

PREVENTION

SAVES

MONEY AND

MISERY

CYRENIANS HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICE
IMPACT REPORT

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FOREWORD



“I very much welcome this report as a contribution to the emerging evidence base on homelessness prevention in Scotland. Housing organisations across the country are striving to develop practice in this area and to document outcomes in terms of helping people to avoid the damaging experience of homelessness and ensuring the effective deployment of scarce resources. Sharing of experiences of practice will become increasingly valuable in strengthening the approach to homelessness prevention across Scotland. This evaluative study from Cyrenians illustrates how organisations can implement monitoring and evaluation of outcomes alongside development and delivery of services which seek to help people sustain homes and avoid homelessness. I hope this report will stimulate further discussion across the sector as to how service commissioners and providers might best ensure robust monitoring and evaluation are in place to ensure optimal learning from innovative practice.”

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

i. INTRODUCTION

Edinburgh Cyrenians has pioneered Scotland's first service aimed at stopping people in imminent risk of homelessness from losing their home, and helping them over a 3 month period to become more resilient to future crises. This report presents the findings from research undertaken by Cyrenians to demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of the Homelessness Prevention Service, now in its third year and providing 400 interventions per annum in Edinburgh.

ii. PRIORITISING HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

Homelessness prevention was already identified by the Scottish Government as a priority in advance of the publication of the Christie Commission's Report on the Future Delivery of Public Services in June 2011. It is acknowledged as a vital element in local authorities' work towards meeting the commitment of the Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2003 that after 2012 all unintentionally homeless households will be entitled to permanent accommodation.

iii. CYRENIANS HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICE

The Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service was set up in response to a City of Edinburgh Council competitive tendering exercise in autumn 2008. It was designed specifically to prevent people from presenting as homeless by either keeping their current house or moving on to an alternative home in a planned way.

Taking account of the factors known to be associated with increased risk of homelessness, Cyrenians employs personal advisers offering tailored one-to-one support to people who are dealing with relationship breakdown, financial problems and concerns about housing security due to unemployment. Mediation is available in relation to debt and relationship problems; and volunteer befrienders will assist people to become more active and engaged in leisure, social and community activities.

iv. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The research compiled quantitative and qualitative data from a number of sources:

- Quarterly performance information provided by Cyrenians to the City of Edinburgh Council.
- Cyrenians' own internal recording systems which indicate distance travelled by those using the service, based on six outcomes in areas that are linked to homelessness. (The six outcome areas cover employment, community links, money, housing security, health and relationships.)
- A tracking questionnaire with a sample of 50 customers of the Homelessness Prevention Service.
- A comparison questionnaire with 15 people with experience of presenting as homeless.

v. FINDINGS

Improvements can be seen across all outcome areas in the situation of people who have engaged with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. Analysis of the data for the sample group of 50 customers indicates demonstrable impact, for example in employment, where 11 moved into employment; and money, where rent arrears dropped from a total of £25,339 to £5,935 and the number of people in rent arrears dropped from 29 to 11. Only 3 out of the 376 people who Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service worked with in 2010/11 became homeless.

The research seeks to highlight potential costs saved by the City of Edinburgh Council through investment in a prevention service, for example by avoiding the costs of temporary accommodation. Hard data is available and included in the report on repayment of rent arrears by customers of Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. The Council's performance data demonstrates that the service is meeting and exceeding its targets on diverting customers from homelessness presentations and sustaining this for a further 12 months in 99% of cases. The report provides strong evidence for the cost effectiveness of the service.

However, the limitations of the exercise preclude a robust quantification of potential costs associated with becoming homeless in a comparable group of non-recipients of such a service, which would provide a measure against the cost of delivery of the Homelessness Prevention Service. Cyrenians would welcome involvement in a research study to undertake a cost:benefit analysis of this prevention work.

vi. CONCLUSIONS

Cyrenians' report seeks to highlight a number of important issues:

- Firstly, Cyrenians' research has demonstrated that customers of the Homelessness Prevention Service are living in circumstances similar to those who experience homelessness in the wider population. This suggests that had Cyrenians customers not sought intervention, there is a reasonable chance that they would have become homeless; certainly, two thirds of the sample group said that this definitely would have been so for them. The case studies in the report help to demonstrate how similar circumstances have led to different outcomes for individuals who have/have not had access to the service.
- Secondly, Cyrenians has tried to demonstrate the impact the Homelessness Prevention Service has on people's lives outside of their housing situation. Our research shows that when an individual's housing situation becomes more secure there are concomitant improvements in other areas of their life, in particular their financial situation, their perception of their mental health, and their employment circumstances.
- Furthermore, the changes made by customers engaging with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service have been sustained over a year after finishing with the service.
- Finally the research has illustrated potential savings to the local authority and shown that a preventative approach is effective in enabling people to avoid homelessness. It presents strong evidence that the new preventative approach developed by Cyrenians in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council is highly effective (more than 95%) and is cost effective for the Council through reducing homelessness presentations, recovering rent arrears and avoiding the costs of temporary accommodation.

In view of the high risk of rising homelessness and new obligations on Councils to help, **Cyrenians proposes to policy makers that homelessness should be a key focus for preventative spend in Scotland.**

1 THE ORGANISATION

Edinburgh Cyrenians is an independent charity that has been operating successfully since 1968. It prevents and alleviates poverty and homelessness and works for a Scotland that makes room for all. Cyrenians has three main areas of business:

- **Prevention:** short to medium term interventions to prevent people losing their home, slipping into longer term homelessness and/or experiencing repeat or 'revolving door' homelessness
- **People and Change:** medium to long term case work delivering a range of outcomes related to fundamental and sustained personal change that reduces the risk of deterioration and increases the chances of people fulfilling their potential as contributing members of society
- **Social Enterprise:** medium to long term engagement with people benefiting from placements and traineeships using the learning and development opportunities provided by our social enterprise workplaces. Outcomes are focussed on personal development, including resilience to reverting to homelessness, and progression to a stable working life.

Cyrenians operates from bases in Edinburgh, East & West Lothian and Falkirk, with a wide variety of services for over 1,300 people a year towards outcomes such as better homes, progress to work, improved health, better coping skills, re-engagement with families and communities and independence from addictions.

The charity has won awards for its involvement of volunteers and its creative engagement with the business community. In its 2008 report, independent charity analysts [New Philanthropy Capital](#) recommended Edinburgh Cyrenians as one of the 9 most effective homelessness charities in the UK. The charity currently has an annual turnover of about £2.5m and employs around 80 staff, with 50% added workforce provided by regular volunteers.

Cyrenians has a strong interest in demonstrating the impact of our work through use of outcomes based planning, the principles of continuous improvement and an evidence based approach to monitoring and evaluation. More about this work is included in section 3.

2 BACKGROUND TO HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND THE CYRENIANS HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICE

The following section highlights a number of areas which are important to the background of this report: firstly, it outlines key policy with regards to tackling homelessness; secondly, it presents trends in homeless applications across Scotland and in Edinburgh, highlighting the main reasons for individuals making presentations; thirdly it looks at some factors relevant to meeting the 2012 target; finally, it looks at what homelessness prevention is and how the City of Edinburgh Council has responded to homelessness through a preventative approach.

2.1 KEY POLICY ON HOMELESSNESS

Over the past two decades key legislation has helped drive significant changes in developing strategies to tackle homelessness. In the late 1990's tackling homelessness became a key policy objective for the New Labour Government. This was highlighted by the extension and expansion of the Rough Sleepers Initiative.¹ The focus on homelessness was further developed in the devolved Scottish administration, leading to the Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2003.² The Act outlines the legal responsibilities by local authorities towards homeless people as follows:³

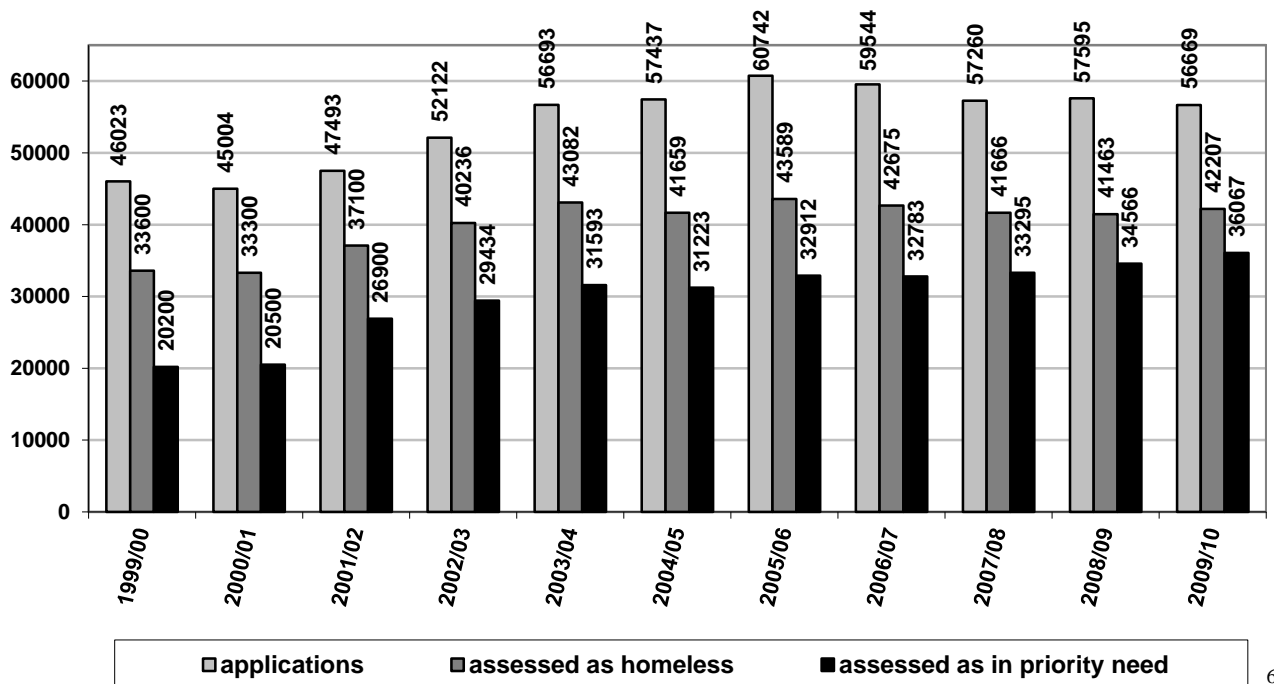
- The provision of advice and assistance to anyone threatened with homelessness or already homeless
- The provision of temporary accommodation whilst individual circumstances are investigated
- The offer of permanent accommodation if certain criteria are met. These criteria⁴ are
 - In priority need (i.e. those most vulnerable such as families with children)
 - Have not become intentionally homeless (i.e. haven't given up a home intentionally)
 - Have a local connection

The 2003 Act also sets out the intention that by 2012 every unintentionally homeless person will be entitled to permanent accommodation⁵. The aspiration is that the first criteria shown above – priority need - will no longer be necessary for local authorities to use as a means to allocate homes because there will be enough accommodation and few enough homelessness presentations to house everyone in need.

2.2 HOMELESS PRESENTATIONS IN SCOTLAND AND EDINBURGH - TRENDS

The following data helps to contextualise homelessness trends across Scotland and The City of Edinburgh. Because of the 2012 target, local authorities have been closely monitoring data on homeless presentations. The graphs below help to demonstrate the trends across Scotland and across The City of Edinburgh.

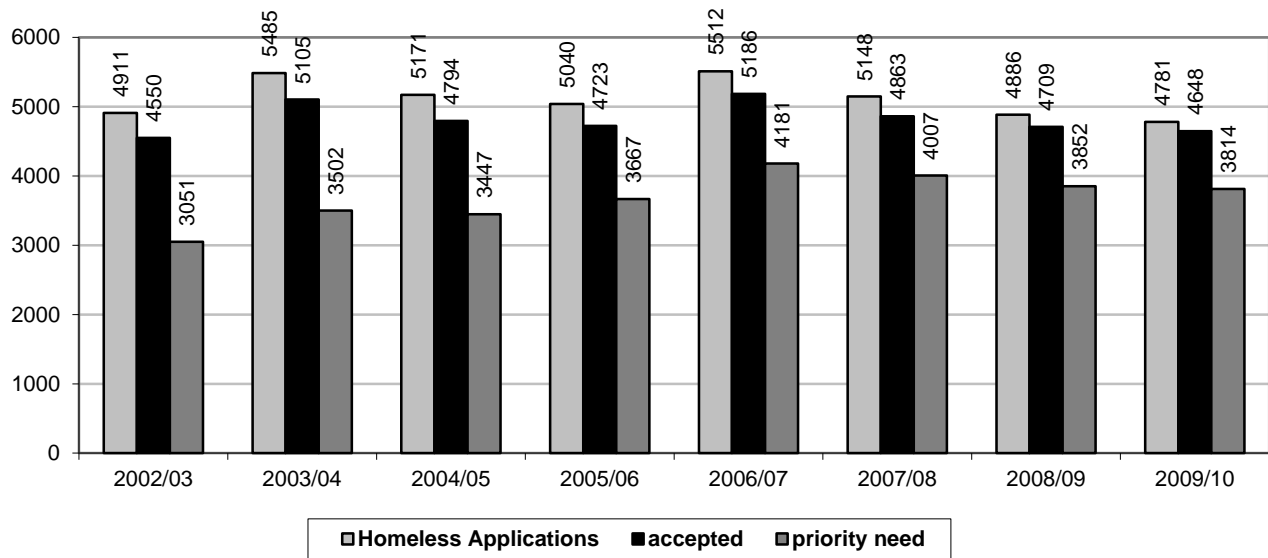
Graph 1- Homeless applications across Scotland



Homeless applications across Scotland rose sharply between 2000/1 until 2005/6 where it began to level off and have since begun to fall. The statistics for 2009/10 show that there were 56,669 homeless applications made. A total of 42,207 of these were assessed homeless with 36,067 assessed as in priority need. Although homeless presentations have been reducing, the proportion of cases assessed as priority need has increased from 60% to 87%.

The trends are reasonably similar across Edinburgh. Please see the graph below.

Graph 2- Homeless applications across Edinburgh



The graph above⁷ shows that The City of Edinburgh Council’s homelessness presentations reflect those seen through Scotland. Homeless presentations peaked in 2006/7 and have been reducing. In addition, the council has increased the proportion of households categorised as in priority need as a percentage of the total. It can be seen that 4,781 people made a homeless application in 2009/2010 and 3,814 were classed as in priority need.

The analysis of both Scotland-wide and Edinburgh data also revealed the profile of those who had made homeless applications and their reasons for presenting as homeless. Key areas are highlighted in the table below.

Table 1 - Profile of homeless applications in Scotland and in Edinburgh

Profile of homeless applicants	Scotland overall %	City of Edinburgh %
Single people/Single parents	86	89
Staying with friends and family	47	52
Were in PRS tenancies	15	18
Asked to leave by family/friends	26	13
Involved in non-violent disputes/relationship	19	40

breakdown		
Violent/abusive household	10	9
Financial reasons	5	5
Offered a PRS tenancy (assessed as homeless)	3	23 (2007-2008)

The proportion of those who became homeless due to relationship breakdown is much higher in Edinburgh than the Scottish average, 40% compared to 19%. This might be related to the fact that rental property is expensive in Edinburgh and people cannot afford to keep a property themselves once a relationship has broken up and hence go down the homeless route. This may also help to explain why there is a higher proportion of people who have been staying in private rented accommodation that have subsequently gone on to present as homeless.

The number of homeless households offered private rented accommodation is also greater in Edinburgh than in any other local authority area. For example in 2007/8, 23% were offered private rented sector accommodation, compared with around 10% in both Fife and Dundee City, 7% in Perth, 7% in Scotland as a whole and around 5% in Glasgow, West Lothian and Falkirk.⁸ This is primarily because Edinburgh has provided schemes to help with access to PRS accommodation and is considered the leading authority in Scotland with regards to this activity.⁹

The data above demonstrates that although the number of homeless applications has decreased in recent years the number of individuals being assessed as priority need has increased as local authorities move towards meeting the 2012 target.

There are, however, concerns that the availability of council and Registered Social Landlord (RSL) housing has not increased to meet the growing number of those who are considered in priority need. Lack of affordable¹⁰ housing has been cited as one of the biggest barriers to meeting the 2012 target.

According to Shelter, in March 2011 there were 11,019 households living in temporary accommodation in Scotland and around 14% of these were staying in a Bed and Breakfast¹¹. In Edinburgh 661 people accessed temporary accommodation in March 2010 and this increased to 750 by March 2011¹². Results also show that in March 2011 270 people were housed in bed and breakfasts (36%). This is the highest number of people staying in bed and breakfasts in Scotland¹³. Furthermore it is estimated that around one third of those families in temporary accommodation are families with children.¹⁴

Thus there are still considerations with regard to how local councils meet the 2012 target without significantly increasing the use of temporary accommodation.

2.3 MEETING THE 2012 TARGET

The Private Rented Sector

The Private Rented Sector (PRS) can be a viable option for local authorities to consider when housing those who have become homeless and may be imperative to helping local authorities meet the 2012 target. In Scotland 1,518 homeless households were offered private rented accommodation in 2009/10 and 99% of these took up the offer. The private rented market is larger than social housing and is often used for transitional housing – particularly in urban areas.¹⁵

To support this, the Scottish Government has introduced a range of legislation to regulate the PRS and improve standards. In addition, legislation has been passed to enable local authorities to “discharge their duty” to house someone through the PRS, indicating the likelihood of the PRS being used as a more permanent housing option.¹⁶ For reference, these issues are explored in the Scottish Government’s *Review of the Private Rented Sector* (March 2009).

The PRS can help people from becoming homeless by meeting the demand for housing which the social housing sector is struggling to meet. However at present it is seen as a less secure option because leases tend to be Scottish Assured Tenancy agreements lasting a minimum of 6 months¹⁷, but landlords can potentially end leases any time after this point.¹⁸ Another consideration is that rents are generally higher than in the social housing sector.¹⁹ This makes it difficult for those receiving housing benefits to find work that will allow them to pay the rent.²⁰ However, with the new legislation in place there is no reason why this cannot be a workable option for local councils.

A proportion of those included in this study are living in the private rented sector. Therefore some of the specific issues relating to the circumstances of people threatened with homelessness and living in the private rented sector will be explored in more detail in section 3.

The Economic Climate and Prevention

The UK is experiencing very significant cuts in public sector spending, combined with sluggish economic growth. There are concerns that together with the effects of changes to benefits, there may be a rise in the number of people experiencing homelessness. In a report commissioned by the Scottish Government to look at the future delivery of public services²¹, it was found that successful reform of public service delivery will come from:

- Involving individuals and communities in the design and delivery of the services they use

- Public service providers working closely together to integrate service provision and improve outcomes (Cyrenians has been mentioned as a good example of public service providers successfully working in partnership with third sector organisations to deliver services)
- Encouraging a preventative approach
- Reducing costs by increasing efficiency and sharing services where possible.

Local authorities are, more than ever, keen to minimise spend and achieve value for money in the services they purchase. It is recognised that a preventative approach is potentially a cost effective way of tackling homelessness. The following section outlines what homelessness prevention is and Edinburgh's strategy on homelessness prevention.

2.4 HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

Across Scotland

Although homelessness prevention is not a new concept, in March 2007, the Scottish Government increased their interest in helping local authorities to prevent homeless presentations.

An initial study into homelessness prevention interventions in Scotland was published (An evaluation of homelessness prevention activities in Scotland: Pawson, Davidson and Netto).²² Pawson et al. (2007) undertook a large study consisting of reviews of homeless strategies, surveys, case studies and interviews with service users. The study had several aims: to map and categorise prevention work; to assess what works for at-risk groups; to identify what monitoring and evaluation tools were in place. They found that prevention activities, although "small" and "experimental", were effective but there was a need for better monitoring and evaluation tools. Following this work, the Scottish Government went on to produce statutory guidance for local authorities on preventing homelessness in June 2009.²³

The purpose of this work has been to support local authorities to meet their 2012 target to abolish priority need and house all people making a successful homeless application. If fewer people make homeless presentations, it is more likely that local authorities can meet the demand to house everyone.

The work conducted by Pawson et al (2007) highlights that homelessness prevention is a wide topic and depends on what outcomes the prevention activity is measuring. A table has been included in the appendix (please see appendix a) to show different types of prevention activity and their expected target groups. However, this can be summarised as follows:

- Early Intervention:
Advice and information about housing, schools education, some visiting support, family mediation and access to private rented sector tenancies
- Pre-crisis Intervention:
Housing options interviews by local authorities, some visiting support, intensive support for people experiencing domestic violence, help for prisoners and landlord/tenant mediation
- Preventing Recurrence:
Visiting support and diversionary activities/employability programmes

The Scottish homelessness prevention guidance 2009 provides the following definition of homelessness prevention:²⁴

*"Following a competent and person-centred assessment of the risks of homelessness, the approaches and activities undertaken to secure the most **effective, appropriate and sustainable** housing **outcome** for the person concerned should be deemed as acceptable prevention activity".²⁵*

This definition is very broad. However, the guidance goes on to emphasise the importance of an early intervention²⁶ approach and highlights this is one of the four main principles identified to help local authorities to meet the target of abolition of priority need by 2012.²⁷

This study is largely concerned with early intervention and pre-crisis intervention with those people who have not previously made a homeless presentation. The specific Cyrenians approaches are explored further in the following section.

Council Action to Prevent Homelessness

In April 2007, councils were asked to identify what action(s) they had taken to prevent homelessness for those households which were deemed as threatened by homelessness or declared not homeless. They were asked to do this at the time of closing an application and can record more than one prevention action if applicable. Records show that for the time period April–September 2010, 3717 prevention actions were taken across Scotland. 37% had their support needs assessed, 28% were helped to find alternative housing and 19% had independent financial legal or housing advice. On top of this 9% received help to deal with a landlord or mortgage provider, 6% had help to claim benefits and 6% were helped to use a deposit/guarantee scheme.²⁸

The increasing focus by local authorities on homelessness prevention raises some interesting issues for those involved in homelessness prevention activity:

- i) At present there is no record of those who are at risk of homelessness. Individuals may have problems with rent/mortgage arrears, relationship problems or threatened redundancy. To reach these groups and prevent homelessness requires early intervention and organisations need to move beyond traditional promotional work.
- ii) Most local authorities in England place a strong emphasis on the offer of advice about housing options. This holistic approach provides a range of advice around the PRS, mediation service, and can help individuals to link in with other services. In 2009 the Scottish Government and COSLA jointly published statutory guidance for local authorities on preventing homelessness which stresses an early intervention approach.²⁹ More recently, The Scottish Government has launched the Scottish Housing Options funding programme. They have pledged £500,000 of 'enabling funding' and all local authorities have signed up to this with five hubs having been established to encourage the development of this approach
- iii) Homelessness can be very disruptive and traumatic for those who experience it. The impact of a spell of homelessness can cause a downward spiral or trigger other problems which continue for years after the initial event. These events can create increases in spending, not only on supporting people through homelessness services, but also in other services such as social work, health, unemployment benefits etc. Assessing this spend and impact on other services, whilst complex and potentially speculative, is explored in more detail in section 3.

The City of Edinburgh Council's Approach to Homelessness

The City of Edinburgh Council re-calibrated services in the spring of 2009 after the production of their updated homeless strategy and a subsequent process of competitive tendering. The strategy outlines a vision of ending homelessness in Edinburgh by 2012, meeting the target to abolish priority need. The strategy has a strong focus on preventing homelessness, with four main aims:

- (a) Anyone who is having difficulty keeping their home will have access to services and support that can help them to avoid becoming homeless.
- (b) Anyone who needs a home can get help to secure one that meets their needs.
- (c) People get access to temporary accommodation when they need it.
- (d) People who have been homeless can access services and support so that they don't become homeless again.³⁰

One of the ways The City of Edinburgh Council has responded to homelessness legislation in order to meet its obligations is by commissioning a range of services to help tackle homelessness. In particular there has been a strong emphasis on homelessness prevention and partnership working both with the council and between providers of commissioned services.

The Council purchased three services with a strong preventative approach:

- i) Housing advice and Information outreach – targeting 3000 households each year and offering advice to people at risk of homelessness or facing eviction. This includes work with people in prison, people going to court as a result of eviction notices and people requiring housing advice. This service is being delivered by the Edinburgh Housing Advice Partnership.
- ii) Access to Private Sector Housing – a scheme for approximately 300 people to access private sector housing either individually or through flat sharing. This service is being delivered by Orchard and Shipman as “Letfirst”.
- iii) A 1:1 support service targeting work with people who had not previously been homeless, but required support for up to 6 months to prevent homelessness from occurring. This service is being delivered by Edinburgh Cyrenians – more information about the service is provided in the following section.

Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service

The Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service has been designed primarily to prevent people from presenting as homeless by either keeping their current housing, or moving on to an alternative home in a planned way.

The service works with people in the prevention context of early intervention and pre-crisis intervention (see section 2.4). This approach involves promoting the service to people who access mainstream services, such as schools, GPs, libraries etc and generally raising awareness of the service with appropriate agencies and the public. The marketing of the service is undertaken by members of the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service team who distribute leaflets and give presentations to the appropriate agencies. The service more specifically targets:

- People experiencing relationship breakdown
- People experiencing financial hardship
- People who are concerned about losing their job or would have more secure housing if they were working

The first two target groups mirror two of the main causes of homelessness as indicated in the statistics shown in section 2.1. The third reflects the strategic emphasis on employment by both The City of Edinburgh Council and Cyrenians. Getting and keeping a job is seen as a key means to sustaining economic

independence and a life away from crisis/homelessness. This view is confirmed in the data presented from this study.

There are some aspects to service design and delivery which differ from other, more traditional, housing support. This includes the way in which the service is presented and promoted. It is very important that the service reaches people before their housing situation becomes a crisis – thereby making it easier to alleviate the threat of homelessness. This means that there is a strong imperative for staff to promote the service much more widely than homelessness projects such as hostels. In addition, staff are titled as “Personal Advisors” rather than “Support Workers” to help reduce stigma that may be associated with needing support.

Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service delivery involves several key elements:

1:1 Key work support using Cyrenians Key Worker Practice Model. The model is based on a professionally recognised way of working (Gerard Egan – “The Skilled Helper”) and links the core Cyrenians values of respect, acceptance and tolerance with practical, day to day ways of working with people facing challenges in their lives. The emphasis in Cyrenians key work is to promote change and independence by encouraging customers to address issues and challenges themselves. Key workers will: listen to the customer’s account of why they are at risk of homelessness; with their consent, gather further information about their situation from other agencies; provide them with help and advice to deal with the problems they are facing which are putting their housing security under threat; accompany them to difficult meetings; link them to any other specific services as required. All key work staff receive training and continuous professional development to ensure they offer effective support.

Formal mediation from a trained and accredited mediator, offered to two main groups: young people aged 16+ whose relationship with their parents is putting their housing at risk or where they have moved out in crisis and could return if the relationship improves; tenants who would like to resolve issues associated with repairs, the condition of the property or rent arrears and avoid eviction by their landlord.

Volunteer befriending, designed to help people to establish sustainable links with the local community and build confidence in leisure and community based activities. Volunteers operate alongside the key work staff, are fully trained and regularly supported.

Employability support, designed to help people become more independent, confident and less reliant on benefits. This includes: delivery of a portfolio based qualification (The Learning Power Award) accredited by City and Guilds; provision of traineeships at the Cyrenians Good Food Service – offering work experience in warehousing, driving, food handling etc.

How the Service Works: The service works with people for an average of 4 months and a top limit of 6 months. Typical issues include:

- difficult situations with a landlord
- difficult relationships with neighbours including antisocial behaviour
- relationship breakdowns with a partner, parents or other family members
- mortgage or rent arrears
- accessing in work or out of work benefits
- Loneliness, isolation and mental health problems
- the physical condition of a home – inside and out - needs to be improved
- health problems
- problems with drinking or substance misuse that are affecting housing

The Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service was designed in response to The City of Edinburgh Council's competitive tendering exercise in the Autumn of 2008. The service commenced in April 2009, working with approximately 350 people each year and is the first of its type in Scotland.

It has been imperative that the background to this piece of research is presented in such depth. It can be seen that the Scottish Government recognises the need to tackle homelessness and has reacted through a number of legislative and operational activities. The Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service is one of these activities, which has the potential to be cost effective and have a lasting impact on peoples' lives.

3 DATA USED IN THIS RESEARCH

This section will describe the different types of data used in this research project, how it was collected and how it is used. The data collected relied both on quantitative and qualitative methods: quarterly performance information provided by Cyrenians to the council; Cyrenians internal recording systems which indicate distance travelled by those using the service also known as “the matrix”; a tracking questionnaire with 50 people who have used the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service; and a Comparative questionnaire with a separate group of people to record their experience of having been homeless.

3.1 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

A contracting requirement with The City of Edinburgh Council involves regular submission of data onto a web-based database (Edinburgh Common Customer Outcomes – ECCO). The majority of those accessing council funded homelessness services are recorded on this database, however all customer data is held on an internal system. The data entry is completed by frontline key workers and administrative staff. It is possible to collate information about all those people receiving support across specified timeframes, or based on different types of information e.g. housing, employability etc. This research uses data from the financial year 2010/11 (April – March). This includes 303 people who accessed the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service during that time and gave permission for their data to be held on the council’s website. 73 people chose not to have their information stored on the ECCO database but their data was gathered from the internal Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service database. This brings the total number of customers worked with in 2010/2011 to 376.

This enabled Cyrenians to see the positive effect that Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service staff have had on those who have accessed the service for the last financial year. It has also allowed us to compare the results with our small tracking sample of 50 Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers to ensure that the sample is representative of the larger Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service population.

ECCO data is very useful in giving a picture of activity with customers whilst they are with us. It also recognises and captures the interlinking issues associated with homelessness. There is a distance travelled tool included with ECCO, which has been developed by Cyrenians (see below). However, ECCO is not able to offer longer term tracking to see if housing stability has been sustained once support from Cyrenians has ceased.

The Council’s contract states that 500 hours a week of support be provided. The majority of this is carried out by Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service, with around 100 hours being carried out by other Cyrenians services. The first service is called Amber which provides mediation and support for young people aged 14-24 and their families. The second service is the Good Food Service which is a social enterprise aimed to bring healthy lifestyles and food to those who are in disadvantaged situations. They rely on volunteers to help with the work they do and it is these volunteers who receive support from Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service.

3.2 CYRENIANS INTERNAL RECORDINGS SYSTEMS

Cyrenians has taken the ECCO distance travelled tool and developed it across the charity, for all key work services including the Homelessness Prevention Service. This system enables us to collect consistent and comparable information to help us assess the impact of our work on all customers. The systems are based on a framework comprised of six outcome areas which are subdivided into 12 areas potentially requiring support.

Table 2- Six main outcome areas and 12 subdivided areas of potential support

Organisational outcome	Key Work Area	Description of goals/issues
Outcome 1 Increasing engagement in employment, training and learning.	Employment, training and learning	Willingness, motivation and skills to work towards getting a job or other long term activity which contributes to society.
Outcome 2 Improved engagement with local leisure and community based activities.	Engagement in leisure, community based activities and volunteering	Ability to become involved in local activities, resources and services with minimum or no support.
Outcome 3 Managing Legal and Financial issues better.	Legal matters	Involvement in the criminal justice system as a result of committing crime or other court related action such as legal proceedings.
	Money management	Management of finances within means including welfare benefits, payment of rent and budgeting.
Outcome 4 Housing is stable and home is warmer, more comfortable and fuel efficient.	Housing stable, warm and fuel efficient	Issues relating to security of tenure (such as lease arrangements) and viability of the fabric of the house (for example building condition and utilities).
	Able to live in comfort	Cooking, cleaning, home furnishing and home-making.
Outcome 5 Improved health and wellbeing	Physical health	Physical health/management of health conditions including accessing primary health care services as

		appropriate (for example GPs).
	Mental/emotional wellbeing	Management of mental health/emotional well being including access to and engagement with appropriate specialist services accessed.
	Drugs	Use of illegal substances and access to specialist services.
	Alcohol	Use of alcohol and access to specialist services
Outcome 6 Better relationships with friends, family, partners and neighbours; disengaged from any abusive relationships.	Friends, family, partners and neighbours	Ability to relate to others and manage relationships with friends, family, partners and neighbours. Includes antisocial behaviour, anger management and mediation.
	Abusive relationships	Relates to care and throughcare, domestic violence, financial or other abuse either as a victim or perpetrator.

A scale is used to assess distance travelled in each of the 12 support areas:

- 5 = service user is out of control in this area and does not recognise this
- 4 = service user recognises that they have significant issues in this area
- 3 = service user is committing to address problems in this area
- 2 = service user is addressing problems
- 1 = there are no support issues/issues have been addressed and resolved

The key work areas mentioned above combined with the 1 – 5 scale is used as a discussion tool with service users. A benchmark is produced during initial assessment through agreement between the key worker and the service user. This is regularly monitored and a formal review takes place at least every quarter. The data is collected and analysed on a quarterly basis. This distance travelled tool, referred to as the matrix, was piloted in April 2010 and the system commenced in June 2010. Data collected from June 2010-March 2011 has been used in this research to show the impact that the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service has. (Please see appendix b for the full matrix).

Cyrenians staff conducted matrix assessments with around 180 people from June 2010 – March 2011. However, only 111 customers have had two or more scoring points over that period. The remainder only had one set of scores with nothing to compare it to. For ease of comparison, the first and most recent scores are used for the eligible Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers. This is usually their first score as they had their initial assessment with the service and their final score as they ended with the service, however for a handful of customers their most recent score may not have been their final score.

There are several reasons for the lack of 376 people with matrix scores:

- Some of the results recorded in June 2010 were not baseline scores and therefore could not be compared with anything.
- Amber didn't start using the matrix system until September, therefore their cases are excluded.
- The matrix system was not introduced to the Good Food Service until December; therefore their results are not included either.

The Cyrenians internal recording system is a very helpful tool in assessing impact. However, as with the ECCO system, it does not provide information on the longer term difference the service makes to customers. In addition, neither the Cyrenians internal system, nor ECCO, can show whether the investment in a preventative approach tangibly saves the council money. This is where the tracking questionnaire with a sample group can begin to help fill that gap.

3.3 TRACKING QUESTIONNAIRE WITH SAMPLE GROUP

Cyrenians undertook a tracking exercise with 50 people who had used the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. A mixed quantitative and qualitative questionnaire was designed based on the 12 Key Work areas mentioned previously. This looked at a customer's circumstances as they entered the service, as they left the service and at a period of time after they had finished with the service. (Please see appendix c for a copy of the questionnaire).

This enabled the organisation to assess both the personal and financial impact of the service whilst people were receiving support and to look at whether the impact was sustained over a period of time. This has also allowed the organisation to derive some tangible data about the cost effectiveness of the Homelessness Prevention Service and to provide evidence that the service is saving the local authority money e.g. in reducing rent arrears.

A sample was selected using the following criteria: those who had accessed the service between June and December 2010; those whose support had finished between three and 12 months before the date that the tracking questionnaire was conducted. In total, 50 people completed the sample group questionnaire.

Frontline practitioners provided details of a customer's situation as they entered the service and as they left the service, effectively completing the first part of the questionnaire. A small team of four volunteers, all of whom have an academic background, conducted the last part of the questionnaire with ex customers via telephone interview. To make this task easier the leader of the research team and a member of the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service wrote a standard letter which was sent out to the customers informing them that they were going to be

contacted. The Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service team were also encouraged to text or phone the customer to inform them that they would be receiving a phone call from a volunteer or a member of staff. As an incentive, there were six £25 prizes to be won, which would be decided by pulling the names of those that had participated in the study out of a hat.

This data was collected over a period of six weeks which included several evening and weekend sessions to ensure as many people as possible were contacted. Data was then transferred into an excel file where the research team could: analyse a customer's movements on the 12 outcome areas across time; track how much responsibility for their current situation individuals attributed to Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service; look at where financial improvements to an individual's situation had occurred; assess individual case studies which best represent the data as a whole.

3.4 COMPARISON GROUP OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

Cyrenians considered it important to draw upon the experiences of those who had previously been declared as homeless as an illustration of what might happen if individuals didn't have access to a homelessness prevention service. A group of 15 service users who were currently accessing other Cyrenians services, and had presented as homeless before engaging with the Cyrenians, were used. This has helped highlight the personal, social and financial costs that may occur as a result of presenting as homeless, where no homelessness prevention service is available.

This group of 15 service users either had telephone interviews or data was gathered from their Key Worker. The questionnaire for the comparison group was based on that conducted with the 50 people that had accessed HPS i.e. the sample group (see appendix d for a copy of that questionnaire). Some of the comparison group is used for case studies, to highlight what happened when they became homeless in comparison to someone who accessed the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. This will further demonstrate how easy it can be for an individual to become homeless and the consequences of them having become homeless.

What is notable with some of the comparison case studies is that individuals' matrix scores appear to increase in certain matrix areas such as mental health, finance and substance misuse when they begin to work with Cyrenians. This pattern can be found across most services whereby the most urgent and obvious issues tend to score high initially and then decrease over time, showing an improvement. Alongside this, as the service user feels more comfortable with the Key Worker, they will disclose more information about some of the other issues which are inhibiting their improvement. This will become clearer with the individual case studies. This also helps explain why some scores may be lower in the comparison group of 15 in relation to the sample group of 50 Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention customers.

3.5 SOME CONSIDERATIONS AROUND THE METHODOLOGY

There are some considerations surrounding the methodology and the sample of ex customers that was used for the tracking questionnaire.

Firstly, there were several ex customers that the research team were unable to get hold of and others who refused to take part in the questionnaire. The following are likely reasons for this:

- People had moved house/changed telephone number
- Individuals did not wish to disclose their current circumstances either because they were private people or their situation may have changed in a negative way

Thus it may be that the individuals in the sample of ex-Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers reported a more positive outcome than that experienced across all service users. However, this has been balanced by comparing internal tracking scores for all Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers with those in the sample group. This can be seen in the presentation of results in section 4.

Secondly, although using the average distance travelled from the different sources of data collection was the best method of comparison and provided a check on the validity of the sample group, it has to be noted that calculating the average has its drawbacks. Comparing the average can be skewed by outliers and by differences in the size of the groups. However it can be seen that the results, which include all distance travelled data for the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service, have very similar results to the smaller sample group of 50.

In section 4, the information described above is used to show the impact of the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service.

4 WHAT DIFFERENCE IS THE CYRENIANS HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICE MAKING?

Section 4 describes the analysis from the sources of data used to explore the difference the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service is making. An analysis of the information shows that the financial investment in an early intervention approach *is* preventing homelessness. In addition, it is also bringing about a level of stability and independence for people at risk beyond their housing situation. It is also clear that those accessing the service are not presenting with straightforward, easily resolved issues. There is a demonstrable and critical need in the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customer group.

There is a large amount of data to draw on, therefore the findings have been split into six sections based around the themes used in the Cyrenians outcomes matrix (please refer to section 3.2 for information on Cyrenians matrix). Each section explores the impact in that specific thematic area and includes:

- Global ECCO data associated with that theme.
- “Wider HPS client group” distance travelled matrix results. This group have two sets of matrix scores- one score when they entered the service and one when their time with the service was ending (two bars on the graphs).
- Findings from the sample questionnaire group, referred to as the “sample group”, along with any relevant comparisons with the wider Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service client group. This group have three sets of matrix scores: one set when they started working with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service, when they finished working and one when they took part in the follow up questionnaire 3-12 months after finishing with the service (three bars on the graphs).
- A case study, which in the majority of cases is taken from the sample group providing a real example of type of people the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service works with.

This makes it possible to explore the significant range of issues associated with homelessness and highlight specific aspects of the service as well as the overall impact. To conclude section 3, all 6 sections will be drawn together to provide an overall picture of the impact of the service and the potential savings it brings.

4.1 INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND WORK

This outcome is concerned with enabling people to move either into work, or closer to the labour market through learning, training and work experience.

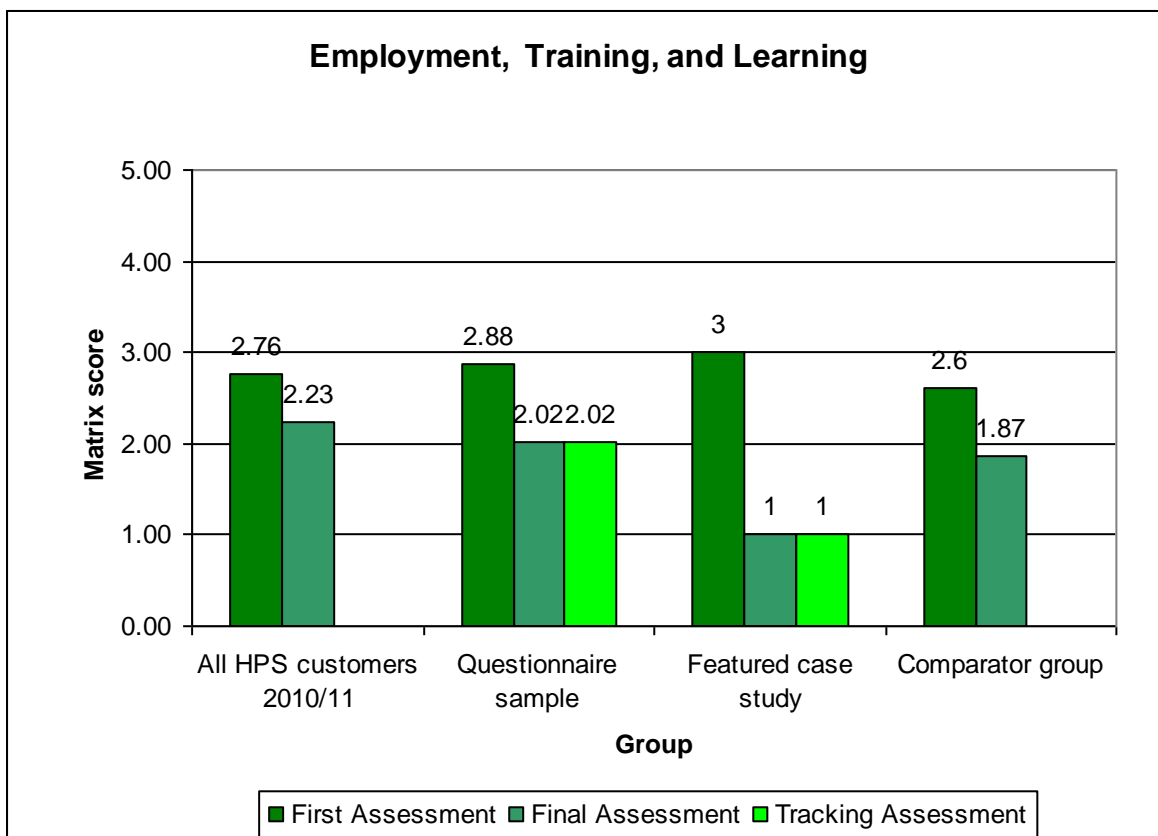
ECCO Data

The information Cyrenians reports to The City of Edinburgh Council through ECCO and quarterly reports shows that, of the 376 Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers worked with between April 2010 and March 2011, 238 accessed some kind of education, training and job search activity. This is 63% against a target of 50% set by The City of Edinburgh Council.

Whilst this information is useful, it does not provide a break down of the specific activity undertaken by the 238 people. Monitoring records from the 238 who accessed some kind of education, training and job search activity also highlights activity provided to the Council by Cyrenians as “added value” to the specified Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service as follows:

- 19 customers were undertaking a portfolio based qualification delivered by Cyrenians as part of our Key Work – the Learning Power Award. This is delivered by Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service Key workers, integrated into their day to day role.
- 13 customers also received specialist employability support through joint work with the Cyrenians Enterprise to Employment Service.

Graph 3- Employment, Training and Learning; Comparison between groups



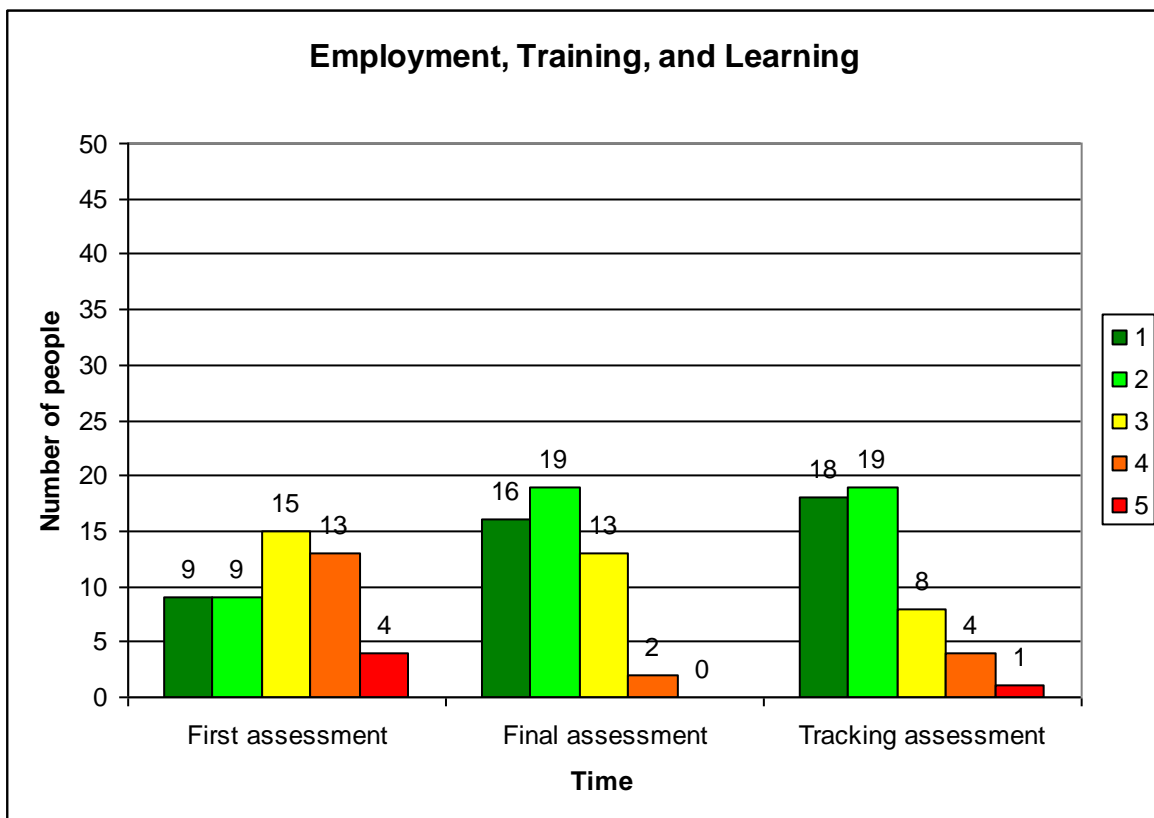
We can see that the distance travelled for all Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers is comparable to the questionnaire sample. It can also be seen that the case study indicates that the starting point for John was similar to the average for the group (+0.12) but that the distance travelled is greater than the average (-1).

The comparison group scores are slightly lower than the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers as well as the questionnaire sample this may be for a number of reasons. It might be because the individuals who have been homeless may not consider their employment issues as immediately urgent in comparison to some of the other matrix areas, such as housing. What is worth noting is that there is a reduction in their matrix scores from when they first entered the service to the assessment stage. This means that since engaging with the service, on average, their employment scores improve.

The Sample Group

Below is a break-down of distance travelled matrix scores for the sample group.

Graph 4 – Employment, Training, and Learning; the sample group

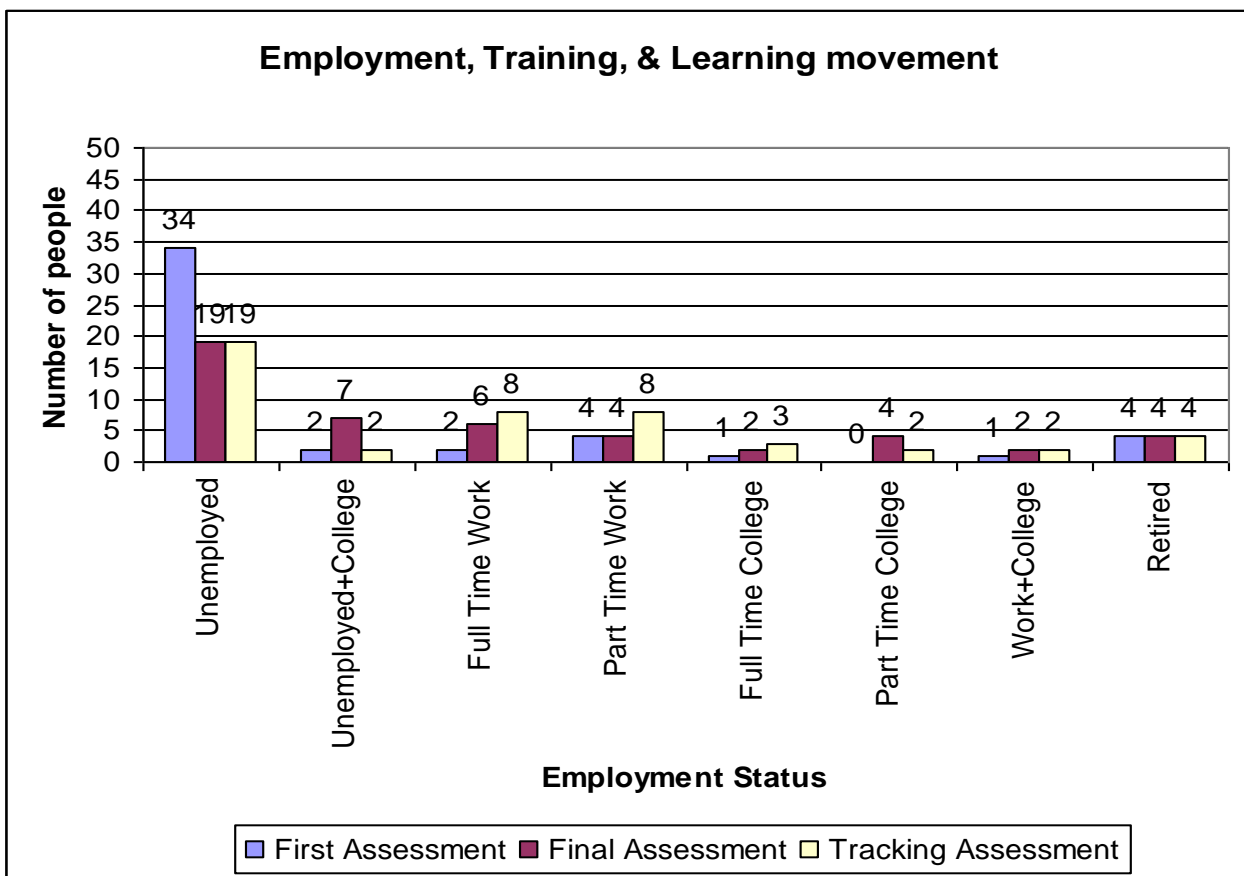


We can see there has been an increase in those scoring a 1 and a 2 on the matrix score across time. At the first assessment nine people scored a 1 and nine people scored a 2. This increased to 18 and 19 people respectively by the final assessment

and was sustained at the tracking assessment. There has also been a decrease in scores of 3, 4 & 5 reflecting a largely positive change across time. It is important to note that the change made between the first and final assessment was not only sustained, but further improvements were made across the group as a whole at the tracking assessment. Only three people's situations deteriorated after support ended. Overall there is an improvement in how individuals see their circumstances with regards to this area.

Through the sample questionnaire the researchers were able to pull apart the data further to track individuals employment, training, and learning circumstances between the assessment times. Overall it can be seen that the number of individuals who were unemployed and were not involved in any training or learning fell across the assessment stages and the number of those in work and undertaking college courses increased.

Graph 5- The sample group's movement in ET&L over the assessment periods



It can be seen that at the first assessment there were 34 individuals who were unemployed, two people who were not working but in college, two people in full time work, four people in part time work, one person in a full time college course and four people were retired.

At the final assessment the number of customers that were unemployed fell to 19. Seven people were not working but were undertaking a college course, six people were in full time employment, four were in part time employment, two were in full time education, four were in part time education and two people were in employment and undertaking college courses.

At the tracking assessment two people were unemployed and accessing a college course, eight people were in full time work, eight people in full time work, three people were accessing a college course full time, two part time and two people were still studying and working.

In total 11 people sought employment during the assessment and tracking stages: six people moved into full time employment, four people moved into part time work and one person was undertaking college and work. One can assume a reduction in the amount paid out to these individuals by government and an increase in social value because they are now in employment.

The Leitch review of skills conducted for the UK Government in 2006 indicates that training and skills development – particularly where focused towards employment – have much wider social benefits, including tackling poor health, crime, financial capability and family life.³¹ What the data doesn't provide is an indication of how many people have kept their jobs as a result of Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service and the resulting maintenance of income. However, this could be the subject of future research.

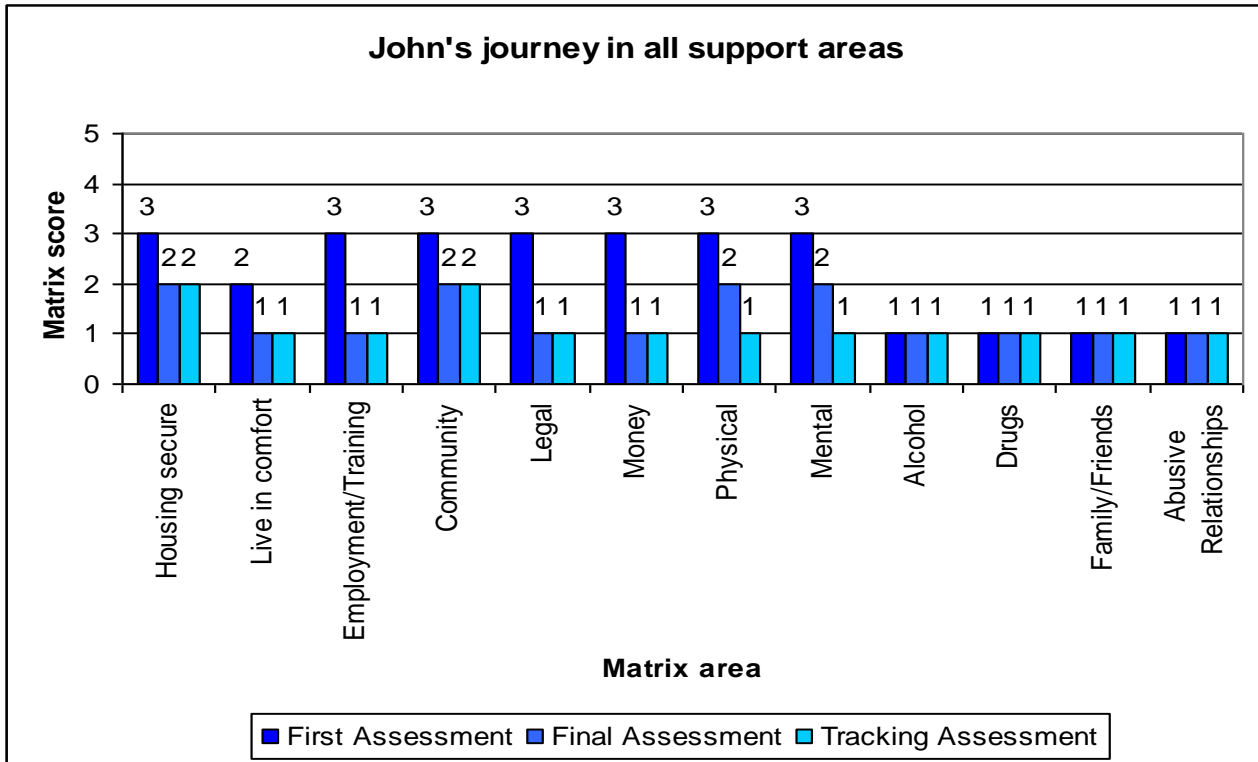
Case Study 1 (Sample Group)

The case study about John shown below provides one of the best examples of a customer at risk of homelessness and unemployed moving to a position of secure housing and work.

John's Journey

John had been unemployed for over 10 years and had been living for the past two years in an RSL flat when he engaged with the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. He was at risk of being evicted from his flat because he had incurred rent arrears partly due to his long term unemployment and living in what he felt was an expensive flat. He had a number of minor criminal convictions as well as one major criminal conviction and he felt this was a barrier to him finding employment. Throughout the course of the relationship John managed to maximise his benefits as well as looking at money management. Through the help of his Personal Assistant, John decided to start volunteering with Cyrenians Good Food project and sustained this over a 13 week period. John also moved into part time employment with Tesco, where he has maintained his position for over 6 months. He is receiving an extra £45 a week in Working Tax Credits and is financially better off. As a consequence John has been managing his rent arrears payments and the council landlord has been happy

with his commitments. He has sustained his RSL tenancy and is managing this well. His mental health and physical health have also improved as a consequence of his situation. Overall this was a very positive outcome.



Comparison Group

With the comparison group it was found that 12 out of the 15 people were unemployed during their period of homelessness. Only one individual continued to work during their period of homelessness. The other two individuals didn't wish to discuss their employment situation and thus weren't recorded. Out of the 15, two cited unemployment as a reason behind their homelessness. When the comparison group became involved with Cyrenians' services, one person moved into work whilst three people enrolled on a cookery course. The individual who maintained their employment throughout their period of homelessness was attacked at work and as a result went on sick leave.

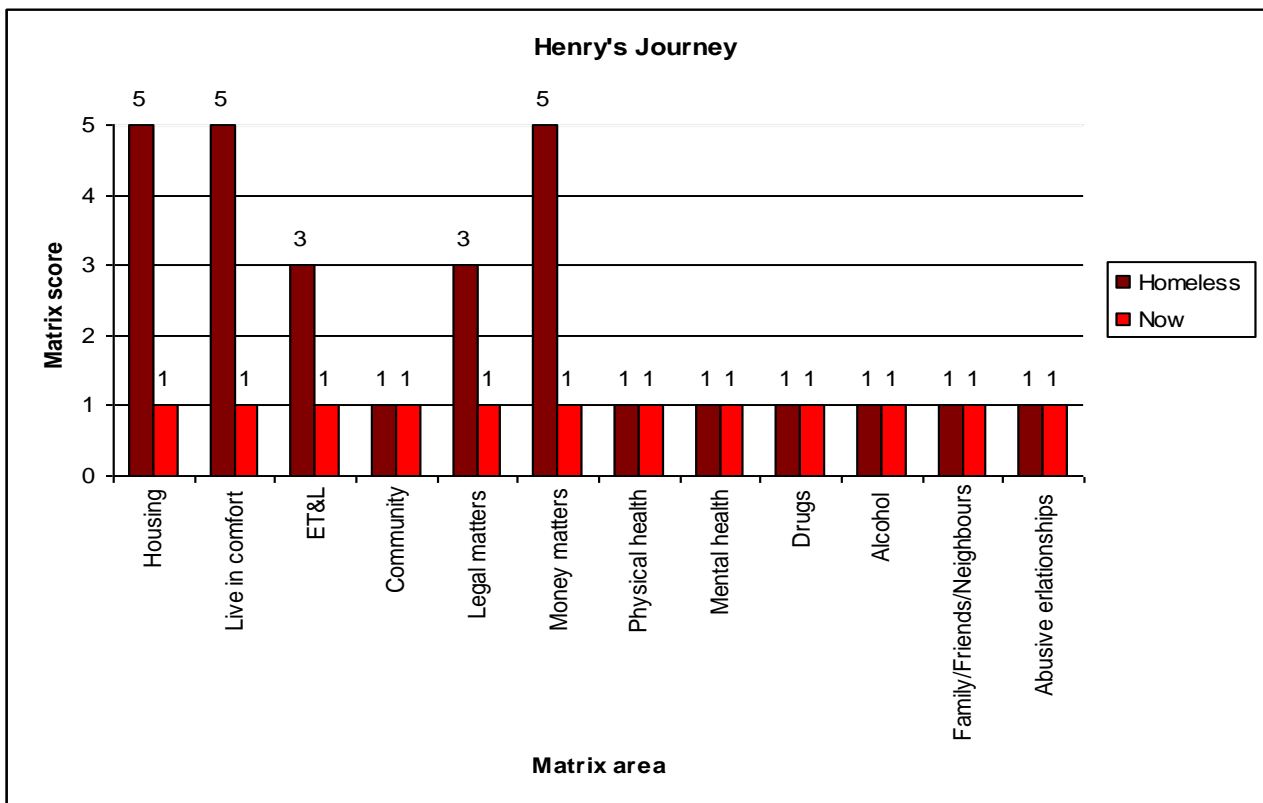
Case Study 2 (Comparison Group)

The case study below highlights the potential for someone to become homeless because they lost their job and the effect this has on other areas of their life.

Henry's journey

About a year ago Henry lost his job as a photographer and ended up defaulting on his mortgage. Although he was receiving Job Seeker's Allowance, Child Tax Credits and Child Benefit it just wasn't enough to pay to pay the bills. As a result his house was repossessed and he became homeless. Henry was homeless for 8 months and lived in a hostel and with friends during this time. His mental health suffered and he felt quite depressed during his period of homelessness.

Since being referred to the SmartMove scheme Henry is a lot happier and is now very settled in a private rented sector house. Henry has also managed to find himself a job as a full time photographer and is no longer in receipt of Jobs Seeker's Allowance.



Conclusions

Firstly, the evidence shows that Cyrenians is providing considerable assistance to Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers to move into education training and work, as indicated through the ECCO data. Information from the sample group provides a much greater degree of detail about more specific outcomes for customers – including most significantly that an additional 11 of the sample of 50 have moved into work and four have started to attend college/learning, with the potential of moving into work at a later date.

Secondly, there are savings to the local authority due to a reduction in the number of people claiming benefits as they enter work and in addition, there are likely to be indirect cost savings which are more difficult to quantify.

Thirdly, John's story highlights how steady employment contributes to an upward spiral – achieving greater independence including housing stability. It also shows that, despite significant support issues at the start of his engagement with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service, these have been overcome.

Finally, although the comparison group is small, it can be seen that almost all of the individuals in the comparison sample were unemployed whilst they were homeless, some of whom became homeless as a result of losing their jobs. Henry's case study reflects how easy it is to become homeless as a result of losing your job and the impact this has on other areas of life. However Henry's case study also highlights that individuals are able to turn their lives around once they have some support in place.

4.2 MORE INDEPENDENCE THROUGH BETTER LINKS TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

This outcome is concerned with linking customers to local amenities, resources, services and social activities. This is in order to address issues of isolation, loneliness and exclusion. This is important because isolation and loneliness can be a key factor in tenancy breakdown and once someone becomes homeless this can be exacerbated further.³²

ECCO

The information Cyrenians reported through ECCO and quarterly reports indicated that 11% of customers reported being isolated or lonely. Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service was asked to show improvement in customers' knowledge of the local area. 78% reported improvements, (to a target of 65%). In addition, 73% reported participating in leisure opportunities (to a target of 50%).

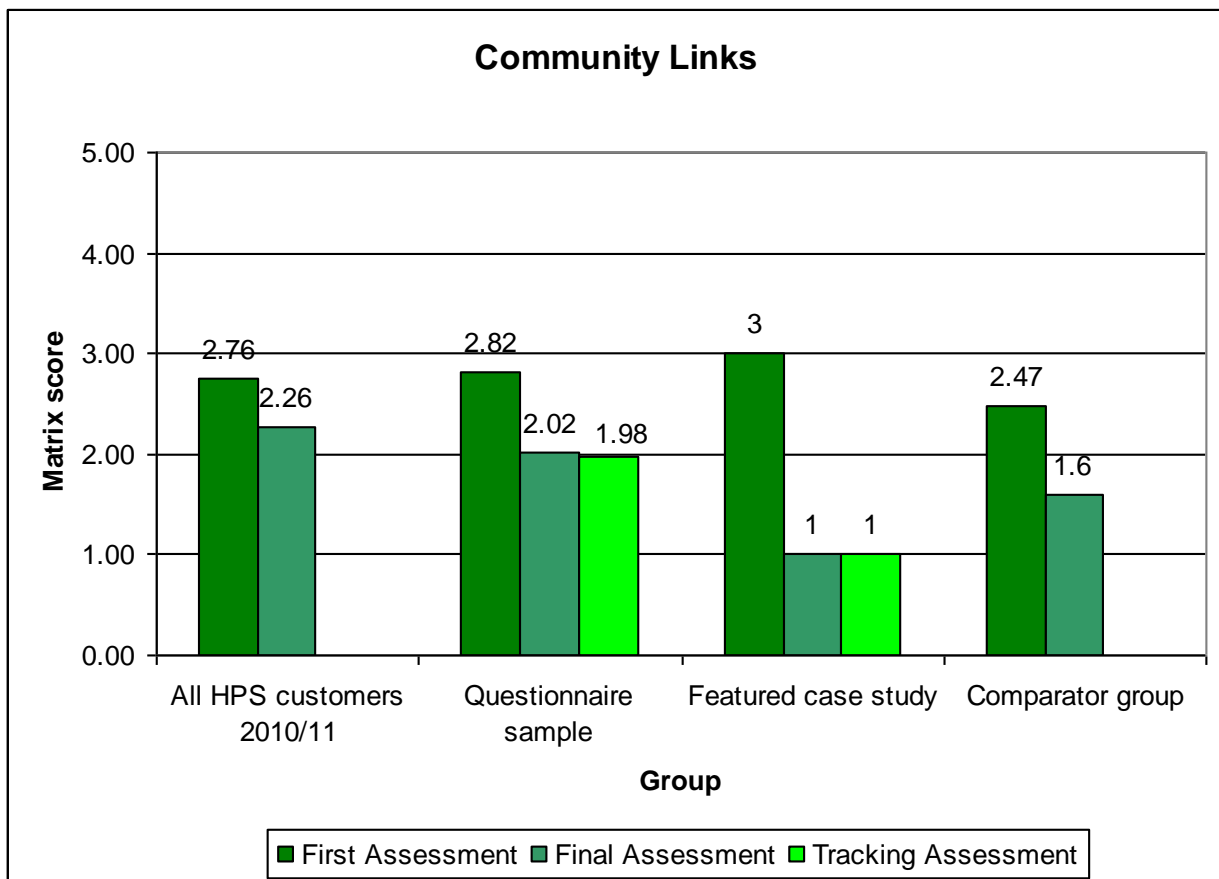
Further to this, Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service includes a befriending scheme, targeted at helping Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers to access community amenities. There are currently seven befrienders that bring an additional 150 volunteering hours to the service each year.

Comparing the Groups' Matrix Scores

The graph below shows that the 50 people in our sample group had a very similar profile to those from the full Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customer sample. The featured case study (Sarah) indicates someone with an equivalent starting point, but with greater distance travelled than was experienced by all Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers. One can see with the

comparison group, as with the employment outcome, their scores are lower in comparison to the other groups and surmise that this is because lack of community links is not seen as a pressing issue by this group at a time when they are facing significant housing problems.

Graph 6- Community links; Comparison between groups



The Sample Group

The tracking questionnaire provides considerable additional detail as follows:

At the initial assessment, four were involved in volunteering for around 2 – 4 hours a week. Volunteering totalled the equivalent of 624 hours a year and included:

- Assisting with an elderly care service
- Helping in a charity shop
- Volunteering
- Engagement with Autism initiatives.

In addition, customers engaged in local activity such as playing pool, a local walking club, use of the local library, baby yoga, a parent/toddler group and Linknet.

By the final assessment, local links had significantly improved:

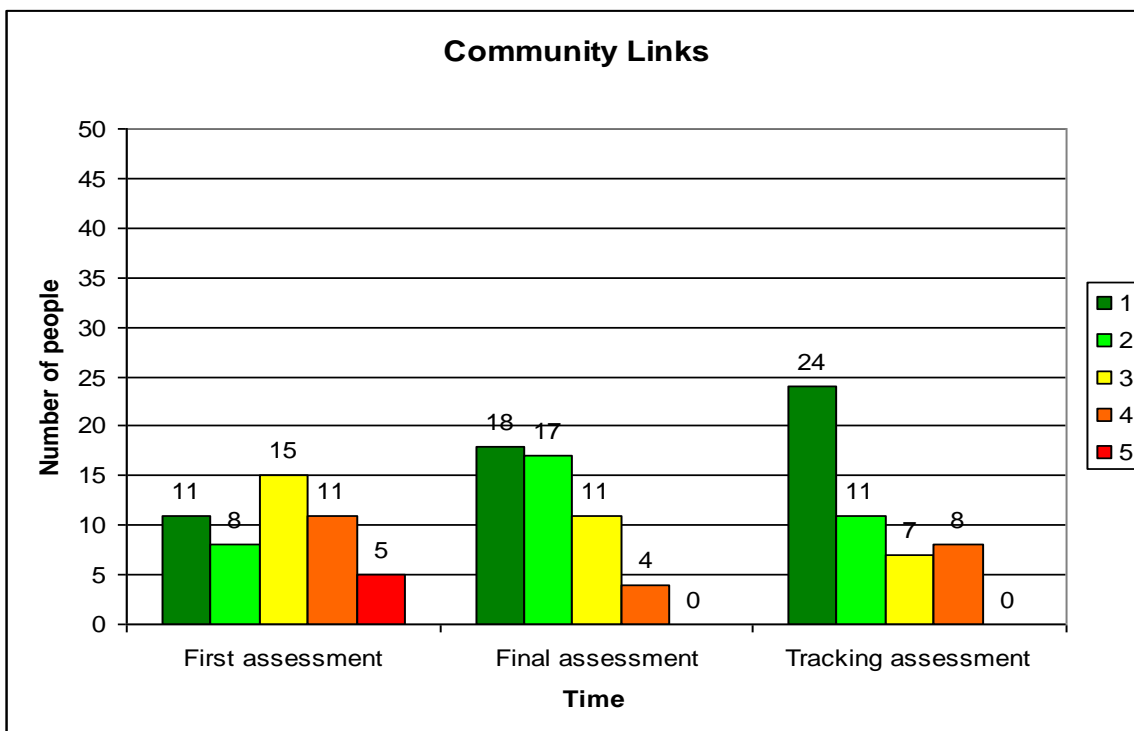
- A total of nine people were volunteering between 2 and 4 hours per week. The information provided showed that 1,040 hours of volunteer work over would have been undertaken for the year. This would have been more, however some individuals did not disclose how many hours per week they volunteering.
- Additional activity included involvement in a local singing group, a mental health social group and four people regularly going to the gym using the council’s leisure card scheme.

At the tracking stage six volunteers were volunteering between 2 and 6 hours per week which, when totalled, was equivalent to 884 hours over the course of one year. Again this would have been more had all individuals disclosed how many hours per week they volunteered. In addition, all the reported leisure activity had been sustained, along with additional swimming, walking and Zumba. It is expected the number of volunteer hours reduced at the tracking stage because more people had moved into work.

Nine out of the 50 people in the sample reported feelings of isolation in their initial assessment. This had reduced to two by final assessment and by the tracking stage, no one felt isolated in their local community.

The graph below shows the breakdown of matrix scores from the sample group.

Graph 7- Community Links; the Sample Group



Links to local community may not be necessarily identified as a key area in addressing a housing crisis. However, the evidence shows that customers have increased their links to local services and amenities and have also increased their contribution to local services through volunteering. It can be seen that in the sample group of 50 there was an increase in the number of people that scored a 1 across all assessments and there was a decrease in the number of people that scored a 3 and a 5 across the assessment periods. Overall, there was also a decrease in those who scored a 4 and an increase in those that scored a 2 though there is some fluctuation between the final assessment and the tracking assessment. Although there is a clear improvement in people's perceived circumstances across the sample, it is unrealistic to think everyone's situation will continue to improve after contact with the service. It may be that for some individuals, making community links was not a pressing issue for them when they entered the service, however once their housing situation was stable again, it may have become apparent that this was an area which needed a lot of work because some individuals may have felt lonely or isolated. This would perhaps explain the fluctuation of those scoring a 2 and a 4. Overall, it can be seen through the matrix scores that there is an improvement in people's perception of their circumstances in this area.

Case Study 3 (Sample Group)

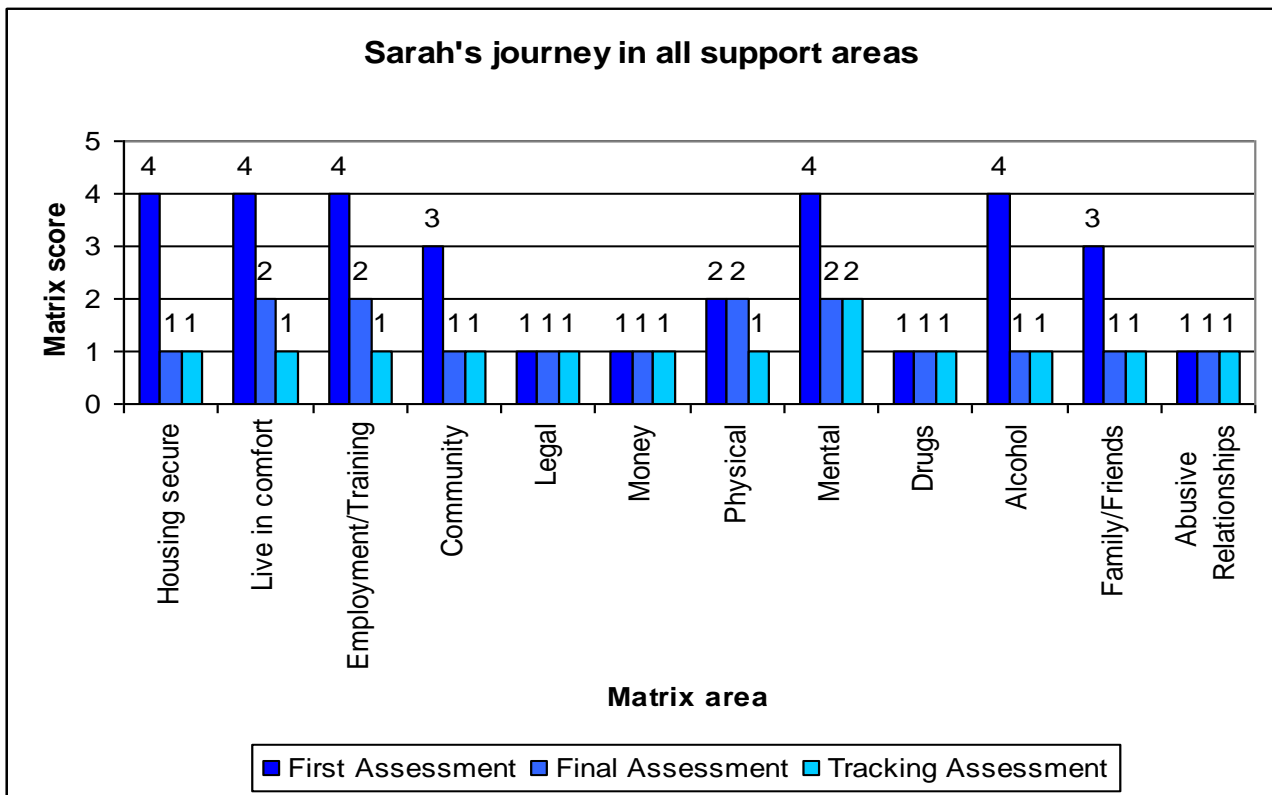
The case study shown here shows how moving house in a planned way has helped Sarah to address a number of issues relating to isolation and harassment. What is most notable is that through moving to a place where she felt more comfortable, Sarah felt able to volunteer and as a result feels more confident and less isolated.

Sarah's Journey

Sarah's housing situation was very difficult when she first engaged with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. She wanted to give her landlord notice to quit because she was experiencing anti-social behaviour. On top of this she needed white goods and new furniture. She was feeling very isolated and lacked self confidence. With the help of Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service, Sarah moved into a new private tenancy in which she felt warm, secure and had all the white goods and furniture she needed to be able to live in comfort. She has been maintaining this tenancy for over four months now.

Whereas before Sarah was feeling a bit low and isolated, she now feels better since moving flat and is getting on well with her new neighbours. Before moving, Sarah was also drinking a bottle of wine a day- to help her cope with the stress of the situation. Since moving to her new flat, Sarah is drinking within the government recommended daily guidelines for women. During the course of the relationship she also engaged in an IT course and began to volunteer. Sarah's mental health improved considerably as a result of her volunteering and IT course. Sarah's ability to communicate with

others has also improved and she feels less isolated because she has made new friends.



Comparison Group

In the comparison group, it was noted that none of the sample volunteered or had much in the way of community links whilst they were homeless. However once they were in more secure housing, nine out of the 15 people had decided to volunteer, go to the gym, or take part in cooking classes. This suggests that whilst people are homeless there are barriers preventing them from taking part in these activities. This could be for a number of reasons. Perhaps they are not able to because their situation is not stable, they have no desire to, or they simply do not know about activities which take place in the local area. There is not a comparison case study here because no one became homeless because of their lack of community engagement nor was it seen as a pressing issue for the comparison group when they were homeless. However it is recognised that community links seems to improve once homelessness is resolved.

It is hard to attribute a cost to this outcome and this has not been attempted in this research. Nor has a cost been attributed to the volunteering contribution as it is a) hard to quantify the financial contribution of a volunteer – as roles differ so considerably b) volunteering generally tends to be offered for roles which are designed to work alongside paid staff, adding value.

Conclusions

The evidence shown in this section indicates that the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service is helping people to improve their community links. In particular, the service has helped people overcome their reported isolation; increase their volunteering contribution and increase their engagement in leisure activities and local amenities. Sarah's story helps to illustrate how links to the local community can help promote independence and autonomy. Further to this it can be seen that making community links decreases the likelihood of feelings of loneliness and isolation and thus reduces the likelihood of tenancy breakdown.

What can also be seen is that from those in the comparison group, there was a lack of community links as people were not engaging in local activity as well as not volunteering whilst they were homeless. However it can be seen that like the sample group from Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service, once their housing situation had stabilised, they were more likely to pursue volunteering and other community based activities. Further to this it can be seen that making community links decreases the likelihood of feelings of loneliness and isolation and thus reduces the likelihood of tenancy breakdown. This emphasises further the importance of having a service like Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service.

4.3 IMPROVED FINANCIAL AND LEGAL STATUS

This outcome is concerned with the legal and financial position of customers. Financial and legal issues are often connected at an operational level, due to the large number of evictions associated with rent arrears.

a) FINANCIAL STATUS

ECCO

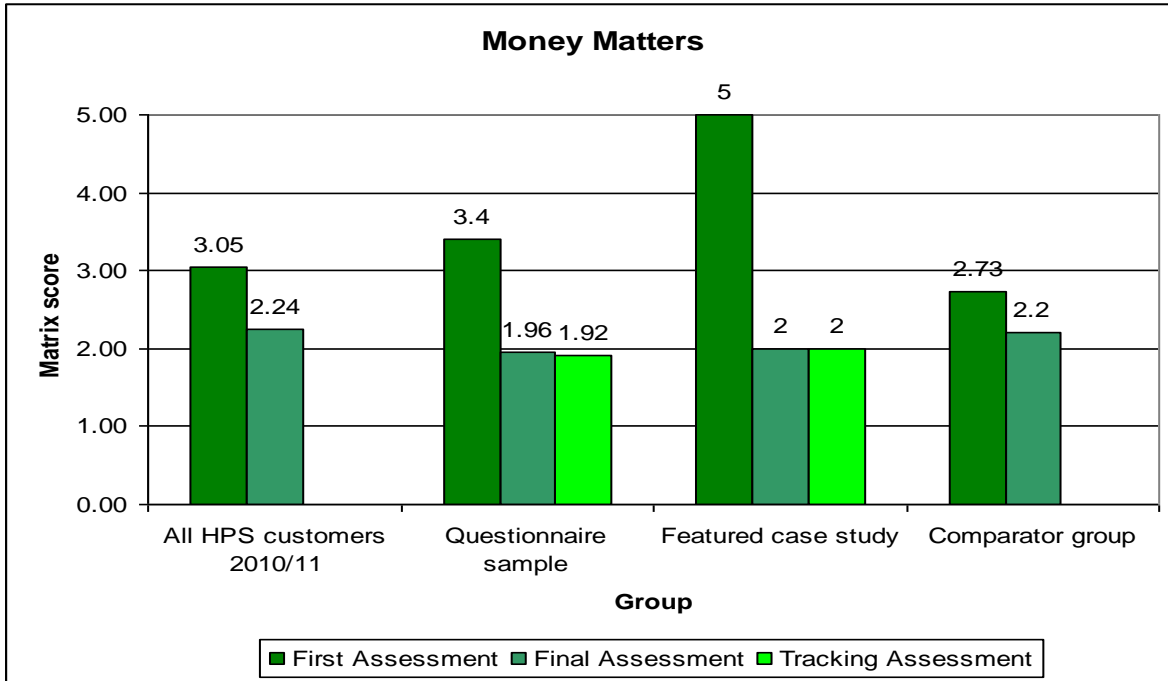
The information Cyrenians reported through ECCO and quarterly reports indicated that 78% of the 376 customers during the year had their income maximised through support from the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service team (the target set was 50%). 146 people accessed debt advice from specialist agencies. 11 people accessed services from Capital Credit Union. Four people were pursued to case completion through the courts in relation to eviction proceedings, two of whom were prevented from becoming homeless.

Comparing the Groups Matrix score

The graph below compares the movement for all groups with regards to money. It can be seen that the wider Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service group have slightly lower matrix scores than the sample group, whilst the featured case study had slightly higher matrix scores and greater movement. The comparison group had lower matrix scores and very little improvement. Again, money may not have been

seen as much of a problem for the comparison group because there were more pressing issues at the time.

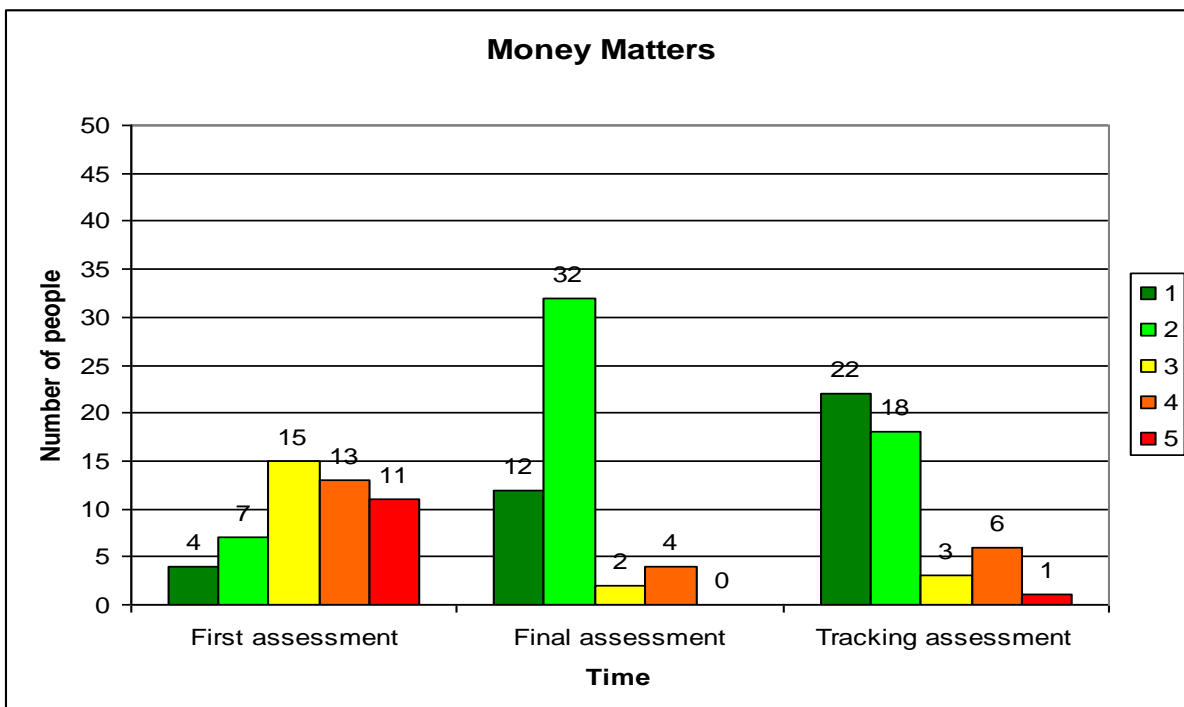
Graph 8- Money Matters; Comparison Between Groups



The Sample Group

The graph below shows the change in matrix scores across time for the sample group.

Graph 9- Money Matters; The Sample Group



It can be seen that there is an increase in scores of 1 and 2 from first assessment to the tracking assessment and a decrease in scores of 3, 4, and 5 suggesting that there are marked improvements in people's perceptions of their financial situation. Although there is a slight rise in 4's and 5's by the tracking period, suggesting that there may be people struggling with their financial situation.

The tracking questionnaire also provides additional detail for the sample group:

Earned income

Earned income is shown in the table below. Not all customers wished to discuss how much money they were earning thus the income cited does not include everyone who was working at each of the assessment stages. The amount increased significantly for the group who did disclose their income, even beyond into the tracking stage. This also coincides with an increase in the number of people who were entering into work as reported in section 3.1. Income earned by those currently working varied between £54.50 and £380 a week. Below is a table outlining the total weekly income earned through work in the sample group of 50. It demonstrates that at the different tracking stages and as the number of people earning increases so does the total weekly and annual income earned by those people who are working.

Table 3- Sample Group Income

	Number of earners	Total weekly earned income	Average weekly income earned per person	Total annual earned income	Average annual earned income per person
Initial assessment	9	£1,165	£129	£60,580	£6,731
Final assessment	12	£1,640	£136	£85,280	£7,107
Tracking stage	15	£2,310	£154	£120,120	£8,008

In the table above it can be seen that there is an increase in the number of people earning money, as well as an increase in average weekly/annual income per person.

Benefits

A large part of the work undertaken by Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service relates to benefits. The questionnaire assessed the benefits situation for the sample. Again there were a number of individuals who did not want to discuss their benefits

whilst others could not remember the exact breakdown of the benefits they received. At initial assessment stage, the following benefits were being claimed:

Of the seven people who were working, three people were receiving some kind of in work benefits. 16 people were in receipt of some kind of work benefits including three that reported receiving Job Seekers Allowance. 17 customers received disability benefit. Eight people received child benefit and 26 were in receipt of housing benefits.

By the second assessment 11 people were working and two of these were receiving work benefits. A further 19 people were still receiving some kind of employment benefits with four of these also still claiming disability benefits. This included four people who were receiving Job Seekers Allowance, 20 people were on disability benefits (including the four mentioned above) and 33 were receiving help with their housing and council tax. The same number of people remained on child benefit and housing benefit.

At the end of the tracking period 18 people were working, none of these people disclosed receiving in work benefits. 15 people were receiving some kind of work benefits including two people on Job Seekers Allowance. 20 people also remained on disability benefits. 32 people were receiving housing benefits and eight people remained on child benefits.

The welfare benefits system is complex and in the process of undergoing change. On top of this, because some individuals were not willing to discuss their benefit situation or could not remember the amount they were receiving, it has been hard to track true changes that have been made as a result of Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service intervention. Moreover, as people have moved into employment there has been a reduction in the amount of people receiving benefits.

Rent Arrears

The City of Edinburgh Council reported this year that rent arrears are at a record low as are evictions for rent arrears³³. Rent arrears is one of the reasons cited for homelessness, as indicated in section 2.1 suggesting that more work can be done in regard to tackling this issue. The reason why this is important is that Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service engages with a high number of people who have rent arrears and are at risk of losing their home because of their arrears.

The table below shows the very significant impact that the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service team have made to reducing rent arrears.

Table 4- Sample Group Arrears

	Initial assessment	Final assessment	Tracking
Number with arrears	31	21	17
Total amount of arrears	£25,339	£13,138	£5,935

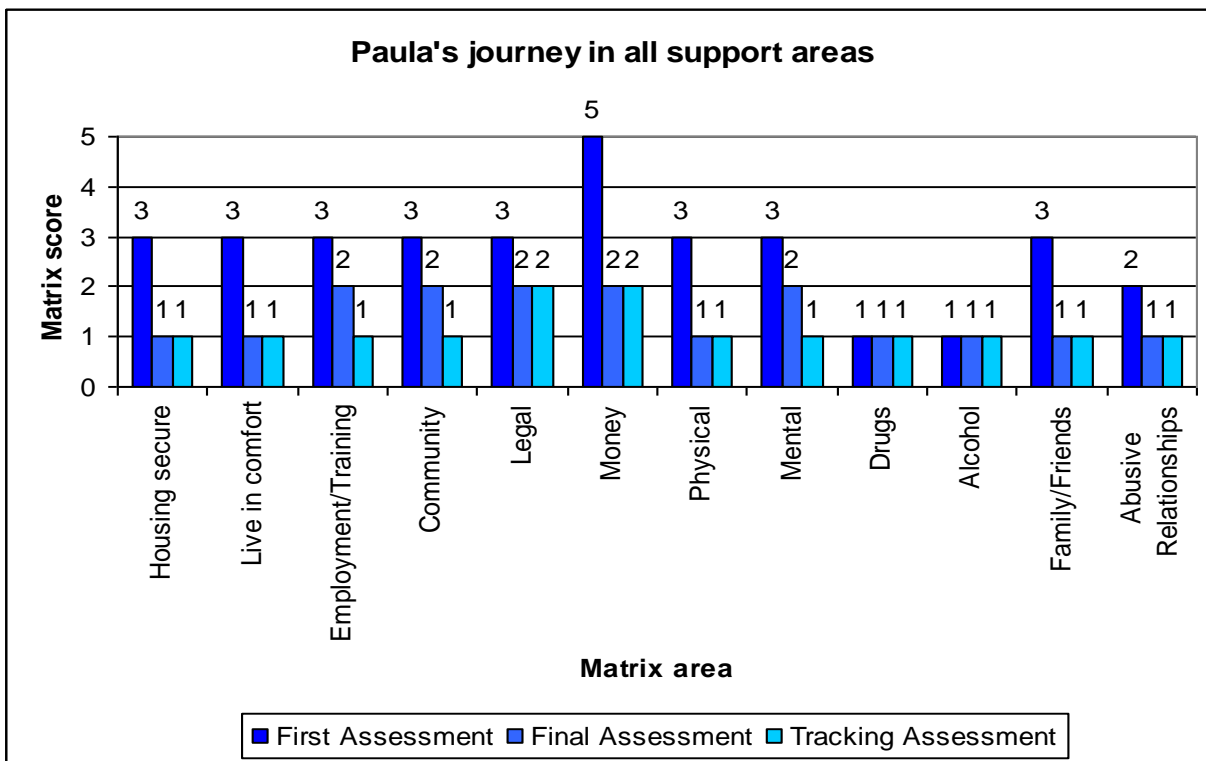
This shows that the service contributed to paying back £19,400. 24 of these tenants were living in council tenancies. The total amount of arrears paid back to the Council is just over £15,000. What is even more notable is that by the tracking stage 14 people had paid back their rent arrears in full. The remaining people with arrears all comment that are still contributing towards their repayments.

The featured case study highlights how easy it is for an individual to build up rent arrears and as a consequence put themselves at risk of homelessness. The case study also highlights how this can be overcome through the support of the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service.

Case Study 4 (Sample Group)

Paula's Journey

Paula came to Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service after her housing benefit application was rejected. She had a number of bills that she hadn't dealt with and significant rent arrears. She was also had debt to credit cards, loans and benefit overpayments. As a consequence she was at risk of having her gas supply cut off and was at risk of losing her council house which she had been living in for a few months. Paula's PA helped her contact the council and her housing benefit was backdated which meant that her rent arrears were paid off. Paula was also encouraged to contact her gas supplier to explain her situation and, as a result, was no longer at risk of being cut off. She put a payment plan in place to pay back a council tax debt. Paula's PA helped maximise the other benefits she was entitled to such as income support, child benefit and child tax credits. This all helped prevent Paula from becoming homeless. At the end of contact with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service she was also receiving support from other organisations to help her budget and save money. She started a new job and is hoping to increase her hours. Paula is managing her money situation well, she is budgeting a lot better and has started saving. Alongside this her mental and physical health have improved as well as her situation with her ex-husband.



Comparison Group

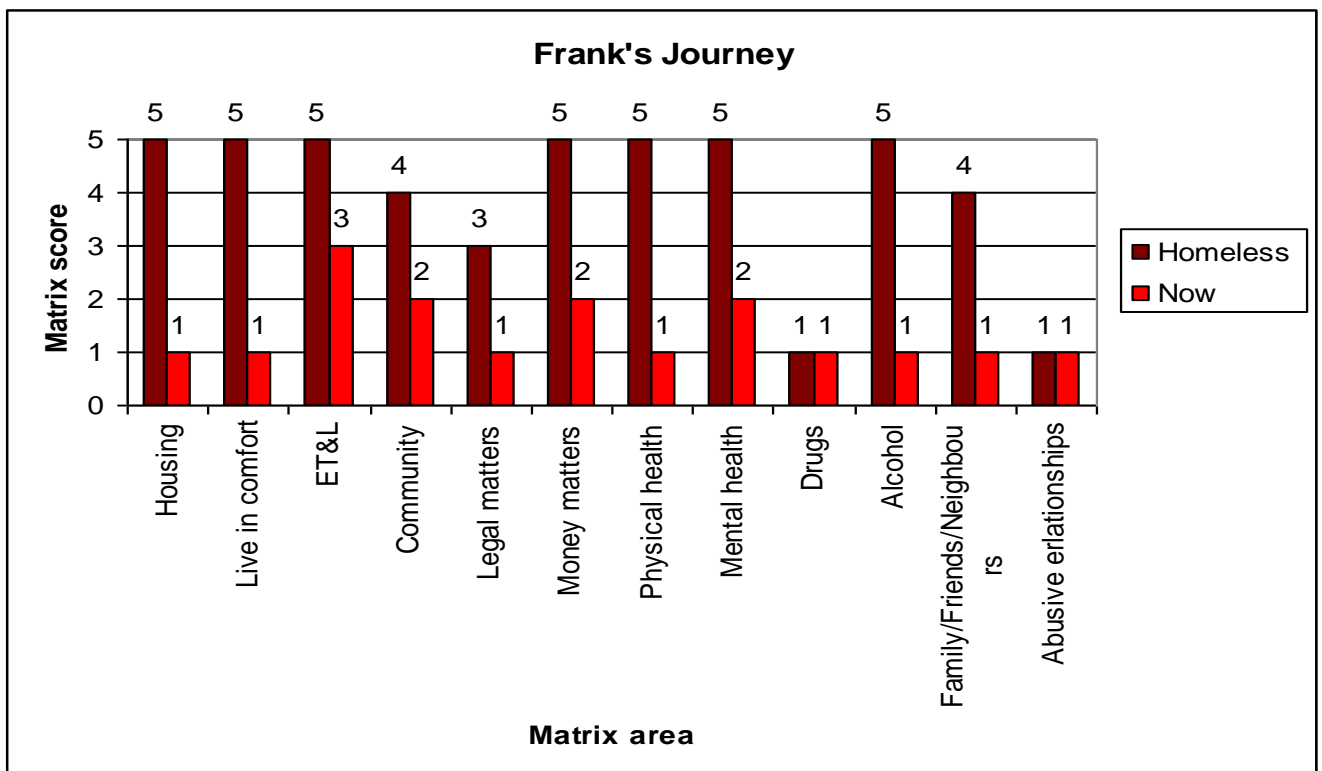
The comparison group reported fewer issues with money during their homeless period and there is a shorter distance travelled at the second assessment stage. Most of the comparison group were in receipt of some kind of benefits whilst they were homeless, ranging from incapacity, Job Seekers Allowance, and disability, with only one person earning money. The majority of the comparison group did not report major financial issues. However four people in the comparison group reported that their financial situation either led to them becoming homeless or made their situation worse. One person was not accessing the correct benefits and as a result found it difficult to get out of their homeless situation (please see case study below). One person's father had been unable to keep up rent payments because he had lost his job and was served notice to quit because of arrears. Finally, two people had their homes repossessed because they could no longer afford mortgage repayments. The comparison group highlights the potential consequences of not having support in place to manage difficult financial situations.

Case Study 5 (Comparison Group)

Frank's Journey

Frank became homeless after he split up with his partner and lost the property that they had shared. He went to stay with friends and family but, when they were no longer able to accommodate him, he found himself on the streets and in various hostels throughout the three years he was homeless. During his early period of homelessness, Frank only received incapacity benefit. This wasn't enough for him to live on and as a result he found it difficult to get out of his homeless situation. In addition he wasn't able to afford to eat well and his health suffered. Frank drank a lot and had poor mental and physical health.

Eventually Frank's mother was able to help him to get back on his feet. He applied for a council house and had help to ensure he was receiving the benefits he was entitled to, including housing benefit to ensure he is able to pay the rent. As a consequence of this Frank is now in safe and secure housing, his mental and physical health have improved and he is no longer drinking. Frank has also started to volunteer and is learning to cook at the Good Food Service.



b) LEGAL STATUS

Wider Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service Group & Sample Group

The main legal issue arising for Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers is connected to rent arrears, as discussed above. There are very few other instances to report; three arrests for minor offences and one arrest for a more serious offence. One customer with an ongoing drug issue did return to court for a Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO) contravention and paid a £400 fine. Due to the limited relevance, further information on legal status has not been included in this research.

It is difficult to speculate whether, as a result of situations spiralling out of control, customers might have become subjects of the legal eviction process and associated costs. Particularly because The City of Edinburgh Council have recently indicated that evictions have decreased recently. However, in 2008/2009, figures reported by the Scottish Government show that 93% of those who were evicted from RSL properties were evicted due to rent arrears³⁴. Furthermore, an audit conducted by Stirling Council estimated that the cost of eviction is three times the amount of total rent arrears investigated³⁵. In their report a total of 23 houses were processed for eviction in 2008/2009. The combined cost of the rent arrears was £33,000. The legal costs associated with evicting the families which included court proceedings, costs involved for re-housing and support came to £117,000.

Comparison Group

In the comparison group, there were more issues to report in terms of legal matters. During their period of homelessness one person was sectioned under the mental health act, one person was arrested for assault, one person was arrested for another minor offence, two appeared in court and two had their houses repossessed. By the tracking stage one person had been arrested for assault and one person had been issued with a notice to quit. It is difficult to say whether or not this was a cause or an effect of their homeless situation; however, it can be assumed that there will be costs associated with these legal issues, but it is inappropriate for the researchers to put costs to these figures.

On the other hand, we can see in the comparison group as a whole, as well as in Frank's story, that rent arrears, defaulting on mortgage payments and simply not having enough money to live on, can have disastrous consequences for people who do not have support from a service like Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. Although the overall scores for money management in the comparison group were lower than the average for Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service overall and the sample group, we can see that for individual cases, not accessing appropriate benefits can ultimately lead to homelessness. As a result things can spiral out of control and individuals may find it hard to get out of difficult situations like Frank's. Although the exact situations of those who were homeless are unknown, it is

reasonable to assume that there may have been legal costs associated with them losing their home. On top of this, there are a proportionately higher number of people who have committed criminal offences and there are costs associated with this as well.

Conclusion

Homeless presentation statistics show consistently and comprehensively that rent arrears can contribute towards homelessness. This is supported by the ECCO data indicating the need by such a large number of Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers to access money advice. However, the sample of 50 provides a much greater degree of detail about the personal circumstances behind the headline money problems. The advice and support provided is clearly improving the perception by customers of their control over their financial situation. Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service support is resulting in not only an improved perception by customers that they are able to control their financial situation, but in other very tangible ways. More customers are earning their own money, working part time to supplement benefits. Rent arrears are being paid off – mainly to the local authority, along with council tax arrears in some cases. Paula's story helps to provide some insight into how spiralling money problems put her housing at risk. Despite a very difficult situation, she has addressed these issues with support and moved to a greater level of financial independence. With regard to legal issues, although very few of the sample group reported legal issues it can't be denied that there are significant costs associated with legal proceedings for eviction.

Overall it can be seen that there are financial and legal factors which can have an impact on an individual's housing situation which can effectively lead to homelessness. Through the help of Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service, those who were at risk of homelessness due to their rent arrears were able to keep their home as well as put payment plans into place. This means that there is a win-win situation for the tenants as well as the council.

4.4 MORE SECURE AND COMFORTABLE HOUSING

This outcome is concerned with the security of housing tenure for customers. It also looks at other issues associated with managing a home (living in comfort) i.e. furniture, equipment, cooking, cleaning and energy efficiency.

a) SECURITY OF TENURE

Ecco

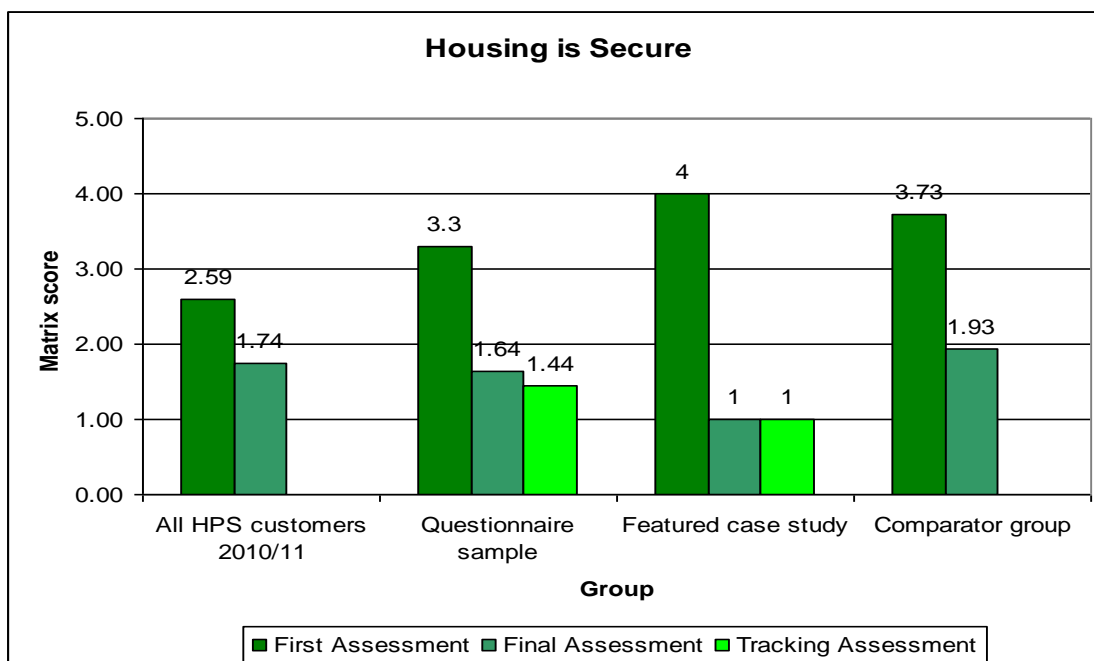
ECCO data has a strong focus on security of tenure. Data for the 376 Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers shows:

- 121 of the 376 people have had some history of homelessness (this must be at least 2.5 years previously). 255 people have not had a history of accessing homelessness services, or made a homeless application to the local authority.
- Only two people out of 376 reported as homeless within 6 months of accessing Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. This increased to three people by 12 months. All three had a history of previous homelessness.

This is simple and very powerful data, indicating that those accessing the service are extremely unlikely to make homelessness presentations. What this does not tell us is the extent to which Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers are at risk of becoming homeless. Our matrix assessment does give a much better indication of the risk around housing security. Cyrenians would anticipate a large number of people reporting their situation as a "3" or a "4" (their home is at immediate risk but they are committed to addressing problems on Cyrenians matrix). It would be expected that very few people score a 5 as this may indicate they are already homeless.

Comparing the Groups Matrix score

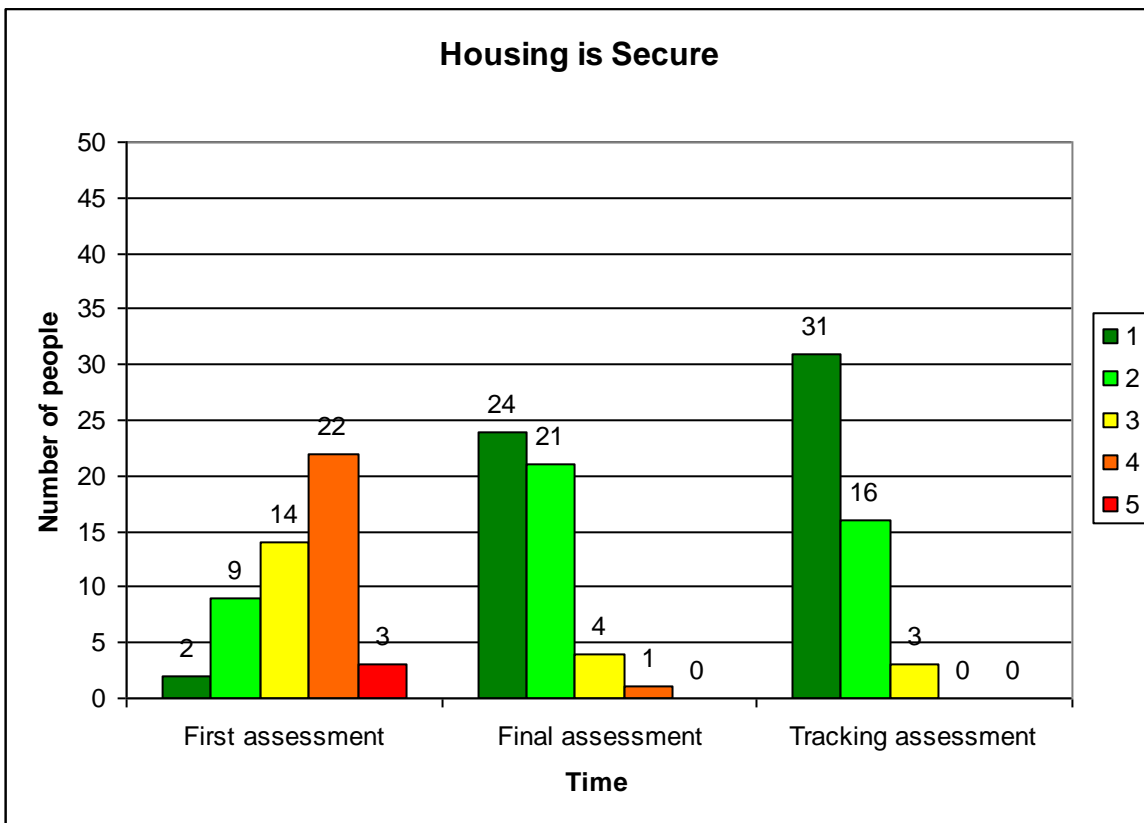
Below is a graph which compares the groups' matrix scores for their housing security. Graph 10- Housing is secure; Comparison Between Groups



The sample group evidences a situation closer to crisis and slightly greater distance travelled than the total Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customer group. The featured case study also shows more critical need, but the end point is very typical of the sample as a whole. It can be seen that the comparison group have an average score which is higher than the wider Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service group which one would expect considering their housing situation was more likely to be closer to crisis. Across all groups, it can be seen that there is an improvement in people’s perceived housing circumstances over the assessment periods. This reflects the help that individuals have sought through Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service and assures us that through the sample group, people are sustaining their housing situation.

The Sample Group

Graph 11- Housing is Secure; The Sample Group



The sample group show a very significant improvement in housing security. What is also very interesting is the continued shift to a more secure position after Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service intervention has ended. It can be seen that over time there are more people scoring a 1 and a 2 on the matrix with a reduction in scores of 3, 4, & 5. By the tracking assessment the majority of people have scored themselves a 1 or a 2 on the matrix with no one reporting that their house is at

immediate risk suggesting that their housing is much more secure and this security has remained after help from Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service has ceased.

Furthermore additional data collected from the sample group of 50 indicated that 23 out of the 34 people that responded to the question, "Do you think that without Cyrenians help you would be homeless just now?" answered "yes." This indicates that over a third of people that answered the question felt they would have been homeless without the help from Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service.

It is reassuring to see that the service appears to be effective.

The Comparison Group

On average the housing situation of the comparison group tends to be less secure. Out of the group of 15 in the comparison group three of them had stayed in a number of places during their period of homelessness. Table 5 presents people's housing situation whilst they were homeless compared to their current situation.

Table 5- Sample Group Tenancies

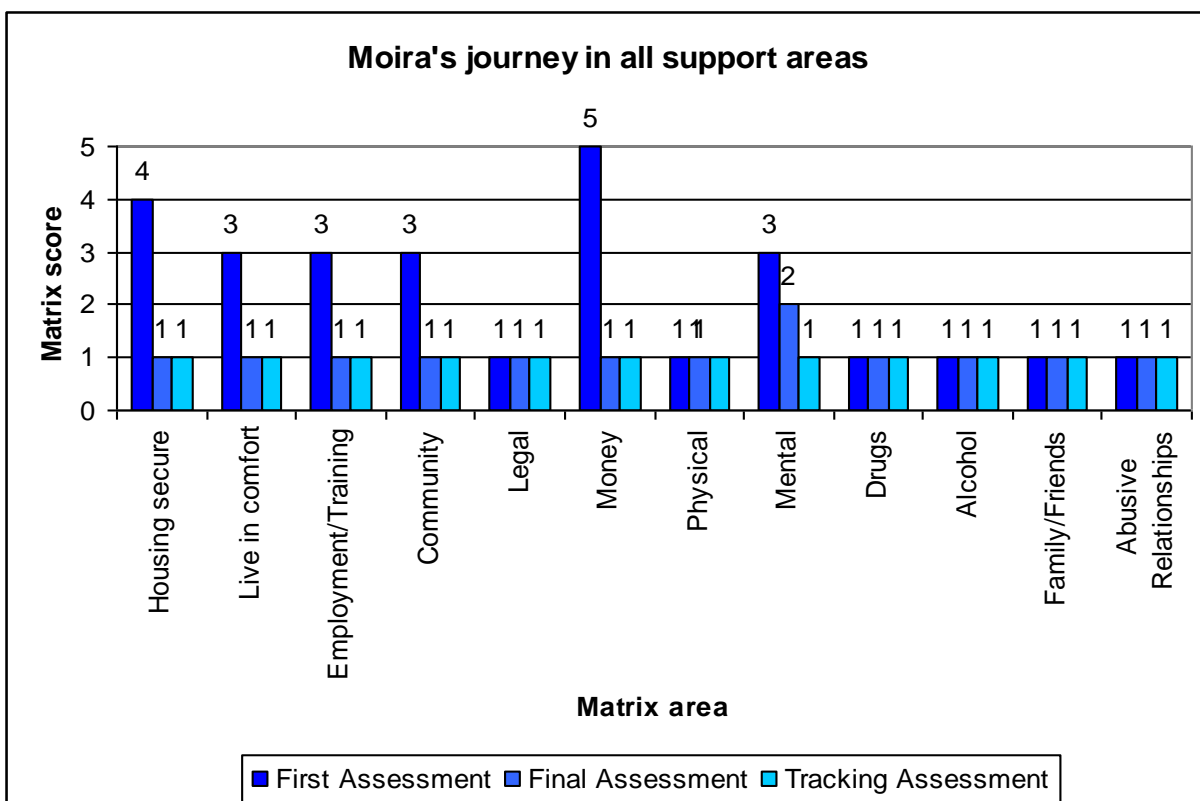
	At initial Assessment	At final assessment	At tracking point	Tenancy type (by %) of all Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers when entering service (376)
Private Rented Sector	16	20	20	30%
Registered Social Landlord	27 (24 Council)	26	27	Other Registered Social Landlord (RSL) 20% LA 39%
Staying with family	3	0	0	
Owner Occupier	3	3	3	7%
Other:				4% (not specified)
Temporary house sitting	1	0	0	
Hostel	0	1	0	

Case Study 6 (Sample Group)

Moira’s story below shows how spiralling problems caused her to be at risk of losing the council tenancy she had lived in since 1994. What is interesting is how her story links in with some of the other matrix outcomes, most notably employment. However, joint work between Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service, Moira and The City of Edinburgh Council enabled her to not only address the risks, but also to buy her council house. Moira’s story deviates from the ‘typical’ picture of homelessness and illustrates that during difficult times, anyone can be put into a position where they can potentially be made homeless.

Moira’s Journey

Moira came to Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service because she had recently been made redundant, her husband’s hours had been cut and they were struggling to live on his very reduced salary. As a result they were receiving letters and phone calls from their housing officer as they had accrued council tax and rent arrears. Moira had applied for Job Seekers Allowance but had been refused. She was generally quite confused about the benefits system as she hadn’t claimed benefits before. Moira and her husband were at risk of losing The City Of Edinburgh Council house they had been living in since 1994. Their Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service Personal Advisor helped Moira and her husband claim the benefits they were entitled to, including housing benefit, which the council backdated so their rent arrears were paid off. During her contact with Cyrenians Moira managed to find a job as a full time senior house keeper and her husband had also managed to find full time employment again. As a result they no longer have debts and were able to buy their council house and are no longer at risk of homelessness.



Comparison Group

From the comparison group it can be seen that on average their housing situation tends to be less secure. Out of the group of 15 in the comparison group three of them had stayed in a number of places during their period of homelessness. Below is a table which presents people's housing situation whilst they were homeless compared to their current situation.

Table 5- Comparison Group Accommodation

Situation as Homeless		Situation Now	
Hostel	10	Council Accommodation	3
Streets	2	PRS	3
Friends/Family	3	Friends/Family	3
Other	1-(Short Scottish Secure Tenancy)	Cyrenians Community	4
		Emergency Accommodation	2

Seven out of the 10 individuals that stayed in a hostel disclosed the amount of time they were in there for. The average stay in a hostel for the comparison group was 21 weeks. The cost for one person staying in a hostel for 21 weeks is £4,116. Although 21 weeks is only an average length of stay for the comparison group, if all 10 people were in a hostel for 21 weeks this is a potential cost of £41,116.

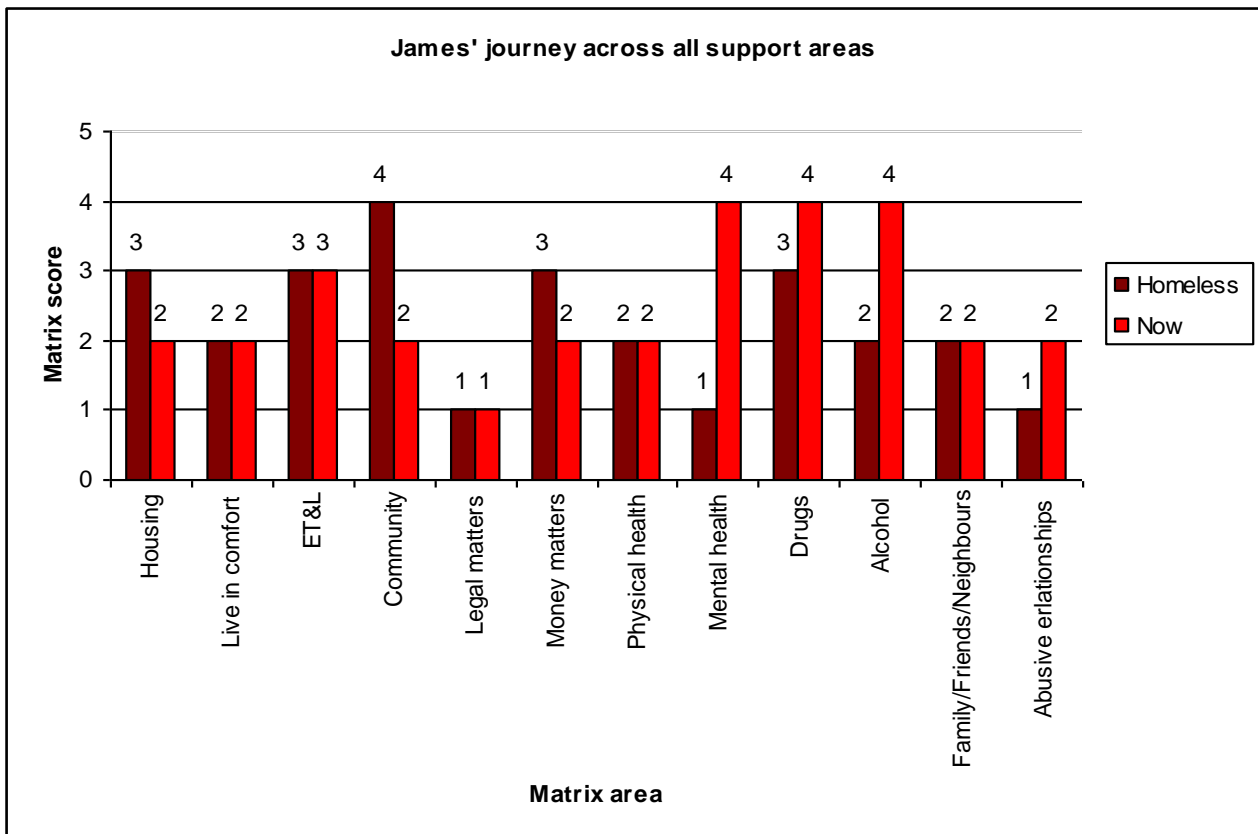
One person from the comparison group has a very similar story to Moira's in terms of how his housing situation spiralled out of control. However unlike Moira he did not have access to the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service and was homeless for two years.

Case Study 7 (Comparison Group)

James' Journey

James was living with his father in a council house. When James' dad became unwell and was no longer able to work, they built up rent arrears because they were not accessing the benefits they were entitled to and as a result they became homeless. They have been staying in a hostel for a number of months now. Although James is engaged with Cyrenians' People with Potential service and is keen to get into employment, he struggles to sustain the jobs that he does get due to disagreements with employers.

Because James' situation is very unstable at the moment his Key Worker is very concerned about him. James self harms, smokes cannabis, and drinks to excess to help him cope with his situation. As a consequence of this, his Key Worker has referred James to Penumbra in a bid to tackle his mental health problems. Although James is now engaging with Cyrenians the situation regarding a number of matrix areas are still ongoing.



b) LIVING IN COMFORT

This outcome looks at an individual’s ability to look after their home and that their home has all basic amenities to ensure it is comfortable to live in.

ECCO

ECCO data shows that all 376 Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers were fully assessed in relation to housing support and other needs. 374 of the 376 also indicated that these needs were being addressed through the service. All customers were able to access support when they needed it.

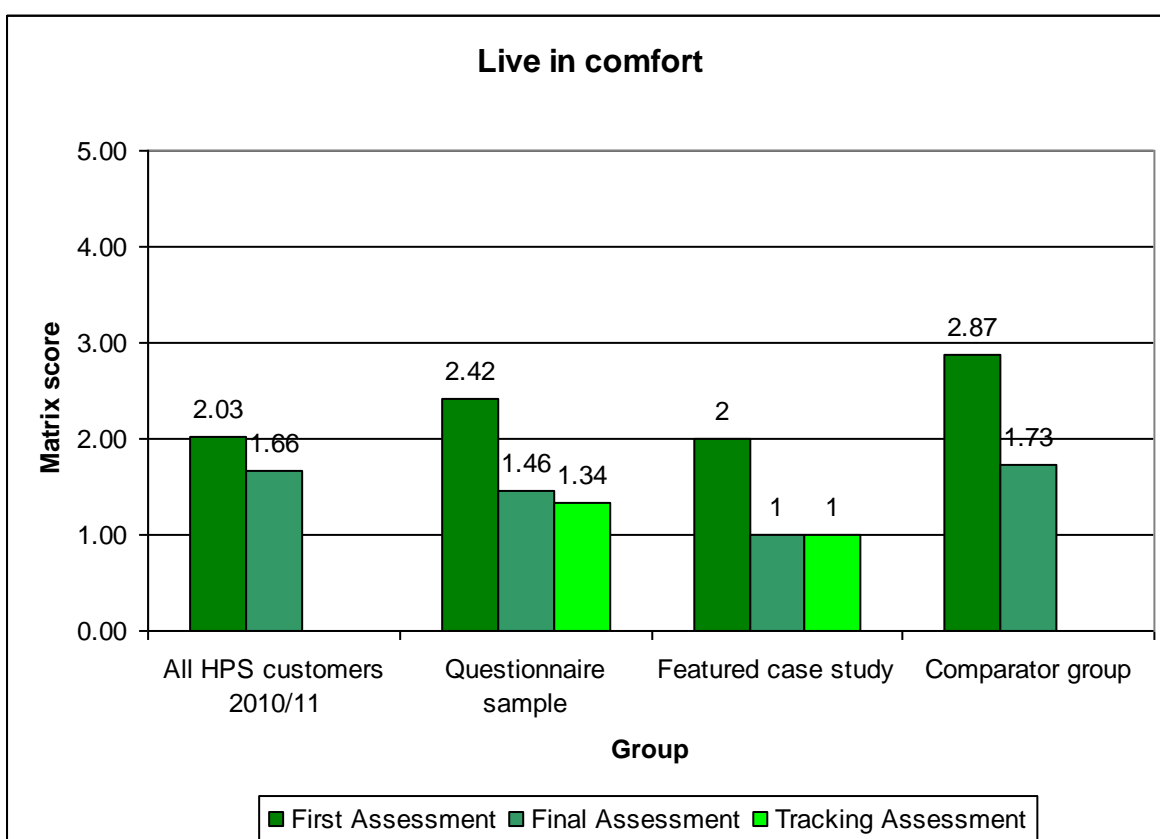
Our ECCO data indicates 74% of customers reported improvements in energy efficiency in their homes (target of 65%). 34 people reported the need for furniture as part of a move into more secure accommodation. Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service helped 29 of these (85%- target of 65%)

Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service also made 35 referrals to Good Food cooking classes, to improve the ability of customers to cook healthily and economically for themselves. All customers referred have accessed these classes.

Comparing the Groups’ Matrix score

In the graph below it can be seen that all Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers’ matrix scores are comparable to the questionnaire sample as well as the featured case study. It can be seen that the scores in the comparison group for this area is higher than the other group’s, which one might expect since these individuals are experiencing difficulty with where they are living.

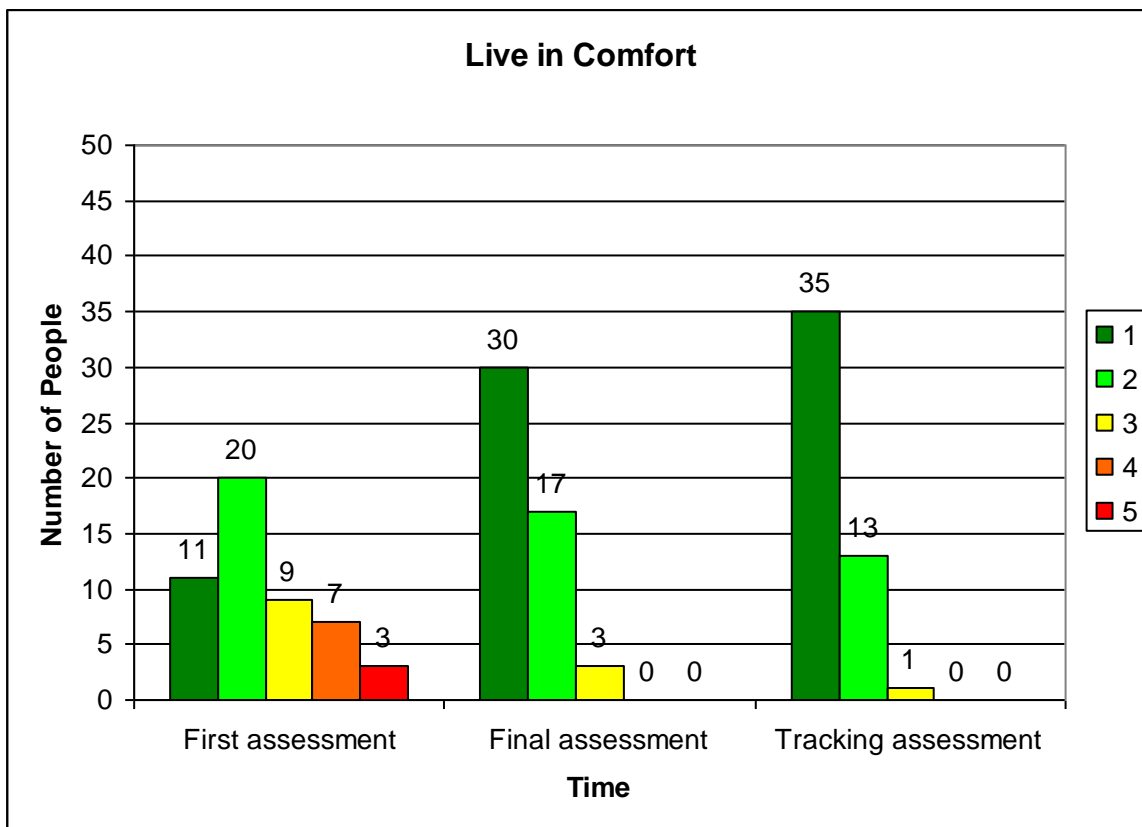
Graph 12- Live in Comfort; Comparison between Groups



The Sample Group

Graph 13 shows that in the breakdown of results there is an increase in scores of 1 across the assessment periods and a decrease in scores of 2, 3, 4 & 5. This indicates that throughout their time accessing Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service, customers have felt more comfortable in their homes and more able to look after them.

Graph 13- Live in Comfort; the Sample Group



Again it can be seen that individuals feel that their ability to live in comfort has improved during the period of time they were engaged with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. These positive changes have been sustained at the tracking period with almost everyone scoring as a 1 or a 2 on the matrix system.

Although the ECCO data offers clear indications that support needs are being assessed and addressed, our tracking questionnaire provides more information about the types of issues arising for customers, which affect the quality of their homes.

The following table shows the types of issues reported by our sample of 50.

Table 6- Issues with accommodation; Sample Group

	Initial assessment	Final assessment	Tracking assessment
Tenancy required repairs	16	4	1
Tenancy required amenities (gas, electric, water)	16	2	0
Tenancy difficult to maintain	7	6	2
Tenancy didn't accommodate health issues	4	2	2

The information in the table demonstrates that the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service helped customers sort out repairs, amenities and to either move to somewhere else that suited their needs or helped put support in place to help them maintain their existing accommodation. The Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service's Mediation Service has proved particularly useful for people dealing with these issues.

One of the mediation services offered is designed to help with communication between landlords/lenders and the tenants/owners. In 2010/11 this service was provided in 52 cases (against a target of 40). This is beneficial particularly when communication between the tenant/owner and landlord/lenders has broken down. This may be due to a number of reasons e.g. rent/mortgage arrears and the landlord refusing to make proper repairs and maintain the property to a good standard.

Mediation is also available to tackle relationship issues which are creating a risk of homelessness - this is covered in Sect 4.6

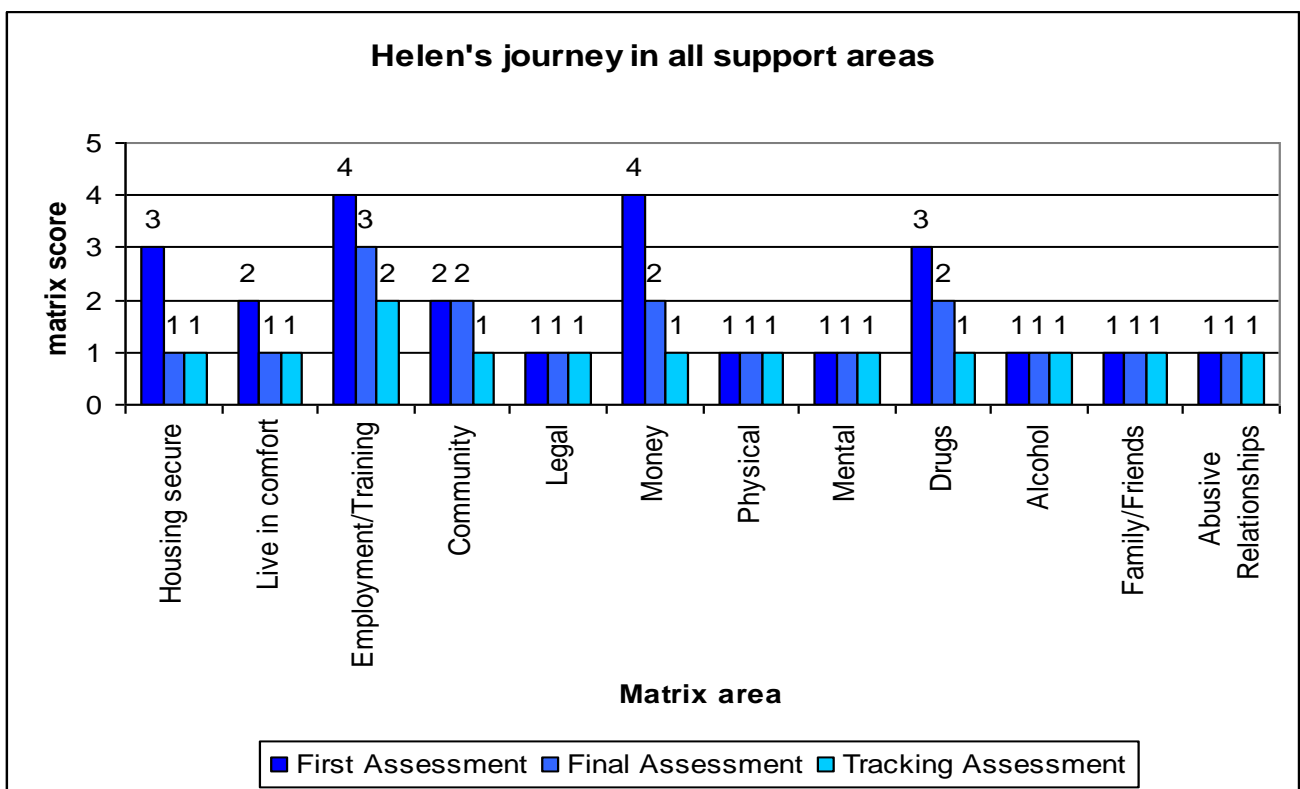
Case Study 8 (Sample Group)

Helen's Journey

Helen lived with her daughter in a location which was convenient for school, an appropriate size for them, close to shops and in a cohesive neighbourhood. Helen had a history of drug use and was on a methadone script. She had rent arrears which she estimated were around three months' rent. Helen was very keen to have some key repairs completed on the property which was getting her down. She received the excess Local Housing Allowance of £50 per benefit period, which she sometimes used for things other than trying to pay off the arrears. Helen was scared that if she lost her tenancy she might lose custody of her daughter. Helen was also nervous of meeting her landlord to discuss the arrears and both she and the landlord were quite elusive. The mediator got a copy of the lease from Helen, so that she could contact

the landlord directly. It emerged that the landlord was unregistered and that the lease was out of date.

At the beginning of the mediation, Helen’s rent had started going directly to the landlord, and that helped to take some of the pressure off the situation. After quite slow progress due to Helen’s lifestyle, Helen and her newly registered landlord agreed that she would pay the excess LHA of £50 every two weeks to him as well as the rent, until the arrears were paid off. The landlord then carried out the necessary repairs and both parties were satisfied.



The Comparison Group

For the comparison group there is very little to report in terms of living in comfort. A small number of the comparison group were on the streets when they were homeless, the remainder were either staying with friends/family or in temporary accommodation. Although they did not have the same issues in terms of housing repairs or lack of white goods, it can be seen that from their matrix score that on average their living conditions were not very comfortable.

Conclusions

There is overwhelming evidence that those people accessing Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service are not going on to become homeless or use homelessness services. This is shown through the ECCO data, internal matrix data and the sample group. It is also clear that those people accessing the service do have support needs and are genuinely at risk of homelessness as a result of a range of problems.

Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers do not generally have severe and acute problems in their ability to live in comfort. However, there are clearly some issues to resolve, in particular repairs and maintenance. Mediation is proving to be an effective tool for achieving this, particularly in cases of dispute and rent arrears. Cyrenians is providing added value for people by offering access to furniture and fittings (another funded Council service) and cooking classes. These may not directly affect people's security of tenure, but are helpful in sustaining people in their existing homes.

4.5 IMPROVED HEALTH AND WELLBEING

This outcome is concerned with the physical and mental health of customers. It also covers substance misuse issues, in particular drugs and alcohol.

a) PHYSICAL HEALTH

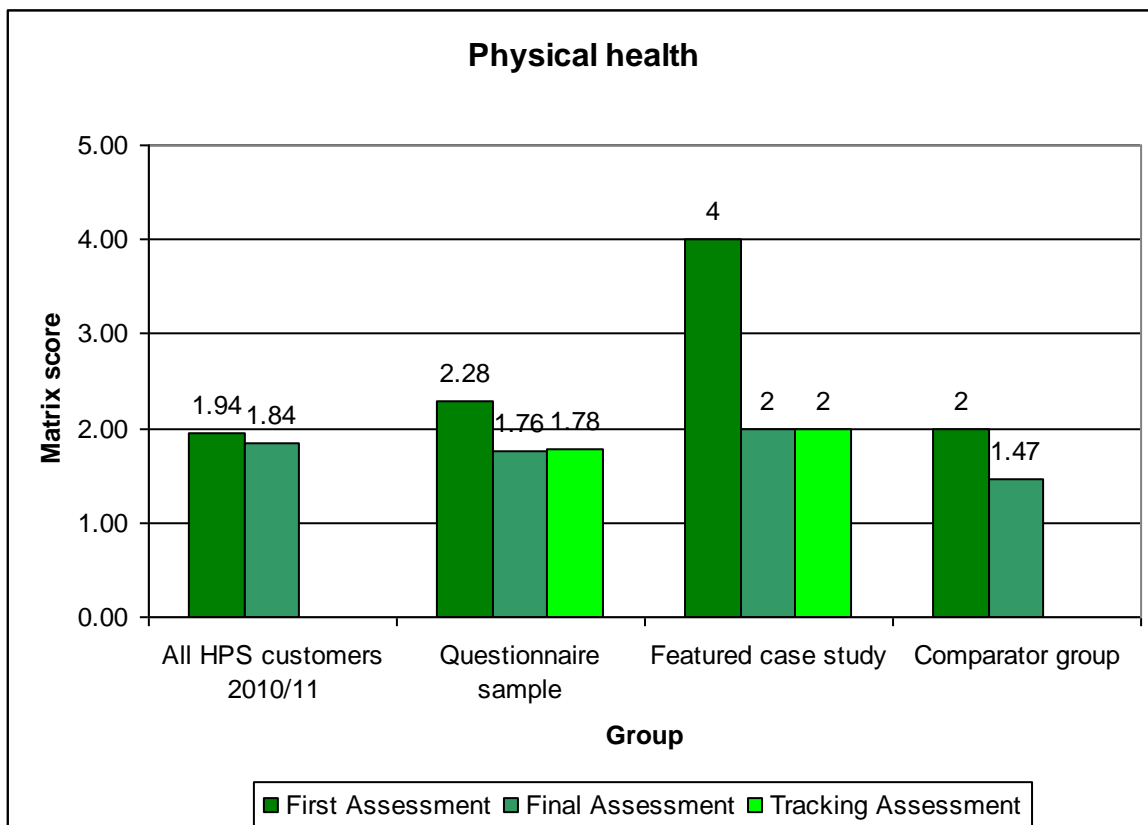
ECCO

ECCO collects limited information about physical health for Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers. 116 people identified physical health as an issue for them and 93 of this group (80%) reported improvements in their health during support (exceeding the target of 70%). 374 of the 376 customers have accessed GP services (the remaining 2 people refused help to do this.)

Comparing the Groups' Matrix score

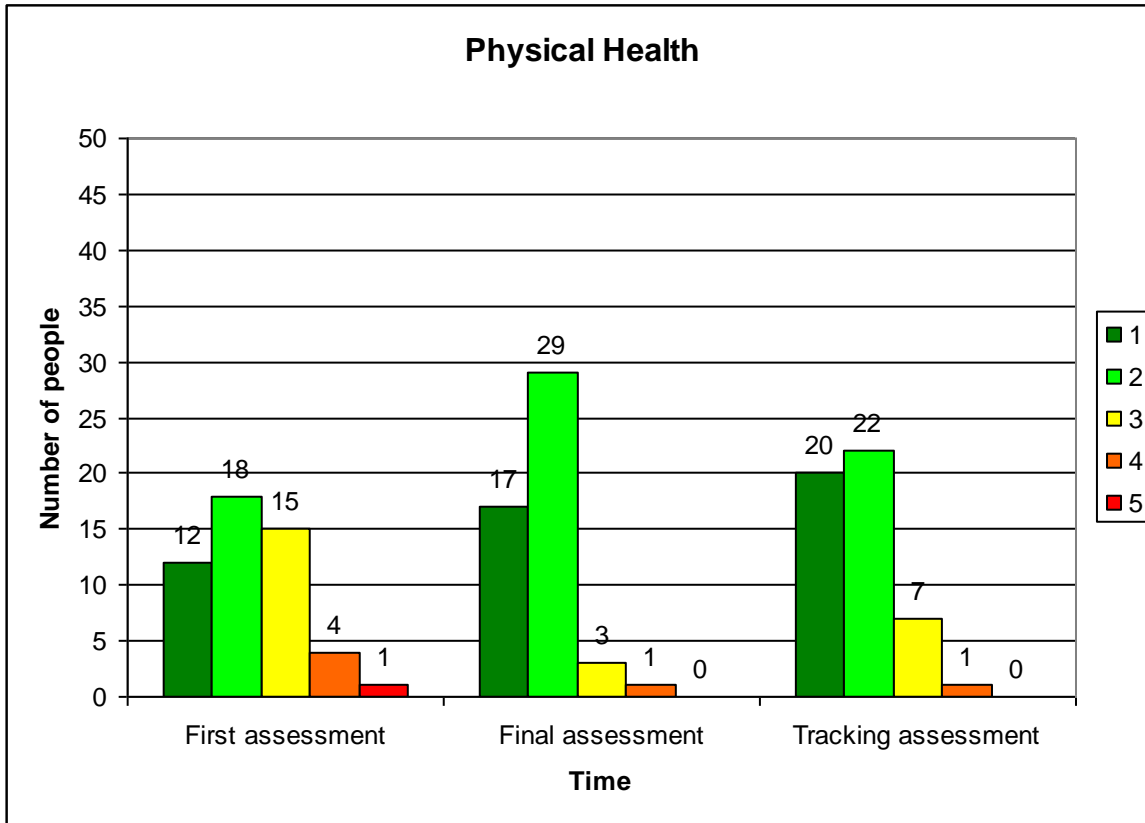
Cyrenians have included the matrix data on physical health for interest: the sample group shows slightly more issues with physical health than the wider Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service group. The case study shows that while physical health *can* affect homelessness it isn't the norm. The comparison group report similar results as the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service group.

Graph 14- Physical Health; Comparison Between Groups



The Sample Group

Graph 15- Physical health- The Sample Group



Analysis of the information shows that at the first assessment 20 people had scored a 3, 4 or 5. As is the trend with other areas, there has been an increase in the number of people scoring a 1 and a 2 on the matrix between first assessment and tracking assessment suggesting that people perceive their circumstances as having improved across time.

In the sample of 50 Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers tracked, 33 reported that they had accessed their GP either when they needed to or reasonably frequently. Five of the group were seeing the GP every two weeks and four of them were seeing their GP once a month. By the final assessment, this had risen to 34 people who had accessed their GP. Two people were also seeing a practice nurse regularly. The picture remained the same at the tracking point with one person in particular reported losing a significant amount of weight.

This suggests that although the people are accessing mainstream health services, physical health issues do not seem to impact greatly on housing. However, the case study below highlights the potential for someone to be at risk of homelessness because of housing not meeting physical health needs.

Although physical health problems do not feature widely in the sample group, there was one person who took part in the research who was at risk of losing her home because of her health issues. Although this isn't the norm, the case study still highlights the need for suitable housing for those with physical health needs.

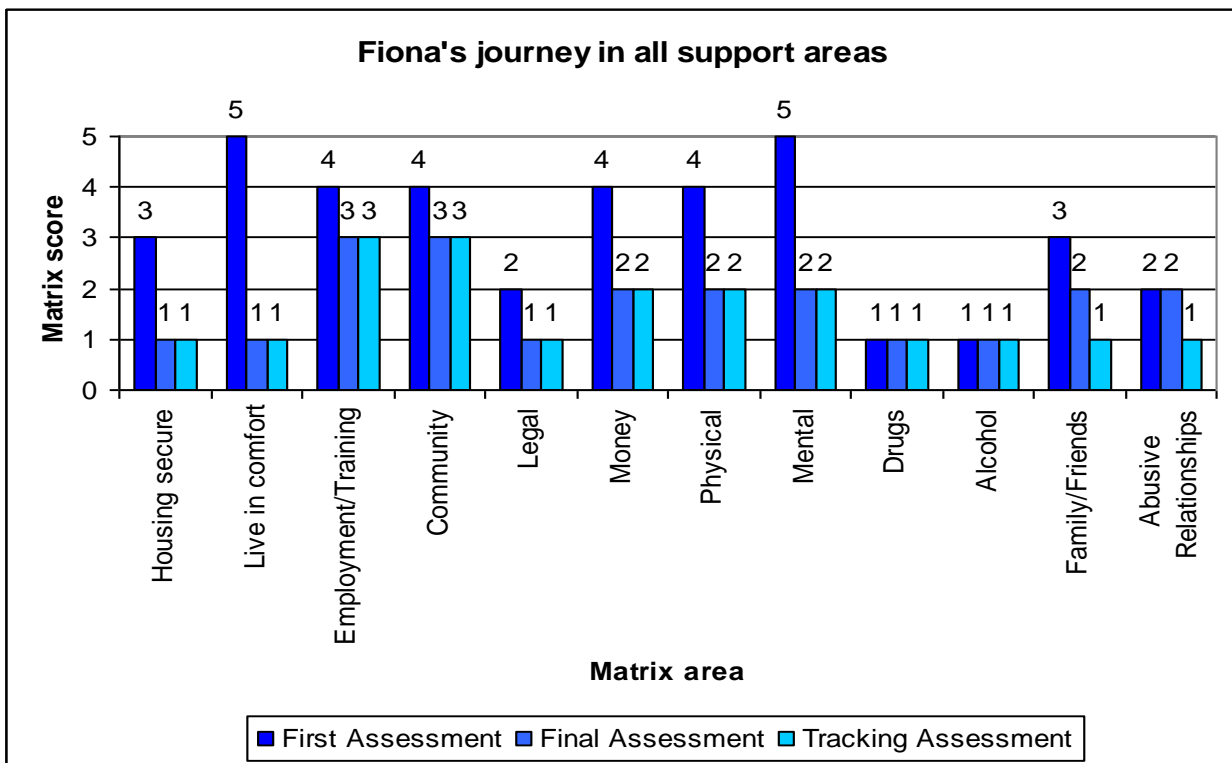
Case Study 9 (Sample Group)

Fiona's Journey

When Fiona contacted Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service she had given notice to quit because the house was unsuitable for her physical health needs and there were a number of repairs required. Fiona couldn't manage the stairs in the house and as a result was sleeping in the living room. The bathroom also wasn't tailored to her needs and she was struggling to shower and use the toilet.

Fiona's PA managed to withdraw the notice to quit preventing her from being intentionally homeless. The PA also supported her to begin looking for a property more suited to Fiona's physical health needs. By the end of her engagement with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service Fiona had moved into more suitable housing where she felt happier, safer and more secure.

During the course of the engagement with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service Fiona's physical and mental health improved with her housing. Her health continues to improve- she has been reducing her methadone prescription, has become more independent and is getting out the house much more.



Comparison Group

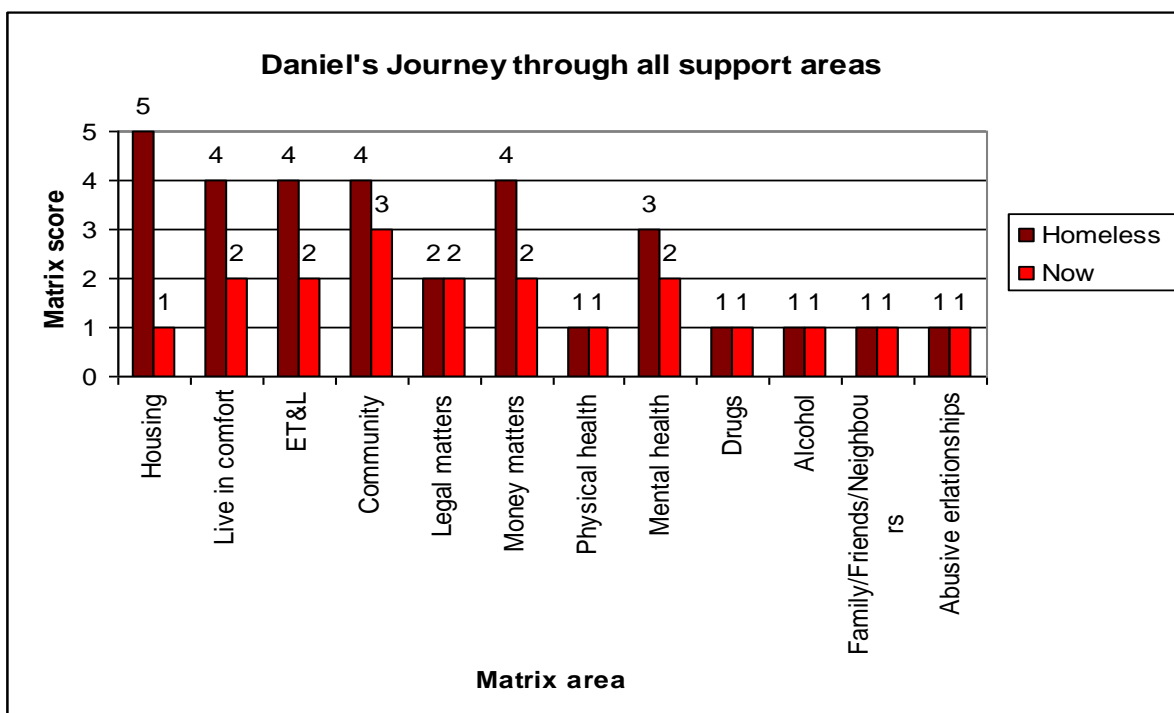
Six of this comparison group reported that they were registered with a GP and accessed this service when they needed to. This increased to eight at their final assessment. This suggests that despite being homeless, some of the comparison group were already accessing health services when they needed to. The comparison case study below features an individual who has a physical disability and became homeless as a result of his mother being unable to look after him.

Case Study 10 (Comparison Group)

Daniel's Journey

Daniel is a young man who stays at one of our community residences. He was unable to continue living at home as he has learning and physical disabilities and he needs a lot of help with personal care. Unfortunately his mother was unable to continue to support him. As a result of this he became homeless and over the past few years has lived in various types of accommodation including supported accommodation. Whilst he was homeless Daniel was subject to abusive relationships.

Since moving to the community, Daniel has been working on his independent living skills (e.g. he's completed two cooking courses), and his confidence and self-esteem are improving. He has started to engage in education and volunteering opportunities and is participating with activities on the farm enterprise each week, developing his social skills and allowing him to mix with others and be part of a team.



b) MENTAL HEALTH

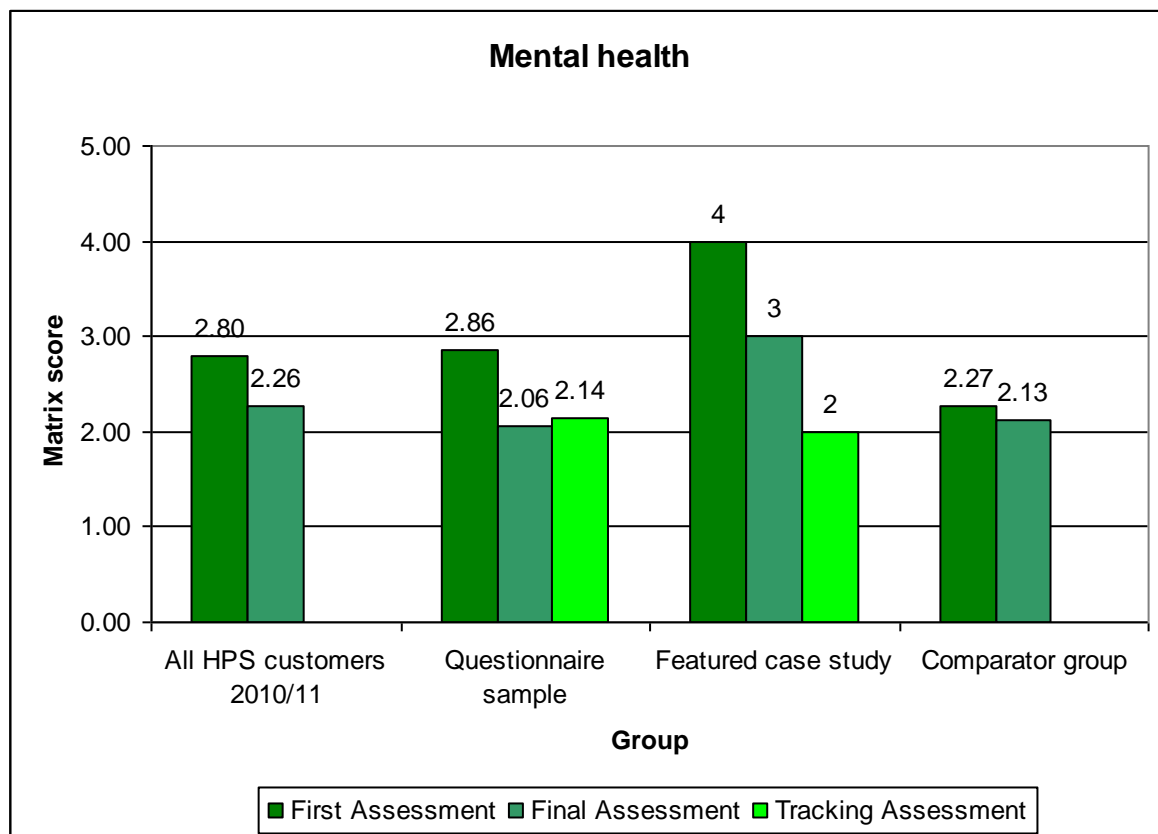
Of the health issues included in this outcome area, mental health was by far the most significant in putting people at risk of homelessness.

ECCO

ECCO data relating to mental health and emotional wellbeing for the HPS group was as follows: 320 of all HPS customers (85%) reported greater self confidence and 322 greater personal motivation (86%). Only 6 out of 22 people with undiagnosed mental health problems went on to access a formal assessment for treatment, however a significant proportion opted for non-medical interventions e.g. counselling. Of the 117 people who disclosed mental health issues, 84 (72%) reported that their mental health had improved.

Comparing the Groups Matrix score

Graph 16- Mental Health; Comparison Between Groups

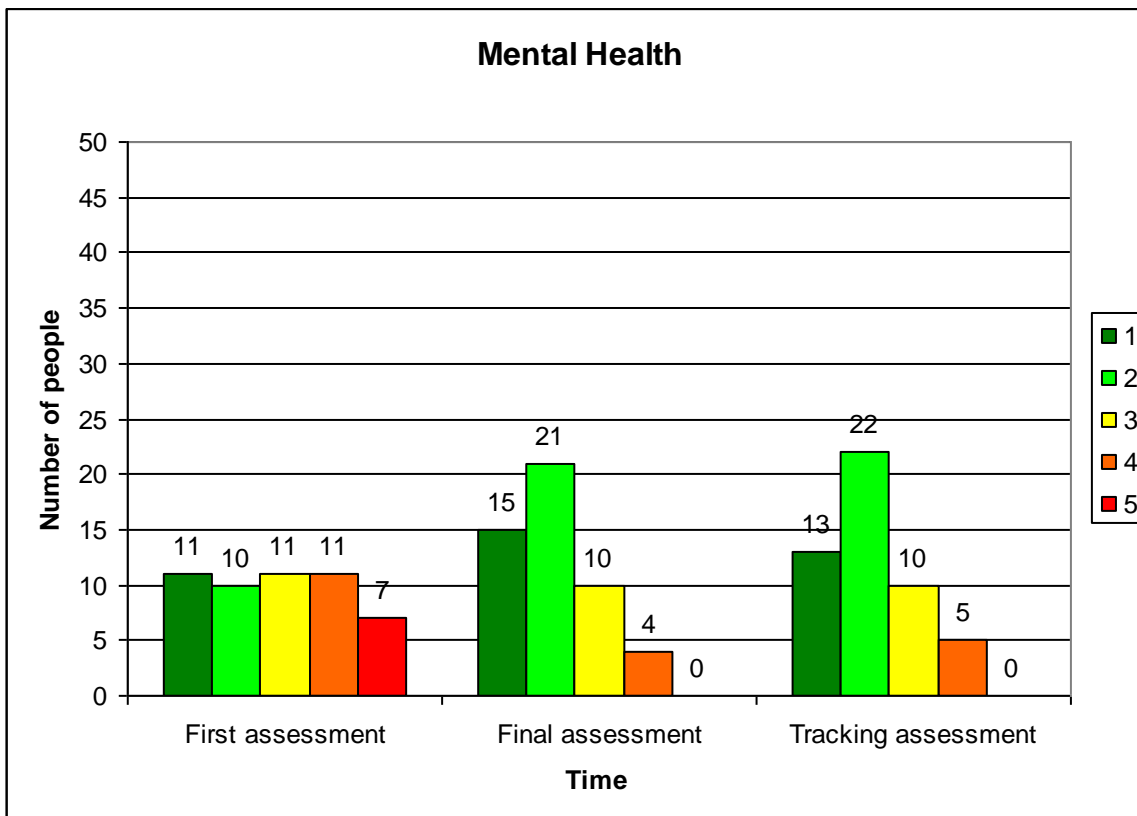


The sample of 50 from the tracking questionnaire highlighted more detailed information. At first assessment, 30 people talked about being depressed and three people were seeing a counsellor. By the final assessment, this had reduced to 14 people reporting depression and 14 people seeing a counsellor. By the tracking point,

11 people talked about depression and 10 were seeing a counsellor (one additional customer and nine who had already been seeing one).

The sample group results are similar to those of the wider HPS group. The comparison group have on average a better mental health matrix score at the time when they are homeless however there is very little distance travelled. One possible reason for this is that they may have coped well with their homeless situation, or again, because of their situation they may not feel their mental health is an immediate concern.

Graph 17- Mental Health; The Sample Group



The above graph provides more detail about the improvement in mental health of the 50 people tracked in this research. There is a general increase in scores of 1 & 2 from first to tracking assessment, and a reduction on 3's, 4's & 5's. There are still people at the tracking point that have scores of 3 or 4 but what is reassuring is that people have been sign posted to counsellors and people at the tracking stage seem to still be accessing these services.

Case Study 11 (Sample Group)

Rachel's story below also highlights the relationship between poor mental health and housing. It is very difficult to provide accurate and direct costs savings associated with improvements in mental health. However it can be seen that as individuals score

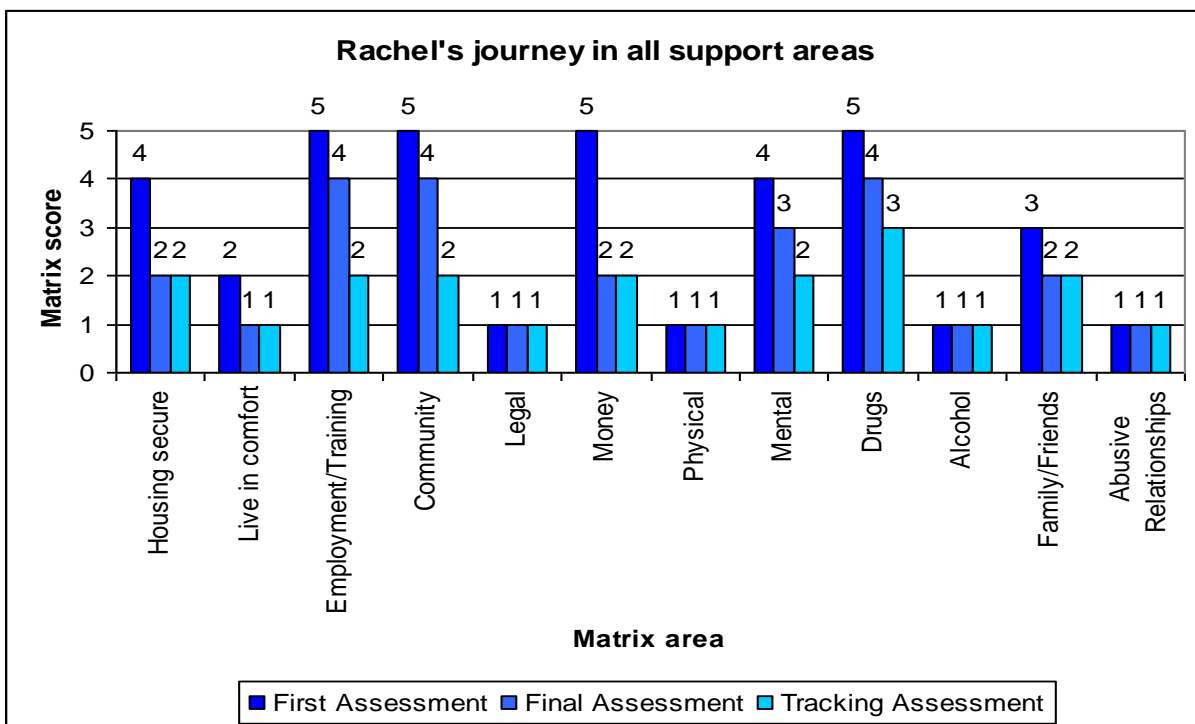
better on the matrix with regard to their housing, there is a reduction in scores for mental health, indicating an improvement in mental health which is also sustained across the tracking period.

Rachael's Journey

When Rachel engaged with the service there appeared to be a vicious cycle between her poor mental health and her risk of homelessness. She had been living in her council house for 11 years and had been suffering from chronic depression for 13 years. She was addicted to prescription drugs and at the time of engagement she had been feeling very depressed, isolated and lonely. Her benefits had been stopped and this contributed to her significant rent arrears. This in turn caused her mental health to decline further.

Rachel's PA helped her to apply for the benefits to which she was entitled. As a result she was awarded Disability Living Allowance and higher rate Employment Support Allowance. Towards the end of the engagement she was managing her rent arrears well and by the follow up period she had managed to clear over half of them.

During her engagement with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service, Rachel's PA had also helped her access some counselling sessions. At the follow up Rachel was still receiving weekly one to one counselling sessions and had stopped taking anti-depressants for the first time in 13 years. Since stopping work with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service she has been regularly volunteering and is now seeking employment. Her mental health is much improved and she is now very comfortable in her house.



The comparison Group

In the comparison group there were also a number of people who were accessing services relating to mental health. During their period of homelessness one person was accessing a counsellor and three people were accessing psychiatrists. By the tracking period, the three individuals were no longer seeing a psychiatrist but two more people were seeing a counsellor.

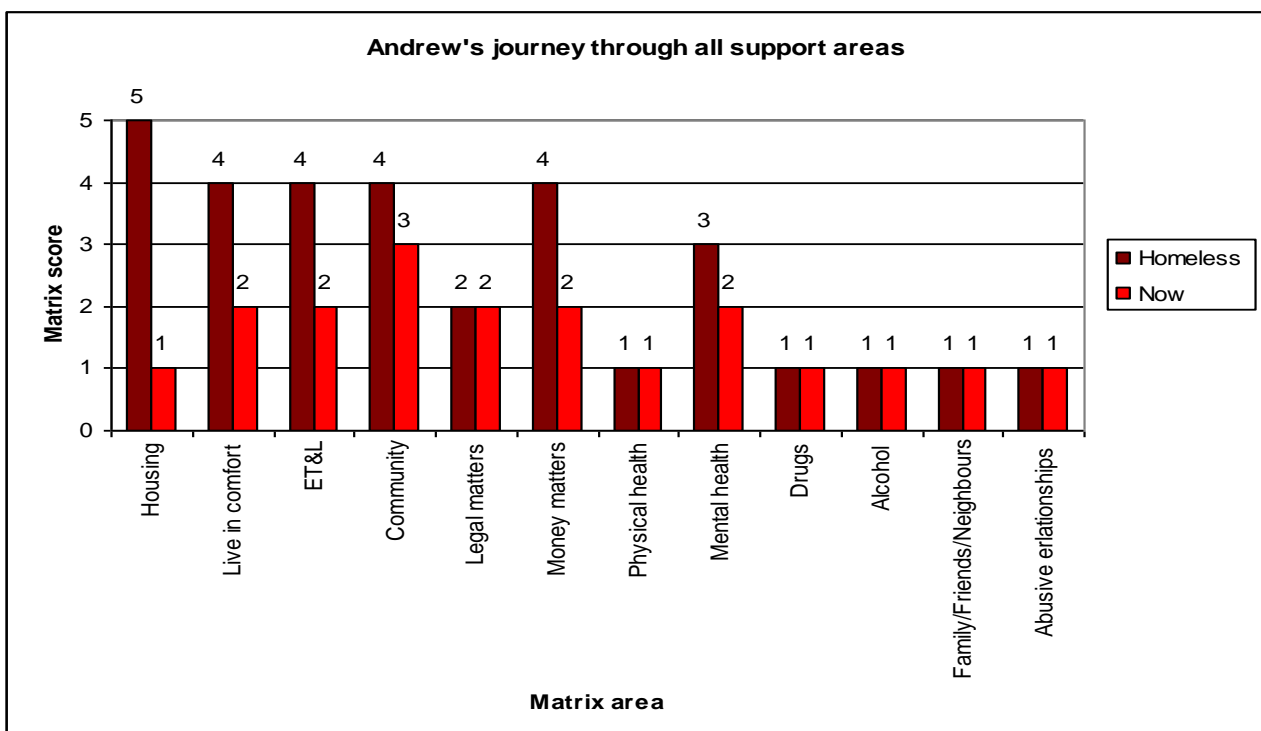
Case Study 12 (Comparison Group)

Andrew's Journey

Andrew became mentally unwell and as a result was struggling to pay his rent. He was eventually sectioned under the mental health act and, due to poor management of the situation, lost his tenancy.

On discharge from hospital, Andrew did not have anywhere to live and as a result he spent eight months living in hostels. He was unable to work or to do any kind of volunteering and had to concentrate on trying to get himself out of the position he was in. Although he was still accessing support for his mental health, it was difficult for him living in a hostel.

Andrew got help from The Access Point and is now living independently in a council house. His mental health has improved a lot and he regularly sees his GP for medication as well as a psychiatrist and a Community Psychiatric Nurse. Now Andrew is settled in more stable accommodation he is looking to volunteer, hoping to start University in the Autumn and has started a cookery class with Cyrenians.



c) DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Overall

It appears that a significant proportion of Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customer group have issues with drugs and alcohol use. Data indicates that, of the whole sample of 376 customers, 30 reported alcohol problems (8%) and 116 people report a drug/alcohol addiction issue (31). 105 people have shown either stability or improvement in this area. However it is well known that people tend to under report issues with substance abuse, including alcohol.

There is a wealth of research out there which suggests that drug and alcohol abuse is associated with homelessness, whether it be a cause of becoming homeless or a consequence of homelessness. The EADP Homeless Needs Assessment 2010 found that joint working and information sharing could be improved between alcohol/drug services and homelessness services.

In a small scoping study undertaken by Cyrenians in 2008, it was found that people's progress was being inhibited by their alcohol use. Over the past three years Cyrenians has developed a training programme and support materials for staff so that they feel more confident addressing people who are at increasing risk of problems due to their levels of drinking and are equipped to deliver an alcohol intervention. As a consequence all staff members who work with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention staff are trained to be able to discuss alcohol use with customers and to give advice on how to reduce drinking as well as advice on how to reduce the harm caused by alcohol. The organisation is hoping to undertake a similar piece of development work around drugs in the near future.

The tracking questionnaire of the sample group indicated that, at the assessment stage, three people reported drug issues, four reported alcohol issues and one person was taking prescription drugs. Of these eight, four were receiving specialist support and four were not. There was little change at the second assessment, although a further two customers were receiving specialist support for their substance misuse. At the final assessment, these activities had been maintained and one person had significantly reduced their use of methadone, one person was no longer dependent on prescription drugs, and one person had abstained from alcohol for three months.

Matrix scores for alcohol and drug use have not been included because of doubts about the validity of self-reporting in this area. The tracking sample scores for drug and alcohol issues show similar results to those of the whole Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service sample.

In the comparison group there were two people who reported substance misuse problems. Only one person was accessing a service to help with their alcohol issues by the final assessment stage.

Conclusion

Firstly, with regards to health it can be seen that individuals report higher matrix scores in the area of mental health than any of the other areas that fall within this outcome. Furthermore what is of particular interest is that their matrix scores improve in the area of mental health along with an improvement in their matrix scores for housing. In the case study it can also be seen that an individual's mental health can have an effect on their housing situation.

Secondly, in relation to physical health, Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service encourages local primary healthcare rather than emergency medical aid which is far more expensive. Although it is beyond the scope of this piece of research it can be expected that regular GP involvement may fulfil a preventive function as there will be a reduction in emergency medical care, which homeless people typically access. Furthermore the case study highlights the possibility of an individual being put at risk of becoming homeless because their house is not suitable for their physical health needs. However what can be seen in our sample of homeless individuals is that some of them were engaged with a GP whilst they were homeless suggesting that it is possible for some people to register and still access their GP practice whilst legally homeless.

Thirdly, drugs and alcohol issues may be an area that escalates as individuals' housing situations escalate toward crisis point. There is scope for further consideration of the most effective response by Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service and how it can best link with specialist services supporting recovery.

Overall there appears to be evidence that there is an improvement in people's physical and mental health over the course of time they are working with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service and these improvements appear to be sustained.

4.6 IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS

This outcome is concerned with the extent to which customers have stable, healthy relationships which do not put their housing at risk. Relationship breakdown is cited as a common cause of homelessness. For the purpose of this study the researchers have split relationship issues into two sub categories: a) friends, relatives, neighbours and b) abusive relationships.

a) FRIENDS, RELATIVES AND NEIGHBOURS

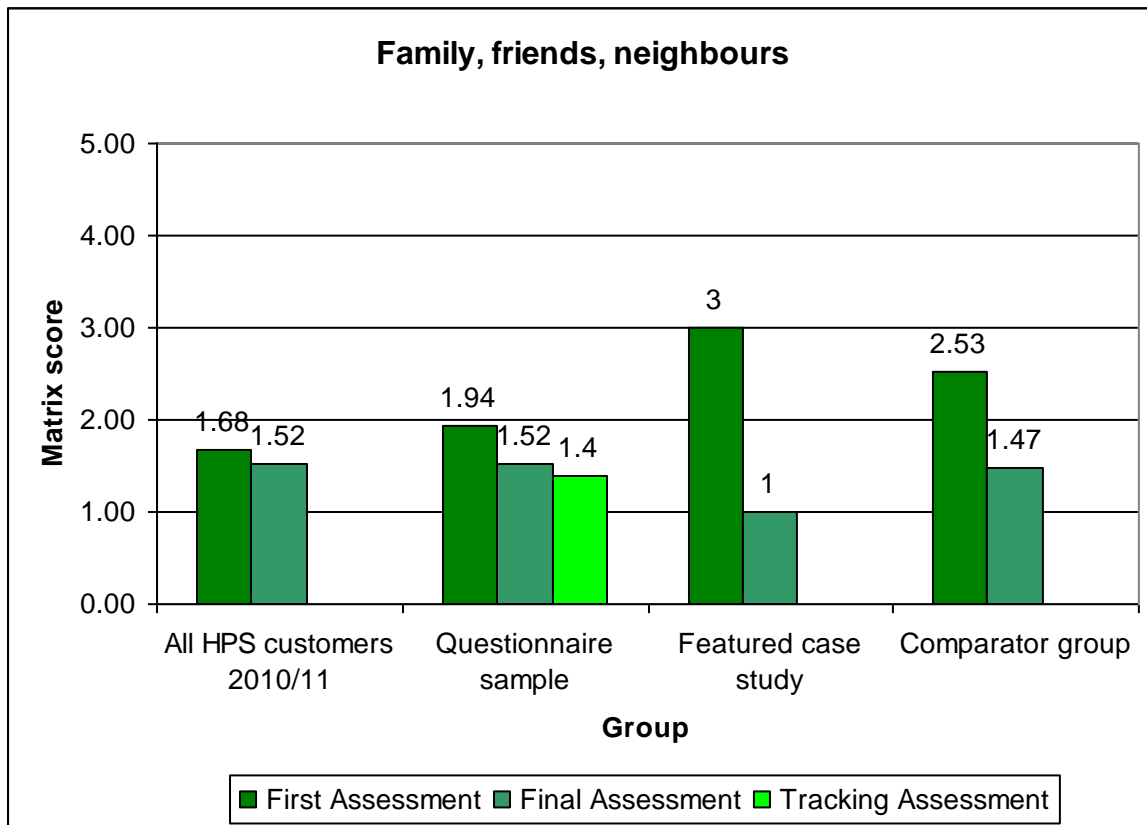
ECCO

ECCO data indicates that 293 (65%) of all Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers last year formed positive relationships. Five people used community mediation services to address issues of racial harassment by neighbours. This is lower than the anticipated referral rate of 20 cases a year.

Comparing the Groups' Matrix score

Below is the graph which compares the groups' matrix scores with regards to Family, Friends and Neighbours.

Graph 18- Family, Friends, Neighbours; Comparison Between Groups



The matrix results don't show much change overall for the wider Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service and the sample group because the matrix is not detailed enough to open that up. However some improvements can be seen and most importantly improvements have been seen in the narrative of the sample questionnaire as noted above. In the comparison group who became homeless, there is a greater difference in first matrix score to final matrix score with an average movement from 2.53 to 1.47. Their matrix scores are also recorded as higher during their period of homelessness. This suggests that those who become homeless may have developed a poorer relationship amongst friends and family to the extent where that relationship has broken down and that person has moved out with no other suitable accommodation in place.

The Sample Group

The average matrix results don't show much change overall for all HPS customers or the sample group. However some improvements can be seen and most importantly improvements have been seen for particular individuals – see Table 8. In the comparison group who became homeless, there is a greater difference in first matrix score to final matrix score with an average movement from 2.53 to 1.47. Their matrix scores are also recorded as higher during their period of homelessness.

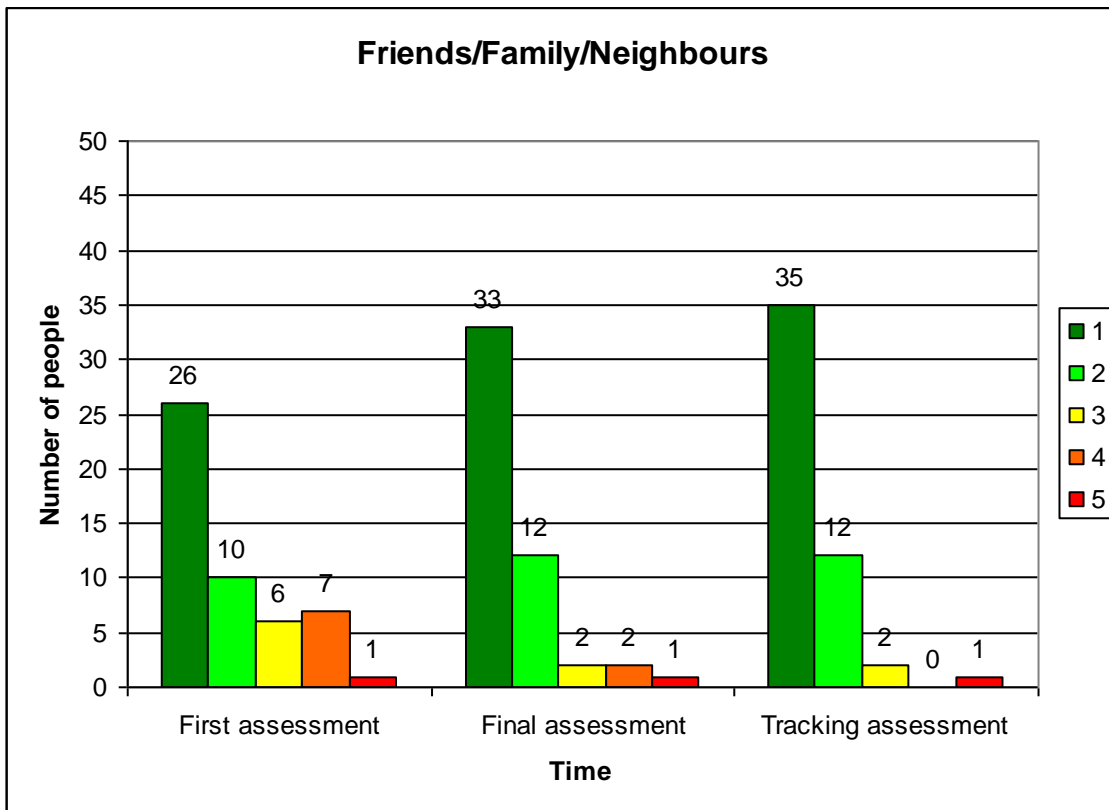
Table 7- Relationship issues- The Sample Group

Issue raised	Initial assessment	Final assessment	Tracking assessment
Isolation	9	2	0
Positive Friends	10	24	17
Positive Family	13	19	21
Positive Neighbours	0	1	4
Strained Friends	5	0	1
Strained Spouse	7	2	1
Strained Family	16	4	1
Strained Neighbours	4	0	3
No Narrative	6	5	0
No Issues	10	13	14

As relationship breakdown is a major cause of homelessness, it is heartening to see that there is demonstrable improvement in these areas. It is difficult to assess the

extent to which these improvements have directly reduced the likelihood of homelessness. However, some causal link might be expected.

Graph 19- Family, Friends, Neighbours- The Sample Group



The breakdown of matrix scores for the sample group shows that the majority of people have scored a 1 or a 2 at the first assessment. The handful of people who scored 3 or 4 have reduced their scores by the final and tracking assessments.

There appears to be one person who has scored a 5 at each assessment stage. In fact, one person improved their relationships with family members over the course of the assessment periods moving from a 5 to a 3 to a 2. Another person moved from a 1 to a 5 because she felt comfortable enough to disclose the fact that she had poor relationships with her children after a period of time of working with her Personal Assistant. The relationship issues were not resolved by the time this individual stopped working with Cyrenians.

The following case study shows how relationship issues can impact on housing.

Case Study 13 (Sample Group)

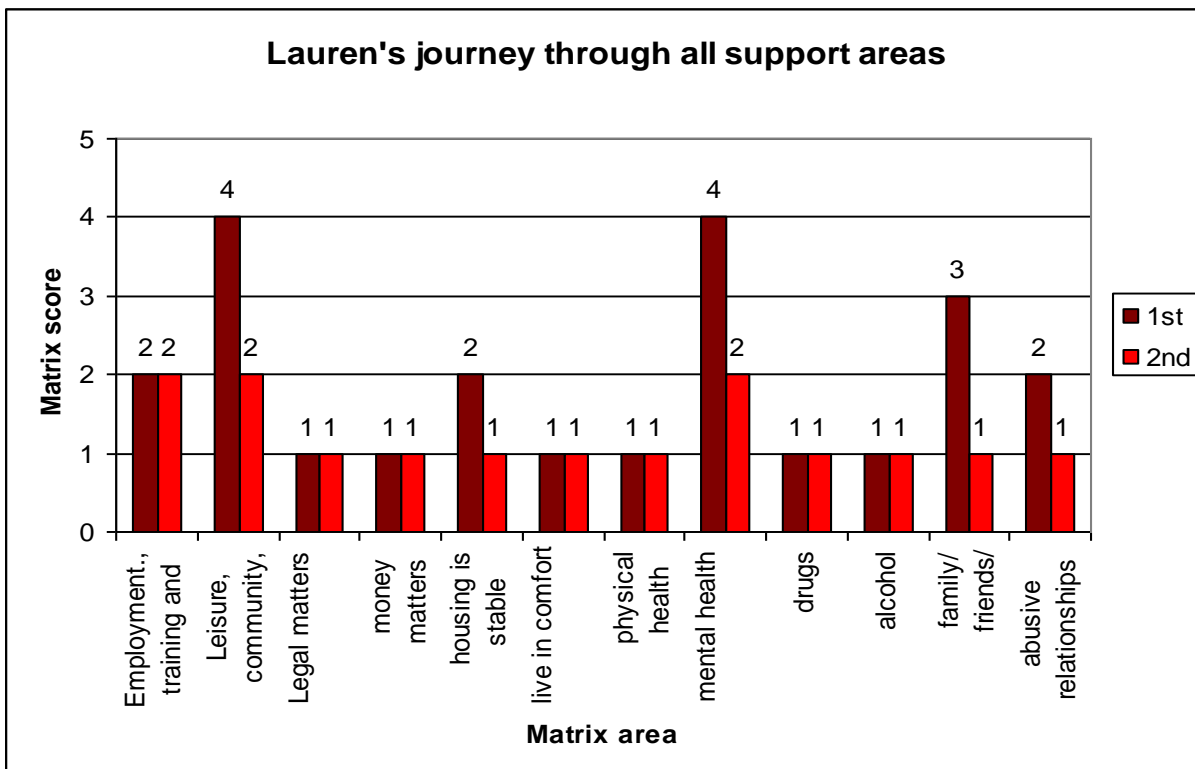
Lauren's Journey

Lauren and her mum Fiona had a very big argument about Fiona's drinking and Lauren's self harming. Lauren also had problems fighting with other girls and hurt someone so badly that she needed hospital treatment. As a result of this Lauren moved in with her dad but wanted to go back to her mum at weekends.

Lauren's relationship with her parents was also affected by them both being disabled. Both her mum and dad were concerned about the effect this was having on Lauren. Lauren's mum had recently given birth and was drinking more because she was feeling more stressed. It was a very difficult situation and Lauren was at risk of becoming homeless.

Mediation allowed mother and daughter to discuss their issues. Fiona agreed that she had been handling Lauren's self harm badly and acknowledged that she had been drinking more. Mediation also gave them space to discuss Lauren's feelings towards having two disabled parents as well as having a new baby in the house.

During the course of the mediation mother and daughter's relationship improved and Lauren moved back into Fiona's house. Fiona was drinking a lot less and Lauren had stopped self harming and was managing her temper better.



Comparison Group

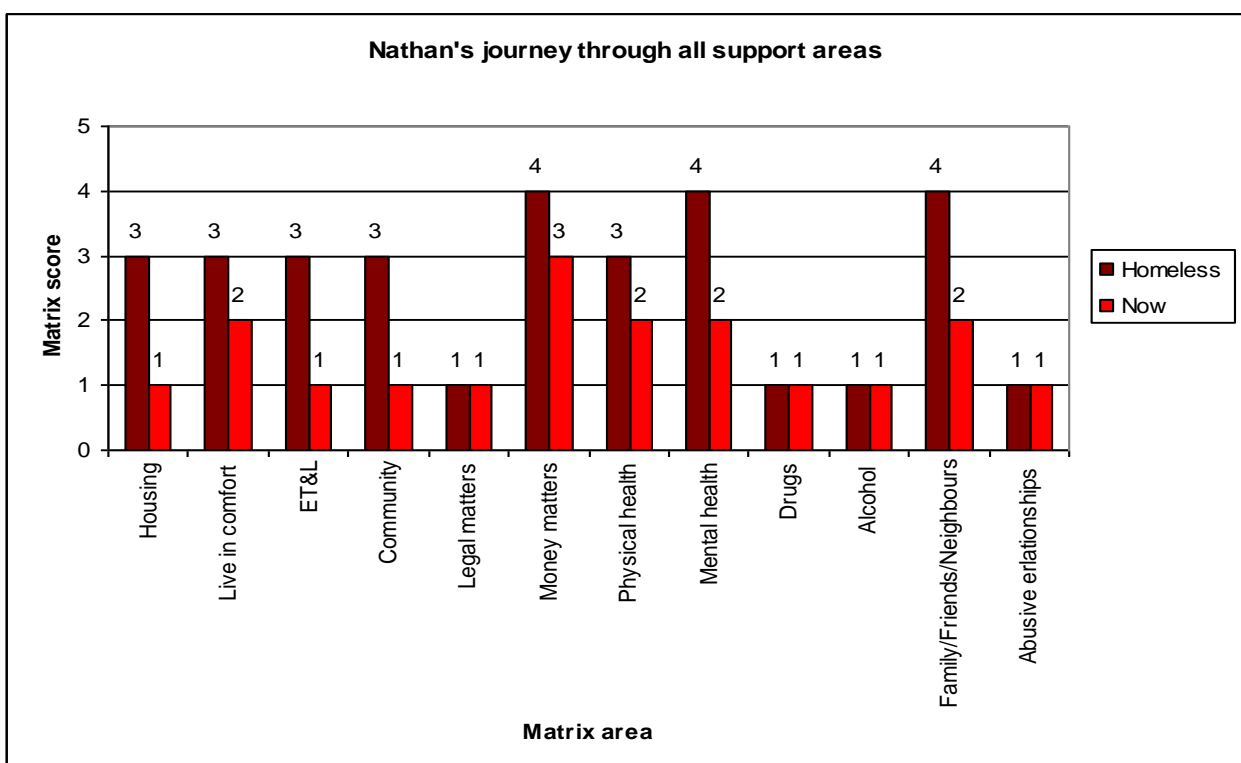
Out of the 15 people in the comparison group five people cited relationship breakdown as one of the causes of their homelessness. Mediation can play a vital role in the prevention of homelessness. The following is a case study from the comparison group which highlights how a relationship breakdown led to one vulnerable teenager becoming homeless.

Case Study 14 (Comparison Group)

Nathan's Journey

Nathan has a learning disability which means he can become quite frustrated when he doesn't understand something and at times can become aggressive. His family was going through a break up and one evening Nathan became very angry whilst arguing with his mum. His mum couldn't cope with his behaviour and called the police. Nathan was taken to stay in respite care, then a bed and breakfast and finally to supported accommodation. During his time in the supported accommodation Nathan struggled to look after himself, did not eat well or socialise with others and his mental health suffered.

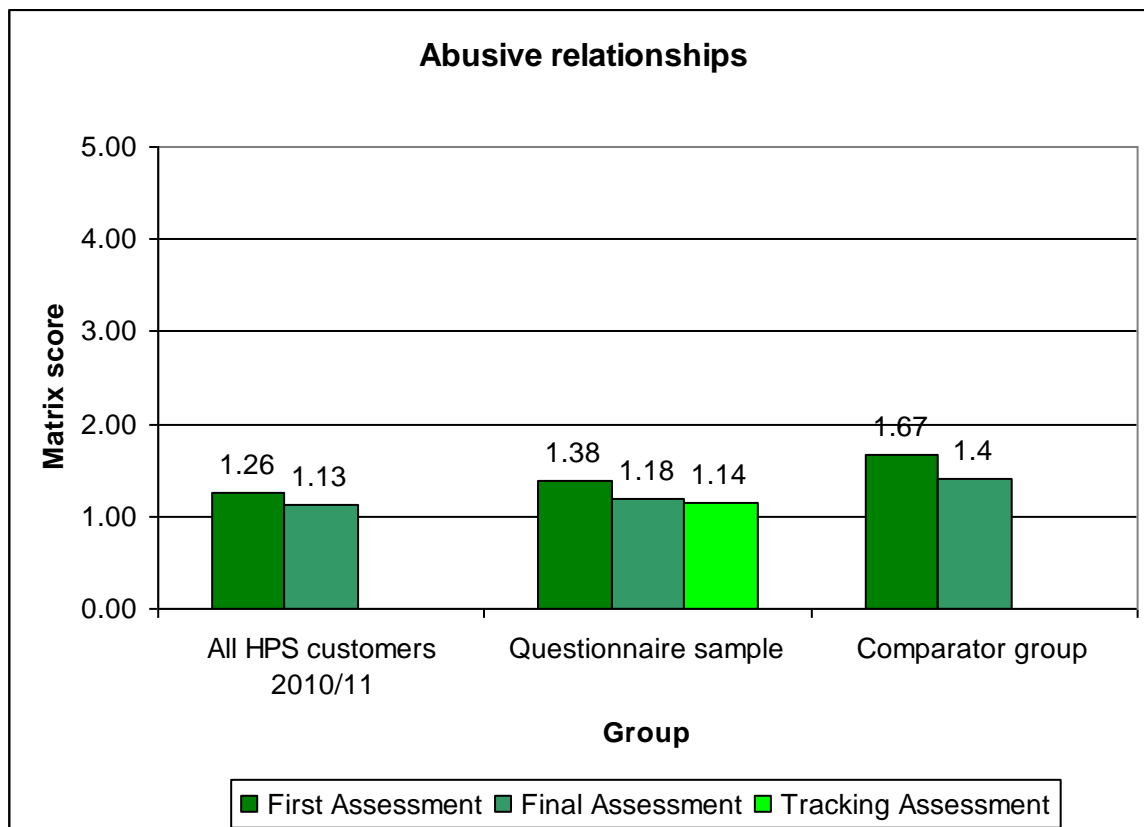
Nathan's support worker suggested the community farm and after an initial assessment, Nathan moved in. Nathan has been living at the farm for over a year now and is doing really well. He is volunteering with an organisation that helps others who have been homeless and has taken a number of courses. He is also starting to get back in touch with his family although at the moment the relationships are still strained.



Comparing the Groups Matrix score

In the graph below it can be seen that there are few differences between the wider Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service group, the sample of 50 and the comparison group, suggesting that on average, abusive relationships do not feature heavily in the people that feature in this study.

Graph 20- Abusive Relationships; Comparison Between Groups



b) ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Abusive relationships seem to account for a small, but significant cause of homelessness. Although a small number of Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers report being affected by an abusive relationship and no issues were raised or discussed in the sample questionnaire, the issue is likely to account for a higher proportion of people being at risk of homelessness. The Cyrenians matrix data is the only source of information – which highlights changes for those affected.

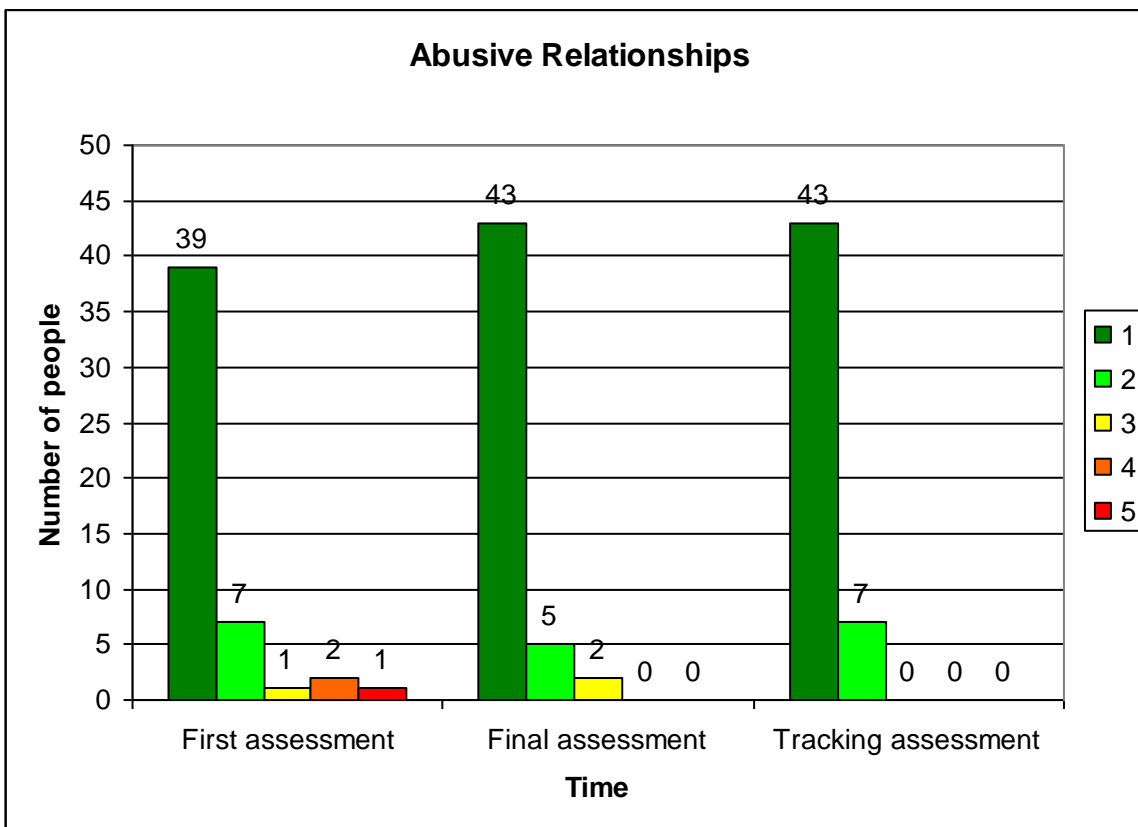
Comparing the Groups’ Matrix score

In the graph below it can be seen that there are few differences between the wider Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service group and the sample group of 50 suggesting that on average, abusive relationships do not feature heavily in the people that feature in this study.

The Sample Group

The graph below shows the breakdown of scores for the sample group. The majority of people have a matrix score of 1 with a slight increase in scores of 1 from first assessment to final assessment which was also sustained through the tracking period. Four people scored a 3, 4 or 5 at the first assessment, however by the final assessment and tracking stage everyone has either scored a 1 or a 2.

Graph 21- Abusive Relationships; The Sample Group



The Comparison Group

The matrix scores for the comparison group show that for this group of individuals, abusive relationships was not disclosed as an issue for them. However, in two cases abusive relationships were cited by the Key Worker as one of the main reasons why homelessness applications were made in this group of people. Thus the scores may not be reflective of the situation as individuals may not have felt comfortable disclosing that information at the time of the questionnaire.

Conclusions

Better relationships between parents and their teenage children can help to avoid homelessness. Amber Mediation can help support better communication between children and parents to reduce the likelihood of a relationship breakdown, which has

been seen in Lauren's case study. This will also help reduce costs associated with young people moving into temporary accommodation.

Although very few of our sample reported problems with abusive relationships, it is still an important consideration in preventing homelessness. Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service can help individuals to move out of abusive households in a safe, planned way to ensure that they do not become homeless. They can also signpost customers to other support services.

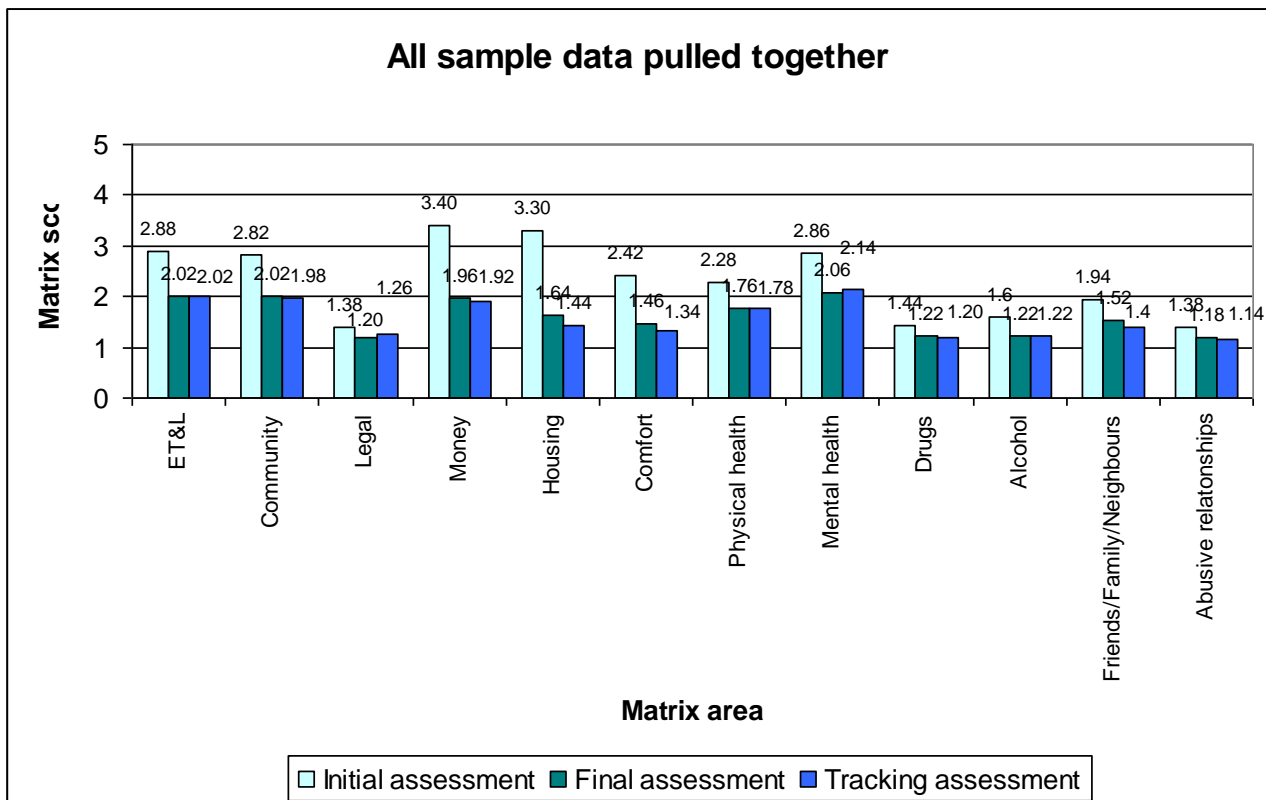
With regards to the comparison group, although there appeared to be no real issues with regards to abusive relationships, The Scottish Government found that 9% of homeless applications made in Edinburgh in 2009/2010 were made because of abusive relationships. A service like Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service has the potential to help those who are escaping abusive relationships by helping them to move in a planned way and by signposting them on to other organisations that will be able to help them cope with their experience of abuse.

4.7 ALL THE DATA PUT TOGETHER

a) COMMON THEMES

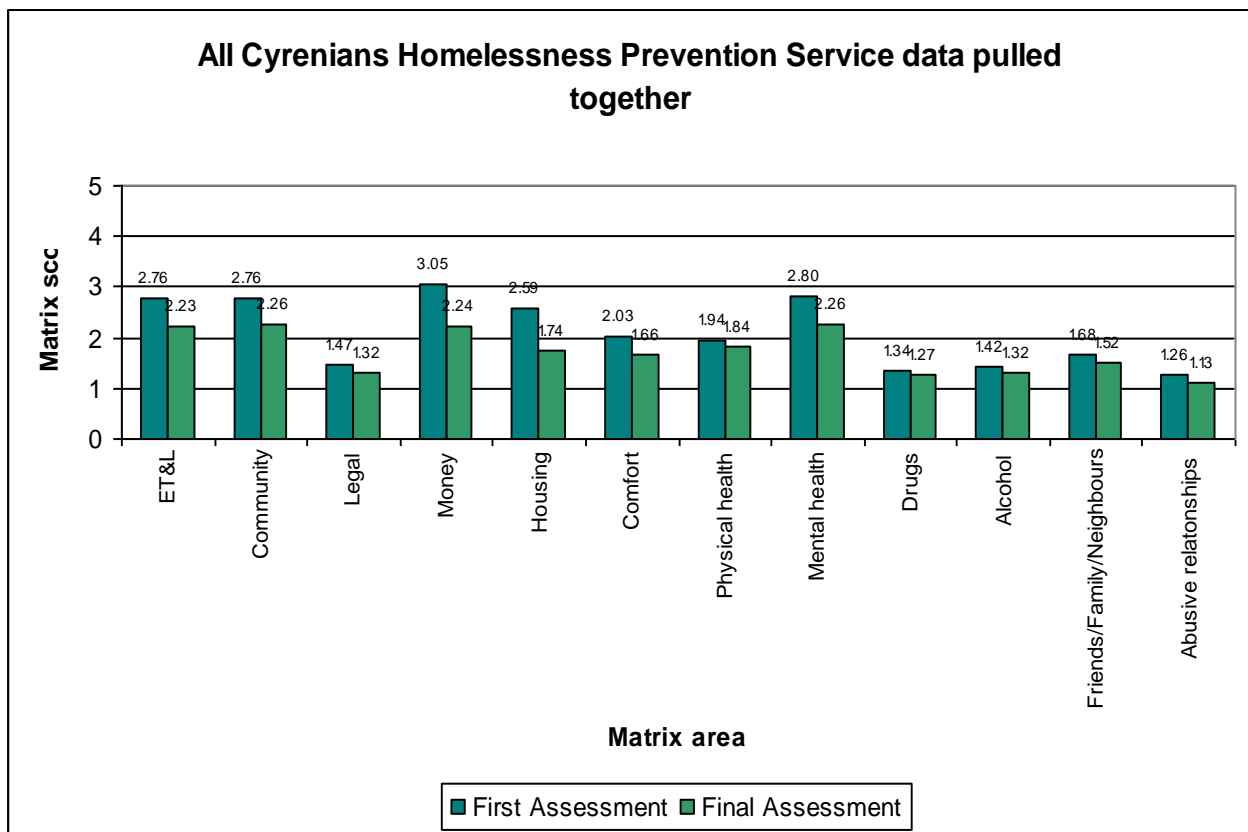
The following graph looks at the entire sample data pulled together across all outcomes. What is most notable is that improvements can be seen in all outcome areas from initial assessment to final assessment. These scores improve or stay the same at the tracking assessment, which highlights that people are sustaining improvements. It is also clear that on average, there are a number of pressing issues at the initial assessment stage. It can be seen that the areas that have the greatest improvements matrix scores are: housing is secure, ability to live in comfort, employment, local links, money, and mental health.

Graph 22- All Sample Group data pulled together



The graph below pulls together the data from all the 111 Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service customers that had more than one matrix score and shows, as previously mentioned, broadly similar trends that were evident in the close up of the sample of 50.

Graph 23 All Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service data pulled together



The data presented above appears to endorse strongly the effectiveness of the holistic approach taken by Cyrenians in stopping people in imminent risk of homelessness from losing their home, and helping them over an average 3 month period to address a number of key areas which would otherwise reduce their resilience to future crises and prevent them from moving forward in their lives.

b) PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

Through the research the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service appears to be preventing people from becoming homeless. Out of the people the service worked with in 2010/2011, 99% were prevented from becoming homeless and sustained this for 12 months after they had finished working the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. Furthermore the sample group of 50 were asked, "Do you think without the help of Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service you would be homeless right now?" Out of the 34 people that answered that question 23 people said "yes" they would have been homeless without help from Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service. A further two people said they "possibly" would have become homeless without intervention.

c) RENT ARREARS

In total Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service helped individuals to pay back £19,400 in rent arrears, approximately £15,000 worth of which was paid back to the local authority. Out of the 31 people in the sample group of 50 that had rent arrears at the beginning of their work with the Cyrenians Homeless Prevention Service, 14 people had paid back their rent arrears in full. The 17 left with some rent arrears commented that they were still contributing towards paying off their arrears each week/month.

5 CONCLUSION

Cyrenians' report seeks to highlight a number of important issues:

- Firstly, Cyrenians' research has demonstrated that customers of the Homelessness Prevention Service are living in circumstances similar to those who experience homelessness in the wider population. This suggests that had Cyrenians' customers not sought intervention, there is a reasonable chance that they would have become homeless; certainly, two thirds of the sample group said that this definitely would have been so for them. The case studies in the report help to demonstrate how similar circumstances have led to different outcomes for individuals who have/have not had access to the service.
- Secondly, Cyrenians has tried to demonstrate the impact the Homelessness Prevention Service has on people's lives outside of their housing situation. Our research shows that when an individual's housing situation becomes more secure there are concomitant improvements in other areas of their life, in particular their financial situation, their perception of their mental health and their employment circumstances.
- Furthermore, the changes made by customers engaging with Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service have been sustained over a year after finishing with the service.
- Finally, the research has illustrated potential savings to the local authority and shown that a preventative approach is effective in enabling people to avoid homelessness. It presents strong evidence that the new preventative approach developed by Cyrenians in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council is highly effective (more than 95%) and is cost effective for the Council through reducing homelessness presentations, recovering rent arrears and avoiding the costs of temporary accommodation.

In view of the high risk of rising homelessness and new obligations on Councils to help, **Cyrenians proposes to policy makers that homelessness should be a key focus for preventative spend in Scotland.**

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APPENDICES

a) MAPPING OF PREVENTION ACTIVITY

Types of Homelessness Prevention Activity		Early Intervention	Pre-crisis intervention	Preventing recurring homelessness	Client groups likely to access this approach
	Approaches identified in relevant literature				
Advice and Information	housing rights, debt, benefits and other issues which may enable them to maintain their home				All
Schools Education	Highlighting homelessness in schools to indicate issues and difficulties and mitigate risk				a, e
Housing options	Clarifying for people their housing choices				All
Visiting support	To help people to address a range of issues which may affect their ability to live in their current housing				All
Family mediation	targeted at young people who have poor relationships with their parents and therefore are at risk of leaving/being asked to leave the family home				a, b, e
Assisted access to the private rented sector	To avert an application for social and council housing and provide more choice of settled accommodation often by providing a guarantee in place of a cash deposit.				a, b, d, g, h
Support for people experiencing domestic violence	To either enable them to be safe in their current home or move away from a violent partner without becoming homeless				a, b, h
Help for prisoners	To either move back into their pre-custody home, or into a new home once they are released – these schemes often include an element of peer learning attached to housing advice qualifications for inmates of institutions.				f
Mediation including: Landlord/Tenant; community/neighbour	To help resolve issues between the two parties which are putting housing at risk				c, d, g, h, i
Key target groups for prevention activity include people who are reference this list – look at literature:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. experiencing difficulties in their relationships either with a partner or parents/other family members b. victims of domestic violence c. have mental health problems and or addictions issues which are leading to difficulty in managing their home independently 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. living in unsafe or unsuitable housing requiring repair and maintenance e. care leavers and other vulnerable young people f. people leaving institutions including, in particular, prisoners g. non-priority single people 86 priority families i. people who are victims of harassment in the community 			

b) CYRENIANS DISTANCE TRAVELLED MATRIX

Key Work Area	5 service user is out of control in this area and does not recognise this	4 service user recognises that they have significant issues in this area	3 service user is committing to address problems in this area	2 service user is addressing problems	1 there are no support issues/issues have been addressed and resolved
Employment, training and learning	I don't work or study and I have no plans to do so.	I don't work or study for a specific reason. It is something I may consider in the future.	I want to make changes in this area.	I have clear goals about future employment, training or learning and I am working towards them.	I am happy in this area (working, training, retired).
Engagement in leisure, community based activities and volunteering.	I have no interest in leisure, community based activities or volunteering.	There are things that stop me from taking part in leisure, community based activities and learning. But, this is something I may like to consider in the future.	I want to find out more about what I could be doing with my time.	I have identified what I would like to do with my time and I am trying out new things.	I am doing something with my time that I enjoy (such as regular volunteering).
Legal matters	I am not co-operating with the requirements of the legal system.	I find it difficult to co-operate with the requirements of the legal system for specific reasons.	I would like to deal with legal issues and receive help and advice in this area.	I am working to resolve any legal issues. I receive regular support and advice.	I have no current involvement with the legal system.
Money management	I don't have the money I need to live.	I find it difficult to manage my money for specific reasons.	I want to learn more about managing my money.	I am taking necessary steps to try and manage my money better.	I am in control of my money and I live within my means.
Housing stable, warm and fuel efficient	I don't know where I'll be night to night.	My housing is at immediate risk.	I know what I need to do to change my housing situation.	I am taking steps to improve my housing situation.	I have a safe and secure place to live.
Able to live in comfort	I don't feel able to look after my home.	I don't always look after my home well, for specific reasons.	I know I need to manage my home better and I know what this will involve.	I am taking steps to manage my home better.	I am able to manage my home well.

Physical health	My physical health is poor and/ or I don't use medical services	I don't always look after my physical health, for specific reasons.	I recognise that I need to take steps to improve my physical health.	I am taking steps towards improving my physical health and using medical services.	I have good physical health (oral health, sexual health, personal hygiene, nutrition). I know how to use medical services and I am happy to do so.
Mental/emotional wellbeing	I have poor mental well-being. I am not coping with things well.	I sometimes have poor mental well-being. I feel unable to cope with some situations.	I recognise that I need to take steps to improve my mental well-being.	I am learning how to look after my mental well-being.	I have good mental well-being. I am able to cope with life's ups and downs and I know how to look after myself.
Drugs	I use 1 or more drugs on a daily basis. This is causing problems for me at the moment.	I use 1 or more drugs on a regular basis but would like to change.	I have started to engage with support and I know what I need to do to make a change.	I am maintaining the changes needed to become drug free.	I don't use drugs.
Alcohol	I regularly drink above safe guidelines. 35+ units/week – Women. 50+ units/week – Men. This is causing problems for me at the moment.	I regularly drink above safe guidelines. 35+ units/week – Women. 50+ units/week – Men. I would like to make a change.	I regularly drink above safe guidelines. 35+ units/week – Women. 50+ units/week – Men. I have started to engage with support and I know what I need to do to make a change.	I sometimes drink above safe guidelines. 14-35 units/week – Women. 21-50 units/week – Men.	I drink within safe guidelines. No alcohol at all, up to 2-3 units/day, 14 units/week - Women. 3-4 units/day, 21 units/week – Men. + 2 days alcohol free a week
Friends, family, partners and neighbours	My relationships with others are not positive.	I am starting to understand why my relationships are difficult.	I want something in my relationships to change.	I am learning how I want to be in relationships.	I have some positive relationships.
Abusive relationships	I am currently involved in an abusive relationship but have no current plans to leave that relationship.	I want to leave an abusive relationship but feel unable to do so.	I have started to engage with support and I know what I need to do to make a change.	I am taking steps to move away from an abusive relationship.	I have no concerns about abuse in my current relationships.

c) THE SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Demonstrating the impact of the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service

Initials of client				Period of contact with Cyrenians				Date of discussion			
Section 1 Housing stable, warm and fuel efficient											
At point of initial engagement with us (taking into account circumstances 3 months before)				Circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).				Tracking at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.			
What type of housing were they in?		How long (weeks)		What type of housing were they in?		How long (weeks)		What type of housing were they in?		How long (weeks)	
Presented as homeless?		Y or N	Length in weeks	Presented as homeless during engagement?		Y or N	Length in weeks	Presented as homeless during last 3-9months?		Y or N	Length in weeks

Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	

Section 2 Able to live in comfort					
Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Matrix score beginning of contact		Matrix Score at end		Matrix score at 3-9months	

Section 3 Money Management					
At point of initial engagement with us (taking into account circumstances 3 months before)		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Tracking at 3-9months after end	
Income	£ per week (if known)	Income	£ per week (if known)	Income	£ per week (if known. If don't know a rough estimate).
Employment (net wage)		Employment (net wage)		Employment (net wage)	
Benefits (Please tick all that apply):		Benefits (Please tick all that apply):		Benefits (Please tick all that apply):	
Employment		Employment		Employment	
Disability		Disability		Disability	
Housing / Council Tax		Housing / Council Tax		Housing / Council Tax	
Other income		Other income		Other income	

Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	

Section 4 Employment, training and learning					
At point of initial engagement with us (taking into account circumstances 3 months before)		Circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Tracking at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Type of work, training, and learning.	How long (weeks)	Type of work, training, and learning.	How long (weeks)	Type of work, training, and learning.	How long (weeks)
Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	

Section 5 Engagement in leisure, community based activities and volunteering					
At point of initial engagement with us (taking into account circumstances 3 months before)		Circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Tracking at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Type of engagement	How long (hrs p/w + how many weeks)	Type of engagement	How long (hrs p/w + how many weeks)	Type of engagement	How long (hrs p/w + how many weeks)
Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	

Section 6 Legal Matters					
At point of initial engagement with us (taking into account circumstances 3 months before)		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		At point of initial engagement with us (taking into account circumstances 3 months before)	
Type of legal issue	Number of times	Type of legal issue	Number of times	Type of legal issue	Number of times
Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	

Section 7 Physical Health					
At point of initial engagement with us (taking into account circumstances 3 months before)		Circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Tracking at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Health services visited	Number of times	Health services visited	Number of times	Health services visited	Number of times
Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	

Section 8 Mental/emotional wellbeing					
At point of initial engagement with us (taking into account circumstances 3 months before)		Circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Tracking at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Type of service involved	Number of times involved	Type of service involved	Number of times involved	Type of service involved	Number of times involved
Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	

Section 9 Drugs					
At point of initial engagement with us (taking into account circumstances 3 months before)		Circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Tracking at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Drug use and type of support (methadone script/drug counsellor etc accessed?)	Frequency + length of visit	Drug use and type of support (methadone script/drug counsellor etc accessed?)	Frequency + length of visit	Drug use and type of support (methadone script/drug counsellor etc accessed?)	Frequency + length of visit
Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	

Section 10 Alcohol					
Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	
Section 11 Friends, family, partners and neighbours					
Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	

Section 12 Abusive Relationships					
Narrative about circumstances from initial assessment (taking into account circumstances 3 months before).		Narrative about circumstances from last review (At point of contact with HPS ending).		Narrative at 3-9months after end of contact with the service.	
Matrix Score at beginning of contact		Matrix score at end of contact		Matrix score after 3-9months	

Total matrix scores across all areas					
Total matrix score at beginning		Total matrix score at end		Total Matrix score at 3-9months	

Making a difference to situation		
Apart from you, who else was responsible for making a difference to your situation?	Agency?	% or fraction of responsibility (optional)

Maintains the situation now		
Apart from you, who else was responsible for maintaining the difference to your situation?	Agency?	% or fraction of responsibility (optional)

The difference Cyrenians has made		
KWPM Area	If you hadn't engaged in Cyrenians' services where do you think you would be now?	Where do you see yourself in a years time?
Housing		
Living in comfort		
Employment and training		
Community Links		
Legal matters		
Money matters		
Physical Health		

Mental health		
Drugs		
Alcohol		
Friends, family, partners and neighbours		
Abusive Relationships		

Do you think without Cyrenians help you would be homeless just now?			
Yes		No	

Any further thoughts?
We value your feedback – if you have any further comments to make, please let us know

Did you receive mediation whilst you were working with HPS?			
Yes		No	

d) THE COMPARISON QUESTIONNAIRE

Comparison Questionnaire

Initials of client		Date of discussion	
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General questions around homelessness

How long ago were they homeless?	
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Short narrative on why homeless?

Money Management

What sort of income were they getting during the period of time they were presented as homeless?

As Homeless		Now	
Income	£ per week (if known)	Income	£ per week (if known)
Employment (net wage)		Employment (net wage)	
Benefits (Please tick all that apply): Employment Disability Housing / Council Tax		Benefits (Please tick all that apply): Employment Disability Housing / Council Tax	
Other income		Other income	
Narrative around how long was the problem ongoing for how was the problem resolved and who was involved?			
Matrix Score then		Matrix score now	

Employment, training and learning (eg. Part/full time work, college, work experience or volunteering)

Did they engage in any employment, training or learning whilst they were homeless?

As Homeless		Now	
Type of work, training, and learning.	How long (Hours per week and for how many weeks)	Type of work, training, and learning.	How long (Hours per week and for how many weeks)
Matrix score then		Matrix score now	

Narrative around how long was the problem ongoing for, how was the problem resolved and who was involved?			
Matrix Score then		Matrix score now	

Engagement in leisure, community-based activities and volunteering

Did they engage in any leisure or community based activities e.g. gym, support worker, other activities that took place in the community?

As homeless				Now			
YES		NO		YES		NO	
If yes what kind of engagement and for how long?		Matrix score		If yes what kind of engagement and for how long?		Matrix score	

Narrative around how long was the problem ongoing for, how was the problem resolved and who was involved?

Legal Matters

Did they have any legal matters during the time they presented as homeless?

As homeless				Now			
YES		NO		YES		NO	
If yes what kind of legal matters?		Matrix score		If yes what kind of legal matters?		Matrix score	

Narrative around how long was the problem ongoing for how was the problem resolved and who was involved?

Physical Health

How was their physical health and did they access any health services whilst they were homeless? This will include GP, A&E, dentist, health visitor, Community Practice Nurse.

As homeless			As now	
YES		NO	Yes	No
If yes what kind health services and for how long?		Matrix score	If yes what kind health services and for how long?	
How do they feel their physical health was during that time?			How do they feel their physical health was during that time?	
Narrative around how long was the problem ongoing for, how was the problem resolved and who was involved?				

Mental Health/ Emotional Wellbeing

How was their mental health and did they access any health services whilst they were homeless? This will include counselling services or access to organisations that would have supported them.

As homeless			As now			
YES		NO	Yes		No	
If yes what kind health services and for how long?		Matrix score	If yes what kind health services and for how long?		Matrix score	
How do they feel their mental health was during that time?			How do they feel their physical health was during that time?			
Narrative around how long was the problem ongoing for, how was the problem resolved and who was involved?						

Drugs and Alcohol

During that time were they taking drugs and/or drinking.

As homeless			As now				
YES		NO		Yes		No	
If yes what kind of drugs/alcohol were they taking and for how long?		Matrix score		If yes what kind of drugs/alcohol were they taking and for how long?		Matrix score	
Narrative around how long was the problem ongoing for, how was the problem resolved and who was involved?							

Friends, Family partners and neighbours

How did they feel their relationships between friends and family were during this time?		How did they feel their relationships between friends and family were during this time? How were problems resolved? Who helped?	
Matrix Score		Matrix Score	

Abusive Relationships

Did they have any abusive relationships during their time as homeless?		How were problems resolved? Who helped? How are relationships now?	
Matrix Score		Matrix Score	