PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

Solving Crises with Community Assemblies:

A focus on food resilience
The Somerset Assembly Group

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How Can We Use People's Assemblies?

1. Create a sense of community & connection.
2. Create a space for reflective learning and discussion
3. Explore a topic / deal with local crises
4. Idea generation
5. Collective decision making
6. Direct action to support a local cause
7. Feedback/review mechanism

Planning a People's Assembly

Lead facilitators and lead notetaker
- Run the assembly, overall time-keepers, record outputs, preferably diverse

Deliberation facilitators and deliberation notetakers
- Build connection and trust, ensure no one dominates, keep time, record deliberation

Carefully choose a question
- Based on local knowledge, broad appeal

Consider barriers to engagement:
- Is the location accessible? Can you meet people's needs / support their disabilities?

Phase 1: The Set Up Phase
Frame the Assembly

- Clearly state the question.

- Explain where the results will go.

- Introduce the input (if you are having one): Ensure it is accurate & reliable.

Three Pillars

Radical Inclusivity

Active Listening

Trust the Process

The Inclusivity Statement

'We value all voices equally in the assembly, as the aim is to hear the wisdom of the crowd gathered here and not to have the assembly dominated by individual voices or groups.

We recognise that confident speakers are not always right and that those who are not confident speakers will often have useful ideas or opinions to put into the discussion. This is why we value all voices equally and we ask you to do the same.

We do not tolerate any calling out, abuse or shaming. We welcome all people but not all behaviours.'

You can follow this with a testify: What brought you here today?

Using hand signals

- **Make a point:**
  Index finger pointed up

- **Agreement:**
  Wavy hands

- **Round up:**
  Create a circle with both hands

- **Speak up:**
  Move your hands upwards with palms up

SPEAK UP

POINT

ROUND UP

I AGREE

Phase 2: The Deliberation Phase

- Breakout Groups (6-10 people)
- Using hand signals in the discussion
- Ensure feedback required (1-3 pieces of info per group is ideal) is clear
- Each group needs:
  - Facilitator:
    - Restates the question and facilitates discussion
    - Ensures no one dominates
    - Keeps an eye on the time
    - Maintains radical inclusivity
    - Can contribute put themselves in the queue to contribute, and ask questions if the conversation slows down
  - Group Notetaker:
    - Records what is being said (bullet points idea)
   - Summarises the findings back to the main group

Phase 3: The Integration (Feedback) Phase

- Lead Facilitator calls assembly notetakers to the front of the assembly;

- Each note-taker gives their discussion group's feedback in the format requested;

- Main assembly note-taker verifies & records feedback (can write on a big board);

- Assembly Note taker feeds results to destination.
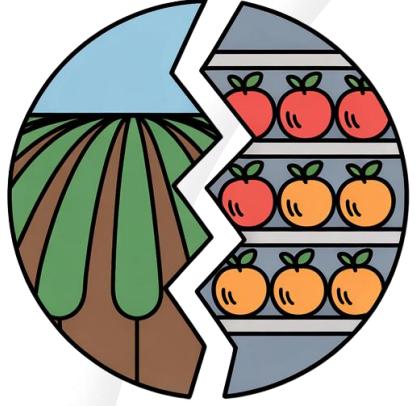
How can we ensure everyone has access to food when
climate shocks and cyber attacks
hit at the same time?
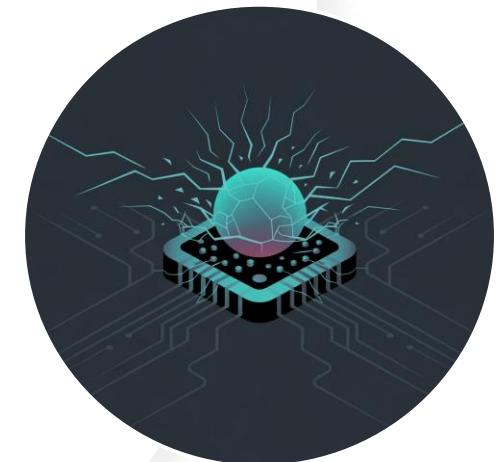
Breakout groups of 5-6 people for about 30 minutes

First 2 mins introduce yourselves

Choose a notetaker

Discuss the question

You'll have 5 mins at the end to decide which 1/2 key points your notetaker will feedback to the main group

Facilitation Practice (Deliberation Phase)

Trust the People Course Autumn 2025

Trust the People is a grassroots community building movement, sharing democratic tools to help people support their communities in the face of local and global crises.

Our free online community organising course is back on Monday 3rd November!

It will run **online** for four weeks at **6pm-8.30pm GMT** each **Monday evening** and will take you through different aspects of community building – from connecting with people one-to-one to running community assemblies, which harness the wisdom and power of the community.

Module 1 - Personal Processing   *Monday 3rd November – 6pm-8.30pm*
Module 2 - Engaging Communities   *Monday 10th November – 6pm-8.30pm*
Module 3 - Group Support   *Monday 17th November– 6pm-8.30pm*
Module 4 - Community Assemblies   *Monday 24th November – 6pm-8.30pm*
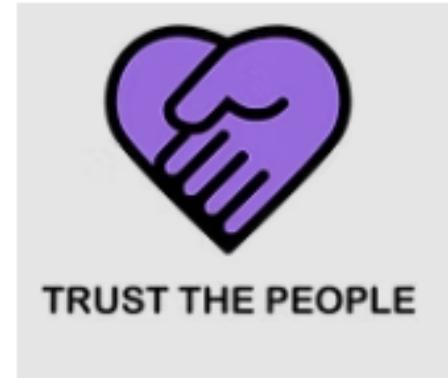
**Peoples Assembly for Newcastle Under Lyme;
Addressing the issues of climate and energy - 2022**