

Awarding Body: University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Programme Name: BA Business Management

Module Name: Community Engagement (LCBB4002)

Assignment Title: Community Engagement Assessment 1

Student Name and Number: Anita Varga / 2012895

Tutor Name: Dr. Gregory Cowan

Word Count: 2000

COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES AT KEW GARDENS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

2. KEW GARDENS

3. COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES AT KEW

4. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STANDARDS & PRINCIPLES

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

7. CONCLUSION

8. REFERENCES

1. INTRODUCTION

The world and people nowadays are pressed and facing more and more challenges. We are challenged for instance by Covid-19 but we are also blessed. We are given resources and opportunities to influence each other, our nation and together the whole world. We have to build awareness amongst us and have a plan to fight challenges such as changing climate. Building communities where we can educate the young, help each other and care for the environment is a great way to start. The talent, the art, the culture is ours and we can use them to build a stronger community. We are fortunate to have one another.

At Kew Gardens they are running inspirational community programmes for instance Grow Wild, Come and Sing at Kew, Shared Stories, Knitting Nature and Community Learning Programmes. People share their stories, being present for one another and succeed together. They feel included

2. KEW GARDENS

Kew Gardens, one of London's top tourist attraction is a botanic garden which was founded in 1840. It is located in Southwest London and has the largest herbarium and the most diverse botanical collection in the world. It is a World Heritage Site and managed by The Royal Botanic Gardens. Kew is a botanical research and education institution. (Wikipedia, 2020)

Kew Gardens is also a wonderful place where people can go for a weekend to relax, admire the beautiful botanical collections and spend quality time with their families.

It hosts many concerts during the year and the magical lights at Christmas time is something not to miss.

3. COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES AT KEW

There are running traditional, face-to-face offline programmes. The idea is to get people together to share ideas, enjoy being together and have fun. People feel that they belong and care for each other.

They include the best practice community engagement techniques such as:

Informing: providing information to localities to enable them to understand problems, alternatives, opportunities and solutions.

Consulting: obtaining locality feedback to inform decision making.

Involving: working directly with the locality to ensure that issues, concerns and aspirations are understood and considered.

Collaborating: working in partnership with localities on all aspects of decision making including development of options and identifying preferred solutions.

Empowering: Placing final decision making in the hands of the locality. (Council, 2015)

Community Programmes at Kew:

Grow Wild: this programme is supported by the National Lottery Community Fund and by other private and public contributions. It connects people with nature and teaches them to be aware about the environment and surroundings. It raises the understanding that we are part of the natural world what we need to protect. It is definitely improves health and helps people wellbeing. It provides community groups with resources and skills and change lives.

Community Growing: community groups can have their own little land to look after. What can be more inspiring than watching our own plants to grow! This can be a very inspiring activity.

Hands-on horticultural workshops: this programme encourages people to work actively and collaboratively together on a specific issue. All participants need to engage and it creates inclusivity and involvement.

Make Do and Mend: great opportunity for DIY skills for instance building birds houses or repair fences. If people up for a bit of physical work and activity this is something for them to try.

Come and Sing at Kew: partnership programme for local community choirs and singing groups. Music is always good for the mind. It helps people to forget about their daily issues and problems.

Shared Stories: this is to discover writing talents and spend quality time together with people with the same interest.

Plant Poets Corner: people can learn about Kew's rare plants whilst doing some creative poetry activities and learning how to express themselves.

Knitting Nature: fun and friendly knit group. People with similar interest can discuss ideas about Kew's rare plants, science or simple just having some great discussions.

Community Learning Programmes: this is available for individuals or groups who are members of Kew's Community Membership Scheme and for people that has physical, psychological or other social barriers to visiting Kew. This is an opportunity to learn about science, history and horticulture.

(Kew Royal Botanic Gardens)

4. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Social media has become the most popular, fastest and cost effective way to engage the community. They provide value and tell people's stories. People tend to trust other people's opinions and experiences. Sharing can create new communities and strengthens existing ones. A community connects people and helps achieving common goals.

Social media platforms used by Kew: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube.

These platforms help people to communicate and engage them in their passion. Information gets to a wider spectrum of people.

Kew Garden uses the following ways to increase community engagement:

Use images on Facebook and Instagram to tell a story: image posts get more interaction than other posts. The more emotionally focused the image is, the more your community will engage with your post.

Share success stories of community members on Youtube: members leave reviews and success stories from their experiences. People tend to trust other people's opinions and experiences.

Head for Emotions: for example posting an emotional quote.

Show every side of the business: personal connection with community members.

Ask audience for help: It's a great way to give community members the feeling that they matter.

Blackadder, A., 2020.

(Community Engagement and Social Media, 2020)

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STANDARDS & PRINCIPLES

Standards are measurement of best practices and based on policies that reflects: Inclusion, Fairness, Equality and Participation. It is intended to act as a reference point for quality and accountability. Standards are designed to reflect the principles of participation, engagement and empowerment. For effective and efficient community engagement, standards are required to guide the entire process.

At Kew Gardens in their community programmes they are using community engagement standards for example:

Inclusion: It promotes the law against discrimination (age, disability, sex, gender, marriage, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion) and human capital development to improve community life and helping people live their greatest lives. Everyone having equal access to health, justice, wealth and opportunity.

Support: Action is taken to remove or reduce any practical barriers which make it difficult for people to take part in engagement activities.

Planning: There is a clear purpose for the engagement, which is based on a shared understanding of community needs and ambitions.

Working Together: Working together to achieve the aims of the engagement.

Methods: Use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.

Communication: communicate clearly and regularly with the people, organisations and communities affected by the engagement.

Impact: assess the impact of the engagement and use what we have learned to improve our future community engagement. (National Standards for Community Engagement, 2016.)

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Constituency Development

They should keep developing relationships with community members. Constituency development involves four practice elements (Hatcher et al., 2008):

1. Know the community, its constituents, and its capabilities.
2. Establish positions and strategies that guide interactions with constituents.
3. Build and sustain formal and informal networks to maintain relationships, communicate messages, and leverage resources.
4. Mobilize communities and constituencies for decision making and social action. (Principles of Community Engagement Second Edition, 2011)

To Create Good Engagement

Sampson-Foster suggests that it needs a culture shift to enable it, not just a different set of tools. Such a shift would demand the willingness to examine what has been done before, to understand what works for the community and what doesn't, and to explore the opportunities that new technology can bring to consultation. It would give people the clarity they need to join and stay in a

conversation where their input is demonstrably valued. (Sampson-Foster J., 2020)

Online Platform

It can bring a wider range and volume of different voices to the conversation, especially those who may not be able to participate offline.

It can compel an exploration beyond the comfort zone but it can also represent risk. It can carry uncertainty. However, these risks can be transformed into opportunities, Sampson-Foster suggests, by ensuring that the risks are sensible and by giving potential implications their due consideration.

They could use an online hub where different consultations are live, and people can have a say in community matters.

There are benefits of online community engagement such as:

- contact with hard to reach groups (older people, socially excluded groups and minority groups)
- contact with divided communities and opposition groups
- No location and accessibility issues (transport requirements)
- Simpler planning process
- The levels of community infrastructure

7. CONCLUSION

Community engagement programmes are important because the world is so materialistic and this is a great way to bring people together and share experiences and help each other. They are not present in all countries; for example, I had heard little about them in my home country of Hungary. Governments should realize the importance of these programmes helping their populations stay connected.

Togetherness is very important. The world is divided by politics, religion, economics, media. We need to realise that we are one. Getting to one, a united population required. To become a united nation we need action and change. Committed citizens can change the world to the better. We have to realise that we have to change for our environment and for our families.

Governments have to realise that they have to create knowledge based economy and create opportunities for people and families. Small things can be the big things in the end. If we start to build small communities eventually they can have world changing effects.

Kew Gardens are running excellent community programmes and doing so much for the community. It is inspiring to see how people can share ideas and helping each other.

Due to the world we are living in now, they may consider using additional online platforms to expand their community activities such as Zoom. This would certainly break down barriers such as transportation, geographical location. People could connect from all over the world which would benefit cultural exchanges.

8. REFERENCES

Community Engagement and Social Media. (2020). Available at:

<https://medium.com/the-guide-to-remote-community-engagement/community-engagement-and-social-media-8b5164a8486f#:~:text=The%20proliferation%20of%20social%20media%20has%20had%20a,on%20Facebook%2C%20Twitter%2C%20and%20other%20social%20media%20platforms.> (Accessed on 13 December 2020)

Wikipedia. (2020). Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kew_Gardens. (Accessed on 13 December 2020)

Herefordshire Council. (2015). *Best practice community engagement techniques*.

Herefordshire Council. Available at:

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/3703/guidance_note_12_best_practice_community_engagement_techniques.pdf (Accessed on 13/12/2020).

Kew Royal Botanic Gardens. (n.d.). Retrieved December 14, 2020, from [kew.org](http://www.kew.org).

Available at: <https://www.kew.org/> (Accessed on 14 December 2020)

National Standards for Community Engagement. (2016). Available at:

http://www.voicescotland.org.uk/media/resources/NSfCE%20online_October.pdf (Accessed 13 Dec. 2020).

Principles of Community Engagement Second Edition, 2011. Available at: https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/pdf/PCE_Report_508_FINAL.pdf, Page 103 (Accessed on 13 December 2020)

Blackadder, A. (n.d.). *7 creative ways to increase community engagement on social media*. [online] Available at: <https://www.hughesandco.ca/blog/7-creative-ways-to-increase-community-engagement-on-social-media>. (Accessed 13 Dec. 2020).

Samson-Foster J., 2020. Available at: <https://www.bangthetable.com/blog/coventrys-beyond-the-survey/> (Accessed 13 December 2020)