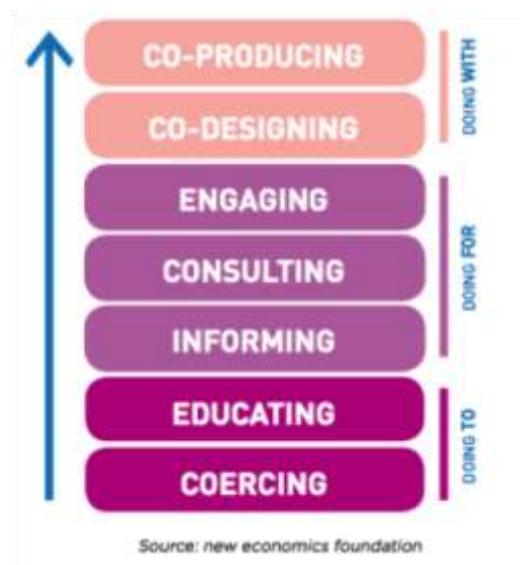


Tip Sheet – Good Lived Experience Involvement

Below we (BIMHN) have put together a few tips on good ways to ensure effective lived experience in developing services / projects. These are things that our members have found helpful, however this isn't an exhaustive list, so do think about them and any others that you feel could be included:

Ladder of participation

We believe it is important to focus on working in partnership with those with lived experience. Different types of participation can be found below:



Co-production = involvement from the start and embedding at every level

Often those with lived experience are involved after the terms of involvement / project scope has been set, which can place limits on how contributions to be made. This can mean missing out on knowledge and value that would otherwise make a project stronger and better. Ensure you get people with lived experience from the start and throughout a project - it could avoid a project needing to be redone or shelved!



Get the basics right!

Things like communicating meeting dates and times in advance, supporting travel arrangements and ensuring papers are accessible may be small things, but can make a massive difference to those wanting to contribute and trying to navigate organisational bureaucracy.

We've heard it all before – building trust and accountability

Some people may have been involved in projects before and had a poor experience. Building trust and ensuring you do what you say you are going to do are important to build trust and confidence that a person's involvement won't just be about ticking a box, leaving people feeling they are being paid lip service.

Skill sets – take the time to understand what people with lived experience can offer – don't assume

People with lived experience come from all sorts of different backgrounds and walks of life. It's important to find out about what skills people are bringing to the table and avoid making assumptions about what they may or may not be able to do.

Reward and Recognition – Recognise and treat people as experts

People with lived experience are experts in their areas and it is important that this is rewarded and recognised appropriately. Be clear at the start about what this will look like and as a minimum this should always include reimbursement of expenses.

Often it will also be appropriate to provide remuneration for a person's time. Be mindful that as paid staff involving people of the potential inequality / tokenism that could be created if people don't feel appropriately valued and are being asked to do tasks that would otherwise be done by paid workers.