



SOCIAL PROPERTY INVESTMENT

PIONEERING STRATEGIES
FOR 21ST CENTURY
HOMELESSNESS
PREVENTION AND
RESPONSE

AN INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT

SUPPORTED BY THE WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL
TRUST AND THE NATIONAL HOUSING FEDERATION

BY AMY.F.VARLE

21st Century Homelessness: A State of Emergency Across Developed Nations

Today in 2017, over 100 million people worldwide are homeless.

They have no shelter. No security. No hope.

UK homelessness expenditure exceeds £1 billion each year.

The human costs, however, are much higher.

Homelessness is dangerous, destructive and damaging,
to *any* individual or household.

Ultimately, it can be fatal.

The average homeless person has a life
expectancy of just 47 or 43; for men and women respectively¹.

As a society, what can we do?

We can ignore it.

We can manage it.

Or,

WE CAN SOLVE IT.

FOREWORD

It has long been assumed that there can be no single, 'one-size-fits-all' solution to the complex and challenging issue of modern homelessness. Whether this belief is accurate or not, it would be difficult to concur that traditional approaches are successfully achieving their aim. As I conclude this study at the close of 2017, Britain is facing a homelessness crisis which could be considered as heading towards epidemic stature.

In the year 2000, at the age of sixteen, I lived for ten months in a temporary accommodation unit for displaced teenagers. I became homeless as the result of a temporary and not uncommon crisis: The breakdown of my family unit.

I should be considered one of the lucky ones. I was immediately placed within a self-contained, semi-supported living complex; a 'halfway-house' arrangement for young adults in similar positions to myself. I made friends and learnt how to maintain my home; saw counsellors and was encouraged to undertake life-skills training. Less than twelve months later, I held an independent tenancy and had obtained a fulfilling employment role; commencing my career in the field of supportive housing, I trained to assist individuals challenged by severe mental health issues to live more accomplished lives.

Over the years, I've often pondered what my fate may have been, had I not been received into such a gentle and nurturing environment at this testing time of my life. Today in 2017, it would be almost unheard of for a single homeless person to receive a similar standard of services and intensive, personalised care to that of myself in the year 2000. A person sleeping rough on the streets of my home city of Manchester today has startlingly limited options available to them if they want to start their life again. So, why is it that we are unable to respond homelessness appropriately in 21st Century Britain? Why is it that instances of homelessness are rising – and why is it that homelessness is being sustained?

Since 2013, I've worked independently to identify and explore economical solutions to the crisis of homelessness and housing instability for vulnerable groups, whilst concurrently campaigning against costly, inhumane, or ineffective techniques. In May 2016, I was delighted to be awarded a Travelling Fellowship from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust in partnership with the National Housing Federation. This afforded me the life-changing opportunity to connect with - and learn from - industry pioneers and leaders across the globe; allowing me to enhance my strategic designs to address homelessness with international influence and flare.

Reflecting my personal overview of the investigations I have undertaken, both as a practitioner in the United Kingdom, and as a researcher in the United States of America, this paper has been compiled to highlight obstacles, challenges, failures and successes, with the aim of educating, empowering and aligning homelessness responders, encouraging innovative service design and the free-exploration of

excellent, proven, or global best-practice techniques. Including the advisory points and professional recommendations I was invited to share with then-Labour Shadow Minister for Housing, Andy Slaughter, in UK Parliament on 7th March 2017, my ultimate goal is to inspire positive transformation to future delivery of British homelessness address services; at both a strategic and operational level.

The conclusion of this publication – and project - reveals the technical plans I have designed for immediate action and implementation, as well as a call on UK government to commission and support further international research study, pilot scheme investigation and practical application work which will promote a cost-effective, efficient and compassionate resolution to homelessness, for diverse applicants across the United Kingdom, and potentially, beyond.

Amy.F.Varle

Researcher and Author

Social Property Investment:

Pioneering Strategies for 21st Century Homelessness Prevention and Response

An International Research Project Supported by:

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Cover image by Matthew Taylor, Manchester Street Photographer. With the greatest thanks.

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21ST CENTURY HOMELESSNESS

For as long as historical records have been kept, Britain has suffered a homelessness problem. Housing is a basic human requirement, yet we must recognise the importance of its commodity stature: Buildings and properties are tangible assets which have revealed over the last century to be one of the most astute financial investment choices a person can make. History shows that we have long been trying to find a balance between capitalist economics and our moral responsibility to ensure that the British housing market is equitable - and accessible - for all.

Modern homelessness began as a result of economic stress in society, combined with reductions in the availability of affordable housing, for a rapidly-expanding population. Traditionally, homelessness has been a circumstance reserved for the poverty-stricken and most disadvantaged members of society; yet at the time of commencing this research study in 2016, more than 1.8 million households occupy our nation's social housing waiting lists, clearly evidencing that attainable access to accommodation which is both affordable and sustainable is a pressing need for today's working-class populationⁱⁱ.

Homelessness and poverty are inextricably entwined. The United Kingdom is home to an identified 3.9 million citizens in "persistent poverty" - people who have lived with less than 60% of national average disposable income for two of the past three years - and are therefore, frequently unable to pay for necessities such as housing, food or childcare. Sadly, many people view homelessness as the result of individual personal failings, however the UK's national homelessness campaigning charity, Shelter, state this belief is belied by the facts: Homelessness is caused by a complex interplay between a person's individual circumstances and adverse 'structural' factors outside their direct controlⁱⁱⁱ.

Homelessness of the 21st Century does not discriminate. Britain is currently facing a homelessness crisis. Nevertheless, whilst government statistics state that in 2016, 4,134 people slept outdoors on any one night across England - over double the number counted in 2010 - it is almost impossible to get an entirely reflective picture or accurate numerical indication of just how vast the problem is^{iv}. According to the well-known national charity representing single homeless people, Crisis, there are no conclusive figures pertaining to just how many people are experiencing homelessness across the UK today^v. Moreover, the problem of homelessness goes far deeper than that of rough sleeping and vagrancy.

Rough sleeping is the most visibly shocking kind of homelessness, but this amounts to a very small proportion of people who could realistically be said to be 'without a suitable, permanent home'. Whilst there are estimated to be around 58,000 individuals in England who, each year, are in contact with homelessness, substance misuse and offending services and who are said to have 'multiple and complex' needs^{vi}, this is only scratching the surface of what it really means to suffer a housing crisis in Britain today. Homelessness impacts many more people than those we see huddled in doorways, or seeking the help of food banks and supporting outreach teams.

Back in 2002, Crisis identified that an estimated 380,000^{vii} 'hidden homeless' individuals were residing in Britain; those who were 'officially unregistered' as homeless, but sleeping wherever they could - in emergency accommodation, staying with friends and family, or squatting in empty buildings - because they didn't have anywhere else to live. Whilst it is impossible to access any further public data or official estimates of numbers of 'hidden homeless' individuals residing in the United Kingdom today, it wouldn't be exaggerating to say the situation is well on its way to becoming borderline pandemic.

Across the country, people are getting more and more desperate in their quest to find somewhere dry, warm and safe to rest and recuperate each night. In the year to March 2016, waste collection firm Biffa discovered 175 homeless people risking their lives in order to attempt sleep within its commercial bin containers^{viii}. By April 2017, Manchester's rough sleepers were found to be living in squalid tunnels underneath the city streets^{ix}. In the same month, London's homeless community defended a man's decision to sleep perilously close to a 20ft drop into River Thames, stating 'it's the safest place to be'^x.

'Sweeping' the Homeless

Communal homeless encampments 'officially' arrived in Britain in April 2015. Flimsy, multi-coloured tents, clustered sporadically across the major north-western city of Manchester: A stark, uncomfortable reminder that not everyone who resides here is able to go home to a warm bed^{xi}.

Whilst seeking possession orders and a city centre-wide injunction prohibiting tents from being erected, Manchester City Council estimated that it spent more than £100,000 on additional policing, security and legal costs in the emotive three-month period to between April and July of 2015^{xii}. Despite this concerted effort to clear homeless people from public areas, variations of Manchester's original 'Tent City' – as well as other homelessness protest groups - still exist today, albeit in new and interchangeable locations^{xiii,xiv,xv}. This is no longer a problem reserved exclusively for Manchester, but one which is challenging towns and cities all over the United Kingdom - and the rest of the world^{xvi}.

'Sweeping' – a process where temporary homeless encampments are cleared of all items, possessions and belongings – is a 21st Century homelessness response technique which is now commonly used in conjunction with the criminalisation of activities relating to vagrancy^{xvii}. The controversial use of enforcement towards those who sleep rough could be seen as such, due to its highly provocative nature: It is a fundamental fact that single homeless people are much more likely to have physical and mental health issues when compared to members of the general population - and therefore could be deemed as 'at risk' in some way.

The important link between housing and mental well-being is often overlooked: Poor mental health can make it harder to cope with housing problems, whilst being homeless or suffering domestic issues can make mental health worse. Official statistics show that in 2015, 32% of single homeless people reported a mental health

problem^{xviii}, while 70% of clients accessing homelessness services in England were reported to have ‘mental health needs’^{xix}.

The reality is considerably more acute: Depression rates, for example, are reported to be over 10 times higher for the homeless population when compared with that of the general community, and other psychological issues such as historical abuse, complex trauma, substance misuse and social exclusion are routinely encountered^{xx}.

Wouldn't you feel anxious and depressed if you had to choose between sleeping in a bin or on a cold, concrete floor each night? If you were regularly mocked, beaten, or urinated on? If your only possessions were regularly stolen, or removed by the authorities; if you had to beg a stranger just to eat?

We are facing a system in utter denial. Hidden homelessness in the United Kingdom surpassed crisis-point some fifteen years ago and despite the fact the problem was identified, it was ignored. When it became visible, immediate measures were put in place to ensure further distance from accountability. Why?



2014: Rough sleeping in Manchester. Image by Matthew Taylor

Homelessness – the state of having no home – cannot be addressed or resolved for *any* household or individual without affording the provision of suitable, permanent - and potentially - sustainable accommodation. Quite simply, both local and central

government are unable to meet the continually rising demand for affordable, tenable homes - and so, our traditional approach to homelessness blocks access to long-term social housing options, for almost *all* who legitimately require them.

Each year, tens of thousands of people apply to their governing local authority for homelessness and housing advice or assistance, yet the vast majority fail to meet the strict conditions required in order to achieve a legal 'statutory homeless' status, which carries a duty to receive assistance - and the potential of being rehoused.

Who is Entitled to Housing?

Under current English law, last revised in 2002, in England, Scotland and Wales, only 'statutory homeless' people are entitled to rehousing via a local authority^{xxi}. To acquire this stature a person must:

- Be 'eligible for public funds'
- Have an association with the area covered by the governing local authority, known as a 'local connection'
- Be able to prove they are '*unintentionally homeless*'
- Provide evidence to demonstrate their '*priority need*' (the definition of which varies between the different nations and has been abolished altogether in Scotland)^{xxii}

Only once a person has passed each of these stringent tests will they be considered 'statutorily homeless' - and only at this stage will a local authority acquire a legal duty to provide assistance. This is known as 'the main homelessness duty'. In practice - with housing stock in short supply across the country - it means that families with young children and pregnant mothers are most likely to be rehoused. Ultimately, the result is that most single people and a number of vulnerable groups, including rough sleepers - and the 'hidden homeless' - are mainly left to fend for themselves.



Surviving on the streets of Manchester. Image by Matthew Taylor

LINEAR HOUSING MODELS

In the UK, the transition from street homelessness to independent living for those with complex needs often resembles a 'staircase' model, with individuals being required to meet specific criteria before they can progress 'step-by-step' towards practical homelessness assistance - and ultimately, an independent tenancy. In practice, this process can involve:

- Initial contact with outreach workers, day centres or treatment services;
- A move into direct-access hostels;
- A further move into second stage or specialist hostels (relating to support needs);
- Progression to semi-independent or shared accommodation;
- Ultimately - once deemed 'housing ready' - taking an independent tenancy, with or without support^{xxiii}

This traditional 'continuum of care' approach is a method we now know to be largely ineffective at resolving the issue of chronic homelessness. The Homelessness Act of 2002 ensures that services offered cannot be described as inclusive to all^{xxiv}; yet, for those individuals who can meet specified criteria to access intervention such as hostel or bed and breakfast accommodation, the 'linear' style reveals itself as a method which inadequately meets the needs of its participants, largely due to the requirement of an applicant to meet a sequence of almost unattainable goals.

How feasible is it for a person to achieve sobriety or overcome serious mental health challenges whilst they are sleeping on the streets, begging for food and trying not to freeze to death in sub-zero temperatures? Is a short, uncertain period spent within a chaotic temporary unit an appropriate environment for recovery from issues relating to historical trauma, domestic violence or substance misuse? How easy is it to rebuild your life if you don't have a registered address, a regular income, or even know when you will next sleep deeply for an uninterrupted period?

A number of academics have recently argued that the evidence base regarding the efficacy of transitional supported housing for homeless people with complex support needs and other vulnerable groups is actually very weak^{xxv}. In this vein, continuum of care, linear and staircase models have been subjected to criticism in recent times, some of which has been severe. Much of this critique has centred on high attrition rates: that is, the loss of service users between the transitional stages^{xxvi}.

The distress which one can attribute to the lack of safety, security and certainty of having a settled home can cause or intensify social isolation, create barriers to education and employment and dramatically impact on both mental and physical health. When homelessness becomes prolonged, or is repeatedly experienced, there are often very marked deteriorations in health and wellbeing.

Furthermore, whilst the 'linear' address evidently fails to present the people it aims to serve with a solid springboard for rebuilding their often damaged and dysfunctional lives, it is also deemed costly to keep any homeless household trapped within a repeated cycle of temporary accommodation placements.

The Financial Costs of Homelessness

Several studies have attempted to calculate the total cost to UK government of British homelessness. These studies have methodological limitations and concern various groups of homeless people, however, in 2012, the UK Government placed its own estimate of homelessness-related expenditure between £24,000 - £30,000 (gross) per person, annually, with a total estimated cost of £1 billion annually. Under scrutiny, this figure appears to be outdated.

In 2004, Crisis concluded that 'hidden homelessness' - meaning people who become homeless but find a temporary, unofficial solution - alone costs Britain as much as £1.4 billion every year^{xxvii}. In addition to this direct cost, there are further indirect costs and complex implications on other public services to consider. To give one illustration, it is estimated that poor housing implicates on the National Health Service in England by between £1.4 billion and £2 billion each year; furthermore, delayed hospital discharges – many which can be attributed to homelessness, sub-standard housing or domestic issues – cost the NHS £455 million annually^{xxviii}.

London Councils' submission to the Autumn Statement 2016 said that the placing of over 50,000 households in temporary accommodation was creating 'extreme financial pressure' for London boroughs - who are currently spending an additional £170 million per annum on temporary accommodation options from their general funds^{xxix}. Temporary accommodation placements – mainly payments to hostels, bed and breakfast-type establishments and hotels – cost the UK £700 million a year; or £2 million a day^{xxx}. With such weak evidence of their efficacy, shouldn't alternatives be sought as priority?

In 2015, Crisis published 'At What Cost? An Estimation of the Financial Costs of Single Homelessness in the UK', clearly identifying that the monetary implications of single-person homelessness increase in direct proportion to the distressing human cost of homelessness^{xxxi}. The 'linear', 'continuum of care' or traditional 'staircase'- approach towards the issue of homelessness merely enables a cycle of mass destruction to occur, escalate, spiral – and continually evolve.

HOUSING FIRST

The highly acclaimed research work of Canadian clinical and community psychology practitioner Dr Sam J. Tsemberis Skoura initially was – and to a large degree still is - thought of as sensational, as it radically identifies homelessness primarily as a **housing** crisis, which should be addressed, without stipulation or barrier, *precisely through housing*. The experience of homelessness is also a form of trauma - and so the preventing and ending of that trauma should be of paramount importance^{xxxii}.

In 1992, Under Dr Tsemberis' direction, a randomised controlled trial of the 'Pathways to Housing' model was conducted, enabling 'Housing First' ideology to evolve and gain traction in the United States of America. In the widely circulated, critically acclaimed evaluation, published in 2000, Tsemberis and Eisenberg reported on a practical study undertaken from 1993 to 1997, which examined the effectiveness of a five-year supported housing programme on 242 homeless New Yorkers^{xxxiii}. The programme provided immediate access to independent scatter-site apartments for individuals with severe psychiatric disabilities and addictions, who were of no fixed abode and living on the streets.

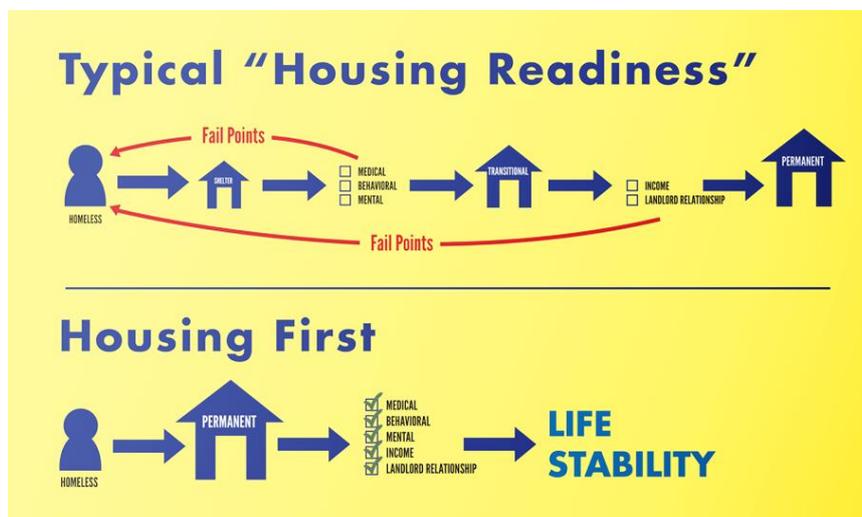
With 88% of participants remaining in stable accommodation and not returning to their former destructive lifestyles, 'Pathways to Housing' was considered a game-changer in the way that the United States of America addressed homelessness. It has revealed since to be a highly effective, cost-efficient and sustainable method of compassionate response when directed towards individuals experiencing *all* types homelessness, across many developed nations. There are examples to study in Italy, Sweden, Spain, Finland and Denmark, to name but a few^{xxxiv}.

Across pilot schemes undertaken internationally, 'Housing First' demonstrates unprecedented success in retaining engagement with traditionally 'hard to reach' members of the homeless community; helping them to secure accommodation, remain in their housing and work towards recovery and a stable lifestyle^{xxxvxxvi}. Typically, 80-90% of participants will remain in housing after one year^{xxxvii}.

Whilst there is no singular, official definition of 'Housing First', replication of the original 'Pathways' model in New York generally focuses on the following key principles:

- Housing as a basic human right;
- Immediate provision of permanent scattered site housing with no requirement regarding housing readiness;
- Respect, warmth and compassion for all clients;
- A separate identity of housing and supporting services;
- Use of case management teams;
- Consumer directed care with recovery orientation;
- Harm reduction rather than abstinence with regards to substance misuse;

- A commitment to providing support to clients for as long as it is required^{xxxviii}.



Graphic by Abode Services, California's largest Housing First provider. www.abodeservices.org.

The impact of supportive housing on services used by homeless persons with mental illness in New York City was measured by the Centre for Mental Health Policy and Services Research between 1989 and 1997. It showed that each unit of permanent supportive housing saved \$16,282 per year in public costs for shelter, health care, mental health, and criminal justice. The savings alone offset nearly all of the \$17,277 cost of providing a supportive housing package^{xxxix}.

More recently, taking direct action via the implementation of transformational service plans, the Canadian town of Medicine Hat has 'eradicated' their long-term homelessness problem via the 'Housing First' strategy, reporting to have maintained its 'homelessness-free' stature for two years at the date of concluding this report^{xl}. With such pressing need for rapid solutions towards its street-sleeping crisis, could Manchester be the first UK city to adopt exclusivity in Housing First approach?

Changing Lives, in partnership with a range of specialist agencies and organisations, has led ground-breaking research on long-term homelessness in the UK. Their investigations indicate that utilising a housing-led approach to tackling long-term homelessness in Britain can potentially reduce the number of people who are homeless, whilst providing significant cost savings to the government and public services^{xli}.

When Housing Link, national membership charity for organisations working directly with people who become homeless in England, evaluated nine UK-based Housing First projects, they found that between 70-90% of participants had sustained their accommodation and were living more fulfilling and productive lives^{xlii}.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN BRITAIN

People become homeless for all types of reasons: Their personal circumstances and social background, a lacking in access to affordable housing, poverty, unemployment, rent rises, evictions, domestic issues and family or household unit breakdowns. Housing policies and the structure and administration of welfare related benefits benefit play a major role too.

Nonetheless, whichever way homelessness occurs, the route to ending it remains the same. 'Housing First', continuum of care, linear and staircase models ultimately all point back to the same end-goal; the ability for a person to obtain - and independently maintain - a safe, secure, permanent place they can call 'home'.

Industry leaders and colleagues across the globe report unrivalled results when deploying tried-and-tested 'Housing First' methodology towards homelessness. Notwithstanding, by far, the biggest impediment to mass exploration - and to creating or operating a 'Housing First'-led project across any pilot scheme undertaken, both nationally and internationally - reports as rapid and continual access to suitable and affordable accommodation, in both the social and private rented sectors^{xliii}.

Whilst in 2016, housebuilding hit its 7-year high, construction began on only 37,080 new homes between October and December 2015. This figure was an increase of 23% on the previous year; however, with 142,890 homes completed in the 12 months to December 2015^{xliiv}, this amounts to less than half of the 300,000 required to be built each year if Britain is to meet its continually-evolving demand. High levels of immigration have contributed to population growth, with an increase of 5 million people between 2005 and 2016; the sharpest rise in 70 years. UK population is expected to rise by almost 10 million - to over 74.3 million - by 2039^{xliv}.

Despite progressively pronounced need, local government involvement in house building activity has been startlingly lacking in recent years. The number of new social dwellings completed in England in 2013/14 decreased by 23% since 2011/12^{xlvi}. Local councils across the whole of England completed only 5,730 new homes in the five-year period between 2009 and 2014^{xlvii}.

Social Housing

Housing has been at the heart of British politics for over a century and responsibility for new supply has ricocheted between the public and private sectors since the First World War. In 1919, UK Parliament passed The Housing and Town Planning Act^{xlviii} (the Addison Act) which was seen as a watershed in the provision of corporation housing and the first 'council homes' appeared. Incentivising building with financial subsidies, 508,000 social dwellings were constructed over a fifteen-year period^{xlix}.

Post-World War 2, under the Churchill government, the Temporary Prefabricated Housing Programme of 1944ⁱ allowed experimentation in building methods and a new form of construction was pioneered, commonly called 'PRC' (Pre-Cast Reinforced Concrete) construction. Houses became quick to assemble and required less skilled

labour than traditional building methods. In the decade after 1945, 1.5 million social housing dwellings were completed and demand for accommodation was somewhat alleviated^{li}.



March 1949: Aneurin Bevan opens the 500th permanent house built in Elstree since the end of WW2 (Getty Images)

The Housing Act of 1974^{lii} introduced state funding for housing associations and allowed private, non-profit making organisations to provide low-cost ‘social housing’ for people in need of a home. These hybrid formations allowed housing to newly integrate with the delivery of public services, encouraging the evolution of mixed-sector funding models. The buoyancy of this period resulted in significant and continued growth and transformation of the sector: Today, there are 1.3 million housing association tenants in England^{liii}.

In August 1980, under Margaret Thatcher’s Conservative government, The Housing Act 1980^{liv} was passed by parliament, allowing the introduction of ‘Right to Buy’ council homes across the UK. Changing the landscape of social housing forever, nationally, 1 million houses were sold within 10 years and the number of homes managed by London’s councils shrunk from 840,000 in 1984, to just over 500,000 by the end of the century^{lv}.

Britain is now facing a serious shortage of local authority-owned affordable housing. As of April 2015, across the whole of England, 1,643,000 residential dwellings were owned by a local council^{lvi}. Astonishingly, as many as 83 boroughs in England now hold no self-owned social housing at all, with some further 65 areas hosting fewer than

100 units^{lvii}. To illustrate further; in 1979, 42% of Britons lived in council homes^{lviii}. Today, that figure is just under 8%^{lix}.

Private Rental Market

The birth of the buy-to-let industry was to see housing brokerage placed into the hands of the private individual for the very first time. Prior to the 1980's, it was extremely rare for members of the public to become private landlords: Infrastructure of loans, advice and information was not readily available. The modern style 'buy-to-let' mortgage wasn't in existence and the idea of purchasing property as a means of funding a retirement income simply did not occur to most people.

The critical change came with the Housing Act of 1988^{lx}, when the Assured Shorthold Tenancy came into being. The 'AST' gave both lenders and potential borrowers the confidence that tenants would only reside in a property for a fixed period and the result was an increase in education and accessible finance. This move culminated in phenomenally accelerated growth of the private property marketplace; according to the Council of Mortgage Lenders, more than 1.7 million Buy-to-Let loans were advanced between 1999 and 2015 and there are 4.5 million households living within privately rented accommodation in the UK today^{lxi}.

Regardless, this sector remains somewhat closed-off to those who are experiencing homelessness, despite it being perhaps the most logical place to quickly seek housing for a person or persons ineligible to purchase a home of their own. The most frequently cited reason for loss of the last settled home is now the ending of an assured shorthold tenancy in the private rented sector^{lxii} and in the first quarter of 2016 this reason was behind 41% of all statutory homeless acceptances in London^{lxiii}.

Shelter identify that more than a million low-income households are struggling to pay even the cheapest available rents in the private sector and could be at risk of eviction by 2020, citing rising rents, benefit freezes and a lack of social housing as contributing factors^{lxiv}. Notwithstanding, this fails to highlight the private providers anticipated to depart the sector as a result of a recent onslaught of changes to practice, including the phasing out of mortgage tax relief, scrapping of the 10% 'wear and tear' tax relief, introduction of the 3% stamp duty surcharge, a growing number of licensing schemes and Right to Rent checks^{lxv}.

One of the greatest challenges encountered by private landlords when providing accommodation for poverty stricken or previously homeless households concerns the navigation of a complex and continually evolving welfare benefit system. With a lacking in accessible guidance or support available to private housing providers, a survey of over 1,000 UK landlords conducted by flat and house share website Spareroom found that almost nine out of ten (87%) property owners who accept housing-related benefits have had problems with payments of rent^{lxvi}.

Welfare Benefits

At the close of 1942, the wartime coalition government commissioned a report entitled 'Social Insurance and Allied Services'^{lxvii}, written by Sir William Beveridge, a highly-

regarded economist and expert on unemployment problems. The Beveridge Report quickly became the blueprint for the modern British welfare state, aiming to provide all citizens with a comprehensive life-long system of social insurance. In return for a weekly tax contribution, benefits would be paid in times of unemployment, sickness, retirement or spousal death. Beveridge wanted to ensure that there was an acceptable minimum standard of living in Britain, below which, nobody fell.

Today, the welfare state of the United Kingdom comprises expenditures intended to improve health, education, employment and social security of British citizens, with £29.7 billion spent on housing related benefits between 2014-15^{lxviii}. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 – the largest reform the welfare system has seen since its inception - introduced a wide range of revisions to financial benefits and tax credits, with changes aiming to reduce welfare dependency and patronage working households^{lxix}.

The implementation of Universal Credit - a single monthly payment for people in or out of work, which replaces singular benefit payments with a combination of housing related benefits and allowances made for living expenses – was found to have left 60% of its initial claimants in severe financial hardship^{lxx}. With media attention focused heavily upon claimants facing serious financial deprivation, on 18th October 2017, MPs supported - by 299 votes to 0 - Labour's motion for a pause in the roll-out in order for problems in the system to be fixed.

Whilst not without major obstacles and serious challenges to overcome, the welfare benefit scheme is generally inclusive to people experiencing homelessness or those who are at risk of homelessness, and it is evident that the private rented sector is adapting and largely responsive to meeting demand: The number of households receiving support to pay rent to private landlords rose 42% between 2008 and 2016. Annual expenditure on Local Housing Allowance rose to £9.3bn during this period, nearly double the amount paid 10 years previously^{lxxi}.

Shelter state that the 'Housing First' model presents a particularly innovative use of the private rented sector at a time when increasing emphasis is being placed upon its viability for households in housing need^{lxxii}. The House of Commons, Communities and Local Government Committee, however, stated in their 2013-14 report entitled 'The Private Rental Sector'^{lxxiii} that if the private rented home market is to become more mature, it is important that all parties are aware of their respective rights and responsibilities.

In January 2016, Crisis launched their 'No Home, No Less' campaign, recognising that private renting helps people escape homelessness and calling on the government to ensure the right support is available for landlords – as well as the people they are willing and able to provide with a home^{lxxiv}.

BACKGROUND TO FELLOWSHIP

In 2013, as an ex-local authority housing support officer, I became self-employed within my specialism of homelessness address and property management for the socially disadvantaged. As I left my career with the cash-strapped local council in 2011, buy-to-let was booming: Between 2008 and 2015, 600,000 private landlords were created, a plethora of new stakeholders in the marketplace^{lxv}. Frustrated with the lack of options being provided by my previous employer, I couldn't help but wonder whether this type of housing could provide poverty-stricken households with rapid access to the stability of choice-based affordable homes; accommodation which had the ability to fully suit individual need.



2013: Beginning to source housing for the homeless, in Fallowfield, South Manchester

So that I could conduct unbiased research, I visited people experiencing homelessness on the streets of Manchester; at soup kitchens, in day centres, hostels and at various squats. I met with chronic rough sleepers, homeless activists, charity workers, volunteers and council officials. I spent each day immersed in this dark and unknown world, in an attempt to understand successes, failures, needs and desires; talking and listening to people affected by homelessness and housing instability, for all kinds of reasons.

Concurrently, I concentrated significant efforts on aligning with established property practitioners, so I could explore and investigate new ways of working in affordable housing. To penetrate the established professional network, I free-shared my knowledge and affiliated with reputable colleagues to host educational, social, development and training events. I spent countless hours providing practical support to investors, landlords and letting agents online, over the phone and face-to-face so that I could understand their objectives, reservations and limitations, whilst simultaneously guiding them to improve and enhance their services.

As I began to gain the trust of my peers, I was granted unrestricted access to a wide-range of private housing options; those which had the potential to be distributed to individuals in need. In May 2013, I was offered approval from Manchester City Council to conduct and facilitate an unofficial, independent ‘Housing First’ inspired pilot scheme; however, with no funding or resources available to support my work, I had to be extremely creative in order to deliver and lead such an ambitious project. Ploughing in my life savings, over the next two years I worked night and day to get people off the streets and into homes: Acting as confidant and administrative assistant - as well as personal guarantor - to the vulnerable individuals referred to me by the city’s homelessness drop-in.

As I linked landlords with prospective new tenants, I worked in sync with participants to design systemised ways of working; addressing the practical challenges that inevitably arose with a solution-focused attitude. I looked to the public and voluntary sectors to provide crucial aspects of specialised tenant support that couldn’t be met by myself or the landlords, though I found that it was near impossible to provide ‘high-needs’ participants with the robust package of rehabilitative care and holistic services they so crucially needed for a tenancy to be sustained long-term – and for all parties to be happy with the eventual outcome.



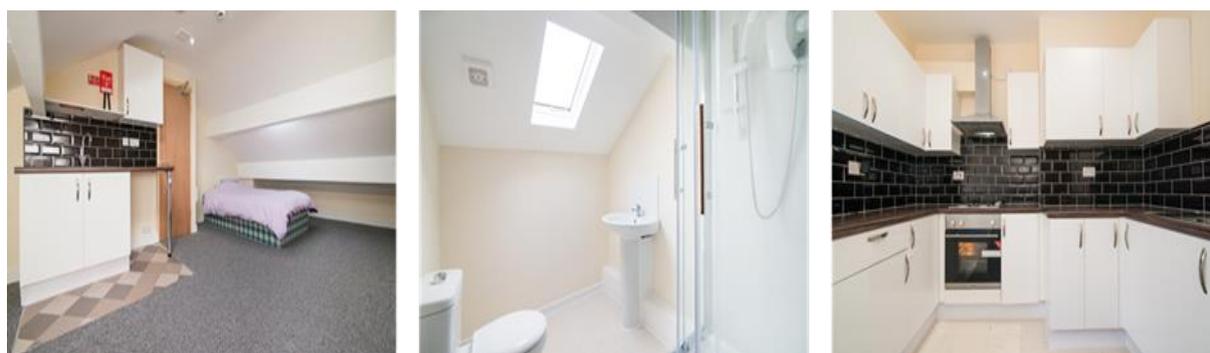
Housing First in Manchester: Participants of my unofficial pilot scheme between 2013 – 2015

Case Study

Keen to address problems and failures, capitalise on successful aspects of collaborative work and share my practical research findings for others to learn from, in 2014, I began working with an investor team to design a radical, new ‘model’ affordable housing project. Aligning contributors from each of the public, private and voluntary sectors, the aim was to demonstrate a solution which would officially evidence measurable value for multiple beneficiaries. Assisted by three of our original pilot scheme tenant participants, a plan was formulated, and an innovative homelessness address scheme designed. It was a project which was created *for the homeless, by the homeless.*

As the team worked to transform a derelict empty property into six state-of-the-art studio apartments with additional semi-shared space, they succeeded in designing a

warm, comfortable environment which would safely accommodate the transition of vulnerable ladies into more fulfilling lives. The operational techniques utilised formulated the beginnings of the 'Social Property Investment' strategic address towards homelessness and the accommodation was utilised as part of Threshold and New Charter Housing Trust Group's official 'Housing First' pilot scheme, which was later highly commended for its innovative approach at the 2017 UK Housing Awards^{lxxvi}.



Housing Innovation: Accommodation provided for Threshold's award winning 'Housing First' pilot scheme

Striving to expand on potential collaborations between contrasting housing and support providers, I sought to 'bridge the gap' between existing services with the aim of sparking a movement of effective inter-sector collaboration. The project's infrastructure was hosted via an open-source resource hub where I synthesised, simplified and promoted our work, wishing to inspire confidence in other practitioners to operate in a similar fashion. I wrote e-guides on good practice, recorded my learnings and knowledge into video seminars and spoke professionally at a wide range of events. I consistently shared aspects of my work across social media with the aim of inspiring evolution in housing-led response towards homelessness; in Manchester, the United Kingdom, and beyond.

To date, I have directly and indirectly supported over 100 homeless individuals with homelessness assistance and housing-related needs, evidencing government savings in excess of £2 million via my unfunded practical research work^{lxxvii}. I have guided individuals in gaining and retaining tenancies within the private rented sector and assisted with the building and rebuilding of relationships with property owners and managing agents to prevent planned evictions. I now work independently to promote excellent industry practice, empowering industry stakeholders across the public, private and voluntary sectors, anywhere in the world, via:

- Free-sharing of 'Social Property Investment' strategies;
- Professional research, knowledge exchange and mentoring programmes;
- Network development opportunities, educational tools, strategy design and consultancy support^{lxxviii}.

AIMS OF FELLOWSHIP

In the late Spring of 2016, I was fortunate to embark on an exciting opportunity which would allow me to take my activism, passion and desire to help end and prevent homelessness to an international level: I would be travelling to the United States of America on a coast-to-coast pit-stop tour of innovative and pioneering homelessness response strategies on behalf of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowship, in partnership with the National Housing Federation^{lxxix}.

I am attracted to learning more about foreign approaches to homelessness for several reasons. As it currently stands, the social housing market in the UK has numerous limitations when it comes to its total resolution of homelessness. Further afield, we can explore divergent approaches which may have proven successful elsewhere, or contain important lessons within their challenges and failures.

Available literature suggests that the extent of homelessness varies considerably across the earth; the United States of America appearing to be a 'leader' among nations of the developed world^{lxxx}. We can draw strong comparisons between the USA and the UK; each share a strong sense of uncertainty about the future, with both encountering challenges of economic turbulence and environmental concerns during the age of digital transition.



New York street art

The practical case study work I have personally undertaken has been enhanced with international influence from its inception. If we refer to western world consumerism, the USA can provide some indication of delayed mirroring and this was used as my early guide when looking to design practical solutions for British homelessness address. The USA was the epicentre of financial disaster in 2008: What methods and techniques were being deployed to address the subsequent disorder and resulting impact on housing and employment? How were crisis respondents managing a

substantial reduction in funding and limitations in practical resource availability, whilst concurrently experiencing a sharp increase in service user demand?

A defining moment in my study arose when tracing adaptations of 'Housing First' models in America and learning of the highly successful 'PATH Beyond Shelter' programme in Los Angeles. 'PATH (People Assisting The Homeless) is a family of agencies working together to end homelessness for individuals, families and communities in California, having displayed a housing-led approach which can be traced back to 1988. They say they focus on housing because *'homelessness is a housing problem: People can't get off the streets if they don't have somewhere to go'*^{lxxxix}.

Studying housing-focused homelessness address in areas of strong economic growth and commercial innovation, such as Manhattan, New York, I learnt that the average price of an apartment can surpass \$2 million^{lxxxix}. And so, I considered, if this region can pro-actively respond to homelessness with the utilisation of 'Housing First' based initiatives such as 'Pathways to Housing', potentially this region holds further methodology which could be adapted for a climate where property value is more aligned with average household income. Furthermore, the UK's robust 'Welfare State' is supportive of meeting diverse need via its free availability of housing-related social security benefits for eligible, low-income applicants.

This Fellowship aimed to investigate hybrid models of housing and inclusive rehabilitation, with the primary goal of understanding how the public, private and voluntary sectors can work together effectively in order to provide compassionate, cost-efficient and conclusive homelessness prevention and response services. Ultimately, could we dissect the approach, identify transferrable lessons and correlate best practice techniques from across the world to be used as a broader approach to addressing varying degrees of homelessness in Britain?



Manhattan, New York

INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDY WORK

Via the review of local, national and international policy and research, as well as compiling case studies of pioneering non-profit and profit-driven organisations that make a powerful commitment to social impact, this project aims to identify the key lessons we can learn from best industry practice in the field of homelessness prevention and response from across the globe; ultimately, for adaptation and implementation in the United Kingdom.

This Fellowship involved fieldwork at locations on the East and West coasts of the United States of America; notably, Silicon Valley, San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York. Each appointment provided a contrast in approach and therefore the opportunity for comparison. I observed, interviewed, analysed data and evaluated findings from a wide-range of associated environments, selecting a number of organisations to explore as inspiring and innovative case study examples. Careful consideration was given to factors such as:

- Evidence of successful and good practice;
- Impact value;
- The mission behind the model;
- Revenue streams and funding sources;
- External partnerships;
- Community engagement;
- Service user benefit;
- Promising long-term plans;
- Creativity, innovation and passion.

Key findings will be discussed thematically, with participation from the following projects, events and organisations:



Housing 2.0 is a one-day pop-up event facilitating discussions focused on addressing challenges and utilising opportunities in American housing



'CHAM Deliverance Ministry' are a faith-led organisation which has ministered on the front lines to the homeless in Silicon Valley for over 15 years

<http://chamministry.com/>



'Lava Mae' recycle redundant city busses, converting vehicles into mobile shower units and washing facilities for the homeless in central San Francisco

<http://lavamae.org/>



'Tender Cuts' is a San Francisco non-profit providing love, laughs and street-side haircut services for those in need

<http://tendercuts.squarespace.com/>



'Project Homeless Connect' (PHC) provide support and quality of life services to homeless communities, nationwide

<https://www.projecthomelessconnect.org/>



'Back on My Feet' (BoMF) efficiently engage with corporate partners and the general public to successfully combat homelessness via the power of running

<https://www.backonmyfeet.org/>



'Delivering Innovation in Supported Housing' (DISH) provide property management services for San Francisco's Public Health Housing Scheme

<http://dishsf.org/>



New York's 'Breaking Ground' is a leader of industry practice excellence and pioneer of 'Housing First' homelessness prevention and response techniques

<http://www.breakingground.org/>



'CastleBraid' is a creative community living space, situated in Brooklyn, New York

<http://www.castlebraid.com/>



The 'Dome Village' was a self-governing community of people unable or unwilling to live in traditional homeless shelters, situated in downtown Los Angeles

<http://domevillage.tedhayes.us/>



'Tiny SMART House' is an internationally recognised and licensed tiny house manufacturer and home builder located in Albany, Oregon

<http://tinysmarthouse.com/>



'Bombas Socks' are growing the 'buy one, give one' movement, having donated over 1 million pairs of custom-designed socks to America's homeless to date

<https://bombas.com/>



Marriott International are a global hotel chain committed to supporting and improving the communities in which they operate

<http://www.marriott.com/>

THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE:

Not since the Great Depression of the 1930's has American society faced such astonishingly high levels of inequality. The American Subprime Mortgage Crisis of 2008, considered by economists to be one of the most serious global financial disasters ever seen, almost collapsed the world's financial system and impacted incontestably on economies across the globe^{lxxxiii}. In the United States, the impact on both housing and public services has been most obvious and a direct manifestation of the wider crisis which the credit crunch has caused.

The extent to which income is distributed in an uneven manner has been growing markedly, by every major statistical measure, for over 30 years. Disparities have become so pronounced that America's top 10% of citizens now average nearly nine times as much income as the bottom 90%^{lxxxiv}. Homelessness is an inevitable consequence of poverty; in America, it ranks on a magnitude and complexity scale which I found difficult to even begin to comprehend.

- In January 2015, officially, 564,708 people were homeless on a given night in the United States;
- Of that number, 206,286 were people in families, and 358,422 were individuals;
- About 15% of the homeless population - 83,170 - are considered to be 'chronically homeless'^{lxxxv}.

According to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, a person who is considered 'chronically homeless' is an 'unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition' who must have been sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., living on the streets) and/or in an emergency homeless shelter:

- for a period of a year or more, OR,
- to have experienced at least four episodes of homelessness in the previous three years^{lxxxvi}.

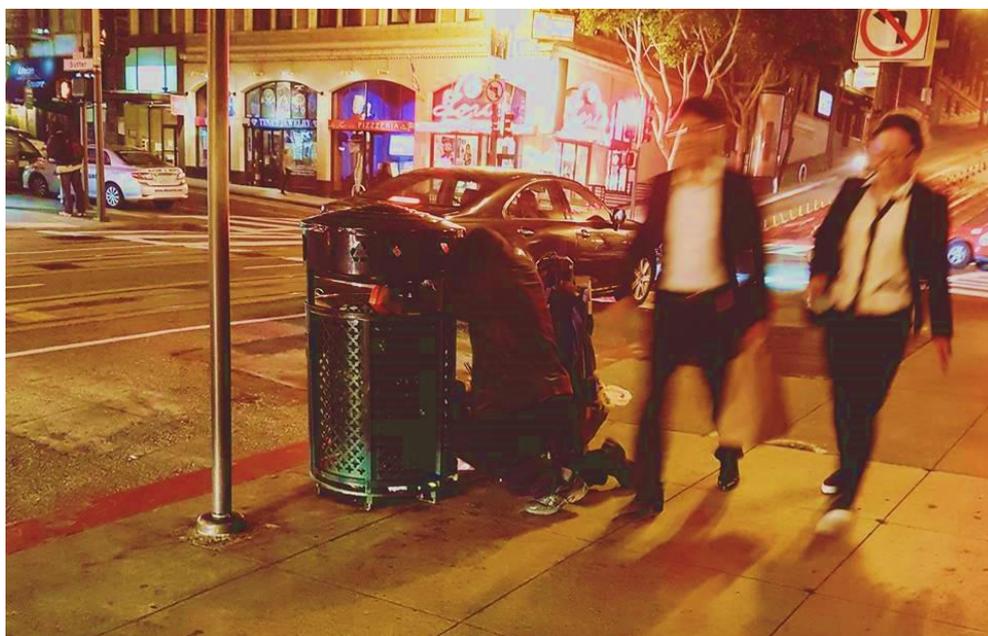
A 'disabling condition' limits an individual's ability to work or perform one or more activities of daily living. For the purposes of assessing chronic homelessness in America, a disabling condition is defined as: -

- Diagnosable substance use disorder;
- Serious mental illness;
- Developmental disability;
- Chronic physical illness;
- Disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions^{lxxxvii}.

The passing of the Community Mental Health Act of 1963 was a predisposing factor in setting the stage for 21st Century homelessness in the United States of America^{lxxxviii}. Long-term psychiatric patients were released from state hospitals during the 1970's

and the intention was to rehabilitate within community mental health centres. In practice, facilities mostly did not materialise, and this population largely migrated to a life on the streets with little in terms of a sustainable support system soon thereafter^{lxxxix}.

Today, more than 124,000 – or one-fifth – of the estimated 610,000 homeless people across the United States of America suffer from a severe mental illness, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development^{xc}. These disadvantaged individuals are gripped by schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or severe depression — all manageable conditions with the right treatment and care - but debilitating if left unattended to. In the absence of early intervention, their plight costs the federal government millions of dollars a year in services, and ultimately prolongs disorder and suffering.



Disparities between the rich and the poor: San Francisco

The vast and expanding divide between the wealthy and impoverished is nothing short of staggering to the new and objective eye; the way in which abject poverty and hopelessness has been normalised left me breathless at times. In large cities where there is evidence of strong economic growth, gentrification – a process of renovation and revival of deteriorated urban neighbourhoods by means of influx of more affluent residents – is resulting in vastly increased property values and the displacing of lower-income families and small businesses. Local communities are changing, with both positive and negative consequences.

I found that individuals experiencing chronic street homelessness generally try to be socially invisible in order to avoid enforcement of new anti-vagrancy penalties^{xcii};

practice I saw enforced with regularity in each of the locations I visited. During the last decade, many public services, such as churches and libraries, began restricting access to people experiencing homelessness and this has culminated in much of this demographic being banished to sidewalks, parks, under bridges and even inside subway tunnels^{xcii}.

The East Coast

In Manhattan, New York, just steps from the bright lights of Broadway and Times Square, I encountered individuals experiencing homelessness in obvious distress with alarming regularity; soliciting for food, money or water - or 'panhandling' - whilst riding the subway. For decades, officials have used 'homeless hotels' - temporary bed and breakfast type accommodation - to shelter the astonishingly high number of homeless people residing within in New York City.

Whilst this keeps many of the district's inhabitants from sleeping outdoors, the number of citizens accessing temporary options has spiralled out of all control in recent years. On any given night, there are an estimated 62,000 men, women, and children sleeping in temporary shelters in New York^{xciii}. Furthermore, evidence demonstrates that the provision of this type of accommodation is proving to be an increasingly expensive election, with shelter costs rising by 62% over an eight-year period. 2015 official estimates place annual costs at \$976 million, up from \$604 million in 2007^{xciv}.



Manhattan: The most expensive real estate in the world

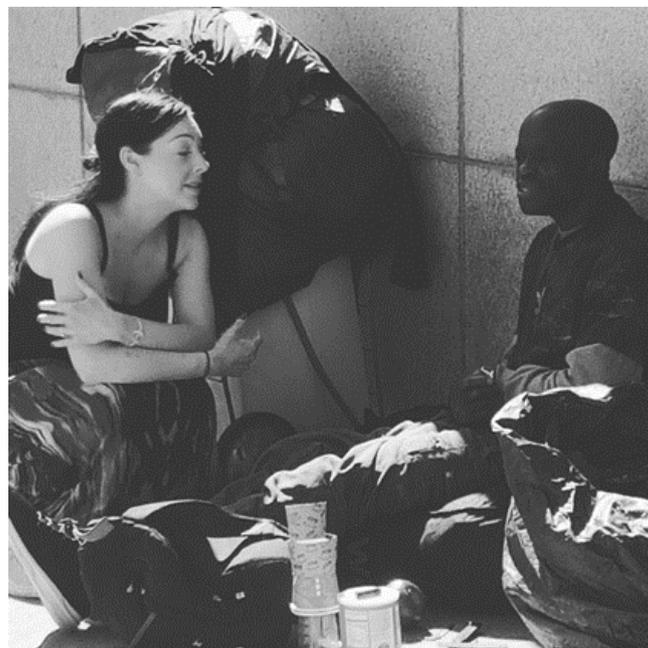
In his 2015 Budget, President Barak Obama called for nearly \$5.5 billion in targeted homelessness assistance. In addition to this, the Budget also included key investments in mainstream programmes needed to end homelessness, such as 67,000 new 'Housing Choice (Section 8) Vouchers' to support low-income households,

including homeless families, survivors of domestic violence and Veterans experiencing homelessness, regardless of their discharge status^{xcv}.

With the launch of 'Opening Doors' in 2010 - the nation's first comprehensive federal strategy to prevent and end homelessness - the President set ambitious goals to end homelessness across the Nation, and since, the White House reports on making significant progress. Overall, they assert that homelessness is down 10 percent since 2010, including a 25 percent reduction in unsheltered or street homelessness. This progress, they report, is the result of the hard work of community partners, unprecedented collaboration across sectors and at all levels of government, and a commitment by Administration to invest in projects and ideas which will end homelessness: evidence-based solutions like Housing First, permanent supportive housing, more affordable housing and access to rapid re-housing^{xcvi}.

The West Coast

Silicon Valley - the southern portion of the San Francisco Bay Area - is justifiably celebrated as the heart of America's innovation, with leading multinational firms such as Apple, Google and Facebook headquartered at its centre. Ranking in the top five most expensive areas to purchase a home in the United States of America^{xcvii}, uniquely, this is a city where the most abundant wealth lives comfortably alongside disease, neglect and squalor. Whilst researching here, I routinely encountered dishevelled, spirit-broken people wheeling trolley-loads of possessions – all their worldly goods - down the sidewalk each day.



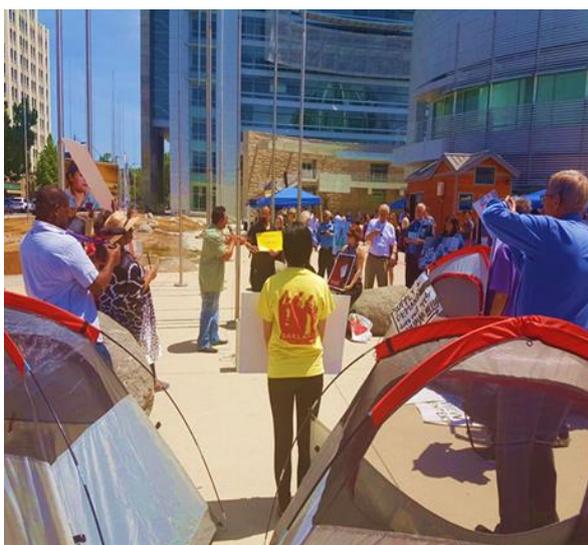
Sleeping outdoors in San Francisco

With one of the country's highest rates of homelessness - the biennial 'Point-in-Time' count identified there were 4,063 homeless individuals in San Jose in January 2015^{xcviii} - Santa Clara County commissioned an unprecedented breakdown of its public expenditures on the 104,000 people who had been homeless in the county over a six-year period. This revealed that the region's 2,800 most persistently homeless people used an average of \$83,000 in public services a year, far exceeding the cost of simply providing them with a permanent, supportive home^{xcix}.

During my first day in San Jose, I attended an interactive governmental-hosted housing conference entitled 'Housing 2.0: Re-Imagining the Housing System in Silicon Valley'^c. This platform brought a network of professionals, academics, volunteers, founders, religious leaders and governmental figures, to showcase and debate topics such as the 'tiny home' movement, land ownership inequality, gentrification and the incredible number of street homeless residing in Silicon Valley.

Encouraging free-dialogue, 'Housing 2.0' asked the question 'How can we leverage such an incredible culture of enterprise and apply it to solving the housing crisis?'. Mr Lee Ricardo, Mayor of San Jose, made his intentions for response to the increasingly critical situation clear: ***'We need innovation and collaboration to address homelessness and affordable housing issues'***.

In promoting a culture of change, the significance of 'Housing 2.0' wasn't that it asked how to disrupt the current housing and homelessness system. Most importantly, it acknowledged that traditional approaches are no longer effective in the current climate and total radicalisation – with the effort and commitment of an entire community - is required.



Housing 2.0: uniting all with the power to serve - (L) Pastor Scott Wagers and (R) Mayor Sam Liccardo

EVALUATION OF FIELDWORK

Engagement Techniques and the Provision of Emergency Care

Drawing comparison with common practice in the United Kingdom, non-profit, community and/or charitable organisations provide the much of the crisis engagement services for the chronically homeless community in America. Pro-active outreach is a critical element of homelessness response, with the hardest to reach members of society living away from urban areas and out of sight from the general public. Many members of this long-term rough sleeping community rarely engage with authorities and there is an impending sense of divide between the parties. This means that rapport building and relationship development via volunteer-led outreach services is crucial.

For more than fifteen years, faith-led group CHAM Deliverance Ministry has brought together a diverse community to worship and serve. CHAM, its volunteers and associates minister on the front lines to the homeless in Silicon Valley; assisting with emergency care needs, running shelters for homeless families and raising awareness of the plight of those sleeping outdoors. In addition to this, the group work pro-actively to find solutions to homelessness as part of the mayor's task force. I joined Pastor Scott Wagers and volunteers from Santa Clara University as they made their weekly pilgrimage into the dense jungle to assist with food and water.



With Pastor Scott Wagers of CHAM Deliverance Ministry

Structured Encampments

'The Jungle' in San Jose was one of America's largest temporary homeless encampments, hosting up to 300 inhabitants at any one time. The city spent more than \$4 million over an 18-month period to address problems arising from within the

camp, eventually beginning their demolition process in December 2014^{ci}. Whilst authorities obtained move-on accommodation for some 135 people from the site, visiting these smaller off-set camping areas gave a sense that many of the ‘Jungle’s’ inhabitants had simply dispersed across the region and were still experiencing homelessness and crisis, albeit in a less contained and concentrated environment.



Volunteering with CHAM Deliverance Ministry at Silicon Valley’s jungle encampments

I was astounded to discover how vast and well-established the ‘tent cities’ are; well hidden behind the busy streets, this is a side of Silicon Valley that the majority of its visitors and locals rarely see. Conversing with members of the community, I learnt that the temporary dwellings are habituated by homeless campers and many people had been existing this way for extreme periods; some, up to ten years. Prominent notices forewarned of planned authority ‘sweeps’, where sites will be cleared of all items and possessions; however, interviews conducted with inhabitants highlighted that there is no viable solution on the horizon to look forward to.

San Jose is grossly under served by both temporary and permanent accommodation options and Section 8 vouchers – the American near-equivalent of Housing Benefit (or Local Housing Allowance) – are vastly misaligned with market rental values, which themselves are disproportionate to average entry-level employment income^{cii}. What this means in practice, is that it can be near-impossible for a person experiencing homelessness to obtain a rental property – or, adequate and sustainable financial resources in order to pay for it.

The Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara (HACSC) operates separate waiting lists for the following federal programmes:

- Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8);
- Project Based Voucher;
- Moderate Rehabilitation^{ciii};

The authority state that the average wait for a household to receive a housing voucher is 8 to 10 years and the people I interviewed didn’t seem to know what to do with the time; other than remain camping in the area, hoping that something, somehow, will change.

When structured encampments are regularly bulldozed, inhabitants simply salvage whatever possessions they can before moving on to another area in attempt to rebuild their lives and meagre shelters. Non-profit and faith-led organisations continually supply those affected with replacement essential items such as blankets, clothing and food, before the barbarous enforcement and removal process will begin again. A costly, and highly emotionally-charged game of cat and mouse, which from an objective eye, appears to have no benefit of substance to either party. It simply moves the problem from one place to another, understandably agitating the subjects - and their increasingly acute mental states - further and further each time.

Society's most vulnerable residents are constantly living on their nerves, not knowing whether they are to be forcibly moved from one week to the next. How can we countenance this underhand, dispassionate treatment of people who, often through misfortune that can beset any one of us, find themselves living on the streets?

Street Homelessness

Los Angeles County spent over \$1 Billion responding to homelessness in 2015^{civ} and I found visiting the city today an uncomfortable and surreal experience. Concealed in the shadows of the monuments of the nation's film and television industry, depravity and hopelessness co-exist alongside a caricature of entertainment and amusement. Both the visibility of rough sleeping and apparent shocking severity of the wider homelessness situation here is astonishing. The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) estimates there are a total of 83,347 homeless people in the streets and in shelters on any one night in LA^{cv}; this is the largest homeless population for any major metropolitan area in the United States of America.

It is acutely obvious that many members of the street homeless community are experiencing severe drug and alcohol abuse and dependency issues; I observed countless individuals who appeared affected by unidentifiable mixtures of chemical substances, wandering the 'Walk of Fame' in a state of what can only be described as delirium. Talking to local shop and business owners on the busy tourist strip, they explained it wasn't uncommon to witness drug-dealing, fighting, collapses and overdoses; all felt at a loss of how to adequately and appropriately respond. It felt unsafe, uncertain and frankly, it felt frightening.

Hollywood's dark underbelly, the infamous 'Skid Row' is a 54-block area in downtown Los Angeles that has become synonymous with homelessness, poverty and crime, containing one of the largest stable populations of homeless people in the United States of America. I was given a tour of the area by American activist and advocate for the homeless Theodore "Ted" Hayes Jr and his professional colleague of over twenty years, Rhonda Elizabeth Flanzbaum. With lived experience and extensive local knowledge, they provided some insight into the bleak existence of those who reside here - and how the area has changed over time.

The complex history of Skid Row – accurately described by some as 'the largest display of human misery in the United States of America' - can be traced back to the 1870's, when the railroads were built on the periphery of an emerging downtown and immigrant men flocked to the area to find work. As construction took hold, businesses

that catered to single males materialised – mostly brothels, taverns and single room occupancy (SRO) hotels^{cv}. With its year-round warm climates and liberal attitude, the area fast became known as a magnet to travellers and ‘drifters’.



Skid Row, Los Angeles

In 2002, newly appointed Los Angeles Police Department chief William Bratton announced a plan to clean up the area by aggressively enforcing an old ‘anti-camping’ ordinance. In April 2006, following complaints from a number of cited individuals, the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ruled that the city was in violation of the 8th and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and sections of the California Constitution. The court stated that ‘the LAPD cannot arrest people for sitting, lying, or sleeping on public sidewalks in Skid Row’^{cvii}.

Since this time, officials have tried – and failed – to clear Skid Row’s sidewalks of homeless people, namely by stepping up their search and arrest of vagrants who line the street corners. In 2016, as law enforcement tried to stem a spate of homicides and gang-related shootings while dealing with a growing homeless population;

- violent crime increased in Los Angeles for the third straight year;
- more than 290 people were killed in the city;
- homicides rose for the third year in a row^{cviii}.

Estimates place numbers of people sleeping rough in Skid Row today – predominantly single black males – between 8,000 11,000^{cix}. It is almost impossible to convey just how extreme the problem here is, as well as how barbaric the living conditions appear.

It was impossible to count the number of tents which line the sidewalks; sidewalk, after sidewalk, after sidewalk. I was stunned, shocked and disturbed by the scale of homelessness here. Driving from Beverly Hills, I felt as though I had entered into a third world country and the experience moved me to my very core.

- The tents of Skid Row are home to men, women and children;
- Nine in 10 homeless Skid Row women have experienced physical or sexual violence;
- There are reported occurrences of rape, violent crime and homicide on a daily basis^{CX}.

It is difficult to put into words just how bleak and hopeless a life without a home in America can be. It appears that if a person is lacking in a robust, sustainable support system and subsequently falls into circumstances where they lose income, employment, health or their home, it can be near-impossible to recover from the crisis to regain normality and stability again. During my Fellowship, I met individuals who were sleeping on the streets through spousal death, sexual and domestic abuse, redundancy and business failures. I also met people who were disabled, had become too unwell to manage their homes and those who had been negatively impacted as a result of being the victim of crime.

Trapped in a cycle of merely trying to survive day-to-day, I couldn't help but feel hopeless on their behalf as I pondered what their outlook would be.



Homeless in Hollywood: Visiting the Walk of Fame was a surreal and moving experience

Pro-Active Response

On arrival in San Francisco, I was disheartened to find another large outdoor rough-sleeping community, with homeless individuals visible in most public areas; sometimes breathtakingly so. The latest 'technology boom' has brought an extraordinary burst of economic growth to the region but this is also impacting dramatically on the local housing market, presenting particularly challenging circumstances for low-income households. The city of San Francisco has the second highest homeless population in the United States of America, with 795 people homeless for every 100,000 residents^{CXI}.

Whilst touring the city, I was highly impressed by the contemporary methods of engagement I witnessed in practice, with Lava Mae (a mobile shower unit) and Tender Cuts (a mobile hairdressing unit) working in partnership to provide no-condition care and support to all in need, whilst concurrently building rapport with the most disengaged members of the community. I observed this successful engagement model in operation, as contrasting organisations worked together to restore the dignity of the dispossessed from their shared central street location close to San Francisco's City Hall.

Such services for the homeless here are vital; during my Fellowship, I learnt that it is near-impossible for the street homeless in America to attend to their personal care needs, clean their clothes, wash - or even visit the toilet. For women, this is one of the only places they can attend to their sanitary needs in a dignified manner.



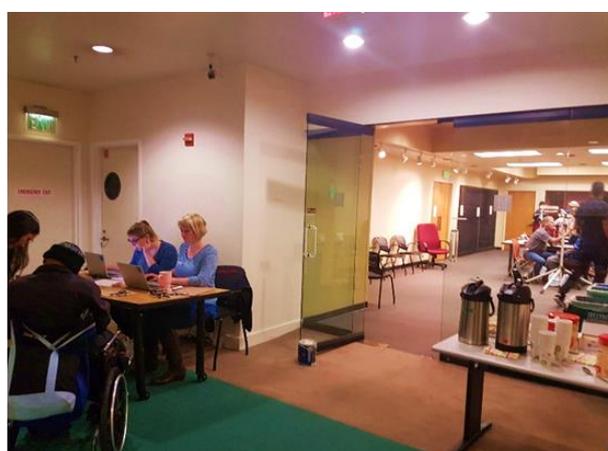
Love, laughter and haircuts for all in need outside San Francisco City Hall

Lava Mae's eye-catching branding and prominent rotating location helps to raise awareness of the plight of the homeless and encourages members of the public to assist with pro-active and positive response. Inspired and wanting to give back to her community, local business woman and barber shop owner Raquel Fajardo joined to extend her services; love, laughs and haircuts for those in need. Whist Tender Cuts has organically grown, it is now a valuable partner in the extensive network of crisis respondents in San Francisco, which as a city excels in demonstrating a unified, strategic approach to supporting the most vulnerable.

Lava Mae and Tender Cuts are connected via Project Homeless Connect, founded in 2004 by then-Mayor Gavin Newsom and the San Francisco Department of Public Health. Project Homeless Connect (PHC) was intended as a way to bring necessary services to people experiencing homelessness and they take a totally unique approach to service delivery. By mobilising city and community agencies, as well as thousands of volunteers, Project Homeless Connect are highly effective at ensuring service users receive a broad selection of holistic care within an extensive range of dignified settings. I was honoured to meet with Executive Director Kara Zordel and her staff team as they generously shared both the ethos and the infrastructure behind their continued impressive success.

Healthcare

The United States of America has no National Healthcare Service like that of the United Kingdom and during my Fellowship, I learnt that it is near impossible for those experiencing chronic homelessness to afford to pay for insurance premiums which connect them with medical care and services. For this reason, ill health amongst people who are experiencing homelessness is cited as a major concern by industry professionals on both the East and West Coasts of the USA. Project Homeless Connect elegantly demonstrate that solutions to social challenges can be found by skill-sharing and creating value in voluntary opportunities; one example of this is the extremely popular physician-led healthcare clinic, staffed entirely by qualified and experienced volunteers.



Project Homeless Connect hosting a popular vision clinic

I was able to observe a session in progress and the professional standard of care on offer to patients was evident. Service users are able to access optical exams and connections to medical care providers, as well as prescription glasses. The benefits to the operation of a service such as this are far-reaching;

- Allows engagement with the most displaced;
- Makes improvements to health and well-being;
- Is an opportunity to form a relationship and provide further support.

Whilst this drop-in clinic is representative of just one of the many varied support sessions held within their centralised San Francisco offices each day, the unique selling point of Project Homeless Connect has to be PHC 65: regular major one-stop-shop events where individuals experiencing homelessness crisis are able to receive assistance from more than 150 service providers, all under one roof.

Participants are engaged from across the public, private and voluntary sectors, with the roadshow events proving to be hugely successful for all involved. With access to multiple services under one roof, people who are homeless can engage with employment counsellors, mental health professionals, housing assistance programmes and personal care treatments, all on the same day. The goal is to ensure participants have all the tools necessary to rebuild what they have lost and move forward in life. As of April 2016, close to 55,000 volunteers had provided services to more than 85,000 homeless and low-income San Franciscans via PHC 65 pop-up events^{cxii}.



PHC 65. Image by Project Homeless Connect

Project Homeless Connect excels in linking the most vulnerable city inhabitants to vital resources throughout the district and it is an extremely popular organisation, with partner agencies locally, as well as across the United States of America. Project

Homeless Connect has become a nation-wide movement to increase access to services for the homeless and engages a national audience in finding solutions for homelessness, as well as its wider-associated issues. Gaining attention from international colleagues, the model has now been replicated internationally in examples such as Sydney Homeless Connect in Australia^{cxiii}.

With more shelter space availability and less tolerance to vagrancy in central areas, New York has a far less visible street homeless population than California. This means that engagement and rapport-building with the displaced can be even more precarious and challenging than for operators on the West Coast. Back on My Feet seeks to revolutionise the way our society approaches homelessness, utilising a unique fitness-based model to engage with those who have lost their way. Work undertaken by Back on My Feet demonstrates that if you first restore confidence, strength and self-esteem, individuals are better equipped to tackle the road ahead and move towards employment, homes and better lives.

Operating in 11 major cities coast-to-coast, Back on My Feet uses the power of running and community spirit to motivate and support individuals, every step of the way from homelessness to independence. Recruiting its members (individuals experiencing homelessness) at homeless and residential facilities around the country, they begin with a commitment to run three days a week, in the early morning. After 30 days in the programme, members with 90% attendance earn the opportunity to move into the second phase of the programme called Next Steps, which provides educational support, job training programmes, employment partnership referrals and access to housing resources. Almost 80% of individuals who start the programme move into Next Steps.

Success is measured not only by the positive health impact of miles run, but also by how many individuals obtain education, employment and stable housing. Guided by New York City Chapter's Executive Director, Terence Gerchberg, I gained an understanding of how Back on My Feet guide vulnerable individuals to undertake a complete rehabilitation programme, which often yields phenomenal outcomes. Members of the public join as volunteers, meeting the running groups in the early morning covering between one and five miles. Runners, joggers and walkers of all abilities are invited to become a part of the continually-evolving community.

Since launching in 2007, Back on My Feet (BoMF) has served more than 5,500 individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness, in addition to engaging more than 100,000 volunteers and supporters. At any given time, 80% of BoMF members are participating in the advanced 'Next Steps' programme, working to secure employment and stable housing. Within six months of becoming a Back on My Feet Alumnus:

- 90% of members maintain their employment;
- 60% receive a wage increase;
- 20% achieve a promotion.

To date, Back on My Feet members have run a collective 500,000 miles and obtained more than 3,500 jobs and homes^{cxiv}. By combating homelessness through their innovative programme, Back on My Feet proves that there is hope: Individuals can achieve things they never thought possible and that there are people who will willingly support them - without judgment - along the way.



Running in Manhattan with Back on my Feet. Image by Back on My Feet

KEY LEARNINGS

- Sweeps of 'Tent Cities' are highly ineffective and appear to exasperate an already rapidly-evolving problem. That being said, it is crucial we do not normalise the visual appearance of human beings living in dangerous temporary encampments. This must not become a common monument of our cities and their failings to adequately respond to the needs of vulnerable people;
- The voluntary sector has a vast and untapped bank of skills, which is ready and able to be harnessed and utilised. This must be channelled effectively;
- Grassroot groups, ie. community, voluntary, non-profit, charitable and faith-led organisations can assist to bridge the gap between parties with conflicting approaches or beliefs and provide immeasurable value in services provided;
- Street support agencies should carefully consider the aid they deliver and techniques they deploy, and whether, ultimately, they contribute to a person's recovery, or their demise;
- The charitable and voluntary sector has ability to generate revenue and should be guided and encouraged to explore development of social enterprise and mission-led business models;
- Person-centred aspiration has to be part of engagement with the chronic homeless community – a individual must be given appropriate tools to see their future differently if they are to fully commit to making a significant lifestyle change.

EVALUATION OF FIELDWORK

Housing-Led Homelessness Response

'Housing First' is a modern homeless assistance approach that prioritises providing people who are experiencing the trauma of homelessness with permanent housing, as quickly as possible.

The principle of housing provision as a priority address to homelessness draws on overwhelming evidence that *all* people experiencing homelessness **can** achieve stability in permanent housing, *if* provided with appropriate levels and variants of accompanying holistic services and support. Housing priority is given to the homeless with little to no treatment pre-conditions, behavioural contingencies or barriers – and study after study has shown this approach to;

- yield higher housing retention rates;
- reduce the use of crisis services and institutions;
- and improve people's health and social outcomes^{CXV}.

'Housing First' approaches are based on the concept that an individual or household experiencing the crisis of homelessness has the first and primary need of obtaining somewhere to live, and that other issues affecting the household should – and can - be addressed once the safety and security of permanent accommodation has been obtained. In contrast, many traditional programmes operate from a model of 'housing readiness' — that is, that an individual or household must *first* address challenges that may have contributed to the episode of homelessness, *prior* to the re-entering of stable housing.

In San Francisco, one organisation which offers a lifeline to those who desperately need – but would be traditionally excluded from - mainstream housing options, is Delivering Innovation in Supportive Housing (DISH). Founded September 2006, DISH provide property management services for the Direct Access to Housing Programme, a project of the San Francisco Department of Public Health. The guiding principle for DISH was to be a small organisation dedicated to serving adults in a supportive housing environment, specifically for those experiencing substance abuse issues and complex physical and mental health challenges.

DISH aim to be a strong partner in the San Francisco city-collaborative effort to end and prevent homelessness; following proven 'Housing First' philosophy, DISH help to get people get off the streets, rebuild their lives and strengthen the communities around them. In the relatively short period of time the organisation has been operational they have obtained 6 housing sites; providing a semi-supported accommodation option for 450 occupants who would otherwise be on the streets. Residents generally arrive with a web of complex issues to work through and they are gently guided by an expert team of both in-house support staff and specialist external agencies.

I was attracted by this approach to 'no condition' stable housing and intrigued to learn more of the programme infrastructure which allows residents to occupy their accommodation for as long as they need to; some, for a lifetime. With a fundamental ethos not dissimilar to that of the pilot initiative I developed in 2013-15, in Greater Manchester, UK, I was keen to dissect the infrastructure behind the support services on offer, as well as the revenue and funding model which afforded the obvious high level of resident care.



Le Nain by DISH: a place filled with hope.

Le Nain Hotel is a four-story building, offering 86 housing units with additional communal living space, to seniors who are homeless and experiencing complex needs. Guided by manager Jack Mclean, I spent time touring facilities and meeting residents, most extraordinarily proud of their homely and comfortable surroundings. With many of Le Nain's occupants having previously survived within the notorious Tenderloin district - San Francisco's most dangerous neighbourhood, which has become a magnet for those with no home – occupants were keen to talk about their experiences of life before and after DISH; some relaying quite harrowing stories of their rapid descent from the 'American Dream' of middle-class suburbia, to the drug and crime riddled streets of San Francisco.

Tenant occupant Laurie invited me to see her studio space, proudly maintained and personalised to feel like home. Laurie, like all of the other housemates I conversed with, was highly complementary of the integrated care package she received; timetables of programmes including on-site nurse-led health clinics, life-skills training groups and education classes, as well as yoga, movie nights and birthday celebrations. Becoming suddenly homeless following spousal death, it is intervention such as this which in Laurie's own words, 'brought her back to life'. Today, she is a valuable member of the household community, providing crucial peer-peer support and companionship to fellow residents.



Before and After: Touring Le Nain with tenant Laurie

Co-Living

The prevalence of family estrangement and abandonment amongst those who sleep rough is alarming. All humans have a fundamental need to belong and maintain at least a minimum amount of lasting, positive and significant interpersonal relationships. Satisfying this need requires:

- (a) frequent, positive interactions with the same individuals;
- (b) engaging in these interactions within a framework of long-term, stable care and concern.

It is therefore unsurprising that a common theme across chronic homeless communities both nationally and internationally is the formation of cliques and groups which band together in order to survive the volatile living conditions which can be associated with sleeping in a built-up, urban area. Much of this 'street influence' can involve unsavoury or illegal activity and it is unhelpful for a person's recovery to retain a strong connection to this former destructive lifestyle. If we are to gently lead a person away from potential harm, we must provide a way for them to align with alternative peer or friendship groups.

The benefits of belonging to a community with positive focus and spending leisure time productively are too important to ignore. Those who reside in semi-shared space can save money, divide chores, enjoy group activities, form lasting friendships - and ultimately, provide a unique and invaluable source of support to each other through day-to-day life.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs - a theory in psychology proposed by Abraham Maslow in his 1943 paper 'A Theory of Human Motivation' - describes the stages of growth in

humans, with deficiency requirements including esteem, friendship and love, security and the meeting of physical needs^{cxvi}. The co-living model allows participants to meet - and sometimes exceed - goals each of these individual areas:

- Physical Needs: the provision of shelter and the meeting of primary needs such as food, clothing, personal hygiene facilities and health care;
- Security: safety of environment, combined with security of tenure, care packages and routine;
- Esteem: support, engagement and group activities which encourage personal development and development of self-confidence;
- Friendship and Love: shared experiences and social activities allow positive peer-peer relationships to form.

I was deeply touched by my visit to Le Nain; having spent the previous two weeks meeting people living outdoors, many who had seemingly – and almost understandably - lost all hope, here I found a place filled with belief and aspiration about the future. Residents are guided to integrate positively to resolve potential conflict in an appropriate manner. This approach appears to greatly assist in helping rebuild foundations for residents to move more easily into fulfilling relationships with others.

On reflection, is it feasible to expect individuals experiencing chronic homelessness to transition wholly independently to a totally private space, away from their peers and those they may see as their surrogate ‘family’?

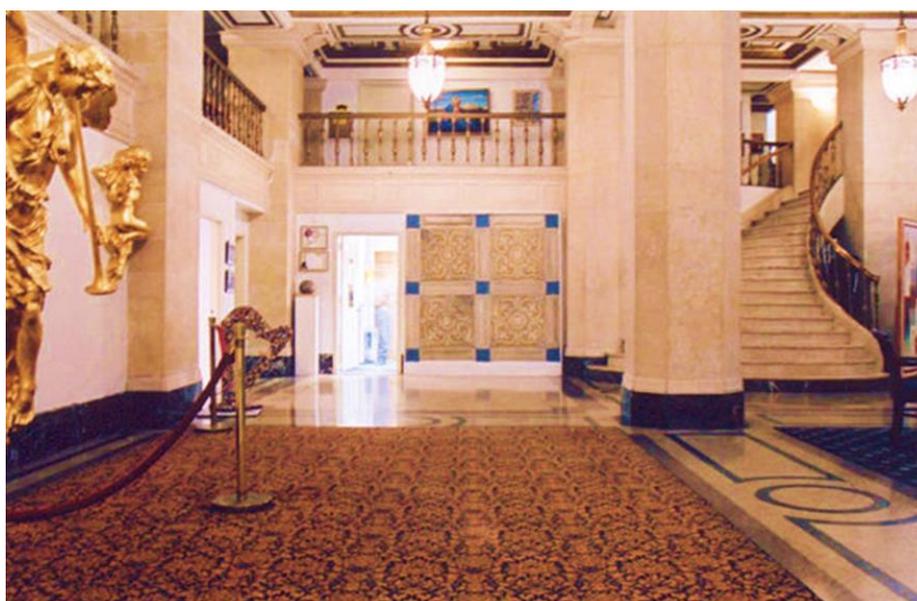
Further exploration of the co-living model as part of a long-term plan for chronic homeless address and rehabilitation is key to understanding the sustainability of solutions. Affording vulnerable people - and those who are perhaps perceived as ‘troubled’ - the opportunity to become part of a safe, supported and solution-focused community, where they are encouraged to thrive and guide others, surely has many undiscovered benefits. Furthermore, the co-housing (US) or House of Multiple Occupation (UK) model is a way to maximise both building space and rental return.

DISH demonstrate the street-to-home model with exceptional efficiency, recognising and humanising the vagrant on the sidewalk and allowing and empowering them to become part of their own solution and destiny. Residents are encouraged to interact and support each other’s journey and as individuals they are valued as assets in each member of the household’s recovery. DISH operate a rounded and whole service which is very much led by its members and residents and the success of its approach is evident at every angle.

Similar practice has been applied in New York, with the pioneering work undertaken by the internationally-acclaimed Breaking Ground (formally known as Common Ground). Breaking Ground revolutionised how New York City addressed homelessness in the 1990’s with its mission to strengthen society by developing and sustaining exceptional affordable housing options for homeless and vulnerable New Yorkers. The belief that **everyone** deserves a home is at the heart of everything Breaking Ground does.

- Breaking Ground’s ‘Street to Home’ programme reduced street homelessness by 87% in the 20-block area around Times Square and by 43% in the surrounding 230 blocks of west midtown;
- Breaking Ground has helped more than 175 adults – who had been homeless an average of 9.9 years – move from the streets directly into permanent housing;
- More than 90% of those housed are able to maintain their accommodation^{cxvii}.

Beginning with a single building in Times Square, Breaking Ground are now New York City’s largest provider of supportive housing, owning and/or operating 19 properties with a total of 3,530 apartments. For chronically homeless people, Breaking Ground create safe, secure housing with essential on-site support services to help them address the psychosocial, mental and physical health problems that are obstacles to their independent living. For those at risk of homelessness, their affordable housing options provide an all-important safety net.



The magnificent Times Square project, New York City. Image by Breaking Ground

Offering a variety of housing-led solutions, Breaking Ground are renowned for conducting their work with respect, kindness, and persistence and this is reflective in the form of both high long-term stability rates and the strong sense of trust in the communities in which they work. When engaging with those who are chronically homeless, staff members aim to support each person individually to determine what is best for them: their outreach team meet people ‘where they are’ – both literally and figuratively. They explain this means in practice, conducting a psychiatric evaluation on a street corner, or arranging specialist workers who can speak to clients in their native languages. This personalised approach provides a lifeline to those most

displaced from mainstream society; those who are most often ignored, those who need help the most.

More than half of homeless single adults in the United States struggle with substance abuse issues, mental illness and chronic health problems like HIV/AIDS – factors that contribute to and maintain their homelessness^{cxviii}. Breaking Ground quite radically state that individuals facing these challenges are not helped by street-based support services, shelters or soup kitchens. In fact, they identify that the chronically homeless community often reject such short-term fixes, instead cycling repeatedly through emergency rooms, psychiatric hospitals and prisons – the costliest ‘shelters’ of all.

Supported housing, by contrast, is a permanent and humane solution, one which Breaking Ground reveals to be a financially attractive option for the city: The annual cost to provide a single adult with supported housing is \$24,190, or less than half the cost of providing emergency, in-patient, and other crisis services to an unoused individual with mental illness^{cxix}.



Breaking Ground's corporate office, Manhattan, New York

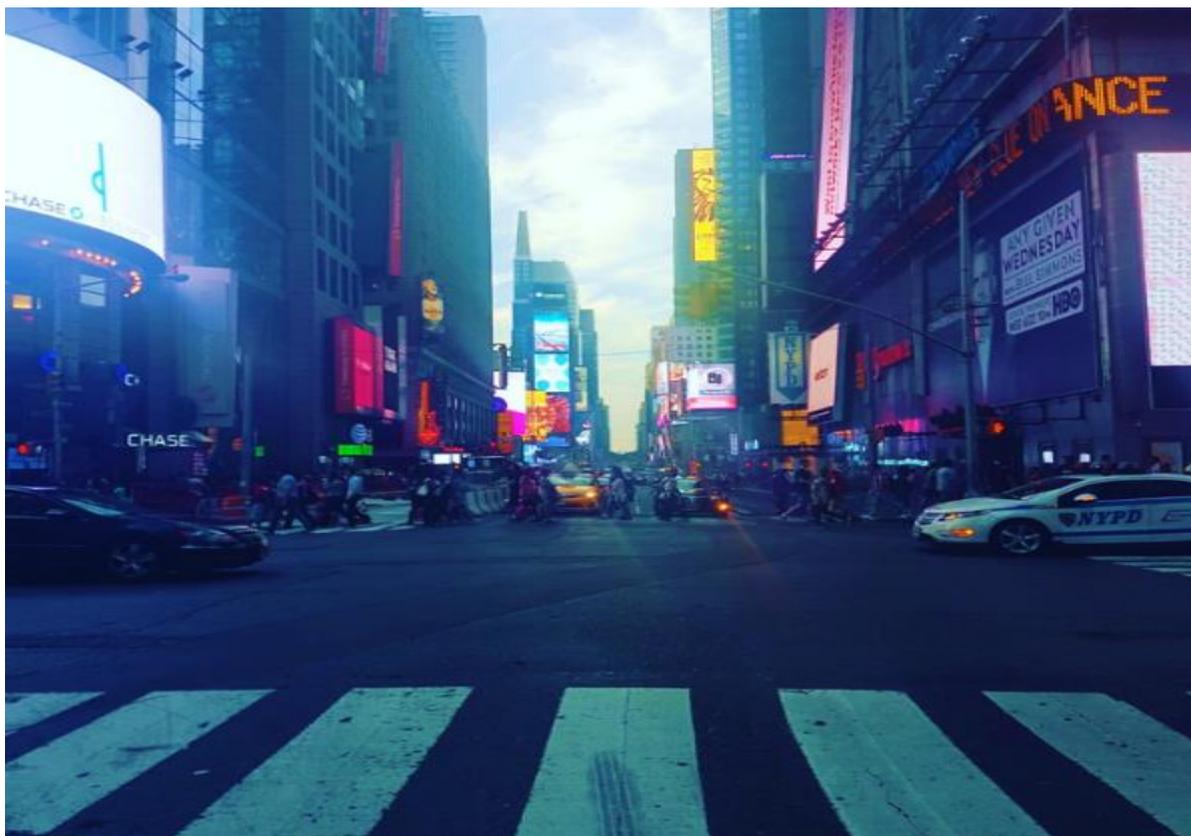
Leading in their stunning execution of the ‘Housing First’ philosophy, Breaking Ground place no barriers on applicants when offering housing and support programmes and they aim to reach clients at every stage of their journey; from the streets to home, during illness and health, and from youth to old age. How do they rehabilitate individuals who have such varied, complex and challenging needs?

In extending a person-centred approach to all they aim to serve, ultimately, Breaking Ground foster strong, vibrant communities, which are contained within beautiful living spaces and complimented by life-enriching experiences. This unique style of interaction enables their household residents to harbour a sense of belonging and inspires both individual and collective aspiration about the future. Breaking Ground

identify and evidence that once a person is stably housed, they are vastly more likely to achieve sobriety and other important needs for healthier and sustainable living.

Operating with complex infrastructure to support a commercial business plan with mission at its heart, Breaking Ground incorporate innovative elements of social enterprise within their funding and revenue models; one example of this is the leasing of public event space, another is hosting a Ben & Jerry's ice cream store within the ground floor of one of their residential buildings. I was interested in the thoughts of Vice President of External Affairs, Jeff Scheuer, when analysing adaptations of in-house social enterprise models for a UK-based Breaking Ground-style project; the inclusion of such allowing the development of training and employment opportunities which would fall within the bracket of rehabilitation, social isolation reduction, community engagement and pro-active tenant support.

I was grateful for the critique and compliment of the conceptual ideas I shared, having the opportunity to discuss both opportunities and challenges within the transferable lessons identified.



Times Square, New York

KEY LEARNINGS

- Housing First undoubtedly ends homelessness and should be used as a core element of homelessness prevention or response strategies deployed in Britain;
- Importantly, the provision of housing alone will not eradicate homelessness. Vulnerable people need a varying and interchangeable level of support when transitioning to stability from chaotic lifestyles;
- Rehabilitative support packages should be service-user led and encourage aspiration to achieve within a person's own realm;
- Much of the successful practice I encountered held a strong connection to client input. Affording challenged individuals the opportunity to become productive and positively create within a safe and controlled environment can be an excellent channel for previously destructive behaviours;
- Successful practice in accommodation design includes elements of socialisation and privacy, with community building key to overall sustainability rates;
- Creativity around partnerships can enable resource pooling in order to achieve combined housing and support goals;
- Calculating 'Impact per Dollar' is a necessary tool in demonstrating cost-effectiveness in order to secure governmental seed funding, public or corporate sector finance and/or support;
- Centralised, collaborative working across sectors will be essential in meeting Housing First ambitions in the United Kingdom.

EVALUATION OF FIELDWORK

Creative Community Living Space

For most Americans, housing is the single biggest expense in their personal budget – for those living alone, the figure equates to more than 40% of after-tax income^{cxx} – and so an increasingly popular way to reduce this cost is to share housing expenses with others. The co-housing concept, which originated in Denmark and made its way to the United States of America during the late 1980's, could be a relatively unexplored solution to homelessness which is cost-effective for building supply, as well as investment cashflow, expenditure and return.

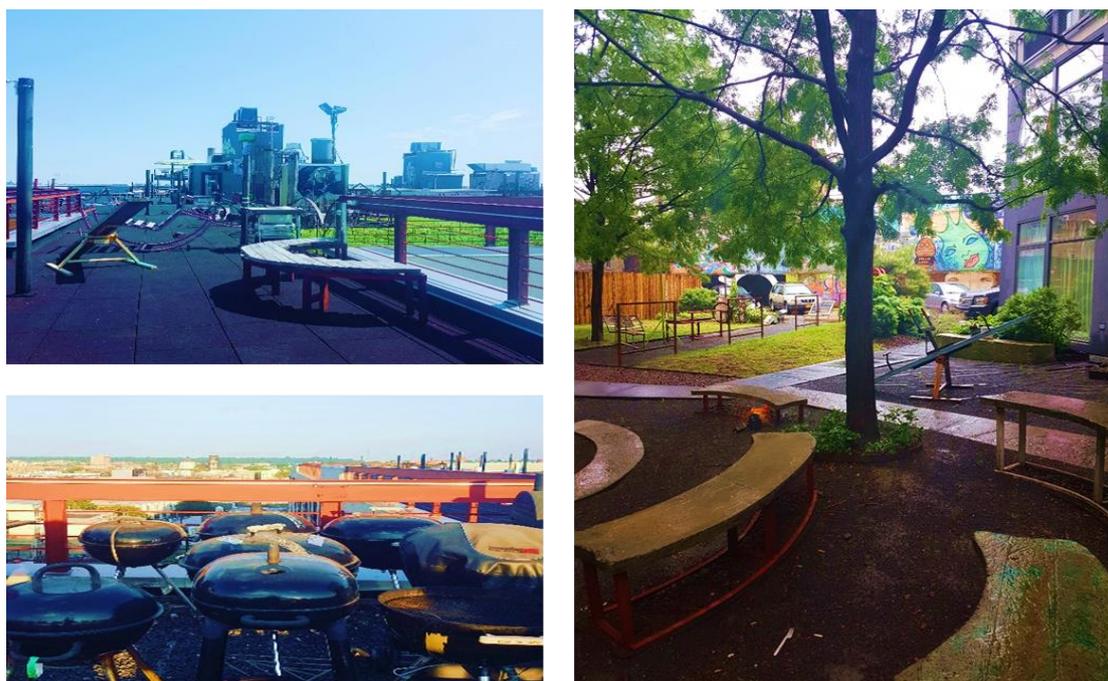
Castle Braid, a 125-apartment complex in Brooklyn, New York, is a stunning visual example of innovation in design and build for the formation of a creative community living environment. A free-space which is continually evolving, Castle Braid is described by its owners as a 'vision of interplay between the individual and the vibrant community they've helped to create'. The New York Post chose the building – home of artists, intellectuals, entrepreneurs and inventors – as one of the five most interesting residential sites in New York^{cxxi}.



Castlebraid's entrance hall

The developer, Mayer Schwartz, says he aimed to establish an organically-growing community of 'young professionals in the creative areas'— by having them live together, sharing their skills and pooling their talents. This ethos allows people of a similar nature to not just co-habit, but socialise, work and ultimately, create together. Private living space is complimented by communal areas which are regularly filled by residents and their music, artwork, performance and dance. Whilst visiting I observed communal shows, classes, parties and dining in action.

Amenities— which include a gym, library, screening room, games room and 6,000-square-foot courtyard, barbeque area and attached dog park – afford the goal of connecting residents to be achieved with outstanding execution. Intending to be inclusive to those who can contribute positively to the community, Mr Schwartz has been known to reward residents with periods of free rent in exchange for their artistic services. During my visit, I learnt that a sculptor received six months of no-payment living in return for his creating of Castle Braid’s custom-made iron gate.



Castlebraid’s communal outdoor space

The apartment complex hosts a private Facebook group with over 500 active members, with the encouragement to connect with your neighbour extending to an online forum and database of resident skill. The wider community are regularly invited to enjoy the former ribbon factory and all it has to offer, with events for locals regularly held inside the building. The result is a space where residents are free to explore and form close bonds as they add immeasurable value to their continually evolving living environment. There is a strong sense of community and a homely feel throughout the beautifully crafted space, which is highly respected and nurtured by its occupants.

Whilst this residential building project is not responding directly to homelessness or affordable housing issues, there are important lessons we can learn from the design, structure and management of such a unique establishment. One-of-a-kind community-orientated housing services can be enhanced by incorporating their own unique quirks; those which encourage cohabitants to respect and connect with their space, as well as one another. Castle Braid is living proof of the power of collective aspirations,

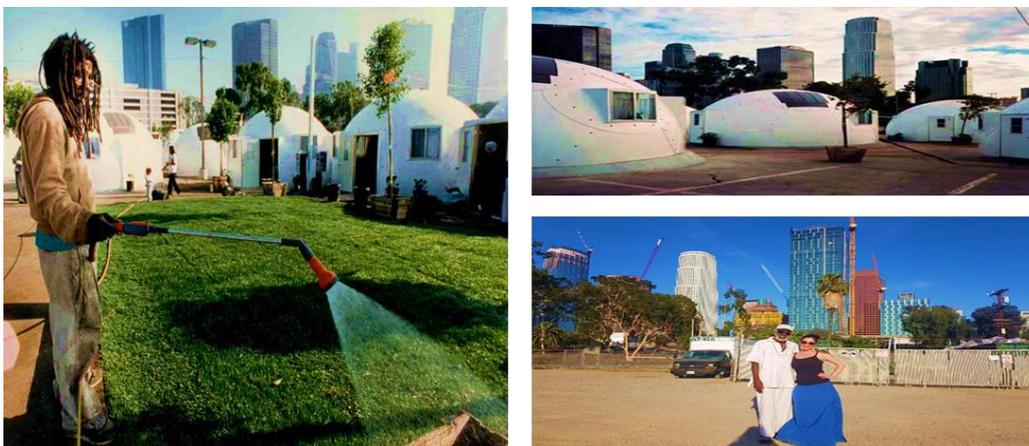
allowing the positive integration of a culturally diverse community within an exceptionally well-cared for and aesthetically beautiful living environment.

Structural Alternatives

Keen to further assess alternative co-living concepts for those individuals experiencing challenging social issues, one of my most unusual visits was to investigate an unconventional solution to a lacking in affordable building options for the homeless and displaced; one with community living at its very core. Theodore "Ted" Hayes, Jr. is founder of Justiceville USA, a non-profit organisation which explores structural alternatives for people who are unable – or even unwilling – to return to a 'mainstream' lifestyle. In 1993, Ted founded 'Dome Village' as a utopian vision to end homelessness in the city of Los Angeles, welcoming the needy into a small urban community of 18 dome structures on a vacant piece of land.

Each dome – 20 feet in diameter and 12 feet tall – offered a radical and unique, long-term or transitional solution, with space and security for men, women, couples and families with children, as well as their pets. Voluntary support staff provided residents with day-to-day assistance and included within the complex were designated communal spaces for life-enriching activities. A large central dome containing shared kitchen facilities encouraged social interaction around community mealtimes and encouraged people to interact. The village fast developed a supportive, family environment, recognising from the very beginning that people needed to be engaged socially, but would also require their solitude and privacy.

Founded in an old abandoned parking lot next to a freeway in downtown LA, the dome units cost around \$10,000 each to build; constructed of polyester fiberglass, were relatively easy to assemble, repair and maintain. During the thirteen-years the village was in operation hundreds of homeless people – singles, couples and families – were given a safe environment where they could re-join with society and begin to thrive. The aim was to gradually and gently transition displaced individuals to stable jobs and communities, with Los Angeles Councilman Ed Reyes, whose district encompassed the village, praising it for its innovative approach at the time^{cxxii}.



Now and then: Theodore 'Ted' Hayes and Los Angeles' Dome Village

Whilst in operation, Dome Village provided a radical, yet simple and cost-effective solution to safely and simply supporting those who were displaced or vulnerable. However, on August 31, 2006, the inhabitants were served with eviction as the result of a vast increase to the land's rent, since its inception over a decade earlier. Most of those who were displaced by the closure were offered emergency Section 8 vouchers and today most are in permanent housing. Many are still in contact with founders and supporters and report fond memories of their time living within this rare and unique community.

Modern Alternatives

Perhaps slightly ahead of its time in the 1990's, today in 2016 the Dome Village would not appear out of place amongst one of America's many residential 'tiny home' villages. The 'tiny home' movement is a description for the architectural and social evolution which advocates living simply in small homes, a way of existence which is becoming increasingly desirable in a modern consumerism-aware world. Tiny homes can allow ingenious use of small spaces, paving the way for exploration into the construction of easy-to-build, durable, mid-term affordable housing. Micro-unit accommodation could prove a popular way to rapidly construct inexpensive, compact, habitual space which has real viability for the affordable marketplace.

Across the globe, residential property is increasing in value and so a key aspect of this Fellowship involved the vital exploration in exceptional design, build and structure of affordable, sustainable housing options. In order to increase housing supply for creative use within the United Kingdom, there are two key areas to investigate:

- 1.) Ingenious ways of adapting existing buildings which are readily available and convertible;
- 2.) Newly forming of habitable space, construction of which is both practical and economical.

Creating additional housing for more people without forcing out existing residents is a key dilemma of the housing crisis, in urban areas across the United States of America, as well here in Britain. The micro-living movement allows exploration of community housing methods which are inclusive for all, with the modern trend seeing 'tiny home' villages continue to sweep across the USA. Whilst it is difficult to get an accurate estimate of how many people reside in 'tiny homes' across the United States of America, there are a growing number of online resource tools which can help to identify existing and upcoming locations^{cxiii}.

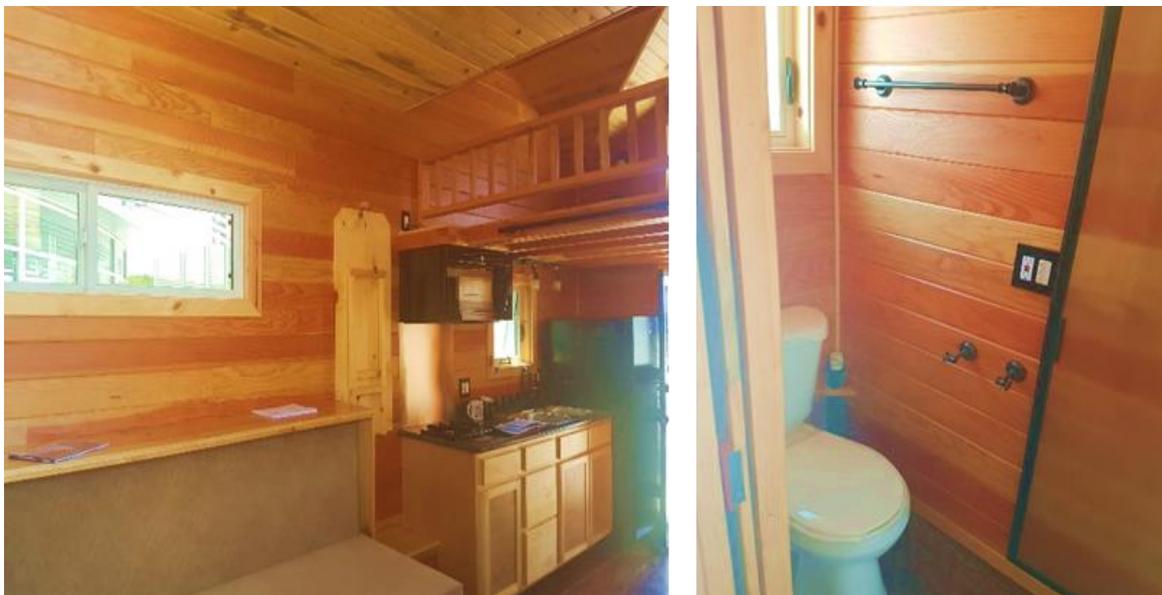
'Tiny homes' generally contain all the essential facilities expected of a one-bedroom residence, ingeniously allowing admirable use of a compact dimensional area. Tiny SMART House, an internationally recognised, fully licensed recreational vehicle manufacturer and custom tiny home builder located in Albany, Oregon, build custom units up to 12' wide and 44' long, to a maximum of 400 sq ft. They advise that typically, 'tiny home' living space footprint (which excludes the trailer tongue and width of the walls) ranges from approximately 120 to 320 sq ft, compared with the average UK one-bedroom home 495 sq ft^{cxiv}. Standard specification new-build homes in the UK

can be constructed for approximately £626.48 per square meter^{cxxv}, however I observed budget tiny home structures in the USA with construction costs as minimal as \$80 per square meter. Generally, costs range between \$10,000 - \$80,000 for a completed unit^{cxxvi}.

Using 'tiny home' methods to maximise potential output of residential building projects at home, we can diversify available space with adaptations such as;

- replacing doors with sliding walls;
- adding multi-purpose furniture;
- making use of sleeping decks;
- installing retractable drawers for appliances.

Likewise, we can build upwards to incorporate storage and reveal a larger area of floor space to work with. If each new development in the UK were able to further increase project efficiency by better utilisation of available space, could additional units of accommodation be added to the design of future building projects? Would mass-adoption of these actions make a great enough impact to significantly increase housing supply to those who need it most? Could abandoned or derelict buildings be converted economically in order to safely house communities of people who are estranged from mainstream society?



Inside a custom-made 'Tiny Smart Home'

KEY LEARNINGS

- Creative application of design, space utilisation and mixtures of building materials can enable the construction of futuristic accommodation options which can meet the needs of diverse occupants;
- We can take lead from tiny home design to look for more cost-effective refurbishment and construction methods and micro-living environments can be replicated within studio space and houses of multiple occupation;
- Revitalising and returning empty and/or disused buildings to the local housing market can have a markedly positive impact on its community and residents;
- Encouraging the creative input of residents promotes social interaction and can assist in the formation of harmonious energy within a shared-living space, as well as enhancing a building's features and design;
- There is a holistic element to incorporating artistic space within a living environment and this almost undoubtedly contributes to positive health and well-being; the more connected a resident is to their surroundings, the more likely they are to make that space a 'home';
- When aiming for residents to effectively share communal space, the availability of constructive activities and/or leisure amenities can help to break down barriers and allow meaningful relationships to form. Integration of housemates within semi-shared accommodation can be greatly enhanced with technology based tools.

EVALUATION OF FIELDWORK

Mission-Led Enterprise: Collaborative Working

One area of exceptional practice identified across my entire Fellowship was the individual and collective value creation in forming collaborative-working models; the establishment of mutually-beneficial business relationships between SMEs, large corporations, investors, governmental agencies, volunteers – and crucially, the social-innovators who believe they can create measurable change.

Fieldwork quickly identified that strength in professional relationships was a strong theme in each and every organisational infrastructure I analysed whilst in the United States of America: Ultimately, none of the service providers I visited would be in existence, let alone producing exceptional monetary and social value, without effective collaboration and resource sharing between all contributing parties.

The heart of Project Homeless Connect is working together through diversity and this organisation demonstrate the mutual benefit in inter-sector supporting relationships magnificently. With much to compare to the ideology of my early career work, which aimed to ‘bridge the gap’ between sectors and services, Project Homeless Connect excel in their ability to link the public, private and third sectors by utilising the strengths, talents and resources of all. Not one single service, approach or organisation has the power to solve homelessness alone; collectively, so much can be achieved.

Project Homeless Connect identify that corporate partners are vital stakeholders in ending homelessness in San Francisco, with business groups representing 52% of volunteers at each large event they host^{cxvii}. Kara Zordel, Executive Director of Best Practice, revealed that creating valuable substance and reward for each party is a vital element of effective inter-sector collaboration. It is necessary for *all* contributors to receive something of value and subsequently benefit from the effort of their participation. Otherwise, why would their motivation to be involved remain continuous?

As I travelled, I saw variants of this theory in practice and this signified the idea that it simply isn’t viable for any organisation to be wholly dependent on an increasing level of gratuity in order to provide a continuous and/or good quality service. From earliest times ‘non-profits’ have been what sociologists refer to as ‘dual identity’ or even ‘conflicting multiple identity’ organisations; they are socially-focused, yet operate in a profit-oriented market economy. They draw heavily on voluntary contributions of time and money, yet are expected to meet professional standards of performance and efficiency. In America, it is evident that this cross-over has identified many advantages and there is much evidence of successful integration and collaboration between sectors and services.

Recent research into corporate social responsibility in Europe, North America and Asia notes that philanthropy reaches its height in North America^{cxviii} and when examining the infrastructure behind ‘non-profit’ models in the USA, I was astounded to discover that the majority of public service providers I encountered were largely financed with funds which had evolved from the private sector, via one route or another; corporate

responsibility programmes, creative sponsorship arrangements and social investment funds being the backbones of most. With continuing reductions to public spending in the UK, on reflection, is it sustainable for any scaling organisation to be wholly and permanently reliant on an uninterrupted supply of state handouts and/or public donations?

The international case study examination I have undertaken demonstrates that for flourishing organisations which are successfully demonstrating an ability to end and prevent homelessness in their chosen regions, diverse partnerships are essential; not just in providing financial assistance, but programmatic guidance, employee engagement and board support. Ultimately, the viability and growth of any mission-led enterprise project could be determined by the strength in its external partnerships, as well as the quality and consistency of the third-party support it engages.

Corporate Partnerships

Designer fashion brand Bombas, capitalising on the growing and increasingly popular movement of ‘buy one give one’ retail, provides a shining example of corporate partnership in action, via its supporting of Back on My Feet; an organisation focused on helping homeless people connect with essential community resources, whilst gaining independence, better health and living skills. Since Bombas’ inception in 2013, more than 1 million pairs of specially-designed hard-wearing socks have been donated to the homeless, many via this unique business partnership.

An arrangement such as this allows value creation at both sides: Back on My Feet can align with a trusted consumer brand, increase their resources, develop their network



With Dave Heath and Terence Gerchberg, Bombas/BoMF HQ

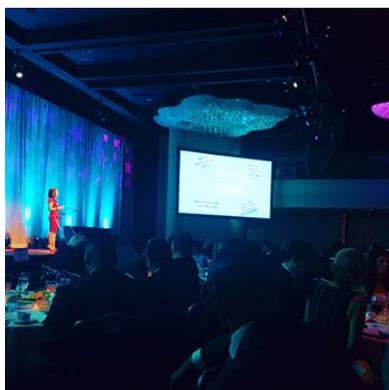
and provide a better level of service to their members. Bombas are able their meet personal, social and corporate responsibilities and desires by giving back to those in need, but their generous actions also allow the raising of their business profile and positive brand identity. Corporate Social Responsibility in all forms presents the opportunity to generate awareness; in this case, via promotion of the philanthropic work that the Bombas team and Back on My Feet collectively undertake^{CXXIX}.

The relationship between Back on My Feet and Bombas is not driven by a need to make money, it is driven by a shared desire to make the world a better place. The two organisations work side-by-side in a shared Manhattan office space, an environment which has become synonymous with social enterprise and the true definition of what it means to be a social entrepreneur; to make creative use of the techniques used by businesses in order to develop, fund and implement solutions to social, cultural, or environmental issues.

Corporate Social Responsibility

In 2011, as part of its 'Take Care' initiative to promote happiness and well-being within their company, hotel chain Marriott International, Inc. established a corporate partnership arrangement with national non-profit Back on My Feet. Marriott Int. has been an avid supporter of Back on My Feet since the organisation's start-up period in Philadelphia and the hospitality leader provides tremendous support in each of the 11 U.S. cities in which the non-profit organisation currently operates.

Whist I was visiting New York, I was honoured to be invited to attend the Back on My Feet New York City chapter's annual benefit, where the organisation celebrated four years of combating homelessness with their innovative running-based model. This evening saw Arne Sorenson, President and Chief Executive Officer of Marriott International, Inc. awarded with the Global Corporate Pacesetter Award, recognising outstanding individuals and organisations that have set the benchmark as leaders in corporate philanthropy^{CXXX}. I was inspired to discover that Mr Sorenson supports Back on My Feet at all levels, from proudly hosting the evening of celebration at the Marriot Times Square Marquis hotel, to running the streets of Manhattan at 5:00am with Terence Gerchberg and the Back on My Feet community.



BoMF NY CEO Katy Sheratt at the annual benefit, Marriot Marquis, Times Square

Why do leading global brands such as Marriott International Inc. believe that engagement in positive social activity is such an important and integral aspect of modern business? 2015 was another highly successful year for the international hotel chain, with adjusted earnings before interest and taxes rising 13 percent to \$1.7 billion^{cxxxix}. With social value creation deeply intertwined across its thriving business activity, it is apparent that charitable giving is no longer an obligation which organisations such as Marriott International Inc. feel they need to fulfil, but has become central to the operations and strategic plan of many of the best companies today.

According to Michael Stroik from the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy, giving back has become such an integral part of business that many global markets possess the belief that societal improvement is an essential measure of business performance. Stroik provides some of the current trends in corporate social responsibility:

- 1) Linking a corporation's performance and corporate societal investments;
- 2) Aligning philanthropic efforts with their goals for impact;
- 3) Increasing employee engagement;
- 4) Increasing non-cash methods of giving^{cxxxix}.

To date, Marriott Int. has generously donated more than \$1 million in financial and in-kind support to Back on My Feet and as a national employment partner, it has provided valuable training and job opportunities to its members. This partnership has grown organically over time and the association brings tremendous value on each side: for Marriott Int. this has allowed a company which is primarily driven by profit to foster an atmosphere in which its associates feel proud of their company's workplace and its contribution to the improvement of society. This positive association can only carry over to its customers - and ultimately, make great impact on its financial business.

Corporate sponsors are not the only in-direct financial benefactors of creative business structuring for mission-led enterprises. Back on My Feet seek to engage all with the capacity to serve; volunteers, donors and the public, as well as their corporate partners. This unified co-ordination to address social issues in a collaborative fashion demonstrates both social and monetary value: every \$1 invested in Back on My Feet returns nearly \$2.50 to the local community through increased economic output from employment and reduction in costs for shelter, medical services, incarceration and addiction treatment^{cxxxix}. This excellent example of collaborative homelessness address shows that via a common bond, meaningful relationships can be developed which benefit individuals, communities, businesses, and ultimately, society.

Corporate social responsibility is a critical area for further exploration as potential support for a movement of mission-led enterprise to address homelessness in the United Kingdom. More and more business leaders recognise that their company's future is increasingly intertwined with the needs and demands of society. Is it morally or socially acceptable that corporate companies are generating huge profits in cities

where local people are resultantly being priced out of their own housing market? In the USA, the answer to this question is no. Should large businesses operating within British cities and towns be held more accountable for supporting disadvantaged members of society, not just with their financial resources, but with their industry expertise, business acumen and marketplace knowledge? In my professional opinion, they should – and there is unprecedented reward to be achieved in doing so.

With funding being cited by most notable literature as a major challenge for social enterprises^{cxxxiv}, it is imperative we explore alternative and creative financing options for essential public services, as well as practical assistance for innovative start-up organisations and those which are established with promising potential of growth. Internationally, we can learn from best-practice case studies where collaborative partnership models enable self-sustaining socially-focused businesses to purposely serve their communities and not only grow, but thrive. How integral these partnerships are in success is a fascinating and very relevant area for further exploration within this field.



Manhattan, New York

KEY LEARNINGS

- We must identify routes to work in a conjoined fashion and operate more productively across sectors if we are to effectively end and prevent homelessness;
- The public, private, third and voluntary sectors, as well as the public, are able and willing to assist in the quest to end homelessness. We must find a way to harness this outpouring of knowledge, ideas and energy;
- We can demonstrate value creation in inter-sector consortium building via the promotion previously hidden assets and resources;
- The provision of education and support will give cross-sector partnerships the opportunity to arise, develop, mature and reach their full potential;
- The value and benefit of Corporate Social Responsibility is little-known and vastly under-utilised in Britain;
- Social enterprise can help to bridge the gap between sectors and services, allowing exploration of revenue generation for traditional non-profit models. Can we encourage the corporate sector to engage pro-actively and share skill-set and knowledge in order for this sector to become more solution-driven and commercially focused?
- Can we empower SMEs and corporations to meet social responsibility by allowing them to become part of the solution?

EVALUATION

Homelessness is one of the greatest social injustices of our time. Because of its complexity, the vast array of interlaying and contributing factors, as well as the broad scale of effected party circumstance, it has previously been assumed that it would be challenging to develop a blanket prevention and response strategy, which would be inclusive to all. Nonetheless, modern times reveal that 'Housing First' cannot be dismissed as a pioneering and radical method of ending homelessness today.

'Housing First' is an evidenced-based practice which is now widely-cited across developed nations as the most effective approach to ending all types of homelessness. Homelessness – the state of having no home – cannot and will not end, without affording the provision of a housing option for *all* those who are lacking.

On the 30th September 2016, California Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 1380, establishing a Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council and making California a 'Housing First' state^{cxxxv}. SB 1380 requires that all state programmes targeted towards ending homelessness incorporate the core components of 'Housing First', recognising that homelessness is expensive to the state and that deployment of a supportive-housing based strategy can reduce incurred costs by up to 80%. This bill is a meaningful win for homeless advocates and represents years of work to create an interagency council who engage cross-sector action.

The Californian government anticipate the Senate Bill 1380 ruling to be a powerful tool focused on formal corroborative evidence that will help to end and extensively prevent homelessness across the state of California. The greatest challenge here is not willingness to implement such radical transformation to traditional approach, it is the realistic ability of gaining access to adequate housing resources in order to meet such tremendous - and continually-increasing - demand.

As permanent living space for homeless households is largely unobtainable, both in the United Kingdom and in the United States of America, 'Housing First' as it presently stands is an option which is primarily focused on reaching entrenched rough sleepers: The most disengaged (and therefore most costly) members of society. Nonetheless, investigations undertaken by myself in the UK and by my colleagues in the USA clearly evidence that many such socially challenged individuals may need very little assistance with rebuilding their lives, once the core element of housing stability has been met.

This raises the question of whether continuing evolution of a 'Housing First' focused approach, without adequate resources to respond fully to demand, will eventually, inadvertently, create yet *another* inequitable sub-section of the modern housing market, for which only the most complex or challenging cases can access. Considered further, could mass-adoption of a criteria-based 'Housing First' model *actively encourage* vulnerable people to engage in dangerous or destructive activities, to ensure they meet the strict entry requirements of the scheme? Under scrutiny, could

'Housing First' in its current format even *incentivise* bad lifestyle choices, in excluding those who could be deemed more housing ready, whilst offering property-based options exclusively to those with the most arduous needs? Ultimately, *is this not discriminatory towards those who have minimal support requirements?*

Investigative work highlights that for many, long-term services are not always necessary. The vast majority of homeless individuals and families find themselves in challenging circumstance after a housing, financial or personal crisis. For these cases, the 'Housing First' approach, albeit with a lesser, variable or sliding scale of accompanying support, could provide short-term assistance to find a suitable permanent home: Promptly and without condition. For those individuals who require only brief intervention and/or signposting to appropriate specialist organisations, achieving stability and individual well-being can be an elementary process and prevent a rapid descent into turmoil and commotion.

If we are to aim for a total eradication approach to homelessness in the United Kingdom, it would be necessary to expand much further upon the raw 'Housing First' model as it currently exists. Housing is a basic human need, and so housing as a solution to homelessness surely should be an option which is *wholly* inclusive and available to all. Breaking Ground state that bringing a person indoors – or preventing them from sleeping there in the first place – is not only effective, as well as cost-effective; it's also the right thing to do. The challenge we face in Britain is not housing the homeless; its convincing people in positions of power that **all** people who are homeless deserve a home of their own.

Feeding the Homeless: Feeding Homelessness?

Unless we are deploying highly innovative techniques which contribute positively to a person's long-term recovery, we *must* now acknowledge that any response which is geared towards addressing homelessness, if not primarily focused on permanently housing the unhoused, and/or supporting the sustainability of tenure, is futile. Whilst engagement and rapport-building are crucial and necessary tools in responding to chronic homelessness, emergency responders should lay their key focus on creating meaningful partnerships with housing providers in both the social and private rented sectors.

It is entirely ineffective to deploy and actively support copious on-the-ground practitioners, particularly when many only temporarily respond to elevate the symptoms of crisis, rather than address the root cause. Should we continue to feed the homelessness fire, delivering hot meals and sleeping bags to our destitute; neither of which have ever been proven to have any positive impact on homelessness prevention or reduction? Whilst mainly innocuous, such effort is not demonstrating an ability to resolve homelessness at large and could even be exasperating homelessness and its wider associated issues, by enabling vulnerable people to isolate themselves from society and live semi-comfortably, outdoors.

There are thought to be around 600 people sleeping in the rain on the streets of Greater Manchester each night. Notwithstanding, there are estimated to be around

11,000 long-term empty homes in the region. Flat-sharing site Spareroom advertises 1,460 immediately available rooms in Greater Manchester, and private home rental platform Rightmove simultaneously hosts over 8,000 vacant rental accommodations. Where is the joined-up thinking?

Abandoning individuals with acute social needs, alone, to survive together on the city streets, in local parks, inside commercial bin containers and within temporary structured encampments, is barbaric treatment of those who need our help the most. We only need to look to Los Angeles' Skid Row for a preview of what is becoming: On the outskirts of Manchester, London or Glasgow.

L.A is a known magnet for people who are homeless. Why? because it caters so well for those citizens who reject a mainstream way of life. With Manchester offering an abundance of round-the-clock homelessness street support services to its ever-growing number of rough sleepers, will the city become the UK's number one homelessness hot spot and desired destination for drifters with nowhere else to be?

Criminalising Homelessness: Rewarding Hopelessness?

Criminalising homelessness – and the very fact that in 21st Century Britain, our civil servants routinely 'sweep' vulnerable people and their only possessions away and out of sight, is frankly, preposterous: What a gross and inhumane misuse of public funds, when the sole purpose of expenditure is to hide the visual reality of our failings to adequately meet the needs of society's most lost and broken people. Where is it exactly that these 'swept away' people are expected to go? We are leaving those who have lost everything, with a sense that they have nothing more left to lose. Yet, we question and condemn their protest and activism?

Councils in Britain have spent more than £3.5bn on temporary accommodation for homeless households in the last five years^{cxxxvi}. Unless care and support for this section of society is radically switched from pre-housing, to post-housing, this figure will likely continue to spiral out of all control, as in the case of Manhattan, New York. The policies and systems relating to the provision of temporary accommodation - that of hostels, hotels, bed and breakfasts and refuges - need a total overhaul in the UK. Such establishments are not without their dangerous downsides and there are well-documented issues surrounding the social aspects of temporary accommodation placements: instability, violence, robbery, noise, fights, bullying and confrontations – often exacerbated by alcohol or drug abuse^{cxxxvii}.

Providers of temporary accommodation do so outside of normal 'Local Housing Allowance' rate rules; rates of which are set by the Valuation Office^{cxxxviii}. With freedom granted to include additional charges and premiums for 'management' and 'support' services, this results in grossly-inflated weekly charges which are mainly covered by 'Housing Benefit', but often extend to include additional top-up payment requirements from service users. In Manchester, the weekly cost to stay in a bed and breakfast can be up to £300, whilst the Valuation Office set the Local Housing Allowance rate for Manchester Central at £67.20.

With a strong and credible evidence base to suggest inadequacy in the linear approach, where does the potent reluctance to phase out such a tired, outdated and expensive response to homelessness stem from? Ultimately, we must ask the question; who are the real beneficiaries of these services and funds?

Is there some resistance amongst this sector to work towards permanent solutions, in lieu of facilitating and operating those which continue to enable and support the growth of homelessness? In my professional, unbiased and broad opinion, most definitely.

We must give some consideration as to why there is such a strong resistance to transformative practice and positive change? Is it because if we were to unveil a strategy which would sensationally eradicate homelessness, or at least, reduce it significantly, many of those in opposition to such affirmative radicalisation would be revealed as parasitic to the problem? Homelessness funding is highly sought-after; it is not uncommon for organisations to 'band' together to avoid experiencing a financial interruption, reduction or withdrawal. Sadly, homelessness is now a multi-million-pound industry, which many individuals, organisations and groups have a vested interest in keeping alive and kicking.

Time for Change

Despite Britain being one of the richest countries in the world, there is an ugly manifestation of grotesque inequality rising and many of our citizens have no choice but to live in accommodation that is run-down, poorly managed, or dangerous. Others live in fear of homelessness, or have lost their homes altogether; surviving day-to-day, bed-to-bed, bench-to-bench. This crisis **must** be acknowledged and tackled with an all-out attack on homelessness and affordable housing supply by the UK government, who must pro-actively engage specialist social entrepreneurs, housing developers, accommodation providers - in both the private and social rented sectors - corporate partners, crisis responders, support providers, local councils and their wider communities.

It is vital that a diversion of accessible funding is made available to encourage and strongly promote further investigation of innovative solutions directed towards both short and long-term affordable housing supply in Britain, and most crucially, the development of a housing accessibility component of the 'Housing First' framework, as it continues to be adapted and promoted for use within the UK.

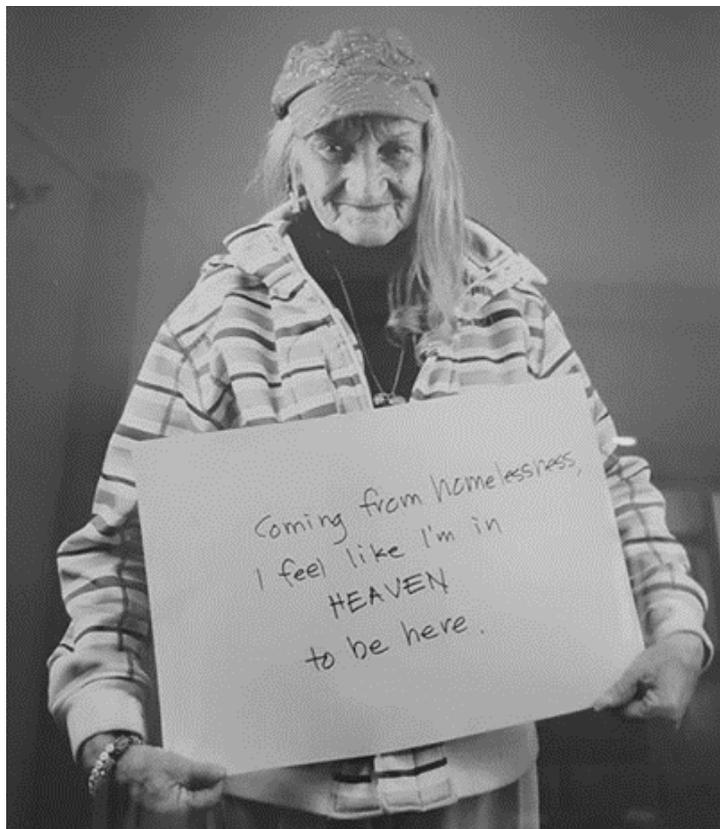
To prevent and end homelessness for everyone, communities must have a comprehensive response plan in place which ensures that **all** people experiencing a housing crisis get the help they need. That response must include both specialised homelessness services and access to mainstream resources — primarily housing, welfare benefits, education, mental and physical health care, life-skills, budgeting and financial responsibility training and employment opportunities — intervention that can help people achieve housing stability and go on to realise their personal goals. People that have suffered the trauma of homelessness need to be given aspiration about their future and be surrounded by people they can relate to, as well as people they can inspire and be inspired by.

PROFESSIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Central Government, Local Councils, the National Health Service, the Welfare System, Social Services and the Criminal Justice System are all experiencing additional costs and extreme pressures as a direct consequence of homelessness. The economic case for using traditional methods and current services to prevent and reduce all types of homelessness in Britain needs to be properly assessed;
- Likewise, an independent enquiry and official review into the provision of temporary, hostel, bed and breakfast and hotel-type accommodation for both homeless individuals and families should be undertaken;
- There is a growing movement of individuals and organisations, both official and unofficial, responding to homelessness and affordable housing issues with a wide variety of methods and techniques. The widening-gap between the public, private, third, voluntary and academic sectors, as well as with well-meaning members of the public, must be addressed. In order to be effective, efforts should be correctly focused, consistent and conjoined;
- Britain should respond to **all** types of homelessness effectively, as well as the wider affordable housing need. Whilst social and private building and construction could - and most certainly should - be incorporated into any long-term address plan, it is imperative that we identify, nurture and support trusted property holders or providers who can provide immediate or rapid access to suitable rental housing. Professional respondents to homelessness, as well as local and central governments, must acknowledge that housing supply for the socially disadvantaged groups can be found via effective relationship building with our private rented home and/or private property investment market and should look at new methods to allow effective collaboration with this sector;
- The viability and economic case for utilising 'Housing First' led initiatives within the private and social rented sectors needs urgent further exploration. Despite reporting remarkably successful outcomes, pilot scheme data currently available assesses only sixty 'Housing First' participants in England, over a six-year period. Britain should fully assess the full financial implications of national policy 'Housing First' and take lead from the State of California in working towards exclusivity in 'Housing First' led address towards chronic homelessness;

- A 'Housing First' approach can benefit both homeless individuals and families. The flexible and responsive nature of address allows 'Housing First' strategies to be tailored towards any degree of service needs. As such, 'Housing First' inspired response could be applied to end the homelessness stature of *any* homeless household. Those who become homeless due to a temporary personal or financial crisis - and therefore have minimal support requirements – may *only* require help to access and secure permanent housing. Immediate intervention would prevent crisis escalation and so further exploration of mass-scale adoption 'Housing First' impact should be undertaken;
- Britain should develop a consortium of trusted partners who are actively working towards evolution of 'Housing First' framework with the goal of this enhanced strategy being promoted and implemented freely across Britain; eventually, to replace traditional linear approach. Participation must include contributors and representation from each of the sectors, those with lived experience of all types of homelessness, and it must be inclusive to providers of both housing and support. An alignment of professional respondents should allow the comparison between the enabling of crisis response and the positive outcomes which can be associated with sustainable, housing and support-led solutions;
- ANY organisation with duty or responsibility to provide homeless individuals or households with assistance should develop a robust support package for 'Housing First' participants and their property owners and managers, even if not participating in an official 'Housing First' pilot scheme. The offering of financial bonuses and short-term incentives may enable initial access to property stock, however this will not support nor sustain the success of a long-term relationship and sustainable positive outcomes. Supporting agencies should thoroughly assess service user need and be transparent with property owners about the level of care both required and offered. 'Housing First' intervention services should be consistent, whilst affording flexibility, and all parties should be fully aware of their rights and responsibilities;
- Decision makers should be critical when assessing the projects, plans and establishments which will receive funding to address homelessness and its wider associated issues in Britain. To sustain, thrive and grow, non-profit-making organisations and the charitable sector can become more commercially focused via the implementation of mission-led enterprise strategies. Britain should encourage a movement of social entrepreneurship and inter-sector collaboration over the traditional 'just giving' model. Funding should be reserved only for those deploying techniques which evidence and/or can demonstrate an ability to end or prevent homelessness and its wider associated issues;

- Corporate Social Responsibility has potential to greatly impact on the delivery and enhancement of homelessness services in the United Kingdom and non-profit organisations should explore ways of forming and sustaining relationships with private sector entities. The focus of CSR should not be purely financial; participants should look to enhance each other's operations and create value for participants in varied, unique and exciting ways;
- Further international research must be undertaken within this field and casual connections created during this Fellowship should be developed and strengthened on. There is great economic benefit to our nation if we are able to design a successful homelessness prevention and response programme which international colleagues can learn and benefit from, with small financial investments having the potential to generate mass-scale positive outcomes. Support must be granted to both conduct and disseminate both UK-based and international research and a seat of learning within an academic institution, combined with an advisory position within the relevant central government department should be granted so that we further expand upon this work.



DISH, San Francisco: Providing housing, hope and a little piece of heaven to the city's most vulnerable and displaced

CONCLUSION

Returning to the UK from my international homelessness research study in the United States of America in the summer of 2016, I initially felt deflated and somewhat lost. My six-week solo-journey - across some of the most deprived and impoverished sites that America has to offer - left me with a lingering sense of sadness. I thought often of the people I had left behind, and what their outlook would be.

With my home city of Manchester still reeling from the brutal murder of Daniel Smith, 23 - a man who was horrifically tortured and beaten to death whilst residing in a homeless camp near Salford Central station, earlier in 2016 - I learnt that in the six months to Christmas from my visit to San Jose, California, 123 people died prematurely whilst homeless on the streets of Santa Clara County^{cxxxix}. I had visited the harrowing places where these people drew their last breaths; I had held their unwashed hands and looked deeply into their sad, haunted eyes. My normality was no longer the same, and I'm not sure it will ever be quite the same again.

Nonetheless, I found being surrounded by such highly acclaimed leaders in America - social change-makers, philanthropists, academics and entrepreneurs – such an incredibly inspiring experience. I decided to channel much of my energy and efforts moving forward into inspiring positive, transformational change. Not just on a personal or individual level as before: Change at an operational, strategic and community level, a legislative and governmental level, and ultimately, a societal level.

Whilst abroad, I had spent time bringing my conclusion together; unlocking the potential for development of conceptual ideas by visually organising key findings into an infographic mind-map. As I began to analyse the transferrable lessons within my study, I gratefully accepted guidance from Jeff Scheuer, Vice President at New York's award-winning Breaking Ground. We analysed how we could formulate a strategy to realistically adopt my vision of universally-known 'Breaking Ground'-style ethos when working to address homelessness across the whole of the United Kingdom – and potentially, even further afield.

Back in Manchester, I began to evaluate and assess the potential for practical application; firstly, by working to enhance the original 'Social Property Investment' homeless housing model I had designed and tested prior to my departure. Mentoring, coaching and monitoring practitioners, we looked to improve upon previously-tried methods, whilst I concurrently promoted the newly-discovered techniques that had been so generously shared with me.

Later, I aligned with national property education firm, Property Investments UK; writing articles, creating educational guides and further extending my professional investor network, allowing my dissemination and conceptual designs for 'Social Property Investment' to reach a much wider audience. When I began to work independently in 2013, my vision had intended on providing disadvantaged people a barrier-free route to accessing permanent homes. By now, the concepts were evolving into the entire infrastructure behind a brand new social investment model; one which was being actively utilised by professionals across the UK.



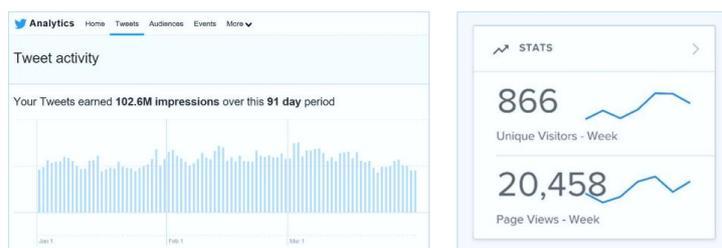
Promoting Social Property Investment strategies with affiliate Property Investments UK

Having developed the beginnings of the disruptive strategies and innovative prototypes that have immense potential to radically transform the systems related to housing low-income households in Britain, I now found myself contemplating how we could align or conjoin all of this innovative work in some way and take it to a mass marketplace for a potent, yet, safeguarded delivery.

Movement Building

Having aligned with a team of internationally-renowned social media marketing experts via a creative corporate sponsorship arrangement, I immediately engaged the support of my CSR partner, Susan Dolan, 'Google Expert UK'. Together, we orchestrated a 12-month 'Housing First' focused movement-building campaign, which we named 'Social Media for Social Good'.

Trialling the use of analytics and algorithms with great success, we consistently engaged and educated an established - and growing - global audience of beyond 500,000 followers and fans; our tweets alone being seen by an average of 1,000,000 users each day. Gaining the support of members of the public, charity bosses, government officials, city mayors, senior-level industry practitioners and well-known celebrity human rights activists, such as Russell Brand and Bianca Jagger, we succeeded in our aim of diverting a proportion of the negative frenzy surrounding the worsening homelessness crisis in Britain, towards a pro-active movement of support backing 'Housing First' inspired solutions.



A screenshot of 2017 campaign data: Twitter impressions from a 91-day period, with weekly website traffic



Supporting the private property investment sector: Chairing the 'Official HMO Group's' Manchester meeting in 2016

I delivered intensive coaching to investors and on-the-ground practitioners, hosted live webinars and facilitated seminars and roundtable events for professional bodies and groups. I was excited to be asked to share my educational programmes with Jon Sparkes, CEO of national representative body for single homeless people, Crisis and to be recruited to guide philanthropists such as former-England footballers Gary Neville and Emile Heskey when making charitable-giving decisions. My work was also showcased as part of the Social Change Agency's 2017 'Movement Watch', supporting change-makers to create sustainable movements that transform the world.

As I prepared to preview my research evaluation at an event hosted by Salford University in April 2017, I was delighted to be invited to UK Parliament's Portcullis House to share my findings and discuss professional recommendations with government's Shadow Minister for Housing, Andy Slaughter. Following our meeting on 7th March 2017, I was subsequently thrilled to learn in November of the same year that several advisory points had been actioned and implemented as agreed. Namely, a specialist homelessness taskforce will be established by the Labour party to ensure that the government meets its target to halve rough sleeping by 2022, then eliminate it altogether by 2027.



Promoting new solutions for homelessness: Presenting findings at Salford University and to UK Parliament in 2017

Likewise, making a strong commitment towards backing Housing First and a housing-led approach towards homelessness in Britain, it was also revealed that £28 million has been set aside in the government's 2017 Autumn budget to launch three regional 'Housing First' pilot schemes: In Manchester, Liverpool and the West Midlands. Whilst this is unprecedented, symbolic and highly pleasing progress, it unfortunately, won't be enough to help everybody need.

To illustrate, in Greater Manchester - one of the largest metropolitan areas in the United Kingdom, comprising ten metropolitan boroughs: Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan, and the cities of Manchester and Salford - £1.8 million is allocated, with 15 housing associations and two private rented sector landlords committed to providing 270 homes for "entrenched" rough sleepers, over a three-year period.

While this will see a proportion of those who have slept outdoors 'regularly' over the past two years (or who are 'well known' to homelessness services) appropriately supported and provided with a suitable housing option; the Greater Manchester region last year saw a 41% year-on-year rise in rough sleeping, with numbers of rough sleepers on the streets quadrupling since 2010. Charities believe a more accurate reflection is around three times that recorded in the official figures.

What will happen at the turn of 2018; as the festive charitable-giving season draws to a close and cold weather provision is withdrawn, but the bitter cold still bites? Will the homeless community in Manchester largely continue to sleep in tents, tunnels and in unsafe buildings; queuing up for a hot meal and a new sleeping bag from the army of crisis-respondents and charitable helpers who assist them each night? Will there be more tragic, untimely – and some might say – preventable deaths?



Homelessness in Manchester at the close of 2017. John sleeps rough in Deansgate each night

The Future

What options are realistically available to people experiencing - or at risk of experiencing – homelessness this winter; next winter, and beyond? What solutions can be accessed by those who are excluded from the criteria-based Housing First scheme, or by those who are resident outside of its catchment areas? What will the outcome be for singles, couples and families who lose their homes in the coming weeks and months; the vulnerable people who are running out of places to go and people to turn to; for those who are already, barely surviving? How many more people will be on the streets by the time the pilot scheme concludes in 2021?

How will Britain ultimately facilitate and manage the eventual (inevitable) mass-expansion of the Housing First scheme, as well as the continually-increasing desire amongst professionals and practitioners, members of the public and people experiencing homelessness themselves, to implement a choice-based, housing-led approach towards **all** types of homelessness in Britain? With Housing First undoubtedly gaining traction and now fast-becoming the desired method of approach for productive response, there is no doubt that housing-led programmes will one day set the benchmark for address across Britain, as they already do across nations all over the rest of the developed world.

The Homelessness Reduction Bill of 2017 – the first major piece of British homelessness legislation for 15 years – will extend entitlements to rehousing to a wider group of ‘single’ homeless people^{cxl}. This Act has the ability to transform the way homelessness services are delivered and ensure that **all** eligible applicants are given the help they need. Nonetheless, it is yet to be seen how local authorities will realistically implement and manage such changes, with accessible accommodation options lacking - and a continually-rising demand to contend with.

The simplistic, yet, seemingly, radical idea of ‘homes’ as a solution to homelessness is gaining monumental and universal support from service users - and people who are actually experiencing homelessness - as well as from robust evidence collected across international academic studies, independent research undertakings and practical pilot schemes, each reporting an unprecedented success rate in resolving homelessness and its wider associated issues. Our own government is now resolved to implementing a housing led approach, with policy changes implemented and significant budget allowance allocated towards large-scale exploration. And so, this reverts us to a broadening of our original question and a common theme throughout the entirety of this paper, as well as this research project as a whole:

How can we obtain a free-flowing, consistently good quality supply of diverse, barrier-free, affordable rental accommodation, as well as flexible access to accompanying holistic support, education, sign-posting and advocacy solutions; so that we are able to make stable, sustainable choice-based homes a solution to **all** types of homelessness; one which is freely available to **all** types of people, in **all** types of need?

SOCIAL PROPERTY INVESTMENT: PIONEERING STRATEGIES

FOR 21ST CENTURY HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Identifying the strengths, talents and resources of all who have ability to serve, 'Social Property Investment' provides a route to centralisation of homelessness address, whilst identifying both accommodation and holistic care supply for the eventual mass-scale adoption of a non-criteria based 'Housing-First' led approach towards housing instability and its wider associated issues.

Though there can be no single, one-size-fits all solution to the tragedy of 21st Century homelessness, 'Social Property Investment' allows respondents from widely differing habitats to align, identify a common bond, share their assets and work together in harmony towards ending – rather than sustaining – the crisis of modern homelessness. 'Social Property Investment' is social enterprise, for social housing; it's a solution which was designed *for* the homeless, *by* the homeless - and the people that are able and willing to help them.

The unique methods of 'Social Property Investment' present a combination of property investment systems and person-centred support-based homelessness address strategies, with focus on three key areas, for all partakers:

- Maximising profit and cost-effectiveness;
- Minimising and mitigating risk;
- And, ultimately making a difference to the lives of people housed.

These methods are proven to get people off the streets – and keep them off the streets.

Whilst sharing techniques between practitioners in the United Kingdom, the United States of America and beyond, we will align the most inspiring and successful respondents to homelessness in the world; creating a global knowledge-exchange platform to design, share and actualise targeted community-driven 'Social Property Investment' and 'Housing First'-led address plans – to be implemented at individual, local, regional, national and international levels.

Whether financial shareholders, property owners, accommodation providers, managing agents, public sector services, charitable establishments, faith-led groups, academic institutions, local authorities with a duty to house - or simply members of the public looking to help; 'Social Property Investment' will bring leaders, contributors, followers, investors and donors together; empowering them to effectively channel their efforts towards the eradication of 21st Century homelessness.

Together, we aim to set the bench-mark for compassionate resolution to homelessness, across developed nations, all over the globe.



The goal of this project is to create a global movement of meaningful, transformational practice which is focused towards compassionate homelessness resolution, via free access to education, practical resources, suitable housing choices and person-centred support.

An open-source resource hub will be at the heart of innovation and enterprise; interlinking practitioners and guiding them to work in a more productive manner. We will collect and distribute practical resources and encourage a diverse cross-sector member network to work effectively and efficiently together.

The theoretical model this conceptual framework is based upon is 'Housing First' and the belief that everyone deserves a home of their own. It also, importantly, recognises the commodity stature of property; finding an appropriate balance between housing as a basic human right and housing as a financial investment opportunity.

The anticipated public benefit to engaging these methods and implementing these plans is staggering. Taking indication from cost effectiveness measuring tools provided by national charity representing single homeless people, Crisis, if we are to recruit and empower 'Social Property Investment' service providers with the aim of delivering a sustainable housing and support solution to 1000 service users within a three-year period, the projected financial cost saving to public services and government will exceed £24,000,000 annually.

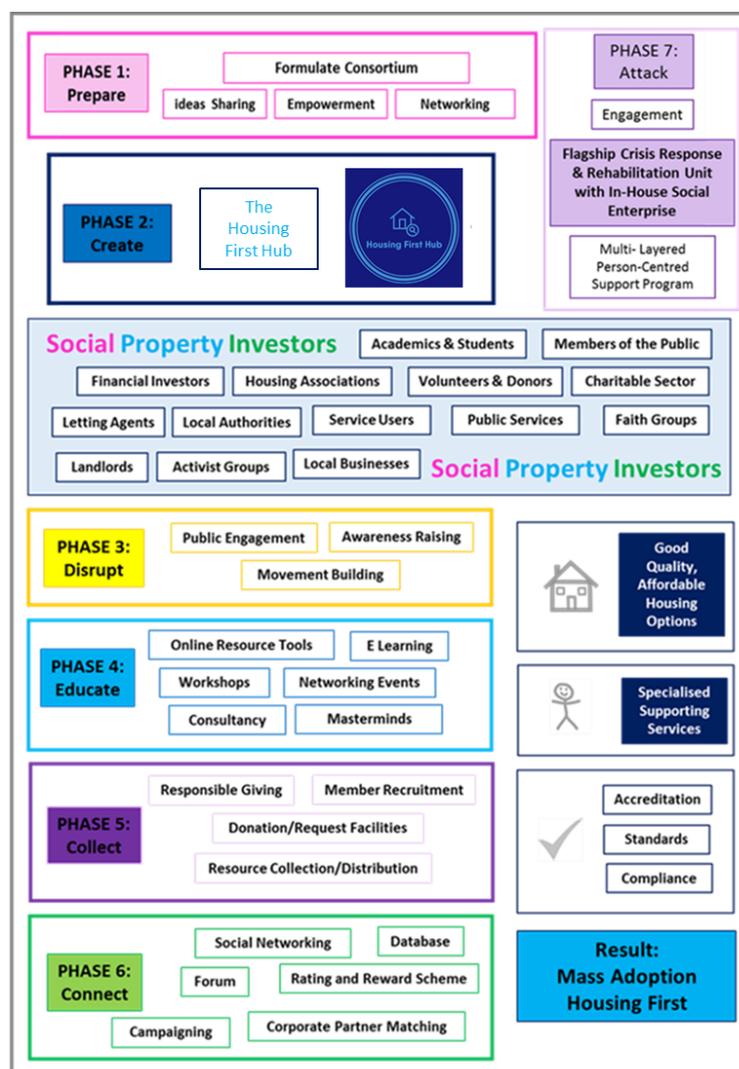
A. GROSS COST SAVING, HOUSING			
Housing circumstances of your currently caseworked clients who were helped into a PRS tenancy			
	Cost to society per quarter	Number of clients in that category	Overall cost
At risk	£3,496	25	£87,400
Street homeless	£4,577	25	£114,420
B&B	£2,328	25	£58,200
Hostel	£6,216	25	£155,400
	Gross cost saving, per quarter: housing		£415,420
B. GROSS COST SAVING, NON-HOUSING			
Needs levels of currently caseworked clients before they were helped into a PRS tenancy			
	Cost to society per quarter	Number of clients in that category	Overall cost
Low	£0	25	£0
Medium	£936	25	£23,400
High	£5,059	25	£126,475
Ex-offender	£2,122	25	£53,050
	Gross cost saving, per quarter, non-housing		£202,925
	TOTAL GROSS COST SAVING, PER QUARTER		£618,345

A. GROSS COST SAVING, HOUSING			
Housing circumstances of your currently caseworked clients who were helped into a PRS tenancy			
	Cost to society per quarter	Number of clients in that category	Overall cost
At risk	£3,496	250	£874,000
Street homeless	£4,577	250	£1,144,200
B&B	£2,328	250	£582,000
Hostel	£6,216	250	£1,554,000
	Gross cost saving, per quarter: housing		£4,154,200
B. GROSS COST SAVING, NON-HOUSING			
Needs levels of currently caseworked clients before they were helped into a PRS tenancy			
	Cost to society per quarter	Number of clients in that category	Overall cost
Low	£0	250	£0
Medium	£936	250	£234,000
High	£5,059	250	£1,264,750
Ex-offender	£2,122	250	£530,500
	Gross cost saving, per quarter, non-housing		£2,029,250
	TOTAL GROSS COST SAVING, PER QUARTER		£6,183,450

Cost Benefit Analysis: Image 1, 100 people with varied complex needs. Image 2, 1000 people with varied complex needs

Major points of emphasis in the 'Social Property Investment' strategic address to combat homelessness include:

1. **Prepare:** Formulate initial consortium and develop exchange network
2. **Build:** Construct technology infrastructure and develop pilot
3. **Disrupt:** Promote a revolutionary approach to addressing homelessness
4. **Educate:** Empower and accredit all with the ability to serve
5. **Align:** Partner trusted contributors
6. **Connect:** Drive responsible public giving and resource sharing
7. **Attack:** Launch direct attack on chronic street homelessness



21ST CENTURY HOMELESSNESS: A STRATEGIC, COMPASSIONATE ADDRESS

Phase 1: Prepare

On 7th December 2017, I aligned with parties from across Manchester to host the UK's first 'Housing Ideas Exchange' event at Manchester Metropolitan University: A networking, empowerment, ideas and action forum about pro-actively tackling housing issues. Welcoming over 200 participants, including keynote speaker Daniel McDonald, of Homeless Innovations, Tampa Police, Florida, we created a platform to spark essential dialogue amongst a diverse and passionate audience.

Contributors aligned from the public, private, third and academic sectors, with sessions hosted on subjects including social policy and activism, criminality and complex needs, architecture and design, health and well-being and international innovation. The event was enhanced by an interactive performance, documentary screening and talk by members of Manchester's homeless and rough sleeping community, as well as an ideas fayre, topical debates and networking opportunities.



The Housing Ideas Exchange event included a networking fayre, debates, ideas workshops and theatrical performances

We will now take this collaborative working ethos to the next level; touring roadshows, seminars and workshops in order to develop a professional international knowledge exchange programme of pro-active and innovative response towards housing and homelessness issues. Strengthening relationships created during this Fellowship and developing new partnerships, collaborations and associations, our members network will allow free-sharing of ground-breaking research, innovation, fieldwork, successful practice and alternative strategic and procedural guidelines, across a global platform.

Our preliminary 12-month pilot project will see this network established in both the UK and the USA: Initially, via a small number of on-the-ground respondents who will be trained, mentored, coached and empowered whilst they are considering trialling, testing, implementing and/or operating a 'Social Property Investment' led address towards homelessness in their region. This initial test-period will allow us to nurture practitioners, whilst further identifying new solutions to homelessness - as well as barriers to recovery - person-by-person, albeit, on a much wider scale.

The 'Social Property Investment' working consortium will extend an open invitation for membership; aiming to contain representation from membership bodies, local authorities, housing associations, charitable organisations, social enterprises, private sector providers, social investors and innovators, the voluntary sector, activist groups, passionate young people and those with lived and/or current experience of homelessness. We will pro-actively engage corporate partners and demonstrate significant, measurable value in Corporate Social Responsibility.

This network will expand each year as the project evolves, with participants encouraged to support each other, work together, grow together - and to each become valuable assets in the solutions they collectively create.



A Manchester University student interviewing Daniel McDonald from Homelessness Innovations Tampa Police, Florida, at the 2017 'Housing Ideas Exchange' event

Phase 2: Create

'Social Property Investment' strategies find the appropriate balance between housing as commodity and housing as a basic human right. The monetary gains which can be associated with buy-to-let investment property are wholly extendable to the provision of affordable, yet diverse, rental homes; particularly when seeking to maximise financial returns via co-living or multi-letting models - those which have proved highly successful when utilised effectively for the rehabilitation of those who are socially challenged or in some way displaced.

<p><u>Investment</u> Purchase Price: £80k Refurbishment: £50k Total Investment: £130k Potential Annual Rent: £27k Potential Gross Yield: 20%</p>	<p><u>Tenants</u> Deposit: £0 Rent in Advance: £0 Move-In Contribution £100 Weekly Rent: LHA Rates £83.00 Weekly Top-Up (Wifi & Water): £3.75</p>	<p><u>Public Benefit</u> Quarterly Saving (Housing): £28,019 Quarterly Saving (Non-Housing) £10,925 Annual Saving £155, 776* *'Making It Count' Cost Indicators by Crisis</p>	
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Example: Our case study project produced measurable value for multiple beneficiaries

Having developed innovative prototypes that can positively enhance the approach we take to supporting vulnerable people with their housing-related needs in Britain - and potentially beyond - these systems will be freely-shared and further tested within our professional ideas exchange group; and later, via a technology-based one-stop-shop, and the mass marketplace, via the 'Housing First Hub'.



The 'Housing First Hub' will centralise homelessness address across sectors

The hub will connect a vast network of existing providers and services - those which typically respond to chronic homelessness wholly on the streets - with accommodation-based solutions which are provided, funded or part-funded, via the private property investment market – OR, as a result of newly-created consortiums of 'Social Property Investment' service providers, who enter into formal joint-venture partnerships in order to raise finance and launch guided projects, semi-independently.

This will be the first web-based platform of its kind globally; correlating the knowledge, assets and resources of the public, private and voluntary sectors and enabling them to offer a wide and varied selection of barrier-free, choice-based homes, along with the enhancement of variable and interchange support options for residents.

Ultimately, this will enable organisations who respond to homelessness with food kitchens and via 'street support' type services, to gradually, methodically and systematically adopt a 'Housing First' approach towards homelessness in their region - and to do so in a constructive, concise and controlled manner.

Phase 3: Disrupt

This phase strives to allow new approaches, innovation and successful case study work to reach a mass-market audience, seeing us implement an extensive enhancement of our systemised 'Social Media for Social Good' multi-channel promotional campaign. We aim to dramatically increase public knowledge - and both direct and indirect reach - and believe this can be achieved via:

- Showcasing of continuing UK-based and international research and fieldwork;

- Engaging social media feeds;
- Webinars and live streams;
- Blogs and vlogs;
- Email campaigns;
- Free online education;
- Member showcasing;
- Service user/case study promotion;
- Public and professional speaking engagements;
- Networking, development, training and promotional events;
- Mainstream media and press;
- Academic Incubator.



Promoting housing-led solutions towards homelessness at a community technology hack alongside Manchester City Councillor and Mayoral Lead for Homelessness Beth Knowles

We have discovered we can drive a movement of specialists, innovators, carers and benefactors. We can now unite them, bind them and empower them; to act with professionalism, skill, compassion and respect; as well as a fierce and unwavering determination to re-shape the future of how Britain treats the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of its society.

Our hub will provide the tools needed to safeguard participants, enhance services, measure and improve outcomes and access practical and financial resources, allowing service providers to increase confidence and improve upon the choices offered to the people they aim to serve.

Phase 4: Educate

This is where 'Social Property Investment' can begin to directly address affordable housing issues and homelessness at large. With education tailored specifically towards individual recipients, all types of providers and respondents can be led with strategies, systems, techniques and tools, with focus on correlating operators to be working within the same guidelines - and to a minimum standard.

Initial application of methods and subsequent enhancing of this educational content will be undertaken within our mastermind group, with the 'Housing First Hub' later acting as our beta-test environment. It will host our community, alongside a wide-range of freely-accessible procedural guidance: templates, forms, guides, resource tools and video learning, as well as up-to-date guidance on 'Social Property Investment' strategies, concepts and news.



Educational content delivered has blended a combination of classroom learning with site visits, web-based tutorials, Skype support groups and 1-1 coaching

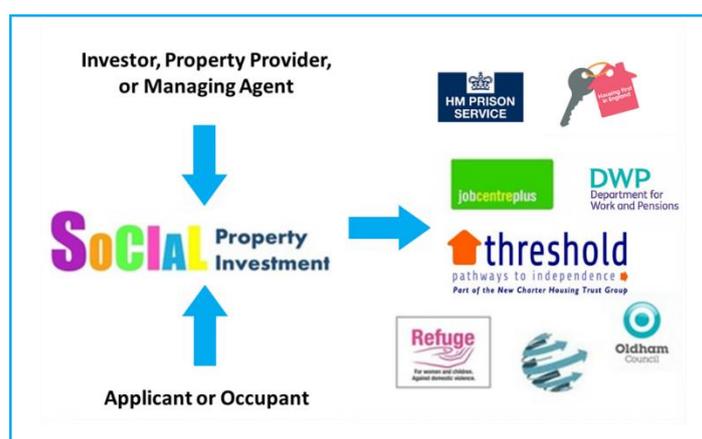
'Social Property Investment' will consummately disrupt the £9 Billion-a-year 'Local Housing Allowance' private property investment marketplace, via the free-sharing of information which is traditionally reserved for a fee-paying audience. Our pilot educational programme – first trialled between 2014 and 2016 - focused purely on empowering philanthropic financial investors and property professionals with a solid social conscience. It provided guidance on topical areas such as:

- Due diligence processes;
- Legislative requirements;
- Building acquisition and design;
- Tenant sourcing, screening and assessment;
- Welfare benefits, payments and rent
- Safeguarding and supporting occupants;
- Management and systemisation;
- Working in conjunction with external partners.

One highly attractive aspect of the technology interface will be the incorporation of an accreditation, rating and reward system, which will ensure the promotion excellent practice, safeguarding and exclusivity, within a carefully-crafted community. With government and consortium collusion, there is an opportunity to provide a level of regulation, benchmark and an expectation of quality within a totally new and developing section of the British housing market.

Phase 5: Connect

A leading feature of the ‘Housing First Hub’ technology will be the unique opportunity it presents to efficiently connect and engage inter-sector professionals and organisations, both locally and nationally, who are acting with shared goals, under the same guidelines and may be looking to partner on a project. In practice, this will mean a reputable landlord can easily connect with a highly-trained or accredited ‘SPI’ letting agent, or a local charity could offer an accredited property provider a volunteer-led support package, in return for the permanent placement of their service users.



Our ‘model’ property aimed to connect participants, whilst centralising operational practice and mitigating risk

‘Social Property Investors’ – as examples, local authorities, housing associations, financial contributors, landlords, letting agents, local charities, paid or voluntary support workers, probation officers, work placement programmes, credit unions or local food banks – can be led to create mini-teams of respondents who provide unique and bespoke combinations of accommodation and practical support to a person (or persons) in need.

The provision of facilities, as well as responsibility for operational management and tenant care, is divided between parties, who each contribute within their own specialism, or by the provision of an asset. One may provide the home, the other, support to assist the tenant in sustainability success. There may be an agreement

established to divide rental profits in order to provide an enhanced level of service user intervention and holistic care.



Supporting the Hull Homeless Community Project to implement 'Social Property Investment' strategies with Property Investments UK

Registrant processes will promote the accumulation of an extensive database of approved accommodation suppliers; those who will feed the internal support community with good-quality, affordable accommodation. With financial investors accessing procedural guidance which focuses on maximising profit and cost-effectiveness and mitigating and minimising risk, there is a degree of flexibility in application criteria and business terms. Similarly, our concurrent database of support providers will operate under the same, centralised best-practice framework. Continuity and a centralised way of working will enable the safeguarding of all members of consortiums formed; occupants and service users, as well as both their housing and support providers.

Local authority councils in England will become registrants of the 'Housing First Hub' in order to access its exclusive database of accredited service providers. This will afford public servants controlled access to varied options when fully obliging their duty of care and looking to house homeless individuals or households within permanent, safe accommodations. The platform will allow institutions the option to identify small, medium and large-scale property holders or providers, financial investors, project sponsors or corporate partners, presenting the freedom to create bespoke, long-term or ongoing arrangements that could supplement new creation of affordable housing stock, on a mass-scale.

Phase 6: Collect

Transitioning to a new home from a chaotic lifestyle can be a daunting and isolating experience and those who face adversity whilst taking steps to improve their circumstances should not be left to cope alone. My Manchester-based pilot scheme – as well as indirect housing work I have undertaken since - revealed that the public and

third sectors are presently largely unable or unwilling to assist most people who are experiencing homelessness, past the stage of living on the streets, obtaining a bed in a hostel, or, signing a tenancy agreement for a newly-rented home.

When this practical research project presented an ability to procure a property-based solution for a person who would traditionally be excluded, I was generally left alone to provide continual aid and ongoing practical support; for any chronically or hidden homeless person I was asked - or volunteered - to source housing for. This included individuals with severe and complex mental health needs, substance abuse issues and acutely challenging personal circumstances. To that end, many struggled tremendously in their new surroundings without the solid foundation of an adequate and robust system of support and living situations broke down.

Whist work centred on movement building will continue to help inspire a transformative way of thinking about 'Housing First', we need to be realistic about what respondents are able – and ultimately willing - to contribute to new service design. Notwithstanding, we can ensure that reputable property providers are able to gather resources to support the people they want to provide with housing, in a variety of ways. A social networking feature will enable members of the public, along with local businesses, SMEs, voluntary and faith-led groups, community leaders, volunteers, donors, philanthropists and suitably-qualified professionals to productively and safely give to those who are homeless, newly-housed or transitioning between the two.

Incorporation of donation and request facilities to the 'Housing First Hub' platform will encourage the giving and sharing of practical items and monetary support, as well display local noticeboards for requesting or offering units of skill, time, mentoring, holistic care – or even just friendship and companionship. The instant gratification one feels from feeding the homeless can be replaced by responsible and controlled giving, which has even greater potential to give the 'feel-good factor' when you can form a bond and continually follow the journey of the organisations - and the people - chosen to receive support.

In 2014, I suddenly had nowhere to live and soon, had no choice but to sleep in a park for four nights. It was awful - I didn't have the medication I needed to remain well. It was so frightening to be female and alone outside overnight, especially at my age.

In desperation, I contacted Manchester Council who referred me to Amy and thankfully, she found me somewhere suitable to live within a few days. I would have been lost without her and my new landlord - they both helped me so much.

With the right support, I am able to manage my health problems much better and I'm finally feeling happy again. If I hadn't met Amy a few years ago, I don't think I'd be alive today.

Lorraine, 66, needed a rapid solution in 2014. She remains in this housing today

Crucially, this will allow **all** who strive to combat homelessness the opportunity to channel their efforts in a productive, efficient and organised fashion. This will be giving

site with a difference: where anyone can safely donate to the displaced, in a uniquely creative manner – along with the knowledge that *any* offering they share will be utilised by those who need it most; in the way it will help them most.

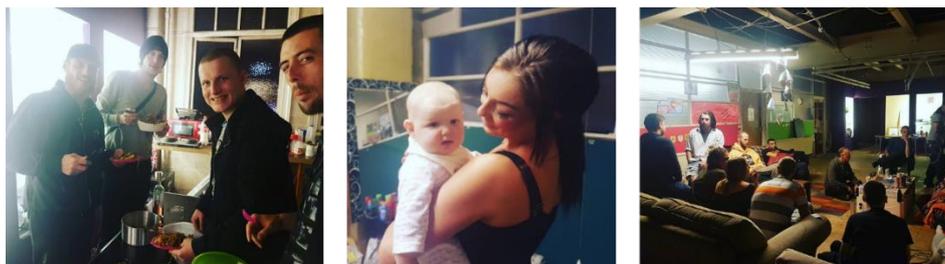
Phase 7: Attack (*Project to run concurrently with phase 1-6*)

Creating a lifeline for the ignored, displaced and chronically homeless residents of Greater Manchester – fast becoming known as the ‘homeless capital’ of the UK - new concepts and ideas should be continually dissected and developed via a revolutionary emergency housing and rehabilitation unit, loosely based on the pioneering ‘Breaking Ground’ Times Square Hotel model.

In an all-out-attack on poor-quality and expensive temporary accommodation, this model can lead a radical - yet compassionate **and** economical - response to chronic and street homelessness in city locations. From a central hub, we will tap into practical resources from the public, private and third sectors to engage residents in activities and aftercare programs which will help to break bad habits, form productive communities and encourage a positive progression in life. We will encourage programs of trauma-based therapy, holistic care, health, fitness and well-being, pet therapy and financial education. Social enterprise groups will be encouraged to form and evolve within the centre to engage residents in projects and activities they enjoy and feel passionate about.

Professional respondents will be encouraged to utilise contemporary methods of engagement and work collaboratively to provide a whole and rounded level of care. Permanent accommodation in the form of move-on options, as well as training, voluntary work and paid employment opportunities will be by our growing network of Social Property Investors. Nonetheless, this building and its services will be there for people experiencing homelessness whenever they need it – before, during *and after* their housing instability crisis.

We will encourage service users to become part of the solution they help to create, whilst simultaneously pushing them towards rehabilitation, recovery and personal growth and success. We will work flexibly, with each and every person we engage; assisting with crisis needs, whilst also encouraging long-term stability, personal responsibility and aspirational hope for the future.



Visiting the Manchester squatting community, July 2016



An executive board of directors and specialist advisory team is an essential and powerful driver in the success of any mission-led enterprise. We seek to align with creative and forward-thinking organisations and spark dynamic strategic partnerships which will support the futuristic vision and evolution of this project:

- **Visionary** - This project should be overseen and led by the visionary and network associates;
- **UK Government** – Alignment with central government will ensure that the objectives of formalising alternative homelessness response can be communicated and later promoted for implementation across local authorities and their partners, UK-wide;
- **Academic Partner** - Formation of an academic partnership with an institution which can incubate educational products and services for members, as well as provide research and evaluation support;
- **Membership Body** - Strong association with a respected representative organisation or membership body who advocate a 'Housing First' led approach towards homelessness;
- **Social Investment** – Funders and financiers who support our vision and share our ethos and goals;
- **Corporate Engagement** - Reputable corporate organisations which can assist with movement building and the acquisition of financial and practical resources;
- **Lived Experience of Homelessness and/or Recovery** – those with lived experience of homelessness will be vital contributors in designing new services.

There have long been calls in Britain for design of a radical new strategy which can appropriately address homelessness and its wider associated issues, and the scale of homelessness is now such that a renewed government strategy is a must. No one should be homeless in Britain today.

As we strive to align, nurture and showcase the work of industry change-makers, leaders, experts and specialists, our aim is to positively impact on homelessness at individual, local, regional, national and international levels.

As we enter 2018, we have an opportunity to totally radicalise our approach for the better, with innovative new solutions; the vibrant towns and cities of the United Kingdom poised to be at the forefront of creating magnificent social change.

I now publicly call on UK government to engage modern social entrepreneurship and back further exploration of the 'Social Property Investment' address to end 21st Century Homelessness. Firstly, with a commitment to an allocation of seed funding being made available to support further research and the initial development of these conceptual ideas.

This is a formal proposal for assistance to launch a 'Social Property Investment' led attack on 21st Century homelessness in Britain. A strategy which finds the balance between housing, as a commodity and housing as a basic human right; one which makes practical, logistical and economic sense, whilst displaying tolerance, compassion and empathy towards those who need our help the most.



Homeless in Manchester: 2018 calls for change. Image by Matthew Taylor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the many, many people and organisations, in both the United Kingdom and the United States of America, that have supported and contributed to this research project in its entirety.

I would like to thank my sponsors at the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, for their continued faith and confidence in me to utilise such an incredible learning opportunity to its absolute fullest; and for allowing me to realise my dreams whilst being able to help and inspire others along the way. I am extremely grateful for the opportunities my Fellowship has created, for the continuing guidance I have received and for the supportive Fellows' network I have been welcomed into along the way.

Likewise, I would like to thank my Fellowship partners, trade body representing independent non-profit housing associations in England, the National Housing Federation. The professional guidance I have been offered since my return from America has been invaluable and I am deeply grateful for the time which has been spent with me, guiding me through my anxieties and worries and encouraging me to innovate further and further!

A special and heartfelt thank you to each of the institutions and people that supported my international fieldwork. It is difficult to put into words what an incredible life-changing experience the undertaking of this study was for me; one I will treasure for the rest of my life and hope to return to again and again. Thank you for making it everything it was, for all that you shared, and for the kindness you showed me along the way.

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Roceteer, particularly Heather Wilde

Women Occupy Hollywood, particularly Ivana Massetti

Joe Fionda – American Homelessness Activist and Actor

For supporting my work in Britain, I am truly humbled to have worked alongside and been inspired by such wonderfully talented and gifted people. Thank you to all of the contributors and participants of my practical pilot schemes: The landlords, letting agents and investors that bravely supported my work in the early days and allowed me to obtain practical experience of working within this field. The charitable institutions and community groups that engaged. The tenants that muddled through with me as we learnt together, and those that allowed their cases to be monitored and evaluated for research purposes. Particularly;

The rough sleeping and homeless community in Manchester

Shiro Rauniar – Landlord and Investor

Leyla, Kirsty and Lorraine - I'm so proud of each of you

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The Ark – Ryan, you inspire me more than you will ever know

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Manchester Shield

John Corey

Michael Thompson

Martin Leuw

Paul and Barbara Grenet

My friends, family and the amazing social media following my work has attracted - thank you for continually supporting and believing in both me and this project

In loving memory of our warrior sister, Clare Dolan

This project is dedicated to the memory of Daniel, Chris, John, Ricky, Wayne and James, who so tragically lost their lives whilst homeless in Britain. I continue to work with you in my heart.



In loving memory of John Chadwick

Please see <http://homelessinnovations.com/housing-gone-wrong-life-death-john-chadwick> for more information

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