

'You said, we listened'

February 2024

Welcome to our latest quarterly newsletter!

Firstly, a huge thank you for being part of Samaritans Lived Experience Panel. Your contributions are really appreciated, and we hope that you find it an interesting and rewarding experience.

The aim of the panel is to create the space for people with personal experience of suicide, self-harm, or Samaritans' service-use to influence the work that we do.

In this newsletter, we share some key findings from recent panel surveys, so you can see how your contribution has shaped Samaritans' work.

Key facts about the panel

- There are **596** panel members.
- In the last quarter, we have **shared 7 surveys with panel.**

Consumer Protections Survey

In September we sent a survey asking for your views and insights about the current levels of protections within the UK.

We know that one of the most effective ways to prevent suicide is to reduce access to the means of suicide. 86 people responded to our call, and the insights from the panel were important to help identify weaknesses in regulations and the real impact these can have.

One of the key findings highlighted that many of you felt that it was too easy for people to make online purchases which could be harmful. **65% of the responses received suggested that the existing consumer protections needed to be tightened.**

We will be working on recommendations and how to reform the existing regulations.

Winter Appeal Campaign

We want to ensure that any fundraising campaigns we do are appropriately worded and sensitive as we recognise that many of our supporters have lived experience.

In September we sent a survey asking you to share your thoughts about our Winter Appeal. You shared with us how **important it is to include statistics in our appeals to highlight the urgency and need for support.**

The responses from the survey highlighted that the appeal made people feel **emotional, engaged, and motivated**, and that the copy was **not upsetting**. Some of the responses highlighted that the length of the text was too long, so **we listened** and reduced the length so it was more digestible.

We are thrilled to say that **Winter Appeal helped us raise over £100,000 for Samaritans.**

Louise, from **Samaritans Fundraising Team** would like to thank you for your contributions and support with this piece of work.

'Thank you so much for taking part in this survey. Your feedback was hugely beneficial and we have learnt a lot from the results. Your comments and feedback were taken on board and because of you we feel we had a much clearer, stronger and more impactful Winter Appeal.'

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Best practice for co-designing research surveys:

At Samaritans we have been **increasingly working with people with lived experience** when we design and deliver research, including surveys. **Co-designing surveys** has a number of benefits – it helps the research surveys we conduct be more sensitive, it improves the experience of participants, and ensures the questions we ask are meaningful and relevant.

We asked for your help to better understand what **best practice** looks like when we **work alongside people with lived experience** when designing surveys about suicide and / or self-harm. The results highlighted that people with lived experience **wanted a variety of flexible ways that they could be involved**. People mentioned wanting to develop their research skills, participate in professional development, and to connect and collaborate with others as positives for being involved in co-designing surveys. However, being upset by discussion of sensitive topics, the time commitment and not having sufficient knowledge or skills were all cited as barriers or concerns to being involved in this type of work.

Your insights helped to provide a better understanding about **what people want and need when participating in this type of lived experience involvement activity**.

Panel members suggested ensuring that there is always someone to talk to, offering follow-up calls or debriefs, encouraging self-care, signposting to support, setting clear expectations, and being accessible would

support and encourage people with lived experience to be involved.

Ellie, from **Samaritans Research and Evaluation Team** said

'Thank you to all the panel members that took the time to share their views. The valuable insights you provided will feed directly into recommendations for best practice at Samaritans when co-designing surveys. This work is so important to help us provide a positive and meaningful experience to those working with us on co-design activities.'



Lived Experience Opportunities

Please have a look at our opportunities to be involved in our work on the **[Lived Experience at Samaritans](#)** web page.

If you know anyone who might be interested in joining Samaritans Lived Experience Panel, please do share **www.samaritanspanels.com** which contains all of the relevant information to register and join the panel.

Huge thank you once again, please do contact us if you have any feedback or questions. We would love to hear from you!

Email us at **research@samaritans.org**

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