



Experts by Lived Experience Policy

1. The purpose of this policy

- 1.1. Barnwood Trust would like all of our work to be directly informed by disabled people and people with mental health conditions. In many cases this will happen informally, through conversations with staff, partners and within the community. There are also instances where the Trust formally involves people with lived experience in projects. Individuals who are involved in our work in this formal way are commonly defined as 'Experts by Lived Experience' and this document sets out Barnwood Trust's policy in relation to these Experts by Lived Experience.
- 1.2. This policy sits alongside Barnwood Trust's policies relating to volunteering, employment and the engagement of contractors, all of which seek to maximise the number of disabled people and people with mental health conditions who work for and with the Trust.
- 1.3. This policy seeks to maximise consistency and transparency within the Trust in how we work with Experts by Lived Experience.

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 Experts by Lived Experience are not managed by a central point within the Trust and it is the responsibility of anyone working with an Expert by Lived Experience to apply the terms of this policy in full.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of the Expert by Lived Experience to adhere to the terms of their Expert by Lived Experience Agreement.

3. How does Barnwood Trust define an Expert by Lived Experience?

- 3.1 The role of an Expert by Lived Experience is to contribute their own knowledge and experience rather than to seek to be representative of others.
- 3.2 Should the individual take on any further roles, which could be defined as a contracting, employed or volunteering role, they should be engaged in this role within a new capacity reflective of the status of that role.

4. The status of an Expert by Lived Experience

4.1 An Expert by Lived Experience is not a volunteer, staff member or contractor for the Trust. They are defined as people receiving an optional hourly payment for their involvement.

5. How are Experts by Lived Experience taken on?

5.1 All projects requiring an Expert by Lived Experience should begin with the creation of a clear brief for the overall project, providing clear parameters for the involvement of Experts by Lived Experience. This should include specific experience as required by the project, what engagement methods will be used, the length of the project and the overall aim of the project.

5.2 The project brief will then be shared by Barnwood Trust to invite participation from a wide range of individuals as relevant to the project. Expressions of interest should be received in writing or verbally.

5.3 The Barnwood staff member responsible for the project involving Experts by Lived Experience should then consider these expressions of interest and communicate appropriately with those who are interested to let them know next steps.

5.4 Experts by Lived Experience who are engaged for the project should sign an Expert by Lived Experience Agreement (see Appendix 1) which is valid only for their involvement in the project they have been engaged for.

6. Compensation, reward and support costs for Experts by Lived Experience

6.1 Experts by Lived Experience are not entitled to regular pay or benefits by the Trust. However, their contribution is extremely important to our work and as such should be recognised. For this reason, an optional involvement fee of £15 per hour will be paid to Experts by Lived Experience.

6.2 Experts by Lived Experience Partner must pay the appropriate tax and National Insurance on any income they receive that is above the individuals tax-free personal allowance to HMRC. For the avoidance of doubt, this does not include direct reimbursement of reasonable expenses.

- 6.3 Experts by Lived Experience should always be advised to seek professional independent advice in relation to tax and National Insurance contributions for their personal circumstances. Rules and guidance that come from the HMRC are subject to change, and as such all Experts by Lived Experience should be encouraged to regularly check the impact of engaging in Barnwood Trust's activities with a professional advisory service such as Citizens Advice Bureau.
- 6.4 Barnwood Trust recognises that some Experts by Lived Experience may be in receipt of state benefits. Barnwood aims to ensure that being in receipt of a state benefit does not constitute a barrier to being able to engage in our projects. All individuals who are interested in being an Expert by Lived Experience must be made aware of the benefit conditions that are required by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The DWP recognises co-production and understands that 'service user involvement' is not the same as work and should not be used to assess an individual's capacity to be able to undertake work.
- 6.5 Involvement payments may affect an individual's means-tested benefits. There is a risk that an individual's benefits can be stopped in circumstances where people fail to obtain the appropriate permission from DWP for earnings or failure to inform the DWP that work has been undertaken. Reimbursement of expenses are ignored and should not affect benefits.
- 6.6 It is the responsibility of Experts by Lived Experience to manage involvement payments within the context of any payments they may be in receipt of from the DWP, through employment and/or their personal taxes.
- 6.7 Written confirmation of project involvement and receipts for Experts by Lived Experience payment received are available to Experts by Experience on request.
- 6.8 In the instance where an Expert by Lived Experience has concerns about receiving an involvement payment with regard to their employment status, their personal taxes or their receipt of state benefits, they should discuss this with the project lead on an individual basis and may opt out of payment if they choose to.

- 6.9 Should an Expert by Lived Experience require personal support, assistance or an interpreter in order to participate in the project, the costs of this relating to involvement in the project will be met by Barnwood Trust. These individuals will also be eligible to reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of this work in accordance with Barnwood Trust's Expenses Policy.
- 6.10 In addition to this, Experts by Lived Experience should not be out of pocket due to their contribution to Barnwood Trust. As such, they are eligible for the reimbursement of expenses in line with Barnwood Trust's Expenses Policy.

7. Related policies and procedures

Safeguarding

Whistleblowing

Volunteering

Contractors

Expenses

Diversity and inclusion

Data Protection

8. If things go wrong

- 8.1 If an Expert by Lived Experience is unhappy with their experience with Barnwood Trust, concerns should be raised and managed using Barnwood Trust's Complaints Policy.
- 8.2 Should Barnwood Trust wish to remove an Expert by Lived Experience from a project, they are at liberty to do so at any time, although where reasonably possible, the reasons for this should be explained to the individual.