

Depaul submission

Crisis' 'Have your Say' call for evidence

October 2017



1. Crisis wishes to use the results from this survey to inform its policy and practice work for the 50th anniversary and related projects. Please tick the consent box below if you are happy for your responses to be used and quoted in Crisis' outputs.

Yes, I am happy for Crisis to use my response

2. Name

Dan Dumoulin

3. Organisation (please complete if you are responding on behalf of an organisation)

Depaul UK

4. Location of your work

Great Britain

5. Summary of what your organisation does

Depaul works in some of the UK's most disadvantaged communities, preventing homelessness and supporting vulnerable young people. Last year we provided services including emergency accommodation, longer term housing and community outreach to over 3,000 young people.

6. What is your target client group? (please list all the groups you work with)

Most of Depaul's work is with young people (aged 16-24) who have experienced or are at risk of homelessness. In addition we provide housing advice to people of all ages who are

leaving prison and some of the Nightstop services we deliver are also open to people of all ages.

7. Address

Endeavour Centre, Sherborne House, 34 Decima Street, London, SE1 4QQ.

8. Contact details

daniel.dumoulin@depaulcharity.org.uk; 07989 404363

9. Are you answering as someone with lived experience of being homeless?

No



Homelessness Accommodation (temporary accommodation and supported accommodation)

17. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Hostels and other current models of supported accommodation are meeting the needs of homeless people, including people who have complex and multiple needs and those with low support needs.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

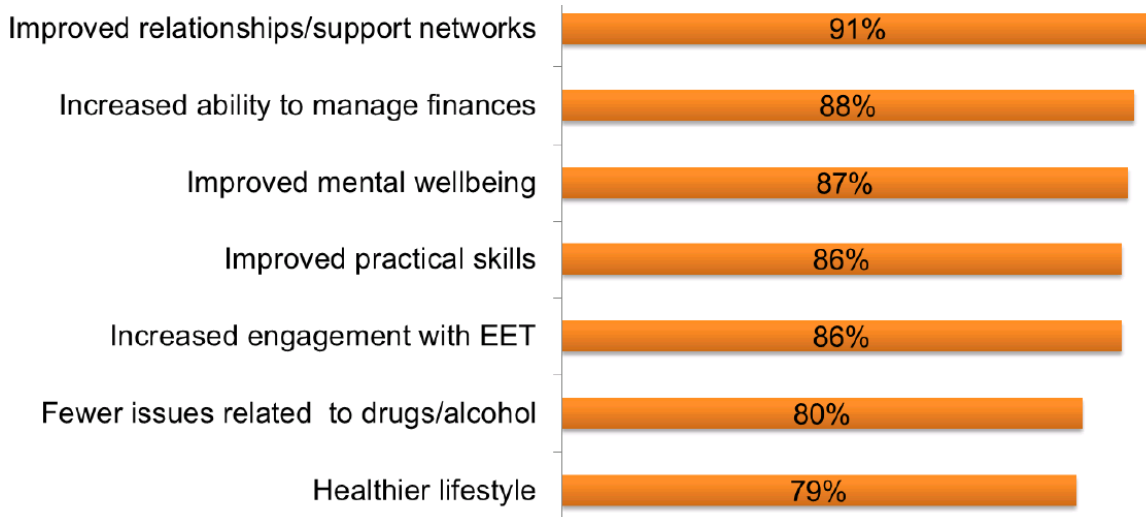
Not sure

18. What evidence already exists to support these models? Please include as much detail as possible, for example target group, any outcomes achieved, scale, budget, how it was commissioned and if it is a programme that is still being used.

Our experience as a supported accommodation provider and other available evidence suggests that current models of supported accommodation are meeting the needs of some, but not all homeless people.

Chart One presents outcomes data collected from clients leaving Depaul supported accommodation services commissioned by local authorities across England in 2016. It is drawn from the records of 317 clients; it shows the proportion of clients with a recognised need in each area experiencing positive change.

Chart One:



Depaul's supported accommodation projects only house young people. This because our experience has shown us that it is safer for young people not to live in supported accommodation with older people. We also work to provide supported accommodation projects that are relatively small. The majority of Depaul Work is carried out in small (4-14) bed hostels, which we believe has a positive impact. We know that young people in larger hostels for all age groups may be at an increased risk of harm.¹

Considerable additional evidence exists showing the outcomes that are achieved by current models of supported accommodation. Most of this is held by local authorities, which commission supported accommodation and require providers to report regularly on outcomes. There is, however, a lack of recent national level data. The Centre for Housing Research (CHR)² at the University of St Andrews was funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to collect data on Supporting People supported housing services until 2010/11. National datasets showing the outcomes achieved by short and long term supported housing during this period are available.³

In 2008 DCLG published research showing the effectiveness of different types of supported accommodation for homeless young people, based on CHR data.⁴ The findings show that Supported Lodgings achieved stronger outcomes than other types of supported

¹ Depaul (2016) Danger Zones and Stepping Stones <https://uk.depaulcharity.org/danger-zones-and-stepping-stones-report>

² <http://ggsrv-cold.st-andrews.ac.uk/chr/>

³ <http://www.adls.ac.uk/local-authorities/supporting-peoples-outcomes-dataset-for-short-term-services/?detail>

⁴ DCLG (2016) Supported lodgings as a housing option for young people <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-lodgings-as-a-housing-option-for-young-people> (Annexe C)

accommodation for this age group. A more recent review of youth homelessness in the UK also found that the supported lodgings model was promising.⁵

19. To what extent do other models of housing and support (e.g. floating support in an independent tenancy or Housing First) meet the needs of homeless people, including those who have complex and multiple needs? What evidence already exists to support these models? Please include as much detail as possible, for example target group, any outcomes achieved, scale, budget, how it was commissioned and if it is a programme that is still being used.

There is extensive international evidence to show the effectiveness of Housing First, much of which is listed at the end of a presentation by Professor Sarah Johnsen from Heriot-Watt University.⁶ Housing First is consistently found to benefit a high proportion of people in cohorts with multiple and complex needs.

Research around the effectiveness of Housing First for young people is limited. The evidence that does exist shows it to be effective alongside other approaches, and that in order to be effective it *'must be built upon our understanding of the developmental, social and legal needs of young persons.'*⁷

Depaul's Your Chance programme shares some characteristics with Housing First. The programme delivers floating support to over 200 young people with extremely high levels of need in Manchester, Rochdale, Oldham and the London Borough of Greenwich. The young people have often been excluded from supported and mainstream social housing. Over 80 per cent have had issues with substance misuse, mental health or offending behaviour and 30 per cent have had some contact with the care system. One of the young people who has participated in the programme talked about how it has benefited him in a video interview.⁸

Your Chance is a payment by results social impact bond (SIB) programme with investment from Bridges Fund Management and payment from DCLG's Fair Chance Fund when results are achieved. It will run for two years, with five months left it had achieved impressive outcomes for a high proportion of young people as shown by Chart 2 below. Depaul is happy to provide more information about this programme.

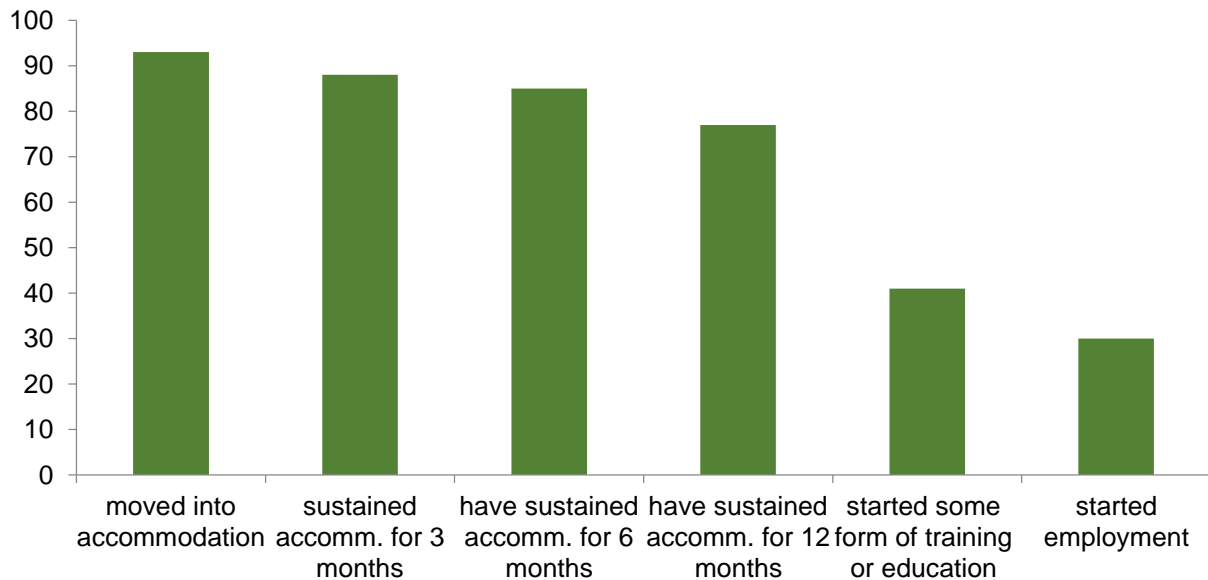
⁵ Watts, E. E., Johnsen, S., & Sosenko, F. (2015). Youth Homelessness in the UK: A Review for The OVO Foundation. Edinburgh: Heriot-Watt University.

⁶ <http://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Evidence%20base%20-%20Sarah%20Johnson%20-%20London.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.feantsa.org/download/think-piece-1-48148659335156272298.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3zCuhp7o5s&feature=youtu.be>

Chart Two:



Supported Lodgings (see answer to question 18) can also be effective for young people with both high and low support needs.

The service models we mention in this answer are dispersed, non-congregate models. Depaul's experience as a provider has shown us that these types of services are often preferable to larger scale accommodation projects, in which relatively high numbers of young people with a range of issues live in close proximity to one another in the same building.

Depaul is hoping to work with leading academics to help produce robust comparative research showing the effectiveness of different types of supported accommodation for young people.

Rough sleeping

22. What needs to happen to ensure that emergency accommodation is available for people at immediate risk of sleeping rough? Please include as much detail as possible.

Emergency hosting schemes provide emergency accommodation for people who are at immediate risk of sleeping rough. They work by linking volunteer hosts, who are willing to give up a spare room for a few nights, with people who urgently require a safe place to stay

Depaul's Nightstop team provides quality assurance, operational support and training to a

wide range of local organisations delivering local emergency hosting services. The team ensures that local Nightstops are offering safe and high quality emergency hosting, for example through making sure that appropriate vetting procedures are in place. All Nightstops currently deliver emergency hosting for young people, some also deliver it for people of all ages.

In 2016 Nightstop provided 1,390 people with a safe place to sleep. Currently 45 per cent of local authority areas in the UK are covered by Nightstop, Depaul is aware of very few areas that do not have a Nightstop but do have another emergency hosting scheme.

Central government could help increase the amount of emergency accommodation available by making seed-funding available for local authorities to use to set up quality assured emergency hosting schemes with local partners.

Depaul has worked with Deloitte to analyse a range of data sets to assess the need for emergency hosting schemes in all local authority areas in England and Wales. The analysis shows that there are number of areas with a very high level of need that do not have a Nightstop service.

23. What are the best models for delivering support to people sleeping rough, including those who have complex and multiple needs (e.g. outreach work/ models of support that coordinate support packages)? What evidence already exists to support these models? Please include as much detail as possible for example target group, any outcomes achieved, scale, budget, how it was commissioned and if it is a programme that is still being used.

Rough sleeping has many causes and there are many cohorts within rough sleeping populations with differing needs. Ending rough sleeping requires multiple solutions, all of which require data and services that are focused on achieving sustained outcomes for people away from the streets.

Below we set out what our experience has shown us to be key features of approaches to tackling rough sleeping. They are largely drawn from efforts made to tackle rough sleeping in London, which has seen year-on-year reductions in the number of people sleeping rough in four of the last five quarters.⁹

Excellent cohort data to identify individuals and gaps in services – Data and analysis is needed to identify who is sleeping on the street, for how long and what has/has not worked for each individual in the past. This cohort data should also identify where current service provision is failing and what additional services are needed – these may include substance use services, mental health support, Housing First, supported accommodation, care funding and reconnection services.

An assertive outreach approach focussed on individual outcomes – A targeted plan

⁹ See the Greater London Authority's CHAIN reports for more information

should be devised for people who repeatedly sleep out. Each plan should be agreed through multi-agency task and target meetings and could include a 'single-service offer' where appropriate.

Progress to be monitored monthly and plans for addressing any variance against targets to be put into place – Ambitious targets for reducing rough sleeping should be built into the period covered by the plan. Establishing a baseline, monitoring and addressing variance against targets will require excellent data and analysis as described above

Cross-local authority provision and reciprocal agreements to ensure that there is no postcode lottery for accessing support – Different areas should work together broker agreements across local authority boundaries to share resources, for example supported accommodation.

24. How should we resolve rough sleeping for people who have limited or no access to public funds due to their immigration status? What evidence already exists to support these interventions? Please include as much detail as possible, for example target group, any outcomes achieved, scale, budget, how it was commissioned and if it is a programme that is still being used.

Unlike supported accommodation, Nightstop services do not rely on housing benefit and do not require people using the service to make a financial contribution through service charges. Nightstop services are therefore open to people who do not have access to public funds. It is important to note that Nightstop provides short term accommodation while a more permanent solution is found - Nightstop does not provide a long term housing solution.

Housing Options and other homelessness services

29. Are there examples of interventions that local authority housing and homelessness teams could be providing or commissioning to help prevent someone from becoming homeless (e.g. mediation, tenancy support work)? What evidence already exists to support these interventions? Please include as much detail as possible, for example target group, any outcomes achieved, scale, budget, how it was commissioned and if it is a programme that is still being used.

Nightstop can prevent people from becoming homeless and can be provided or commissioned by local authorities. More information about Nightstop is given elsewhere in this submission.

Nightstop is more effective at preventing homelessness when it is provided alongside services that help find longer term solutions. Family mediation helps young people to

resolve issues with their parents that can lead to them becoming homeless. It can support young people to remain in the family home and prevent them from sleeping rough. It can also help young people who are homeless to rebuild relationships with their parents.

In one area a Depaul family mediation service prevented 62 young people becoming homeless over the course of a year, leading to an independently estimated average saving of £9,493 per young person.¹⁰ Despite these potential benefits, few areas are covered by a family mediation service.

Education

45. What role should the education system play in helping prevent homelessness for young people?

The 2015 report 'Youth Homelessness in the UK' examines the evidence around school based interventions that aim to prevent homelessness.¹¹ These interventions educate young people about homelessness in its different forms and what to do if they need housing support.

The report found widespread support for these types of interventions among homelessness professionals, and references a Homeless Link report that states they are available in most local authority areas. Depaul provides these interventions in schools and colleges.

The report also notes that the nature of these services makes them difficult to evaluate; this has contributed a limited evidence base around their effectiveness. It concludes with a perspective that supports the targeting of school based interventions at particular schools, alongside an increased focus on other means of targeted early intervention.

Teachers are also well placed to spot young people who may be experiencing housing issues and can signpost young people who need them to services. Nightstop, for example, often receives referrals from teachers working in schools and colleges.

61. What more could be done to ensure that Universal Credit functions to provide a safety net for homeless people? Are there any examples of where this already works well? Please include as much detail as possible, for example target group, any outcomes achieved, scale, budget, how it was commissioned and if it is a programme that is still being used.

¹⁰ Insley, E., Insley Consulting and Depaul (2011) Homelessness prevention: Can we afford not to? <http://www.insleyconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Homelessness-Prevention-final.pdf>

¹¹ Watts, E. E., Johnsen, S., & Sosenko, F. (2015). Youth Homelessness in the UK: A Review for The OVO Foundation. Edinburgh: Heriot-Watt University.

The continuing roll-out of Universal Credit could help more young people to move into and remain in work. A problem with the current design of the benefit, however, is resulting in young people who are homeless or at risk having to wait at least six weeks for their first payment. During this time they often cannot pay rent, have to rely on food banks and may get into debt that they struggle to pay off.¹²

The delay before the first payment is linked to an expectation that people will save enough while working to see them through a period of unemployment with no other income. Young people who become homeless, however, rarely have any savings to fall back on. Many have not worked or have not earned enough to build up savings.

The Government should take urgent action to address this problem. Universal Credit should be modified to reduce the length of time that it takes for people who are homeless or at risk to receive their first payment. People who are homeless or at risk should be added to the list of groups who are exempted from the seven day waiting period. Increasing the amount of financial support available to people during their assessment period, while ensuring they do not get into excessive debt to the Department of Work and Pensions, could also help.

¹² Depaul (2017) Depaul UK Submission to Work and Pensions Select Committee Inquiry into Universal Credit <https://uk.depaulcharity.org/depaul-makes-universal-credit-submission>