

## Engaging People Project Case Study

Team: CNET

Date: November 2019

Title: Capacity Building for VCS

Outcome: Better decision making

i.e.: better engagement, better information or better decision making

### Background (brief intro)

In summer 2018 CNet undertook a skills audit with volunteers, individuals and part time staff to identify development support needed so that people could feel confident in engaging and sharing( both theirs and their member) stories in different arenas and with different audiences (meetings, forums, events etc.) Information from the audit was looked at and there emerges two key areas which people needed support with; focusing on communication skills and around feeling confident in sharing their stories. CNet then promoted three standalone sessions which were advertised through forums, website and via word of mouth. There were all held between Sep and October has an initial pilot to see if there was a need for this type of development and capacity building training

### What we did, who was involved (project activity)

A database was created with the skills audit findings and peoples contact details and the following sessions were organised around Communicating Confidently

- Speaking Up Session working on the skills and confidence to get your messages across to decision makers and looking at methods of participation- 20<sup>th</sup> September
- Facilitation Skills , covering the role of a facilitator and how to manage participation – 26<sup>th</sup> September

And a third session aimed at individuals in the community was organised around Poetry , Prose & Health, a creative writing workshop around health and wellbeing for the 7<sup>th</sup> November

These sessions were promoted via CNet bulletin and website

### Outcome (results, recommendations, learning, added value)

Both of the communicating confidently sessions had waiting list and places fully booked. Evaluations sheets were gathered with request for more training round assertion building and confidence. The vast majority people were new to CNet and not members of existing forums.

The poetry and prose session attracted people from Ilkley and Skipton, a mixed group in terms of ethnicity and gender, again all were new people. It's of note that 8 of the 14 who attended shared that they had suffered from mental health issues ( post-natal depression, PTSD )

### What next (future plans, spin offs)

We will be studying the evaluation sheets from the 50 plus people engaged and looking to plan a series of one off sessions for Spring Summer. There has been a request from several groups and individuals for training and development support around personal assertion skills and confidence

We will also be piloting a Poetry and prose session at an Islamic Women's group in December, and are considering running quarterly creative writing sessions for spring and Summer due to demand and requests to continue.

