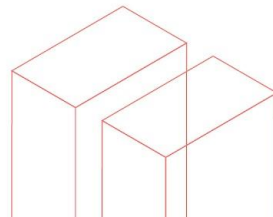


Test and Learn and Systems-wide Evaluation: Understanding what works to reduce homelessness and end rough sleeping

19th European Research Conference on Homelessness
Thursday, 18 September 2025
Utrecht, Netherlands



**Centre for
Homelessness Impact**





MICHELLE BINFIELD
Director of Programmes



LUKE ARUNDEL
Evidence and Data Lead



Created in 2018 to act as a **catalyst for evidence-led change** and support government to derive maximum value from its investments.

Goal is to ensure that policies and projects to tackle homelessness are **as effective as possible**.

Work collaboratively to gather the evidence available, **share 'what works'** and help practitioners and policymakers use evidence to create impact.



TEST & LEARN AND SYSTEMS-WIDE EVALUATION

Since our inception, CHI has made the case for **substantial investment** in the ability to robustly test new and existing interventions.

As a part of the 2022 'Ending Rough Sleeping for Good Strategy', the UK government responded by investing **£15m** in the UK's **first ever programme of trials and a systems-wide evaluation** of homelessness and rough sleeping.

This ambitious commitment represents a **substantial leap in investment** in quality evidence and research.



Core elements: Test & Learn



- A portfolio of **funded interventions** across multiple areas (71 and counting).
- **Rigorous, independent evaluations** of each of these interventions as a condition for funding.

These will help build the evidence base so that models proven to be effective can be supported to scale.

Core elements: Systems-wide Evaluation

- Systems **mapping** and systems dynamics **modelling**.
- Main programme **evaluations**.
- **Deep dives into drivers** of homelessness and rough sleeping.
- System-wide **monitoring framework**.

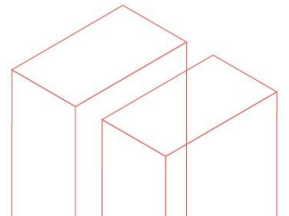




Test & Learn



**Centre for
Homelessness Impact**



TEST & LEARN PORTFOLIO

Outreach with a
health specialism

Community integration
and relationships (Citadel)

Personalised
budgets

Time-limited
accommodation and
legal advice for NUKN

Individual Placement
and Support

Accommodate or
Connect

DfE programme for
care leavers

Better use of council data
to prevent homelessness

AI housing advice
chatbot

Use of unconditional
cash transfers

MHCLG-funded

Other funding

Prevention: Using local authority's data to target advice

WHAT IS IT

- Data science platform to combine data from across the local authority, develop a risk score and target support to people identified as at risk by the model.
- RCT with randomisation at the individual level, c. 1400 people.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Councils have considerable household data to identify people in financial difficulties, and to offer support early (e.g. debt advice), and identify other needs (e.g. homelessness).



Poverty: Personalised Budgets

WHAT IS IT

- A personalised, flexible budget (£4,000) planned and managed by a caseworker.
- RCT with randomisation at the individual level with c.350 participants.

WHY IT MATTERS

- One-off, flexible financial support at the right time could enable life-changing steps with impacts in multiple domains, and would be highly scalable.
- Would help understand if benefits (e.g. agency, lower administrative burden) outweigh risks.



Employment: Individual Placement and Support (IPS)

WHAT IS IT

- Specialist employment service for people with complex needs that focuses on helping people to access paid employment immediately, alongside the offer of ongoing in-work support.
- RCT with randomisation at the individual level, c.460 participants.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Light-touch support has not been as effective for this group, so more intensive, specialist service could support people to recovery.
- IPS has been tested with similar groups (severe mental illness and substance use), including a DWP-funded RCT.



Set common approaches and standards

Common reporting, technical guidance, and processes including data collection will help us improve comparability between the different projects so the **programme is more than the sum of its parts.**

These have also accelerated the speed at which we can learn between projects and improve others.



Apply to evaluate a project

Evaluate a Test and Learn project by reading about it below and apply on Flexigrants.

[Apply to evaluate](#)

Key Links

- [Evaluation Pillars](#)
- [Statistical Guidance](#)
- [Implementation Guidance](#)
- [Economic Guidance](#)
- [Review of Outcome Measures](#)
- [Protocol Templates](#)
- [Lived Experience Policy](#)
- [Dates for applications](#)

Some of the resources available

Be intentional about sharing learning

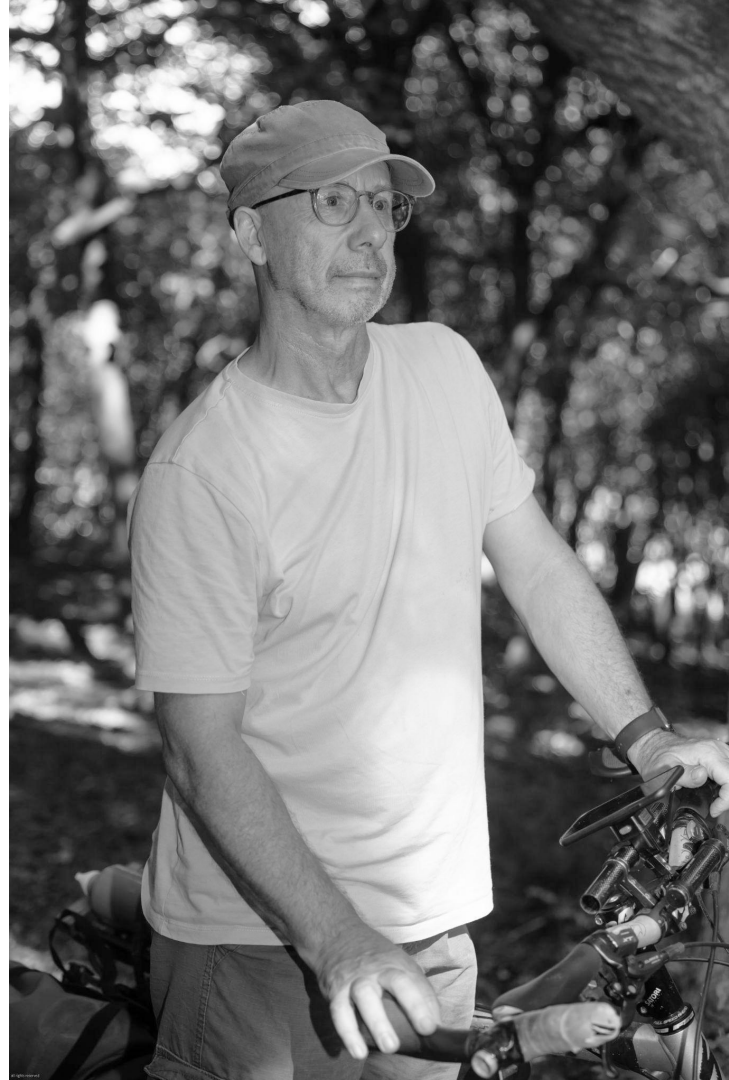
This is needed at multiple levels...

The team: bringing a mix of skills and experiences - with a passion to end homelessness and shrewd determination

The projects: creating space to share learnings and build common solutions

The programme: shared experiences to apply for future programmes

The wider community: Trailblazer group, embedding comms as we go, days like today



Enlist as much help as you can

We have been lucky to have some of the most prominent **academics and practitioners**, and members of our **Lived Experienced Network** to support the programme, providing constructive challenge and wisdom. Our Grants and Evaluation Committee helps to keep us accountable.



Our Expert Advisors



A few members of our
Lived Experiences
Network

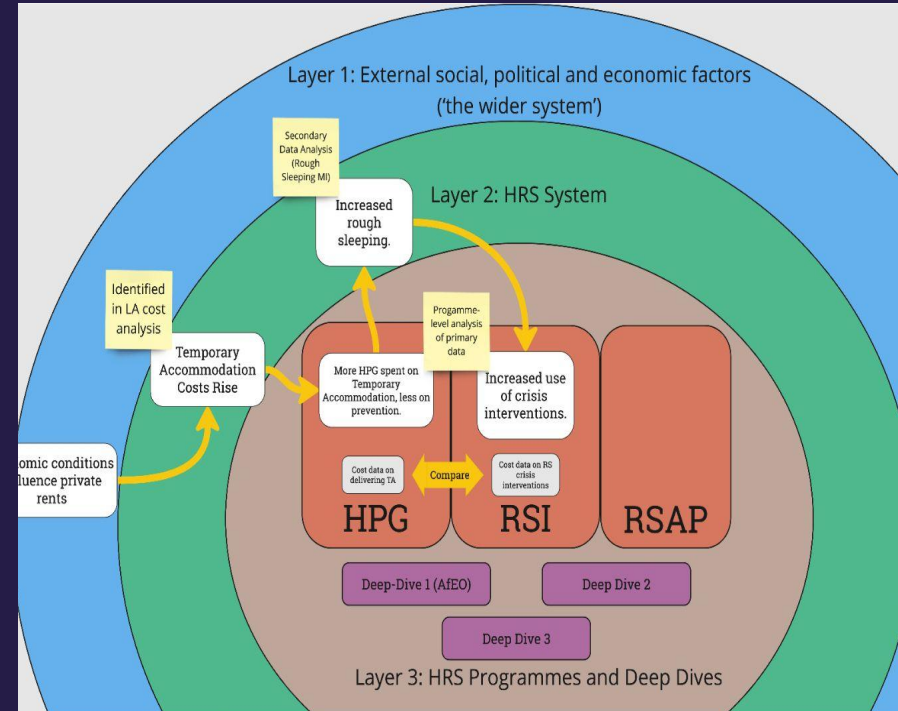


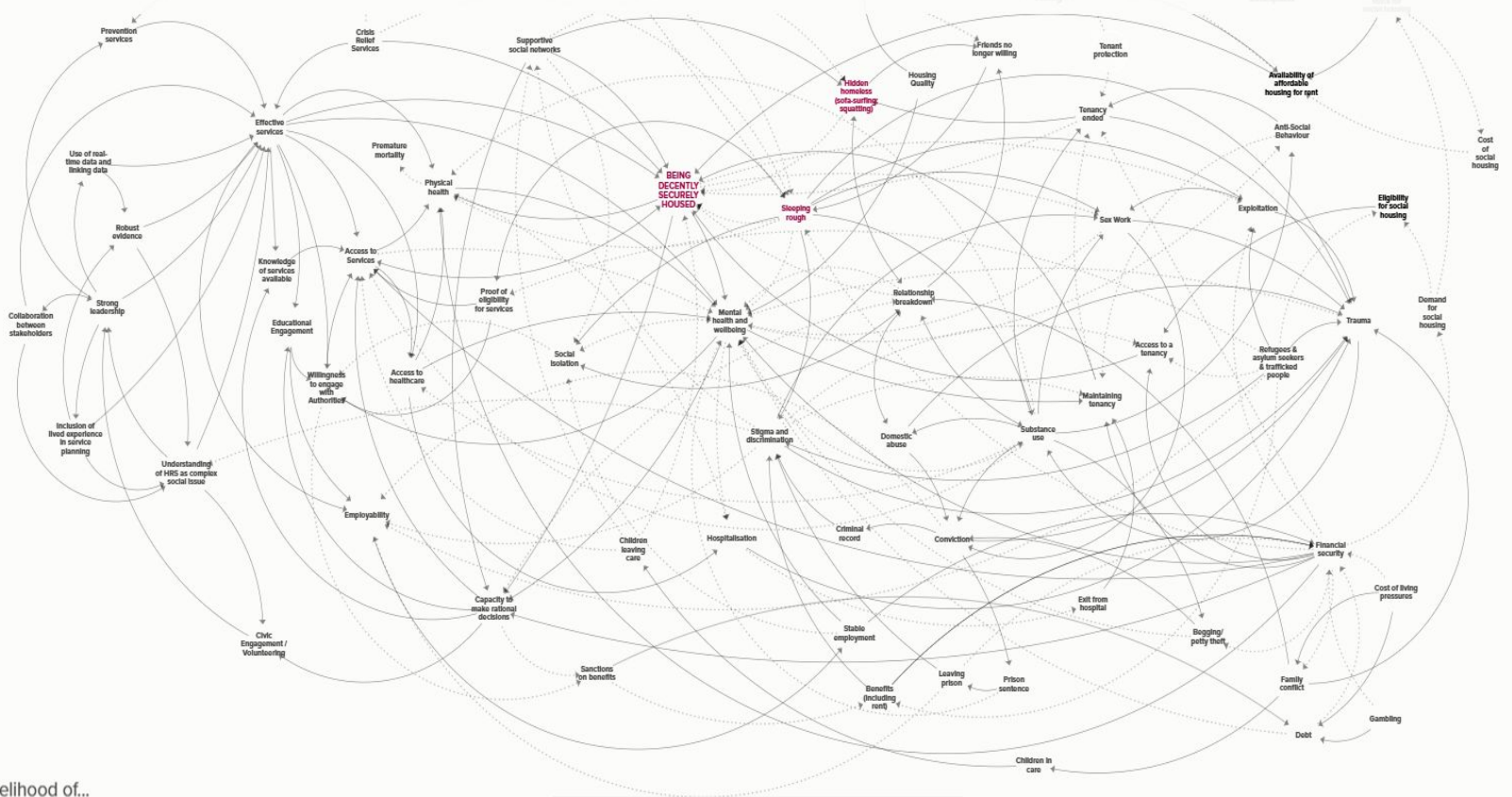
Systems-wide Evaluation

1. How do the different levers and interventions made by the Government contribute to homelessness and rough sleeping outcomes?
2. How do the different parts of the system work - or not work - together?
3. How might the system be optimised to improve outcomes and value for money?

What is involved?

- Focused standalone evaluations of four of government's key homelessness programmes.
- Building detailed systems maps of different aspects of the system; user journey mapping.
- Undertaking intervention level analysis looking at 30+ of the interventions funded by government and where they impact within the system.
- Fieldwork with 20+ local authorities, their service providers and people with lived experience.
- Evidence review to identify drivers/levers.





Decreases likelihood of...

Increases likelihood of...

Housing

Outcome

People

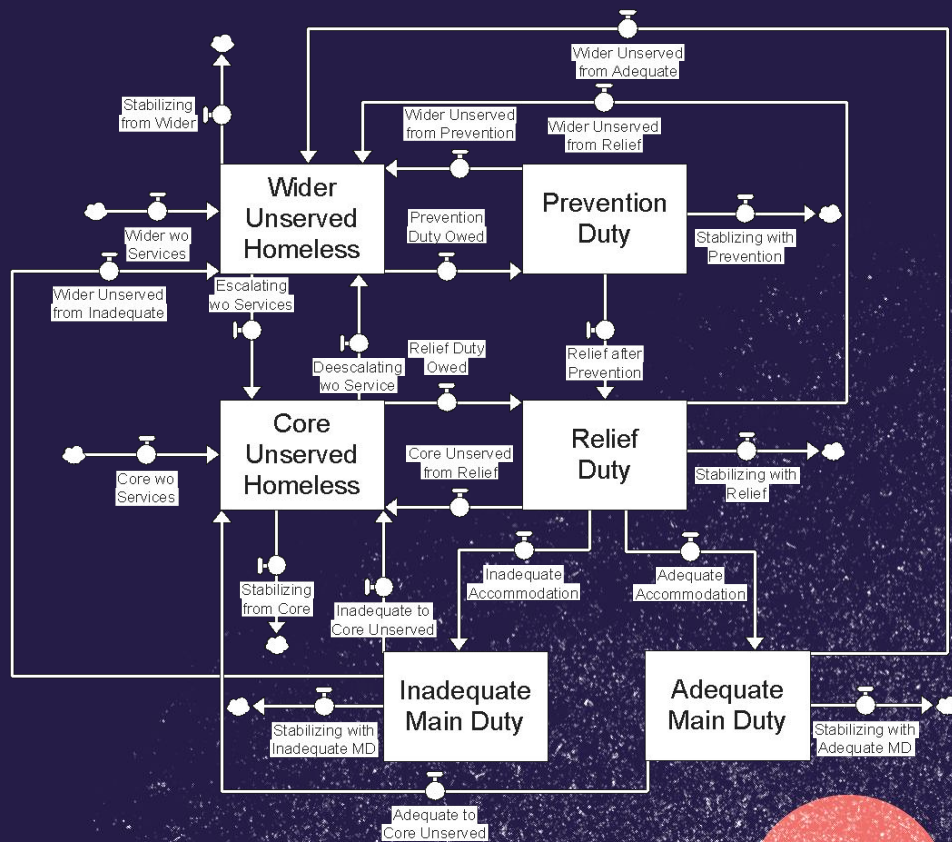
Services

Systems Dynamics Modelling

- Policy experiments
 - Identify key areas
 - Prevention
 - Capacity
 - Quality
- Metrics
 - Tangible (e.g., households)
 - Intangible (e.g., £s well-being)



Patrick Fowler
Homelessness
Systems



Research deep dives

- Criminal justice
- Refugee resettlement
- Housing availability/allocations
- Financial Insecurity
- Domestic abuse



The hope for the **future**

This is an exciting opportunity to improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness in the UK.

Our hope is that this programme of work will contribute to create the right conditions to test new ideas and scale effective practice, and drive improvements to the way the system operates, helping us move closer to the objective of **ending homelessness and rough sleeping for good.**



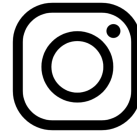


If you want to hear more,
you can sign up for updates at...

[www.homelessnessimpact.org/
test-and-learn](http://www.homelessnessimpact.org/test-and-learn)



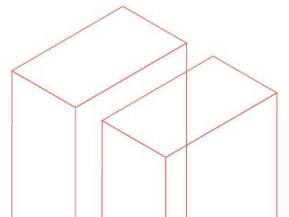
@Centre for Homelessness Impact



@homelessnessimpact



**Centre for
Homelessness Impact**





Thank you!

Michelle Binfield

Director of Director of Programmes and
Implementation

michelle@homelessnessimpact.org

Luke Arundel

Evidence and Data Lead

luke@homelessnessimpact.org



Centre for
Homelessness Impact

