

Resettlement is a positive move for homeless people

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Resettlement services over the last few years have helped many homeless people make positive changes in their lives. The largest study in the UK of the resettlement of single homeless people has found that four-in-five (81 per cent) of a large representative sample were still living independently 18 months after being re-housed.

The FOR-HOME study followed up 400 single [homeless people](#) who were moved from hostels and other temporary accommodation into independent housing in London, Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire to determine the long-term outcomes of resettlement. It was conducted by Tony Warnes and Maureen Crane at the University of Sheffield in collaboration with six leading homelessness organisations: Broadway, Centrepoint, Framework, St Anne's, St Mungo's and Thames Reach.

The research indicated that most people in the study were glad to have moved, were optimistic about the future, and were rebuilding their lives. Some had started jobs or training courses, and several had renewed contact with their family or children or built new [friendships](#).

The research also found that:

- Living independently was not easy – many struggled to manage finances and pay bills, and two-thirds had debts by 18 months;
- Those who moved into private-rented accommodation had the

steepest rise in debts, and were the most likely to have given up their tenancy or been evicted;

- Help from a tenancy-support worker after moving was of great benefit, but only one-half received this service;
- Young people were the most likely to have acquired debts, and the least likely to have had tenancy support.

One FOR-HOME participant said: "I feel that the support I received during my time at the hostel and after I moved on was invaluable, and helped to prepare me to live independently. Without their support, I would have struggled with much difficulty and would not be as successful as I am now. It was still a tough journey, but knowing I had people there to support me really made the difference".

The research confirms that resettlement services achieve lasting positive outcomes for homeless people and in the long run save the taxpayer money. Tenancy-support services are crucial in the first months of resettlement to help people who are [homeless](#) adjust to independent-living. As homelessness organisations increasingly have to rely on the private-rented sector for resettlement accommodation, more advice and support is needed for people re-housed into this tenancy.

Responding to the report on behalf of the charities, Centrepoin Chief Executive, Seyi Obakin said: "The positive outcomes for the study participants are testament to the targeted support that well-funded homelessness services can provide to tackle homelessness, with long-term benefits to the taxpayer. However, the current economic climate could put this good work at risk. It is crucial that hostels and tenancy support teams are protected to ensure that the homelessness sector can maintain and build upon this success in the months and years to come."

Broadway Chief Executive Howard Sinclair added: "It is good to see this report recognising the importance and potential of the private-rented sector (PRS). In our view the PRS, and schemes such as Real Lettings, provide pragmatic alternatives to social housing, which if set alongside the right services and support can help a person to maintain their tenancy and live independently over time."

Tony Warnes and Maureen Crane said: "To ensure that recent successes in tackling homelessness are not reversed, local authorities and homelessness sector organisations must reaffirm their common purpose and work even more closely together".

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