

# Using Housing First to End UK Street Homelessness

Opportunities and Challenges

# Housing First and Street Homelessness

- Context
- Fidelity and working in new ways
- Getting results
- Meeting challenges

# Context: Overview



- Four jurisdictions
- Elected governments in each one
- Central government in London
- Central government runs England
- 90% of population are in England

# Context: Health and Welfare



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions



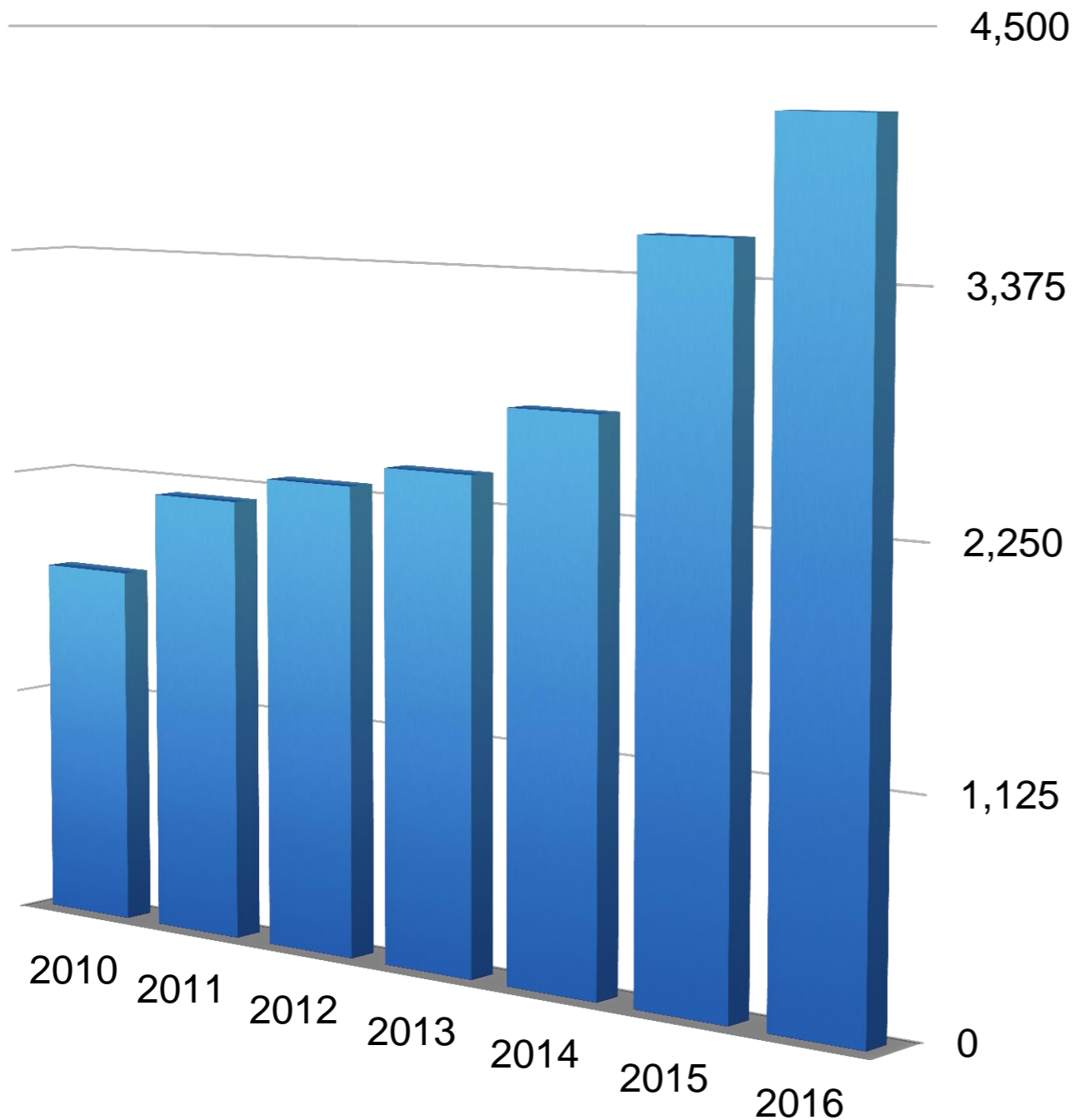
- Health £149 billion in 2017 (\$191 billion)
- Social protection (Welfare) £245 billion (\$256 billion)
- Defence, £48 billion (\$61.6 billion)
- National Health Service (NHS) universal and free
- Welfare benefits and assistance with housing costs for any unemployed working age adult
- Systems experiencing sustained cuts and right wing 'reforms' e.g. benefit sanctions, disability benefit cuts, inflation-only increases to NHS budget
- Approximately 17% of housing stock is social housing (2014)

# Context: Tackling Rough Sleeping



- Rough Sleepers Initiative 1990-1999
- Homelessness Action Programme 1999
  - 66% reduction by 2002
  - *Coming in from the Cold* strategy 2000
  - Rough Sleepers Unit
  - Homelessness Directorate, 2002
  - *More than a Roof* strategy, 2003
  - Changes to homelessness laws in England
- *No Second Night Out* launched in 2011
- Legislative reform, Scotland, Wales, England, Northern Ireland
- A lot of interventions, a lot of money spent

# Context: Rough Sleeping



- Rough Sleepers Initiative and Homelessness Action Programme reduce levels
- As does *No Second Night Out*
- But the cost is high
- And the problem comes back
- 1,768 rough sleepers at a PIT street count in 2010 (England)
- 4,134 in 2016 (England)

# A New Way of Working



- A new way to tackle rough sleeping
- Ordinary housing
- Including the private rented sector
- Using flexible, mobile support teams
- Not unfamiliar in many respects
- But the emphasis on personalisation and service user control with intensive support is new

# Fidelity Issues

- Pathways Housing First
- A welfare state in miniature
- In the UK, things are different
- Emergence of intensive case management (ICM only) services
- In the UK, also a tendency not to spend so much on homelessness services, ACT/ICM looks expensive
- *More choice and more control*



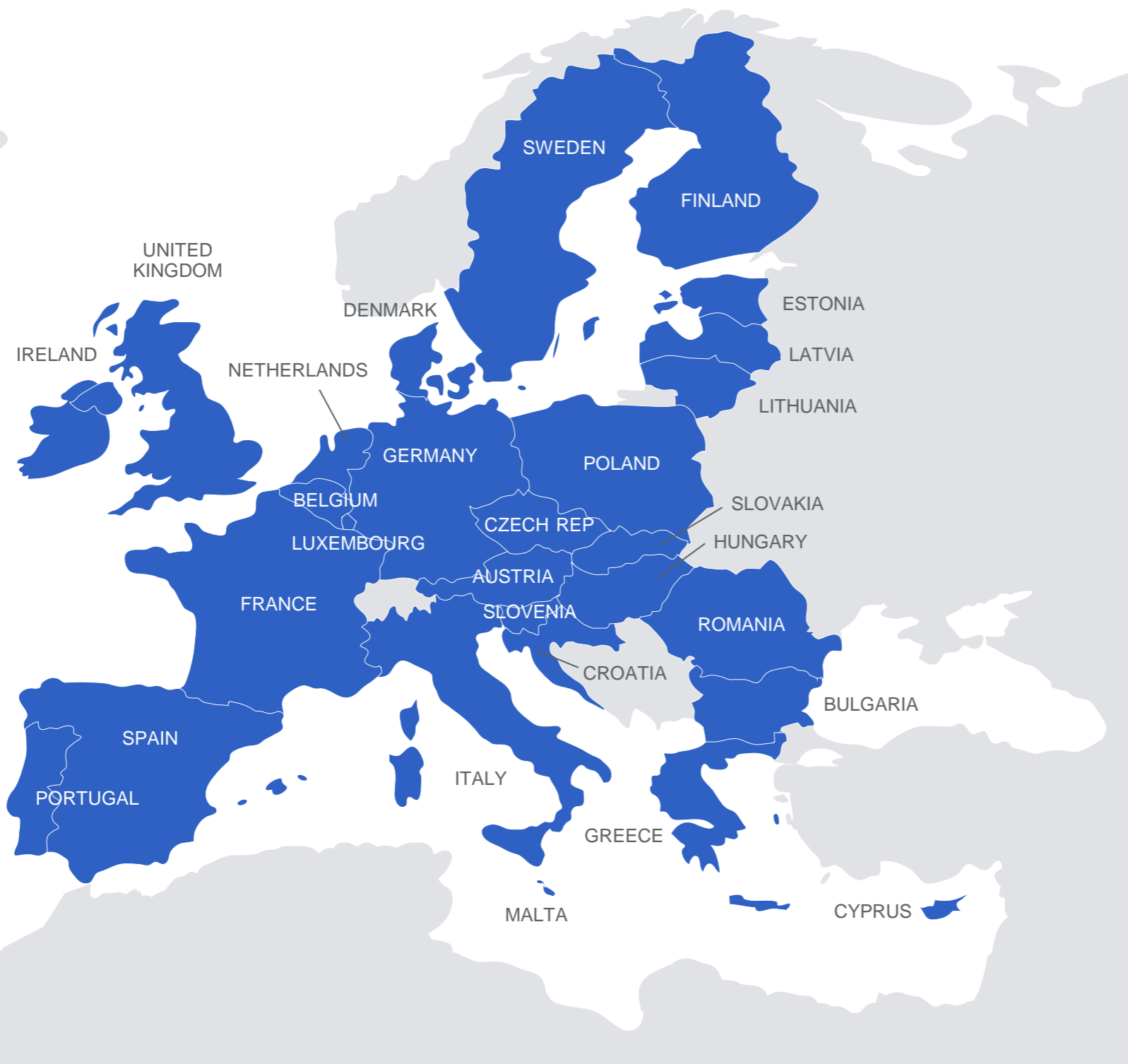


# Housing First in the UK

- Tends to be case management only
- Personalisation (bespoke support)
- Co-production (choice and control)
- Intensive case management
- Building a package of support
- Using social rented as well as private rented housing
- Full, ordinary tenancies
- Rents paid by general welfare system
- Treatment free from National Health Service
- Harm reduction (mainstream policy)
- Variable levels of peer support



# Housing First in Europe



- High Fidelity in France
- Denmark has ACT only and ICM/ACT models
- Finland has case management only
- So do UK, Italy, Portugal, Netherlands, Sweden
- Because welfare systems and social housing systems are extensive
- Some European countries employ communal, congregate, sharing-based versions of Housing First
- Not yet evident in the UK, but pressures on money

# Getting Results



- Greater emphasis on case management
- Own tenancies in the UK
- But UK is not that different from the rest of Europe, Finland, Norway, Portugal, Italy etc.
- Pilot studies show Housing First working
- Comparable rates of housing sustainment, 74% of people housed at one year in five services (2014 pilots, England)
- Reductions in crime, mental health problems,
- 27% of service users are women
- Out of 60 Housing First service users using nine pilot services in 2014, *everyone* had slept rough
- 62% had slept rough for three years or more
- Ongoing work with two Housing First evaluations from 2015 onwards shows the same pattern, wide experience of living rough, which Housing First ends

# Meeting Challenges



- Evaluated nine Housing First services in England in 2014
- All reporting successes, although one was quite low fidelity
- Three had closed by 2015
- Funding sunsets, 'pilot' status
- Insecurity of local authority/municipal funding
- And budget cuts

# Meeting Challenges

- Statutory homeless systems focused on all forms of homelessness
- Massive drive towards prevention across the UK, building on Welsh experience
- Funding changes will close a lot of single site, institutional provision which is congregate and communal
- Opportunities for Housing First
- But within integrated homelessness strategies
- And within a complex welfare system
- Move away from separate, 'pilot' status
- **Has to network** with other services to function
- Find a clear role in the bigger picture



# Finding a Role



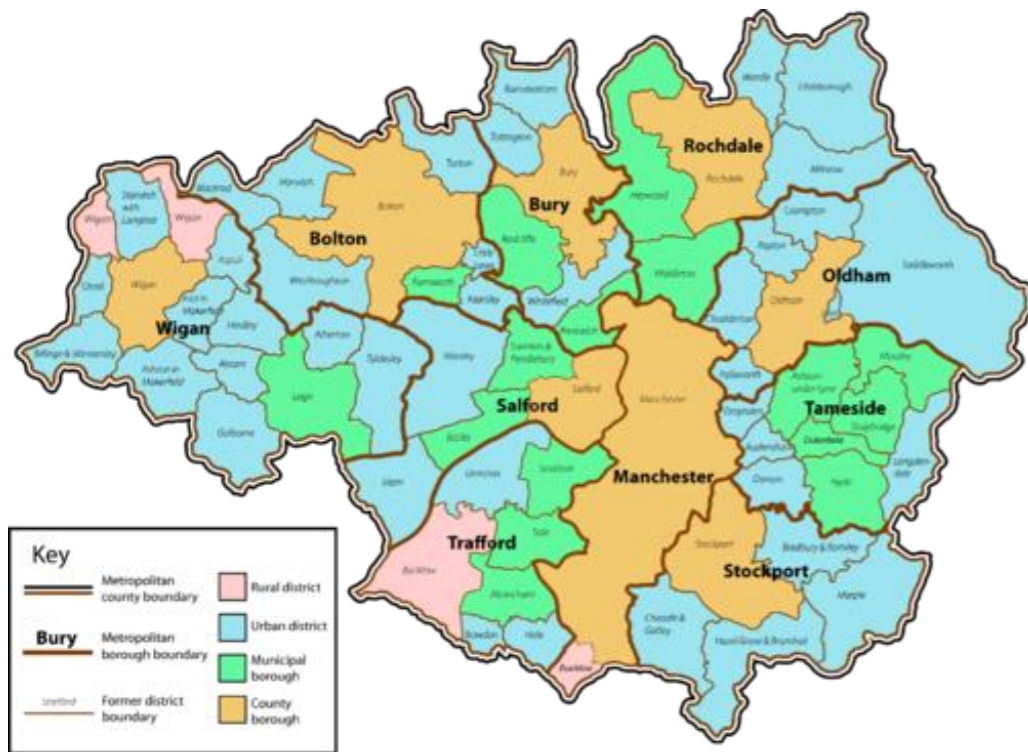
- Breaking the link between complex needs and rough sleeping
- Former offenders (ex-convicts) with complex needs
- People with severe mental illness and addiction
- People with experience of the child protection (social work) system during as children
- People whose health and wellbeing deteriorate because of sustained homelessness, from no-need to high-need
- Become **integral** to preventative services
- Link with health, social work
- Become **part** of the homelessness, health and housing strategies
- Demonstrate **cost effectiveness**

# Finding a Role: Complex Systems



- 33 elected authorities
- Each with a homelessness strategy
- The London Assembly (elected)
- Elected Mayor
  - With a homelessness strategy
- 8.6 million people
- Multiple health commissioning groups

# Finding a Role: Complex Systems



- Even in smaller cities, structures are multiple, complex
- Housing First - as a service model and as a response to rough sleeping - must face the challenge of integrating into complex systems and structures
- To end rough sleeping through Housing First, services must link, network and become part of wider policy, cannot be developed on a free standing basis
- Because the money will run out
- And because access to suitable housing will be difficult
- As with UK, so with Western Europe and most developed economies



# Housing First needs Housing

York among least affordable cities in UK to buy a home



York among least affordable cities in UK to buy a home

25th February 2017



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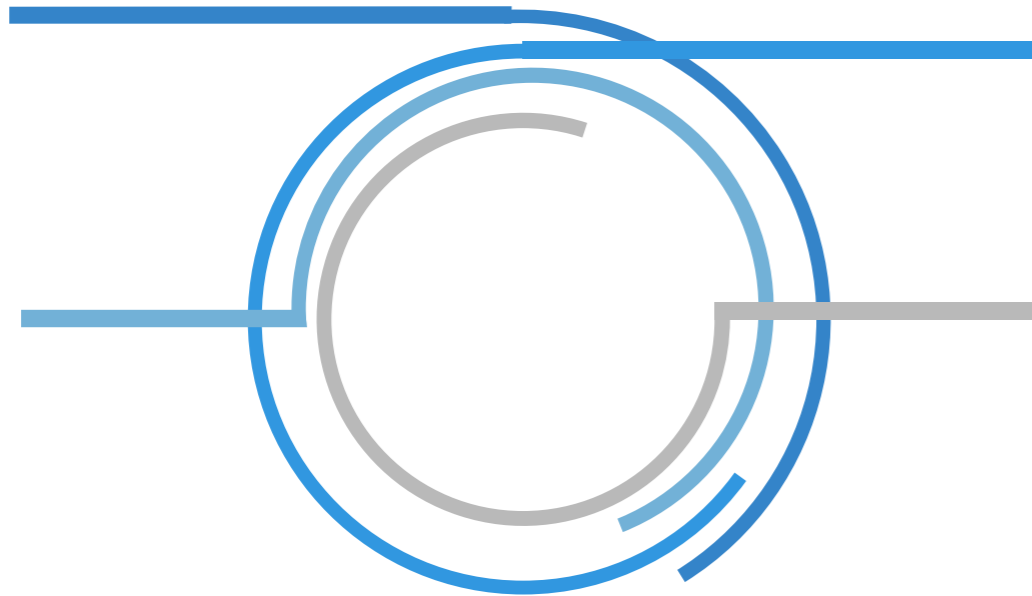
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YORK is one of the least affordable places in the UK to buy a home, with properties typically costing nearly eight times earnings, a report has found.

According to Lloyds Bank, the city is the most unaffordable place to live in the north and eighteenth least affordable in the UK as a whole.

- Key lesson from the progress towards 'functional zero' in homelessness in Finland
- Integration, coordination and building Housing First into an integrated homelessness strategy is a sure way to tackle rough sleeping
- But you must have enough housing
- And that housing must be adequate, affordable and have reasonable security of tenure
- Building Housing First in York is a challenge...

# Summing Up



- Housing First does not necessarily always mean exactly the same service model
- Housing First can be adapted to work in ‘service rich’ welfare systems like those in the UK and Western Europe, as an intensive form of case management
- Clearly Housing First can reduce rough sleeping, particularly sustained and recurrent rough sleeping
- But to work Housing First must be part of an integrated homelessness strategy
- An effective Housing First service must be networked, not just for case management, but also to ensure access to resources
- Housing must always be thought about, the right housing is essential
- There must be a homelessness programme or strategy of which Housing First is an integral part, not a ‘Housing First’ strategy

# Thanks for Listening



Nicholas Pleace

Deputy Director, Centre for Housing Policy, University of York



Centre for Housing Policy

[www.york.ac.uk/chp/](http://www.york.ac.uk/chp/)



European Observatory on Homelessness

[www.feantsaresearch.org](http://www.feantsaresearch.org)



Women's Homelessness in Europe Network

[www.womenshomelessness.org](http://www.womenshomelessness.org)



Housing First Guide Europe

[housingfirstguide.eu](http://housingfirstguide.eu)