



Homeless Link

# Commissioning Homelessness Services

A Good Practice Webinar

We will be starting shortly

Please introduce yourselves in the chat



# Commissioning homelessness services: good practice seminar

**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March**



Building capacity for commissioning homelessness services

Commissioners' Forum - overview and purpose

Commissioners' Forum - meeting topics

Commissioners' Forum - key themes

Commissioning homelessness services - a good practice guide

# Building capacity for commissioning homelessness services



Homeless Link is funded through MHCLG's 'Voluntary and Community Frontline Sector Support' grant. We provide resources and opportunities to build capacity and improve services across England e.g. outreach, SWEP, trauma-informed, EDI, welfare benefits etc.

Commissioning is an essential part of the picture. Commissioners enable good practice through service planning, design and create the conditions for good practice to thrive through their monitoring/relationships with providers.

Commissioners' Forum

Commissioning homelessness services – a good practice guide

# Commissioners' Forum

## Overview and purpose



Open Forum

Members of Forum to decide what is discussed

Chance to get to know each other and share challenges and ideas

Four initial monthly meetings from November 2024 to March 2025

# Commissioners' Forum

## Meeting topics



November 2024 – list of topics identified for discussion at future meetings

January 2025 – whole system approaches to commissioning

February 2025 – challenges of working with Adult Social Care and/or Mental Health

March 2025 – update from MHCLG on development of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

# Commissioners' Forum

## Key themes



Strong appetite for meeting up with other commissioners to share experience and areas of good practice:

'Networking with other areas'

'Hearing other LAs struggles and that it is not just our area'

'At least we all have the same problems!'

'Being able to share concerns and ideas with MHCLG'

'Hearing about good practice models happening elsewhere'

# Commissioning homelessness services – a good practice guide



## Chapters:

- Introduction
- Foundations of good practice
- Commissioning Cycle Stage One: Analyse
- Commissioning Cycle Stage Two: Plan
- Commissioning Cycle Stage Three: Secure Services
- Commissioning Cycle Stage Four: Review

Multiple links to other resources

11 case studies



Basingstoke  
and Deane



OutcomeHome  
CONSULTING, EVALUATION & TRAINING

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# Commissioning Homelessness Services

Basingstoke and Deane perspective



# About Basingstoke

- Lower tier authority, concentrated town centre with large rural surrounding area.
- 180k population (approx.)
- Non-stock holding authority
  
- Over 100+ supported bed spaces in the area – variety and options for people.
- Rough sleeping figures:
- 26 in 2016 to 2 in 2024

# • What we wanted to achieve

- Person at the centre
- Decrease in rough sleeping numbers
- Meaningful data collection
- Changing the power dynamic in commissioning – we are not the experts
- Improve client experience and support
- Increase staff well-being, retention and resilience.

# • How we started

- Coalition of the willing
- Cross party political support locally,
- PIE awareness sessions/training from Uni Southampton for Senior Leadership and members
- Free training for all partnership on PIE
- Building a clear narrative and picture of need-re-framing the issue.

# What we did/are doing

- Training – free and wide reaching
- Reflective Practice
- Local authority – first stop
- Data
- Shared referral form
- Diversify and improve accommodation and support
- Commissioning through relationships
- Psychology and peer mentoring throughout the support offer.



# PIE and systems change

- MEAM approach
- Social Inclusion Partnership
- Voice of lived experience
- Recognise when things haven't worked, reflect and go again - be willing to share learning
- Share and celebrate outcomes beyond that of your organisation

# Clinical Psychology and Peer mentoring

- Outcome Home
- RSI funding from MHCLG
- Embedded approach into the existing support offer.
- Complementing the work of the homeless support services
- Focus on giving people (staff and clients) the skills to cope

# **GMCA Commissioning and Lived Experience**

James Walker, Tess Murphy, and  
Gwen Page Roberts

## GMCA Context

- Mayoral Combined Authority covering 10 local authorities in GM.
- No statutory homelessness duties, however, aim to use devolution to add value and deliver change.
- GM Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2021 – 2026
  - *‘This strategy commits to building inclusive and democratic participation as a means to prevent homelessness.’*
  - *‘It is essential that Greater Manchester values inclusive participation to strengthen, influence, and inform decisions that enable a better society and homelessness prevention through the channels of power in government and business.’*



# Coproduction at GMCA

- Homelessness prevention strategy was heavily coproduced, with ongoing involvement including legislative theatre sessions that raise specific issues and topics that people want us to address.
- Changing Futures has further embedded LE coproduction, with that being one of the key principles. We have a coproduction lead and have a LE panel who we regularly meet with and draw on to tackle issues.
- Examples such as recently commissioning two offers of support in GM which LE members helped shape.



# GROW

- GROW (Getting Real Opportunities of Work) began during TNLCM Fulfilling Lives programme, and has been continued under CF.
- Trainees are placed with delivery areas including GMCA to develop their workplace skills, but also to shape and influence how public sector orgs work with LE. Brings in new perspectives and understanding of issues we are working to address.
- Massively helps community engagement, and challenges status quo.

# Faith Engagement Project

- Strengthening faith communities' response to migrant homelessness through facilitating connection, sharing information and offering practical support.
- The role of faith communities in supporting new GM residents has huge potential and could include:
  1. Supporting wellbeing and integration
  2. Humanitarian response
  3. Homelessness response

## Future Opportunities

- This work, informed by the GROW trainee, could inform how commissioning is done in the future across GM
- Understanding what support faith communities are providing and opportunities to collaborate and strengthen this
- GM Live Well – ensuring that there is great everyday support available in every neighbourhood and shifting power back to communities

# Homeless Link

## **What we do**

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for frontline homelessness services. We work to improve services through research, guidance and learning, and campaign for policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

**[homeless.org.uk](https://homeless.org.uk)**

**[@HomelessLink](https://twitter.com/HomelessLink)**