



IMPACT REPORT
HOUSING FIRST
APRIL 2021



OUR MISSION

Stonepillow support and empower homeless and vulnerable people to achieve sustainable independence and wellbeing.

OUR VISION

Working in collaboration with our clients, communities and stakeholders, we will end rough sleeping and support people from homelessness to home.

We will do this by:

- Providing wraparound services which put the client at the heart of what we do.
- Providing safe, secure, high-quality accommodation and support.
- Strengthening the client pathway by understanding the gaps in provision and proactively responding to them.
- Enabling clients to achieve their journey to recovery, wellbeing and sustainable independence.

EVERYONE HAS A RIGHT TO A HOME

Stonepillow provide support 365 days a year across Chichester and Arun, offering a complete recovery journey focusing on improving health and wellbeing, and sustaining independent living. We do this by working in partnership with other agencies across West Sussex to provide the following essential support for homeless and vulnerable people:

- Safe, secure, high-quality accommodation
- Support with mental health, recovery and wellbeing
- Fresh food and essential provisions
- Keeping them safe and well during the COVID-19 pandemic

"A year ago I didn't have any hope for the future, now I have a lot of hope for the future"



Collaborative working with clients & communities has been essential



Key staff were trained to implement the Housing First Model



Covid-19 has impacted heavily on both the demand for temporary housing and the potential supply. As always, the pressures are great.

When the virus hit, the immediate message was that everyone should 'stay at home'. This raised two distinct issues: not everyone had a home to stay in and others were at risk of losing theirs.

'EVERYONE IN' POLICY

In light of 'this public health emergency' the biggest immediate initiative, that became known as the 'Everyone In' policy, looked to bring all those sleeping rough or in shared sleeping facilities such as shelters, into safe accommodation.

Based on an April 2020 snapshot from English local authorities, the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) reported that 90% of individuals identified by local authorities as 'rough sleepers' or in 'shared sleeping sites'— a total of around 5,400 people had been accommodated. The majority were placed in hotels that were empty because of the pandemic.

In the longer term, it is clear those accommodated under 'Everyone In' need to be re-housed. Coupled with the knowledge that there is also likely to be a significant spike in the numbers of evicted households in need of temporary accommodation, new measures will have to be put in place to avert a secondary crisis.

With this in mind Stonepillow applied for and was awarded a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund to establish and pilot the first Housing First Project across Chichester and Arun districts.

The project was designed to provide support to the most vulnerable and multi-disadvantaged rough sleepers, enabling them to set up a new home for life and engage with the wider range of services they require, integrating into the community and ultimately helping them to build new, sustainable independent lives.

Stonepillow is currently working with over 60 'rough sleepers' throughout the county who are now in emergency accommodation provided by Chichester and Arun district councils.

HOUSING FIRST AN EVIDENCE BASED APPROACH

Stonepillow are committed to a support framework based on the 5 principles of Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE). Within this framework, PIEs aim to bring about behavioural change. These can be small but significant and if not identified and monitored they may be overlooked.

The introducing of a psychological framework helps us to identify the changes that the Housing First worker and client experience and monitor. We have ways to measure, and evidence change. These included existing methods such as the Outcomes Star, and in addition, psychological approaches such as the Wellbeing Recovery Action Plans.

Housing First is an extraordinary and unique approach to these complexities that completely turns the 'traditional approach' on its head.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs clearly states that a fundamental foundation for wellbeing is shelter, people need to feel safe and secure before anything else is possible. Housing First says 'we give the person shelter, in order that they are better equipped to managing the complexities of life.'

Staff feel
more invigorated
&
empowered



15 out of 15
clients remained
engaged with
the project -
100%



One client
reported their
quality of life
was now
20 out of 20



Stonepillow have now delivered the first six months of the Housing First Model. This Impact Report has been commissioned to measure and learn from this unique opportunity to use the challenges of Covid-19 to build robust, sustainable pathways for the most vulnerable clients to access and sustain permanent housing.

EVIDENCE

All 15 clients completed a survey at the beginning of their engagement and 6 months later about how they were feeling and managing their lives with multiple choice options ranging from 'rarely' to 'all of the time'.

The range of the improvements varied, with the biggest improvement score being 12 points and the lowest being 1.

In order to establish a financial perspective to our impact measures (savings to the public purse), we used HACT's guide called Measuring the Social Impact of Community Investment: A Guide to using the Wellbeing Valuation Approach. See more about this approach here - www.hact.org.uk/social-value-publications.

The total financial value of the client's improvement for the Housing First clients was £144,009, an average of £12,001 per client. This score ranged vastly, dependent on the start score and level of reported improvement from the survey discussed above.

Only one client had a £0 financial benefit due to their minimal level of increase and therefore their level of social impact remained the same in relation to their local community. The most significant improvement was £24,059 over this 6 month period.

VALUING CLIENT CHOICE

Our intention was to build on our existing multi-agency approach to provide flexible support for as long as it is needed.

Our ethos is to separate housing support from any other support necessary for individuals to thrive independently in any community.

Our aim is to empower people to seek the change that has often eluded them by continuing to offer a 'no strings attached' approach.

Underpinning our offer is the firm belief that in order to achieve effective, sustainable, behavioural change individuals must be trusted to make the right choices for themselves.

SAFE, SECURE ACCOMMODATION

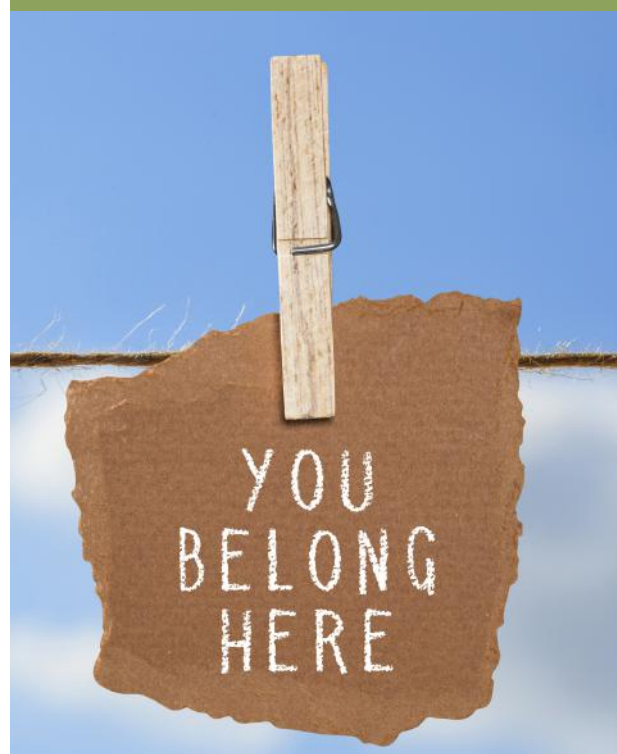
We are now seeking further funding so that we can increase our Housing First offer to support more vulnerable individuals across the West Sussex area.

The impact measures used for this Impact Report were collated using the following methods:

- Client Outcomes Stars
- Case Studies
- Client feedback
- Statutory & Non Statutory Agencies feedback
- Stakeholder feedback
- Sussex Police & Housing First statistics
- Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS)
- Staff and Client interviews and questionnaires
- Quantitative reports from management
- HACT social value bank
- Data from Inform (client record keeping system)

You will hear from our clients how provision of a home has offered them a sense of belonging. How allowing them the autonomy to make any desired changes from a strengths based perspective has enabled them to feel in charge of their own lives again, in some cases, for the first time ever.

Clients have
achieved
sustainable
change



"for the future hopefully
I can carry on
maintaining a plan,
getting back into work
and sorting my health
out. Of course I have the
potential to achieve
these."



What we have
learnt in the first
six months



Having control of their finances, learning new skills, staying engaged with services has also provided hope for the future

You will hear from our support workers how the implementation of flexible, open ended support has empowered and enhanced the relationships with the clients.

Staff also describe feeling more invigorated, energized and confident in their role.

You will see from the report that the implementation of the project has been successful in achieving the principles of a Housing First model.

CONCLUSION

The evidence supports the following outcomes for clients:

- Reduction in Anti-Social behaviour
- Reduction in A & E Presentations
- Reduction in Drug & Alcohol consumption and associated criminal activity
- Reduction in contact with Bluelight Services
- Increased Engagement with Ambulatory Detox Programmes (AAD*)
- Increased Engagement with Opiate Substitute Therapy (OST*)
- Increased Engagement with Primary Healthcare Services
- Increased Engagement with Stonepillow
- Increased client self-esteem and autonomy
- Increased financial and budgeting skills
- Sustained tenancies
- Maximisation of Benefit Entitlements

For staff:

- Enabled staff to feel empowered, that they are making a difference
- Increased staff knowledge and asset mapping of local services
- Increased staff resilience and wellbeing
- Trusting relationships with client
- Increased passion for the work they do
- Increased cohesive team working

What we have learnt:

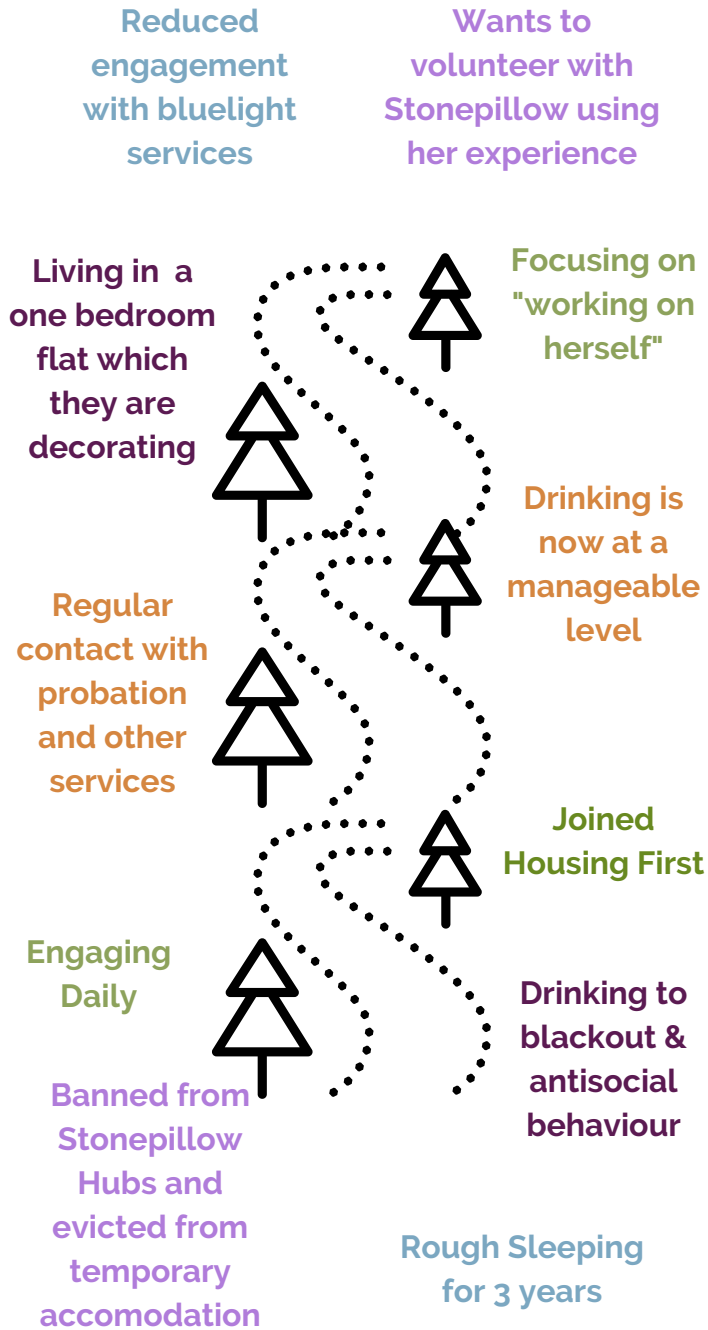
A key learning for us throughout this initial 6 months of Housing First has been huge from a client , partnership and staff perspective. On all fronts it is to be ambitious, brave and bold. It has reinforced the need to never give up on a person who, on face value appears not to be in the right mindset to be housed independently. By providing them with intensive, strength based, trauma informed work practices and resilient support staff the impossible becomes possible. Agreeing shared purpose with all partners, particularly landlords is essential. Using the Service Level Agreements has enabled a clear understanding of shared roles and purpose which has supported delivery. The greatest learning has been to have the right staff involved, to train them well and to ensure they have the right support, supervision and reflective space to manage, assess and develop their professional practice. We have seen some outstanding outcomes. Clients of the Housing First Project have amazed themselves as to what they are capable of achieving and as we see in this report their outcomes have been lifechanging. Stonepillow want to roll out this model of work to offer it to more than the first 15. This is a long term commitment from Stonepillow and this report provides the evidence to support our ambition.

What we have learnt



One of the most important and liberating aspects of this project is 'being able to simply go round, sit on 'their' sofa and have (one of 'their') coffees – in 'their' environment, 'they' are inviting you in. When you have not had a home for so long must feel amazing'. – Housing First Worker

One Person's Account



"I was homeless for 3 and a half years and was in and out of hospital; I never felt secure.....now, I have a secure property and the difference that the Housing First approach has made to my life, means that I'm alot more involved and having my personalised budget has been very important to me as I have been learning to budget".

"I used to call blue light services at least once a week, but now, with being securely housed with the Housing First approach, has meant that I have zero calls to blue light services per week these days.....using my personalised budget to build mybudgeting skills, decorating, cooking, cleaning and being a mum again".

Craig & AE - Housing First Clients

Christmas was lovely, someone moved into a flat in December and refused to decorate or celebrate and within one week of being there they had put up their tree, had lights up around the place, took photos standing next to the tree and made themselves a Christmas Dinner

Kylie Jones - Housing First Worker

To create the team it was important to recruit people with a 'never give up attitude' over their knowledge base. We were able to successfully recruit internally focusing in their resilience and values first. This model is both unique and challenging so support workers needed to have extensive training and model good practise to successfully build the programme. Having a passionate support team we needed to have a manager who would put the Housing First principles first and integrate this team with wider colleagues for support.

Hilary Bartle - CEO



This way of working was completely different from my previous role in a hostel, we are able to see the client go through their whole journey. It was amazing to have the freedom to do more with people like go for coffees, walks and shopping. It was challenge to adjust to this new way of working as it was so different to how we did things before. but with the support of management and the team it worked. Building relationships was key with both the client and other organisations. I feel 100% more invigorated for my role. You can really see how this way of working genuinely works, it takes time and is challenging but completely worth it. One of the key aspects to the success was the personalised budgets, allowing the clients to make their house a real home.

Fiona Wheeler - Housing First Worker

"Could I have imagined this a year ago?, No way, I'd never have believed this was possible; it feels like Housing First has got 'the job' done quicker than anything I have done before. Because I now have secure housing and feel comfortable and safe, I am now engaged with all 4 support services around me. My engagement has gone up more than 100%".

Client Feedback

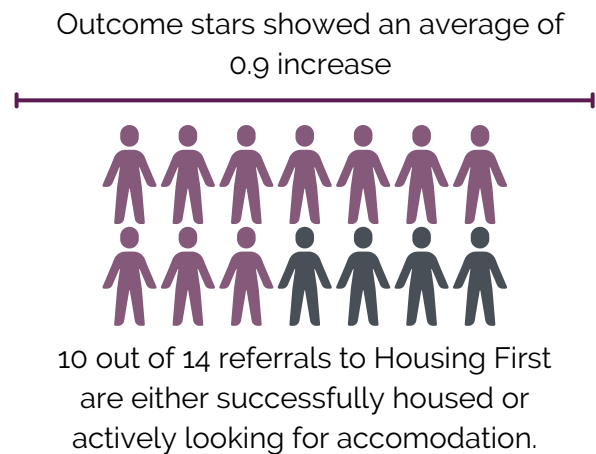
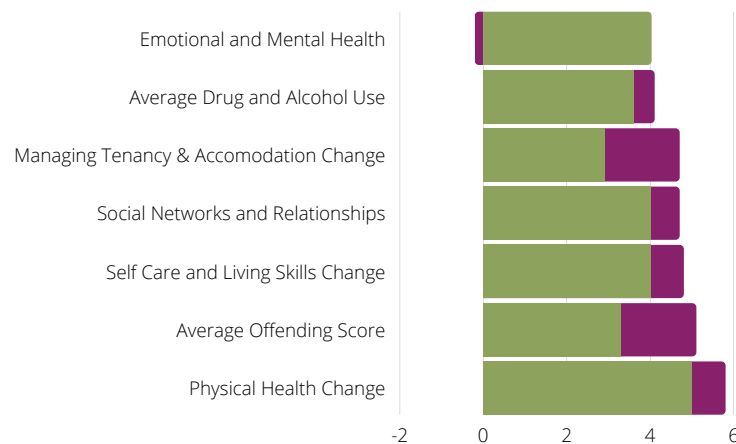
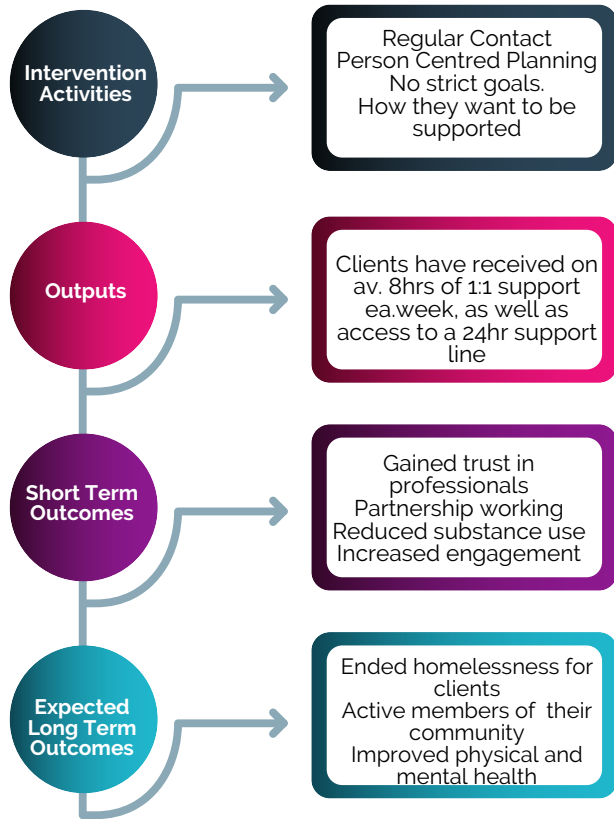
"I have more contacts now for local services than i ever had before, I have learned so much about different services"

Fiona Wheeler

[Click here for the full stories](#)

Before Housing First I was sleeping in a tent on the streets. The regular contact helps my mood a lot, I have depression and it cheers me up. The personalised budget is really important, without it I wouldn't have anything, I can't even afford to eat on a daily basis. My quality of life is 20 out of 20 since engaging with the project. I have learned skills like cooking, cleaning and not hoarding things I pick up off the street. The biggest challenge was stopping associations with other people still on the street. My engagement with other services has definitely increased, before I was just sitting on the street doing my own thing, now I engage with 4. One year ago I didn't have any hopes for the future and now I have loads and the ability to achieve them. Without Housing First I will probably become homeless again.

Wayne - Client



90% on average

Engaged clients have increased engagement with Mental Health services

100% Substance Misuse

Active clients are now engaged with local drug & alcohol services, with 33% on OST*

Blue Light Services

Blue Light Services report a reduction in anti social behaviour call outs to the 6 entrenched rough sleepers.

50% Alcohol Detox

Two out of the four alcohol dependent clients are currently engaged with AAD*



Impact Report Emergency Covid -19 National Lottery Funding 'Housing First Model'

This funding was obtained to support the most vulnerable and complex rough sleepers in West Sussex.

During the Covid-19 restrictions these individuals were provided emergency accommodation. The intention of this grant was to provide a realistic exit pathway for this community to prevent them returning to the streets.

The concept of the funding was 'Housing First' and to remove the restrictions involved in traditional homeless support models by separating support and tenancy, with the only requirement being to have a home and commit to paying rent.

This ethos being that housing is a basic human right offered to clients without terms, conditions or threats.

This is achieved through building relationships with landlords and police based on tolerance and flexibility, alongside intensive holistic support work for 1-2 years. Although there are no restrictions of their behaviour there is still emphasis on meaningful use of time.

The project intended to provide a space for people to rebuild their lives with an overall reduction to criminality, demand on bluelight services and overall improvement in health.



The data has shown that 74% of those who have engaged with the project have improved their overall health & wellbeing. We have seen a reduction in contact with blue-light services. Staff have been proactive in maintaining daily contact with clients and this has helped build trusting relationships, increasing client self-esteem and autonomy.



10 out of 10 active clients are utilising their personalised budgets to decorate their homes or to gather items ready for their move