Community engagement: shaping civic agendas and university life

Welcome

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Agenda

Welcome

10.35: Dan James, Director Development, Eden Project
11.00: Emily Morrison, ICS: Principles of Community Engagement
11.30: Nicola Gratton, Lead for Civic Engagement and Evaluation, Staffordshire University
12.00: Liam Harney, Big Local and Young Foundation

12.30 Close

Dan James
Director Development, Eden Project

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Civic University Network

Emily Morrison, ICS: Principles of Community Engagement

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Civic University Network

Engaged 'in'

We know what we want/ are doing - but the programme will have implications for communities or the local area

Engaging *with*

We want to act on this issue that affects us, the local area or local community – and have not decided exactly what the specific problem is nor what would work yet

Engaging *for*

We want to contribute to or be part of the local community – we will be led by what they identify are the issues and then decide how to solve them

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Engaged 'in'

We know what the issue is and what needs to be done. We want to build support around our approach.

Engaging *with*

We know what the issue is because of our expertise & insight, or because we are part of the community as well. But we may not understand how it is experienced by others.

Engaging *for*

We accept we don't know and that communities can direct us via what they know.

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Civic University Network

The community plays an active role in generating knowledge about the issues that affect them.

Engagement is on-going, built into the regular activities of HE institutions, rather than a one-off event.

Engagement is proactive and productive, meeting communities where they are and finding pragmatic ways to build relationships and address issues.

Communities are recognised as having strengths and assets that can complement those of universities to produce positive civic outcomes.

Principles of Community Engagement

The community is treated as an equal partner in generating insight and ideas, and engagement seeks to rebalance power imbalances between university and the community.

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Sufficient investment allows for both breadth and depth in engagement.

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Community Engagement: a fine balancing act

Nicola Gratton

Lead for Civic Engagement and Evaluation

Staffordshire University

Get Talking

Keep Talking: Background

Get Talking Hardship

2019
[Get Talking Hardship](#)

January – May 2020
UKRI Enhancing Placed-based partnerships for Public Engagement funding

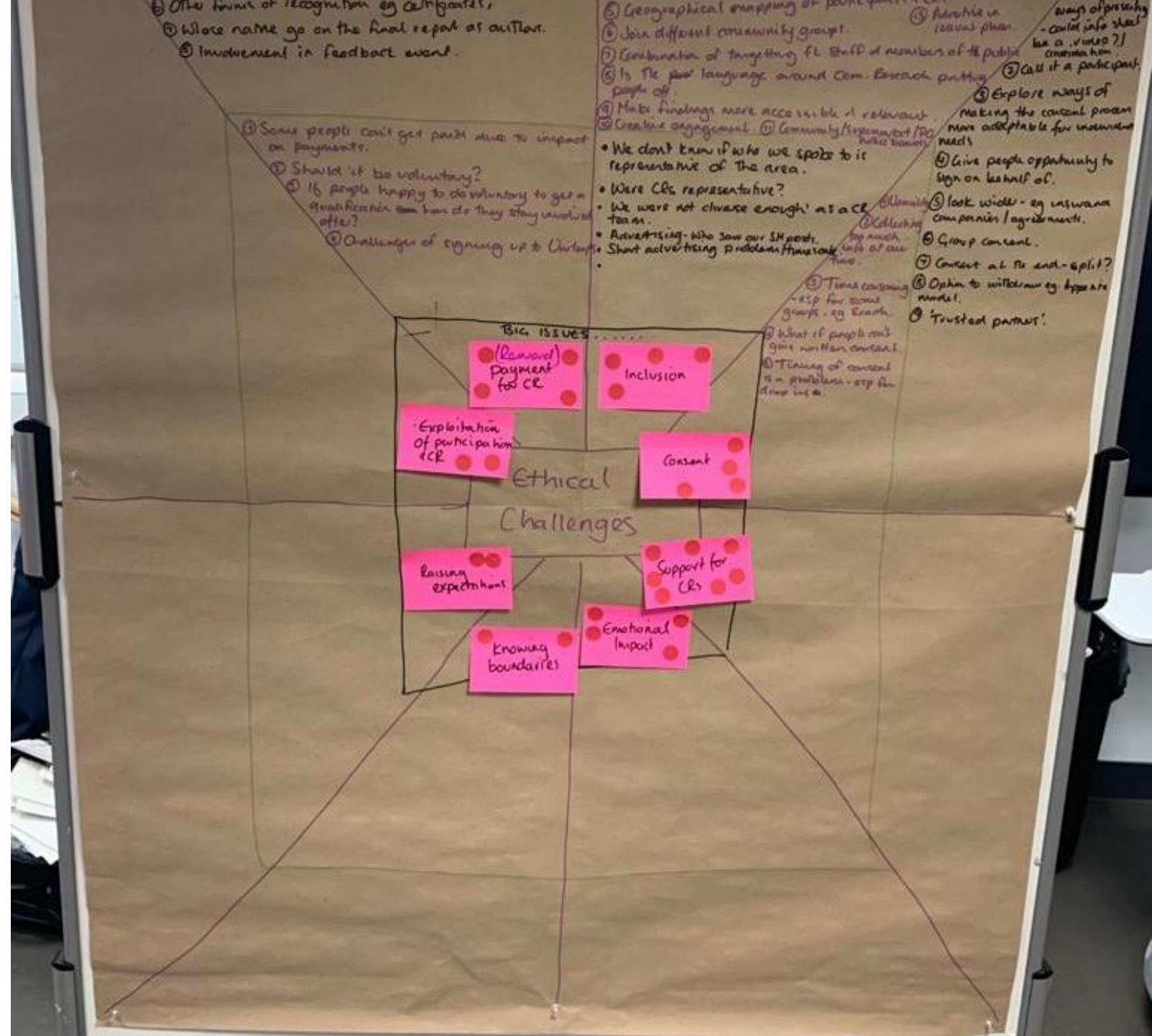Aim: develop sustainable model for community research teams

Introducing the Keep Talking Team

Expert Citizens CIC

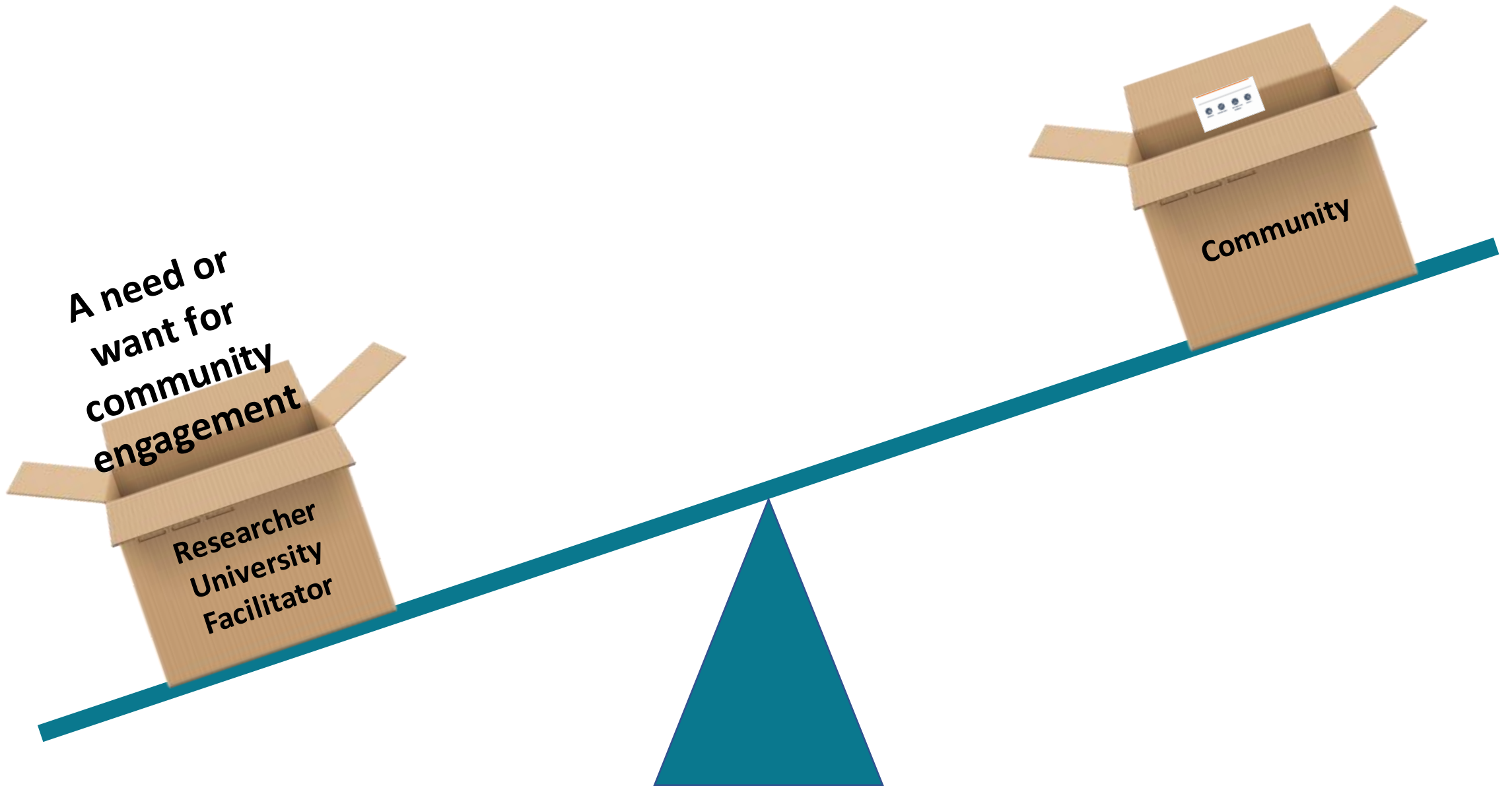STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY

Our research

- Community researcher needs

- Power and ethics – the issues and solutions

- Covid-19 - adapted to remote engagement

Balancing needs and agendas

A need or want for community engagement

Researcher University Facilitator

Community

PURPOSE

RELATIONSHIPS

CREATIVITY AND FLEXIBILITY

DETAILS

Relationships

Community – university

Within the group

Friendship

"It's helped me make some new friends and helped me to understand 'normal people' (as in people who haven't suffered mental health and an alternative lifestyle) and it has helped me to appreciate their lives too"

The overall impact it has had on us all, not just me, but it has highlighted the importance of friendship, kindness, positive relationships and built some strong friendships through this unprecedented time in all our lives.

"the sense of comradery has developed through this and how we were all in the deep end together but have all come through the other side stronger I feel."

"I think that my relationships with people in the group have strengthened, especially when I've shared my poems in the group chat"

Cheesecake with a twist!

Photo by Teri Elder and a made up recipe!

Method:
Melt the butter in a pan and mix in the crushed packet of hobnob biscuits. Press firmly into a tin, cover with clingfilm with pop in the fridge until firm.
Mix (with an electric whisk) the rest of the ingredients together until thick. Place on top of your base and add on the fruit of your choice and leave for 3 to 4 hours in the fridge to set

Top tip: If you whisk the do it is really thick then add sugar it helps the che

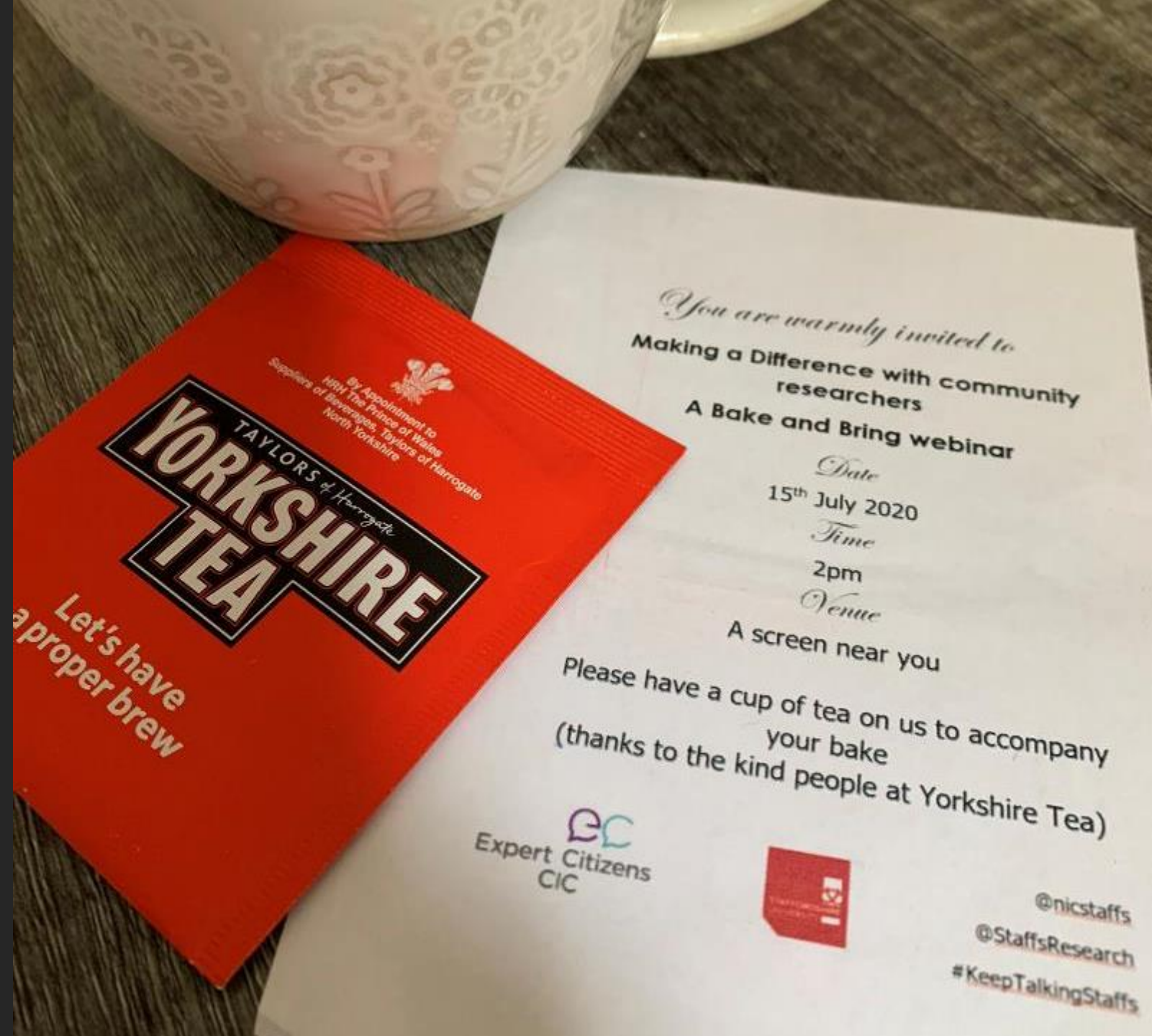"I enjoyed people's c progress, f throwing it pot cook to l them two qual Sunday dinners!"

The sense of camaraderie has developed. We all got thrown in going into lockdown but we were all throwing thing out in the WhatsApp group, and trying to sense when people weren't doing well. There was a sense of wanting to make sure everyone is doing well... throwing out the odd nice word when you can tell someone is struggling"

were ur flat eople's raphs of our put a smile n my face"

It's the small things that make a big difference

Power imbalance

Researcher University Facilitator

Community

Power
Imbalance

Researcher
University
Facilitator

Community
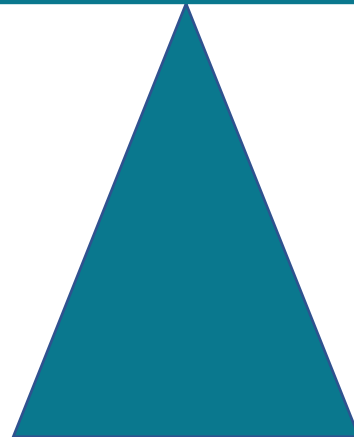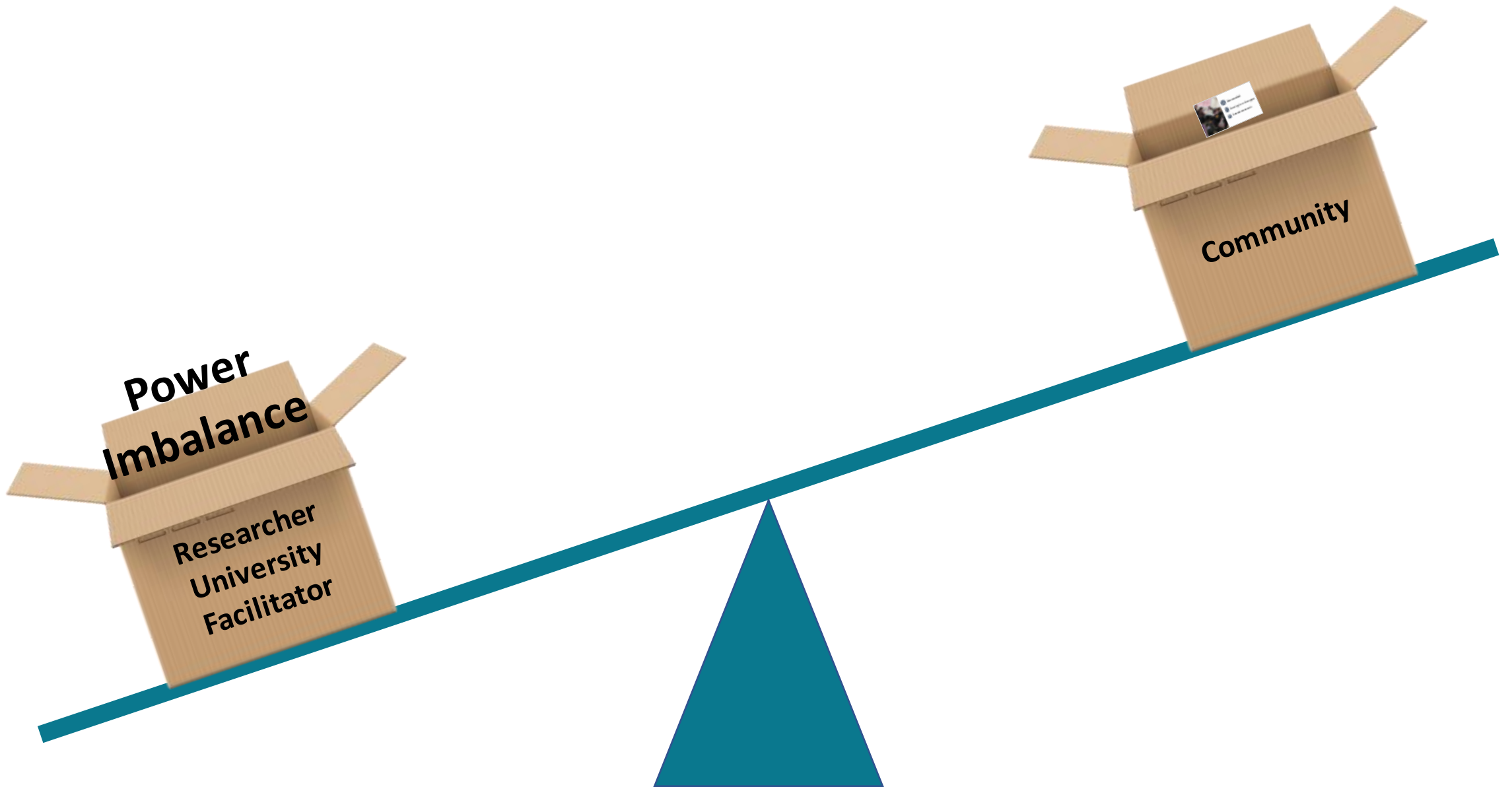
Who benefits?

Starting from Strengths

Shared ownership

Mutual and meaningful benefits

"If you believe you know everything...you know nothing".

Bureaucracy, Inflexible processes

Researcher
University
Facilitator

Community
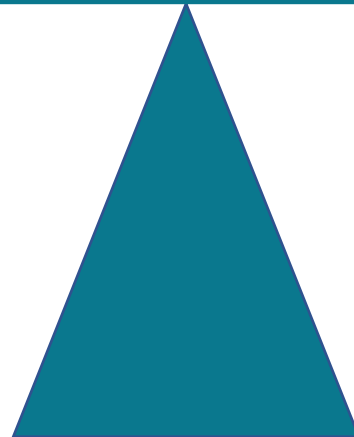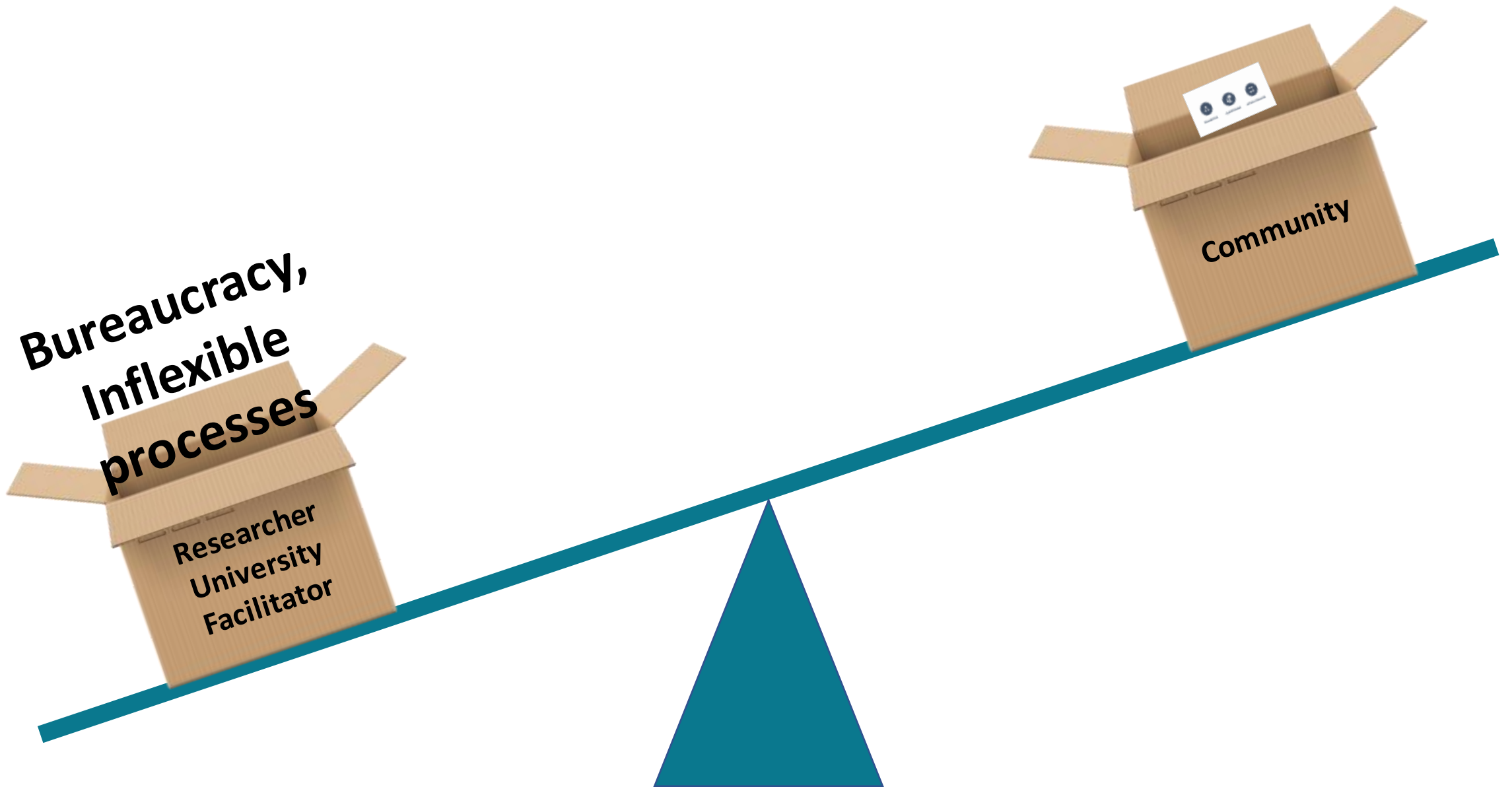
CONNECTOR   QUESTIONING   ACTION FOCUSED

Connector role

Question (and allow others to question) the fundamentals of how we work

Balancing needs and agendas

Our learning for Community Engagement

1. Relationships are everything!	2. Start from strengths	3. Acknowledge and actively address power
4. The value of a 'connector'.	5. Be creative	6. Shared ownership
7. The small details matter.	8. Question the fundamentals (and allow others to question) about how you work and what you (think you) know	9. Give more time than you think you will need

Links to Keep Talking resources
1. **Keep Talking About… Podcast (Expert Citizens link):** A podcast hosted on Anchor, shared through Spotify, Apple Music and TuneIn exploring issues of isolation, disability, creativity, friendship and community and family. Keep Talking about… | Podcast on Spotify

2. **Get Talking about Community Research Comic:** An illustrated comic designed following community researchers request for easily accessible resources to understand the role. Keep Talking community researchers and project team are represented in the illustrations : https://issuu.com/nicstaffs/docs/get_talking_about_community_reseach_comic_final

3. **More than Findings and Funding:** a coproduced guide for community organisations and universities working together to create the right environment for community research: https://issuu.com/nicstaffs/docs/more_than_findings_final

4. **Purpose, Process, People:** Community researchers' motivations for sustained engagement in place-based research: https://issuu.com/nicstaffs/docs/more_than_findings_final

5. **Messy research chapter:** Gratton, N., Fox, R. and Elder, T. (2020) Keep Talking: Messy Research in Times of lockdown. In Kara, H. and Khoo, S. (Eds.) Researching in the Age of Covid-19. Vol. 2: Care and Resilience. Available at: https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/researching-in-the-age-of-covid-2

Get in touch: n.gratton@staffs.ac.uk   01782 292751   @nicstaffs

Engaging Communities in Big Local
Reflections on Aberfeldy Big Local

Liam Harney, Senior Researcher

THE YOUNG FOUNDATION

for stronger communities

Big Local

-Funded by the **National Lottery Community Fund**

-**£1 million** each for 150 areas across England

-**10 years** to spend the money

-**Decisions made by** a partnership of **local residents**

Big Local Aims:

-Communities will be better able to identify local needs and take action in response to them.

-People will have increased skills and confidence, so that they continue to identify and respond to needs in the future.

-The community will make a difference to the needs it prioritises.

-People will feel that their area is an even better place to live.

THE YOUNG FOUNDATION

for stronger communities

Aberfeldy Big Local

- Diverse, **inner city estate**
- **'Forgotten Community'**
- **Partnership** of local residents making decisions on a monthly basis
- 1 fulltime **staff** member + 2 part time staff
- Variety of **priorities** & activities supported in the area

Successes

- Resident-run **youth club**
- New community **pub** & **tea rooms**
- Influencing **regeneration**
- New community **boxing club**
- Funding **community projects**
- Support for **local entrepreneurs**
- Redesigning **local parks**

Engagement Approaches

- Resident-led Partnership
- Collaborating with local organisations
- Community Meals
- Community Chest Fund
- Large Events & Consultation
- Peer Research
- Community Engagement Staff
- Creating Spaces

THE YOUNG FOUNDATION

for stronger communities

Lessons Learnt

- It takes **time to build relationships**, establish honest communication, and build a reputation. It is worth investing in these

- **Trust** is important. People are cynical about community development, consultation, and the intentions of large institutions

- **Actions** speak louder than words

- There's a huge amount of **untapped talent** and **ideas** within communities

- Be aware of **local power dynamics** & don't assume local institutions always represent people's interests

Member Collaboration

MY ACCOUNT   DASHBOARD   FORUMS   MEMBERS   NEWS   EVENTS   SURVEYS   BLOG   RESOURCES

Members

Jonathan Dempsey

Rebecca Easterbrook

Simon Cane

Emily Burns

- Find and collaborate with other Network Members across the UK

- Share your experiences, challenges and tips

- Link with other organisations operating within the civic space
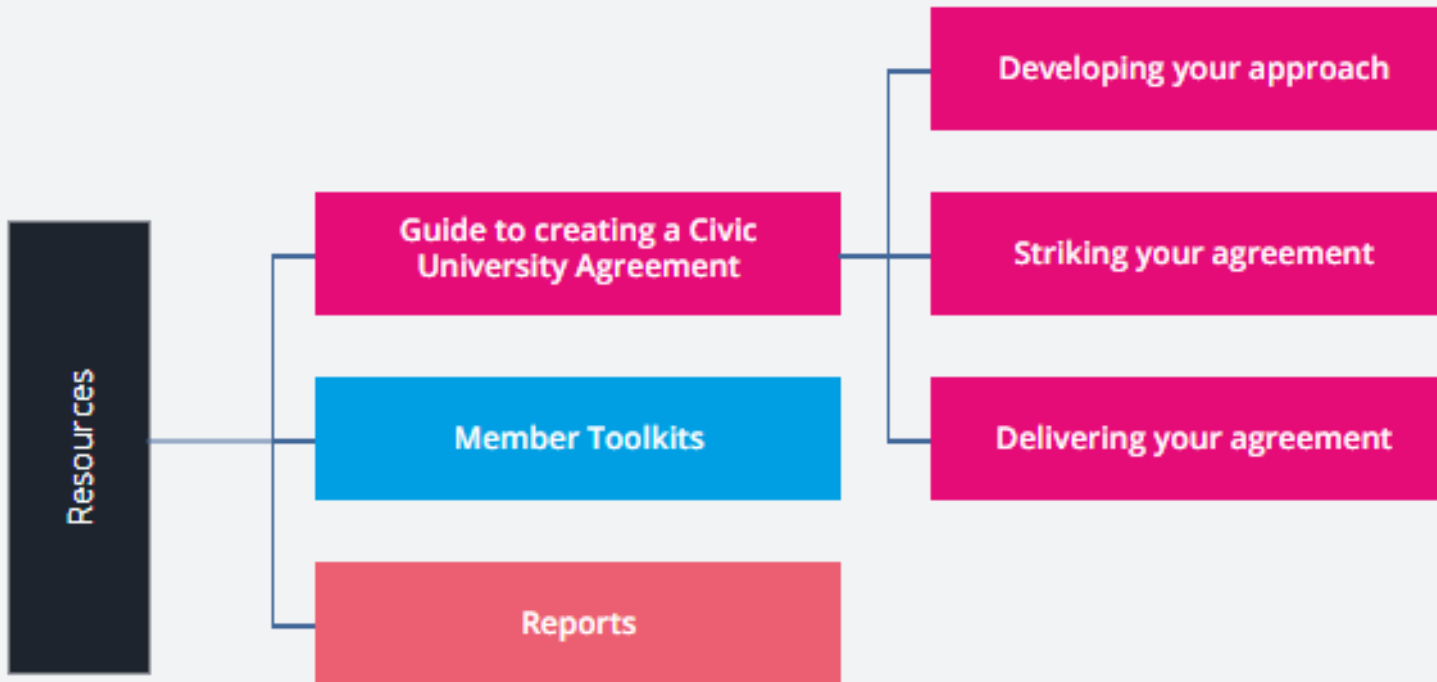
1. Developing your approach
Undertaking consultation and gathering evidence to inform your agreement and building effective partnerships.

2. Striking your agreement
Deciding the most effective way to focus your agreement (there are many options for this, and no 'one size fits all').

3. Delivering your agreement
Setting appropriate targets and goals; putting in place evaluation and monitoring; implementing effective governance and securing resources and building a team to deliver the work.

1. Developing your approach

Helpful Resources

Video Case Studies

These case studies reveal how different HEI partnerships have gone about developing their civic strategies. Recorded at the end of 2020, they reveal very different approaches, and contain lots of practical advice about the lessons learned.

This **event report** summarises the lessons learned and provides useful links and resources.

The Manchester Story

The universities in Greater Manchester began the development of a city-wide partnership in the summer of 2020. Julian Skyrme, Director of social responsibility at the University of Manchester, provided this update a few months into the process.

This **briefing note** provides links to useful resources developed at Manchester.

The Keele Deals

The University of Keele is focusing its civic work through a series of sector deals, a process they began back in 2017. Ann Pittard, Director of Engagement and Partnerships at Keele, explains their approach.

This **briefing note** provides links to useful resources developed at Keele.

A Glasgow Civic Agreement

The story of how the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde went about developing a partnership approach and launched a civic agreement in the summer of 2020.

A Vice Chancellor's Perspective

Trevor McMillan, VC at the University of Keele, and the government's Knowledge Exchange Champion, reflects on Keele's approach to the civic agenda.

Useful Resources

We have provided links below to other useful resources. Please get in touch if you would like to share others, or to recommend useful tools you have drawn on to develop your work.

Winchester's Flourishing Communities framework

The University of Winchester undertook a two year consultation as part of their community impact strategy.

This framework is the result – focused on seven features of a flourishing community. These features now focus and guide their civic strategy.

UEA's civic impact

UEA recently published a report summarising their civic, social and economic impact. This evidence is providing a helpful resource to inform their future civic strategy.

Extending civic engagement to post-industrial towns

Recent research by Public First, commissioned by the UPP Foundation, reveals significant challenges in public attitudes towards and understanding of universities. You might find some of their findings useful in persuading colleagues of the need for a more strategic civic approach.

"There was an "overwhelming impression" of "distance and indifference" when the participants were asked to sum up their views of universities. The report summarised the public's perception of universities as "self-interested institutions, rather than civic and social actors.... similar to businesses with a bottom line to look out for, rather than as the public-private hybrid."

2. Striking your agreement

Resource packs

Video Case Studies

These case studies tell the story of how HEIs and HEI partnerships have delivered civic agreements. They outline the process followed, and we provide links to range of useful resources that underpin the agreement.

Universities for Nottingham

Nottingham Trent University and the University of Nottingham launched their 'Universities for Nottingham,' civic agreement in the summer of 2020. The team from NTU and a key partner, the NHS, outline how they went about it.

This **briefing note** provides links to useful resources developed to support the process, and to the published agreement.

Solent University: developing a Civic Charter

Mike Toy, Stakeholder Engagement Manager at Solent, explains why the University chose to develop a Civic Charter – and how this has laid the foundations for a Civic University Agreement.

A resource pack is in development and will be uploaded here soon.

Wrexham Glyndwr: A co-created civic mission

Nina Ruddle, Head of Public Policy Engagement at Wrexham Glyndwr, explains how the university has set about co-developing its civic strategy with key regional partners.

This **briefing note** provides links to useful resources developed by the project, including their Civic Mission Framework.

Civic Mission Framework
for Wrexham Glyndwr University 2020-2030

COMMITMENT & FOCUS.

Our mission is to help you:
End social inequality across North Wales by 2030.
Our aim is to be useful to you in this work by working with, and for, you innovating, co-creating, testing and delivering new approaches to:

1. Community resilience
2. Keeping well
3. Leadership, Governance and whole system working

CAPACITY & ENABLE.

Our Role in WGU is to enable collective action by:

Research | Insight | Ideation | Prototype
Discover | Define | Develop | Deliver

OUTCOME.

To enable and deliver for this collective mission we would in partnership establish a 'North Wales Public Service lab' Learn together - Lead together

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Future Network events

School Trusts: A new form of civic structure	**5th March** 14:00 – 15:00
CUA Workshop 4: **Evaluation of civic activity**	**9th March 2021** 10:30 – 12:30
CUA Workshop 5: **The Civic Index**	**24th March 2021** 10:30 – 12:30

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