

COPRODUCTION IN HOUSING AND REGENERATION

A FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITIES AND
PRACTITIONERS



community led housing .
london

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WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR

This framework is intended to be used by local authorities, housing associations, community and resident led organisations, and others working in housing, urban development, and regeneration. It is envisaged as a tool for evaluating the health and effectiveness of coproduction processes; and as a guide to improving relationships between decision-makers and citizens and supporting new cultures of working together.

By increasing capacity for coproduction within the built environment sector, our intention is to improve project delivery for all stakeholders and advance more equitable forms of urban development.

BACKGROUND TO THE GUIDE

This document is the product of two years' work by **Sib Trigg** and **Rowan Mackay** evaluating coproduction practices, focusing on initiatives between LB Newham and community representatives on estate regeneration projects. The findings were initially presented to the Council and have been reinterpreted as a guide for anyone involved in or wanting to initiate coproduction in housing or regeneration.

Several evaluation and learning workshops took place addressing: 'what worked' and what hadn't worked regarding coproduction processes', and subsequently specific questions on power within the steering group and coproduction as a site of disagreement, such as:

- What are the power imbalances within the steering group?
- What does it mean to 'do things together'?
- What problems can be solved together?
- How can the steering group approach red-line non negotiables?

- How can resident representatives express disagreement with a decision and feedback from the wider community?"

Finally, a range of Council officers were asked to reflect on how coproduction has positively and negatively affected their work, the internal challenges both at officer level and at a corporate level, and for suggestions to make coproduction work easier and more effective.

HOW TO READ THIS GUIDE

The guide is set out as a series of:

- **Key principles for coproduction** which set an agenda for how we think coproduction should be discussed, planned, implemented, and evaluated if it is to be done well.
- **Guidance** on how each principle can be implemented in the context of housing and regeneration.
- **What to look out for:** common problems and pitfalls that can arise in a process.
- **Practical actions** for improving how a coproduction process is performing.
- **Tools we use** to support coproduction at different stages of the process would be available through our advisers.

If at any point you would like advice and guidance, you can contact us at

info@communityledhousing.london

DISCLAIMER

Our team and associate advisers encourage organisations to think openly and clearly about their objectives and how to achieve them. The information in this guide is not legal, financial, or professional advice. You can read our full disclaimer [here](#).

EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT COPRODUCTION

In the last few years, coproduction has emerged from the niche of social care policy into the mainstream practice of sectors such as transport, education and even banking. Within architecture, planning, housing and regeneration, coproduction has raised the bar for the role communities can expect to play in how their homes and neighbourhoods are managed and change.

Done well, coproduction can enable communities to negotiate genuine control over the delivery, long-term ownership and management of urban development from housing to workplaces, community facilities and green spaces. Like any new terminology though, coproduction can mean everything and nothing, and definitions vary.

DEFINING COPRODUCTION

The term 'coproduction' indicates design and implementation, which differentiates it from co-design, service design or participatory design, although coproduction can include these activities. It is generally agreed that the term was first used by Elinor Ostrom in the 1970's when working on research with the police force of Chicago to demonstrate how 'users' and 'providers' depend on each other. The concept of 'users' and 'providers' working together to design and implement services appropriate to 'users' is now common across disciplines such as health and social care.

There are many different definitions of coproduction. We have intentionally avoided creating a new definition here, although the

following have been useful in providing a starting point.

Co-production' as understood in the context of public services is "a relationship where professionals and citizens share power to plan and deliver support together, recognising that both have vital contributions to make in order to improve quality of life for people and communities."¹

Co-production concerns power differentials and "goes well beyond the idea of 'citizen engagement' or 'service user involvement' to foster the principle of equal partnership. It offers to transform the dynamic between the public and service workers, putting an end to 'them' and 'us'. Instead, people pool different types of knowledge and skills, based on lived experience and professional learning."²

What is clear is that coproduction is challenging the status quo and raising expectations for the role communities can expect to play in these processes. Applying a coproduction methodology to the complex world of housing and urban regeneration presents challenges. Coproduction in practice involves more than just working with residents in a community engagement framework, it is a shift in alignment and values. By recognising two fundamental components of coproduction – **re-shaping power dynamics** and **building trust** – we can even begin to do away with the term itself and focus our attention on what's important – **collective control over our homes and neighbourhoods**.

¹ Filipe, Angela, Alicia Renedo, and Cicely Marston. 'The Co-Production of What? Knowledge, Values, and Social Relations in Health Care'. Edited by Claire Marris. *PLOS Biology* 15, no. 5 (3 May 2017). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.2001403>.

² National Co-production Critical Friends <https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/>

³ The Challenge of Co-Production, Nesta 2009

RE-SHAPING POWER DYNAMICS

At a time when Londoners have grown accustomed to their relative powerlessness in the face of urban development and the social impact of 'regeneration', coproduction has become the buzzword for an industry trying to demonstrate it can do things differently. What does coproduction offer that other forms of 'public engagement' do not? And what can be done to ensure these ideas lead to lasting change?

For urban communities, and particularly those without the privilege of political or economic influence, for whom urban regeneration can be a destabilising process, the prospect of re-shaping relationships and shifting power in these processes is an attractive proposition. Although a major challenge is the complexity of the development process itself.

How power is held and shared in a regeneration process is not just about who makes the decisions - power is something that plays out in different ways throughout the regeneration process. The ten principles set out in this framework highlight some of ways in which power can be held, shared and confronted through a coproduction relationship, from setting a project vision to how the partnership deals with things like accountability and conflict, or provides support for partners to participate fully.

BUILDING TRUST

The 'steering group' or 'project committee' is a common feature of coproduction and is beginning to change the role of communities in housing and regeneration. In this form of engagement, a group is formed with representatives from both the community and the lead project promoter (eg Council or HA). The members are equally represented in the group and advise or make decisions

over the lifetime of the project, beyond punctuated moments of 'inclusion' usually afforded within conventional processes.

In addition to increasing the frequency of face-to-face interactions between those with power and those without, the steering group model focusses the emphasis of these interactions on building the levels of trust necessary for a long-term relationship. By treating engagement as an ongoing process that may continue beyond the development project itself, coproduction is placing relational aspects such as 'trust', 'conflict', and 'care', at the top of the engagement agenda. In doing so, local authorities, housing associations and even some developers are having to learn an entirely new way of relating to and working with communities.

Of course, a steering group alone does not mean you are working in coproduction (and be warned if anyone claims otherwise). The kind of cultural and structural changes required to realise a different power dynamic between communities and local authorities, tenants and landlords, those with and those without power requires buy-in at every level of governance and a willingness to un-learn deep-rooted paternalism within institutions.

While this may sound like an impossible task, some are exploring how coproduction can work in practice.

ADVANCING COPRODUCTION

We recognise other good work in advancing coproduction as a route to more equitable housing and regeneration including:

- [Rethinking Community Engagement](#)
Future of London
- [A community led Recovery Plan](#)
Just Space
- [Coproduction Collective](#)
- [Relationships Project](#)

A FRAMEWORK FOR COPRODUCTION

Coproduction presents opportunities for more empowered forms of housing delivery, building knowledge, skills and engagement among local residents and decision-makers such as local authorities, housing associations and developers. Building long term relationships and undertaking development that is embedded in local communities and economies can enable local support for capital projects, avoiding hurdles later on. Co-production has the potential to improve the efficiency and quality of service delivery and improve community engagement practices.

However, working in coproduction requires resourcing to do well, can take longer, and there are not many precedents. Building a different kind of relationship between corporate organisations and residents is also challenging, and requires an acceptance of non-linear, messy processes.

This framework is arranged as a set of **ten key principles** with guiding **explanations**, and **tools and resources** we use. Each principle is followed by practical examples. The examples are given as **quick wins** and **medium to long-term recommendations** that are intended to improve both existing processes and to lay the foundation for potential future coproduction work.

The framework indicates:

- **Ways to evaluate** the health and effectiveness of a coproduction process.
- **Guidance** to help improve relationships between residents and coproduction partners and support new cultures of working together in the long-term.
- **Tools we use** to help address specific issues and progress projects, which would be available through our advisers.

THE PRECEPTS

The following 5 precepts are intended as a provocation for coproduction partners upon entering a process, to help ensure that power dynamics are acknowledged and discussed from the outset.

1. **You are not a team.**

The coproduction steering group is not a unified group and should not be treated as such.

2. **Your interests are not aligned.**

Commercial and resident interests do not always overlap. There will be important differences to work through.

3. **You will not agree with each other.**

Coproduction will entail disagreement and conflict

4. **You will have to compromise.**

Working together well will entail compromises, it is likely that no one party will get everything they want

5. **One partner will always have more power than the other.**

A council, housing association or developer will always have unilateral veto powers over any steering group within its remit, therefore will always be the more powerful.

Principle #1

1. WORKING TO A COMMON VISION

ENSURE EVERYONE AGREES ON WHY THEY'RE THERE

Set out and agree a common vision from the start. As well as defining what you want to achieve together, this should also focus on how you plan to work together to achieve your objectives. This shared vision can then be used keep the group accountable. Have clear expectations on roles and responsibilities of the group from the start. While you should agree on why you're coming together, don't pretend you're always going to agree on everything. Acknowledge where there is and is not alignment on key issues from the outset and decide what needs resolving in order to continue.

Tools we use:

- [Vision statement templates](#)
- [Terms of reference templates](#)

WRITE POLICIES AND PROCESSES TOGETHER

Coproduction projects don't need to reinvent baseline working practices. Use best practice examples for baseline processes, make sure that agreed processes are consistently adhered to by all parties and cannot be overridden. Any changes in programme timescales and expectations should be clearly communicated to all parties including the reasoning behind those changes. All parties need to feel able to set meeting agendas.

Tools we use:

- [Meeting minutes and process templates](#)

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Differing intentions from the start

Coproduction can easily become consultation by another name. The starting point should always be a common desire to share power and do things together - making things, having ideas, identifying problems and solving them collaboratively. This is what a steering group/project committee should be set up to do, as should be defined in its founding documents. Sharing information and decisions made behind closed doors, rather than problems to be resolved, can result in meetings that feel like negotiations rather than collaboration.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Quick wins

Recap at the start of each meeting what stage the project is at, the project timeframes the coproduction process is working to and key risks and opportunities, helping resident representatives to situate themselves and contribute meaningfully.

Mid to Long-term Actions.

For future projects integrate coproduction into Stage 0, Strategic Definition.

2. RE-SHAPING POWER DYNAMICS

UNDERSTAND THE DISTRIBUTION OF POWER

Power and responsibility are not always obvious and are often complex – for example individuals may represent a powerful stakeholder but have limited power themselves. Understanding power dynamics within the group from the outset is important to ensure clear roles and responsibilities and ensure the steering group is representative of relevant stakeholders including the wider community.

Tools we use:

- [Ladder of Participation](#)
- [Stakeholder and power mapping guide](#)

DECIDE HOW YOU WILL SHIFT POWER THROUGH COPRODUCTION

Coproduction should look to re-balance power towards those most affected by a project, service or process. This may take time and there needs to be a realistic understanding of what is and isn't possible now and what to aspire to, especially in relation to decision making.

Tools we use:

- [Theory of change templates](#)
- [Three Horizons Framework](#)

MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

Constraints and red lines need to be communicated and understood by everyone from the outset, and it should be emphasised that constraints often change over the duration of long projects. The roles

of individuals may mean that they are not able to speak their personal opinions but must be mindful of the wider organisation's priorities. Coproduction is a choice for everyone and there needs to be desire and enthusiasm in order to make it work.

Tools we use:

- [Project process mapping guide](#)

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Different expectations of power

The language around coproduction can make it easy to set high expectations when it comes to sharing power. This can lead to confusion over who has control over particular decisions and how a formal coproduction group operates. Conflicts between how a coproduction process is discussed as operating and the legal practicalities that impact the power it has can unravel the process later on. This leads to expectations not being met, frustration and time-consuming resolution processes.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Quick wins

Periodically undertake skills and knowledge audits of a steering group to identify ongoing capacity and training needs.

Mid to Long-term Actions.

Undertake stakeholder mapping at the start of each phase of the project, to understand where power sits, who is most affected and identify who needs to be involved.

3. REDEFINING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CHALLENGE CONVENTIONAL ROLES AND EXPERTISE

Coproduction requires those involved to think differently about whose knowledge and expertise is valuable in achieving certain outcomes. It makes sense that coproduction will struggle if we chose to rely on and uphold established roles (e.g. professional and resident). Challenging these well-established structures can be difficult, and it's important not to try to challenge everything at once. Having support from people who are used to working across professional/sectoral/social boundaries can be invaluable in helping a group to challenge the status quo whilst maintaining stability in the relationship/project.

Tools we use:

- [Template steering group chair/facilitator role descriptions](#)

CONTINUOUSLY REAFFIRM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Power dynamics are reinforced through the roles and responsibilities of steering group members. Writing these down and recapping throughout the process can help to reassure members of the power they have to be heard and to influence group decisions, as well as their responsibility to listen and remain accountable to the group and who they represent. Maintaining relevant joining, induction and handover procedures are also key to ensuring the group remains representative and accountable to the wider community or organisation. Handover processes don't need to be time consuming and can help to bridge gaps in knowledge

and maintain trust within the group should be regularly reviewed and evaluated.

Tools we use:

- [Template steering group member role descriptions](#)
- [Example induction and handover process](#)

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

A lack of clarity of roles of steering group members can lead to confusion and unclear expectations. When the coproduction principles are not carried through the organisation from those working on the ground to director level it can lead to a lack of understanding of what coproduction actually involves. Unclear or rushed handover processes can lead to the loss of the project narrative through changes in personnel, which causes setbacks and delays in re-establishing trust and lost knowledge.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Quick wins

Use a transparent and open selection process for resident representatives. Regularly recap on the roles and responsibilities set out in the Terms of Reference.

Mid to Long-term Actions

Make time to properly induct new members of the steering group, including input from both organisational and resident representatives

4. JOINED UP GOVERNANCE

ENSURE COPRODUCTION HAPPENS AT EVERY LEVEL OF GOVERNANCE

An accountability process should be established for individuals involved in the coproduction process at all levels of an organisation (including political and corporate areas). The political coproduction mandate needs to ensure that it aligns with the reality of the coproduction process on the ground.

Tools we use:

→ [Diagram example local authority governance structures](#)

ENABLE EQUAL REPRESENTATION IN DECISION MAKING

Establish a clear and public process for residents to join coproduction steering groups. Make sure the purpose is understood by all parties. Use a deliberative decision-making process and make sure that there is enough time for all parties to understand all relevant information before decisions are made. Make sure all parties are able to bring information to the table to be considered.

Tools we use:

→ [Template terms of reference](#)

SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR DECISION-MAKING

Local government processes especially can have long timescales, but decisions often have to be made quickly, which can lead to tension if groups are not consulted.

Decisions should not be taken outside of the coproduction process. Where this does happen a full explanation should be given immediately with full transparency.

Tools we use:

→ [Guide to consensus decision making](#)

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Commitment and accountability

There can be a disconnect between those involved in a coproduction process and those who hold power over how it operates. While the former may be committed to finding ways to work collaboratively and see value in doing so, the latter might see the process as optional and to be bypassed when time pressures are tight. For coproduction to work, the commitment to doing things differently must be supported and held accountable at every level of an organisation.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Quick wins

Set KPIs for coproduction. Require resident representatives to update on how they are holding themselves accountable to the wider community.

Mid to Long-term Actions

Establish accountability checks within reporting processes (similar to EQIA)

Introduce coproduction as part of the standard project management framework.

5. EQUITABLE RESOURCING AND SUPPORT

UNDERSTAND THE RESOURCES AND NEEDS OF ALL INVOLVED

Those with more power will need to give more time, resources or information in order to support the coproduction process. People may need support to increase their skills and knowledge. The inclusion of independent facilitators and chairs can be helpful in ensuring everyone's voices are heard.

Tools we use:

- [Chair role descriptions](#)
- [Facilitation role descriptions](#)
- [Skills audit templates](#)

SUPPORT ALL PARTICIPANTS IN THE COPRODUCTION PROCESS

Everyone enters the coproduction process from the point of their own experience and knowledge. Mandatory coproduction training for new steering group members should take place on a regular basis. This should be accompanied by an ongoing training programme for members (residents and organisational) that complements the relevant stage of the coproduction process. Resident training should be responsive to their needs and a training programme developed collaboratively as part of the baseline coproduction policies and processes. The coproduction process itself requires a clear, independent source of support and advice, as well as independent support for both residents and other participants (e.g. local authority officers).

Tools we use:

- [Example training programmes](#)
- [Brief for independent advisors](#)

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

The needs of everyone

It can be easy to focus on the training residents without consideration for the needs of others in the process, or opportunities for shared learning. Working in coproduction is a learning process in itself, requiring skills in communication, mediation and decision making, as well as more obvious topics like procurement, planning, design and viability.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Quick wins

Ensure resident representatives have their own space to debrief, feedback and hold each other accountable

Make time to regularly go over and explain the different stages of the process, for example, procurement, design, delivery and how they relate to each other, recognising that these things may have to be repeated to be understood.

Mid to Long-term Actions

Review training needs and opportunities for all steering group members on a six monthly basis. Regularly review additional support needs to enable participation in the steering group, e.g. internet access, child care, pastoral support.

6. ONGOING OUTREACH AND ACCOUNTABILITY

KEEP YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE

Coproduction fails in a vacuum.

Representing a wider community or network requires continuous communication with that group to provide feedback and ensure their interests are being accurately represented. Resident reps should undertake community outreach work per week, with responses fed back to the steering group and reporting methods defined in response to the local context. Regular efforts to reach out to wider audiences will also ensure you remain accountable and validate your voice within the coproduction process.

While accountability will be a familiar part of the work for Council officers, for example, it is important however to keep the steering group updated on discussions and decision within the wider Council or organisation to ensure a common understanding of the accountability dynamics that exist within the group.

Tools we use:

- [Terms of Reference](#)
- [Outreach strategies and support for outreach](#)

FIND THE BEST WAY TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure collaboration with communities and networks outside of the immediate coproduction process. Communication needs to account for different levels of access and preference to different platforms and communication mediums. Communication to a particular group (e.g.

residents) should come from representatives of that group.

Tools we use:

- [Engagement strategy templates](#)

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Existing preconceptions and prejudices

Existing preconceptions and prejudices can result in a lack of trust between different groups, which can be difficult to overcome. A lack of understanding of the experiences, needs and aspirations of a particular group can lead to a resistance from others to listen and take what they are saying seriously. Overcoming these issues takes time and a willingness to listen and for opinions to be changed on both sides. It can also be impeded by factors such as high turnover of participants, making relationships difficult to maintain.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Mid to Long-term Actions

Develop iterative feedback systems that allow for views and opinions of those outside the steering group to be discussed and help shape the decisions being made.

7. COLLABORATIVE AND CARING CULTURE

DEVELOP A CULTURE OF COLLECTIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

All parties need to feel able to bring problems to the table for dialogue, rather than preconceived solutions. Learn to embrace uncertainty! Communicating uncertainty builds trust and encourages collaborative problem solving. Openness to new ideas and ways of doing things should be cultivated, alongside being prepared to have your mind changed. Building trust requires reciprocal action. The purpose of working together therefore is not to enact the will of any one party but to share responsibility and find solutions together.

Tools we use:

→ [Facilitation training and resources](#)

CONSIDER WHERE AND HOW PEOPLE MEET

Where and how people meet impacts how relationships and trust are built. Deciding on the kinds of environments where meetings, conversations and disagreements take place will impact whether everyone feels comfortable and has an opportunity to be heard. What might be an accessible space for some, might not be for others.

Tools we use:

→ [Access coordinator resources](#)

UNDERSTAND COPRODUCTION CAN BE DIFFICULT FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE AT DIFFERENT TIMES

People will need support to participate at different times for different reasons. Make

sure that there are policies and procedures that support people to take time out and that the process for doing so is known to all parties.

Tools we use:

→ [Pastoral care resources](#)

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Disconnect and burnout

As time goes on, adherence to agreements and processes made at the start of the coproduction process can slip. For example, less time is given for checking in because people feel they know everyone in the room by now, or participants might be added or removed without due process. A lack of accountability to the group's agreed governance processes can result in participants feeling disengaged or lost because their needs are not understood.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Quick wins

Make space in each meeting to go over things that people don't understand. Support individuals or groups to host steering group meetings in a space of their choosing (online or physical). Make time at the start of each meeting to check in on everyone and identify people's needs and desires for the meeting.

Mid to Long-term Actions

Practice a culture of collaborative problem solving, whereby all feel able to bring problems to for the steering group to discuss and resolve together.

8. A SPACE FOR DISAGREEMENT

WELCOME DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS.

Disagreements should not be allowed to prevent the group from working together. Establish a space where it is possible for parties to disagree, without singling out individuals. Time should be allowed within the programme for sufficient discussion on contentious issues, to ensure that solutions to difficult elements are not overlooked. While people are often representing wider groups/interests within the coproduction process, individuals should be free to express their opinions within and outside of formal groups and spaces.

Tools we use:

→ [Facilitation training and resources](#)

WORK THROUGH CONFLICT.

There will always be different and at times conflicting agendas and motivations in a coproduction process. Those in power have a responsibility to listen, even when communicated in a confrontational way. The process of working through conflict can be helped by bringing in external facilitation and mediation when necessary.

Tools we use:

→ [Conflict mediation training and resources](#)

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Avoiding difficult conversations

It can be all too easy to follow the path of least resistance when navigating conflicting interests that arise in a project. There can be a tendency to withhold information and cut communication in order to preserve the partnership, but this can quickly lead to uncertainty and distrust between partners. Project programmes and deadlines can add additional pressure, making communication feel like an added complication. Finding a way to raise conflicts or start difficult conversations needs to be valued and supported by all partners if a relationship is to be maintained.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Quick wins

Introduce a fixed agenda item to discuss problems and conflicts, to normalise bringing and resolving issues within steering group meetings.

Mid to Long-term Actions

Establish a procurement list of trusted external facilitators and mediators selected by both resident representatives and the Council / other stakeholders.

9. OPEN AND TRANSPARENT DATA SHARING

DEVELOP A CULTURE OF SAYING 'YES' TO SHARING INFORMATION.

Sharing information builds trust and requires trust. No one is obliged to share information, but collaborations won't get far without it.

Policies should be in place from the outset that agree how information will be used and shared, as well as implications if agreements are broken. Restrictions to the disclosure of information and reasons for the restrictions should be discussed including exploring solutions or conditions for how it can be shared. Full transparency may not always be possible, and the reasons for this need to be clearly communicated and solutions offered.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Overpromised access to information

The challenges of sharing information between two partners, particularly when one or more are large or commercial organisations, can hinder efforts to build trusting relationships. Access to and sharing of information is an area where power differences partners can be experienced most. Be clear about what can and can't be shared, be honest about the challenges to sharing information, and be open to finding ways to share information where there wasn't before.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Quick wins

Ensure all documents discussed at meetings are circulated prior to meetings and are easily accessible for steering group members in their own time.

Support any additional access needs to access information easily, such as internet provision or digital literacy.

Mid to Long-term Actions

Establish a policy within the Terms of Reference for what information can and can't be shared, setting out reasons and the circumstances in which exceptions can be made, i.e how confidential information might be shared within the confines of the steering group.

10. A RELATIONSHIP LED APPROACH

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS NOT PROCESSES

Coproduction requires trust and this is only ever built between individuals. This requires those working in coproduction to move from a process-led to a relationship-led approach. For local authorities this is about seeing relationships as a solution to statutory duties and project efficiencies, not as incompatible with them. Understand the impact of change in team personnel on relationships and maintaining trust and knowledge.

Tools we use:

→ <https://relationshipsproject.org/from-process-led-to-relationship-led/>

KEEP COMMUNICATION OPEN

Maintain open lines of communication between all parties in the coproduction process. Moratoriums on communication erode trust quickly. Accept the fact that you will not always have the answer and own it. It always helps to communicate institutional responsibilities and constraints clearly and honestly, particularly in cases where you're not able to share certain information. For example, if a policy or process conflicts with resident's ideas or desires, the policy or process needs to be brought into the room and understood. But remember that coproduction should have the potential to challenge existing processes.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Delayed response times that leave people waiting for answers can be particularly damaging to the coproduction process. Communicating uncertainty can help build trust and gives opportunities for the different parties involved in the process to work together on finding solutions.

PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Quick wins

End communication moratoriums by agreeing how conflicting or sensitive situations can be communicated about.

Maintain a culture of regular updates from all steering group members.

Mid to Long-term Actions

Develop coproduction communication guidelines for steering group members that focus on maintaining constructive relationships.

Provide training for steering group members on practicing a relational approach to working together.

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