

# GM Homelessness prevention strategy



## Outline of the session

### Present - GMJOKERS GMCA GMHAN LAs

Homelessness Prevention Strategy: Where are we?

**Intros** and objectives - Representation from 7/10 LAs

Game - **House, Person, Storm** - Engage a little physically and emotionally with what it is like to remain inside a housing system

Game - **In or Out** - A feel of what are the basic parameters of what's in the strategy, and see other people's perceptions & understandings of that using the space

**Sculptures** - Using random objects to build a shape of where we are now in preventing homelessness

**Exhibition** - observation, presentation, then group discussion on where we are now

Redesign of sculptures - what it should be

**Reflections and personal commitments** - what's needed to get there.

# Feedback from tables

## Table 1 Income and jobs

Current state of things:

Limited resources ('one shoe available')

[little] empathy relating to gambling and other addictions

'Hard to stop addiction when other crises are going on in your life'

No role model (or accessible, coherent, and relevant trusted guide) on finances

Confusion around UC - these are exacerbated by literacy challenges

'It's a house of cards, and it's just collapsed'

'Each time trying to get help is a roll of the dice or a snakes & ladders game'

Employment options [increase]

[At its core] 'it's all going well, then it collapses'

Full of red tape and jumping through hoops

For artists / creatives - benefits only temporarily address income challenges

It's a knife edge - one pay check to another

'You're always skint - UC is barely enough to eat'

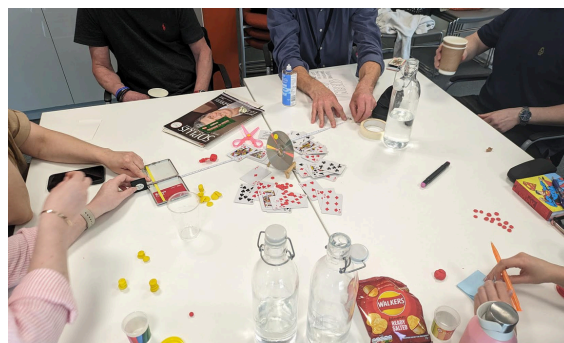
There are only short term jobs when there should be long term ones

'It's getting worse'

It doesn't pay to work

### Actions

- Redesign and co-produce jobcentres as Live Well Centres [Via Devolution deals] with focus on meaningful employment
- Transform the system - fundamentally make it less layered and confusing
- End Zero hours contracts



## Table 2 Health

Current state of things:

In a fragile state - people and the system are more fragile

'Crying out for help - but all you get is medication'

It's like an obstacle course 'there are so many barriers and it takes so much time'

Addicted to drugs / alcohol; you can't get help after a certain time

Addicted to prescription meds

'Pledges' are always too late

Things are fragile all around the NHS

Trying to access social care before [without] decent accommodation [is a self-defeating merry-go-round]

Dependency on mental health meds [is an increasing problem]

Local authorities 'can only' put people in B&B's and that's not suitable for people leaving the hospital.

Specific case study / example offered of person in hospital bed 200 days for

appropriate place to discharge to - and after that period the LA rejecting duty to house

because of length of stay in hospital (across over between local connection and legal directives LA adopts)

Health - the Future:

Not fragile any more

[there are] accessible services

Pledges for your health are seen to be met - which leads to, and incorporates, housing

There is a smooth, easy, journey through

### Actions

- Everyone works together
- Mental health fully resourced
- Aftercare is prioritized
- (prioritize housing first model)



### Table 3 Housing

Current state of things:

Nothing Available

Everyone crammed into 'one bag' (temp accom offer) - all running into the same end

'Looks like someone carrying all their stuff'

'The wheels have come off'

'It's horrendous, unsafe'

'Illness is a barrier to accessible housing'

'The bag is ripped... you get somewhere that looks alright...then there's mold... things need

fixing and its bad quality

Empty promises

Explanation: Getting a housing is a constantly moving target, as the criteria needed is constantly changing

Demand for access to housing has become more difficult [has risen beyond any ability to realize]

'All the housing is full'

'Every now and again someone meets the target [criteria to be housed], but its occasional

Housing in the future:

'It doesn't matter who you are, what your circumstances are - there is free access to housing'

'Geography doesn't matter' (end to local connection)

Barriers and criteria went out of the window'

#### Actions

- Take away intentionality
- All care leavers under 25 have Band 1 priority that they can't lose
- Commitment to build a range of suitable accommodation (and be creative and expansive with the parameters of 'suitable')

### Table 4 - Wild Card:

Current state of things:

Everything is hidden

'Out of sight out of mind'

'Discarded'

'Missed opportunities'

'Making yourself homeless'

'Invisible homelessness - sofa surfing

Meaning:

Overcrowding - RISK - whose responsibility is affordability?

'Bad options - being in a wrong area could be increasing your risk

People are being blamed and stigmatized

Stigma around immigrants / asylum seekers [has increased massively]

What it look like in future : '[we] got everything out of the pit so we can see and deal with it'

#### Actions (on national level)

- Build more housing
- More affordable housing
- More supported / supportive housing
  - Incorporating less right to buy (set discount at 5% and change time period eligibility)*
  - [Note that] Market rent is 2.5 that of council rent*
  - Bring back rent control*
  - Regulations in planning) to favor first time buyers over PRS portfolio holders expansion*
  - Abolish section 21 no fault evictions*
  - Better comms and joined up services*

### Table 5 - Structural Inequality

What it looks like:

Racial divide

'Death Star vibes'

'Class tower'

'Equality doesn't mean anything'

'Climbing and only getting bread sticks'

Need to work towards equity rather than equality

Ivory towers'

Meaning

Not being heard - not listening to what I'm saying

Color of your skin / religion leads to different treatment

We've reached the bottom of what services can do for you (or there's a deliberate lid depending on who you are)

'We're not equal - people have different needs

'How is housing prioritized based on status and needs?'

# Overall Themes



**Funding  
Cycles  
Challenging  
Overwhelmed services  
Not enough properties  
Disjointed and inconsistent criteria  
GPs**

**It's now down to luck /chance  
[housing is] unattainable & and  
uncertain**

**There is an absence of stability  
'It's a game of pass the parcel  
'The issue feels too complex'**

**'There's a Goldilocks thing to it ('have  
to be just right fit, and that is next to  
impossible / constantly changing')**

**Not enough housing**