

# A model action research process

Knowledge  
is Power

Supporting community-led  
action research

## Identifying an issue

The first stage is to identify an issue within your community that you would like to change.

It is important to have a clear focus on what you want to find out and why. To aid you in this, it is essential that you have clear and specific research questions.

See the Knowledge is Power website for a handy guide on **developing your research questions**.

**IRISS** provides some handy project planning resources to help you clarify your research idea through their Co-production Planner.

## Identifying partners

At this stage, you have identified your research questions. You now want to start to think about who you want to work with (e.g. other organisations in your community) and who you want to influence (e.g. local council).

Community-led action research is research that wants to make a change and it is important that you think about who should be involved to make those changes.

Conducting a **stakeholder analysis** will enable you to identify who you want to engage with during the course of your project.

## Planning your research

It may seem daunting but starting off with a plan for your project is crucial for preventing any hiccups along the way.

This is where you think about the practicalities of your research (e.g. capacity of the group, what resources you might need).

See the Knowledge is Power **guide to research planning**.

The **Association of Research in the Voluntary and Community Sector** provides a useful **Research Planning Template**.

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## Choosing your research methods

Research methods are the tools that researchers use to explore and find out about their research topic. See the Knowledge is Power handy guides on **research methods** which will help you to choose the most appropriate research methods. You also need to think carefully about any **risks/ethical concerns** that might arise.

To find out what methods other community action research projects have conducted why not look at examples in practice.

See **here** for a consultation undertaken on Reinstating Bonnybridge Railway Station.



## Data collection and analysis

After careful planning, your project is ready to begin data collection using your chosen methods. At this stage you might come up against challenges in accessing the data or people you want to speak to. It is important to be reflective and it may be necessary to adapt your original plan to address your research questions.

Analysis of your data will depend on the research methods you have used (e.g you may be looking to identify key themes from your data if you conducted an interview or focus group).

**Community Food and Health Scotland** provides a useful resource on **How to Analyse Data**.



## Making a change

There are lots of examples out there of how other community action research projects have shared their findings and made a change. The Knowledge is Power toolkit includes several **resources** on using evidence to create change.

See **Disability Research on Independent Living and Learning** (DRILL) for lots of creative examples of how you can share your findings.

See **here** for a video of a vlog from a research project on young disabled people's transitions.

