

SUMMARY OF WORKSHOPS - Challenges and possible solutions

Workshop	Challenges	Possible solutions
1 Developing strategic approaches	<p>A) Having to develop your own local strategy to meet your own needs</p> <p>B) Improving partnership working</p> <p>C) Importance of knowing legislative framework (section 8 misuse of drugs act)</p> <p>D) Overcome barriers around confidentiality which may lead to inappropriate offers/decisions</p> <p>E) Promote / market this work positively</p> <p>F) Develop links with private rented sector as well as social sectors</p>	<p>A) This process helps to build/form relationships with partners around the table. You will need to undertake a Local Needs Assessment. Remember to look at all sources of data and collect qualitative information as well as service users' views. It is also useful to undertake a gap analysis as well as a mapping exercise of all available services, both specialist and generic, that play a role in housing for drug users.</p> <p>B) A review of partnership structures and membership of groups will usually result in the need to expand membership in order to include more housing or drug partners. You may benefit from undertaking a small project to get people working together and to facilitate learning across professional boundaries.</p> <p>C) Training to help enhance skills around section 8. Joint training delivered by housing/drug and police services. Policies and procedures need to be relevant to specific services and fully understood by staff and service users. Web links for information: www.shelter.org.uk, www.homeless.org.uk, www.release.org.uk.</p> <p>D) Training about what needs to be shared and how to overcome this issue along with joint working of partner agencies to build trust. Information sharing protocols can be developed between the housing and drug sectors by commissioners.</p> <p>E) It can help to have an agency or an individual who takes on the role of champion in a local area. They need to be established and respected leaders as well as knowledgeable in the fields of drug and housing.</p> <p>F) Most areas have a local landlord forum that can be useful to partners in this work. They can sometimes send reps to sit on planning and commissioning</p>

		groups. When working with this group, it is important to have staff who understand the business sector, as it is different from working with other public services.
2 Providing for drug users in a hostel	<p>A) Need for robust protocols, both internally and externally</p> <p>B) Alternative models of provision can meet a range of needs from abstinence to chaotic</p> <p>C) Inclusion of housing providers' perspective within drug commissioning as well as drug input to housing commissioning.</p> <p>D) Where needs are multiple drug treatment on its own will not support independent living. Establishment and strengthening of partnership working between services is essential.</p> <p>E) Need to network with a whole host of services to comprehensively meet the clients' needs.</p>	<p>A) It can be useful to undertake a review of protocols, policies and procedures to ensure that they allow service users to engage with the service. Consider if "conditions of acceptance" to a service are necessary. These conditions may inadvertently exclude the service users it is intended for or lead to their eviction if their circumstances change.</p> <p>B) Recognise that services are going to have to work with people with a range of differing needs at different times, and therefore need to be able to meet those needs or to refer on to a service that can. This also helps the service user stay in services appropriate to their current need rather than be evicted from one that can no longer meet their need.</p> <p>C) Commissioners could consider inviting new members into their existing structures. It is important if this is done that they are senior enough people to make decisions on behalf of their organisation. Drug partnerships should be aware that Supporting People do not represent housing within local authorities.</p> <p>D) Close working with housing, drug, health, education training and employment (ETE), etc – often located within the hostel – was important to give service users access to these services, constructive use of time and social capital development.</p> <p>E) Develop both formal and informal network relationships between service providers to meet the needs of service users. Recognise that different services are working with the same client and how different services' targets can be achieved through partnership working. This can be underpinned by the use of LAA indicators.</p>

<p>3 Responsive service delivery; approaches to support working with drug users</p>	<p>A) Strengths model</p> <p>B) Staff working with people with complex needs need good support along with training.</p>	<p>A) The 'Strengths Model' used at Julian Housing enables work with clients to become solution-focused, views clients as a resource, helps clients see themselves as a resource. The model articulates this ethos in a business language, which is helpful in contracting / commissioning settings. Provides a concrete example of quality services and outcomes.</p> <p>B) Staff working in housing can benefit from training in how to work with drug users, especially if this is provided alongside staff from drug services. The level of supervision that staff receive will need to be sufficient to avoid 'burn out'. If done right, this can increase staff retention. It is also helpful to recruit staff with the right skills needed to work with complex needs, and not just rely on qualifications and employment histories.</p>
<p>4 Identify housing and related support needs for drug users</p>	<p>A) Homelessness gateway that manages all homelessness applicants in and through homelessness and supported housing services, matching services to need.</p> <p>B) Recognition that many services were working with the same clients, therefore organised services under the Safe Newcastle banner to work in partnership. The Housing Strategic Group took lead internally on housing issues.</p> <p>C) Relationship between commissioning and strategic groups.</p>	<p>A) Pathway or Gateway is valuable as it shows who is in which services and how their needs were matched with existing provision. It also highlights who is not in accommodation that should be. This may be harder to implement in a small local authority.</p> <p>B) Housing Strategic Group designed and resourced training across all services, making an explicit statement that all services had to be able to meet the needs of drug users.</p> <p>Different agencies work with the same service users, so training was required to ensure that staff knew their own role and boundaries, and when to refer clients on to the next service. Information sharing improved when services worked together on a regular basis.</p> <p>C) In Newcastle the strategic planning group and the commissioning group met regularly to discuss and resolve issues, especially when services are not performing as planned (performance review). They also discussed issues relating to supply and demand for services (planning). This was seen as a very</p>

	<p>D) Move-on issues in all housing sectors.</p> <p>E) Customer focused service delivery.</p>	<p>useful way to resolve issues that often manifested themselves at service delivery level.</p> <p>D) A lack of move-on is keeping service users in services for too long. Development of the private rented sector as well as the wider housing market can assist with this.</p> <p>CLG are looking at developing some work with the private sector to provide accommodation specifically for PSA 16 clients including offenders and drug users who are homeless, but not owed a housing duty or assessed as in priority need. The proposed scheme (decision to be taken end Sept 08) will facilitate the leasing of private stock to RSL's, who in turn will manage it and rent it to PSA client group. The scheme is looking to agencies (NOMS) to underwrite some of the costs involved as there are additional risks to the landlord from housing this client group. Clients will have floating support and be part of a managed homeless pathway.</p> <p>Buy-to-let market - some mortgages have exclusion policies such as no DSS.</p> <p>E) You need service user involvement to ensure support services will meet their needs. It should be meaningful engagement from which real action flows. Service users prefer to have a single point of contact to access housing related services.</p> <p>Newcastle has developed a standard referral form that is used by all referrers / providers. Common assessment forms and frameworks help to collect data in a standard form.</p>
<p>5 Service user involvement in strategic planning, commissioning and</p>	<p>A) Service user involvement must be fully integrated.</p>	<p>A) Where you have a service user forum that is well established, it can be used to give input to planning and commissioning processes.</p> <p>To make the most effective use of this forum you may wish to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Providing core funding on an annual basis to support their work.

operational delivery		<ol style="list-style-type: none">2) Creating seats, with full voting rights, on commissioning groups.3) Commissioning them to undertake service reviews or involve them in the performance management of contracts. <p>Involving service user groups in this way can provide valuable perspectives on performance that cannot be seen in performance data, and establishes their involvement as formal and integrated. It does require the provision of training, mentoring and ongoing support to make it sustainable.</p>
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