

Case study: media training

What was the issue to address?

Following the negative coverage North Kirklees communities received during events that took place in early 2007, local people felt they had been misrepresented, particularly in the national press and broadcast media. Journalistic portrayals were often based on a 'snap shot' of diverse communities that had lived peaceably side by side for generations.

There was a clear need for communities to voice their views and restore confidence in local people who had felt they had become scapegoats of the national media in stereotypically unrepresentative news stories.

What did we do?

The expertise of professional media trainers were enlisted to devise and deliver tailored media training packages. After an introductory session to demystify the media and its workings, delegates were given the opportunity to take part in interactive workshops that mimicked both reactive and proactive scenarios based on the real life events that communities found themselves confronted by.

The training sessions developed skills in:

- Staying on message
- Taking control of difficult interview situations
- How to make the media your friend
- Writing for the media

Participants had the opportunity to take part in an interview with a real journalist, be under the glare of the camera lens and confronted by a microphone. Radio and television interviews were recorded and played back to the group so that individuals could learn from each other's interview and receive critical constructive feedback from the trainers.

At a follow up training session, delegates were equipped with the skills to draft press releases to capture the interest of journalists and how to promote positive stories about the good relationships that exist between people of all ages, backgrounds and faiths.

Take away delegate information packs and certificates were provided to all those who took part so that techniques could be shared between colleagues and across community organisations.



Shaping our future Together
Kirklees community cohesion strategy



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What difference did we make?

Delegates were given an opportunity to gain new skills and confidence in dealing with the media through the use of proven techniques and using examples that reflected their previous experience. The chance to practice those very skills in a safe environment proved to participants that it is possible to 'make the media your friend'.

Without the appropriate skills to handle the media, local people had found themselves in a situation where they were unable to convey their message with confidence.

Mohammad Osaman, Secretary from Thornton Lodge Action Group commented, "The training was of a high standard and yet accessible. I found it very informative and I will be taking back a lot of ideas from this to use in my own training programme for my organisation".

What were the keys to our success?

We briefed the trainers before the training took place to make sure they had an understanding of the issues that concerned our communities. Together, we came up with training packages that were design to respond to the needs of everyday people who came into contact with the media. Using real life case scenarios, we gave people the opportunity to put theory into practice with interactive workshops.

What are we doing next?

A further, women only media training package is being planned in partnership with local voluntary community organisations to equip women with the same skills to voice their views with clarity and confidence.

