

50+ Citizen Engagement Project

Videos Letters from Aberbargoed OAP Group – Pilot Profile

The Engagement Issue

Organisations often ask older people to take part in focus groups and consultations. People face many barriers when trying to get involved, such as transport and inappropriate times of the meetings. People can also be put off because of the style of the consultation or focus group. Formal public meetings are not for everyone.

The video pilot aimed to overcome this barrier by involving a group of older people in a consultation setting where they felt comfortable i.e. their weekly OAP meeting at the village hall.

At the time of the pilot the views of older people were being sought on the Health Social Care and Well Being Strategy. Video was used to record the views of the Aberbargoed OAP Group on what was important to them about this Strategy.

People Involved

The main organisations involved were Aberbargoed OAP Group, Islwyn Camcorder Club and a local Mentro Allen Project.

What Happened

Contact was made with Aberbargoed OAP Group via a local voluntary officer working for Mentro Allen. Then the 50+ Citizen Engagement Project Officer met the group on three occasions to explain the purpose of the pilot. The group assisted with the design and timings of the pilot and this early involvement secured their support.

Initially a video was recorded highlighting the group's views on the Health Social Care and Well Being Strategy. The video was recorded during their regular weekly meeting and over 30 people took part. When the members of the group edited the video they felt that their views were not being heard. This was due to the volume of people taking part and the amount of cross talking. The group decided to forward the recording to the Health Social Care and Well Being Coordinator anyway as part of the consultation.

After realising that their views could not be clearly heard, the group decided to have another video session. This time the group decided that the filming would take place one to one. They wanted the videos to record issues that were important to them as individuals as well as to their group. The issues of importance were decided by them and not an outside organisation.

The main issues to arise were:

1. The poor state of the Local Authority run building that the group use. The group had to raise money themselves for new windows and other refurbishments.
2. Poor access to the hall because of the placement of refuse bins.

3. Traffic calming measures have led to cars using a back lane as a shortcut. This has implications for residents with sensory impairments.
4. Age discrimination on public transport.

Problems encountered

The main problem was encountered during the filming of the group consultation. People's voices could not be heard clearly due to background noise.

This problem was quickly turned into a positive as it inspired the group to make the one to one videos.

Barriers To Engagement Addressed

This pilot addressed in particular the following:

- Education & Skills
- Transport
- Money
- The issues are of little interest
- No knowledge of benefits of participation

Resources

- Introduction to the group
- Hall (which the group had access to)
- Islwyn Camcorder Club: Video equipment including editing software and DVDs
- Refreshments

Reasons For Success

1. Tackling the lack of resources
 - A local video club volunteered to support the project.
 - A small project grant dealt with room hire etc.
2. Communications
 - Communications were face-to-face.
3. The approach to engagement
 - There was direct contact with older people in the community, in a setting where they felt comfortable and in control
 - Participants were involved in the design and editing process of the videos which enabled ownership of the pilot
 - There were clear outcomes from the project that the group can pursue after the pilot ends
4. Type of engagement
 - Video recording older people in their communities. This gives the opportunity for them to express themselves in a direct and natural way.