Qualitative review of the RSI programme 2020 – 2025

for West Midlands Combined Authority

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Contents

WMCA Homelessness Taskforce

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Introduction

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Homelessness Taskforce was established in 2017. The Taskforce set itself the ambitious goal of designing out homelessness in all its forms across the region. Recognising that homelessness is a complex, multifaceted issue that transcends simple solutions, the Taskforce dedicated itself to identifying and addressing systemic gaps in policies, procedures, structures, and relationships that either contribute to or fail to prevent homelessness. Although homelessness is not a devolved responsibility to the WMCA, nor is it specifically funded, the Taskforce has collaborated with Local Authorities, other public sector agencies, not-for-profit organisations, and the business community in an effort to create a more cohesive and effective regional response to homelessness.

A key initiative of the Taskforce has been the WMCA Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Programme, launched in April 2020 and running through to March 2025. This programme, funded by grants totalling c. £2.7 million from the then Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC[1]), represents a strategic investment aimed at reducing rough sleeping across the West Midlands. The RSI Programme has to date been instrumental in supporting thousands of individuals who were either experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping, through a range of innovative projects across the WMCA region. These projects include the development of a women-specific pathway in Birmingham, the implementation of Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) training, support for an on-line database of services, employment support, a spot purchase fund, a tenancy sustainment service, a regional training programme, as well as infrastructure at the WMCA to support funded organisations and administer the programme.

The following five priorities were identified in consultation with key stakeholders:[2]

Preventing and tackling rough sleeping at the earliest opportunity, e.g., investment in a spot purchase fund to enable tailored, flexible and personal interventions.

Preventing recurring rough sleeping, e.g., through integrated prevention and investment in testing how accommodation can be sustained through engagement with community activities and the creation of new supportive social networks.

Access to good employment, e.g., investment to test innovation in supporting individuals to access good quality employment that acts as both a protective factor in preventing homelessness, repeat homelessness and a sustainable route out of homelessness, ensuring rough sleeping is a brief and non-recurring experience.

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[1] Now the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG).
[2] For more information see: Rough Sleeping Initiative 2023 / 2024: Key achievements and learning report (July 2024)

Information, advice and guidance, e.g., promotion of an alternative giving scheme, and investment to develop eight microsites of the Street Support Network microsites which help people and practitioners to identify suitable opportunities for support, volunteering, and giving.

Supporting the development of frontline staff to enhance knowledge and skills, e.g., via a regional training offer for people working in homelessness and housing-related organisations.

As the programme enters its final year, the WMCA has initiated a comprehensive qualitative review to assess the impact and effectiveness of these investments. This review is particularly focused on understanding how the RSI Programme has influenced organisational practices, enhanced the capabilities of service providers, and improved outcomes for those directly impacted by homelessness. The review process involved qualitative data collection, including interviews and surveys with a wide range of stakeholders, from managers and frontline staff to case studies of individuals that have benefited from the programme's services.

The insights gained from this review will be important for evaluating the success of the RSI Programme but also for shaping future homelessness strategies in the West Midlands. The findings will help the Taskforce refine its approach, identify positive practices, and advocate for continued investment in homelessness prevention. Moreover, the review will provide valuable evidence to support future funding bids and lobbying efforts, ensuring that the region continues to make progress towards its goal of eliminating homelessness. This report, therefore, represents a pivotal moment in the WMCA's ongoing efforts to create a more inclusive and supportive community for all its residents.

Participants in qualitative reviews contribute their subjective perceptions and opinions, which may not always align with objective truth, but these perspectives are valuable for understanding complex issues. The essence of qualitative research lies in capturing the richness of stakeholder experience, where participants' views reflect their unique context, emotions, and cultural background (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). These insights, while interpretative, provide meaningful information for communication strategies, continuous improvement, and future action by uncovering diverse viewpoints that might otherwise be overlooked (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Therefore, qualitative data offers a depth of understanding that complements quantitative findings by illuminating the nuances of participant behaviour and thought (Patton, 2015).[3]

Key achievements learning report 2023 – 2024

The RSI programme received £1.49 million from the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government to fund initiatives across three years (2022-2025). The focus was on preventing rough sleeping, sustaining accommodation, and supporting access to employment, with 19 projects across 13 organisations. In 2023/24, the WMCA RSI programme supported more projects and organisations than in the preceding years.

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[3] Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). The SAGE handbook of qualitative research (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). Qualitative research & evaluation methods (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Key achievements included the expansion of tailored support through spot-purchase funding (personal budgets) for individual interventions, social network projects, and employment support programs. The programme directly supported 1,265 individuals, with positive outcomes such as 497 people securing sustainable accommodation and 209 moving off the streets. Social network projects saw 48% of participants sustaining tenancies for at least six months.

Challenges identified include building trust with individuals, language barriers, financial instability, and difficulties in engaging with mental health services. Innovation in supportive social networks and employment initiatives were highlighted as important to longer-term success.

The programme also focused on staff training, delivering 17 courses for over 300 frontline workers, enhancing skills in psychological-informed environments. Cross-regional coordination and learning were key themes, with shared insights helping to drive systemic change and prevent rough sleeping.

Looking ahead, the programme aimed to embed these learnings and ensure sustainability beyond 2025, focusing on innovative, prevention-focused initiatives.

Method

Sixteen semi-structured interviews took place involving twenty individuals from fifteen organisations across the programme. Conversations loosely followed a topic guide organised five key lines of inquiry:

- What's worked well?
- What have been the challenges?
- What has been learned?
- What would you do again?
- Impressions of the added value of the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce involvement

The topic guide can be found at Appendix A – Conversations topic guide on page 67.

Transcripts of interviews were produced and analysed to identify key emerging themes. These are intended to provide qualitative insights into the performance of the programme in relation to the key lines of inquiry.

Figure 1: Types of organisations responding to the survey

🔵 Local Authority	1
🟠 Service provider	0
🟢 Third sector	4
🔴 Private sector	0
🟣 Prefer not to say	1
🟤 Other	1
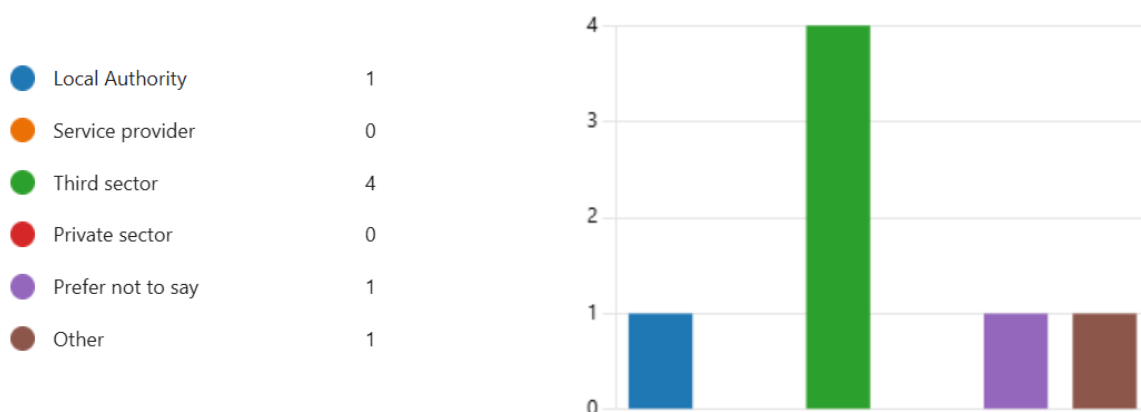
Additionally, a survey following the same topic structure was circulated to stakeholders. The survey received a total of seven responses from organisations as shown in Figure 1. Respondents to the survey did not cover the whole geographical area of the RSI projects as can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Areas covered by the responses to the survey

Area	Count
Birmingham	1
Coventry	0
Dudley	1
Sandwell	0
Solihull	1
Walsall	1
Wolverhampton	2
Prefer not to say	2
Other	0
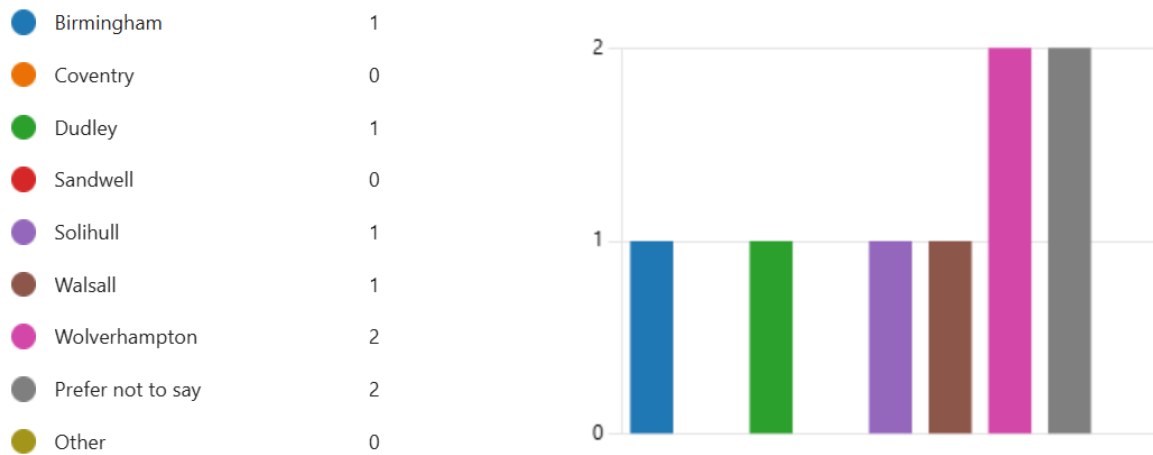
Although relatively few in number, the organisations responding to the survey reported providing a wide range of services as can be seen in Figure 3. Similarly, Figure 4 shows that those organisations work with a wide range of relevant customer groups.

Figure 3: Types of services provided by organisations responding to the survey

Service	Count
Emergency accommodation	3
Supported accommodation	3
Outreach services	5
In reach services	3
Health services	1
Employment support	2
Housing support	3
Mental health services	1
Substance abuse support	1
Personal budgets	2
Welfare benefits rights advice or...	2
Emergency aid (e.g. food, clothi...	3
None of these	0
Prefer not to say	1
Other	1
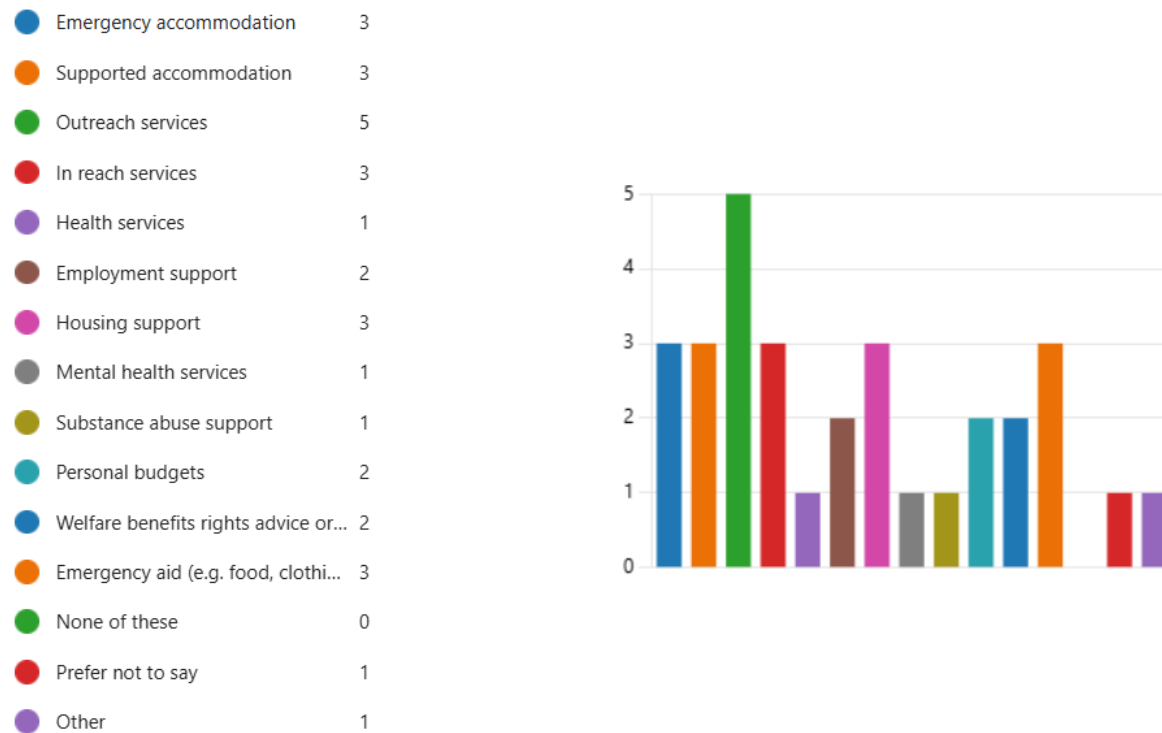
Figure 4: Customer groups of organisations responding to the survey

● Individuals	6	
● Families	3	
● Young people	3	
● Veterans	1	
● People leaving prison or custody	4	
● People leaving hospital	2	
● Young people leaving the care s...	3	
● Minority ethnic communities	3	
● LGBTQ communities	2	
● Asylum seekers	3	
● Refugees	3	
● People with no recourse to publ...	2	
● None of these	0	
● Prefer not to say	1	
● Other	0	
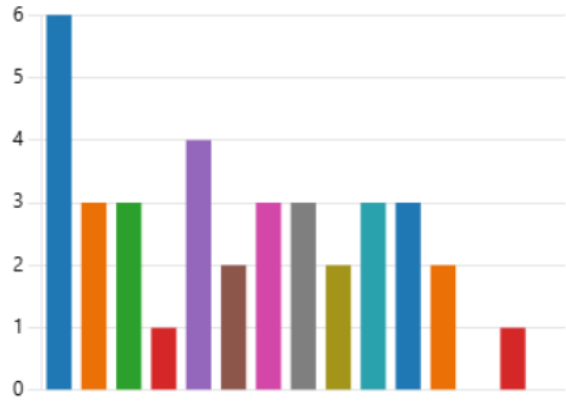
Themes in the analysis were synthesised using transcripts from the semi-structured conversations as well as narrative responses from the survey. Where relevant, themes are also illustrated using charts taken from evaluative survey questions using a semantic scale. The thematic analysis is structured by topics as set out in the conversation guide.

Thematic analysis

What's worked well?

Analysis of conversations with stakeholders of the WMCA's Homelessness Taskforce RSI programme, a dominant theme that emerged was the concept of flexibility as a critical enabler of successful outcomes. Stakeholders consistently highlighted the impact of adaptable funding models, such as personalisation funds, which allowed for immediate and tailored responses to the diverse needs of rough sleepers. The flexibility of RSI funding enabled local authorities, service providers, and third-party organisations to allocate resources effectively across a range of areas – from emergency accommodation to the provision of essential household goods – without being constrained by overly rigid bureaucratic processes.

Interviewees emphasised that this adaptability was instrumental in achieving several positive outcomes, including supporting individuals' transitions into stable housing, providing sustained in-work support, and supporting positive changes in mental health. Operational flexibility facilitated collaboration across a range of partnerships, which stakeholders identified as another key factor driving successful outcomes. This collaborative model, involving local authorities, charity networks, and other organisations, ensured that services and resources could be coordinated effectively to address the many individual, social, and systemic challenges of rough sleeping.

Overall, the RSI programmes emphasis on flexible funding and partnership-driven approaches allowed stakeholders to respond creatively to the immediate needs of people experiencing rough sleeping while simultaneously supporting longer-term solutions. Stakeholders' perception is that this not only improved individual outcomes but also enhanced the operational effectiveness and innovation of service providers across the region.

Topic 1: Successful practices and strategies

As seen in Figure 5, most respondents to the stakeholder survey (n=7) felt that the practices and strategies of the RSI programme were either somewhat (n=1) or very effective (n=5).

Figure 5: Effectiveness of practices and strategies
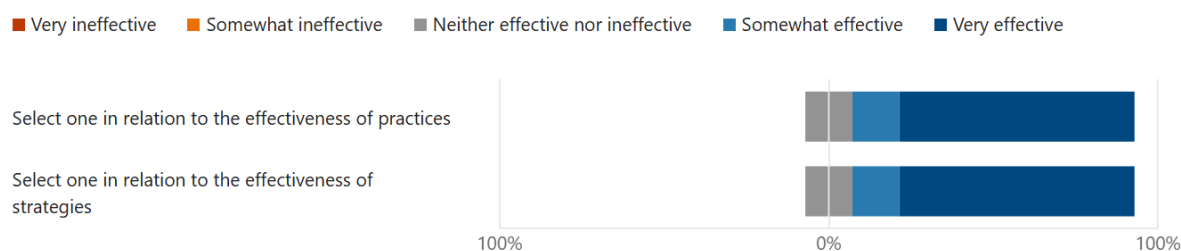
Similarly, most respondents to the stakeholder survey (n=7) felt that overall outcomes were either very good (n=3) or excellent (n=3) as can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Overall outcomes of the WMCA's RSI programme
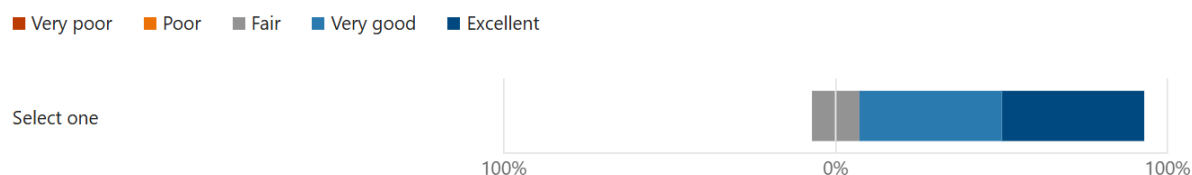
Theme 1.1: The effectiveness of personalisation funds

Several stakeholders reported that personalisation funds had been effective in tackling barriers to engagement and promoting positive outcomes. Key to that was the ability of frontline workers to respond quickly to the presenting needs of customers. Similarly, personalisation funds have helped to overcome structural or systemic barriers to customer progress in terms of both recovery from and prevention of rough sleeping. One stakeholder cited the personalisation funds supplied through the RSI programme as reducing pressure on other funding streams, such as "Change into Action", allowing those funds to be utilised elsewhere *[Interview 14]*.

Examples cited by participants included crisis interventions like food and clothing, hot and cold weather packs for people experiencing rough sleeping, emergency accommodation, payment of rent or utility arrears, help with appointment or job-related necessities like transport or clothing, resettlement support such as essential furniture, and engagement or digital inclusion help like mobile phones. Services for women have utilised personalisation funds to meet the individual needs of customers including gender specific accommodation and to provide tablets for digital inclusion, e.g., when a customer was in hospital *[Interview 15]*.

> *"Within this contract we've got a nice little budget line where we can use money for that type of thing … and that's been really handy to us."*
> *[Interview 02]*
>
> *"The flexibility enabled us to provide emergency provision, travel accommodation costs, deposits for accommodation … making a house a home." [Interview 08]*
>
> *"We've applied for a personalisation fund … been able to get mobile phones, clothing, and provide hot weather packs and cold weather packs. We're really flexible with it." [Interview 09]*
>
> *"Having a fund for small grants to help small, local charities that work to combat homelessness." [Respondent 1, Q2]*
>
> *"The ability to reduce homelessness. Having the ability to fund travel to reduce homelessness." [Respondent 6, Q2]*

Theme 1.2: Effectiveness of training and professional development

Ongoing training is seen as important by participants for keeping staff prepared and knowledgeable in their roles. The effectiveness of the training and professional development offer emerged as a significant theme across multiple interviews, highlighting the importance to stakeholders of equipping staff and volunteers with the necessary skills to effectively support people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping.

A key aspect of this training focused on raising awareness about specific issues such as trauma, modern slavery, and legislative frameworks like the Homelessness Reduction Act. Interviewees highlighted the impact of these training initiatives on staff awareness, performance, and client outcomes. For instance, the modern slavery awareness courses were seen as important for frontline workers awareness.

Similarly, trauma-informed approaches were emphasised across the interviews. Organisations invested time in the available psychologically and trauma informed training, reflective practice, and clinical supervision sessions. These were thought to help staff understand, recognise, and manage trauma more effectively, including the possibility of vicarious trauma experienced by staff and volunteers. Reflective practice emerged as a particularly important component of professional development, providing staff and volunteers with a safe space to share experiences and refine their approaches.

Overall, the training and professional development offer was thought to contribute to ensuring staff and volunteers were adequately prepared to engage with vulnerable populations, through improved awareness of evidenced based practice and recognised standards.

"The [WMCA] offers modern slavery awareness courses through RSI funding, which I think is really important." [Interview 11]

"We do reflective practice and clinical supervision to help staff understand trauma … Embedding the psychological, trauma-informed approach has been a strength." [Interview 04]

"Training for volunteers has been something we've had to look at … it's been about getting the volunteers to the right standard." [Interview 05]

"Training has been vital … like the Homelessness Reduction Act just keeping it in the forefront of their minds." [Interview 09]

"Reflective practice was really valuable for my team … it's something we've missed since it stopped. It helped us understand how to better support our clients." [Interview 13]

"Sharing good practice. Having the opportunities to meet and discuss issues with fellow professionals." [Respondent 2, Q2]

"RSI coordinator meeting along with RSI training offer." [Respondent 3, Q2]

"Having access to internally accredited course provided quick and effective upskilling and relationship building." [Respondent 2, Q3]

Theme 1.3: Impact of support for customers and staff

The impact of the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) support on both customers and staff was a recurring theme across the interviews. Stakeholders consistently highlighted the positive outcomes that RSI funding and services brought, emphasising improvements in customer well-being, housing stability, and staff capacity to provide effective, empathetic care.

For customers, the provision of practical support – often enabled through personalised and flexible funds – had a profound impact on their lives. Simple interventions such as starter packs helped individuals transition from homelessness to stable accommodation. Additionally, sustained engagement with customers, especially in the critical first month of housing or employment, was seen as important in helping people to navigate challenges associated with recovery from crisis and change.

The emotional and psychological well-being of customers was also reported as improving significantly due to RSI interventions. Relatively simple and practical support, such as helping customers attend GP appointments or probation meetings, was thought to make a big

difference in their overall stability and engagement with services. There were also notable improvements reported in mental health, with one interviewee describing a dramatic increase in mental health scores after receiving support.

Staff also benefitted significantly from RSI support, particularly through trauma-informed training and reflective practices that enhanced their ability to deliver services. This focus on supporting staff well-being and development enabled them to better manage the complexities of their roles, ensuring that they could deliver improved quality and sustained care to people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping. Several participants highlighted the important role of reflective practice in staff development.

RSI's support beyond immediate housing needs, encouraging long-term improvements in mental health, stability, and staff capacity. By providing both practical and emotional support to customers and empowering staff with the tools and training to manage their roles effectively, participants reported that the RSI programme had created a positive and lasting impact.

"By giving a starter pack … there's a greater chance of them staying in the accommodation … and they had in general stayed for three months in the accommodation. … Cumulative mental health before is 134 … and mental health after is 245.5 … it's a big increase." [Interview 01]

"We have carried on with people, constantly checking on them... That first month is absolutely key for them." [Interview 02]

"The amount of hits that we get through the website is encouraging. … It's a helpful place for people to go to find good quality advice and guidance." [Interview 03]

"Our role is to support staff primarily … with maximising their delivery. … We do reflective practice and clinical supervision to help staff understand trauma. … Embedding the psychological, trauma-informed approach has been a strength. … We repurposed resources to support … frontline staff when needed." [Interview 04]

"We were able to go out and … get all the ingredients and he [a chef] cooked for everybody … small things like that make a big difference." [Interview 05]

"We pay for a month's worth of travel when they start work … clothes for starting work … and consistent contact for support." [Interview 06]

"The smallest things, like engagement with partners and supporting GP appointments or probation, make a big difference." [Interview 08]

"Funding for otherwise forgotten and marginalised groups." [Respondent 5, Q2]

Topic 2: Positive outcomes for customers

Theme 2.1: Helping people to find or stay in housing

Another central theme that emerged across the interviews was the significant effort and success in helping people at risk of or experiencing rough sleeping to find and maintain stable housing. Through a variety of flexible and personalised support measures, the RSI programme

has enabled stakeholders to offer both immediate and longer-term interventions that improved housing stability for vulnerable individuals.

One of the key strategies was providing practical assistance to help individuals transition smoothly into accommodation. For example, starter packs containing essential household items were instrumental in encouraging people to stay in their housing longer. Additionally, sustained support during the critical first month of housing helped prevent individuals from falling back into homelessness.

The flexibility of RSI personalisation funding allowed service providers to address a range of urgent housing-related needs, from emergency accommodation to deposits for long-term housing, providing mobile phones, clothing, and inclement weather packs, all of which contributed to engaging people in a housing pathway or improving their stability in their existing accommodation.

Another successful approach was the contribution made by the RSI programme to the Housing First model, which provided not only housing but also the necessary emotional and practical support to help individuals adjust and thrive in their new environments.

Additionally, outreach efforts were enhanced by the flexibility of RSI resources, allowing teams to identify vacant beds and provide transportation, even outside normal office hours. This proactive approach helped ensure that people were placed into emergency housing as soon as it became available, preventing unnecessary time spent on the streets [Interview 14].

The RSI's flexible and practical approach has contributed to more comprehensive support mechanisms. This has allowed organisations to address both immediate and longer-term needs, helping vulnerable individuals not only find housing but also stay in it. Through practical assistance, sustained engagement, and models like Housing First, the programme is thought by participants to have made a significant impact on promoting housing stability.

"By giving a starter pack … there's a greater chance of them staying in the accommodation … and they had in general stayed for three months in the accommodation" [Interview 01]

"We were able to go out and … get all the ingredients and he [a chef] cooked for everybody … small things like that make a big difference." [Interview 05]

"The smallest things, like engagement with partners and supporting GP appointments or probation, make a big difference." [Interview 08]

"We've applied for a personalisation fund … been able to get mobile phones, clothing, and provide hot weather packs and cold weather packs." [Interview 09]

"The flexibility enabled us to provide emergency provision, accommodation, and deposits for accommodation … and get young people into sustainable work quickly." [Interview 10]

"Being a housing provider also meant the accommodation need could be addressed alongside the employability support." [Respondent 2, Q3]

"… we have seen a significant number of rough sleepers (past and present) as well as those at risk of rough sleeping settle into permanent accommodation

Theme 2.2: Helping people to engage in employment pathways

A theme emerged around interventions to help people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping find or sustain employment. Stakeholders emphasised how tailored support, flexible funding, and sustained engagement were important in helping individuals secure jobs and maintain stability. These interventions addressed both practical needs and emotional support, making it possible for some vulnerable individuals to transition from homelessness into training, volunteering, or even paid employment.

Practical support, such as assistance with claiming welfare benefits, providing travel passes, work clothing, and assistance with job-related documentation such as identification, played a central role in helping individuals achieve sufficient stability to consider engaging in employment pathways. Participants reported that assistance helps to ensure that individuals could meet the logistical challenges of entering the workforce, especially during the initial stages of employment when they are most vulnerable.

The flexibility of RSI funding also enabled providers to address a wide range of needs that supported employment efforts. Whether it was covering emergency provisions, accommodation costs, or deposits for housing, these funds helped remove barriers that might otherwise prevent individuals from thinking about training, volunteering, or employment.

Sustained engagement during the critical first month of employment was another key factor in helping individuals succeed. Continuous check-ins helped individuals navigate the challenges of their new jobs, providing emotional and practical support when needed.

In the Coventry based Job Shop, the deployment of a specific employment outreach worker for people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping further enhanced the effectiveness of these employment interventions. One interviewee noted the importance of having a job coach integrated into their team, stating, "We've had a job coach deployed from the Job Shop who works directly with the Rough Sleeper team and has got knowledge of the issues specific to the people" [Interview 06]. This approach ensured that individuals received targeted support tailored to their unique circumstances.

In summary, helping people to find and sustain employment within the RSI programme involved a combination of practical support, flexible funding, and sustained engagement. These efforts not only provided the necessary impetus to assist some people into work but also ensured that they had the support needed in the early stages of their employment, thereby improving their longer-term prospects of stability and success.

*"We have carried on with people, constantly checking on them ... That first
month is absolutely key for them." [Interview 02]*

*"It's been great for us as well. ... There was a really heavy hand on proof of ID,
proof of this, proof of that." [Interview 02]*

*"We pay for a month's worth of travel when they start work ... clothes for
starting work ... and consistent contact for support." [Interview 06]*

"We've had a job coach deployed from the Job Shop who works directly with the Rough Sleeper team and has got knowledge of the issues specific to the people." [Interview 06]

"The flexibility enabled us to provide emergency provision, travel accommodation costs, deposits for accommodation ... making a house a home."
[Interview 08]

"Providing practical and emotional support for individuals, particularly through the Housing First model, was a standout success." [Interview 08]

"The flexibility enabled us to provide emergency provision, accommodation, and deposits for accommodation ... and get young people into sustainable work quickly." [Interview 10]

"Having the RSI Employability role sat within the RSI Outreach Team. This enabled relationships and referrals to be built effectively." [Respondent 2, Q3]

"... we have had two people who were rough sleeping go into work – that is an amazing achievement for them." [Respondent 2, Q5]

Theme 2.3: Impact on mental health

The positive impact of RSI funded support on customers' mental health was also a recurring theme throughout the interviews. Stakeholders highlighted how both practical and emotional interventions helped to improve the mental well-being of individuals experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping. These efforts ranged from small but meaningful actions to more structured, ongoing support, all contributing to better mental health outcomes for beneficiaries.

For many individuals, participants reported that the provision of essential items and personal support led to a noticeable improvement in their mood and outlook on life. One interviewee quantified this shift, noting a substantial increase in mental health scores after receiving assistance: "Cumulative mental health before is 134... and mental health after is 245.5... it's a big increase" [Interview 01]. This indicates how practical interventions can have a measurable impact on emotional well-being.

Additionally, participants reported that engaging individuals in meaningful activities contributed significantly to their mental health. For example, one organisation facilitated a cooking session led by a customer who had been a chef, which had a positive impact on their mood. Another participant shared how simple acts like providing garden furniture helped a customer develop a hobby that greatly improved their mental health.

Ongoing engagement and support with essential services also played a crucial role in mental health improvement. Regular check-ins and assistance with attending GP appointments or probation meetings helped individuals feel supported and encouraged, contributing to better mental health outcomes.

The RSI programme's focus on providing both practical and emotional support is reported to have had a significant impact on the mental health of customers. From helping individuals develop hobbies and engage in social activities to ensuring they receive the healthcare they

need, these interventions have collectively improved the mental well-being of many at-risk individuals.

> *"Cumulative mental health before is 134 ... and mental health after is 245.5 ... it's a big increase"* [Interview 01]
>
> *"We bought him some garden furniture ... He's developed a love of gardening and it's been massive for his mental health."* [Interview 02]
>
> *"We were able to go out and ... get all the ingredients and he [a chef] cooked for everybody... small things like that make a big difference."* [Interview 05]

Topic 3: Stakeholder collaboration

Theme 3.1: Effective cross boundary collaboration

All of the respondents to the stakeholder survey (n=7) reported that collaboration across boundaries is either somewhat (n=3) or very effective (n=4).

Figure 7: Effectiveness of collaboration between stakeholders

■ Very ineffective ■ Somewhat ineffective ■ Neither effective nor ineffective ■ Somewhat effective ■ Very effective
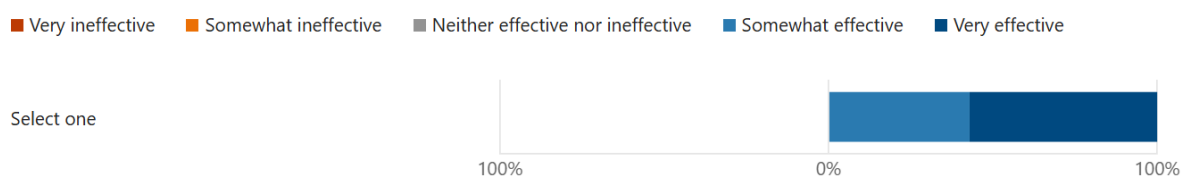
This was also reflected as a heavily recurring theme across the interviews. Participants placed a high value on the effective partnerships and collaboration encouraged by the WMCAs RSI programme. The success of these collaborations is seen as lying in their ability to bring together diverse stakeholders – including local authorities, housing services, voluntary organisations, and strategic networks – to share knowledge, informally pool resources, and tackle complex challenges. Participants believe that collaboration has advanced a sense of collective responsibility, enabling stakeholders to deliver more effective, coordinated responses to individuals in need.

Participants consistently highlighted the value of the relationship between the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce's RSI team and participating organisations, which have allowed for more streamlined service delivery and improved outcomes. For instance, participants emphasised the importance of the cross border remit of the Taskforce and its ability to bring people together without being too formal.

Stakeholders felt that transparent communication has built trust and ensured that agencies can collaborate without duplication or interference.   One participant noted that organisations were able to avoid treading on each other's toes [Interview 08].

This collaborative ethos is further reinforced by the work of the West Midlands Anti-Slavery Network. Highlighting this important issue by getting the right people around the table was seen as key to raising awareness and securing access to decision-makers. Another example has been the work via Coventry City Council to coordinate interventions through a specialist employment advisor for people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping. Bringing together a multi-agency intervention on welfare benefits, money advice, help to secure identification, help

with housing, and other practical assistance through personal budgets, was important to successful engagement in training and support pathways [Interview 06].

Overall, collaboration has encouraged innovation, supported the sharing of best practices, and strengthened efforts to address rough sleeping across the region. The progress of these collaborations highlights the importance of sustained and coordinated efforts between statutory sector organisations and between the statutory and third sector for effective interventions.

"We work through about 15 or 16 what I call local partners... and they range from local authorities to Women's Aid" [Interview 01]

"She sits within their team, is treated as a member of their team, and that's worked really well for us." [Interview 02]

"The homeless task force is good at collaboration ... The whole point of going we're a region, take the politics out of it, and we want to reduce rough sleeping. ... RSI funding has been a welcome resource that we wouldn't have had without it." [Interview 03]

"The contract right from the word go ... it's a collaborative venture. ... The WMCA has been critical ... they've been wonderful in terms of collaboration. ... We were able to flexibly support Birmingham City Council when needed." [Interview 04]

"We work with anybody who would feel has got the mind. There's lots of agencies around Birmingham we work with." [Interview 05]

"We've had a job coach deployed from the Job Shop who works directly with the Rough Sleeper team and has got knowledge of the issues specific to the people. ... It's gone pretty well from the start ... we've got direct links to the homelessness forum and charity networks." [Interview 06]

"We were really alert to the specific nature of women's rough sleeping ... it was a really good link that's been maintained ... especially for women with no recourse to public funds." [Interview 07]

"We've got lots of kind of partnership forums and strategic meetings ... That's what makes it work. ... Commissioners come out on daily outreach, and we have regular monthly rough sleeper partnership meetings." [Interview 08]

"Diana's role has been the most crucial ... coordinating all of the West Midlands in terms of rough sleepers has just been really helpful. ... All across the areas ... we talk through what our barriers have been, and it's been fed into the rough sleeping task group." [Interview 09]

"It was good to share practice ... Some of their stories were quite different to ours, but some common threads were interesting and provided learning experiences." [Interview 10]

"The combined authority is the one place that does bring them all together ... having all those things in one place benefits everybody. ... They bring together local authorities in a way that allows us to have direct conversations, which is invaluable to our work. ... We made a recommendation to set up a subgroup

on NRPF, and it was supported by the Mayor and Jean Templeton."
[Interview 11]

"The regular meetings between us and the other authorities are useful ... it's good to have that sort of information-sharing network. ... The combined authority does a good job of knitting us all together ... without being too formal or cumbersome." [Interview 12]

"The arrangement of the Taskforce, which is all my equivalents across the West Midlands, has been brilliant ... being able to support each other and share knowledge has been invaluable." [Interview 13]

"The joining up of WMCA authorities has been useful." [Respondent 4, Q2]

"Not trying to do everything itself [WMCA], but working through other organisations which may be closer to the issue of rough sleeping." [Respondent 1, Q3]

"Reconnections protocol." [Respondent 3, Q3]

"I think the shared knowledge and joint working." [Respondent 4, Q3]

"Collaboration ... in establishing Change into Action ... has played an important role in providing funds to assist those coming out of homelessness (sometimes rough sleeping). WMCA had knowledge to impart on the establishment of Change into Action at a 'borough' level, including issues such as custodianship of funds, publicity, IT etc." [Respondent 1, Q7]

"It's been really useful having the provider networking meetings that WMCA facilitate, it's good to share ideas and talk about issues and what solutions others have found." [Respondent 2, Q7]

Theme 3.2: Minimising bureaucracy

The theme of minimising bureaucracy and offering administrative flexibility emerged as a point of divergence among the interview participants, with mixed views on the administrative demands of the programme. While some interviewees expressed frustration with the burden of administrative tasks, most felt that the level of bureaucracy was manageable and proportionate given the flexibility the programme allowed for delivering important services.

However, for some participants the administrative processes were perceived as time-consuming. Despite these concerns, other participants felt that the level of bureaucracy was lighter than expected compared to other funding streams, particularly those with more stringent requirements. This was particularly apparent in the administration of personal budgets.

Several participants compared the RSI programme favourably to other short term funding initiatives in terms of having lower levels of administrative bureaucracy. This suggests that, on balance, many interviewees appreciated the programme's relative flexibility, which allowed them to adapt their approaches to meet the immediate and varied needs of people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping.

"It's been great for us as well... There was no really heavy hand on proof of ID, proof of this, proof of that." [Interview 02]

"We've been left alone to kind of crack on with stuff ... Not being micromanaged at all. ... We've had some good support from the WMCA ... they've been supporting us to get it right." [Interview 03]

"The flexibility of the funding I think is really important ... we haven't had to think in a box." [Interview 05]

"The flexibility that we could really adapt it and use it for the women's needs ... has been great. ... This flexibility allowed the team to respond swiftly to crises, often preventing women from returning to abusers or ending up rough sleeping." [Interview 07]

"The flexibility enabled us to provide emergency provision, accommodation, and deposits for accommodation ... and get young people into sustainable work quickly." [Interview 10]

"The flexibility enabled us to work more effectively with small voluntary organisations and get them known at the regional level. ... The monthly returns give us data to pick up on wider trends, like the increase in women sleeping rough. ... Data collection is key, especially when looking at larger regional patterns and future initiatives." [Interview 12]

"The flexibility in funding allowed us to meet the needs of our clients... from mobile phones to travel passes. This has been really beneficial, especially for people with no income." [Interview 13]

What have been the challenges?

This section outlines several operational challenges faced during the delivery of the RSI programme. It draws on insights from interviews and stakeholder surveys, highlighting the diversity of perspectives regarding the significance of these challenges. Key themes included difficulties in achieving and tracking outcomes, recruiting and retaining staff, and maintaining engagement from various stakeholders.

One operational challenge is tracking outcomes. While flexible resources allowed for creative interventions, the administrative burden of data collection and reporting was perceived as "laborious." Manual data collection and inconsistent reporting from staff added to the complexity. Another challenge was the difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff due to the insecurity of short-term funding. Staff turnover further exacerbated operational disruptions.

Additionally, the report emphasises inconsistent buy-in from stakeholders, particularly some local authorities. Some areas demonstrated strong collaboration, while others suggested some stakeholders lacked engagement. These operational hurdles, added to by external factors such as economic conditions and anxiety of short-term funding, made measuring the success of the programme more complicated. Despite these challenges, the programme's flexibility remained a central component of its perceived success.

Topic 4: Operational challenges

Respondents to the stakeholder survey (n=7) had a range of views about the types and significance of operational challenges experienced in the delivery of the RSI programme. Figure 8 shows that respondents perceptions of operational challenge are 14% for extremely

significant (n=1), 43% for moderate significance (n=3), 14% for minor significance (n=1), and 29% for not significant (n=2).

Figure 8: Significance of the operational challenges
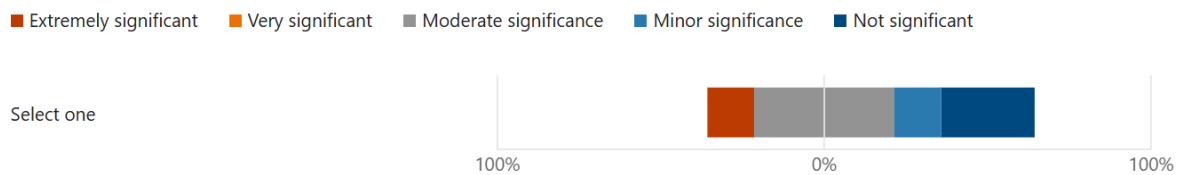
This diversity of perception in the significance of challenges, as well as the types of challenges, is reflected in the stakeholder interviews as well as a small number of narrative comments in the survey.

Theme 4.1: Achieving and tracking outcomes

A challenge that emerged across some interviews was the importance of both achieving and tracking outcomes to measure success. While many participants expressed satisfaction with the flexibility of resources and administration that allowed for creative interventions, some also highlighted the challenges associated with tracking and reporting outcomes.

One interviewee shared that their service had been successful in supporting 25 of 30 participants to maintain their accommodation for at least three months. This demonstrated a clear, measurable outcome that has a direct relationship with the intervention activity. However, the same interviewee also noted the challenges of maintaining contact with people once they had left the programme to understand the resilience of their progress.

Some participants mentioned the administrative burden associated with tracking outcomes as a challenge. One interviewee described the process as "laborious" and requiring close collaboration with colleagues to accurately report the necessary data. Similarly, another interviewee noted that all their data collection is done manually, which consumes a significant amount of time and effort, as "we've had to teach our workers to do it and it takes a lot of time."

Despite these challenges, the flexibility of the programme – linked to overall administration and support – remained an important component of the perceived success. One interviewee commented that "the flexibility of the funding has been crucial and I'd definitely continue with that approach." This ability to tailor resources to individual needs was seen by many as essential, not only for achieving immediate outcomes, e.g., through personalisation budgets, but also for providing a foundation for longer-term effectiveness.

Another interviewee [Interview 15], involved in RSI projects funded via a Local Authority as well as that funded through the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce, noted that the reporting requirements were different and felt they could be more coordinated.

Overall, while the participants were able to achieve positive outcomes, this theme highlights that tracking those outcomes revealed both the strengths of flexibility in the programme and the ongoing challenges of managing the administrative aspects effectively.

"Last year ... I think 25 of the 30 people ... stayed for at least three months where they were. ... We lost contact or the caseworker had lost contact with one of the cases. They just vanished." [Interview 01]

"The forms that we have to fill in are like ... laborious. And I have to work very closely with Diana and Chloe to understand the figures." [Interview 05]

"We have a waiting list of people waiting to come into our services ... There is a massive lack of move-on accommodation. ... If there were more money, we'd love more affordable move-on accommodation, particularly in the Housing First model." [Interview 08]

"All our data collection is done manually and it's a lot... we've had to teach our workers to do it and it takes a lot of time." [Interview 09]

"We used to get young people into traffic management jobs, which were well-paid entry-level roles, but those have disappeared due to funding cuts." [Interview 10]

"None, really ... perhaps a little time in successfully getting ... caseworkers to report back on whether their clients had managed to remain in accommodation for 3 months after they had first been housed ... but not really a 'challenge'." [Respondent 1, Q7]

"My one member of staff who [left the project] and so I needed to recruit, that meant I had roughly a month where we had to get the new member of staff up to speed." [Respondent 2, Q7]

"The difficulty in recruiting and the transition for the new appointee to get to grips with the role. This resulted in a 3 to 4 month window where operationally we were not at full capacity." [Respondent 3, Q7]

Theme 4.2: Lack of awareness and inconsistent buy-in from stakeholders

A challenge identified across some interviews was the lack of awareness about the WMCA, the RSI initiatives, and a perception of inconsistent buy-in from stakeholders, particularly among some Local Authorities. Participants noted that despite the success of collaborative efforts, not all stakeholders were equally engaged, and there was a clear disparity in the level of understanding and involvement across regions.

For instance, it was highlighted that awareness of the initiatives organised by the combined authority was limited outside certain circles. One participant believed that general awareness of the WMCA's activity in this area was limited outside the immediate circle of those directly involved. It was felt that this lack of awareness created difficulties in fully integrating efforts, particularly in raising awareness around specific issues affecting people experiencing rough sleeping, e.g., modern slavery and people with no recourse to public funds. There was a perception that the programme had funded training courses but had struggled to communicate their existence broadly.

Inconsistent buy-in from Local Authorities was also a concern for some interviewees. While some areas demonstrated strong engagement and collaboration, others were perceived to lack interest or commitment, potentially affecting the overall impact of the initiatives. This uneven involvement was noted to be particularly problematic when attempting to maintain a regional focus on rough sleeping. One interviewee noted, "it's no good [Local Authority A] being amazing and [Local Authority B] not being great". Another felt that there were some "areas that don't engage as much as they could... it's a shame that not all areas are as fully involved". Similar to the issue of awareness, interviews felt that inconsistent engagement by key organisations

reduced the potential to have a wider impact on specific and complex issues tackling understanding and tackling modern slavery and helping people with no recourse to public funds.

"We get more buy-in from some local authority areas than others ... It took a while to get some of the local authority areas up to speed." [Interview 03]

"You don't have to step too far out of these forums, and there's literally no knowledge of what the combined authority actually does." [Interview 11]

"There are a couple of areas that don't engage as much as they could... it's a shame that not all areas are as fully involved. ... If everyone was equally involved, it would help us all." [Interview 12]

Topic 5: Resources

As shown in Figure 9, most respondents to the stakeholder survey (n=7) felt that resource constraints (e.g., funding, staffing, communications, etc.) had either no impact (n=4) or only a minor impact (n=1). Conversely, a minority of respondents believed that resource constraints had either a moderate (n=1) or significant (n=1) impact on the programme.

Figure 9: Impact of resource constraints on the programme
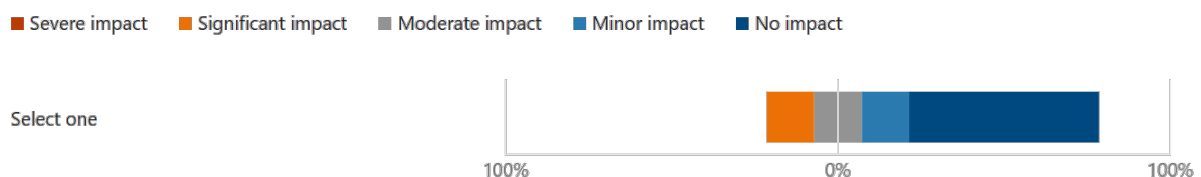
Theme 5.1: Staff recruitment and retention

A recurring issue highlighted by interview participants was the difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff, which was perceived as driven largely by the challenges of short-term funding and job insecurity. Many organisations found it tough to attract suitable candidates and maintain a stable workforce due to the temporary nature of contracts and the lack of financial certainty.

Participants explained that the limited duration of funding created a sense of instability, making it hard to keep staff on board. In particular, several interviewees noted that the uncertainty about whether funding would continue beyond a two-year period led to high turnover rates, as employees were hesitant to remain in roles with unclear futures. One interviewee noted that staff often left in search of more secure employment.

Recruitment itself was also problematic, with participants emphasising that it was difficult to hire people for short-term positions. Potential candidates were thought to be discouraged by the temporary nature of the roles, and some organisations reported experiencing prolonged vacancies that disrupted the flow of their work. In some cases, teams had to cope with recruitment gaps lasting several months, which slowed progress and caused challenges in re-establishing relationships once new staff were inducted.

Staff turnover, whether due to external opportunities or personal circumstances, further complicated these issues. One interviewee shared that replacing staff who had gone on maternity leave presented challenges, particularly when there was no overlap or handover

period to ensure a smooth transition. This resulted in a loss of continuity and placed additional pressure on remaining staff to cover the gaps.

In addition to recruitment and retention issues, the pressures of delivering services in a fast-paced, crisis-tackling environment were also noteworthy. For example, some felt that this led to staff development and training taking a back seat. Failure to prioritise staff development was thought to affect staff morale and long-term development within the organisations. Some participants linked the sustainability of their services directly to staff retention. Without stable, long-term funding, many felt that they could not build a reliable workforce, as the programs they ran were dependent on short-term funding streams. This instability meant that the teams operating these services were often on uncertain ground, limiting their effectiveness and long-term impact.

In summary, the theme of staff recruitment and retention highlighted the difficulties faced by organisations in maintaining a stable workforce. Short-term funding, recruitment gaps, and high staff turnover were perceived as significant challenges, which in turn affected the likely sustainability and continuity of services.

"... we had to recruit externally ... there was no handover period, and that was a challenge." [Interview 02]

"Staff turnover means that a lot of knowledge about networks and referral routes is lost every time someone leaves. ... It's difficult to extract information when people leave, and websites become out of date." [Interview 03]

"Line managers have been too focused on immediate crises and often deprioritise training." [Interview 04]

"We had a recruitment gap for three months, and it slowed our progress ... [Name] left ... and [Name], while good, had to build relationships from scratch." [Interview 10]

"Recruitment has been tough ... getting people to join on a short-term contract is really difficult. ... The biggest challenge we face is the uncertainty around funding ... we don't know if we can continue the work past March next year which has made staff retention really difficult." [Interview 13]

"Staffing to work across the project has been challenging." [Respondent 1, Q11]

Theme 5.2: Variations in the level and nature of demand

The interviews revealed perceived variations in the level and nature of demand for services highlighting potential shifts in both the volume of need and the complexity of cases. While some areas saw a reduction in rough sleeping, new challenges emerged, particularly regarding cross border movement and availability of services.

Some participants noted that although rough sleeping had decreased during implementation, they believed that there had been an uptick in people migrating across areas, increasing demand on local services. This shift was thought to complicate service delivery, as the apparent transfer of individuals created additional pressure on already stretched resources.

A significant challenge identified for this dynamic was the shortage of suitable move-on accommodation. Many participants pointed to the housing crisis as a key challenging issue, with insufficient affordable housing options making it difficult for people to transition out of homelessness. That systemic blockage contributes to waiting lists for services, leaving organisations struggling to meet the demand.

There is also a perception that the complexity of the cases being handled has also increased. Interviewees observed a rise in the number of rough sleepers presenting with mental health challenges, requiring more specialised interventions and resources. This added layer of complexity stretched services that were already under strain. Similarly, some participants noted the diversity of the customers and in particular challenges engaging with and support people where English was not their first language.

Participants also reflected on other variations, noting that data collection helped identify specific patterns, such as an increase in women experiencing rough sleeping. These insights allowed for more targeted interventions, but they also underscored the importance of adapting services to meet evolving needs. Additionally, the economic landscape shifted, with a reduction in entry-level job opportunities, particularly in sectors more likely to employ people transitioning out of homelessness. This further complicated efforts to support individuals into sustainable employment.

Variations in demand – whether in terms of the volume of people needing services, the complexity of their cases, or regional migration patterns – posed significant challenges for service providers. Organisations had to adapt to these shifting dynamics, often with limited resources and insufficient housing options, while contending with increasingly complex client needs.

"We haven't seen as many rough sleepers this year as compared with last year." [Interview 01]

"We've had a fair few people whose first language is not English … ESOL provision, there's never enough of it." [Interview 02]

"There's been a massive reduction in rough sleeping but we are seeing an increase in people migrating to [our area]. … We have a waiting list of people waiting to come into our services … There is a massive lack of move-on accommodation." [Interview 08]

"We've had to adapt to more complex cases, especially with the number of rough sleepers facing mental health challenges increasing." [Interview 09]

"There was a reduction in entry-level job opportunities, particularly in sectors that traditionally employed our clients." [Interview 10]

*"We've done work to research the movement of rough sleepers between areas which has helped us understand regional dynamics. … The monthly returns give us data to pick up on wider trends like the increase in women sleeping rough." [Interview 12]*

"There's just not enough move-on accommodation available... the housing crisis is one of the biggest challenges we face." [Interview 13]

Topic 6: External factors

Of all respondents to the survey (n=7), around 43% felt that external factors (e.g., policies, economic conditions, relationships, etc.) had posed no challenge (n=1) or only slight challenges (n=2) to the programme. A further 43% of respondents noted moderate challenges from external factors (n=3). Where 14% believed external factors had posed a significant challenge (n=1). This is shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Extent to which external factors have posed challenges

■ Extremely   ■ Significantly   ■ Moderately   ■ Slightly   ■ Not at all

Select one

100%   0%   100%
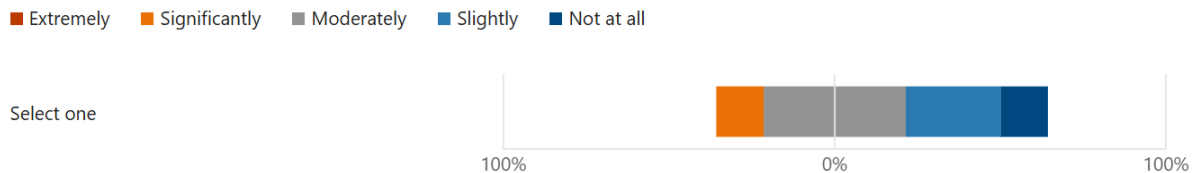
Theme 6.1: Prevailing economic conditions

Broader economic challenges, such as the rising cost of living, changing employment landscapes, and scarcity of suitable housing, have adversely homelessness services and people experiencing homelessness. Across interviews, several participants point to how economic conditions challenge their work, often presenting additional obstacles for individuals at risk of homelessness.

One key issue raised is the cost of living crisis, which has strained both individuals and services. Interviewees mention that rising prices for basic necessities, such as food, utilities, and housing, have made it increasingly difficult for people to sustain their tenancies. One interviewee noted that increasing costs have directly contributed to a rise in homelessness, as people struggle to afford their essential living expenses.

Economic conditions were also thought to be affecting housing affordability in both the private and social housing sectors. Participants noted that many individuals find it increasingly difficult to access or maintain housing due to rising rents. This lack of affordability not only drives people into housing crisis but also restricts their ability to recover. One interviewee commented on the "perceived affordability" of private sector housing, which remains out of reach for many due to stagnant wages and increasing costs.

The changing employment landscape further complicates matters. Interviewees discussed the challenges faced by individuals in securing stable, well-paying jobs, which are crucial to maintaining secure tenure in accommodation. One interviewee explained that precarious employment, such as zero-hour contracts, has worsened the risk of homelessness, as individuals struggle to earn enough income to cover rent and living expenses.

Prevailing economic conditions – marked by rising costs, housing affordability issues, and employment challenges – are creating significant barriers for both homelessness services and the people they aim to help. This theme underscores the critical need for economic stability and affordability as essential components in addressing homelessness effectively.

"The cost of living has had a big effect. The changes in benefits and income from the Department of Working Pensions have had an impact on things going on as well." [Interview 07]

"The economy hasn't been in a healthy state for a while, and that is impacting things like affordability for the private sector, or perceived affordability for the private sector." [Interview 12]

"The rates of both people who are homeless and people at risk of homelessness have actually gone up, and that's partly because of the cost of living." [Interview 13]

"Economics is going to make a difference, you know, cost of living is going to make a difference regardless of what the situation is. So that makes a difference massively." [Interview 14]

"Our particular charity saw quite an increase in people rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping last year ... I suspect due to the general economic conditions." [Respondent 1, Q13]

"We have also seen an increase in the number of customers facing homelessness for the first time as they are struggling with the cost of living." [Respondent 2, Q13]

"Reduction in entry level job opportunities in the Birmingham area." [Respondent 3, Q13]

"Lack of accommodation available." [Respondent 5, Q13]

Theme 6.2: Short-term funding and project sustainability

The challenge of short-term funding and its impact on sustainability was a prominent concern across the interviews. Participants consistently highlighted how the temporary nature of funding created barriers to long-term planning and service continuity. Many expressed frustration with the inability to sustain effective programs beyond the limited funding periods, which led to uncertainty and a lack of stability for both services and staff. The point was sometime made specifically about RSI, but also about the nature of the funding landscape generally.

One of the key issues identified was the difficulty of building services that could be embedded beyond their initial funding cycle. Participants remarked that while some services had proven to be effective, the lack of funding beyond a two-year window often meant that these programs could not continue, undermining the progress that had been made. This created a sense of disappointment and frustration, as interviewees noted that without sustained funding, the positive impact of these programs would likely diminish over time.

As noted in a separate theme, the uncertainty surrounding future funding also made it challenging to retain staff. Many organisations struggled with staff turnover due to the temporary nature of their contracts, as employees were hesitant to commit to roles with an unclear future. This lack of job security made it difficult to maintain a stable workforce, which in turn affected the quality and consistency of service delivery.

Additionally, participants discussed how short-term funding restricted their ability to address long-term needs, particularly when it came to housing. Without consistent financial support, organisations were unable to secure long-term housing solutions or keep up with the increasing demand for accommodation.

Short-term funding created a precarious environment for service providers, limiting their ability to plan for the future, retain staff, and develop sustainable solutions. The interviews underscore the need for more stable and long-term funding arrangements to ensure that successful programs can continue to make a lasting impact.

"Short-term funding means you can't really plan for 5-10 years ahead. ... My worry is what happens when that doesn't get funded again." [Interview 03]

"Funding is not stable, often what they're being asked to do exceeds the resource available. Short-term funding means you're constantly worried about what will happen when it's gone." [Interview 04]

"It'd be nice if the pot would just remain as is, rather than losing any money." [Interview 05]

"We knew RSI was going to be a short-term programme ... but the challenge is insecurity around future funding. There's nothing really to replace RSI ... you get funding, it does the job, and then it's gone. ... Even if we get another year's worth of [another funding stream], it's not aligned to tackle the issues presented through RSI." [Interview 06]

"We didn't employ staff through it ... ours was always just giving out ... I think we could have spent more ... the need was always there. ... I think it was a bit disappointing that it didn't carry on ... women's rough sleeping is more hidden." [Interview 07]

"Without RSI funding, we wouldn't particularly have that service... The staffing that operates within that service wouldn't be there." [Interview 08]

"I'm at the point with the RSI that I'm looking at what initiatives I want to change and what I want to stop doing because I don't want to come to March of next year and just have money thrown at us." [Interview 09]

"I'm so disappointed that it can't be sustainable for longer than two years ... if you build that service that is working, and then it drops off, it's no good for anybody." [Interview 10]

"It's always going to be difficult with short-term funding because we're working on things with long-term needs. ... Without continued funding, the work we've done might not have a lasting impact." [Interview 12]

"The biggest challenge we face is the uncertainty around funding... we don't know if we can continue the work past March next year, which has made staff retention really difficult. ... Recruitment has been tough ... getting people to join on a short-term contract is really difficult." [Interview 13]

Theme 6.3: Barriers to engagement

In the interviews conducted with various stakeholders, some barriers to engagement were identified. These impacted both customers of the programme – i.e., those experiencing homelessness – and the organisations working to support them through RSI initiatives.

Barriers to engagement for customers

Customers were described as facing several complex barriers to engagement, often related to their personal circumstances and support needs. One of the most prominent issues was disengagement after initial contact, with some individuals showing early involvement only to later disappear from services, leaving support providers with the challenge of reconnection. Language barriers, particularly for those whose first language is not English, further complicated their ability to access and sustain engagement with services.

Vulnerability to exploitation, such as gang involvement or "cuckooing," also placed some customers in dangerous situations, which creates challenges in seeking or maintaining support. A lack of suitable housing options exacerbated this issue, as many individuals struggled to find move-on accommodation, making it harder for services to keep them engaged. Additionally, women faced distinct challenges, such as the hidden nature of women's rough sleeping and the heightened safety concerns related to domestic violence and abuse, which create further challenges for gaining and maintaining engagement.

Barriers to engagement for organisations

For the organisations working to people experiencing rough sleeping, barriers to engagement primarily stemmed from systemic and operational challenges. Short-term funding and sustainability consistently arose as a concern, with many interviewees expressing worries over their ability to sustain services over the longer-term. This also led to recruitment challenges, as there is a perception that potential staff are reluctant to accept short-term contracts, making it difficult for organisations to build and retain experienced staff. In addition to funding challenges, some interviewees reported time-consuming reporting requirements.

Some interviewees also reported a lack of engagement from important services, e.g., mental health services, which created challenges in providing comprehensive services for customers. Participating organisations also reported frustrations with inconsistent buy-in from key stakeholders resulting in a perception of gaps in effective collaboration.

These challenges illustrate the complex nature of engagement difficulties faced by both customers and the organisations offering support. However, given the large number of stakeholders involved in the sector, cross authority working, and the complex nature of the customer group, these challenges seem inevitable although nonetheless worthy of attention and mitigation.

Barriers to gaining and maintaining customer engagement

"Some people will engage for a bit and then fall off a cliff and you never hear from them again." [Interview 02]

"We've had various issues about people taking [customers] in their cars and doing a bit too much." [Interview 05]

"Women's rough sleeping is more hidden... we had to be really careful as there are additional safety issues for women." [Interview 07]

"We've had a lot of cuckooing ... people being exploited around gun and gang violence, which makes it difficult to support them." [Interview 08]

"We have picked up lots of customers where English is their second language and that has presented problems as there is not enough ESOL provision available locally." [Respondent 2. Q13]

Barriers to gaining and maintaining stakeholder engagement

"We get more buy-in from some local authority areas than others ... It took a while to get some of the local authority areas up to speed." [Interview 03]

"One of the LA's didn't engage with us ... but there was never any unfair criticism." [Interview 04]

"We've had issues with engaging staff for some of our interventions." [Interview 04]

"The RSI landscape is fast-paced and crisis-driven ... it's difficult to get people to commit." [Interview 04]

"Line managers have been too focused on immediate crises and often deprioritise training." [Interview 04]

"We have a waiting list of people waiting to come into our services ... There is a massive lack of move-on accommodation." [Interview 08]

"If there were more money, we'd love more affordable move-on accommodation, particularly in the Housing First model." [Interview 08]

"We have no contact with mental health services. We can try to understand someone's mental health needs, but it completely dies off after that." [Interview 09]

"I'm so disappointed that it can't be sustainable for longer than two years ... if you build that service that is working and then it drops off it's no good for anybody." [Interview 10]

"There's just not enough move-on accommodation available... the housing crisis is one of the biggest challenges we face." [Interview 13]

What has been learned?

This section discusses key lessons learned from the implementation of the RSI programme, highlighting several themes that emerged from stakeholder interviews. Stability is identified as an important factor for supporting people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping, with models providing access to suitable and affordable housing to increase the likelihood of long-term recovery. Emergency provisions also play a key role in stabilising individuals in the short term, encouraging trust and engagement for future recovery.

The impact of small interventions, such as personalisation funds and community-building activities, is also noted as important. These seemingly minor actions help improve mental well-being and create stepping stones toward more significant progress. Partnerships and collaboration among local authorities and service providers are seen as important for delivering holistic support and encouraging innovation.

Finally, co-production between stakeholders is highlighted as necessary for developing sustainable, tailored services. Collaborative efforts ensure that the solutions address the complex challenges faced by people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, with participants advocating for more system-wide changes to create long-term improvements in support. Learning and reflective practice are emphasised as key drivers for adapting and improving services based on insights and feedback.

Respondents to the stakeholder survey (n=7) agreed that there were valuable lessons from implementation of the RSI programme. Most felt that the programme had delivered extremely valuable (n=4) or very valuable learning (n=2) with only one participant rating the lessons as moderately valuable.

Figure 11: Value of the lessons learned from the programme
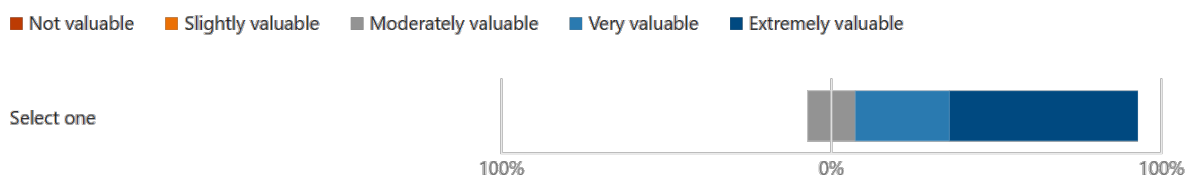
Topic 7: Key insights

Theme 7.1: The importance of stability for homeless individuals

Stability emerged as a theme with stakeholders working to support people experiencing homelessness. It was consistently highlighted as an important factor of effective interventions, underpinning successful outcomes for people experiencing rough sleeping. Creating stability in housing, support, and services is seen as necessary for helping individuals move beyond the immediate crisis of homelessness and into a more secure future.

One of the clearest examples mentioned of the importance of stability is the Housing First model, which prioritises providing secure housing as the first step and platform for recovery. Interviewees emphasised that this model is "absolutely vital" in offering individuals who have experienced long-term homelessness a sense of stability and a platform for connection with support services.

Similarly, another key aspect of stability is the role of emergency provision, which offered immediate relief from rough sleeping. Emergency accommodation and support were seen as essential in stabilising individuals in the short term, encouraging trust and engagement, creating the opportunity for further steps toward longer-term recovery.

Sustained support was also emphasised as critical for maintaining stability. Ongoing active engagement, particularly in the early stages after securing housing, was identified by interviewees as important for reducing the risk of a return to homelessness. As one participant noted, the first month of consistent check-ins and support is "absolutely key" for maintaining stability and maximising the opportunity for long-term success.

However, interviewees noted that the crisis-driven nature of services and high demands can make it difficult to establish and maintain stability for individuals. The rapid pace and immediate demands can hinder efforts to maintain consistency and stability. Similarly, the ongoing housing crisis poses a significant challenge to achieving stability in the wider community. The shortage of available "move-on accommodation" prevents individuals from transitioning to permanent housing, thereby undermining their ability to achieve lasting stability.

"If people stay in the accommodation for three months ... the longer they're there, the longer they're likely to stay." [Interview 01]

"We have carried on with people constantly checking on them... That first month is absolutely key for them." [Interview 02]

"The RSI landscape is fast-paced and crisis-driven... it's difficult to get people to commit." [Interview 04]

"Housing First is absolutely vital ... It gives people who've faced years of rough sleeping hope and stability. ... Emergency provision has been essential to prevent people from spending a night on the street. ... It gives us time to support them." [Interview 08]

"There's just not enough move-on accommodation available... the housing crisis is one of the biggest challenges we face." [Interview 13]

"The project has been invaluable in helping a demographic of people that may have slipped through the net otherwise and could have ended up on the streets." [Respondent 2, Q15]

Theme 7.2: Small interventions can have significant impacts

Interviewees commented on the power of small interventions in creating meaningful change for people experiencing homelessness. Minor yet impactful actions were thought to help in providing immediate relief, building trust, and laying the foundation for longer-term recovery.

One such intervention is the use of flexible personalisation funds, which can cover small but essential expenses that help individuals stabilise their lives. Personalisation budgets, referred to by one participant as a "slush fund", have proven to be instrumental in making a big difference, allowing organisations to respond quickly to clients' immediate needs providing practical interventions and building trust.

Another example of small interventions having a large impact comes from community support, where seemingly simple actions such as organising a group meal have had a meaningful impact. One organisation shared how buying ingredients for a chef to cook for everyone brought people together and created a positive, shared experience – small actions that can significantly improve morale and a sense of well-being.

Another example is the provision of starter packs for individuals moving into accommodation which was highlighted as a small intervention with a significant impact. These packs, which include basic household necessities, not only helped people settle into their new homes but also improved their mental well-being.

Finally, small acts of immediate support can provide essential breathing and thinking space for customers and staff. For instance, securing overnight accommodation can offer enough stability to allow staff to focus on more comprehensive, long-term support. Interviewees felt that these small interventions act as stepping stones toward more significant progress, enabling both the individuals and the support teams to achieve better outcomes.

> *"The starter packs really improve people's mental well-being ... it makes them happy to know there are people in the community who care about them. ... It's tiny, but it does actually make quite a difference."* [Interview 01]

> *"Having a coordinator ... it's like gold dust. ... Without a coordinator, the tool would go out of date quickly and be ineffective."* [Interview 03]

> *"It gave us breathing space ... knowing we could accommodate ... overnight meant we could focus on other support."* [Interview 07]

Theme 7.3: Partnerships and collaboration are key

A recurring theme with interviewees involved the key role that partnerships and collaboration play in delivering successful outcomes. Strong partnerships between local authorities, service providers, and community organisations enable a more cohesive and effective response to homelessness, allowing for the sharing of resources, knowledge, and strategies. At the apex of the collaboration, many interviewees noted role of the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce in bringing together representatives from statutory and third sector across the West Midlands. This collaboration has been described as invaluable, providing a platform for sharing knowledge and supporting one another in understanding and tackling common challenges.

Similarly, collaboration between partner agencies at the frontline is considered essential in providing holistic and comprehensive support to people experiencing homelessness. One participant emphasised the importance of transparent and open relationships with other service providers, noting that effective collaboration allows for more seamless and coordinated interventions.

Collaboration was also seen as particularly important for specialised services, such as those focusing on women experiencing homelessness. In those specialised contexts, partnerships with other organisations have enabled a more tailored approach to addressing the unique needs of the target population. Interviewees noted that maintaining these partnerships has been key to continuing effective services for women in vulnerable situations.

> *"We've been able to cross-refer and help on both projects, and that's worked really well."* [Interview 02]

> *"It was great to directly link the work we do with the rough sleeper team and the job coach support service."* [Interview 06]

> *"It was good to continue learning and supporting each other, particularly around women's rough sleeping."*
>
> *[Interview 07]*

> *"One of our biggest lessons was the value of partnership work ... everybody knows what's going on with everyone. ... We can't do everything for everybody. We learned that we need to stop trying to be everything to everyone. ... Collaboration is everything ... We don't tread on each other's toes and we're open and transparent in our relationships."* [Interview 08]

"Diana got the reconnections protocol pushed through and got all of the combined authorities signed off on it ... so it's given us a backbone when we're trying to get information." [Interview 09]

"Learning from others in the region helped us address some of the barriers we faced. It's been a real joined-up effort." [Interview 10]

"The combined authority has done well at getting the right people around the table... It enables direct access to strategic people, not just within local authorities. ... The fact that people like Neelam and Jean Templeton have been in place for a while is a huge plus." [Interview 11]

"Sharing good practice and comparing trends across areas has been really useful. ... We've done work to research the movement of rough sleepers between areas, which has helped us understand regional dynamics. ... The regular meetings between us and the other authorities are useful... it's good to have that sort of information-sharing network." [Interview 12]

"The arrangement of the taskforce which is all my equivalents across the West Midlands has been brilliant ... being able to support each other and share knowledge has been invaluable. ... We've learned so much from other authorities in the region ... If one area is facing a challenge, others have often already found a solution." [Interview 13]

"To work closely with other city partners and transparent communication." [Respondent 5, Q15]

Theme 7.4: Importance of coproduction between partners

Co-production emerged as a theme across several interviews, highlighting the collaborative nature of working with multiple stakeholders to deliver effective services for people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping. Many interviewees stressed the value of bringing together local authorities, partners, and frontline workers to co-create solutions that address complex challenges.

Participants often emphasised how working in partnership allowed for shared learning, resource pooling, and a more coordinated response. One interviewee noted that the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce itself had played a crucial role in enabling collaboration by allowing stakeholders to support one another and share valuable knowledge. This collaborative structure ensured that services were not working in isolation but were contributing to a collective regional effort.

Another interviewee remarked that the strength of co-production lies in the way different local authorities were able to come together through the flexible and transparent relationships encouraged among partners which enabled them to identify mutual interests and positive practice.

Co-production was also seen as a way to challenge traditional power dynamics. One interviewee highlighted the importance of true co-production rather than mere consultation, acknowledging that achieving this requires bravery and a willingness to share power across agencies and with service users. By co-producing services, interviewees believed that more sustainable and innovative solutions could be developed to address homelessness and related issues.

> *"We work through about 15 or 16 local partners ... we don't deal directly with homeless people." [Interview 01]*
>
> *"The system should be co-produced properly, but we have to be brave. It's a power issue. A lot of what's called co-production is really consultation." [Interview 03]*
>
> *"Collaboration is everything ... we don't tread on each other's toes and we're open and transparent in our relationships." [Interview 08]*
>
> *"The system should be co-produced properly but we have to be brave. It's a power issue. A lot of what's called co-production is really consultation." [Interview 11]*
>
> *"The combined authority does a good job of knitting us all together... without being too formal or cumbersome." [Interview 12]*
>
> *"The arrangement of the [WMCA Homelessness] Taskforce ... has been brilliant ... being able to support each other and share knowledge has been invaluable." [Interview 13]*
>
> *"The joint learning has been key to the programme." [Respondent 4, Q15]*

Topic 8: Effective practices

Theme 8.1: Holistic support, tailored, person-centred approaches

Another key theme across the interviews was the importance of providing holistic and tailored, person-centred support. Participants emphasised that addressing homelessness requires more than just providing housing. Rather it involves taking a comprehensive approach that considers the whole person, including – for example – their mental health, employment, and overall well-being.

Interviewees highlighted the need to address all aspects of a person's life, not just their housing situation. This sentiment was echoed by others who noted that the first few weeks of support once accommodation had been found are particularly critical to long-term success. Continuous check-ins and individualised assistance were seen as essential in helping people stabilise and avoid falling back into rough sleeping.

Several interviewees, pointed out that the flexibility of funding allowed for more creative and individualised responses to client needs. This flexibility enabled them to quickly address a range of issues, from securing housing to providing practical items and support for well-being, which had a significant impact on their clients' mental health and long-term stability.

Overall, the importance of personalised interventions was a recurring theme, with many emphasising that no two clients are the same. Tailored support, from facilitating GP appointments to helping with employment, was seen as critical in addressing the complex needs of individuals facing homelessness. Interviewees noted that this approach led to better engagement and more positive outcomes for clients.

> *"We bought him some garden furniture ... He's developed a love of gardening, and it's been massive for his mental health." [Interview 02]*

"Our ... model helps support workers see tools in action and learn from it. ... Working through the support worker has been key in embedding trauma-informed approaches. ... We've seen clients engage with creative activities ... these are essential for trauma recovery. ... We've learned that sometimes the smallest changes in the system can make a big difference." [Interview 04]

"The flexibility of the funding has allowed us to be imaginative in how we work ... what is right for this person." [Interview 05]

"It's not just about housing ... it's the whole lifestyle, everything that's going on in their lives." [Interview 06]

"It gave us breathing space ... knowing we could accommodate her overnight meant we could focus on other support. ... Women's rough sleeping is more hidden ... we had to be really careful, as there are additional safety issues for women." [Interview 07]

"We've had a massive drive in looking at PIE and taking a step back to reflect on what we do." [Interview 08]

"One shoe doesn't fit all. You try and tailor interventions, but what works for one person doesn't work for another." [Interview 09]

"We come from a psychologically informed approach, trying to work with the young person rather than doing things to them. That's the only way it works." [Interview 10]

"Integrated approach RSI Outreach, Housing Support alongside Employability Support. Such work with rough sleepers takes time and the barriers to engagement can be significant; it is not a quick fix." [Respondent 3, Q15]

Theme 8.2: Importance of training and volunteer support, reflective practice

Consistently interviews emphasised the significance of comprehensive training, volunteer support, and reflective practice in the successful delivery of services to rough sleepers. Many participants stressed that properly equipping volunteers and staff with the right knowledge and skills was essential for ensuring the quality and effectiveness of support provided.

Several interviewees highlighted the importance of training volunteers to meet the right standards. For one organisation, initially they found managing volunteers complex, but the organisation streamlined its approach, assigning one dedicated worker to oversee volunteers which improved outcomes. They felt that ensuring volunteers received proper guidance and support allowed them to maintain appropriate boundaries and deliver better services.

Reflective practice was also seen as a crucial element in helping staff and volunteers understand the challenges faced by rough sleepers. For example, participants emphasised how valuable reflective sessions were for their team, as it helped them better understand how to support clients effectively. Although a participant reported that this practice had since been discontinued, there was a recognition of its importance in encouraging continuous improvement and maintaining the wellbeing of staff and volunteers.

In addition, participants pointed to the value of specialised training, such as a modern slavery awareness course, which helped frontline workers better understand and address specific vulnerabilities. Similarly, interviewees discussed the importance of providing trauma-informed

training and clinical supervision to help staff better understand the complex psychological needs of their clients as well as the potential impact of complex and emotionally demanding work on practitioners.

"We do reflective practice and clinical supervision to help staff understand trauma." [Interview 04]

"We streamlined it down so that there is just one worker now dealing with everyone, which is working much better. ... Training for volunteers has been something we've had to look at ... it's been about getting the volunteers to the right standard." [Interview 05]

"Training has been vital ... like the Homelessness Reduction Act, just keeping it in the forefront of their minds." [Interview 09]

"The combined authority offers modern slavery awareness courses through RSI funding which I think is really important." [Interview 11]

"Reflective practice was really valuable for my team ... it's something we've missed since it stopped. It helped us understand how to better support our clients." [Interview 13]

"It is useful to be able to engage purposefully by using Level 1 courses. It is significant to develop trusting and open relationships with local employers. This may not have been sufficiently understood at the outset of the programme." [Respondent 3, Q15]

"The joint learning has been key to the programme." [Respondent 4, Q15]

Topic 9: Feedback and adaptation

Theme 9.1: Public awareness of effective help is low

A less prominent but nonetheless interesting theme to emerge was the issue of low public awareness regarding homelessness and related programmes. Participants expressed concerns that both the general public and even certain professionals outside specific networks often lack a full understanding of the complexity of homelessness and the work being done to support people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping.

For instance, one participant noted that, outside specific forums and networks, there is minimal knowledge about the work of the WMCA in tackling homelessness and related issues. This highlights a perceived gap in both professional and public understanding of the coordinated efforts taking place behind the scenes.

Similarly, other interviewees observed that while collaboration among local services has been successful, public perception often fails to grasp the multifaceted nature of homelessness, such as the interplay between housing, mental health, and employment challenges. One participant felt there could be more awareness of the public giving scheme to deter members of the public from giving cash directly to people on the street.

Participants working with women experiencing rough sleeping expressed disappointment that public awareness around gender specific needs remains low. This lack of awareness was

believed to contribute to the hidden nature of women's homelessness and limit the support and strategic attention these cases receive.

"All you're doing [by giving cash directly] is you're subsidising their life on the streets" [Interview 01]

"It's gone pretty well from the start ... but outside our regular networks, there's still a lack of public understanding around how complex these issues are." [Interview 06]

"Women's rough sleeping is more hidden ... I think it's disappointing that it didn't carry on because there wasn't enough public awareness or attention." [Interview 07]

"You don't have to step too far out of these forums and there's literally no knowledge of what the combined authority actually does." [Interview 11]

Theme 9.2: Need for strategic system change

A key theme that emerged from the interviews was a perceived need for system change to address the long-term needs of people experiencing rough sleeping more effectively. Participants highlighted that while existing funding streams, like the RSI programme have made a positive impact, they often address immediate needs without resolving the deeper structural issues within the system.

For instance, interviewees pointed out that while short-term funding has provided much-needed resources, it does not fundamentally change the system. They emphasised that lasting change requires a more strategic approach, expressing concerns about the limitations of short-term funding. Participants felt that without a more sustainable model, the progress made and learning developed might not be enduring.

Additionally, interviewees stressed the need for NHS services to become more inclusive and responsive to the needs of people experiencing rough sleeping, noting that systems must be adapted to better support this vulnerable group, particularly in terms of mental health services. It was felt that without such adjustments, gaps in care will continue to hinder the long-term success of interventions.

Participants underscored that while immediate and flexible support is crucial, achieving meaningful and sustainable outcomes requires a shift in how services are structured and delivered. This includes aligning funding with longer-term goals and making systemic changes to health, housing, and social support services to better address the complexity of people's needs.

"I still think there's more to come, and I'm not sure we've maximised our potential with it. ... The system hasn't been nailed down, and RSI doesn't do system change ... it helps on the way but doesn't fix it." [Interview 03]

"We're working on systems change to make ... services more inclusive for rough sleepers. ... We need to push inclusion and adapt NHS mental health services." [Interview 04]


"A significant part of the new terms of reference is around data collection ... we're working on how to share data across organisations." [Interview 11]

"Without continued funding, the work we've done might not have a lasting impact. ... It's always going to be difficult with short-term funding because we're working on things with long-term needs." [Interview 12]

## Theme 9.3: Improving practice through learning

Most respondents to the survey (n=5) believed that the programme had been extremely (n=2) or very effective (n=2) at using key insights from implementation to improve practice or outcomes over time. Only one respondent felt that the programme had been moderately effective at driving improvement through learning as seen in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Effectiveness of implementing improvement based on learning
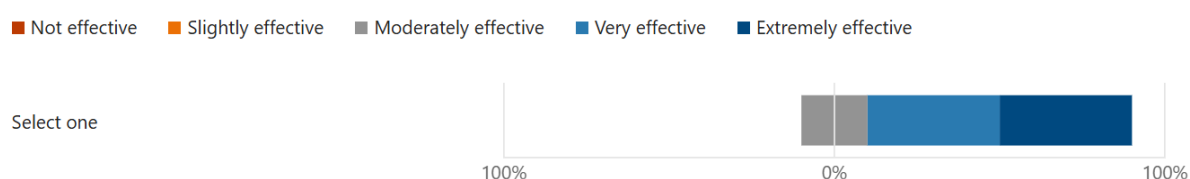
Similarly, Figure 13 shows that most respondents to the survey (n=7) believed that the programme had been extremely (n=4) or very effective (n=1) at implementing improvements based on feedback from service users or other stakeholders. Two respondents felt that the programme had neither been effective nor ineffective at implementing improvement based on feedback.

Figure 13: Effectiveness at implementing improvement based on feedback
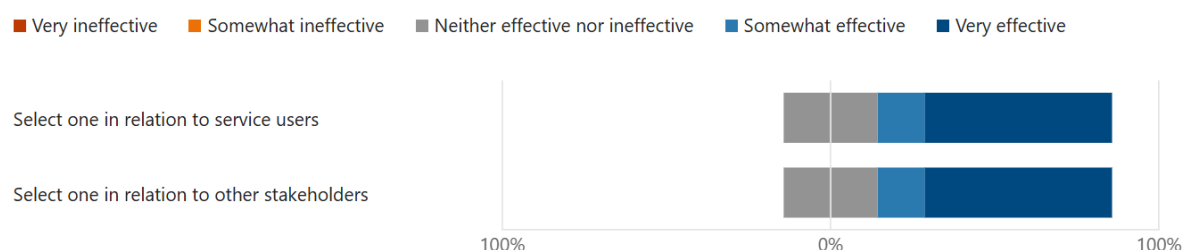
Several interviewees emphasised the importance of reflective practice, both individually and within teams. By regularly reviewing what is working and what is not, teams are able to identify areas for improvement. One participant noted that reflective conversations prevent organisations from "going down a rabbit hole," allowing them to focus on effective strategies and adapt when necessary. This approach not only encourages continual learning but also helps teams avoid repeating mistakes.

Another key aspect of learning comes from collaboration and shared experiences across different authorities and organisations. Participants frequently mentioned the value of learning from other partners in the programme. One interviewee explained that collaborating with others provided opportunities to share best practices, leading to more effective support for people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping. This exchange of knowledge, particularly through forums and joint meetings, allowed teams to learn from each other's successes and challenges.

Organisations have engaged in structured learning environments such as psychologically informed environments (PIE) forums, where they adopt more person-centred approaches. One interviewee highlighted how such forums have been a "huge learning experience," enabling teams to better understand the psychological needs of their staff and customers and adjust their services accordingly.

"It's quite timely because you can often get down a rabbit hole otherwise. Reflective conversations help us look at what's been working well and what hasn't. Learning from other authorities has been really helpful." [Interview 03]

"Reflecting on what we do has helped our teams take a step back and really think about how we can improve. We've been part of PIE forums that allow us to work with a person-centred approach, and that's been a huge learning experience." [Interview 09]

"The collaboration across authorities has allowed us to share best practices and learn from each other. Reflective practice, particularly for frontline staff, has been invaluable in understanding how to support clients better." [Interview 14]

"We have been able to pick up customers earlier in the process as soon as they are struggling with their housing situation rather that firefighting and picking them up at the point they are already on the streets." [Respondent 2, Q17]

"Getting out in the local community to recruit prospective employers that would be interested in considering rough sleepers for employment opportunities." [Respondent 3, Q17]

"We had feedback from customers about where they wanted to be seen – we put our member of staff in the local council plus office who can then make warm referrals on the same day and this has worked really well - it has reduced our number of no shows." [Respondent 2, Q19]

What would you do again?

This section discusses practices and strategies that respondents would continue in future programmes, highlighting the value of personal budgets and collaboration. Flexible personal budgets allowed services to respond quickly to the diverse needs of individuals, addressing both immediate crises and longer-term stability. This flexibility enabled organisations to provide essential support, such as emergency housing or necessary items, improving client outcomes.

Partnerships and collaboration between local authorities, service providers, and stakeholders were viewed as a key strength that should be continued. The respondents praised the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce for encouraging cooperation, sharing knowledge, and creating a supportive network. These partnerships helped to coordinate effective responses to rough sleeping.

The report also identified areas for improvement, with some respondents mentioning the administrative burden of performance reporting. Many participants advocated for more stable,

long-term funding to ensure the sustainability of services and reduce uncertainty for both staff and clients.

Finally, respondents emphasised the need for public awareness campaigns to improve understanding of homelessness and promote proactive support. The continuation of trauma-informed and holistic approaches was also recommended to provide comprehensive, long-lasting support to individuals at risk of homelessness.

Respondents to the survey (n=7) mostly stated that they would be very likely (n=6) to recommend using the same practices in a future programme. Similarly, most respondents also stated that they would be very likely (n=5) or somewhat likely (n=1) to recommend using the same strategies. In both cases, one respondent stated that they would be neither likely nor unlikely to recommend using the same practices and strategy. See Figure 14.

Figure 14: Likelihood of recommending the same practices and strategies in future
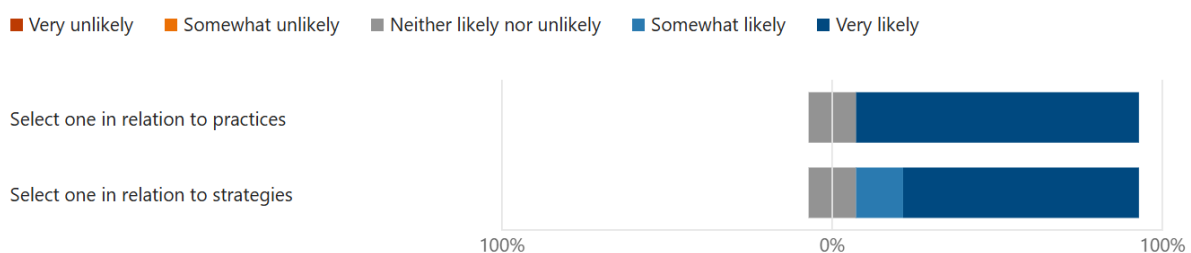
Topic 10: Recurrent practices and strategies

Theme 10.1: Personal budgets

A recurring theme across the interviews was a wish to continue the use of flexible personal budgets in supporting people experiencing rough sleeping. Participants emphasised how this flexibility allowed services to respond swiftly to the diverse and immediate needs of individuals, making a significant impact on engagement and outcomes.

Several interviewees highlighted how flexible funding enabled them to be imaginative in their approach, tailoring their support to what was right for each person. This flexibility allowed organisations to provide for a wide range of needs, from emergency accommodation and travel costs to essential items like clothing and mobile phones. For instance, one interviewee described how the ability to cover costs like deposits for housing or emergency provisions helped make a house feel like a home, addressing not just immediate need for shelter but also supporting overall well-being.

Similarly, other interviewees discussed their use of personalisation funds, which had allowed them to provide crisis interventions to protect people, e.g., hot and cold weather packs, further emphasising the importance of a flexible, fast, and non-bureaucratic approach. This adaptability was seen as important in meeting people's shorter and longer-term needs, particularly in situations where other resources were unavailable or slow to respond.

Overall, flexible personalisation funding was seen as a key enabler of person-centred, responsive services, allowing providers to go beyond more rigid programme structures and offer more meaningful, immediate support to those in need.

"That little slush fund line has made a big difference for us." [Interview 02]

"The flexibility allowed us to help with passports, travel vouchers, and all the basic needs." [Interview 06]

"The flexibility of the funding … being able to meet the immediate needs, that's something I'd do again." [Interview 07]

"We'd continue to use the flexibility of the funding … it allows us to meet people's needs whether that's accommodation, travel, or small items." [Interview 08]

"The flexibility has been invaluable. We've been able to meet the immediate needs of … people and provide them with opportunities for work and training." [Interview 10]

"The flexibility in how we allocate funds, especially for emergency provision and accommodation, is something we'd definitely keep." [Interview 12]

"The flexibility of the funding has been crucial, and I'd definitely continue with that approach." [Interview 13]

"If funds are available I would encourage the use of a 'small' fund, perhaps with a slightly higher monetary limit, say, £3,000 rather than £2,000) … or even two small funds e.g. up to £2,000 and, say, £2001 - £3,000) for small, local organisations." [Respondent 1, Q21]

Theme 10.2: Maintain partnerships and collaboration

A central theme in the interviews was the importance of maintaining strong partnerships and collaboration between local authorities, service providers, and other key stakeholders. Participants consistently emphasised that effective collaboration was crucial to the success of initiatives aimed at supporting people experiencing rough sleeping.

Several interviewees praised the structure of the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce. For example, participants highlighted how the Taskforce enabled partners to share knowledge and support one another. Similarly, other participants noted that the partnerships developed with, for example, the rough sleeper team, homelessness forum, and employment support services were vital in providing coordinated support for individuals.

The flexibility and openness of these partnerships were also commended. One interviewee described how the programme brought together different local authorities, creating a network where services could collaborate without being bogged down by unnecessary formality. This sense of mutual support and shared goals was echoed by a number of interviewees who emphasised that transparency and open communication among partners.

The interviews emphasised that maintaining these partnerships and collaborative efforts is viewed as essential for successfully tackling homelessness.

"We're not experts … we work through the partners because they are trained caseworkers." [Interview 01]

"It's been an absolutely worthwhile thing to do… There's more development to come, and the job's not finished yet. … We've got it right with the impartiality of the Street Support Network, but there's more to do in making it a mainstay." [Interview 03]

"Working with the combined authority has been really beneficial ... they've linked us in with different people." *[Interview 05]*

"The collaboration with the rough sleeper team, homelessness forum, and employment support has been crucial." *[Interview 06]*

"We'd continue the collaboration with ... others ... it's really valuable." *[Interview 07]*

"Collaboration is everything ... We don't tread on each other's toes, and we're open and transparent in our relationships." *[Interview 08]*

"The coordination of the RSI meetings has been key ... everyone talks about their barriers, and the information filters back down." *[Interview 09]*

"The shared practice and the support from WMCA, especially from Diana and Chloe, has been really helpful. We would definitely continue that." *[Interview 10]*

"The [WMCA]'s role in bringing people together has been vital. ... It allows for a common understanding across local authorities." *[Interview 11]*

"We'd definitely continue the collaboration with local authorities and partners. ... it's been essential to our work." *[Interview 12]*

"We'd want to work more with the Combined Authority to access private rented accommodation. ... single-person housing is key for people with a history of rough sleeping." *[Interview 12]*

"The [WMCA] Taskforce is essential ... bringing all the local authorities together and sharing resources has been a game changer." *[Interview 13]*

"The recording of information." [Respondent 5, Q21]

Topic 11: Improvement areas

Figure 15 shows that most survey respondents (n=7) felt that either no improvements were needed (n=2) or only light improvements were needed (n=3). However, two respondents stated that moderate improvements were needed.

Figure 15: Scale of improvement needed in the programme

Legend: ■ Major improvement needed ■ Significant improvement needed ■ Moderate improvement needed ■ Slight improvement needed ■ No improvement needed

Select one

100%   0%   100%
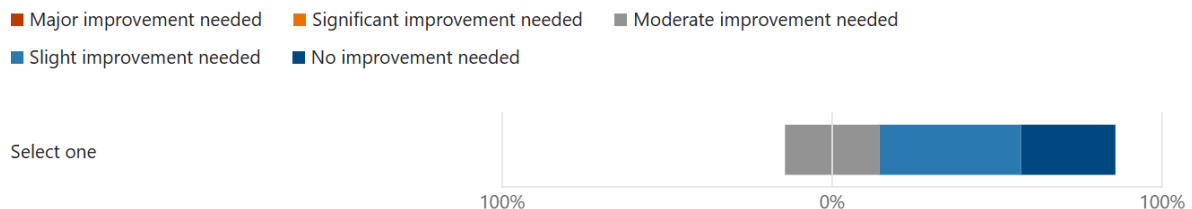
Theme 11.1: Clarity over proportionality of administration

During the interviews very few areas were highlighted by participants for potential improvement. More than one participant cited the administrative burden related to performance reporting as in need of attention. One participant described the administration as laborious and time-consuming. However, that view was more than balanced by other interviewees who described the administration as flexible and proportionate.

Other areas for improvement discussed during interviews related to wider systemic issues outside of the direct influence of the programme. For example, the short-term nature of RSI funding, improved availability of suitable accommodation, or access to mental health services.

"The forms that we have to fill in are like ... laborious." [Interview 05]

Theme 11.2: Stability of future funding

A recurring concern among interview participants is the uncertainty around long-term funding. Many interviewees mentioned the challenges posed by short-term funding cycles, which often limit their ability to plan and implement sustainable solutions. The reliance on temporary grants and short-term contracts makes it difficult for organisations to provide consistent support to vulnerable populations.

Several participants highlighted that securing multi-year funding would greatly improve their capacity to deliver long-term services. For example, they pointed out that without stable funding, there is constant pressure to reapply for grants, diverting valuable time and resources away from direct service provision. This not only affects the delivery of critical services but also impacts staff retention, as many employees face uncertainty regarding their roles beyond the current funding period.

The need for greater collaboration between funding bodies and service providers was also emphasised. By working more closely together, funding organisations can better understand the long-term needs of services and design more flexible funding models that allow for ongoing adaptation to emerging challenges.

"Short-term funding creates a lot of uncertainty. We find ourselves spending significant time reapplying for funding instead of focusing on delivering consistent support to our clients." [Interview 07]

"I'm so disappointed that it can't be sustainable for longer than two years." [Interview 10]

"If we had more secure, long-term funding, we could plan better. Right now, the funding is so fragmented, and it makes it difficult to focus on the big picture when we're worried about where the next grant is coming from." [Interview 11]

"It's always going to be difficult with short-term funding because we're working on things with long-term needs." [Interview 12]

"One of the biggest barriers is the lack of continuity in funding. It's difficult to retain staff when we can't guarantee contracts beyond a few months or a year. It affects morale and the ability to deliver stable services." [Interview 14]

"The thing that would improve it for me is future funding" [Respondent 2, Q23]

Theme 11.3: A wider public campaign

Some interviewees and one respondent to the survey felt that there is a need for a more extensive public campaign to inform the general public about homelessness. They believed that increased visibility of homelessness issues can motivate public action and increased empathy. For instance, one interviewee mentioned that the public often does not know what to do when they see someone experiencing homelessness and suggested that a consistent approach to sharing information would help address this gap.

"I think that there should be more publicity ... more obvious publicity about homelessness, cause people don't really think about it. If I talk to people ... most of them haven't even heard of Change into Action. ... With all of these problems, the first thing about solving it is to get people aware of it. If it's a social problem, you want it to be in the front of people's minds, not just in the background." [Interview 1]

"One of the significant things, the cross-cutting themes, was actually about the lack of consistent information, advice, and guidance for people who are experiencing homelessness. Also, for the public—what do they do when they see someone who needs help?" [Interview 2]

"Clearer publicity to the public on the number of rough sleepers in the ... area, clearer information to the public on what they could do when they suspect that somebody is rough sleeping, e.g., public notices in railway and bus stations and in shopping centres, etc., giving a telephone number or an email address where concerns may be reported. Also publicity on the success rate of the RSI." [Respondent 1, Q25]

Topic 12: Sustaining success

A majority of respondents to the survey (n=7) felt either confident (n=1) or very confident (n=3) that the success achieved in the RSI programme could be sustained and built upon. Figure 16 also shows that three respondents expressed that they were neither confident nor doubtful of sustaining and building on the programme's achievements.

Figure 16: Confidence that the success achieved can be sustained and built upon
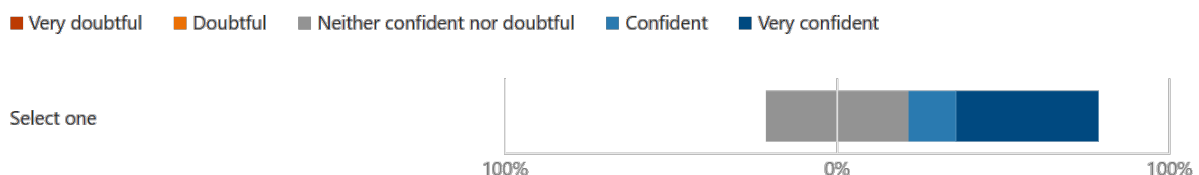
Theme 12.1: Continuation of the programme

There was desire among interviewees for the programme to be repeated. Many participants emphasised that while the programme has been effective in reducing rough sleeping, its long-term success and impact are at risk due to the short-term nature of the funding and the need for more resources to grow and embed the initiative. Participants acknowledged the positive impact of the RSI programme but highlighted the need for its continuation fearing that the activity, including the associated multi-agency collaboration, would cease without ongoing funding.

"The rough sleeping initiative ... from our point of view, it's been highly successful" [Interview 01]

"If we had more funding, we could have grown that and looked wider at referral streams. ... I would definitely do it all over again." [Interview 02]

"It's been an absolutely worthwhile thing to do. ... There's more development to come, and the job's not finished yet." [Interview 03]

"The whole thing has worked really well and helped a lot of people." [Respondent 2, Q21]

"... the sheer nature of the RSI work needs to be a permanent approach, not one with a limited shelf life. I hope that makes sense. There is clearly a need, so to withdraw this support is detrimental to rough sleepers." [Respondent 3, Q23]

Theme 12.2: Maintaining flexibility

Several interviewees highlighted how funding flexibility enabled them to provide tailored support. Participants were keen to see the administrative and operational flexibility continue.

"Our flexible approach has allowed us to adjust when the situation required, and I'd do that again." [Interview 04]

"The flexibility of the funding ... is really beneficial. It's not tied to certain demographics or benefits." [Interview 05]

"The monitoring not being too heavy but constantly there ... the support from WMCA has been good." [Interview 06]

Theme 12.3: Embed trauma informed and holistic practice

Several interviewees highlighted the importance of embedding trauma-informed approaches. For example, one interviewee explained that providing reflective practice and clinical supervision to frontline staff was crucial for helping them understand and manage the trauma their clients had experienced.

In addition, other participants stressed that their success came from addressing the "whole lifestyle" of their customers and not just their housing situation. This holistic approach was seen as essential in helping individuals stabilise and rebuild their lives.

"I'd continue focusing on trauma-informed approaches, supporting staff with reflective practice. ... The work with frontline staff in helping them use psychological tools has been highly valuable." [Interview 04]

"The guests have really benefited because we've been able to think broadly ... addressing mental well-being through small things that make a big difference." [Interview 05]

"Integrated approach/PIE approach. A holistic approach alongside the accommodation and employability support creates a more stable environment for the individual." [Respondent 3, Q21]

Theme 12.4: Focus on systems change

Some interviewees wanted to see more of a focus on systems change, including workforce development opportunities, in a future programme. Many participants recognised that while immediate interventions have been effective, there are broader systemic challenges that they feel need to be addressed to create lasting, longer-term solutions. This included workforce development through the learning programme.

"I'd continue pushing for system changes to make statutory services more accessible and effective for rough sleepers." [Interview 04]

"I think there needs to be better strategic alignment between RSI, UK SPF, and whatever replaces it." [Interview 06]

"Keeping the RSI training plan is crucial … I always say to my team, even if it's a repeat, you might learn something new." [Interview 09]

"If these issues can't be resolved regionally, they should be escalated to the government diplomatically and robustly." [Interview 11]

"If we could get more private landlords on board, maybe even securing a block of accommodation … that could really help ease the housing crisis." [Interview 13]

Contribution of the taskforce

Participants felt that the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce played a crucial role in the success of the RSI programme, providing a platform for collaboration and coordination across the West Midlands. This section explores the Taskforce's added value, with survey respondents rating their experience of working with it as overwhelmingly positive. The Taskforce was instrumental in nurturing partnerships between local authorities, service providers, and other stakeholders, creating a more unified approach to addressing homelessness. Through its leadership, the Taskforce facilitated knowledge sharing and strategic coordination, helping to drive regional efforts to reduce rough sleeping and improve the delivery of integrated support services.

Topic 13: Added value of the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce

All respondents to the survey (n=7) rated their overall impression of working with the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce as either good (n=3) or excellent (n=4) as shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17: Overall impression of working with the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce

Theme 13.1: Centrality of the Taskforce to encouraging collaboration

The WMCA Homelessness Taskforce played a pivotal role in the perceived success of the programme, with many interview participants highlighting its valuable contributions to collaboration, knowledge sharing, and coordination across the region. The Taskforce brought together key stakeholders from local authorities, service providers, and other partners, creating a more consistent approach to addressing homelessness.

The leadership of the Taskforce was seen as a key part of the success of the RSI. By creating a space for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and a level of strategic coordination, the taskforce played a role in driving regional efforts to reduce rough sleeping and deliver more integrated support services.

"The combined authority is the one place that does bring them all together... having all those things in one place benefits everybody." [Interview 11]

"The combined authority does a good job of knitting us all together... without being too formal or cumbersome." [Interview 12]

"The arrangement of the task force which is all my equivalents across the West Midlands has been brilliant ... being able to support each other and share knowledge has been invaluable." [Interview 13]

Conclusions from thematic analysis

The thematic analysis highlights several key factors that contributed to the success of the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce RSI programme. Flexibility emerged as an important enabler, particularly in the use of personalisation funds that allowed for quick, tailored responses to diverse needs. This adaptability, paired with the collaboration between local authorities, service providers, and third-party organisations, was perceived as central to improving outcomes for rough sleepers.

Figure 18: Survey respondent perceptions of impact in preventing rough sleeping
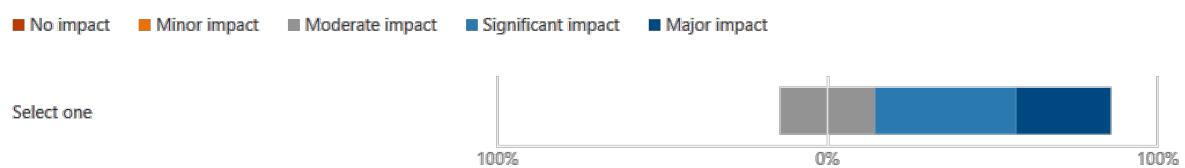
Furthermore, the programme's focus on holistic support, trauma-informed practices, and ongoing training for staff and volunteers strengthened service delivery and enhanced customer well-being. Reflective practice also played a crucial role in developing continuous improvement, helping projects to adapt and refine their approaches. Challenges such as short-term funding, recruitment difficulties, and administrative burdens were noted, yet the flexibility of the programme mitigated many of these issues.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that the programme's ability to respond creatively and collaboratively to both immediate and long-term needs was a key part of its perceived success. As shown in Figure 18, most survey respondents (n=7) felt that the RSI programme had delivered either a major impact (n=2) or a significant impact (n=3) in preventing rough sleeping with the balance of respondents (n=2) rating the impact as moderate.

Project case study

Coventry Job Shop

Context of the RSI project

People experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping face considerable barriers to accessing training, volunteering, or employment opportunities. Key barriers to employment pathways include a lack of accommodation or insecure forms of tenure which make maintaining a schedule or a stable address difficult. Similarly, maintaining consistent access to a longstanding telephone number or access to the Internet makes communication with services or employers problematic. Additionally, homelessness often causes or exacerbates poor physical or mental health while social issues such as addiction to drugs or alcohol are also common. People may have lost access to key identification documents, bank accounts, primary healthcare, and may also lack the means to access reliable transport. Disabilities are more common among people experiencing homelessness, including hidden disabilities such as acquired brain injury, which can also lead to complexities when accessing training or employment pathways. Other key barriers to employment that are common among the customer group include gaps in work history, disrupted education, limited qualifications, and experience of the criminal justice system.

For many people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping, the dynamics of a daily struggle for survival caused and exacerbated by these issues may understandably take precedence over longer-term planning such as skills development or finding work. As such, research shows that people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping may become stuck outside of support systems due to a complex interplay of intersecting disadvantages. Allied to those individual circumstances, people in this situation also face discriminatory social attitudes that mitigate against successful engagement in mainstream services or employment. In the academic literature, this has been described as *multiple exclusion homelessness*. In this context, supporting people to access pathways to employment represents a significant and challenging ambition.

Site visit to the Job Shop

The Job shop is at West Orchards Way, Coventry, CV1 1QX and is open Monday to Wednesday 9.30am until 4.30pm, Thursdays from 10.30am until 4.30pm, and Fridays 9.30am to 4.30pm. Coventry Job Shop is part funded through the RSI programme of the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce via an outreach worker for people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping. A site visit took place on 20th September 2024 as part of the qualitative review which was facilitated by service staff and management. The Job Shop provides support to help people find employment and overcome barriers to employment. Priority is given to residents of Coventry. The Job Shop has been running for many years but moved to its current location in March 2024 and received a formal relaunch in July 2024.

The new premises for the Job Shop enjoys a prominent location in the city centre near to popular shops, cafés, and other facilities. Services are delivered in a sizable modern retail unit and offer a welcoming, bright, and open plan setting. Staff greet people at a reception area. Job coaches are available to visitors using both and appointment-based and drop-in models. There

are numerous meeting desks available for work coaches and other professionals to meet with customers. Where confidentiality is necessary there are several soundproofed consultation rooms available.

Job vacancies and other opportunities are displayed on large screens both inside the building and in the full height windows that face a retail throughfare at the front of the premises. These encourage footfall and add to the welcoming retail appearance. Partner agencies also use the Job Shop as a base to provide related services. This includes job centre staff as well as a money and benefits advice service. CV workshops and other employment related training, such as digital skills and ESOL, are delivered in a number of flexibly sized meeting rooms which serve groups from approximately 6 to 20 participants depending on the configuration of movable walls.

The Job Shop has several desktop computers for use by anyone visiting the centre. This is also used as a digital skill training area. The Job Shop may also gift reconditioned laptops to people in need as part of a digital inclusion programme.

Employers use the premises for meeting and interviewing prospective employees. This includes large employers such as the City Council and Amazon. The service recently hosted a jobs fayre that attracted more than 400 people. Sometimes, employers ask the Job Shop to conduct interviews on their behalf. This wide array of services provided by or at the Job Shop are funded through a mix of funding streams.

The WMCA Homelessness Taskforce RSI programme funds a specialist worker for people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping. Managed and supported by a small programme team that oversees the rest of the project, the worker operates largely on an outreach basis. The team is employed by Coventry City Council.

The specialist RSI worker helps people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping to tackle barriers to employment. These include access to housing, health services, acquiring identification documents, employment related training, welfare benefits (including discretionary housing payments, for example, to temporarily help with supported housing rental should people find employment), volunteering opportunities, and work trials. The worker acts as an advocate and navigator for customers to coordinate a wide range of needed services.

This approach helps people to achieve a necessary level of stability such that skills development, volunteering, or employment become a more realistic aspiration as planning horizons lengthen. Multi-agency working and the maintenance of a wide range of service relationships is essential for the work. Where appropriate the worker also supports people to attend, engage with, and benefit from the services available at the Job Shop. Presenting at the Job Shop on a drop-in basis with the RSI worker provides near immediate access to a work coach or money advice as the service recognises the need to respond quickly to positive engagement from customers experiencing housing crisis.

A flexible personal budget is available to the RSI worker. This enables the service to quickly address presenting needs that may pose significant barriers to engagement with services. Examples include mobile phones, transport, clothes, help to secure necessary identification, essential furniture, the cost of obtaining certifications such as a CSCS card, etc.

Customer case studies

Case studies highlight the diverse challenges faced by individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness, and how tailored support from the Job Shop's RSI programme has helped them on their journey toward employment and stability. The case studies of David, Andrei, Daniel, Maria, Tom, and Samuel (not their real names) demonstrate the programme's multifaceted approach in addressing complex barriers such as no recourse to public funds, mental health challenges, financial instability, and digital exclusion. Each story underscores the importance of personalised interventions – ranging from language support, digital inclusion, and access to benefits, to emotional and practical assistance in securing housing, access to health services, training, and – for some – employment. These examples illustrate how outreach through the RSI worker and targeted resources leads to ongoing customer engagement and access to needed support. In often challenging circumstances these individuals have benefited from help to develop or regain their confidence, improve their living conditions, and aspire to longer-term stability in the community. What follows is a selection of six different case studies from twelve supplied by the service. Of these, five involve male customers and one is a female customer. Only one of the twelve case studies supplied by the service for the review involved a female customer.

David's story*

* Note that David is not the person's real name

Key context: no recourse to public funds

David, an EU national, arrived in the UK during the Covid pandemic and initially stayed in a hotel as part of the "Everyone In" initiative. With no recourse to public funds but the right to work, David faced barriers such as limited English proficiency and a medical condition. Referred to the RSI programme in 2023, David's progress was supported by a translator to help overcome the language barrier. He was supported to enrol in an ESOL course to improve his English, with transportation costs covered by RSI. Despite his health challenges, David is committed to improving his English to pursue employment opportunities. The programme also provided ongoing support, including weekly appointments and travel assistance. David's aspiration is to find employment and be in a position to support himself financially. David's story highlights the challenges faced by people with no recourse to public funds and the role of tailored support in overcoming language and health barriers.

Barriers faced:
- Limited English proficiency (language barrier)
- No recourse to public funds
- Historic health condition causing pain and requiring medical treatment
- Lack of financial resources for transportation
- Reliance on a translator for communication

Support provided:
- Enrolled in a course to improve English skills
- Bus tickets for transportation to and from the ESOL course
- Translator support to attend appointments
- Referral to medical services for treatment and physiotherapy
- Weekly appointments with RSI staff for continued support

- David is in a better position to obtain employment with a positive aspiration

Andrei's story*

* Note that Andrei is not the person's real name

Key context: not claiming benefit entitlements

Andrei, an EU national with settled status, walked into Coventry Job Shop seeking support. He faced financial hardship with no income, had not applied for benefits, and was at risk of rough sleeping due to being evicted. Andrei was sofa surfing and needed to find new accommodation quickly. In response, he was referred to the money advice team for financial support and for housing assistance. He was also advised to apply for homelessness support through Coventry City Council.

To enhance his employability, Andrei attended a workshop where his CV was updated. He participated in employment events and interviews for jobs with large local employers. After attending pre-screening, he was successfully offered a full-time job with a salary significantly higher than the minimum wage. With his new employment secured, Andrei was temporarily accepted back into his previous home and aspires to save for his own accommodation.

Barriers faced:

- Financial hardship with no income
- No benefits applications were in place
- At risk of rough sleeping due to eviction and precariously housed
- Did not know how to address these issues

Support provided:

- Referred to the money advice team for financial support
- Referred to Steps for Change for housing assistance
- Advised on homelessness application with Coventry City Council.
- Referred to a CV workshop to update and prepare for job applications
- Referred to multiple employment events
- Supported to apply for Universal Credit.

Key outcomes at time of writing:

- Avoided rough sleeping
- Andrei secured a full-time job
- Saving for a deposit on more secure accommodation

Daniel's story*

* Note that Daniel is not the person's real name

Key context: young male experiencing low mood

When Daniel registered with the programme he was struggling with anxiety, depression, and low confidence, which impacted his social interactions and engagement. His participation was inconsistent due to these mental health challenges. To support Daniel, he was enrolled in a confidence-building workshop and later assessed for digital skills. Daniel lacked access to the

Internet and digital equipment. Through the digital inclusion scheme, Daniel received a laptop and Internet dongle, which significantly boosted his confidence and independence.

With a desire to gain skills and experience, Daniel sought volunteering opportunities. He applied for a retail volunteering position with a charity, where he interviewed and was offered a weekend role. His initial weekend experience was positive and Daniel reported increased confidence. His engagement with the RSI worker has improved as a result of his volunteering role, marking a step forward in his journey toward employment and self-sufficiency.

Barriers faced:
- Struggled with anxiety, depression, and low confidence
- Difficulty with social interaction and engagement
- Inconsistent participation due to mental health challenges
- No access to digital equipment or the Internet
- Reliance on others for tasks like email, CV writing, and job applications

Support provided:
- Enrolled in a confidence-building workshop
- Assessed for digital skills
- Provided with a laptop and Internet dongle through the digital inclusion scheme
- Supported in searching for volunteering opportunities.
- Assisted in applying for a volunteering position

Key outcomes at the time of writing:
- Daniel secured a part-time volunteering role
- His confidence and independence improved with access to digital resources
- Increased engagement with the RSI worker
- Daniel felt more positive and prepared to build skills for future employment

Maria's story*

* Note that Maria is not the person's real name

Key context: insecurely housed female experiencing low mood

Maria returned to the UK after living in abroad for a number of years. Upon her return, she found herself homeless and temporarily staying with friends. Coventry City Council declined housing support due to her lack of a local connection. Despite her considerable experience in health and social care, Maria was unemployed, not receiving benefits, and her mental health was deteriorating.

Through the RSI programme, Maria received support to apply for benefits and search for affordable accommodation. She secured rented accommodation using her own resources. Maria became eligible for benefits after a period in the UK allowing her to claim rent support. With further assistance, Maria updated her CV, applied for jobs, and received two job offers in health and social care settings. At the time of writing, Maria was awaiting her employment contracts having accepted both positions on flexible hours. Maria has stabilised her mental health and feels optimistic about sustaining her employment and improving her living situation.

- At risk of homelessness due to temporary housing with friends
- Ineligible for housing support due to lack of local connection
- Financial insecurity and not in receipt of benefits
- Deteriorating mental health due to circumstances

Support provided:

- Assisted in applying for benefits
- Helped search for affordable accommodation
- Supported in updating her CV and applying for jobs
- Arranged job interviews and facilitated decision-making regarding job offers
- Provided pastoral care and support

Key outcomes at time of writing:

- Successfully claimed welfare benefits
- Stabilised living situation in temporary accommodation
- Improved mental health
- Moved into more suitable accommodation
- Maria secured paid work

Tom's story*

* Note that Tom is not the person's real name

Key context: rough sleeping male, relationship breakdown

Tom lost his job and left his family home following a relationship breakdown, becoming street homeless. He was found sleeping in a tent by the rough sleeper's team in Coventry. Referred to the RSI programme at the Job Shop by the rough sleeper's team, Tom received support to secure employment and accommodation. Tom initially accepted an emergency bed with a local service for people experiencing homelessness. The RSI worker collaborated with various teams to help Tom update his CV, search for similar roles to his previous employment, and arrange travel support for job interviews.

Subsequently, Tom was offered a tenancy through a local housing association and attended two job interviews, resulting in a full-time job offer. Despite barriers like homelessness and travel costs for interviews, Tom engaged well with support services, regularly attending appointments. With financial assistance for travel from external services, Tom is now set to sustain both his employment and tenancy, improving his mental health and stability.

Barriers faced:

- Rough sleeping following relationship breakdown
- Deteriorating mental health exacerbated by street homelessness
- Financial barriers to recovery
- Loss of confidence and stability

Support provided:

- Provided temporary emergency accommodation
- Assisted in job searching and helped update his CV

- Provided ongoing job opportunities via text
- Arranged travel support for interviews

Key outcomes at time of writing:
- Tom secured a full-time job
- Gained his own tenancy
- Received support for travel costs pending first payment from employer

Samuel's story*

* Note that Samuel is not the person's real name

Key context: young neurodivergent male

Samuel, a young neurodivergent man, was referred to the service by the employment service due to his experience of homelessness. Residing in specialist supported accommodation for young people, Sam lacked some essential household items, which were secured with the help of a grant from the money advice team.

Samuel holds a level 2 qualification through which he aimed to secure relevant employment. His employment advisor assisted him with updating his CV and searching for related roles, leading to an interview for an apprenticeship position. Despite facing challenges such as limited Internet access and a sanction applied to his benefits, Samuel received vital support, including a laptop and digital skills training. He also received help to overturn the benefits sanction. After passing necessary checks, Samuel's offer of a place on the apprenticeship was confirmed along with a start date. Samuel received bus pass which was arranged to assist his commute.

Barriers faced:
- History of homelessness
- Lack of basic essentials in his accommodation
- Neurodivergent requiring tailored support
- Difficulty independently job searching and applying for jobs
- Limited access to the Internet and no computer for job applications
- Benefits sanction affecting his income leading to financial concerns

Support provided:
- Referred to the money advice team for grant to cover home essentials
- Assistance with CV updates and job search for qualification-related roles
- Application for a laptop and dongle from the free laptop scheme
- Completed a digital skills assessment for better online job search capability
- Support in overturning the benefits sanction through a mandatory reconsideration
- Provision of a bus pass for travel to work in the first month of employment

Key outcomes at time of writing:
- Financial sanction overturned, securing a stable income
- Laptop and Internet access provided
- Secured an interview and was successful in gaining an apprenticeship
- Accepted assistance with cost of travel for the first month

Job shop - conclusion and recommendations

What's gone well?

The Coventry Job Shop proved effective in creating a welcoming and accessible environment for individuals at risk of rough sleeping. Its bright, open-plan layout, combined with its central location, provides a positive and engaging atmosphere that offers encouragement for participation. The wide range of services offered, such as job coaching, CV workshops, digital vacancy boards, digital skills training, and collaboration with partner agencies, ensures that customers can benefit from holistic support in one place.

Additionally, the specialist RSI worker, funded through the RSI programme, plays a key role in addressing crucial barriers like housing, health services, and employment readiness, helping customers to gain the necessary stability for engagement in training and employment pathways. The outreach model, commitment, and willingness of the worker to support customers to access a wide range of services is central to achieving trust and rapport with individuals.

One of the strengths of the service is the flexibility of its personal budget, which has allowed the team to respond quickly to urgent client needs. This has proved critical in providing essentials such as transportation, mobile phones, identification, and household items. The programme's approach resulted in customers successfully completing training, securing employment, or gaining an apprenticeship, despite facing significant barriers, including mental health struggles, financial insecurity, and language difficulties.

What's been difficult?

However, the programme also faced several challenges. Many customers deal with complex, interconnected barriers alongside homelessness including financial instability and mental health issues, which make consistent engagement difficult. Those with no recourse to public funds or limited language skills required additional resources, including translation services. Furthermore, navigating multiple agencies – such as housing, health, and welfare benefits – was often daunting and time consuming for both the RSI worker and the customers. Working remotely on an outreach basis the RSI worker maintains a complex set of relationships with numerous agencies and services. Coupled with a relatively high caseload this limits the capacity available for networking with similar services and professional development.

As reported by the current team, case work started without some of the necessary administrative and management infrastructure in place. This led the worker to feel isolated and initially uncertain about the remit of the role. However, the situation has improved significantly since the inclusion of the RSI worker within the supervisory responsibilities of the Job Shop programme team. Initially the lack of a recording process for performance and management information added to those challenges. Subsequently, the new management team had to establish a process for recording management information and reporting. The service then had to backtrack to capture earlier interventions and outcomes for management information and performance monitoring.

The programme itself delivers a range of outcomes along a journey towards employment. Given the challenges of supporting people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping to access employment, the management team reported that they would value the opportunity to report a wider range of softer outcomes to illustrate customers achievements. This would be in addition to the case studies. There was a feeling that the current numerical performance reporting to

WMCA focused on a single key 'destination' outcome for an individual, be that training, volunteering, or employment, rather than enabling reporting and accounting for earlier significant outcomes such as accessing housing, health services, or welfare benefits, as well as gaining identification documents, etc., all of which could be considered key milestones.

What are the lessons learnt?

Key lessons that may be emerging from the Coventry Job Shop's approach include:

- The importance of a multi-agency holistic model where wider barriers to employment such as housing, health, and financial wellbeing form a coordinated support intervention is becoming clear in the context of successfully accessing a training or employment pathway.

- Case studies demonstrate that early support interventions when people new to rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping, e.g., due to circumstances such as relationship breakdown or friends no longer being able to accommodate, can be effective relatively quickly. Gaining or restoring sufficient stability in people's lives swiftly makes achieving training, volunteering, or employment a more realistic aspiration before additional complexities are formed.

- The value of flexible, practical, and immediate assistance – whether through personal budgets or support to apply for grants – proved vital in removing short-term barriers to accessing training or employment pathways, e.g., access to transportation, household essentials, digital inclusion (through mobile phones or the provision of a laptop), etc.

- Regular contact between customers and the RSI worker helped maintain trust, motivation, and rapport that promoted engagement with mainstream services as well as those provided through the Job Shop at its retail unit in the City Centre such as those funded through the UKSPF.

- Demand for the service has been such that despite maintaining a waiting list, the RSI outreach worker is dealing with a high caseload which reduces the opportunity for networking, professional development, and reflective practice which are likely essential for a sustainable service.

- Early teething problems for the project during mobilisation and early delivery included a lack of administrative, management systems, and clear lines of reporting or communication leading the RSI worker to feel initially isolated and a period where performance reporting and data systems had to be established and then the data collected retrospectively.

Recommendations

If the project were to be continued as part of a future WMCA Homelessness Taskforce RSI programme, it is recommended that:

- Performance data and case studies from the current programme is used to refine and characterise the target customer group. This could help to manage demand and create capacity for networking, professional development, and reflective practice to support the RSI worker.

- Performance reporting processes and analysis are reviewed to better enable recording of a wider range of positive results and outcomes for customers including follow-on to mainstream employability schemes such as those funded through UKSPF and softer

outcomes along the journey such as gaining identification documents, gaining digital inclusion, or attending training.

- Data and case studies on the effective use of personal budgets within the programme is used to coproduce a set of examples for practitioners, policy makers, and commissioners to guide practice and systems change at each of those levels.

- Consideration is given to the scale of a manageable caseload and processes for triage of referrals is established for situations in which demand for outreach exceeds the capacity of the service.

Conclusion

The Coventry Job Shop's RSI programme demonstrates the significant impact of tailored support for individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness, helping them to overcome complex barriers to employment and achieve greater stability. The holistic approach, combining outreach, multi-agency collaboration, and flexible personal budgets, has supported customers to address critical needs such as housing, health, and digital inclusion, enabling engagement in training and employment pathways despite challenging circumstances.

Despite initial challenges in infrastructure and high caseloads, the programme's success in restoring stability and enabling customers to regain confidence and independence underscore its value. If the service were to form part of a future programme, refining performance metrics, managing demand, and supporting the RSI worker's reflective practice and professional development will be important to sustaining this impactful service. The Job Shop outreach worker represents an example of what Professor Sir Michael Marmot calls *"proportionate universalism"*. In this context, that means a service that is open to everyone in the community, the Job Shop, provides additional tailored support to people in need that promotes equity of access.

By continuing to evolve based on these lessons, the RSI programme can build on the already impressive impact of the Job Shop's role in contributing to meaningful change for people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping.

Acknowledgements

Image sourced from www.coventry-jobs.co.uk

Image sourced from www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-news/visited-coventrys-new-job-shop-29517350

Image sourced from www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-news/visited-coventrys-new-job-shop-29517350

Customer Case Studies

Social Networks – Case studies

David's story*

* Note that David is not the person's real name

Key context: migrant experiencing mental health problems

David arrived in the UK after fleeing military conscription in his home country. He left behind his family and travelled alone across multiple countries before arriving in the UK, where he was initially placed in a migrant holding centre. David later moved to supported housing with a social housing provider.

David faced several challenges, including being withdrawn, feeling hopeless, and losing contact with his family. He has been working towards family reunification, although progress has been slow due to missing paperwork. He expressed a desire to work as a kitchen fitter, a profession he enjoys due to his previous experience working with metal alongside his father.

With support, David has been connected to community activities such as ESOL classes and volunteering opportunities. He successfully applied for a volunteer position helping with furniture collections. David's achievements include opening a bank account, completing Level 2 ESOL, and securing a volunteer role.

David is highly motivated to transition from volunteering to paid work and hopes to reunite with his family. The support team has worked closely with him, using motivational interviewing and ensuring regular engagement.

Barriers faced:

- Emotional withdrawal and feelings of hopelessness
- Loss of contact with family in his home country
- Slow progress in family reunification due to missing paperwork
- Difficulty obtaining necessary documents and DBS for volunteering

Support provided:

- Regular support sessions and motivational interviewing
- Assistance in contacting the Red Cross for family reunification
- Linked with community activities (Belgrade Theatre, ESOL classes, conversation café)
- Support in finding volunteering opportunities (successfully connected with Emmaus)
- Helped with opening a bank account and registering for social housing

Key outcomes:

- Completed Level 2 ESOL, currently studying for Level 3
- Successfully applied for a DBS and secured a volunteer position with Emmaus
- Opened a bank account and registered with Home-finder for social housing
- Clear personal goals and motivation to transition from volunteering to paid work
- Actively working toward family reunification with support from the Red Cross

Colin's story*

* Note that Colin is not the person's real name

Key context: migrant experiencing mental health problems

Colin lost his job, and with it, his accommodation, leaving him days away from rough sleeping. The service's timely intervention provided him not only with shelter but also a strong sense of community. Colin was supported in securing essential documents like identification and a National Insurance number, opening a bank account, and receiving medical care. The service also helped with transportation to appointments and offered financial support for necessary items.

Colin actively engaged with the service community, participating in events and training, including a first aid course that helped him secure employment. Within weeks, he found a low-paid job and began saving, eventually moving into a rented room. Regular check-ins and review meetings ensured he stayed on track with his goals.

Barriers faced:
- Imminent risk of homelessness due to job and housing loss
- Limited personal belongings upon arrival at the service
- English was not Colin's first language, though he communicated well
- Need for essential documents (ID, bank account, NI number)

Support provided:
- Immediate provision of basic needs (toiletries, clothing, bedding) through community funding
- Assistance in securing necessary documents (ID, bank account, NI number)
- Registration with a local doctor for healthcare
- Help with CV organisation and participation in events and training
- Transportation to appointments
- Regular check-ins and review meetings to monitor progress
- Opportunities for volunteering and community engagement

Key outcomes:
- Secured a low-paid job within weeks of arriving at the service
- Began saving money and moved into a rented room
- Gained valuable skills which helped in securing employment
- Active engagement with the service community, contributing to his sense of belonging and progress toward independence
- Clear goals and motivation to continue working towards stability and independence

Spot Purchase Fund – Case studies

William's story*

* Note that William is not the person's real name

Key context: gang activity and mental health issues

William presented in distress, unable to return to his accommodation due to threats from individuals, possibly linked to gang or county lines activity. William was upset, scared, and seeking safety. The support team provided immediate reassurance, helped him report the threats to the police, and arranged emergency accommodation while working with the local authority to assess his housing situation. Additionally, mental health services were engaged to provide further support.

William was rehoused through an exempt accommodation service. He has continued to engage with services, receiving resettlement support and ongoing mental health care. William's long-term plan includes moving out of the area, but until then, he has access to continued support.

The main barrier encountered was initial reluctance from housing services to relocate William due to his history of unverified claims. However, the availability of the spot purchase fund allowed for temporary hotel accommodation to ensure his safety while a longer-term solution was found.

Barriers faced:
- Threats from individuals, potentially linked to gang or county lines activity
- Initial reluctance from housing services to relocate
- Emotional distress and fear for personal safety
- Mental health concerns requiring professional support

Support provided:
- Immediate reassurance and provision of a safe space
- Assistance with making police reports regarding the threats
- Emergency accommodation arranged via spot purchasing fund
- Liaison with the council regarding housing options
- Engagement with mental health services for ongoing support
- Travel pass provided for transportation to accommodation

Key outcomes:
- Rehoused through exempt accommodation
- Ongoing resettlement support provided
- Continued engagement with services, including mental health support
- Plans to move out of the area in the future

Maureen's story*

* Note that Maureen is not the person's real name

Key context: female migrant experiencing domestic abuse

Maureen accessed support after experiencing coercive control, financial, emotional, and verbal abuse from her ex-partner, who was affiliated with gangs. Maureen was forced to travel to another country and sell her belongings before coming to the UK, where the abuse continued. Her situation led to excessive alcohol use, a seizure, and hospitalisation. After discharge, she was left homeless and later entered another controlling relationship. Maureen eventually escaped and sought refuge in a homeless shelter.

Maureen's immigration status prevented her from accessing benefits or social housing, leaving her in a destitute state. Through the service, she accessed accommodation and subsistence payments funded by the Supporting Migrant Victims fund. During this time, she explored her immigration status and ultimately decided to return to her home country. Funds from the RSI covered the cost of a replacement passport, allowing her to travel safely back home, where she resumed work and built a support network.

The key barriers in helping Maureen were related to her immigration status and limited funds. However, ongoing support enabled her to access necessary funds, achieve a safe outcome, and avoid homelessness and destitution in the UK.

Barriers faced:
- Coercive control, financial, emotional, and verbal abuse from her ex-partner
- Immigration status preventing access to benefits or social housing
- Homelessness and destitution after escaping abusive relationships
- Limited funds to cover the cost of travel documents and embassy visits
- Low self-esteem and psychological trauma due to prolonged abuse

Support provided:
- Accommodation and subsistence payments
- Emotional support and empowerment through a support worker
- Referral to immigration advice services to explore her status
- Assistance with obtaining a replacement passport using RSI funds
- Regular engagement and empathy to build a trusting relationship

Key outcomes:
- Successfully returned to her home country, avoiding homelessness and destitution
- Gained employment in her home country, providing financial stability
- Built a strong support network and feels empowered to maintain a positive life
- Overcame immediate barriers related to immigration and financial instability

Stephen's story*

* Note that Stephen is not the person's real name

Key context: female migrant experiencing domestic abuse

Stephen is a single father with a history of rough sleeping, homelessness, and imprisonment. Stephen, who suffers from anxiety and depression, was served with an eviction notice from his private rental sector landlord, placing him at risk of homelessness. He also had rent arrears with a social housing provider, dating back to his imprisonment, which prevented him from being rehoused. With no support network and a poor credit score, Stephen was in a precarious situation.

The support provided included regular one-to-one sessions, help with completing a homelessness application and housing application, negotiation with the social housing provider to reduce rent arrears, and financial support from the RSI spot purchase fund to clear the remaining arrears. Stephen was also provided with food parcels, travel cards for appointments, and assistance with court documents to challenge the eviction notice.

Following the court hearing, Stephen was placed in temporary accommodation with a live housing application and band one priority status. His rent arrears were cleared, and homelessness was prevented. Ongoing support is being provided to secure permanent housing and ensure Stephen can maintain future payments. Communication issues with housing services, which affected Stephen's mental health, were addressed through intervention and advocacy.

Barriers faced:
- History of rough sleeping and homelessness
- Ex-offender with rent arrears from a prior tenancy during imprisonment
- Eviction notice from PRS landlord
- Poor mental health (anxiety and depression)
- No access to financial support or credit due to a poor credit score
- Risk of homelessness
- Communication issues with supported housing provider, causing additional stress

Support provided:
- Regular one-to-one support sessions
- Assistance with homelessness and housing applications
- Negotiation with social housing provider to reduce rent arrears
- Financial assistance from RSI spot purchase fund to clear remaining arrears
- Provision of food parcels and travel cards for appointments
- Guidance through the eviction court hearing process

Key outcomes:
- Placed in temporary accommodation
- Rent arrears fully cleared
- Housing application now live with priority status
- Secured storage unit for household items
- Ongoing support to secure permanent housing
- Homelessness and rough sleeping prevented

Overall conclusions and priorities

The programme is perceived by stakeholders as being effective in addressing homelessness and rough sleeping in the West Midlands. Through a combination of flexible funding, tailored interventions, and strategic collaboration, the programme is reported to have successfully supported a large number of people, leading to positive outcomes such as securing sustainable accommodation and improving mental health. The RSI's flexible approach, which includes personalisation funds and supportive social networks, is thought by stakeholders to have been pivotal in achieving these results, demonstrating the value of adaptable, customer-centric solutions.

Moreover, the collaboration between local authorities and third sector organisations has enhanced the effectiveness of the programme, enabling cross-regional knowledge sharing and innovative approaches. Training and professional development for staff, especially in trauma-informed care, have strengthened the capacity to deliver higher-quality services. However, challenges remain, particularly around the instability and anxiety of short-term funding, staff recruitment and retention, and the complex, evolving needs of experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping.

While the programme is perceived to have made significant strides, sustaining these initiatives and securing longer-term funding stability are vital to maintaining and building on the progress made.

Priorities

1. **Sustainability**

   Short-term funding limits the ability to plan and sustain services, making it essential to advocate for longer-term investment. Embedding learning from the RSI programme into mainstream ways of working may be possible.

2. **Housing**

   Increasing the availability of affordable "move-on" accommodation to help individuals transition smoothly from homelessness to sustainable housing is a significant structural challenge. Advocating for measures to address the housing shortage should be a priority.

3. **Enhance public awareness**

   Increase public and professional awareness of the issues leading to homelessness, especially regarding the complexity of rough sleeping and the specific needs of women and vulnerable groups. Campaigns could promote the importance of giving via structured public schemes rather than directly to rough sleepers.

4. **Collaboration**

   Build on the partnerships created across the region, particularly among local authorities, third-sector organisations, and health services, to ensure cohesive and comprehensive support. Maintaining these connections may not require a great deal of resources.

5. **Data collection and reporting**

   Consult with stakeholders to understand their perceptions of the data collection and performance regimen and improve as necessary. Inform where there is no flexibility due to the requirements of central funders.

6. **Employment pathways**

   Employment plays a crucial role in preventing recurring homelessness and providing a sustainable exit from rough sleeping. Look in detail at the successful cases to identify priorities and targeting of resources for maximum impact.

7. **Promote staff well-being**

   Continue the focus on trauma-informed practice and reflective sessions to support staff well-being and enhance support for customers.

Appendix A – Conversations topic guide

Topic guide

Semi-structured stakeholder conversations

Introduction

Purpose of the conversation

Briefly explain the purpose of the conversation, emphasising that the goal is to gather feedback on the RSI Programme to improve future initiatives:

The WMCA's Homelessness Taskforce has sought to undertake activities with local authorities and other partners, that are relevant and complementary to local strategies and commissioned services. When there has been potential added value, the Taskforce has played a central role in convening, commissioning and coordinating activity.

This activity has included organising joint bids to secure additional investment through programmes such as the Rough Sleeping Initiative that have allowed the Taskforce to work with local authorities and other partners to test out innovation, build resilience and capacity, generate economies of scale, and produce learning that can be shared.

Between April 2020 and March 2025, WMCA helped to secure £2.7m through the RSI programme which has been used to invest in projects that have supported more than 2000 people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping.

This conversation is about getting qualitative feedback from key stakeholders on the impact and effectiveness of the investments to inform future activity as well as your impressions of the value added by the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce.

Duration

Inform participants about the expected duration of the conversation (approximately 45-60 minutes).

Consent to record and confidentiality

Confirm consent to record and transcribe the conversation.

Assure participants that their responses will be kept confidential and used only for evaluation purposes.

Start recording, thank for consent to record the conversation.

Conversation topic guide

Part 1: About the participants

- Briefly introduce yourself, your organisation, and your role

- What has been your involvement in the WMCA RSI programme

Part 2: What's worked well?

- Successful practices and strategies

  - Can you describe any specific practices or strategies that have been particularly successful in the WMCA RSI Programme?

  - Are there any aspects of the programme that you feel have consistently met or exceeded expectations?

- Positive outcomes

  - What positive outcomes have you observed as a result of the WMCA RSI Programme?

  - Can you share any success stories or notable achievements from your perspective?

- Stakeholder Collaboration

  - How has collaboration among stakeholders (e.g., local authorities, service providers, community organisations) contributed to the success of the programme?

  - Are there any particular partnerships or collaborations that have been especially effective?

Part 2: What have been the challenges?

- Operational challenges

  - What operational challenges have you encountered during the implementation of the WMCA RSI Programme?

  - How have these challenges impacted the overall effectiveness of the programme?

- Resources

  - Have there been any issues related to resource allocation, such as funding, staffing, or communications, etc?

  - How have these resource constraints affected your ability to achieve programme goals?

- External factors

  - Are there external factors (e.g., policy changes, economic conditions, relationships) that have posed challenges to the programme?

  - How have these external factors influenced the programme's outcomes?

Part 3: What has been learned?

- Key insights

  - What are the key insights or lessons learned from your involvement in the WMCA RSI Programme?

  - How have these insights informed your approach to addressing homelessness and rough sleeping?

- Effective practices

  - Can you identify any practices or strategies that have proven to be effective in addressing challenges faced by the programme?

  - How have these practices been adapted or improved over time?

- Feedback and Adaptation

  - How have you incorporated feedback from service users and other stakeholders into the programme?

  - Can you provide examples of how the programme has adapted based on this feedback?

Part 4: What would you do again?

- Recurrent practices or strategies

  - Are there any specific practices or strategies or approaches from the WMCA RSI Programme that you would recommend using again in future initiatives?

  - What makes these practices or strategies particularly valuable or effective?

- Improvement areas

  - If given the opportunity, what changes or improvements would you make to the programme?

  - How do you believe these changes could enhance the overall effectiveness of future initiatives?

- Sustaining success

  - How can the successes achieved in the WMCA RSI Programme be sustained and built upon in future efforts?

  - Are there any long-term strategies or policies you would advocate for to ensure continued progress?

Part 5: Contribution of the Taskforce and conclusion

- Contribution of the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce

    - What value has the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce added through the RSI programme?

    - Is there any more that the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce could do to support a future RSI programme?

    - What's it been like working with the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce?

- Final thoughts

    - Do you have any additional thoughts or comments regarding the WMCA RSI Programme that we haven't covered?

    - Is there anything else you would like to share that could be useful for the evaluation and future planning?

- Next Steps

    - Briefly outline the next steps in the evaluation process and how the collected information will be used.

    - Thank participants for their time and valuable insights.

Appendix B – The survey questionnaire

PDF

Survey - RSI Programme Qualitative Review 2020 - 2025.pdf