

Community Reporting



What is community reporting?

Community Reporting is a storytelling movement founded in 2007 by People's Voice Media that supports people to tell and share stories about their own lived experiences. It uses digital tools to capture these stories and to share the learning in them with others.

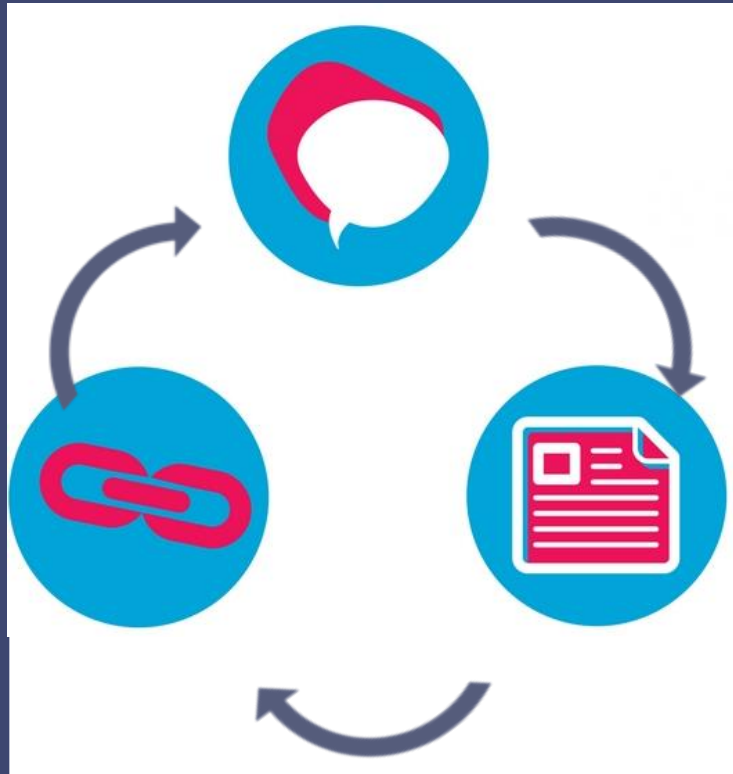
Community reporting helps:

- People to have a voice on things that matter to them
- Challenge perceptions
- Use stories as catalysts of change

Three stages of community reporting

1. GATHERING STORIES

Using simple digital tools such as smartphones and tablets to gather stories of people's lived experiences



2. CURATING STORIES

Watching the stories together and deciding what we have learned from one another and how to present this to other people.

3. MOBILISING STORIES

Packaging what we have learnt and presenting it to other people.

Stage 1: Gathering Stories

Four simple steps to gathering a story:

- Identify the storyteller
- Gain their informed consent
- Have an informal chat with the storyteller, and decide with them what question(s) you are going to ask
- Record their response, with prompting as needed

Example Stories

Watch this recording and think about:

- How the questions are asked
- How the storyteller feels
- How the recording has been made (picture, sound etc)



<https://communityreporter.net/story/steve-volunteer-2023-06>

Example Stories

Watch this recording and think about:

- How the questions are asked
- How the storyteller feels
- How the recording has been made (picture, sound etc)



<https://communityreporter.net/story/community-events-2023-06>

What kind of questions should you ask?

- You are not conducting a formal interview, you are gathering a story
- Start with an opening question which invites the storyteller to start sharing their experiences
- Have a few follow-up/prompt questions ready to go if needed

Open v closed questions

Open questions



- Tell me about your experience of volunteering
- How does volunteering make you feel?
- Why do you volunteer?

Closed questions



- Do you enjoy volunteering?
- Have you gained new skills from volunteering?
- What do you do as a volunteer?

Recording techniques

- You can record your story using any method available – it works just as well on a mobile phone as by recording the story on Zoom
- Check that the storyteller is comfortable being filmed. If not, you can capture the audio only, or even take a transcript of their story

Recording techniques



Find a **QUIET** space to record in



Place the mic **CLOSE** to the person who is speaking



Check your **SOUND LEVELS** to make sure you can hear the person speaking



Choose a **SUITABLE** shot size



Think about where the person is **LOOKING**



Pick a **SUITABLE** background or shot for you recording

Responsible storytelling

When we are recording our stories we need to think about how we can gather stories in a way that is ethical and safe. Some key tips include:

- Informed consent is key!
- Check in with the storyteller before, during and after the story
- Don't ask leading questions
- Be understanding and give space where needed
- Remember to protect yourself too

Consent

Consent is key to capturing stories. You should make sure that your storyteller:

- Understands why you're capturing their story
- Knows what you'll use their story for
- Has consented to be filmed or recorded, and know how this will be stored according to GDPR
- Has been given the option to consent to the wider sharing of their story e.g. on social media or with partners

Stage 2: Curating Stories

- Once you've finished gathering your stories, you're ready to curate!
- Curation should involve those involved in gathering the stories, as well as key decision-makers
- Letting storytellers know what you've done with the stories they provided is a great way to build trust

The curation process

- Watch back all of the stories you have gathered
- Examine the topic, context and content of the stories, exploring what people are talking about, their thoughts and feelings about the subject and their reasons behind this
- Use these to create a set of findings. What are these stories telling you?

Stage 2: Mobilising Stories

- Turn your findings into action!
- Share your stories (make sure you have consent first) and your findings with others
- Stories can be used for all sorts of things such as demonstrating impact, recruiting volunteers, lobbying decision-makers, even as evidence for funding bids. How best can you use yours?