

Part one - What Is?

Time: 1 hour 25 minutes

Taking stock of what's not working, what we want to change and what we want to retain

Facilitation guide:

Introduce the aim, mindset and exercise as set out below.

Aim:

- To explore what activities are currently helping us create a sustainable, resilient and socially just community, as well as what is stopping us doing this.

Mindset:

- Each person only has one part of the picture, so be open to other views to develop a more complex and realistic overview and accept that we can never know everything.
- Understand that each person's perspective of the local community at present, what needs to change and what needs to stay the same, helps us to find better solutions.
- Different perspectives are fine even if they are in tension as life is complex! The key is how we navigate those tensions together.

Go through the following exercise then put people into small rooms in groups of 3-5 people for 60 minutes (ideally 20 minutes for each of the 3 areas). Every 20 minutes, prompt the groups to move on to the next area.

What Is exercise:

The idea of the What Is exercise is to work in small groups to take stock of the world that exists around us at this point in time. In order to do this explore the following three areas and capture the main points in your shared notes. It is possible and completely fine for some local projects or organisations to appear in more than one list.

- Resilience: What are the things around you that contribute to the resilience of that place? What have you seen, during times of crisis or shock - such as extreme weather, the Covid pandemic or disruption to services or supplies - that have enabled the community to support itself? How has your community been able to manage those shocks and to rebuild itself afterwards?
- Relinquish: What are the things in your community that simply no longer have a place if we are to move towards a low carbon, more connected and just future? What do we need to let go of, to leave behind, to put to one side?
- Restore: What needs to be put into place in order to repair the damage that has been done to our place by climate change, by austerity, inequality, biodiversity loss and so on? What are the things that already exist in this place that represent the process of restoration or have a key role to play in that process?

By the end of this exercise, you will have created a kind of inventory of the place you live in today, of its seeds of hope, the things that are actively driving us closer to disaster, the building blocks on which the future needs to be built.

In person: Introduce the exercise all together, then invite people to form small groups where they are sitting, to respond to the three topics below. Make sure each group has pens and paper to capture their notes. After 60 minutes, join back together and invite people to take some time to walk around and read each other's notes. If you have time, gather once more and ask people what they're noticing - such as patterns, similarities or key themes'

Online: After introducing the exercise, put people into breakout rooms of 3-5 people. Share the three topics below (resilience, relinquish, restore) in the chat or on slides, so people can refer back to them during the discussion. Make sure people have access to a shared document for notes. After 60 minutes, bring people back into the main session, and invite each group to briefly feed back.

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