

# Barnwood Circle Round Up

December 2023



## Hello

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

This bumper edition of our newsletter marks the end of another great year for Barnwood Circle. It includes updates on some of the co-design projects and information on 'what we heard' in our latest round of meetups on accessible information. We have an update about our individual grants programme and news about Barnwood's new Chair of Trustees. What you think about your experience of being a Barnwood Circle member is important to us so you will also find a link to our Annual Members Survey.



On behalf of the Trust, we'd really like to thank you all for being a part of Barnwood Circle and for all the difference that you make to our work and how we do it.



- Sally Byng, Chief Executive



# 2023 - a year in numbers for Barnwood Circle



What you tell us through meetups and co-design projects directly informs our work, and makes us answerable to disabled people and people with mental health conditions across Gloucestershire.

- We currently have **122 members**.
- Over the past year, we have held **24 meetups** at different venues across the county, and online. At these meetups we discussed topics such as accessible transport, accessing information, accessing green spaces and accessing employment. We produce 'what we heard' reports from these meetups which directly feed into work the Trust is doing.
- In 2023 we have had **8 co-design projects** which **31 members** took part in. These projects have helped create communication materials, award funding, plan our Annual Public Meeting, recruit new Barnwood staff members, and develop our employment campaign, Empowered Employers.

# Together with Barnwood 2023

**On Tuesday 21st November we held our annual 'Together with Barnwood' event. Despite holding it at a bigger venue it was still over-subscribed.**

All aspects of this event were co-designed by a team of Barnwood Circle members and the Barnwood Trust Engagement team who created an accessible and interactive event. The purpose of this event was to share Barnwood's strategy and work activity in 2023, and to hear ideas and reflections for 2024.

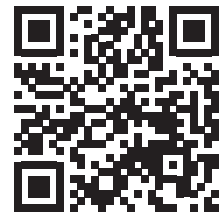


After hearing an opening presentation from Ann Santry, Chair of the Board of Trustees, attendees went into different breakout sessions to explore some questions facing the work of the Trust going forward. These were:

- How Barnwood 'listens and learns'
- How Barnwood talks about disability
- How Barnwood funds organisations
- How Barnwood makes its investments



We have put together a short highlights film to give you a flavour of the event and also summarise what was discussed in the breakout sessions.



If you would like to watch this video please visit our website or scan the QR code on the right.

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## **‘What we heard’ about accessible information**

**In the summer round of meetups, we discussed the accessibility of information. A total of 48 people came to 6 in-person meetups.**

Issues raised included attitudes, awareness, lack of opportunities, support and technology. 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.



Scan the QR code on the right to read the report or contact us if you would like this sent to you.





# Outcome of the communication co-design projects

**We launched the new Barnwood booklet at Together with Barnwood.**

This was produced by a co-design group of Barnwood Circle members, Bitter Lemon creative agency and member of our Engagement team. We are incredibly proud of the final product and the process we went through to get to the final result.



Another big communications co-design project has also finished.

This was a larger group who came together with the aim of producing a set of communication guidelines which will be an important resource for the whole team to use going forward. The guidelines cover things like how we talk about Barnwood's work, inclusive language and accessibility.

Jennie Curtis, Head of People and Operations

**"This is perhaps the most helpful thing that's landed in my inbox in a long time. Its brilliant!! I love it thank you – this is SO helpful for People and Ops! Thank you!!"**

Sally Byng, Chief Executive

**"The comms guidelines are my constant companion. I have used them twice today already."**



# Individual Grants update

**Towards the end of 2021, some of our Barnwood Circle members worked alongside Barnwood Trust with the aim of designing an individual grant. From these co-design sessions, two funding programmes were formed, 'Grants for You' and 'Grants for Your Home'.**

In January 2022, the Individual Grants team presented a review of these grant programmes to the Barnwood Circle members involved. From October 2023, Barnwood Trust relaunched our individual funding programme – which was rebranded as the 'Grants for Individuals' programme. This programme keeps true to the ethos that originated from our co-design sessions.

We will be communicating much more about the changes to our individual grants programme in the new year. In the meantime please scan the QR code to the right to watch a short film which outlines the changes. This can also be found on our website.



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## Chair of Trustees recruitment

**Members of Barnwood Circle recently helped with the recruitment of our new Chair of Trustees, Ingrid Barker. They sat on a discussion panel with people from organisations Barnwood works with.**

The aim of the discussion was to assess candidates on their interest in engaging with and understanding some of the issues disabled people and people with mental health conditions face, the quality of their communication skills, and their ability to build rapport and relationships. There was a separate discussion panel with staff and an interview with Trustees.



Our Chief Executive, Sally Byng said the involvement of Barnwood Circle was “very significant” and “gave the interview panel very clear views about how the candidates communicated, how they interacted with the group, and how you felt they fitted with how Barnwood does its work. This clear feedback enabled the Panel to feel confident in their own assessment of each of the candidates. This helped them to reach the decision, and to feel that it had been a fair decision.”

Ingrid becomes a Trustee straight away and takes over as Chair in May 2024.

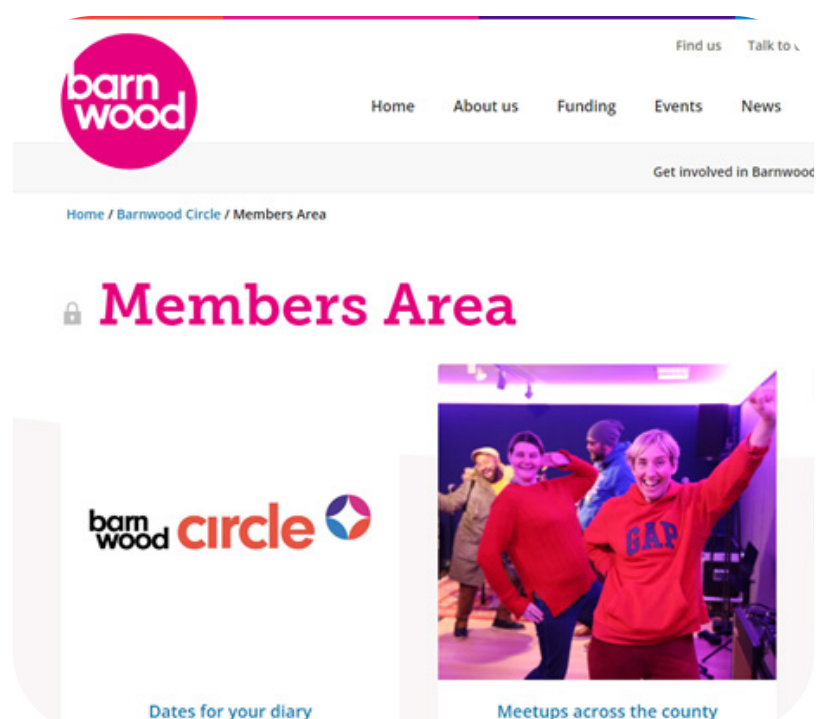
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## New ‘members area’ on our website

**We are creating an exclusive area of our website for Barnwood Circle members to make sure they are informed about events upcoming Expert by Lived Experience projects, ‘what we heard’ reports and Round Up newsletters. The members area will hold helpful resources to support you to be involved in activities across the year.**

19 Barnwood Circle members are being consulted on the design and content of these web pages to make sure all members can use and access it easily.

We hope that the members area will be ready to ‘go live’ by mid-February 2024. We will let you know more about this closer to the time.



# Annual Members Survey

**It's been great meeting and working with members of Barnwood Circle over the last year.**

We want to know what it's been like for you. If you would like to let us know what you think, please complete our short survey by scanning the QR code. For those of you who prefer things in the post, this will be sent to you.



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**Finally, we want to say thank you for being a Barnwood Circle member in 2023. We all hope you have a safe and restful festive break and wish you a happy new year.**

**The Barnwood Trust team will be back at work on Tuesday 2nd January and look forward to speaking to you soon in 2024.**

