

# Local Action Plan: King's Lynn & West Norfolk

Welcome. This Local Action Plan for co-production outlines actions to be taken across King's Lynn & west Norfolk to ensure that people with experience of homelessness are fully involved in co-producing solutions to homelessness across the area.

## No Homelessness in Norfolk

No Homelessness in Norfolk is the ambitious vision shared by the Norfolk Strategic Housing Partnership and the Norfolk Homelessness Solutions Forum. The Norfolk Strategic Housing Partnership brings together system leaders from across public and voluntary sectors including housing, health, police, probation, adult and children's social services, the Department for Work and Pensions and all Norfolk Local Authorities. The Partnership is supported by the Norfolk Homelessness Solutions Forum, an operational group led by Shelter.

A key principle of No Homelessness in Norfolk is that true positive change will only come about by incorporating the expertise of front-facing colleagues and experts by experience (people who have lived experience of homelessness). This principle underpins the [Norfolk Homelessness Charter](#)<sup>1</sup> and the [Norfolk Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2022-2025](#).<sup>2</sup>

**This charter forms a pledge concerning the rights of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. We believe that people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness have a right to:**

- Have their voice heard and to participate in decisions that affect them
- A safe and secure home with the appropriate level support they need to live a good life
- Respect at all times and a good standard of service from all partner agencies
- Equality of access to information and our services

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hopestead.org/app/uploads/2022/03/NSHP-Charter.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.hopestead.org/app/uploads/2022/03/NSHP\\_Strategy\\_5.11.20211.pdf](https://www.hopestead.org/app/uploads/2022/03/NSHP_Strategy_5.11.20211.pdf)

Groundswell works with people with experience of homelessness, offering opportunities to contribute to society and create solutions to homelessness. Participation is at our core because the experience of homelessness is crucial in making decisions that affect lives and ultimately help people to move out of homelessness. In September and October 2022, we held Speakout! events in Cromer, Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn, Norwich and Thetford. We met around 100 people to discuss how to embed co-production and participation in each area. People with experience of homelessness joined us, along with people from local authorities, homelessness support services and a range of other statutory and voluntary sector organisations, including the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board, the police and housing associations.

## Co-production

Co-production is a way of working together to create positive change, including designing, delivering or improving services. It is an approach that seeks to maximise the involvement of people who have experienced a problem in describing and solving it.

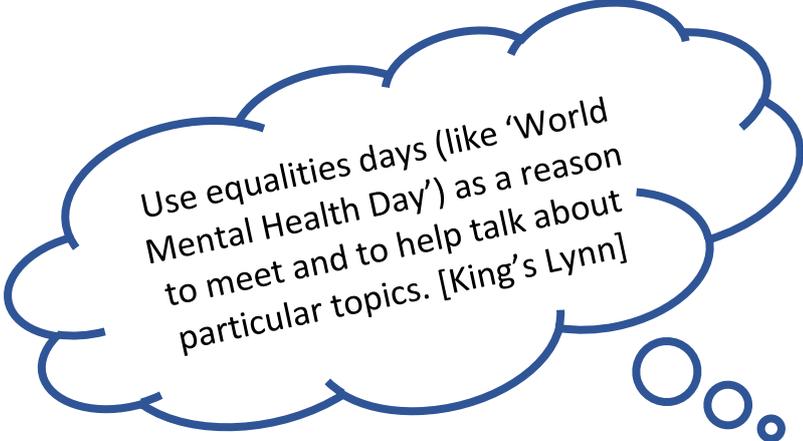
### Social Care Institute for Excellence features of successful co-production

The Social Care Institute for Excellence ([SCIE](https://www.scie.org.uk)) presents some key features that successful co-produced projects have in common.<sup>3</sup> These include:

- Understanding, defining and valuing the skills and abilities of people who access care and support.
- Breaking down barriers between those who provide and those who receive support.
- Ensuring that all people involved in co-production have shared goals.
- Ensuring that all people involved in co-production get something back from the work they put it.
- Ensuring that participation covers all aspects of a service, from planning and design to its actual delivery.



Meet people where they are – go to them, don't expect them to come to you  
[King's Lynn]



Use equalities days (like 'World Mental Health Day') as a reason to meet and to help talk about particular topics. [King's Lynn]

<sup>3</sup> Social Care Institute for Excellence (2022) *Co-production: what is and how to do it*. Found at <https://www.scie.org.uk/co-production/what-how>

## Local context

- King's Lynn and West Norfolk has relatively few people rough sleeping, although there has been a sustained increase in the use of temporary accommodation.
- Many of the available services for people experiencing homelessness are based in King's Lynn, and challenges with travel make it difficult for people in other areas to access them.
- The King's Lynn Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 will be due to be refreshed over the next two years, which will provide a good opportunity to involve people with experience of homelessness in designing its solutions.<sup>4</sup>
- A large number of people attended the Speakout! in King's Lynn, including a group of Purfleet service users who were strongly in favour of organisations employing staff with experience of homelessness, having seen great benefit from being supported by such workers.

## Actions suggested at Speakout! in King's Lynn



### Employ staff with experience of homelessness in front-facing roles.

- Provides routes out of homelessness.
- Can immediately give service users the impression of being supported in a more equal system.
- Employees bring to their work knowledge and perspective of what it is like experiencing homelessness, whether or not they share their experience with service users.
- Carefully designed recruitment and employment processes can break down barriers to employment (e.g. being open to employing people with gaps in employment history, past involvement with criminal justice, previous substance use etc.)

### Case studies

- As described in section 2.2. a number of organisations in Norfolk already do this and are willing to share what they have learned, including Purfleet Trust, Solo Housing, Your Own Place and Rethink.
- Shelter GROW (Getting Real Opportunities of Work) traineeships:  
<https://blog.shelter.org.uk/2021/02/grow-exploring-new-opportunities/>
- 70 per cent of Groundswell's paid staff members have lived experience of homelessness. We have learned a great deal about what helps to support people and to be a good place to work. A key part of our support is our commitment to progression. We will be publishing an independent evaluation of our Progression support for staff and volunteers early in 2023.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6008/homelessness\\_and\\_rough\\_sleeping\\_strategy\\_2019-2024.pdf](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6008/homelessness_and_rough_sleeping_strategy_2019-2024.pdf)



**Involve people with experience of homelessness in the recruitment process for new staff.**

- Demonstrates values to service users and prospective employees
- Brings a different perspective to the recruitment process
- Gives service users a sense of ownership over their service
- Better quality staff hired
- Tests whether job applicants respond towards service users as you would hope
- Could include involvement in ongoing staff appraisal, e.g. through 360 degree feedback

**Case study:** National Expert Citizens Group, for Fulfilling Lives (2015): Involving Service Users in Recruitment, a peer research report <https://www.bht.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/6-Involving-Service-Users-in-Recruitment-A-Peer-Research-Report-Aug-2015.pdf>



**People with experience of homelessness come together to form groups and/or bring together existing or new service user groups to develop actions collectively.**

- Build solidarity and peer support.
- Create a collective voice to influence positive change.
- Could link up with other co-production or peer led groups, like Mind, where appropriate.
- These groups tend to be led by members, rather than convened by professionals.

**Case studies**

- Norwich Renters Collective group <https://campaigns.shelter.org.uk/join-norwich-renters-collective>
- Renters unions, such as: <https://londonrentersunion.org/> <https://www.generationrent.org/>
- Focus E15 campaign group: <https://focuse15.org/about/>



**Co-production in partnership with the local neighbourhood, such as community lunches or neighbourhood clean-up events**

- Moving co-production beyond homelessness towards community and neighbourhood building
- Contribute to local community, building bridges with neighbours
- Connect people with experience of homelessness to community in a positive and supportive way

**Case studies**

- A community litter pick event took place in Swansea, arranged by Sunday Night Plaid Cymru Food for the Homeless: <https://businessnewswales.com/businesses-encouraged-to-engage-with-homelessness-challenge/>
- Camerados is an organisation that runs 'public living rooms' <https://camerados.org/>



**Organise Festivals of co-production to bring together people with experience of homelessness, and professionals, to share their ideas and best practice.**

- For example, could hold a World Homelessness Day event at The Place.
- Could be an attractive, appealing and enjoyable event for people with experience of homelessness to learn about all sorts of local opportunities, including co-production, influencing and consultations, as well as volunteering, training etc.
- Can also incorporate and showcase creative work (art, performance, entertainment etc.), involve a good lunch, promote connectedness and friendship
- Could also bring together professionals, who can share their ideas, expertise and co-production best practice examples.
- Could extend beyond homelessness, breaking down silos. For example, could include local mental health services.

**Case studies**

In Norfolk, the Strategic Housing Partnership held a virtual conference in 2021 to launch the Norfolk Homelessness Charter that included performances from people with lived experience.

Homelessness charity St Mungo’s has run Client Festivals, bringing together clients, staff from departments and services across the organisation, and external organisations. The festival is run by and for clients, and involves stalls, entertainment and performance, exhibitions, taster sessions of activities, food and refreshments and opportunities to get involved with co-production work.

[https://www.mungos.org/app/uploads/2020/10/StM\\_AR\\_Client\\_Involvement.pdf](https://www.mungos.org/app/uploads/2020/10/StM_AR_Client_Involvement.pdf) and <https://www.mungos.org/client-festival/>



**Involve people with experience of homelessness in local activities that align with their skills and interests, such as decorating and maintenance within local services.**

- Fosters a sense of personal investment into services.
- Build confidence and skills.
- Helps services to create environments that suit their users.

**Case study**

Broadland Housing invited people moving into newly built properties to help get them ready.

# Good practice and ideas from other places in Norfolk

## Co-production across Norfolk

There are already several examples of co-production within homelessness services in Norfolk:

- St Martins and Shelter both employ dedicated staff to boost involvement. They are active in facilitating the Norwich Co-production Alliance Group, which hosts monthly meetings and is working towards further expansion.
- Shelter operates the [Norwich Renters Collective](#), a network that unites renters from across Norwich in tackling high renting costs and unfit housing.<sup>5</sup>
- Great Yarmouth has a Co-production Group, a working group contributing towards the ambitions of the Great Yarmouth Homeless Alliance. Their research with people who have experienced homelessness has been aimed at understanding perceptions of existing services and to inform the development of their approach to embed co-production across Great Yarmouth's homelessness services.
- Your Own Place operate an Advisory Board ([YOPAB](#)) to help lived experience guide decision-making at Your Own Place.<sup>6</sup> They provide training to prepare participants for key roles in the board such as chair, finance and marketing. This year, Your Own Place has partnered with Sanctuary Housing to deliver workshops gathering residents' views, ideas and concerns to inform and influence Sanctuary's leaders and decision-makers.
- Several homelessness organisations, such as Purfleet Trust and Solo Housing, recruit employees with lived experience.

Attendees at Speakout! events in Cromer, Great Yarmouth, Norwich and Thetford suggested:

### ***Bridging knowledge gaps***

- ✓ Support people with experience of homelessness to understand the mechanisms for influencing change in their local area. For example, provide training or information about things like data collection, commissioning practices, budgets and funding, and homelessness law. [*Norwich*]
- ✓ People with experience of being homeless in the area could look at street count figures, and other local statistics, and provide contextual analysis. [*Thetford*]

<sup>5</sup> <https://campaigns.shelter.org.uk/join-norwich-renters-collective>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.yourownplace.org.uk/our-services/yopab/>



- ✓ A peer council or co-production champions – a trained/supported group of users of homelessness services could gather feedback from users of their service or others, then come together to identify common themes and solutions. [Cromer]

### ***Bringing expertise from experience into formal processes***

- ✓ Invite people with experience of homelessness onto a commissioning board when new services are commissioned and a scrutiny panel to monitor delivery. [Great Yarmouth]
- ✓ Requirements for strategic engagement with service users in Service Level Agreements (SLAs) [Cromer]

### ***Unique benefits of peer roles***

- ✓ Train people with experience of homelessness to be ready to take on paid roles, both in the homelessness sector and other areas of work. [Great Yarmouth]
- ✓ Train and support peer navigators to work with Housing Options users, either directly or via audio, film or written materials. [Thetford]

## Further resources

There are a lot of good quality resources to inspire and motivate people to keep working on co-production, and to keep developing new skills. We include a selection below and encourage you to keep searching for more. We do not endorse any paid-for services and you should undertake your own due diligence before buying any services, training or product.

### Blogs by people who have been involved in co-production

- *'I have something to offer, insight not everyone can claim to, and I now have a voice.'* My one chance: why including lived experience is so important, by Dena Pursell, Groundswell Care Navigator for Lambeth <https://groundswell.org.uk/2021/my-one-chance/>
- *'The impact of co-production: Learning from experience'* by Patrick Wood, Chair of the SCIE Co-production Network. Active in the mental health survivor movement since 1989. <https://coproductionweek2017.blogspot.com/2022/06/the-impact-of-co-production-learning.html>
- *'The importance of Co-Production'*, John's blog, an 'Expert by Experience' working with Rethink Mental Illness in Norfolk and Waveney: <https://www.rethink.org/news-and-stories/blogs/2022/07/the-importance-of-co-production/>

### Reports and toolkits

- Co-production Collective (2020) *'Co-pro stories: exploring lived experience of co-production'*. <https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.ucl.ac.uk/dist/c/605/files/2021/02/Co-Pro-Stories-Short-Final.pdf>
- Groundswell (2021) *'Inspiring Change Manchester's coproduction journey'*. <https://groundswell.org.uk/2021/learning-from-icms-coproduction-journey/>
- Fulfilling Lives (2022) *'Coproduction: principles into practice'* [https://www.fulfillinglivesevaluation.org/wp-admin/admin-ajax.php?juwpfisadmin=false&action=wpfd&task=file.download&wpfd\\_category\\_id=324&wpfd\\_file\\_id=7278&token=c22fd2adc0cecd4d34b092ef6b4dc3be&preview=1](https://www.fulfillinglivesevaluation.org/wp-admin/admin-ajax.php?juwpfisadmin=false&action=wpfd&task=file.download&wpfd_category_id=324&wpfd_file_id=7278&token=c22fd2adc0cecd4d34b092ef6b4dc3be&preview=1)
- National Voices (2022) *'Valuing Lived Experience – learning report'* [https://www.nationalvoices.org.uk/publications/our-publications/valuing-lived-experience-learning-report?mc\\_cid=b83ae3855c&mc\\_eid=8494e01efa](https://www.nationalvoices.org.uk/publications/our-publications/valuing-lived-experience-learning-report?mc_cid=b83ae3855c&mc_eid=8494e01efa)
- Homeless Link (2018) *'Co-Production – working together to improve homelessness services'* <https://homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/co-production-toolkit/>, aimed specifically at people wanting to use a co-production approach for homelessness services.
- SHP (2022) [Co-production toolkit](#) for multiple disadvantage, itself co-produced by lived experience volunteers alongside commissioners and co-location partners.
- Involve's knowledge hub contains resources to support public participation in civil life: <https://involve.org.uk/resources/knowledge-base>



- Revolving Doors' *'Toolkit: developing a community of community practice'* is a guide for conducting peer research: <https://revolving-doors.org.uk/publications/running-peer-research-project-offenders-community/>
- The Fulfilling Lives final evaluation summarises achievements, findings and learning from all 12 co-produced Fulfilling Lives projects: <https://www.fulfillinglivesevaluation.org/new-publication-programme-achievements-evaluation-findings-learning-and-resources/>
- Fulfilling Lives (2021) *'Involving people with lived experience in the workforce'*: <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/insights/documents/Involving-people-with-lived-experience-in-the-workforce-2020.pdf>

#### Websites and networks

- Making It Real Norfolk's Story book <https://www.facebook.com/MakingitRealNorfolk>
- Expert Link's network 'Conversations on co-production' <https://expertlink.org.uk/co-production/>
- UCL's Co-Production Collective, a community of people interested in co-production: <https://www.coproductioncollective.co.uk/> There is a detailed accompanying resources library: <https://resources.coproductioncollective.co.uk/>
- Social Care Institute for Excellence 'Co-production: what it is and how to do it': <https://www.scie.org.uk/co-production/what-how>
- Ideas Alliance have extensive co-production resources, articles and guidance <https://ideas-alliance.org.uk/>

#### Short animations and films

- National Lottery Community Fund 'what is co-production?' <https://twitter.com/i/status/1013761405231747072>
- National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) principles for co-producing research <https://twitter.com/NIHRinvolvement/status/1543872791740547073> (Full resource here: <https://www.learningforinvolvement.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Guidance-on-co-producing-a-research-project-2022.pdf>)

#### Good practice examples

- Expert Citizen National INSIGHT Awards are a useful source of examples of successful co-production projects, from ways in which co-producers have gathered stories and insights to how they have led positive change <https://expertcitizens.org.uk/insight/>
- Shelter's GROW traineeships: <https://homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/employing-people-with-lived-experience/>

Publication date: December 2022

