

## Making User Involvement Work

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## The Presentation

- About me and CDP
- What involvement is and is not
- Characteristics of an involvement process
- Key features of involvement

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## The Presentation cont.

- The benefits of involvement
- Personal observations and experiences
- Closing thoughts

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## Who I Am

- Disability Consultant devising and delivering solutions to disability related problems for organisations
- Specialising in the design, crafting and delivering of training courses
- A portfolio of courses available ([www.cdp.org.uk](http://www.cdp.org.uk))

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## Who is the Council of Disabled People?

- CDP has been in existence for about 18 years
- Its aim is to promote the full inclusion of disabled people in all aspects of society within Warwickshire and Coventry
- Controlled and run by a majority of disabled people

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## A Number of Services Provided

- Support
- Information
- Advice
- Advocacy
- Mentoring
- Training & Development

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## Information, Support & Advocacy

- Delivered by the Social Justice Team
- One-off solutions to in depth on-going support

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## Mentoring

Mentoring is delivered by our RAMP project (Raising Awareness through Mentoring and Personal Support)

- Its aim is to recruit, train and match volunteer mentors with disabled people.

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## Training & Development

- Portfolio of training courses
- Research
- “Walk and Talk” Access Audit

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### What is Involvement?

- Involvement is the process of active engagement on a long term basis
- Consultation commenting on options or a course of action or scheme
- Proper involvement is about a genuine commitment to the process it requires

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### What is Involvement? cont.

It involves:

- Adequate planning and preparation
- An approach based on Disability Equality Principles

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### National Audit Office

*Local stakeholder groups often are charitable and voluntary organisations will require Government Bodies to make an ongoing commitment to build capacity*

- In my experience they tend to dip in and out of the process to meet their requirements
- Particularly the case now with the legal requirement to involve disabled people in the Disability Equality Duty

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### User Protocols

- Help avoid misunderstandings
- Show genuine intent and commitment to the process
- Demonstrate respect grounded on a professional relationship
- Show the process will/should have real effect

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### Characteristics of Involvement

- Needs to be planned, structured, resourced and significant
- But no exact template
- Will vary according to the size and type of organisation

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### Inherent Features

- Use accessible mechanisms
- Be proportionate
- Be influential
- Be transparent

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### The Benefits of Involvement to the Organisation

- Will be more inclusive and result in better services for everyone
- A demonstration of delivering on social and ethical need
- Delivering on legislative requirements

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### Benefits to Disabled People

- Providing expertise and experience
- Build confidence and self esteem as well as new skills
- Disabled people seen in a new light  
- 'Active contributors not passive recipients'

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### To Society Generally

- A better environment for everyone
- All sectors in society will be treated with respect and empathy

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## Final Thought

**“Nothing about us without us!”**

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