

# Transcription: Facilitation training video

## SLIDE WITH TEXT:

**Community empowerment. Partnership. Co-production.**

**Words familiar to anyone working in public services today.**

**But what do these mean in practice?**

**Jacky Niven:** I think the people who could benefit from this type of training is [that it's] open to anybody who wants to engage with people at any level—from your community activists setting up a toddler group to practitioners wanting to engage with the community, senior management within local authorities, other community planning partners and our local elected members and government. Essentially, anybody who genuinely wants to get the best and genuinely wants to know what people think and feel and what positive change they want to see.

**Caroline Smith:** The people who can benefit from this training are firstly ourselves, going out to do the engagement but more importantly it's the community. If we can get better at better at engaging with the community, get better at listening to the community and better at giving them a voice which is being heard, ultimately they'll benefit and help to influence and shape future policies and strategies and just move forward with the council.

This type of training is very much needed at this moment in time because we're all focused on the community empowerment act, involving our local communities in decision-making, involving them in that democratic process. I think we are, as a council, trying to move forward with that, to raise that profile, to better the ways that we are engaging, to better find ways to have that communication with the community. And it's a two-way communication. We need to hear their opinions and feedback, to feed that back up to the top, to the decision-makers within the council as well.

**Dr Claire Bynner:** One of the things that we learnt fairly quickly was that this was about a culture change across public services. Our public services are traditionally very hierarchical in their structures, and they're designed to be quite bureaucratic and traditional in the approach, the decision-maker is at the top.

And so we've spent some time also developing the workshop for the leadership level – that level we talking about local councillors, elected members and senior management. If we don't work with the leadership level, it's like driving a new car down an old road. Yeah? The new car isn't going to last very long because the old road needs upgrading.

**SLIDE TEXT: It went so well that we developed national level training for trainers so they could pass on these skills to other people.**

**This is what they thought in Aberdeenshire...**

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## GENERAL FOOTAGE OF WORKSHOP

**Lucy Styles** I think this training helps people in organisations with understanding how to have those difficult conversations, how to have more honest conversations, and how to communicate much more effectively. How to have much better conversations with your community fundamentally.

**Andrea Gilmartin** I feel working in partnership in the community is really important, The way we're moving forward is to we need to build capacity if we're going to make changes, and the only way we're going to make changes is to know what people want within the community to know the communities, and training like this, I feel anything that give us the tools or information, or some direction to take this process forward can only be a positive thing.

**Jacky:** We've always been quite strong at delivering good dialogue or working with communities to get good dialogue. I think if we're being honest, we weren't that disciplined at reaching that true deliberation, and what this process has given me is the sort of, 'yes let's do this strong and positive dialogue but now let's start to make more deliberative decisions'

**Andrea:** The last topic we just spoke was how to structure a different conversation by wearing different hats and I found that was a fantastic way to structure a discussion. You are enabling people to not only put forward their opinions but you were asking them to think outside the box and say, 'okay, I know you think negatively about this, but what are the positives?' and people were quite uncomfortable doing that. But everyone once they started thinking about it they weren't so blinkered in the thought process on a specific topic. Using this method of training or structuring a discussion really helped people to look at the bigger picture.

**Lucy:** I have used the training to help support a mini public that we trialled in quite an unusual rural setting. We used practical examples we'd learned on our training to input them into the programme so it was really useful/

**Lucy: So Roisin, we recently took part and organised a mini-public in North Mar in rural Aberdeenshire. How did you go about it and how did you put the mini-public together?**

**Roisin:** Initially, I got the idea through going on training with What Works Scotland the previous year and I just felt we already do well, and Aberdeenshire and Aberdeenshire Council do relatively good engagement with the community, but we are all aware that it's not necessarily representative and we are seeing the same faces.

We actually used a consultancy company to recruit the mini public. We discussed with them and we got statistics from Aberdeenshire Council. We knew that we needed people that lived in the smaller settlements and those who lived in more remote areas, up the farm tracks and so on.

**How did you know when you got the group together it really was demographic?**

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I think we all felt it when we walked in the room. It was very clear that it was a different group, different people. The atmosphere was less comfortable. People weren't used to it, people were a little bit suspicious as well, even down to not helping themselves to tea and that kind of thing. But you could see [that] people where from very different backgrounds.

We had a 90-year-old farmer who'd probably been there for generations who lived way up the glen. A youngster who was, I guess, what the local people would call an incomer, but all very much part of the community and you had everything in between.

One of the key things we also really tried to explain what they were doing there. One of the questions we asked people was about why they came forward to get involved and we actually paid people to get involved in this activity. It was a factor in a scale of one to ten so it was quite high for most people that the remuneration was there.

At the end of the experience, people would come time and time again, they would come every weekend. They were very, very positive.

People were coming up with complex reasons for issues around mental health services in the area and sharing their and their families' experiences in the farming community and males, and how things needed to change so there was lots and lots of rich information captured and I learned loads from these guys.

**Lucy:** I've also used it, using in the smaller techniques in sort of more day to day usage can we change the way we do our team meetings or can we work with our partners in local planning group so some very small things but also some larger things as well.

I guess the training really helps give everyone a common language and a common narrative to follow and it's actually helping us establish more of a network so it's not being done in isolation so you feel part of a bigger picture.

**Roisin:** It's about really good dialogue and sharing information and not tokenistic, and an essential part of that is understanding it and understanding what best practice is

**Jacky:** I think they would be armed with tools to really have meaningful conversation that matter and reach a real understanding of what people really want and are really saying.

**Claire:** What does it means to be a leader that actually encourages other people to be leaders themselves, and how do we make that change? How do we really bring in the public in a really meaningful way, that they can participate in a decision being taken that they were part of that decision. And when that happens well, it's incredibly powerful, it actually gives you tingles up your spine.

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Our thanks to all the participants

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[whatworkscotland.ac.uk](http://whatworkscotland.ac.uk)

<https://www.khub.net/group/wws-evidence-hub>