The Rebuilding Lives study: Outcomes over five years for homeless people who are rehoused

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Presentation

- Design of the Rebuilding Lives study and the sample
- Housing outcomes over five years
- Reasons for moving or being evicted
- Experiences of those housed
- Implications for practice
Rebuilding Lives study

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Study’s aims

- To examine the longer-term outcomes for formerly homeless people who were resettled
- To identify the characteristics of those who receive or need longer-term support
- To explore the roles of different practitioners in providing this support
Study design

- Longitudinal study built on FOR-HOME study
- Sample: 297 participants who were housed at 18 months
- Interviews with potential participants FIVE YEARS post-resettlement
- Interviews with workers providing housing-related support to participants
Collaborating homelessness sector organisations
The Rebuilding Lives sample
Profiles of the sample (N = 297)

- 215 men / 82 women. 23% aged 20-29; 51% aged 30-49; 26% aged 50+
- Problems: 63% mental health; 37% alcohol; 57% drugs
- 33% homeless more than 5 years
- Housing tenure when resettled: 46% local authority; 44% housing association; 10% private-rented
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewed (13 were homeless)</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacted / not interviewed</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died or in prison</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost contact</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Housing outcomes over five years
Details for 265 people:

- 55% still in original accommodation
- 34% housed in another tenancy
- 6% were homeless
- 4% had died
- 1% in prison
Housing instability over five years

- 47 people (19%) – housing instability (4+ tenancies and / or homeless episode)
- 16% homeless at some time
- Young people, and those with long histories of homelessness (> 10 years), more likely to have become homeless
- People rehoused in private-rented sector had poorer housing outcomes
Homeless episode since resettlement by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age at 60 months</th>
<th>Percentage of participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>12</td>
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Outcomes over five years by housing tenure when first resettled

Housing instability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HA</td>
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<td>PRS</td>
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</table>

Homeless episode

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of participants</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
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<tr>
<td>HA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
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</table>
Reasons for moving or being evicted
Evictions

- Overall, 24 people (9%) were evicted from resettlement accommodation

- Evictions more common in PRS (30%) cf. 9% in LA and 5% in HA

- Main reasons for eviction:
  - financial problems / rent arrears
  - ending of fixed-term tenancy agreements
  - participant’s antisocial behaviour
Moving / changing accommodation

- 42 people (16%) moved of their own accord. Another 10% had to move (but were not technically evicted). All housing tenures.

- Reasons for moving elsewhere:
  - poor condition of current housing
  - obtained larger / better accommodation
  - poor coping / needed supported housing
  - moved closer to family / friends / partner
  - problems with neighbours / local people
Experiences of those housed at 60 months
Housing conditions and coping

- Three-quarters created a ‘home’ and looking after accommodation.
- One-quarter struggling to cope – dirty living conditions or hoarding.
- 35% in housing in serious disrepair.
- More likely than general population to be in accommodation that is damp.
Income and finances

- Most are on low incomes / struggling financially.

- Financial problems exacerbated by:
  a. Social security benefits suspended / stopped
  b. Employed casually / ‘zero-hours’ contract
  c. High rents of PRS for those employed

- Increase over time in debts, esp. among young people.
Debts of £1,000+ (not student loans)

Percentage of participants

- 20-24: 5
- 25-29: 37
- 30-39: 39
- 40-49: 18, 23
- 50-59: 10, 26
- 60+: 7, 7

When resettled | 60 months
Housing-related support

- 40% had support from services in last 12 months; 32% at 60 months
- People receiving support more likely to have health / substance misuse problems and long histories of homelessness
- Less likely to have support: young people, those in PRS, and those outside London
Implications for practice
Changes to resettlement practice over last few years

- Homeless people tend to stay in hostels for shorter periods before being resettled
- More people are now resettled into the PRS
- Welfare cuts mean that tenancy support services are now often limited
- Increased use of trained volunteers / peer supporters to provide tenancy support
Tackling poor housing conditions

- Workers should link with local housing advice services that can advocate on behalf of tenants living in homes in disrepair
- Public health practitioners should help tackle poor housing
- Personalised support plans for people self-neglecting, in squalor or who are hoarders
Providing tenancy support

- Many homeless people are vulnerable and require support in the long-term either regularly or at times of difficulties

- Tenancy support should be available to:
  - (young) people with little experience of independent living
  - those resettled in the PRS

- Help for PRS tenants when fixed-term tenancy agreements end
Tackling financial problems

- More advice and coaching on managing finances and avoiding debts should be available to homeless people both before and after they are resettled.
- Those with large debts should be assisted to access specialist debt advice services.
- Assistance by Jobcentre staff / other workers to help formerly homeless people access regular jobs, rather than relying on casual work.
Assisting with welfare benefits

➢ Assistance should be given by DWP advisers & support workers to vulnerable people when benefits change or stop.

➢ The risks of suspending social security benefits should be assessed and managed in the case of formerly homeless people who are highly vulnerable and whose tenancies could be at risk by such actions.
Conclusion

Resettlement for homeless people works. However, many who are resettled face problems in the first few years. The keys to successful resettlement are the availability of workers who can:

- identify people who are having difficulties but may not seek help
- respond to needs in order to enable tenancy sustainment and prevent further homelessness
Our warm thanks to …

The study participants who have been involved throughout the five years, and have willingly invited us into their homes and shared their experiences.

The tenancy support workers and other staff who participated in Rebuilding Lives. Also members of the Advisory Group and Experts by Experience.

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Rebuilding Lives Summary available at:
www.kcl.ac.uk/scwru/res/hrp/hrp-studies/rebuilding.aspx