

There's
no place
like
HOME

Photo credit: JDM Tattoos

trinity
HOME+PEOPLE+JOB

LONG TERM SOLUTION

ENDING HOMELESSNESS
EX-RESIDENT SURVEY 2018

THE BIG
SLEEPOUT

wearetrinity.org.uk

WORKING FOR A FAIRER SOCIETY

POLLING DATA

Every two years Trinity reach out to people who have moved on from our supported housing service to find out if what we are doing works.

Recently a well know Building Society have been advertising their mortgage products by spoofing the 1939 Hollywood movie The Wizard of Oz. The premise is they can provide a yellow brick road to the Emerald City, somewhere over the rainbow that ends up with you getting a home. Is it just me or are they really saying that getting a mortgage today is a fantasy?

A flat in Hillingdon costs £200k, so you need to earn £67k which is 2.7 times the local average wage and almost five times minimum wage. Last year we housed 211 people, the vast majority were unemployed and we moved 77 people on from Supported Accommodation into independent housing. Unfortunately homelessness and unemployment often leads to or is evidence of the need for supported housing and last year at Trinity that help cost the government £1m and it cost Trinity almost as much, so its important that we find out if what we're doing works. We also don't want to be wasting our or anyone else's time.

No news is good news people say. It's right and proper that people decline to be associated with the spectacularly stigmatised time in their life when they had to suffer the indignity of homelessness and the evidence of real independence is the choice to move on, physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually...but it makes surveys difficult. Despite this we have reached almost twice as many people as last time. In the two years between April 2016 and March 2018:

153 moved on
13% contacted
86% still housed
52% in employment

Our last survey in 2016 showed:

74 moved on
21% contacted
80% still housed
60% in employment

We conclude that our focus on housing first (not that one) has meant that **twice as many people moved on in the last two years compared to the previous two years and more people are sustaining their tenancies with over 86% still housed a year after leaving Trinity.**

**TRINITY IS A LONG
TERM SOLUTION TO
HOMELESSNESS**

We all know that a job is the silver bullet to end homelessness and unfortunately the lack of a specific Job Coach has affected our results in assisting people into work. We also need to work smarter on maintaining contact with people that leave our service if we want to accurately assess our work year on year.

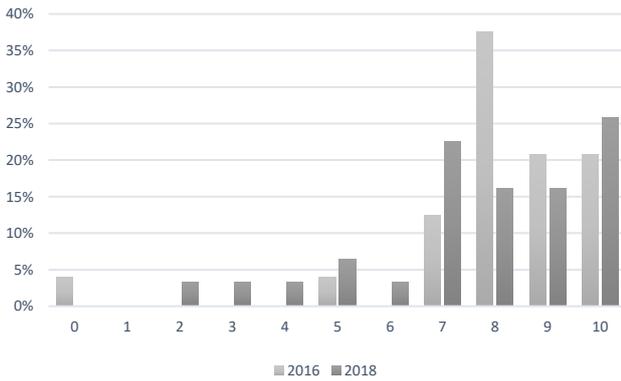
REPORT CARD

Whilst we have people on the phone we also take the opportunity to canvas opinions on how we can improve our service. There's nothing like a bit of customer feedback. We ask two questions –

1. How would you rate us out of ten?
2. How could we improve our score?

Average score
2018 8.2
2016 8.0

Customer Satisfaction



Despite moving on twice as many people we have continued to increase our average rate of satisfaction. Key feedback included:

- 40% no improvements needed
- 15% other residents were the problem
- 12% poor quality housing
- 7% more and cheaper housing

Everything will be all right in the end, and if everything is not all right then it isn't the end.

Whilst we are flattered and appreciate the gratitude we are fully aware that not only have we not yet ended homelessness, we have not got everything right.

One key difference between me and a Trinity resident is that I get to choose who I live with. Through increasing our offer of affordable housing we envision a time when residents can interview and allocate rooms to their own house mates. Thereby increasing community values and decreasing housing management problems.

We have been aware of the quality issues related to a few properties our Coaching Team had inherited and these have now been handed back. We have implemented a more robust refurbishment programme and a quarter of our properties have been refurbished in the past 12 months. Our Temporary Accommodation service for families suffering homelessness was surveyed by Frost & Co who said

“This is the best Temporary Accommodation in the Borough.”

Last year Trinity was oversubscribed by 450%. There is a desperate need for more Supported

and Single Accommodation. We are working with Hillingdon Council and the Private Sector to increase our provision and since April we have increased our bed spaces by almost a third from 118 bed spaces to 150.

THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD?

Homelessness is one of civil society’s most persistent problems. Ending homelessness for us does not mean no one ever becomes homeless again, that’s out of our control, it means creating local systems that ensures no one ever need to suffer homelessness.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

We can unblock the shortage of housing for single people by making it accessible through creating shared housing in the Private Sector without the need for employment, deposits or credit history.

Private landlords lease their properties to charities at 20% below market rent for five years. The reduction is offset through savings made in; agency fees, void periods, rent arrears, out of hours management and maintenance costs. The charity assumes all the risk regarding tenancy management, voids, bad debt and general maintenance whilst providing a risk and hassle free income to the landlord.

Example - A five bedroom house leased for 5 years will provide an income of £90,000 without lifting a finger and will be fit to re-let at the end of the lease.

This is not a stellar business plan as its high expenditure and low income but then again neither is ending homelessness for a homeless charity. It is however the right thing to do, its part of the solution that improves access to housing to excluded people and prevents homelessness and at scale can subsidise supported accommodation costs.

SYSTEM CHANGE SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW?

I heard recently that systems can either be smashed or changed from the inside. There is a third way that's always worked; we create another way and the system changes. Any system that can end homelessness; local, national or international, needs paying for. The Welfare State is a volatile thing, it's a third of government spend and therefore it's always being changed and cut and it's one of the main political footballs. Any system that works will only work if it stands the test of time which means it needs to be hermetically sealed, protected from these unstable external conditions. It needs to be self-funding.

Beyond the cost of property, the financing of homeless services remains short-term and includes; government grants, Council funding, trust funding, charitable donations and enhanced housing benefit. These incomes are not for added extras, they pay for essential organisational services like; staff, recruitment, training, finance and administration and are constantly at risk through being subject to change and cuts.

WHY IS IT EXPENSIVE?

It's unanimously agreed that Supported Accommodation costs a lot more than regular housing. Often the cost of the room is higher because it needs more maintenance. Then there's security costs and the costs for the actual people who help tenants in Supported Accommodation (we're not allowed to call this 'support' because it sounds too much like the previous funding programme).

JUST RENT A ROOM

Despite the fact that people actively seek Supported Accommodation, most landlords want a deposit and credit check and won't rent to unemployed people. To rent a room in Hillingdon costs between £120 and £150 per week and Local Housing Allowance is just £85 a

week leaving a gap of around £40 per week to be paid for out of Job Seekers Allowance of £73. This leaves just £33 a week or £4.70 a day for food, phone, toiletries, travel, clothes etc. This won't change under Universal Credit.

SOCIAL BUSINESS

Don't put all your eggs into one basket. Successful business models offer a variety of products that diversifies income. Government or grant subsidised business units that would otherwise be unprofitable are unsustainable and will not stand the test of time. There are some exceptions including being too big to fail, but for local organisations with local knowledge and connections success is found in diversification.

Trinity have developed a social business that meets half the charities overheads, but if we are to achieve financial self-sustainability we need to further **develop profitable business units to be in a position to offer all our housing solutions at the Local Housing Allowance.** This is a key element to a local system that can end homelessness.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states it, we believe it and we all know its true that everyone has the right to a home and by spring 2020 Trinity will be housing 300 every year, working towards ending homelessness in Hillingdon and Slough.

There's no place like home...

A huge thank you to Jathieesan Umaasuthan for giving up his summer holidays to assist us with this research.

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