

October 2021



# **Transforming Rehabilitation: Impact and Lessons Learned**



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# Report Summary

**By working together we can achieve positive outcomes and make a lasting impact on peoples' lives**

## 51,800

Number of people helped in custody and the community

## 89%

Percentage of people supported who achieved a positive outcome

### Service User Impact and Performance

Shelter delivered the Transforming Rehabilitation (TR) contracts from May 2015 until end of June 2021. As part of a supply chain working on behalf of the Community Rehabilitation Companies in 5 areas, we helped a total of 51,800 people with their Accommodation and Finance, Benefit and Debt needs. We achieved positive outcomes for 89% of the people we supported based on outcomes data we started to collect from April 2019.

Whilst contract delivery varied between areas (staff worked with people in custody on the Purple Futures contracts and in both custody and community on the Sodexo CRC contracts), the contracts couldn't have been delivered without the support of our Peer Mentors in custody and volunteers in the community.

### National Impact

Throughout the duration of these contracts we contributed to a total of 40 HMIP/HMPPS inspections and were specifically recognised and commended in a number of these. Despite the operational difficulties faced by staff particularly in the early days of the contracts, our staff were often recognised for their tenacity in helping to find people accommodation on release. We also contributed to national systems change through the evidence we submitted to the Justice Select Committee in 2018, which led to the introduction of Enhanced Through the Gate (ETTG), additional resources from government and a more joined up approach to supporting people with their rehabilitation needs.

A key lesson for the future is the need to ensure that we have a more direct relationship with the commissioners to make our voice heard and to ensure that we work closely with Shelter's Communications, Policy and Campaigns (CPC) teams to proactively influence policy and defend the rights of people in the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

### Local Impact

Locally, we made a big impact working with the Probation service and local authorities to help shape local homelessness strategies, upskilling probation staff and partner agencies, helping to set up multi-agency resettlement boards across prisons, working closely with local Homelessness Prevention Teams (HPTs), supporting KPMG with the development of the newly formed Regional Probation Directorates' Reducing Re-offending Plans and working with the CRCs to help create pathways for individuals whose accommodation needs often needed to be coordinated with other services e.g. substance misuse and mental health.

We have learned some invaluable lessons along the way, including the need to encourage joint working, ensuring that adequate systems are in place to support case management, manage our performance and provide data insight, but most importantly ensuring that our expertise is focused on supporting those who are most in need of accommodation support.

# Service User Impact and Performance

Delivering at scale means we can help more  
people and achieve greater impact

## 42,000

Number of individuals  
helped in custody

## 9,800

Number of individuals  
helped in the community

### Number of People Helped

Throughout the duration of the contracts from May 2015 – March 2021 we worked with 42,000 (41,957) individuals in custody and delivered interventions to 33,600 (33,607) of those individuals. We also delivered interventions to a further 9,800 (9831) individuals in community, therefore providing a combined figure of nearly 52,000 people helped.

### Outcomes Achieved

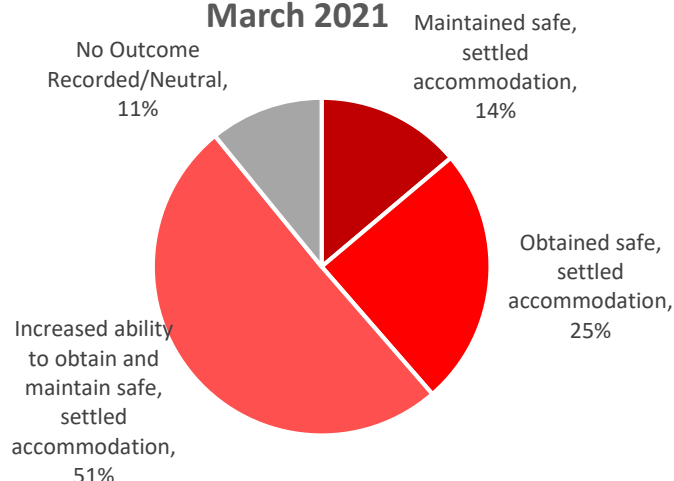
With the introduction of Enhanced Through the Gate (ETTG) in April 2019, we started to align the outcomes across both contracts with the new ETTG specification. This alongside an update to the data reporting tools meant more robust data for evaluation purposes.

Across all of the contracts, we delivered 16,779 accommodation interventions and 11,161 finance interventions. In addition, we also delivered 1,611 ETE interventions to clients in Purple Futures areas. Some individuals will have received multiple interventions during this time.

Of the 16,779 accommodation interventions delivered, the following outcomes were recorded:

- 2,255 – Maintained safe, settled accommodation
- 4,090 – Obtained safe, settled accommodation
- 8,569 – Increased ability to obtain and maintain safe, settled accommodation
- 1,765 – No Outcome Recorded/Neutral (e.g. when client failed to engage)

### Custody Accommodation Outcomes April 2019 - March 2021



Of the 11,161 finance interventions delivered, the following outcomes were recorded:

- 2033 – Improved money management skills
- 5078 – Maximised income
- 1678 – Reduced/eliminated debts
- 2372 – No Outcome Recorded/Neutral (e.g. when client failed to engage)

Between April 2019 and March 2021, we worked with 4,300 individuals in community and delivered 4,386 interventions (some clients will have received multiple interventions during this time). From a total of 6,851 outcomes recorded, 85.5% were recorded as positive.

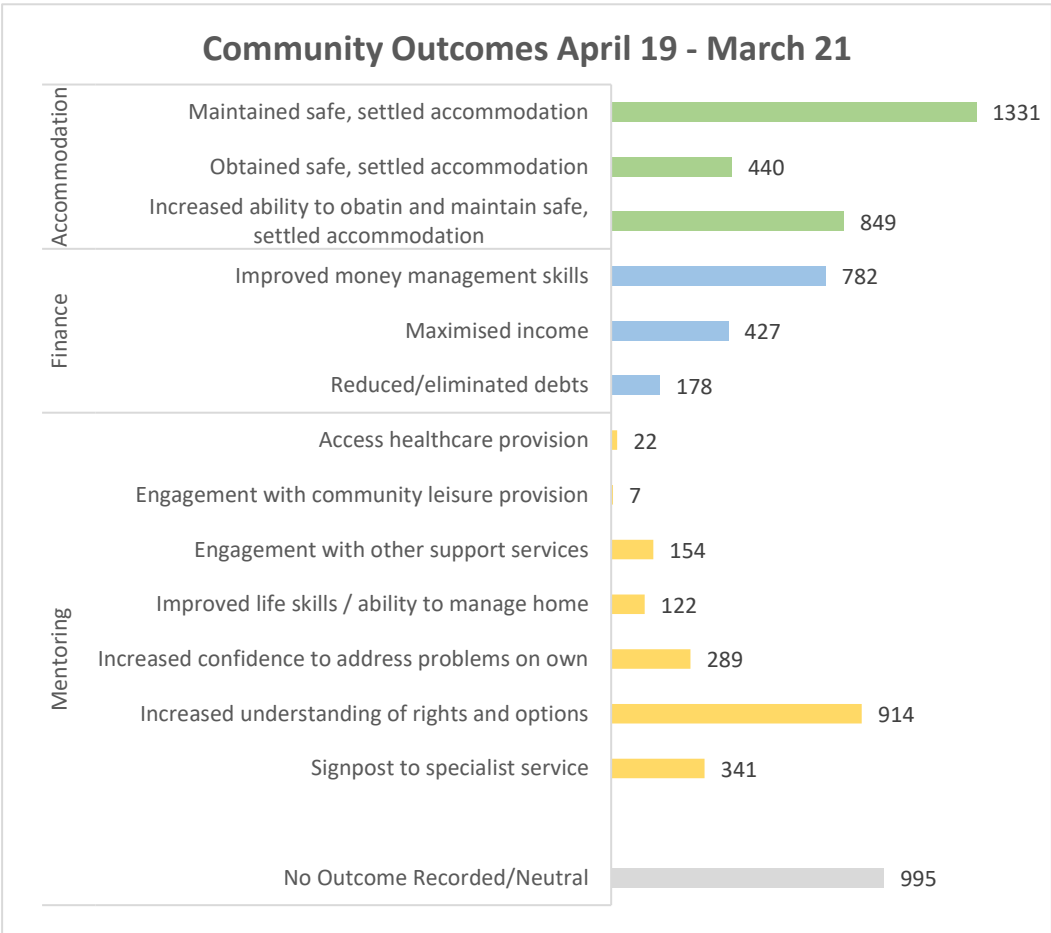
Use of Peers in Custody

Peer Mentors in Custody have made an extremely positive contribution to the Contract. We have recruited and supported Prisoners to work as Peer Mentors ('Peers') supporting individuals when they first come into Prison.

Over time, we have developed the role of the Peer in most prisons so that they became well established and, where possible, there were Peers on every wing.

Peers provided advice and guidance on debt-related issues and provided staff with information required to complete housing interventions. They also facilitated workshops such as CVs, tenancy sustainment and Debt management. In some prisons, we had peers based in reception so that they could provide support to those who were first time in custody as well as support those leaving after a long sentence. We also linked in with Shelter shops and provided clothing to those leaving custody, including suits for interviews on release.

By developing the Peers knowledge, skills and confidence in these roles, it helped to support them in their desistance from re-offending.



"As part of the Through the Gate service I genuinely felt I was being given the opportunity to change people's lives".

#### **Volunteers/ROTL Placements**

Volunteers have provided invaluable support to service delivery. Over 200 volunteers were recruited and trained to provide support to the service in either a specific mentoring role or in a general volunteering role supporting people with low complexity issues. We developed an extremely successful volunteer recruitment and induction package and achieved good rates of progression with many volunteers moving onto paid work within their chosen field, both internally with Shelter and within the wider Criminal Justice field.

We also provided placement opportunities for prisoners Released on Temporary License (ROTL) in partnership with HMPs. An agreed process was put in place with Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) for recruiting volunteers with lived experience e.g. we worked with HMP Kirkham to offer several ROTL (Released on Temporary License) placements, based in our central Preston office. They supported the admin to be the first point of contact for people dropping in to access our food and clothing bank and answering basic advice queries.

#### **Case Study – Meghan, Volunteer Mentor**

After graduating in July 2015, I began to consider what career I would like to pursue; I knew I wanted to work with offenders and I needed experience, but aside from that I had no idea how to gain my ideal job. After applying to a few positions and being immediately rejected I started my search for voluntary positions and found this role with Shelter and put in my application.

In my role at Shelter, I meet with clients on a weekly basis to help them fulfil their goals and complete their action plans. This includes supporting on debt issues, housing, drug and alcohol misuse and gaining access to their children. Although the thought of lone working with ex-offenders was initially daunting, the support provided through training and by the Volunteer Co-ordinator and Mentoring Officers was second to none. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting with clients and supporting them.

Working as a volunteer for Shelter is fulfilling as you feel you are personally making a difference and are really involved. I enjoyed my volunteering as all the staff were extremely friendly and supportive, allowing me to take control of my own cases and develop my skills within the role. Eventually, I managed to obtain the experience necessary to gain a position within the service I was volunteering for and working as



Staff at HMP Humber

# National Impact

Our national impact can be felt through the contribution we made to independent inspections and our impact on government policy

# 40

Number of inspections we contributed to

## HMIP/HMPPS Inspections

Over the lifetime of the contract we contributed to 31 inspections of the prisons we worked in, 8 inspections of the probation areas we were based in, and 1 thematic inspection of the accommodation and support for adult offenders in the community and on release from prison in England. Inspections were carried out by HMI Prisons and HMI Probation, and highlight the strengths of our service and potential weaknesses to be aware of for the future. We need to be cautious about lessons learned as often HMIP was looking at the whole service on offer to individuals rather than considering contractual requirements which providers like Shelter were required to deliver and HMIP has been generally very critical of TR.

Inspection	Positive feedback
Merseyside CRC, June 2020	There was excellent accommodation support from Shelter, which the CRC was in partnership with at HMP Liverpool. In 94 per cent of those cases requiring it, we assessed that there had been sufficient work on the accommodation needs of prisoners. We saw numerous examples of Shelter working tenaciously with service users to find provision for release. Even when options were declined by the service user, further attempts to find alternatives were invariably undertaken.

HMP Humber, November 2019	There were some good examples of work to secure accommodation on release, including the use of legal challenge when a local authority refused to accept a prisoner with a priority need for housing.
HMP Forest Bank, May 2019	Offender supervisors, Shelter (contracted by the community rehabilitation company (CRC)) and the new ITTG team, who were employed by the CRC under new national arrangements, worked together to achieve positive outcomes in spite of the major problems with accommodation.
HMP Styal, May 2018	Managers had identified 20 women who returned to the prison repeatedly and prioritised them for high intensity multidisciplinary casework, both inside the prison and beyond. Records indicated an impressive level of continuing support, including post-release, which we have rarely seen elsewhere
HMP Northumberland, July 2017	Arrangements to help prisoners find accommodation on release were good. Shelter also provided support in the community and had very well-established referral pathways with local authorities in the north-east, including the facility to make direct housing applications.

"We saw numerous examples of Shelter working tenaciously with service users to find provision for release."

HMP Altcourse, November 2017	The resettlement plans we saw were better than we often see. There was an appropriate focus on prisoners with issues relating to previous work in the sex industry or where they had been a victim of domestic abuse.
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Whilst in custody, the multi-disciplinary resettlement boards<sup>1</sup> led by Shelter were regularly highlighted as good practice by HMIP. We were also praised in both custody and the community for the development of referral pathways with local authorities and other housing providers, and maintaining these relationships was an integral part of delivering a successful accommodation service.

We were sometimes criticised when it was felt that resettlement plans were over-reliant on data reported by the client, rather than a full review of all the information available from OASys, nDelius and P-Nomis.

In the new contracts, providers won't necessarily have access to these systems, so the relationship with the Responsible Officer will be key to getting a full understanding of the client's needs.

However, we were also praised when the client's voice and wishes were clear in our plans, showing that the plans had been co-produced. It is important that we continue to make sure the client's wishes are central and clearly heard.

There was much praise for 'departure lounge'<sup>2</sup> initiatives for clients leaving custody, and it was good practice to ensure Shelter staff had a presence at these, where they were in place, to ensure a continuity of informed accommodation support immediately after release.

**Input to National Systems Change**

Our role as a key sub-contractor delivering on behalf of the CRCs across 5 CPAs meant that we were listened to at local and national level. Working in partnership with the CRCs we were able to influence/challenge local authority practice. Because of the scale of delivery, we were also listened to by government and in particular were able to provide evidence to the Justice Select Committee (JSC) as part of its review of TR in 2018.

Our submission to the JSC influenced the findings of the report and the Government's response which led to more investment in TR and the introduction of Enhanced Through the Gate. As a result, more probation staff were employed to work directly in the prisons and support a joined-up approach to supporting individuals through the gate.

As part of the Reducing Reoffending Third Sector (RR3) Advisory Group led by Clinks, we inputted at meetings where we were a co-opted member of the Special Interest Group looking at resettlement service re-commissioning. We influenced commissioners to understand the best way to deliver services (e.g. trauma informed care, strengths-based approaches), integrate housing and justice services, the best way to commission/procure services.

Our impact was lessened to some degree through being a sub-contractor to primes, which meant contractually we had to be careful not to cause reputational damage. However, the scale of our delivery meant that our voice was still heard. A key lesson is the need to ensure that in the future we have a more direct relationship with the commissioner, that gagging clauses do not prevent us from speaking out or challenging the lack of accommodation support for offenders and that we become more proactive in influencing policy and practice by working more closely with Shelter's Communications, Policy and Campaigns (CPC) teams.

<sup>1</sup> Multi-disciplinary resettlement boards provide an opportunity for different agencies working within the prison to come together to discuss individual cases and the support needed prior to release.  
<sup>2</sup> The 'departure lounge' located just outside the gate was used by the CRC and partner agencies to support individuals at the point of release, with close links to mentoring, housing, employment and substance misuse services.



# Local Impact

**Our impact at a local level was evidenced through our collaborative and multi-agency and approach to working**

## **What did we deliver?**

Across the contracts, we delivered a range of services at a local level including:

- Provided direct access to Accommodation & Finance, Benefit and Debt advice for Service Users both in custody and community setting including support to find and maintain tenancies
- Provided education around disclosure to improve employment prospects plus courses on preparing for job interviews and completion of CV's.
- Delivered workshops in both custody and community around Financial Inclusion/Housing Rights/Options/Managing a Tenancy
- Supported probation with their statutory duty to refer people who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness by completing the Duty to Refer
- Supported service users to integrate within their local communities. The running of the drop-ins at various locations throughout the CPA proved a great success and promoted partnership working. This also provided an opportunity to upskill and raise awareness of housing and homelessness issues amongst community groups.
- Introduced the Dealing with Debt Handbook to support those in custody to manage their finances.

## **Impact on Criminal Justice System**

Locally, we had the following impact on the Criminal Justice System:

- We upskilled probation staff and other partners to support individuals with their accommodation and finance, benefit and debt needs
- We contributed to operational homelessness meetings to shape local strategy
- We collaborated with local housing partners to increase accommodation options
- We worked closely with local authorities to streamline processes, improving outcomes for Individuals
- We provided sector expertise to inform the CRC Enhanced Through the Gate (ETTG) model and to enable them to develop pathways such as a substance misuse pathway into community, GP registration, linking in with the mental health team in custody
- We set up Multi-Agency Resettlement Boards across suitable prison sites, inviting partner agencies and Responsible Officers to participate
- We provided expertise to help CRCs to develop pathways such as financial inclusion with DWP leading to the introduction of SPOCs within local DWP offices to deal with complex benefit issues and raised awareness of barriers to resettlement and reintegration into society i.e. Universal Credit access for offenders

"Services need to adopt a more specific needs-based process to target those most in need."

- We worked with local banks to agree process to open basic accounts for homeless clients
- We supported the newly formed NPS Homelessness Prevention Teams (HPT) to understand the local landscape and main issues relating to service user's accommodation needs/barriers. Worked with the HPT teams to start addressing these at a strategic level and influence homelessness strategy for offenders in each region. We also fed into the development of the HPT fund which successfully accommodated large numbers of service users during the COVID-19 pandemic
- We participated in a KPMG Consultancy Project to support the development of the North East, North West and Greater Manchester NPS Reducing Reoffending Plans 2021-2024
- We contributed our knowledge and expertise as part of the NPS Accommodation Task & Finish Group in Lancashire highlighting the challenges faced when accommodating offenders with high risk issues. Report produced and fed into Lancashire Reducing Reoffending Strategic Board
- MAPPA<sup>3</sup> Events – facilitated events to look at partnership approaches to overcoming the barriers into accommodation whilst also maintaining safe communities. We were able to use our knowledge in the area to encourage stakeholders who were anti justice work to think differently about it and managed to influence their thinking on this resulting in them agreeing to further joint work in this area.
- Supported CLINKS with the development of the regional homelessness forum for offenders linking into wider Regional Homelessness Group (2015-2019)
- We attended Regional Reoffending Boards which allowed us to influence decisions directly affecting our service delivery
- We developed a joint approach with mental health charities (MIND) to highlight the correlation between mental health and offending

### Lessons Learned

We learned some Invaluable lessons from the delivery of these services on the ground:

- The 'one size fits all' approach doesn't always work – services need to adopt a more specific needs-based process to target those most in need
- The need for an effective information sharing platform/system that includes health care providers and other agencies
- IT systems need to be in place in a timely manner to support working alongside Prison and Probation protocols and allow for case management
- Joint working and information exchange with Prisons and Probation is vital in securing positive outcomes for individuals
- Flexible co-location is important with CRC/NPS but having presence within local communities is equally important
- Service users need to be engaged with prior to release to improve accommodation outcomes, and gate pickup needs to be an option for those who require it
- Volunteers should provide added value to the service rather than being built into contract targets. This was a significant issue with the mentoring early on as 50% of the contract target was based on volunteer hours

<sup>3</sup> Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) is the process through which various agencies such as the police, the Prison Service and Probation work together to protect the public by managing the risks posed by violent and sexual offenders living in the community

"Service Users need to be engaged with prior to release to improve accommodation outcomes"

- In the last year of the contract we implemented a prioritisation framework which focused on those service users who had acute accommodation need rather than those who generally were referred for housing advice. This made better use of Shelter's expertise specialism, reduced caseloads and improved outcomes for those in greatest need

### Case Study - Marilyn's story

Marilyn received a long sentence, the first 14 months of which were spent in a closed prison before she was transferred to open conditions to complete the final 6 months of her sentence. During Marilyn's time in custody she worked hard to overcome many of her resettlement needs and address previous substance misuse, domestic violence and unemployment.

Since moving to open conditions Marilyn had obtained a full-time job and was able to save a large part of her wages to look for a private rented tenancy on release. Marilyn had a clear resettlement plan and from the beginning had made it clear from that her intention was for a new start, in a new city, away from former associates and negative relationships of her previous home.



Sodexo staff event award winners

However, when COVID restrictions were introduced Marilyn's plans were in danger of unravelling. Her freedom, and the prison's open conditions, were suspended and Marilyn was unable to attend work or view properties. With the real possibility that Marilyn, despite doing everything right, might be homeless on release Shelter completed a duty to refer application with York City Council, which was initially accepted.

Unfortunately, things became more complicated when it was discovered that, due to being in custody, Marilyn was unentitled for furlough and the supermarket suspended her contract. This in turn prompted York City Council to revoke its duty of care as they claimed Marilyn no longer had a local link to the area.

In the following weeks Shelter worked closely with Marilyn and Changing Lives in order to find appropriate accommodation which would allow Marilyn to keep her job. Shelter completed a Homeless Prevention Team (HPT) referral which was approved and Marilyn was granted 7 days stay at a hotel on release. Marilyn, Shelter and Changing Lives used this week to view properties and they found one which was suitable, but the landlord requested six months' rent up front which, receiving no pay since COVID restrictions came into play, Marilyn didn't have.

Shelter applied to the HPT for further funding, and Changing Lives applied to the Vicar's Relief Fund for the deposit. Combined with Marilyn's £800 savings she was still £900 short. Shelter and Changing Lives investigated other sources of money and were successful in their petitions to a DV fund and York's Rough Sleeping Team.

With all the money in place Marilyn's anxious wait was over. She was able to furnish the flat with some of her leftover savings and, the last Shelter heard, is due to recommence her work at the supermarket in September.

"After advocating on Rob's behalf, Shelter were able to convince the council to accept duty of care and Rob was placed in suitable interim accommodation."

#### **Case Study - Rob's story**

When Rob came to Shelter, he had been evicted from his supported housing and was rough sleeping. He had no money and had not eaten for over 24 hours. He was cold, shivering and wet. Rob had mental health issues, including anxiety, and his situation was exacerbating his anxiety. Rob also was drinking heavily, using drugs and on top of that had a gambling problem.

Shelter advised that Rob present as homeless at the local council. On his first attempt he became very agitated and the housing officer had to call the crisis intervention team. The council assessed him and decided Rob was not in priority need. Due to Rob's condition Shelter decided to challenge the decision and accompanied him that afternoon to the council office to make another homeless application. After advocating on Rob's behalf Shelter were able to convince the council to accept duty of care and Rob was placed in suitable interim accommodation.

Besides housing Rob needed help to access clothes and food. Shelter identified drop ins in the local area and Rob, along with his Shelter ASG worker and Shelter volunteer attended the drop ins. There he was given dry, clean clothes and a bacon sandwich. Rob stayed at the drop in for 2 hours and engaged with all the support services that were on offer. He returned later in the day for some hot food and Shelter arranged for a food parcel from the local foodbank.

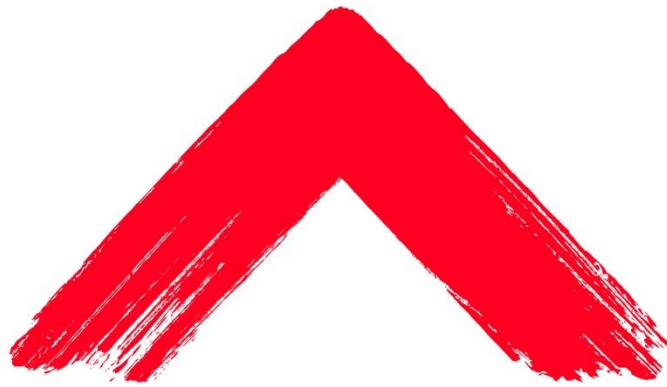
Rob had previously engaged with drug and alcohol services but had fallen out touch. Working with Rob's probation officer Shelter arranged an appointment so that he could reengage with the support service. The drug and alcohol team were able to arrange, with Rob, help for his gambling addiction. With budgeting advice provided by Shelter and the support of gambling anonymous Rob has been able to manage financially, most of the time.

Rob kept in daily contact with his Shelter ASG worker, who provided him with support and encouragement to stay engaged with support network that Rob was developing around him. With patience and continued involvement Rob and Shelter were able to secure suitable supported accommodation.

Rob has made the most of the support offered to him and his mental health has improved massively. He is now more confident about his future and is making plans to move forward. He has said that he would like to become a Shelter Volunteer when he is ready, and Shelter staff will support him with his aim. Rob still attends the weekly men's drop in and continues to make progress.

**We exist to defend the right to a  
safe home and fight the devastating  
impact the housing emergency  
has on people and society.**

We do this with campaigns, advice  
and support – and we never give up.  
We believe that home is everything.



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