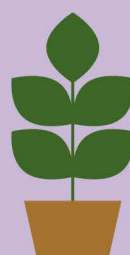
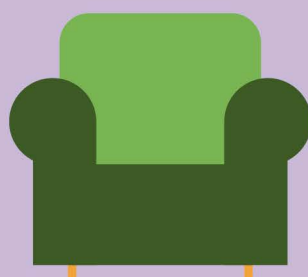


Chesterfield Housing First Impact Report 2022

July 2022

Delivered by South Yorkshire Housing Association in
partnership with Chesterfield Borough Council



Introduction

The Housing First model is proven to end homelessness, and works on the belief that housing is a basic human right. Housing First offers people who are experiencing homelessness, and that have multiple and complex needs, a home for life. The home isn't conditional on the person accessing further support, but they should desire to have a tenancy. Multiple and complex needs may include experience of domestic violence, entrenched street homelessness, and/or mental health needs. The model works by offering people a home, first – this acts as a stable foundation for recovery and to rebuild their lives. Housing First customers are supported to settle in their home, and to make choices about how they'd like to build on their strengths and meet their goals. Our customers do not have to access further support to be able to stay in their home, but flexible and personalised support is offered for as long as it is needed.

There is a strong economic case for a national rollout of Housing First. In their report [Home for All - the case for scaling up Housing First in England](#), Crisis state that for every £1 invested in Housing First there is savings of £1.24 through reduced use in other services.

This impact report shares more about how we capture our customers' achievements and progress, and how we use this data to ensure they can access holistic and personalised support. Our data also shows the effectiveness of high-fidelity Housing First services, and how Chesterfield Housing First helps customers to settle in their home and to meet their goals.

Housing First Chesterfield

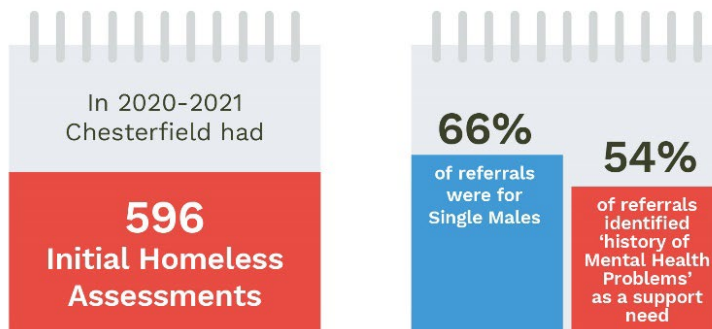
Housing First Chesterfield started as a 12-month pilot project in October 2020, delivered in partnership by South Yorkshire Housing Association and Chesterfield Borough Council. We are regarded as a trusted provider of Housing First because of our successful Housing First service in Rotherham.

For more information about Housing First Rotherham, our trauma-informed approach, and about homelessness trends and numbers both locally and nationally, you can read our [Housing First Rotherham report](#).

Housing First principles:

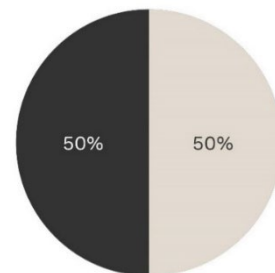


Housing First Chesterfield in numbers



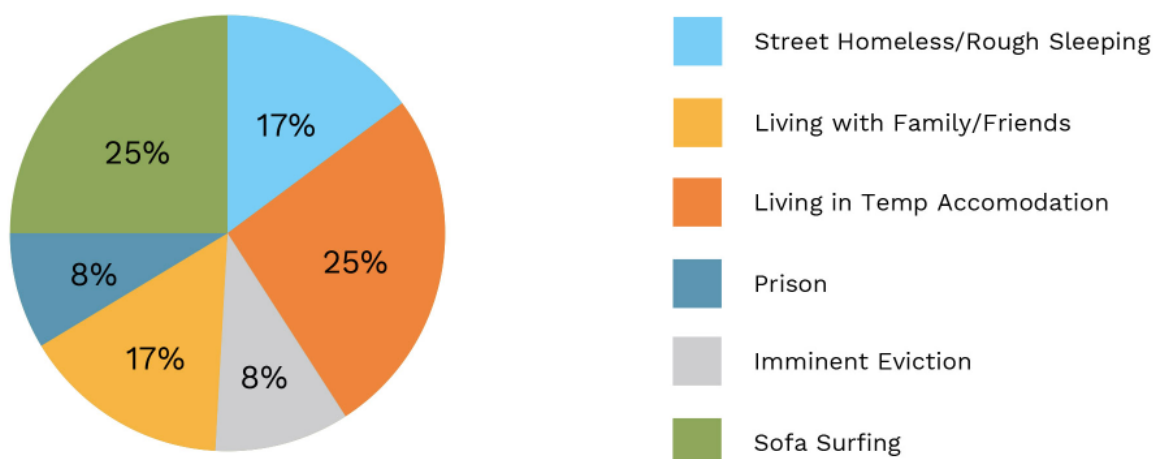
Our Housing First Customers

12 people took part in the pilot



50% of our customers have experienced **domestic abuse**

Our customers' living position at the time of referral:



In the 2015 Hard Edges report, the costs of rough sleeping to the public purse were calculated to be between £14,300 and £21,200 - which is 3 to 4 times the cost to public services for an average adult.

In 2018/19, local authorities in England spent £1.1 billion on temporary accommodation which is a 78% increase over the last five years.

(Shelter - Temporary Accommodation and the cost of homelessness in England)

Capturing our customers' achievements

Housing First is a valuable service which needs to be offered to the people experiencing the most disadvantage to maximize impact. Collating both qualitative and quantitative information at referral stages enables us to make informed decisions around suitability, priority, and to establish a baseline for measuring achievement.

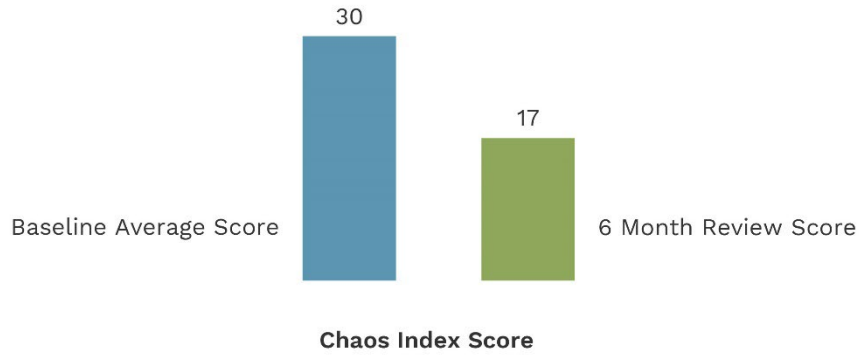
Our regular, person-centred reviews help us to capture our customers' achievements, and to identify if and where we need to adjust the support we offer. We use this information to work with our customers to reflect on their progress and build on their strengths, and to co-design plans, opportunities and support to meet their goals.

The Chaos Index

We use the quantitative New Directions Team Assessment, otherwise known as the Chaos Index. This assessment is widely known in commissioning and embedded amongst Housing First services across the UK. It was developed by South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, and focusses on the behaviours of an individual across 10 areas, including engagement, anxiety, substance misuse, self-harm, risk, and housing. The assessment asks individuals to score against statements, from '0: I rarely miss appointments and actively engage' to '4: I don't engage or attend appointments.' There is a maximum total score of 48 available.

At Housing First Chesterfield, we also use the Chaos Index as a measurement tool to reflect progress and to help our support planning.

The full New Direction Team assessment is completed at the start of placement, and then repeated six months later - the data below shows our customers' Chaos Index scores. We have seen a significant reduction of 44.37% across all areas of measurement, which indicates that customers experience stability and security in their first six months of Housing First.



What does your home mean to you?

Everything, I never want to lose it.

Housing First Customer

“The average age of death for people experiencing homelessness is just 45 for men and 43 for women. The national average age of death in the UK is 79.4 for men and 83.1 for women.”
Simon on the Streets

“Chesterfield Housing First has supported and helped my most vulnerable clients to do many things, including reducing substance misuse, reducing behaviours such as begging and creating stability and optimism. I have nothing but praise and admiration for them.”
Housing Worker – Pathways

“The homeless population face barriers to accessing health and social care services including stigma and discrimination, a lack of trusted contacts, and rigid eligibility criteria for accessing services.”
NICE

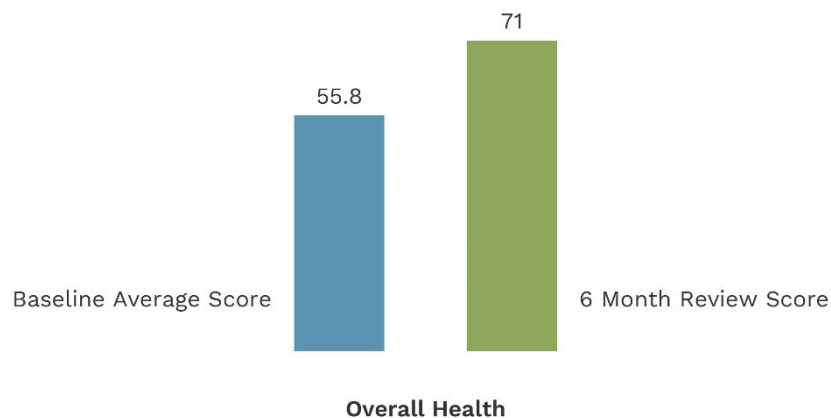
When a customer moves into their Housing First home, we work with them to co-produce a support plan. For many of our customers, one of the first steps is

registering with health services, such as a GP and dentist. Our keyworkers support our customers to access healthcare, and to ensuring their needs and wants are listened to and met. We also work with our customers to develop short term goals around healthcare to ensure sustainable and consistent treatment planning, with a focus on continuity of care.

People with a history of homelessness and complex needs have limited access to Primary Health Care, which results in poor health and lower life expectancy. Our customers may have also experienced discrimination, and barriers to access healthcare services, because of factors including their previous behaviour and lack of engagement with recovery services.

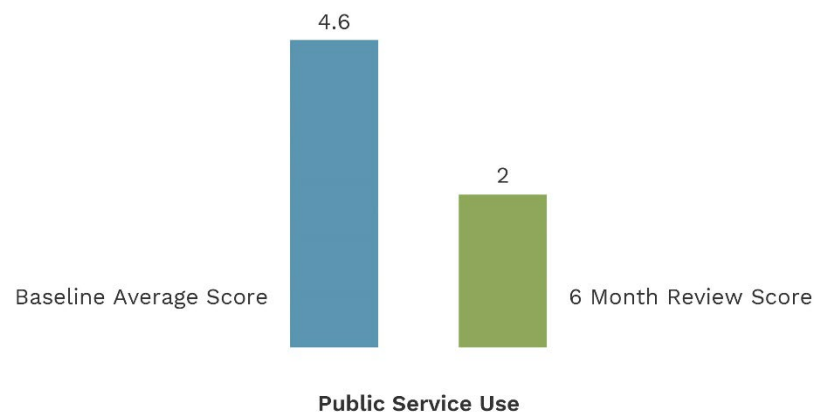
We ask our customers to ‘indicate on a scale of 1-100 (0 being worst imaginable health state) how good or bad your own health is today, in your opinion?’. We also ask our customers about their levels of pain, mobility, and their mental health and wellbeing.

All our Chesterfield Housing First customers told us that they have challenges around their health. Our data shows that our customers have reported a 15.2 improvement at the six-month review stage, which indicates improved health outcomes following their move to Housing First.



We also ask customers how much they have used services such as A&E, Police, Ambulance, Mental Health Crisis Teams, and the Fire Service. We understand that people with a significant history of homelessness have increased levels of unplanned care and involvement with these public services. This is detrimental to the customer, and to the limited resources of public services.

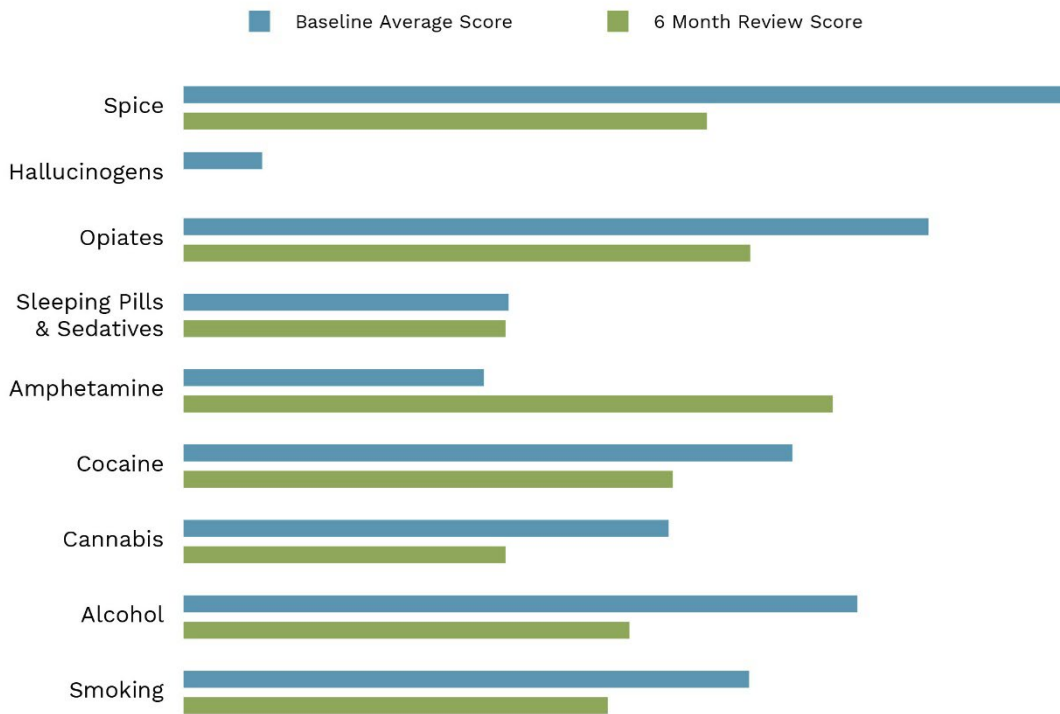
Our data shows that our customers' use of unplanned and crisis services has reduced by more than 50%.



In the 6 months before being housed with Housing First, Customer C had been admitted to A&E twice, used paramedic services once, and had one overnight stay in hospital. At their assessment, Customer C stated they had undergone tests for a health condition, but this was undiagnosed as they felt too anxious to continue treatment and receive a diagnosis through their GP. After a period of building trust with their keyworker and settling into their home, Customer C attended a GP appointment with their keyworker. A treatment plan for their physical and mental health conditions was put in place, which included a prescription for new medication. It was agreed that the keyworker would call Customer C to remind them to take their medication to help them build this routine and build their confidence in doing this. This has been the first time in their adult life Customer C has engaged with primary services. There have been no instances of them using emergency services since being housed with Housing First.

All our customers have told us that they have challenges with addiction and using substances. We understand some people that have experienced complex trauma will have challenges around addiction and accessing treatment, and that using substances can be a coping mechanism. We ensure that a trauma-informed approach is taken when supporting customers to manage addiction, which creates a flexible and non-judgemental approach to recovery. Our six-month review shows an overall reduction in our customers' use of substances.

Changes In Substance Use



We use the shortened version of the **Warwick-Edinburgh Wellbeing Scales** to measure our customers' wellbeing. We ask our customers to rate statements including 'I'm feeling optimistic about the future' and 'I've been feeling close to others'.

The data incorporates all customers that are currently accessing the service. We are pleased to see that the six-month follow up shows increased levels of mental wellbeing across the service.



What are your hopes for the future?

I would like to keep my flat as I love being here and keep my drug and alcohol use to a minimum and maybe find a girlfriend.

Housing First Customer

New Economics Foundation 5 Ways to Wellbeing

We use the New Economics Foundation 5 Ways to Wellbeing to help improve our customers' mental health and wellbeing, and to ensure our interventions are resilient and sustainable.

We ask our customers to rate statements including 'I connect with people that are important to me and people in my community' and 'I give to other people and feel that I'm able to help other people by sharing my time or skills.'

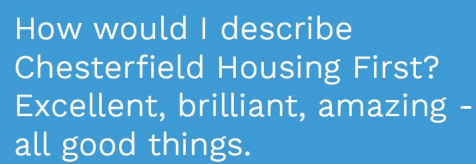
Our data shows an increase in our customers **connecting with others, being active** and **taking notice**, which we can partially attribute to Housing First offering a home for life and support.

Housing First Customer feedback

"I am a lot happier, a lot more settled and a lot more glad to be off the streets."

"I am paying all my bills and I am in front with these, I have grown up a lot since my last flat where I didn't pay my bills or show any respect to it... but now I try and keep it tidy and take pride in my home, and take care in myself too."

We have seen an overall reduction in scores, which we can attribute to a particular customer's experiences. Our customer has an extensive history with mental illness, and we have supported him to access Primary Care services. Unfortunately, the response from the GP wasn't helpful, and this reinforced feelings of mistrust and negatively impacted on his health, resulting in a reduction in score. We have explored this further, and we're working closely with the customer and Primary Care to support accessibility and engagement.



How would I describe
Chesterfield Housing First?
Excellent, brilliant, amazing -
all good things.

Housing First Customer

Steven's story

Steven was our first Housing First Customer in Chesterfield and moved into his new home in December 2020. He has kindly shared some of his experiences.

Tell us a bit about yourself.

Before moving into my flat, I was homeless and lived in a tent for almost 2 years. I found that nobody would help me, and I couldn't access any night shelters or emergency accommodation because I have a dog, Polar. Polar is a 4-year-old Blue Merle collie. She's my best friend and is the reason I carried on day in day out, even when things got bad. I have lived in supported accommodation before but hated it as staff were always in and out, checking up on me but never actually helping me. They ended up kicking me out and I hadn't done anything wrong but couldn't prove it. I am an alcoholic and also a former drug user, but I don't use drugs anymore. I did used to top up a little but when on the streets, but not since living here. I work with DRP and am on a Methadone script. I'm looking at slowly reducing my alcohol use and hope eventually to get off my Methadone.

How is your life different since taking part in Housing First Chesterfield?

I've got a roof over my head that is comfy and safe. When I first moved in, I worried all the time that I was going to get kicked out but my keyworker reassured me that I have a secure tenancy that's mine for the rest of my life if I want it and if I play my cards right. I don't have to worry anymore about all the things I used to worry about when in my tent like, "how cold is it going to be tonight?" or "If I go out, will my tent be there when I get back?" (my tent was vandalised and set on fire a few times). One of the most amazing things to change is that I'm in contact with 3 of my kids again. Their mum was always happy for me to see them, but I didn't want them visiting me in a tent. Since I've lived here, they've been over to see my flat and sat inside watching Sky TV while I've cooked for them and taken them out for walks or to the park with Polar.

What are you most proud of achieving?

Getting a place to live and making it work. I don't think I ever really thought that would be possible.

How do you work with your keyworker?

Really well. I love that Hannah comes when she says she will and when I ask for her help with something, she just does it. Sometimes I don't need anything, and

we just have a chat and watch a bit of TV. I also like that if I'm not feeling like seeing her, she respects that and as she says, "As long as I know you're okay, I'll leave you be". She never just turns up on my doorstep, unless she's bringing me some FareShare food (and even then, she tries to ring first) and when she arrives, she just hands it to me has a quick chat and then goes. It's like living in supported accommodation but not if you know what I mean cos I feel like it's my home and I'm in control of who comes and goes.

What are your hopes and plans for the future?

I'm thinking of offering to do a bit of gardening work in the local area. I've also thought about setting up a car wash business as I did this years ago. I want to get off the booze and methadone and would really like to get back to work. And I'd like to stay living in this flat as a council tenant, when I'm ready.

What does your home mean to you?

Everything - I'm an Englishman - it's my castle.

What would you say to somebody that was thinking about taking part in Housing First Chesterfield?

Do it now, don't hesitate, do it quickly and don't look back.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Hannah, Lorraine and Megan - you are all brilliant and thank you very much for everything you have done for me.

For more information about South Yorkshire Housing Association's Housing First offer, please contact:

Laura Costa
Service Manager

l.costa@syha.co.uk

Vic Stirling
Head of Service

v.stirling@syha.co.uk

