



Key Achievements & Learning Report

Introduction

The WMCA Homelessness Taskforce has been successful in securing funding from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Rough Sleeping Initiative¹ in 2020/2021 (£581,400) and 2021/2022 (£639,292); combined value of £1,220,692. This funding to the WMCA from DLUHC was awarded in addition to Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding allocated to individual Local Authorities.

Building on the work undertaken in 2020/2021, the intention of the WMCA RSI programme in 2021/2022 was to develop region wide initiatives aimed at system change through to those testing out innovation in service delivery, to add value to the work of Local Authority partners and to start to build an increased focus on preventing rough sleeping.

We also intentionally kept a focus on investing in outcomes rather than in outputs to encourage providers to be flexible about how they delivered services in order to address priority areas of need where service gaps existed or there was potential to enhance existing services.

To ensure relevance and strategic fit, the Homelessness Taskforce and Rough Sleeping Task Group agreed the following priority areas of need for 2021/2022:

1. **Preventing rough sleeping** - reduce the flow of repeat rough sleeping, in particular for those that came in as a result of the pandemic response, key focus on sustaining tenancies via use of peer led and other support to promote sustainable social networks.
2. **Information, Advice and Guidance** - one of five central objectives for the Homelessness Taskforce, access to good, accurate, timely IAG to act as a protective factor to help people at risk, and enable those seeking to help, to do so in an effective way – linking to [Change into Action](#) and training for frontline staff.
3. **Women** - vulnerable, rough sleeping and other precarious situations, not feeling safe in provision, needing a bespoke, intensive support and accommodation offer.
4. **Intensification of support** - recognising that the support needs of some individuals are beyond current risk management levels, however with additional resource, individuals could be appropriately supported into accommodation and to remain in accommodation.
5. **Individuals with restricted eligibility** - working within legal parameters to arrive at solutions for individuals from abroad for whom legal restrictions mean there are significant constraints on what help can be given, recognising the needs and opportunities to connect to migrant services, legal advice and employment pathways.

Investment

In 2021/2022 the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce received £639,292 for investment from DLUHC. This funding was utilised across two major subsets of activity. Firstly, to continue a number of the projects from 2020/2021, focussing on systemic change to secure the legacy of the positive work and learning from the previous year, with a view to embedding and mainstreaming activity.

¹ The primary objective of RSI funding is to:

- Help people sleeping rough off the streets;
- Help those who have moved off the streets to successfully progress away from rough sleeping; and
- Prevent those in crisis, and at imminent risk, from sleeping rough.

10 projects were continued into 2021/2022 across the following 5 areas:

- Provision of accommodation/intensification of support to enable people who sleep rough to access and maintain accommodation.
- Women specific service provision to prevent and resolve rough sleeping crisis, especially where abuse or exploitation may be a factor.
- Provision of support to those with problematic status in the UK impacting rough sleeping, including temporary accommodation as a pathway to resolving status and rights, return to country of origin or into work.
- Developing Psychological Approaches, placing clinical psychology at the frontline, working directly with identified people sleeping rough and in support of outreach services.
- Local plan of outreach and accommodation pathway – in geographically more removed/suburban /unserved areas, enabling local service mobilisation.

An open tender process was also undertaken and submissions were sought from relevant organisations to deliver outcomes through bespoke, innovative, flexible and effective proposals across the following Lot, resulting in 8 projects being commissioned:

- Outcome focused, spot purchase fund available to organisations to enable individual solutions for people sleeping rough, allowing flexible, personal planning and delivery.

In addition, the Faith & Communities Development Officer role was continued for the region to work with faith, community and smaller scale voluntary groups to support greater integration with Local Authority and statutory pathways, and to create meaningful offers away from the streets and support upskilling and safe practice amongst volunteers and groups.

Finally, investments were made in two new areas of work:

- To develop a region wide resource with [Street Support](#).
- Commission four innovative projects to help those at risk of returning to rough sleeping to develop sustainable social networks that reduce the risk of a return to the streets.

Achievements

Individuals supported:



Impact of Interventions:

Intervention/Impact	Individuals supported
Emergency accommodation spaces provided	349
Temporary accommodation spaces provided	113
Long-term accommodation spaces provided	117
Number of unique individuals supported into short-term accommodation	344
Number of unique individuals supported into long-term accommodation	134
Number of unique individuals supported to secure their own tenancies	416
Number of unique individuals supported through RSI funded services (non-accommodation)	1049
Number of unique individuals supported to reconnect to another area	84
Number of unique individuals supported into employment, or employment focused services	151
Number of unique individuals connected to other support services e.g. Drugs and Alcohol	381
Number of unique individuals supported through PIE Reflective practice sessions	124
Number of unique individuals supported by RSI funding in other ways not included above	287
Number of unique individuals sustaining engagement over 3 months	355
Number of unique individuals sustaining engagement over 6 months	66

The graphic and table above highlight that through the RSI investment we enabled organisations to reach 1890 unique individuals and support them to achieve a wide range of outcomes.

Faith & Community Groups

Across 2021/2022 six well attended training and engagement events took place. The first of which offered faith and community groups the opportunity to engage, network and discuss challenges around the current context of rough sleeping, as well as considerations for new innovative and prevention focused support. This event allowed us to steer our work with faith and community groups and feedback from this session directly fed into the range of training courses and innovation funding opportunities that we delivered in the year.

In 2021/2022, we delivered training covering the following themes:

- Impact Measurement
- Adult Safeguarding
- Mental Health First Aid
- Duties of a Trustee
- Bid Writing

All the courses we provided were popular, with four out of the five being fully subscribed and running waiting lists. In total 70 individuals accessed courses from 38 unique faith and community groups spanning the WMCA area. Feedback from courses was consistently excellent. Follow up work with attendees suggests that the training offer led directly to changes in practice within faith and community groups. For example, reassessments of the roles of trustee members, and improved safeguarding and mental health support practices at an organisational level.

We also published a new booklet entitled “Designing Out Homelessness with Faith and Community Groups”. The booklet provides an introduction to the work we are doing, highlights key considerations for the development of new provision, sets out examples of good practice and the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce’s ask and offer in working with faith and community groups. The booklet has been well received by cross sector partners and will continue to be used as a practical resource to highlight and share the ways in which groups can collaborate with the Taskforce.

There has been a substantial amount of work with groups that have not previously been engaged with local partnerships or their relevant Local Authority. Much of this work has been around ensuring that they have the relevant knowledge and skills to signpost people towards Local Authority rough sleeping referral pathways. This has been successful in facilitating changes to practice where groups were not previously aware of what support is available within their local area.

We undertook significant partnership work with colleagues from DLUHC and Birmingham City Council in the run up to Christmas 2021. This work focused on faith and community groups in Birmingham that were considering opening and running communal style winter night shelters. Through the relationships that had been developed with these groups we were able to support active engagement with both Local Authority homelessness and environmental health departments to ensure that risky communal spaces were not opened. This ensured local alignment of services with guidance (Winter Night Shelter Principles) published by DLUHC. Groups were encouraged to work with the relevant Local Authority and as a result individuals were referred to the Local Authority rather than using communal night shelters and helped to access Local Authority pathways so they could secure appropriate accommodation.

Other similar work we have done includes working with partners to develop a handbook for groups engaged in street feeding/soup run activities. This has included information and suggestions for improving practice and increasing alignment to both Local Authority and WMCA Homelessness Taskforce aims and strategies. Feedback from this booklet has been positive and multiple groups have advised they will be using this to inform the support they are providing.

Support has also been provided to the West Midlands Faith Strategic Partnership Homelessness Working Group. This has focused on facilitating the dissemination of learning and good practice to a wide range of faith communities across the region.

Monitoring and simple evaluation has been completed with the groups that were funded through the initial WMCA RSI Innovation Fund for Faith and Community Groups in 2020/2021. The results indicate that a total of 95 individuals were helped to transition away from rough sleeping. Some projects under this programme have continued beyond the innovation funding, particularly those with a digital inclusion focus where devices have continued to be used to support individuals, for example to access benefit and housing applications.

A new funding opportunity was launched in the second half of 2021/2022 building on the work of the previous Innovation Fund. The WMCA RSI Prevention Through Innovation Fund aimed to take the learning from the initial funding round and focus on providing an opportunity for groups to embed sustainable changes in support practices. One group in Dudley and one group in Coventry were funded to test out new projects.

Our assessment is that the support, information and guidance we have provided has helped groups supporting individuals rough sleeping off the streets and into appropriate accommodation through relevant Local Authority pathways. This has included providing information around how to access support and accommodation via adult social care for individuals with restricted eligibility. Other examples have included reiterating the role, importance and effectiveness of utilising StreetLink on a frequent basis. We have also been able to support groups to access and submit applications to multiple external funding opportunities.

Overall, we have carried out a variety of activities with faith and community groups that have supported the development of new partnerships, changes to practice and adoption of appropriate standards that align with Local Authority rough sleeping strategies.

Learning

A key part of our RSI programme is to capture the benefits and challenges of the projects we invest in and to consider their role in adding value to the work of our Local Authorities and wider partners, in particular how the learning can enhance the region's expertise in designing and commissioning innovative rough sleeping services.

As well as tracking data on outcomes and outputs we asked providers for case studies that illustrated what works and what doesn't work. We asked providers to reflect on their own learning as part of that process. A detailed analysis of the case studies and some examples are attached in the appendices below.

In this section of the report, we set out the main learning points that the providers and we have captured to date.

Cross-cutting learning

Delivery partners shared that partnership working has been supported and nurtured through the work of the WMCA's RSI programme, for example helping and enabling providers to combine their efforts to work on projects together. Providers have reported that regular catch-up and review meetings with organisations working on similar projects, or in the same geographical area, have helped in sharing best practice and understanding common challenges that may need collective action to address. In many cases this has led to adjustments to practice being co-produced which we believe has led to improved outcomes for individuals experiencing rough sleeping.

A concerning theme that emerged over the year has been the challenge of recruiting and retaining staff, for example some of the projects commissioned to test how social support networks can be sustained have struggled to recruit specific staff members to support the investment with concomitant impact on outcomes. Our sense is that this is becoming an increasing problem across the sector.

Feedback from delivery partners working on the women's specific pathway highlighted that there are currently a significant number of couples presenting for support which staff felt that they were not confident to respond to and support effectively. There was also agreement that it is important that staff are supported and trained so that they can recognise who may be experiencing domestic abuse, and ensuring they know how best to support and provide a safe space.

Whilst the numbers of people sleeping rough has come down significantly in recent years it is clear that the flow of new people onto the street continues to be a challenge. This has led us to focus our new investments in 2022/2023 on early prevention of rough sleeping wherever possible. It is also one of the factors which has influenced our decision to ask the delivery partner commissioned to deliver the PIE initiative to focus some of their efforts on developing a version of the PIE offer for upstream services. This, together with our wider regional activity as an early adopter shines a light on the need for effective universal and targeted prevention services so that rough sleeping is prevented, wherever possible, so it is rare, and where it occurs it is brief and non-recurring.

Outcomes and learning from the specific investment themes

In this section we pull out the key learning from each of the separate investment themes.

Additional specialist support: projects in this theme exceeded outcomes in providing intensive support sessions to individuals with specific support needs, for example, nighttime support for people with disrupted sleep patterns. This investment theme has helped providers to offer focused interventions and work with 406 individuals, helping to ensure a range of positive outcomes. This demonstrates that there is still value in these additional specialised support activities. A number of these projects have now become part of the relevant Local Authority's RSI programme.

Women specific service provision: by bringing relevant providers in Birmingham together to develop a joint proposal we were able to promote the design and delivery of a women's specific pathway in the City. The outcomes delivered exceeded those envisaged and helped 95 women to move away from rough sleeping and to sustain tenancies. Many of the women supported reported that they had experienced a well-coordinated, collaborative approach as a result of the linked pathway between organisations working specifically with women. Our analysis suggests that the gender specific pathway and the joint nature of the delivery approach has enabled the creation of a successful model of working. Birmingham City Council have now picked up the ongoing funding of the pathway as part of their local RSI 2022 to 2025 investment plans.

People with restricted eligibility: all the projects in this investment theme have achieved significant outcomes in supporting individuals with restricted eligibility to public funds. 139 individuals have been helped to achieve a variety of critical outcomes, including being supported to acquire settled status alongside accommodation and support while awaiting decisions. Where relevant the funding of this work has now been taken up by the appropriate Local Authority.

Developing Psychological Approaches - PIE (Psychologically Informed Environment): the provider has continued to offer reflective practice, one to one client support, case formulation, manager sessions and training across a wide range of delivery partners. All the predicted outcomes in relation to staff capacity and skill building were achieved and 124 individuals were directly and indirectly helped as a result of PIE activity. Feedback from organisations that have been involved with the PIE programme is excellent and a small number have gone on to engage the provider to deliver further PIE activity from their own resources. Going forwards we are working with the provider to develop 'PIE in prevention' workshop-based staff training, psychology client clinics, multi-agency case formulations, mental health, drug and alcohol workshops, building on staff awareness and barriers to self-care, team building, workshops around tolerance, boundaries and enhancing partnership working. A critical part of the 2022 to 2025 investment will be the agreement of 7 local PIE action plans covering each Local Authority area.

Enhancing outreach and accommodation pathways in geographically more removed or unserved areas: using a variety of pathways including StreetLink referrals in this investment led to support for 115 individuals to come off the streets. Of these, 67 were supported into settled accommodation. Birmingham City Council agreed to continue this service as part of its local RSI programme from July 2021.

Spot purchase fund: we funded 8 organisations across the WMCA region and captured evidence of successful delivery of outcomes across the investment theme. The resources were used to support 620 individuals with a wide range of one-off help including starter tenancy packs, travel to appointments, clothing and other key essentials. In many cases the spot purchase resources were used to enhance other support packages and have offered the flexibility that providers need to support people with complex challenges in often very practical ways, allowing individual solutions, personal planning and delivery.

Street Support Network (SSN): over the course of 2021/2022 the central SSN team and the local SSN Coordinator (RSI funded and hosted by Crisis Skylight Birmingham) has worked with the 7 Local Authorities in the region to successfully set up individual sites for each area. Information for circa 250 organisations offering help to people rough sleeping are listed and accessible through the [7 sites](#). This web resource provides a key link to our [Change into Action](#) initiative, promoting and raising awareness on how to 'give help' in an informed and safe way. In 2022/2023 we will be working with SSN to promote the sites and track the impact on both individuals and organisations.

Promoting sustainable social networks: helping individuals to develop supportive social networks can be a critical part of ensuring that a person's move away from rough sleeping is sustained. This investment was a new theme for 2021/2022. It has not been without its challenges, partly a factor of the intrinsic challenge of helping people who have become disconnected from positive networks to build the confidence to re-engage. We were particularly keen to see providers develop links with community organisations and to help form networks that were based on people's interests rather than on their rough sleeping history. Some delivery partners faced issues with recruitment, leading to delays in starting the project, resulting in some targets not being met. However, considering this was a new and innovative idea, there were still some significant outcomes with 147 individuals being supported. The projects have also helped to capture and articulate some very useful learning for the second year of this investment. Of the 147 people supported many were helped to establish and sustain social and community-based networks through

positive participation. In turn this is contributing to people sustaining tenancies and developing meaningful networks.

Conclusion and Next Steps

We have developed our RSI programme with three underpinning principles:

1. To add value to the work of each Local Authority in the region, not to duplicate effort.
2. To invest in innovation and 'proof of concept' projects that could then be invested in by each local area if they are successful.
3. To invest in cross regional work that builds skills, capacity and promotes the designing out of homelessness, particularly supporting the smaller Local Authority areas who would not have the critical mass individually to either fund or make use of programmes such as PIE.

Our assessment is that we are successfully contributing to a sustained reduction in rough sleeping and in ongoing prevention of rough sleeping by using those principles. Therefore, from the learning in 2021/2022 we are able to say the following with some confidence:

- A significant number of people at risk of rough sleeping, people actually rough sleeping and those in the process of moving on into settled accommodation have been helped to achieve important outcomes as a result of the WMCA RSI programme.
- We have successfully tested out a number of new approaches in the region which have now become part of the relevant Local Authority's RSI core offer, for example the women's pathway in Birmingham.
- Investments such as the Faith and Communities Development Officer role, PIE and Street Support are having a positive impact on skills, capacity, sustainability and in bolstering the region's understanding of what it means to design out homelessness and its ability to achieve our joint ambition of ending rough sleeping in the West Midlands.

The WMCA RSI Programme 2022 to 2025 seeks to continue to add value and complementary outcomes to the work of our Local Authority partners and to build upon the good work established in 2020/2021 and 2021/2022. Our intention is to continue to invest in some of the projects from 2021/2022 as well as in some new areas of innovation.

For existing investments we have collaboratively refocused providers outcomes to include a mix of embedding the positive work already done as well as developing new approaches, for example working with the PIE provider to develop a PIE package for prevention services. For RSI 2022 to 2025 we will continue to invest in the following areas of work:

- Faith and Community activity to help build on the early success of the work and build in a legacy of innovation and high-quality practice.
- Working with the PIE team to embed and develop the approach, as noted above.
- Spot purchase funding to enable individual solutions for people at risk of sleeping rough, those currently rough sleeping or to sustain recent transitions away from rough sleeping.
- Further development and upkeep of the region wide resource Street Support.
- Continued investment in projects promoting social networks with the aim to help reduce the risk of a return to the street.

New areas of work, based on our needs assessment and the three principles noted above, will include the following:

- Outcome-focused innovative projects designed to provide entry to sustainable employment.
- A region wide programme of training courses and events, covering a wide range of topics from Mental Health First Aid to impact and outcome measurement.
- An RSI Coordinator to oversee the WMCA programme and to help bring together the RSI leads from each Local Authority and learning from across the region to maximise the potential for shared approaches and development of systemic change.

All of our investments and efforts across the RSI 2022 to 2025 programme will be used to promote system change as well as flexible, personal planning and delivery to ensure rough sleeping is prevented wherever possible, so it is rare, and where it occurs it is brief and non-recurring.

As the programme progresses we will be working with partners across all sectors to ensure that investments that are contributing to positive outcomes are funded and embedded in mainstream provision and investment plans wherever possible.

Further Information

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Appendix 1: Case Study Review & Analysis

In gathering case studies from our RSI projects we are aiming to extract some of the personal narratives of the individuals supported and to use that to help us gain a better understanding of the key emerging issues, barriers that may have been faced and key learning that could potentially be used to inform future plans and services commissioned to tackle rough sleeping across the region. The anonymous case studies received from delivery partners have been analysed and emerging themes set out in the table below.

Emerging Themes	<p>Multiple and Complex Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship breakdown: continues to be a major contributory factor to rough sleeping, individuals reported they had experienced family fallouts/relationship breakdowns, with some women fleeing domestic and other forms of abuse, leading them to be isolated from their children/families/surrounding networks. • Mental Health: providers reported that significant numbers of individuals present with mental health challenges. They also reported that their assessment was that in many cases people who had experienced major life trauma often presented with challenging and aggressive behaviour as a by-product of that trauma which presented staff with challenges in how they might respond. • Physical health: as well as mental ill health, some people were also experiencing physical health issues, disabilities, or long-term medical conditions. This meant that it was essential that they were registered with health services and their accommodation had to be adapted to care for them. • Substance misuse: many people experiencing rough sleeping had addictions or frequent substance misuse. These individuals required a great deal of support to help them to overcome these. • Financial struggles: unsurprisingly, many people who were rough sleeping/at risk were experiencing extreme financial challenges/destitution. In many instances, they were also unaware of the support that was available to them or were unable to receive financial government support due to having restricted eligibility to public funds.
Barriers and Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mismatch of available supported accommodation and assessed needs: in some instances services were unable to house individuals leading to distrust in services. • Low trust in services: clients may have been let down in the past by services and therefore were not initially open to engage or willing to commit to relying on support services. This lack of trust also often led to aggressive outbursts/violent behaviour that was unsettling for staff members. However, remaining calm and attempting to understand the reasons behind this behaviour often led to reductions in such incidents. • Women experiencing domestic abuse do not often want to disclose the full extent of what is happening to them, due to fears around the perpetrator finding out. This can make it difficult for support staff to direct them to the right support when they are not aware of what is going on. • Lack of knowledge around immigration issues: the volume of information required to apply for Section 4 support is intense. It can also be very difficult to obtain certain information from individuals especially when they are destitute or where there are language barriers. • Time delays: reported in receiving responses from Home Office and Migrant Help. In addition, delays due to COVID backlogs have had detrimental effects on lives and mental health.
Changes and Outcomes achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal support to apply for settled status applications. • Support to acquire UC/ public funds/ open own bank accounts. • Individuals supported into employment/ employment-focused services. • Support to relocate to another area/ internationally.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support with travel to attend important appointments (GP referrals/ counselling/ job interviews). • Individuals reported feeling safer, listened to and supported. • Individuals supported to develop social skills and soft skills (timekeeping, goal setting, responsibility for self). • Positive changes in wellbeing and personal hygiene. • Counselling/ support for mental ill health and substance misuse.
Insights and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication between services: led to better informed and better joined-up approaches to support, which then led to better and more trusting relationships with individuals. Linking with partner agencies ensures services have the best insight, ensuring they are delivering adequate support, completing correct documentation, and chasing delays. • There is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to support: each person is an individual with their own unique journey and different needs and so should be treated as such. Support needs to be tailored so that it is most suitable for that person and is most likely to ensure trust is gained and progress made. Those with multiple challenges will often require long-term 1-1 support and a whole-team approach to ensure sustainable outcomes. • Effectiveness of PIE techniques: partners have informed us that using PIE techniques when supporting people has been helpful in initiating meaningful rapport. For example, helping individuals to see the progress that they have made and increasing encouraging self-belief. In addition, learning about responding with <i>unconditional positive regard</i> was extremely efficient in ensuring that people learnt that staff are there for them regardless of whether they are in a good headspace or experiencing challenges. This subsequently helps to build trusting relationships and enables lives to be improved. • Meaningful activities such as social clubs and courses are hugely beneficial: social clubs and activities that draw on hobbies were found to be a great way to build trust and engagement in services. Such classes have been beneficial in enhancing confidence and social skills. In addition, having a routine helped to improve wellbeing. • Consistency and reliability are key to ensuring trusting relationships: e.g. attending appointments with individuals to help them to open bank accounts, attending GP appointments, consistent calls to ensure contact is not lost. • Small client case load for staff worked better: as staff reported they were better able to focus and spend time supporting people appropriately.

Appendix 2: Case Study 1

Describe the person's circumstances at the point you started working with them.	P was moved into a shared house after rough sleeping, he had been in supported accommodation previously and had been moved into a community shared house. This move did not suit him. He displayed paranoia and was working on addressing his substance misuse. P left the accommodation and went back onto the streets, his drug use escalated. When I met P, he was sat begging outside a supermarket.
What were the presenting issues when you started working with them?	Rough sleeping, lack of trust in services, mental ill health, substance abuse (various including mamba and heroin), and there were also safeguarding issues raised as he posed a threat to himself and others.
What work did you do alongside the person?	First thing was to build a relationship with P. I achieved this by being consistent, genuine, and acting as a go between with other agencies. P had been known to chase staff away as he was so disillusioned by the agencies they represented. My focus was to get him to re-engage with services. I attended appointments with him and liaised, when necessary. Workers would come and ask him questions that he sometimes felt overwhelmed by. I would support P through this. A referral was made to the mental health team and substance misuse support service, this resulted in him being scripted. This helped P to engage with services.
What changes and outcomes have you and the person achieved so far?	P is more receptive to support from other agencies, he is in supported accommodation and appears to be settling in. He is on script. The risk to himself and others has greatly reduced.
What are the person's chances of sustaining any changes and outcomes they have achieved?	With the right support I am hopeful that P will be able to move into his own accommodation, he will have received and be able to maintain his mental health programme. I understand that he has been successfully referred to the Housing First programme.
How have you helped to ensure this person has continued to engage with services?	By supporting him to all his appointments and ensuring that he was able to build relationships with the staff. I would also escalate issues to managers as needed. This ensured that P had a voice.
What barriers did you encounter in helping the person? <i>Structural and /or personal.</i>	P's aggression and paranoia played a big part. Initially P found it difficult to see that the world was not against him. His trust was at an all-time low. The change from supported accommodation to having his own front door was going to be huge. It was clear that all agencies would need to work together to achieve a positive outcome.
What learning or new insights have you had as a result of the work?	A consistent and honest approach is essential to managing expectations. For example, If I made an appointment, then I would keep it.
Do you feel this learning would change the way you work with a person in a similar situation needing support in the future?	I learnt a lot from P, having a consistent approach, sitting with him when he was in a good space and when he was angry at the world. Letting him know that I was going to stay with him regardless. That I was working to enable him not to disable him to achieve his goals.

Appendix 3: Case Study 2

Describe the person's circumstances at the point you started working with them.	A was a graduate, who had come from abroad to study here. Since leaving university he was struggling to find work. He felt it was common for foreign students to face barriers to employment, possibly due to culture differences and sometimes unfortunately prejudices. He was facing homelessness within 28 days if he didn't secure work and possibly having to return to his home country.
What were the presenting issues when you started working with them?	A's confidence was low and he was disheartened by the rejection he was facing in the job market. His main goal was to find employment.
What work did you do alongside the person?	We looked at A's skills and interests and helped him to improve his CV. One of the main goals was to improve his self-esteem and confidence, to enable him to maximise his potential when job searching. As we got to know him, it became clear that a vacancy we had access to would be a great fit for him, so we encouraged him to apply for the role.
What changes and outcomes have you and the person achieved so far?	A really impressed at interview and was offered the position. This opportunity meant the world to him. It gave him hope that he could begin to build a life here and he was so pleased that somebody had given him a chance. He is reserved, but slowly he is coming out of his shell and once started in the role, I am sure he will continue to flourish.
What are the person's chances of sustaining any changes and outcomes they have achieved?	I believe A is committed and motivated and will continue to build on his success. He is now looking to support his wife to get into employment when she finishes her studies.
How have you helped to ensure this person has continued to engage with services?	We have regular communication. He experienced challenges with the recruitment process and I provided regular contact so we can overcome the issues together.
What barriers did you encounter in helping the person? <i>Structural and /or personal.</i>	The main barrier A faced was that he was on a student visa so had limited working hours. This was due to expire a few weeks after the job offer was given. We supported him to apply for his graduate visa and have kept in touch regularly to monitor the progress of this. The position was kept open for him to allow for the delays with the Home Office processes. There have been times along the way when A has felt depleted by the delays and worried he would lose the employment opportunity and therefore housing.
What learning or new insights have you had as a result of the work?	We have learnt a lot about the challenges our customers with restricted eligibility to public funds face around documents needed to evidence their right to work. There are so many different types of visas and everyone we have supported has been on a different journey and has a unique story as to how they have come to live in the UK. Some of the delays due to COVID back logs have had huge detrimental effects on lives and some people's mental health has really suffered as a result. By linking with partner agencies, we have been able to get a better insight into the processes and support our customers to complete the right paperwork and chase up delays for them. This has meant they have received vital right to work documents and peace of mind that they will be able to stay in the UK.

Do you feel this learning would change the way you work with a person in a similar situation needing support in the future?

Completely. Knowledge in this area is key to supporting customers in the right way. Working with this client group present many challenges. It isn't just that they have no access to benefits to support them financially whilst out of work, it is the need for a wide variety of paperwork surrounding their stay in the UK, the social barriers they face with English as a second language or cultural differences. And how all of this affects their mental wellbeing. We have learnt that accessing support is especially difficult if you have no recourse to public funds, so for us to provide that help and to learn about other agencies that have funding to support them will help us moving forward to help many more. We have gained valuable knowledge and experience which has given us a much greater understanding of what barriers our customers might face.