🔧 Tool: How to map stakeholders
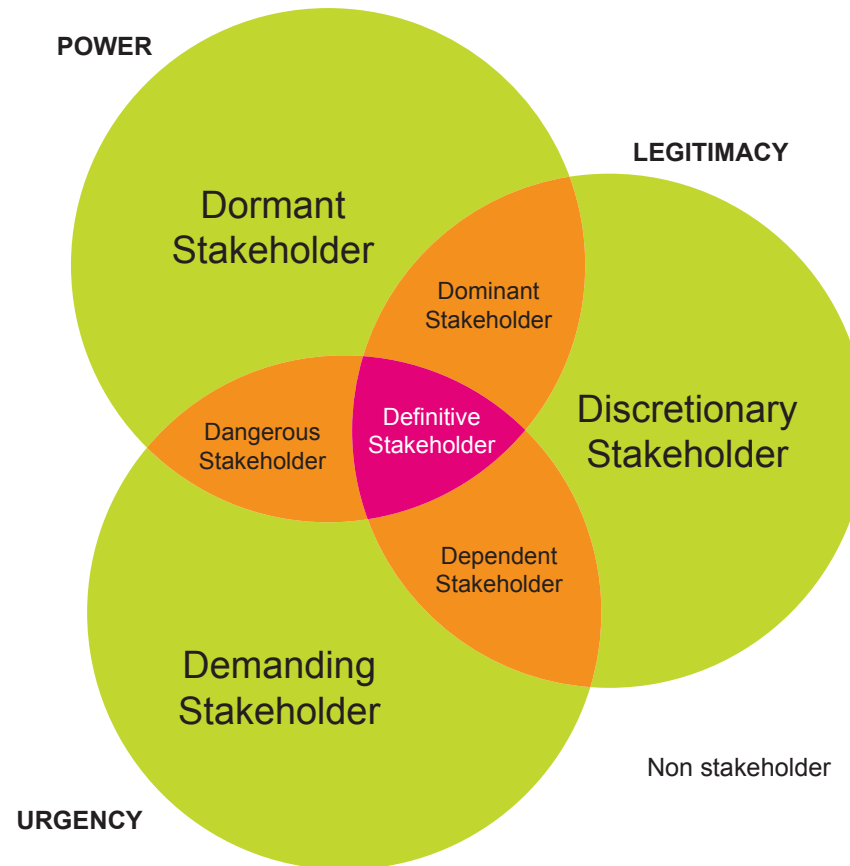
Stakeholder mapping is a key part of any engagement process. Every authority will have a variety of interest groups to think about engaging. These can include:

I. local residents

II. area-based groups

III. communities of interest

IV. faith-based groups

V. racial, ethnic and cultural groups

VI. local community and voluntary groups

VII. web-based or virtual groups

VIII. statutory partners

We can't engage all of the people all of the time. People don't want to be engaged on everything. The tool below can help prioritise and make judgements about where to invest your efforts.[1] It's built on the following three overlapping spheres:

• **power:** how much they can influence the decision

• **legitimacy**: how much right they have to be heard

• **urgency**: how strongly they feel about an issue

POWER

LEGITIMACY

Dormant Stakeholder

Dominant Stakeholder

Discretionary Stakeholder

Dangerous Stakeholder

Definitive Stakeholder

Dependent Stakeholder

Demanding Stakeholder

URGENCY

Non stakeholder

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1   The tool is known as the Stakeholder Salience model, and was designed in 1997

This may look complex but it's helpful in shaping a more nuanced approach to addressing public issues, one which brings in those with the power to help change things, without drowning out those who have a legitimate right to be heard or who feel most urgently about an issue.

To use the tool, label your stakeholders as either green, amber or red, to denote medium, high or very high priority. Someone who has power over the decision but is disinterested and unaffected by it may just be green, for example. If they're affected as well and have legitimacy in being heard, then they move up to amber. If they're also very exercised about the outcome then they become red.

For instance, a high-profile councillor for an estate being developed might be a green stakeholder. If they also live on the estate then they'd become amber. If they were very angry about the development, they'd become red.

Having created a comprehensive list of stakeholders labelled in this way, you can then categorise the different individuals and groups.

The version below is filled out, using the hypothetical example of a council's engagement with the local community about regulation of the sex industry. It's realistic about how the change will be made – businesses will probably have more power – but still makes sure less powerful or interested parties have a voice. The strategy for reaching each group flows from this.

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Compiled by the Local Government Association and The Campaign Company, with help from The Consultation Institute   **February 2019**

New Conversations 2.0
LGA guide to engagement

	Residents	Sex workers	Businesses
Interested (mark 1 or 0)	1	0	1
Entitled to be heard (mark 1 or 0)	1	1	1
Powerful (mark 1 or 0)	0	0	1
Overall priority (add combined scores)	2	1	3
Channels	Local press, social media, institutions like schools, local organisations	Ad hoc – brokered introductions and social networks	Regular briefings, e-bulletins, business conferences
Framing	'Your view is vital to us and it will be quick and confidential to participate'	'We will respect your view. We will make it quick and easy for you to have your say'	'You can influence the area you trade in'
Tactics	Partner with schools and resident organisations, third party intros at regular events	Highly proactive, safe, anonymous, compensated for time and input	Professional briefings, use advocates from the Chamber of Commerce
Call-to-action	'Help the community – on your own terms'	'Be paid and be heard'	'An opportunity to influence your area'