

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



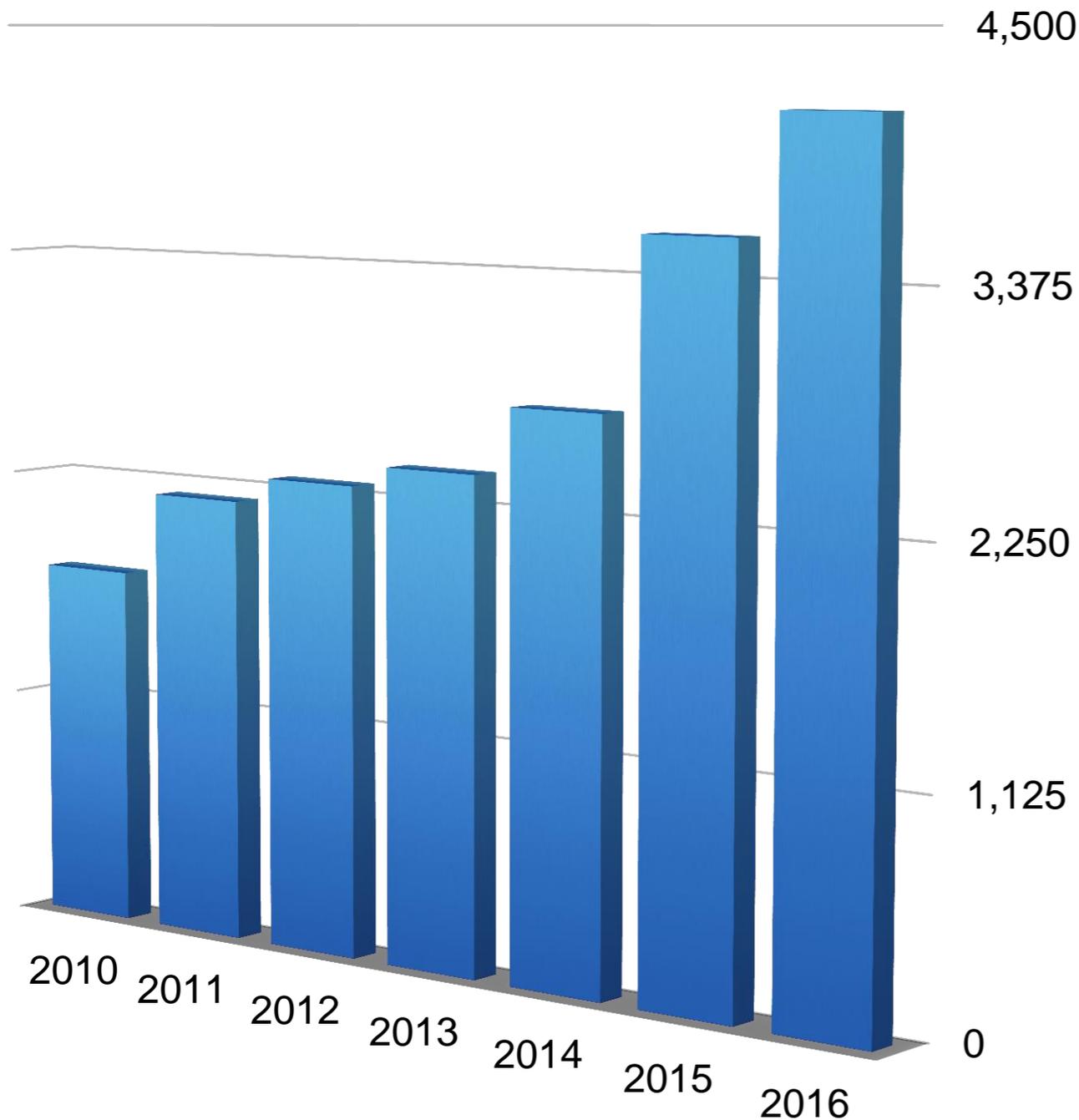
- Health £149 billion in 2017 (\$191 billion)
- Social protection (Welfare) £245 billion (\$256 billion)
- Defence, £48 billion (\$61.6 billion)
- National Health Service (NHS) universal and free
- Welfare benefits and assistance with housing costs for any unemployed working age adult
- Systems experiencing 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



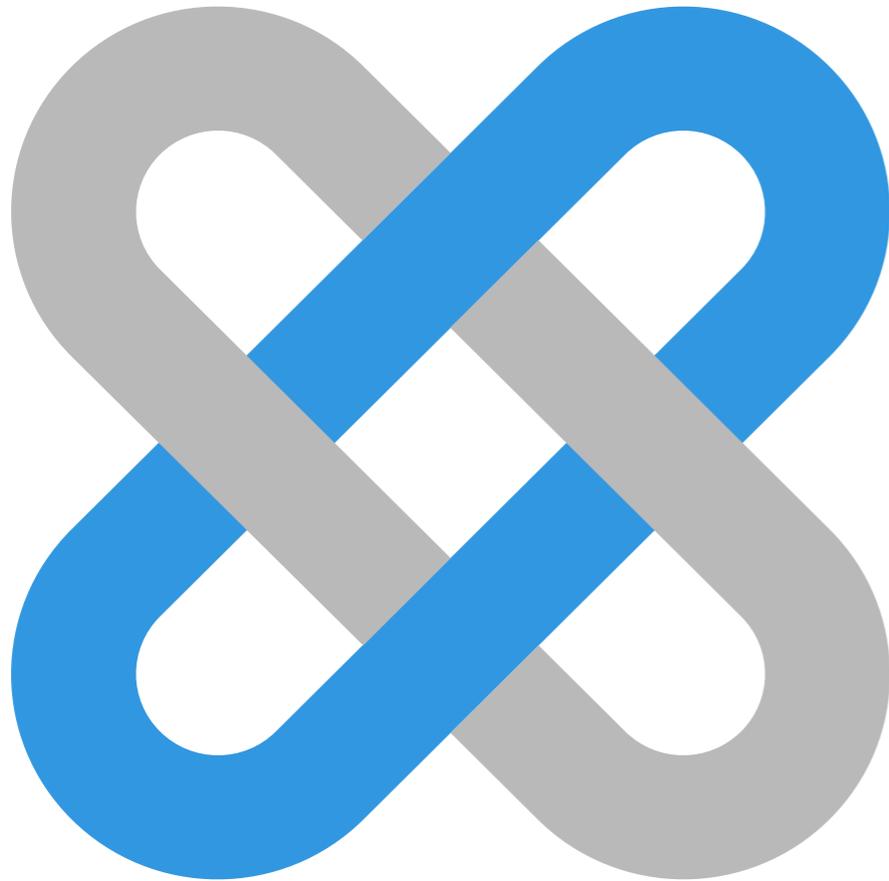
- Evaluated nine Housing First services in England in 2014
- All reporting successes, although one was quite low fidelity
- Three had closed by 2015
- Funding sunsets, 'pilot' status
- Insecurity of local authority/municipal funding
- And budget cuts

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



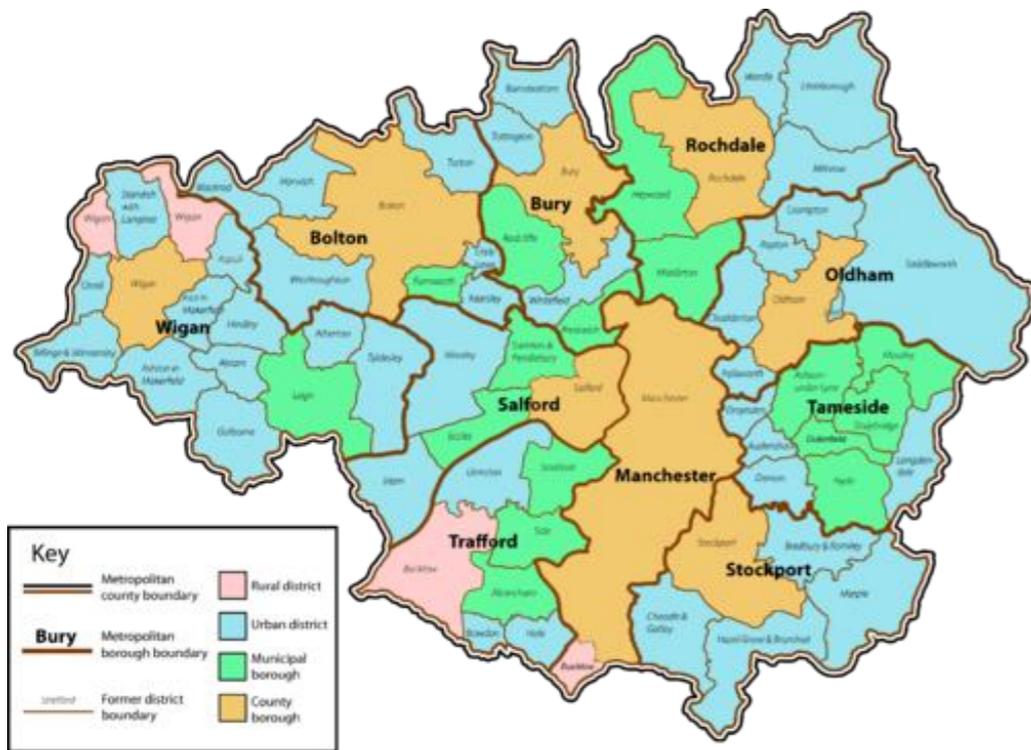
- Breaking the link between complex needs and rough sleeping
- Former offenders (ex-convicts) with complex needs
- People with severe mental illness and addiction
- People with experience of the child protection (social work) system during as children
- People whose health and wellbeing deteriorate because 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



Don't be the last to know! Get the latest local news straight to your inbox.

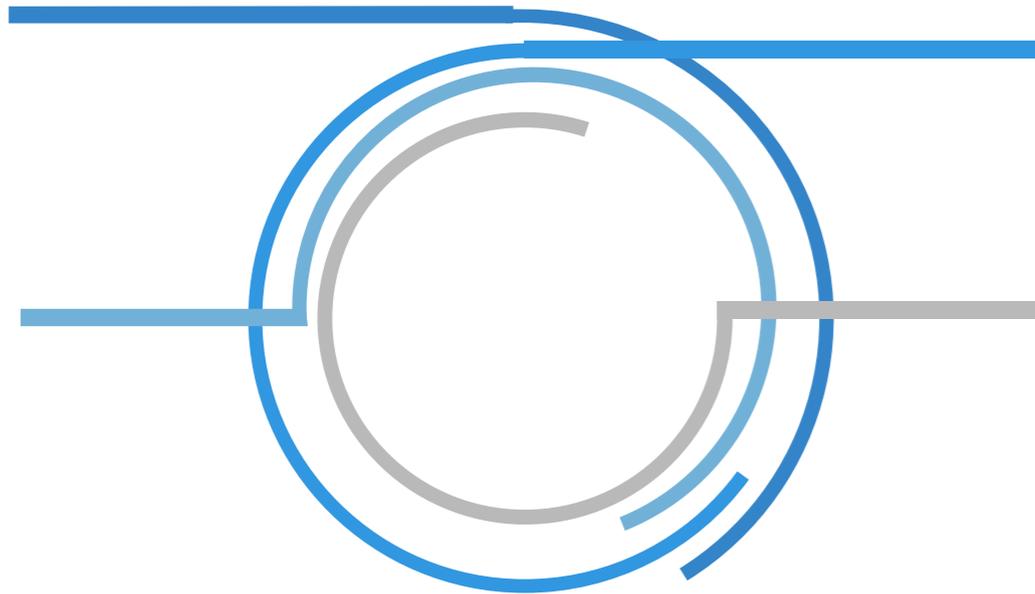
Sign up

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/



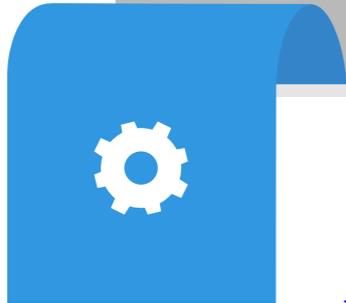
European Observatory on Homelessness

www.feantsaresearch.org



Women's Homelessness in Europe Network

www.womenshomelessness.org



Housing First Guide Europe

housingfirstguide.eu