



## How to Run a Weaving Trust Event

Citizens:mk is running a series of events at which ordinary people from different communities will meet each other and share their experiences of life in Milton Keynes. We aim to have had a thousand conversations by the end of the coming year.

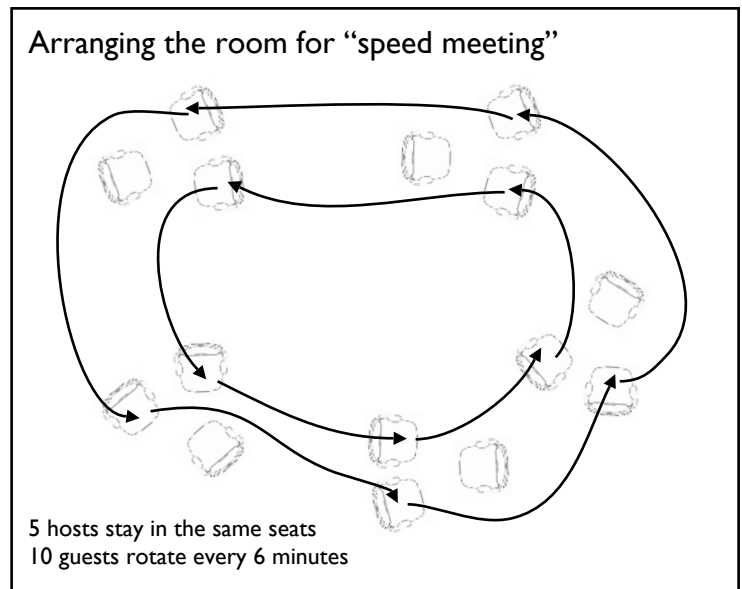
The conversations are not meant to be heavy and they should be enjoyable. We believe that simple encounters between human beings will generate trust and help to weave our communities together.

This is a brief guide for organisations which have agreed to host an event. If you need more advice, please contact us and we will be happy to help.

1. **Date and Time:** The basic details of the event need to be agreed with the Weaving Trust campaign group. They will then be able to advertise the event and help you to put it on.
2. **Main Contact:** We need someone that we can talk to about the event. Who is the person who will take the lead on your Weaving Trust event? It would be great to have a team of people who share the work, but you need to have a named individual who will make sure that everything happens.
3. **Publicity:** We will publicise the event amongst Citizens:mk members. We plan to use a web site called EventBrite to issue tickets and control numbers. We hope to bring between 15 and 30 guests to each event. If there are particular communities that you would like to invite, please talk to us, and we can include them. We need to issue invitations by email before people can book tickets. Each named contact can order up to five tickets.
4. **Style:** The aim is to create relaxed and enjoyable encounters between ordinary people. The style of the events should therefore be open and accepting. We want to create an atmosphere in which people feel able to share and listen. We would discourage people who take part from lecturing or bombarding others with facts or ideas. Intolerant, offensive or discriminatory language should not be tolerated.
5. **Hosts:** These events depend on each host institution bringing 15 people - although different group sizes would be possible. You need to identify by name, the 15 people who will be there on the day and make sure that they know what they will be asked to do.
6. **Facilitation:** As a training organisation, Citizens:mk would like to develop the facilitation skills of people in our member institutions. The Weaving Trust group will provide facilitators for the event, but will also seek to identify and support people who will be able to take on this role. The normal pattern would be for a prospective facilitator to attend an event, then co-facilitate an event, and then act as a lead facilitator. This will enable us to establish a common style for the events. If you have people who would like to do this, please let us know.
7. **Testimonies:** We usually ask 2 people from the host institution to speak for roughly three minutes each. These people are asked to talk about their personal experiences as members of their institution. Remind your speakers to keep it brief and make it personal. We're not looking for speeches, theories or facts. The key question is, what is life in MK like for you?
8. **Recording:** We would like to catch some of the things that are said, so that we can share this with others and increase the learning opportunities. We may ask the people who give testimonies to say a few words on video, or provide us with the text of their statements. We will also provide postcards on which people can write or draw reflections or comments. We will provide a record of this feedback for you, but we also encourage you to have your own evaluation, reflection and feedback session after the event.
9. **Food and Drink:** These events are about hospitality, so there will be an opportunity to share food and drink with your guests. Remember, that you are asked to share something of yourselves, so think about refreshments as part of the way you express yourselves.
10. **Venue:** You will need to provide a room with enough space for 45 people. You will also need chairs that can be arranged in a circle of small groups in which one host can meet one or two guests (see diagram). In some cases, having a separate room for refreshments and/or whole group conversations may be useful.
11. **Special Requests:** Some communities may have particular rules which guests need to follow. Please let us know in good time so we can let guests know what you would like them to do.

## Resources Needed

- A hall or rooms to accommodate 45 people
- 45 chairs that can be moved
- At least 15 hosts
- A bell, a stop watch - and someone who can ring it every six minutes
- Food and a drink for refreshments
- Camera to take pictures/video (we will bring one too)
- Postcards (we will provide these)



## Outline Agenda of the Event:

1. **Prepare the Space:** You will need enough space for up to 45 people to gather. They need to be able to meet in a circle and in groups of two or three for speed-meeting. You also need space for refreshments. Depending on your available space, you may want to set out two or three rooms.
2. **Arrivals:** Make sure that the building can be accessed at least a half an hour before the event. We will help set things up, and collect names and contact details at the door if possible.
3. **Welcome:** Someone will need to introduce the event. It would be great if a person from the host community could welcome people to their event, and a facilitator will then explain what will happen. (5 mins)
4. **Testimonies:** Two people from the host community and one from the guests speak briefly about their experiences as members of their institution in MK. (10 mins)
5. **Refreshments:** Everyone takes a break and enjoys the hospitality of the host community. During this time the room could be rearranged for the speed-meeting. (20 mins)
6. **Speed-Meeting:** The room is arranged so that the fifteen hosts can all meet one or two guests. Ring a bell every 6 minutes and rotate the groups. Keep reminding people to take it in turns to listen - and ask questions. The focus of the conversation is "What is your experience of life in Milton Keynes?" Other questions may be asked (eg "What are your main concerns about trusting others?") but the aim is to keep conversations open. Give people permission to set their own agenda and ask their own questions. Resist the temptation to do a lot of feedback between rounds. (45-60 mins depending on available time)
7. **Feedback:** Bring everyone back into a big circle and invite people to say one word (or brief sentence) that captures how they feel - or anything that struck them in the conversations. Give them postcards and explain that they will also be able to write or draw something on the postcard, which will be kept and shared with others. One word or a sentence would be ideal. Thank them for taking part and wish them well for the future. (10 mins)
8. **Networking:** Finish the event by encouraging people to continue their conversations and to attend future events. Keep an eye out for prospective members of the campaign group and for potential facilitators.
9. **Evaluation:** As with all Citizens events there will be an evaluation after the event facilitated by someone from another institution. Invite people to stay for this.



### Contact:

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