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Extracts from 'Teach Yourself Citizens' Juries: A handbook by the DIY Jury Steering Group'

"A citizen is a person who feels responsible for the area in which they live and would like to have some say in the running of it."

Resident, Newcastle, UK



Have you ever thought about running your own citizens' jury but were not sure how to go about it? The following extracts are taken from a new handbook *'Teach Yourself Citizens' Juries: A handbook by the DIY Jury Steering Group'*. Using a series of cartoons as a guide, it takes you through a step-by-step process on how to plan, implement, and follow-up a citizens' jury. The cartoons illustrate what a citizens' jury is, why you might want to have one, what the main ingredients of a citizens' jury are, and how to get started.



Made to accompany the video 'Teach Yourself Citizens' Juries: Making a difference' the manual explains the origins of citizens' juries, and provides examples of some of the situations in which you might feel it would be worthwhile to hold a citizens' jury for yourself.

This 22-minute video shows how a citizens' jury was formed 2003 in Newcastle, UK, to explore health issues affecting older people. The video takes you through each aspect of the processes that were involved, from organising the first meeting, where people explored and prioritised the issues of concern, to selecting a steering group, oversight panel, expert witnesses, and jury members, to meetings where jury members could debate and analyse the 'evidence'. The result was a set of practical recommendations identified by the jurors that were then presented at a high-profile launch to policy makers and the media.

This video demonstrates how to find common ground between people from diverse backgrounds, and how ordinary citizens' can make complex, informed decisions based on the information presented to them by expert witnesses and from their own deliberations. It also includes commentary recounting the experiences of some of the people involved.

The handbook and video are published by the Policy, Ethics, and Life Sciences (PEALS) Programme, University of

"You think of a jury, you think of a courtroom, and it was that type of setting that I thought I would be coming into – but this is different, it's more friendly, and an atmosphere is created where you can openly ask questions and get answers."

Steering group member

Newcastle, 2003. These extracts were reproduced with kind permission from PEALS. The cartoons are by Kate Charlesworth, and the accompanying video was produced by Swingbridge Video.

A single copy of the handbook and video are available free of charge to community groups on request – thereafter all additional copies as priced. The handbook and video cost £10.00 per copy plus postage.

● To order, please contact:
**PEALS, Centre for Life,
 Times Square, Newcastle, NE1 4EQ.
 Tel: +44 191 241 8614.**





If you are an individual, you might want to interest friends or other people in your community to help. How will you attract people to the idea of a jury? Will it be about getting local concerns a better hearing from those in power, or finding a way of getting greater recognition for a national or international issue.



CHOOSING A SUBJECT



Assuming that you want to attract people that you don't already know, the first question to ask is whether you seek members of your local community, or a group of people from a wider area who already share a common interest that is not merely confined to their locality (such as racism, toxic pollution, or food labelling).



HOW TO GET PEOPLE TO THE FIRST MEETING

When arranging your meeting there are various ways of making sure that people who don't normally come to meetings decide to come along:

- Publicise the meeting by word of mouth, not just by printed advertising.



- Make the time of the meeting one that suits people, and offer help with childcare, and access for people with disabilities.

