



# Tim Holmes discusses the challenges most commonly faced when dealing with a public consultation

Ahead of [Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement for Infrastructure](#) on 18th June in London, Tim Holmes, Director of Holmes Group Consulting, delivers his insight on the challenges faced when dealing with public consultations and the best way to plan and adapt your consultation strategy.

## Tim Holmes *Director* Holmes Group Consulting

### What is the most common challenge you face in dealing with public consultations?

Balancing a range of expectations from different sources, often with conflicting or competing interests. These might include political commitments, community concerns, statutory requirements and stakeholder inputs. Designing and delivering a consultation strategy that addresses all of these areas - and particularly often within limited timeframes - is a recurring challenge.

### What advice would you give someone starting to plan their consultation strategy?

Be very clear right from the outset in defining expectations, objectives and process of the strategy. Make sure you, your client, your team, your stakeholders and your community all have the same level of understanding and expectation around what the consultation is intended to achieve, how people will be engaged and can make their views heard, and how the outcomes will be communicated back to them.

### How can you adapt your engagement throughout the development and construction on the project?

It's worth articulating what the key opportunities for consultation will be throughout different stages. For example, in the development stage the consultation can focus on influencing scope and functional outcomes, setting the parameters for the project - eg the 'What'. During construction the ability to influence the scope is minimal, but the way in which the project is built can be addressed much more clearly - the 'How'. Making sure consultation is tailored to these distinct phases is key.



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## Hear from Tim Holmes and many more experts...

...including HS2, Consultation Institute, Burges Salmon and more at [Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement for Infrastructure](#), taking place in London at Burges Salmon on Tuesday 18th June.

Tickets start from just £249 + VAT (group booking discounts available). For full details of the programme and how to secure your place visit <http://bit.ly/2XNeVQu>.

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