Internal Scoping Exercise on Participatory Research

May - July 2022

Report compiled by Kim Townsend, Public Engagement Consultant

1. Research questions and methodology

This internal scoping exercise has taken place over three months, between May and July 2022, and has aimed to gather insight into the current processes and structures at the University of Bath that support researchers to take a PPI and participatory approach to their work, as well as to investigate the needs barriers, and enablers for those using participatory methods.

The following research questions were explored as part of this exercise:

- RQ 1: Which staff (by faculty/school, job family, grade etc.) are undertaking PPI and PR?
- RQ 2: Why are staff choosing to do PPI and PR?
- RQ 3: What are the current enablers that are supporting PPI and PR at Bath? (Support staff, grants, training, mentoring, community/university networking)
- RQ 4: What external support for PPI and PR are staff accessing?
- RQ 5: What barriers are there to doing a PPI/ PR project?
- RQ 6: What have staff found challenging about PPI /PR?
- RQ 5: What types of community partners are staff currently working with? (local, national, charities, community groups, public sector)
- RQ 6: What types of projects are community groups doing with academics at Bath (subject areas, themes, knowledge and expertise)
- RQ 7: What do staff need to do more/better PPI and PR?

For funding reasons, participatory research and PPI will be considered separately over two reports. This report focuses on participatory research at the University of Bath, but has been informed by the entire process investigating both participatory research and PPI.

The following methods were used to answer these questions

Method	Details
An online survey of researchers using participatory methods at University of Bath	Survey was distributed via • Existing contacts of the PEU • The PEU e-newsletter • The PEU blog • The PEU Twitter account • Departmental email to the members of every department in the University • Email to Research Coordinators in every department • The staff homepage • The University of Bath staff Twitter account • Research Centres with a participatory ethos • Direct email to all academics who have declared themselves as using participatory methods on the University Research Portal (n = 30 in total, which includes researchers doing both participatory research, and PPI. The PPI respondents will be considered in a separate report, and so for the purposes of this report n = 17, which is the number of those who said they had done participatory research)

Semi-structured interviews	• N = 9 interviews in total across PPI and PR • N = 4 interviews with those doing participatory research across a range of departments and career levels
Requests for information over email	Every department was contacted via email to their research coordinators to ask for information about their processes and structures that support researchers using participatory methods (n= 3 responses). Given the low number of responses, and the short time-frame for this work, gaps in knowledge were filled using desk-based research and by asking questions in the semi-structured interviews.
Desk-based research	Desk based research was carried out to map existing processes and structures that support those taking a participatory approach to their work. A list of academics who have declared that they are using participatory methods on the University Research Portal has been created.

3. Definitions of participatory research

3.1 How 'participatory research' is defined for the purposes of this project

Participatory research is often used as an umbrella term and encompasses a number of different practices. For this scoping exercise, a broad definition of the term was agreed - an approach to research where researchers and people outside academia co-produce knowledge together.

Keeping the definition broad has enabled a wider view of the current landscape of participatory practice at the University of Bath, and has allowed for investigation into what meanings and definitions academics are choosing for their work.

However, using such a broad definition has at times caused confusion for those taking part in the scoping exercise. Some participants felt that they would have been able to take part more easily if a less broad definition had been given. Responses were received from researchers who didn't define their work as 'participatory research', rather they used another term, for example 'emancipatory research', but after some exploration it was clear that their work was highly relevant to this project. It was necessary throughout the project to give encouragement that all research using participatory, co-produced methods was of relevance to the project.

As mentioned in Section 2 of this report, for funding reasons PPI and participatory research are being considered separately in two different reports. As such, survey respondents were asked whether they were doing PPI or participatory research. This question threw up further discussion and some confusion in the survey answers about definitions of the two, ways in which they overlapped, and what the project team meant by the terms.

> *"I couldn't select both for option 4 but I tried to. PPI and participatory research are different terms for the same thing, perhaps PPI is viewed as more policy minded sometimes but to be honest it shouldn't be."*

"Participatory research. Patient and public involvement - I'm not really sure what the differences are for these two terms to be able to answer the question."

3.2 What the term 'participatory research' means to researchers at University of Bath

In order to explore what meaning academics at the University of Bath gave to the term 'participatory research' the following question was asked in the online survey: "We recognise that the term participatory research can mean different things to different people. Please tell us in your own words how you define participatory research".

Key words from each response have been used to create Figure 1.

Figure 1: A word cloud showing key words from the definitions of participatory research given by respondents to the survey

Many of the responses talked about co-production, co-design, and co-creation, involvement and collaboration. Some talked about power-sharing and working together. Most of the responses detailed

the stages of the project that participants would be involved in, and specified that they would be involved throughout the project, from the design to the dissemination.

Those who are involved in the research project were frequently described as 'participants'; the terms 'people' and 'public' were used too. Several responses talked about stakeholders or the community affected by the research. Marginalised communities, and vulnerable populations were also mentioned.

Giving a voice, listening, and sharing stories were terms used in some of the responses. Some were keen to state that the point of participatory research was to 'make a difference' or to 'empower' participants to 'make a difference' or 'take action' or 'drive change'. The term 'participatory action research' was mentioned by some, in the context of the importance of taking action.

4. Which staff are undertaking participatory research?

4.1 Survey responses by job title

There was a good spread of survey responses from across career levels and job titles. The majority were Senior Lecturers at 35%, but a variety of positions were represented.

Figure 2: Survey responses by job title
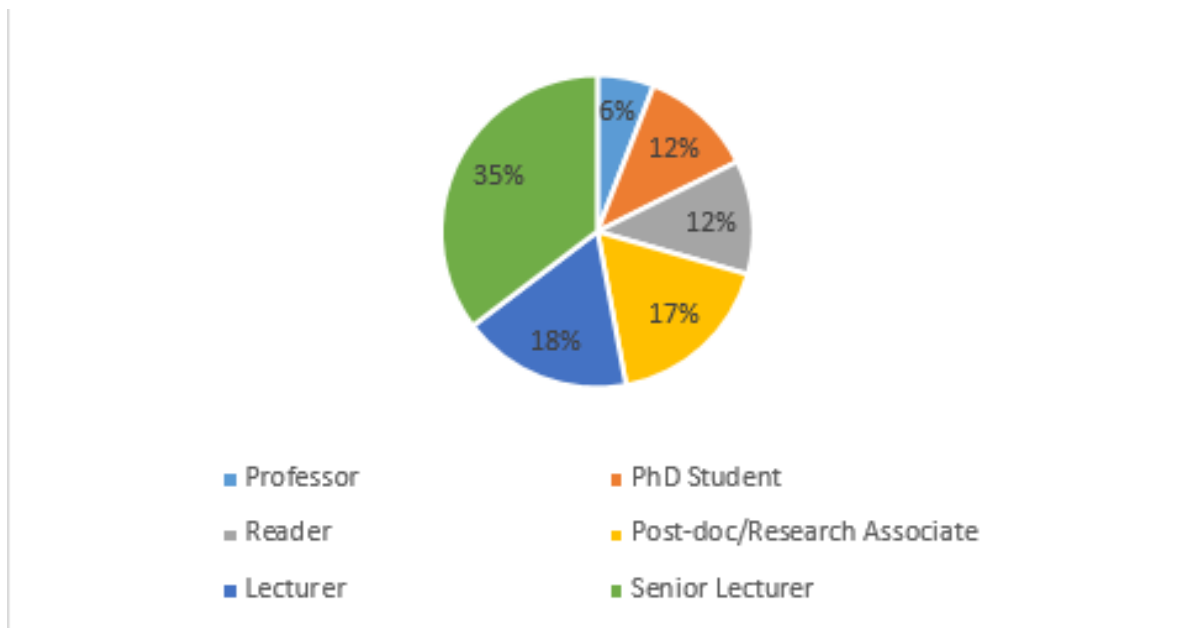
4.2 Survey responses by type of contract

70% of those who answered the survey are on a permanent contract, as opposed to a fixed term contract, or 'other' (for example PhD students)

4.3 Survey responses by department and faculty

The majority of responses were from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. The breakdown of responses per faculty was:

- Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences – 82%
- Faculty of Science – 12%
- Faculty of Engineering and Design – 6%
- School of Management – 0%

This heavy weighting towards the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences has been echoed in desk-based research, and in the mapping exercise which formed part of this project (see appendix). On the University Research Directory there are more people who say they are doing participatory research in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences than any other faculty.

Respondents were also asked which department they were from. Table 1 shows the breakdown of survey responses at department level.

**Table 1: Survey responses by department**

Department	Number of responses
Architecture and Civil Engineering	1
Education	2
Health	1
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	2
Psychology	4
Social and Policy Sciences	7

5. Why are staff choosing to do participatory research?

Survey respondents were asked to choose from a list, which motivations they had for doing participatory research. The data-set for this list was drawn from a survey report by a consortium of funders, led by Wellcome Trust, on factors affecting public engagement by UK Researchers. It was felt by the ParticipatoryResearch@Bath team, that the motivations may be similar for doing participatory research. Respondents to the survey were given the option to tick 'other' if they felt that they had a different motivation for doing participatory research, and to give details.

The top two motivations were 'Ensure that research is relevant to those it affects' (n= 17) and 'To improve the quality of my research' (n= 14).

Figure 3: Motivations for doing participatory research
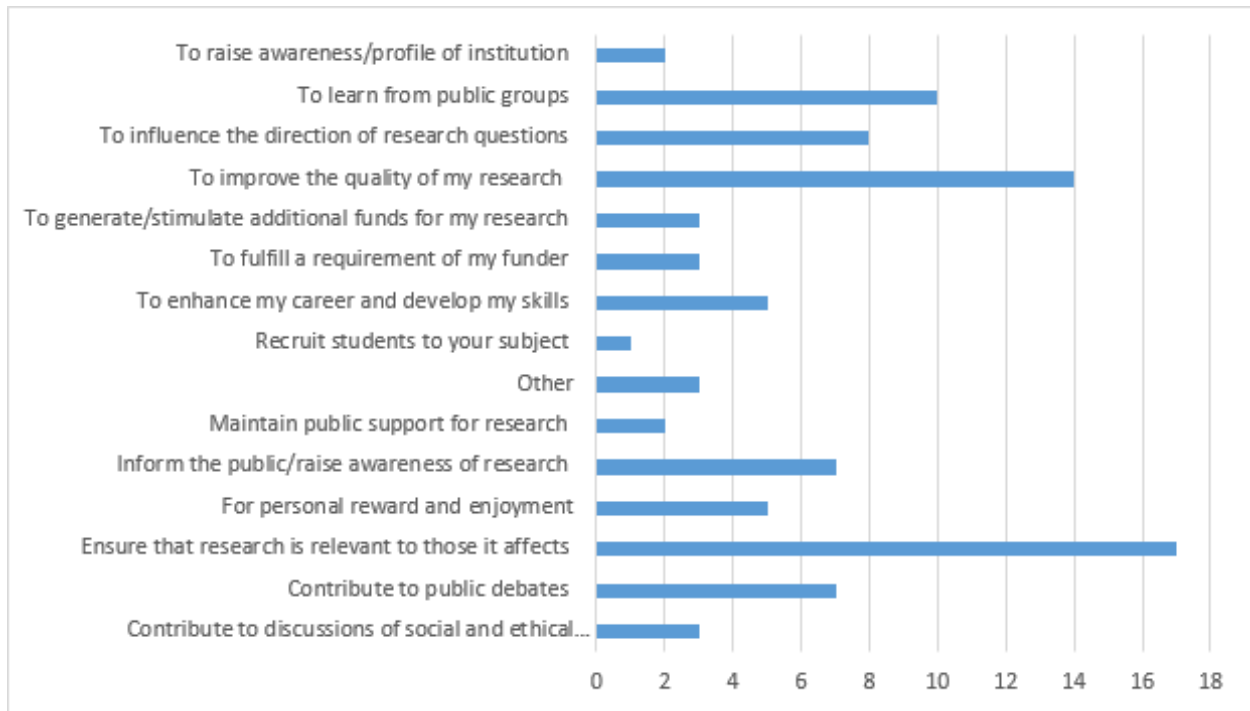
Other motivations that were given related to social justice and the researcher's passion for the work

> *"Because obesity in adolescence is a major problem but adolescents have little to no voice in the nature of either research or policy relating to it – we wished to address this major omission."*

> *"I'm on teaching focused contract so I'm doing this research as an extra, non-funded activity as it matters to me and provides an opportunity to get involved in charitable work."*

Another motivation given by one respondent related to the quality of the research and its adoption.

> *"To maximise the chances of the intervention being accepted and effective"*

6. What barriers and challenges are there to doing a participatory research project?

Survey respondents were asked to choose from a list, which barriers they had faced to doing participatory research. The data-set for this list was drawn from a survey report by a consortium of funders, led by Wellcome Trust, on factors affecting public engagement by UK Researchers. It was felt by the ParticipatoryResearch@Bath team, that the barriers may be similar for doing participatory research. Respondents to the survey were given the option to tick 'other' if they felt that they had experienced a different barrier to doing participatory research, and to give details.

The biggest barrier researchers face to doing participatory research is 'competing pressures on my time' (n=9), followed by 'lack of institutional support at University of Bath' (n=6).

Figure 4: Barriers to doing participatory research
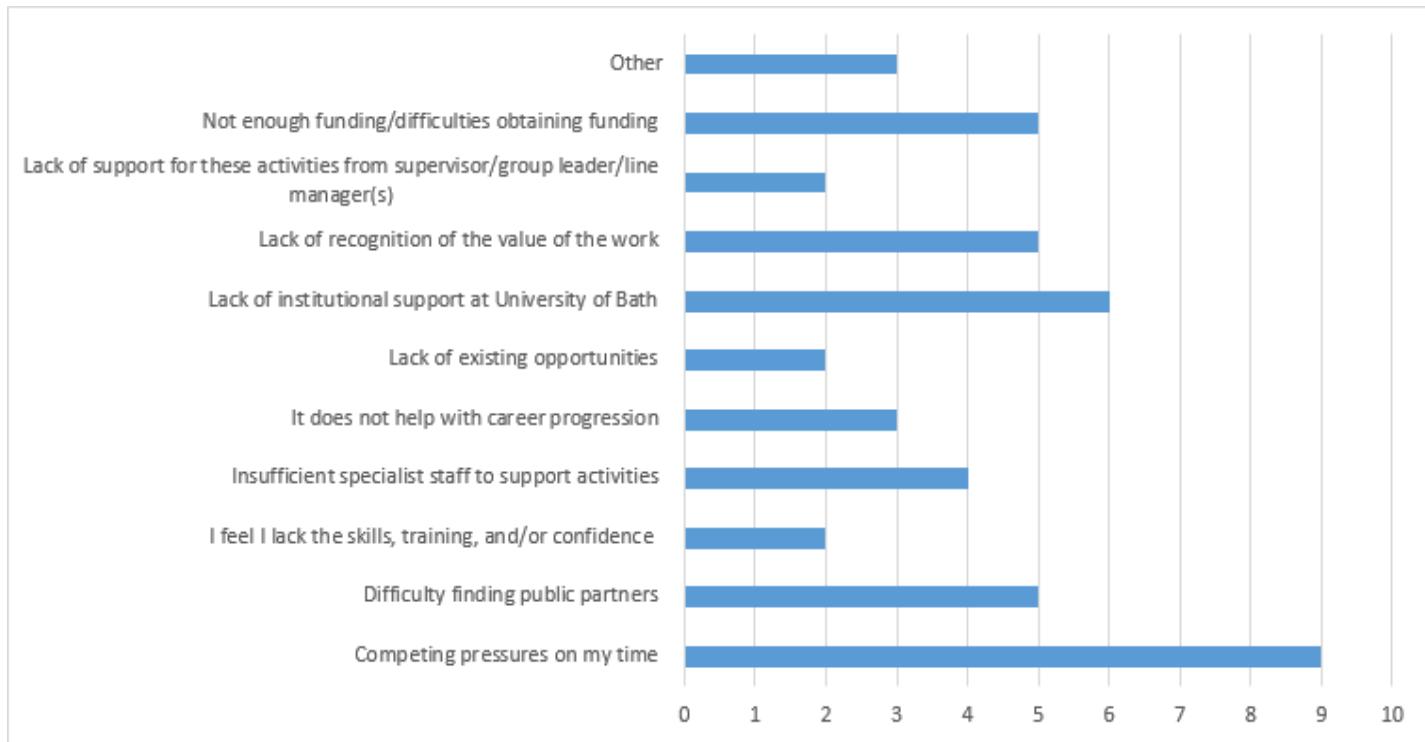
Those who selected 'other' talked about difficulties finding participants, working with participants, and paying them.

Barriers to doing participatory research were explored in more detail in semi-structured interviews with academics. The top three barriers from the survey will be discussed in the following sections, alongside common themes from the interviews.

6.1 Competing pressures on time

The time-consuming nature of involving participants from outside academia in research was the most commonly selected barrier in the online survey. This was described as being particularly difficult at the project design phase, when the work is largely unfunded (with notable exception of NIHR who do fund the project design phase).

> *"It took around 14months of grant writing and ethics protocol development."*

In a semi-structured interview, a senior member of staff talked through the challenges with regards to time pressures when involving participants in developing a bid proposal.

> *"For example, If I want to write an NIHR bid, and I see the deadline is coming up for, I don't know, the end of next month. They will expect there to have been a level of involvement in the bid design. It's relatively easy to pick up the phone to an established group and ask, 'can I meet with you as a group in two weeks time and talk to you about this'. But it's a degree of participation. I think as academics, we tend to perhaps overuse those existing groups then because it's easy. But it's so difficult to do otherwise. Particularly if you've not got any funding.*

NIHR will now give you a small amount of money to fund that work in the bid development, which is really useful, because I could then employ, maybe one of my PhD students or something, to set that work up. But for me to do it...

Ideally you'd want to do a really nice job of having a little core group, and meeting with them two or three times. But in that core group, if you wanted to include people who've got dementia [for example], it could be three or four months just setting that up properly. Let alone setting it up in order to write a bid that has to be in by July the 19th or whatever.

When we've done work with carers, to have somebody who is a full-time informal carer come to one of your projects, they generally have to pay somebody to go and sit with the person they care for. And so you're having to think all of that through as well. And I can see why a lot of academics think it's all too difficult.

It's just much quicker if I do it myself"

Another academic talked about how it takes longer to work with people who are not part of the same work environment. There are differences to navigate which can be time consuming, for example, some participants have different availabilities, ways of communicating, preferences of technology – for example not having an email address.

One researcher involved in co-design of innovations said that working in partnership necessarily takes more time because the project is constantly evolving based on the participation.

"Participatory research takes time. And that's because it involves many steps and one of the steps is building trust, building trust takes time.

Time is a big barrier. It is something that takes time because we cannot just do one participatory aspect and then go to the next step of the project. The participation informs the next step and the project has to evolve based on the participation.

I don't know personally how to do participatory research from the beginning without causing too many delays on the project itself. We need to somehow tweak things in order to respond to whatever comes out from the participatory research and then feedback."

This academic went on to say that a lack of understanding about the implications of participation means that researchers are often under pressure to take less time.

"A lot of it is just a tick boxing exercise, without understanding why we are doing it, or what the implications of it are. We do have pressure to get projects running and there is limited time and also limited money and all these things, they take time, then money so...

I hope that the university wants to actually go down this route because it believes in it and not just because it wants to tick another box saying that we are doing it."

6.2 Lack of institutional support at University of Bath

The second most commonly selected barrier in the online survey was 'Lack of institutional support at University of Bath'.

In a further survey question, respondents were asked to give a score out of 10 on how supportive both their department and the wider University were of participatory research (10 being very supportive, and 1 being not supportive), and then to give more details if they wished.

Figure 5: How supportive is your department
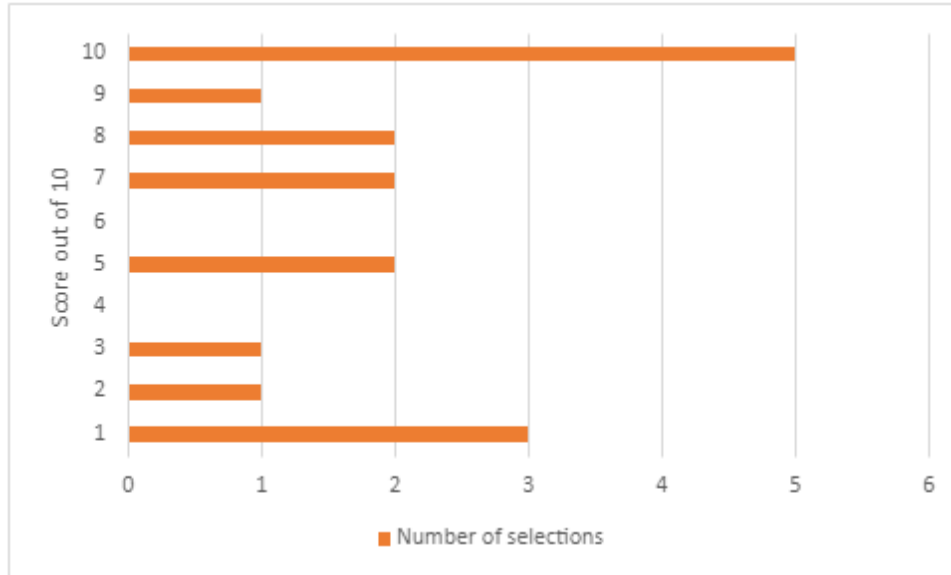
Most people felt that their department was supportive of participatory research. Some mentioned that their line manager had been supportive of their work, and several stated that participatory approaches were normal and expected in their subject.

A common theme was that researchers didn't have any expectation that their department would be supportive of participatory research over any other kind of research.

> *"It's not more or less supportive than of any other kind of social science research."*

> *"There is nothing specific in the way that my department or the University engages with my research relating to a participatory approach. I.e. I would expect the same level of support regardless of whether a project pursued a participatory approach or not."*

Several respondents said that there may not be any support, but there are not any particular barriers at a departmental level either.

> *"They don't stand in the way but they don't give any particular support."*

> *"There is no support although there are also no particular barriers."*

> *"There is not enough participatory research being conducted in my department. I did not feel there were any obstacles or lack of support. But also I felt on my own with no opportunities to learn/be inspired from."*

When asked to consider how supportive the University of Bath is of participatory research, 70% of respondents selected 6 out of 10 or lower.

Figure 6: How supportive is the University
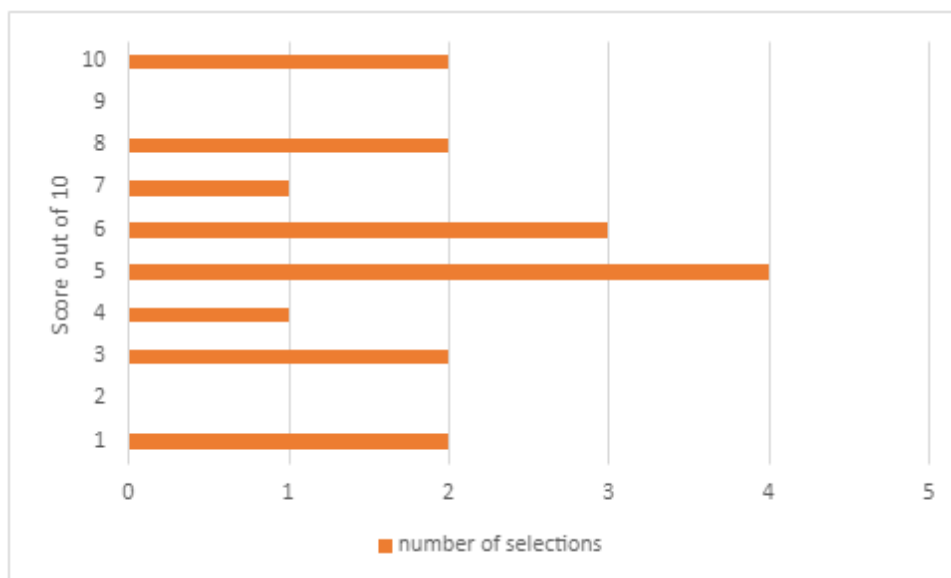
Comments about how supportive the University is of participatory research focused on the lack of administrative support, lack of visibility, and lack of training.

Some mentioned that the infrastructure and administrative support were better at other Universities.

"The infrastructure is poor compared to others and there are barriers to following NIHR Involve guidance such as paying money."

"Lack of support - other work I have done with Bristol they have a raft of people who have
helped *with this from plain English summary reading, to policy change plans."*

Others felt that the University doesn't value participatory approaches

"I do think that as a predominantly STEM university it is hard for some departments and academics to understand how impactful participatory and co-creative research can be. You almost have to battle to get your voices heard."

"I do not see much visibility or much talk of participatory research from the university leadership so it is hard to gauge how supportive the university is as a whole."

Several responses focused on the lack of training at the University

"I think the dept and Uni are supportive, i.e., like that you're doing it if you are, but I think staff need to be offered training and resources to know how to do it."

A PhD researcher said they felt the lack of support was very stressful

"It would have been lovely to actually have had somebody who's done this before to say, 'oh well, that happened to me', you know, 'this is the way in which I overcame It' or 'I managed to mitigate this through doing this'. I didn't have that, so I always felt like I was really treading water just almost drowning because I felt like, you know, I didn't have that support. Although my supervisors were there as much as they could be, they're very, very busy. It's just sometimes I can go without actually talking to them for over a month. I felt really, really stressed and

overwhelmed by it, and I didn't have any other outlet to be able to go to. And I think that maybe if they did put something in place, it would be very good for other PhD researchers."

6.2.1 Difficulty paying participants

Difficulty paying participants was a barrier mentioned in most of the semi-structured interviews. In responses to the online survey this problem was frequently linked to how supportive academics found the University to be of their work.

An analysis of the responses reveals several problems:

- In order for participants to be paid monetarily for their time they have to register as a consultant with the University, which involves navigating paperwork and University systems. They then have to invoice for their payment, and do their own tax returns. This is not suitable for many participants
- There is the option to pay participants in vouchers, which some researchers felt was demeaning, or not suitable for the work they were doing.
- There are restrictions on how much participants who are in receipt of benefits can earn in both money and vouchers. Sometimes these participants are asking not to be paid.
- The inability to reimburse travel expenses with cash

These quotes from the survey answers and interviews illustrate this further.

> *"I still do not fully understand the processes nor can I explain them to my participants. We have lost individuals in the past because of the university finance processes."*

> *"People have to send an invoice. Can you imagine saying to somebody with dementia - Will you do this activity? And then could you send me an invoice or at least have you filled in the contract? Nightmare!"*

> *"It was very challenging arranging payments. Lots of people were concerned about payments impacting on benefits (most group members received benefits). This meant some people opted not to receive payments. Other people preferred voucher payments, whilst others preferred BACS transfers, but this was often complicated with the University systems."*

> *"I am not allowed to have 'petty cash' to pay people back their bus and train fares as the University won't accept this approach - I cannot claim even if I take a picture of the tickets. This means I have paid for participants travel out of my own pocket."*

6.2.2 Difficulties with ethics approval processes

Another difficulty that those involved in this scoping exercise linked to a lack of support from the University, was with ethics approval processes.

> *"It was hugely challenging to get ethical approval. Which wasn't a bad thing as this is an ethically complex project and we learned a lot through thinking through the many challenges we will face. As ever, there is also plenty of paperwork too."*

> *"There's been this massive shift in thinking about service user involvement in research over my career. And it's much more accepted if not required now, and yet you know, I live in fear of putting something through the Ethics Committee, that might not be familiar territory to them."*

"Ethical procedures for research make participatory research difficult. In order to involve community partners in defining research needs and problems we need to be able to engage with them prior to achieving ethical approval (e.g. when research problems, questions and methods are already defined). This is also a problem at the doctoral level, which translates to not training doctoral researchers in participatory research because they are not permitted to recruit or engage with community partners until they have ethical approval. As such, we are not carving out space for future participatory researchers because it tends to be something that researchers only have freedom to engage in when they are working in a research capacity as post-doc level or higher."

6.3 Difficulty finding public partners/participants

Experiences finding public partners tended to vary depending on the research subject and who the stakeholders were. For those who had existing research partnerships with, or who were funded by, 'gatekeeper' organisations (for example charities), finding partners or participants was easy.

"In the case of my project access to participants (refugees residing in refugee camps) was provided by 'gatekeepers' i.e NGOs managing refugee camps. Establishing contact and collaborating with those NGOs was my & colleagues initiative."

"There is only one patient charity for OA in UK so, it was easy to find them. This charity is also well connected to the European and other international patient groups so, the work led to international work very easily."

But for others the process of finding partners was difficult, and these people selected 'difficulty finding public partners' as one of the main barriers in their work.

"The main problem I am having is that my target audience is schools, and they are incredibly busy and in addition it is a sensitive topic area (relationships and sex education)."

"I do research on children and adolescents with antisocial behaviour- I'd like to include them in the process of research, but no idea of how to recruit them and their parents. Given the stigma around antisocial behaviour, it's hard to know where to start."

6.3.1 Methods of finding public partners/participants

There are some existing public panels that are available to researchers at Bath from specific disciplines, for example the People with Lived Experience panel in the Department of Psychology, or the Participate Panel, which is available to researchers using the NIHR Research Design Service. These panels are more commonly used for PPI work, and there are many researchers whose work falls outside the remit of these panels.

Survey respondents were asked how they found their public partners. The responses in Table 2 show that most researchers are approaching external organisations as a cold contact, without any support in connecting with them from within the University.

**Table 2: How did you find your public partner/participants?**

Method	Number of selections

I approached them as a cold contact(s)	7
They were an existing contact(s) of mine/my department	6
We were introduced to each other by an external organisation	2
We were introduced to each other by public engagement/involvement specialists at University of Bath	0

7. How well equipped do University of Bath academics feel to do participatory research?

Researchers who responded to the survey were asked to rate out of 10, how well equipped they felt they were to do participatory research. All of the researchers felt positive about their skills. The results, charted in figure 7, show that 100% of participants scored 5 or higher.

Figure 7: How well equipped do academics feel to do participatory research, score out of 10.
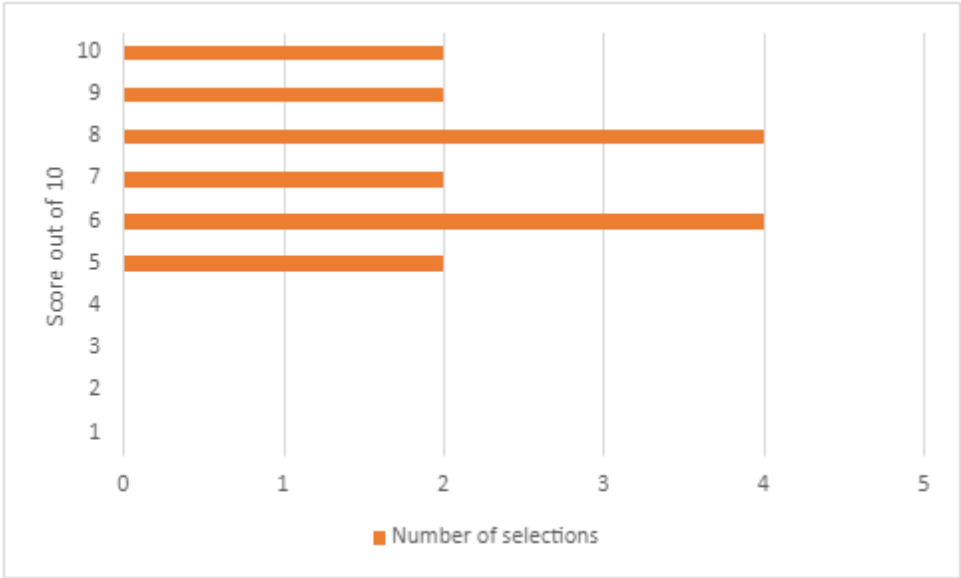
8. What are the current enablers that are supporting participatory research at Bath? (Support staff, grants, training, mentoring, community/university networking)

Despite academics feeling that they are well equipped to do participatory research (section 7), many have not received any support to do this kind of research, and the enablers that are supporting participatory methods at Bath are sparse.

In the online survey 52% of respondents said they hadn't accessed any support, and only 23% have had any training.

**Figure 8: Types of support researchers have accessed.**

Those who selected 'other' said they had received support with dissemination of outputs, were given time to do participatory research, and had worked with more experienced academics at other universities.

Researchers were asked a further question about the sources they got support from. The majority of survey respondents had received support from an external organisation, or informally through colleagues. Only 17% had received support from the University of Bath (from their department or from specialist support staff at the University) as shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Sources of support
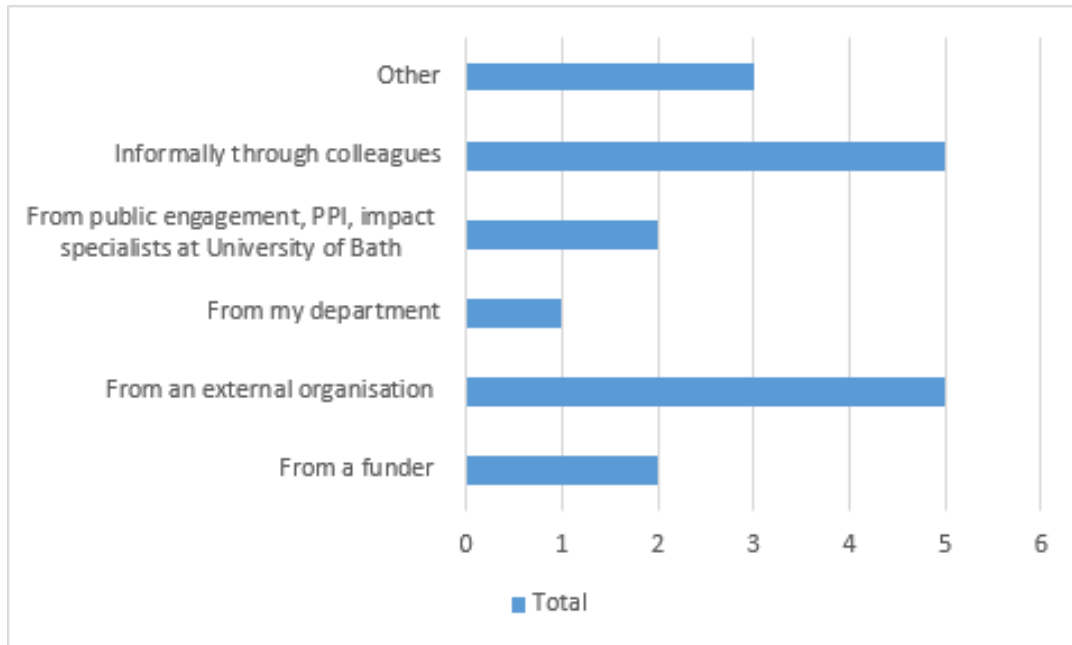
Another source of information and support that was frequently mentioned in the semi-structured interviews was academic literature on participatory methods. Several academics who were interviewed stated that they had informed themselves in advance of doing a participatory project by referring to literature on the subject.

However, most of the academics who took part in semi-structured interviews hadn't received any formal support to do participatory research.

> *"I've started this from the ground up and I've just, hate to say it, made it up as I went along. There are no courses, as far as I'm aware. Even in the MRes there aren't any courses or sessions on participatory research. And this is the worrying thing, because I think there are more students who want to do participatory type research. But there aren't dissertation supervisors or even thesis supervisors to do it. I've just delivered a workshop at another university on participatory research, and so there is stuff going on. We're not doing it at Bath but it is going on. We should be doing it and if we can't get it, we should buy it in."*

> *"We should be including modules on participatory research methods at masters and doctoral level. Students also want this."*

Emails were sent to every department at the University, and desk-based research was carried out, to determine what support was available to those doing participatory research.

8.1 Departmental support

In the psychology department DClin (Doctorate in Clinical Psychology) trainees receive some participatory research training, and they are also required to do a participatory research project as part of their course. There is a PPE (people with personal experience) Committee for DClin trainees – this committee advises on all aspects of the DClin (student interview panels, teaching, research projects etc).

Weekly emails are sent to the PPE Committee to offer opportunities for involvement. This committee is also sometimes used by research staff. DClin Trainees have to pitch their main research project to a member of the PPE Committee to ensure suitability of their research projects, get feedback on the methods, dissemination etc.

The psychology department also has access to a Research Community Panel and External Advisory Board which can be drawn on for participatory research.

No other support at a departmental level was found across the University.

8.2 Research Centres

Many University of Bath research groups/centres include participatory research, but it is not the focus of any one research centre. Some Research Centres offer seminars, and at times these are about participatory research, for example the Centre for Decolonising Knowledge (DECkNO) recently held a round table series on participatory methodologies.

8.3 Doctoral Training Partnerships

Some of the Doctoral Training Partnerships that the University of Bath is involved with provide good support with participatory research. The South West Doctoral Training Partnership in Economic and Social Science have a focus on collaboration, and offer a student-led collaboration fund, and an impact fund. The UKRI CDT in Accountable, Responsible, and Transparent AI provide access to research partners, training, seminars, workshops and placements. And the NERC Centre for Doctoral Training in Freshwater Biosciences and Sustainability (GW4 FRESH) offer access to stakeholders for collaborative research.

8.4 University-wide support

The Public Engagement Unit offer a Start-Up Fund, which provides up to £200 for relationship building and conversations with new people/partners, that might lead to public engagement activities in the future.

RIS (Research Innovation Services) support academics with research development. They advocate for public participation, consultancy, collaboration, or co-creation (where relevant) and signpost to organisations that can support with connecting to public partners/participants. For example they will signpost to the NIHR Research Development Service, or Health West of England, or charities with patient groups. They have funding available for skills development and have funded academics to go on participatory research or PPI training.

Lisa Austin supports academics who are applying to NIHR through the Research Design Service. She can give guidance on PPI and EDI (Equality, diversity and inclusion), she can access funding to pay participants who are involved in grant applications, and she has set up the Participate Panel - around 100 public participants who are patients, service users or carers with whom academics can be connected for the purposes of PPI.

8.5 Funding for participatory research at Bath

The majority of the academics spoken to as part of this scoping exercise are funding their participatory work through their research funding. Those working at PhD level stated that they had not received any

funding. Some researchers had received a grant from the Public Engagement Unit for their participatory work.

Table 3: How was your participatory research project funded

How funded	Sum of total
It was not funded	3
Specific grant funding for your participatory research or PPI project	3
Through research funding	11
Grand Total	**17**

8.5.1 Difficulties funding the project design phase

Many people talked about the difficulties involving participants in the project design and bid development phase, due to the lack of funding for this work. There are costs involved in using participatory methods at this stage of a project, such as venue hire, refreshments, travel costs, paying partners and participants, and paying university staff who are involved. Only one funder was mentioned who offers funds for the bid development phase; NIHR. Researchers who are applying to other funders are finding it hard to fund participation at this stage of the project. One department coordinator said:

> *"There are no funds specifically for participatory research – this has caused some problems/embarrassment for some people, having to rely on collaborators at other universities to pay PPE [people with personal experience]."*

The Public Engagement Unit's Start-Up Fund provides up to £200 for relationship building and conversations with new people/partners, that might lead to public engagement activities in the future. It wasn't clear if any of the respondents had accessed this particular grant, but two had accessed some funding from the Public Engagement Unit.

8.6 Strengths of the support offered by the University of Bath

Less than half of the survey respondents answered the question 'What were the strengths of the support you accessed at University of Bath?' (42%) and many of those who answered didn't mention strengths.

> *"People try as individuals but the system is wrong"*

> *"Very little support to have any strengths'"*

However several have mentioned the Public Engagement Unit and the Engage grant to be supportive.

> *"Most of the support I have received on participatory research to date is not at the university of Bath. However, the Engage grant is a huge help to support my work in this area."*

The DClin PPE Committee and the Widening Participation team were also mentioned as having been helpful.

9. Who are the public participants working with University of Bath academics? And what kinds of projects are they involved in?

The majority of survey respondents had partnered with a charity to do their participatory research. An unconstituted community group, or informal group of people with a shared experience, was the least likely to have been involved in a participatory research project at University of Bath.
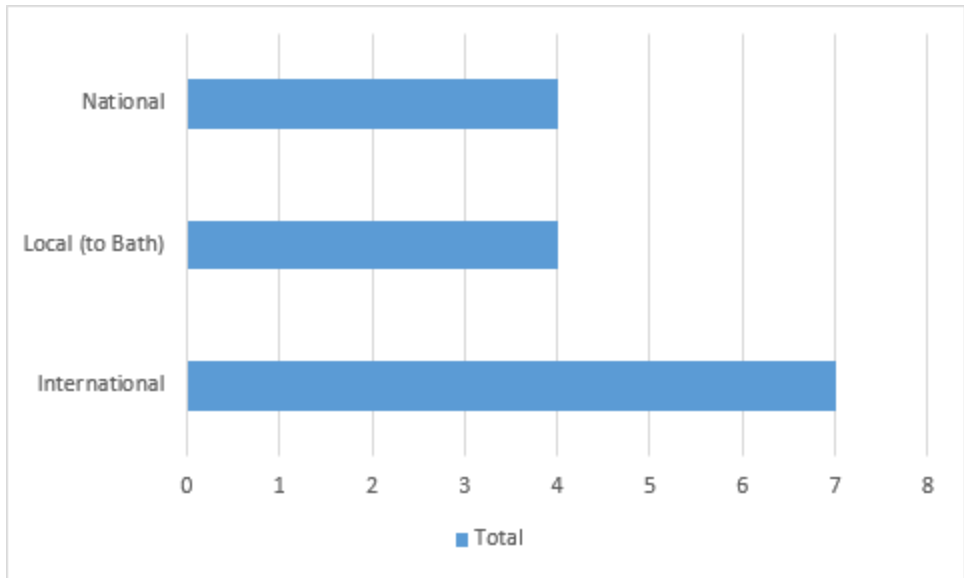
Figure 10: Types of organisation involved in participatory research
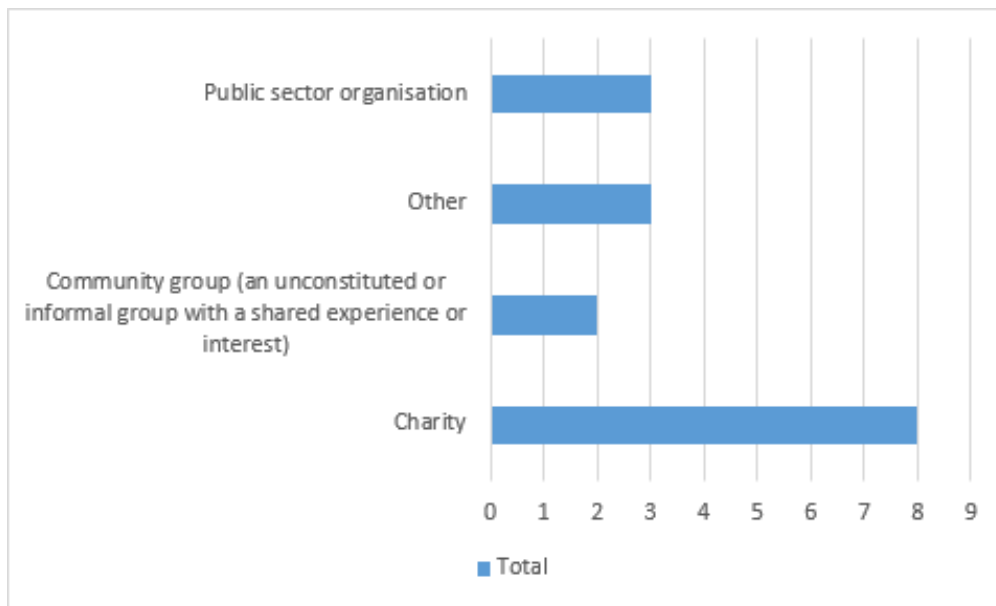
Those who selected 'other' stated that they had worked with multiple types of partners on their project.

Most of the researchers involved in the scoping exercise had worked with an organisation with an international remit.

Figure 11: Remit of partner organisations

The projects involving public partners/participants, most commonly focussed on health or medical research. Education, mental health, and community development were also common research topics.

Figure 12: Focus of participatory research projects
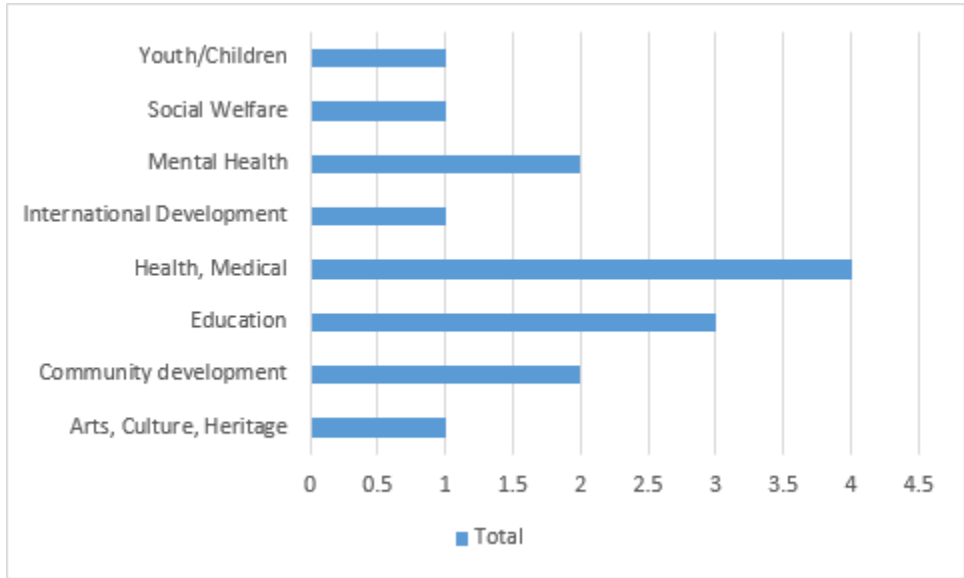
10. Recommendations for the University of Bath

In the online survey, respondents were asked 'What should the University of Bath do to encourage more staff and students to do participatory research or PPI?'. Responses can be summarised into three areas:

1. **Provide support for those using participatory methods**

   "Training at masters and doctoral level. Interdisciplinary research centre on participatory (and action) research. Funding support. A dedicated RIS person for participatory research."

"Lots and lots of sessions on the power and validity of participatory methods!"

"Provide more support"

"Provide training"

2. **Remove administrative barriers**

"Make the system work for us"

"Simplify paperwork."

"In particular the university should recognise that this type of research costs money, does not lead to research papers quickly and therefore 'translation to a paper' should not be a requirement."

3. **Highlight participatory research**

"Highlight work that has been successful; highlight where it brings grant success."

"Market it well as a research methodology that creates solutions for healthcare and education."

"I suspect this needs to come primarily from the funders pushing hard for a move away from PPI as lipservice, and instead requiring genuine collaborative engagement with those affected by research. This should include policymakers as well as the public. I therefore see the role of Bath as working both to promote a culture of collaborative research among its academics, and using its influence through various networks to promote a change of culture among funders."

The following sections will expand on these recommendations using material gathered in the wider scoping exercise – the semi-structured interviews, the mapping exercise, and the desk-based research.

10.1 Provide support for those using participatory methods

Consider providing training

Only 23% of those who completed the survey had had any training in participatory methods. Academics would like to see training in participatory research, particularly at masters and doctorate levels, but also for all stages of the academic career.

Consider providing funding for the project design phase.

65% of respondents had funded their participatory research through research funding. Many funders don't provide funding for the project design phase, despite this being an important stage for participants to be involved in when using co-produced methods. Those who have received funding at this stage (for example from NIHR, one of the only funders who provide money for this early work) have been able to do more meaningful early engagement, have been able to pay participants fairly, and have been able to involve others at University of Bath to alleviate time pressures. Could the University provide funds for this work?

Consider providing staff who can support participatory research

Through the NIHR Research Design Service some researchers are able to access the support of Lisa Austin, who can help them with planning PPI, connect them with public panels, help them write funding

applications, and help them recruit participants as research collaborators. Academics who have accessed this support have faced fewer barriers, and have been able to draw on best practice and expertise in this area. Many researchers, however, are not eligible for this support, and for them it is very difficult to navigate the various university systems, find participants, and access best practice.

Some researchers are accessing support through RIS (Research and Innovation Services), who advocate for participatory methods, and provide signposting to partner organisations and places where participants can be recruited.

Having more staff who can support all researchers with participatory methods would mean that more academics could be supported in these ways and more - signposting, connecting with participants, giving information advice and guidance, sharing best practice, help navigating university and funder systems, support with applying for funding and demonstrating impact etc.

Consider providing ways for staff to network

One of the biggest sources of support that researchers at Bath are accessing is informal support through colleagues. This could be formalised and grown to include more networking opportunities and the sharing of ideas and best practice.

10.2 Remove administrative barriers

Consider working with the finance team to simplify payments processes for those participating in research

One of the most commonly mentioned issues in this scoping exercise was difficulties navigating finance procedures so that participants can be paid. Having a system that works for a variety of collaborators (those who prefer money, those who prefer vouchers for benefits reasons) would make the research process easier, and would enable researchers to show participants that their contributions are valued.

Consider creating guidance with ethics committees on how to navigate ethics approval for participatory research

Another university system that academics have found difficult to navigate when using participatory methods is ethics approval. Consider working with ethics committees to provide guidance on ethics and participatory research.

10.3 Highlight participatory research

Consider ways in which academics can feel this work is valued by the University

Some researchers who took part in this scoping exercise have felt that this kind of research is not valued by the University, and that the lack of infrastructure, and support for this work is indicative of that. Addressing the points above in 10.1 and 10.2 would go a long way to alleviating this. But academics would also like participatory methods to be promoted and talked about more by the University. This could include highlighting success stories within the University, working with the comms team to publicise this work more both internally and externally, considering reward and recognition, joining in with national and international discussions and networks for participatory research, and bringing senior leaders onboard with creating a culture of collaborative research.