

TACKLING HOMELESSNESS: CASE STUDIES

LSE HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES
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CASEReport 132

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Executive Summary

Since 1987, LSE Housing and Communities' work on homelessness in the United Kingdom has given us in-depth knowledge of the many projects homelessness charities run. These include not just the provision of emergency accommodation, but also direct advice and support.

We developed a series of knowledge-exchange workshops to share good practice, gather useful ideas, encourage greater collaborative working, and promote shared learning amongst organisations providing homelessness services. Sharing this evidence, and learning from what works, both improves the capacity and delivery of homelessness initiatives, and inspires individuals and groups who are moved by the problem of homelessness to take action.

This report includes 17 valuable case studies, divided into four main themes:

- Local projects to reduce homelessness which respond to immediate needs on a small scale;
- Homelessness prevention projects which are specifically targeting people threatened with homelessness, often in private rented accommodation;
- Projects that deal with wider problems such as drug and alcohol dependency, alongside actual homelessness through the provision of multi-dimensional support;
- Broad-based work to end homelessness such as city-wide “end-homelessness” programmes.

The projects we highlight span the breadth of Britain, including in London, Edinburgh, Durham, Yorkshire, Oxfordshire, Croydon, and Northampton. There are projects at many different scales, from small, local projects such as Durham Action on Single Housing, through to the Homes for Cathy campaign group, a network of housing associations working on national strategies to end homelessness. The case studies include projects responding to all stages of homelessness, from those providing advice, support and advocacy for people in precarious private rented accommodation, to those that work with entrenched rough sleepers.

Many of the case studies have moved to, or are shifting towards a whole person centred, “psychologically informed” approach to tackling homelessness. This involves understanding and designing support that takes into account the emotional and psychological needs of the individual, in a more personalised and non-judgemental approach. This focus is bringing about fundamental systems change to how homelessness provision is delivered.

The variety of case studies in this report demonstrates the complex and multi-faceted nature of homelessness, and the need for a number of different approaches and services to tackle it. Our core aim is to foster greater knowledge exchange and sharing of good practice, opening up conversations amongst stakeholders, activists, and service providers. This should help to create new partnerships and better ways of working together in order to help more people access a stable, secure, safe place to call home.

Introduction

About this research

In November 2018, LSE Housing received KEI funding from LSE to bring together examples of best practice in homelessness in the United Kingdom. We also received funding from the Mitchell Foundation that helped us extensively with this work. Homelessness has risen up the policy agenda in recent years as evidence has continued to emerge of the steep rise in homelessness since 2010, impacting upon both levels of rough sleeping and households in temporary accommodation. The main objectives of the project were:

1. To bring together homeless charities, local authorities, combined city authorities, and the communities most affected by homelessness to **share good practice** in dealing with homelessness.
2. To **gather lessons from innovative projects** that are successful in tackling homelessness.
3. To **encourage collaborative working** between local authorities, housing associations, private landlords (PRS), community based and charitable homelessness organisations, policy makers, and other relevant statutory organisations.

We planned a number of knowledge exchange activities to help us achieve these objectives:

1. A **case study resource** to help those working in homelessness to learn from each other;
2. A study of Housing First pilot projects;
3. Incorporating **best practice** from Scotland and Wales in homelessness prevention and reduction;
4. A **Think Tank** on homelessness prevention and reduction to fully expose the experiences and share ideas on ways forward;
5. Finally, a **policy roundtable and launch** event for the guide with media coverage to disseminate what we learnt on a wider scale. Unfortunately this roundtable had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Sharing this evidence and learning from what works will both improve the capacity and delivery of homelessness initiatives and inspire individuals and groups who we are moved by the problem of homelessness to take action.

Please provide any feedback to LSE Housing on your views, reactions, additions, omissions or mistakes. We have done everything possible to prevent mistakes and take full responsibility for any we have made.

We would like to thank the many organisations that generously gave their time to helping us. We are immensely grateful for their inspiring work and for the time they took to help us understand what they did.

Case studies

Through this knowledge exchange project we have researched many services and interventions designed both to prevent and to relieve homelessness across the UK. Our research was a mix of open-ended qualitative interviews with organisations, visits, and desk-based research. Whilst this is not an exhaustive collection of homelessness prevention and support projects in the UK, and there are many other resources available, we wanted to share the experiences of the inspiring groups and organisations we have heard from.

This report includes 17 case studies, divided into the following main themes:

- Local projects to reduce homelessness;
- Homelessness prevention projects;
- Multi-dimensional support;
- Broad-based work to end homelessness

Some of the interventions and projects highlighted may well cover more than one of the themes as their approach to tackling homelessness will be holistic and wide ranging.

We have researched each case study, and conducted phone interviews or visits with eight of the projects, two from each of the four main themes. The case studies of the projects we have interviewed directly are at the end of each section.

i. Local Housing and Support Projects

1. Project Vista: New Horizon Youth Centre and Network Homes, London

Name of the project	Project Vista
Location	London
Target group(s)	16 – 21 year olds, particularly those young people who are in precarious low paid work which makes renting in the Private Rented Sector difficult.
Project overview	<p>This project was developed in response to an increasing number of young people moving into unstable employment and the decreasing availability of affordable accommodation.</p> <p>Project Vista provides affordable accommodation, employment skills and independent living support to 16 – 21 year olds across London who have been made homeless. The project gives young people the stability of a quality home to live in, whilst receiving help to improve their employment situation and preparing to move into the private rented sector. The flats are owned by Network Homes and are managed by the New Horizon Youth Centre.</p> <p>The rooms are allocated to young people by New Horizon and individuals are able to live in the property for one year, with ongoing training, employment and life skills support from the Centre. After this time, they move into the private rented sector or they are assessed for other Network Homes accommodation (social or affordable rents). Network Homes owns and manages the property in partnership with New Horizon.</p>
Organisations involved/partners	New Horizon Youth Centre (NHYC) and Network Homes
Source of funding	London Housing Foundation
What makes it innovative/unique	<p>The partnership working between NHYC and Network Homes.</p> <p>In linking the provision of affordable, supported accommodation with education, training and employment (ETE) support, this project provides stable accommodation enabling young people to build the skills and experience that will prevent future homelessness.</p>
Outcomes	20 young people accommodated in four flats in Islington and Hackney with bedrooms, en-suite facilities and communal kitchens and living areas. Rent £90 per week all inclusive.

	The first phase in 2016 saw all residents able to either take on extra work hours, accept promotions, or to maintain or take jobs they would otherwise have lost due to not having permanent place to live.
Website	https://nhyouthcentre.org.uk/ and https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/

Further information about Project Vista:

Network Homes is a long established housing association, owning and managing over 20,000 homes mainly across West London, Hertfordshire and the South East and with an annual turnover of over £230 million.

New Horizon Youth Centre is a registered charity, originally founded in 1967 to address the needs of young people involved in drug misuse in London’s West End. The charity continues to work with the most vulnerable and at risk young people and describes itself as:

A vital support network for 16-24 year olds who have no one else to turn to. We provide everything from hot food, showers and laundry to finding them accommodation, training and employment. We offer counselling, drug and alcohol support, health, fitness, art, music and communication skills workshops - everything they need to create a positive future.

Network Homes in partnership with the New Horizon Youth Centre (NHYC) launched Project Vista in 2016 with the aim of providing affordable accommodation, employment skills and independent living support to 16 – 21 year olds from across London who have been made homeless. The project gives young people the stability of a quality home to live in, whilst receiving help to improve their employment situation and preparing to move into the private rented sector. Through Project Vista, residents can stay for up to one year and receive targeted support during this time by Education, Employment and Training and Independent Living Skills programmes.

Funded by London Housing Foundation the idea behind the project is to provide a stable home to allow young people to focus on improving their employment situation, save money for a deposit and develop independent living skills.

In 2017, the project won the prestigious London Homelessness Award in recognition of its innovative approach. The judges were impressed by the collaborative approach between the two organisations and the way young people are placed at its heart. The £30,000 prize money was given to NHYC to be used to extend their frontline services.

The project was also included as a case study in a 2017 Crisis publication on shared housing... *Spare to Share: A guide to letting and supporting shared tenancies in social housing*

In this partnership, NHYC acts as the managing agent, guaranteeing to Network Homes a regular reduced rent. This allows NHYC to let out the rooms to young people in need on a protected licence for a maximum of one year. The licences are issued by NHYC, who also conduct the ‘right to rent’ checks and sends them on to Network Homes.

The team from NHYC supports the young people with their employment and personal goals and provides weekly check-ins. These allow NHYC to get an early indication of any repairs, anti-social behaviour or other issues that may be arising, so they can be resolved promptly

Project Vista shows the crucial work that can be done by Housing Associations to provide a housing plus role, working in collaboration with a specialist charity to ensure that employment, training and independent living skills are provided alongside good quality, stable accommodation.

2. The Social Bite Village, Edinburgh

Name of the project	Social Bite Village
Location	Edinburgh
Target group(s)	Single homeless people
Project overview	An accommodation model for up to 20 homeless people, creating an alternative to sub-standard and ineffective temporary accommodation solutions.
Organisations involved/partners	Cyrenians Hillcrest Housing
Source of funding	Social Bite
What makes it innovative/unique	Independent housing units with support provided to enable those experiencing homelessness to move on and improve their lives.
Outcomes	<p>By the end of 2018, five community members had found paid employment and a further five community members had enrolled on educational and training courses.</p> <p>The intended outcomes for community members include; making positive social networks and relationships improving self-care and living skills, managing money, physical and emotional health; and in the longer term achieving and managing independent accommodation outside of the village.</p>
Challenges faced and lessons learned	<p><i>Social Bite believes for a community to be truly transformational, it is fundamental that Community Members are involved in the shaping and forming of it, at every stage...The journey of the community so far, has been largely positive, with many lives being transformed. However, as with any environment that brings together people from different backgrounds, experiences, with varying preferences and habits; the community has gone through a natural process of forming and norming, with ebbs and flows of struggle and celebration as people have adjusted to, and at times struggled with, community life. (Ending Homelessness in Scotland Social Bite Impact Report 2018-19)</i></p>
Website	https://social-bite.co.uk/the-social-bite-village/

Further information about Social Bite

Social Bite began in 2012 as a small sandwich shop on Rose Street in Edinburgh, set up by Alice Thompson and Josh Littlejohn. The shop began employing people from the homeless community when a local Big Issue seller called Pete asked for a job. Social Bite then introduced a Pay It Forward service where customers could buy food in advance for the homeless. Social Bite now gives away 100,000 items of food and hot drinks per year and employs over 100 people, many of whom have struggled with homelessness.

The founders of Social Bite were shocked at the extent of homelessness and the barriers it creates to living a normal life, so in 2015 set up the Social Bite Fund with the mission to end homelessness in Scotland.

The Social Bite Village was established in 2018 as an innovative, highly supported community for up to 20 people affected by homelessness. The purpose of the Village is to offer the right support, living environment and opportunities for someone from a situation of homelessness to build an independent life.

The Social Bite Village development came out of conversations Social Bite had with people supported by, and employed in, their social enterprises, who had experience of living in temporary accommodation. A key message coming through was that current B&B accommodation that was available did not provide a suitable base for people to escape from homelessness.

The Village is made up of 10 'NestHouses' – each shared by two residents plus an additional unit for staff. There is also a central Community Hub, which is the focus of community life – where residents are able to cook, eat and socialise together. The Hub is also used to host training and support opportunities and activities. The village has a timetable of activities each week all designed to help residents achieve outcomes related to personal development.

Community members are expected to stay at the village for around 12-18 months at which point they will be supported to move into permanent housing. During their time there, community members should contribute to life in the village, learn new skills, and engage in work and voluntary placements. As each person moves on, a new Community Member will join to be supported and mentored by their fellow community members. The residents will be people who are currently living in mostly unsupported temporary accommodation, shelters, and B&Bs.

The Village is designed to be an active and highly supportive community. Cyrenians are involved as partners providing skilled and experienced staff and volunteers. These staff members and volunteers are crucial in providing positive role models to residents, running a health and wellbeing programme as well as being a consistent and supportive presence on site.

Hillcrest Housing Association is also a partner in the project providing a Housing Officer to manage the tenancy of each resident. Hillcrest also provide facilities management for the Village ensuring the buildings and site are maintained to the highest standard.

The Social Bite Village is an experimental project, built upon the expertise and lived experience of those who have created similar developments. The Social Bite Village was built thanks to a massive collective effort from a range of companies and individuals, supplying

everything from windows to project management expertise. The project spurred the public's imagination and stands as a tangible symbol for hope and doing things differently.¹

The Social Bite Village is an innovative and pioneering project that brings together safe and secure accommodation with opportunities for education, training and employment.

3. DASH: Durham Action on Single Housing

Name of the project	Durham Action on Single Housing (DASH)
Location	Durham
Target group(s)	<p>DASH works mainly with single homeless adults. These include rough sleepers, people forced to rely on family and friends for somewhere to stay, people leaving hospital, care or prison, with know where to go, and people whose private tenancies are at risk for whatever reason, including financial shortfall.</p> <p>DASH manages tenancies for people with long-term mental health problems, people with substance misuse or alcohol problems, people excluded from mainstream housing because of an offending history or financial problems, and young inexperienced people on their own for the first time.</p>
Project Summary	<p>DASH is a small independent charity that began life as the Durham Cyrenians in 1972. They have provided housing and support to single homeless people throughout County Durham for 45 years. They now offer around 65 places in a variety of projects to suit different levels of support needs. Their focus is on providing support to enable their tenants to rebuild their lives, to ensure that they won't end up back on the streets.</p> <p>DASH provides long-term and short-term supported and unsupported accommodation for single homeless people. DASH provides a women's project targeted at vulnerable women who have multiple and complex needs.</p> <p>The charity employs around 18 members of staff and they also run a volunteering programme, with many volunteers coming from Durham University.</p> <p><i>'Everyone, regardless of circumstances, should have a fundamental right to a place of shelter, and help to rebuild their life.'</i></p>
Organisations involved/partners	Durham County Council
Source of funding	<p>DASH has two main sources of funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • properties are maintained from rental income; and

¹ Social Bite: www. <https://social-bite.co.uk/the-social-bite-village/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the support element is provided by Durham County Council's Commissioners for Adult Social Care fund. <p>Recently, they have also been holding frequent fundraising events in partnership with local organisations. In anticipation of further Local Authority cuts in 2020, DASH are looking to become a Registered Provider of affordable housing as an additional source of funding.</p>
What makes it innovative/unique	<p>DASH is a local charity and means a lot to former and current users and those who have interacted with the service; people know that they have helped a lot of people locally in the past which helps build and maintain their reputation.</p> <p>In terms of Fundraising: local businesses and enterprises are seeking to support local charities rather than the big nationals. This is possibly to do with the recent rise in the profile of homelessness and people desire to help their local community.</p> <p>DASH use a personal approach – getting out there, raising their profile and making themselves known in the community.</p>
Challenges faced	“Financial stability is always a challenge as a small charity”.
Lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that DASH has a thorough knowledge of the environment and communities it operates in; Actively seek to engage the local community in supporting their work; Maintain close relationships with stakeholders and external agencies.

Further information on DASH services:

Short-term supported housing

DASH have 17 beds allocated to their short-term property portfolio. Those beds are in properties based in Gilesgate in Durham and in Langley Moor, County Durham.

Short-term agreements consist of 28 day licences and 6 month assured short-hold tenancies. The type of agreement issued to clients depends on the accommodation they have been allocated to.

The support provided empowers people to become more independent, to enable more life choices, and to improve their quality of life. DASH aims to help people to gain the skills and confidence they need to return to, or progress towards, living more independently. The short-term services are for those tenants able to progress to greater independence within a time limited period.

A variety of support is provided to service users including helping them to maximise their benefits and access Housing and Council Tax Benefit. DASH provide advice on maintaining a tenancy or licence, budgeting and other daily living skills. They help people by sign-posting them to other services and liaising with specialised support agencies, such as mental health services, and helping them to access mainstream housing.

Support starts with service users working closely with staff to identify their support needs and then preparing an agreed Individual Support Plan with realistic aims and objectives, all within the first few weeks of their occupancy or tenancy.

Long-term supported housing

Six places are provided but vacancies for these properties are infrequent and are intended specifically for people with longer term support needs.

DASH support includes

- help with accessing Housing and Council Tax Benefit
- help with accessing mainstream housing
- help with setting up and maintaining a new tenancy
- directing to and liaising with specialised support agencies
- budgeting guidance and help with other daily living skills
- information on local services and amenities
- service user involvement at DASH meetings and training
- regular supervised drop-ins

Vulnerable Women's Project

This innovative project provides accommodation and a supportive environment to vulnerable women who have multiple and complex needs. The project was established in 2014 for women with entrenched lifestyles which form a barrier to them accessing housing and other support services.

At full capacity the accommodation can house up to 10 women and is staffed 24/7, 365 days a year.

The women using the service have complex needs and may have struggled with physical and mental ill health, child welfare, family and relationship breakdown, offending behaviour, historic abuse, bereavement, substance misuse, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, childhood trauma and sometimes self-harm.

The support provided is based upon the initial assessment of needs which DASH carries out and the support plan, which is developed between DASH staff and each service user. DASH services can also involve supporting women to attend appointments, linking in and coordinating with other agencies/services, arranging activities and other day to day assistance to help the service users repair their lives and move on.

Unsupported properties for rent

In 2012 DASH was successful in an application to the Empty Homes Community Grant Programme. This involved buying eight properties to house twenty-four people. The properties had to have been empty for at least six months and were then refurbished and re-let at an affordable rent.

The unsupported properties, which are located throughout County Durham are ideal as general needs lettings as there is no ongoing support to residents in these properties.

DASH provides a vital service for single homeless people in the Durham area and is building links with local communities to ensure local support for their work.

<https://www.dashorg.co.uk/>

4. Personal Transitions Service, Mayday Trust

Name of the project	Personal Transitions Service (PTS) & Housing Transitions Service (HTS)
Location	Northampton, Oxford and Westminster
Target group(s)	People who are homeless and/or going through tough times
Organisations involved/partners	Mayday Trust
Project overview	The PTS is a personalised strength-based support service that focuses on people's assets, their potential and what they want to achieve in life rather than on weaknesses and how to fix their problems (e.g. substance misuse). They provide a totally person-led approach, having undergone a total transformation of its organisation, systems and culture.
Source of funding	The Mayday Trust receives funding from agencies, trusts, private companies and the general public. They work with Bridges Fund Management, an organisation that matches private investors with organisations doing positive social and environmental work, to develop a framework for Social Impact Bonds (SIB) framework.
What makes it innovative/unique	<p>A complete systems, organisational and cultural transformation is fairly unique. In their journey towards change, Mayday Trust had to let go of and unlearn most of the processes and ways they used to deliver their services and start afresh.</p> <p>The level of personalisation and control given to people is unprecedented in their homelessness services. Mayday take it to the next level when applying this strength-based approach, as it is embedded in every aspect of the organisation including their HR, finance, operations, language and evaluation practices.</p>
Outcomes	<i>"Due to the non-intrusive nature of the conversations Mayday Coaches have with the users they work with, disclosure of substance use or offending is not a requirement. However, for those who have chosen to disclose this information an 81.3% reduction in re-offending and 86.5% decrease in substance misuse was recorded"</i> ² between 2017 and 2018. Over the year, about 79% of the 254 people who accessed Mayday's services sustained their accommodation and 93% experienced improved mental health and wellbeing.
Challenges faced	The major challenge is finding funders and commissioners that believe in the approach adopted by Mayday. For example, many commissioners want to see results in terms of percentage in reduction of substance use or offending, etc. However, this is not data that coaches systematically collect from people they work with.
Lessons learned	One of the main lessons learned from Mayday's experience is the importance of listening to people on the receiving end of homelessness services. People going through tough times are not a homogeneous group and it is important to understand people's

² Mayday Trust (2018) Annual Impact Review 2017-2018 https://maydaytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Annual_Impact_Review_Website_Download-1.pdf

	<p>different stories, contexts and journeys, and tailor services accordingly.</p> <p>The second main lesson is around the application of a genuine strength-based approach and the importance of embedding it throughout the organisation.</p>
What's next?	<p>A new PTS SIB for young people experiencing homelessness, <u>Be the Change</u> has now been commissioned through <u>First for Wellbeing</u> in Northamptonshire, a pioneering social enterprise set up as a partnership between Northamptonshire County Council, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and the University of Northampton.</p> <p>Upfront funding and support are provided by <u>Bridges Fund Management</u>. Mayday will receive payments when they are able to move young people into stable community-based accommodation and when they find employment.</p>

Further information about the Mayday Trust:

Eight years ago Mayday Trust – back then a traditional supported housing provider – decided to make a drastic change to the way they operated and delivered their services. This was the result of some revealing insights from their conversations with several hundred people experiencing homelessness, both on the street and those living with Mayday. The message that came from this was that homelessness services are often “*humiliating, dehumanising and at worst institutionalising*”, often focusing on deficits, ‘fixing’ people and segregating them from their communities, which traps them in a long-term cycle of homelessness.

The Personal Transitions Service approach gives people choice and flexibility on the kinds of support they receive. When people arrive, there is a meet & greet session where staff explain what they can offer and it’s a person’s choice whether they opt to work with a coach or not. People are offered a four week trial before committing to working with a coach.

Coaches do not complete needs and risk assessment forms or use paperwork in front of users, which can be a humiliating and re-traumatising experience. They meet with people outside of their homes, build personal relationships with them and have conversations that you would normally have when meeting people for the first time. Instead of focusing on how to give up alcohol for example, they talk about interests, talents, what have they done well in the past and what they really enjoyed. Based on what they aspire to, everyone gets access to small personal budgets, talent bonds and transition grants that finance the services, activities and opportunities that individuals need, when they need them. People can then access mainstream services rather than those specifically targeting homeless people. For example, someone can select and access their own therapy when they need it. Talent bonds help people who have business ideas access funding. Coaches can also help people procure work and educational placements based on what they actually want to do instead of the other way around of finding opportunities first and trying to get people to attend things they are not necessarily interested in.

PTS is deliberately separate from the housing service (i.e. Housing Transition Service) that Mayday provide in their accommodation. Coaches are not involved in management or operational housing

matters and don't have a say on an individual tenancy matters. This allows people to form trusting relationships with their coaches rather than one obstructed by talk of rent arrears and evictions. It also gives flexibility for coaches to continue working with people after they move from Mayday's accommodation. In order to tackle the problem of segregation, institutionalisation and unsafe environments in large blocks of housing or hostels, Mayday is moving away from larger blocks of accommodation to individual flats and smaller houses where possible.

Part of the transformation Mayday has undergone is changing the way staff are recruited, trained and receive on-going support. Frontline staff are recruited not only based on skills and competencies but also on their values and attitudes. They receive training on the survival and coping strategies people may use to deal with homelessness and living through tough times.

Mayday Trust have shown how it is possible to bring about wholesale system change, redirecting to a person led system which puts people in control of their future.

<https://maydaytrust.org.uk/>

ii. Homelessness Prevention

5. Pan-London Housing Reciprocal by Safer London

Name of the project	Pan-London Housing Reciprocal (PLHR)
Organisations involved/partners	Mainly delivered by Safer London in partnership with local authorities
Location	London
Target group(s)	Social housing tenants in London who are at high risk of harm where they live and wish to move to a different London borough
Project overview	<p>A housing pathway that is a voluntary collaboration between all London local authorities and 47 registered housing providers and support agencies. It increases options for people with a social housing tenancy in London who are at high risk of harm and need to relocate to another area of London in order to remain safe and not lose their social tenancy.</p> <p>People may be referred because of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic abuse (see definition) • Other types of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) including sexual violence and exploitation (including prostitution and trafficking), so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and stalking • Hate crime • Gang related crime or serious youth violence • Other high risk community safety reason
Source of funding	Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)
What makes it innovative/unique	New approach unseen elsewhere before 2017
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 200 people have moved through the Pan-London Housing Reciprocal • 284 property offers made in years 1 and 2 of operation • 76 registered housing providers are now signed up to the scheme including all 33 London local authorities • Award-winning scheme that has been recognised as good practice nationally • Over 1500 professionals reached through training, workshops and events

	In a sector that was divided by local authority boundaries, 76 housing partners are now working together to support their tenants at risk of abuse, violence and potential homelessness. Coordinated by Safer London, this new approach demonstrates an innovative way of working in partnership that offers significant potential for the housing sector across the UK.
Challenges faced	<p>Moves are subject to suitable accommodation being available in safe areas identified, may take time and might not be possible in all cases.</p> <p>Pan-London Housing Reciprocal should not be considered emergency accommodation. If someone is at immediate risk in their home, emergency accommodation should be identified in the interim.</p>
Lessons learned	<p>Half of property refusals through the programme were explained by property type, with other reasons including location and risk. When properties are refused, they are matched to another applicant.</p> <p>Waiting lists for accommodation are considerably shorter than general social housing waiting lists in London.</p> <p>Referrals from Social Services increased during the second year of the Reciprocal due to their awareness raising work.</p>

Further information about Pan-London Housing Reciprocal

Safer London launched the Pan-London Housing Reciprocal (PLHR) in January 2017, a new and innovative way to prevent homelessness that does not exist in any other city or country as far as we know. Research showed that survivors of domestic abuse in London often experience long periods of housing instability, moving between refuges, hostels, temporary accommodation and short term private tenancies. Insecure housing is often a re-traumatising experience that can put survivors at further risk. For those with a social tenancy, the prospect of losing this security can be an additional barrier to fleeing abuse.

Safer London initially secured the agreement of 32 local authorities and 43 housing associations to support tenants experiencing domestic abuse, other forms of violence against women/girls, gang-related violence, hate crime or other abuse.

The Pan-London Housing Reciprocal is an alternative housing route based on the voluntary collaboration between local authorities and housing associations, coordinated by Safer London. It is not a statutory requirement of the housing partners offering this option. Applicants must be at risk in their current borough, have a social tenancy and wish to move to a different London borough. Their landlord needs to be signed up as a Pan-London Housing Reciprocal Partner.

Landlords who refer their tenants for a move agree in exchange to rehouse other applicants who are at risk where they live. In this way local authorities and registered providers in London work together to enable their tenants to move somewhere safe and maintain their social tenancy. Moves are subject to suitable accommodation being available in the safe areas identified, may take time and might not be possible in all cases. The hope is that moves can be facilitated quickly, but this is not always the case.

For those at high risk of harm from gangs, additional support must be in place to ensure that gang-related issues will not continue in the new area. Where appropriate, this support is available through Safer London’s London Gang Exit programme. LGE is a pan-London service designed to support young people involved in or affected by gang activity, complementing and enhancing existing local services across London.

The work of the Pan London Housing Reciprocal has been recognised as good practice, for example it is cited in the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Ending Homelessness report on homelessness prevention in July 2017, and the following year it won a prize at the London Homelessness Awards. The Pan London Housing Reciprocal has also become a partner in the MHCLG funded ‘Whole Housing’ Project that shares the model in two different areas of the country for survivors of domestic abuse.

The Pan London Housing Reciprocal demonstrates an effective way of partnership working to support vulnerable people at risk of homelessness.

<https://saferlondon.org.uk/pan-london-housing-reciprocal/>

6. SHPS Brent

Name of the project	Single Homeless Prevention Service (SHPS)
Location	Brent, London
Target group(s)	Single people in Brent aged 18 and over
Project overview	<p>The service provides support to those who are threatened with homelessness and is run in partnership with the London borough of Brent. They refer people to the service for support with their housing needs in line with the objectives under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.</p> <p>Their mission is to prevent homelessness, improve overall well-being for those who come for help, and to reduce social and economic exclusion.</p> <p>SHPS Brent work with all those referred to develop a Personal Housing Plan (PHP). This identifies the housing need alongside a series of actions the individual and the SHPS Brent staff team need to complete with target dates for completion. The individual and SHPS staff member sign up to complete these actions within the timescales set in order to prevent or relieve homelessness. Actions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing to the landlord; • agreeing a rent payment or positive behaviour plan;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signposting to additional support services; • attending a viewing of a property • carrying out mediation between family members. <p>The aim of the actions on the PHP is to prevent or relieve homelessness. This plan can be reviewed and updated regularly depending on need to achieve goals set.</p>
Organisations involved/partners	<p>The two core delivery partners are: Crisis and Thames Reach - organisations with extensive experience of working in the homelessness sector, engaging and supporting people to secure and sustain accommodation suitable for them.</p> <p>Bridges Fund Management is the social investor.</p>
Source of funding	Local Authority (Brent) and Bridges Fund Management
What makes it innovative/unique	<p>Once homelessness has been prevented or relieved for at least eight months, SHPS will complete a checklist identifying that there is no longer a risk of homelessness, ensuring that the support services required are engaged as needed.</p> <p>SHPS is paid by the local authority according to the number of successful outcomes it delivers, so they are incentivised to make sure that the service delivers positive housing outcomes for individuals.</p>
Outcomes	<p>Preventing homelessness and sustaining tenancies are the main outcomes, alongside completing personal housing plans.</p> <p>By May 2019, SHPS Brent had successfully found homes for 311 people and had completed more than 740 personal housing plans for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.</p>

SHPS Brent is a useful model of partnership working between local authorities and others to prevent and relieve homelessness as well as tackling social and economic exclusion.

<http://www.shpslondon.org/our-service>

7. Street Buddies, Westminster

Street Buddies is a peer-led outreach service run by housing association Riverside in Westminster. Street Buddies help to get entrenched rough sleepers off the streets. Street Buddies' volunteers, who are also former rough sleepers, are trained in dealing with substance misuse, mental health issues, and maintaining professional boundaries.

Armed with an extensive knowledge of the range of support services available through Riverside and its partner agencies, Street Buddies help customers to take the first steps to re-engaging with services and moving away from entrenched rough sleeping.

This unique set of training, skills and experience means that Street Buddies volunteers are ‘experts by experience’ and can reach and engage with entrenched rough sleepers in a way professionals often can’t. Street Buddies are often called in when outreach workers are unable to build a connection with individuals who are sleeping rough.

Street Buddies also provides paid apprenticeships providing essential work experience within the sector and mentoring support and supervision.

Street Buddies is a peer support initiative involving former homeless volunteers and trainees to make contact with rough sleepers. They are ‘experts by experience’ who have been trained in tackling the issues of substance use and mental health, working with entrenched rough sleepers, some of whom been living on the streets for decades. Our Street Buddies’ background gives them an empathetic advantage and the success of the model has been overwhelming. The Street Buddies team has built up trusting relationships with rough sleepers, showing that they have made a dramatic change to their lives and moved away from the streets...Street Buddies’ volunteers are seen as peers not professionals and are often more successful in engaging with rough sleepers who might otherwise be reluctant to engage with professionals. Riverside Area Manager, Steve Davies³

Street Buddies is expanding in 2020 into other boroughs including neighbouring Kensington and Chelsea as the scale of rough sleeping continues to grow in London. It provides a crucial peer-led outreach service that could be used effectively in other areas.

<https://www.riverside.org.uk/in-your-neighbourhood/westminster-2/care-and-support/street-buddies-westminster/>

8. Cambridge House Safer Renting

Name of the project	Safer Renting, Cambridge House
Organisations involved/partners	Safer Renting is delivered by Cambridge House in partnership with local authorities across London
Location	Safer Renting currently operates in the London Boroughs of Croydon, Enfield, Hounslow, Lewisham, Westminster and Waltham Forest. It is expanding into other boroughs and communities.
Target group(s)	Low-income tenants in the private rented sector (PRS) living in dangerous housing conditions with poor physical standards provided by ‘rogue landlords’, where the tenants are at risk of becoming homeless due to evictions.

³ <https://www.riverside.org.uk/in-your-neighbourhood/east-london/news/street-buddies-reaching-out-to-rough-sleepers-in-westminster/>

<p>Project overview</p>	<p>Safer Renting works with people in bottom-end private rented housing ('slum' rentals), to provide advice and advocacy to prevent homelessness. Tenants are referred to them by partner local authorities' licensing schemes and by environmental health enforcement officers.</p> <p>Their clients typically have little or no knowledge of their housing rights and are not connected to mainstream networks of advice. For example, some tenants don't have tenancy agreements and don't get receipts for rent paid as cash in hand, which makes it difficult for them to prove that they used to live there after eviction.</p> <p>Safer Renting provide customized advice and hands-on advocacy, intervening where there is high risk of homelessness.</p> <p>The service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches at-risk tenants and victims of criminal landlords • Provides expert outreach advice and advocacy • Secures accessible legal representation • Provides non-legal advocacy support where necessary.
<p>Source of funding</p>	<p>Core funding for Safer Renting comes from a range of voluntary and charitable organisations. They aim to become a social enterprise in the future where local authorities pay a fee for their services.</p>
<p>What makes it innovative/unique</p>	<p>Safer Renting fills a gap where local authorities can no longer afford to hire full time tenancy rights advocates, while at the same time sparing councils the enormous costs of dealing with homelessness in their local areas.</p> <p>They reach disadvantaged tenants who would normally have limited access to housing solicitors or similar services. This is due to their close and direct working relationship with local authorities.</p> <p>Their service is unique as it goes beyond merely providing advice to acting on behalf of tenants, for example by supporting them to get injunctions, take landlords to court, get back their deposits and defending them against illegal evictions.</p> <p>They also provide an outreach and responsive service where they get in touch with tenants within 24 hours of a referral.</p>

Outcomes	<p>Currently working in 6 London boroughs: Croydon, Enfield, Hounslow, Lewisham, Westminster and Waltham Forest but looking to expand to more.</p> <p>In the latest Cambridge House Annual Report, figures show that Safer Renting has worked with 188 vulnerable households achieving high levels of homelessness prevention and stopping illegal evictions.</p>
Challenges faced	<p>Lack of support and understanding from the police in investigating and arresting landlords suspected of illegally evicting their tenants. Safer Renting is trying to work more closely with the police.</p> <p>The complicated and inadequate nature of the law; PRS tenants have to navigate a long list of different and complicated laws in order to know their rights, which is not realistic for most people in vulnerable situations.</p>
Lessons learned	<p>Homelessness prevention through providing advocacy services against evictions for PRS tenants can save local authorities massive costs of rehousing.</p>

Further information about Cambridge House Safer Renting:

The Cambridge House Safer Renting programme protects tenants who are victimised by criminal landlords by providing specialist advice, advocacy and support.

The objectives of Safer Renting are:

- Preventing homelessness, particularly by intervening in illegal evictions;
- Supporting private renters to negotiate better conditions in their homes;
- Enabling private renters to move away from a criminal landlord on their own terms, with compensation whenever possible;
- Informing government policy and best practice by analysing and communicating how criminal landlords are exploiting the London housing crisis at the expense of tenants.

The ending of a private tenancy has become the leading cause of homelessness in the UK, leading to 40% of all cases in London. Safer Renting clients generally have little or no knowledge of their housing rights and are not connected to mainstream networks of advice. The Safer Renting programme plays a valuable role by:

- Reaching at-risk tenants and victims of criminal landlords
- Providing expert outreach advice and advocacy
- Securing accessible legal representation
- Providing non-legal advocacy support where appropriate

These activities help tenants achieve a range of positive outcomes, minimizing the risk of homelessness by:

- Sustaining tenancies through advocacy and preventing illegal evictions

- Challenging ‘no fault’ evictions to delay or prevent repossession
- Supporting tenants to find suitable housing
- Supporting tenants to secure compensation
- Equipping tenants with knowledge of their housing rights
- Referral to broader support e.g. health, debt advice, migrant advice/support

Safer Renting plays a crucial role in improving the private rented sector as a whole as well as preventing homelessness for the most vulnerable. This model could be used in different areas to help people sustain tenancies and live in safer, secure and suitable accommodation.

<https://ch1889.org/safer-renting>

9. The House Project – Co-op for and by Young People

Name of the project	The House Project (HP)
Organisations involved/partners	The National House Project in partnership with local authorities
Location	Started as a pilot in Stoke-on-Trent and now being implemented in five other local authorities, namely Islington, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, Rotherham and Doncaster
Target group(s)	Young people (16-18 years) leaving care
Project overview	<p>The House Project is a housing solution based on a tenant-managed housing co-operative model, run for, and by, young people aged 16-18 who are leaving care.</p> <p>The pilot model involved the transfer of void properties from the council to the HP on a short-term lease and peppercorn rent. The aim was to secure about 10 properties at any one time, replacing allocated properties when they revert to the council. In general, however, accommodation can be provided by other Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and local authorities can determine the number of properties allocated to the project and the best legal entity for its HP. For example, the HP in Stoke-on-Trent was registered as a company limited by guarantee (CLG) while retaining the co-operative principles and membership structure at the centre of its management.</p> <p>Young people are referred to the project by their social workers and go through an application process that involves filling an application form and attending an interview. In selecting young people, local authorities take into consideration how a group can work together and support each other, how much support a young person will need, and whether the House Project is able to provide that level of support. Before moving into their accommodation, young people work with architects to refurbish their properties, which helps build a sense of ownership and enables them to create a home that meets their needs. When their properties are ready, young people become tenants of the HP and stay until they are ready to transition out of the project, at</p>

	<p>which point they and their home revert to a standard long-term council tenancy.</p> <p>Following the principles of a co-op model, young people take a leading role in how their tenancies are managed. HP members participate in decision making on the kind of services and support to which the budget is allocated, and decisions about new and existing HP members. Terms of HP members’ tenancy include a requirement on young people to engage in “16 hours of employment, education or training (EET) activities per week, to play an active role in the HP community by attending meetings regularly and taking up “opportunities presented through the project” (HP10 Group Rules); and to be respectful of other members and their choices and views.”⁴ The House Project delivers an accredited learning programme for young people to develop their skills, confidence and aspirations. Young people attend a residential course, write their own learning plans, explore their interests, passions and career aspirations, work with the team to manage the budget and work that needs to be done to their homes, write health and safety plans for their homes, and write a business plan to pitch for money to organise community events or projects that matter to them. They also have an opportunity to join the Young People’s National Movement. The YPNM represents all House Project young people nationally and takes ideas for improvement and issues to the National House Project Board.</p> <p>During their stay, young people receive support from a group of local authority staff and a range of partner agencies (including a legal team, architect and training company). A psychologist is commissioned to provide a training programme to staff members on Trauma Informed Practice, which helps them develop an understanding of the impact of trauma on young people and how to shape the services and support provided with that understanding in mind. The psychologist also provides regular consultation for the team to support their wellbeing and reflect on their work with young people.</p>
<p>Source of funding</p>	<p>The National House Project (NHP) is funded by the Department for Education until March 2020 and will support the roll out of Local House Projects (LHP) to five local authorities as well as developing financial modelling and scalability on a national platform, across the UK.</p>
<p>What makes it innovative/unique</p>	<p>This project is the first of its kind for care leavers in the UK. It is unique with regards to the level of ownership and control taken by young people in developing and running the overall project, as well as choosing and refurbishing their own properties, and identifying the support needed to sustain it.</p> <p>Another innovative aspect of the HP is its funding model, which pools the accommodation and living costs normally allocated by local</p>

⁴ Dixon, Jo and Ward, Jade (2017) Making a House a Home: The House Project Evaluation. Department of Education. Available at: <https://innovationcsc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/1.2.70-Making a house a home the house project evaluation.pdf>

	<p>authorities to 16 and 17 year olds leaving care, and uses this fund to procure support services which the young people and HP board deem priority to meet their individual and group needs. Expenses covered include cost of rent and utilities, the HP staff team and the commissioning of support services from partners and other agencies as needed.</p>
<p>Outcomes</p>	<p>According to an evaluation of the pilot project conducted by the University of York:</p> <p><u>Accommodation</u> After a year and due to delays of setting up, 5 young people had successfully moved into their HP homes, while 4 were still waiting to move.</p> <p><u>EET Education, Employment and Training</u> All young people were participating in some form of EET by the end of the evaluation, when 3 of them had been out of EET at the start of the HP. “Five were in further education, 2 had traineeships, 1 had full time work and another was working part time and claiming benefits.”</p> <p><u>Wellbeing and self-confidence</u> Overall, young people involved in HP reported being happier compared to baseline figures. There was an increase in their satisfaction with 10 life domains including family, health, future, school/college, time-use, choices in life, money, appearance and home. The two domains with the highest increase in satisfaction were their happiness with friends and their self-confidence.</p>
<p>Challenges faced</p>	<p>According to the evaluation conducted by the University of York, there were a number of challenges that faced the implementation of the pilot project in Stoke-on-Trent:</p> <p>“The innovative nature of the project proved to be an obstacle to gaining buy-in and support as it required changes to existing systems across council departments, for example, changes to housing allocation policies and to financial systems for care leavers. The perceived risk of handing over properties to be managed by the HP company, which afforded young people a high degree of control, was also described as “anxiety provoking” (L1) and a further obstacle to gaining the necessary senior buy-in and permissions within the original time frame.”⁵ This resulted in delays setting up the project and moving young people to their homes, which was initially envisaged to take 6 months. This had negative implications on young people’s lives due to uncertainty and instability as some had to find temporary accommodation when their existing care placements had disrupted or had ended prior to their HP home becoming available.</p> <p>Another challenge was the availability of suitable homes (i.e. one bedroom flats) in convenient locations that match young people’s</p>

⁵ Dixon, Jo and Ward, Jade (2017) Making a House a Home: The House Project Evaluation. Department of Education. Available at: https://innovationcsc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/1.2.70-Making_a_house_a_home_the_house_project_evaluation.pdf

	<p>needs. This also restricted the level of choice that young people could have in choosing their homes.</p> <p>In addition, it was difficult to maintain the same level of participation and engagement from each of the 10 young people, resulting in having only a small group attending most activities and doing most of the work. This created some fairness concerns among those regularly participating in activities.</p> <p>Finally, it was challenging to bring together a staff team with the expertise and knowledge to effectively carry out the complex job of supporting young people through the transition, talking with them about housing, writing tenancy agreements, etc. while at the same time liaising between young people and partner services, attending care reviews with social workers, and managing team dynamics.</p> <p>In addition to the frequency of young people’s participation in HP events there was some acknowledgement that the level of the tasks that accompanied HP participation had placed high demands on young people and their ability to manage other life events. The aim to empower young people to take responsibility and control of the HP and their move to their own homes was widely commended as a positive means of facilitating choice, agency and skills development. However, the project team highlighted a need for this to be managed carefully to avoid overwhelming young people, who, by the very nature of the project, were at a vulnerable and transitional stage of their lives.</p>
<p>Lessons learned</p>	<p>The HP pilot evaluation demonstrated the importance of gaining political buy-in from local council members in order to overcome bureaucratic hurdles and obstacles due to changing long-time processes and systems. Sufficient lead-in time is needed to “carry out the groundwork; establish systems for supporting staff and young people, and providing the necessary reassurances and robust safeguards when pushing the boundaries and embarking upon change in local authority settings.”⁶ Having ‘project champions’ from among staff and young people was essential to ensure their perseverance and dedication to work closely with local authority officials and advocate for the project.</p> <p>Based on the evaluation, people involved in the HP pilot advised against giving young people move in dates until staff are absolutely certain when homes will be available. This will avoid causing instability in young people’s lives and potentially making them homeless and having to find temporary accommodation in the meantime.</p>

⁶ Dixon, Jo and Ward, Jade (2017) Making a House a Home: The House Project Evaluation. Department of Education. Available at: https://innovationcsc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/1.2.70-Making_a_house_a_home_the_house_project_evaluation.pdf

	Moreover, challenges facing staff highlighted the need for providing them with sufficient training and opportunities for team building activities in order to be able to effectively support young people.
What's next	After a successful phase 1 of the House Project in Stoke-on-Trent in 2015, funding for phase 2 in 2017 has enabled the establishment of 'The National House Project' as a national charity, which is developing the framework and provides the expertise and support to enable any group of young people and the adults working with them to apply to set up their own HP in the future. Local authorities interested in establishing their Local House Project can contract the National House Project to support them with the setting up including writing a project and budget plan, financial modelling, templates for policies and procedures, recruitment of staff and young people, and the set-up of their House Project Learning Programme.

The House Project provides a useful model of sustainable housing and support for young people, involving young people throughout, and working on a cooperative tenancy management basis.

<https://thehouseproject.org/>

iii. Multi-dimensional Support

10. Emmaus

Name of the project	Emmaus
Location	Nationwide, and global
Target group(s)	Formerly homeless people
Project overview	<p>Emmaus supports people who have experienced homelessness. Emmaus began in France following the Second World War when homelessness was a major problem.</p> <p>Emmaus describes itself as a homelessness charity with a difference, offering not a bed for the night but a home, meaningful work and a sense of community. Emmaus currently supports more than 800 formerly homeless people</p> <p>The first Emmaus community opened in the UK in 1991 and since then many more have opened, and there are now 29 communities in the UK and a further 5 groups trying to establish new communities.</p> <p>Most Emmaus projects have between 20-40 places for people to live as members of the communities, alongside the Emmaus members responsible for the community. Those who join from a homeless background are known as Emmaus companions. A home is available for as long as someone needs it. Companions get a room of their own, food, clothing and a small weekly allowance. In return it is expected that companions will work in the social enterprise of their community, behave respectfully to others, not use drugs and alcohol on the premises, and sign off all benefits except for housing benefit.</p> <p>Although joining a community will not appeal to or work for everyone, for some formerly homeless people it offers the support and companionship that may have been lost and can help people regain a sense of control, self-esteem and stability in their lives.</p>
Source of funding	<p>Emmaus UK is funded through donations and grants, which are also used to support the Emmaus groups and communities around the UK.</p> <p>Each Emmaus community's ultimate aim is to become financially self-sufficient, supporting itself through the trading activity of its social enterprises. Until they reach this point, Emmaus communities and groups rely on</p>

	<p>donations and grants to cover their costs and develop their business.</p> <p>The social enterprises are central to the Emmaus model, providing meaningful work for companions as well as generating the funding that maintains the communities, to make the communities as self-sustaining as possible. The main business activity is collecting donated furniture and other household goods and selling them in Emmaus shops; some items are refurbished and upcycled, and in the case of electrical items PAT tested for safety. There are also Emmaus cafes, house clearance businesses, gardening projects and clothing shops.</p>
What makes it innovative/unique	<p>Emmaus describes itself as a homelessness charity with a difference, offering not a bed for the night but a home, meaningful work and a sense of community. Emmaus currently supports more than 800 formerly homeless people.</p>
Outcomes	<p>In 2018-19 Emmaus supported 1529 people, almost half of whom had experienced relationship breakdown and a quarter were using alcohol and / or drugs.</p> <p>Emmaus research identifies that 79% of companions who have lived at Emmaus for a few months say that working and having something to do every day has been most beneficial part of their experience.</p> <p>Before joining Emmaus 85% of people were not satisfied with their life and a third of people had attempted suicide or had suicidal thoughts, on moving out of Emmaus communities 89% of people felt satisfied with life, safe and confident. Companions say the most beneficial aspects of Emmaus communities are getting to know others, the opportunity to work and access to training.</p>

Emmaus has for many years provided a multidimensional support approach to homelessness by offering accommodation alongside opportunities for employment and being part of a community.

<https://emmaus.org.uk/>

11. House of St Barnabas – Employment Academy

The House of St Barnabas works to break the cycle of homelessness by providing training, work experience and employment opportunities to help people rebuild their lives. Uniquely they do this

by using their beautiful Grade I listed Georgian townhouse in Soho to run a social enterprise, a fully commercial members' club.

The club provides income to run their Employment Academy which is at the heart of the social business, providing an on-site commercial environment for their trainees with accredited training, work experience and employment support. The staff are trained as buddies to support the trainees, providing job support and to ensure that the trainees feel part of the team.

The aim is to enable people to step away from the label of "homeless" to become active employees within the businesses they work with.

Participants and graduates of the Employment Academy are at the heart of everything that is done. Their journey starts with a three-month employment preparation programme in the Grade I listed home and members' club in Soho. Unlike many training programmes, The House of St Barnabas continues to offer structured support and mentoring for a year once people have moved on, to help graduates find, keep, and progress in, work. After that, the door remains open for people to pop in and share their successes and challenges with the team.

The House of St Barnabas also set up an accommodation pathway to help participants and graduates who found that their insecure housing situation was a barrier to sustaining employment. Help is now offered to find affordable housing alongside continued practical support around benefits advice, furnishing properties, money management and budgeting, dealing with landlords, and other services, and even physically assisting with moving home. The accommodation pathway is divided into three stages, primarily using shared accommodation, and then moving on into other accommodation delivered through Octavia Housing.

In a recent impact study published in 2019, the House of St Barnabas detailed the following achievements:

- In the five years since the first programme participants graduated in February 2014, the Employment Academy has supported 104 people into 133 jobs.
- Almost 1 in 5 working graduates now have secure, affordable accommodation AND have been in work for 6+ months
- 4 out of 5 graduates on the Accommodation Pathway are in work
- One fifth of graduates who've found work are now living in a secure tenancy
- No evictions from probationary or secure tenancies on our Accommodation Pathway⁷

The House of St Barnabas brings together employment training and work experience, alongside help and advice around accommodation, to help break the cycle of homelessness.

<https://hosb.org.uk/>

12. Thames Reach

Thames Reach are a London-based charity, whose mission is to assist homeless and vulnerable men and women to find decent homes, build supportive relationships and lead fulfilling lives. Thames

⁷ https://hosb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/HoSB-Impact-Report-2019_WEB.pdf

Reach provide numerous services in prevention, response and recovery to those affected by homelessness. Here we highlight some of their services:

Lambeth Living Well Network Floating Support

Thames Reach floating support services visit vulnerable people in their own homes to provide temporary support and prevent homelessness

Peer Landlord London

- People on low incomes, or zero hour contracts are at a higher risk of homelessness because of the high rent levels in London.
- Peer Landlord London is a model of affordable, shared housing for people who have previously been homeless and are now working, or close to returning to employment. It is designed to help individuals become more independent and to assume responsibilities within a supportive environment.
- Each property is assigned a live-in peer landlord, who is responsible for the smooth running of the household, organising the payment of bills, and liaising with Thames Reach.
- The peer landlord is also there to offer support and advice to the other tenants.
- Thames Reach is able to lease properties from social investors at below the market rate, with rent charges then kept low to ensure that tenants moving towards employment and greater independence have somewhere affordable to live in London.
- Peer Landlord London is run in partnership with Commonweal Housing, a charity that seeks to tackle social injustice through the development of innovative housing projects, and Catch 22, a social business providing services that help people in tough situations to turn their lives around.

Rough Sleeper Social Impact Bond

- The Thames Reach SIB (Social Impact Bond) service works with entrenched rough sleepers who have been on the streets for years and for whom other initiatives and forms of engagement have not worked.
- Being deeply entrenched, more traditional outreach interventions are not effective. This service puts a special emphasis on engagement and building trust, working with people to take them from the streets into temporary accommodation and then on to secure accommodation, and into employment or volunteering.
- The service has the flexibility to purchase bespoke services and has rapid access to a range of short-term accommodation options to enable rough sleepers to move away from the street at very short notice. Lead Workers and peer supporters work flexibly with service users to find the best solution to their particular needs and help them move away from the street using the most sustainable route possible.
- This service works with some of the most vulnerable people sleeping on the streets of London and is a vital part of Thames Reach's outreach services network.
- This service is funded by Social Investment Bond, based upon a payment by results structure. A Social Impact Bond is a public-private partnership that funds effective social services through a performance-based contract. Social Impact Bonds enable local governments to partner with high-performing service providers by using private investment to develop, coordinate, or expand effective programs. So if Thames Reach is successful in taking an entrenched rough sleeper into secure long-term housing, the organisation will receive and retain the investment. Conversely if it fails, the investment will be taken away.

STAR

- Sustaining Tenancies Accommodation & Resettlement (STAR) is a four-year project run in partnership with Shelter, St Mungo's, and Stonewall Housing. It operates across the capital to help people sleeping rough or in danger of becoming homeless.
- Thames Reach's role is to deliver face-to-face support to people with complex needs, including those in rough sleeping hotspots, and to those at risk of losing their tenancy due to anti-social behaviour, poor mental health, or drug and alcohol issues.
- Through STAR, service users are able to access training and employment, and improve their physical and mental health. Specialist support is provided by mental health practitioners from Enabling Assessment Service London (EASL).
- In addition to the support provided by Thames Reach, STAR also involves Shelter, to deliver housing advice, St Mungo's, who help people to access housing in the private rented sector and Stonewall Housing, who provide specialist advice and accommodation for LGBTQ+ people affected by homelessness.
- STAR is funded by London Councils.

Lambeth Offender Service

- Many homeless people have multiple support needs, where one issue compounds another. This is particularly the case when a homeless person also has a history of offending.
- The Lambeth Offender Service helps people currently in the criminal justice system who are at risk of homelessness. People leaving prison and those with a criminal record can find it hard to get accommodation, which can lead to reoffending and a revolving door back to prison.
- The service works closely with Lambeth Council, as well as the courts, custody suites, and probation services. It responds to referrals for people who do not have any accommodation on release from prison or police custody. The service also works with clients involved in the criminal justice system who have a tenancy, which they are at risk of losing.
- The service's primary aim is to help these vulnerable people to avoid sleeping on the streets but the service also provide support to help reduce the chances of people re-offending.
- Referrals can come from agencies or individuals, and people can self-refer.
- The Lambeth Offender Service is funded by the Government's new Homelessness Prevention Fund.

Tenancy Sustainment Team

- The Thames Reach Tenancy Sustainment Team works across 16 London boroughs helping former rough sleepers to manage the transition away from the street or hostel living into more independent accommodation, and then enable them to rebuild their lives.
- Using a 'Floating Support' model, staff provide support for as long as is needed and then 'float off' to support someone else. However staff are always available should a tenant relapse, or need some additional support. A large, dedicated team of staff and volunteers work to have a positive impact on the general health and well-being of former rough sleepers by enabling and encouraging them to address chronic and other health problems and maintain relationships with appropriate health and care services.
- Staff also provide flexible, individually-tailored support to build confidence and independent living skills, and help rough sleepers engage in meaningful activity like training or employment.
- In due course and where appropriate, tenants are supported to move on into more suitable accommodation, such as general needs social housing or private rented accommodation.

Greenwich Private Rented Sector

- In partnership with the Royal Borough of Greenwich, Thames Reach helps to secure access into the private rented sector for people aged between 18 and 34 who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, and whose needs can be met within a shared housing environment. The aim of the Greenwich Private Rented Sector Scheme is to improve access to shared accommodation within the private rented sector.
- The scheme develops a network of private landlords who agree to make available good quality accommodation. Staff mediate between the landlord and client by helping with viewings, the sign-up process, claiming housing benefit and resolving tenancy difficulties or breakdowns.
- Referrals are via Greenwich's Housing Options Service team.

Bermondsey Project

- The Bermondsey Project provides temporary, supported accommodation for single homeless people with a history of poor mental health; some with a history of rough sleeping. Staff work alongside mental health professionals to support individuals to manage their own health. Each resident is allocated a key worker to help co-ordinate the support provided.
- Staff encourage residents to get involved in all areas of their own care and support them to build the skills needed to sustain themselves in the community. Residents stay at the Bermondsey Project for a period of up to two years, but can also receive ongoing support for up to three months after they leave to help them settle into their permanent home.
- The project comprises of a mixture of 30 self-contained flats and bedsits across three sites – Aberdour Court, Roseberry Street, and Galleywall Road.

The Croydon Hospital Discharge

- The Croydon Hospital Discharge project involves a Thames Reach staff member based at Croydon University Hospital, working with medical, social care, and administrative staff both on wards and in the A&E department to avoid patients being discharged out onto the street.
- The service offers a person-centred approach to hospital patients focusing on enabling and supporting individuals specifically with support needs related to housing and welfare benefits.
- Staff work with both new and entrenched rough sleepers, people who are homeless, and people who are not entitled to claim housing and welfare benefits. Often the housing problem is complex and requires considerable liaison with departments and services outside of the hospital. The primary role of the Thames Reach link worker is to negotiate with the local authority housing team to secure suitable accommodation for individuals, expedite and support their recovery on discharge.
- The discharge plan also includes on-going support after the patient has left hospital. In many cases, the continuity of support helps to settle the person into accommodation. This in turn improves a patient's wellbeing and the chance of a full recovery from their physical illness, decreasing the chance of further hospital admission and breakdown of the accommodation.
- This service has been successful in reducing the length of hospital stays and allowing people to be discharged when they are medically fit, reducing inequality for homeless people and lessening the inflated costs created by delayed health care and poor housing.

<https://thamesreach.org.uk/what-we-do/>

13. Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM)

Name of the project	Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM)
Location	There are 27 local areas across England using the MEAM Approach, 24 of which are already delivering it while the rest are in the planning phase ⁸ .
Target group(s)	People facing multiple disadvantage who experience a combination of problems including homelessness, substance misuse, contact with the criminal justice system and mental ill health. They are the individuals that are often known to different services in a local area such as the police, hospitals, etc. They are likely to fall through the gaps between services and systems, making it harder for them to address their problems and lead fulfilling lives.
Organisations involved/partners	MEAM – a coalition of national charities – Clinks, Homeless Link, Mind and associate member Collective Voice – in partnership with local organisations
Project overview	<p>The main objective of MEAM is to get all the relevant service providers and service commissioners from different sectors in a local area around the table working collaboratively to help individuals facing multiple disadvantage</p> <p>MEAM is an approach based on seven key principles (see figure below) that help organisations in local areas design and deliver better coordinated and integrated services for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.</p> <p>The MEAM coalition (Clinks, Homeless Link and Mind) provides free support to local areas to set up their own MEAM partnerships. Partnership managers work with a lead partner or coordinator in each area to help them implement the MEAM wheel Framework.</p> <p>The framework is non-prescriptive and is meant to be adapted to local needs and circumstances.</p>
Source of funding	The National Lottery Community Fund finances the national MEAM coalition but interventions under the MEAM approach are funded locally.
What makes it innovative/unique	Where services are being stretched everywhere, MEAM is a champion for working differently and working together more efficiently. It's about genuine partnership working that recognises and practically reflects the connectedness of the different issues people with complex needs face in real life.

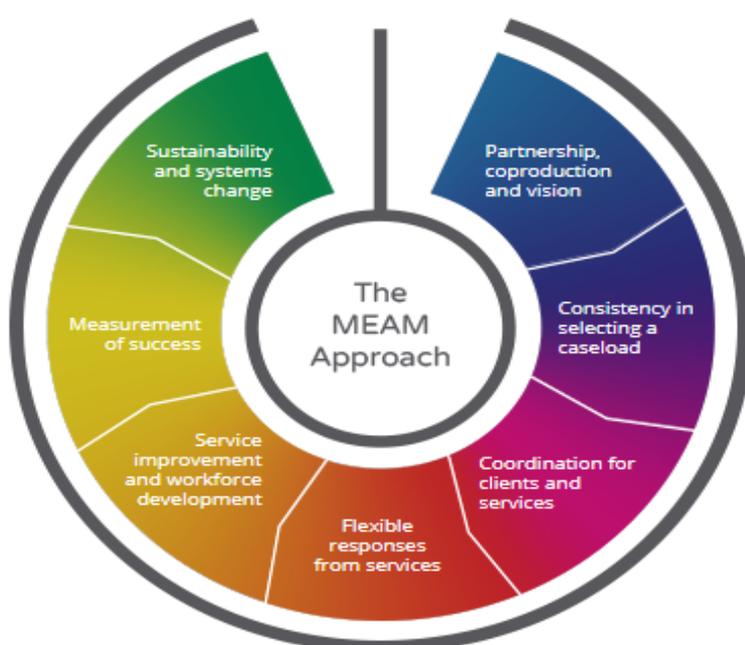
⁸ <http://meam.org.uk/where-we-work/>

	<p>The MEAM approach aims to change the way the system works without many additional resources. It opens channels of communication and helps different services become aware of other providers and have a wide view of the system.</p>
Outcomes	<p>There are emerging findings from the ongoing national evaluation of MEAM:</p> <p>Individual wellbeing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individuals are achieving goals that are important to them. 2. Individuals are showing improvements in key areas of their lives. 3. Individuals are improving their accommodation situation, with a significant reduction in rough sleeping. <p>Efficient use of resources</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Emerging evidence suggests potential reductions in unplanned service use. <p>Better services and systems</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Individuals are being supported to access, engage and remain engaged with services. 6. Local areas are delivering better coordinated interventions. 7. Local interventions developed using the MEAM Approach are delivering more flexible support that people need/want. However, the extent to which wider local systems are more flexible is currently limited. 8. Local areas are increasingly focused on involving experts by experience but there is still significant work required to move towards co-production. <p>Benefits of the MEAM Approach network</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Being involved in the MEAM Approach network helps local areas design and deliver local interventions.
Challenges faced	<p>One of the challenges facing the effective implementation of MEAM is getting buy-in from service providers that perceive MEAM as an addition to their statutory duty rather than a different way of delivering these same duties. Some local organisations may have conflicting priorities and it is sometimes difficult to align aims and objectives. It could also be disruptive when key individuals championing MEAM move on from their roles.</p>
Lessons learned	<p>The most important lesson is really getting to know people by really listening. People don't fit into boxes and everyone has a different way of getting better. Being able to cross boundaries of multiple organisations is vital.</p> <p>For this to work, it requires openness from commissioners to be reflective of what they are doing. There need to be honest partnerships that challenge each other with the aim of changing the system and not</p>

	to criticise individual efforts. The team need to be flexible to do things differently
What's next?	The MEAM coalition are now advocating for changing local and national policies that tackle systemic barriers which prevent individuals from receiving the right support and achieving their full potential. While some systemic barriers can be addressed by changes to local practice and cultures, others will require changes to local or national policy.

Further information about MEAM:

The seven principles of the MEAM Approach



The main objective of MEAM is to get all the relevant service providers and service commissioners from different sectors in a local area around the table working collaboratively to help individuals facing multiple disadvantage. It aims to solve the problem of silo working in provision of services dealing with often interrelated issues that people experience. This fragmentation often leads to people disengaging because nobody understands the whole picture.

While it depends on each community's needs, some of the key services that working together are community safety, the police, voluntary organisations, local authorities, hospitals, the ambulance service, housing providers, and mental health and substance misuse services. The aim is to build on existing local services rather than invent something new.

Coproduction is a key element of the MEAM approach through meaningfully involving people with lived experience as early as possible in the process.

There is usually a strategic group and an operational group that meet regularly. The strategic group creates the buy-in and is made up of senior commissioners and policy-makers who discuss and agree a shared understanding of the problem and a vision for the whole area. They identify on sources of

funding, design referral processes and jointly agree on the cohort that will receive the intervention. The operational group, on the other hand, consists of the service managers and senior practitioners and explores practical approaches to better coordinated services. The group to reflects on their work and feed in the learning of what is working and what is not. Linked to the two groups, is a team of frontline coordinators/support workers that work directly with people experiencing multiple disadvantage.

Every person is assigned a navigator who is their single trusted point of contact who works with them and has the remit to cross organisational boundaries. Navigators work flexibly with individuals, listen to what they need and design a bespoke service package that fits their circumstances and priorities rather than having one uniform offer for everyone.

In order to ensure the sustainability of MEAM, local areas needs to embed a way of evaluating its impact.

The MEAM approach demonstrates the value of genuine partnership working, person centred approaches, the role of lived experience and the need for wider system change.

Read more about the policy impact work on the website <http://meam.org.uk/policy-information/>

14. End Youth Homelessness

Name of the project	End Youth Homelessness
Location	Nationwide
Target group(s)	Young people experiencing homelessness
Project overview	<p>End Youth Homelessness is a UK-wide network of local charities that have joined forces to tackle youth homelessness together.</p> <p>Member charities work in their own way to meet the needs of local young people, whilst all sharing the same beliefs that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every young person has the right to a home • Every young person needs the independence that an education and job provides • Every young person needs a stable support network and services that can prevent them from becoming homeless <p>It provides a national platform to raise awareness, share experience and generate voluntary income.</p> <p>Housing: EYH Members provide safe and supported accommodation, some of it in foyers to 30,000 young people across the country. From these secure bases, young people can be supported to overcome the trauma that led to them to becoming homeless and the enormous barriers they face. Often, young people find it difficult to ‘move on’ from supported accommodation into social housing or private rented accommodation because the rents are high and the responsibilities significant. To address this, in 2017 EYH</p>

	<p>launched the Rent Deposit Scheme (RDS), funded by the Yorkshire Building Society. The RDS aims to support over 700 homeless young people to move into the private rented accommodation and allow EYH to act as their guarantor with their landlord.</p> <p>Health: One of the most pressing issues facing homeless young people is poor physical and mental health. EYH helps young people stabilise their lives and learn to live healthily. EYH member charities provide a wide range of services to tackle physical and mental health problems; enabling young people to access NHS services, supporting young people to manage pre-existing conditions and supporting young people to develop and maintain healthy relationships.</p> <p>Work: EYH acknowledges that each young person has their own talents, dreams and aspirations. EYH charities provide a wide range of services to enable young people to work towards their own goals. They believe that supporting homeless young people into training and employment is as important as helping them to find a place to call home.</p> <p>Prevention: EYH helps at-risk young people and their families to overcome problems before they reach crisis point. They believe to end youth homelessness, issues need to be tackled before homelessness starts – by providing support, mediation, education and the right person to talk to. The aim is that families have the support they need so that young people at risk are identified and supported before the point of crisis. Early intervention is an approach shared across EYH member charities and is key to ending youth homelessness.</p>
<p>Organisations involved/partners</p>	<p>11 partners across the UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centrepoin, London • The Benjamin Foundation, Norfolk and Suffolk • St Basils, Birmingham • 1625 Independent People, Bristol and South Gloucestershire • Aberdeen Foyer, Aberdeen • The Amber Foundation, South and Southwest of England • Roundabout, Sheffield • The Rock Trust, Edinburgh • Llamau, Cardiff • Step by Step, South England • MACS, Northern Ireland
<p>Source of funding</p>	<p>Funds came mainly from a host of businesses and corporate partners who help to raise awareness and funds across the UK. Corporate partners include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taylor Wimpey • Dune • Yorkshire Building Society • Eversheds Sutherland • Freshfields • MVK Group Holdings Co

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack • OVO Foundation • WCRS • APA
What makes it innovative/unique	<p>Before EYH was established, there was no UK-wide organisation for helping homeless young people.</p> <p>They play an important role in both fundraising and also bringing people together to share good practice, innovation and knowledge exchange as leaders in their areas.</p>
Outcomes	<p><u>Housing</u>: <i>Rent Deposit Scheme</i> – 124 young people supported into their own accommodation since June 2017</p> <p><u>Work</u>: <i>Jobs Coaching, Bursary Fund and Transforming Futures</i></p> <p>The Bursary Scheme, funded by the H&M Foundation and Eversheds Sutherland, enables young people to access education, employment and training (EET) opportunities. The scheme funds the costs for which a young person would normally turn to family support networks for help, such as course fees, specialist equipment and travel to/from work, college or university. The Bursary Scheme ensures that homeless young people are not prevented from pursuing their dreams due to personal circumstance. From October 2016 – July 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 533 young people have been supported through the Jobs Coaching Programme • 403 young people have accessed EET • 367 qualifications have been achieved <p>The external evaluation of the Transforming Futures programme describes it as offering <i>‘a responsive and flexible model of support which allows homeless young people to make the transition into EET at their own pace.’</i></p> <p>The key features of Transforming Futures that have led to its positive impact on young people are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The combination of job coaching and the bursary fund, are seen by young people, and those involved in programme delivery, as essential and highly effective in supporting those on their journey into EET. • The Job Coaches’ ability to build a trusting relationship with each young person is key. To be seen as independent from other key workers, such as Housing Officers, who sometimes have a punitive role. • The approach provides young people with time and space to come to decisions about EET without pressure, and gives them a second (or third or fourth) chance when obstacles presented themselves. • Job Coaches work in collaboration with others who can offer additional support and services to young people including key

	<p>workers, course providers, colleges, local employers and mental health providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The largely hands-off approach by EYH and the ability for the Job Coach to operate independently within their charity, allows them to tailor the way they target homeless young people and have freedom to make decisions depending on their context⁹.
Lessons learned	<p>EYH commissioned the Young Foundation to produce an Evaluation of the Transforming Futures programme. This evaluation also produced a toolkit on best practice in setting up employability programmes for homeless young people so this learning can be applied as the employability fund develops and distributes funding to members.</p> <p>EYH is moving away from specific project and programme funding for member charities to wider funds which will have the same overarching objectives but will enable member charities to deliver it according to their specific local needs and resources. The employability fund is the first of these to be launched in late 2019, other wider funds to cover housing, health and prevention will follow at a later date.</p>

End Youth Homelessness provide a network bringing together local charities working on the ground in their areas to tackle youth homelessness across the UK.

<https://www.eyh.org.uk/en/>

iv. Broad based work to end homelessness

15. Homes for Cathy

Homes for Cathy began as a group of housing associations that were formed in the Cathy Come Home era (1960's) as they came together in 2016 to mark the 50th anniversary of Cathy Come Home, Ken Loach's pivotal 1960s television drama about a young families' slide into homelessness and poverty, and to highlight the continuing needs of homeless people.

Since 2016, the Homes for Cathy group has been organising a range of local and national events to raise awareness of the needs of homeless people, and working on strategies to end homelessness. The group works closely alongside other organisations such as the National Housing Federation, Shelter, Crisis and other groups campaigning for homeless people.

The Homes for Cathy group is run by Hightown Housing Association and co-ordinates events with the help of South Yorkshire Housing Association. All members are asked to sign up to the following commitments:

⁹ Young Foundation, 2019, *A Brighter Future: An evaluation of End Youth Homelessness' Transforming Futures Programme*)

1. To contribute to the development and execution of local authority homelessness strategies;
2. To operate flexible allocations and eligibility policies which allow for individual applicants' unique set of circumstances and housing history to be considered;
3. To offer constructive solutions to applicants who aren't deemed eligible for an offer of a homes;
4. To avoid making any tenant who is seeking to avoid homelessness, homeless;
5. To commit to meeting the needs of vulnerable tenant groups;
6. To work in partnership to provide a range of affordable housing options which meet the needs of all homeless people in their local communities;
7. To ensure that properties offered to homeless people are ready to move into;
8. To contribute to ending migrant homelessness in the areas housing associations operate;
9. To lobby, challenge and inspire others to support ending homelessness.

Membership of the group now stands at over 80 member housing associations.

<https://homesforcathy.org.uk/>

16. GM-Think by Inspiring Change Manchester

GM-THINK is a multi-agency database that lets services across Greater Manchester share information quickly and securely. The aim of GM-Think is to improve the outcomes for people accessing services in Manchester. The system makes it easy for organisations to coordinate the work they do with people who have multiple and complex needs. This helps as it means people accessing the support do not have to repeat their story each time they access a different service. Service users have their own profile page and are able to get involved in their own support journey by updating goals and achievements.

The database is only used by those working directly with people accessing services and includes:

- outreach teams
- engagement workers
- peer mentors
- other specialist services

Service users can also access their own information to see what kind of data is being recorded and how it's used.

GM-Think is designed to benefit both services and the people who use them. Organisations will be able to access appropriate and relevant information. This will reduce the time it takes to piece together a person's journey across Manchester's services, streamlining processes and avoiding duplication. People accessing services won't have to keep 'retelling' their story.

The information that's kept on GM-Think includes:

- a personal profile page with basic information about a person and how their needs can be met
- a support plan/action plan
- a safety plan agreement on accessing support and keeping safe.

<https://inspiringchangemanchester.shelter.org.uk/gm-think>

17. Southwark Council's Homelessness Trailblazer Pilot

The London Borough of Southwark was chosen by DCLG (now MHCLG) to be an 'early adopter' trailblazer for the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017; homelessness legislation focused on new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness. The Council was awarded around £1m to take this work forward.

Through the Trailblazer, the Council will provide early learning and dissemination of information to support other local authorities in their preparations for implementing new prevention focused homelessness legislation. The Trailblazer project will mirror the duties that will eventually be placed on other local authorities in the Homelessness Reduction Act.¹⁰

Actions taken by Southwark included early intervention work to prevent homelessness, the establishment of No First Night Out and Housing First Models to prevent people from sleeping rough, and a commitment to end rough sleeping and the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation by 2020.

As a trailblazer pilot, Southwark has welcomed other local authorities from across the country to visit and share their knowledge and experience on delivering services and meeting the requirements of the HRA.

Southwark's homelessness service continues to be recognised for its excellent homelessness prevention services. It became only the second London borough, and 15th borough overall, to achieve the National Practitioner Support Service Gold Standard. The achievement involved a diagnostic practitioner review and then demonstrating that Southwark has in place a comprehensive prevention focused service for all customers. This involved meeting 10 challenges such as evidencing that no families had been placed for over six weeks in shared B&B accommodation and to have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness, reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs.¹¹

There has been a change in the culture of services provided, where the customer is at the centre of everything the Council does. The service **employs people who have experienced homelessness** and has corporate support across the Council and buy in from the voluntary and legal advice agencies in Southwark.

It's changed the way the Council works by 100%. It has led to an awful lot more, we have had staff turnover, positive staff turnover because we have brought in younger people who have had a lived homelessness experience. So we have gone away from recruiting people because they have done the job for years to recruiting people that have had life skills, are more empathetic. (Ian Swift, Head of Housing Solution, Southwark)

Customer satisfaction levels have increased with 88% of those accessing homelessness services now feeling satisfied with the services received.

¹⁰ Southwark Homelessness Review 2017,

<http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s77440/Appendix%203%20Review%20of%20Homelessness%20in%20Southwark.pdf>

¹¹ 2019 Annual Review of Southwark Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2022

The council was the first to use **Personal Housing Plans** to prevent homelessness and ensure customers can access training, employment and education. This led to the development of **Pathway Plans** for vulnerable customers and linked into the Housing First model.

The model has reduced sofa surfing and evictions from family and friends. It is the first of its kind in London and led to the development of **the Accommodation Finding Service** for all homeless customers.

A partnership hub developed with Women’s Aid, Job Centre Plus and Shelter to deliver independent advocacy services for customers. This has been combined with a **self-help framework** to empower customers to access a range of services, and a **resettlement service** for vulnerable customers.

Southwark Housing Solutions has also been recognised for the work done to help vulnerable residents, including those experiencing domestic abuse, treating all priority and non priority needs customers in the same way. They have also established a strong working partnership with Solace Women’s Aid who are based in the same office, and they also continue to use the Pan London Reciprocal service.

Since March 2017, Southwark Council adopted a new approach towards domestic abuse and Homelessness. All customers fleeing domestic abuse will be provided with accommodation and no customer will return to the place they left due to domestic abuse. A non priority customer will be treated exactly the same way as a priority needs customer. The Homelessness Reduction Act trailblazer work certainly assisted the service to change the culture of services provided and to place the customer at the centre of all of our work. The customer fleeing domestic abuse will be seen by the Housing Solutions service alongside Solace Women’s Aid who are based within the Housing Solutions service office and this partnership work provides an empathetic, and customer focussed service. Solace Women’s Aid provide independent housing advice and advocacy for all domestic abuse customers.¹²

Southwark Council was the first council to launch a Homelessness Reduction Board. The Board brings together the Council, local partners and agencies to work more closely together to tackle homelessness. It encourages better collaboration and partnership working amongst a variety of agencies providing existing homelessness services. The Homelessness Reduction Board can also hold each partner to account for their effects in preventing and reducing homelessness. Cross cutting work with the Adult, Children, and Mental Health services has also helped eliminate silo working across the council under a new ‘One Council homelessness prevention approach’, which is now part of the culture of Southwark Council.

18. The Psychology in Hostels Project

Name of the project	Psychology in Hostels (PiH)
Location	London Borough of Lambeth
Target group(s)	Homeless people with histories of trauma and disruption
Project overview	The project puts an understanding of mental health, trauma and psychological need at the centre of thinking about homelessness. As a pilot, it has developed an intensive integrated model of the Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) approach in the Waterloo Project hostel, where a team of NHS psychologists of

¹² 2019 Annual Review of Southwark Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2022

	<p>different grades are based on-site full time, working alongside Thames Reach staff.</p> <p>The Psychologically Informed Environment model involves services being designed and delivered in a way that takes into account the emotional and psychological needs of the individuals. Staff teams are trained accordingly. This includes high-level policies and organisational management, down to the direct interaction with service users¹³, to form an approach to supporting people out of homelessness, in particular those who have experienced complex trauma or are diagnosed with a personality disorder.</p> <p>The project follows a shared leadership approach where psychologists and hostel management staff think, plan and work together so that everything that happens within the environment is psychologically informed, from the move-in and move-out processes, to thinking about risk and support, as well as the design and management of the building.</p> <p>All hostel staff are trained in an evidence-based attachment theory approach (Mentalisation-Based-Treatment - MBT). Mentalisation is the process by which people understand and are attentive to theirs and others' mental states, thoughts, feelings, and desires. It helps staff to read and interpret people's behaviours, which may appear unpredictable and difficult to understand and who might engage in high levels of risk-taking. This is particularly helpful for long-term homeless people who might find relationships threatening and overwhelming, which makes it difficult for them to access support. All staff members have formal therapeutic tools, so that every contact they have with the hostel residents helps the residents regulate their emotions, manage their relationships and enhance their wellbeing. An important aspect of PIE is Reflective Practice, where hostel staff and psychologists meet regularly to debrief and reflect on their work in general, as well as on specific cases to develop consistent ways of team working with individual clients.</p> <p>The model aims for hostel users to gradually and slowly control their behaviours and keep a comfortable distance between themselves and others. The overarching PIE framework for managing the service allows for on-site psychologists to slowly engage residents in an informal way through having a cup of tea, doing some gardening or playing a game. On average people need about four months of informal contact before moving to the most intensive level of support where they are offered specialist assessments, in case of possible undiagnosed learning disabilities, head injury, etc. They can also be offered individual and group psychological therapy.</p>
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¹³ https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/TIC%20PIE%20briefing%20March%202017_0.pdf

	<p>People stay with the project for around a year but sometimes longer. The project offers a transition service that continues to work with people for an agreed period post move-on to prevent ‘revolving door’ issues of transition and disrupted attachment that can lead to placement breakdown. Staff also work with the organisations people move on to by facilitating reflective practises, sharing team approaches, and providing training as well as doing joint pieces of work with their key workers. Previous hostel residents can come back to visit from time to time.</p> <p>The project involves a peer mentoring element where people with lived experience of homelessness volunteer to be mentors and build trusted relationships with hostel residents. They support the latter to attend appointments (e.g. help them see their GP) and co-facilitate group activities. Peer mentors receive a five-day training programme on therapeutic skills, empathic validation, “mentalisation”, group therapy skills, facilitating group therapy, and how to manage boundaries and risk.</p>
Organisations involved/partners	South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM) in partnership with the London Borough of Lambeth and Thames Reach Homeless outreach organisation.
Source of funding	Initially funded for two years and based on the outcomes and the model, the project then received further charitable trust funding from Maudsley Charity, followed by a large grant of £1.3 million from Guys and St Thomas’ Charity to further expand the model and test some hypothesis around what works.
What makes it innovative/unique	<p>The full embedding of psychological understanding in service provision involves NHS psychologists and third sector staff, co-located on site and working in partnership on a daily basis.</p> <p>There are no exclusion criteria to access the NHS psychologists. They work with everybody who lives in the hostel including those who have multiple comorbidities and polysubstance misuse issues.</p> <p>All staff members that work in the hostel are trained in mentalisation-based approaches.</p> <p>Contact is graded so it’s not just about having a psychology service, it is embedded in every aspect of service provision which allows people to slowly build trust on their own terms in a way that is manageable for them and crucial for overcoming trauma.</p>
Outcomes	<p>After three years, The Psychology in Hostels pilot was evaluated by detailed internal service evaluation and two independent evaluations teams. Findings showed that:</p> <p>Reaching unmet populations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the latest 3-year pilot, up to 97% service users (SUs) engaged across three sites offering 1650 therapy sessions with 78% attendance. Noteworthy for a complex need’s population described as ‘chaotic’ ‘non-engagers’.

	<p><u>Mental Health Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant improvement in mental health following 6 or more individual therapy sessions within a PIE context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 40% report significant improvement. ○ 40% report improvement in depression, self-harm, aggression, and substance misuse. <p><u>Service use & health economics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations confirmed a shift from what might be considered bad cost (i.e. prison, emergency health & evictions) to what might be considered positives costs (i.e. housing, GP, drug & alcohol support). <p><u>Health Care:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were reductions in the proportion of people using hospital services (incl. ambulance, A&E, inpatient and outpatient services). Average use and cost of inpatient hospital services reduced by £2,440 pp pa. • A&E admission decreased by 58% for those receiving 6+ 1:1 psychology sessions within a PIE. • The proportion of people using Community Mental Health Teams reduced by 65% to only 6% of participants. • Substance Misuse treatment increased by 61% compared to 2 year baseline (incl. changes in prescribing services). <p><u>Homelessness:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major reductions in repeat homelessness: -82% rough-sleeping, -67% evictions. • Supplementary specialist analysis also found that as the number of psychology sessions increases, the percentage of negative move-ons decreases to the point where there were no exits to prison or evictions at 13+ sessions. <p><u>Criminal Justice:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of people using criminal justice services substantially reduced following this support; this was true for all criminal justice services but was particularly noticeable for the number of people using prison (-87%). • Overall reduction in prison costs per year was £1,675 per person. • Nights spent in police custody also decreased for all service users, but this effect was strongest for those engaged with psychology within a PIE setting for +6 sessions (-84%).
<p>Challenges faced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the main challenges the project faces is embedding the PIE approach, changing management processes in the hostel, and establishing collaborative and integrative work between teams with different backgrounds and ways of working. Embedding PIE into the hostel management meant that hostel staff had to change

	<p>the way they have been doing things for a long time, which mainly used to revolve around traditional housing management, sign-posting and moving people onto more permanent accommodation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another challenge was that staff found it harder to engage certain subgroups of the hostel population, namely females and those with poly-substance misuse (drugs and alcohol). The latter would often sleep throughout the day and so miss many of the activities during the day. As a result, project staff including psychologists have introduced some engagement activities around dinner time and engagement incentives such as rewards and prizes.
<p>Lessons learned</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the Psychology in Hostels (PiH) pilot has demonstrated that an onsite integrated model can achieve outstanding outcomes. • To embed PIE in a service and its management processes, it is important that psychologists and the hostel (or any other service) staff work together and recognise the value of their different expertise in making the project work. It is essential to have ownership from the top of the organisation all the way down so there is no conflict over policies. • Make sure the psychological language used is accessible for both staff and clients. • As much as possible, the physical environment needs to be conducive to therapeutic work. For example, it is recommended to have protected spaces for the team to do their Reflective Practice, as well as having space for group activities with service users and private rooms for one-to-one sessions. • An evidence-base now exists for ‘what works’ to address the complex needs found in those experiencing homelessness and unstable housing; outcomes that span mental and physical health, social, criminal justice and housing sectors, while also demonstrating a health-economic impact.
<p>What’s next?</p>	<p>Develop similar projects in Westminster and Greenwich following the positive evaluation.</p> <p>Now South London and Maudsley (SLaM) team work with 10 to 15 different homeless providers in partnership to share that learning.</p> <p>This model can be used in a range of contexts including - Young People’s and Looked After Children’s services, Forensic and Mental Health accommodation settings, and Inpatient Services.</p>

About SlaM	South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust provides NHS mental health and substance misuse services in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Croydon, Bexley and Wandsworth. They also provide more than 50 specialist services for children and adults across the UK including perinatal services, eating disorders, psychosis and autism.
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The Psychology in Hostels project is an excellent example of the Psychologically Informed Environment approach, providing evidence of what works and how to manage the model to help roll out more widely.

Overall Summary and Conclusion

These case studies demonstrate a variety of approaches to a number of different aspects of homelessness, a complex and multi-faceted problem. The projects in this collection cover a large range of positive actions to combat homelessness and contribute to knowledge exchange and sharing of best practice in this area.

There is a focus throughout many of the case studies on shifting towards person centred, psychologically informed approaches. In many areas this is bringing about fundamental systems change in how services are delivered.

We believe that the exchange of knowledge and good practice among the different stakeholders and activists will lead to an improvement in homelessness services, help create new partnerships and more effective working between different housing associations, local authorities and third sector organisations.

Annex: Templates for discussion

Case Studies:

Name of the project	
Location	
Target group(s)	
Project overview	
Organisations involved/partners	
Source of funding	
What makes it innovative/unique	
Outcomes	
Challenges faced	
Lessons learned	

Housing First:

Overview	Name of service Area of operation Date it started operating and how long has it been ongoing? Number of users?
Area of operation	
Eligibility criteria and assessment process	The target client groups how are individuals referred to the service?
Organisations delivering the scheme – breakdown of duties/ staffing structure	Who runs the scheme? What partners are involved?
Caseloads and geographical scale	
Types of support provided	The ‘wrap-around’ support model adopted
Housing provider	Social, private landlords. How much choice do clients have in accommodation?
How is HF integrated with other homelessness services	
Source and length of funding	
Main targets/ How do you measure success?	
Main costs and benefits	What is the cost per head of delivering the scheme? Have you done any work on cost benefit analysis relating to potential long term benefits of the scheme?
Challenges faced	Challenges and what would you do differently?
Outcomes	How many people have taken up tenancies under the scheme since it commenced? Of these how many have maintained tenancies?