

All Party Parliamentary Group on Ending Homelessness



Housing First inquiry session 4

Meeting Minutes

26 January, 10-11.30am, Zoom

Attendees:

Neil Coyle MP, APPG Co-Chair
Bob Blackman MP, APPG Co-Chair
Lord Best
Ian Byrne MP
Jason McCartney MP
Ben Everitt MP
Darren Henry MP
Stephen Timms MP
Baroness Greender

Parliamentary staff:

Graeme Smith, Office of Neil Coyle MP
Millie Wright, Office of Thangam Debbonaire MP
Henry Cavill, Office of Nickie Aiken MP
Josie Horton, Office of Marsha de Cordova MP
Andrew Fellows, Office of Andrew Lewer MP
Geoff, Office of Baroness Lister
Micah, Office of Tim Farron MP
Christian Ariwa, Office of Lyn Brown MP
Hannah Bowes-Smith, Office of Baroness Finlay of Llandaff
Ted Mair, Office of Apsana Begum MP
David Badger, Office of Imran Ahmad Khan MP
Stuart Whittingham, Office of Mick Whitley MP

Secretariat:

Emily Batchelor, Secretariat to APPG

Other:

Ruth Jacob, Crisis
Jasmine Basran, Crisis
Saskia Neibig, Crisis
Disha Bhatt, Crisis
Maeve McGoldrick, Crisis
Matt Downie, Crisis
Jon Sparkes, Crisis
Hannah Slater, Crisis
Rachel Dunfield, SYHA
Hugh Currie, St Mungo's
Michelle Langan, Papercup projects
Jessica Brown
Holly Tippet-Simpson, Salvation Army
Jo Prestidge, Homeless Link
Katie Earnshaw, Emmaus

Apologies:

Rachael Maskell MP
Nadia Whittome MP
Lord Shipley
Beth Winter MP
Lord Hylton
Baroness Watkins of Tavistock
Sally-Ann Hart MP
Baroness Hamwee
Lord McNally
Sir Graham Brady MP
Caroline Lucas MP
Stephen Crabb MP

Panellists:

Eddie Hughes MP
Juha Kaakinen, Y Foundation
Joe Shalam, CSJ
Fiona Colley, Homeless Link
Mark Prinn and Graham Ord, Changing Lives

Cllr Helen Dennis
Steph Kleynhans, Shelter
Alexandra Williams, NRLA
Anna Watchman, St Mungo's
Neil Preddy, Oxfordshire
Neelam Sunder, WMCA
Amanda Bloxsome, LCR
Claire Dowan
Paul Prosser, Noah Enterprise
Daniel, Noah Enterprise
Andrea Faulkner
Clive Chapman, CSAN
Maeve McClenaghan, TBIJ
Robin Tyne, Southwark
Connie Muttock, Commonweal
Jo Bhandal, AKT
Felicity Mallam, Wates
Alex Eagle, the Running Charity
Neil MacDonald
Alex Smith, Homeless Link
Samara Jones, Housing First Europe
Regina Harrington, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Emily Cole, GM
Samantha Stewart, Nationwide
Paul Anders, PHE
Rosie Lewis, Angelou Centre
Jamie Pope, NYAS
Rhys, Shelter
Octavia Aronne, Safer London
Nick Bartholdy, CIH
Cllr Kieron Wilson
Liam Geraghty, Big Issue
Tim Wates, Wates,
Lucy Smith, NACCOM
Alex Tiley, YMCA
Caroline Schulman NHS
Bec, Labour Homelessness Campaign
Steve Burak, Labour Homelessness Campaign
Sylvia White, Labour Homelessness Campaign
Caroline Bernard

Welcome and apologies	
Introductions	
Bob Blackman MP	<p>Bob Blackman MP (BB) opened the meeting by introducing himself, welcoming attendees and briefly outlining the event format.</p> <p>BB introduced the first panellist Eddie Hughes (EH) MP, Government Minister for Housing and Rough Sleeping.</p>
Eddie Hughes MP	<p>EH thanked BB and outlined his professional experiences and background in the sector, including comments on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For three years EH worked at YMCA Birmingham. - Andy Street's election in the West Midlands as Mayor and his priority as Mayor to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in the region. - His enthusiasm for the APPG's report into Housing First.
Questions to EH, 5:15 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Neil Coyle MP (NC) thanked EH for joining the event and asked whether he would be willing to meet with Officers and Members of the APPG to talk through how the Government intends to meet its manifesto commitment to end rough sleeping. <p>EH said he was sure that would be ok and that he would be working and listening to the sector.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Jon Sparkes (JS), Chief Executive of Crisis, asked EH for his thoughts on how to build on progress of Everyone In to effectively prevent rough sleeping and initial thoughts about the role of Housing First in this? <p>EH said that there was a need to build upon the bonds that have been created and the information that has been collected as a result of that experience and hopefully use that as a pull to keep people in rather than on a temporary basis. EH spoke about his experiences working in YMCA, and that people often need a second or third chance to engage with services.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Baroness Greender (BG) welcomed EH to his post and asked him about the scrapping of section 21 and evictions during the pandemic. <p>EH said his initial thoughts were that scrapping section 21 would be part of a wholesale renters reform package and the need to take evidence and guidance from the sector/experts, to avoid piecemeal approach. EH said there is an attempt to balance the interests of landlords and tenants.</p>
Juha Kaakinen, CEO, Y Foundation	<p>NC introduced the next panellist, Juha Kaakinen (JK), Chief Executive at the Y Foundation in Finland.</p> <p>JK outlined the work of the Y Foundation including comments on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Y Foundation was set up with the mission to end homelessness of single people in Finland - It operates as the embodiment of collaborative Finnish culture a non-profit, non-political organisation - Special target at first were homeless men living in temporary accommodation – serious lack of small affordable flats

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Started procuring of individual flats from housing companies (private) - Currently have 5,400 apartments across Finland - The mode of operation is based on a very wide network of partners. - The Y Foundation is the housing provider, allowing for other organisations to provide the support - Natural extension of operations to start buying social flats - Buying small flats is getting more difficult now as it is tempting for private investors to buy too - The Y Foundation has been active and involved in all the national programs in Finland to end homelessness, including Housing First since 2008 - 2008-2015 – 30% of all housing provided to homeless people was provided by the Y Foundation - Also involved in the conversion from TA/hostels etc to supported housing - There is a very wide political consensus that homelessness is a national issue in Finland, and to continue national programmes - Important that political commitment is also at local level - Newer focus on those living temporarily with friends and relatives as many studies it seems that living temporarily with friends and relatives is the route to homelessness, so if you want to prevent actual street homelessness, this is the group that has to be taken into consideration - Housing First acted as a catalyst in the system – from temporary accommodation to permanent housing. - Housing policy has a very crucial role to make the systems change possible - Social housing is an important element of homelessness prevention, social housing really has to be social - There has to be a sustainable long term plan of implementation - Now and in the coming years.. there wouldn't be a better time to build affordable housing, it doesn't require huge government grants - In Finland, only need 5% of our own money to make the investment possible - Optimistic that the Y Foundation's core elements could be replicated or adjusted to England - The most critical elements are scale and scope, and multi-functionality - It is important that our foundation is not dependent on one single source of funding and the organisation has several modes of operation that support its effort - Hybrid organisation – housing for special groups, social housing, employment services and research - The main thing is to create sustainable long term structures of collaboration - Not a single organisation can own homelessness as an issue
<p>Joe Shalam, Head of Housing and Financial Inclusion, the Centre for Social Justice</p>	<p>NC introduced the next panellist Joe Shalam (JS), from the CSJ</p> <p>JS outlined the work of the CSJ on Housing First.</p> <p>JS made several comments on scaling-up HF including on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lots of evidence on the strength of the model but less on the logistics of scaling up provision in a timely and effective way - Number of HF places has grown healthily in recent years but still long way to go for it to reach its full potential

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three key ingredients to scaling up effectively: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sustainable funding for a national HF programme Need a new sustainable funding model. Currently patchwork of short-term funding streams. Scaling up held back by a lack of confidence that the money will be there. Proposing three year cross-departmental fund, as phase 1. ➤ Increasing the supply of social and private rent for HF Need permanent homes. Limited availability of one-bedroom housing was an impediment to growth. Matching place for HF to place for others. ➤ National stewardship National, cross-government approach needed that aligns with wider strategic response to homelessness. Need to build in lived experience and outcome monitoring - Credible and achievable plan
<p>Fiona Colley, Director of Social Change, Homeless Link</p>	<p>NC introduced the next panellist Fiona Colley (FC) from Homeless Link.</p> <p>FC outlined Homeless Link’s project – Housing First England, with comments on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of staying true to both the philosophy and non-negotiable service model principles. - Quite a distinctive HF service model - HF works, crucially because it is not just a housing and homelessness intervention but also social and health intervention - The challenge is to scale it up while maintaining that quality and fidelity to the model. Four things to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Long term funding - 40% of HF projects have support contracts that are one year or less. 83% three years or less. Clearly not compatible with service model. So need to continue and sustain and expand the regional pilots but we need to make sure that all the other upcoming funding rounds are HF friendly. Need to push for long term ring fenced funding for homelessness ➤ Increased supply of housing. Need far more social housing. Scope for better engagement with PRS ➤ Spread the buy in of how the model works, particularly amongst those who are commissioning services. Task for government and for the sector. Need a mindset shift ➤ Build an integrated system that is housing first but not housing alone with health and social care sector taking joint ownership with housing. HF has whole systems benefits and savings but joint commissioning is rare. HF workers act as invaluable advocates but can’t always break through the gatekeeping. - HF services in England continue to grow. Services operating in every region. Services tripled since 2017. - Is the high quality growth of HF being supported by national policy choices and what do we need.
<p>Mark Prinn and Graham Ord, Changing Lives</p>	<p>NC introduced the next panellists, Mark Prinn (MP) and Graham Ord (GO) from Changing Lives.</p> <p>MP outlined how Changing Lives operates in the North East of England, supporting around 700 people a year who experience homeless, in around 14-16 local authority areas.</p>

	Unfortunately there were audio problems and GO was unable to make his remarks.
<p>Bob Blackman MP</p> <p>Neil Coyle MP</p>	<p>NC thanked panellists and passed the chair over to BB.</p> <p>BB made comments including on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of lived experience in evidence-gathering - The cross-party nature of the APPG and how that strengthens its arm in Parliament - The previous inquiries of the APPG into prevention and rapid rehousing - The APPG's upcoming report will make recommendations on how we end homelessness and provide people with the support they need <p>NC thanked BB and opened up the Q&A session.</p>
<p>Questions to the panel: 1: 11:02 minutes</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Kieron Wilson (KW) asked about the Government's goal to end rough sleeping by the end of this parliament and what the Government's plans should be with dealing with NRPF? 2. Lucy Smith (LS), NACCOM, asked about the providing Housing First model to everyone who needs it, regardless of immigration status. <p>JS answered by saying the figure of 16,500 which is used to as an indicator of how many HF places are needed is the group with multiple needs. JS also spoke about the unique context of the pandemic, which has exposed the need for a new settlement with regards to public funds.</p> <p>FC said the pandemic has been an interesting opportunity to engage with those with NRPF, for some of them it is the first time they have felt safe with engaging with services. Homeless Link's members on the whole want to see the end of the NRPF conditions.</p> <p>BB asked if there was a breakdown of statistics on people with NRPF available.</p> <p>Cllr Helen Dennis (HD) said that supporting those with NRPF is probably the biggest pressure Southwark Council is seeing at the moment with regards to homelessness services. The Council is supporting 72 people with NRPF from the first wave of the pandemic, working with the local Law Centre to resolve their immigration statuses.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Caroline Schulman (CS), NHS asked about the joint funding arrangements of HF model, and the lifelong health problems that people who experience homelessness experience, asking whether HF is the vehicle for this and true cross-departmental working? <p>JS said there had been positive examples of the Government working across departments, for example between the MOJ and DWP, and health being a core aspect of HF.</p> <p>FC said that there might be a silver lining from the pandemic and the cross-departmental working for homelessness services, and learnings must be taken from the pilots.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Geoff (G), Office of Baroness Lister asked about establishing a regular and sustainable income, and claiming benefits, and the interaction between the individual support of funding and the wider funding of the HF programme.

	<p>JK spoke about the principle of normality, that the person in the flat has the same rights and obligations as anyone else, this means that they are eligible for housing benefit which can cover up to 80% of the rent, and the rest can be covered by social welfare benefits. The main issue is funding for support services. The importance of looking at it from the clients perspective, and a need to not rely on one source of funding.</p> <p>JS agrees that it is about establishing normality and stability. On benefit cap, there is a case for specific and targeted exemptions for certain groups of homeless people for this model to work.</p>
Neil Coyle MP	<p>NC thanked panellists, attendees and Secretariat.</p> <p>BB also thanked everyone who had contributed.</p>
Actions and deadlines	<p>Secretariat to send around minutes to attendees and both Chairs.</p>