you.

Explain your aims, what you want to achieve and the benefits to them

The Place Standard should be a collaborative project, so you should always aim to bring others along with you as equal partners. It is as much their project as yours, as they should benefit from the outcomes too. Getting buy-in from the beginning of your project will also help you to deliver on your subsequent action and improvement plan.



Reflecting on your plan so far

Discuss in your team:

- Have you identified any barriers to success? What are these and how might you deal with them?
- Have you also thought about how you will prepare for success for example, if lots of people turn up to one of your sessions?
- Thinking about the key partners and other interested parties you have identified how will you ensure that they fully understand your project aims and be able to manage other's expectations of it?

Now complete the 'project management' template on page 45.

Understanding your community

It is important to include as many different people in your community as possible, rather than just the core members of your team, or the people who are confident at speaking up at public meetings. Remember, the Place Standard tool is designed to tackle health inequality, so if you find particular areas of deprivation in your place, you could target these specifically to ensure they are included in any developments.

These websites have information and statistics about your local area that could help you understand who you need to include in your Place Standard project. This will form your area profile.

- Understanding Scotland's Places
 Easy to understand overview of the local town.
- National Records of Scotland
 Demographic information including population estimates by age and sex.
- Scotland's Census
 Relevant information including employment types, housing types and travel statistics.
- Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
 Scottish Government's tool to identify areas of deprivation, including employment, education and housing statistics.
- Scottish Public Health Observatory Profile tool
 Further detailed information about health statistics for your area.

See page 34 for guidance on why and how to gather this information from people.

Case study

Hillhead and Harestanes locality action planning

The project team found, using the Scottish Census data, that 28% of homes in the area were socially rented and 11.8% were council rented. This meant that a specific target audience to engage with were the local tenant and residents' groups. The team recruited key individuals from the housing association staff to carry out the Place Standard assessment with their tenants.

You can access further information at:

http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1681/nicola-mccallum_analysis-and-prioritisation-at-neighbourhood-level.pdf

Engaging with your community

The National Standards for Community Engagement are good-practice principles designed to support and inform the process of community engagement and improve what happens as a result.

The principles, such as being inclusive and supportive, should underpin your engagement plan.

Read more about the National Standards for Community Engagement here: http://www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards/

Setting your target audience

You should plan to involve a representative cross section of your community.

Using your area profile as a guide, do an open internet search for groups you could target. Look for newsletters, Facebook groups and community notices in newspapers – all are good sources of local information. Ask your partners to also suggest groups or individuals that represent the cross section of residents you are aiming for.

As word gets round the local community, you might find groups approach you. Try to build in some flexibility during your assessments to fit these people in.

Some group types to look for in your area

- Tenant and resident associations.
- Social or health groups: walking groups, mum and baby groups, 'men's shed' groups, sports teams.
- Specific interest groups: art and craft groups, local meetups, adult education classes.
- Youth groups / schools: Girl Guides / Scouts, Boys / Girls Brigade, school ecocommittees.
- Specific characteristic groups: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+), specific disability groups.
- Faith groups: local churches, mosques or other places of worship.



Engaging with different audiences

There are a variety of different methods that you can use to engage others in your Place Standard assessment. It is likely that you will need to use a few of these to reach all of the target audiences you have identified.

Once you have decided who you want to hear from, speak directly to the leader of that group to explore the best approach to engage the rest of the group.

Taking advice from them about the preferences and needs of the groups will help you to make a decision or make adjustments to ensure the engagement is appropriate for them. You might find the group leader actually offers to carry out the Place Standard assessment for you.

Your flexibility will be important here. Be prepared to meet people where they currently are. Perhaps you can go along to an arranged community council meeting, a parent and baby group or local library. This will help the group feel comfortable and confident in expressing themselves.

Barriers to engagement

Accessibility

Making your methods match the preferences and needs of your community is a vital part of the process. Have you considered communication needs, such as different languages or levels of literacy? Have you considered physical needs, such as how easy it might be for disabled people to access the venue you are holding the engagements in? Have you considered social or emotional needs, such as fear of taking part in large, public engagements? Consider these points and adjust your plan.

Group's ability or awareness

Some of the people you want to speak to might never have taken part in a consultation before. They might need some extra time to complete a full Place Standard assessment – for example, a few introductory meetings or taking them through it in smaller stages.

Trust

If you don't have an existing relationship with that group, you might experience some reluctance or distrust in what you are trying to achieve. Letting partners who have 'a way in' to the group lead that engagement is a great way of building trust.

Examples of engagement methods

Focus groups and workshops

Pros

- Can easily be delegated: ask your partners to do the Place Standard assessment with their networks.
- Are less time consuming than one to ones and will allow you to gather lots of comments.
- You can host the assessment where the group already meets.
- People can bounce ideas off each other, which can help to capture a range of views.

Cons

- Needs negotiation skills if there are diverse opinions in the group.
- Requires facilitation skills to manage the group dynamics.
- You might need to work in the assessment around the group's meeting schedule, meaning some of your engagements might not fit your timeline.

This guidebook includes a 'Checklist for your Place Standard engagement' on page 48.

As part of your focus group or workshop, you can bring the Place Standard tool to life by getting people out on a walk around the area with you.

Walking around the area sparks discussion and can make people who are not used to filling in traditional surveys or assessments more comfortable in giving their opinion. It allows people to directly point out their favourite areas and things they believe need improvement.

Try out the 'walk around' activity on page 33.



Public meetings

Pros

- Placing open invitations to meetings in the local press can help spread the word about your project.
- Allows other people, who were not identified in the target audience list, to take part.

Cons

- · Can take up a lot of time without being able to guarantee people will come.
- Can be harder to ensure you get a cross representation of the different groups within the area.
- Can be harder to manage expectations if people don't understand the background of the project or what you are trying to achieve.

One to one sessions

Pros

- Can easily be delegated: ask your partners to do the Place Standard assessment with their networks.
- · Allows you to gather really in-depth comments.
- · You can host the assessment where the person already is.

Cons

- Are time consuming.
- Having a lot of one to one assessments and increasing the overall number completed will make data analysis longer.

Try out the 'one to one' activity on page 30.

Online survey

Pros

- Allows other people who were not identified on your target list to take part.
- People can do the Place Standard assessment at a time that suits them.
- Can gather a lot of information without much time needed from your team (which can also be a con if more people fill in the survey than you were expecting).
- Can be used by partners to enter their paper-based surveys so all the information is in one place and format.

Cons

- People might misunderstand what the project is about or what the survey is for.
- · Not as easy to support people with advice.
- People might drop out partway through as they will have no encouragement or incentive to keep going through the whole survey.
- Not everyone will have internet access, so you might still need to have paper copies.

Public Health Scotland and the Scottish Government have designed an online survey for public use. This allows you to create your own Group Place Standard assessment and share it for completion using a unique URL.

Take a look at the online survey at: https://www.placestandard.scot/ and create a test group survey to get familiar with using it.

Case study

Galashiels Academy Bridging the Gap

The Bridging Gaps project is the first of its kind in the UK, encouraging a unique partnership that will work with young people to engage with planning in their town and decision-making.

You can access further information at

https://www.pkc.gov.uk/media/35055/Alyth-PAS-Report-Feb-16/pdf/ Alyth_Community_Engagement_-_Bridging_the_Gaps_Building_the_Future_-_ February_2016

Promoting your plan to maximise engagement

Word of mouth

Share the news through all of your own and your partners' networks. Create an email draft and standard text to introduce the project.

Local noticeboards

Place posters and information in the local area advertising your project.

Local press and media

Advertise the project in local newspapers, radio and social media sites to reach other audiences.

Online

Create a Facebook event or Twitter hashtag for followers of your Place Standard engagements so people can find information on the internet.

Remember to ensure all of your communication methods match the preferences and needs of your target audience. For example, do any of your posters need to be in different languages?

Reflecting on your engagement plan

Discuss in your team:

Will any of the groups you have identified need additional support to complete the Place Standard tool? How will you help them, e.g. translators?

How will you capture the details of those who might be interested in helping you with the follow on stages to your project?

How will you make sure your project is understood consistently across the engagement methods you will be using?

How will you review your engagement plan to ensure it is going well?

Now complete the 'engagement plan' template on page 47.

The Place Standard Tool is available in Mandarin Chinese, Polish and Arabic, and is available from: https://www.placestandard.scot/



Helpful tools and organisations

Young Placechangers Toolkit

The Young Placechangers toolkit aims to inspire young people to take the lead in their local community, to voice their opinions and help make positive change happen.

The National Standards for Community Engagement

The National Standards for Community Engagement are good-practice principles designed to support and inform the process of community engagement, and improve what happens as a result.

Community Health Exchange (CHEX)

CHEX supports and promotes community development approaches to health improvement. They provide support to a network of community-led health initiatives and their public sector partners who are tackling health inequalities in communities across Scotland.

Voice Scotland

Voice Scotland offers a range of supporting resources and materials to assist you to carry out community engagements.

Communities Channel Scotland

This resource aims to provide support to local groups and organisations so that they can contribute to a socially and economically sustainable Scotland.

Co-production project planner

Co-production is about combining our strengths to work with one another on an equal basis to achieve positive change. This free planner helps you put your ideas into action. You do not need to be an expert in co-production.

Leapfrog

Tools for bringing people together, exchanging ideas and making stronger, more active communities.

Place Standard Guide

The Place Standard tool is simple and easy to use. Here is a range of other guidance, resources and additional materials which will also help you to plan and carry out your assessment. See https://www.ourplace.scot/tool/place-standard-guide

'Shaping better places together'

This report marks a first attempt to investigate the role and significance of facilitators in participatory community design processes, including Place Standard exercises.

Place Standard Tool with Air Quality Lens

This part of the tool has information on air quality and has additional prompts which can be used in areas if you want to know how local people feel about air quality and their ideas to improve air quality.

Place Standard Tool with a Climate Lens

This resource offers the opportunity to consider climate change and how it will impact on health and wellbeing and Scotland's places.

The climate lens helps stakeholders including public health planners, local planning partners and communities to consider how global trends such as climate change will play out in a local area.

Place Standard Tool Design Version

This is based is on the same 14 Place Standard themes and organises these into 5 overarching categories using design-orientated focus areas and detailed prompts that are referenced to urban design principles.

Place Standard Tool for Children and Young People

These versions are based on the core Place Standard tool but the theme names, questions and prompts have been adapted to be more accessible and appropriate for younger users.

Place Standard Inclusive Communications Toolkit

You can use the Toolkit alongside the information and guidance for any version of the Place Standard you are using. The toolkit will help you set up an event in an inclusive way, which will help include more citizens in the conversation.

Module three: Putting your plan into action

The proof of a good plan is in the delivery.

This section walks you through the Place Standard tool, offers practical activities for you to complete with your target audience and addresses common issues you might come across.

At the end of this module you should be ready to carry out your Place Standard assessment.

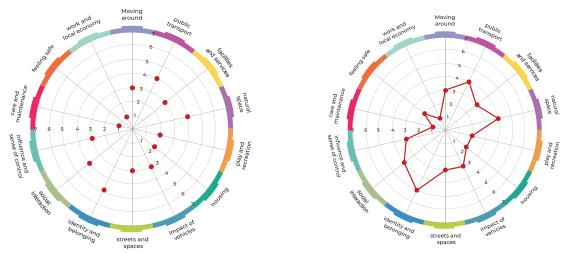
How to use the Place Standard tool

The Place Standard tool has 14 themes. For each theme there is a headline question and prompts.



Start on one theme (whichever you like) and encourage people to think about it using the headline question and prompts. A full list of questions and prompts can be downloaded at https://www.placestandard.scot

Give each theme a score from one, meaning there is a lot of room for improvement, to seven, meaning the quality is as good as it could be. This gives a quick, visual understanding on which themes are the priorities for improvement.



- 1. Decide your score
- 2. Add your score onto the Place Standard tool
- 3. Join up the scores



As well as scoring each of the themes, it is important to gather feedback on why they gave it that score. You may need to encourage or help people to record their comments. Make sure you give everyone enough time.

What is it like to live here?

How does this place make me feel?

What's my opinion?

The discussion and comments you gather during the assessment are the key outcomes from the tool. Letting people explain why they feel a certain way about their place brings the area to life in your final report and allows you to fully understand what it is like to live, work or play there. The prompt boxes help record what is good now and how it could be made better in the future.

When you come to write up your final results the scores will help you to prioritise where action needs to be taken. The comments will help you to understand why this action is important and how it could be done.

Activity: one to one

To gain confidence in carrying out the Place Standard tool with other community members, carry out a 'mock' place assessment in pairs with someone from your own team. Take it in turns to ask the other about their home community using the tool and guidance booklet.

When asking the questions, think about how you will encourage the person to give you a score whilst also recording their reasons, views or comments. For example, how many prompts do you need to use?

When answering the questions, think about what helped you to understand that theme and how easy or difficult it was for you to answer.

Discuss together:

- How did the questions and answers help you both to express your views about the area, consider themes you might not have thought about previously, understand priorities for action and start thinking about how actions might be done?
- How long did it take? How would you speed the process up if pushed for time?
- · What would you do if the person said they did not know anything about that theme?
- Are there benefits in coming from the same place as the people you will be engaging with, or instances where being an 'outsider looking in' might be helpful?





Common issues

Participants are short on time

Let participants know how long you would expect them to be with you before you start. You can go into less detail on the prompts to get around the tool and just capture people's first thought on the headline question for each of the themes. Or you can ask your participant to take away a survey or fill it in online or use the app when it suits them.

Participants have no opinion or feel they cannot answer certain themes

If participants have no opinion on that theme, even after you've used a few of the prompt questions, it's better to not score that theme and record the participant's thoughts in the comments.

Getting bored or restless with the assessment

Starting at different themes for each assessment can limit the number of times the same theme is not answered due to people dropping out part way through.

Scoring versus gathering comments

Whilst scoring is important to help you prioritise action, it is the comments that are the most useful and insightful outcomes from using the Place Standard tool. Wherever possible, aim to get both during your engagements.

You do not have to aim for consensus

If your group disagrees on the score, note the different results and write reasons why, rather than trying to average it during the engagement. Differing views are important to record for later analysis in the report.

Managing expectations

It is important to be clear that the Place Standard tool will not result in immediate action on all of the themes but can inform any actions that do take place, especially if people pitch in to help. Explain where they will find the final report, what you intend to do with it and which organisations you intend to share it with. This is a good time to ask people if and how they could help achieve the actions they have identified.

Being consistent

Throughout your different meetings, always aim to give consistent information. Some people find it useful to have a joint script of important points to cover.



Case study

Auchencairn Link Park project

The pilot case study from Auchencairn Link Park in Dumfries and Galloway is an example of how to record when people have no opinion. They suggest using a different colour marker or line style to record the non-responses to make these clear during the reporting process.

The full report can be accessed at

https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/auchencairn-link-park-dumfries-and-galloway-place-standard-tool-case-study/

Activity: the walk around

A walk round the area you are discussing can be a great way of sparking ideas, discussion and interest in your project. It gives participants a chance to point out exactly where there are strengths and opportunities for improvement of the area and you can photograph these to document the process.

In your team, carry out a walk around to give you an understanding of how these work and how you would run this with other people. Agree a rough route that you will walk in the time you have available. Each of you should take your Place Standard tool booklet and a pen, or utilise the app to record the information. Taking photographs can also help.

Take it in turns to lead the assessment and to be a participant, so you can get experience of both sides.

Discuss together:

- How would you make sure all of the points are covered as part of your walk around assessment? Would you need to be more flexible with the order you went round the Place Standard wheel?
- What practical considerations would you need to take to ensure the walk around works well?
- As a leader, how easy or hard is it to keep people on track to complete the assessment?
- Do you need to go around the whole place for this to be effective, or would you target one specific area to save time?
- How would you schedule a walk around into your engagement plan? Is there a group you'd specifically want to target for this?
- If you cannot fit in a walk around, how could you make use of photos of local landmarks and an easy to read map of the area during your sessions?

Look at the checklist on **page 47**, which will help you think about what to cover during each assessment.

Importance of information about participants

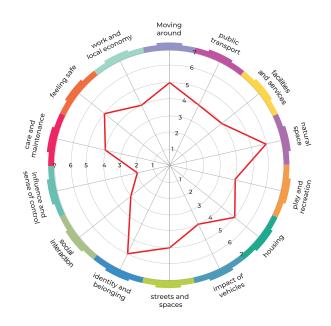
Demographic information is personal data such as age, race and sex.

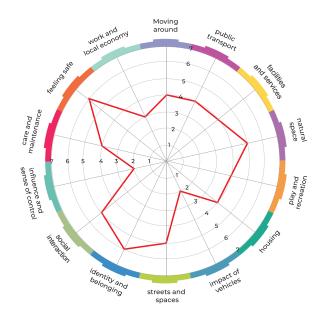
If people are willing to share some basic personal information anonymously during your assessments, this could help you to analyse your results. It will allow you to see issues such as the difference between younger and older people's perception of place. Giving people some optional questions to gather this information at the start / end of your assessment can be a good way to do this. For example, if you use the online tool, you will see that the respondent's age, gender and postcode are asked for.

Any information you collect should be treated with confidentiality and you should only collect what is appropriate for the Place Standard tool. For example, collecting the first part of someone's postcode instead of their full home address will be sufficient for your report. It can also make people who want to remain fully anonymous more comfortable in taking part.

Spot the difference

Both of the Place Standard tools shown to the right were gathered during the same assessment of Queensferry in 2015. The first set of results displays Queensferry's school children's views. The second displays Queensferry's results as a whole.





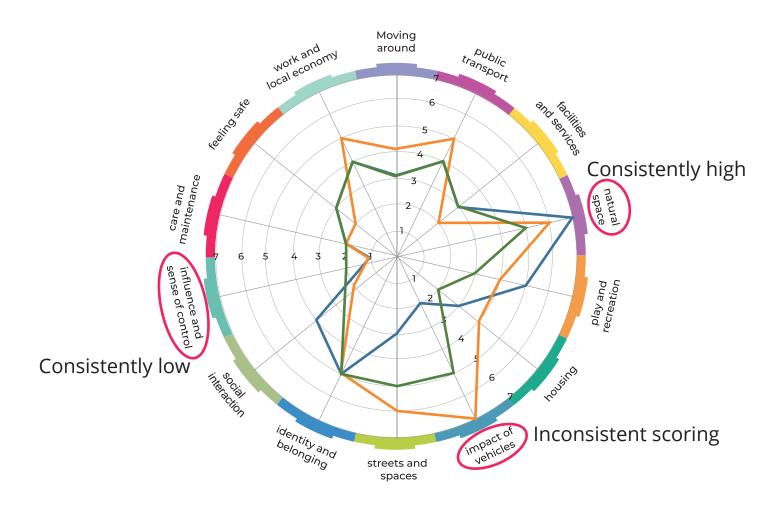
How your final assessment might look

In this example, you can see three different assessments that have been assigned different colours within the same tool. It can be helpful to give results in this way to highlight scores by different individuals or groups.

Themes that have scored consistently **low** would be your priority areas for action – e.g. **influence** and sense of control.

Themes that are scored consistently high would be low priority areas – e.g. natural space.

Themes that are inconsistently scored show the varying opinions of individuals or groups – e.g. impact of vehicles. This will help you to understand how different groups interact with a place. In the example of vehicle impact, the scores might reflect the difference of people with and without disabilities and their potential need for different types of transport. These differences should be highlighted within the final report.

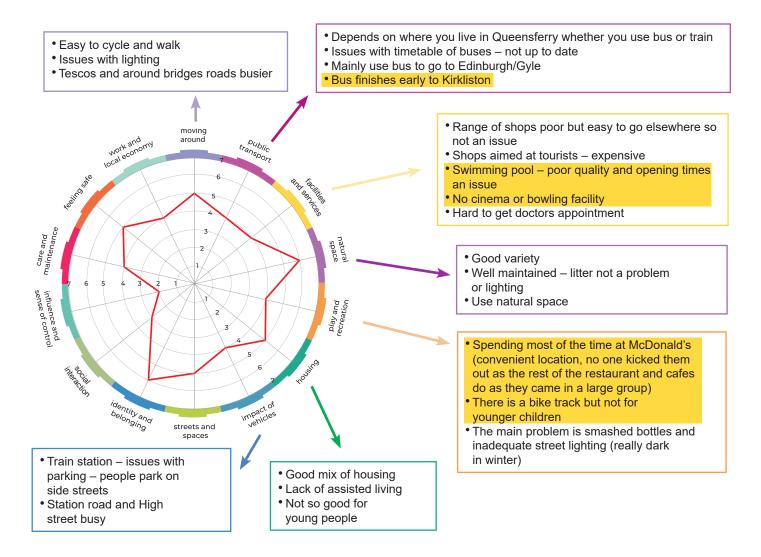


Queensferry results example

Looking in more detail at the comments you have gathered can shed light on why groups have scored the same place differently.

In the Queensferry example below, the highlighted comments are from young people and the rest are from other community members.

Where there are differences in opinion, the comments allow you to identify and prioritise appropriate actions for each group type.



Module four: Results, report and next steps

At this point you will have a series of completed assessments that represent the views of your community. Sharing these without bias should be one of the core features to your report.

This section describes how to manage the scores and comments you have gathered, and how you might like to present these in your final report.

It also offers some considerations on how you might turn these results into an action plan, leading to improvement.

Understanding your data

Qualitative data: the comments

The comments you have will be really useful in the final report – people's stories and feelings can inspire action.

Identify patterns

Look for reoccurring topics or issues, and group those comments together. Try to get more groupings than just the 14 themes, but not so many that the patterns become too complex to easily understand.

Split up positive and negative comments

This allows you to quickly see what people think is an issue under each theme. This will help to prioritise action.

Cross check

There is no 'right' answer to the topics you have pulled out, but you should validate or check your groupings with another member of the team.

You might find that people mention specific features of the area under multiple themes. For example, people might identify the poor quality of the pavements under the 'care and maintenance' theme as well as under 'streets and spaces'.

Understanding your comments example

The links and possible reasons for these comments will become clearer as you look further into the comments. In the example of poor quality pavements, you might find that this is linked to 'traffic and parking' (people parking their cars on the pavement due to lack of available spaces), which links to 'public transport' (people think that bus tickets are too expensive so decide to buy a car). This will help you pinpoint how you might take action to address these areas for improvement. Pulling out these patterns within the report will help you to explain how people experience their place.

In your future action plan, you might use this as evidence that pavements need to be fixed. You might also petition for more parking spaces to be designated to the local residents, or approach the bus company about offering discounted prices for regular journeys.

Natural Space		
Comment	Lots of good open spaces, lots of litter and dog poo	
Theme	Natural space	
Topic	Variety of natural space	
Positive	Good variety of natural space	
Negative	Presence of litter and dog fouling	

Quantitative data: the scores

The scores will be helpful to quickly prioritise themes for action.

Collate

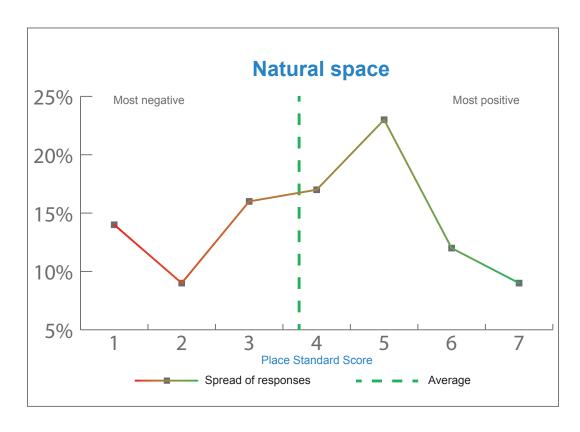
Bring your results together in a way that makes sense to your assessment. You might want one overall view, but you might also want a specific grouping for a certain demographic, e.g. younger or older people.

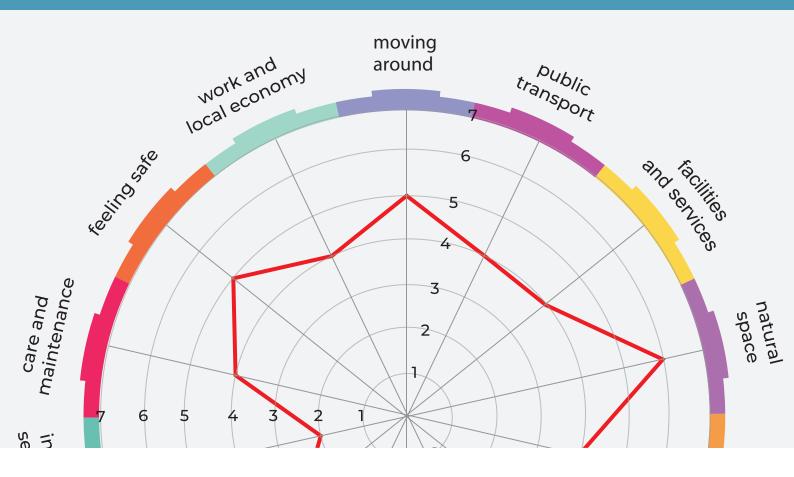
Range

The range refers to how spread out the scores are. If there is a big range (i.e. a large percentage of people scoring one or two and a large percentage scoring six or seven, with little in the middle) flag this theme to pay particular attention to the comments. It is important to include this as it shows the spread of different views.

Average

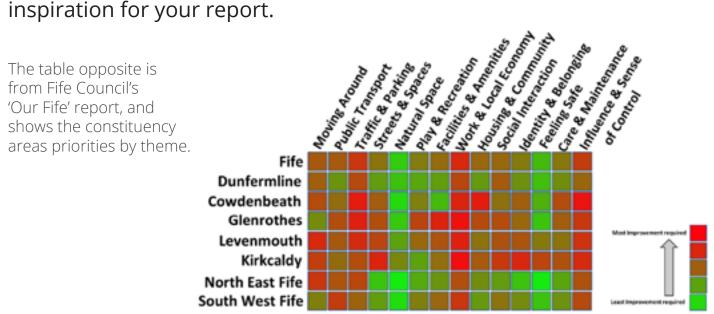
Working out the average allows you to see the overall results for the assessment. This is the easiest guide for you to prioritise the themes for future action (i.e. the lowest scoring themes require immediate action, the highest scoring themes can be left for now). However, relying on the average alone will not reflect all of the different views you have gathered about the theme, so it is very important to include comments and the range. These will give you the additional information you require to make an informed decision about the priorities.





How to display your prioritised results

Colour coding the results and listing them in order of priority are two easy ways to display your results. You can use these examples as inspiration for your report.



The table on the next page is from the East Dunbartonshire Place Standard pilot, with the themes ranked from least to most positive and key comments alongside.

	Groupings	Respondents felt that the key negative issues were	Respondents felt that the key positive issues were
ssitive	Work and local economy	 Lack of local employment opportunities, especially for young people. Lack of local businesses and impact on employment. Difficulties accessing affordable, flexible childcare. Not enough support for individuals whose second language is English. 	 Good local employment support programme.
Least positive	Influence and sense of control Social interaction Identity and belonging	 Negative perception of, the area from those who do not live there. Lack of connection between Hillhead and Harestanes. The council, NHS and public agencies were not taking into account the views of the community when making decisions. 	Hillhead Community Centre.Sense of Community.
	Moving around Public transport Traffic and parking	 Poor maintenance of road surfaces and pavements. Lack of enforcement in tackling inappropriately parked cars. Safety issues i.e. cars parked on pavements. Cost, cleanliness and reliability of public 	 Good traffic calming measures around schools. Significant improvements across the local area due to the regeneration work that is taking place.
	Streets and spaces Natural space Play and recreation Care and maintenance	transport. Outdoor spaces are poorly maintained. Main problems include litter, dog fouling, graffiti, poor lighting (especially at the local skate park).	 Good variety of outdoor spaces. Hillhead Community Centre and the resources it provides. Good recycling facilities.
Most positive	Housing and community Feeling safe Support and services	 Availability of housing. Poor condition of some areas of local environment. Instances of anti-social behaviour. Lack of childcare provision. Issues of safety at the skate park. 	 Positive impact of Hillhead Housing Association. Feels like a relatively safe place to live. Good police presence in local area. Good range of local facilities available.



Your final report

Your report should pull together all of the steps you have carried out to complete the assessment, as well as your results.

Now complete the 'report template' template on page 51.

Sharing your report

First

Showing people the outcome of the engagements gives them confidence that their views were listened to and it allows them to understand how any future actions have been prioritised.

Second

Giving the full findings back to key partners allows them to consider the prioritised themes in relation to their work or interest areas. It also could instigate an action planning group who take the priorities forward.

Third

If you can, try to gain support from local councillors, MSPs and the local authority. These individuals and organisations will be important for helping you take the prioritised areas forward.

Finally

Make your results publicly available. People who were not able to attend the engagements will be interested to see what others from the local area think. Consider asking the local paper to run a story encouraging people to read the report and to get in touch if they wish to help move prioritised areas forward.

Next steps

Well done! You now have a fully completed Place Standard assessment, which gives a clear, representative and prioritised list of issues and actions local stakeholders would like to see addressed.

Now it is time to keep up the momentum you have gathered and plan how to put these improvements into practice.

As the Place Standard tool can be used for many different reasons, there is no single way to plan action. However, the following points offers some ideas for what you might look for, and who to look to for help.

Action planning

Review your aims

Reviewing your original aims will make you reflect on the reason you started this process in the first place and allow you to check in to see if you have achieved what you set out to do.

Review your priorities for action

You should be able to split these into the general issues, which are relevant to a number of stakeholders, and specific issues, which are relevant to one or two stakeholders. Identifying these two types of issue within your priorities will help you to find support to change them.

Identify people or groups who can help you to make change

After reviewing your aims, and reflecting back on the people you engaged with, who is best placed to make changes on your priority issues? Using the same skills as you did when you were building support for the Place Standard assessment, you should be able to present your report to key stakeholders to gain their support. Use the 'End of project action planning' template in the appendices to help you with this.

Now complete the 'End of project action planning' template on page 50.

Appendices

Project management template	46
Engagement plan template	48
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Project management template

Use this table at the start of your planning process to think about the key points you need to cover before you start your Place Standard engagements. You can also use it throughout your project to reflect upon your progress.

We have filled in some examples to help you.

Aim What is the overall purpose for carrying out the Place Standard assessment?	We are applying for a fund to improve the local park. We want to gather the views of the local community to understand how they feel about the area, including the park, to ensure that our plan to improve the park is representative.
Our Place Which area are you focusing on specifically?	Whilst we are looking to get funding to improve the park's facilities, we know that any changes will impact the local village. Therefore, we will ask questions about the whole village, but will not directly include the neighbouring city.
Project team Who is going to be jointly responsible for ensuring that the Place Standard assessment is carried out successfully?	As we are part of the park's 'Friends Of' group, we will use the existing committee as the core project team.
Core skills Who from your project team will cover the key skills	Organising skills: our vice chair is used to keeping us on track with projects and has enough time to make the Place Standard project their priority.
needed to complete the assessment?	Facilitation skills: our secretary is a part-time teacher and is confident in leading the engagements, or training the rest of the team to complete them.
	Analytical skills: our treasurer has a good grasp on using Excel, but does not have experience of analysing people's comments. We will ask the park manager if they can suggest someone who can help us at the local authority.
Key partners Who will you enlist at the start of the project to ensure that it is a success?	The park belongs to the local authority so the park manager would need to be included at the start, as any changes would be their responsibility. They will also be able to help us gain senior level buy-in at the local authority.
	Park users – there is a health walking group who use the park every day, as well as a parent and push chair group who use it every week. They are key stakeholders in the park's development.
	The park borders onto the local primary school so we would like to speak to the parent / teacher council . They will help us gather the views of pupils.
	A group of teenagers use the park at weekends so we would like to contact the local youth worker , who will help us design our engagement with young people.

Project management template

Resources What materials / things will you need to carry out your assessments?	Communications materials: we will need posters and flyers to advertise our events. Place Standard tools: we will need to print out enough copies of the tool for everyone to use. We will need pens etc for people to use. People / time: we think that the biggest resource will be our volunteer's time, as each focus group will take 30–60 mins.
Key dates Are there constraints or opportunities you need to work toward? Schedule regular check-ins	The fund application needs to be in by the 1st April, so we would like to have the Place Standard report completed by the 10th March. There is a Christmas festival being held in the park in December which would be a good time to host the first public meetings. We will have a check-in meeting every Thursday
Barriers to overcome Have you identified any issues which might stop your plan developing?	We do not know anyone else outside of the key partners we've identified. We'll have to pay particular attention to our engagement plan and ask for help where there are gaps.
Actions Assign some key actions now to get your plan off the ground. Make sure to include all of your key partners as well as the core team, agree actions they are confident in achieving.	Outreach: the vice chair will reach out to the identified partners to secure their buy-in for the project. The park manger will speak to the communities team to get a good contact there. Engagement plan: the whole committee will carry out the next phase of the guide to identify our audiences.

Once you have completed this template, start putting together a timeline for your project. When is it realistic to achieve the aims you have set? Are there important events in your community you want to attend? Get everything on a calendar or timeline for everyone to work towards. Try to build flexibility into the timeline as some groups or individuals might take longer than you first anticipated. Include key dates and actions, and include the names of those responsible for each of the actions.

Engagement plan template

Use this template to think about the different groups you want to engage with. You might want to complete one of these for each group.

We have filled in some examples to help you.

Group Name	East End learning support group
Group type Does this group match one of the identified types you were trying to target?	Adult education for people with additional needs
Key partner Who will help you to engage with this group in a meaningful way?	Each class has a support worker who works with the group every day.
Equality / diversity considerations Do you need to consider making changes to the engagement method to ensure it meets the needs and preferences of the group?	After speaking to the support worker, they have recommended that we build in extra time to make sure the group understands the Place Standard. We will visit the group twice to break the Place Assessment up into manageable chunks.
Method of engagement Which engagement method has the best chance of helping the group feel comfortable and confident in giving their opinion?	Workshop / focus group based at the learning centre they meet at.
Tools / activities Are there any specific activities you want to include to help the group understand the Place Standard fully?	We will use a walk about during the first session, and in the second session, provide large print versions the participants can label themselves.

Top tip:

The Voice supporting materials will help you to design your engagement plan to meet the National Standards for Community Engagement. It offers handy pointers to overcome barriers to engagement, identify whether you need specialist advice and how to choose the most appropriate methods. Before and during your engagement planning, read the Key Questions and Handy Hints booklet to help you make the most out of your engagement sessions. You can find out more at http://www.voicescotland.org.uk/support-materials/

Checklist for your Place Standard engagement

Use this checklist as a starting point to consider what practicalities you should cover for each assessment.

Pro	eparing for the engagement session
	I have a clear understanding of the group's needs and preferences, and have made appropriate plans to meet these.
	I have recruited the support I need.
	For example, do you need a note taker to record the discussions?
	If there is a specific group leader or key partner involved, I have agreed with them who will lead the session.
	If they would like to lead the session, have you given them the support they need to do this?
	I have sent any appropriate information they might need ahead of the session.
	You might like to send them a copy of the Place Standard tool so they can familiarise themselves with it, or if you're going on a walk about, let them know to bring clothing to suit the weather.
	n the day sources you might need:
	Copies of the Place Standard booklet
	Tablet
	Pens / pencils
	Large copies of the Place Standard tool to display, sticky dots or Post-its
	Cameras for recording your walk around
	Prompt cards for discussion
	Photographs of local landmarks
	Map of the area
	Clock to keep people on time Distanhand / smartphone to record discussion
	Dictaphone / smartphone to record discussion
Aft	
	I have sent follow on information, including links to the online / paper based survey for those
	who were unable to attend on the day. Remember to include contact details and a deadline you would like any extra assessments to be completed by.
	I am satisfied that the engagement session I have completed reflects the opinions of that group type.
	For example, less people might turn up to the engagement session than you were expecting Do you need the views of more people to ensure you are accurately representing the range of views?
	I know who is the best person to send the final report to, and have given them a date to expect this by.
	I know who is interested in helping us to carry out our action plan once we have completed our final report.

End of project action planning template

Use this template to think about the next steps you will need to take to start acting upon the priority areas your assessment highlighted. You might like to complete one of these for each priority area identified.

We have filled in examples to help you.

Priority for improvement Which theme was this priority identified under? What specific point needs to be addressed?	Care and maintenance / streets and spaces: poor quality pavements, particularly on Walker Avenue.
Who is the key stakeholder? Is there an individual or group who would be responsible for any actions that would happen?	Roads and maintenance department at the local authority would carry out any improvements.
Which other stakeholders will be interested? Who else gave opinions on that point	All of the groups we identified with mobility considerations will be directly impacted.
during your assessments?	The health walking group regularly use this route so will be interested in improvement plans.
	Local children use this route to walk to school so we should also involve them in future actions.
Do you have existing links with these groups from carrying out the Place Standard assessments?	We do not have direct contact with the roads and maintenance department so will use our contact in the communities team to help us find the best link.
	All of the other stakeholders have been consulted and the leader of the walking group committed to helping us so will be a good partner for this priority.
Who else can help? Are there any organisations or individuals who will be able to assist you?	Living Streets Scotland are the UK charity promoting everyday walking and might be able to advise us. Sustrans are the UK charity promoting active travel and also might be able to advise us.
Evidence What evidence from the Place Standard report will help you to	60% of people we spoke to specifically mentioned the poor quality pavements.
secure the support from the identified stakeholders?	Streets and spaces scored the lowest of all of the themes.

Top tip:

Once you have completed a template for each of your priority areas, refer back to the project management plan you created at the start of this project. Many of the skills and techniques you used then are useful at this stage of planning.

Write 'SMART' (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) aims for each of these priorities, and place them onto a similar timeline to the one you used when plotting out the Place Standard engagements.

Report template

Use this template as a guide to structure your final report. You will have gathered most, if not all, of the information you will need to complete this if you have followed the guidebook from start to finish.

Summary

Give a short, overall summary of the entire project. It might be helpful to imagine the person who is reading the summary will not have the time to read the whole report, so you will need to include the most important points of the project onto one page. Consider writing a sentence for each of the five 'W' questions: who, what, when, where, and why, as a starting point.

Introduction

Within this section you should include the introductory information that will help the reader to understand exactly why, where and with whom you planned your Place Assessment. Refer back to the first part of the guidebook, 'developing your Place Standard plan'.

Aim: state the reason why you carried out the Place Standard assessment and what you hoped to achieve. Consider including a copy of your timeline as an appendix to the report.

Your team: give a brief description of your team and the skills / experience you have which are relevant to the Place Standard assessment.

Partners: give a brief description of your partners and the main reason you engaged with them.

Your place: state and explain the specific place you focused on and why. Where were the boundaries, did you include neighbouring areas? Give enough information so someone who knows nothing about the area understands the local context.

Area profile: using information you gathered from the 'understanding your community' section of the guidebook, state and explain the key facts and figures which you used to help you to understand the specific needs of local people.

Methodology

Within this section you should include the information and methods you used to design how you would practically carry out your plan. Refer back to the approach to 'engagement', 'engagement methods' and 'identifying audience' sections of the guidebook and then to the final section of the guidebook on findings and reports.

National context: were there any national initiatives or standards which influenced your project, for example, the National Standards for Community Engagement?

Approach to engagement: state what considerations you had when deciding who you wanted to engage with. How did you ensure that the people you engaged with accurately represented the overall community? Explain the reasoning behind the chosen engagement methods.

Participants: how many people did you speak to? How did you identify these individuals / groups and did you use any tools to support you? Consider including a list of the groups as an appendix to the report.

Approach to analysis: explain how you captured people's comments and feedback, how you compiled the findings and your overall plan for analysing this information. For example, did you focus first on people's comments, or the scores? Did you have any key questions in mind that you tried to answer?

Results

Within this section you should present your findings in a logical and clear format. Refer back to the third section of the guidebook on 'findings, report and next steps'.

Summary of findings: state the key facts and figures about your results, such as how many Place Standard assessments were completed, how many were captured during each type of engagement, etc. Were there any key patterns?

Results by theme: display both the scores and key comments for each theme. Try to give the reader the most common comments, specific areas for improvement and also any key positives identified for that theme.

Priorities for improvement: display all of the priorities for improvement in order of need. You might like to display your results visually, for example as a colour coded grid or table, alongside one or two key summative points for explaining their order.

Review

Within this section you should reflect upon how you will take forward the priorities for action. Refer back to the third section of the guidebook on 'findings, report and next steps'.

Action plan: if you have already agreed any actions, state what these are, including the timeframe to complete these.

Review process: state how long you think the Place Standard assessment will be relevant for, and whether you have plans to carry out another Place Standard assessment, for example, in five years' time.

Key learning: reflect upon the whole project and state what worked and what did not during your process. It might be helpful to consider this as an advice or top tips section to help other communities interested in completing their own Place Standard assessment.

Get in touch: give contact details so people who are interested in getting involved know how to get in touch.



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