



**Cheshire West**  
**Voluntary Action**  
Championing the community sector



# **Lived Experience Preparation Checklist**

**This self-assessment tool is designed for you to reflect on your organisation's approach to working with people with lived experience. It provides key considerations, practical steps, and prompts to support ethical, meaningful, and inclusive engagement.**

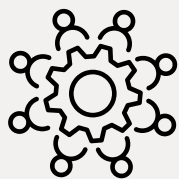
**This checklist is not a set of rigid rules—you don't need to be doing everything; it's intended to be a flexible tool you can adapt and utilise according to the needs of your organisation and the people you support.**

## Organisational Commitment



- Do you have a clear purpose for engaging people with lived experience?
- Have you got allocated resources (time, funding, staff) to support meaningful engagement?
- Does your organisation have policies that promote inclusivity, equality, diversity and ethically engage with people with lived/living experience?
- Is there commitment from trustees and leadership team to co-production and lived experience inclusion?
- Have you identified clear roles and responsibilities for people with lived experience to help influence decisions (e.g. shaping and designing existing or new projects)

## Culture and Attitudes



- Does your organisation foster a culture of respect and recognising the value of listening and working with people?
- Is the voice of lived experience integrated into decision-making, not just as a token?
- Are staff, trustees, volunteers and leadership open to challenge and change based on feedback from people?
- Do you provide regular opportunities for people with lived/living experience to shape strategies, policies, and services?
- Have you taken steps to address unconscious biases and potential barriers that may impact engagement?

## Support and Wellbeing



- Do you offer emotional and practical support to individuals sharing their lived experience and also, staff and volunteers who are involved?
- Have you created a safe space where people feel comfortable sharing?
- Are trauma-informed approaches embedded in your work?
- Is there a clear process for addressing concerns or complaints from volunteers with lived experience?
- Do you have mechanisms to check in on people's engagement before, during, and after engagement?

## Accessibility and Inclusion



- Have you ensured that engagement opportunities are accessible (e.g., location, do people have access digitally?, language, disability accommodations?)?
- Are there multiple ways for people to participate, recognising people have different comfort levels and communication styles?
- Have you addressed potential barriers such as (e.g., offering compensation, covering expenses so noone is out of pocket)?
- Do you provide training or capacity-building opportunities for people with lived experience and also, staff and volunteers to develop their skills and confidence?
- Have you consulted people with lived experience on what they need to fully participate in shaping your charity's work?

## Reflection and evaluating (Impact)



- Do you regularly evaluate and improve your engagement and participation practices? (i.e. policies, how you meaningfully engage with communities and people?)
- Do you get feedback from people with lived experience on how engagement could be improved?
- Have you embedded lived experience involvement into long-term strategies, rather than one-off projects?
- Are you open to learning and implementing changes based on lived experience feedback and changing needs?
- Do you have anything in place to measure the impact from lived experience work?