

Barnwood Circle Round Up

March 2024



Hello

Welcome to the March edition of the Barnwood Circle 'Round Up'.

In this edition of the newsletter you can find a summary of our latest meetups, the 'what we heard' report on accessing activities, and read about the release of our new Empowered Employers podcasts. You can learn about how we're sharing our communications guidelines, our new co-design projects and everything you need to know about accessing our new Members Area. There is also a reminder about changes to Barnwood Circle membership and what to do next.

Spring 2024 meetups

Spring is on its way and we have just completed our first round of meetups for 2024. Thank you to everyone who was able to join us in-person and online to share their views and ideas on transport.

We had 57 people attend the meetups and there were so many insightful conversations and ideas shared on this topic. We have been busy collating everything we have heard and will share with other teams at Barnwood as a possible future project.



Sharing our communication guidelines with other organisations

Last month we were asked by our Funding Relationship Management team whether it would be possible to share our communication guidelines with external organisations who were looking for funding from Barnwood.

They thought it would be a useful tool for organisations who might be looking to co-design guides for inclusive practice (including disability positive language).

We have now produced an 'external' version of the guidelines which includes the co-designed sections of the guidelines about language. We think that this will be a useful tool and may encourage others to produce their own guidelines or be inspired by the co-design process we went through to produce ours.



We hope that everyone involved in the last years co-design communications project is as excited as us about the thought that this work is being shared externally and influencing other organisations.

'What we heard' about accessing activities

In the autumn 2023 round of meetups we discussed the accessibility of activities. A total of 48 people came to 6 in-person meetups. The people who came were mostly disabled people and people with mental health conditions. Professionals attended some meetups.

The challenges faced when accessing activities are:

- accessibility
- lack of opportunities
- poor attitudes and awareness
- support and independence
- technology

People also shared positive experiences of:

- accessible activities
- good attitude and awareness
- technology

The following ideas were shared:

- better awareness and training
- better attitudes
- more opportunities
- improved accessibility
- more collaboration and partnership
- self-determination and confidence

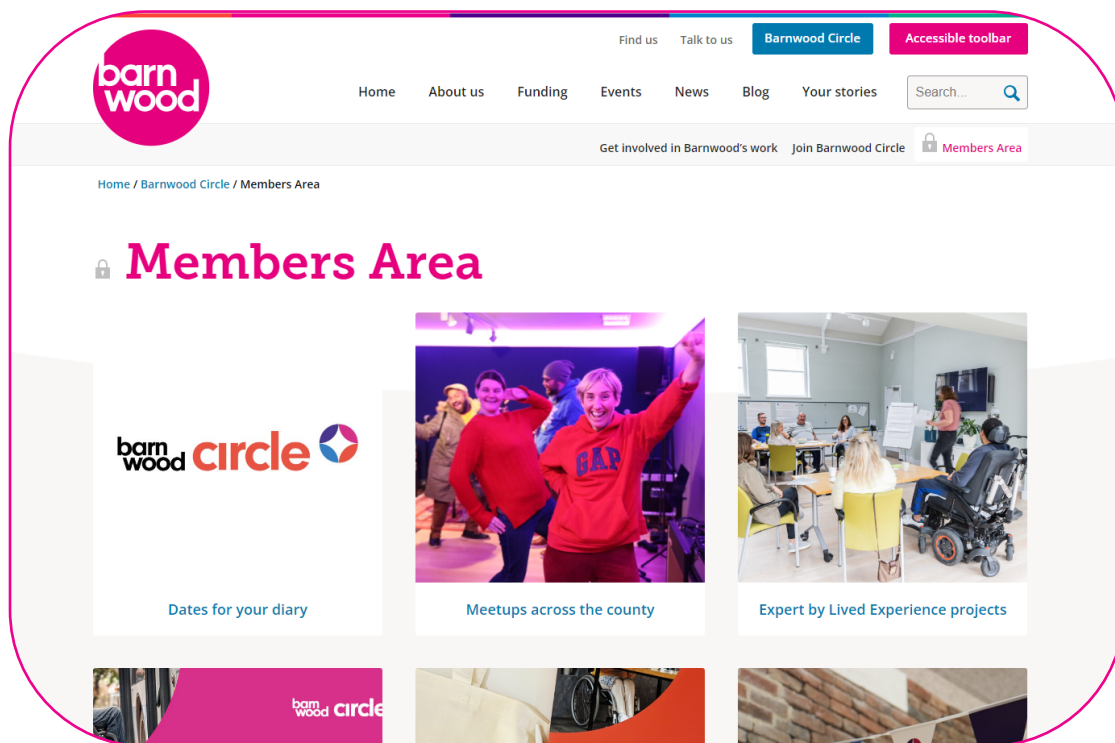


We will be using the findings of this work, alongside work on accessibility of spaces and information, as part of a project on accessibility in the summer of 2024. This will be in partnership with our Funding team.

If you would like to read the full report, please visit the website Members Area or scan the QR code on the right.



Barnwood Circle Members Area



This new area of the Barnwood Trust website will keep you up to date about activities and resources related to your involvement with Barnwood Circle.

You can find out what events are coming up, what meetups are happening in your area, and what Experts by Lived Experience projects are happening this year. You can also read the 'what we heard' reports and Barnwood Circle newsletters and gain access to packs and information that will be useful for you.

To access the Members Area, please scan the QR code on the right



Should you have any question or concerns email Wey on talktous@barnwoodtrust.org, call, text or WhatsApp: **07519 325601**. We welcome feedback on how accessible the Members Area is for you.

Empowered Employers podcast

We have launched a 3 part Empowered Employers podcast series which we have shared on the Empowered Employers website and social media.

Last year, as part of the Empowered Employers campaign, we recorded conversation with a group of Barnwood Circle members about their experiences of employment. This was the same group that also helped us to shape the Empowered Employers campaign, alongside our commercial employer partners. These conversations were recorded at Music Works and have been turned into three fantastic podcast episodes.

The group discussed things that they felt employers should know, covering subjects such as flexible working, workplace adjustments and applying for a job as well as looking at barriers and common misconceptions.



As well as the three episodes we also worked with an illustrator to produce an animated trailer to see a snapshot of the conversations in the series and encourage more people to listen to the full episodes. We are releasing the full episodes weekly, two have been published already and you can listen or watch them by visiting the Empowered Employers website.

Scan the QR code on the right, to visit the site and watch the trailer.



We hope you enjoy these and thank you again to the Barnwood Circle members who were involved in this project.

Sharing our learning about Experts by Lived Experience projects

Ged Cassell, Funding Policy and Evaluation Manager at Barnwood, has written a blog for NPC, a think tank and consultancy for the social sector. In this blog, Ged shares what Barnwood has learned from giving Experts with Lived Experience a genuine voice in decision-making and awarding funds through both the Digital Inclusion and the Short Breaks funds.

To read the blog please scan the QR code on the right



Barnwood Circle membership changes

We emailed members in January to say that we would be making some changes to Barnwood Circle membership. At the end of January, we held 3 drop-in sessions to share our plans and get some feedback. These were attended by 34 members. We used this feedback to finalise how membership will work from April 2024.



Why are we making changes?

- Less than one-third of the 120 members have been involved in projects
- We want more people to have the opportunity to contribute to our work
- Barnwood Circle needs to be representative, as far as possible
- We need to keep hearing fresh ideas, opinions, and experiences

A summary of the changes

- Membership will be open to disabled people and people with mental health conditions and carers only
- We will continue to connect with professionals through meetups and our wider engagement work
- Membership of Barnwood Circle will be for up to 3 years
- Current members will have to opt-in to remain members for another 2 years from April 2024
- Members can be involved in 3 projects over 3 years
- Members will continue to get the quarterly Round Up newsletter
- Non-members can opt to receive a new quarterly newsletter, Barnwood Connect, to keep in touch
- Non-members can still attend meetups

What happens next?

Please let us know your decision about future membership by **Thursday 28th March**. You can do this by scanning the QR code on the right.



If you would prefer to have a conversation please email us at talktous@barnwoodtrust.org or call, text or WhatsApp: **07519 32560**.

We are currently working on new content for our website, and developing a new information pack which will be sent to those continuing their membership. If you have any questions, please get in touch.

Future Experts by Lived Experience projects

We will be continuing with our Experts by Lived Experience projects in 2024. Details of these will be sent to you by our team and posted of the Members Area on the website.

We already have a group working on the next stage of the Empowered Employers campaign and look forward to being able to share progress of this.

We are currently recruiting for members to join the Annual Members Event planning group.

Other Experts by Lived Experience projects planned include anti-racism engagement. This project will explore how we can make our practice more inclusive, with members from minority ethnic groups. Another project will explore a new Accessibility fund, which will continue the work started by our meetups in 2023.



You can also find more information about these co-design projects on the 'Experts by Lived Experience Project' page on the Members Area.

Please scan the QR code on the right to visit the Members Area.



Feedback welcome

We want to learn as much as we can about what works, and what doesn't. If we can make this newsletter better, please let us know.

If you want to get in touch with the Engagement team about anything at all, you can email talktous@barnwoodtrust.org, and call or WhatsApp **07519 325601**.