

Shetland Partnership

Methods and Techniques



Workshops

Workshops allow people to share ideas and have discussions in smaller groups in a larger group setting.

Workshops can use different presentation formats, facilitation styles, and group discussions, creating a space for collaborative planning and problem-solving.

Suitable for:

Workshops are suitable for exploring issues, sharing information, identifying concerns, setting goals, and testing ideas.

Type of engagement:



Collaborate



Consult



Involve



How to do it:

- Define the purpose and goals of the event.
- Assign a host and table facilitators to guide discussions, keep the workshop on schedule, and ensure that all participants have an opportunity to contribute.
- Think about how to arrange the venue and how to set up tables. Do you need to organise food and refreshments? Are there dietary requirements? Is the venue accessible?
- Consider the questions to be asked, and brief hosts and facilitators. Ensure discussions are recorded, whether through notetaking or a feedback sheet.
- Ensure participants know what is expected of them.
- Create a clear agenda.
- Share relevant information and include activities to deepen understanding or explore topics.
- Conclude by sharing group findings, with a spokesperson or facilitator presenting.
- Plan how to share workshop outcomes and their impact on decisions.

★ Advantages

- Workshops bring people together to discuss complex issues and find creative solutions, with smaller groups allowing quieter voices to be heard.
- Workshops participants consider diverse opinions, leading to more informed contributions.
- Sharing key points from group discussions helps everyone stay informed and understand the direction of the conversation.
- Often workshops include participants moving around the room, which can ensure people remain engaged.

⚠ Challenges

- Each table or breakout room needs experienced facilitators to keep discussions on track.
- Some participants might take over the conversation, making it harder for others to share their ideas and perspectives. Facilitators should clearly state ground rules and ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate.
- Appointed spokespeople might not accurately reflect their group's ideas when sharing the results of small group discussions. Having a separate sheet for feedback by the whole group could help here.

Further information:

More information on carrying out a workshop will be available via a search engine which may be useful to look at.

Case study:

Islands with Small Populations Workshop – An event to bring together Island Representatives to review the Islands' Locality Plan

(see online at: <https://www.shetlandpartnership.org/examples-community-participation/islands-small-populations-review-workshop>)