



## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE NETWORK

28.07.15 at London Funders

### Participants

Jade	<b>Glanfield</b>	Association of Charitable Foundations
Katherine	<b>Evans</b>	BBC Children in Need
James	<b>Humber</b>	BBC Children in Need
Ciaran	<b>Rafferty</b>	City Bridge Trust <b>(Chair)</b>
Joyce	<b>Harvie</b>	Greater London Authority
Helen	<b>Mathie</b>	Homeless Link <b>(Presenter)</b>
Daisy	<b>Boehm</b>	John Lyon's Charity
Alicia	<b>Lippiatt</b>	John Lyon's Charity
Erik	<b>Mesel</b>	John Lyon's Charity
Lisa	<b>Charalambous</b>	London Borough of Camden
Jim	<b>Minton</b>	London Youth
Shelagh	<b>O'Connor</b>	New Horizon Youth Centre
Jon	<b>Snow</b>	New Horizon Youth Centre
Rachel	<b>Wharton</b>	New Philanthropy Capital
Andrew	<b>Fuller</b>	Richard Reeve's Foundation
Alice	<b>Millest</b>	Social Finance Ltd

### In attendance

Becky	<b>Green</b>	London Funders
David	<b>Warner</b>	London Funders

Ciaran welcomed everyone to the group and noted the meeting notes from 20th May 2015. Ciaran confirmed that there would be a follow up meeting to discuss the area of mental health services including service providers and other key stakeholders.

### Young Homeless People

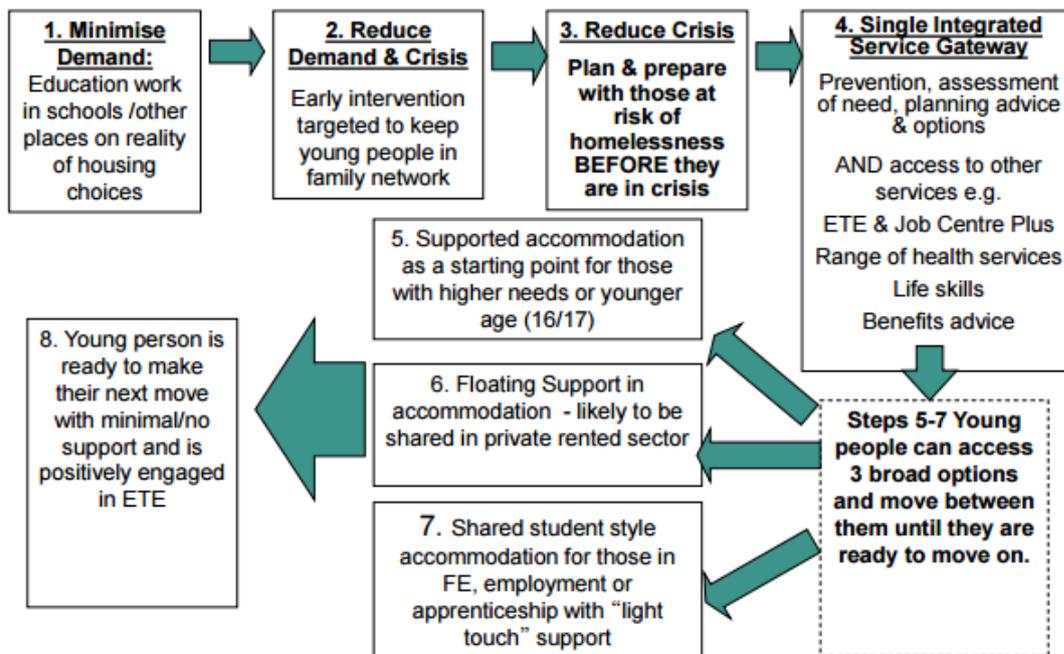
#### Helen Mathie, Homeless Link

[The Homeless Link presentation is available here](#)

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for organisations working with people who experience homelessness in England. Young homeless people are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and continue to make up over half of clients who access and receive support from homelessness services in England. At a time when proposals to restrict housing benefit for young people have been announced by the government, what are the key issues on the horizon facing homeless young people? Helen Mathie led the group in a discussion on current issues and trends affecting young people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness - [Homeless Link reports are available here](#). Representatives from **New Horizon Youth Centre**, including **Chair Jon Snow and Director Shelagh O'Connor**, also attended to give some practical case-study examples and to feed into the discussion.

Helen outlined the positive pathway model and noted that this was currently being updated and would be published soon.

## Positive Pathway model [St Basils – currently being updated]



Organisations often use this model to ensure that they are considering the whole range of needs of a young person.

In terms of numbers, Helen noted that half of people using homelessness services are under 25. Of these, 60% are male, and 40% are female. CHAIN data for London reports that Westminster has highest number of rough sleepers under-25 (322, 13%) and Brent has the highest proportion of rough sleepers under-25 (16%).

While statutory figures suggest homelessness among young people is decreasing (currently the proportion of homeless acceptances for households aged 16-24 is lower in London compared to the national figure), frontline charities say young people approaching homelessness services is increasing. The picture is very complex with a lot of different indicators and the group discussed possible reasons why the statutory figures are dropping:

- Effective preventative measures – there is a positive pathway model or approach in half of areas, and family mediation, home visits and work in schools all take place. However there is a mixed pictures as only 1 in 5 young people approaching local authorities have their homelessness prevented or relieved and education work in schools has decreased.
- Statutory figures are based on those who the authority have accepted as ‘having a duty’ and so the numbers don’t include those approaching for help who are not seen as having a duty.

B&B continues to be used by local authorities to accommodate young people in emergencies, and more than 7 in 10 providers have had to turn young people away, mainly because the client’s needs were too high or the service lacked capacity.



Currently there can be a lack of coordination with neighbouring boroughs so hard to find space for a young person in another borough. Coordination across boroughs can be particularly important where you are working with gang affected young people.

The factors contributing to homelessness can include relatives/ friends not being able to accommodate them, drug and alcohol problems, unemployment, mental health, financial problems. Some young people are more vulnerable to becoming homeless, for example young offenders and care leavers. NHYC also noted an increase in non-indigenous young people, as young people are coming from Europe and recent changes will mean they are now not entitled to any support or provision.

The challenges sustaining a life away from homelessness are also increasing. 30% of those living in hostels are ready to move on, but there is nowhere to go locally which highlights a lack of option for young people.

- Welfare reform is making access to housing difficult - especially changes to the Shared Accommodation Rate and local welfare assistance.
- Benefit conditionality - young people more likely to be sanctioned
- Fewer options can mean lower standards in the private rented sector, with landlords reluctant to rent to young people.
- Repeat homelessness is a risk (Rebuilding Lives, Crane et al, Kings College, 2015)

Meeting young people's support needs is challenging in the current economic climate as young people's needs are becoming more complex, while the availability of external youth services is decreasing.

### **Qs and discussion**

- The situation is as bad as ever, if not worse. The lack of housing provision is a massive challenge and there is no strategy/ planning which takes into account that a proportion of the population is in need of safe housing. Homelessness is also not expressed in the same way as before, with individuals sofa surfing it can be hard to measure.
- The spectrum of need has widened with the current housing situation, so important to also note the acute need in addition to the general housing need.
- Any pan London work seems to be about rough sleeping and not focusing on this age group. It is important to look at a more coordinated approach between authorities.
- The group discussed some important approaches and some updates in provision
  - Depaul UK community hosting – more voluntary hosts are required
  - Look Ahead Gateway are closing
- The most positive story is that apprenticeships have increased. There is also a greater awareness of needs, however people are crippled by the demobilisation of housing provision. If young people have an apprenticeship, then why shouldn't they get a loan? Is there a social finance model in this?



- Social Finance noted some work in this area – there is optimism in this, as it shows that there are good things going on
  - Social Finance are look to scale up the Depaul model
  - Working with 3 local authorities on Shared Lives, which may show important lessons with a quasi payment by results, social finance model.
  - Peer landlords – e.g. snugbug in Manchester
- There is a stigma attached to young people and so it's important to continue pushing with housing associations to create more spaces. Funders could act as guarantors?
- It could be worth trying to get this onto the agenda for mayoral elections, through two routes:
  - London Fairness Commission
  - London Housing Commission
- In order to help to spread the message get the voices of young people heard, NHYC notes that there are some very articulate young people who could be involved in some discussions.
- Important to plan funding models as soon as possible before it's too late and to look collectively as funders.
- NHYC pointed out that for young people, it's not always about the hard outcomes (that funders are looking for). The journey is very important and it can be important to focus on the more emotional support, the nurturing, care and attention. This is hard to demonstrate to funders. This was recognised as a constant issue for funders, to recognise 'good' work rather than 'new' work or hard outcomes.

### Roundtable update

The group updated each other on activities and current challenges:

- Helen Mathie updated the group on Homeless Link's work. They have engaged on the consultations on local welfare provision and 18-21 housing benefit proposals, and have found some government departments to be easy to engage at the moment. They are also carrying out some work on migration and Housing First
- Erik, John Lyon's Charity, commented on their recent popular funding programme – School Holidays Action Fund (SHAF) and noted its popularity – there is a value for young people here. He also updated the group on the initiatives to for young people foundations in Brent, Barnet and Harrow. Locality will be a good partner with their expertise on community asset transfer
- Andrew Fuller introduced Richard Reeves Charity, which exists to support young people under 25. They will focus on literacy and numeracy for primary school children and also progression into work (16 – 18 year olds) and are eager to work in partnership with others.
- Alice Millest gave an update on Social Finance's activities, in particular the Social Incubator Fund, which focused on three social issues:



- Perpetrators of domestic violence
- BME mental health
- Care leavers

They looked at existing work, surveys and research and noted key issues e.g. housing – inappropriate use of hostels; peer support; and inconsistency from one local authority to another (focus on ‘improving the average and reducing the variance’ by sharing best practice, accountability and transparency.)

- Children in Need have announced their 2015 total of 49.1 million and gave a general update on their activities and internal changes including their move to Salford.
- Ciaran Rafferty noted that the City Bridge Trust is to increase its annual giving to c£20 million in each of the next three years (up from c£15 million pa currently).
- London Funders’ AGM took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> July and included a panel discussion on the next five years in London. The panel and audience discussed the key issues facing London’s civil society and what’s got to change. The full write up is available on the [London Funders website](#).
- The GLA gave an update on the LEP [London Ambitions Careers Offer](#) and commented that information and updates are now available on ESF through the [LEP website](#) and on the [European Structural Investment Funds](#) website.
- London Youth are looking carefully at housing and at their links with Housing Associations. Also, following on from the Vision for Young Londoners launch – this is meant to be a very inclusive process and events will take place later in the year to help to raise awareness of different areas.
- NPC recently published a report on systems change, published by LankellyChase Foundation, and have [written a blog for London Funders](#) .They are also in the early stages of starting an educational work stream and will be talking to schools, funders, charities on concerns and focus and will be encouraging others to talk to them. Finally, NPC will be holding an event on 8<sup>th</sup> September on housing - [have charities neglected the question of rent for too long?](#)
- New Horizon Youth Centre noted that there is a useful report which has just been published – [Gang involved young people: custody and beyond. A practitioners guide](#)

Ciaran thanked Helen for her presentation and to the group, including New Horizon Youth Centre, for coming and contributing to the conversation.

Ciaran also noted that as he had chaired this group since its inception, if anyone else were interested in chairing or co-chairing to contact the London Funders team.