

HELP THROUGH CRISIS LEARNING, EVALUATION & SUPPORT TEAM

ANNUAL REPORT

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Creating Connections
Hopkins Van Mil

About the Help through Crisis programme

Help through Crisis is a £33 million National Lottery funded programme set up by the Big Lottery Fund, the largest funder of community activity in the UK. It supports 69 partnerships across England which help people who are experiencing or at risk of hardship crisis to overcome the difficulties they are facing to plan for their futures. The partnerships receiving National Lottery funding through the Help through Crisis programme bring together small voluntary groups and established charities to work together locally. Working together, they offer people advice, advocacy and support which matches their personal circumstances. The aim is to look at the issues people face, and the underlying causes, from their basic needs, to their physical and mental health, to skills and employment. People are supported to draw on their personal experiences to build on their skills and strengths so they are ready to seize the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Help through Crisis projects are working towards four outcomes:

- People who have experienced hardship crisis are better able to improve their circumstances.
- People who are at high risk of experiencing hardship crisis are better able to plan for the future.
- Organisations are better able to support people to effectively tackle hardship through sharing learning and evidence.
- Those experiencing, or who are at high risk of experiencing, hardship crisis, have a stronger, more collective, voice, to better shape a response to their issues.

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Welcome to our end of year report!

The Help through Crisis learning, evaluation and support team is a group of organisations commissioned by the Big Lottery Fund to help build understanding and capture learning from the HtC programme. The team is made up of people from Ipsos MORI, NEF Consulting, Revolving Doors Agency and Hopkins Van Mill. You may have met us at an event, or spoken to one of our relationship managers since May 2017 when we started our work.

This report describes what we've done together since then, and what we'd like to do with you next year.

It is based on your feedback from events, conversations with your relationship managers and the partnership survey – thanks to everyone who completed this in May and June 2018.

We're looking forward to seeing you in Manchester at the National event on 13th September! But we'd love to hear from you before then if you have any thoughts or comments on our work so far, or about our plans for next year. You can get in touch at:

HelpThroughCrisis@ipsos.com

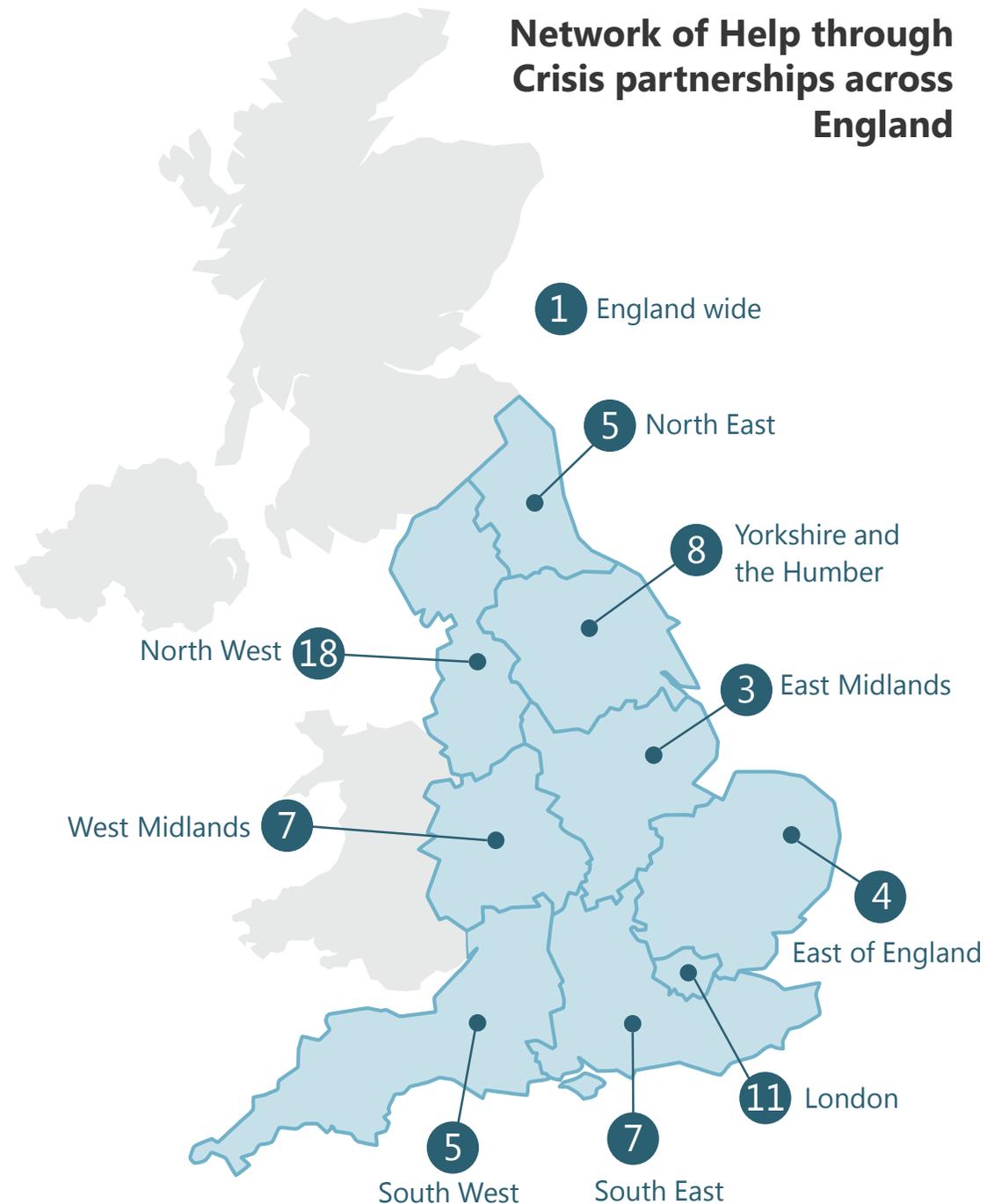
Help through Crisis support team



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Network of Help through Crisis partnerships across England



A list of partnerships in each region is provided in appendix A

THIS YEAR, TOGETHER:

- 91** people attended **regional events** in May/June 2018
- 96** people attended the **launch event** in September 2017
- 96** people attended **regional events** in January 2018
- 100+** calls have been made between **relationship managers** and projects

You said the events...

- Helped you to think about co-production and develop co-production within your organisation (see page 9 for more).
- Helped to facilitate connections between organisations.
- Provided a space for organisations to share and learn from each other, generating new ideas.

Insights from the events are captured throughout the remaining pages of this report.

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“We came back from the events with a lot to think about, especially in relation to how we are capturing and utilising the Beneficiary Voice across both partner organisations.”

Partnership Feedback Survey



Help through Crisis national launch event, September 2017

“It has been very helpful being able to speak to other projects and discuss what they are doing, what's working for them and it's about having a forum to share ideas and good practice.”

Partnership Feedback Survey

THIS YEAR, TOGETHER:

We've also held:

3 Slack discussions

The Slack discussions have been useful for organisations to consider challenges, learn from one another, and offer solutions. The discussions have been very helpful for the LSE team to learn more from you about current topics of interest. Insights from these discussions are summarised on page 7.

And produced:

3 toolkits of resources about evaluation, co-production, and messages and tactics,

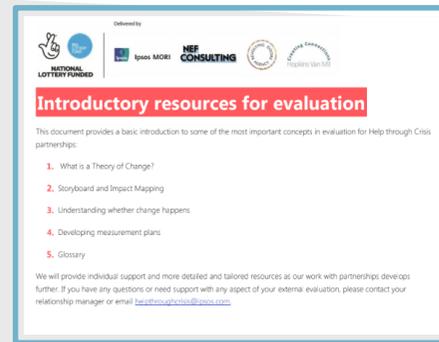
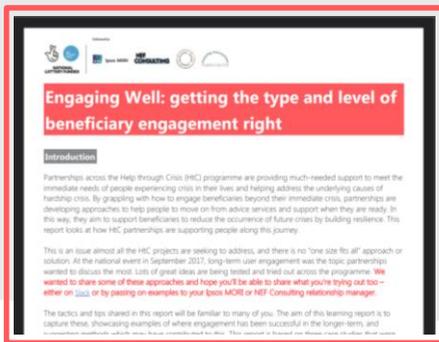
2 learning papers on Engaging Well and Co-production,

1 literature review on hardship crisis.

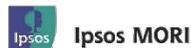
Case studies with three organisations for the Engaging Well report were insightful and allowed us to learn and share knowledge and good practice for encouraging engagement. The organisations shared their innovative and tailored approaches, which we hope have been useful for organisations across the programme. There are more insights from this report on page 8.



"[Written materials are] useful tools to discuss at our regular in house meetings."
Partnership Feedback Survey



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THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, YOU TOLD US ABOUT SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU ARE FACING

Long term engagement with beneficiaries past the initial support or advice offered to address their immediate needs. It can be more difficult to engage beneficiaries in the longer-term to help them build resilience and move on from hardship crisis. This also has implications for evaluation and beneficiary voice activities.

For tips try the Engaging Well learning paper

It can be challenging to set up **monitoring and evaluation approaches** including identifying appropriate tools to measure change, selecting appropriate outcome measures and attributing the impact of a project.

Take a look at the evaluation toolkit or contact your relationship manager

Effective **partnership working** has taken time and effort to get going in the first year, embedding the same ethos and monitoring approaches across all organisations.

See an upcoming learning paper on partnership working

Individuals did not respond well to **formalised beneficiary voice activities** such as meetings, and many have struggled with this aspect of the programme. They found that beneficiaries were difficult to engage after the crisis had been solved and did not want to associate themselves with crisis support.

Get in touch with Andy at Revolving Doors, take a look at the Co-production learning paper, case studies and strategy framework.

You have also:

- **Faced higher levels of need than anticipated** including demand for services and the number of individuals with severe or complex needs. This has led to resourcing challenges for some organisations.
- **Referral rates** have varied, with some projects receiving high levels or inappropriate referrals, while others have struggled to access people eligible for a service.

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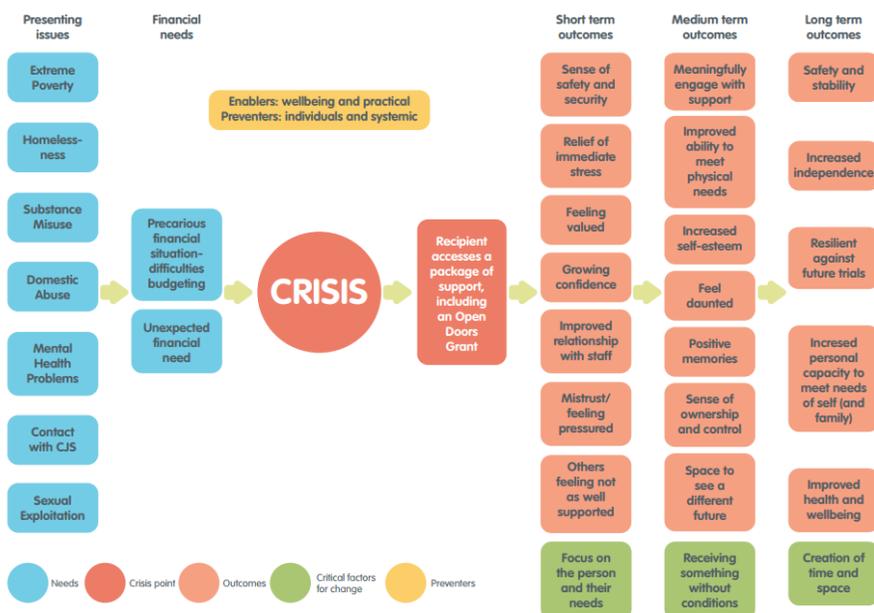
WITH YOU, WE HAVE LEARNED:

Slack evaluation discussion

Partnerships agreed on the need to measure the distance travelled by beneficiaries by asking a set of questions before and after someone has received advice. But they also emphasised how the evaluation should not be intrusive or put service users off.

Participants highlighted the advantages of using open ended questions, interviews and focus groups to capture qualitative feedback, as well as using videos and visuals to tell a story after data has been captured. Several people shared videos they had developed with beneficiaries including an [animation from Oasis Aquila Housing](#) and a video from Help through Crisis Ealing.

Example theory of change



¹ Open Doors Programme Theory of Change, NEF, November 2013

Tips on how to use videos

“The film we made was young people telling their stories of the difference the service had made for them and this involved them talking about the kind of crisis they had been in. They said that because of that it was for 'funders eyes only'.

Before this we've made short films where people talk in more general terms about how accessible and easy to use the service is. This has meant that they've not had to disclose anything about their own personal situation. We've found it a relatively quick way to capture feedback that is more rounded than on paper.”

Robert from Mancroft Advice Project during the Slack evaluation discussion

Evaluation toolkit

The evaluation toolkit is an introduction to evaluation, demonstrating how to get going with evaluation and embed it in organisations.

The toolkit covers:

- An introduction to a theory of change – importance, development, and using the information (including the example on the left).
- Storyboard and impact mapping – uses, key questions, building storyboards, and mapping impact.
- Recognising changes, through observation, reporting, measuring, and analysis.
- Developing measurement plans (How? Whom? When? Where? In what format?)

WITH YOU, WE HAVE LEARNED:

Effective approaches for preventing recurrence of hardship

Building resilience through longer-term engagement by providing tools to prevent recurrence of hardship. This can include providing:

- **Beneficiary training – helping them to develop new skills**

Ealing CVS begins by providing support to aid initial crises, such as financial support planning, then offers bespoke support down the line, such as CV help or website design.

- **1:1 support – helping to build a rapport and trusting relationships**
- **Planning for the future – such as helping with benefits applications**
- **Keeping in touch with beneficiaries – providing a point of contact for organising future meetings and being there if needed**

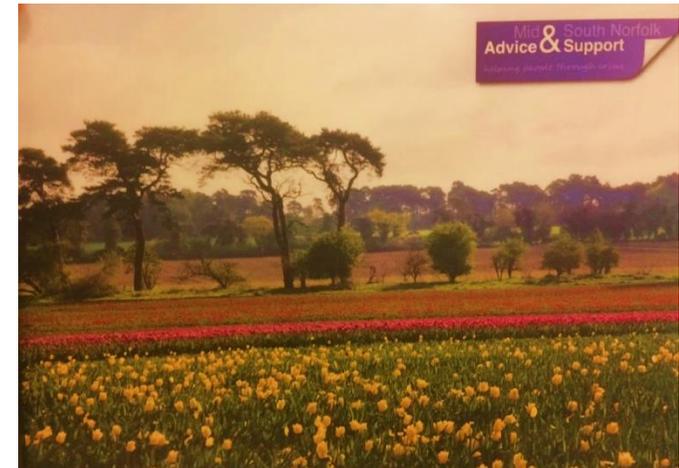
Mid & South Norfolk Advice & Support found that giving clients diaries and sending postcards has been successful in maintaining contact and creating rapport with clients.

- **Co-producing services to enhance support – getting input from previous beneficiaries is important for ensuring the service is effective**



“We have found that linking clients in with other projects at our centre helps with engagement.”

Sara, long term engagement Slack discussion



Postcard used by Advice Champions to send to clients at Mid & South Norfolk Advice & Support

Factors influencing success in addressing hardship

- Providing tailored & flexible support
- Navigating initial conversations and focusing on the client’s strengths
- Involving peers in the support
- Agreeing clear milestones
- Creating trusting and relaxed relationships with clients.

The Engaging Well report explores these approaches in more depth.

WITH YOU, WE HAVE LEARNED:

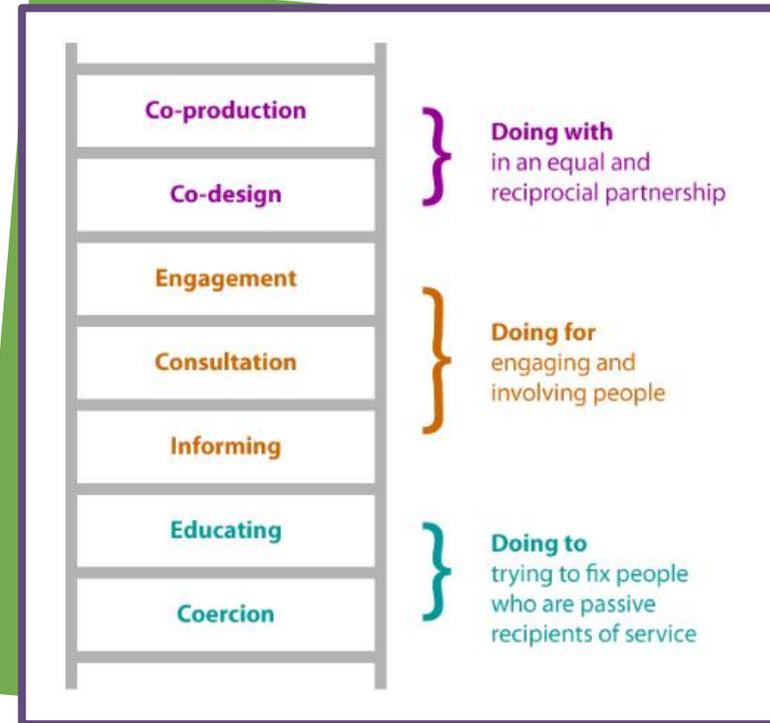
Engaging those with lived experiences to shape the programme

The co-production report explored how to build co-production through:

- A change in mindset from the organisation to empower those with lived experiences
- Taking a collaborative approach
- Involving everyone
- Developing skills of co-producers, such as IT or interviewing skills
- Providing training & support to co-producers
- Considering incentives to drive engagement, such as personal development and gaining new skills

“[Co production] creates services that are more in tune with their community, more innovative, more sustainable.”

January workshop quoted in the co-production report



What's the difference between Co-production and service user involvement?

Co-production differs from service user (SU) involvement because:

- It goes beyond consultation
- It requires involvement from SUs in the design and delivery of the service
- It focuses on more active roles, encompassing volunteering and peer support

WITH YOU, WE HAVE LEARNED:

Deciding on your message

The messages and tactics toolkit described four common approaches to speak to local services:

WHAT

"We know what's really going on with the people you are responsible for"

HOW

"We know how to support people in crisis – and we can prove it"

HOW

"We can help you identify small changes to make big improvements"

WHY

"We can help you do the things you don't have resources to do"

"Gather evidence through monitoring and evaluation, particularly lived experience stories"

"Form a reciprocal relationship where DWP is invited to observe and/ or to attend LA events (if the content is appropriate), working more closely with Job Centre Plus"

Agreeing on your tactics

Key tips for agreeing which tactics to use included:

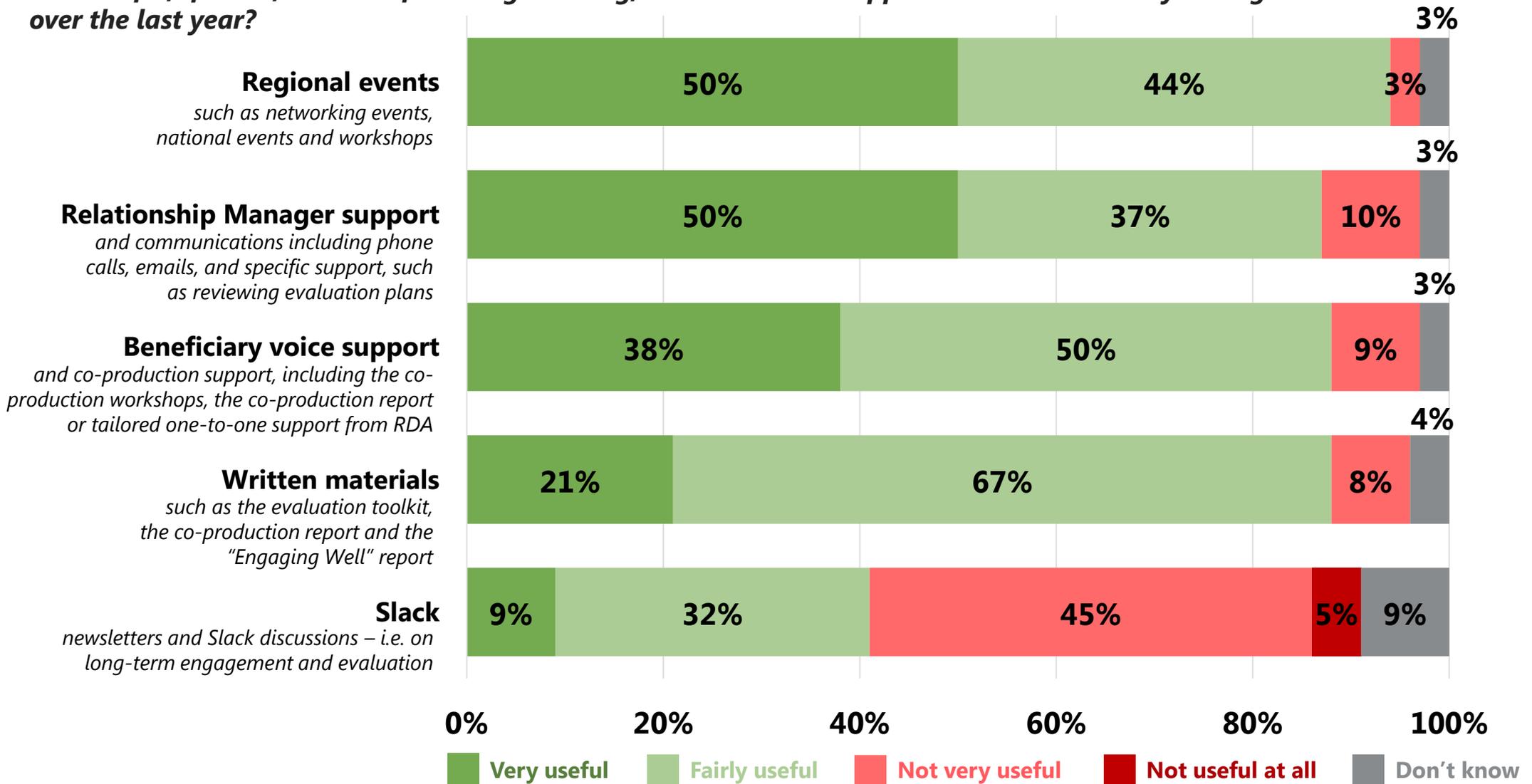
- Forming strong relationships with local organisations, influencers, and referral agencies
- Using evidence to tell a story through evidence of hard outcomes (including social return on investment), case studies and collating data from across the HtC programme
- Adapting communications to the audience by taking a flexible approach to the platform being used, repeating messages and involving beneficiaries.

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YOU HAVE TOLD US THE EVENTS HAVE BEEN ESPECIALLY USEFUL

How useful, if at all, have the following learning, evaluation and support activities been to your organisation over the last year?



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Source: Partnership feedback survey 2018. Base: all (Relationship Manager – 30; regional events – 34; written materials – 24; Slack – 22; Beneficiary voice - 34)

BUT THAT MORE PEOPLE COULD USE SLACK

- The regional events were viewed as the most useful support in 2017-2018 providing opportunities to network and learn from each other.
- Relationship Manager support, the beneficiary voice support and the written materials have also been useful, helping partnerships to create evaluation plans, develop feedback forms and act as a sounding board to discuss ideas.



The results from the feedback survey emphasised the current low-usage of the platform. However, a number of partnerships **acknowledged Slack could be more valuable if more people engaged with it**. Slack can be a really useful tool for **networking, sharing learning, achievements, tips and news** from across the programme, sharing comments in the group channels or directly messaging other partnerships.

Slack is being used to connect partnerships from across the country, so don't be afraid to ask questions and make contact with peer organisations! We will continue holding these discussions in the upcoming year of the programme, and we hope you can get involved!



"[The RM support] changed the way we evaluate our project and been more bold and imaginative as a result; felt more emboldened to be honest and share our learning; revise our budget slightly; involve service users more closely."

Partnership Feedback Survey



"I haven't had the time to use this [Slack] much but appreciate it is there and have linked with other members."

Partnership Feedback Survey

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TO HELP US LEARN AND DEVELOP OUR SUPPORT, WE HAVE:

1. Set up a **National Advisory Group**, made up of experts from charities, advice organisations and universities.
2. And we are working to set up a **Beneficiary Voice network**. In April, we had an initial meeting with three beneficiaries involved in the programme, but we've found it quite difficult to bring people together in larger numbers.

Over the summer, we've been visiting projects to talk to other beneficiaries about their experiences and priorities. We want to know what is **most important to them** to help shape our support and share learning across the programme. This will be fed back to the National Advisory Group in November 2018 and will help shape our activities next year. Others will also be invited to take part.

We're hoping the beneficiary voice network will grow throughout the programme, and will act as a way of influencing local decision makers and funders in the area. We'd also like to get members involved in our evaluation activities and offer training from Revolving Doors.

But we're always open to further ideas so let us know if **the people you work with would like to get involved or you've got ideas for how we can make sure everyone's voices are heard through the programme.**



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LUNCH MEETING:
CREATING A NATIONAL LIVED EXPERIENCE GROUP

Help Through Crisis is a national programme funded by the Big Lottery Fund. It involves 59 partnerships across England, including the organisation providing support to you. Our role is to share learning with organisations working to help people across the country.

We want YOU to help us achieve this!

This lunch meeting will be a chance to explore:

- Your experience of using services
- The role of the group
- How we could support you to be involved
- What you would like to get out of it

It will be relaxed and informal chat over lunch with some of the organisations involved: The Big Lottery Fund, Ipsos Mori and Revolving Doors.

Please contact Andy Williams at andy.williams@revolving-doors.org.uk to book a place

FRIDAY 27TH APRIL 12-2PM
WATERLOO ACTION CENTRE
14 BAYLIS RD, LAMBETH, LONDON SE1 7AA
(TRAVEL EXPENSES CAN BE REIMBURSED)

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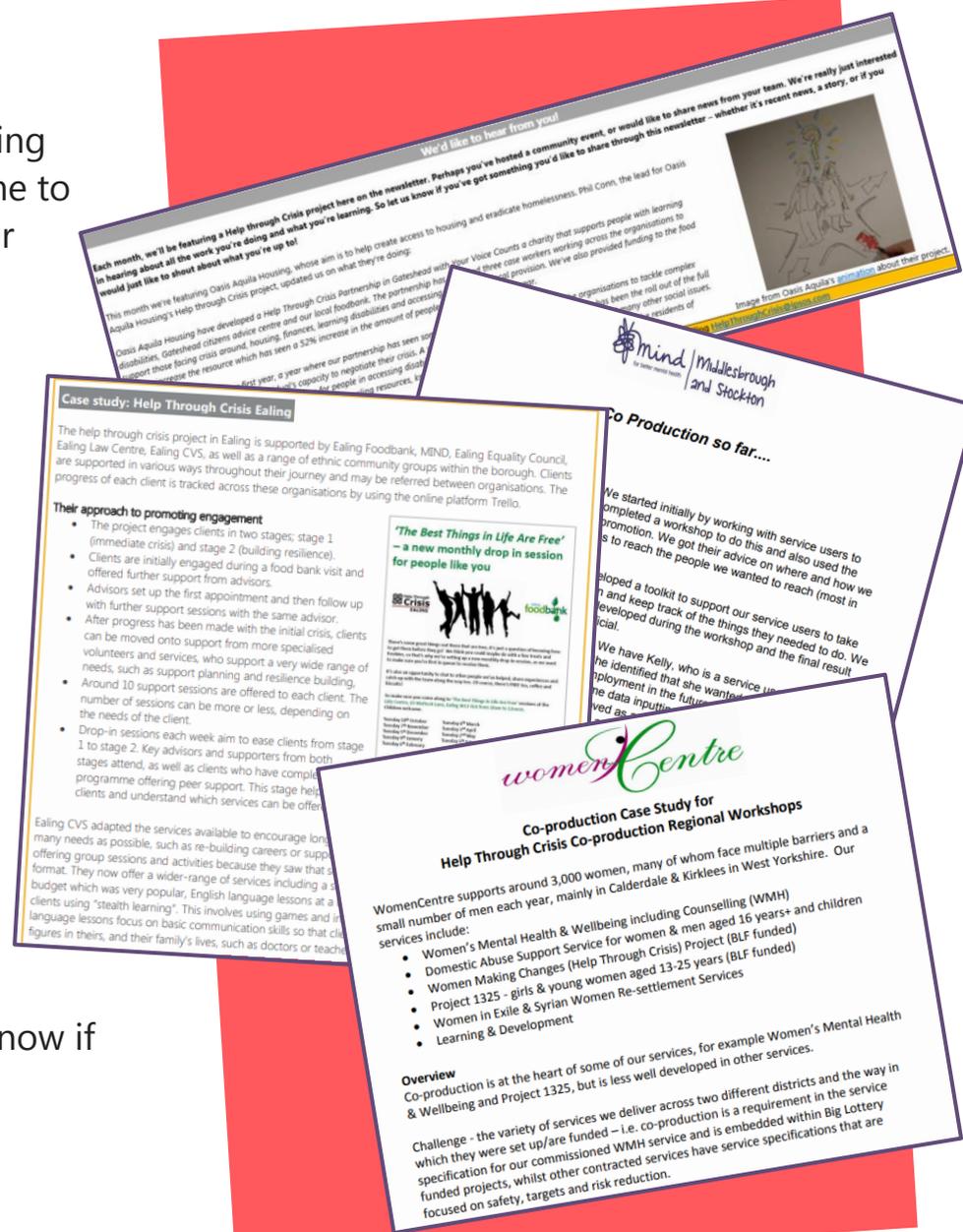
Flyer for the user-led steering group meeting in April 2018

THANK YOU!

Thank you to **everyone** who has taken part in our networking, learning and sharing activities. And especially those who've given up their time to share what they've learned in more detail, to form case studies in our reports:

- Ashford Place (North West London)
- Breakthrough, led by Citizens Advice Hull and East Riding
- Changes - Bringing Balance Back project, SHAP, Liverpool
- Help Through Crisis Ealing
- Helping People through Crisis, Mid & South Norfolk Advice & Support, Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind
- Oasis Aquila Housing
- Rooted - Coventry Citizens Advice with Valley House
- Women's Centre (Halifax)
- Wyre Forest Night Stop

We're always keen to come and hear what you are doing, so let us know if you'd like to feature as a case study in the future!



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These materials can be found on the **#resources-library** on Slack.

OUR FUTURE PLANS

We know there have been lots of changes over the last year of the Help through Crisis programme, as the Big Lottery Fund moves towards regional working. We've also been thinking about how we can best support you next year and how we can work together to learn, share ideas, and tell others about the amazing work you are doing. This means we are going to make some changes to the way we work.

- 1.** We want to come and visit you and learn more about what you are doing over the next few years. So we are planning **twenty case study visits** this year and we'd like to visit every project over the remaining years of the programme. On these visits, we'd like to:
 - Learn more about what you are doing
 - Speak to your partners and beneficiaries
 - Provide any bespoke support you may need e.g. facilitating a meeting, providing evaluation advice.
- 2.** This means we won't be providing support through your relationship manager anymore. Instead, we will have different **people leading on different themes of support**. You can contact these leads via the email addresses later in this report or get in touch with any member of the team and we'll make sure you get to the right person.
- 3.** We will still be holding a national event each year, along with regional events and sharing written resources. But we'd love to **work with you to design and develop** our support. Let us know if you would like to get involved or have suggestions for resources that would be useful to you.



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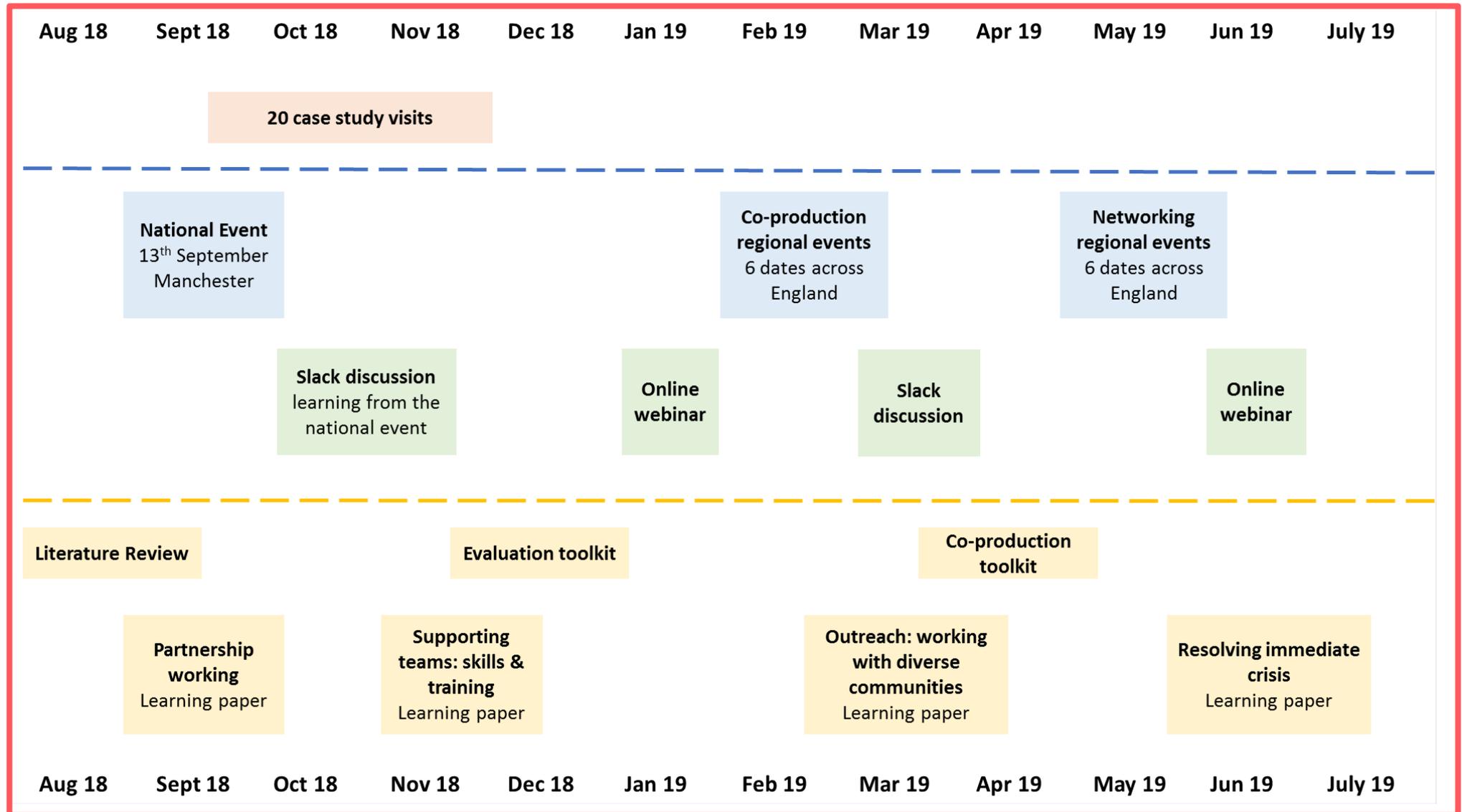
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NEXT YEAR WE ARE PLANNING:

The calendar below summarises our plans for visits, events and written resources over the next year. You'll see we've made some suggestions for the areas we'd like to focus on, but let us know if you have other ideas for discussions or resources you'd like to have for your Help through Crisis project: HelpThroughCrisis@ipsos.com



APPENDIX A: NETWORK OF HELP THROUGH CRISIS PARTNERSHIPS

North West

- Carlisle Eden Mind - *Connect*
- KeyRing- *The Ancora Project*
- Lancashire west - *People in Crisis*
- Manchester Mind - *Happy 2 Help*
- Mencap Liverpool - *Reaching Out & Moving On (#WhatHelpedMe)*
- Middleton Day Centre - *The Enhance Project*
- Mind in Furness - *Positive Changes for Positive Lives, a Barrow Advice Hub project*
- Citizens Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn - *Rossendale Crisis Support*
- Salford CAB - *Salford Crisis Support*
- Shap Ltd - *Bringing Balance Back project*
- The Bond Board - *Homeless Advice and Resilience*
- The Brick - *Queens Hall Action on Poverty - Inspire to Attain*
- Urban Outreach Bolton - *Urban Outreach Living Well*
- Wai Yin Society - *Way Out of Crisis*
- Women Centre - *Women Making Changes*

North West cont.

- The Bond Board - *Door to door furniture recycling*
- The Brick - *ReBUILDing Lives*
- The Larder - *Community Food Hub*

North East

- Fiscus North - *Sunderland ACES - SAFE project*
- Middlesbrough & Stockton Mind - *Firm Foundations*
- North East Law Centre - *Up a Height - support for families in crisis*
- Oasis Aquila Housing - *Resolving Crisis in Gateshead*
- Stockton District AIS - *Give us a break*

Yorkshire and the Humber

- Asylum Support Appeals Project - *Assisting Asylum Seekers in Crisis in Yorkshire and Humberside*
- Better Leeds Communities - *Leeds Crisis Support Service and Community Exchange*

Yorkshire and the Humber cont.

- Bevan Healthcare CIC - *New Futures, Bradford*
- Gipton Supported Independent Living - *Open Doors (Gipton and Harehills)*
- Hull and East Riding CAB - *The Breakthrough Project*
- Ravenscliffe Community Association - *Free from Crisis*
- Ravenscliffe Community Association - *Combat waste, create taste*
- The Freedom Centre - *Freedom Fresh Food*

West Midlands

- Birmingham MIND - *WELLcome Home: Hospital Discharge Navigator Service*
- Birmingham Rathbone - *Rebuild my Life (Crisis Support)*
- Coventry CAB - *ROOTED*
- Citizens Advice South Warwickshire - *Reach Out and Help*
- Telford & Wrekin CAB - *Helping hands out of Hardship*
- Wyre Forest Nightstop – *Axis*
- Feeding Britain - *Community Food Hubs*

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APPENDIX A: NETWORK OF HELP THROUGH CRISIS PARTNERSHIPS

East Midlands

- Direct Help & Advice Ltd- *Derbyshire Bi-lingual Crisis Buddy Service*
- Nottingham Womens Centre - *EVOLVE*
- Re:store Northampton - *The Hub*

South West

- Access Dorset - *Help Through Crisis Dorset*
- Avon and Bristol Law Centre - *Just Ask*
- Bevan Healthcare CIC - *New Futures, Bradford*
- Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold Districts Ltd - *Help through Crisis Stroud and Cotswold Districts*
- The Matthew Tree project - *Building lives in Bristol*
- The Matthew Tree - Bristol Food Hub - *Rebuilding Lives Food Hub*

South East

- Citizens Advice in North & North West Kent - *Preventing Actual and Threatened Homelessness*
- Isle of Wight CAB - *Isle help You Through Crisis*

South East

- No Limits - *Overcoming the Odds -help young adults in hardship crisis*
- Oxford CAB - *Oxford Stronger Together*
- Strood Community Projects - *Medway REAP - Restoration, Empowerment, Action and Purpose*
- The You Trust - *Circles of Support*
- MindOut LGBTQ - *LGBTQ Hardship Advocacy Project*

East of England

- Cambridge CAB - *The Cambridge Crisis Network (CCN)*
- Citizens Advice Luton - *Luton Crisis Advice and Support Project*
- Mid & South Norfolk Advice & Support – *Citizens Advice*
- Mancroft Advice Project - *Norwich Young Person's Advice Partnership - From Crisis to Opportunity*

London

- Ashford Place - *Independent Lifestyles*
- Community Links Trust - *Tackling hardship in Newham through one-to-one support*
- Ealing CVS - *Ealing Crisis Navigator project*
- East End CAB - *East End Crisis, Empowerment & change project*
- Hackney Migrants Centre - *Moving out of hardship:supporting vulnerbale migrants in London*
- Haringey CAB - *Crutch in a Crisis*
- Praxis - *Street legal*
- South West London Law Centres - *Stepping Stones to Stability:Collaboration across SW London*
- Wandsworth CAB - *Coummunity Centred Help Through Hardship Crisis in Wandsworth*
- Ashford Place - *Independent Lifestyles Weekend Project*
- Little Village - *Building Our Village*

England wide

- The Hubhub Foundation - *Community Fridge Network*

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Please get in touch!



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