

Seminar 24: Dimensions of Homelessness (Room: TBD) - Chair: Masa Filipovic Hrast, SI

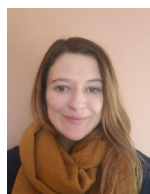
Beth Stone, Emily Wertans, UK: Disability and homelessness, An identity or a label? A critical analysis of terminology in the UK

While concurrent experiences of homelessness and Disability are common, they are often overlooked or misunderstood in policy and practice. This presentation is based on a novel report which examined the intersection between Disability and homelessness in the UK. The report discovered that a disproportionate number of Disabled people experience homelessness and that they face multiple barriers to exiting homelessness. It also identified significant discrepancies in the way this intersection is recorded, monitored and supported.

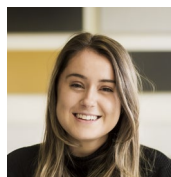
This presentation will provide an in-depth exploration of the practical issues which can arise when 'homelessness' and 'Disability' are positioned in contention with one another. It will begin by considering how Disability and homelessness are conceptualised at a theoretical level, and how this is informed by broader socioeconomic and ableist narratives. It will then consider how narrow and misinformed categorisations have undermined recording and monitoring efforts at policy and service level in the UK. Further, this presentation will demonstrate how Disabled people may struggle to meet eligibility thresholds for statutory support.

The second half of this presentation will explore the impact of Disability and homelessness labels on personhood. It will highlight the difficulty of creating a label which has real-world meaning in enabling support but which is also able to capture the complex ontological realities of Disabled people. This presentation will argue that current constructions of Disability and homelessness are too simplistic to capture intersectionality and that assigned labels carry significant weight in terms of associated stigma and personal identity construction.

Finally, this presentation will consider the broader policy and social landscape. It will demonstrate how increased politicisation and weaponising of Disability and homelessness permit problematic categorisations while removing vital safety nets. It will consider how to overcome these issues in a context of dwindling resources where support is conditional upon meeting increasingly restricted criteria.



Dr Beth Stone is a lecturer in Disability Studies at the University of Bristol. Beth's research explores the intersection between Disability and social exclusion, with a focus on neurodiversity and homelessness.



Emily Wertans is a Doctoral Candidate in the School of Criminology at the University of Leicester specialising in using creative research methods when working with people affected by homelessness who have been subjected to abuse(s).

Sarah Cooke, Rachel O'Connor, Lydia Hutchings, Chris Fox, UK: Evidencing the Impact of Strengths based Working on Long term outcomes

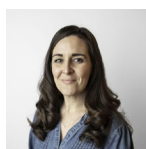
Public services often fall short of their primary objective: improving lives. Often this is because they are transactional and deficit-based, they address people's symptoms (homelessness) rather than root causes even though many challenges people face are complex and require more holistic solutions. We developed two 'strengths-based' programmes to work with adults and young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness: Kirklees Better Outcomes Partnership[1] and Greater Manchester Better Outcome Partnership[2].

Strengths-based working is designed to challenge, motivate, raise awareness of, and capitalise on the individual's strengths. Front-line services were designed to be personalised and holistic, empowering individuals to help themselves and fostering sustainable change. We also sought to develop a strengths-based partnership to deliver this service and encourage the wider system to adopt strengths-based approaches. An evaluation of front-line practice using Qualitative Comparative Analysis demonstrated that, when front-line staff worked in more strengths-based ways their clients

achieved better long-term outcomes. A separate evaluation identified significant savings to public budgets associated with the programme.

This body of work advances both our understanding of effective services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and the evidence-based for the effectiveness of strengths-based approaches to service delivery in public services. We describe the service delivery model in which 'reflective practice', self-efficacy and 'innovation' on the part of front-line service delivery teams were key to facilitate strength-based working. We discuss the evidence on programme effectiveness and describe the framework we developed to identify if services are working in a strength-based way, utilising the benefits of analytical and problem-solving that utilised effective data to evidence trends and impact. We conclude by outlining how this model can be embedded within service delivery organisations and scaled across local delivery systems.

Sarah, Rachel and Lydia are Employees of Bridges Outcomes Partnerships. BOP is committed to transformative social intervention, specialising in strengths-based approaches, empowering individuals in housing, homelessness, and criminal justice sectors. Our innovative strategies and data-driven analysis catalyse sustainable change, yielding long-term impact and substantial public budget savings.



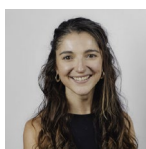
Sarah Cooke leads the Kirklees Better Outcomes Partnership. An experienced regional and national Director with a demonstrated history of working in non-profit sectors across Homelessness, Housing and Justice. Skilled in innovation & project management, consortium & relationship development, government consultation, and new business opportunities. Part of numerous ambitious pilots including Re-Unite, Greater Manchester Offenders Project, Female Offender Whole Systems Approach in GM and Transforming Rehabilitation "Through The Gate" Contracts and committed to supporting rehabilitation and empowering individuals to achieve independence through innovative and asset based services.

Nominated for UK Housing Award and winning a Northern Housing Award as part of GM Homes Partnership.



Rachel O'Connor Rachel is a Programme Director leading the Young Persons Homeless Prevention Pathfinder at the Greater Manchester Better Outcomes Partnership (GMBOP). Since January 2021, she's been guiding the project to success, impacting young people across GM as well as feeding into wider systems learning. With eighteen years of senior management experience, Rachel excels in leading teams delivering critical services in housing, debt, and criminal justice sectors. Prior to GMBOP, she made significant impacts in the Transforming Rehabilitation contract, managing Through The Gate provision across the North West. Recognised with a Butler Trust award in 2018, Rachel is passionate about how strength based ways of working can effect positive social change.

provision across the North West. Recognised with a Butler Trust award in 2018, Rachel is passionate about how strength based ways of working can effect positive social change.



Lydia Hutchings Lydia works as an Impact Analyst, previously supporting BOP's international work on the Sierra Leone Innovation Education Challenge and the Ghana Education Outcomes Project and now the GMBOP Pathfinders programme. Since studying philosophy at university, she has worked for a number of charities, predominantly within the education sector and most recently for Teach First - an education charity which aims to build a fair education for all. Lydia is passionate about promoting social mobility and helping to improve the life chances of those who need it most.



Chris Fox is Professor of Evaluation and Policy Analysis at Manchester Metropolitan University, where he is also Faculty Director of Research for Arts and Humanities with strategic responsibility for 350 researchers working across the arts, humanities and social sciences. Chris's areas of research specialism are evidence-based policy, public service reform and social outcomes contract (Social Impact Bonds). He has written 4 books and 45 journal papers, the most recent being 'Can a focus on co-created, strengths-based services facilitate early-stage innovation within Social Impact Bonds?' published in the International

Public Management Journal.