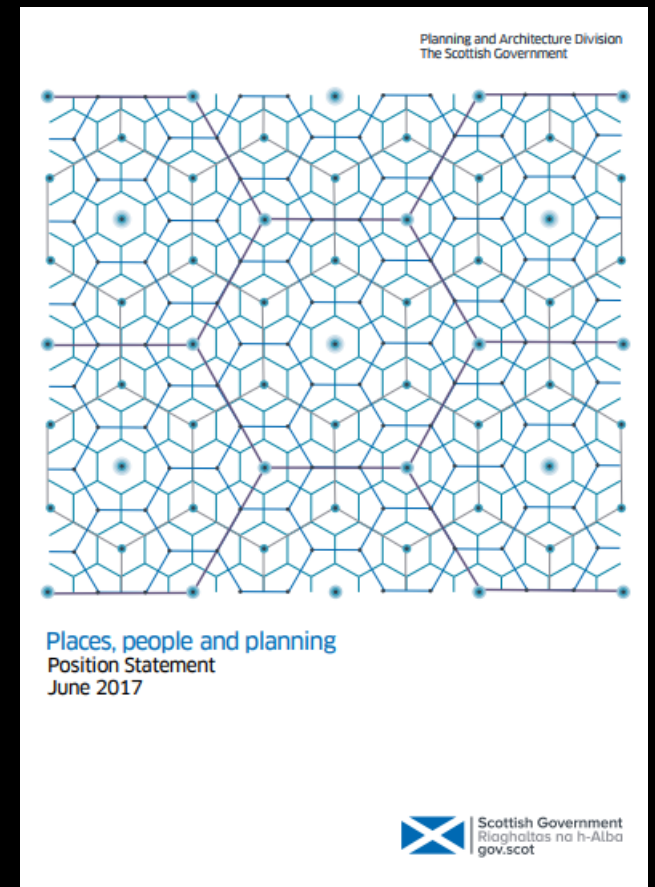


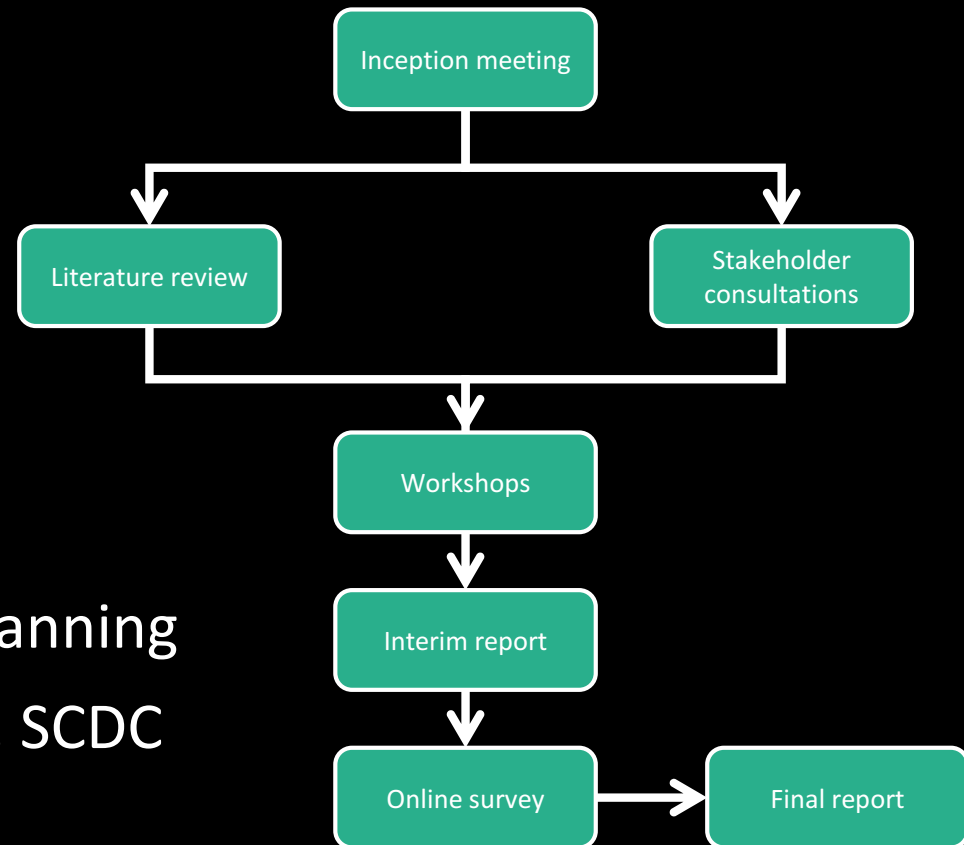
John Lord, yellow book  
Nick Wright, Nick Wright Planning  
Edinburgh 01.08.17



## The Scottish Government's brief

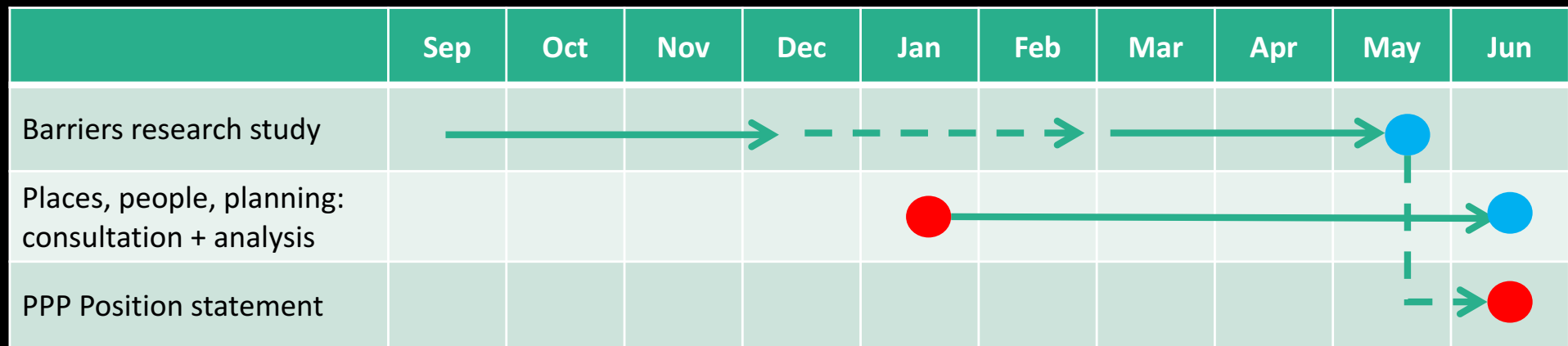
“...research to identify the barriers...which prevent the full involvement of communities, young people and other seldom-heard groups in the Scottish planning system and [to] provide findings which, either through changes in policy, practice or legislation, support a more collaborative and inclusive planning system”

# The consultant team and the work programme



- John Lord, yellow book
- Nick Wright, Nick Wright Planning
- Fiona Garven & Dave Allen, SCDC
- Kraken Research

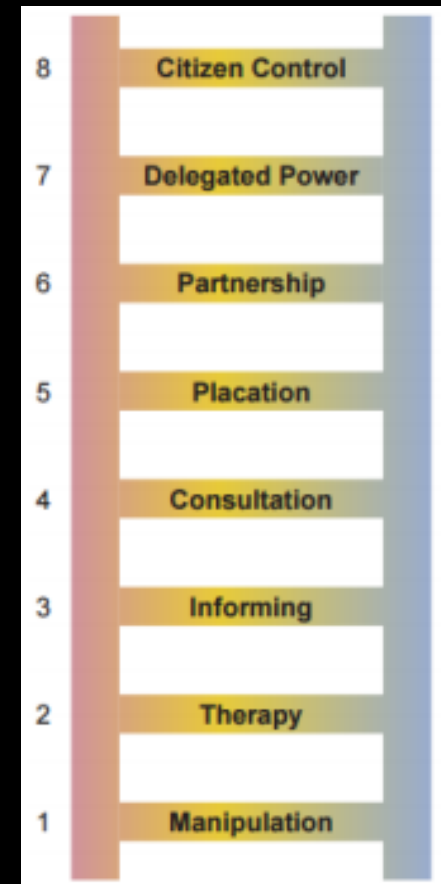
# The timeline



# Defining community engagement

Community engagement is a purposeful process which develops a working relationship between communities, community organisations and public and private bodies to help them to identify and act on community needs and ambitions. It involves respectful dialogue between everyone involved, aimed at improving understanding between them and taking joint action to achieve positive change. [It] is supported by the key principles of fairness and equality, and a commitment to learning and continuous improvement.

*National Standards for Community Engagement*



## The context: empowerment, engagement and participation

“Scotland’s communities are a rich source of energy, creativity and talent. They are made up of people with rich and diverse backgrounds who each have something to contribute to making Scotland flourish. Central and local government needs to help communities to work together and release that potential to create a more prosperous and fairer Scotland. The Scottish Government is committed to our communities being supported to do things for themselves – community empowerment – and to people having their voices heard in the planning and delivery of services – community engagement and participation.”

# The independent review: collaboration, inclusion and empowerment

Rec	
43	A continuing commitment to early engagement in planning, but practice needs to improve significantly.
44	Communities should be empowered to bring forward local place plans, and these should form part of the development plan.
45	Community councils should be given a statutory right to be consulted on the development plan.
46	We are not persuaded that third party rights of appeal should be introduced.
47	A working group should be established to identify barriers to greater involvement in planning
48	A new statutory right for young people to be consulted on the development plan.



# Places, people and planning: consultation document – key themes

Key change 1:  
Making plans for the future

Key change 2:  
People make the system  
work

Key change 3:  
Building homes and  
delivering infrastructure

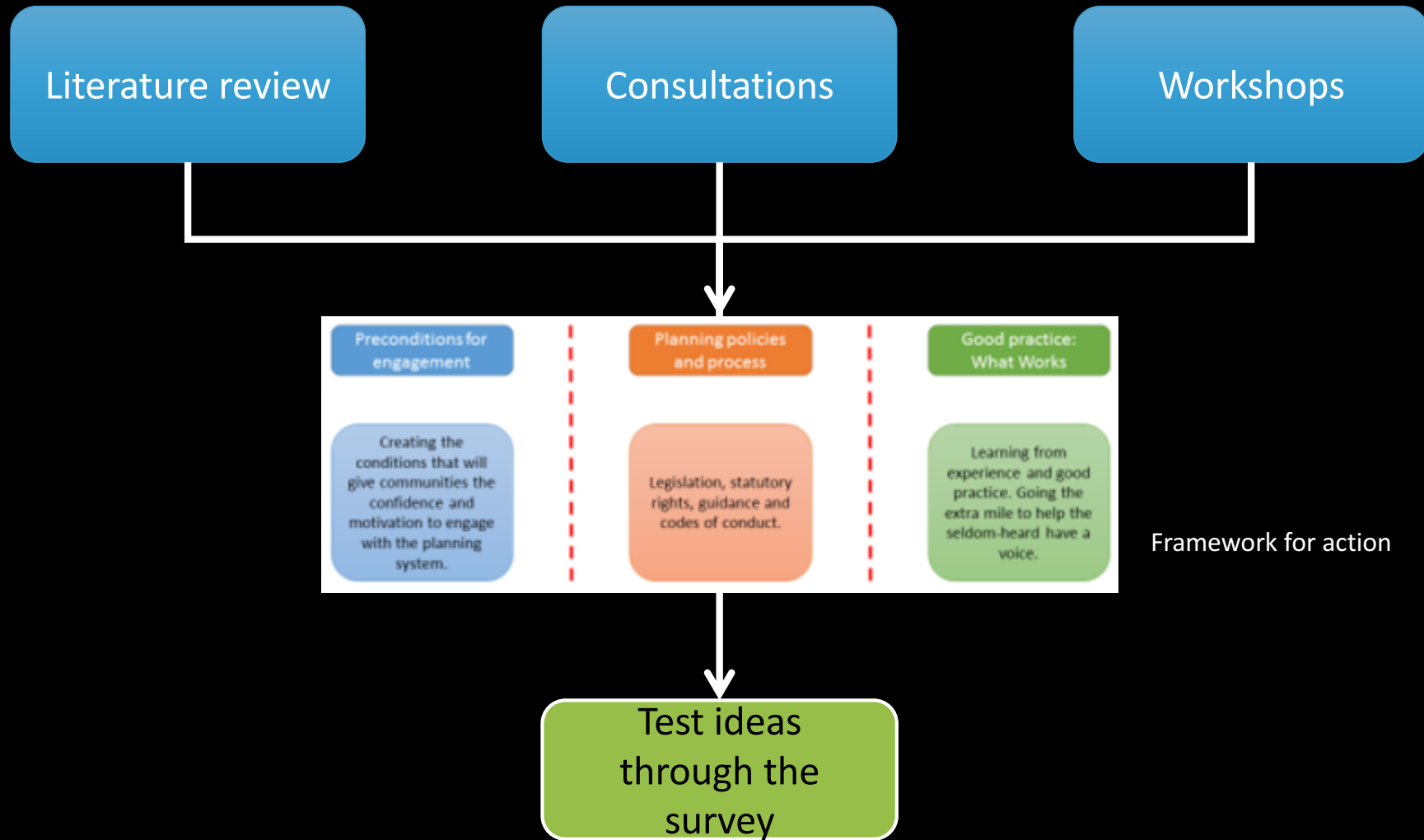
Key change 4:  
Stronger leadership and  
smarter resourcing



# Places, people and planning: People make the system work - proposals

Proposal	
6	<b>Giving people and opportunity to plan their own place:</b> a new right to plan + local place plans forming part of the LDP
7	<b>Getting more people involved in planning:</b> a stronger voice for children and young people
8	<b>Improving public trust:</b> improved pre-application consultation, discourage repeat applications and improve enforcement
9	<b>Keeping decisions local:</b> more local authority decision making

# Developing a framework for action



# Pathways to effective engagement

Pre-conditions for engagement

Creating the conditions that will give communities the confidence and motivation to engage with planning

Planning policies and process

Legislation, statutory rights, guidance, codes of conduct, access to resources

Good practice: what works

Learning from experience and good practice. Going the extra mile to help the seldom-heard have a voice

# Testing perceptions and ideas

## Preconditions for effective engagement

The Scottish Government should confirm that **the core purpose of planning is to create great places** that will promote the five strategic objectives for Scotland.

All parties should be clear about **the purpose of community engagement** and the benefits it can offer. Engagement should make a positive difference and deliver better planning outcomes.

The Scottish Government should give local communities and communities of interest the **right to plan** by leading the development of local place plans and engaging in the production of development plans.

There needs to be a climate of **mutual trust, respect and confidence** between the key players in the planning system: communities, planning authorities, landowners and developers.

The planning system must be **open, transparent and accessible to all**. Clear communications in plain English should ensure that everyone knows what is happening and how they can get involved.

Planners and developers must be **fully committed to engaging with communities**. They should actively encourage communities to get involved at the earliest possible stage, and to listen carefully and respond constructively.

The planning system must be **fair and equitable**, and it should be based on a clear understanding of the rights and responsibilities of all the interested parties.

The engagement process should involve communities in thinking about national and regional **public goods** such as housing, employment land, infrastructure and built/ natural heritage as well as local agendas.

## Planning policy and process

The Scottish Government should consider the case for **integrating spatial planning into the community planning process**. This innovative move would encourage joined-up policy thinking, reduce costs and place planning at the heart of the policy agenda.

Every planning authority should be required to produce a **community engagement plan** to support the integrated community/spatial planning process. Guidance may need to be published on the development of these plans.

The plan should reflect the guiding principle of **early engagement** with communities, focusing on the production of local place/locality plans, development plans and master plans.

The community engagement plan should include specific proposals for **increasing diversity in engagement and reaching seldom-heard groups**.

The community engagement plan should include an appraisal of the **demand and capacity** for engagement, and proposals for capacity building, training and staff development.

The Scottish Government should **assess the resources implications** of a drive to increase community engagement, and consider the case for a ring-fenced fund to support training and capacity building.

The Scottish Government should consider the case for commissioning a **code of practice** setting out the rights and responsibilities of communities, developers, landowners and planners engaging in the planning process.

## What Works – opportunities for practical action

### Make the most of existing guidance and good practice

The theory and practice of community engagement has been thoroughly examined and documented. For practitioners in Scotland there are two key sources:

- The National Standards for Community Engagement, and
- SP=EED Successful Planning = Effective Engagement and Delivery (PAS)

The national standards and SP=EED can be used in conjunction with the Government's Place Standard.

### Connecting with the seldom-heard

The independent review reported that there was "little evidence that disabled people, young people, minority ethnic groups, or disadvantaged groups are being effectively and routinely involved in the planning system". The consultations confirmed this view and we also encountered concerns that remote communities were poorly served. Some groups find it particularly difficult to get involved because of language barriers, disability, poverty or discrimination. The report describes ways in which practitioners can "go the extra mile" to reach out to the seldom-heard.:

### Using plain English, effective communications and feedback

The language of planning is a serious barrier to community engagement. The profession's enthusiasm for jargon – much of it entirely unnecessary – is seen as a means of excluding and intimidating ordinary members of the public. People understand the need for some technical language but they are frustrated when it is used to dress up arguments that should be expressed in plain English.

People were very critical of official notices, advertisements and confusing online portals, all of which are seen as ways in which local authorities ration participation in planning rather than actively promote it. Communities are frustrated by a lack of feedback from engagement events. They want a clear and accurate record of what was said, a statement of what was done with their ideas and suggestions, and a record of the decision reached.

“Planning is not effective in engaging/empowering communities”

92% community/civil society agree

59% professionals

“Consultation is often minimal rather than meaningful”

93% community/civil society agree

49% professionals

“Local authorities often seek to manage expectations”

84% community/civil society agree

63% professionals

“Community councils are keen to gather community views”

**73%** community/civil society agree

**33%** professionals



“There is mutual trust, respect and confidence between the players”

86% community/civil society disagree

83% professionals

“The system is open, transparent and accessible to all”

81% community/civil society disagree

57% professionals

“Planners and developers are committed to community engagement”

86% community/civil society disagree

52% professionals

“Community engagement influences planning outcomes”

85% community/civil society disagree

69% professionals

“We should integrate spatial planning into  
community planning”

**84%** community/civil society agree

**68%** professionals

“We should give communities the right to plan and produce local place plans”

92% community/civil society agree

49% professionals

“Engagement processes should be led by independent facilitators”

**84%** community/civil society agree

**38%** professionals

“The engagement process should meet people on their own terms in their own places”

91% community/civil society agree

46% professionals



## There's a lot that communities and professionals agree about

- front-loading engagement
- communities of interest as well as “locals”
- every Council should have an engagement strategy
- code of conduct for all parties
- the purpose of planning is to create great places
- planners should challenge developers to do better
- strengthening the community council network
- ring-fencing resources for community engagement

## What we've learned

- the independent review panel got it right
- community representatives are angry: it's a failing system
- professionals are anxious: there's something wrong
- the system isn't fair or equal
- mutual trust, respect and confidence are the essential preconditions for change – but they are absent
- there is a dissonance between the language of empowerment and the reality on the ground
- a “blank cheque” commitment to community engagement would be unsustainable and self-defeating

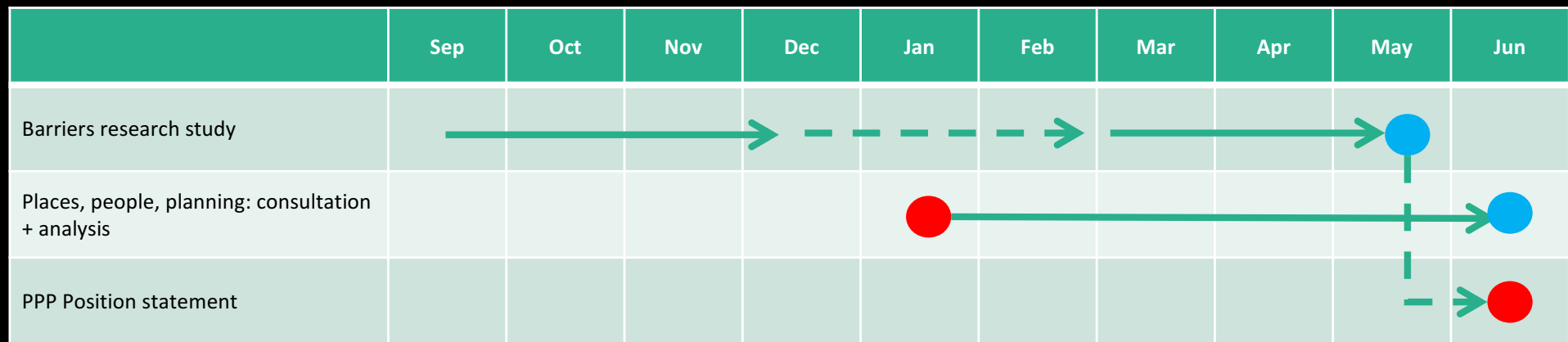
## Some big challenges

- all communities are under-represented
  - reaching the seldom-heard needs to be viewed in this context
- planning is complex: it is a domain of hard decisions and tensions are inevitable
- what is the point to community engagement if it doesn't exert a positive influence on policy and the built environment?
- balancing local goods and public value
- how much engagement can we handle? does every community have a right to plan?
- everyone involved should have rights *and* responsibilities

## Challenges for everyone...

- the Scottish Government must have the courage of its convictions – creating a space where the culture of engagement can flourish
- councils will need to work in a different way, with planners acting as independent experts and facilitators
- developers need to start by learning about the place and the community
- community councils and development trusts need to be more diverse and representative and to acquire new skills

# The timeline



# THE BIG QUESTION

Will the Position Statement be  
enough to tackle the barriers?

# A reminder: what the research team suggested

## Preconditions for effective engagement

The Scottish Government should confirm that **the core purpose of planning is to create great places** that will promote the five strategic objectives for Scotland.

All parties should be clear about **the purpose of community engagement** and the benefits it can offer. Engagement should make a positive difference and deliver better planning outcomes.

The Scottish Government should give local communities and communities of interest the **right to plan** by leading the development of local place plans and engaging in the production of development plans.

There needs to be a climate of **mutual trust, respect and confidence** between the key players in the planning system: communities, planning authorities, landowners and developers.

The planning system must be **open, transparent and accessible to all**. Clear communications in plain English should ensure that everyone knows what is happening and how they can get involved.

Planners and developers must be **fully committed to engaging with communities**. They should actively encourage communities to get involved at the earliest possible stage, and to listen carefully and respond constructively.

The planning system must be **fair and equitable**, and it should be based on a clear understanding of the rights and responsibilities of all the interested parties.

The engagement process should involve communities in thinking about national and regional **public goods** such as housing, employment land, infrastructure and built/ natural heritage as well as local agendas.

## Planning policy and process

The Scottish Government should consider the case for **integrating spatial planning into the community planning process**. This innovative move would encourage joined-up policy thinking, reduce costs and place planning at the heart of the policy agenda.

Every planning authority should be required to produce a **community engagement plan** to support the integrated community/spatial planning process. Guidance may need to be published on the development of these plans.

The plan should reflect the guiding principle of **early engagement** with communities, focusing on the production of local place/locality plans, development plans and master plans.

The community engagement plan should include specific proposals for **increasing diversity in engagement and reaching seldom-heard groups**.

The community engagement plan should include an appraisal of the **demand and capacity** for engagement, and proposals for capacity building, training and staff development.

The Scottish Government should **assess the resources implications** of a drive to increase community engagement, and consider the case for a ring-fenced fund to support training and capacity building.

The Scottish Government should consider the case for commissioning a **code of practice** setting out the rights and responsibilities of communities, developers, landowners and planners engaging in the planning process.

## What Works – opportunities for practical action

### Make the most of existing guidance and good practice

The theory and practice of community engagement has been thoroughly examined and documented. For practitioners in Scotland there are two key sources:

- The National Standards for Community Engagement, and
- SP=EED Successful Planning = Effective Engagement and Delivery (PAS)

The national standards and SP=EED can be used in conjunction with the Government's Place Standard.

### Connecting with the seldom-heard

The independent review reported that there was "little evidence that disabled people, young people, minority ethnic groups, or disadvantaged groups are being effectively and routinely involved in the planning system". The consultations confirmed this view and we also encountered concerns that remote communities were poorly served. Some groups find it particularly difficult to get involved because of language barriers, disability, poverty or discrimination. The report describes ways in which practitioners can "go the extra mile" to reach out to the seldom-heard.:

### Using plain English, effective communications and feedback

The language of planning is a serious barrier to community engagement. The profession's enthusiasm for jargon – much of it entirely unnecessary – is seen as a means of excluding and intimidating ordinary members of the public. People understand the need for some technical language but they are frustrated when it is used to dress up arguments that should be expressed in plain English.

People were very critical of official notices, advertisements and confusing online portals, all of which are seen as ways in which local authorities ration participation in planning rather than actively promote it. Communities are frustrated by a lack of feedback from engagement events. They want a clear and accurate record of what was said, a statement of what was done with their ideas and suggestions, and a record of the decision reached.

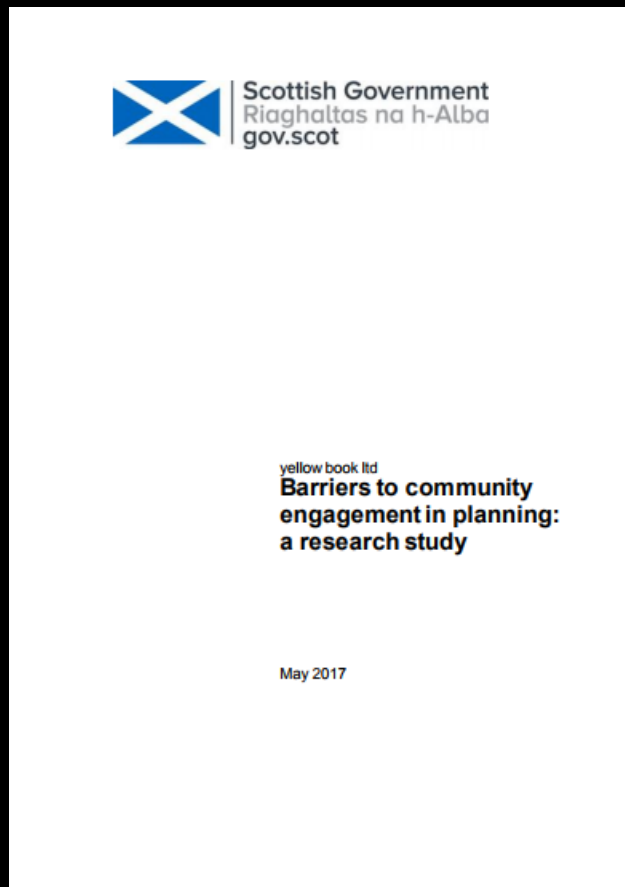
3 key areas	Barriers research	<i>Position Statement</i>	What else is needed?
<b>Lack of trust &amp; transparency</b>	Mutual trust, respect & confidence amongst key players. Open, transparent & accessible to all. Fair & equitable. Professionals must fully commit.	<i>Amendments to PAC.</i> <i>Remove 'free go' after refusal or appeal.</i> <i>Stronger enforcement.</i> <i>Training for professionals.</i> <i>No equal appeal rights.</i>	?



3 key areas	Barriers research	<i>Position Statement</i>	What else is needed?
<p><b>Why engage?</b>  <b>How much?</b>  <b>Where does it end?</b></p>	<p>Clarity of purpose: public or individual? Empower or consult?  Community right to plan (lead LPPs, engage in LDPs).  Integrate community/spatial planning.  Community engagement plans.  Connect with the “seldom-heard”.  Resources.</p>	<p><i>LPPs consistent with LDP.</i>  <i>Align community/spatial planning.</i>  <i>Involve children &amp; young people more.</i>  <i>Consider how to shift from consultation to empowerment.</i></p>	<p>?</p>

3 key areas	Barriers research	<i>Position Statement</i>	What else is needed?
<b>Planning is complex: tensions are inevitable</b>	Engage on national/regional public goods & local agendas. Rights & responsibilities: code of practice? More use of NSCE & SP=EED.	<i>Involve people earlier in the planning process.</i> <i>Guidance on rights &amp; responsibilities.</i>	?

Key areas	Barriers research	<i>Position Statement</i>	What else is needed?
<b>Lack of trust &amp; transparency</b>	<p>Mutual trust, respect &amp; confidence amongst key players.</p> <p>Open, transparent &amp; accessible to all.</p> <p>Fair &amp; equitable.</p> <p>Professionals must fully commit.</p>	<p><i>Amendments to PAC.</i></p> <p><i>Remove ‘free go’ after refusal or appeal.</i></p> <p><i>Stronger enforcement.</i></p> <p><i>Training for professionals.</i></p> <p><i>No equal appeal rights.</i></p>	<p>?</p>
<b>Why engage?</b> <b>How much?</b> <b>Where does it end?</b>	<p>Clarity of purpose: public or individual? Empower or consult?</p> <p>Community right to plan (lead LPPs, engage in LDPs).</p> <p>Integrate community/spatial planning.</p> <p>Community engagement plans.</p> <p>Connect with the “seldom-heard”.</p> <p>Resources.</p>	<p><i>LPPs consistent with LDP.</i></p> <p><i>Align community/spatial planning.</i></p> <p><i>Involve children &amp; young people more.</i></p> <p><i>Consider how to shift from consultation to empowerment.</i></p>	<p>?</p>
<b>Planning is complex: tensions are inevitable</b>	<p>Engage on national/regional public goods &amp; local agendas.</p> <p>Rights &amp; responsibilities: code of practice?</p> <p>More use of NSCE &amp; SP=EED.</p>	<p><i>Involve people earlier in the planning process.</i></p> <p><i>Guidance on rights &amp; responsibilities.</i></p>	<p>?</p>



John Lord, yellow book  
Nick Wright, Nick Wright Planning  
Edinburgh 01.08.17

