

NEWday Homeless Advice and Support Day Centres

Evaluation of 12-Week Pilot

1 October-21 December 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report presents the findings and recommendations of an evaluation conducted on the London Borough of Newham-funded 12-week pilot of NEWday, a consortium of 4 local voluntary agencies offering advice, support and specialist services to Newham's homeless and vulnerably housed population through day-centre provision over four days/week in two locations (East Ham and Stratford). The pilot ran during October-December 2018 and was designed to contribute to Newham's wider strategy of homelessness relief and prevention by meeting individuals' immediate needs, removing barriers to progress, and addressing longer term issues.

NEWday is operating in the context of:

- a sharp, recent and unprecedented increase in Newham's homeless population, giving rise to some of the highest rates of homelessness and rough sleeping in the country;
- the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and formation of the Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel at national level; and
- an injection of £500k into the borough to tackle homelessness, in line with Newham's mayor's stated priority.

Method

In addition to surveying quantitative data (registration forms, needs assessments, attendance records, endpoint surveys) recorded routinely by staff throughout the pilot, qualitative data was gathered via a series of interviews with 5 key NEWday staff and 2 service users plus a focus group of 5 service users. Conversations were based on an Appreciative Inquiry model to ascertain NEWday's strengths and achievements, but also to probe learning points and potential future improvements.

Findings

Quantitative Data

142 service users accessed NEWday over its 48 sessions. Of these, half were rough sleeping, using a c/o address, or staying at a night shelter; 4/5 were male; 70% were aged 30-59; a quarter reported a disability; over half were white (with over a third being white other – mainly central & eastern European); and 30 different languages were spoken. The demography was broadly comparable to the CHAIN 2017-18 figures for Newham.¹ Needs assessment data identifies high levels of support needs (in addition to housing) around:

- Finances: 65% were receiving no benefits, a quarter requested support with debt or money management, over a third had no bank account;
- Basic needs: 85% required washing/laundry facilities; 20% requested a foodbank referral;
- Literacy: a third struggled with reading/writing; half lacked basic computer skills;
- Work: over 50% sought help securing a job.
- Status: around a third were EEA nationals, so currently have uncertain status post-Brexit.

¹ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports> Greater London Authority CHAIN Annual Report Newham April 2017-March 2018

Strengths, Achievements, USPs

Many key strengths were identified through the qualitative research:

The NEWday model is highly relational and responsive to individuals' needs. It provides a warm, genuinely welcoming environment where people feel safe, valued, and respected, have their basic needs met, their dignity restored, and begin to build trusting, working relationships with staff. This model is predicated on staff who are vocationally-minded, creative, focussed on the individuals with whom they work rather than rigid targets and processes, and committed for the long-haul.

Staff were pleased to offer an extended provision of 4 days (rather than the previous 1-3), including a Stratford venue, and to see that the model is both effective and replicable. This was especially important in terms of offering greater continuity to rough sleepers and NEWway night shelter guests, and accessibility for those rough sleeping in Stratford (especially the Mall). Staff were especially proud of the throughput (over 3.5 times the initial target) and visible impact the service was having on individuals in terms of jobs, housing, benefits, debt, and intangibles such as confidence/self-worth.

Partnership is pivotal to the model: internally, staff come together effectively as a team, bringing shared values but different expertise, and appreciate one another's contribution and their mutual dependence. Work has been done to improve rostering to ensure a similar quality of service across the week. External partnerships have further developed during the course of the pilot, and increasingly agencies are coordinating with NEWday and offering specialist services at the sites. There is evidence that these relationships are beginning to transfer between venues/staff and that external agencies are increasingly seeking to work positively with NEWday, not least due to the extended provision (and potentially the signal of Council endorsement through its current funding). Internal and external partnerships contribute to the 'one-stop-shop' nature of NEWday's offer which in turn enhances NEWday's ability to work holistically and in a tailored way with service users and reduces duplication and inefficiency within the sector.

There was no real consensus amongst staff or service users around the efficacy of the various NEWday activities/services, which reinforces the notion that NEWday's strength lies in the overall package rather than one magic bullet. However, the kitchen volunteering, anticipation and meeting of basic needs, mindfulness, processes for assessing needs, and employment support were variously identified as strengths. Activities tended to be identified as important for their role in conferring dignity, transformation, sense of purpose, and building relationships and community.

Unintended Effects, Learning, Improvement

In terms of the unexpected, staff were struck by the different demographics accessing the different venues; the responsiveness of service users (their willingness to return each week, discernible transformation and sense of belonging); the extent to which external partnerships have developed (in depth and quantity); the emergence of a volunteer base from surprising sources; and service evolution/improvement week on week (particularly at the new venue). Staff identified some costs which had not been fully budgeted for, including basic clothes, toiletries, food, coffee, sleeping bags.

Considerable learning by staff was in evidence, including:

- training around housing/homelessness;
- greater humility and revising their attitudes towards homelessness;
- experimentation with the model (preparation, reflection, revision);

- understanding the value of partnership (in terms of capacity, expertise, and accountability) as well as its limits (partners are not interchangeable, so sometimes gaps can only be plugged by a specific partner) and difficulties (especially around working with statutory agencies).

Staff identified an outstanding need for mental health first aid training.

Key Characteristics

NEWday undertakes to exhibit number of hallmark characteristics in its service delivery. Overall, NEWday achieves these characteristics very well. However, in terms of what it does, NEWday is particularly strong at meeting immediate needs, providing specialist support, and providing access to health services, in which the partnership with the transitional practice nurse is especially effective. Delivery of independent living skills and access to employment, education and training opportunities were both areas for improvement – the former is currently hampered by the limited kitchen facilities at the Bobby Moore Pavilion, and staff would like to see more employment agencies and computer training available through NEWday.

In terms of how it works, NEWday is strongest at:

- providing a safe, welcoming environment;
- equality and diversity;
- being person-centred; and
- having partnership as standard.

Staff and service users identified the need for greater client involvement both in personal decisions and progression and at more strategic levels (eg: steering groups, volunteering, etc). Staff felt there was more to be done to ensure greater consistency with service users' progress and transformation: some individuals had made significant progress, but this was not true in every case. NEWday is beginning to put in structures and processes to capture and share learning with a view to improvement (such as fortnightly team meetings), but staff identified that this is easy to lose sight of in an increasingly hectic working environment. Although service users had a strong sense of community within NEWday, staff were less certain about both this and reciprocity with the wider community. Referral processes were identified as requiring tightening up to avoid future problems with capacity and flow and to ensure that help continues to be targeted appropriately; and despite extensive partnership, staff identified a number of existing specialist agencies they wished to see at NEWday (most notably: CGL) as well as services which are not yet available or sufficient (eg: advice on 'settled status', more mental health provision).

Recommendations

The evaluation has thrown up a number of practical recommendations to improve NEWday's contribution to Newham's homelessness strategy:

Model refinement:

- Clarifying and tightening referral processes;
- Ensuring needs assessments are conducted for everyone and in a way that builds rather than undermines user-staff relationships;
- Defining and agreeing clearer parameters in terms of the offer to those with no local connection and to those who are vulnerably housed or homeless as opposed to rough sleeping.
- Incorporating greater co-production in individual and project-level decision-making and execution in workable ways;

- Structuring NEWday sessions to include timetabling of specialist activities/staff alongside free-flow activities and those requiring less staff input.

Partnership/coordination:

- Encouraging increased access of NEWday by other agencies (to be written into Council SLAs where appropriate);
- Securing new partners to enhance NEWday's offer (eg: around employment, banking, coding/advanced IT, creative arts, substance misuse & addiction, legal/immigration advice);
- Requesting additional specialist provision where services are lacking or insufficient (eg: mental health, basic computer and literacy skills).

Service expansion/development:

- Extending provision to 5 days over 3 sites as resourcing and staffing permit;
- Securing funding to ensure costs are fully covered (refreshments, clothing, sleeping bags, etc);
- Refurbishing the kitchen and investing in the maintenance of the Bobby Moore Pavilion;
- Developing longer term housing (eg: supported, independent accommodation) and work solutions (eg: social enterprise work placements).

Information:

- Improving data capture in terms of outcomes, registers, needs assessments, and follow-up/endpoint assessments.
- Improving mechanisms through which information and practice is shared through NEWday, potentially resolved by the newly introduced team meetings.

Wider issues to be addressed by local government and beyond include:

- Reviewing practices and protocols within statutory agencies (eg: Homelessness Prevention & Advice Service and Adult Social Care) to make it easier for voluntary services to work with them for the good of the most vulnerable; and
- Improving coordination between local authorities to ensure a more joined-up approach to homelessness, rather than passing the problem on.

Additionally, the following areas for further research were identified:

- Follow-up with ex-service users to probe reasons for leaving and to monitor progress and sustainability of outcomes;
- Evaluation of sub-services to ensure the best use of resources within NEWday; and
- A longer-term assessment of NEWday's impact on rates of homelessness in Newham, its prevention and the reduction in cyclicity.

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF

NEWday is a consortium commissioned by London Borough of Newham (LBN) to pilot the provision of day centres offering advice and support to homeless and vulnerably housed individuals in Newham. Established for this venture, the consortium consists of Bonny Downs Community Association (BDCA), NEWway (night shelter operating during the colder months), Skills Enterprise, and the Salvation Army (Stratford branch). The pilot ran for 12 weeks from 1st October – 21 December 2018, with day centres open 4 days per week (8:30-14:30) over 2 venues (1 day at Salvation Army, Paul Street, E15; 3 days at Bobby Moore Pavilion, Napier Road, E6). For the preceding four years, BDCA in partnership with NEWway and Skills Enterprise ran a similar 'Purpose & Belonging' session at the Bobby Moore Pavilion (BMP) targeting homeless and vulnerably housed people, which had been variously open 1-3 days per week (most recently 1 day) according to funding.

The stated purpose of the NEWday provision, in line with the overarching aim of LBN's homelessness strategy, is to relieve homelessness and to prevent those at risk of homelessness from becoming homeless, including breaking cycles of homelessness. Correspondingly, NEWday's ultimate success will be measured in terms of its effectiveness at reducing rough sleeping in the borough.

NEWday services are designed to:

- address immediate needs (safe, welcoming place to be, hygiene needs, refreshment, food);
- overcome immediate barriers to progress (eg: obtaining ID, using a correspondence address, looking at financials such as opening and managing a bank account, accessing benefits, or support with employment); and
- address longer-term issues, including through the provision of initial assessments, tailored support, access to specialist services, peer support, volunteering, and help with accessing legal advice, making housing benefits and housing applications, debt management, and making HPAS applications and developing Personal Housing Plans.

Access to NEWday services is by referral, not drop-in, on the basis of individuals' motivation and commitment to change.

NEWday undertook to deliver in 5 key areas, with a number of hallmark features or characteristics in its approach to service delivery:

5 key areas:

- Meeting immediate need
- Provision of specialist support
- Support to develop independent living skills
- Support to access education, employment & training opportunities
- Provision of health services

Hallmark characteristics:

- Client involvement at every level
- Safe, welcoming environment
- Equality & diversity
- Person-centred
- Community-centric (based in community, fostering community, owned by service-users)
- Partnership as standard

- Progress & transformation
- Review & improvement

Additionally, the following factors are central to NEWday’s undertaking:

- Referral processes
- Use of specialist agencies
- Mix of rough sleepers, hidden homeless, vulnerably housed
- Prioritising those with Newham connections

This report represents an evaluation of the initial 12-week pilot, particularly in terms of the features described above.

CONTEXT

According to Shelter, 1 in 25 people were rough sleeping (41) or temporarily housed (13,607) in Newham in 2017, representing the highest rate for any local authority in England.² In terms of rough sleeping, CHAIN data suggests this under-reports the situation: its most recent Annual Report for Newham recorded 418 rough sleepers in 2017/18, representing an increase of 6% on the previous year, more than 100 of whom had a history of rough sleeping (‘returners’ or ‘stock’),³ and the quarterly report for July-September 2018 recorded 198 rough sleepers – a 47% increase on the second quarter of the previous year.⁴ According to Homeless Link, rough sleeping in Newham quadrupled between 2014 and 2017, availability of homeless support services has declined, and Local Housing Allowance has not kept pace with rent and house price rises.⁵

NEWday was commissioned in the context of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017’s implementation; the government’s pledge to spend £1bn by 2020 to address homelessness and rough sleeping, and establishment of the Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel to inform its strategy;⁶ and

²

https://england.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/1440053/8112017_Far_From_Alone.pdf

³ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports> Greater London Authority CHAIN Annual Report Newham April 2017-March 2018

⁴ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports> Greater London Authority CHAIN Quarterly Report Newham July-September 2018

⁵ Homeless Link <https://www.homeless.org.uk>, taken from Newham Homelessness Summit 2018 Facts, Figures & What Next?

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-lead-national-effort-to-end-rough-sleeping> (accessed 11/1/19)

a commitment by Newham's new mayor to prioritise tackling homelessness within the borough.⁷ Newham received £500k MHCLG funding to implement a range of measures including:

- 20 extra emergency accommodation hotel beds accessible all year round;
- Extending the Housing First pilot supporting rough sleepers to come off the streets;
- Support for women with no recourse to public funds experiencing domestic abuse; and
- Increasing the provision of 'pop-up' day centres for homeless people, including funding staff and rental costs.⁸

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places new duties on local government to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas, including:

- Providing free, accessible information & advice (on rights, prevention, securing accommodation when homeless, help available & how to access) available to everyone and relevant to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Assessments & personalised housing plans for all eligible applicants setting out the steps for housing authorities and individuals to take (and their mandatory or recommended status).
- Duty on public bodies to refer individual cases (with consent) to an identified housing authority (promoting working together).
- New duties to prevent & relieve homelessness for eligible persons regardless of priority and intentionality.
- Extending the 'threatened with homelessness' definition from 28 to 56 days in order to increase the timescale (and therefore those eligible) for preventative work.⁹

⁷ <https://www.newham.gov.uk/Pages/News/New-Mayor-announces-a-fresh-start-to-tackle-street-homelessness-in-Newham.aspx> (accessed 11/1/19)

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ Garvie, D (April 2017), Shelter Briefing: Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_and_research/policy_library/policy_library_folder/briefing_homelessness_reduction_act_2017 (accessed 15/1/19)

METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

The evaluation comprises two main parts: a desk-based review of client data, and a series of interviews/focus groups with service users and lead staff from each partner organisation.

Client data was collected by NEWday in the form of user registrations and needs assessments questionnaires, attendance records, file notes documenting progress and outcomes for individuals, and post-service/end-point questionnaires. The majority of this data has been recorded by NEWday in Upshot, BDCA's secure, cloud-based, service-user database.

Qualitative data was collected using a framework based on the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) model, which encourages reflection on the following phases:¹⁰

- Define – what is the topic of inquiry?
- Discover – What gives life? What is the best? What creates hope? What gives cause for celebration? What works?
- Dream – What might be? How might things work in future? Where would you like to be?
- Design – What should be (ideally)? What processes would work well?
- Deliver/destiny – How to empower, learn, adjust/improve, sustain change?

Compost London elected to use AI as this allows participants to focus on positives and possibilities, rather than problems and deficits. We believed this would help to preserve service users' dignity and potentially provide some quasi-therapeutic benefit in offering participants the opportunity to envision change and start to identify the pathways – and support they might require – towards its realisation. A similar model was used with staff, although staff interviews were focused more on the service provision rather than personal progress and achievement.

Interviews were conducted at both sites, with 5 staff and 7 service users in total, through 6 interviews and one focus group (4 staff interviews; 2 interviews plus one focus group with service users). Given the requirement to evaluate contemporaneously with the pilot, the interviews and focus group took place on 20 and 22 November (ie: during week 8 of the pilot).

SAMPLING

Staff

Interviewees constituted a purposive sample, having been identified by the consortium lead as key staff from each of the partners (2 from Salvation Army, 1 from Skills Enterprise & BDCA, 1 from NEWway, 1 consultant brought in to manage NEWday pilot day-to-day). All staff were given the option not to participate in the focus groups when they were invited, although none declined.

Service users

Suitable times were identified to enable one focus group to take place at each venue at times when users were likely to be available. However, as NEWday runs on a free-flow, drop-in basis once people have been accepted into the service, and the nature of the client group is often unpredictable or chaotic, it was not known in advance which service users would attend. We opted not to attempt to make appointments or issue invitations ahead of time. Staff directed the research

¹⁰ See <https://appreciativeinquiry.champlain.edu/learn/appreciative-inquiry-introduction/> (accessed Oct 2018), and https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/appreciative_inquiry (accessed Oct 2018).

team to individuals present on the days with whom they had longer standing relationships and who had lower mental health needs, on the basis that these individuals would be better placed to comment on their experiences of NEWday (ie: a convenience sample). Language was identified as a potential impediment to data gathering, although the research team was advised that normally other service users readily help with translation. Service users were given the option (but were under no obligation) to participate. In the event, a user focus group was conducted at BMP, but the research was conducted as 1:1 interviews at Paul Street. One service user opted out of being interviewed when approached. During the focus group, people felt at liberty to join and leave as they pleased: the group commenced with 4, rose to 5 and fell to 2 over the course of the session.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As with any social research, there are a number of ethical considerations.

- **Intrusiveness/defensiveness**
NEWday's efficacy is closely interlinked with service users' personal successes or failures. This makes it difficult to evaluate the difference NEWday has made without understanding service users' situations, which inevitably creates a degree of intrusion. As far as possible, service users were able to control the extent to which they shared with the researchers, and an attempt was made to focus on positives rather than individuals' problems. Similarly, for all or nearly all of the staff NEWday is a vocation, which makes its evaluation much more personal. As such, probing NEWday's shortcomings may feel intrusive and cause defensiveness in staff to the detriment of the evaluation, the project, and the staff themselves. This was mitigated by the AI approach and the overarching desire of staff to deliver the best service possible, which allowed staff to focus on ideas for improvements rather than shortcomings, whilst still eliciting the required information.
- **Expectations, power, and non-participation**
Research participants were apprised of the purpose of the research and service users advised that their participation or otherwise would have no direct impact on the services they received from NEWday going forwards. Staff (and some service users) made the connection between the evaluation and its potential impact on NEWday's future funding. Although service users evidently felt at liberty to withdraw from participating, there were one or two moments at which service users appeared to shy away from criticising NEWday, apparently due to loyalty and gratitude rather than fear of direct negative consequences. However, it should be acknowledged that stakes are high for service users: they are extremely vulnerable and often highly dependent on NEWday for support, which creates a structural power imbalance inherent in the evaluation.
- **Data sharing**
The research team explained what the information would be used for and obtained consent from all participants at the point of collecting the data. Participants were advised that they could withdraw consent at any time. None of them have done so, although some aspects of conversations with staff were 'off the record'.
- **Anonymity**
Service users were promised anonymity, which has been maintained within the report. Staff have been anonymised as much as possible (for example, staff comments have not been attributed), although given the small team it may be possible for those associated with NEWday

to identify the source of some comments. Staff were apprised of this at the outset, and given the opportunity to amend or withdraw any comments from the draft findings.

- **Declaration of interest**

The lead researcher is also a part-time employee of BDCA, which inevitably compromises independence, and the Salvation Army staff are known to her through her family's attendance of Messy Church at Paul Street. This was unavoidable on this occasion due to lack of availability of other Compost London staff, but is not normal practice. To manage the conflict of interest, the evaluation has been overseen by non-connected directors of Compost London, including one attending the focus group on BDCA premises and providing independent observations. There have been some advantages to the connection, in terms of building trust and rapport with interviewees, and access to Upshot data.

LIMITATIONS

There are a number of research limitations in addition to those arising from the ethical considerations:

- **Service user skew**

The users participating were regular NEWday attendees, suggesting some measure of order/routine in their lives. Those with the most positive outcomes are likely to have moved on; whereas the hardest to reach along with any who had negative experiences of NEWday were unlikely to be present. Moreover, staff potentially could have chosen the individuals they felt would report more favourably, although a review of participants' outcomes and demographic data suggests a reasonably representative sample, with each exhibiting a mixture of achievements and setbacks in their timelines. Demographically, the group is slightly older than average (mean=50; mean age of NEWday attendees=44).

- **Impact on rough sleeping**

This research does not attempt to evaluate NEWday's ultimate effectiveness at reducing rough sleeping in Newham, which is too soon to assess, both in terms of the rough sleeping data available and because this has been a short-term provision working on a long-term problem.

- **Ex-service users**

Whilst it would be worthwhile to do so, it has not been possible to follow-up with those no longer using NEWday on this occasion, due to limited time and resources.

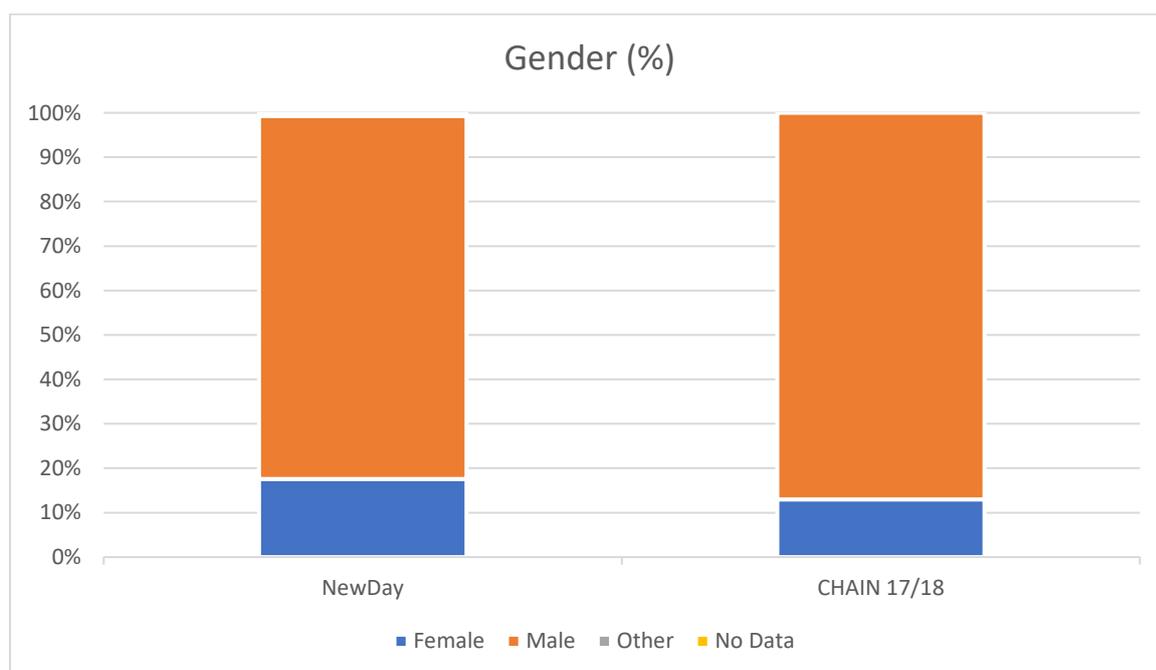
FINDINGS

QUANTITATIVE DATA

All service users

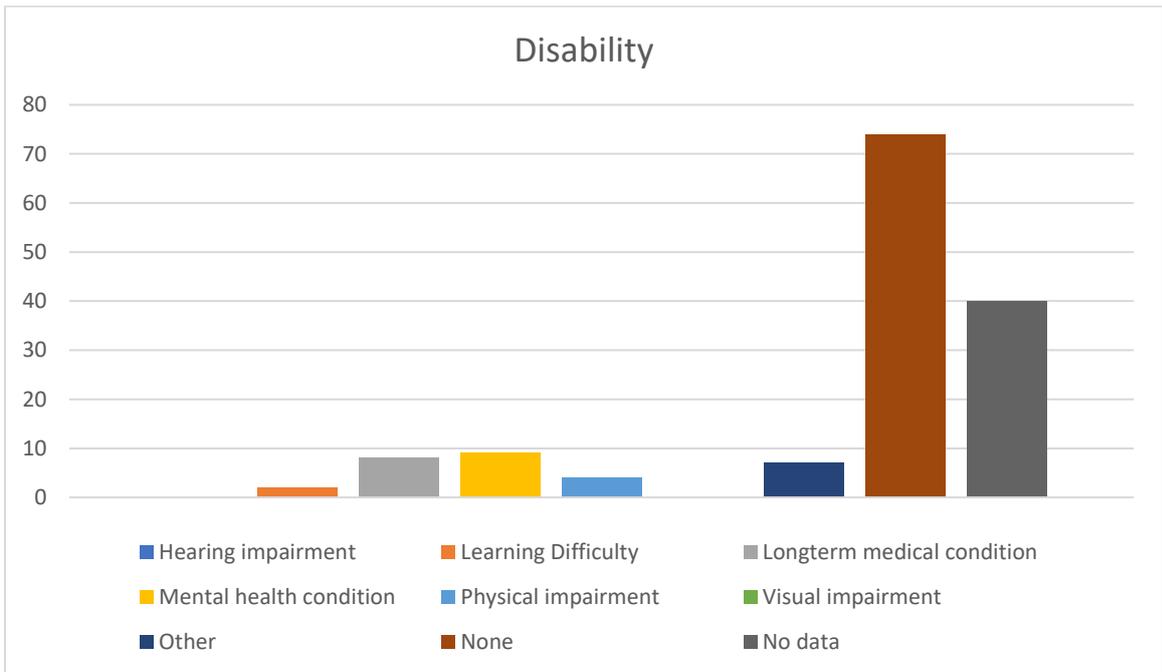
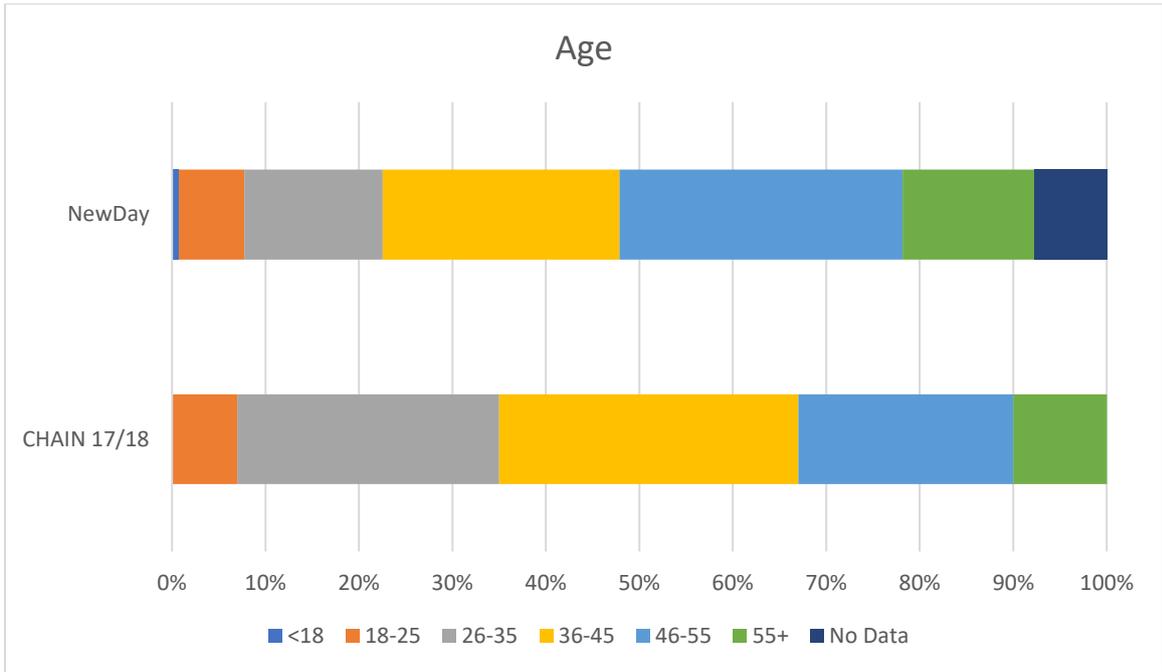
According to the data recorded in Upshot, 142 unique individuals accessed NEWday during the pilot – over 3.5 times the agreed target of 38 – and all 48 sessions were delivered. There were 13 attendances at mindfulness sessions; 642 attendances for advice; and 50 attendances for medical services (flu jabs, dentist, nurse, occupational therapist, etc).

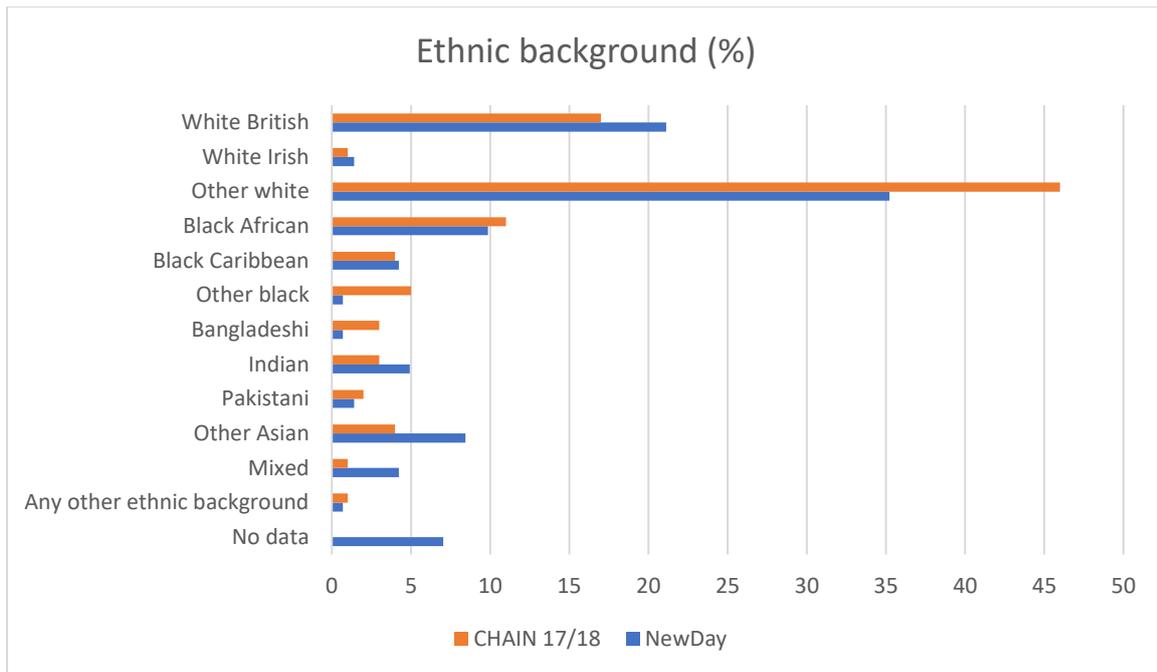
In terms of demography, the majority were male (81.7%), aged 30-59 (70.4%), white (57.7%), and professed a faith (62.7%). 27.5% reported a disability; 13.4% reported a mental health condition; and 50% were rough sleeping, had no fixed abode, or were using a c/o address. 30 different languages were spoken by service users: Romanian (15.3%), Russian (11.7%), Lithuanian (7.2%), Italian (6.3%) and Polish (6.3%) were the most common languages besides English (80.1%).¹¹ The demographic data is broadly comparable to that presented in the most recent CHAIN Annual Report for Newham (April 17-March 18), although NEWday service users are a slightly older group.¹²



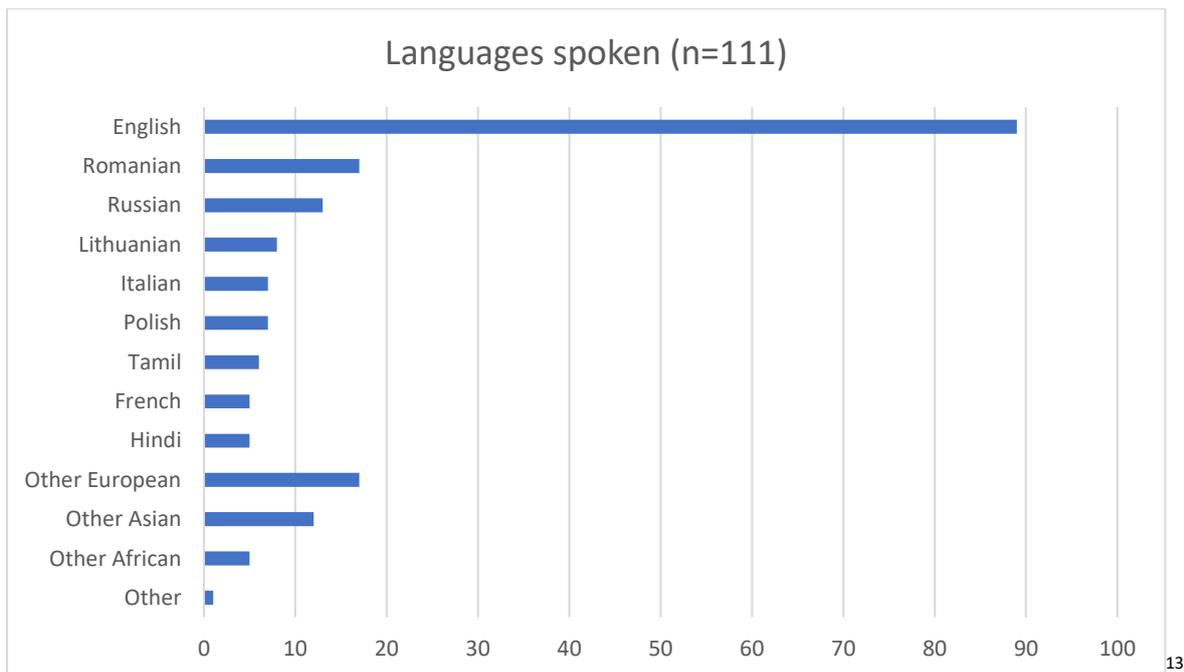
¹¹ Potentially around 20% of those for which there is data did not report having English. Although in some cases this may be a data-collection oversight, at least some amongst the 20% have no English, as corroborated by staff interviews.

¹² <https://data-london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-report> (accessed 11/1/19); this is a similar, but not identical target group.

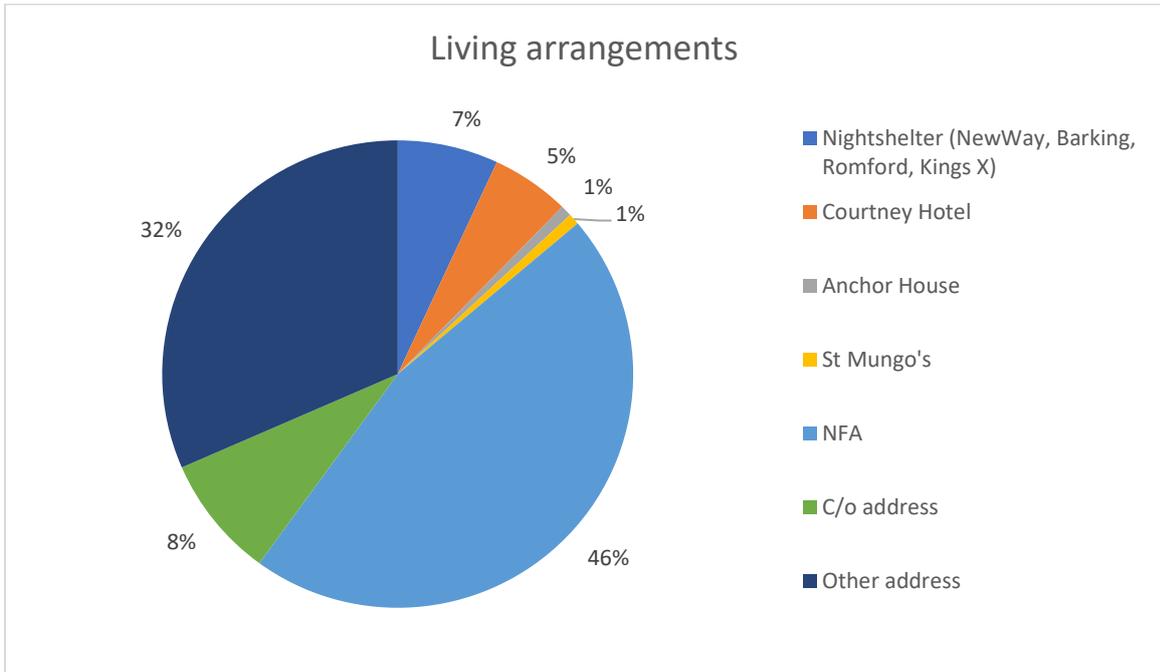
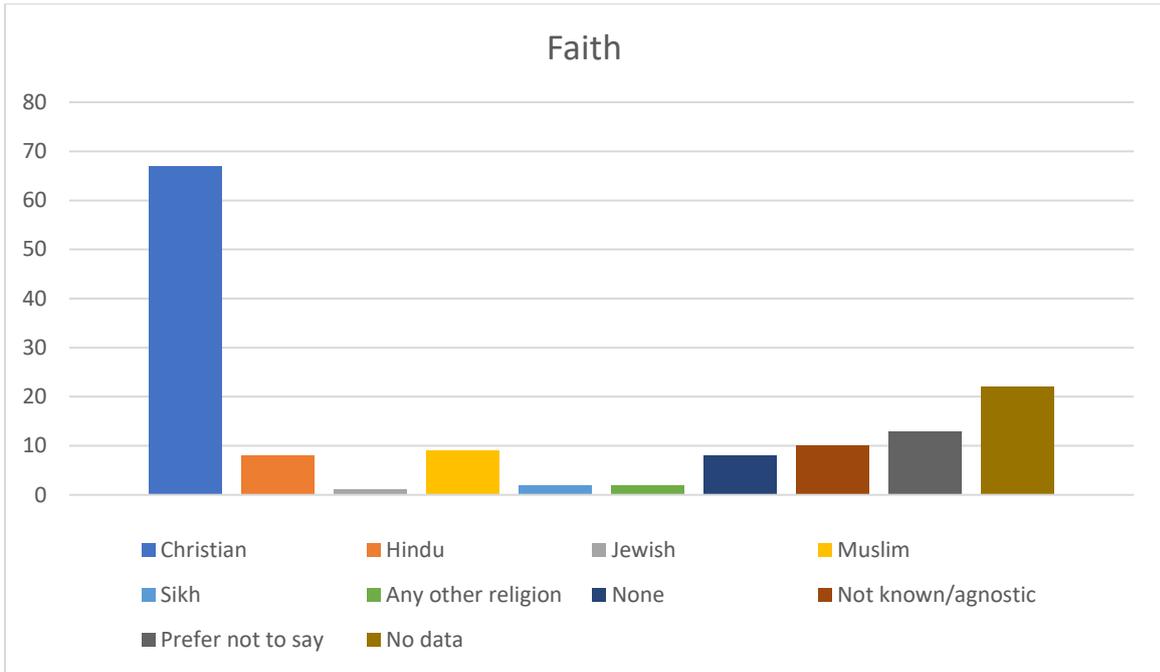




The high proportion of individuals from other white ethnic backgrounds are predominantly of European heritage, especially central and eastern Europe.

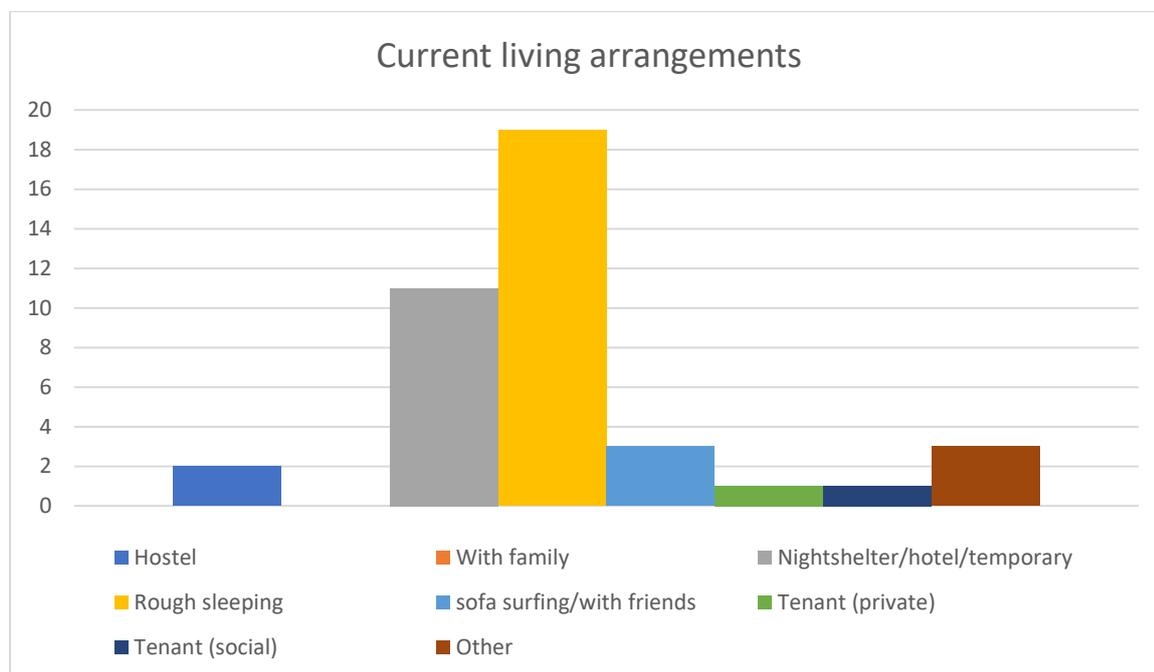


¹³ NB: some service users are multilingual.

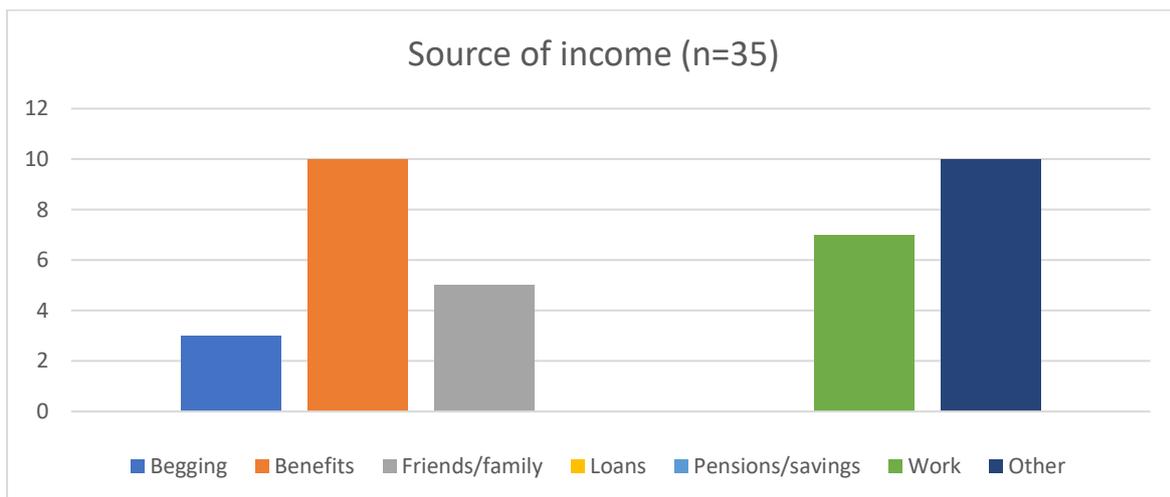
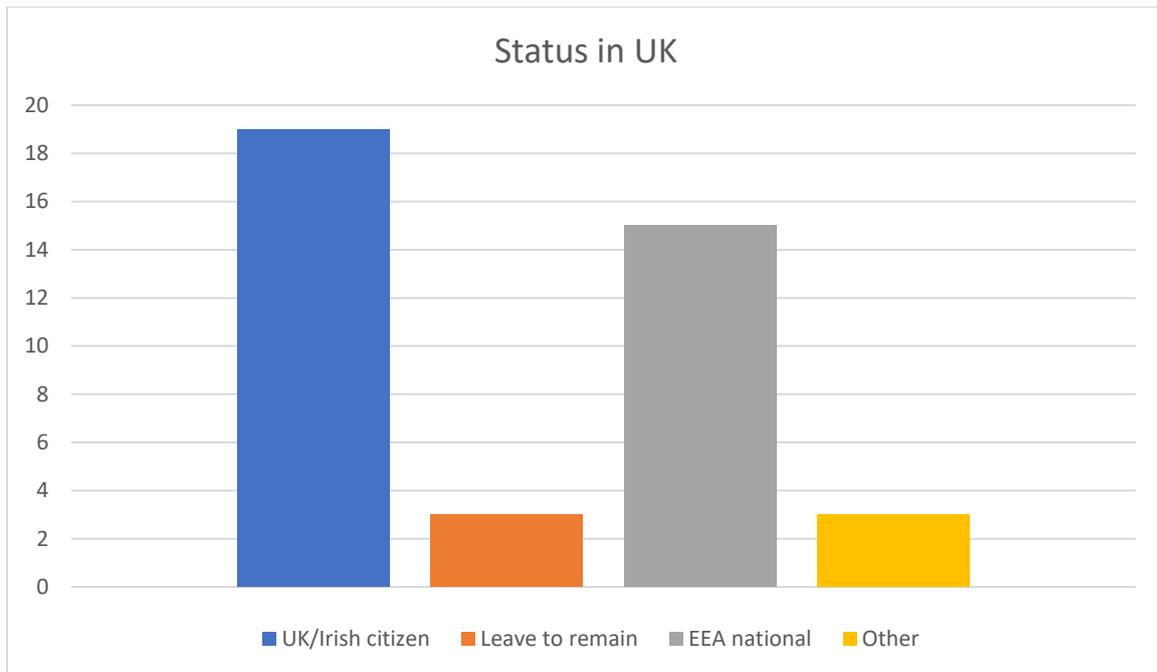


Needs assessments data

At the time of writing, 40 individuals were recorded as having completed welcome/needs assessment questionnaires. Of these, the results are as follows:



- 37 reported needing advice and support around housing and almost half were rough sleeping.
- 7 lacked valid ID documents.
- A quarter needed support around debt or money management, and 15 had no bank account.
- 26 (65%) were receiving no benefits, 5 were on ESA, 4 on UC, 3 on JSA, and 2 on PIP/DLA.
- Benefits were a main source of income for fewer than a third, with one fifth in paid work.
- Over half needed help with looking for work, and nearly a third required help with basic literacy.
- 50% reported feeling confident using a computer; 50% reported that they did not (n=36).
- 20% needed a food-bank referral.
- 35 (over 85%) required access to washing facilities.
- 15% required help with independent living skills.
- 9 requested a medical referral, 5 requested referral to substance misuse support, and 2 to mental health services.
- Almost half were UK/Irish citizens, but over a third were other EEA nationals, suggesting high numbers with uncertain future status pending clarity on Brexit.



Endpoint survey data

A sample of 14 individuals took an endpoint survey, developed for the NEWday pilot. Service users were asked to score the extent to which they agreed with each statement using a 1-5 scale (1=strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree).

Since accessing NEWday...	Mean score	Mode
...my basic needs are better met.	4.23	4
...I engage less in activities such as begging, theft, prostitution, underground working.	3.85	3
...I am more engaged with the support I need.	4.00	4
...I am better able to address deeper issues.	3.43	4
...I have access to the support that's right for me.	4.14	4
...I understand my rights better.	3.57	4

...I am better able to manage my finances.	3.79	4
...I feel more in control of my life.	4.07	4
...I am accessing more of the benefits I am entitled to.	3.69	4
...I am better at dealing with practical problems.	3.93	4
...I have gained the skills I need for independent living.	4.00	4
...I feel less likely to become (or return to being) homeless.	3.93	4
...I know more about my work options.	4.14	4
...my work prospects have improved.	4.07	5
...I have gained skills useful for work.	4.14	5
...I feel better able to find work.	4.43	5
...my physical health has improved.	4.14	4
...my mental health & wellbeing have improved.	4.38	5
...I better understand how to keep healthy.	4.00	5
...I better understand the risks to my health, especially around rough sleeping.	3.79	3
...I drink or take drugs less.	3.79	3

6 respondents reported accessing other services during the NEWday pilot, although in 4 cases this was due to signposting or referral by NEWday. The sample is too small to draw any firm conclusions; however, responses from this sample were largely positive, with the majority tending to agree that their lives had improved in these areas since accessing NEWday. Respondents were more equivocal in relation to their ability to address deeper issues, understand their rights, and access their benefits; there was an understandable reluctance to answer the questions relating to criminal or antisocial behaviours, which may mean these are reported inaccurately; and respondents seemed most positive about the support they had received in relation to work and health.

Specific outcomes are difficult to collate from Upshot, but some are presented in the funding reports having been drawn from records kept by NEWway. Despite the high number of unique attendees and high levels of repeat attendance (90 attended 3 or more sessions), the sub-targets do not appear to have been surpassed to a similar degree. For example, only 11 people have secured tenancies for 6+ months (target=10), and only 4 people are reported as having secured employment opportunities (target=8).¹⁴

Difficulties with the current data recording system

The reporting requirements and evaluation, combined with the higher than anticipated numbers of service users, have brought to light some difficulties with the current data recording systems:

- **Inconsistency between systems**

There is a substantial discrepancy between the number of unique service users reported to the funder and that recorded in Upshot. There are a number of possible reasons for this:

- Data had not been fully entered into Upshot at the time when the report was compiled.
- Staff lack confidence in Upshot's accuracy and/or their own ability to extract the required data from Upshot.

¹⁴ The actual number is likely to exceed the target, as it would include those taking up volunteering and work experience opportunities, whereas the 4 in the report refers to those securing paid work with accommodation.

- Staff from different partners are using different recording systems which are inconsistent with one another.
- **Registration for sub-activities**
There has been some confusion around recording uptake of activities and services which happen within NEWday sessions. Staff have rightly been concerned to avoid double-counting and keep paperwork to a minimum, but in practice this has meant a loss of detail regarding which individuals have accessed which specific forms of support (activities and services occurring within sessions have been recorded as headcounts rather than registers).
- **Capturing and reporting on outcomes**
Timeline events can be used within Upshot to record individuals' progress, detail regarding the interventions they have received, and outcomes (where staff are made aware of these). Whilst this is a powerful tool in keeping track of individual case histories and progress, especially when working across the team, the database struggles to report on these timeline events across service users in large numbers. Furthermore, timeline events are not necessarily used consistently or reliably across the staff team. The timeline event options may need refining in light of the pilot and unprecedented numbers to enable staff to better distinguish between status, interventions, and outcomes, and to ensure all possible scenarios can be captured.
- **Needs assessments**
The welcome survey/needs assessment tool appears to have been used with fewer than a third of individuals accessing NEWday. Although there is an understandable reluctance amongst staff to overwhelm service users with paperwork, or uncertainty as to the appropriate moment to undertake an assessment, this presents a missed opportunity to both understand and share information with colleagues about individuals' needs and priorities as well as those of the user group en masse.
- **Endpoint survey**
An endpoint survey has been developed to capture the data required to report back to the funder, however, this currently bears little relation to the welcome survey, so does not lend itself easily to longitudinal comparison. The use of this survey has already thrown up difficulties in gathering data on engagement in antisocial or criminal behaviour required by the funder, and pursuing this information potentially risks undermining hard-won working relationships with service users.

FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

The findings below broadly follow the staff interview framework:¹⁵

- What has been going well?
- What have been NEWday's greatest achievements?
- What are the key things about NEWday that make the difference?
- Have there been any surprises or unintended effects?
- What have you learned?
- How could NEWday be improved going forwards?

For ease of reference, staff comments are italicised and mainly highlighted in blue text boxes; comments from service users are in yellow text boxes.

1. What has been going well?

Overall, staff were pleased with how the NEWday pilot was going, and all were able to identify particular aspects by which were especially impressed:

ADDRESSING IMMEDIATE NEEDS:

All staff valued NEWday's ability to meet service users' immediate basic needs in a timely way (showers, clothing, laundry, refreshments, food, sleeping bags, safe/warm space, people to talk to). This was identified as important in helping people regain a sense of dignity (especially where needs were anticipated and items such as clean underwear offered proactively before people had to ask) and for enabling people to move on to address higher level needs. Staff also appreciated how responsive they were able to be to pressing needs:

"Seeing people coming in who have no housing, and...get support immediately".

"Responding really quickly to need".

"Where you can wash, where you can wash your clothes, where you can get a postal address to claim benefits, and then maybe lead onto temporary accommodation." U

EXTENDED PROVISION:

Staff valued opening for longer hours and on more days than ever before, as echoed by service users:

"We've been open for 2 or 3 days in the past, but never 4 days and never 8:30-2:30."

"It's felt really helpful just to be able to say: 'Tuesdays, or you have the rest of the week over at Bonny Downs', so to be able to be really direct."

¹⁵ See also Appendices

“Now it’s increased [...] I can come Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. And it’s cold out there. So, I can have a cup of tea, I can sit down, I can chat amongst friends, I can get warm [...] it all goes back to this dignity thing [...] and start to rebuild again.” U

GREATER REACH/STRATFORD LOCATION:

In addition to the longer service hours, staff identified the importance of the proximity of the Paul Street location to Stratford Mall. This has meant that both sides of the borough are served and has brought new referrals:

“Having a location in Stratford has meant we’ve seen a lot of new faces that we wouldn’t necessarily have seen, because it’s a trek getting over to East Ham.”

CONTINUITY OF SERVICES:

The extended provision in combination with the wider partnership has given rise to greater service continuity, particularly for night shelter guests and others seeking a routine through which to effect change:

“Seeing the relationship build up with the project workers [...], because there’s the consistency – not just the dropping in at night, but through the day as well.”

In some cases the relationships developed by service users have been with the team, working closely together to ensure individuals get the most appropriate support and advice; in other cases continuity is about being able to access a single key member of staff when needed who is familiar with an individual’s situation:

“Identifying the ones where their need is less so they can see different people, but we’ve each got more complex ones [...] I think that’s really important [...to provide] a sense of continuity, to avoid them having to overshare”

Service continuity is also about providing a foundation from which to build:

“Nice to have that continuity, and then to build on it through doing the cooking, or having conversations, mindfulness [...] having a real sense of purpose. It’s not just about people hanging out and drinking coffee. There’s a lot more to it...”

“Given me a purpose and a meaningful way to use my time. If you weren’t here, I could be in some kind of danger. But you are here, so so am I.” Y

SHARPER FOCUS:

Although not universal, some staff observed and appreciated NEWday’s more targeted focus on homelessness rather than poverty more widely:

“New referrals. It feels like really targeted referrals. The real rough sleepers, homeless.”

SYSTEMS, PROCESSES, MODEL:

One member of staff identified the systems in place for 'processing' new referrals and initial needs assessments (which inform discussions with individuals and help individualise the service) as a strength:

"A good plan of what to do when new people come in [...] I think we respond really well – we've got a good system in place which means that people are seen, registered, survey is going really well because it informs our discussions with the new person [...] and helps us identify the areas to work on intensively."

NEWday's model is central: rather than just thinking in terms of lacks and problems, staff help individuals identify their current focus, hopes and strengths in order to support them to build from these.

"We did some training with the Mayday Trust [...] strengths-based work. That's been really helpful in thinking about how we use that survey [...]. Often [...] service users] are really focussed on everything that's gone wrong, so it's really helpful to work out the things that they want to focus on and the things that they are doing well [...] That gives hope and then we can work with the energy of that hope."¹⁶

ONE-STOP SHOP:

All staff valued the ability to offer a holistic service, in terms of meeting immediate/basic needs; offering support and advice around employment, housing, basic skills, debt, benefits, obtaining documentation, etc; additional in-house services such as use of a c/o address, mindfulness sessions, kitchen volunteering; the presence of other, specialist services (including transitional practice nurse, dentist, addiction/substance misuse); and the ability to signpost/refer to other specialist support (eg: for immigration advice, victim support, etc, as well as access to Food Bank, night shelter accommodation, community garden volunteering, training, and other opportunities offered by the consortium partners beyond the NEWday remit):

"It's not just a standalone: that will not work. It's a platform to address all these issues."

"It feels like it has come together."

Staff felt that they were both able and required to respond to a greater complexity of needs than ever before:

"More joined up and relational. Not just pockets doing what they're doing as an island...it's really helpful for people to know that we're all working together."

"They got me off the street [...] got my dignity back. [...] Helped me get into Anchor House. [...] I've got a fulltime job now [...] Everything's sorted!" Z

¹⁶ <https://maydaytrust.org.uk/> (accessed 15/1/19)

PARTNERSHIP (WITHIN NEWDAY):

Staff reported that the team is working well together whilst maintaining clarity around their different remits/expertise. Aiding this are fortnightly NEWday meetings to ‘case conference’ and resolve any immediate service-related issues (for example, clarifying who is doing what and when, and filling any gaps). Staff were clear that the expanded partnership better enables a coordinated response to Newham’s homelessness problem, and with different organisations bringing their own unique offers:

“Having Salvation Army join the fold [...] this building’s so nice, and everyone really appreciates being here.”

“Partnership is going well.”

“The team have really been working well.”

“Crossover [with NEWway staff. Attending meetings] helps us work out what are the gaps and who needs to do what for who. And we’re replicating that with a NEWday meeting [...] fortnightly.”

PARTNERSHIP (EXTERNAL):

Increasingly, links are also being developed with external partners, and there is some evidence of ‘sharing’ these links across the consortium:

“Building up partnerships with other agencies that we wouldn’t necessarily have had contact with [...] Thames Reach guys were actually able to come into the building to evaluate people here [...] We would have never met them before.”

The physical presence of external agencies was also identified as positive, not only in terms of them being able to contribute to the ‘one-stop shop’, holistic approach, but also:

“A physical handover of staff and actual conversations, which is so much more constructive than an email [...] and that person’s [then] got to make that step by themselves.”

Building these relationships is also key to agencies are filling gaps rather than duplicating:

“Now we’re working much more in partnership with people like SHP and [...] ThamesReach [...] and the council’s outreach staff, so it’s really important that [...] we don’t duplicate.”

KEY ACTIVITIES:

Staff variously identified a diverse range of activities as the best aspects of NEWday, including kitchen volunteering, sit down meals together, conversations with service users, mindfulness sessions, and employment support. Although the activities identified differed, the selections tended to be made because of their significance to service users in terms of dignity, transformation, sense of purpose, and building relationships and community.

REPLICABILITY:

One of the strengths of the model is the fact that it has been possible to replicate it straightforwardly in a new location. Although there are some differences, the feel of the two sites is similar, largely due to the calm, welcoming atmosphere created by the staff, and shared key modus operandi.

"Thursday hasn't felt too different. It's going smoothly on Thursdays, as it always has."

"Replication on Tuesday has gone really well, in terms of the building, vision and hospitality. Really smooth uptake here. This feels [...] just as strong as it does at the Pavilion."

"It's a replicable model."

2. Greatest achievements

TARGETS:

The extent to which the targets agreed with the funder have been surpassed. At the time of interviewing (conducted in week 8), NEWday had engaged with nearly three times the target number of unique service users set for the 12-week pilot:

"Responding to the number of people that we've responded to [...] 98 people since the beginning of October."

SERVICE USER BREAKTHROUGHS AND OUTCOMES:

Ultimately, the greatest achievements were those of service users, particularly in terms of housing and employment:

"It's really difficult to help homeless users into employment [...] so the biggest achievement is the distance travelled by some of the homeless users. [...] 5 users have secured employment."

"Seeing someone get into housing and get a job."

"Seeing breakthroughs [...] interviews with housing, benefits reinstated, debts written off, people making progress with Learn My Way."

Individuals' progress in less tangible ways was also identified as significant, such as building relationships, discovering a sense of purpose, or increased self-esteem or confidence:

"Seeing someone looking really proud [...] with everyone feasting on a meal they've prepared or putting finishing touches to a construction they've done at the community garden. They're things you can't measure, but you know from someone's behaviour."

"For me it's been a massive experience [...] I didn't see no direction, nowhere to go till I came to this centre [...] my life started getting back slowly, [...] seeing my life coming back again [...] it's in progress." T

"I'm feeling more positive because I'm getting good answers. [...] I'm hopeful to get a job. The persistence of staff is giving me hope." X

"It's given me the confidence to do stuff. I can do more things, including things I thought I can't, but I can. I can cope with more. Now I know I definitely can." Y

INDIVIDUALISED SERVICE:

Staff were impressed not only by the throughput and number of individual outcomes achieved in such a short timeframe, but also by the degree of tailoring they had been able to offer to ensure that each individual was given the most appropriate support for them, rather than taking a 'one-size-fits-all' approach – arguably an easier option given the numbers accessing the service, but likely to have been less effective.

"I would hope that that response has been individualised and has been a response to the person [...I'm] between 70-80% sure."

"For me they're doing the best they can." T

"They're friendly people. [...] she listens to what you say. She don't push you to one side, she just sits with you and gives you time." Z

SEEING THE THEORY WORKING IN PRACTICE:

Staff have developed and maintained an empowering support model of stepping back and facilitating, rather than doing for/to someone. This model has borne positive results, and staff reported a sense of achievement from seeing the transformative effect of their offer:

"We have facilities and what we're able to give."

"It's working."

KITCHEN VOLUNTEERING:

For staff at Paul Street, the opportunity for service users to volunteer in their kitchen was key. This was a longstanding vision which came to fruition out of genuine need, when service users were asked to help out due to a staff member's back injury. Although seemingly simple, this activity has benefits on many levels, including: bringing people together (in cooking and eating), thereby building relationships and community; giving people a sense of purpose, pride and power in being able to give something back and meet a genuine need; developing skills and confidence; a platform from which to teach other life skills (eg: planning, budgeting, food hygiene, commitment, responsibility, leadership, routine, etc). Staff described one individual who had been:

"[...] really reticent about coming into the kitchen, and I think there had been some issues around his self-confidence [...] I just watched him every single week blossom and stand taller and look more animated [...] and his face when we trusted him with £10 [to buy ingredients...] And he owned it: he was leading all of us in the kitchen."

"You're not just sitting on a park bench drinking cheap cider. You're doing something a bit more practical and they [DWP] can't argue with that, can they?" U

"Doing the cooking and the people I'm with." Y

3. Key things that make the difference

There was broad consensus amongst staff around the key elements of the NEWday model in terms of what made the difference for service users and what differentiated NEWday from other homelessness services.

PROVIDING A WELCOME AND SAFETY:

"The way that we welcome is really important. The atmosphere that's created here."

"We're providing somewhere safe."

"There's a clear understanding about what our rules are in terms of you can't turn up here and be really drunk, but at the same time we understand that the level of alcohol dependency means that you would need to drink safely."

"They're very welcoming, which makes you want to come here. I feel safe here – I feel alright here. [...] It makes me want to go back." Y

"You're welcomed with open arms. It gets you out of the rain for a few hours. It gets your mind off thinking about things, and it gets you back somewhere in the realms of normality [...] and to start again." U

"Staff are calm, very welcoming and friendly. It's like you're in a family group, a little community here. [...] Everyone makes you feel part of it. Everyone says good morning." Y

"There's no squabbling. It's a very relaxed atmosphere [...] without fear and without prejudice, really. I think that's part of the whole set up [...] this is a very approachable way through a very sad situation for a lot of people." U

RESTORING DIGNITY & MEETING BASIC NEEDS FIRST:

"For some people it's just about having somewhere safe and warm, to get a shower, to [...] get some dignity and comfort back into their lives after [...] a cold series of nights outside over the weekend."

"To have one set of clothes and trying to exist like that is horrific [...] it's not acceptable. And having to come and ask, so even going in before someone asks and offering it."

"But to be able to be clean and comfortable means you can sit and have a conversation."

"NEWday is the bridge between survival and growth. [...] We see our [...] service users in this survival part and there's this gap into growth [...] it's a bridge there, like little stepping stones."

"The good thing about this place is that you can [...] get something to eat. If you're eating normally [...] then you're not tempted to steal, you're not tempted to beg." U

WORKING RELATIONALLY AND RESPONSIVELY WITH INDIVIDUALS:

"Relational"

"Eating together"

"Face to face"

"Very people-oriented"

"It's a love that we give and we get back [...] that's really deep-rooted in [...] all the staff, also the volunteers."

"We don't see it as a job, we see it as a great service [...] every staff is like that."

"People coming back" [having previously built relationship through NEWway]

"We call it a sari in a thorn, so we have to take it little by little, [...when dealing with complex problems] you can't pull everything, so you have to take it one by one to save the sari."

"Listening to what [the] needs are."

"Having the journey with people in a holistic way [...] it's a whole range of life skills and support and being there without agenda almost – that you can sit and talk and be."

"But it's more than sitting and talking, it's doing what we can to make a difference. It's not about maintaining people [...] it's about moving people out of that situation when they're ready for it whilst developing relationships."

"Person-centred approach in practice."

"You don't see it as a case worker, they are co-workers actually, they're not a case [...] you co-work with the service users. [...] In that way we can journey with them if they are willing to journey with us as well, so this is a two-way process."

"We provide a really inclusive, responsive service that takes into account where the person is in their journey and really tries to identify the strengths and work with that. [...] I don't think that necessarily happens very often, particularly in statutory services [...] which are not set up [to] – cannot – do that and I think that's a huge gap. [...] We're really able to give something very different."

"Having those interactions which are responsive and caring [...] working in a very empathic way can provide healing in a way. [...] Then even if someone's staying in the survival place, the interaction has been important and stays with the person."

One service user reported having trust in the staff, where he would not normally trust staff of other support agencies. That staff have helped with his complex situation, given good advice, and been quick to respond has made him optimistic about the future.

"The difference is how NEWday is organised, because it is human. [...] It is not simply a job to them. We respect each other." X

"Working together – all together. WE are doing it." Y

"It's down to relationships with the staff." Z

"Commitment and charisma." T

BEING INCLUSIVE, NON-JUDGMENTAL:

"I think that we're really inclusive, that we respond to people whoever comes in."

"We've got people from every ethnicity"

"How we work here – it's inclusive"

"We respond regardless"

"Providing 1:1 to all guests [...] to make sure people are heard and provide them with the advice we're able to."

"Non-judgmental"

"Showing unconditional positive regard"

"NEWday works with anyone. Coming here, people get the help they need." T

"It's a great place, they do help people here. The facility's there if people want it." V

HAVING CLEAR ROLES WITHIN THE TEAM:

"Different roles for different staff."

"Our focus is working on the bottom tiers of Maslow's hierarchy of need [...] with [other] NEWday staff doing higher levels."

"Recognising our limitations [...] everyone's got their own role [...] as part of the team [...] ours is more of a pastoral, holistic role rather than actively campaigning."

"A good core team on each day [... Staff were re-rostered to ensure this, whereas] before it was weighted more to Thursdays than Fridays."

"Knowledge and expertise of different partners."

PROVIDING A ONE-STOP SHOP:

Staff work holistically not only in their approach to individual service users, but also in terms of what NEWday provides:

“Different services in one platform.”

“Providing people opportunities to learn new skills, whether that’s cooking or learning how to use a computer.”

“Wellbeing stuff [... It’s] really good to have the mindfulness.”

“We are able to target a lot of barriers.”

“Staff are continually responding to new needs and thinking ahead. Once one problem is [... solved/in hand], they start working with you on the next. [...] Progressing every aspect of your life. [...] They give good advice. That’s why I like them.” X

“They get all the computers out and they do help people [...] and they often get jobs and accommodation and that, and I think it’s great: what place would you get that kind of facility?” V

PARTNERING WITHIN AND EXTERNAL TO NEWDAY CONSORTIUM:

“Partnership has been key.”

“To be able to offer showers and clean underwear [...] We could never do that if we weren’t working together.”

“The sense of purpose thing is about what we’re able to do and the facilities we’re able to give, despite the limitations we have [in terms of staffing...] because we know that by working in partnership [...] there’s a bigger pool of people so we can share that responsibility [...] there needs to be something in Stratford, but without working in partnership it couldn’t happen. Working together has facilitated that.”

“Tom [ThamesReach] has brought Tamil clients in [who are extremely] hard to reach.”

“Now the Council recognises this. Everything is coming together.”

Staff were impressed by the responsiveness of the transitional nurse. One described how she arrived within ten minutes of being called to triage a service user presenting health needs, referred him for registration with a local GP practice, and obtained a same-day appointment from which he was prescribed the medication he needed.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY:

Service users had a strong sense of belonging and being part of a community through attending NEWday. One of the service users (V) took a researcher to show her the community garden where he volunteers on a growing & building project. He now wants to be a landscape gardener. He is also

part of BDCA's walking football team and was playing for West Ham at the weekend. He conveyed a strong sense of belonging and pride that this is somewhere he's part of and has helped to create.

"Meeting new people that you wouldn't have met. [...] I've just joined the allotment." V

"Where the discord is out there, the harmony [...] is in here" U

"There's a sense of community here." Y

This was also reflected in users' future plans: for example, X expects to have a job and housing in a year's time, but intends to stay in contact.

"I will be keeping in touch with NEWday." X

"I hope I'll have a home and I'd like to be working – more voluntary work – helping people is my goal: helping people and being with people." Y

4. Surprises & unintended effects

"It's a lot better than I thought it would be!" Y

Service users reported NEWday having met or surpassed their expectations. One user explained that he didn't have any expectations because it was safer not to. Overall, the experience of recent weeks had not thrown up any great surprises for the staff interviewed, all of whom are experienced and knowledgeable in running similar services for similar user groups, having been involved in running either NEWday's predecessor or other inner-city homeless provision. However, there were a small number of unexpected elements:

DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHICS AT THE DIFFERENT VENUES:

The *"core demographic is rough sleepers in Stratford"*, whereas the East Ham venue tends to see more vulnerably housed people, especially those who have a longstanding connection, often returning to conduct job searches, etc.

"I thought it was just going to be another day of [...] the same crowd, whereas actually my Tuesdays are very different to my Thursdays because of the demographic."

ISSUES PRESENTED:

Staff identified the element of surprise in that they never know who may be arriving when and with what issues. They noted that more complex needs have been presented during the pilot, there are always new challenges to respond to, and the work is fast-paced:

"You have to be on your toes because you don't know who's coming through the door."

"The pace is fast [...] How fast is quite surprising."

THROUGHPUT AND OUTCOMES EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS:

The fact that the number of service users far outstrips the agreed target, as well as the numbers of people moving on, detoxing, etc. One individual was offered *two* jobs through the employment support offered.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNERSHIPS:

Although:

"[We have] really good longstanding relationships developed over the last 4 years with referral agencies/service providers",

the expanded service and statutory remit has helped NEWday to further forge these links, giving rise to a more coordinated response to Newham's homeless problem:

"Earlier we never used to work with other [external] partners, but now they're all coming together [...] they are here; it makes a huge difference."

SERVICE EVOLUTION:

How the service has developed over the pilot, especially at Paul Street; for example:

"The way in which the kitchen volunteering came about."

SERVICE USERS' RESPONSES TO THE OFFER:

Evidently, the positive response of service users to NEWday is not taken for granted by staff, who were struck by:

"People returning each week to continue to cook";

"the stories that get shared";

"seeing people stand on their own two feet";

and an emerging sense of community and belonging.

UNANTICIPATED COSTS:

Food (for kitchen volunteering/sit down lunch), clothing (underwear for after showers), staff time, coffee:

"I've worked with a lot of homeless people and we've never got through this much coffee before!"

VOLUNTEERS:

Volunteers have largely been recruited by word of mouth, rather than organisation-to-organisation appeals for members to step up.

"Volunteers are starting to build up [...] and they're coming from places that surprised us."

5. Learning & revisions

Despite the majority of staff drawing on past experience of similar work, considerable learning and reflective practice was in evidence:

"I could not begin to list how much I'm learning!"

KNOWLEDGE & EXPERTISE:

There has been substantial learning within NEWday around housing and homelessness policy and procedures. Although the partner organisations are experienced in this service provision, additional training has been necessary due to changes in legislation, new staff and the sharper focus on homelessness/rough sleeping rather than vulnerably housed people:

"Housing, [...] the system around homelessness, [...] how the Council are responding and what their expectations are [...] of us as NEWday and how we fit."

Staff identified mental health awareness as an area in which the NEWday team still seeks to develop its knowledge and expertise.

ATTITUDES:

The shift towards rough sleepers has reminded staff that anyone can be in that situation at any time:

"Everybody can be in any situation [...] some of the users have been similar to the working people, but then something big happens and life changes."

One longstanding staff member reported being less judgemental because they found themselves listening more, due to the different client group:

"It is quite different from before because we are seeing a lot more [rough sleepers]"

THE MODEL:

The pilot served to reassure staff as to the model's efficacy and replicability:

"It's a really good model [...] It's needed, it works, it's replicable."

This included establishing and maintaining good boundaries, and *"knowing our limits, especially around mental health"*:

"I think I've learned a lot about the beauty of stepping back and getting out of the way. And listening to what it is that people need. It's not about us fixing something, it's about exploring what the answers are."

"Having more open space allows you to [...] reinforce ownership of the situation [...] to sit down and have that conversation [...] we're going to do this together."

"It's not a 'done to' situation."

"With so many other projects it's a handout, handout, handout, go to this place [...] But to be able to say, 'Let's sit down at the table together, how are we going to work this situation out? We're not going to do it for you: there are the tools'."

There is evidence that the model and associated procedures are evolving over the course of the pilot. For example, staff are increasingly using the initial needs assessments as a point of reference as they work with service users:

"[We've decided to] go back to the surveys and use them as a way to review what's happening."

"[Individuals' progress] gets reviewed at [NEWway and NEWday team/casework] meetings. However, there's something to be said for going back to those surveys and checking [...] to inform our discussions with service users – what's going well, what's not going well, have your ideas about what you want to focus on changed, where are the gaps, those sorts of discussions."

PREPARATION AND PILOT:

Paul Street staff felt that a trial period had been useful at this initial stage and that having a month's lead-in time had been instrumental for planning and preparation to enable a smooth start:

"We did what we could to make it a safe, welcoming space. We had the risk assessments in place."

Although staff wondered whether fliers might have been circulated earlier, they concurred that *"building up slowly has been good"*, enabling procedures to develop and improvements to be made week-on-week.

DIFFICULTIES AROUND PARTNERING EXTERNAL AGENCIES:

Despite many extremely positive partnerships, staff noted:

"how very difficult it is to work with the statutory services".

Specifically, this related to dealings with Newham Homelessness Prevention & Advice Service (HPAS) and Adult Social Care:

"HPAS is obviously in a state of transition [...] finding it so difficult to find a way to get a good working partnership where you're advocating for these people. [...] ASC's response also been very difficult to get any sort of assessment or care package. [... One service user is] extremely vulnerable and [...] under the Care Act and under HPAS's own guidelines the response should have been so different."

In addition to statutory services there had been some duplication with Single Homeless Project (SHP), although this was ironed out through a meeting.

VALUE OF PARTNERSHIP:

Staff reported learning the value of partnership in terms of enabling and accountability:

"We can't do it on our own."

"If we weren't able to work together, this wouldn't happen."

“Mutual accountability [...] when you’ve got more people working together and you have more of a consensus on what the needs are, it’s far easier than just making the judgement call yourself.”

“It might be six [different staff having] conversations with the same person that build up an overall picture which might give better long-term direction.”

LIMITS OF PARTNERSHIP:

Staff were also beginning to come up against the limits of partnering, with Salvation Army staff expressing the *“frustration of having the facilities but not having the staff”* – recognising that to expand the Paul Street offer would require an additional member of Salvation Army staff and that other partners would not be able to plug this gap:

“Having Salvation Army staffing a Salvation Army building is a non-negotiable in terms of safeguarding procedure and operation of the building, in terms of liability insurance, that kind of stuff.”

“I’ve learned to control my temper and let things go. I’ve learnt to cook. [...] I’m also helping in the garden. Meeting new people, realising that they have similar problems to you: you’re not on your own.” Y

6. Improvements & future directions

SERVICE EXPANSION:

Almost all staff and service users wanted to see the provision extended to 5 days/week. This would enable them to signpost to another centre even when their centre was not open:

“It’d be nice if we could have all 5 days open [...] because we try to address many barriers, it needs time.”

Staff reported service users hanging out in betting shops in order to get off the streets on days when NEWday was closed, which potentially compounds addictions and financial problems:

“Being able to offer something that was 5 days a week. When you’re vulnerable and you need somewhere to go to be safe from yourself that’s not going to draw you into [unhelpful behaviour patterns...] so 4 days a week, and then you’re falling back.”

Service users also suggested replicating in more venues or expanding existing sites to provide more space for more activities and/or service users. One service user was concerned that the service should only be extended if the staff team was expanded, because existing staff work long and hard and should not be required to work longer hours.

“There is help! [...] it should continue, and maybe at a greater level” U

“They’re doing more than enough already.” X

CONTINUITY:

Staff expressed concerns about the provision gap if funding is not continued in January, and also after the night shelter closes in the spring:

“Homeless people don’t just disappear.”

Some identified a need to join services up better, for example, by NEWday having a presence within the cold weather provisions if these are required this winter.

Follow-on steps were identified as key, both in terms of housing and work:

“The issue isn’t what we’re doing. The issue is what else is out there to be able to support people and hold people, because Night Shelter is great, but it’s not the answer. This is great, but this isn’t the answer. There’s got to be proper follow on steps.”

Suggestions included B&B for those not meeting SHP criteria;¹⁷ a pop-up hostel, akin to Redbridge’s Project Malachi;¹⁸ or some kind of self-contained housing, like Just Homes¹⁹ but on a larger scale and more specific to this user group.²⁰ One staff member is currently planning a social enterprise which will draw its workforce from NEWday service users to provide a supported stepping stone back into the mainstream workplace.

“If they had more resources they could put [more] people in hostels and help people move on.” Z

PRACTICAL NEEDS:

Greater funding to cover practical, personal items and consumables such as good quality sleeping bags, toiletries, underwear, food, and coffee was called for, to ensure NEWday’s costs are fully covered. Practical building improvements were identified which would enhance NEWday’s offer, especially at BMP: for example, better shower and toilet facilities; remedying other building maintenance problems; and kitchen refurbishment would give rise to volunteering opportunities and hot food, as per Paul Street:

“We do need really good quality sleeping bags [...] and this is a multi-use building: things like the showers, the toilets, there are an awful lot of practical problems in this building [(BMP)...] showers that are cleaner and not old – they’re not dirty, they’re just old and they block up with mud. [...] this building is used really heavily, so it could really do with... like if we had a better kitchen that could be a volunteering opportunity [...] and we do need hot food in the winter.”

“More funds. We could do [cook] more things with money to buy more equipment and ingredients. [...] Kitchen improvements at the Pavilion.” Y

¹⁷ <https://www.shp.org.uk/>

¹⁸ <https://popuphostel-ilfordsalvationarmy.nationbuilder.com/about>

¹⁹ <http://justhomes.org.uk/>

²⁰ See also the Edinburgh example: <http://social-bite.co.uk/the-social-bite-village/>

PARTNERS:

In addition to NEWday's in-house expertise, a number of external partners currently offer services within NEWday sessions, which staff would like to see increase, particularly at the newer site:

"If other agencies were to come in and use the space as well, to do more of that joined up response, especially for those people who are meeting in cafes [...] they could do more of that in here."

Where services are not currently offered at NEWday venues, staff report that *"generally we're able to signpost for most things"*. However, mental health was identified as a gap in provision:

"It would be really good to have a mental health expert or somebody who could do mental health assessments [...] even if it was just once a fortnight."

Although staff regarded Nathan from Enabling Assessment Service London (EASL) positively, his contracted offer is inadequate for the scale of the problem:

"I think he's only paid to do maybe half a day a fortnight and a lot of those hours are done out in the shopping centre with rough sleepers."

In addition to mental health services, staff would seek to increase the range of external partners regularly offering services within NEWday sessions, including:

- Employment support (eg: Workplace, employment agencies)
- Opening bank accounts (eg: Post Office or London Credit Union)
- Substance misuse & addiction (staff would like to see a greater CGL presence and suggested that a minimum attendance commitment be written into its SLA by Newham Council).
- Accommodation (links with more partners offering sheltered accommodation/supported housing, as well as options for those not requiring supported housing eg: regular visit from a Newham Housing Officer.)

With additional funding, the following services could be bought in:

- IT skills (application and case management processes are increasingly exclusively online, but also coding for those already computer literate, or more structured/specialist training and job search for those previously working in IT):

"Just now I was checking [...] 2 of [...our service users] and they did not check the journal because it's online and the journal was saying that they have to come and meet the jobcentre. Because they did not check the journal and they did not keep the appointment the universal credit application is closed."

This was echoed by a service user who identified that it takes longer to support people to do things themselves than to do things for them, so extra staff would be required, especially around IT.

- Creativity – arts, music, writing (of therapeutic value).
- Translation/interpretation (especially Russian/Slavonic languages) & English language classes.

- Support for EU migrants and Brexit advice – preparing to apply for “settled status”, and legal support around immigration more generally:

“There’s a really major problem for European migrants [...] because of the situation with Brexit. [...] the Public Law Centre are delivering workshops to help people get everything in place to apply for their settled status or get their workers’ rights.”

“The organisation needs to get more back up [...] financially [...] to expand the organisation what they’re doing to help people like me [...] to help more people” T

Paul Street staff sought greater connection with Newham Council:

“It would be nice to see someone from the Council pop by. [...] We’ve had a lot of people from the agencies, but not necessarily from the council themselves – just to see what it looks like, and particularly because they’re funding it.”

REFERRAL PROCESS:

Staff unanimously identified the referral process as an area for improvement, especially as the provision becomes more established and known:

“At this point we now really need to [...] take people that have solely been referred by outreach, like Thames Reach and the Council’s outreach service. We won’t have a really hard and fast rule, so if it was somebody referred by the Jobcentre that really met our criteria [...we would work with them] so we won’t be really rigid, but that’s the benchmark.”

The NEWday model is predicated on the ability to match service user flow to the available space and staff, which enables the service to feel safe and welcoming, and to be dignifying, relational, holistic, responsive and individualised. Although flow is currently manageable, attendance is increasing and staff recognise that work is needed to ensure the numbers accessing the service at any one time are manageable and to ensure that the service users who will benefit most from the offer are prioritised:

“It’s got much busier in the last few weeks and there’s been a real complexity of need.”

“Tuesdays is going to present [...] more of a challenge, because of the geographical location and [...] outreach workers swoop the centre and give out our leaflets.”

Staff were clear that NEWday is not simply a drop-in or soup kitchen, but that service users need to be ready and/or willing to move on:

“What I don’t want to happen is for it to become a drop-in centre where people just come, eat, sleep, have a shower. I feel very strongly that that’s not what we’re supposed to be doing.”

“I don’t want it to be a case of just send everybody down from the shopping centre and they come every single week just because it’s [...] a kind of feeding programme. [...] I think that’s in line with the Council, with the whole of the NEWday ethos, that there has to be a commitment to change.”

However, staff were not certain that this was widely understood by referring agencies or prospective service users, and thought that:

“there are different understandings around people showing a commitment or desire to change”.

Staff were clear they could offer a *“base for people to learn new skills, but also to be able to get really good advice”* and that:

“There are limits to who we can help and how we can help them [...] if people aren’t willing to engage or aren’t able to engage because of their situation.”

There was some confidence that the basic needs of those not ready for change could be met elsewhere (for example through Bridges breakfast and food handouts in the Mall, although it was stressed that the latter are not currently well coordinated).

The question was raised about how to establish engagement levels, which are not easy for outreach workers to gauge as the street environment is not conducive to in-depth, personal conversations, but are more straightforwardly assessed at a NEWday centre in the context of an emerging user-staff working relationship. However, this in turn raises the question of how those assessed not to be ready for change should then be managed:

“Holding the boundary more [...] the outreach [referral procedure] thing will help. [...] Because the level of need is so vast, to be very clear about what we’re doing here, that’s something that I personally am going to need to be aware and vigilant [...] I don’t think it’s going to be easy, because it’s human.”

Staff also expressed uncertainty about when/how to initiate these conversations:

“Even asking, ‘What is it that you want to get out of being here today?’ [...] I also don’t want to scare people as soon as they come through the door with a form to fill in.”

There was also concern about the impact of individuals treating NEWday as a drop-in on those attending because they’re ready for change.

Although at the time of interviewing there had been some successful negotiation since the previous week with Street Outreach about alerting NEWday of any complex needs referrals made, this is something to be clarified first and foremost within the NEWday consortium, including *“making it clearer to our outreach workers as well”*, then liaising with external outreach agencies (eg: Thames Reach/CHAIN) to ensure a common understanding of the NEWday offer and that referral procedures are consistently followed.

Service users were also concerned about ensuring others who would benefit from NEWday were aware of it. Several reported being ‘ambassadors’ for NEWday/NEWway/Bridges/Purpose & Belonging, by referring others they encounter on the streets or asking them for beer money. One was particularly concerned that about how support was prioritised, perceiving injustice in the wider system which prevents him from working or but allows others to claim and spend benefits on drugs and alcohol:

“Clearly people don’t know about this project, so some kind of advertising campaign [...] some form of recognition so people can get the word out there [...] if you had people queuing out the door, they’d be happy maybe to fund more spaces, more resources, more [...] qualified people to run the place” U

“I see a lot of east European people who’ve [...] come over to the United Kingdom, and there must be Council officials walking past these people every day and I don’t see them tapping them on the shoulder saying, ‘Bonny Downs’ ” U

“It needs a conversation [not just a leaflet]” T

“I give them Jonny’s number or Simone’s number” U

“To make sure the right people get a chance” T

GREATER STRUCTURE/TIMETABLING OF SESSIONS:

Staff suggested introducing more structure to NEWday’s provision by timetabling workshops or sessions, especially as both centres are open-plan spaces which makes running concurrent activities more challenging:

“Knowing who’s doing what when would be more helpful.”

Potentially, this would make more efficient use of staff time and expertise; provide better routines, structures and boundaries to a user group whose lives are often unhelpfully chaotic; and diminish stress levels for staff and users alike:

“[We] don’t really know what our day’s going to look like – it depends who’s coming through the door.”

This would require careful planning to ensure that urgent cases continue to be triaged and immediate needs met at anytime they are presented and less staff-intensive opportunities are still available throughout the day (such as the use of computers for independent job search, showers, etc).

PREVENTING REGRESSION:

One service user was concerned that not enough is done to ensure progress is sustained:

“I’ve gone round in a loop again. What stops me from going around that loop again next year? [...] the inroads to getting people off the streets are good [...] but it’s thereafter [...] I think permanent accommodation [...] more interaction with the DWP or [...] with companies [...] for people to stand on their own two feet. And the link back to social housing. Because the private rental market, people in our situation just can’t afford it even with subsidising from housing benefit or universal credit.” U

CELEBRATING AND LEVERAGING STRENGTHS:

Developing the working model to capitalise more on the inherent positive characteristics of the user group, such as resilience, adaptability, resourcefulness, and survival skills.

7. Other comments

Staff and service users were given the opportunity to provide any other feedback about their experience of the NEWday pilot:

- *“I’ve been encouraged by the strong vision and how quickly that has matched reality.”*

- *“Supportive team, with different knowledge, skills and experiences coming through.”*
- *“Energising.”*
- *“[It’s] tough, but [it feels] held and supported.”*
- *“Service users becoming peer mentors” (3 digital champions helping other service users with online skills)*
- *“It’s been a really constructive time. It’s been very successful. It needed to happen years ago.”*
- *“If it wasn’t happening it would be missed.”*
- *“Worked very, very well.” (alignment with wider organisation’s long-term transformational mission).*
- *“Links across borough [...] when you can encompass all those – BDCA, Bridges, NEWway – in something that spreads across the borough – East Ham, Stratford, Plaistow – as well. It’s vital. It’s the only way it’s going to work [...] realistically.”*

Y described his situation as like being in a dark box. He’s still in the same box, but moving towards the light source, with things getting better as he continues to move towards it.

“If it wasn’t here, I’d still be on a park bench.” Y

“I was so down till I came to NEWday. [...] NEWday really do their best.” T

“They actually saved my life.[...] without her and without Bonny Downs I would have been dead, I wouldn’t be sitting here. I just got back from rehab after 6 months [...staff] took me to CGL, got me into rehab [...] They really deserve every support.” Z

“Helped to build my confidence.” Y

“Now there is help – it’s important it continues.” U

“What they do is okay. It’s really working [...] I will always give a good reference of NEWday and NEWway.” X

8. Characteristics

Staff were asked to score a series of characteristics listed in the NEWday funding bid/agreement, using a 1-10 scale (1=poor, 10=excellent). Mean scores have been calculated; traffic-lighting is in relative terms, with red signifying a low score compared to those of other characteristics, and green a comparatively high score.

Characteristic	Mean	Comments
Meeting immediate needs	8.6	NEWday is strong at meeting immediate needs. Its strength is in its welcome and the friendly atmosphere the staff create. Showers, laundry facilities, basic clothing, food & drink, social space, a postal address, safety, sleeping bags, etc are provided at both venues. However, the welcome is slightly more convivial at the Paul Street location, because the facilities are better maintained and the Salvation Army staff prioritise welcome, hospitality, and nurturing community, which in turn frees up other NEWday and specialist staff to concentrate on casework.
Providing specialist support	8 (only 3 of 5 scored)	NEWday is a 'one-stop shop' for people experiencing homelessness. The partnership means that most issues presented can be addressed in-house (skills and training, housing, benefits, debt, some mental health). Where there are limitations, NEWday staff are clear about these and bring in specialist partners as appropriate and where available (eg: health services, substance misuse/addiction, mental health). There are some gaps in service provision, such as immigration, which NEWday staff are simply not qualified to advise on. Although they signpost, it would be advantageous to further develop links with agencies who are able to offer immigration advice, with a view to hosting regular immigration advice surgeries.
Providing support to develop independent living skills	7	There is a schism between the Paul Street and BMP offers in terms of independent living skills. Staff tended to agree that cooking skills are central to building independent living skills, as budgeting, nutrition, hygiene/cleanliness/tidiness, self-care, safety in the home, social skills, routines, etc all naturally flow from meal preparation. Paul Street has a spacious, newly refurbished, fit-for-purpose kitchen, whereas BMP lacks this facility. However, there are other life skills that staff located at BMP envisage developing (including a cloud facility and know-how to keep documents safe; smoking cessation; a bike project). BMP had hosted an occupational therapy service and staff are keen for its resumption.
Providing support to access education, employment & training opportunities	7.3	There is good use of job search at both sites, and laptops are available to service users to undertake these. Staff are usually on hand to support job search, especially where service users are not sufficiently computer literate to conduct these independently. In addition, Skills Enterprise runs 'Learn My Way' computer literacy online courses and some of the service users 'graduating' from LMW become digital champions and volunteer to support other learners. Not all staff were certain how impactful LMW was for service users, and this may merit further probing.
Providing health services	8.3 (BMP scores only)	Overall, NEWday is effective at providing access to health services, and the transitional nurse and dentist have regular slots at BMP. In addition to her routine visits, the transitional nurse is highly responsive to need. However, there are gaps: in particular, staff note a shortage of mental health provision. Paul Street currently has less involvement from health

		providers, although flu jabs were on offer on the day the field research was conducted. Potentially, as the newer venue, it is taking a little longer to develop these links. Alongside this lower level of provision, staff were clear about what they could and could not offer and felt confident to manage service users' expectations accordingly. Potentially, links can be extended from one site to the other depending on how pan-borough services are in practice and/or links with the nearby West Ham Lane Health Centre could be explored in time.
Client involvement at every level	7.7	Staff were generally clear that service users were heavily involved in their own 'cases', and were largely supported to make their own decisions, rather than having decisions made for them. This unravelled slightly where service users lacked skills to take their cases forward, and staff lacked time to impart those skills (usually computer literacy, due to the high degree of computerisation of statutory services and systems relevant to those experiencing homelessness). It was observed that there was less client involvement and ownership at 'higher' levels, for example no user steering group, and staff felt there was little co-production overall. Paul Street was perhaps stronger at fostering service user involvement to make the sessions happen (eg: cooking, shopping & planning menus, laying tables/serving food, clearing up, packing down). Potentially, much of this also happens at BMP, but staff identify it less readily: for example, we spoke to service users who also volunteer in the wider organisation (eg: community garden, community café, children's nativity), service users are occasionally taken on as staff, ²¹ some act as digital champions and translators, and others assume an unofficial ambassadorial role in encouraging other homeless people to attend.
Safe, welcoming environment	9.4	Providing a safe, welcoming environment is one of NEWday's strongest suits, and this was confirmed by service users and researchers' observations. It is hard to identify how the Paul Street environment could be improved. There is room for improvement at BMP in terms of the condition and cleanliness of the building. However, this is secondary to the friendly, calm, non-inhibiting atmosphere fostered by the staff: the staff set the tone, and the culture within the sessions follows from the behaviours they model.
Equality and diversity	9.6	Staff and service users alike concurred that everyone is welcome and all are treated equitably. In some cases, there is a language barrier which may prevent individual cases being progressed as efficiently as they might be. Potentially, issues may be missed where service users lack the vocabulary to articulate them. Generally, language barriers are worked around by other service users acting as interpreters and staff using Google Translate.
Person-centred	9.5	The NEWday offer is extremely person-centred. Everyone is treated as an individual, with respect, and seen as a person (rather than a number or a case). This starts from the moment an individual arrives on site: everyone is greeted and offered a warm drink. Every individual is assessed holistically to establish what their specific needs are. Staff see themselves as working in partnership with each service user and strive to support each individual to find the best solutions for them. Staff prioritise getting to know service users, which was evident from the

²¹ This has occurred from Purpose & Belonging, but not yet from NEWday.

		conversations and rapport between staff and service users (and amongst the service users).
Community-centric	8.6	Staff considered that NEWday was fairly well embedded in and supported by the community and, in turn, creating community. In the case of Paul Street, staff were more tentative about the strength of support amongst their neighbours, and are conscious that this is early days and that community takes time to build. Embryonic community was in evidence within the Paul Street session, especially amongst those who were also NEWway night shelter guests; service users concurred that they felt part of a community.
Partnership as standard	9.4	There are (at least) two levels of partnership: the consortium partnership upon which NEWday is predicated, and partnership with other agencies who come in to augment NEWday/offer their services alongside, as well as those NEWday receives/makes referrals from/to. Although NEWday partners extensively both internal and external to the consortium, there is room to further develop external partnerships, eg: staff would like to see greater use of the sessions by other agencies both as a venue for running regular services and as a meeting point when working with individual service users, and better links with representatives from the Council. Within the consortium, the possibility of involving Bridges Homeless Support is still under negotiation.
Progress & transformation	8 (only 2 of 5 scored)	All staff agreed that individuals' journeys take time and it is very early in the life of the service to see high-order changes. Service-users' situations are often very complex and progress is not consistent across the board, although significant distance has been travelled in a number of cases.
Review & improvement	7.5	Services at the two venues are at very different points in evolution. Paul Street services are changing and improving weekly and the initial learning curve is steep. Services at BMP are long established, so initial lessons have tended to be learned and incorporated. Potentially, it has been easier to introduce changes at the Paul Street venue because routines are less established; by contrast, although there is potentially less change required at BMP, ways of doing things are harder to question or unpick because they are concretised through weeks/months/years of precedent. As a new venture, NEWday itself is beginning to put systems and structures in place to facilitate review and improvement, such as regular team meetings. There is a danger that review and improvement can get squeezed due to the high demands on the ground, but staff are currently live to this possibility and taking steps to ensure this reflective practice routinely occurs.
Referral processes	6.5 (4 of 5 scored)	All staff concurred that referral processes needed improvement, and steps had been taken to improve the system between my first and second visits. There had been a lack of clarity amongst referrers as to the purpose of NEWday. Staff were clear that NEWday is not simply a drop-in/soup kitchen, but that those attending should be referred on the basis that they have expressed or demonstrated a willingness/readiness to engage and work towards positive change in their lives. During the previous week, a number of service users had been referred to Paul Street from Stratford Mall with high level mental health needs, which would need addressing before these service users would really be ready to engage in tackling their homelessness, which NEWday was neither prepared nor intended for.

		The referring agencies were contacted to explain the parameters of NEWday and to clarify the referral eligibility requirements, and to request that referrers contact NEWday when referring individuals with more complex needs. Referring agencies responded positively, with the potential of improving partnerships as well as referrals. However, this remains an area for monitoring with a view to further improvement.
Use of specialist agencies	6.6	NEWday makes appropriate use of specialist agencies: it is aware of its own limitations and seeks to partner where it lacks the requisite expertise. However, Paul Street staff acknowledged that it takes time to develop links (partly because new provision, partly because different area of the borough to existing NEWday services). Staff identified a need for greater presence of CGL/drug/alcohol/addiction services, and one suggested LBN could write this into CGL's SLA. There is also a need for more mental health provision: staff considered that this was a problem with extent rather than quality or willingness to partner.
Mix of rough sleepers, hidden homeless, vulnerably housed	N/A	Staff were slightly inconsistent on this (and it has been difficult to verify through service user records). Some staff believed there to be a fairly even balance between rough sleepers, hidden homeless, and vulnerably housed contingents accessing NEWday. Others felt that the services were catering predominantly for rough sleepers (and those in emergency accommodation). There appeared to be a lack of consensus about what NEWday's brief was. As from October, the session at BMP has shifted its focus away from vulnerably housed, to the extent that Skills Enterprise/BDCA have made provision to offer appointments to this contingent at other times during the week. This is also in recognition that the two groups are demographically distinct and have different (although sometimes overlapping) needs. Those presenting as vulnerably housed in East Ham tend to include young, Asian/British Asian mothers, whereas rough sleeping has a male-dominated demographic, often with mental health or addiction issues, which can make for a difficult environment for vulnerably housed families to seek support in.
Prioritising those with Newham connections	N/A	Again, there was a small degree of inconsistency on this point: all staff were clear that this was a screening question at the initial needs assessment (and potentially referral) stage, and that the vast majority had a Newham connection. However, for those few without a Newham connection, some staff reported that NEWday declines to work with them, whereas other staff still undertake to offer support whilst advising that they may receive better services in the borough where they have a connection. BMP staff observed a recent influx from Barking & Dagenham (likely due to the proximity of the borough boundary). In some cases the Newham connection is extremely recent where individuals have been sent to Newham by their own local authorities. This is an issue for coordination between boroughs as well as within NEWday, although any clarification/compact between boroughs would need to be careful to prevent individuals falling into the 'gap'.

Four service users participated in the characteristics exercise (X and Y individually, U and V worked together). All agreed with the positive characteristics except:

- **Helps me make my own decisions**: U&V felt that decisions tended to be made together, or options researched and narrowed down by NEWday staff.

- **Supports me to do things for myself**: U&V felt that sometimes staff did things for service users, rather than equipping them to do things for themselves.

All disagreed with the negative characteristics, except:

- **Does things for me that I could do for myself**: X felt that sometimes this was true, other times it was more about supporting him to do things for himself.
- **Works on its own**: X felt that sometimes it did this, but only when appropriate – when they had the expertise or when staff believed they could provide the help better inhouse. If they advised him against accessing another service they would always explain their advice. U&V expanded this to ‘works on its own key principles’ – this wasn’t so much that NEWday works in isolation, but that it works in a different way to other agencies. When probed, U&V were not completely sure whether NEWday works well with other organisations, but reported that they think it does.
- **Decision-making**: X reported that generally decisions for him are made in partnership, between NEWday and himself. He seemed fairly comfortable with this.

“Staff give options for what to do next, and it’s your choice whether to do it.” X



They also added:

- **Tailor-made** (U&V): Because staff are focussed on individuals, they come up with pathways to meet the needs of the individual, rather than one size must fit all.
- **Thinks outside the box** (U&V): Staff have the freedom and flexibility to come up with creative solutions, rather than having prescribed targets to achieve or routes to follow with each service user.
- **Human** (X): (see ‘Working relationally and responsively with individuals’, in ‘Key things that make the difference’ section, above).

Figure 1: NEWday characteristics according to U&V

INDEPENDENT OBSERVATIONS

A second researcher attended to assist with the BMP focus group and for moderation, and made the following observations of her visit:

"I found NEWday warm and welcoming. Most staff had no idea who I was - when I walked in I was welcomed by several people and offered a drink at least 3 times. The space was busy but not uncomfortably so. People were at computers or sitting in easy chairs talking. It felt relaxed but purposeful.

I wasn't sure whether this was just the NEWday project or Skills Enterprise using the same space.²² There were laptops on a number of tables and it looked like some people were being guided/supported to do job searches.

When we were ready to set up the focus group, people were approached individually about participating with no pressure to do so. We met in part of the same space and the dividing door was left partly open so participants could come and go. We were therefore able to hear activity from the other side of the space - it sounded busy but felt very safe. Some in the group seemed to know each other well; a couple spoke confidently and stayed throughout. Occasionally someone said something the others didn't agree with - or didn't properly understand. They were given space by the rest of the group and it felt like different views and perspectives were respected.

I heard lots of people addressing others by name (staff/user and user/user) and several conversations where it was clear the other person knew what was going on in their life and was interested in it. This feels like a relationship-based project, and somewhere where mutual support and understanding matter a lot.

As I left, I observed a staff member (or maybe volunteer) talking to a man who I think was a user, who was distressed. The staff member was calm and caring, her body language reaching towards him.

In short - from today's snapshot - I was impressed!"

²² The researcher was not aware that Skills Enterprise is part of the NEWday consortium.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings give rise to a number of practical recommendations, in terms of refinements to the NEWday model; partnerships; expanding and developing NEWday services; NEWday's use of information; and wider issues for local government and beyond. The evaluation has also highlighted a number of areas meriting further research.

PRACTICAL

1. Refining the model

- **REFERRALS & NEEDS ASSESSMENTS:**

Referral and initial needs assessment processes should be clarified and agreed amongst NEWday staff, and then communicated to referring agencies. NEWday will need to take account of volume, flow, and readiness to engage when sharpening referral and assessment processes. This is particularly key for Paul Street as its proximity to Stratford Mall makes it more at risk of being overwhelmed.

- **CLARIFYING PARAMETERS:**

Although NEWday has a strong, positive and distinctive working model, to avoid confusion or inconsistency it would benefit from greater clarity amongst its staff around who it works with and how. For example:

- To what extent should rough sleepers be prioritised over those in emergency accommodation/hidden homeless/vulnerably housed?
- Are we co-working, case-working, team-working with service users – what is the model?
- What is the appropriate response to service users presenting with no connection to Newham?

- **CO-PRODUCTION:**

NEWday should review user involvement within its current model, with a view to:

- More consistently supporting people to do things for themselves whenever possible (this may require extra staff time to train and support those who are ready to take responsibility, rather than doing things on their behalves as a shortcut)
- Introducing meaningful, yet workable co-production at project level; for example, working concertedly with individuals experiencing cyclical homelessness to develop models and identify specialist support needed for breaking these cycles.

- **STRUCTURED SESSIONS:**

Staff should consider introducing greater structure within NEWday sessions, including clear staff timetabling to ensure clarity around which workshops/activities are scheduled to run when and by whom.

2. Partnership & coordination

- **GREATER UPTAKE BY OTHER AGENCIES:**

NEWday already partners extensively and is instrumental in bringing about the greater coordination amongst Newham's homeless response services which has been lacking. However, service users would benefit from yet greater linkage with and use of space by other agencies, including statutory services. LBN should consider using its influence to promote partnerships, for example, by writing requirements to attend minimum numbers of NEWday sessions into agencies' SLAs where they receive statutory funding. NEWday should

continue to invite external partners to run ‘surgeries’ or make appointments to meet service users at its venues.

- **NEW PARTNERS/ENHANCED OFFER:**

Additional partners should be engaged to attend NEWday, including around:

- Employment support (eg: job agencies, Workplace)
- Bank accounts (eg: London Credit Union)
- Creative arts (eg: those offering art, writing, singing, dance, theatre, workshops)
- Legal & immigration advice, including support for EU migrants in readiness for Brexit
- ICT/coding/web design to provide more structured, advanced training opportunities
- Substance misuse & addiction (eg: CGL)

- **SPECIALIST PROVISION:**

Specialist provision in a number of areas is currently lacking or insufficient for the level of need amongst Newham’s homeless population. If these were adequately resourced, they could be made available through NEWday:

- Mental health
- Basic computer skills
- Basic literacy
- Translation/interpretation (especially Russian) and ESOL

3. Service expansion and development

- **EXTENDED PROVISION:**

Provision should be extended to 5 days per week, potentially through partnering with Bridges, Caritas Anchor House, or with another NEWway host to provide a third venue within the borough. Within these negotiations, consideration should be given to timetabling to enable NEWday to follow on from NEWway at the same or a nearby venue where possible.

- **REPLICABILITY:**

As the pilot has demonstrated, NEWday has the potential to be replicated successfully. However, replicability should not be taken for granted following the initial success of Paul Street. A number of particular factors were critical in this instance, including the Salvation Army staff’s extensive skills and experience acquired in other projects/contexts; their long-gestated vision for the Paul Street service; and alignment with NEWday values, such as willingness to partner and person-centredness. Successfully replicating at further venues would rely on identifying partners who share key values and are open to working in similar/complementary ways.

- **ADDITIONAL COSTS:**

A number of unanticipated costs arose during the pilot, including food, basic clothing supplies, coffee, and sleeping bags. NEWday should work with funders to ensure their inclusion within future budgets.

- **BMP KITCHEN AND MAINTENANCE:**

Funding should be sought to resolve maintenance issues at BMP to improve the quality of welcome, including kitchen refurbishment to enable a consistent quality of volunteering experience and meal preparation to be offered at both sites.

- **LONGER TERM HOUSING AND WORK SOLUTIONS:**

NEWday staff should continue to pursue ideas for providing work experience opportunities through the establishment of a social enterprise and for self-contained, supported housing (potentially in partnership with existing providers).

4. Information

- **SHARING PRACTICE ACROSS NEWDAY:**

Although the NEWday experience is broadly similar throughout, there is scope to share practice across the sites. The newly introduced fortnightly team meetings should provide a mechanism through which to reflect on and share practice, as well as case conference, and clarify aspects of the NEWday offer/model. A balance should be struck between quality assurance and becoming overly prescriptive as protocols develop, and staff should retain the flexibility to work relationally and slightly experimentally as this is a key strength. Practices which could be shared are:

- considering designated welcoming staff/volunteers at BMP as per Paul Street;
- using established contacts in non-NEWday partners working at BMP to broker similar relationships at Paul Street.

- **DATA CAPTURE:**

The evaluation highlighted a number of data capture issues:

- The system for capturing outcomes is not currently adequate given the numbers involved and should be reviewed. This may involve an overhaul of timeline events in Upshot which, in turn, may benefit from the development of a logic model/theory of change.
- The use of registers should be reviewed to ensure a consistent, light touch approach which allows individuals' attendance information (thus service-use pathway) to be captured.
- Needs assessments should be used with all service users at the point of entry (or shortly thereafter). Needs assessment tools should be reviewed to ensure they support rather than undermine NEWday's relational approach as far as possible.
- Follow-up/end point assessment tools should be integrated with baseline/needs assessment tools to allow for comparison and track distance travelled over time.

5. Wider issues

- **WORKING WITH STATUTORY SERVICES:**

LBN should review practices within statutory agencies such as HPAS and ASC with a view to understanding and removing barriers to accepting referrals from and forging effective partnerships with the voluntary sector.

- **INTER-BOROUGH COORDINATION:**

Action is required at an inter-borough or policy-level around sending homeless people to other local authorities, such as Newham. Potentially, this includes the practice of rehousing in other boroughs which, in turn, have high rates of homelessness.

FURTHER RESEARCH

- **FOLLOW-UP WITH EX-SERVICE USERS:**

Periodic follow-up with ex-service users would be useful longer term, to monitor their ongoing outcomes, as well as to gather data about the reasons for disengagement.

- **EVALUATION OF SUB-SERVICES:**

As a holistic service, NEWday offers a wide range of different sub-services. It would be worthwhile for NEWday to undertake mini-evaluations of some of the key services (eg: Learn

My Way, mindfulness, kitchen volunteering) with a view to ensuring the services offered are the best use of staff and resources, and to identify potential improvements.

- **IMPACT ON NEWHAM'S HOMELESSNESS PROBLEM:**

If NEWday is to continue as a long-term, Council-funded service, it will be both possible and desirable to assess the extent to which NEWday is reducing rough sleeping in Newham and contributing to achieving the aim of LBN's homelessness strategy: the relief and prevention of homelessness, including cyclical homelessness.

APPENDICES

A. INTERVIEW FRAMEWORK: STAFF

- What has been going well? – what are the best things?
- What have been your greatest achievements?
- What are the key things you've been doing that make the difference?

- What were the surprises?
- What have you learned? What might you do differently?
- What would make things even better?

- What else would you want to do if the service was to expand? Why?
- What should the service look like?

- How do we get there?

- How well is NEWday doing at each of these (score & discuss scores):
(What it does)
 - Meeting immediate needs
 - Providing specialist support
 - Providing support to develop independent living skills
 - Providing support to access education, employment & training opportunities
 - Providing health services(How it does it)
 - Client involvement at every level
 - Safe, welcoming environment
 - Equality & diversity
 - Person-centred
 - Community-centric (based in community, fostering community, owned by service-users)
 - Partnership as standard
 - Progress & transformation
 - Review & improvement
 - Referral processes
 - Use of specialist agencies
 - Mix of rough sleepers, hidden homeless, vulnerably housed
 - Prioritising those with Newham connections

- Anything else to share about your experience of NEWday?

B. INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP FRAMEWORK: SERVICE USERS

Since engaging with NEWday:

- What has NEWday meant to you?
- What has NEWday done well?
- Going forwards, what would make NEWday better?
- Has anything surprised you in your experience of NEWday?

- Has anything made you feel more positive/hopeful?
Have you achieved anything?
- Have you learned anything?
- What has made the biggest difference in your life?

- How would you like to see your life going over the next year? (what would you like to achieve/where would you like to be?)
- What about the next 5 years?

- What could NEWday do to help bring this about?
(Thinking about what it could do and how it could do it?)

- Which of these words/phrases are true of NEWday?
(Activity: ask people to select/mark the phrases which most look like NEWday)
 - Safe
 - Welcoming
 - Treats everyone equally
 - Puts people first
 - Caring
 - Helps me feel part of the community
 - Works in partnership with other agencies
 - Helps me make my own decisions
 - Learns from mistakes
 - Is easy to access
 - Makes accessing other agencies easier
 - Helps me move on
 - Supports me to do things for myself
 - Unsafe
 - Unfriendly
 - Treats people unfairly
 - Not focussed on its service users
 - Uncaring
 - Makes me feel isolated
 - Works in isolation
 - Takes decisions about me
 - Repeats the same mistakes
 - Not accessible
 - Makes it difficult to access other services
 - Holds me back
 - Does things for me that I could do for myself

- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience of NEWday?

C. ENDPOINT USER SURVEY

Since accessing NEWday:

Immediate needs:

- My basic needs are better met.
- I engage less in criminal/antisocial behaviour (eg: begging, theft, prostitution, illicit working).
- I am more engaged with the support I need.
- I am better able to address deeper issues.

Specialist support:

- I have access to the support I need/that's right for me.
- I am more aware of my rights/I understand my rights better.
- (I have better access to housing benefits. TLE?)
- I am better able to manage my finances.
- I feel more in control of my life.

Living skills:

- I am better at dealing with practical problems.
- I feel better equipped for independent living/I have gained the skills I need for independent living.
- I feel less likely to become (or return to being) homeless.

Education, employment, training:

- I know more about my work options.
- My work prospects have improved.
- I have gained skills useful for work.
- I feel better able to find work.

Health & wellbeing:

- My physical health has improved.
- My mental health & wellbeing has improved.
- I better understand how to keep healthy.
- I better understand the risks to my health, especially around rough sleeping.
- I drink or take drugs less.

Have you accessed other services besides NEWday?

Did you connect with these because of NEWday?