

Stakeholder communication in a school extension project

Project type: Construction

Location: UK

RICS/APM stakeholder principles: Communicate; Consult early, and often; Relationships are key

Stakeholder terms: Stakeholder expectations, communication

Abstract

A case study on a lead surveyor's first project completing a relatively small school extension and the engagement process with key stakeholders.

Background

Working with a small design team we decided to do more than take a brief, design and cost and then deliver the project. We involved the client and key stakeholders (which included parents and staff) in all aspects of scoping the project. Although we had a broad concept and budget to work within, there was considerable flexibility around what could be delivered.

The issues

The standard approach towards these projects was to superficially involve the stakeholders and produce a relatively off the shelf solution, however at the behest of the designer this thorough engagement of the stakeholders was performed, which was initially uncomfortable and added complexity to early stages of the project work.

The challenges

Through the engagement process it was unfeasible to take everyone's views in to account, with the process of demonstrating that their views had been heard and considered and the reasoning behind their exclusion being challenging in some instances.

The solution

Engagement means multiple forms of interaction and a lot of listening. Once we had identified who the key stakeholders were we were able to identify what was important to them and, with some innovative thinking and flexibility around the design and specification, deliver what would work best for them.

The benefits

From this extensive stakeholder engagement it was possible to obtain the full support of all stakeholders (importantly including the town council and local community) to allow the decision making and approval process for this project easier than any other similar schools project.

The learning points

Extensive, thorough, engagement with the community and council through a variety of methods may be time consuming and initially a complicating factor, however the benefits of stakeholder support in project approval and decision making are worth the initial effort.

This case study was written by the APM Stakeholder Engagement Focus Group.

- *For more information on the group or stakeholder engagement, [click here](#).*