

## BRENT CARE JOURNEYS \* BULLETIN 16

The last month has seen BCJ piercing every layer of the system - from essential **reflective work with our community**, to positioning our power for **thought leadership at the Festival of Learning** in Manchester, to reaching right out at the edges of external **influencing at the Bank of England**.



**ListenUP** As we approach the final stage of the partnership and begin to account for significant changes in our year to come, it was imperative that we took pause with our community of care experienced collaborators. We did this in order to inform the last operational plan, but also in an attempt to reach into the legacy we will leave beyond that.

We used a variety of methods to engage young people in this challenge, which included Vox Pops with Brent's very own Aaron Roach Bridgeman, a time machine of sorts, conventional research approaches and an integrated, two way panel discussion with Brent's leaders.

We are actively working our way through the data but as it stands have emerging insights which include:

- The importance of maintaining the patchwork of insight and experience within the workforce; the difference this makes to young people when they can correlate need to expertise.
- The benefits of working with greater autonomy and with significantly decreased systemic limitations and profundity of impact this has for young people who long for relational and 'extra mile' approaches.
- The power of solidarity and how this has to be nurtured to emerge; the stark significance of a 'social safety net' for people who otherwise don't have a network to catch them.



**The Festival of Learning** Although we were not aware at the time, it was an important achievement for BCJ to be selected to present at this inaugural event. Apparently submissions had been many and the standard was high.



The title of our workshop ("Water can flow uphill in certain situations": What BCJ Learned About Achieving a Goal in Spite of Complex Resistance) was designed to enable us to be candid about our process of trial and iteration, developing BCJ from a blank page.

It was also a defining moment for BCJ, serving as the launch for our **Partnerships with People Model** - shown on the next page and **available for [download here](#)**.

# change systems change systems change systems

BCJ's PwP Model is the most distilled version of our learning about creating change **with and for** people. We hope that it will have important legacy for work which is concerned with protection, safety, justice and change in Brent, Barnardo's and beyond.

## The Partnership with People model

2023



**01 RADICAL RELATIONSHIPS**  
Put people first and make priority of the ways in which human beings connect and thrive; don't ever prioritise a demand led by a system over the need of a person or your relationship with them. Be bold and believe that every relationship has radical potential.



**02 RELENTLESS INCLUSION**  
Barriers to being genuinely inclusive will be relentless. Embrace this fact; build it into your learning and planning cycles. Meet every blocker with a tenacious and gracious demolition team who are astutely tuned into cultural and structural opportunities for change. Support one another and share the load in your pursuit of equity.



**03 INTENTIONAL ENVIRONMENTS**  
Your environment shapes you; our shared spaces significantly impact the quality of what we can achieve together. The factors which constitute where we come to convene are, too often, default. They need to be considered and designed. Getting this right will enable all four of the other principles.



**04 REDISTRIBUTED POWER**  
Power can be visible and invisible, sometimes hidden, often assumed, frequently hoarded and seldom redistributed. There is untold potential in the possibility of being permitted to have both support and agency. Working in this space requires integrity, honesty and a little mischief. Expose and redress.



**05 LEARNING AND ITERATION**  
There is comfort in the constancy of change when you have fidelity and trust in the process. This highly creative culture is soothed by the safety of the 'test and learn' structure. Leave behind any fictional narratives of achieving preordained targets and lean in to the ever present surprises.



## BCJ at The Bank of England



If you know BCJ, you know that we like to make the most of every opportunity, aim high and shine bright together. This is exactly what we did at the Bank of England when we were invited to influence decision makers regarding the impact of the Cost of Living on care leavers. ✨

Over the course of three sessions BCJ codesigned an interactive activity which was then coproduced for the Governor, the Director General for Universal Credit, the Executive Director of the Financial Conduct Authority and others from the DfE and voluntary sector (including Catch 22, Coram and the Care Leavers Covenant).

Collaborators from **BCJ have honed a way of effecting change which maintains their power and integrity**. From the off, the group were clear that they wanted to focus on sharing their insight and expertise, as opposed to personal accounts of living poverty. The result was unforgettable, cleverly involving many people in the room who were invited to play a part, bringing the realities of daily life for care leavers into peoples hearts and minds. BCJ's are proud of **two significant outcomes** following their contribution at this meeting:

1. The Director General for UC took pause to comment that he thinks something needs revisiting in the training and briefing of job centre staff; they have discretionary powers which could be used for care leavers and they may not be consistent or fully utilised.
2. The Exec Director for the FCA took a copy of our exercise away with him and will be using it in team meetings with relevant staff!



## Heads up...

BCJ are half way through design phase #4

## Introducing.. **PREPARED TO CARE (P2C)**

In partnership with Brent Fostering Team

A codesigned box of resources and activities to support foster families to bond, develop resilient connections and positive communication.



## And finally, we recommend checking out

- **Our latest blogs** which include reflections from staff with lived experience (exploring employment with a criminal record) and what we have learned about learning.
- The timely Barnardo's' **No Bank of Mum and Dad report**
- Brent's very own **George the Poet - BBC Sounds - Have You Heard George's Podcast? - Available Episodes**

STREET FIRST AID

**What is First AID on the road?**

**Could you help a mate?**

MONDAY 27 NOVEMBER  
BRENT CIVIC CENTRE  
5pm - 7pm

care journeys

BCJ PRESENTS A HOME ALONE EDITION

**BCJ FAMILY TREE**

06TH DEC 5-7 PM

FOOD GAMES GIVEAWAYS

Bridge Park Community Centre, Harrow Road, NW10 0RG

ON THIS DAY MAKE SURE YOU COME AND COLLECT YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFT FROM BCJ!

Contact Apria for more information - 07745 126 910

DONT MISS OUT

# UP... COMING