

Community Researchers Project Action Plan January 2015

Overview:

Community Researchers are individuals who are given training to conduct voluntary research in their own community and neighbourhood.

Community Researchers can be used when researching a particular topic, sensitive issues specific to a certain social group and is a way of engaging with traditional hard to reach groups.

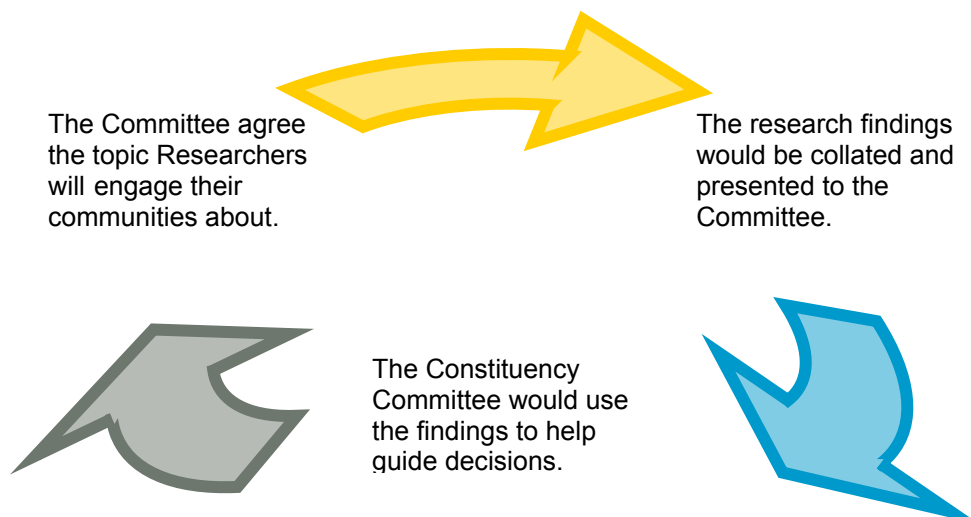
There are a number of benefits to engaging through Community Researchers:

- Working with a community also enables the research to be a two way process in which information can be given to the communities who participate.
- In-depth community engagement can provide important insights into attitudes, beliefs and behaviour in particular communities which quantitative data cannot explain.
- Working with Community Researchers develops relationships with hard to reach groups.
- A template is provided for the Community Researchers to write up their findings in the same format. This ensures that the data can be analysed and used effectively.

Purpose of Community Researchers:

The aim of the Birkenhead Constituency Committee is to develop a team of Community Researchers to gather research from groups and residents that may not have been engaged with before.

After initially recruiting residents who want to volunteer as Community Researchers and giving them the required training the scheme would work by:



Research Topics:

There is capacity for the Community Researchers project to focus on 4 main research topics within the year. These topics will be chosen by the Handbook Sub Group to help guide the constituency committee when it requires further information to make a decision or just wants additional evidence.

All of the information collated through the community researchers project will be presented to the constituency committee.

The 4 research topics for the financial year of 2014/15 are:

1. Engage with black and ethnic minority groups to enhance the understanding of groups in Birkenhead.
2. What are the most commonly linked issues facing residents suffering from multiply problems.
3. TBC BY THE HANDBOOK SUB GROUP.
4. TBC BY THE HANDBOOK SUB GROUP.

Projected timetable for research to be completed:

Once the research topic is launched the below time table sets out the time needed for each phase of the project.

Launch the research topic and circulate the information requesting volunteers to partners, social sector groups and general public ensuring widespread coverage	1 week.
Two day introductory training course into community research conducted by external tutor	2 days
The volunteer community researchers conduct 'listening surveys' in their own community, based on the particular topic	4 weeks.
The community researchers attend an evaluation event to discuss their findings and give feedback on the project	1 day
External tutor compiles the report based on the completed listening surveys to ensure an independent report.	1 week.

Training:

Given by an external tutor, the training the volunteer community researchers will receive is an introduction into community research and will cover topics such as:

1. The topic being researched
2. How to do a 'Listening survey'
3. Why we are collating the information and how it will be used
4. Confidence and communication skills

Each course could accommodate 10 Community Researchers with the benefits being:

- 1) Building the skills of residents :
- 2) Reveals the stories behind the statistics:
- 3) Uncovers issues unknown to external researchers:
- 4) Creates partnerships and communication channels:
- 5) Encourages communities to develop their own solutions

Project Costs:

A budget of £2,000 has been allocated to the project from the constituency committee.

The costs to deliver training are £300 per 2 day course (costs for tutor, paperwork and refreshments)

4 courses = £1,200. This would train 40 Community Researchers.

£600 will be used for travelling expenses of researchers.