

# Community Engagement



## Guide

This document provides information on how and when Glenorchy City Council will engage with the community and why it is important.



Glenorchy City Council acknowledges the Muwinina people as the traditional owners of this Land. We recognise all Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the original owners and continuing custodians of the land and waters of this island, lutruwita. We pay our respect to Aboriginal Elders, past and present. We commit to working for a City that welcomes and respects all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**Community Engagement Guide**

Glenorchy City Council  
July 2023



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# Introduction

In 2022/23 we asked the community how Glenorchy City Council should engage with them. We heard from over 1,000 people across our community at events, markets, and pop-ups and via online and paper surveys. This feedback has informed our Community Engagement Framework.

The Framework details how and why Council engages and is our commitment to the community that we will continue to build a culture of engagement both within Council and in the community.

This Guide complements three other documents in Council's Community Engagement Framework:

- *Community Engagement Policy* - Provides direction for how Council will engage with the community and stakeholders when making decisions, delivering services, or representing the community.
- *Community Engagement Procedure and Toolkit* - Planning is a vital ingredient for any meaningful engagement process. This document assists Council staff in the design, implementation, and evaluation of community engagement plans.
- *Community Engagement Brochure* - Promotes the various methods Council uses to engage with the community and provides information on how community members can talk to Council.

In preparing this *Community Engagement Guide*, Council has drawn from past experiences of community engagement, feedback from key stakeholder groups, knowledge and skills of staff, research, and best practices in the field of community engagement promoted by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Australasia.

## Understanding our community

Glenorchy is a vibrant, progressive City that has experienced significant growth in the last few years. From 2016 to 2021, the City's population increased by 4,167 people (9.0%) to 51,083. The largest change in age over this time was an increase of nearly 3,500 people in the 25-34-year age group. With a median age of 37, the local government area has the equal second youngest demographic in Tasmania.

Glenorchy is culturally diverse, with 21.6% of people living in the City born overseas. Of the people born overseas, 33% arrived from 2016 onwards. Our residents come from 72 different countries and nearly 19% speak a language other than English at home. The City is also home to 5.4% of the population who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, which is higher than the Greater Hobart area.

In Tasmania, the *Local Government Act 1993* prescribes processes and actions Council must take in making certain decisions for the good governance of the City. Other legislative instruments also establish specific procedures for community consultation and decision making by Council, for example, the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*.

# What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement is a planned process where Council and the community exchange information through different methods to enable problem solving and service delivery. Community engagement enables quality decision making by Council that is informed by an understanding of community values, needs, and aspirations.

Council is committed to hearing from our community about issues that affect them. Council does this in planned ways throughout the year, such as Community Yarns, pop-ups, reference groups, our online engagement platform and meetings with groups and individuals.

Council also acknowledges that it's important for the community to hear from us. Council is committed to keeping the community informed on Council decisions, news, opportunities to be involved and how we are delivering the projects and infrastructure that supports our communities. We do this through Council's website, social media, posters and flyers and local media like the Glenorchy Gazette.

The words 'Stakeholder' and 'Community' are used throughout the Framework.



## Stakeholder

This refers to a person, group of people, or organisation/s who are involved in an engagement because:

- They could be impacted by project outcomes.
- They have an interest in project outcomes.
- They are responsible for some of the project outcomes.



## Community

Refers to any group of people who share a connection with place, affiliation, or identity within the Glenorchy Local Government Area. Community can refer to Glenorchy as a whole, or to groups such as residents, ratepayers, business owners, workers, students, visitors, including tourists and shoppers, government establishments, community organisations, including clubs, churches and charity groups.

# Why Community Engagement?

Community engagement provides the opportunity for the community to have a say and contribute to the decisions and actions of Council. Communications (marketing and advertising) complements Council's engagement by ensuring our activities and outcomes are promoted.

**When effectively delivered, community engagement can lead to better outcomes for all with the following benefits:**

## To the Community



Improved community participation in Council's decisions.

Well informed and resourced community with improved understanding of Council's policies, projects and decisions and actions.

Community members feel included and empowered because they have expressed their right to be heard and informed.

Community members feel more trusting of Council and its processes.

Increased involvement and shared ownership of problems and solutions.

Appreciation and recognition of local community knowledge.

Empowerment for social change.

## To Council



Ability to make better informed decisions guided by an understanding of community values, needs, and aspirations.

Improved planning and delivery of services that meet community expectation, including efficient use of resources.

Provides opportunity to help the community understand issues, alternatives, opportunities, and solutions.

Builds confidence in Council's ability to deliver on services.

Gains early buy in and strengthens trust and partnership.

Community engagement will take place when:

- the views of individuals or groups within our community will provide further information valuable to planning, or decision-making.
- the issue will significantly affect existing levels of service.
- the issue is complex or controversial.
- the issue will have long term impact on the community.
- when it is a legislative requirement.

Using the Community Engagement Procedure and Toolkit, project coordinators will work with the Community Engagement Officer to determine level of engagement required for decision or project.



# Community Engagement Values

Council’s engagement procedures are guided by our community engagement values. In planning and delivering engagement activities, Council commits to these standards.

## We commit to community engagement that is:

<p><b>Inclusive and Representative</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are affected by an issue, we actively seek your views and ensure there are ways for you to have your say and find more information.</li> <li>• Council will listen to and value the ideas, feelings and opinions expressed during community engagement processes.</li> <li>• Council will promote the choice and rights of the community to engage and encourage those who wish to engage.</li> <li>• We respect our community – their history with the land, people, and times of Glenorchy.</li> <li>• We build relationships and promote mutual understanding. We encourage engagement activities that allow people to work together.</li> <li>• Where other government bodies undertake projects or activities that will impact on Council’s communities, Council will advocate for participation in the decision-making process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Accessible and Transparent</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We ensure accessible information is available to help our community be part of the process and understand decisions.</li> <li>• We promote the use of plain English in community engagement. Where information is technical in nature, supporting information will be provided. Where appropriate, information will be provided in languages other than English.</li> <li>• We are honest and open-minded. As stakeholders too, we will communicate our views and consider expert opinions where available.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Timely and Responsive</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We plan for engagement and engage as soon as possible to allow time for the community and stakeholders to participate in the process.</li> <li>• We acknowledge feedback, provide updates, and inform participants of the outcome of the process and how feedback was used in decision-making process.</li> <li>• We use IAP2 best practice methods to adapt our engagement methods to suit the project or issue.</li> </ul>
<p><b>And we commit to Continuous Improvement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We evaluate our engagement activities and learn from community feedback.</li> <li>• We are committed to the IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard in Community and Stakeholder Engagement.</li> <li>• Adequate resourcing (staff, skill, and financial means) is provided to enable each engagement process to fulfil its objectives and to enable a culture of meaningful community engagement.</li> </ul>

# International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is the leading professional organisation advancing the practice of public participation globally.

*“Community and stakeholder engagement is now required and accepted as a standard component of any significant project as much as traditional disciplines such as planning, development, and implementation.” (IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard)*

IAP2 has developed the IAP2 Core Values for Public Participation for use in the development and implementation of public participation processes. These core values help facilitate better decisions that reflect the concerns and interests of stakeholders.



## CORE VALUES

IAP2 Federation's Core Values for Public Participation professionals define the expectations and aspirations of the public participation process. Processes based on the Core Values have been shown to be the most successful and respected.

<p><b>1</b> Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.</p> <p><b>2</b> Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.</p> <p><b>3</b> Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers.</p>	<p><b>4</b> Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.</p> <p><b>5</b> Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.</p> <p><b>6</b> Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.</p> <p><b>7</b> Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.</p>
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[www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

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Council's engagement approach requires professional agility and flexibility to adapt to the nature of varying projects. IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum (page 10) is designed to assist engagement specialists and provide a structure when choosing engagement methods. The Community Engagement Procedure and Toolkit provides a list of tools to choose from – these tools can be adapted depending on the project requirements.

Differing levels of public participation are valuable depending on the goals, time frames, resources, and levels of impact of the decision to be made. The five levels of public participation are: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower.

# IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION					
	<b>INFORM</b>	<b>CONSULT</b>	<b>INVOLVE</b>	<b>COLLABORATE</b>	<b>EMPOWER</b>
<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL</b>	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
<b>PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC</b>	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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# Inclusive Engagement and Representation

Community engagement requires that those who are affected by an issue have the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process.

Glenorchy is a vibrant, diverse city, we will encourage maximum participation of the broadest section of those affected or interested, and we will work to ensure representativeness.

In practice it can sometimes be difficult for everyone who is affected or interested to participate in the process. Councils are often described as the level of government 'closest to the people'. Elected Members are voted in by the community to represent their views, they then become a way for people to have their say on important local issues.

**Representativeness describes the level of how well or how accurately a smaller number of people reflect a larger group. When an engagement process gives a good indication of what the broader community believes, the engagement is said to be representative. Representative engagement may require undertaking both quantitative and qualitative types of engagement.**

Qualitative engagement is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, motivations, and trends in thought. It provides insight into issues and helps to develop ideas. Data collected does not measure the number of responses and therefore its statistical validity cannot be determined. Data collection is often unstructured or semi-structured and includes methods such as focus group discussion.

Quantitative engagement is used to generate numerical data about observable issues that can be described or determined in mathematical forms such as percentages, averages, sums, etc. Data collected can be tested for validity and data collection is structured. Examples of quantitative engagement methods are surveys and polls.





**GLENORCHY**  
CITY COUNCIL

## *More Information*

If you would like any further information,  
please contact Council's  
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