



Research Code of Practice

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Contents

What is our Research Code of Practice?	1
About this document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the document is structured • Terms we have used 	1
Key principles underpinning the Code of Practice	2
Protecting research participants from harm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed consent • Right to withdraw • Data Protection • Maintaining anonymity 	4
The integrity of our research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency • Making best use of the Trust's resources 	8
Ensuring that our research is accessible and inclusive	9
Collaborating with other organisations	11
Conducting research with children and young people	11
Alignment to the Trust's values	12

What is our Research Code of Practice?

This Code of Practice sets out the research principles and practices that help ensure that work carried out by Barnwood's Researchers is undertaken with the highest possible level of integrity. We have written a Code of Practice because everyone who participates in our work has the right to be well informed about the purposes of our research and to understand the nature of their involvement in it. We also believe it is important to ensure that the ways in which we work to ethical principles and data protection regulations are transparent.

The Code of Practice applies to the whole research process, from designing a research project to sharing our findings. This document focuses on the activities associated with gathering data, such as conducting surveys and interviews.

Our research principles and practices align with Barnwood Trust's values: **Focused, Inclusive, Bold** and **Forward Thinking**. These values are described at the end of the document.

If you have any questions about our Code of Practice, please contact Roz Warden, Head of Insights, on **01242 539935** or email at roz.warden@barnwoodtrust.org

About this document

How the document is structured

The first section of this document introduces three overarching principles that underpin the Code of Practice. In the second section, we have outlined further principles that fall within each of these three areas. We have also included some specific examples of what we think about and do to ensure that we follow these principles. There is a separate section at the end of the document that outlines our practices related to conducting research with participants who are under the age of 18 years.

Terms we have used

Where we use the terms 'participant' or 'research participant' we are referring to an individual, an organisation or a group who takes part in one of the Trust's research projects or activities.

Where we use 'the Trust', we are referring to Barnwood Trust.

The term 'raw data' refers to data we have collected from a source before it has been analysed.

We use the term 'desk research' to refer to collating and summarising research that has already been conducted, including research undertaken by others.

Key principles underpinning the Code of Practice

All work undertaken by the Researchers at Barnwood is guided by this Code of Practice, which is underpinned by three overarching principles. These are:

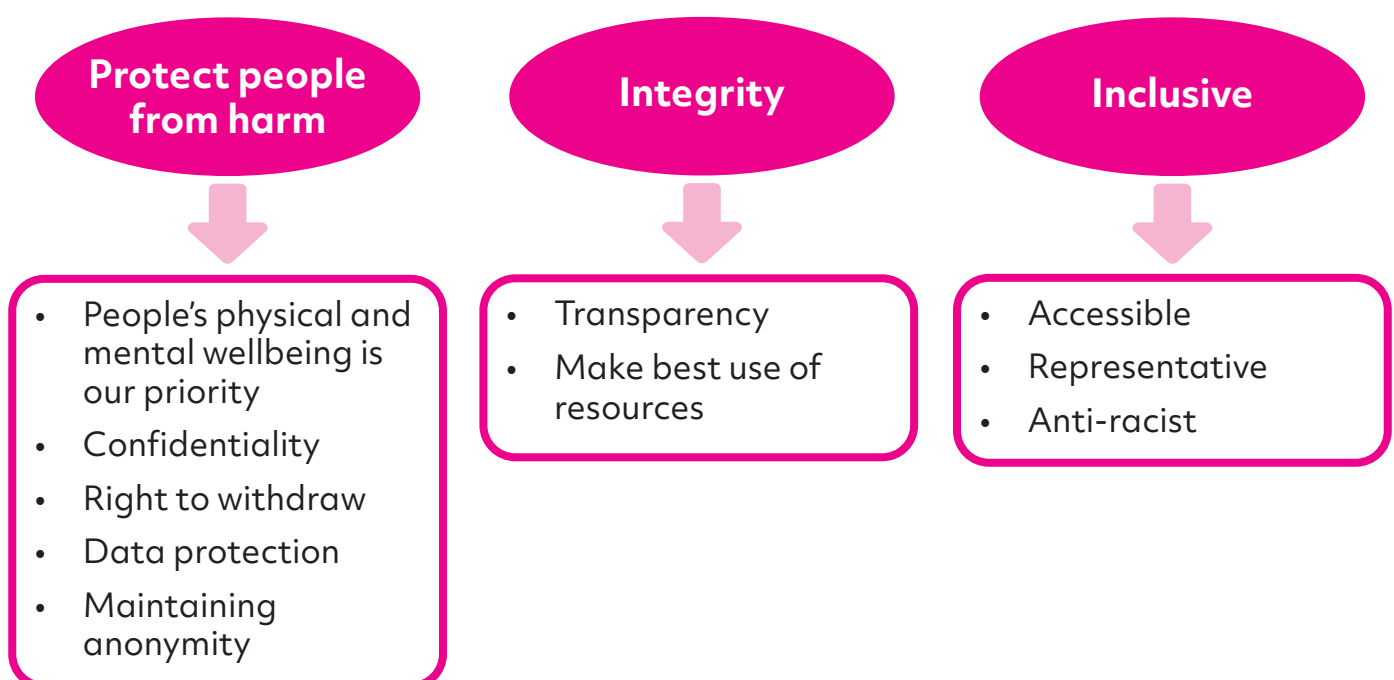
- Wherever possible, research participants should be protected from physical, psychological and emotional harm.
- We conduct our work with integrity.
- Our research activities should be as inclusive as possible.

These principles encompass the following beliefs, on which decisions about our work are based:

- In carrying out our work, the physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing of the people who participate in our research is our highest priority.
- We must comply with relevant legislation when conducting research.

- The confidentiality of research participants should be maintained, except where their responses cause concern for their safety or the safety of others, or where explicit consent to name, or otherwise identify, an individual or organisation participating in the research has been obtained.
- All research participants should be able to exercise their right to decide whether they take part in our research. This includes having the right to withdraw from participating in a research activity.
- We have an obligation to the Trust, the wider research community and society to maintain professional standards when carrying out our work. This includes standards related to honesty, integrity and quality.
- We should make best use of the Trust’s resources.
- Participating in the research we conduct and the outputs of our research should be as accessible as possible.
- We should take action to ensure that our research is inclusive of a wide range of people and, specifically, those from marginalised or underrepresented groups.

These overarching principles and beliefs are represented in the diagram below.



Protecting research participants from harm

Aim: To ensure that individuals are not harmed, and organisations' reputations are not damaged, as a result of participating in our research

We take the following steps to help ensure that our research does not harm participants.

- All Researchers at Barnwood undergo a criminal records check by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This is renewed every three years.
- All Researchers at Barnwood complete regular Safeguarding training.
- We assess the risks associated with our research activities and take action to manage risks where possible.
- We respect individuals' and organisations' privacy.
- We gain informed consent from all individuals before they participate in a research activity.
- To help research participants feel at ease, we seek to provide alternative options (for example, options in relation to the data collection methods used; questions asked; the location and timing of interviews; and who is present during an interview).
- The Trust has a complaints policy (which is available on the Trust's website). This describes the standard way in which complaints are addressed, including the time within which anyone making a complaint can expect to receive a response.

Further details related to informed consent, right to withdraw, data protection and maintaining research participants' anonymity are included below.

Informed consent

Aim: To ensure that participants are fully informed about the purpose(s) of our research and what participating in a research activity will involve before they consent to taking part

- We take steps to ensure that all research participants are fully informed of the nature and purpose of each data gathering activity they take part in.
- We make it clear to participants that taking part in our research is optional and that deciding not to take part will not impact on their eligibility for funding or other opportunities provided by the Trust.
- All research participants opt-in to our research activities and are informed of their right to withdraw from participating at any stage.
- Participants are informed of any third parties involved in the research and the nature of their involvement.
- We recognise that, as well as gaining consent from an individual, it may be appropriate to gain consent from a relevant professional or family member/friend.
- If a research participant is under 18 years, we seek permission for their participation from a parent/guardian in addition to consent from the individual themselves. Additional details of practices related to conducting research with participants under 18 years can be found below in the section titled 'Conducting research with children and young people'.
- Participants are provided with contact details for a named person to contact if they have any questions about the research. They are also given contact details for another named person to contact if they have any concerns about the research.
- Recognising that individuals may need different types of support to enable them to provide informed consent, we explore options for providing this support.

- Having explored options to support an individual to understand the purpose of a research activity and the nature of their involvement in it, if we have concerns that a potential participant may not be able to provide informed consent to take part in the activity we cease the individual's involvement in the research.
- Where appropriate, participants' consent to take part in research activities is re-established regularly after the formal procedure to document consent has taken place.

Right to withdraw

Aim: To ensure that all research participants know about their right to withdraw from a research activity and are comfortable to exercise this right if they wish

- All participants have the right to withdraw from participating in a research activity after giving informed consent. This includes not participating in the research at all or withdrawing part way through the research.
- We make it clear to research participants that taking part in our research is optional and that deciding they do not wish to participate will not impact on their eligibility for funding or other opportunities provided by the Trust.
- If participants request that their data is excluded from the research after a research activity, this will be actioned where practicable (e.g. if analysis of the data has not yet begun).

Data protection

Aim: To ensure that we comply with data protection regulations and avoid the risk of causing harm to research participants through inappropriate storage and use of data

- As a user of personal data, Barnwood Trust is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. All personal data will be processed by Barnwood Trust in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- The Data Protection Act 2018, which covers the six data protection principles of the General Data Protection Regulation', states that data must be:
 - (a) Processed fairly, lawfully and transparently.
 - (b) Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes.
 - (c) Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary.
 - (d) Accurate and up-to-date.
 - (e) Identifiable only for as long as necessary.
 - (f) Secure.
- We are aware of our responsibilities in relation to the Data Protection Act 2018.
- We only gather data for a specific purpose, and we inform participants of that purpose.
- We ensure that the type of data we gather is appropriate: that is, it enables us to meet the aim(s) of the research.
- We only gather the data we need.
- The data we gather and store is accurate and, where necessary, up to date.
- Data is stored in a form that enables individuals and organisations to be identified only for as long as is necessary.
- Data is stored securely. This includes, for example, storing data in password protected files and locked cupboards.
- We comply with the Trust's policies related to the collection and storage of data. The Trust's Privacy Policy can be found [here](#)

Maintaining anonymity

Aim: To avoid the risk of causing harm to research participants through making them identifiable

- Prior to gaining consent to participate, we inform participants how their data will be used and who will have access to it.
- Unless a participant has given their consent to be identified, we anonymise their responses if we share them outside of Barnwood's Insights team. In some cases, responses may be seen by others before being anonymised (e.g. if evaluation forms are collected by an event facilitator). In these cases, participants are informed of this before consenting to take part.

The integrity of our research

Aim: To meet high standards of integrity when carrying out our work, including being transparent about our methods and making best use of the Trust's resources

Transparency

Aim: To ensure that participants are fully informed about the purpose(s) of our research and what participating in a research activity will involve before they consent to taking part.

- When conducting research, or communicating with potential research participants, Researchers are open about being part of Barnwood Trust.
- We will only use data we have gathered for the purpose it was gathered for unless we have specific consent from those who provided the data to use it for another purpose.
- When reporting the findings of research conducted by other researchers or organisations:
 - We only refer to research that we believe is credible.
 - We include details of the sources of these findings where available.

Making best use of the Trust's resources

- There is a specified aim for each research project we undertake.
- Before engaging in a research project we gather information to ensure that we are not duplicating research and to inform our approach. This information is used to assess the value of the proposed work (for example, what new knowledge or understanding it is likely to result in), how it might help the Trust to influence change and how we can maximise the chances that we will achieve the aims of the research. This may include gathering information from Experts by Experience and/or others who have relevant expertise and conducting desk research.

Ensuring that our research is accessible and inclusive

Aim: To ensure that our research is accessible to, and inclusive of, disabled people and people with mental health conditions who may face barriers to taking part in research

We recognise the diversity within the population of disabled people, people with mental health conditions and communities within Gloucestershire. Ensuring that our work is as accessible and inclusive as possible is a priority for us. This applies to both the way in which we conduct research and the way in which we share our findings.

We consider factors that could limit people's participation in our research, such as the methods we use to gather individuals' views, and take action to remove barriers we identify. We also seek to gather the views of people with a range of experiences. For example, this could include taking steps to ensure that we gather the views of people with different experiences of disability and mental health conditions and the views of those from marginalised or underrepresented groups.

We take the following steps to help ensure that our research is accessible and inclusive:

- We seek to understand the barriers to being involved in our research that individuals may face, including barriers that may be associated with the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010.
- We are mindful of not inadvertently excluding people because of certain conditions/practices associated with our work.
- We consider the extent to which our research findings are likely to represent the views and/or experiences of different populations and how we can ensure that they are as representative as possible.
- We seek to offer a range of ways in which individuals can participate in our research (e.g. through interviews, focus groups, conversations or survey responses).
- We encourage potential participants to contact us to discuss individual needs and preferences for sharing their views and experiences.
- We provide information about our research projects in a range of formats.
- We apply best practice principles in accessible communications when creating research materials (such as participant information sheets and survey questions) and when sharing our research findings.
- We consider how our process for gaining informed consent can be adapted in order to be able to include as many people in our research as possible, provided that we can be sufficiently confident that an individual is able to give informed consent.
- As part of the Trust's wider work towards becoming an anti-racist organisation, we are committed to developing research policies and practices that support anti-racism.

Collaborating with other organisations

- When collaborating on a research project with another organisation/other organisations:
 - We inform participants who is involved in conducting the research and who will have access to their responses.
 - We share our Research Code of Practice with the organisation(s).
 - We use the Research Code of Practice as a basis for creating any joint research agreements and methodologies.
- As standard practice, we do not share raw or personal data with other organisations.

Conducting research with children and young people

All the principles and practices outlined in this document apply to conducting research with children and young people. Specific practices that relate to research with individuals under the age of 18 years include:

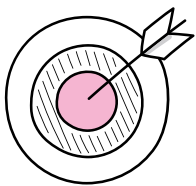
- If a research participant is under 18 years, we seek permission for the child/young person to participate from a parent/guardian, in addition to confirming that the child/young person consents to take part.
- Working with guardians to identify ways in which we can protect children/young people from harm; establish children's/young people's support needs; and help ensure that taking part in our research is an enjoyable activity for children/young people.
- We do not lone work with children and young people. Two Researchers are always present during a research activity.
- Children and young people are always given the option to be accompanied by an adult of their choice when participating in a research activity.

- All Researchers at Barnwood complete regular Safeguarding training.
- All Researchers at Barnwood undergo a criminal records check by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This is renewed every three years.

Alignment to the Trust's values

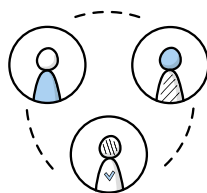
We take steps to ensure that our work aligns with the Trust's values.

Focused



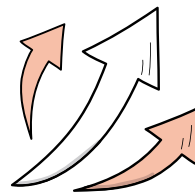
Disabled people and people with mental health conditions across Gloucestershire are at the heart of everything we do

Inclusive



Connecting and collaborating with openness and honesty, we ensure all voices are respected, heard and valued

Bold



In the face of change and uncertainty we are flexible and confident in finding ways forward

Forward Thinking



Using our independence, we explore long-term solutions to everyday challenges

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