



Learning Sets: A collaborative approach with The Listening Fund and Real Insight

Introduction from The Listening Fund

In early 2018, we asked our 22 partners in England what training and support they might want as they worked to improve their listening practices and culture. One of the training providers they chose was Real Insight (RI). Following further consultation, RI put together a training programme based around a seven-point framework developed by RI's founder, Nash Momori.

The response from partners to these learning sets was overwhelmingly positive. There were challenges – we weren't able to find a physical location which all partners could access on a monthly basis; and at times the learning sets were also affected by the capacity challenges which regularly face small organisations – but the open and honest conversations between partners were so rich that we belatedly asked RI to capture what they heard. That is the basis for this paper.

As we did not discuss producing a paper until the learning sets were nearly over, what follows is necessarily an imperfect snapshot of detailed, nuanced and sometimes emotional discussions. Partners collectively explored their hopes, achievements and disappointments and although this record of the learning sets cannot capture all the organisations' different experiences, some clear themes emerge from the work:

- Most partners were able to identify a part of their listening practice or culture which they could immediately improve, e.g. working with young people to review the language used within their organisation, or asking young people how and when they want to communicate. Even starting these conversations led to some quick wins.
- Capturing the momentum from this early progress was crucial, however, as the report shows that attendees encountered resistance to change from within their own organisations. This could be from the board or senior management team, or from colleagues who felt vulnerable and overwhelmed, but almost all partners had to spend time and energy making the case for meaningful listening.
- Almost universally the fact that boards were considered not to be representative of the communities they serve was identified as a source of tensions between leadership, staff teams and young people.
- Partners reflected on how being in receipt of services could reinforce or even create a stigma for young people. This could then be perpetuated by how staff perceive and engage with those they serve. The stigma is damaging to listening, affecting young people's confidence and their willingness to be involved in higher levels of participation and leadership

- Participants felt that, all too often, organisations' structures and ways of working were set up for their own benefit and/or that of numerous other external stakeholders: funders, commissioners and regulators. Everyone apart from young people.
- Making listening opportunities equitable is hard, even within individual organisations. This is especially true for services run in different locations, with different young people, addressing different issues – but it is vital to work towards equity to ensure all young people are heard.

The work with RI has also surfaced some broader lessons, including:

- The benefit of facilitated, peer-to-peer space. Working with the same group over a prolonged period enabled honest reflections and conversations in a way that would have been impossible during a one-off seminar or conference.
- The complexity of deciding who to invite into different spaces. Young people were absent from the majority of the learning sets and only invited to join later sessions. Even then, not all partners had a young representative for a variety of reasons including scheduling conflicts and a lack of engagement from young people. Whilst this meant that the learning sets only heard incomplete perspectives on given situations, it also enabled participants to be frank, open and vulnerable with one another in a way that they would not have been with young people present.
- The need for more digital resources and improved digital skills in the sector, supporting access to opportunities and resources for organisations and individuals outside of hubs such as London.

Our hope is that this document will support participants' reflection as they move forward with their work; provide other Listening Fund partners with a summary of the key learning from Real Insight's training; and offer external organisations interested in improving how they listen to young people some useful questions and guidance for self-reflection.

The paper follows the structure of the seven learning sets. After outlining the theory of each set, it summarises what Listening Fund partners shared in relation to the given topic ('Learnings'); what partners later said had changed following the learning set ('Key Gains'); and finally some questions to consider around each topic ('Recommendations').

More on what we have learnt from The Listening Fund can be found on the Fund's dedicated website (www.thelisteningfund.org), including reflections from partners, an evaluation of the Fund by the Centre for Youth Impact, and a variety of tools and resources related to improving listening practices and cultures.

April 2020

“Involvement can increase self-esteem, improve individual outcomes and increase people’s satisfaction with services. The greatest benefits result when people agree with the purpose... and when they have choice and control over it” [National Involvement Standards 2015]

AIMS:

Real Insight was commissioned by The Listening Fund to support the development of an on-going listening culture within partner organisations; to build the confidence and leadership of Learning Set participants; and to help partners sustain young people’s engagement within a renewed open staff/organisational culture, leading to decision-making roles on an equal basis.

Real Insight, [known as RI in this report], is a Community Interest Company (CIC) consisting of a group of inspirational people with lived experience of severe and multiple disadvantages. RI’s team is well positioned to act as an intermediary between peers and service providers. With extensive experience of presenting to and training delivery across the sector as a whole, Nash Momori, RI Founder/Director shares his passion for hearing the voices of service users, which can create an enthusiasm and willingness to try new ideas in order to engage with young people.

RI’s approach was intended to meet the aims of the Listening Fund: “Enabling young people to be agents of change, where their needs are heard and responded to.”

- From the start, the overall aim was to empower young people to move from being passive consumers of services, to being active shareholders
- At the same time, it was paramount to support organisations to understand the perspectives of recipients in their services
- Real Insight’s team offered an approach aimed at achieving meaningful involvement and enhancing relationships amongst providers and recipients, to help services get the most from their involvement activities; and to adjust their culture and systems for mutual gain

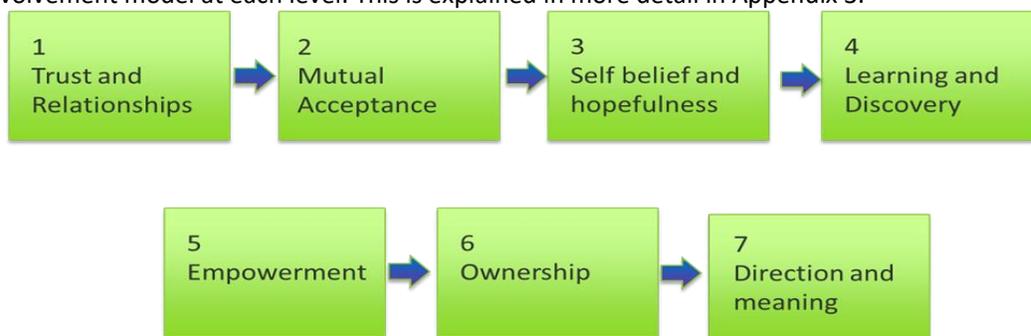
Intended Outcomes:

At the end of the Learning Set series

- Participants will have improved their organisation’s service-user participation
- They will have been able to share challenges and solve problems together
- They will have thought-through all seven aspects of RI’s Involvement Framework and implemented aspects into their own work
- RI will have evaluated each aspect of involvement for each participant to establish a baseline, as well as identified progress over the duration of the learning set
- There may be a network of practitioners and service users who continue to meet or connect after the series has ended

The ladder of participation – introducing The Detailed Framework

The Learning Set series utilised the Real Insight ‘Relationship Model and Involvement Framework’. Each step on the seven-rung ladder was the basis for a day’s workshop and the framework outlined the service-user involvement model at each level. This is explained in more detail in Appendix 3.



Findings – Participants’ gains – Recommendations

The following chart follows the ‘*Findings – Participants’ gains – Recommendations*’ arising from each step along the participation development framework. All content generated by the Learning Set participants themselves, and anonymised to protect participants’ confidentiality.

YP= Younger People / LS= Learning Set

Learning Set 1. ‘Trust and relationships’		
Level of service user involvement	Merits	Challenges
Trust and relationships - the deeper qualities of a human bond, which allow for effective interactions between service users and providers	Open communication and transparency where service users’ strengths are utilised	Challenging and redefining boundaries between staff and service users
<p><u>Findings</u></p> <p>Board level – structure, engagement, and representation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Board level decision-making had the least representation for younger people ○ Therefore, need to open communication and transparency ○ Board Members / Trustees were described by partner organisations as predominantly ‘White Caucasian’ and retired, and were deemed to represent the overall national supply-side of charity services, but not the demand-side or service user/younger person’s constituency ○ There were few or no formal channels for staff or YP to communicate with or influence the Board ○ Board level involvement in the organisations was stated as functionally executive, and generally centralising e.g. for staff hire, resource allocation, and new work planning ○ If there is no meaningful connection or communication with frontline staff from senior management, service Directors, or Board, it leads to tensions around work and resource allocations between front-line staff and management ○ Work and/or resource tensions have been fed back into complaints to volunteers and YP by some staff, who then become co-opted into internal disputes <p>Challenging and redefining boundaries between staff and YP using services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Many staff seem more passionate for the YP than do the Board and senior management ○ Yet several partner organisations stated they had no YP (22-25yrs) staff, thus no direct voice to a ‘peer’ for YP constituency ○ Staff are committed to help YP, taking extraordinary steps to support them above the call of duty <p><u>Key LS Partner Gains via Learning Set</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One Board Trustee had been designated to represent young people (by LS2 meeting) ✓ One Board had incorporated one YP as a member - and Board will for the first time meet with Youth Forum members in the coming month (by LS3 meeting) <p><u>Recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate your workforce, are there members of staff who are well placed to build ‘peer’ relationships with young people? <input type="checkbox"/> Examine who is on your board – is it representative of those you serve? <input type="checkbox"/> What can you do to establish effective Youth Forum-type opportunities? <input type="checkbox"/> How can young people be supported to play a greater role in organisational governance? 		

Learning Set 2. 'Mutual Acceptance'		
Level of service user involvement	Merits	Challenges
Mutual acceptance - interacting on an equal footing	Non-judgemental working practice involved shared goals	Challenging the notion of professionals "knowing best"

Findings

The working-together culture, and values

- Work we do is as normalised, but needs to be more empathetic to what is 'normal' to young people
- On returning to organisation, other staff reluctant to receive information or guidance from the Mutual Acceptance and Values concepts in the Learning Set
- It will take time to implement / accept
- Power struggles can come out of trying to implement Learning Set training, for instance where current policies differ from actual or changing practice, or managers' roles are perceived to be challenged as front-line staff advocate changing relationships with YP and vice-versa
- Receiving services has created stigma for YP
- Challenging to include YP who do not want to commit, for whatever reason
- YP may prefer a lighter, less complex involvement – but is that on offer?

Key LS Partner Gains via Learning Set

- ✓ YP are now working with a wider group of their peers, including new Youth Panels – staff support on how to consult and how also to listen
- ✓ Looking at how to make policies friendlier to YP - changing the 'top-down' culture

Recommendations:

- What can you do to best present the concept of mutual acceptance to staff teams and the board, and how can you successfully frame this way of working as an asset?
- How can your organisation reduce any stigma attached to using your services?
- Have you consulted young people about how they want to be involved and offered different levels of engagement?
- Are the staff, management and board prepared to accept that developing a new listening culture will take time?

3. 'Self-belief and Hopefulness'

Level of service user involvement	Merits	Challenges
Self-belief and hopefulness - both service users and providers see the value in service user involvement	Service user contributions are valued, and acknowledged	Ensuring that service user involvement is not a tick box exercise, and is not a top down process

Findings

Assertiveness needed

- Organisational structures and mechanisms are set up mostly for staff benefit, and are not the easiest way to get YP voices across
- This can stifle the emerging YP's voice before involvement gets established

Confidence Building:

- A key finding from LS1 recognised the need to change how Board meetings are run (e.g. location, papers/pre-engagement):
- What will assist YP to become ready to fully participate?
- Need to avoid tokenism e.g. lack of *consistency* with YP involved in interviewing for new staff

Key LS Partner Gains via Learning Set

- ✓ Communication links established through message boards, and Youth Panels
- ✓ Youth Panel members to take turns to support Youth Panel Meetings - YP meetings to be more regular and YP are responsible for agenda-setting (seen by LS3 meeting feedback)

Combined culture, structure and practice gains by LS4:

- ✓ Ensuring YP skills, assertiveness and confidence are being developed
- ✓ Increase in staff focus on enabling YP involvement
- ✓ Feedback loops created e.g. 'brand videos' co-created with YP: "We used to just ask YP - now they are involved!" - an example of YP contributions valued, and acknowledged

Recommendations:

- Have you adequately prepared young people for any role they may take? Questions to consider include:
- How do we equip them to do this? Have they been asked? And listened to?
- Are they ready for this role? What do they say they need? Did they receive it?
- What channels are there for YP and/or their forums to consolidate and offer up evidence?

LS 4. 'Learning and Discovery'		
Level of service user involvement	Merits	Challenges
Learning and discovery - openness to learning from the experiences of service users	Openness to the organisation learning from service users	The willingness of professionals to contemplate changing services, based on the volitional narratives of service users
<p>Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tensions exist between personal vs organisational values, including language use ○ Recognised YP need to be listened to more but - how to change to a 'listening' culture'? ○ Always asking what the YP thinks is not enough <p>Key LS Partner Gains via Learning Set (Practice gains)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Organisation is now involving YP from the beginning of projects rather than in the middle/at the end ✓ Recently started a traineeship initiative where YP can gain work experience as part of the service staffing team ✓ There has been a closer look at the language used in daily practice in services ✓ Communications to YP therefore to be more thoughtful ✓ Now ensuring language is understandable ✓ Fewer acronyms, and fewer abbreviations in use ✓ Developing a new original strategy which will carry these trainings [LS carry forward] ✓ Funding for rewards written into a working staff/YP collaboration ✓ Better at celebrating youth achievements <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How can you reframe meeting agendas to maximise young people' engagement? <input type="checkbox"/> Have you evaluated your communication methods and language with young people? <input type="checkbox"/> Could you use pictures/other 'thought starters' to support young people's involvement? <input type="checkbox"/> How effective are your induction processes for YP – to involvement, ideas, and to the organisation itself? 		

LS 5. 'Empowerment'		
Level of service user involvement	Merits	Challenges
Empowerment - Service users are empowered to influence the decision making process with equal power	Service users empowered to contribute to decision making process	Ensuring processes for making contributions are equitable, regardless of service user impairments
<p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decentralised structures as well as centralised organisations can prove problematic for YP's equality of opportunities e.g. having Project Leads across a hierarchy in a multi-site, or multi-service organisation ○ A decentralised structure means that branches can (and do) devise much of their own local support and engagement ○ Differences may exist in the quality and/resourcing of diverse services provided ○ Unfair treatment may occur as the YP are not in right locations to access the service, or get involved in decision-making ○ High turnovers of YP coupled with staffing ratio and retention issues can make involvement, and equal opportunities difficult to maintain ○ YP broadly seen as recipients of assistance, and the organisation is set up to act <u>for</u> them more than <u>with</u> them <p>Key LS Partner Gains via Learning Set</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Changes are to be in made in standards, policies and resourcing so there are no double standards ✓ All staff and projects are held accountable for involvement ✓ Processes to be streamlined - but still need more youth involvement across all the organisation ✓ Projects have started to frame future work with the development of YP as assets (in proposals to funding bodies etc.) <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What can you do to create equal opportunities and access so YP with diverse voices and experiences can get involved in your work? <input type="checkbox"/> Can your current processes be simplified and streamlined? <input type="checkbox"/> How can you ensure transparency on accountability, including involvement responsibilities? Have you looked at your policies, standards and how you resource this work? 		

LS 6. 'Ownership'		
Level of service user involvement	Merits	Challenges
Ownership - Service users have key roles in service delivery and organisation management	Service users are assigned key roles	Designing roles that are integral to the initiative, and not ancillary to it
<p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Asking YP rather than assuming they would not be interested was a consensual aim ○ How do other staff members perceive YP? As 'beneficiaries' or partners/peers? ○ Is there a culture of engagement / trust / assumed competence? ○ If not, can this change? <p>Key LS Partner Gains via Learning Set</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Organisation is now involving YP from the beginning of projects rather than in the middle/at the end ✓ Short-term opportunities for young people have arisen ✓ Recently started a traineeship initiative where YP can gain work experience as part of the service staffing team ✓ Decorated accommodation with YP, which brought the YP and service provider's teams together <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does your organisational culture appreciate young people as assets rather than recipients of assistance? <input type="checkbox"/> What can you do to ensure processes for YP making contributions are equitable, regardless of individual circumstances? <input type="checkbox"/> How can you work alongside YP on practical project tasks which brings YP and staff/volunteers together, creating a degree of familiarity? 		

LS 7. 'Direction and Meaning'		
Level of service user involvement	Merits	Challenges
Direction and meaning - the initiative is led and directed by service users, to ensure the initiative is meaningful to them and their peers	User-led and user-driven initiative	What systems and process need to be put into place to ensure that services are driven and led by service users
<p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A YP-led and YP-driven culture was not the 'norm' ○ Staff time pressures due to need to undertake management and office tasks ○ How do other staff members perceive YP – affects handing over 'power' ○ If systems and services are not driven or led by YP and their perspectives, what value does this actually place on YP? ○ Sustaining an involvement culture or project can be hard if YP have no contact after they leave and their skills/in-put goes with them ○ Inconsistencies in YP attendance at involvement sessions - how to get buy-in from our organization to gain trust - need more time to explore and try out different methods <p>Key LS Partner Gains via Learning Set</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A 'Powering Up' Initiative begun to listen to YP's feedback and give them a voice ✓ Well attended involvement sessions; when numbers down, still supported by organisation ✓ Risk Vs Reward - attitude building in team toward YP <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What can you do to create a culture and working assumption that YP will want to be/are able to be involved, rather than an assumption that they won't? <input type="checkbox"/> How can you ensure that the value of YP's insights is valued from the beginning of project? <input type="checkbox"/> Can you ensure that collective risk taking, aided by assuming YP's competence, is seen as a positive? 		

> It should be noted that the direct voices of young people do not greatly feature in this report, however, the Learning Set participants could be viewed as having an advocacy role. A series with staff and younger people throughout rather than one or two of the sessions explored in this series, could be illuminating.

> A final note: the current campaign in conjunction with The Listening Fund – **'The Young Trustee movement'**. Fewer than 3% of charity trustees are under 30. This Learning Set report highlights participating organisations' positive developments in this campaign arena.

Real Insight, April 2020.

Thanks and acknowledgements:

Sincere thanks to the Learning Set participants for their candour, enthusiasm, and dedication to younger people. Also to The Listening Fund's Edd Fry for unstinting support. And the Real Insight team members who made it all possible.

Appendix 1: Who we are

The Listening Fund - a £945,000 pooled fund to invest in learning and scaling practice at an organisational level that enables young people to be agents of change, listen and responds to their needs, and measures the impact of doing so. Part of the investment enables organisations to examine how they work with young people to ensure that they are not just giving them a voice, but listening and responding as well. For further information: Website: <https://www.thelisteningfund.org>

Real Insight Consultancy UK [known as RI in this report] is a Community Interest Company (CIC) consisting of a group of inspirational people with lived experience of severe and multiple disadvantages. We collaborate with economists and designers to create new conversations between service users [known as 'peers'], providers and commissioners that improve services. We received investment from Lankelly Chase Foundation to develop our model and to work with other organisations to test our methodology. RI provides the conditions that increase motivation to have meaningful conversations, bringing together the experiences of peers, 'front-line' staff, and managers listening to each other and learning, aiming to improve services by listening to the people who receive them. Website: <https://www.real-insight.org/>

Why RI's Peer Facilitation?

RI's team is well positioned to act as an intermediary between peers and service providers. With extensive experience of presenting to and training delivery across the sector as a whole, Nash Momori, RI Founder/Director shares his passion for hearing the voices of service users, which can create an enthusiasm and willingness to try new ideas in order to engage with young people.

RI, funded to work with up to four partners during 2018/19, supported the development and change within existing service user involvement programmes. It collaborated with Together (the mental health charity, West Sussex Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust, South London and Maudsley NHS Mental Health Foundation Trust, and Blackfriars Settlement, LB Southwark. RI brings together the experiences of peers with the creativity of designers and the mathematics of economists to design new ways for peers, staff and managers to have meaningful conversations - listening to each other and learning from each other. This has helped e.g. one of the NHS Foundation Trusts, above, seek a clear and agreed understanding of what the purpose of peer involvement will be across the organisation, strategically and locally for service users. Staff quotes from their evaluation report's 'Next Steps' include:

"I see the need for professionals to understand more about listening"

"More awareness now of real collaboration"

"..Will continue to push for open involvement/more involvement"

Appendix 2: The Learning Sets – Structure and Contexts

Real Insight was commissioned by the Blgrave Trust to work with a small number of organisations who already received investment through the Listening Fund, following a successful training proposal presentation at the Resource for London conference 22.03.2018 - 'Case study: Bringing lived experience to the fore - Nashiru Momori, Real Insight'.

RI's 'offer' was to provide practical help, support, and reflections on how participating organisation's staff engage with young people, and provide facilitated learning opportunities toward strengthening strategy and improving service-wide delivery. Participating organisations were self-selecting, had recognised a need, and indicated they would like to work in collaboration with Real Insight to develop the ways in which people who use their services are more actively involved.

The organisations who would like to work with Real Insight were almost all based in London. A 'learning set' was viewed by The Learning Fund as a practical, productive way for the funded organisations to work together, share ideas, and build up a network that is sustained across the life of the programme.

WHY [action] Learning Sets?

'Action learning at work...helps individuals develop their own competencies, enabling them to take action to overcome the day to day challenges they face...empowering others...'*

In a Learning Set, participants meet regularly (usually a group of 5-8 people) are able to raise e.g. real life problems, difficult questions, discuss sensitive issues and share their learning in a supportive environment, - what they say remains confidential to the group. They empower each other, and find their own solutions. A Learning Set can consist of colleagues from a single organisation or from different sectors and different professional backgrounds.

On this occasion, the series consisted of participants from different organisations in the same field, and organisational representatives did change – arguably enhancing the overall learning exchange. A facilitator usually supports the group, though over time a group may become self-facilitating.

HOW do learning sets differ from learning that is more traditional?

The process is different from traditional learning in that Set members:

- make a shared commitment to real action and change
- become mentors to each other – learning with and through each other
- are expected to ask questions, seek answers, gain support and expect challenge
- need to be positive and open-minded about issues/problems being discussed and possible solutions.
- work on real problems and implement solutions – i.e. development which is learning by doing
- all discussions are confidential to the group *

*Ref: <https://www.actionlearningassociates.co.uk/?gclid=CKqWtq6okosCFSUnEAodEQ0ZSA>]

Real Insight Training in Context: A “Combined” Learning Set Approach:

Each partner organisation workshop meeting was divided between 'planned' sessions [e.g. where the topic is agreed in advance, with "what worked for me and what didn't - and what would I do differently next time"], and 'open' sessions [e.g. 'open' sessions where individual members bid to discuss issues of concern to them]. Workshops utilised the *Real Insight Relationship Model and Involvement Framework* to initiate engagement and as the basis of each days training, creating the shared safe learning space. Participating organisation's team members brought their own experiences, shared learning, skills and knowledge, independently and neutrally facilitated by Real Insight's team. [*Please see Appendix 3]

Shifts in power: Real Insight takes calculated risks, as it recognises engagement - and potential change - is risky for organisations, staff and, where present on the training day - participating younger people. Such engagement is unpredictable because it changes the power dynamics between all parties present.

Taking risks: Real Insight makes this a safe process, which will result in clear progression and planning for everyone - experienced/recognised during each training workshop - before leaving to return to their respective organisations where the learning can be shared. Concepts, action plans and tools [learnt/shared/rehearsed] can now be explored in actual practice.

Participants are supported to identify personally where improvements in service delivery/outcomes can occur because of the process of working with Real Insight; we can demonstrate the safe, engaging space created by this approach.

Workshop design recognised the need to reach people through transparent, consistent and clear language and communication. Facilitators emphasise ALL contributions would be welcomed. The training offered gives short, but dedicate time aimed at enabling staff team members, and young people when present, to gain skills and confidence to incorporate as seamlessly as possible into daily working and relationships, overcoming time-constraint objections.

Service users, staff and leadership working with Real Insight expressed high levels of satisfaction with the content, presenters, and the methods used through the Real Insight *Relationship Framework* to facilitate safe, trusting spaces. This approach ensured clarity of message, and a welcoming environment:

“I’m enthused to want to spend more time with [my organisation].”

“Finding out the presenters were service users themselves.”

“Giving a voice to the hardest to reach to effect change”

“...Revived my passion for Service User Involvement’

MEETING THE AIMS IN PRACTICE:

Real Insight is included in the ‘Promoting Change Network’ (PCN), which has been set up by Lankelly Chase to foster learning, and supports over 40 organisations, which receive funding from the Foundation. The website has case studies/reports on learning sets previously undertaken in different contexts. [<https://www.actionlearningassociates.co.uk/lankellychase-foundation-2014-15/>]

The RI Theory of Change was developed over the course of three pilot projects as a new model of co-production, which aims to reposition the service user from being a ‘passive consumer’ to an active ‘shareholder’ of services. *Please see Appendix 3 for the detailed *Real Insight Relationship model and Ladder of Participation*.

For organisational leaders, appreciating service user involvement as the most important and meaningful way to improve existing services and create new ones that meet the needs of peers can be an anxiety-provoking yet inspiring change. RI promotes cultural change by assisting organisations comprehend how service users can be viewed as assets rather than a drain on resources or a risk to be managed and mitigated.

Appendix 3: The Process

Real delivered the group Learning Set programme [with 7 day-long sessions in Central London, over 9 months 2018-2019 including a further commission from a participating organisation], which included up to eight paying individual organisations' senior front-line staff that work directly with younger people. This holistic shared learning approach was fully informed by Real Insight's *Involvement Framework* and its associated *Relationship Model* in practice. Blgrave Trust via The Listening Fund and Lankelly Chase, have been supporting the programme, with funding, and strategic guidance. The Learning Set's participation grew since inception, with requests also to include younger people later on in the workshop series who are in receipt of services - a tangible power shift/sharing.

Real Insight's organisational and delivery team consisted of service users, and former service users from diverse backgrounds, known as 'peers' - adding credibility, realism, lived experience and professional training and project lead/management backgrounds to enable fast engagement with participants.

Underpinning the whole training delivery and learning process was the shared aim to empower younger people to move from being passive consumers of services, to being active shareholders with opportunities to be equally heard (as 'peers') - in an equalising environment:

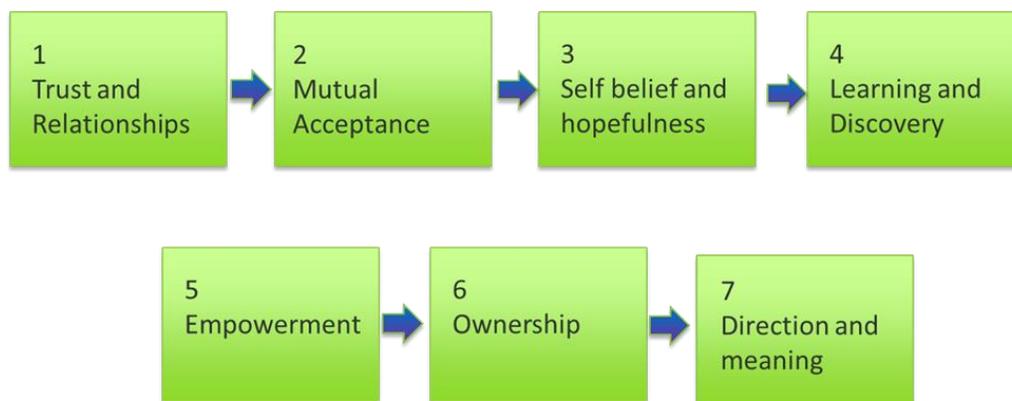
- Supporting providers to understand directly the perspectives of recipients in their services
- The rewards – increased organisational participation, staff retention, better relationships between staff and peers, peer-led ideas, better recovery rates

THE LADDER OF PARTICIPATION – Introducing participants to The Detailed Framework

The Learning Set series utilised the Real Insight Relationship Model and Involvement Framework to initiate engagement and each step on the Ladder as the basis per days training, creating the shared safe learning space. The detailed framework outlines the service-user involvement model at each level of the framework.

N.B. For the full Framework please contact Nash Momori, RI Founder/Director to discuss, as it is the intellectual property of Real Insight.

In summary, the culture, practice, and structure of the organisation and its service users should reflect the elements described at each level. Group training occurred during the 1st Learning Set meeting, with feedback, reflection, discussion on how participants could implement and embed the Ladder of Participation in their organisation. The participation areas were introduced - as well as the overall facilitated process:



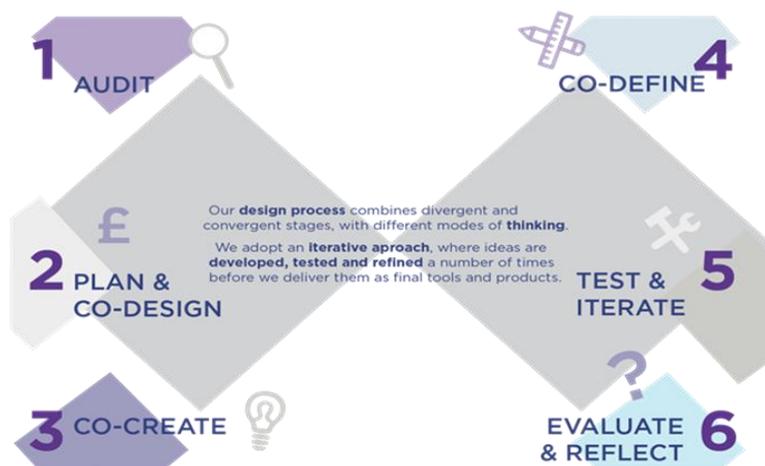
Listening, sharing, learning – challenges for cultural change and confidence building:

In approaching involvement, there is an assumption of inequality. This may, or may not be accurate and so needs testing in individual practitioner, and organisational contexts. What explains a perceived disparity between the experience of peers, and those of ‘management’, for instance? If it exists, does this representative of something systematic? What equalised, responsive and inclusive services/practices are actually occurring, which perhaps are not receiving the recognition they should have?

The Learning Sets had two sessions, planned, and open. The first describes how to reach these goals, and the learning is taken back to the organisation to be tested. The second session then evaluates the progress made in each organisation and the learning that has emerged. This method enabled answers to some of the above paragraph’s questions to become apparent.

For each topic area, Real Insight examines **Culture, Practice, and Structure**, using creative design or economic-based exercises to establish what current activity is like and to evaluate improvements over the course of the leaning set; it was a guide, not for strict adherence.

The facilitation method incorporates activities that enable staff and service users to feel comfortable and confident, creating constructive relationships where people feel comfortable to learn, explore and be honest about their feelings. This tackles unsaid issues, such as differential power, and enables people to move on to talk about familiar topics in an open way.



Co-design

Real Insight’s ‘recipe’ for meaningful involvement within organisations is to design together a process by which can be engaged with, and works for everyone from the service, as far as possible. This process is always flexible, adapting to the particular challenges we are tackling.

“Real Insight aims to impact positively on the practice and the structure of services, in order to inspire a culture shift.” (Nashiru Momori)

Keeping in mind there is a high turnover of younger people accommodated within services represented, their resilience can be low at times, along with low confidence and motivation. This is hard to build up in a short time span.

Appendix 4: Economics of change

RI's team would highlight the following concerning resources, asset perception, and service change and/or re-direction, from its own team member professional roles and services' experience. There is limited evidence on the resource impacts of individualised health and social care structural changes. A good example being advocacy services, which have not been researched in detail for cost/benefit – hence the importance of the design and economics' coupling of Real insight.

N.B. Many of the changes instigated by Leaning Set participants would be low cost in monetary terms within their organisation.

The ImROC report 'Recovery: the business case (2017)', for example, is worth citing as it attempts to bring together economic evidence to support change:

- * 'Some approaches in England to e.g. care planning have been criticised for excessive paperwork and bureaucracy, whilst reforms in the way in which e.g. mental health services are paid for may act as a disincentive towards genuinely individualised care plans. **The business case needs to be strengthened for mechanisms to promote increased personalisation and choice**
- * ...in broad terms there tends to be at least a 2:1 return on investment to the workplace of evidence-based actions to address common mental disorders and an even greater level of return on investment for some workplace (mental and physical) health promotion actions
- * Co-production is therefore explicitly about a change in the power relationship between professionals and people who use service. This is probably the most controversial and challenging implication of trying to work in this way. Nevertheless, the value of co-production for public services is now widely acknowledged. It underpins policy initiatives in England (e.g. People Powered Health programme, Cocreating Health, Wales, and Scotland; and e.g. in Recovery Colleges or Peer Support)

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