



Evaluation of Place-Based Work in Brent

The Berkeley Foundation funded Crisis Skylight Brent to develop place-based work with the intention of increasing opportunities to end homelessness in Brent and to add to Crisis' learning about how ending homelessness can be delivered locally.

Place-based work is 'a long-term approach to identifying, understanding, and addressing social issues rooted in the experiences, expertise and relationships that exist within a recognised geographic area'.¹

The place-based approach in Brent included the following activities:

- establishment of the Brent Homelessness Forum
- community of practice
- working groups



- task and finish groups
- research on homelessness and health
- homelessness awareness sessions
- development of Built for Zero
- opening of new Crisis Skylight Brent premises.

1. See work from Renaisi on place-based change and approaches: renaisi.com/place-based-change/.

Campbell Tickell evaluated the success of the place-based work in Brent by:

- interviewing 22 stakeholders in senior and operational roles across 12 organisations from public and voluntary sectors
- Interviewing two individuals with lived experience of homelessness in Brent using a visual approach to map their journeys and talk about their experiences
- surveying 31 members of the Brent Homelessness Forum.

Strategic change achieved:

- **'bottom-up'** development of Brent's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Brent Homeless Health Plan
- nurturing partnerships that enable **quick responses using live information**
- **national and international approaches** to local place-based work from Crisis' connections.

Systems change achieved:

- collaborative leadership leading to **joint recruitment panels** for shared posts
- training and **upskilling of public sector officers** and joint outreach work
- accompanied visits allowing public sector services to **engage with hard-to-reach groups**
- improved **joint working** on referral, assessments and decisions.

Individual change achieved:

- **quicker referrals** and assessment processes and decision making
- **smoother transitions between support services** for those trying to resolve their housing issues
- **faster resolution for Universal Credit** claims that are cancelled or held up
- sourcing accommodation for those with **complex needs**
- improved **GP registration** for people experiencing homelessness.

Homelessness Forum members were largely positive about its impact on the sector:

- 97% said being involved with the Forum was very or fairly significant.
- 81% said it had strengthened their own relationships.
- 81% said it had positively influenced their own ways of working.
- 87% said sector relationships had been strengthened.
- 83% said the sectors ways of working positively influenced.

Recommendations for future place-based work in Brent and elsewhere:

- continue to build leadership capacity including key posts in both the public and voluntary sectors
- promote communication and engagement with the widest possible network of agencies
- maintain connections between local place-based work and national homelessness policy
- continue to be focused and realistic about what can be achieved through place-based work and the importance of continuously nurturing structures, partnerships and relationships.

Please see the full report for more detail, including the policy and delivery context of the work, the conditions for change identified through the evaluation, and more: <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/services-and-interventions/place-based-work-brent>



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