



A wholly different  
leadership experience

**ThePublicOffice**

[www.thepublicoffice.org.uk](http://www.thepublicoffice.org.uk)

**ThePublicOffice is a powerful, collaborative learning experience that helps public servants think creatively about the design and delivery of citizen-centric public services.**

**Developed for people working in local and central government, and other public service organisations, it shifts thinking, attitudes and behaviours, motivating participants to work collaboratively for change.**

**ThePublicOffice enables participants to see what transformation of public services could mean, and to identify their role in making it happen.**

At the heart of ThePublicOffice experience is a series of stories about what it's really like to use public services.



Mark and Mikhi



Sheina and Brian



Lisa and her children



Shirley, Andrew, Victoria and Jeremy



Anita, Anthony and Ebony



Public services are poorly set up to deal with common life events.

Mark is a weekend Dad determined to play an important role in Mikhi's upbringing.

Sheina and Brian



**Public services don't always provide the right information at the right time.**

**Sheina and Brian manage the care of their two sets of elderly parents. Sheina also has breast cancer.**

Lisa and her children



**Public services often do not respond to the needs of both individuals and their families.**

**Lisa and her children are trying to re-build their lives since escaping domestic violence.**

Shirley, Andrew, Victoria and Jeremy



Users of public services have to become 'experts' in order to make the system work for them.

Shirley and Andrew have an ongoing struggle to get appropriate support for their children, who both have dyspraxia.



Public services sometimes provide solutions that create dependencies - leading to greater problems than they solve.

Anita is struggling to keep her children safe and well whilst her husband is in prison.

ThePublicOffice uses these stories to enable participants to view public services through the eyes of the user, so **creating the motivation for change.**

Then, using a specially designed physical environment and a tailored process, it gets participants working together to:

**understand the user experience;**

**explore new, collaborative approaches;**

**design solutions;**

**and capture these ideas.**

ThePublicOffice is a memorable experience that creates energy, stimulates action and builds collective commitment to doing things better.

## Creating the motivation for change

Typically, senior public servants have limited experience as public service users.

ThePublicOffice films deliver just enough of that experience to evoke a powerful empathy and a strong motivating desire to think hard about how things could be done better.



**“Fantastic morning.....really invigorating. I’m fired up.”**

Permanent Secretary

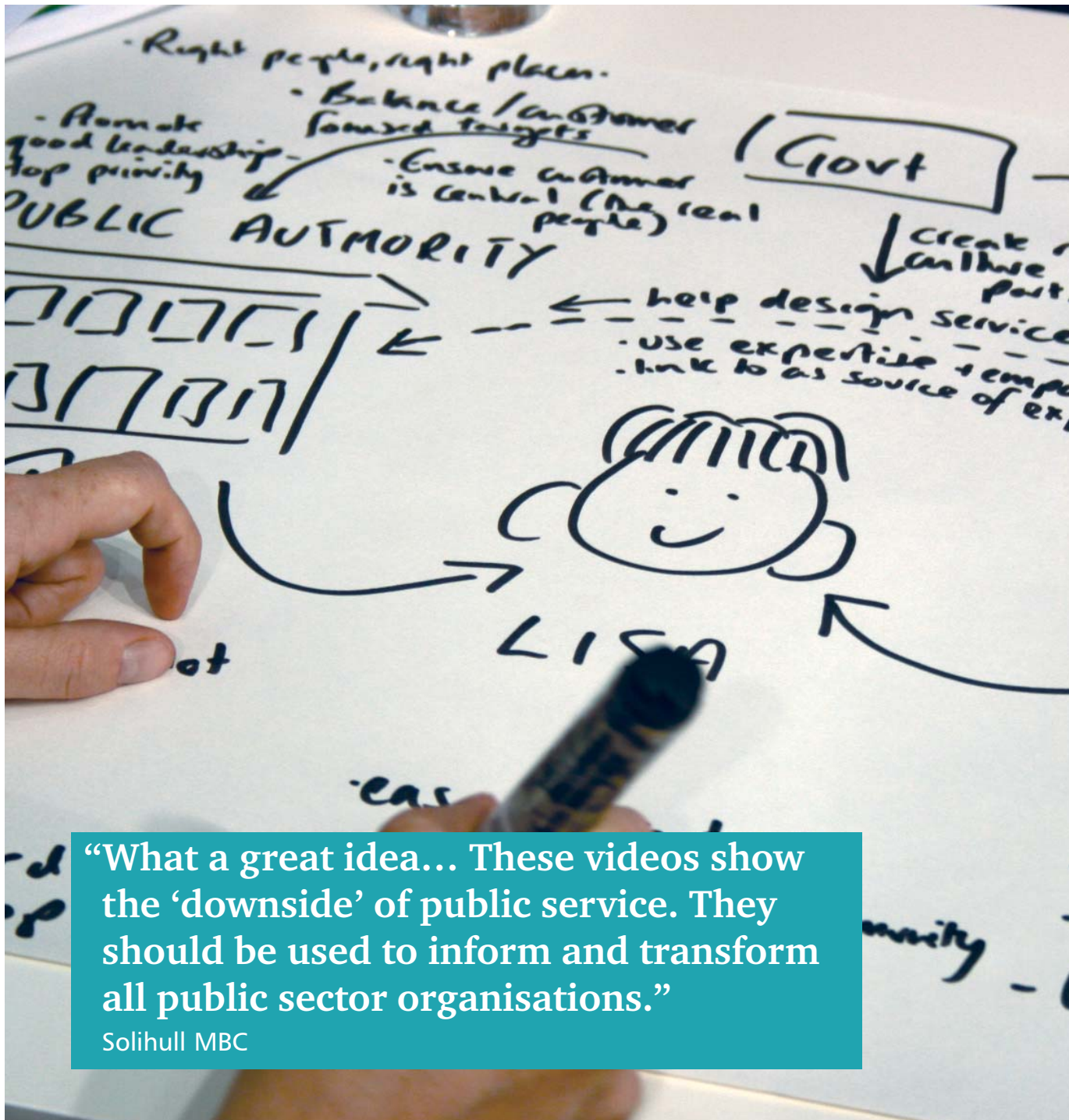
# Understanding the user experience

Our stories about families engaging with public services show the difficulty and distress caused by:

- Poor collaboration between public services
- Problems with getting the right information at the right time
- Inability of public services to deal with common life events
- Failure to accommodate the needs of individuals and families
- Users having to become 'experts' to make the system work

“What a great idea... These videos show the ‘downside’ of public service. They should be used to inform and transform all public sector organisations.”

Solihull MBC





**“Very stimulating ...good process and materials leading to lots of good ideas”**  
CEO

## Exploring ways of doing it better

Having engaged with users' stories, participants consider 'the system' as a whole and where things go wrong. They look at examples of good customer service from the public, private and voluntary sectors, and consider how:

- User-created feedback can improve services
- Simplicity can be brought to the 'navigation' of services
- Users can best help themselves to help each other
- Services can be combined in order to increase reach/take up
- Better information can improve customer experience



## Designing solutions

Working in small teams alongside service designers and expert contributors/ provocateurs, participants focus on co-creation and collective problem-solving to develop ideas that respond to the issues and problems highlighted by the families. This workshop element can be focused on questions like:

- Why aren't our current systems delivering for the families in the films?
- How do we use the insights generated to re-design our services?
- Are there general rules for designing public services that work for users?
- How do we wind down old services and wind up new ones?
- How can other stakeholders contribute to citizen-centred transformation?
- Can technology deliver the improvements users need?

**“Best bit was trying to devise solutions”**

Permanent Secretary

# Capturing the ideas

The experience ends with a plenary session where teams present their work and display it in ThePublicOffice space. Participants can view and review the thought processes and ideas generated and share them with colleagues. Participants take away a book containing key material and ideas.

With our partners, we support, facilitate and inspire you to turn the ideas generated at ThePublicOffice into practice. We can:

- Co-design and help deliver spin-off projects which capture the energy of ThePublicOffice experience
- Work with leaders to support the internal change process required to work and deliver differently
- Design and trial new approaches to developing and delivering truly alternative services



“Stimulating and provocative – and fun.”

Former Permanent Secretary

# How can your organisation benefit from ThePublicOffice?



**There are three different types of experience. Each can be customised to suit the particular needs of your organisation.**

**ThePublicOffice Event:** a one, two or three day event delivered on site at your office or workspace. We create a tailored installation (in your foyer, for example) with facilities to show our films and other material to stimulate and motivate participants. We will run up to three workshops (minimum two hours per session) per day for around 25 participants each. Large numbers of people can see the films and browse the exhibition, including their colleagues' workshop outputs, while the installation is in place.

**ThePublicOffice Workshop:** as above, but limited to a two hour (minimum) session suitable for inserting into a longer management/development/away day type event. We dress a space to create a mini-version of the experience.

**ThePublicOffice Feature:** a specially designed facility is created as part of a larger conference or exhibition. The facility is used for 'closed' facilitated workshops with invited guests and as an open space for larger numbers to walk through unfacilitated.

# How much does it cost and how soon can we run it?



The price per head is less than you would pay for a conventional leadership intervention or top-level course, and whatever your space or budgetary limitations, we will do our best to design something that meets your needs. ThePublicOffice team will help you:

- Define the right group to participate
- Get the right people in the room
- Identify the right kind of experience and appropriate venue
- Co-design and deliver follow up activity that will ensure ThePublicOffice is not just a one-off event, but a stimulus for real changes in practice

**For an initial discussion about your needs, please contact:**

**Lindsey Morgan**

ThePublicOffice Project Manager

**email:** [lindsey.morgan@kable.co.uk](mailto:lindsey.morgan@kable.co.uk)

**telephone:** 020 7061 3255

**www:** [www.thepublicoffice.org.uk](http://www.thepublicoffice.org.uk)

# ThePublicOffice

[www.thepublicoffice.org.uk](http://www.thepublicoffice.org.uk)

ThePublicOffice is a project devised, led and owned by the public-sector research firm Kable as part of its "Ideal Government" strand of work. ThePublicOffice brand and the installation itself were created by the Like People Do team at Central St Martins College of Art & Design.

Sponsored by:

Design by:

**boilerhouse.co.uk**  
delivering connected communications™



**NORTEL** *Microsoft*  
INNOVATIVE COMMUNICATIONS ALLIANCE