



NOAH

Housing First in Luton Headline Report 2021



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What is Housing First?

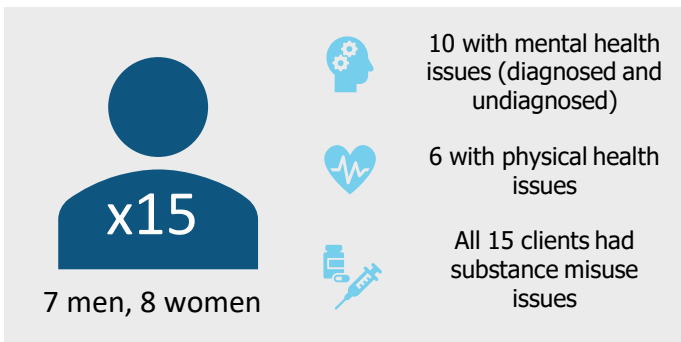


Housing First is a housing and support approach which gives people who have experienced homelessness and chronic health and social care needs a stable home from which to rebuild their lives.

It provides intensive, person-centred, and holistic wrap-around support that is open-ended.

It places no conditions on individuals; however, they should desire to have a tenancy.

Background of clients



Topline Housing First in Luton Stats



18 referrals have come through
15 clients are in their own accommodation
3 are in process and awaiting housing



100% retention rate
1 possibly moving to another area



First 24 months (April 18 – 20) funded by NHS Better Care Fund (via Luton Borough Council)
Latest 12 months (April 20 – 21) currently funded by MHCLG Rough Sleeper Initiative (via LBC)



100% self-contained 1 bed flats

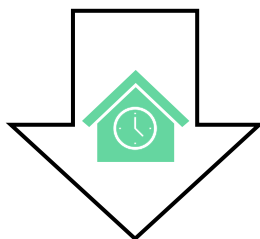
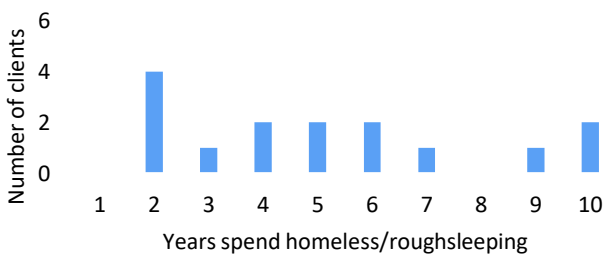


All flats distributed across Luton area

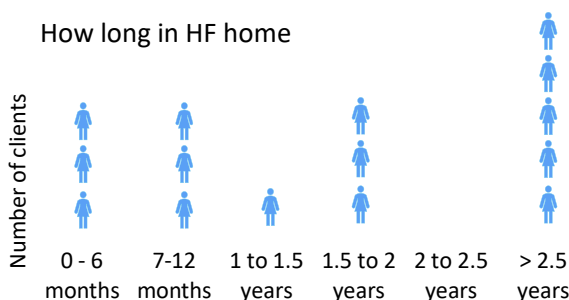


8, 7, 3 – cases per project officer

Length of homelessness before Housing First



How long in HF home



“Housing First is a platform for change” – outreach worker

Impact of Housing First



Clients valued their outreach workers greatly and praised their trustworthiness, non-judgemental attitude, well-informed help, and their good sense of humour



Some clients showed a new interest in a hobby, with literature, plumbing, and games consoles being some examples



A majority of clients have less chaotic lives. The Chaos index data showed that six out of the 10 measured responses had a reduction in people's chaos index between the first and last period measured.



There was also a reduction in clients' criminal activity which means that their impact on public service funds has been reduced



12 out of the 15 people with substance issues currently either speaking with a drug counsellor, speaking with the local substance misuse service, or taking their methadone prescription.



The 100% retention rate, coupled with all clients being registered with a GP and clients getting intensive support to get ID/banking/benefits in place has meant people who were formerly entrenched homeless are now no longer roughsleeping and are able to get the care they need

Challenges experienced



Difficulty in getting engagement from some among the entrenched roughsleeping cohort to join onto Housing First



Once clients enter the flat they become overwhelmed and stop engaging. Periods of no communication



Need for prepaid meters, and changes to budgeting exposure as many clients struggled with bills as they had no experience of paying this when they were homeless



It was difficult for outreach workers to not be seen as solely problem-solvers. Similarly, sometimes outreach workers had to seek to maintain boundaries.

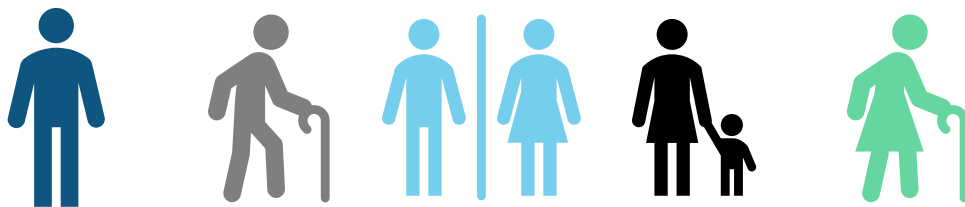


Reminding clients to be mindful of the company they keep and how this could impact their lives and recovery journeys



There was a difficulty with getting some clients engaged in new hobbies due to issues around lockdown & more pressing issues in clients' lives

The harm reduction approach is working.



Every client is different, and their journeys of recovery are not uniform or linear; clients may make improvements in one area of their lives and fall behind in another and when, where, and how these occurred for each client was different. Housing First succeeds because the wrap-around support is tailored to the individual and their own personal recovery journeys

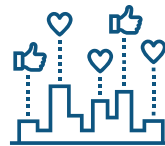
Recommendations based on beneficiaries' feedback

Have more long-term commissioning funding in place alongside the long-term housing support offered



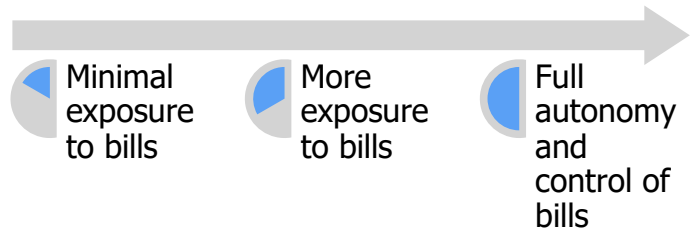
Give clients hands-on training for household chores or maintenance or other life skills

Speak with the people who have changed their social circle to find out how they did it



Explore the reasons for lower mental health service uptake when compared with substance recovery uptake

Have a gradual exposure to bill maintenance and budgeting, have prepaid bills where possible for the essentials, and then move to direct debits when clients are settled



At the referral stage, have an information sharing or online meet up involving all relevant parties to give background and insight into the available information and needs of a new client.