

Glasgow Homelessness Network works to end homelessness in Glasgow, and ensure that outcomes for people affected by homelessness meet their needs, interests and aspirations.

Homelessness Shared Solutions

Report to West Glasgow CHCP & Partners

July 2010

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Glasgow Homelessness Network (GHN) invited Community Health & Care Partnerships in Glasgow to consider a Participation Model that had been designed to represent the diversity of people affected by homelessness and their unique homelessness experience. Through involvement, the aim was to provide a contemporary and sensitive analysis of service user perspectives on relevant local planning and provision.
- 1.2 The Participation Model is based on the review of, and learning from, a pilot commissioned by the West Glasgow Community Health and Care Partnership in 2008. The West CHCP wanted to undertake a project to explore how the CHCP could best develop service user involvement with people affected by homelessness in the planning and delivery of health and care services.
- 1.3 The CHCP regarded GHN as well-placed to deliver this work as a trusted broker with voluntary sector frontline services. GHN has a long experience in involving people affected by homelessness, including:

At **European** Level, GHN:

Is a member of a participation working and advisory group.

At a **National** level, GHN:

- Is funded by the Scottish Government to create a culture of innovation and continuous improvement in Service User Involvement across Scotland. GHN coordinates the Scottish Homelessness Involvement & Empowerment Network (SHIEN), launched in Dec 2008;
- Is working in partnership with Alcohol Focus Scotland to deliver service user involvement training and an expert advisory and support service for professionals who plan and provide services.

At a **Local** level, GHN:

- Is contracted by Glasgow City Council to facilitate systematic Service User Feedback on a range of homelessness services in Glasgow;

- Is contracted by Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS Board to evaluate implementation of the Scottish Government's Health & Homelessness Standards in Glasgow, providing a process for the Service User Involvement performance indicators of these Standards;
 - Is funded by Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) to implement and roll out a Peer Mentoring Service User Involvement project;
 - Was commissioned by Glasgow City Council in 2009-10 to carry out a Service User Feedback survey, gathering the views and perspectives of almost 500 people using homelessness services across the city;
 - Has published a highly regarded Toolkit and research on Service User Involvement & Empowerment.
- 1.4 The first cycle of workshops in July 2009 were energetic, participative and emerged with clear actions and outcomes. Working toward the second cycle, the participation model has become further embedded in relevant local plans as a useful means of engaging not just with service users, but with people working and living locally.
- 1.5 This paper provides a report on the second cycle of Shared Solutions for the West area of Glasgow, held in April 2010.

2. Context

"Local solutions rely on their specificity, local ownership, and the ability of groups to tailor solutions to particular contexts. Local groups are also best placed to encourage community engagement on a social issue, through access to local networks and existing relationships".

(Mass Localism: NESTA; 2010)

- 2.1 The progressive development of the Shared Solutions model is influenced by the work of National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) on the concept of 'Mass Localism' published in February 2010.
- 2.2 This report discusses a new approach to involving local communities in the work of finding and implementing solutions to big social challenges, of which homelessness is one, in order to strike the balance between supporting authentic local solutions while at the same time achieving national policy targets and priorities.
- 2.3 The Nesta report sets out a series of principles for stimulating and supporting more local responses to social and inequalities issues that are at a manageable cost to the public purse.
- 2.4 Within these key principles, Shared solutions workshops offer people living, working and using services in local areas a bottom-up and democratic process to supplement, support or challenge central and local planning. This is while providing stakeholder groups with the opportunity to understand the specific challenges facing each other, alongside a unique and equal say on how solutions for identified issues are prioritised.

3. The Service User Participation Model

3.1 The Service User Participation Model endeavours to:

- Augment existing structures which allow Service User Involvement within services;
- Augment existing structures for Service User Involvement established by service planners and managers in the statutory sector (e.g. Public Partnership Forums);
- Network key staff across services who can share practice and innovation in Service User Involvement and support resource exchanges and access to national network;
- So far as possible, seek to broadly represent the diverse population of people affected by homelessness;
- Use existing infrastructure to maintain its own structure; that is via the Tenancy Sustainment Group, Essential Connection Forums etc;
- Enable the systematic input of service users, provide a means for these to be compiled and communicated to appropriate planning and management structures AND provide feedback to service users;
- Allow for consultation with service users affected by homelessness by planners and managers of services.

3.2 The benefits to Stakeholders include:

- **Service users** can raise issues locally with their own services and know there is a conduit for these issues to reach planners and managers within CHCPs, CPP and other structures. Service user involvement is facilitated within an empowerment framework, which aspires to always provide positive benefits for people participating. In a wider context, service user involvement is considered to increase employability, life skills, social networks and personal resilience to crisis. Service users are encouraged to liberate themselves from having an 'ex-homeless' label and participation will have clear exit points.
- **Service staff and managers** see an enhanced service user involvement role for themselves with no resource implications. This is particularly useful in the cases where existing involvement raises issues beyond the means of the service to change (for example, issues that have a wider policy or mainstream service implication). Staff will have access to the support of a national network (SHIEN), innovation resource exchanges and a practitioners Toolkit. Services can access support to meet the service user involvement requirements of funders.
- **Planners of services** have a simple mechanism by which they can 'homelessness-proof' their planning and service development by consulting with people affected by homelessness. They can demonstrate awareness of and responsiveness to the needs of people affected by homelessness. They can meet the Service User Involvement Performance Indicators of the Scottish Government's Health & Homelessness Standards.

4. Shared Solutions Methodology

- 4.1 Delegates attending the workshop were assigned to round tables that contain a range of stakeholders, perspectives and experiences for discussion. Initially, participants are invited to identify all local issues and challenges they consider important for discussion – this is unprescribed, broad and far reaching. This session is designed to generate as many discussion points as possible, following which each group are asked to negotiate and agree on the 2 most important issues for discussion.
- 4.2 The 2 priorities from across each of the roundtable discussion groups are collated and a single list created - participants are subsequently assigned 1 vote and invited to anonymously cast this votes by weighing up their own views on the relative importance of each issue.
- 4.3 The issues receiving the most votes by participants then formed the substantive discussion sessions for the day; this time asking participants to be solutions-focused in their discussions and consider a range of methods that could form part of the means of addressing the issue, set out as follows:
 - What are your experiences of this issue.
 - What are the challenges.
 - Suggested solutions.
 - Next steps.
- 4.4 Following this process ensures that the agenda for the day is fully set by the participants living and working within the CHCP area and is designed to make sure that all stakeholders can contribute equally to discussions and priority setting.
- 4.5 There was a question, answer and comments session at the end of the event to raise points not covered during the day.

The workshop closed with a performance from a local community group or activity aimed at engaging all participants in an entertaining activity.

5. Overview of the West Shared Solutions Workshop

- 5.1 The West CHCP Shared Solutions Workshop was held on the 29th April 2010 in the Drumchapel Community Centre.
- 5.2 The event was attended by 46 delegates representing a range of Registered Social Landlords and voluntary sector accommodation and support services, statutory services and a small number of service users within the West CHCP area. A full list of organisations represented at the workshop can be found in the appendix 4 to this report.
- 5.3 Neil Hunter, Director of the West Glasgow CHCP, presented an update on the work key areas of work in the area over the last 6 months and priorities for future work.

The presentation discussed the establishment of the Essential Connections Forum and Tenancy Sustainment Group in the area to promote a joint approach to preventing and alleviating homelessness, the work to implement the local Health and Homelessness Action Plan and the impending devolution of the Community Casework Team to the CHCP.

Neil also discussed the constraints on the CHCP in the current financial climate and the importance of ensuring that the meeting of the statutory duties is balanced with the aspirations of the CHCP.

In future Shared Solutions workshops this session will be used to feedback to participants on any ongoing work and improvements in relation to the priority issues identified in the workshop.

- 5.4 Following the methodology detailed in the previous section the two key priority issues identified by stakeholders in the West CHCP were (an outline of morning discussions is available in appendix 2):

PRIORITIES:

COMMUNICATION AND JOINED UP WORKING

SUSTAINABILITY AND THE CONTINUITY OF SERVICE PROVISION

- 6.1 The number one priority issue of **communication and joined up working** was described by participants as the importance of the involvement of all agencies and ensuring that everyone is working towards joint priorities.
- 6.2 Experiences and challenges of participants discussing this priority area were:
- Failure to share information;
 - Data protection legislation being used as a barrier to sharing information;
 - Lack of confidence in the standard of information to be shared;
 - Problems understanding the issues for all of the agencies involved;
 - Financial pressures and short timescales;
 - Lack of internal and external communication;
 - Not being honest and upfront with customers;
 - Staff not taking responsibility;
 - Not all agencies not attending case conferences;
 - Not all relevant information being provided at the beginning of the process.
- 6.3 Solutions and next steps identified by workshop participants in relation to communication and joint working included:
- Continue with and build upon the Essential Connections forum;
 - Use multi-agency groups to find solutions to difficult cases;
 - Sharing good practice;
 - Continuity of information provided;
 - Establish an online forum for sharing information;
 - Staff taking time to get to know people and allow sufficient time for someone to engage;
 - Development of shared information resource;
 - Staff to ask the right questions at the first point of contact.
- 6.4 The second priority issue of **the sustainability and continuity of services in times of limited funding** was described by participants as the ongoing difficulties of knowing what alternative services are in place when a service loses its funding.

6.5 Experiences and challenges of participants discussing this priority area were:

- Confusion amongst staff and service users when the remit of a service changes or the service is withdrawn;
- Service users disengaging when the service they had been using is no longer available;
- Difficult to build relationships when services are changing;
- Difficult to manage expectations;
- Funding cuts have lead to a lack of long term support services;
- Problem of services being commissioned based on quantity and cost issues rather than quality;

6.6 Solutions and next steps identified by workshop participants to the issue of included:

- Restructuring of services to make more effective use of funds;
- Review of funding decisions in order to deliver 2012 homelessness target;
- High level understanding and acceptance that those with complex needs require longer term support;
- Base funding decisions on quality of service provided;
- Co-location of agencies in a 'hub';
- More advertising of available services in Housing Association offices;
- Wider advertising of local welfare rights agencies

7. Overview of feedback from other local Shared Solutions Workshops

7.1 Shared Solutions Workshops following the same format as the West CHCP event were also held in the South West, South East, North and East CHCP areas in March-April 2010. A number of common themes were raised; an overview of which is provided below:

- **GLASGOW EAST CHCP PRIORITIES:**

1. Being Homeless Without Complex Needs
2. Engaging with people currently not involved with services
3. Attitudes and Values of Staff

- **GLASGOW NORTH CHCP PRIORITIES:**

1. Publicising and Promoting Services- Communication and Networking
2. Lack of Choice of Suitable Housing
3. Accessing Tenancy Support for ALL New Tenants

- **GLASGOW SOUTH EAST CHCP PRIORITIES:**

1. Sustaining Permanent Accommodation
2. Avoiding Early Case Closure
3. Improving Communication between Services

- **GLASGOW SOUTH WEST CHCP PRIORITIES:**

1. Permanent Accommodation
2. Single point of contact, access advice and information
3. Local Access to Local Suitable Housing

- 7.2 An equivalent report has been produced providing details of each of the CHCP Shared Solutions workshops and is available from GHN.

8. Considerations for West CHCP

- 8.1 All of the issues identified as priorities for the participants at the West Shared Solutions Workshop were submitted as having a direct impact on the prevention and alleviation of homelessness in the area. However, it is recognised that not all of the issues are the ultimate responsibility of the CHCP. It is also understood that some of the issues will be able to be resolved relatively quickly, and that some will take longer term planning. The considerations set out in this report aim to reflect these points. These considerations are also intended to build on the range of suggestions put forward by those attending the workshop.
- 8.2 CHCP Senior management is invited to consider this report, with formal feedback invited by workshop participants through a report and/or presentation at the next local Shared Solutions event (Sept/Oct 2010). This might set out steps taken (or planned) as a result of the suggested solutions and next steps recommended by participants.
- 8.3 The Health and Homelessness Standards require the CHCP to make *active* use of the views put forward by people using services. In order to continually improve in relation to this performance requirement the CHCP should consider working with partner agencies through the Tenancy Sustainment Group and Essential Connections Forum to develop and implement an action plan to ensure that service user views are influencing practice in the West.
- 8.4 Participants at the workshop identified joint working as the number one priority issue for the area. Consideration should be given to membership of local networking groups to ensure that all partners in the area are involved and represented.
- 8.5 In the current financial climate the local groups should be widely used to publicise changes to services and potential closures to ensure people have access to information on what is currently available in the area to meet their needs.

Appendix 1: Best Practice in Service User Involvement

The GHN/CHCP Participation model is defined by 9 characteristics that combine to better represent homelessness diversity. The Participation model will therefore:

1. Develop within a **holistic definition of homelessness**, causes and impacts (housing, opportunities, wellbeing) and at each level (policy, practice, provision, perception).
2. Be grounded in a credible model of homelessness, its causes and consequences and how it may be prevented or alleviated, and give due recognition to the efforts of non-homelessness services in the prevention and alleviation of homelessness – whether they are conscious of or accredited for this aspect of their work or not.
3. Have contact with a **cross section** of the population of people affected by homelessness. This may be done directly or through homelessness and other services. Bearing in mind the extent of hidden homelessness and the extent to which people who are homeless are engaged with mainstream, non-homelessness services, there is a significant amount of contact with people affected by homelessness which will be done through direct contact and through non-homelessness services.
4. Consider the role of **organisations with a smaller stake** in homelessness. Such organisations need to be made aware of the impact of their work as regards homelessness alleviation and prevention and be appropriately networked to facilitate service user contact, but also to share good practice and receive support where necessary.
5. Exist in, develop and perpetuate an **empowering environment**. Service users must have personal benefits from their experience of being involved in the development of CHCP services. This can be achieved through the courtesy of paying travel expenses etc, but sustained involvement needs to compensate the service user through opening up environments where empowerment is possible. This in itself is a contribution to alleviating and preventing homelessness. At the very least, there should be a mechanism to feedback actions and consequences of previous involvement activity.
6. Be facilitated and serviced by **a credible, trusted broker**. This work will involve working across a large range of providers and with a range of service users with different needs and desires. The credibility of the people involved in this work and their independence from other parties is important. It is proposed that GHN take this role, including through the resources and support offered through the Scottish Homelessness Involvement & Empowerment Network.
7. Work in an innovative way to develop means by which service users can be **engaged and their engagement sustained**. This work needs a consistent and persistent approach.
8. Allow service users to raise issues relating to existing CHCP services or to suggest the development of new services and to be consulted on the **development of services by the CHCP**.
9. Work flexibly with a range of planned and structured activity that is **inequalities sensitive**, and takes account of service user's needs and capacities.

There are specific methods of good practice as outlined in **GHN's 'Easy 3x3' Participation Technique & Toolkit**. This includes considerations around a 25 point checklist of good practice. For the CHCP Shared Solutions Workshops, these guidelines ensured the following:

- Invitations extended by email, posters and telephone;

- The Shared Solutions workshop provided a safe, comfortable and encouraging environment;
- Accessible information (in plain English), was provided;
- Service user expenses were available;
- An open agenda allowing delegates to determine the direction of discussion and space for all involved to put forward their opinion;
- Clarity around purpose of the day and aims and objectives and feedback;
- Transparency and clarity concerning who has been invited to take part;
- Inequalities sensitive practice (literacy & language barriers, childcare considerations, accessibility etc);
- Flexibility around service users inputting to overall participation model, and future input welcomed by phone, email, writing, 1:1, or direct through service;
- A structured innovative, agenda, ensuring solutions focus whilst providing time for icebreaker, social networking, lunch and a drama performance;
- Several routes made available to delegates for evaluation.

Appendix 2: Overview of all issues raised at the workshop

Morning round table discussions

Table 1

What are the barriers to accessing services?

- Lack of knowledge;
- People feel acknowledged and intimidated;
- Shortage of housing;
- Territorialism: anti-social behaviour in particular areas;
- Joined up thinking;
- Communication;
- Fragmentation;
- Aspirations;
- Lack of partnership;
- Changes to services.

What works well in accessing services in your local area?

- Specialist organisations for anti-social behaviour;
- Parenting skills classes;
- Good services out there;
- Local RSL has good contact with tenants.

What are the 2 main points you would like to put forward for the afternoon discussion?

1. Communication and joined up thinking
2. Intimidating accessing particular services

Table 2

What are the barriers to accessing services?

- Inconsistency of casework management which is a barrier to tenancy sustainment;
- Timescales of agencies to respond to issues;
- Improve joint working;
- Arrears generation puts time pressure on RSLs;
- No named person in CHCP to talk to.

What works well in accessing services in your local area?

- Homechoice has resulted in homeless people getting better offers of housing;
- Tenancy sustainment group
- GHA allocating 45% of tenancies to homeless households.

What are the 2 main points you would like to put forward for the afternoon discussion?

1. Improving formalised joint working
2. Tenancy Sustainment and the management of arrears

Table 3

What are the barriers to accessing services?

- Cuts/distribution of services;
- Housing Benefit;
- DWP (Community Care Grants, Crisis Loans);
- Operational Partnership Working;
- Communication.

What works well in accessing services in your local area?

- RSLs/Has
- More information available on support and welfare rights services;
- Essential Connections/Tenancy Sustainment Groups

What are the 2 main points you would like to put forward for the afternoon discussion?

1. Debt Management services
2. Tenancy Sustainment services

Table 4

What are the barriers to accessing services?

- Benefit processes;
- Access to welfare rights services;
- Access to addiction services;
- Having to travel to see services;
- Short term funding;
- Waiting time from point of becoming homeless;
- Access to 'decent' emergency accommodation;
- Poor relationships between partner organisations;
- Homechoice – risk of 'cherry picking'.

What works well in accessing services in your local area?

- Ongoing updates and details from Community Casework Team;
- Longer term ongoing support;
- Close liaison, good communication between service providers;
- Development of partnerships;
- Easy access to Hunter Street Health Centre;
- Quicker access to Welfare Rights service;

What are the 2 main points you would like to put forward for the afternoon discussion?

1. Benefits processes/timescales and perception of being trapped
2. Rent rates for furnished lets.

Table 5

What are the barriers to accessing services?

- Lack of information sharing at the outset to ensure people are appropriately accommodated and supported;
- Poor sign posting of what is available, no clear first port of call for accessing CHCP services – feedback can be lost.

What works well in accessing services in your local area?

- Good information supplied in Section 5 submissions;
- Good working relationships across agencies;
- Care programme approach/Adult Support and Protection – formalizing joint working commitment.

What are the 2 main points you would like to put forward for the afternoon discussion?

1. Lack of information sharing
2. Poor sign posting of what is available

Table 6

What are the barriers to accessing services?

- Awareness
- Engagement
- Boundaries
- Size of CHCP
- Short term funding
- Accessing funding

What works well in accessing services in your local area?

- Partnership working
- Person centred
- Sign posting
- Coordinating services

What are the 2 main points you would like to put forward for the afternoon discussion?

1. Awareness of services
2. Ability to access services

Appendix 3: Overview of priority issues and voting results

The following are a list of the two main issues that were raised and put forward during the morning session, which were then voted upon (number of votes registered) to identify the top priorities, which were taken forward and discussed in the afternoon session.

| Priority Issue | Votes |
|---|-------|
| Communication and Joined Up Working | 14 |
| People feeling intimidated accessing services | 4 |
| Formalising Joint Working | 0 |
| Tenancy Sustainment (management of arrears) | 0 |
| Difficulty in accessing debt management services | 1 |
| Positive aspects of tenancy sustainment (improving communication) | 6 |
| Sustainability and continuity of support services (funding) | 13 |
| People not knowing services and being able to access them | 0 |
| Lack of information and sharing the information | 0 |
| Benefits process (Community Care Grants, timing) | 5 |

Appendix 4: List of organisations attending the workshop

The following organisations were represented at the West CHCP workshop.

| |
|---|
| Addaction |
| Cernach Housing Association |
| Clydeside Tenant Partnership |
| Drumchapel housing Co-operative |
| GAMH |
| Glasgow City Council |
| Glasgow Community and Safety Services |
| Glasgow Housing Association |
| Glasgow Simon Community |
| Glasgow West Housing Association |
| Glasgow West Regeneration Agency |
| Great Western Tenant Partnership |
| Kendoon Housing Association |
| Kingsridge Cleddans Housing Association |
| KNIGHTS Housing Association |
| Loretto Care |
| NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde |

Appendix 5: Overview of participant evaluation (31 responses were returned from 46 delegates)

1. Delegates by occupation/service user and sector.

| Type of delegate | No. |
|----------------------|-----|
| Service User: | 2 |
| Front Line Staff: | 17 |
| Manager: | 7 |
| Policy Maker/manager | 1 |
| Other: | 4 |

2. The overall rating of the workshop

Delegates rated the workshop on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)

| Rating | Responses |
|--------------|-----------|
| Blank or n/a | 0 |
| 1 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 |
| 3 | 6 |
| 4 | 20 |
| 5 | 5 |

Reasons given for these ratings include:

- Workshop showed how many agencies are available
- Very informative, good way to meet partner agencies
- Good participation from all delegates
- Finding out what other agencies opinions/issues were
- The workshop was very constructive
- It was informative – learning from others’ experience
- It was a good chance to meet service users, voluntary sector workers, housing providers all together and discuss the issues that are relevant to each
- There was a lot of information about what is happening and what we want to happen
- Very participative
- Interactive sessions
- Anything that raises awareness and brings all resources, agencies, housing associations together to problem solve can be nothing but positive

3. Most/least worth while part of the day

- Each was valuable in its own way
- Sharing information with people together at the same table
- Afternoon discussions (finding solutions)
- The active input from agencies other than RSLs
- The input from all the tables and that we will receive feedback
- Problem solving
- Fun quiz

4. Some specific issues were raised as areas that delegates would like additional information on:

- Contact details for participants to be circulated
- The homelessness services directory
- Any resource directories/point of contact for the West
- More on housing reforms

5. The following were identified by delegates as actions to be taken forward from the workshop:

- Sharing ideas and contacting the correct people
- Use information to feed back to the Public Partnership Forum
- Get involved in more information sharing and networking
- Make contact with services I met today
- Take steps to reach out to other services
- Share the awareness with other members of staff