



THE BOND BOARD

Crisis Private Renting Champions 2015 for Partnership Working

Good practice

The Bond Board has had partnership working at its core from its very establishment and has worked in partnership with the local authorities where it operates and extremely closely with housing providers and other voluntary sector organisations. Historically these partnership arrangements with other service and housing providers have been informal and ad hoc to gain the best outcome for our clients and landlords. We still have a lot these informal arrangements in place with other providers of both voluntary and statutory services and continue to build new informal delivery partnerships for the benefit of our clients.

Over the last seven years the Bond Board has pursued a strategy to look beyond its traditional formal partners - the local authorities where it operates - to develop new formal partnerships with other organisations. These include organisations that have experience of working with our clients to enable both organisations to diversify and attract new funding but, just as importantly, to share resources, knowledge, learning and the risks of innovation.

In the last 12 months the Bond Board has formed partnership agreements with a number of organisations that have attracted new funding to deliver a diverse range of private rented access and tenancy sustainment solutions. These partners included Rochdale Citizens Advice Bureau, Threshold and Petrus Community.

The work with these partners has been developed not just for funding but with the intention of building opportunities for both organisations and their clients. These partnerships have been able to survive both successes and failures in tender and funding applications and also mixed delivery results in the early stages of the some of the more innovative projects.

The success of some projects may have been limited in terms of the number of clients directly housed but a huge success has been the indirect outcomes which have included leaning for the individuals using the services and the organisations staff teams' ability and willingness to innovate together on new projects.

The benefit from the organisations working together on what has been a very difficult project to get started has been a sharing of the risk and learning that has enabled the very different experiences of both staff teams to develop solutions that address the needs of its services users. The strength of our partnership approach has given the funder confidence as the project has developed and changed.

Case study

Petrus Community is a well-established charity based mainly in Rochdale and delivers a large range of services including supported accommodation, a community store and a day centre for homeless people. The Bond Board and Petrus Community share the ambition to address the needs of difficult to engage people who are homeless or insecurely housed with complex needs. Both organisations pride themselves on understanding the challenges of working successfully with people that have failed to succeed with other services. There have been other ideas and projects where we have



sought to share each other's expertise and experience that have not been successful but, interestingly, the shared experience and effort have strengthened the partnership between the organisations' staff teams. The Bond Board and Petrus have partnered on two key projects:

NO Second Night Out was funded to create options for people not to have to sleep on the street or to prevent people arriving on the street. Our Partnership enables our organisations to have the resources to undertake innovative approaches to reach, and to keep engaged, some of the hard to reach individuals that other services struggle to engage positively with. The Bond Board was enabled through Letting Out, its social letting agency, to set up a small number of training homes that were ready to move in to with furniture, initial utilities and food, so that individuals that were not able to move in to the night shelter could move in to a tenancy. Petrus Community provided the support and a contact point via their day centre for the services users. This enabled the support and housing management to be split, but also a shared approach to the individual tailoring of the support and learning for each tenancy as well as shared problem solving when things were not working so well.

The Spare Room project is a lodging scheme and is a project that we have been delivering in partnership with Petrus Community. This project has been successful at attracting funding for the last two years from the Rochdale Clinical Commissioning Group. This project development has been organic as the original idea of targeting those suffering from the bedroom tax did not have the expected appeal. The project now focuses on people who are homeless and are "sofa surfing" and those that are struggling to find someone to share with and need our Letting Out sharers project. This change of emphasis has come from working with and listing to both organisations' services users and staff. This has enabled the original idea to be built on and has increased the appeal of the project.

About the champion

The Bond Board was established 22 years ago as a bond guarantee scheme in Bolton, expanding to Rochdale and Bury in more recent years. The organisation has built on its experience of issuing bonds; has responded to the changing needs of its clients; and currently delivers a number of projects in the private rented sector to help people to access and sustain their tenancies. These projects include a floating support scheme, two bond guarantee schemes, a welfare rights advice service, independence scheme, and a social letting agency for under 35's who want to share.

The Bond Board
Tel: 01706 342404
www.thebondboard.org.uk

