

Year Strategy

2013 – 2018

Our purpose
is to end
homelessness

Crisis

crisis

5 Year Strategy

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Our aims

We want to do more for more homeless people in more places across the UK and help to change their lives for good.

We want to change the way society thinks and acts towards homeless people.

Our beliefs

Homelessness is a devastating experience. People have often hit rock bottom and need time and support to get back on their feet.

Single homeless people are at the heart of Crisis. They are among the most vulnerable and isolated people in our society.

Single people often have few family or financial resources to fall back on. They have very limited statutory access to housing and find themselves at the back of a long queue in an environment of scarce supply.

Homeless people are all unique individuals. Everyone deserves a place to call home, and a chance to live a fulfilled and active life.

Putting our beliefs into practice

Crisis helps people rebuild their lives through offering housing, health, education and employment services. We also create opportunities for people to make new friends and new connections. We will encourage, support and nurture people to find their place in the world again for as long as it takes. We work all over the UK, all year round.

Crisis has worked with tens of thousands of volunteers and with many organisations for more than 45 years. As homelessness rises again, we will continue to work with friends and allies, who like us, believe homelessness is simply wrong.

Introduction

Our five year strategy starts as homelessness of all kinds is rising

There is continuing pressure on public expenditure and a deep housing crisis. Our clients will scramble for a foothold in the housing market. There is more need for our services, we need more people to support us and we need to persuade policy makers and opinion formers that it is time to worry about the people who are being left behind.

The Homelessness Monitor which we commissioned in 2010 will look at the affects of the government's policies through to 2015. It is already telling us housing benefit will no longer act as a buffer against homelessness for those losing their jobs or those on low incomes. It indicates that young people are likely to become particularly vulnerable.

As central government devolves more to local authorities we should expect different levels of support from one local authority to another. We also anticipate the continued divergence of policies between the countries in the UK, with Scotland already taking some very different decisions on homelessness.

We grew significantly in the last five years and are better placed to support people across the UK. We have developed a flexible delivery model which means we

can be responsive and agile. We work closely with dedicated client forums across the country to hear their views and ideas. Their contributions are invaluable to us.

We need to grow our services and we intend to more than double the number of people who join our year-round services. Our growth will initially be in our existing centres especially in Birmingham, Merseyside, Newcastle and London.

The final act of our 2008 to 2013 strategy is to open in Coventry and Sheffield and the first act of 2013/18 is to deliver services from these new centres. We aim to open three further centres in years 3, 4 and 5 of our new strategy.

The focus of what we do remains on employment, education, health and wellbeing and housing. But the balance between these elements will change so that we will be able to find homes for far more of those who are participating in our other services.

We will continue to provide evidence on what will prevent homelessness and we will make sure that policy makers use this evidence.

We will continue to campaign not simply on behalf of homeless people but also on behalf of the many organisations up and down the country who feel constrained to speak up for themselves.

Our many supporters can help us change the way that people think about homeless people and can help influence their own communities.

The services we offer are determined by a model of change. This tells us why people become homeless and what needs to happen to move them away from homelessness.

We do not offer some of the things which will be critical in leaving homelessness for some individuals and not all individuals need every intervention that is on offer. The model enables our front line staff to identify the range of support that will make a difference to an individual and see how this support might be provided.

We cannot do this alone. We will work with our corporate supporters, with the trusts and foundations who are so generous to us as well as with other voluntary organisations.

Our priorities

Our operational priorities focus on three broad areas

- Delivering services in housing, health, education and employment
- Increasing knowledge, changing attitudes and influencing government
- Raising funds, developing staff and improving office systems



“Crisis has been fantastic and I wouldn't have been able to achieve what I have without them... Not only do they help you move on with a home, but also with education and looking for work... When I get a job I'll still be volunteering for Crisis. I want to give something back.”

– Sue

Priority

Deliver high quality services that enable housing stability, financial security, improved wellbeing and the development of positive relationships

Our model of change identifies housing stability, financial security, improved wellbeing and the development of positive relationships as the critical long term outcomes for homeless people. Our services and measures of success are built round these.

We aim to double the numbers of people who use our services in five years and to be operating from 12 sites. Over five years 38,000 people will participate in the services delivered in and through our centres.

Crisis at Christmas has always been a flagship programme and we will spread it to new centres. It will be a gateway to other opportunities as well as an emergency service. There are other organisations who will be trying to provide emergency support all year round. We will respond to this emergency with gifts in kind, volunteers and donations.

Employment is the ultimate goal for many homeless people leading to independent lives. We help them prepare for employment and find employment. The development of preferential relationships with employers will help deliver our aim of getting people into employment.

Our coaching methodology helps people who may be confused and uncertain to plan and coordinate their progress. All those we support will have access to a coach and we expect at least half to take advantage of this. This is part of providing a high quality service. Further quality measures rest on our learning and skills development offer being recognised externally. This gives individuals a passport for the future and the organisation a mark of approval.



I have my own key and no one can come in unless I have asked them to... I feel like a man again. You don't feel like a man when you are sleeping in the back of a car.
– Thomas

Priority

Develop and deliver a range of housing solutions

It might seem obvious that a homeless charity should prioritise housing and increasingly our clients simply can't get housed. They are in competition with those who local authorities have a statutory duty to house, with those who have got much more to spend and with those who are more articulate and more confident. They need our support more than ever particularly as cuts in public expenditure have shredded the provision of housing advice.

We will provide housing advice to our members. We will expand our coaching model to ease people into tenancies and to provide some one to one support focusing on education and employment.

In some areas we will run Private Rented Sector Access Schemes directly, keeping people safe from rogue landlords and acquisitive letting agencies.

We will continue to provide a national advisory service on using the private rented sector to prevent and resolve homelessness in England and Scotland.

We will find partners who can help us secure access to housing stock. Our campaigning on housing will focus on affordability, availability and sustainability and in the first instance lead to party manifesto commitments around housing and benefits in 2015.

Solving the housing crisis requires political will but also imagination and we will contribute research and development of new models of housing.



Crisis has a long history of funding research that sets the tone for key debates on housing and homelessness in the UK. Equally impressive to me is how they use research findings to influence policy and practice as well as the general public.
– *Professor Suzanne Fitzpatrick*

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Priority

Be the leading source of knowledge on causes, effects and solutions for single homelessness

Crisis has been known for many years for the research that it produces. Our research provides the evidence to influence opinion and to enhance our own reputation.

We will publish the Homelessness Monitor and the results of our Sustain project showing success factors for people going into the private rented sector. We will commission new research every year to extend understanding of the issues and the action which would make a difference.

Our other big research project will be a three year longitudinal study capturing the outcomes and destination of our members. This will provide a rich source of information about value for money and what works for our clients and will be an important endorsement of our work.



“My relationship broke down and so did I. I moved out and although I had a letter from my GP saying I needed emergency accommodation – the local council couldn't help me. I want to help Crisis tell the Government how difficult it is out there for people like me.

– Dean”

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Influence opinion and public policy and raise awareness so that homelessness matters to more people

We want to make homelessness matter. We want more people to care about homelessness and as a result spread our messages to their local communities as well as to government.

We want to increase people's knowledge about homelessness so they understand more about what causes people to become homeless and what it means to be homeless. We will spread our research messages so the problems and solutions to homelessness are better understood.

We want to make greater impact with all our audiences so that they will act with us to challenge negative policies and develop positive ones.

Campaigning is in our blood and we will recruit 25,000 more people who can add their voices to ours. We want to affect governments' spending decisions as well as the way that homeless people are represented by government. We want public policy to address the needs of homeless people.

We will put in place a network of volunteer ambassadors including volunteers who have come through our services who will take messages into the community. We expect a 500% increase in social media followers and friends and an increase in the use of the web.



Having seen Crisis at Christmas first hand, I can assure the thousands who donated so generously that their every pound and penny was very well spent.
– Sir Ian McKellen

Priority

Raise funding to support existing activities and growth plans

Traditionally Crisis has received very little money from government and we don't see this changing. It means that we are not reliant on a source of funding that is shrinking. It also means that we rely on lots and lots of individuals giving us, mostly small sums of money, from time to time.

Our target is to raise more than £33 million income in year five. The strongest focus will be on extending the reach of our fundraising at Christmas, when people often want to help homeless people.

We believe that we can raise more money in local communities. We will find more people who can identify with what we do and spark their imagination to do something together on behalf of homeless people.

We will need to ask more and more people to donate to us if we are to fulfil our ambitions. We will ask them by writing to them, through press, television and radio advertisements and by asking them to participate in events.

We will retain our existing partners and find new partners in the corporate world, sharing our ambitions with them and their employees. We will work in partnership with trusts and foundations aligning where our vision and values coincide.

We will keep our supporters in touch with what we are doing and how their money is spent. We will look for new sources of income.



“Above all else working for Crisis means having pride and compassion, whilst making real differences to people whose personal circumstances could so easily become our own.”
– Carol

Priority

Develop our people, systems and operating methods to ensure that they effectively support Crisis' activities, growth and development

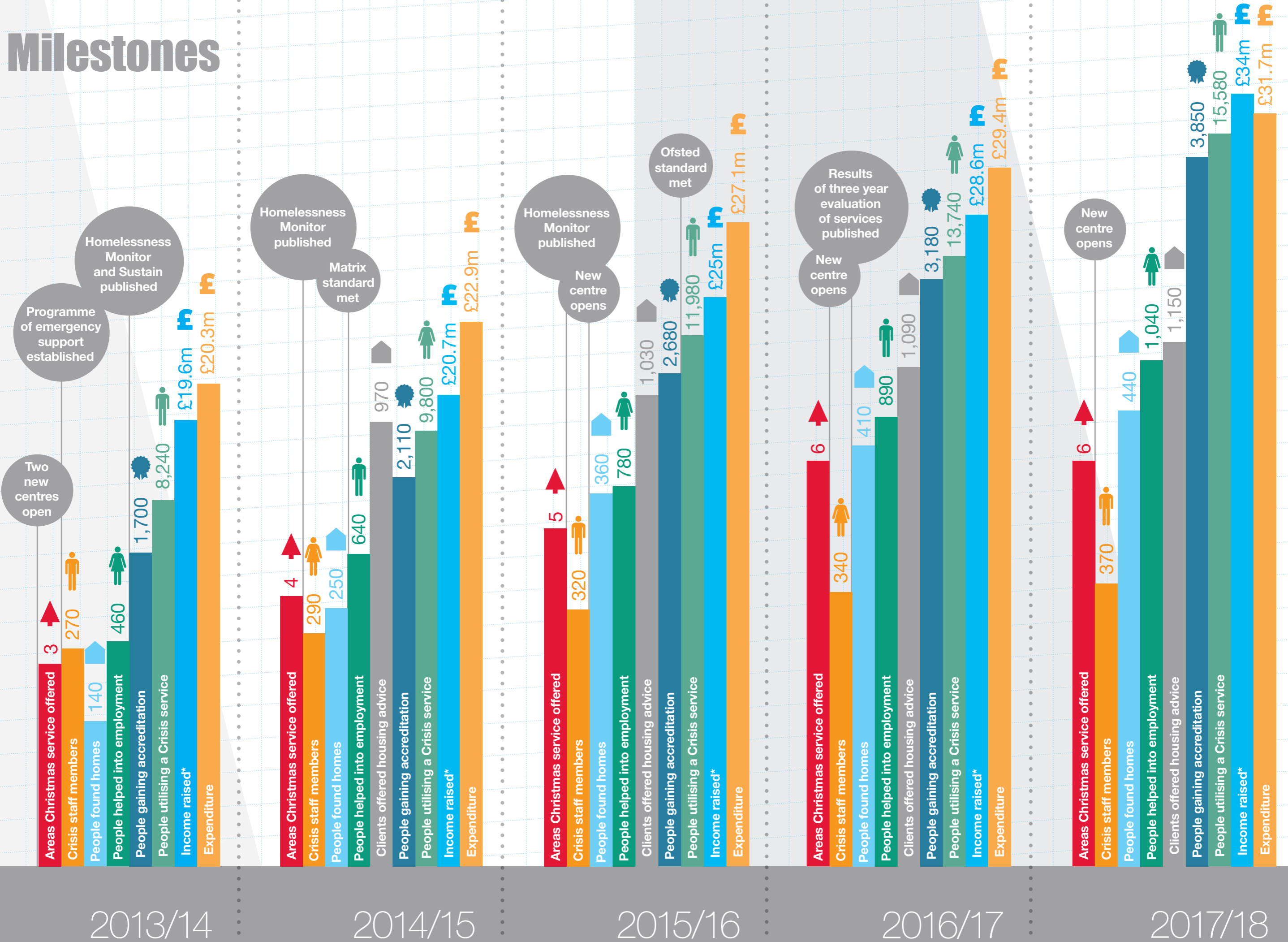
Crisis' costs are very significantly in its staff. We can only deliver our ambition if we can recruit and keep the right staff and show that we value them. We will make sure that they have the tools to do their jobs to the maximum of their ability.

Our volunteers are our other important human resource. They come from all walks of life with a wealth of skills and experience. We want to make sure that we make it easy for them to contribute these in a variety of ways and wherever we work. We know that most will still volunteer at Christmas and it would not be possible to deliver the Crisis at Christmas project without them. We also expect to increase the numbers of our clients who are volunteering for us. We can make a variety of roles available which will enhance their employability.

Our work is largely about relationships between people but as we grow and expand the geographical areas over which we work, operating systems, policies and communication become more important. We will measure what our staff and volunteers think about how they are treated and whether they are equipped for their roles. We will also measure whether our services including our corporate services are value for money and make changes where necessary.

Our trustees are ultimately responsible for ensuring that we live within our means, keep within the law and live up to our values. We will need to ensure that we have a diverse trustee body to oversee our aspirations for our clients and to end homelessness.

Milestones



2013/14

2014/15

2015/16

2016/17

2017/18

Crisis

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Homelessness ends here