

Barnwood Trust's Annual Public Meeting



What We Heard

November 2021

At Barnwood's Annual Public Meetings in November 2021, over 50 participants came prepared to discuss the following in small groups:

- What **Small changes** would they like to see happen in Gloucestershire, maybe in a specific area, or requiring a small amount of money?
- What **Bigger changes** would they like to see, either county-wide or bigger or more longer-term funding?
- **Raising Awareness** of something happening that they think deserves to be more widely known or heard about?
- Did they have something that they **have to offer** or would like to share, like a skill or expert knowledge?

This document summarises the key themes that emerged from the discussions.



In some instances, ideas that were raised were about things that Barnwood is already working on or that we are planning to work on, so we've given an update on those, as well as information on how you can get involved in that work.

Where something has been raised that we haven't got in plan already, we're going to take all of the feedback and consider it within the relevant team to develop our thinking on what action we might be able to take. We'll then come back to you with an update in the Spring to let you know what we've been able to progress.

This feedback serves as an incredible situation analysis of the county in relation to disability and mental health and will be invaluable for us in our thinking and areas of focus.

Please get in touch in the meantime if there is anything you would like to discuss further.



1. Key issues

These are the main issues that were raised in the 'Raising Issues' section of the event:

- Information about services and support (**Page 4**)
- Access to services, support, housing and outdoor spaces/activities (**Page 5**)
- Involvement and influence, such as a lack of inviting young people into decision making; and organisations hearing more voices, along with the intention of commitment and action (**Page 6**)
- Isolation and loneliness (**Page 7**)
- Access to transport (**Page 8**)
- Young people, including young people's mental health (**Page 8**)

The following outlines Barnwood's current work and thinking looks like on these issues, as well as information on how you can get involved in this work.

Information about services and support

Barnwood's Strategic Development Managers are working across the county to try to support organisations to improve the accessibility of their communications. Our Let's Be Clear fund is still available to help organisations to access money that can help them to improve the accessibility of their communications.

There is still a long way to go in our county to ensure that everyone is aware of the services and support that they are entitled to and could benefit from. In 2022 we will be working to commission a large-scale project to improve digital connectivity for disabled people and people with mental health challenges which we believe will create material change on this issue.

To find out more about Let's Be Clear, contact Hannah Bradley at hannah.bradley@barnwoodtrust.org or visit www.letsbeclearcampaign.org/



To find out more about our Digital Divides work, contact Sally Byng at sally.byng@barnwoodtrust.org or visit www.digitaldivides.co.uk/



Access to services, support, housing and outdoor spaces/activities

This a key area of focus for our Strategic Development Managers. We also provide grants to organisations to help them to expand their services, give advice and create a more inclusive environment.

To find out more about our work on housing, contact Josh Jones on josh.jones@barnwoodtrust.org

To find out more about our work on access to outdoor spaces and activities, contact Ismail Kholwadia on ismail.kholwadia@barnwoodtrust.org



Involvement and influence, such as a lack of inviting young people into decision making; and organisations hearing more voices, along with the intention of commitment and action.

We've heard a lot of feedback in the last year about over and under-consultation – in some instances, people aren't being consulted or heard at all, while in others, they are being surveyed and asked to attend focus-groups regularly, but with no discernible change or impact having been achieved as a result.

At Barnwood, one of our key strategic aims is to increase the involvement and influence of disabled people and people with mental health challenges in the county. As a Trust, we've changed our funding criteria so that organisations applying to Barnwood for grants must demonstrate that they have meaningfully involved disabled people and/or people with mental health challenges in their thinking and planning for the work they are seeking to fund.

In 2022, we're going to be providing two training workshops in this area: **Involvement and Participation:** This is designed with organisations in mind, to help to build capacity and expertise to involve more voices in their thinking and decision making. **Tools for a Louder Voice:** This is designed with disabled people and people with mental health challenges in mind who may want to develop their change-making skills and have a louder voice in consultation and involvement in the county.

For more information, please contact Georgia Boon at georgia.boon@barnwoodtrust.org

Isolation and loneliness

Through our individual grants, we provide people with resources that help them to create social connections, and through our place-based funding, we provide grants to organisations who provide social and recreational activities for disabled people and people with mental health challenges. Our Strategic Development Managers work across their patches to support organisations and try to maximise the opportunities in their local area.

If you have ideas for where you live, or more generally, please contact a Strategic Development Manager:

Penny (Forest of Dean):	<u>penny.hulbert@barnwoodtrust.org</u>
Josh (Cheltenham):	<u>josh.jones@barnwoodtrust.org</u>
Ismail (Stroud):	<u>ismail.kholwadia@barnwoodtrust.org</u>
Kat (Cotswolds):	<u>katrina.brown@barnwoodtrust.org</u>
Liam (Gloucester):	<u>liam.daniels@barnwoodtrust.org</u>

Access to transport

We're considering access to transport in relation to our individual grant at the moment, and two of our Strategic Development Managers have identified this as a key issue for their patches (the Cotswolds and the Forest of Dean).

We haven't included this in our plans for the coming year, but if you would like to discuss this further and have some ideas on how change could happen, please contact Kat Brown (Cotswolds) on katrina.brown@barnwoodtrust.org or Penny Hulbert (Forest of Dean) on penny.hulbert@barnwoodtrust.org.

Young people, including young people's mental health

This is not an area that the Trust has worked within previously, our focus having been mainly on adults. We have provided some funding to young people's mental health organisations, but haven't undertaken research in this area, or had any specific strategic goals around it.

At the moment we are working to look in a lot more depth at respite and short breaks for disabled children and their families.

If you are interested in this work, please contact Dan Jacques at dan.jacques@barnwoodtrust.org to find out more.

2. Changes in Gloucestershire

Participants shared thoughts on what they would like see changing in Gloucestershire. The headlines were:

- Improved accessibility (**Page 10**)
- An increase in collaborative working (**Page 11**)
- Improved awareness of services and support available, and improvements in provision of information (**Page 12**)
- Changes to funding and investment (**Page 14**)
- Improved understanding of neurodiversity, mental health and disability (**Page 15**)
- Improvements in housing (**Page 16**)

The following outlines how Barnwood is trying to work on those changes and information about how you can get involved.

Improved accessibility

The kinds of things that people mentioned in this area were:

- more accessible opportunities, such as access to participating in the arts
- accessible toilets
- access to green spaces
- access to transport

We're working hard to improve accessibility across the county through our Strategic Development Managers.

If you have ideas or would like to know more about their work, please contact:

Penny (Forest of Dean):	<u>penny.hulbert@barnwoodtrust.org</u>
Josh (Cheltenham):	<u>josh.jones@barnwoodtrust.org</u>
Ismail (Stroud):	<u>ismail.kholwadia@barnwoodtrust.org</u>
Kat (Cotswolds):	<u>katrina.brown@barnwoodtrust.org</u>
Liam (Gloucester):	<u>liam.daniels@barnwoodtrust.org</u>

Collaborative working

The kinds of things that people mentioned in this area were:

- collaborative working
- partnership working
- reciprocity, where organisations support one another
- a co-ordinated approach which avoids duplication of work

Barnwood plays an important role as a convenor within the county, and in 2020, founded Gloucestershire Funders which seeks to serve as an example of collaborative working. We try to bring agencies, organisations and individuals together in order to make change.

To learn more about our partnerships and our partnership way of working, contact Georgia Boon at georgia.boon@barnwoodtrust.org.

Improved access to services and support

The kinds of things that people mentioned in this area were:

- access to advice about benefits
- access to the Access to Work Scheme
- access to healthcare
- reducing waiting times for mental health support services
- access to support for disabled people who don't cross the threshold for support needs

One of Barnwood's strategic partnerships is with Access Social Care who provide free legal advice through organisations to individuals with social care needs.



You can find out more about them here:

www.accesscharity.org.uk/

We have also recently funded a new project with the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide support for disabled people who are going through a PIP assessment.

We work in partnership with Inclusion Gloucestershire who provide advocacy services for disabled people and people with mental health challenges who do not meet the threshold for statutory advocacy.



You can find out more here: www.inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/engagement/advocacy-and-mentoring-support/

We are always pleased to receive funding requests from organisations who would like to provide this kind of support, and would love to hear from you if you have creative ideas to support change in this area in the county.

Please contact Georgia Boon at georgia.boon@barnwoodtrust.org.

Finally, in 2022 we're going to be campaigning on better access to work for disabled people and people with mental health challenges.

To learn more about the Citizens Advice Scheme, contact Penny Hulbert at penny.hulbert@barnwoodtrust.org.

To learn more about our partnerships and our employment campaign, contact Georgia Boon at georgia.boon@barnwoodtrust.org.

Funding and Investment

The kinds of things that people mentioned in this area were:

- changes in approaches to funding
- funding for specific initiatives
- access to small, flexible pots of funding that organisations can give to the people they support
- big investment needed in supporting 16 – 25 year olds
- central government funding reaching local authorities

In 2021, Barnwood Trust has changed all of its grant streams with a new set of funding principles, and released more than £1m of additional funds into the county. **You can see our funding principles here: www.barnwoodtrust.org/funding/**

We also trialled giving small pots of money to organisations to give to the people they support. Our individual grant is currently under review and will re-launch in 2022.

We haven't explored any specific funding for 16-25 year olds, but our respite care/short breaks project will encompass this age group. We welcome feedback on our funding streams, so please do get in touch.

Find out more about funding by contacting Emma Hughes at emma.hughes@barnwoodtrust.org

Find out more about our project to look at respite and short breaks for disabled children and their families, by contacting Dan Jacques at dan.jacques@barnwoodtrust.org

Improved understanding of neurodiversity, mental health and disability

The kinds of things that people mentioned in this area were:

- increased understanding of the range of individuals' circumstances
- improved understanding of disability in the community
- education around neurodiversity and mental health, for everyone
- more being done in the health sector regarding hidden disabilities

Our learning programme is designed to build knowledge and capability around disability and mental health. It doesn't cover specific conditions and diagnoses, but rather seeks to promote good practice that will help to change conditions in Gloucestershire for disabled people and people with mental health challenges. The full programme will be released in 2022.

Strategically, we are really keen to increase the capacity and capability of organisations to meaningfully involve disabled people and people with mental health challenges in their work as we believe that this will result in sustainable increased knowledge and understanding.

To find out more about any of the above, contact Georgia at georgia.boon@barnwoodtrust.org.

Improvements in housing

The kinds of things that people mentioned in this area were:

- improvements in the quality and quantity of supported accommodation
- setting up a scheme that provides deposits for renters
- sustainable supported living
- help with finding accommodation for people who have a low income and a disability

Barnwood has a long history of working to create sustainable communities with inclusive housing. We have refined this approach to focus on driving change to ensure that disabled people and people with mental health challenges have housing that meets their needs. Part of this work is our role as co-chairs of the Cheltenham End Furniture Poverty group (alongside Cheltenham Housing Aid Centre).

We are just beginning our new approach to this work and would love to hear from you if you have thoughts or would like to get involved.

To share your thoughts or get involved, contact Josh Jones at josh.jones@barnwoodtrust.org

Thank you so much to everyone who took part in our Annual Public Meeting.

Please do get in touch if you would like to discuss anything further, or if there is a specific issue you raised which you feel isn't covered above.

