



Carmarthenshire  
**CONNECT**  
**CYSWLLT**  
Sir Gaerfyrddin

## **Digital Expressions**

Techniques for encouraging people to express themselves using digital cameras

We've used a variety of techniques on the Carmarthenshire Connect project to engage members of the community in using digital stills and video cameras. We're particularly interested in encouraging participants to use the technology to express their own views and those of their communities. This is a selection of the most successful techniques we've found when working with community groups.

### **Cue Cards: Talking Points**

#### **Purpose**

A method which enables people to talk freely on camera around a specific theme. This method is particularly useful for encouraging a group to focus on a single subject. It may be useful in evaluation exercises, or more generally.

#### **Equipment Required**

- Digital video cameras (such as 'Busbi' or mobile phone cameras) 1 camera for every 2 or 3 participants
- A4 Cards (1 for each camera)
- Laptop / PC (for downloading material afterwards)



A 'Busbi' digital camcorder

#### **Time Required**

Approximately 10-15 minutes

#### **Description**

Prepare cue cards in advance. Choose single words or short phrases which will allow participants to focus on a particular theme. For example, a card with the word "Cymraeg" (Welsh) can be used to encourage participants to describe their feelings about the Welsh language. Write or print the word or phrase in large letters on A4 cards.

To use the cue cards, divide the group into 2s or 3s and give each group a camera and a cue card. Demonstrate the use of the cameras and explain that they are to film each other holding the cue card whilst talking about the subject on the card.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to use multiple or reversible cards.

For instance: a 'Hopes' / 'Fears' card could be used at the outset of an activity to gauge participants' expectations; a 'Last Week' / 'This Week' card can be used to elicit participants' changing attitudes.

#### **References**

<http://www.carmsconnect.org.uk/2008/07/keeping-it-real.html>

# Smiley Faces

## Purpose

'Smiley Faces' allow participants to gather positive or negative feedback about a particular object (for example physical features of a local community). This can be useful as part of a wider consultation or evaluation activity.

## Equipment Required

- Digital Stills Cameras or mobile phone cameras
- A Laptop or Personal Computer
- Printed A4 'Smiley' / 'Sad Face' Cards (1 for each camera or participant)

## Time Required

The time taken to complete this exercise depends on the type of consultation or evaluation being undertaken and may take anything from 1-2 hours to several days.

## Description

Prepare the smiley and sad faces on A4 cards (reversible) either by printing from a computer or hand drawing them and preparing any equipment you will need for the exercise.

### To engage with the group:

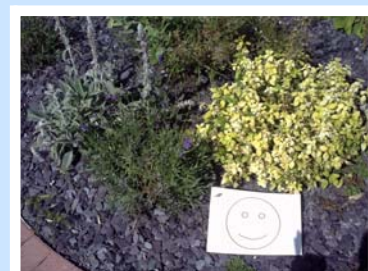
1. Introduce yourself and your purpose for being there.
2. Explain to the group that the cards will be used with the cameras to capture their feedback and feelings.
3. Ask the group to choose specific things they feel strongly about and to take photos of these features or objects including sad or smiley faces to represent how they feel about them.
4. Hand out the cameras and support participants in the activity.
5. When finished, collect the cameras.

The initial follow up is to download all the photos onto a laptop or personal computer, and sort into separate files so you know which participants took each photo. You can then store them on CD until they are needed, for example, in a future meeting, where they can then be displayed on a projector or printed for the community to view and discuss.

Using this engagement method is a great way to prompt and document feedback from participants that is relevant to a consultation or evaluation exercise and allows individuals to be strongly involved in the consultation and evaluation process.

## References

<http://www.carmsconnect.org.uk/labels/Penymorfa%20Community%20Garden%20Project.html>



## Question Cards

### Purpose

Questions cards encourage participants to talk on camera about an activity or experience. Using question cards creates a structure for interviews and allows participants to capture their thoughts, opinions and feedback about a particular subject or activity.

### Equipment Required

- Small hand held video cameras (such as Busbis) or mobile phone cameras, or small DV video camera
- Pre-printed A5 question cards
- A laptop or personal computer

### Time Required

This exercise can be carried out by one individual with a group of 2-5 participants in approximately 15 minutes and a larger group of 8-12 participants in approximately 30 minutes.

### Description

First, prepare the questions on A5 cards. This can be done on a computer and printed or hand written. You will need to prepare a set of questions cards for each hand held camera being used.

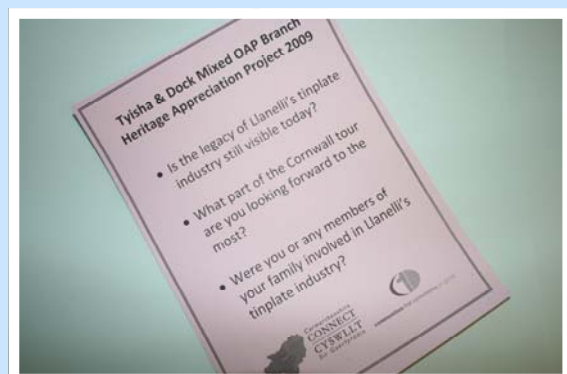
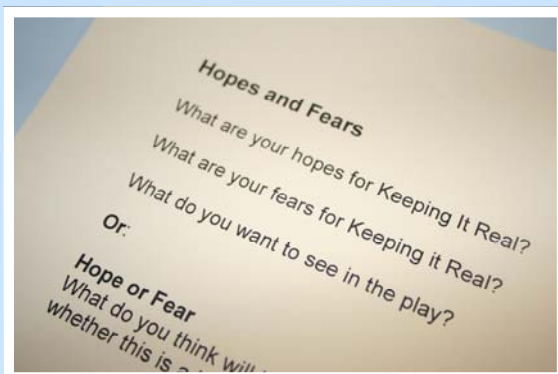
### To engage the group:

1. Introduce yourself to the group and your purpose for being there.
2. Explain what the question cards will be used for (demonstrate if needed).
3. Split the group into pairs (preferably) and give each pair a camera, demonstrating how to use them.
4. Ask the group to film interviews with each other in their pairs using the questions provided (support if needed).
5. Collect the cameras.

The initial follow up for this exercise is to download all the video clips onto a laptop or personal computer, and sort into separate files so you know which participants took each video. You can then store them on CD until they are needed, for example, in a future meeting, or upload them to a website for others to view.

### References

<http://www.carmsconnect.org.uk/2009/01/base-facilitate-upper-amman-valley.html>



## **My Word**

### **Purpose**

A method to encourage people to summarise their feelings about an experience or topic. This method may be particularly useful for evaluation immediately following an activity.

### **Equipment Required**

- Digital video cameras (such as 'Busbi' or mobile phone cameras) 1 camera for every 2 or 3 participants
- Blank A4 cards (1 for each camera)
- Magic markers / Felt pens
- Laptop / PC (for downloading material afterwards)

### **Time Required**

Approximately 15-20 minutes

### **Description**

Divide the group into 2s or 3s. Distribute a camera to each group and give each participant a blank card. Provide a range of coloured pens or magic markers for participants to choose from. Demonstrate how to use the cameras.

Ask everyone to think of a word which describes their feelings about the particular experience or topic with which you are concerned. Explain that, if they can't think of one, they can invent one. Ask them to write this on the card in large letters.

When everyone has had a chance to choose their word, ask them to record interviews with each other, in their groups, about their choice of word. Each participant should hold up their card and explain why they have chosen their word (or if they have invented one, what it means and why they chose it.)

### **References**

<http://www.carmsconnect.org.uk/2008/07/keeping-it-real.html>