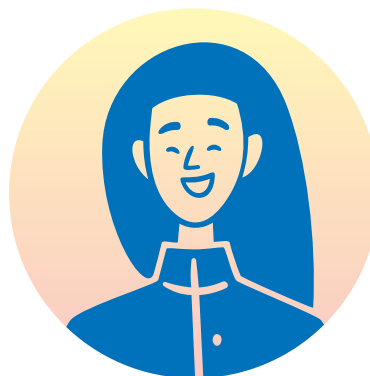


Co-creation framework

A shared document setting out co-creation and our values



A note about language

We use the following terms throughout the framework:

Involvement members: any patient or carer who is participating.

We: everyone taking part in co-creation activities.

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Our co-creation framework



Our framework, co-created

Our framework provides a **firm foundation** for all our co-creation work.

We start with our **co-creation values**, which guide our work. This framework is not intended to be a “how to” guide. True co-creation is about starting with our values, then learning and exploring as we go. So; this is a living, co-created document which will be developed, improved, and learned from over time.

Our definition of co-creation:

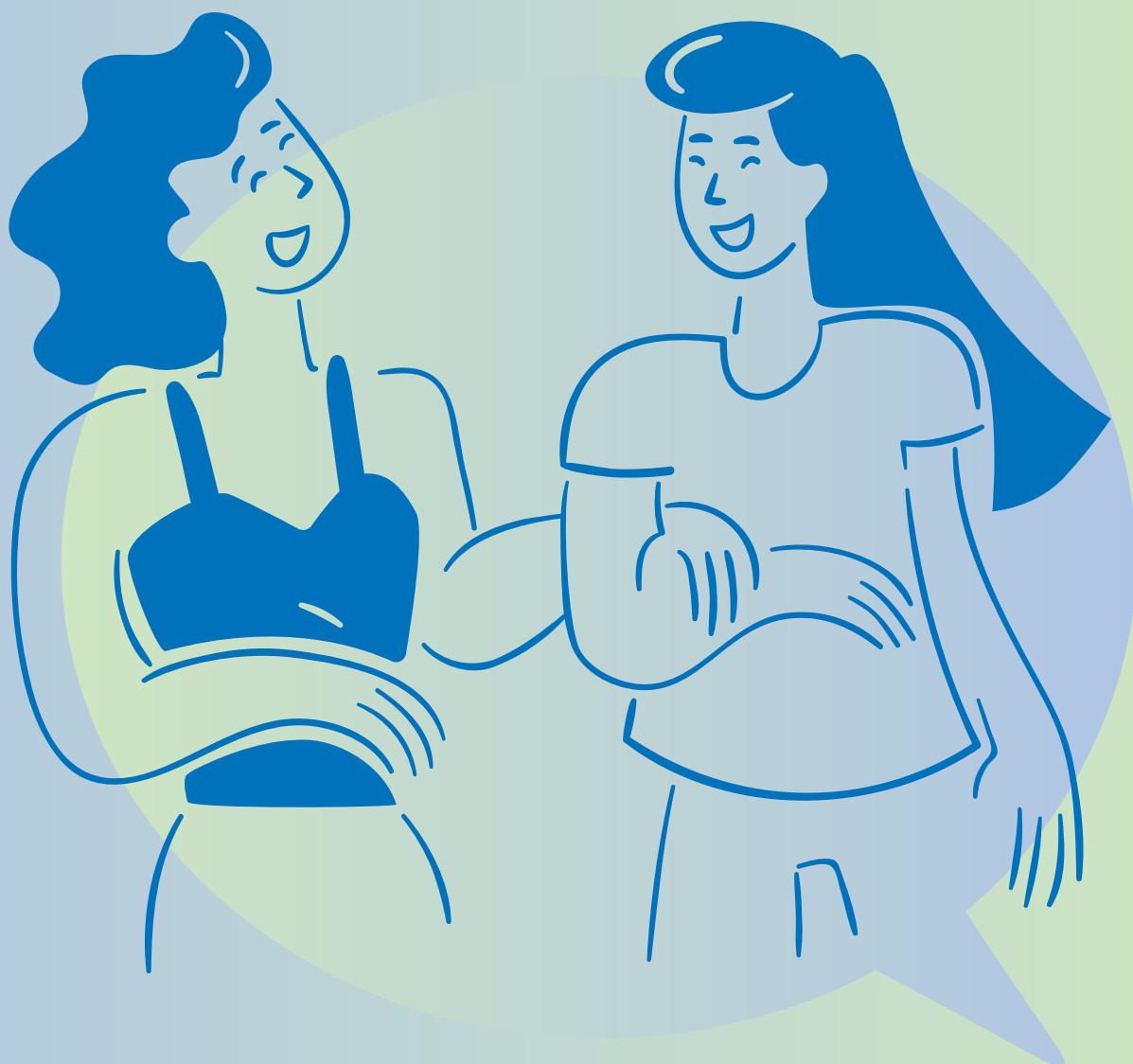
Co-creation is our word for working together towards shared goals. It applies to any situation where our Trust works in partnership with patients, carers, families and partner organisations.

“Working together and valuing each other’s views whilst aiming for a shared goal.”

Quote from a member of staff

“It’s cathartic and feels important to be able to change things and give my lived experience.”

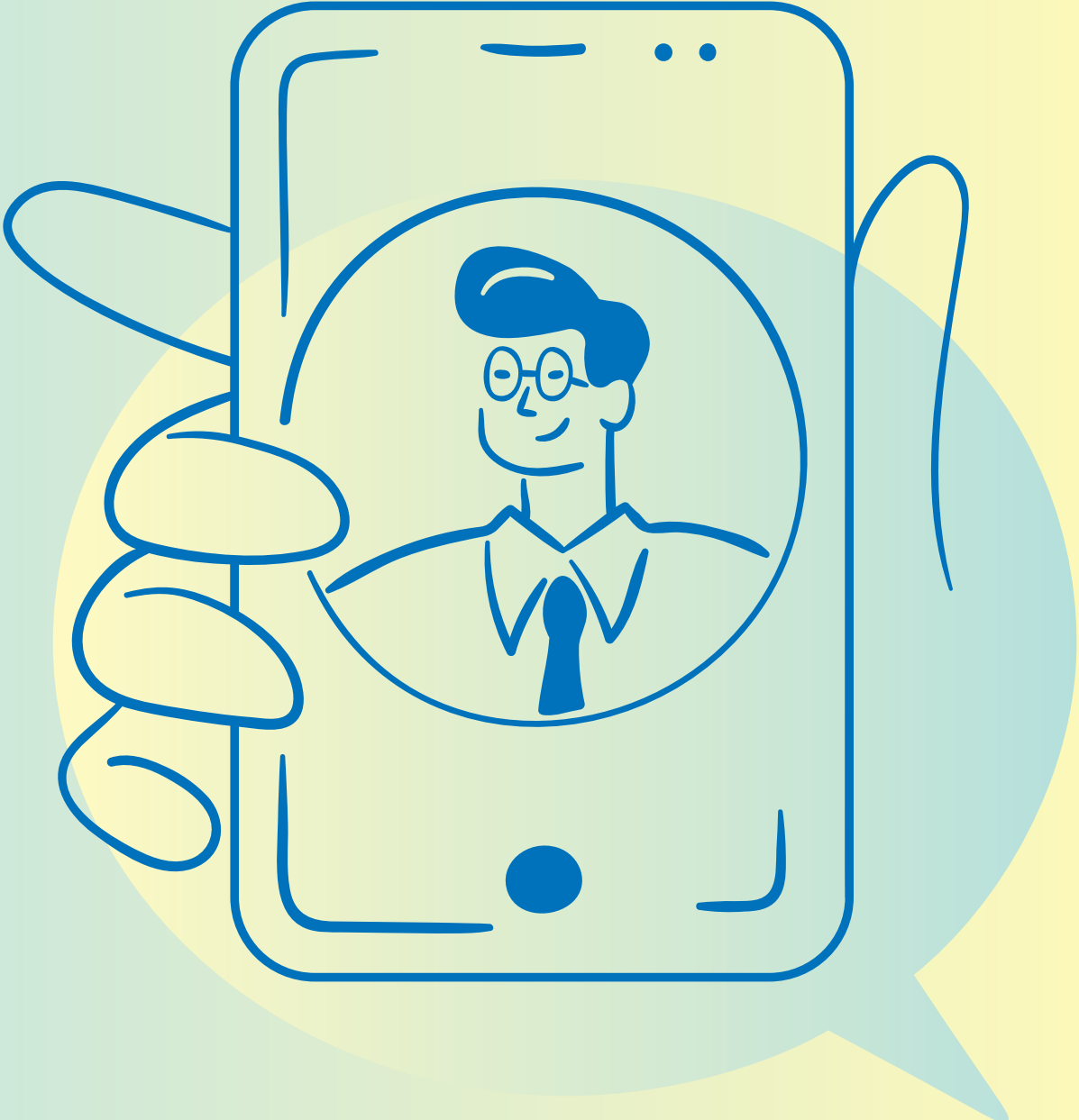
Quote from an involvement member



Developing the framework

We co-produced this framework with our patients, carers, staff and partner organisations. The framework took time, energy and effort over several years to co-create. We know it isn't perfect – and we recognise that there is no such thing as a perfect document. It has been the work of many people coming together to explore what co-creation means to us and the values it represents.

Our values



A firm foundation

Co-creation is all about **bringing people with different experiences together**, to work towards **shared goals**.

We will not always agree with one another. We will have **different opinions**. There might be times when this is **uncomfortable**, and **that is okay**.

However, sometimes issues or concerns are raised that go beyond a difference of opinion. In these circumstances, we need to **escalate our concerns appropriately and sensitively**. We believe having a **compassionate** approach includes having boundaries about what behaviours are okay.

“As the ethos of co-creation becomes embedded within TEWV, so the support to involvement members grows and develops.”

Quote from an involvement member



We are compassionate

Kind

We actively support one another and treat each other with kindness. Always.

This includes being kind to ourselves by respecting and asserting our boundaries, asking for help if we are struggling with a piece of work, and saying 'no' to opportunities that may distress us.

Understanding

We recognise that people have different experiences and many people doing this work have experienced pain and suffering.

We try to be understanding of one another.

Diversity

We value and embrace diversity. Diversity, in all forms, is a strength.

Co-creation is all about bringing different perspectives, strengths, opinions, and experiences together. True co-creation cannot take place without diversity.

Power

We recognise that, sometimes, there is a power imbalance between group members.

When working on co-creation projects, everyone is equally valuable.

As far as is reasonably possible, contributions will hold equal weight.

Supportive

We support one another to achieve our shared goals – we all have different strengths and challenges.

We understand that anyone can be well or unwell at different times. When someone is unwell, we will compassionately work to support their ongoing involvement.

Shared goal

We understand that we are all doing our best and working towards a shared goal.

Our best can vary according to our current circumstances.

We will be patient with one another.

“How much you understand and value the importance of feedback and your desire to improve the service is admirable and I think will be very beneficial to the service and people like me.”

Quote from an involvement member



We are responsible

Honesty

We use open and honest communication when there are issues or problems.

Sometimes, this means that we are challenged by a situation or comment. This is okay! We are all learning and we won't get it right every time.

Wellbeing

We try our best to take responsibility for actively managing our own wellbeing.

If we are concerned about someone else's wellbeing, we will raise this confidentially and kindly.

Authenticity

Everyone should feel able to be their full, genuine, authentic self. We value diversity.

If people do not feel able to be themselves, then it can affect our ability to reach our shared goals.

Learning culture

We are all learning.

We will all make mistakes.

We are all allowed to change our opinions when we learn new information.

When someone makes a mistake, we will raise it in a way that is sensitive to their feelings.

Ground rules

All groups and meetings are encouraged to agree and/or co-create ground rules at the beginning.

In some circumstances, there may be a need for additional rules to be included.

Framework responsibility

The framework applies to every piece of work we do, and every group or meeting we participate in.

We take shared responsibility for following the framework.

The framework applies to everyone, no matter what their role is.

Policy in practice

We respect the time, effort, and energy it can take people to work through their email inbox. When people apply for, or enquire about, any involvement activities, we will always let them know if there is a spot available for them.



We are respectful

Communication

We communicate respectfully and thoughtfully, considering others' feelings.

We respect the contributions of others and expect them to respect ours.

We understand that communication comes in many forms and isn't restricted to spoken words.

Individual differences

We respect and accept individual differences.

This includes embracing and accommodating all communication styles and methods.

Inclusive

We aim to enable one another to contribute as much or little as they would like to.

We actively ask whether anyone needs any reasonable adjustments to take part in an activity. We aim to facilitate reasonable adjustments, and ensure they are organised in good time.

Transparency

We are transparent, honest, and trust people with the truth.

We are clear about any limitations. These may be personal, financial, or organisational.

If we make a mistake, that's okay! It's all part of learning together.

Confidentiality

We respect people's privacy by ensuring personal things that are shared are kept confidential. This includes keeping people's participation confidential.

We will not pressure anyone to disclose information that they are uncomfortable sharing.

Respecting others' time

If we are unable to complete some agreed work by an agreed deadline, or we are unable to attend an agreed group or meeting, we will communicate this with our team as soon as we reasonably can.

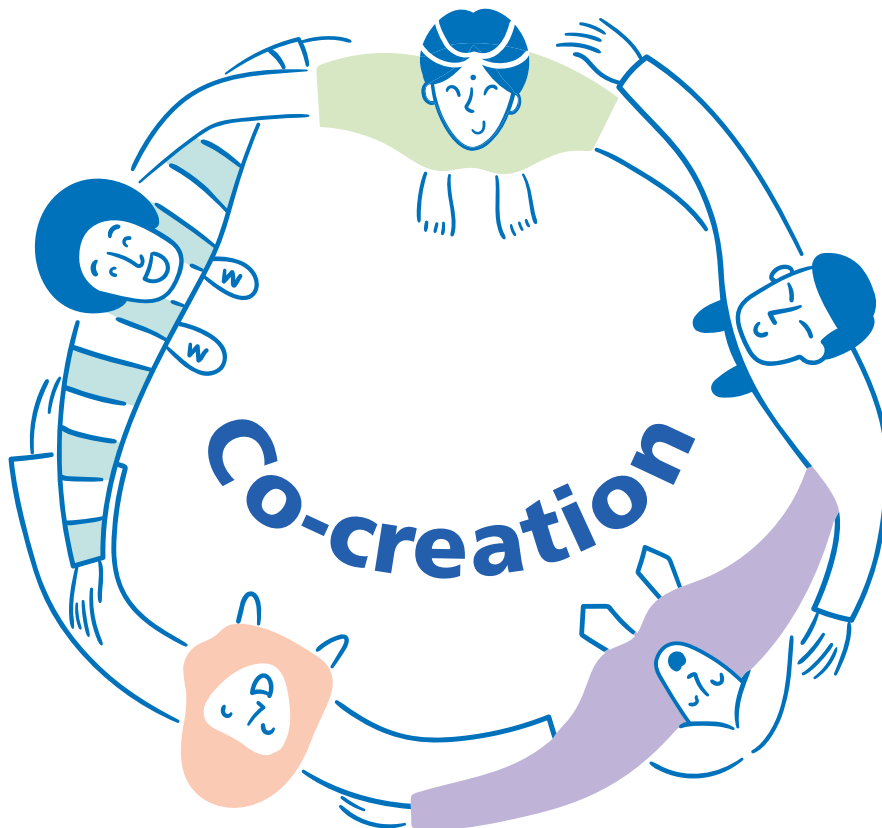
Our shared understanding of co-creation



Our ambition

Our ambition is for the voices of patients and carers to be sought out, listened to and acted upon at every level across the Trust.

We are using the term co-creation to describe this ambition.



"I love being part of the co-creation group. It gives me a sense of helping people open up and show their true talents and abilities. I love seeing our young people thrive and feel like they are cared for by our services. I would really recommend that staff get involved, whether it be admin or clinical – it really makes you feel good."

Quote from a clinical team secretary



What does it mean to us?

Integral

Involvement members are involved in all appropriate service development from idea development to evaluation.

Lived experience expertise is respected. We welcome the different perspectives on embedded practices and culture.

Considered

All project leads assign a co-creation 'level' to each project plan.

The assigned level is justifiable. Anyone can challenge it if they disagree.

Inclusion

Everyone has access to the information they need to allow them to contribute equally.

People communicate in a variety of ways. Communication style does not affect contribution value.

We pay attention to the voices missing from our conversations. It is vital that we work to make sure that our involvement work represents our population.

Power

Existing power imbalances are considered and mitigated against where possible. For example, the ratio of staff to involvement members is always considered.

Exceptions

Co-creation may not be possible when:

- there is a legal reason that it isn't appropriate.
- the project leader and involvement team jointly conclude that it would not be appropriate for a specific step of a project.

Value

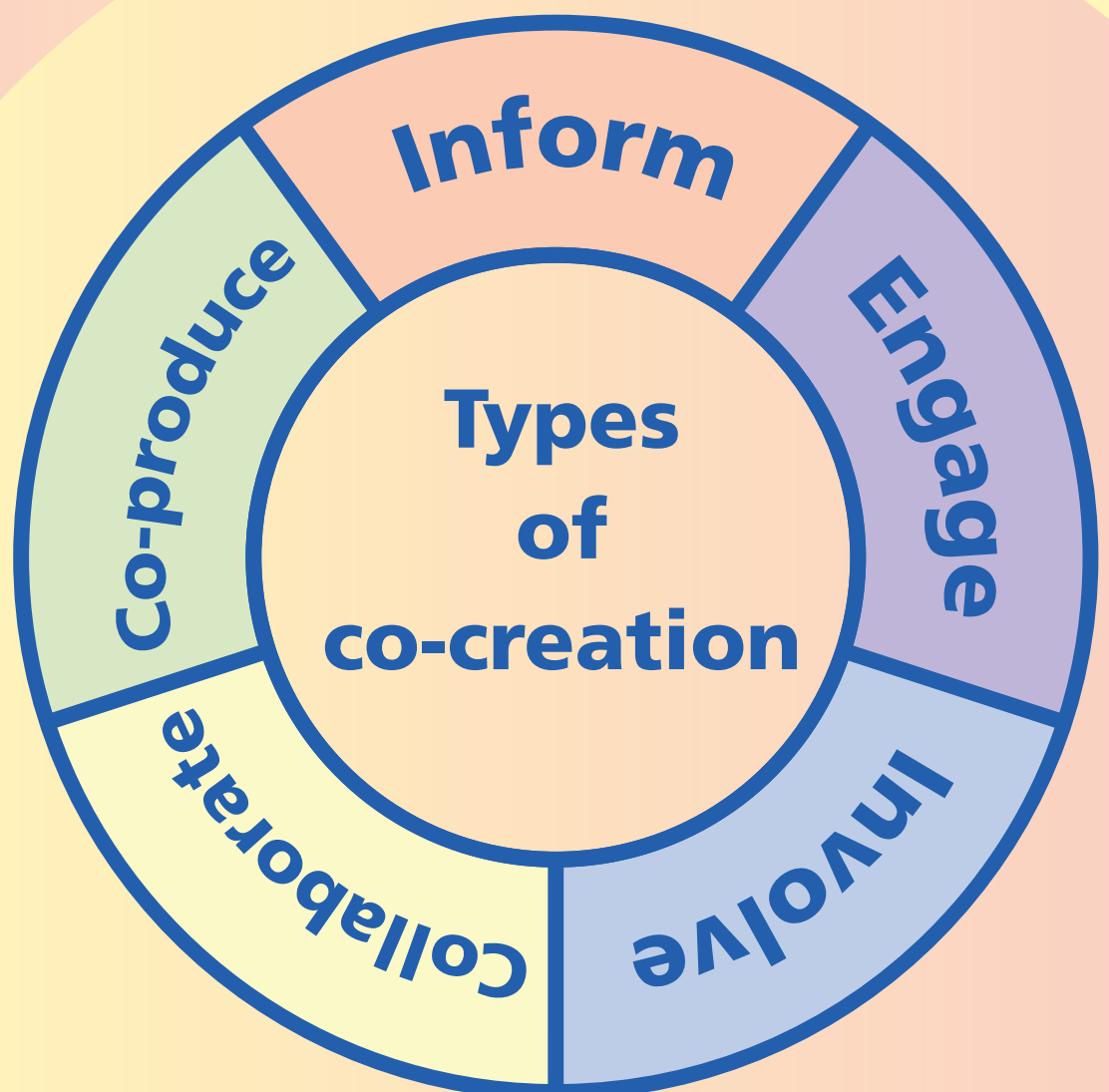
Lived experience expertise and professional expertise are equally valued.

Lived experience expertise brings perspectives and skill sets that help to ensure successful, inclusive outcomes.

Everyone is respected. Their time and effort are genuinely valued.

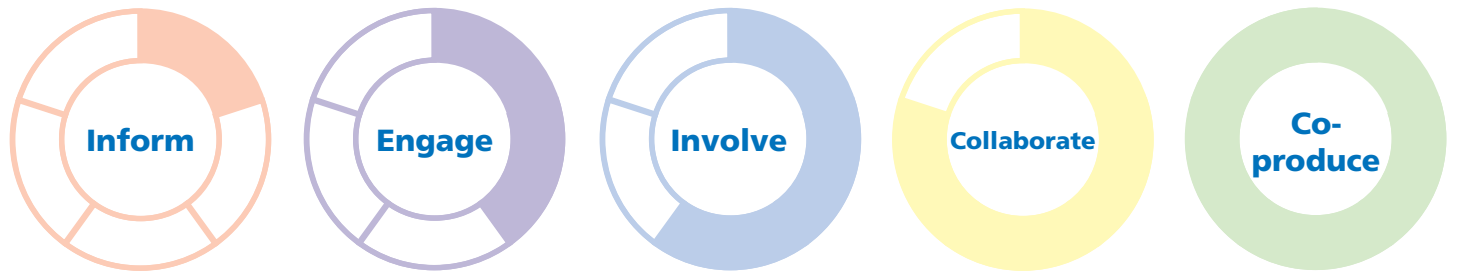
“I have found co-creation really important in improving my mental health, as it allows me to see what people are doing to help, and that people actually care, so I don’t feel as alone. It is also important for helping other people who are going through similar things. It gives us a chance to say what a lot of young people are thinking. The more of us who do, there is a higher chance of change.”

Quote from a young involvement member



Types of co-creation

There are different ways to work together within co-creation. It isn't possible, or appropriate, to co-produce everything. Identifying and assigning the type of co-creation for every opportunity enables us to be transparent and fair.



Inform

TEWV tells service users and carers about a piece of work.

Engage

Patients and carers are informed about a piece of work and asked for opinion.

Involve

Patients and carers actively influence opinions and outcomes.

Collaborate

Equal two-way partnership between service users and carers, and TEWV. Shared decision-making and actions. Focused on one part of the project.

Co-produce

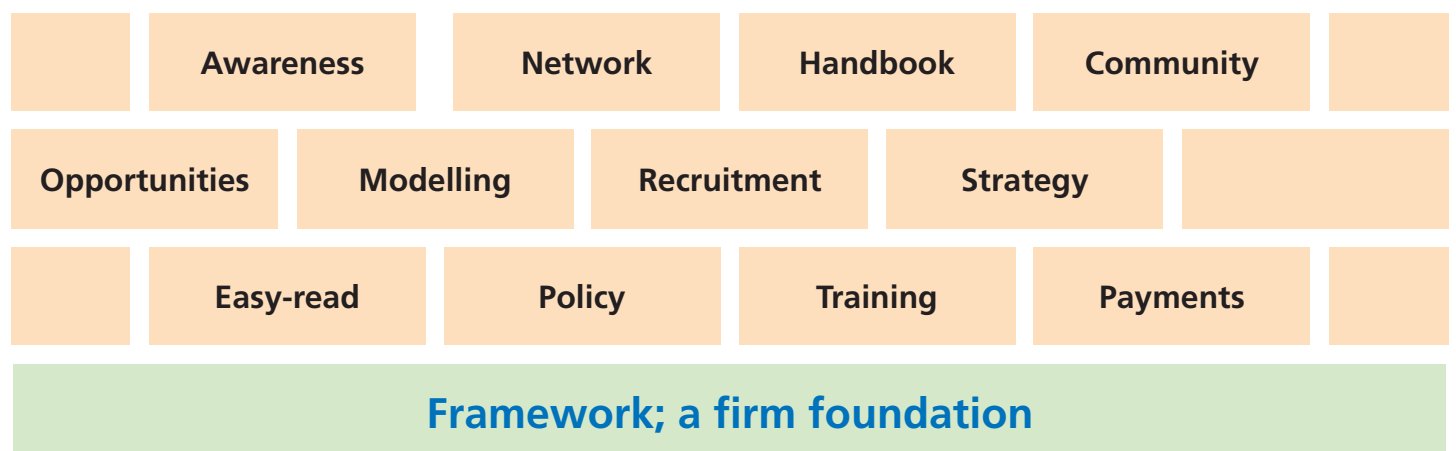
Equal two-way partnership between service users and carers, and TEWV. Shared decision-making and actions across the whole project; problem, design, delivery, and evaluation.

What next?

We recognise a framework is only a document. It is people who bring these values, and co-creation, to life. We expect everyone involved in co-creation to model these values.

A firm foundation

Now that we have a shared understanding of what co-creation is, and the values that guide our work, we can build on them.





Acknowledgements

A lot of people contributed to this piece of work. Many hours have been spent in meetings, webinars and discussions. From initial conversations to word-by-word edits, we have truly co-created.

We'd like to acknowledge the passion, energy, thought, time, effort, and emotional energy poured into this piece of work. Thank you.

Governance and continuous improvement of the framework:

We recognise that living documents need regular reviewing. We recommend that our joint co-creation boards and wider co-creation community review the framework on a three-year basis to ensure the values and definitions still hold true.



Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust