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Evaluation of Homelessness Interventions Interim Report

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Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not
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Glossary

Acronym/Key word	Definition
Area Planning Board	Made up of partner organisations that work together and share the responsibility for: developing, delivering and improving efficient and effective substance misuse services, to meet the need of the population; carry out strategic management of the financial resources used to fund substance misuse services; provide high level oversight of the audit and performance assessment of commissioned services for substance misuse.
EMMIE framework	Stands for: effect, mechanism, moderators, implementation and economic cost. It is a tool which assists researchers to unpick the range of contextual factors which impact on the process of delivering projects.
ETA	Emergency Temporary Accommodation
HF4Y	Housing First for Youth is a rights-based intervention for young people with complex needs who are affected by homelessness, addressing the needs of developing adolescents and young people and facilitating a healthy transition to adulthood while having a safe and stable place to call home.
HMPPS	Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
Outcome Stars Measurement Tools	A family of evidence-based tools for measuring and supporting change. The Star is underpinned by three values – empowerment, collaboration and integration. The values that inform the Outcomes Stars are similar to those of person-centred, strengths-based and co-production approaches.
RSLs	Registered Social Landlords

TA	Temporary Accommodation
Upstream early intervention	Early stage prevention and adopting an approach that moves beyond a reactive response led by homelessness services, to a focus on prevention which works across all sectors.

1. Introduction

1.1 In February 2022, Welsh Government commissioned Imogen Blood & Associates (IBA) to undertake an evaluation of homelessness interventions in Wales to support homelessness services transformation. The aim of the evaluation is to understand the impact and approaches of the interventions funded as part of the following three national programmes:

- **Phase 2 approach to Homelessness**

In response to the pandemic, 22 local authorities received £5.2 million of funding to deliver over 70 initiatives which aimed to build sustainable and fundamental change to homelessness services across Wales. Project funding came to an end in March 2021. Some projects were pilots and where these were successful, have been mainstreamed into local authority Housing Support Grant plans.

- **Housing First (HF)**

The Welsh Government initially awarded funding for pilot HF projects during 2017/18. A rolling Housing First Grant Programme now allocates around £1.9m annually to support HF and Housing Led projects across seven different local authority areas (a total of eight projects, of which two received funding as part of the initial pilot).

- **Youth Homelessness Innovation Fund (YIF)**

Launched in 2019, YIF is aimed at supporting projects to deliver new and innovative housing approaches for young people. These projects are specific to vulnerable young people aged 16-25 at risk of becoming homeless or currently homeless. The Welsh Government approved funding for 25 projects for 2019-20. 21 projects have continued to be funded in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23

1.2 The evaluation explores the effectiveness of homeless interventions in Wales to understand the efficacy of currently funded interventions towards the Welsh Government's strategic homelessness goal in the Homelessness Strategy and The Programme for Government 2021-2023. IBA is conducting primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative research, including a review of relevant policies, documents and monitoring data. The evaluation will include cost benefit analysis work conducted in the period following this report.

1.3 The evaluation consists of four main phases:

- A scoping phase: documentary analysis and interviews, rapid evidence synthesis, EMMIE review¹
- A design phase: development of evaluation framework and programme theories
- Evaluation phase: qualitative case studies, interviews and quantitative survey capture; a cost benefit analysis or cost benefit framework for future development.
- Synthesis and reporting phase

1.4 Evidence from this report, alongside a further report will inform future policy development and decisions around support for interventions to prevent and alleviate homelessness. This report provides emerging headline findings during the early part of the Evaluation phase which followed the completion of the Scoping and Design phases. A further final report will be published once the evaluation has been completed, later in 2023.

¹ The realist EMMIE framework (effect, mechanism, moderators, implementation and economic cost) is a tool which assists researchers to unpick the range of contextual factors which impact on the process of delivering projects. For more information see Thornton et al (2019)

2. Methodological approach

2.1 The evaluation is theory based and driven by realist principles. The approach identifies commonalities across the programmes, as follows:

- They are all aimed at preventing (repeat) and/or alleviating homelessness
- They are intended to support homelessness services transformation by, certainly in the case of the Youth Innovation Fund, adding new services to the local offer.
- Most have a 'housing-led'/ rapid re-housing focus, i.e., a rights-based approach to housing, in which conditionality (e.g., of engaging with support, demonstrating 'housing-readiness') is removed and the aim is to support and sustain an exit from homelessness as quickly as possible.
- There is a common theme of handing control, choice, rights and responsibilities to people experiencing homelessness; support is strengths-based, psychologically informed and person-centred.
- All either explicitly aim to secure or ultimately depend for their success on access to multi-agency support.
- Implementation has been prompted by and/or will have been impacted by the pandemic.

2.2 The findings from the scoping phase of the evaluation thematically informed the design of a Theory of Change at both policy and programme level. Following any refinements as a result of this evaluation, Welsh Government plans to use these Theories of Change as a framework for evaluating future interventions. The policy level Theory of Change can be found in Annex A.

2.3 The programme level theory of change has been developed iteratively and provides an overarching evaluation framework to assess four types of provision. The categories are based on the function of the model/ service within the (envisaged) rapid-rehousing system, and this should maximise the opportunities to apply the learning from our evaluation strategically. The four types of provision are:

- Triage and assessment (including by/for other agencies as well as housing/homelessness);
- Housing supply/access to social and private rented sector housing (e.g., Private Rented Sector (PRS) access initiatives, lease schemes, etc);

- Support + housing (provided as a package, i.e., in a transitional supported housing project) with the aim of facilitating move-on (i.e., time limited); and
- Support provided to remain in a property (e.g., floating support; Housing First; where there is no expectation that the person will move if they no longer need/ want/ are receiving the support - the tenancy is 'mainstream' (not linked to support) but may not be permanent because it might be in the PRS).

2.4 A case study approach is being used for this evaluation. The research design aims to draw out the commonalities and significant differences between the needs of different age groups in relation to these stages of the prevention/ rapid-rehousing journey (though it should be borne in mind that the Youth Innovation Fund is aimed at people aged 25 and under).

2.5 To enable testing of the extent to which the funded projects align with Welsh Government's policy, each case study considers five key principles or themes governed by the policy-level Theory of Change, which are:

- Use of evidence (local data and research/ evaluation evidence) and co-production.
- Prevention/ earliest intervention.
- (Prioritising) rapid & permanent re-housing (for example, someone might be in a hostel, but the focus is on helping them to find/ providing support to maximise the likelihood of tenancy sustainment).
- Person-centred/ trauma-informed.
- Joined-up/ partnership working.

2.6 In the case studies the research team are using an established framework (EMMIE) to facilitate understanding on how the local context, mechanisms, moderators and barriers shape the implementation and impact of these programme theories and themes. This enables us to draw comparisons and test hypotheses about the different approaches and resources needed in different contexts.

Update of fieldwork carried out to date

- 2.7 Following a scoping phase and development of a Theory of Change at programme level, primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative research has been conducted, including a review of relevant policies, documents and monitoring data. Future work on this evaluation will include cost benefit analysis work conducted in the period following this report.
- 2.8 The evaluation phase began in October 2022. At the time of writing, the research team has reached out to key leads in 9 case study sites (of which there are 10) and 1 of 3 Phase 2 local authorities to determine a general overview of the project or commissioning context and impact. Interviews and data gathering is ongoing and to date this has included 31 strategic and operational staff and three people with lived experience.
- 2.9 This first report has been produced at the end of the first year of the evaluation and considers information collected up to the 6th of March 2022. The emerging findings are tentative given the early stages of research activity.
- 2.10 It should be noted that the majority of voices feeding into findings at this stage are from professionals with more lived experience voices yet to be brought into research activity over the coming weeks and months.
- 2.11 The research team will carry out more in-depth data analysis (including thematic coding and theory of change framework testing) to inform the final report once all fieldwork is completed in summer 2023. This will enable comparisons to be drawn and hypotheses tested about the different approaches and resources needed in different contexts. Short case studies will be produced for each of the 9 case study sites and include stakeholder quotes in our final report. The research team are also collecting data to support a cost benefit analysis that will be discussed in the final evaluation report.

3. Interim Findings: Prevention and early intervention

Context and overview

- 3.1 Prevention is at the forefront of the Strategy for Preventing and Ending Homelessness (Welsh Government 2019, p.1), which recognises ‘a need to shift much more of our energy and resources to preventing homelessness from happening in the first place’. The strategy emphasises the effectiveness of early intervention, and the fact that prevention requires a whole system approach.
- 3.2 Local authorities have a duty under [The Housing \(Wales\) Act 2014](#) (HWA 2014) to review homelessness in their area, developing strategies to prevent homelessness whilst also providing help for those who are threatened with homelessness. The HWA 2014 places duties on local authorities to provide free advice and, in certain circumstances, help and accommodation to people who are homeless, or threatened with homelessness. The local housing authority must work alongside other public authorities, voluntary organisations and other persons, to ensure that these services are designed to meet the needs of groups at particular risk of homelessness (Law Wales 2023).
- 3.3 Services commissioned by local authorities using the Welsh Government’s Housing Support Grant are intended to ‘augment, complement and support’ the statutory homelessness service, preventing people from becoming homeless, stabilising their housing situation, or helping potentially homeless people to find and keep accommodation (Welsh Government 2020).
- 3.4 During the pandemic, Welsh Government took a series of unprecedented measures to tackle and prevent homelessness, including legal measures to suspend social and private rented accommodation evictions (Welsh Government 2020b).
- 3.5 From April 2021 to March 2022 there was an increase of 27% in the numbers of households presenting to Welsh local authorities threatened with homelessness, and a decrease of 11% on 2020/21 in those assessed as homeless and owed a duty to help secure accommodation. Of those threatened with homelessness, 67% had their homelessness prevented by at least six months (Welsh Government 2022). Whilst these figures are likely to be distorted by the impact of fewer evictions

during the pandemic, they do suggest that early intervention is working well for many households.

- 3.6 The Strategy for Preventing and Ending Homelessness (Welsh Government 2019) proposes the following typology of homelessness prevention:

Table 1: Typology of homelessness prevention

Typology	Description/Details
Primary	Preventing or minimising homelessness risks across the population at large
Secondary	Early-stage prevention focussed on high-risk groups, or those starting to show early signs of a particular problem
Tertiary	Intervening once there is a problem to stop it getting worse
Acute	Spending to manage the impact of a strongly negative situation - does little or nothing to prevent problems recurring in future

Source: Strategy for Preventing and Ending Homelessness (Welsh Government 2019)

- 3.7 Many of the funded projects within the sample work with people who are already homeless (arguably ‘tertiary prevention’) often targeting those with long histories of homelessness or housing instability, including rough sleeping. Those accessing accommodation-based projects tended to be identified once they had already entered the statutory homelessness system, either through making a homeless application, being moved through supported housing, or leaving care (rather than supporting someone whilst they are in care). ‘Prevention’ applies only to these projects where they aim to support people to exit homelessness sustainably, i.e., the opposite of ‘acute’ spending which has been described by Fitzpatrick, Mackie and Wood (2021) as ‘repeat prevention’. This is considered in the following section on rapid re-housing.
- 3.8 However, several of the case study projects are seeking to work with people further upstream (arguably ‘secondary prevention’) for example, targeting those leaving care or prison, or supporting those who are at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

The emerging findings are presented in relation to the preventative work of these projects in this section.

Emerging evidence of enablers and barriers

- 3.9 This section presents emerging themes from across all of the programmes, though the fieldwork in relation to the Youth Innovation Fund projects is further advanced.
- 3.10 There are examples of promising practice and learning around what works in engaging people – especially younger people – upstream from case study projects for whom this was a focus. One project adopted minimal referral or self-referral criteria in order to pick up those at risk of homelessness. They also forged referral partnerships with a wide range of agencies to pick up young people with any kind of housing issue, including Probation and Children’s Services (Leaving Care, Family Intervention Teams working with young parents at risk of losing tenancies/ children into care as well as other young people whose living arrangements are at risk) to catch individuals at key transitions and/or where there is a tenancy/ home situation that might be sustained.
- 3.11 Having the flexibility and skills to work with whatever ‘is on top’ for the individual and offering holistic support around that – rather than focusing only on the (presenting) housing issue was viewed by operational staff and service users as the most effective way to ensure prevention outcomes are sustained. Examples include offering a range of support with education, training and employment (ETE), tenancy training, confidence building, community integration, which is tailored to the needs of the individual. To note, some frontline workers interviewed were not convinced of the value of wider community-led offers in preventing homelessness.
- 3.12 Learning from outreach projects shows how offering floating support can achieve more upstream homelessness prevention – with interviewees reporting how it prevented people going through the homeless system altogether through supporting skills around living independently or mediating where relationships are at risk of breakdown.

Wider system factors

- 3.13 Other agencies understanding what role they can play in identifying and responding to those at risk of homelessness. Some participants felt this had improved as a result of the pandemic. Some activity is underway to raise awareness that homelessness is 'everyone's responsibility', not just homelessness services, e.g., North Wales authorities collectively holding an event involving statutory and community and voluntary service (CVS) partners to consider what role each can play.
- 3.14 Community Housing Cymru reflected that many of their Registered Social Landlord members were investing considerably in a wide range of services to prevent tenancy breakdown (e.g., income maximisation, energy efficiency advice, tenancy support) and that they were seeing huge demand for these services in the post-Covid/ cost of living crisis context.

4. Interim findings: Prioritising rapid and permanent rehousing

Context and overview

4.1 The Homelessness Strategy (Welsh Government 2019) and Ending Homelessness in Wales (Welsh Government 2021) set out the Welsh Government's commitment to moving away from a "staircase', earned rewards, model of service delivery" (Welsh Government 2021, p.4), to transforming the response to homelessness to one of 'rapid rehousing. The Rapid Rehousing Guidance (Welsh Government 2022) states that,

'Rapid Rehousing is an internationally recognised approach which ensures that anyone experiencing homelessness can move into a settled home as quickly as possible, rather than staying in temporary accommodation for long periods of time'.

4.2 Housing First - which is a focus of this evaluation - represents one form of rapid rehousing for people with multiple and complex support needs in addition to their housing need.

4.3 Welsh Government policy documents recognise that a transformation to rapid rehousing will take time, given the need to bolster the supply of and access to affordable housing in many areas, and transform both cultures and processes within homelessness services.

4.4 Each local authority was required to progress toward developing a rapid rehousing transition plan by September 2022 as part of their Housing Support Programme Strategy. This was supported by national Rapid Rehousing Guidance (Welsh Government 2022). It is intended that the plans are treated as "live" documents, which local authorities will continue to refine and develop. Alongside this, Welsh Government has set a target to develop an additional 20,000 new social homes for rent by the end of the term of government, and in addition to leasing properties from private landlords through Leasing Scheme Wales.

4.5 The pandemic created both opportunities and challenges for this strategic direction. On the one hand, it has accelerated ambition and delivery around the pace and scale of prevention and rapid re-housing; mobilising wider partners around a culture

of 'doing whatever it takes' (Homeless Action Group 2020), whilst confirming homelessness as a public health issue. Pausing private rented sector evictions and social allocations created an opportunity for innovative partnerships with housing providers. However, it has also meant that local authorities – in Wales (as in other parts of the UK) have had to develop and make use of a lot more temporary accommodation (Senedd Research 2021) at a time when the strategic direction was to move away from this (Welsh Government 2019 and 2022). Between the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and the end of January 2023, over 32,400 people who were previously homeless have been supported into emergency temporary accommodation. As of 31 January 2023, 9,410 individuals were in temporary accommodation (Welsh Government 2023).

Conceptual discussion

- 4.6 For operational staff in particular, there was some confusion around the term 'rapid rehousing' and some trepidation around its use.
- 4.7 Local authority interviewees raised concerns about the term 'rapid rehousing' (though not about the ethos underlying it) since it risked raising expectations about how quickly a person can 'get a house' if they present as homeless. Support providers expressed similar concerns about 'rapid' raising unrealistic expectations in the 'real world' and the impact which this can then have on the trust and morale of those they support who may be left waiting for months or even years.
- 4.8 There was a general lack of clarity about the role of supported housing within a rapid rehousing system and concerns that this might be decommissioned without proper planning.

Access to settled tenancies: emerging evidence of enablers and barriers

- 4.9 As highlighted in the introduction to this section, rapid rehousing is a policy with a long lead-in, given the current housing crisis and lack of supply of single person accommodation. This section presents emerging findings about how these barriers are impacting on projects' ability to support people into suitable and sustainable settled tenancies, and whether and how these barriers are being overcome.
- 4.10 A few frontline workers felt that some of the individuals they were supporting were 'not ready and need to learn to be a tenant', suggesting that the 'staircase' or linear model, in which people are progressed through residential settings until they can demonstrate 'tenancy readiness' is still embedded within cultures and systems.
- 4.11 Most projects expressed an ambition to support people into sustainable settled tenancies; however, individuals working on the frontline are navigating a system in which this is often challenging. All projects reported a lack of move-on options.
- 4.12 Some project models which aim to support rapid move-on into permanent accommodation have not worked as intended due to housing supply issues. For example, a project which offers training flats, intended for a period of up to 18 weeks to support young people into permanent accommodation is unable to move people on, in some cases for over a year due to a lack of accommodation, meaning also that others are not able to access the training flats.
- 4.13 Interviews to date suggest that barriers to housing supply may include:
- Long waiting lists for social housing, and allocations policies which do not prioritise those experiencing or at risk of homelessness, treating non-permanent accommodation provided by one project as "settled" for the purposes of priority banding, or placing young people on a separate waiting list to the general population.
 - Concerns from local communities/ elected members about people who have experienced homelessness being seen to jump the waiting list for social housing, or about the risk of neighbour nuisance where there is a history of multiple disadvantage, leading to resistance around changing allocations policies in some areas.

- Individuals and households experiencing multiple disadvantage being 'by-passed' in allocation decision-making, due to perceived risks by landlords
- Affordability of some properties (including utility bills) – subsidies from providers and/or Discretionary Housing Payments are sometimes used, but seen as unsustainable.
- Lack of one-bedroom properties in more rural areas; spare room subsidy policy (set by UK Government) acts as a barrier to allocating larger properties to people, even where there is lower demand.
- Poor public transport links to some estates/ properties create a huge risk to tenancy sustainment for people who do not have access to a car.
- Private sector landlords selling their properties or preferring to let to students or professionals than to people receiving benefits.
- Age limits on supported housing and move-on projects. A supported housing project aimed at young people referred to having concerns that they would be unable to support service users into suitable move-on accommodation once they turned 25.
- Local issues which are impacting on housing supply, for example in one local authority where an issue with contaminated land has led to a suspension of all planning applications to develop or convert.

4.14 Despite much-welcomed additional capital funding from Welsh Government, local authority and social landlord interviewees reported barriers and delays to development and acquisition of properties, resulting from:

- Increased labour and material costs due to inflation and Brexit.
- Restrictions on using Welsh Government funding to buy properties which do not initially meet Welsh Housing Quality or Temporary Accommodation space standards.
- Timescales for spending capital funding allocations not aligning with the time it takes to build or purchase properties.

Integration within a rapid rehousing system: emerging evidence of enablers and barriers

- 4.15 Even where projects are demonstrating promising re-housing/ repeat prevention models, they do not necessarily appear to be effectively integrated within a wider local rapid rehousing system. The research team identified the following facilitators and barriers to this.
- 4.16 The awareness, appetite and capacity of projects to challenge conditionality and advocate for the right to housing of those they support within wider housing allocations systems. It was clear that the transitional stage in the move to more permanent accommodation was seen as necessary, but not always described by project staff in a way that would suggest housing was seen as a right. We heard examples in which frontline workers normalised and accepted 'one offer' policies and the need for individuals to prove their 'tenancy-readiness' and felt they could do little to influence other parts of the pathway. Where Housing First and other intensive support services were relatively new, there was a sense that decision-makers do not yet fully understand or trust the support model to wraparound the individual and enable them to sustain a tenancy.
- 4.17 The extent to which projects are functioning within wider partnerships with local authorities and/or individual social landlords. Where support providers have direct formalised relationships with housing providers (e.g. through a joint bid at the outset, an existing group or partnership structure, or through a service level agreement) or where senior people within the housing provider understand and buy in to the values of a project offer (i.e., Housing First), this was felt to enable better access to properties. A project run by a third sector organisation described its frustration at the local authority's failure to address move-on requirements which had been identified at the outset of the project, and its lack of direct relationships with other housing providers (including private sector landlords and estate agents) outside of the council. Another project had merged with a Registered Social Landlord about five years ago, having previously struggled to identify move on through other routes. The project can now tap into new affordable housing developments to provide move-on options. Another project had only informal

partnerships with housing providers which hinged on relationships with individual housing officers.

- 4.18 Security of funding/ time-limited offer for wrap-around support on resettlement; and engagement of wider services (e.g., mental health) where needed. Short-term support funding may not be sufficient to reassure landlords to offer secure tenancy rights, especially to those with multiple and complex needs and/or a history of tenancy problems. Community Housing Cymru reported at a national level that lack of access to mental health services increased their members' concerns that tenants would be left without treatment and/or support.
- 4.19 There was also some evidence of the provision and sustainment of housing being seen as more important than support. While support can be less tangible and measurable than housing outcomes, the rapid rehousing model (rightly) emphasises support provision and (re)building connections within a community to help sustain longer term positive outcomes. The research team sensed a risk that the focus on 'rehousing' leads to the under-valuing of support, which is critical to 'repeat prevention' for many, especially people who have lived unsettled lives and experienced multiple disadvantage. In a project set up to offer 'two tier' housing and wider community facing support elements, support workers across each did not have a seamless referral route. There was also a lack of clarity about the role community facing support staff played in homelessness prevention.
- 4.20 The next phase of the evaluation will explore the extent to which funded projects feature in or align with local Rapid Rehousing Transitional Plans as local authority officers are interviewed and review draft plans from relevant areas in the coming weeks and months.

Examples of Promising Practice

- 4.21 There are promising examples to support rapid rehousing within some of the case study projects.
- 4.22 One model contains a dedicated resource to: source accommodation, provide rent and move in assistance and support and provide case management / support

provision to focus on building connections with the community and/or connect to jobs and services.

- 4.23 Another project providing shared flats to young people reported that the initial agreement is set up as a licence which means service users do not have full tenancy rights at the outset. However, this model brought two benefits: licences can be turned into secure tenancies if the young person settles and since the accommodation is classed as insecure, young people receive a higher band within social housing allocations policies and can explore other housing options if they wish to move.
- 4.24 One provider explained how, given the acute shortage of 1-bedroomed properties in their area, they had tested a model in which two individuals are supported to access and share a two-bedroomed property. They felt this was working well as a step in the process of supporting people to independence.
- 4.25 A health and housing assessment hub for people with mental health and addiction issues is working with people in temporary accommodation but is looking to expand this to include people who are in supported housing, to reduce the likelihood of eviction and risk of future street homelessness (with a long term aim of supporting service users to become more stable and access permanent accommodation).

Wider system factors

- 4.26 The overall emerging finding is that there is a lack of joined up working across different housing and homelessness services, making it challenging to apply rapid rehousing at system level. However, the research team identified some positive developments within local systems, set out below.
- 4.27 One local authority explained that Phase 2 funding had provided the revenue and associated Welsh Government guidance to produce the approved template necessary for them to bring others on board in order to pilot a 'triage hub'. This had demonstrated that multi-disciplinary assessment in a short-term accommodation setting is a crucial first step in working to rehouse people with multiple and complex needs. Without this, officers highlighted a risk of 'rapid rehousing into failure' - this also demonstrates 'repeat prevention' in action. Some people had stayed at the hub

for one night and then moved on rapidly; others had stayed for three to six months in order to access diagnoses and social care assessments. Some people had moved directly from the triage hub into residential care. The local authority had also recognised the crucial role of outreach services running alongside the hub to encourage long-term rough sleepers and those with very low trust of systems to access it.

- 4.28 One local authority has set up a Rapid Rehousing Board. The board was felt by participants to have been a good mechanism to get everyone, including the housing associations, around the table in order to build some ownership of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. However, not all local authorities in Wales have such a board.

5. Interim Findings: Partnership working

Overview and project context

- 5.1 Housing support is multifaceted and, for those with complex needs in particular, projects identified the importance of engaging services beyond housing, working with community organisations, NHS, social care and beyond. Interviewees made the point that joined up working is essential to a more trauma-informed approach, so that people can access the support they need without having to re-tell their story, and to reduce the risk of people being excluded from services or evicted from accommodation.
- 5.2 The importance of partnership working is emphasised throughout the Welsh Government policy documents, for example, Ending Homelessness in Wales (Welsh Government 2022, p.6) states that:
'...all public services and the third sector have a role to play, working together to prevent homelessness and where it cannot be prevented ensure it is rare, brief and unrepeated. Partnership working therefore must be at the heart of everything we do'

Emerging evidence of enablers and barriers

- 5.3 Many projects reported that limited access to statutory mental health services and increased demand for all health and social care services limited the effectiveness of partnership working.
- 5.4 Support staff described spending a lot of time chasing and advocating for people in relation to accessing diagnosis, treatment and support. One service explained that the young people it supports are often discharged from mental health services without even realising it, including sometimes for non-engagement when they did not know about the appointment. Delivering a trauma-informed approach is challenging when wider systems and services are not operating in this way.
- 5.5 One of the hub projects has been able to establish a single point of access (SPOA) into substance misuse services to improve access and coordination for those experiencing multiple disadvantage.
- 5.6 Some accommodation projects reported positive relationships with their respective local authorities which supported smooth pathways at the "front end" (i.e., through

housing options), but there was a tendency for this to feel less connected at move-on, discussed in the previous section of this report.

Examples of promising practice

- 5.7 There is some evidence of funded projects raising awareness and influencing culture in partner agencies and across systems, in relation to the principles of Housing First (and this was not limited to those delivering Housing First).
- 5.8 For some projects, multi-agency forums and networks were an important vehicle for this. One key informant explained how their local multi-agency housing network tends to be crisis driven, but their regular involvement in the Housing First for Youth project had helped professionals see and have greater oversight of a person's whole journey, 'beyond crisis point'. This can also help to achieve longer term buy-in around person-centred and trauma informed approaches.
- 5.9 Other projects built in a multi-agency approach as part of their delivery model, particularly Housing First and also outreach hubs. In these cases, meetings took place across sectors to wraparound the needs of the service user, though as highlighted in the previous section, the voice of the service user themselves in this process was sometimes missing.
- 5.10 One project in particular is seeking to reverse this and influence practice in partner organisations to work with young people in a more person-centred, co-productive and transparent way. The project supports young people to invite professionals and informal supporters to a 'Team around the Tenancy' meeting, in order to improve coordination and reduce duplication between different workers involved in a case and, most importantly, put the young person at the centre of the plans.
- 5.11 Staff at an outreach hub working with people with complex mental health and substance misuse issues to support recovery recognised the differences in organisational and professional culture within their multi-agency team. This hub was initially resourced through Phase 2 funding and has developed into a comprehensive multiagency approach with buy-in across health, housing and substance misuse services. The hub continues to expand cross sector involvement (recent additions include a domestic abuse and a physical health nurse) and has

achieved financial commitment through complex needs funding to Area Planning Boards through the Welsh Government and via the Housing Support Grant. As well as building relationships across health services, it has a lived experience panel involved in influencing the hub and at a wider strategic level. They have taken a 'step by step' approach to building cross-sector buy-in and commitment, with a longer-term ambition to improve partnership working for those who are experiencing both problematic substance use and mental ill-health in the local area. Though in relative infancy, this model can offer useful learning to areas who wish to develop a housing and health partnership approach.

Wider system factors

- 5.12 Many projects reported feeling – or appeared to the research team to be – 'siloed', lacking strategic buy-in across all touchpoints of their service users' pathways. During engagement with wider strategic stakeholders and partners in this next phase of the fieldwork, it will be important to understand their perceptions of local systems, and whether and how they see funded projects fitting within these.
- 5.13 The local authority interviewed to date for Phase 2 described effective multi-agency governance structures, which include a strategic steering group, overseeing the Housing Support Programme Strategy and an operational Homelessness Forum which sits beneath it. Both contain around 30 representatives, drawing in police, probation, the community and voluntary sector as well as ownership and involvement in the whole governance structure from wider council departments. The structures were intended to help determine local priorities and ensure wide ownership of these.
- 5.14 Staff at the outreach hub which hoped to influence wider service delivery for people with co-existing mental health and substance misuse problems explained that they were using the Area Planning Board as a vehicle to start challenging the way NHS services are currently commissioned.

6. Interim Findings: Use of evidence: Service user co-production and consultation

6.1 Welsh Government has identified the importance of ensuring clients are more meaningfully involved in design and delivery of projects. For example, Ending Homelessness in Wales (Welsh Government 2022, p.5) states:

‘Policy, service delivery and practice should be informed and shaped in a co-productive manner and by those with lived experience’.

6.2 As consultation and involvement were more explicitly covered in project application forms, rather than co-production itself, these activities are all considered in this section.

Overview and context

6.3 At the current time, the evidence is mixed in terms of how projects have incorporated elements of consultation and co-production. Some have adopted elements of service user involvement, ranging from scheduling house meetings for residents to identify improvements – to inviting people to suggest questions and be on interview panels when recruiting a youth and community development worker.

6.4 The research team will continue to explore and capture learning around co-production to inform the final report in late 2023. However, to date informants from most case study areas have participated so the final report will look to build on the findings in this section.

Conceptual discussion

6.5 The research team found that some projects conflated co-production with more general service user involvement in service provision. On the other hand – a Youth Innovation Fund project had adopted elements of co-production but did not recognise this as such - reporting that they did not incorporate co-production yet went on to discuss how service users were involved in making decisions around how a hardship fund scheme should prioritise spend.

6.6 Though all interviewees acknowledged the need to consult with service users - in a few cases, staff did not recognise what role co-production would play in improving

service delivery. Another project which involves a multi-agency hub identified that as a new service the input of service users with substance misuse to inform development was essential. This has included attending multi-agency meetings and designing visual service user journeys to raise awareness. This has informed development of the project and is starting to influence wider health and substance misuse services across the local authority.

- 6.7 Overall, there was a sense that operational staff in particular are less aware of what co-production is and/ or that this is an underpinning principle of Welsh Government policy. Whilst some strategic staff are more involved in co-production with service users– there was limited evidence to date of this priority trickling down to those on the front line.

Emerging evidence of promising practice, enablers and barriers

- 6.8 Rather than necessarily using co-production methods to influence the project as a whole, a few projects discussed involving service users to influence their individual service. For example, one project adopted a two-part review of support plans and distance travelled, where the young person and the worker complete the progress reports independently and with their views given equal weighting.
- 6.9 Ensuring that service delivery is shaped in a co-productive manner is an identified priority at Welsh Government level. As highlighted elsewhere, this research has identified examples of service users influencing design and delivery across a few projects, though this was not always the case. One project reported that although they had asked young people to get more involved and have their say (including attending multi-agency meetings) most did not wish to do so. When asked why this was the case staff reported that service users were busy, or that their lives were complex. Yet it did not appear that the project had explored with service users if there were ways in which they would like to get involved outside of the options presented to them (e.g., some may not feel comfortable sitting in a meeting with other professionals). The evaluation findings to date suggest that projects work with service users to explore the ways in which they would feel comfortable and able to contribute toward shaping and informing the service they receive –making it clear that they only need to get involved if they wish to do so.

Wider system factors

- 6.10 Projects were more likely to report on co-production activities at an organisational level - which also incorporated service users of Welsh Government funded projects. This included a project which held a weekly service user forum which fed into, and has influenced, ongoing wider services and policies at local authority, regional and Welsh Government level. Another project has a co-production group containing current and former service users which informed their overall services.
- 6.11 The national key informant interviews identified some promising avenues through which projects can link, such as Cymorth Cymru's Experts by Experience programme and activities to feed lived experience views into the national strategy development or Homelessness Advisory Groups. Shelter Cymru have a Take Notice Panel and have published a series of resources around how organisations can increase levels of service user participation (Shelter Cymru web page, undated). These offer some great learning opportunities for projects and local authorities. A few staff members were identified as having an awareness of and valued external regional and national sources of support around co-production, be that through training or cross-sector forums, or learning from wider service user groups. But based on this evaluation to date these resources are less likely to trickle down to those working directly with service users. Also to note that there is still some work to do at national level around supporting local authorities to co-produce – with Shelter Cymru highlighting the lack of a national 'ethical framework' which considers issues related to GDPR, data sharing and risk assessments, for example.
- 6.12 National informants highlighted that co-production was not always embedded at Welsh Government level – with an example of the implementation of Rapid Rehousing Transitioning planning not feeling sufficiently co-produced with local authorities. The key informant research to date has found that some local authorities would welcome the opportunity to share learning with each other and Welsh Government to help inform planning.

7. Interim Findings: Person-centred/ trauma-informed approach

7.1 Ending Homelessness: (Welsh Government 2020, p.5) states as one of its key principles that:

‘All services should place the individual at the centre and work together in a trauma informed way’.

7.2 The Welsh Government has previously committed specific funding to Cymorth Cymru to support local authority staff to learn trauma informed principles, through funding targeted training via the Homelessness Prevention Grant (this training took place during 2017-18 and 2019-20) (Cymorth Cymru, undated).

7.3 The following definition has been offered of what it means to work in a ‘trauma informed’ way:

‘In this approach knowledge about trauma and its effects are integrated into policies, procedures, and practices. It seeks to actively resist traumatising people again and prevent and mitigate adverse consequences, prioritising physical and emotional safety and commits to ‘do no harm’ in practice and to proactively support and help affected people make their own informed decisions.’

(ACE Hub Wales/ Traumatic Stress Wales, 2022, p.10). NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (undated) offers the following definition:

‘Person centred care refers to a process that is people focused, promotes independence and autonomy, provides choice and control and is based on a collaborative team philosophy. It takes into account people’s needs and views and builds relationships with family members.’

7.4 NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (undated) highlights the relationship between person-centred care and co-production, which can support a person-centred approach since it sees people as ‘equal partners’ in planning and development. Where the previous section covered service user involvement and co-production, this section focuses more explicitly on practice with individuals.

Overview and context

- 7.5 Many projects have adopted elements of a person-centred offer, with examples provided of taking an advocacy approach. At a more basic level service users were asked what activities they would like to see included in a project. More embedded services actively worked towards a support model in which power is shared between citizen and worker, with the citizen choosing who, how, where and when to access help. Overall, the approach is not being applied consistently across staff or across different elements of a project, or across wider pathways of which these projects form a part. To date, some operational staff across a few of the projects reported that they were unsure about what it meant to offer a person-centred or trauma informed approach (perhaps unsurprisingly, this was less evident in projects which have adopted a HF, as this approach is embedded in the framework).
- 7.6 For the next phase of the evaluation, the research team will continue to gather the views of people using funded projects and identify the extent to which these have been perceived as person-centred. A synthesis across all interviews will also be carried out— cross referenced by project, to highlight specific examples of good practice and areas for development – which will be informed by ongoing fieldwork.

Conceptual discussion

- 7.7 Projects were asked at application stage to demonstrate how they deliver a person-centred/trauma informed service. Whilst in some cases the principles were being applied, the research team found some ambiguity across projects about what constitutes a truly person-centred service, with a few frontline staff reporting that they were not familiar with the terms. Where operational staff had heard of these terms, they did not necessarily apply them correctly. For example, a staff member in one project suggested that service users would be “referred to other services” to manage any trauma.

Examples of promising practice

- 7.8 One project described adopting a ‘restorative approach’ and had taken actions which had led to positive feedback from service users. The engagement workers in

post are from a lived experience background. This project recognises there can sometimes be resistance from young people (particularly from a care background) to link in with professionals as they are used to things 'being done for them'. The project works closely to overcome these barriers through ensuring the young person not only attends but also initiates multiagency meetings about them, allowing them to invite professionals or family members whom they wish to be there. The young person is also cc'd into emails to and from other professionals (including cc'ing the young person back in when professionals omit them in a response email). There are some cross project learning opportunities here, as highlighted in the co-production section – as other projects had struggled to involve service users.

- 7.9 Whilst there have been limited interviews with service users to date - where collated, there have been reports of positive outcomes relating to holistic support, leading to increased confidence, wellbeing and support around education and training, budgeting and life skills. One person reported feeling cared about and that staff had gone "above and beyond" to get to know them and understand their needs, with one helping them to access bursaries from the National Youth Arts Trust and apply to university to study musical theatre.

Emerging evidence around enablers and barriers

- 7.10 Most organisations offered trauma informed training to staff, but this did not always cover all staff, particularly newer ones, with one interviewee reporting that they did not have the resource to offer refresher training.
- 7.11 Sometimes being person-centred or trauma informed can be hindered due to the project model. For example, a shared housing model needed to give careful thought to how a person would fit into the service. A more risk averse affordability and matching selection process took place to screen and manage risks and needs, yet this was justified as needed in order to promote the wellbeing and safety of the other resident in a shared setting.
- 7.12 In some cases, a person-centred approach was offered within the parameters of the project support – but not across the system as a whole. For example, we heard that in some organisations and systems, there is a culture of referring people without seeking their consent or even explaining the purpose or nature of the offer which

can act as a barrier to engagement. Regarding move on, one local authority had a one offer policy for service users ready to move-on from a project. Within one of the HF4Y projects, in which the accommodation provided is not permanent due to the age criteria, a lack of move-on options meant that a service user who is due to turn 25 is at risk of moving 'backwards' into emergency accommodation. This runs counter to the Housing First principles around offering stable support for as long as someone needs it and the principles around 'positive youth development' (Housing First Europe Hub 2022). In another project, examples were provided of a few people moving back in with family until permanent accommodation can be found. Whilst interviewees highlighted that these service users had improved independence skills for the future, moving people 'backwards' across a pathway is not in the best interests of the service user, and therefore not person-centred. A housing association provider who worked closely with a HF4Y project referred to other providers bypassing customers assessed as having high level needs. This again highlights the need for a whole system approach to working in a trauma-informed way.

- 7.13 Though it would be expected that Housing First projects assessed as high-fidelity to apply a person-centred/ trauma informed approach, projects fed back that their ability to work in this way using an intensive case management model was sometimes limited by the over-stretched and/or inflexible wider systems which they are supporting people to access.

8. Interim Findings: Using evidence: Measuring performance and impact

- 8.1 Projects funded through the ongoing Housing First and Youth Innovation Fund programme are required to complete a monitoring report every six months in which ongoing KPIs are recorded. Projects also complete an annual delivery plan, to update on any changes to the project and confirm the ongoing funding that is required.
- 8.2 Since the three funding programmes included within this evaluation were set up, Welsh Government has made significant progress in developing an Ending Homelessness Outcomes Framework, including a new Housing Support Grant Outcomes Framework, through engagement with the sector. In the overarching Ending Homelessness Outcomes framework, draft outcomes are structured under the headings:
- Equalities, partnership and workforce
 - Rare, brief and unrepeated
- 8.3 Six local authorities contributed to the pilot of the HSG Outcomes Framework – of which the feedback received has informed the final version of the framework (Welsh Government 2023b).
- 8.4 This section presents the emerging findings in relation to how projects are measuring and reporting their progress. The three programmes and the case study projects participating in the evaluation to date have not, to our knowledge, integrated the new outcomes formally into their systems. In the remainder of the evaluation, the research team will work with Welsh Government to agree whether and how our findings and recommendations might reflect the emerging Outcomes Framework.

Overview and context

- 8.5 Ensuring that projects have robust measurement processes in place can help to inform what is working well in particular contexts and across different parts of the system, enabling consideration of where gaps and opportunities are. The research team found that robust measurement processes are generally not in place across

funded projects, with more of a focus on outputs than outcomes and learning. Where projects provided evidence, this tended to reflect their wider service offer rather than being project focused.

- 8.6 For phase 2 projects, due to the nature of the rapid funding and the fact that these have now either been mainstreamed or are no longer operating, KPIs were no longer being collated. This meant the level and quality of data being captured is mixed and where services are still running – dependent on the requirements of specific funding streams.
- 8.7 The research team are carrying out ongoing work to identify the data collected and held internally across projects – this will be synthesised and discussed in more detail for the final report.

Emerging evidence of promising examples, enablers and barriers

- 8.8 A few case study areas are collecting information internally to gather feedback, measure progress and/or distance travelled, such as through exit questionnaires, or Outcome Stars measurement tools. Some projects reported regularly meeting with clients to review their goals, with one combining assessment and progress data in one system to allow more detailed reports. Though a number of projects are small scale, this can offer some useful learning for Welsh Government.
- 8.9 Across most projects, information was mainly collected for the purpose of reporting set KPIs to Welsh Government, which tended to be framed around specific outputs. A project which acknowledged that current KPIs are “quite basic” told us that they would welcome the opportunity to discuss learning and improvement with the Welsh Government, and the opportunity to refresh the KPIs, neither of which has happened to date.
- 8.10 Whilst some KPIs picked up on ‘softer’ outcomes, such as around improvements to wellbeing and Education, Training and Employment – it was not always clear how this evidence is being collected. In the case of one project, the research team were informed that wellbeing KPIs had been assessed by staff members, rather than through asking young people directly.

- 8.11 Programme managers acknowledged that Covid factors had perhaps got in the way of some planned evidence gathering across projects. Some projects had planned to collect additional information, such as around assessing cost benefit or applying longitudinal measures through the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale. However – the research team identified that in the main, this did not take place. Some interviewees cited Covid as a reason for this due to start dates being delayed and disruption meaning projects could not get off the ground or operate as intended. Housing First and shared accommodation models in particular had struggled to deliver as planned at the outset. This meant that additional ‘robust’ measurements did not get off the ground.
- 8.12 In a few areas, staff were unsure about how KPIs were being measured. For example, in one project a strategic interviewee suggested frontline staff were collating information (as they worked directly with service users), yet when asked, this was found not to be the case. In a partnership project being delivered by a third sector organisation and a local authority, interviewees from both partners suggested that the other were collecting the KPIs.
- 8.13 Projects which were smaller and worked with more complex individuals whose housing pathway journey may take longer and be less linear expressed that traditional quantitative indicators and numeric KPIs did not measure some of the factors identified as ‘success’. A few indicated that non-housing related outcomes were sometimes more appropriate. For example, a project reported an indicator as enabling people with a range of mental health issues to engage with services that can help them recover. From this the client is in more of a position to develop life skills and reduce future homelessness. Another project felt that a qualitative approach would offer more valuable learning and collected client case studies for this purpose.

9. Summary

- 9.1 This report sets out early emerging themes based on year one of the evaluation, focusing primarily on the policy and programme Theory of Change and fieldwork with service and housing providers.
- 9.2 To inform the final report the research team are carrying out further case study fieldwork with service users, which is due to be completed Summer 2023. This will be followed by a more in-depth data analysis exercise to draw out robust comparisons and test hypotheses about the different approaches and resources needed in different contexts, alongside development of individual project case studies and a cost benefit analysis. This will be used to develop a set of recommendations to inform the design of future funding approaches adopted by the Welsh Government.

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Annex A: Theory of Change

Policy level Theory of Change

Defining the problem / situation analysis (What is the problem?)	Solutions focus (What is the solution?)	Causality (What will cause the solution to happen?)
<p>How well is the problem understood? Is it well founded? Does it rely on assumptions, if so which assumptions?</p>	<p>What is the aspiration/ambition for the solution? On what principles/ tenets are the solutions founded? What is different about this policy compared to what has been done before?</p>	<p>How is the causal relationship between problem and solution described and anticipated? What is the rationale underpinning the process of change?</p>
<p>Overarching: - Is built on the premise that housing (or lack of it) is not the only cause of homelessness and should not be the sole area of focus. The policy has a strong emphasis on whole system approaches and a single strategic view on homelessness. However, this relies on assent from relevant partners and agencies. <i>[Assumes assent]</i>.</p>	<p>1. Take steps to understand local level demand and what works: a) consider the scale of the problem through improving homelessness data b) look to evidence the impact of services and interventions and share this to inform wider learning <i>[Assumptions for the above:</i> <i>An evidenced based approach to assessing impact of services and</i></p>	<p>1. Lack of sufficient data means that the size of the problem and the extent to which current service provision is effective is not properly understood at national and local level. Better evidence gathering will facilitate improvement and enable WG to provide clear guidance to LA's about 'what works' in rapid rehousing. <i>[Assumes no distinction between what kind of impact evidence will</i></p>

Defining the problem / situation analysis (What is the problem?)	Solutions focus (What is the solution?)	Causality (What will cause the solution to happen?)
<p>- Homelessness is broadly defined i.e., to encompass hidden homelessness.</p> <p>- The overarching vision 'rare, brief and unrepeated' is open to interpretation.</p> <p>- Identifies a shift away from current policy which is limited or absent in terms of: whole system approach; trauma informed and person-centred practice; co-production; emphasis on early intervention and prevention within the spirit, not the letter of the law; rapid and appropriate housing solutions and secure tenure; innovative and housing and support solutions.</p>	<p><i>interventions will support WG to provide clearer guidance on effectiveness and assist commissioning decisions across LAs]</i></p>	<p><i>have on? future policy and commissioning decisions.]</i></p>
<p>- Focus shifts: away from crisis management, homeless release, ETA, TA etc to upstream early intervention, and away from staircase/ reward-based</p>	<p>2. Ensure earliest prevention is the intervention of first choice</p> <p><i>[Assumption: early intervention and prevention is more cost-effective, 'true prevention' starts pre-56 days (i.e., the period prior to the statutory definition of households being at threat of homelessness, as per (section 55(4) of Housing Wales Act 2014))</i></p>	<p>2. To achieve early intervention and prevention, authorities should take action before 56-day Duty. Duties within the Housing Act should be considered as the 'last line of defence' / treated as a 'safety net' when all other preventative avenues have failed – working to the 'spirit not the letter of the law'. Greater investment in more primary, secondary and tertiary prevention to reduce flow of households</p>

Defining the problem / situation analysis (What is the problem?)	Solutions focus (What is the solution?)	Causality (What will cause the solution to happen?)
models to long term housing-led solutions.		falling into homelessness will also be required.
	3. Ensure rapid and permanent rehousing is prioritised as an approach to tackling homelessness <i>[Assumption: demand will fall and will help reduce demand on hostels, TA and ETA over time]</i>	3. To ensure that rapid and permanent rehousing is prioritised, there needs to be: a) shift away from ‘staircase’, earned rewards model of service delivery b) implement long-term housing-led solutions c) shift away from provision of ETA, TA and hostel services d) explore adopting HF as part of a whole system approach, ensuring wraparound support is in place e) Increase supply and choice of affordable housing (via development of social housing, fairer allocations, better access to private rented sector)

Defining the problem / situation analysis (What is the problem?)	Solutions focus (What is the solution?)	Causality (What will cause the solution to happen?)
		<p><i>[Assumption: this requires alternative service delivery models jointly owned and funded by relevant public services, including Mental Health, substance misuse, primary care, community safety and housing to ensure specialist multi-disciplinary teams support individuals to address their needs and take a trauma informed approach]</i></p>
	<p>4. Adopt a person-centred approach</p>	<p>4. all services should be offered in a trauma informed way, working with partners to achieve this</p>
	<p>5. Support a joined-up approach with local partners – with a focus on prison leavers, care leavers, hospital discharge and young people <i>[Assumption: system level joined up approach is possible and will facilitate ending homelessness]</i></p>	<p>5. Homelessness is not solvable with housing alone, rather it is a ‘public services matter’ requiring system level approaches <i>[Assumption: all relevant public services assent to this view/there is buy-in at all levels]</i> via:</p>

Defining the problem / situation analysis (What is the problem?)	Solutions focus (What is the solution?)	Causality (What will cause the solution to happen?)
		<p>a) engagement with local public services (including health boards, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)) and the third sector.</p> <p>b) Implementation of a prisoner pathway in partnership with HMPPS <i>[Assumption: the pathway will prevent recurrent homelessness for this group].</i></p> <p>c) Investment in targeted secondary prevention aimed at young people through the youth service and a range of partnerships <i>[Assumption: these organisations are active in the LA / will bid for contracts and are fundamentally aligned to the vision of the policy].</i></p>

Defining the problem / situation analysis (What is the problem?)	Solutions focus (What is the solution?)	Causality (What will cause the solution to happen?)
		<p>d) Working with the care system to ensure successful transition for care leavers into permanent accommodation.</p> <p>e) Working with hospital discharge services.</p> <p>f) Working with housing management and RSLs and PRS to support prevention and avoid unnecessary evictions.</p> <p>g) Policy, service delivery and practice being informed and shaped in a co-productive manner and by those with lived experience.</p> <p>h) Specialist multi-disciplinary teams (established via jointly funded alternative service delivery models).</p>

The following thematic headings were distilled from the policy level theory of change above. These headings informed the high-level policy review which subsequently informed the programme level theory of change detailed in the next section. Policy level thematic headings are:

- Evidence – data and co-production to understand local demand and what works (locally and nationally) including Welsh Government’s role as a 2-way conduit
- Prevention/ earliest intervention
- Rapid and permanent re-housing prioritised
- Person-centred trauma-informed
- Joined-up approach (especially for key transitions between services)

Programme level Theory of Change

The programme level theory of change has been developed iteratively and provides an overarching evaluation framework to assess the following four types of provision. The categories are based on the function of the model/ service within the (envisaged) rapid-rehousing system, and this should maximise the opportunities to apply the learning from our evaluation strategically:

- Triage and assessment - including by/for other agencies as well as housing/homelessness
- Housing supply/ access to housing (e.g., PRS access initiatives, lease schemes, etc)
- Support + housing provided as a package (i.e., in a transitional supported housing project) with the aim of facilitating move-on (i.e., time limited)
- Support provided to remain in a property (e.g., floating support, Housing First) where there is no expectation that the person will move if they no longer need/ want/ are receiving the support. The tenancy is ‘mainstream’ (not linked to support) but may not be permanent because it might be in the PRS.

The research team will ensure a good mix of projects/ models targeting younger people and (older) adults in the evaluation so commonalities and significant differences between the needs of different age groups in relation to these stages of the prevention/ rapid-rehousing journey can be drawn out.

Programme theory themes

Within each of these projects/ models, the five key principles or themes from our policy-level Theory of Change distilled from the WG Homelessness Policy and tested across other key policy documents supplied are being explored. These are:

- Use of evidence (local data and research/ evaluation evidence) and co-production
- Prevention/ earliest intervention
- (Prioritising) rapid & permanent re-housing (e.g., someone might be in a hostel, but the focus is on helping them to find/ providing support to maximise the likelihood of tenancy sustainment)
- Person-centred/ trauma-informed
- Joined-up/ partnership working

This should enable the testing of the extent to which the funded projects align with WG's policy.

The evaluation case studies will also use the EMMIE framework to facilitate understanding on how the local context, mechanisms, moderators, barriers, shape the implementation and impact of these programme theories and themes. This should enable the evaluation to draw comparisons and test hypotheses about the different approaches and resources needed in different contexts.

This approach could be summarised in the following grid:

	Triage & Assessment	Access to housing	Transitional support + housing package	Support to remain in a property
Use of evidence				
Prevention/ early intervention				
Prioritising rapid & permanent re-housing				
Person-centre & trauma-informed				
Joined up/partnership working				