

Voices for Equity

People influence decisions on services and use of resources



Guide on Methodology

Voices for Equity
A Shetland Partnership **Participation** Project



Participation



People



Place



Money

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Introduction

What is the purpose of this guide?

This document provides a guide to the method used for the participation project, Voices for Equity in Shetland, which ran between 2018 and 2020.

The Voices for Equity project was a two-year project designed to reduce inequalities in Shetland through participation, by bringing forward public voices and uncovering the different aspects of inequalities. It acknowledged the need to learn directly from those who are experiencing disparities and disadvantaged outcomes in order to tackle inequalities. The project was funded through the [Fairer Scotland Action Plan](#) and was delivered through the Shetland Partnership.

This document explains how to set up the scheme, provides suggestions for recruiting, and advice on confidentiality and ethical considerations. For further information, please contact Shetland Island Council, Community Planning and Development.



Fairer Scotland Action Plan

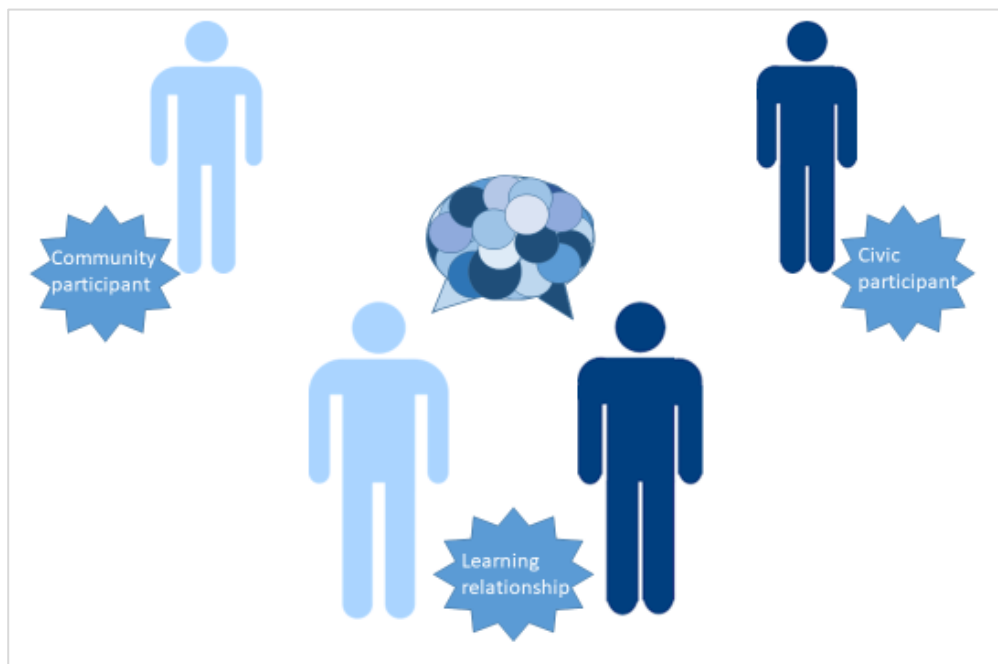
Part 1

What is the method?

The learning partnership scheme is a reciprocal learning method that emphasises learning through relationship building and mutuality.

Community and civic participants are recruited and matched together in learning pairs to discuss and explore inequalities by bringing their personal perspectives and experiences to the conversations they have.

Mutual commitment, respect and confidentiality sustain their relationship, which is set to last for an agreed period. During the relationship, pairs are supported and assisted by the organising body, as appropriate. The method of sharing experiences in the learning relationship enables decision-makers (the civic participants) to be better equipped, with a more direct knowledge and understanding of inequalities.



Learning relationship

Where did this method come from?

Understanding underlying causes and driving forces that lead to socio-economic disadvantage is crucial in order to reduce inequalities. Alongside research and good systems knowledge, there is a need to learn directly from those who are experiencing disparities and the disadvantaged outcomes.

The Fairer Scotland Conversation, initiated by the Scottish Government in June 2015, aimed to engage and speak directly to those whose voices were not usually heard, on

equality issues that matter to people in Scotland. The emphasis was on open and direct conversations, coming from a belief that everyone's voice is equally important.

In 2015, the Poverty Leadership Panel, of Glasgow City Council and Faith in Community Scotland, led on a Mutual Mentoring Scheme. This was developed from the belief that in order to tackle poverty, individuals from low-income communities must be involved in decision-making processes. This was also one of the recommendations from Shetland's Commission on Tackling Inequalities, which reported in 2016.

The Voices for Equity project follows on from this recommendation; the values and standards set out in the Glasgow Mutual Mentoring Scheme; and the ideals and principles that formed the Fairer Scotland Conversation.

The project method is designed to enable people experiencing challenges as a result of Shetland's inequalities, to share their knowledge directly with decision-makers within Shetland's public bodies. It gives the project's participants a new way to learn: from real experiences, both as private people and professionals, and therefore allowing a better mutual understanding of inequalities. It provides opportunities to build closer relationships between the participants and encourages more direct contact between people living in a community who do not normally meet. By its nature, it represents a different form of community participation.

"Through conversation, we are no longer them and us. No longer unaccountable. No longer strangers. Learning together about dignity, respect and value" (Fairer Scotland Action Plan.)

Setting Up

It is advisable to make a plan and timeline to:

1. Plan and prepare
2. Recruit participants
3. Meet potential participants
4. Match participants
5. Monitor progress and support learning relationships
6. Facilitate the end of relationships.

This also helps to think through any ethical considerations as well as how participation may lead to change and development.

The Process

Quick links	Information
1. Planning and preparations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas for recruiting • Prepare network • Identify target group • Ethical consideration • Information materials • Privacy Impact Assessment
2. Recruitment and making initial contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit /meet/ inform services and organisations • Identify individuals • Information materials
3. Meet potential participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information materials • Screening questions
4. Match participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner agreement • Privacy statement • Project information and contract • Pre-mentoring expectation form • Start- up activity
5. Monitor progress and support relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and facilitation • Monitoring tool
6. Facilitate the end of relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation • Learning outcomes

1. Planning and preparations

To get as broad a picture of inequalities as possible, and to ensure that a variety of voices get heard through the project, it is important to recruit participants from different sides of the community, socially as well as geographically.

It is useful to map out an idea of which specific target groups, areas or demographic cohorts you would like to recruit from, before starting the recruitment process. It is important to think through any ethical considerations regarding recruiting individuals with lived experiences of inequalities, also bearing in mind it can prove difficult to approach individuals randomly based on statistical background. In order to ensure the project results in change as a result of their participation, consider seeking to recruit civic participants with power and remit to influence decisions and changes.

In addition to considering whom you would like to recruit on a generic level it is also advisable to consider what personal skills and features the individuals should have to be able to participate.

Planning and Preparations – Information materials

To spread the project's main message, core content and method it is useful to develop a leaflet or flyer. Depending on the nature of the project and the recruitment process, consider developing one leaflet aimed at community participants and another for civic.

The leaflet should give information on how the project works, what is expected from the participants, what they might get from their participation as well as how to contact the project management.

Although you may never intend to publicise the information material to the wider public, you should be aware that others might circulate it.

Planning and Preparations – Confidentiality

Confidentiality is at the core of a project of this nature. The participants are telling stories and giving information about their private lives, and confidentiality must be ensured throughout.

Primarily, confidentiality must be confirmed between the participants matched in a learning relationship. This can be confirmed through a partner agreement between the participants in the pair, setting out the standards and values for their participation and relationship. Such standards and values ensure that partners respect and appreciate each other and that confidentiality is maintained throughout.

The second is confidentiality between the participant and the administering body/project organization. A contract between the project and the participants, which explains the aims and purpose of the project, participants' rights and what the project asks from the participants, is required.

The project will gather and keep some personal information about the participants, therefore policies and routines to ensure confidentiality must be in place. A Data Protection Impact Assessment will be required, undertaken by the host organisation, to ensure that it meets General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). This will flag up a number of actions, such as the development of a privacy statement. It will also inform the text to be included in any materials.

Particular consideration will be required if participants are under the age of 18. Project body should seek advice from organisation's legal team and/or HR.

2. Recruitment and making initial contact

Using networks and contacts is a good place to start recruitment. For example, different community groups, voluntary organisations and public services.

Some members of society are already active in different community groups that are tackling poverty, so consider how best to use contacts who can reach out to those whose voices are not heard that often.

In general, a good way to recruit people is to get in direct contact with the people you would like to involve, whether that is as community or civic participants; perhaps by going along to an event that they will be at.

Recruitment and making initial contact – Challenges

There may be a challenge that contacts feel uncomfortable approaching a potential community participant, about their involvement; this may come from them feeling they are making a judgement about another person. Therefore, when recruiting participants through services and organisations it is important to provide good information about the project and enabling potential participants to understand the benefits to them. Thus, for people in relevant services and organisations to be able to assist with recruitment it is vital that they fully understand what the project is about, how it will work and the potential impact. The most effective recruitment occurs when the project lead speaks directly with potential participants, but organisations and services may serve as important linking points for the project.

3. Meeting the potential participant

The next, and important stage, is for the project lead to arrange to meet with each potential participant. In this meeting, information about the project's aims and outcomes can be provided, along with information about the set up and how the process will work. Moreover, this is a chance to have a conversation about inequalities both locally and generally, and about the inequalities the potential participant is experiencing in his/her life.

There should be no reason to hold back any information about the project for the potential participant. Experience shows that the more information the participants get about the project, the better they understand their role and possible impact. In addition, the potential participant has the opportunity to ask questions. It is also an opportunity to investigate any desired learning outcomes and motivation for taking part in the project.

The participants' welfare in the project is paramount. To ensure participants are comfortable in their relationships, it is important to ask questions around their preferences for matching. For example, whether the participant prefers to be matched with someone of the same/different gender, older/younger etc. In addition, practical issues such as ability to travel to meetings, meet outside office hours etc. should be clarified.

4. Match participants

Matching participants – Matching

There is no straightforward procedure when it comes to matching people in mutual learning relationships. The crucial part is to focus on personal characteristics and the participants' comfort and well-being.

However, to maximise learning outcomes, consider having some criteria for matching. For example, matching younger with older people, people from different geographical locations, or people from different backgrounds; but always with the participants' wellbeing and comfort in mind.

For any politicians matched in the project it is important to make sure they are not matched with someone from their electoral ward.

A list of screening questions used in the Voices for Equity project is attached in the appendix.

Matching participants – The first match meeting

After initial introductions, it is necessary to go through the formal aspects of the process, such as the Privacy Statement, Participation Contract and Partner Agreements. All of these documents must be understood, and signed.

Along with this, the participants are asked to fill out a pre-mentoring expectations form, to indicate what they expect to get out of their participation.

After a few minutes spent on information and signing documents, the pair can be left to start their conversations. To break the ice and to support the process of getting to know each other before they go into speaking about inequalities, an informal start up exercise can be provided (see appendix). The exercise is there for the pairs to use but it is up to them whether they choose to do so.

The participants decide themselves what they would like to speak about on the topic of inequalities, and what stories they would like to share with each other. In accordance with the participation contract, neither of the participants should take any notes from any of their meetings.

First match meeting documents (see appendix):

- Participation contract
- Partner agreement
- Pre-mentoring expectations
- Start up exercise

Matching participants – Learning relationship meetings

The learning partners will meet for around one hour each time they meet. The frequency of their meetings is up to the participants. However, if possible, they should schedule their next meeting every time they meet, to ensure continuity.

Participants are free to meet wherever they want, but not in private places, such as homes. If meeting in a private place is necessary, consideration must be given to whether a third person (such as the project lead) should be involved.

The project lead could offer to organise meetings for participants who do not want or have time to organise their own. Some participants are too busy to manage their own calendars

and others might not feel able to take the responsibilities for scheduling meetings. Offering to do this can make the difference to establishing and maintaining a partnership. It also keeps the project lead in contact with the participants and makes it easier to keep a record of their meeting frequency.

5. Monitor progress and support learning relationships

Monitor progress and support learning relationships – Monitoring

Participants' wellbeing in their learning relationship is an important responsibility for the project lead. Regular feedback from participants on how they are doing in their relationship and how comfortable they are with their match is important. A monitoring tool should be in place, that is simple to use and it may be digital. On a regular basis, the participants are asked to feed their comments and remarks into the monitoring tool, giving the project lead the opportunity to follow their development and offer support if necessary.

Examples of monitoring questions used in the Voices for Equity project can be found in the appendix.

Monitor progress and support learning relationships – Level of support and facilitation

The learning pairs will need different levels and methods of support. Typically, the most common type of support is materials to guide the conversations, ensuring that communication is reciprocal. Some might also need a gentle reminder to stay in touch and schedule appointments. A system of support should be in place for each of the pairs, dependent on what the project lead has picked up through initial meetings and the matching meeting. For example:

Support to guide conversations:

Occasionally, the learning pairs will request some input and inspiration for their conversations. They might be unsure how to start their first conversations and they might be unsure about how to approach the topic of inequalities. The project lead should provide support materials designed to assist conversations and to ease the comfort of speaking about inequalities.

Support to ensure reciprocity:

Depending on the participants, some might find that conversations are a bit imbalanced (one person sharing more than the other), and would like tools or means to tackle this. It is vital that the method facilitates a two-way learning process. More structured and designed conversations can be a way forward and the project lead should offer materials to aid this.

Support to schedule meetings:

Experience has shown that it may be difficult for participants to sustain contact over a longer period, and it is crucial that the project lead offers support for the participants to stay in touch and to schedule meetings. The project lead should have a monitoring system in place to maintain records and stay in regular contact with participants.

6. Facilitate the end of relationships

To avoid any confusion and misunderstandings it is advisable to set a timeframe for each relationship. Consider how the end of the relationship will be marked (e.g. project lead taking the pair out for coffee), and also consider what will or may happen for participants when a relationship ends. It is good practice to speak to participants about this, preferably well in advance, to implement any actions and one-to-ones to allow participants to speak freely.

Part 2

What is the value of participation?

There are a number of reasons why people, both community and civic are motivated to take part in a project of this nature.

Community participants appreciate the chance to have their voice heard by someone with power and influence, with the hope and wish that telling their story might change decisions so other people will not have to experience the same inequalities and disparities as themselves.

Civic participants enter the project with a sincere interest to be paired with an individual experiencing a different life circumstance than themselves. Through participation, they learn how life is different for folk living in the same community and how some must make difficult choices, and can struggle more than others. Delivering better services is high on the civic agenda and the civic participants are eager to increase their understanding about inequalities within their community.

Reasons to participate may differ; common for both is the wish to have a positive impact on their community and someone else's life. Both community and civic participants feel participating develops their empathy and helps them to better understand the full picture. Also, participants report that participating in the project makes them think more about their interactions with other people and with society in general.

"It gives you a window into a life different from your own"

Civic participant on the value of participating in the Voices for Equity project

A number of positive outcomes have been achieved from the Voices for Equity Project:

Firsthand knowledge and closer relationships

The method requires the learning pairs to meet frequently, one-to-one, and by following this structure, the participants interact closely with their learning partners. This direct contact gives the participants a direct insight into each other's lives and roles and they build a relationship that is deeper and more resilient.

Reducing the gap between 'the governing and the governed'

The contact between those with the responsibility for making decisions over how resources are used, and those who may need the support of services, gets more direct and uninterrupted as the learning partners are matched as community and civic participants.

It repairs the disconnection between people living in communities and decision-making; it has the potential to build trust and understanding across divisions and differences.

Active citizenship

The process is a different form of participation, where people are getting involved in community planning in a new way. The contact with decision-makers is open and direct and represents a diverse approach to active citizenship.

Free of group dynamics

Members in a group can support and encourage each other, but sometimes group dynamics can also have an unfavorable impact on its members. In contrast to other groups and commissions, the relationship between the participants in the learning pairs is not influenced by any group dynamics. Their conversations are not interrupted and the participants build trust and rapport with each other by sharing stories from their lives. They are free to speak about whatever is on their mind, and there is a strong emphasis on mutual respect and responsibility and being unprejudiced.

Positive outcomes from the method:

- Getting first-hand knowledge
- Closer relationship between participants
- More direct contact between the governed and the governing
- Different pathway for active citizenship
- Participation not influenced by group dynamics

For more information about Voices for Equity outcomes, please read [the final report](#).

Ethical judgements and reflections

It is important to recognise that telling your life story can be a draining process and that feelings of both shame and powerlessness may follow. Contributing to the project with your lived experience of poverty and inequality is an unselfish act, which should not be taken for granted.

The project provides an excellent opportunity to get views and opinions on complex issues from citizens who do not often state their opinions publicly. However, it is important that the project balances this against repeatedly asking community participants for their views and opinions.

Recruitment

Recruiting participants tends to happen through organisations and services. Therefore, the project method may not be capturing the most disenfranchised voices or the voices of those who manage to stay afloat without any contact with services.

Moreover, potential participants may perceive an element of stigma or prejudice by the fact that they are approached by the project.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is essential, both between the participants and between the participants and the project. Therefore, the project must meet all current legislative requirements in this area.

The project should clarify whether it will deliver any specific services to participants and what process is in place if referrals to access support (with consent) becomes necessary. For any output from the project, it is important to maintain confidentiality, especially when involving other sponsors and stakeholders, such as the media.

Reciprocity

Be conscious about how power is shared between the participants. Due to roles and responsibilities, some have the power to change things, whilst others do not; this may have an impact on the dynamics in the relationship. The learning potential lies in the participants introducing one another to each other's views and perspectives.

The project should be clear that both participants are expected to share their stories and experiences, and that both sides have to approach their partners with open and humble mind-sets. Being able to listen and show sincere interest is crucial in order to overcome the gap in power and authority that may be felt by the participants from the outset.

What can be done to ensure mutuality?

“No two people have the same life and by talking and discussing issues – and keeping an open mind - you can learn from another person no matter their status.”

Civic participant on the value of participating in the Voices for Equity project

The partner agreement is meant to ensure that a certain set of basic values are agreed and shared by the participants in the pair. These values are chosen to ensure that both parties take responsibility for ensuring confidentiality and for contributing to and sustaining the relationship. As the civic participants sometime struggle with stress and time management, the community participants – although sometimes in very different situations – also live busy and stressful lives, often with financial issues as an underlying struggle. To make sure that all participants have equal opportunities to participate the project should offer to cover childcare and transport costs.

Furthermore, it is important to provide a means for participants to give feedback on how they are doing in their learning relationship. A digital tool could serve this purpose, giving the participants a chance to indicate if they are not content in their relationship.

Stigma

Stigma and shame are often related to inequalities and to poverty in particular. Statistics might show that certain groups of the population are experiencing inequalities (e.g. young parents, single men, people in remote areas, etc.) but it is important to be aware that the individuals might not feel they are experiencing inequalities themselves. It is important to consider that many people feel their life is rich even though their monthly financial income might be significantly below average.

Also, give some thought to how participants are referred to, when promoting the project in meetings, documents etc. Consider focusing on all the participants’ skills and expertise rather than merely someone’s lived experience of poverty and inequality.

Appendices

- Voices for Equity leaflet, page 1, appendix 1
- Voices for Equity leaflet, page 2, appendix 2
- Partner Agreement, appendix 3
- Project information and contract, appendix 4
- Pre-mentoring expectations, appendix 5
- Screening questions, inequalities, appendix 6
- Screening questions, personal characteristics, appendix 7
- Start- up activity, appendix 8
- Tracking scheme, appendix 9
- Mentor evaluation, appendix 10

Participating in the project will

- Put you in close and confidential contact with people who make decisions
- Give you the chance to have your voice heard by someone with power and influence
- Give you the opportunity to be a resource, helping decision makers to better understand the everyday experiences of inequalities in Shetland
- Increase your experience and knowledge about decision making in Shetland
- Enable you to contribute to a stronger and more trusting relationship between public services and the general public.

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Voices for Equity

"People influence decisions on services and use of resources"



Shetland Partnership Plan
2018-2028



About the project

This two-year project aims to reduce inequalities in Shetland through participation, by bringing forward public voices and uncovering the different aspects of inequalities. It is designed to improve the ways in which people in Shetland can be more involved in community planning. Specifically, it will help people who are facing inequality to share their experience with decision makers at Shetland's public bodies. The project will be based on two-way learning - the sharing of experiences and perspectives between the community and public bodies (a process called Mutual Mentoring).

Mentoring is simple, rewarding, and time well spent!

How does it work

We are now recruiting people who would like to explore new ways of participation. If you are interested, you will be paired up with a partner recruited through services and agencies in direct contact with people. Your partner may be experiencing inequalities and sometimes exclusion, and some of our participants may be young people. You will be each other's mentors. You will support and empower each other, through the exchange of knowledge and perceptions. Support and facilitation will be provided throughout the project. Your main focus will be to exchange experiences, and confidentiality will be ensured.

How much time will it take?

The pairing will last for about a year. During this time, it is hoped that you will meet together ten times. Each meeting should last approximately an hour.

Where will we meet?

You will decide together with your partner where to meet. You are encouraged to meet both in offices (Lerwick) and out in communities.

We would like to hear from you!

Please use the contact information in this leaflet to get more information and to discuss your participation. Participation in the project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you have the right to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

What's in it for me?

As a mentor you may

- Become inspired
- Gain confidence in expressing your views
- Experience and exchange ideas
- Meet new people
- Have your knowledge and experience challenged in a friendly and sociable way

We ask that you

- Are committed: prioritise and agree to meet with your partner
- Be unprejudiced, reliable and open
- Listen, and be accepting of and interested in your partner
- Have empathy and be able to show a sympathetic approach to sensitive issues
- Keep information confidential



Appendix 3

PARTNER AGREEMENT

The meeting between learning partners is an equal one- to- one meeting, which builds on mutual trust and respect.

This is a learning partner agreement between:

.....

As your learning partner, I will:

- Show trust and respect towards you and your stories
- Be an honest and confidential partner
- Be listening, accepting and interested in your views and perspectives
- Be unprejudiced, reliable and open for change
- Recognise that our contributions to this relationship may be different, but I will give it equal acknowledgement and recognition.

With this agreement, we agree on the following:

- Our meetings are confidential. Neither of us will take notes nor keep records from our meetings
- We will keep our appointments on date and time
- We will work constructively together, and will seek help and advice if any disagreements occur
- We won't exchange valuable gifts or lend out money
- We agree that this agreement will come to a closure if it becomes necessary for either of us.

Communication and meeting frequency:

Name	Telephone	E-mail

Our learning partnership starts on this date _____ and will last for up to 12 months.

Date for the next meeting:

Our first meeting will be at:

Welcome to the Voices for Equity Project

This document provides information about taking part in this project.

Purpose and Aims

The project's aim is to reduce inequalities in Shetland through participation. The project will enable previously unheard voices to be listened to, and thereby improve equity in Shetland. Its purpose is to enable people experiencing challenges as a result of Shetland's inequalities to share their knowledge directly with those with responsibility for making decisions about the use of Shetland's resources.

The project is based on reciprocal learning; the sharing of experiences and perspectives between community and civic participants through two-way communication.

The project is a two-year project funded by the Scottish Government through the [Fairer Scotland Action Plan](#). Shetland Islands Council, Community Planning and Development Service is responsible for project implementation and its daily management, on behalf of the Shetland Partnership.

Participation in voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you have the right to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. Choosing not to participate or to later withdraw won't have any negative impacts on your current and any future relationships, or need for services, provided by the Council and other organisations in Shetland.

How Will It Work?

You have already met with the Project Officer and been paired up with a mentoring partner. You will meet about ten times over a year, to discuss, explore and share experiences about inequalities in Shetland. You will be each other's mentors and, using your own knowledge and perceptions, support and empower each other.

The partnership will be built on mutual trust and respect, to ensure equality. The standards and values for your participation is stated in the mentor agreement.

The project will not be delivering any specific service, on behalf of the Council or other organisations, but you and / or the Project Officer may (with consent) wish to refer people to services to get support.

Half-way through the mentoring partnership, the Project Officer will arrange to meet with you both; for a catch-up and to get feedback from your mentoring conversations.

The Project Officer will be available, throughout, should you wish to meet with her, alone or together.

Privacy and Data Protection

The partnership is about sharing experiences, but only your life experiences that you feel comfortable sharing.

The Project (through the Council), will keep information about your name and contact details as well as the information shared in your first meeting with the Project Officer. The purpose of this will be to enable a meaningful matching for you and to be able to make contact with you, about

the Project. This information will be deleted, once the Project has concluded, in 2020. This is in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. Please refer to our Data Protection Privacy Statement.

You may share personal and sensitive information with your project partner. However, neither of you will take notes nor keep records from your meetings.

Support to Get Involved

There is no payment for being involved in the project. The time you give to this will be voluntary. Any costs associated with the community participants being involved, such as travel and childcare, will be covered by the project.

Project's Outcomes and Dissemination

If you're involved in the project, you may want to make a statement or provide feedback on your learning and experience from the project in a variety of ways. The Project Officer will support this.

The Project Officer will prepare and publish a report regarding the project; to promote the approach and to comply with the Scottish Government funding. This will be available, online. It will not contain any personal information. Any information you have given and shared in the project will be anonymised and only anonymised case studies or anonymised quotes would be used. You will have an opportunity to review the draft text. As much as possible, the creation of the report and other materials will be driven by you.

Contact Information

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.....
 Date and Signature

Name	Telephone	E-mail

Appendix 5

Pre-mentoring expectations

As a partner in this project, I hope:

- To learn from my learning partner
- To be better at understanding someone who is different from me
- To strengthen my skills in understanding new situations
- To increase my understanding about myself and my situation
- To have my views and opinions challenged
- To contribute with my knowledge and experience
- To improve my listening skills
- To further develop my communication skills
- To increase my self-esteem
- To strengthen my confidence
- To increase my knowledge about decision making processes in Shetland
- To increase my knowledge and experience in order to improve participation in Shetland
- Anything else? Please explain _____

Appendix 6

<p>About inequalities</p> <p>Evidence shows the main inequality in Shetland is socio-economic or related to low income and poverty. Poverty is not just about money though. Other things can lead to inequality, such as: illness or disability - low quality and insecure housing - adverse outcomes at school - diminished rights (and the means to exercise them) - gender, ethnicity, faith, sexuality - isolation, loneliness and stigma</p>
How would you describe inequality? What matters most to you?
Are you in any of the situations you just described?
What or who would make the biggest difference to your situation?
How would you describe Shetland and the Shetland community? Do you notice any inequalities around you?
If yes, what (if anything) do you think would help to change or improve inequalities in Shetland?
What one thing would you most like others to understand about your situation?
What are your thoughts about democracy and participation?

Appendix 7

Personal characteristics	
How do you feel about talking to a potential stranger about inequalities?	
How do you feel about sharing personal stories with a potential stranger?	
How do you feel about receiving sensitive information?	
How do you feel about being paired up with someone potentially vulnerable?	
How are your opportunities to travel to meetings, and what would be your preferred times to meet?	
Would you prefer to be paired up with someone younger/older? Same/different gender?	
Is there anything you feel strongly about?	
When in conversation with people, what do you prefer most? To talk or listen?	
Would you say that you in general prefer to have/ or be in control or "go with the flow"?	
Based on the information provided and this conversation; do you have any expectations for your participation?	

Appendix 8

Start-up activity

Pictures are displayed on cards with question on the backside. In turns, participants choose card free of choice and answers the questions on the backside.

Where is your mum's family from? And/or where is your dad's family from?

If you were invisible for a day, what would you do and why?

What is your earliest memory?

What would you do for fun when you were a child?

What are you proudest of?

Did you enjoy school?

When in life have you felt most alone?

If you could hold on to one memory from your life forever, what would that be?

How would your classmates remember you?

What traditions have been passed down in your family?

If you could interview any person living or dead, who would it be and why?

If you found a magic lamp and the genie offered you three wishes, what would your wishes be, and why?

Who has been the biggest influence on your life? What lessons did that person teach you?

If you were marooned on a desert island, what three items would you want with you, and why?

What did you want to be when you grew up?

Tracking sheet

	Community participants			Civic participants		Meetings (insert date)											
	Name	Place		Name	Place												
1		Island															
2		Town			North												
3																	
4		South															
5																	
6		Town			Town												
7																	
8					West												
9																	
10																	

	Matching successful		Half-way meeting		Matching unsuccessful		Meeting cancelled/rescheduled
	Matching ceased		Participant withdrawal		Project lead facilitate/take part in meeting		

Appendix 10

Mentor Evaluation: Voices for Equity

Please, state your e-mail address		
During your mentor meeting, generally what percentage of time do you talk?		
More than 50%	It's less than 50%	
I think it is 50-50	I don't speak so much	
How much are each of you in control of the process?		
I feel that my learning partner is most in control	I feel it is quite equal	I feel I'm most in control of the process
Did you get an opportunity to give feedback to your partner today?		
Yes, I gave plenty of feedback	Yes, I think I gave my partner some feedback	No, I don't think I gave any feedback today
Did you receive any feedback from your partner today?		
Yes, I received lots	Yes, I received some	No, I don't think I received any feedback today
Do you feel comfortable around your mentoring partner?		
Yes, we get along well	I'm not quite sure	
It's alright, but I also feel a bit insecure	No, I don't feel comfortable	
Are you able to be open and sincere with your partner?		
Yes, this is not an issue for me	I'm not quite sure	
Yes, sometimes	No, I find that difficult	
Are your stories, views and opinions met with respect?		
Yes, they are	They are, sometimes	No, that is not my experience from the meeting
Do you talk about things you find relevant and interesting?		
Yes, we do!	Yes, more or less	No, we don't
Are you happy to continue? Please use the comments field to tell us how we can support you!		
Yes, definitely	Probably- if we make some changes	No, I don't want to continue

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For more information, please see our website or call 01595 743888

