SBD Community Toolkit

A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement









Foreword

At Sandyford, we believe that a Business Improvement District is about more than enhancing infrastructure—it's about creating real value for the people who live and work here. For us, sustainability is not just a buzzword; it's a responsibility and a promise to future generations.

In 2023, we proudly joined the IB-Green project, an EU-funded initiative that fosters sustainability across North-West Europe. Our goal is to transform industrial and business parks into climate-resilient spaces. As part of a network spanning six countries—Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Ireland, and the Netherlands—Sandyford Business District is united with 11 partners under one common goal: to lead the way in sustainable urban transformation.

Our mission is clear and urgent: to mitigate the heat stress caused by the vast expanse of sealed surfaces in industrial parks, where up to 80% of the land is covered by concrete. These areas become urban heat islands, amplifying the impacts of climate change. By introducing green and blue infrastructure, we aim to cool these spaces and enhance livability, not just for businesses, but for the entire community.

In partnership with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, we are transforming 0.8 hectares of land into a new civic park at the heart of Sandyford Business District. This is more than just adding green space—it's about designing a future of climate resilience, a place where nature and urban life can coexist sustainably.

Our journey has been rooted in research and community engagement. To deepen our understanding, we partnered with UCD Innovation Academy and welcomed Sam O'Connor, a Master's student in Design Thinking in Sustainability. Over three months, Sam applied design thinking principles to our project, highlighting the vital role of community engagement in the park's success.

To gain deeper insights into the needs of the Sandyford community, we hosted focus group sessions with various stakeholders and conducted a personas workshop facilitated by Wessel Badenhorst from Urban Mode. This collaborative effort has been essential in shaping our vision, ensuring that this park is a space for everyone.

This toolkit is the culmination of our research, filled with valuable data and insights to guide the creation of a vibrant, climate-resilient space. Our project is not just about sustainability—it's about building a connected community.

Because to make this vision a reality, we need everyone to join us on this journey. Together, we can transform Sandyford into a model of sustainable, community-focused urban design.

Fernanda Pinto Godoy EU Project Manager at Sandyford Business District







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1. Sandyford Business District and IB-Green Project Summary

Sandyford Business District (SBD), a non-profit organisation, is committed to enhancing the well-being of over 26,000 employees and 6,000 residents through sustainable development initiatives.

As part of this mission, SBD has successfully secured European funding for three major projects, including the IB-Green initiative, which focuses on transforming industrial and business parks into climate-resilient spaces while mitigating heat stress.

The IB-Green Project, a multi-year initiative (2023-2027) funded by Interreg, aims to address critical environmental issues such as the urban heat island effect, poor air quality, and a lack of green infrastructure. The project brings together 11 partners from six countries across North-West Europe (NWE), each contributing innovative solutions to climate challenges. The aim of the project is focused on integrating green and blue infrastructure, to create healthier environments and climate resilience in industrial and business districts.

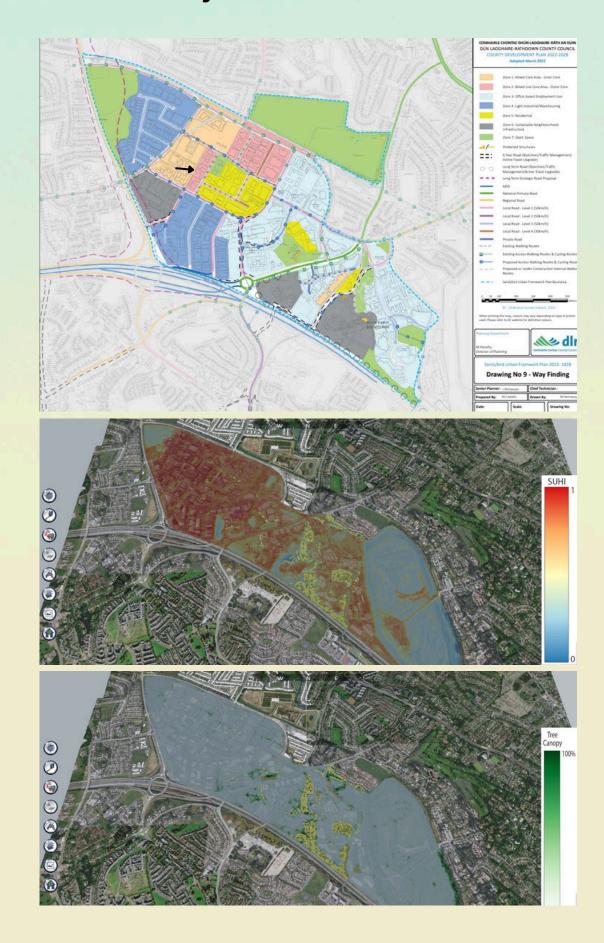
As a key participant, SBD is collaborating with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council to transform a 0.8-hectare of land into a new civic park. This park will not only beautify the district but also play a vital role in reducing heat stress, improving air quality, and providing a community space for social and recreational activities.

SBD's commitment to innovation is further demonstrated through ongoing research, including geospatial mapping to assess urban heat islands and tree density coverage. This data-driven approach ensures the development of effective and sustainable solutions tailored to the district's specific needs.

Through its involvement in IB-Green, SBD continues to lead in climate action, delivering long-term value to the local community and contributing to the global sustainability agenda.



2. Pilot Site and Geospatial Mapping on Urban Heat Island and Tree Density Cover



3. Targeted Climate Risk Analysis of Sandyford Business District: Key Insights and Opportunities

In collaboration with University College Dublin (UCD), Sandyford Business District (SBD) conducted an in-depth targeted analysis as part of the IB-Green project to assess the climate risks facing the district and guide the future pilot action. The analysis involved gathering feedback from employees, local businesses, and residents through focus groups, detailed surveys, personas workshops, geospatial mapping, and direct stakeholder engagement. This comprehensive approach allowed for a deeper understanding of the district's environmental, social, and community challenges.

Key Insights:

- Lack of Outdoor Amenities: A recurring theme was the frustration over the absence of inviting outdoor spaces. Many employees expressed dissatisfaction with the limited areas available for relaxation or eating lunch, often choosing to return to their offices instead of enjoying a break outside.
- Need for Sustainability and Engagement Initiatives: While businesses demonstrated strong support for sustainability, they highlighted the need for clearer guidance on how to participate in local initiatives. Companies are eager to align their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) goals with sustainability efforts but struggle to find actionable pathways to get involved.
- Environmental Discontent: Employees and businesses described the district as a "concrete jungle," emphasizing the lack of greenery and communal areas. This sense of detachment from the natural environment contributed to a feeling of dissatisfaction among stakeholders.
- Challenges in Business Parks: Traditional business and industrial parks prioritise corporate infrastructure, often at the expense of environmental and community well-being. Sandyford Business District's setting faces challenges such as poor air quality, heat stress, and the absence of communal and green spaces, leading to a disconnected urban experience.
- Opportunities for Improvement: There is strong demand for well-designed, sustainable outdoor spaces that encourage social interaction and community building. Businesses and residents seek green initiatives that not only enhance the district's environmental quality but also support their broader CSR and sustainability goals.

SBD is committed to addressing these challenges by transforming the district into a more

sustainable, inclusive, and community-oriented space. By prioritizing green infrastructure and promoting stakeholder engagement, SBD aims to shift away from the traditional, impersonal business park model and create a more vibrant, connected environment.

4. Focus Groups and Stakeholder Discussions



5. Personas

As part of our background research for the Sandyford Business District, a personas workshop was conducted by Wessel Badenhorst from Urban Mode, supported by UCD. This workshop utilized census data and community feedback to identify resident profiles and personas who will be utilizing the new civic park. The research is fundamental in establishing a baseline for SBD's community engagement toolkit, ensuring the park's design and future initiatives align with the needs and characteristics of the community.

Problem Statement:

Residential park users require enhanced outdoor facilities, as the current environment hinders the development of an active and engaged community.

Persona Analysis:

Understanding the diverse needs of Sandyford's residents was essential for creating a community engagement framework that meets their expectations. Through the analysis of census data, surveys, and focus groups, two key personas were identified. These personas represent the primary demographic groups who will most benefit from a reimagined civic park focused on sustainability, inclusivity, and community engagement

Persona 1: Indian Professional (Age 25-35)

Profile

- Health-conscious, active, and often newly relocated to Sandyford.
- Seeks community, cultural connection, and diverse social spaces.
- Desires more food options, particularly those reflecting their cultural background, along with relaxing outdoor spaces.

Current Experience:

Their experience in Sandyford Business District is primarily transactional, focused around work with limited opportunities for leisure or socialization. They commute to the district, spend the workday in the office, and leave immediately afterward. The lack of outdoor seating and green spaces prevents them from relaxing or enjoying lunch outdoors. Additionally, the limited availability of culturally diverse food options hinders their culinary experiences during the day. This persona feels the district does not adequately support their needs for physical activity, wellness, or community engagement

Persona 2: Stay-at-Home Mother with Young Children (Age 25-40)

Profile:

- Stay-at-home mother residing in Sandyford with children under the age of 5.
- Concerned about her children's safety due to busy roads and a lack of play areas.
- Prioritizes family well-being and seeks safe, engaging environments for her children to play and learn.

Current Experience:

For young families, the industrial nature of Sandyford presents significant challenges. This stay-at-home mother is focused on providing a safe and stimulating environment for her children, but the district lacks essential child-friendly infrastructure. Busy roads, minimal pedestrian zones, and the absence of playgrounds or parks mean she often has to leave the area to find suitable spaces for her children to play. With nearly 47% of families in Sandyford having at least one child under five, the shortage of child-focused spaces is a major concern. Additionally, the lack of family-oriented events or communal spaces makes it difficult for parents to connect and form a supportive community.

This persona currently finds it difficult to integrate into the local community. The industrial design of the district feels unwelcoming and unsafe for her children, leading her to spend most of her time indoors or outside the district where safer, more family-friendly environments are available. The absence of communal, child-friendly spaces limits her ability to meet other parents or provide outdoor play opportunities for her children, leaving her family disconnected from the local community and its potential social benefits.

The overarching challenge within Sandyford Business District is the lack of inclusive, community-driven spaces that address the diverse needs of its growing resident population. The district has historically been designed around the needs of businesses, but with the rising number of residents, many of whom are looking for a better quality of life it is imperative to develop infrastructure and initiatives that foster social engagement, cultural inclusivity, and environmental sustainability.

There is a clear demand for more green spaces, outdoor seating, and family-friendly activities that reflect the changing demographics of SBD. Without these changes, residents will continue to feel isolated from their environment, with limited opportunities to connect with each other and their surroundings.



THE 3 PILLARS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Engagement Toolkit is structured around three main pillars:











1. Cultural and Inclusive Events

One of the strongest findings from the resident survey was the desire for more culturally diverse and inclusive events. Over 90% of respondents expressed interest in the idea of having food trucks in the park, particularly those offering diverse food options. In response to this, the toolkit introduces Indian Food Truck Fridays, a weekly event that will bring authentic Indian cuisine to the heart of Sandyford. This initiative not only caters to the culinary preferences of the growing Indian professional community but also serves as a platform for cultural exchange and social interaction. It transforms the park into a lively, communal space where residents and workers can gather, eat, and connect.

2. Sustainable Community Involvement

Sustainability is at the core of the toolkit, and this pillar focuses on engaging the community in environmentallyfriendly activities that contribute to the long-term health of the district. The Tree Planting Initiative invites residents to participate in the creation of a pocket forest, giving them the opportunity to leave a lasting, green legacy in the district. This initiative not only improves air quality and reduces the urban heat island effect but also empowers residents to take ownership of the park's environmental future.

Additionally, the Birdhouse and Bee Hotel Building Workshops offer families and individuals the chance to engage in fun, hands-on activities that support local biodiversity. These workshops will not only promote environmental education but also provide opportunities for residents to bond with each other through a shared commitment to sustainability.

3. Health and Well-being

Recognizing the importance of both physical and mental wellbeing, this pillar focuses on creating spaces and activities that promote a healthier lifestyle for all residents. One of the standout features is the Kinetic Playground, a playground designed with interactive, energy-generating play structures that encourage children to be physically active while also contributing to sustainable energy production. This playground will serve as a much-needed safe space for young families, offering a secure and engaging environment for children.

Furthermore, the Community Garden will provide a space for residents to grow their own produce, share gardening tips, and learn about sustainable food practices. The garden fosters a sense of community by bringing together individuals who share a common interest in healthy living and environmental



7. New Capabilities Enabled by Personas: Unlocking Opportunities

With the introduction of these initiatives, both personas will experience significant improvements in their day-to-day lives within SBD:

- Indian professionals will now have access to culturally relevant food options, outdoor spaces where they can socialise during their lunch breaks, and inclusive community events that make them feel more connected to their environment.
- Stay-at-home mothers will have a safe, engaging space where their children can play, along with opportunities to meet other families through family-friendly events like birdhouse building workshops. The new park infrastructure will address their concerns about child safety and create a more welcoming, family-oriented environment.

The Community Engagement Toolkit is designed not only to meet the needs of the identified personas, but to provide a range of benefits to everyone living and working in Sandyford. By offering diverse and inclusive initiatives, the toolkit fosters a sense of belonging and encourages social interaction for people of all ages and backgrounds. These initiatives will also attract visitors from outside the district, making the park a social hub where local businesses, residents, and newcomers can engage with one another, further enhancing the district's appeal and creating a thriving, interconnected community.



8. Sustainable Best Practices

Sustainable Event Guidelines:

The toolkit promotes sustainable practices in all community events. These guidelines aim to reduce the environmental impact of gatherings by focusing on waste reduction, energy efficiency, and minimizing carbon footprints. Specific recommendations include:

- Waste Reduction: Encouraging the use of reusable or compostable food and drink containers. Vendors and event organizers will be urged to reduce single-use plastics and emphasize recycling.
- Energy-Efficient Equipment: Event organizers should use energy-efficient lighting and sound systems, preferably powered by renewable energy sources like solar generators.
- Local Sourcing: Supporting local businesses by sourcing food and materials locally, reducing transportation emissions, and fostering the local economy.
- Carbon Offsetting: Calculating the event's carbon footprint and encouraging participants to contribute to local carbon offsetting initiatives, such as tree planting in the Civic Park.

These guidelines will not only make community events more sustainable but also educate participants about reducing their personal environmental impact.

Climate Resilience

The community engagement initiatives in this toolkit are designed with climate resilience at the forefront. By enhancing green spaces, promoting sustainable mobility, and focusing on air quality improvements, these efforts will make Sandyford more resistant to climate-related challenges such as heat waves and pollution.

- Green Spaces and Heat Reduction: Increasing green spaces in Sandyford, such as pocket forests and community gardens, will combat the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect, a major issue in densely populated areas. More trees and green areas will provide shade and help reduce temperatures during hot periods, contributing directly to climate resilience.
- Air Quality Improvement: Initiatives like planting air-purifying vegetation and promoting carfree zones aim to improve the district's air quality. Businesses and residents alike will benefit from these efforts, which contribute to better health and well-being.
- Sustainable Mobility: Reducing traffic congestion and encouraging sustainable transportation options, like walking, cycling, or using a district bus, will further contribute to cleaner air and a healthier environment.



9. UN Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global objectives established by the United Nations to address critical challenges in relation to sustainability. The Community Engagement Toolkit has been designed to align with the following SDGs



SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

These initiatives directly support SDG 11, which calls for making urban spaces inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. By fostering green spaces and improving mobility, the toolkit aims to transform Sandyford into a model of urban sustainability. Enhancing public spaces and promoting sustainable mobility options will contribute to a more livable, connected, and environmentally friendly community.



SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

Improved air quality and accessible green spaces offer direct health benefits to Sandyford residents and workers. Reducing heat stress through additional greenery, along with lowering pollution levels, will create a more health-conscious environment. Decreasing traffic and emissions through pedestrian-friendly spaces and greenery directly supports SDG 3, which emphasizes reducing deaths and illnesses caused by air pollution. Cleaner air will lead to fewer respiratory issues and improved overall community health. Expanding green spaces also provides residents with more opportunities for outdoor activities, which contribute to physical and mental well-being.



SDG 4: Quality Education

Education is a key element of these initiatives, ensuring the community understands the importance of sustainability and is empowered to take action. Through educational workshops and events focused on topics such as composting, air purification, and the benefits of heat reduction techniques, the toolkit supports SDG 4, which emphasizes inclusive and equitable quality education. These opportunities will raise awareness of local and global environmental issues while equipping residents with the knowledge and tools to implement sustainable practices in their own lives.





10. How to Get Involved

At Sandyford Business District (SBD), our mission is simple: to create value for those who live and work here. With a small but dedicated team, we drive initiatives that enhance business growth, public infrastructure, and community life. Whether it's through events, speaking to our team, or engaging online, we're always your first point of contact.

Representing over 1,000 companies, 26,000 employees, and 5,500 residents across four business parks, we're committed to making SBD a thriving, world-class hub for everyone. You can also learn more about our EU-funded projects that further support our community initiatives. Stay connected by visiting our website or subscribing to our newsletter!

https://www.sandyford.ie/



Opportunities for Residents:

Residents can participate by attending community events, joining workshops, or volunteering for initiatives like planting trees or organising sustainability workshops. They are also encouraged to provide feedback on ongoing projects through surveys or community meetings.

Business Involvement:

Local businesses can sponsor community events, such as food festivals or fitness sessions, or contribute to the park's development through donations or sponsorship of green spaces and facilities. Businesses can also engage employees in community initiatives, fostering stronger ties with the district.

Partnerships and Collaborations:

Collaboration is key to the success of the toolkit. We encourage partnerships between community organisations, schools, local authorities, and environmental groups. These partnerships will enable more diverse projects, shared resources, and stronger outreach within the community.



1. Subscribe to the Community Newsletter o Stay updated on all upcoming events, sustainability initiatives, and opportunities to engage with the park. Check your inbox regularly for event announcements and toolkit updates. 2. Spread the Word Tell your friends, family, and neighbours about the events happening in the community. o Encourage others to get involved by sharing the newsletter or talking about the toolkit during social gatherings. 3. Participate in Events Attend the toolkit events, such as tree planting days, food truck Fridays, or educational workshops. o Bring along friends or family to help build a stronger community. 4. Volunteer for Initiatives Sign up for volunteering opportunities like helping with the community garden or organizing events. Your involvement helps make these initiatives successful and impactful. 5. Follow and Share on Social Media o Follow the project's social media channels for live updates, event details, and community stories. Share posts to expand the reach of the toolkit and encourage others to participate. 6. Embrace Sustainability at Home • Apply sustainability tips from the toolkit to your daily lifewhether it's composting, recycling, or using eco-friendly Start small by practicing what you learn and sharing those habits with your household. 7. Give Feedback and Suggestions After events, provide feedback on your experience to help improve future initiatives. Suggest ideas for community projects or ways to enhance the toolkit's impact.

12. SBD Community Toolkit Checklist for Residents

13. Engaging the Community: Nine Principles for Inclusive Engagement

To effectively engage with the community, businesses can adopt nine core principles that guide local planning and decision-making. These principles help ensure that engagement processes are meaningful and effective, ultimately fostering stronger connections with the community.

Incorporating these principles into your engagement strategy involves three key phases of consultation and active participation. Additionally, we will provide case studies that illustrate how these principles can be successfully implemented.

The Nine Principles:

- **Genuine**: Engagement must be respectful and open, avoiding superficial efforts or predetermined outcomes. Leaders should truly value community input.
- **Purposeful:** Engagement processes should be relevant and connected to decision-making, ensuring that community feedback informs actions taken.
- **Planned:** A comprehensive and transparent plan is essential, ensuring that all stakeholders have the opportunity to participate meaningfully.
- **Clear:** Clarity about the purpose, scope, and potential outcomes of the engagement process is crucial, enabling informed participation.
- **Inclusive:** Ensure that all voices are represented, introducing specific measures to include diverse perspectives from the community.
- **Collaborative:** Work together with stakeholders in designing and implementing the engagement process, allowing for shared power and responsibility.
- **Accountable:** Commit to transparency by reporting back to stakeholders on how their input shaped the process and outcomes.
- Accessible: Identify and address barriers to engagement, making it easier for everyone to participate.
- **Fit for Purpose:** Tailor the scope, approach, and methodologies of the engagement process to suit the community's needs and contexts.

By embracing these principles, businesses can foster inclusive community engagement that not only strengthens relationships but also enhances the impact of their initiatives. Remember the guiding ethos: "Nothing About Us Without Us" This powerful phrase emphasizes that no decisions should be made without the active participation of those affected, reinforcing the importance of community involvement in every step of the process.



14. SBD Community Toolkit Checklist for Businesses

	1. Sponsor Community Events
ш	• Offer sponsorship for events like Indian Food Truck Fridays, sustainability workshops, or
	community sports days.
	 Your sponsorship can cover event costs, provide supplies, or offer prizes, helping to make these initiatives successful.
	2. Promote the Toolkit to Employees
	• Encourage your employees to participate in community events, volunteer opportunities, and sustainability workshops.
	 Share the toolkit's newsletter and event updates internally to keep your team informed and engaged.
	3. Incorporate the Toolkit into Your CSR Strategy
	 Align your Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) goals with the community toolkit by supporting green initiatives, such as tree planting or eco-friendly events.
_	 Publicize your company's involvement, showing your commitment to sustainability and the local community.
	4. Collaborate on Workshops and Events
	• Partner with the community to co-host sustainability workshops, such as waste reduction,
	green office practices, or biodiversity preservation.
	Offer your expertise, space, or resources to make the events more impactful.
	5. Encourage Green Practices in the Workplace
	 Use the toolkit's recommendations to adopt more sustainable practices, such as reducing waste, using energy-efficient equipment, or promoting sustainable commuting options. Lead by example in adopting environmentally friendly policies that align with community goals.
	6. Provide Employee Volunteer Days
_	 Support employees who want to volunteer at toolkit events by offering paid volunteer days.
	 Participating in community projects like park clean-ups or event organizing strengthens your business's connection to the local area.
ш	7. Promote Events on Social Media
_	 Use your company's social media platforms to share community event announcements, sustainability initiatives, and stories of collaboration.
	 Highlight your business's involvement to inspire other companies to join the cause.
	8. Offer Resources and Expertise
	 Contribute to the toolkit by offering specialized resources or expertise, such as marketing, event planning, or technical advice on sustainable practices.
	 Your support can enhance the quality and reach of community events and initiatives.



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16.Credits

















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The SBD Community Toolkit is designed to serve as a guide for building a vibrant, climate-resilient community.

By utilising relevant data and insights specific to Sandyford, this toolkit provides a framework for engaging with the people who live and work in the district.

Our journey has shown that sustainability is not just about green spaces and infrastructure—it's about creating an inclusive environment that brings everyone together.

This toolkit revolves around three key pillars:

- **Cultural and Inclusive Events** Creating opportunities for cultural engagement and fostering inclusivity through events that celebrate diversity within the community.
- **Sustainable Community Involvement** Encouraging active participation in sustainability efforts, making it a collective mission to protect and enhance our local environment.
- Health and Wellbeing Promoting a healthy, balanced lifestyle by integrating wellness into the fabric of the district, ensuring that Sandyford is a place where people can thrive.

With this toolkit, we aim to inspire, inform, and empower the Sandyford Business District stakeholders and community to actively participate in shaping a future that prioritises both people and the planet.

Together, we can transform SBD into a space that is not just sustainable but truly vibrant and connected.



