

FUNDING PROSPECTUS:

Supporting people with No Recourse to Public Funds

**An opportunity to help some of our most vulnerable
neighbours find a home and rebuild their lives**



Funding prospectus: Supporting people with No Recourse to Public Funds

During the pandemic, councils and voluntary organisations in Oxfordshire were moved to find temporary accommodation for over 200 people who were sleeping rough. They were immediately safer, and were then able to take practical steps to start rebuilding their lives.

The success of this intervention proves that it is possible to end homelessness in Oxfordshire – but only if we act now, before people are turned back out onto the streets when this temporary accommodation finishes. At that moment, many people, and in particular those who are not eligible to access existing services, risk re-entering a cycle that makes rough sleeping again inevitable.

In Oxfordshire, there are just over 20 people who are most at risk because they are not eligible for public funding. Some are from EEA countries; others are from outside the EEA and have a pending or unresolved asylum claim. Those from outside the EEA are not allowed to work. None are eligible for benefits or to use public services, except for basic health care. The government term for their status is “no recourse to public funds” (NRPF).

Finding secure housing is especially tough for them due to a number of factors, including:

- Being prohibited from working (in the case of those with unresolved asylum and immigration cases)
- Inability to access benefits or the private rental sector due to immigration status
- Inability to access public-funded services provided by charities
- Mental health problems resulting from trauma, separation from family, and abuse
- Problems with addiction and substance misuse.

In many cases this policy effectively leaves people destitute. However, for them living in hardship in Oxfordshire is preferable to a return to their own countries, where they may face danger or even worse conditions. This often makes them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and a return to the streets also places them at risk of deportation to a place where they may not be safe.

Under current government policy, local councils are not permitted to use their resources to help beyond the provision of short-term emergency accommodation in response to COVID-19. Without access to benefits or council services, how can a viable long-term solution be found for this vulnerable group?

The plan sets out how a coalition of voluntary organisations and philanthropic support can implement a programme to enable this group of people to become self-sufficient, contributing members of our society. It is an ambitious task that will take determination and tenacity. The alternative is a return to life on the streets with the consequences to them and the costs to our society that entails. This programme brings a well evidenced lifeline that will give each person a great chance to start to build a meaningful life, supporting themselves and contributing to our community.

Providing good longer-term solutions for these people not only helps them, it also helps to protect the wider community during the current pandemic.

Oxfordshire Homeless Movement (OHM) is now looking for philanthropists and grant-giving organisations to fund and make property available for this five-year programme.



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OXFORDSHIRE HOMELESS MOVEMENT

Nobody should have to sleep rough on our streets

www.oxfordshirehomelessmovement.org

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The “Housing First” approach in Oxfordshire

After being proven around the world during the last 20 years, the “Housing First” approach has emerged as a highly effective and targeted way to end homelessness permanently. **Its key insight is that without stable accommodation and support fitted to their needs, no person is likely to remain safe, mentally well, and able to start looking after themselves or contributing to their society.**

The [Centre for Homelessness Impact](#) considers Housing First to be one of the most effective interventions to tackle homelessness, with multiple high-quality studies proving its effectiveness.

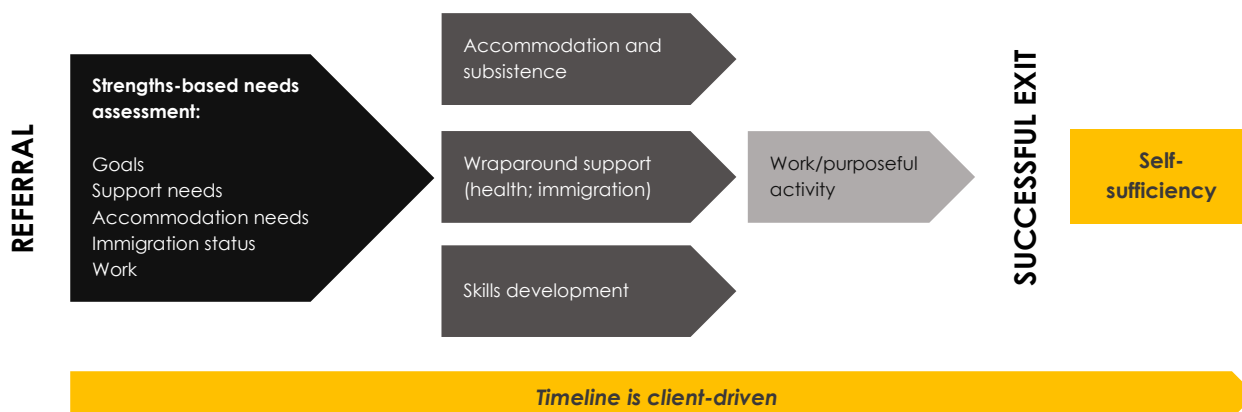
The aims of OHM's NRPF programme are to:

- Find sustainable housing for people with NRPF, and to provide support services to enable them to progress to become self-sufficient, contributing positively to the community in Oxfordshire
- Help resolve their immigration status, which is typically the principal barrier to enabling them to progress
- Develop and test a model of intervention and support that can be used to help other people with NRPF who become homeless in the future.

The programme will be housing led and adhere as closely to Housing First principles as is possible for this group. Legal restrictions on this group, linked to their immigration status, limit the degree of choice and control that would typically be a key element of a Housing First project.

A description of the approach and the principles underpinning it can be found [here](#).

The programme will serve 21 people and will accept additional referrals up to a maximum of 30 people. As people successfully move on, their place can be taken by others in the county in a similar position. The key elements of the plan are:



An individual plan based on each person's strengths and aspirations is at the heart of the Housing First approach, and this programme will help each person develop and make progress on their plan – in so far as legal constraints allow. Common elements of the plan will include:

- The resolution of each person's immigration status
- Enabling each person to become self-sufficient and contribute to society (in line with Housing First principles, the specifics for each person will be determined by their own aspirations and strengths)
- In some cases, a reconnection and informed, voluntary return to the person's home country.

It is possible that for some people, the outcome of the immigration process may be negative – and yet a return to the person's home country may not be possible due lack of travel documentation, dangers in the home country or other factors. In these cases, the person faces an indefinite future in the UK without benefits, support, or the right to work and rent a home. We believe that these people nevertheless have a right to a home, subsistence and a place in our community. We would continue to support them on the programme.

The programme will work closely with the Oxfordshire councils' own Housing First plan, which is being set up to help UK nationals.

How will impact be measured?

We will use a combination of 'hard' measures, which are typically used in projects to alleviate homelessness, alongside a 'soft' storytelling methodology known as "Most Significant Change", which is well suited to assessing individual outcomes and for use with the small number of people in scope. We will also work closely with the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI) to independently evaluate the project.

'Hard' measures will include:

- Resolution of immigration status
- Tenancy sustainment
- Reduction in drug/alcohol use
- Level of engagement in employment or purposeful work
- Life skills such as budgeting and managing medication.

The storytelling Most Significant Change methodology uses trained interviewers to collect stories from programme participants. By telling their story participants will be able to describe what changed for them; how it happened; and why it is important. The process is carried out in a systematic way. Stories are edited, reported individually (protecting identities where necessary), and used to produce an evaluation report. The group Arts at the Old Fire Station, which works from the Crisis Skylight Centre, has used the methodology successfully and will lead this for us.

A description and examples of the methodology can be found [here](#).

What are the timescales?

Helping someone who has been sleeping rough for a long period to move on to independent living is a long-term task typically taking more than a year. The additional complications faced by this group will mean the process will sometimes take longer. It is also clear that new cases will appear over time.

In the best scenario, funding for emergency accommodation for this group will start to come to an end from 31st March 2021. Therefore, we plan to run the programme for five years starting in early 2021.

We plan to implement the project in stages:



How will funding provide housing?

Using the initial strength-based needs assessments and information from those managing emergency accommodation, we have identified the need for six units of self-contained accommodation, and 15 places in shared properties (HMOs). Please see the notes in Appendix 3.

The funding will be used to secure these from one or more of the following:

- Housing association property at a social rent
- 'Meanwhile' use of empty property in return for refurbishing/repurposing it and a peppercorn rent
- Privately rented property where a landlord makes this available at a peppercorn rent
- Social investment to acquire property
- Using a Cross-Subsidy Model, where we serve clients who have access to benefits, and this income is used to subsidise the rental of our NRPF clients.

Funding breakdown and costing

Costs for the programme, **excluding the cost of acquiring property**, are set out below. In addition, we need to secure access to 21 units of accommodation at a nominal rent (or find extra funding to cover rental).

	One-off costs	Annual costs – 21 people	Five-year programme total
Subsistence		£75,000	£350,000
Support and project management		£123,000	£550,000
Housing management		£38,000	£175,000
Household set up	£20,000		£20,000
Immigration – legal support and advice		£21,000	£97,000
Independent evaluation	£50,000		£50,000
Total	£70,000	£257,000	£1,242,000

Property costs will be dependent on our success in securing property at a peppercorn rent and/or our ability to use cross-subsidies for some places. We have been successful in securing the first 12 units for a peppercorn rent. It is realistic to assume that for the remaining units we will need to pay some rental. Our worst-case scenario assumes a social rent will need to be paid for all the remaining nine units.

	Annual cost – 21 people	Total five-year programme cost
Property costs – best case	£27,000	£120,000
Total project cost – best case	£284,000	£1,362,000
Property costs – worst case	£54,000	£240,000
Total project costs – worst case	£311,000	£1,482,000

Who will deliver the programme?

The programme was initiated by Oxfordshire Homeless Movement and designed by a coalition of leading local organisations covering the specialist areas required: Aspire, Asylum Welcome, Connection Support, Crisis, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire Community Foundation (OCF), St Mungo's, Sanctuary Hosting and Refugee Resource. Three well respected specialist organisations will deliver the project:

Organisation	Programme elements delivered
Aspire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property management and maintenance services
Asylum Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the non-EEA cohort: immigration and asylum casework to support access to and maximise effectiveness of legally aided help For the EEA cohort: support to regularise status
Connection Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create tailored support plans to holistically care for the client's ongoing wellbeing, and create a plan with the client to help them move forward Specialist support relating to trauma and lived experience

See Appendix 1 for more detailed information on each of our providers.

Project management and governance

A management team selected from the three service providers will be responsible for the operational management of the project. A project manager will be appointed by Connection Support as part the services it provides.

The management team will be accountable to the Steering Committee of OHM, supported by the Distribution of Charitable Funds Committee of OCF. This combination combines the expertise from the homelessness sector from OHM with the expertise in overseeing the appropriate use of funds from OCF. This combination also gives a good balance of support and challenge to governance.



If you would like to find out more about this project, please contact Yvonne Pinner, OHM Project Manager, at

yvonne@ohmteam.org

Appendix 1: Our delivery partners

Aspire

www.aspireoxfordshire.org

Aspire is a multi-award-winning employment charity and social enterprise. We empower people facing homelessness, poverty and disadvantage to find employment and housing. We support over 2,000 people every year across Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.



Established in 2001, Aspire has been tackling the most complex social issues in Oxfordshire for over 18 years. We support vulnerable local people into and towards employment and housing, as the most powerful way to break the complex cycles of homelessness, re-offending and poverty.

We tackle these complex social issues through our unique enterprise model. Aspire runs social businesses that offer professional facilities management services to local councils, businesses, academic institutions and private customers. We work with councils and companies who take their social responsibility seriously; who understand that they don't have to choose between doing good, and doing good business. Our enterprises are growing – during 2019 we are launching our new inclusive recruitment service, supporting local businesses to meet their recruitment needs through coaching, workshops and in-work support.

Aspire's businesses don't just provide class-leading professional services; they also offer life-changing work experience and employment opportunities to our clients. Alongside this, our Employment and Development Workers provide these clients with intensive one-to-one support designed to break down multiple barriers to employment. Together, this is a powerful approach that helps hundreds of highly disadvantaged people achieve their own change.

Asylum Welcome

www.asylum-welcome.org

We welcome asylum seekers, refugees and detainees who have fled persecution and danger in their own countries and seek refuge in Oxford and Oxfordshire.

Asylum Welcome has a range of services, expertise, and experience specifically relevant to the situation of the people for whom the project is initially designed. These services currently include a drop-in Welcome Centre; general advisory services, including promotion of links with statutory services; a youth service; specialist immigration and legal advice; a hardship fund and foodbank; and an education and employment service, which includes support for volunteering for those not entitled or ready to work. We have close and ongoing links with Refugee Resource, who specialise in therapeutic support and counselling, and with whom many clients are shared and with whom we would work on this project. We have a new programme supporting refugee community groups around the county that will be useful in supporting progression of some clients and helping identify others in need, and we provide confidential advice on voluntary return for those clients who are interested.



Asylum Welcome worked in partnership with Oxford City Council, running the initial orientation programme for newly arrived families under the Syrian vulnerable person's resettlement scheme. We worked with community groups to furnish their accommodation before arrival, orientating them around Oxford and the local services. We continue to provide ongoing support, dealing with all immigration matters and onward referrals to solicitors.

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For the last year we have been running a Europa Welcome service that provides support to vulnerable EU citizens and permanent residents with registration and regularisation of their status. This includes support to the sort of EEA nationals within the NRPF group.

Last year, we directly supported about 900 refugees and asylum seekers, and about 700 vulnerable migrants. We often work with clients over many years, with hardship funding for those not entitled to benefits, running alongside general advice and support; legal assistance, including linking to the specialist lawyers, Turpin and Miller; support to prepare for employment; and links with housing providers. Depending on clients' circumstances, some will move in and out of a relationship with us, and it can take multiple attempts to secure status. In 2019–20 seven former unaccompanied young people who had been without status since leaving care gained refugee status or another form of leave following work with our service towards fresh claims. We have started work in one or more of these ways with many of the potential clients of this project.

Asylum Welcome's operational model combines a small core staff with specialist skills with a team of trained and supervised volunteers. On the legal/immigration side, this includes volunteers with Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) qualifications, both on asylum and immigration and for EU citizens. This staff/volunteer hybrid model enables us to keep costs low and engage/support more people, while still offering proper supervision and quality assurance. It also offers a richer engagement with clients by people from all backgrounds who really want to be there. The volunteer dimension usually enables us to respond to sudden changes in demand and often to work in the language of the client, though we still bring in translators, paid or voluntary, when needed. A staff member usually coordinates, supports, and supervises a team of three to 15 volunteers, depending on the service, each of whom may offer half a day or more a week. A volunteer coordinator supports the recruitment, rostering and general preparation and training of volunteers.

Connection Support

www.connectionsupport.org.uk

Connection Support provides a breadth of specialist support services to a range of people facing complex life challenges. Our support is tailored around the person and makes a difference to their life now, but also provides building blocks to help them help themselves in the future.



We provide flexible support and advice to a range of adults (young and old) and families in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. This covers housing support, homelessness, isolation, money management, mental health and drug and alcohol abuse. Often service users have multiple issues, which means our work with them is all-encompassing.

Connection Support delivers several Housing First projects and is a specialist industry leader in this area, with a passion for delivering this kind of service, providing opportunities and positive outcomes for individuals who have struggled to move on in their lives in other types of accommodation. We achieve this through a holistic, person-centred approach, focusing on the strengths of the client rather than a 'deficit' model.

We support a range of clients, many of them with mental health and/or substance misuse issues following a period of rough sleeping. In 2019 we supported more than 4,000 people. We resettle refugee families and support and empower them to restart their lives in Oxfordshire – through past and present resettlement we have supported 40 families, with a further six confirmed to arrive when flights resume.

We understand the need to tune into the client and find a way to build trust and understand their needs regardless of their background, experiences, culture and language, and that each client will respond best to different approaches and so support is tailored. We have a wealth of expertise in-house with over 25 years' experience working with homeless people. We deliver a range of services through expert staff and we have links with partner agencies locally to call on for additional support where required.

Appendix 2: Referral criteria

People with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) are those who are subject to immigration control due to their immigration status, which will prohibit them accessing publicly funded services.

The group already being housed by Oxford City Council who have NRPF have differing rights and entitlements. Some are eligible for certain forms of support through the Home Office, but there may be reasons they cannot take it up. Many have a strong connection with Oxford and do not wish to apply, some may be waiting for their accommodation to be arranged with the Home Office. Those we already know within the group are:

- Asylum seekers waiting for Home Office accommodation (eligible for section 95* but it has not been provided yet)
- Asylum seekers with a fresh claim who are eligible for section 4* but who would not accept dispersal
- Refused asylum seekers with no fresh claim
- There are also those who are subject to immigration control and are homeless and destitute, and currently sheltered:
 - Has Leave to Enter or Remain in the UK with the condition 'No Recourse to Public Funds'
 - Does not have Leave to Enter or Remain.

To access the project, service users must meet the following criteria:

- Be without any recourse to public funds
- Be in the Oxfordshire area with no access to accommodation and at risk of street homelessness
- Be destitute or at risk of destitution
- Not entitled to support through Adult Social Care
- Have a local connection or a strong reason to be housed within the Oxfordshire area (eg former care leaver from Oxford)
- Be either appeal rights exhausted (in relation to their immigration or asylum application) or with a fresh claim pending
- Have a strong reason to not wish to return to their home country
- Have the potential to regularise their status in the future
- Be willing to engage with the project to resolve their status.

Exclusion criteria

- People who could pose a risk to others or themselves would not be allowed to the property.

* Section numbers are references to legislation – we can provide more details if required.

Process

- The case manager and project manager (or similar) will assess each referral together and allocate a space on the waiting list or within the project.

In order to allocate spaces, they will prioritise those clients who:

- Are street homeless
- Have a mental health condition or physical health condition
- Have no to access any asylum support accommodation (section 4 or 95).

One potential hurdle at the time of referral may well be access to information about the client's status, as many clients have no papers. Getting this information through the Home Office can take three months. As part of the referral a service user will need to agree to put in this request if they have no documentation.

As part of the assessment the case manager must talk to the client about what their move-on plan from the project would be. The client will need to sign an agreement to work proactively with the case manager on a move-on plan as part of their occupancy agreement.

There may be some service users who are assessed for whom it may not be possible to have a move-on plan, as their immigration history is such that they would struggle to put in any application to regularise their status. Where the case manager feels that this is the case the project should ask the referrer to obtain secondary legal advice for the client to assess any potential options, and also to speak to a qualified adviser on voluntary return (if appropriate). A decision would need to be made whether to give a temporary bed to give the service user to give some respite from destitution, with a review in six months on whether or not to accept the referral.

Appendix 3: Cost assumptions for support and housing

Exact costs will be dependent on what is discovered by the strengths-based needs assessments. In the absence of that information, assumptions have been made on information available today. On 1st October 2020, the number of people in emergency accommodation is:

- Three EEA nationals – all male, one in the YHA and two in Canterbury House
- 14 non-EEA nationals – all male, all in Canterbury House
- Two men and two women whose status is under investigation – three in the YHA and one in Canterbury House.

All are single.

Typically, those in the YHA have more complex needs than those in Canterbury House.

Work is in progress to get more detailed information on their needs. In order to estimate costs, the following assumptions have been made:

Number of people:

Support need state >	High	Medium	Low	Total
Women	2	0	0	2
Men	4	6	9	19
Total	6	6	9	21

Connection Support recommends the following caseloads per worker:

- High support = 5 people
- Medium support = 10 people
- Low support = 15 people

Therefore 2.4 FTE support workers would be needed to support the current caseload. Management support for these workers would equate to 0.3 FTE.

Support costs after year 1 include a 2% increment to reflect cost of living.

Costs include salary, on-costs, staff expenses (including travel) and line management costs.

It is assumed that people who are successfully moved on will be replaced by new referrals to the scheme and therefore numbers will stay constant over the duration of the project.

Housing

For housing these numbers suggest:

- Ideal scenario: 12 people in dispersed single unit accommodation, nine people in HMOs
- Acceptable scenario: six people in dispersed single unit accommodation, 15 people in HMOs.

Costs are based on the "Acceptable" scenario.

Appendix 4: High-level project plan

Key goals/milestones	Dates
Plan and funding prospectus complete	Month 1
Year 1 funding secured	Month 2
Stage 1 property secured	Month 2
Stage 1 resources in place	Month 2
Stage 2 property secured	Month 4
50% total funding secured	Month 4
Stage 3 resources in place	Month 6
Stage 3 property secured	Month 6

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8
Preparation								
Stage 1 = First 5 people								
Stage 2 = Next 5 people								
Stage 3 = Next 10 people								
Tasks	Complete operational plan		Engage first 5 people		Engage 2nd 5 people		Engage next 10 people	
	Detailed costing		Accommodation set up		Accommodation set up		Accommodation set up	
	Select delivery organisations		Move in		Move in		Move in	
	Complete funder prospectus		Service delivery		Service delivery		Service delivery	
	Fundraising*							
	Identify Project Manager		Needs assessments next 5		Hire support worker 2			
	Hire support worker 1		Search and secure property*		Needs assessments next 10			
	Organise immigration services				Search and secure property*			
	Search and secure property*							
	Set up governance							
	Initial needs assessments							
	*= go/no go items							