**A guide to Housing First for criminal justice professionals**

This briefing is an introduction to Housing First for criminal justice professionals, including those who work in police, prison and probation services. For more detailed information visit <https://homeless.org.uk/areas-of-expertise/housing-first/>. For local information, please contact the Housing First service in your area (see below).



**5. Your local Housing First Service**

**3. Who it is for**

**2. Context**

**4. Housing First and your role**

**6. Supporting the approaches**

**1. What Housing First is**

**7. Next steps**

Unconditional access to permanent housing with open-ended specialist support. Housing First adheres to seven key [principles](https://homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/the-principles-of-housing-first/), watch [Michelle’s Story.](https://vimeo.com/684255605)

Housing First can support the criminal justice sector.

* Talk to colleagues about Housing First
* Look at Housing First resources
* Connect with your local Housing First team
* Build partnerships and joint working protocols with Housing First teams

Housing First has a positive impact for the criminal justice system, with [reductions in arrests, ASB and begging](https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/83966/1/Housing_First_England_Report_February_2015.pdf). For one service supporting 27 women with a total 831 offences, there was a [decrease to just five offences whilst in Housing First support.](https://homelesslink-1b54.kxcdn.com/media/documents/Jigsaw_Housing_First_for_Women_Final_Evaluation_Report_2021.pdf)

For every [£1 spent on Housing First, £1.56 is saved](https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/CSJ-Close-to-Home-2021.pdf), including to criminal justice services

Housing First ends homelessness for people experiencing multiple disadvantage and tenancy sustainment rates are between 70-90%

People facing multiple exclusion and disadvantage who experience a combination of issues. For many, their current circumstances are shaped by long-term experience of poverty, deprivation, trauma, abuse and neglect.

Housing First uses three key approaches:

1. [Trauma informed care](https://homeless.org.uk/areas-of-expertise/improving-homelessness-services/trauma-informed-car/)

2. [Strengths-Based practice](https://homeless.org.uk/areas-of-expertise/improving-homelessness-services/strengths-based-practice/#:~:text=It%20involves%20re%2Dframing%20the,organisations%20and%20those%20accessing%20them.)

3. [Harm reduction](https://homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/supporting-people-who-use-drugs/)

These structural inequalities intersect in different ways, manifesting in a combination of experiences including homelessness, substance misuse, domestic violence,

contact with the criminal

justice system and

mental ill health.

You can read the above resources and seek training to ensure consistency in support.

Criminal justice teams have a vital role in supporting Housing First residents at different points in their journey. Key activities may include:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY HOUSING FIRST SERVICE**

Name of service: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Lead Contact: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Capacity of service: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Supporting with prison visits, planning for release and working jointly in the community, particularly around managing risk
* Providing information and updates to support the Housing First team to stick with the person through cycles of custody and community
* Carrying out joint visits and attending multi-agency meetings

Homeless Link 2022. All rights reserved.

Homeless Link is a charity no. 1089173 and a company no. 04313826

Referral information (if relevant):

­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Any other information:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_