

## Before you begin

Public involvement works best when it is grounded in thoughtful reflection and planning.

Take time to think through what meaningful involvement looks like for your project. It helps being clear and realistic. Involvement doesn't have to cover everything, but it should always matter.

Use the table below to help you prepare before inviting people to join your project.

Reflection point	Why it matters	To consider
<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>Why are you involving people?</p>	<p>Clarifies intent and helps avoid tokenism.</p>	<p>What are you hoping to learn or achieve through the involvement?</p>
<p><b>Justice</b></p> <p>Who is being included or excluded?</p>	<p>Ensures fairness and relevance.</p>	<p>How can you create a 'space' that is inclusive and welcoming?</p>
<p><b>Influence</b></p> <p>What in your research can people help shape or change?</p>	<p>Links involvement to real decisions and impact.</p>	<p>Map your research timeline. At which stages can people make a difference?</p>
<p><b>Approach</b></p> <p>How will people be involved?</p>	<p>Supports clear expectations, appropriate roles and agency.</p>	<p>Is your approach flexible, respectful and proportionate?</p>
<p><b>Support</b></p> <p>What support will people with dementia and carers need for to be involved?</p>	<p>Enables contribution and protects wellbeing.</p>	<p>Have you planned for access and support?</p>
<p><b>Commitment</b></p> <p>What time and input are you asking for?</p>	<p>Respects people's time and builds trust.</p>	<p>Is the role clear, manageable, and fairly recognised?</p>