



END ROUGH SLEEPING
IMPACT REPORT
2012/13 - 2017/18

www.harpsouthend.org.uk

Registered charity number 1098126



FOREWORD

As I step away from HARP after 14 years as Chief Executive, I'm so very proud of everything that we have achieved, particularly over the last five years through our End Rough Sleeping strategy, a period where **we have assisted over 5,000 people.**

Back in the early part of the decade, services for homeless people in Southend looked very different to how they look now. We had a day centre in Valkyrie Road, Westcliff and people had a half hour walk to our night shelter in Southend, whatever the weather.

When talking to people I found they often had harrowing tales to tell of their past. George, 45, had run away from an orphanage at the age of 10 to escape a life of violence and abuse and had lived on the streets all his life since. George had serious drink problems and mental health issues. Sadly such tales were a common theme.

People had all had accommodation in the past several times but this would break down due to their behaviour, and we recognised that **accommodation alone was not enough to address homelessness.**

People needed support to sustain a tenancy; their lifestyle needed to be addressed; people needed purpose other than just drinking. So we developed *SAM Programmes*, tailored to

each individual offering *Support, Accommodation and Meaningful Activity*. We found that when all three elements were in place, people had a much greater chance of moving towards a healthier and more positive lifestyle away from homelessness.

We knew we couldn't do it alone and it's only thanks to the support of the public, our funders, partner agencies and Southend Borough Council that we were able to make the impact that we are now so pleased to report.

We set up the Bradbury Centre which combined a Day Centre and Night Shelter all on one site, to become a one stop shop for single people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness in Southend. The Bradbury Centre provides emergency accommodation, hot food, showers, clean clothes, medical services and meaningful activities. There is a specialist team to help people access accommodation and get the support they need. They also help prevent people in accommodation from losing their homes. **In the last three years, 97% of at-risk service users kept their tenancy and didn't end up homeless.**

We also developed more supported accommodation specifically for those with complex needs i.e. mental health, drug and alcohol issues. Meaningful activity is crucial to this work, including activities such as dog walking, art classes, drug recovery and managing budgets, all to help people move towards a healthier lifestyle.

In recent years, we've set about creating innovative projects that meet the needs of different groups of homeless people, such as our award winning women's hostel White Heather House.

Ultimately, many people like George, who had found themselves trapped on the streets with nowhere to turn, now have accommodation in the town. George himself has managed to sustain a tenancy for over two years, after over thirty years on the streets. **He now has somewhere to call home, along with 146 other long-term rough sleepers who have been housed over the last four years.**

This is a testament to what people in difficult circumstances can achieve when the right resources are available to them, as well as the hard work and commitment of HARP staff and volunteers.

It's been a wild ride over the last five years at HARP and I'm delighted to present to you our End Rough Sleeping Impact Report which really highlights the difference we have made to so many people's lives.

Gill Garwood
Outgoing Chief Executive

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Front cover shot - Tony, former rough sleeper helped by HARP

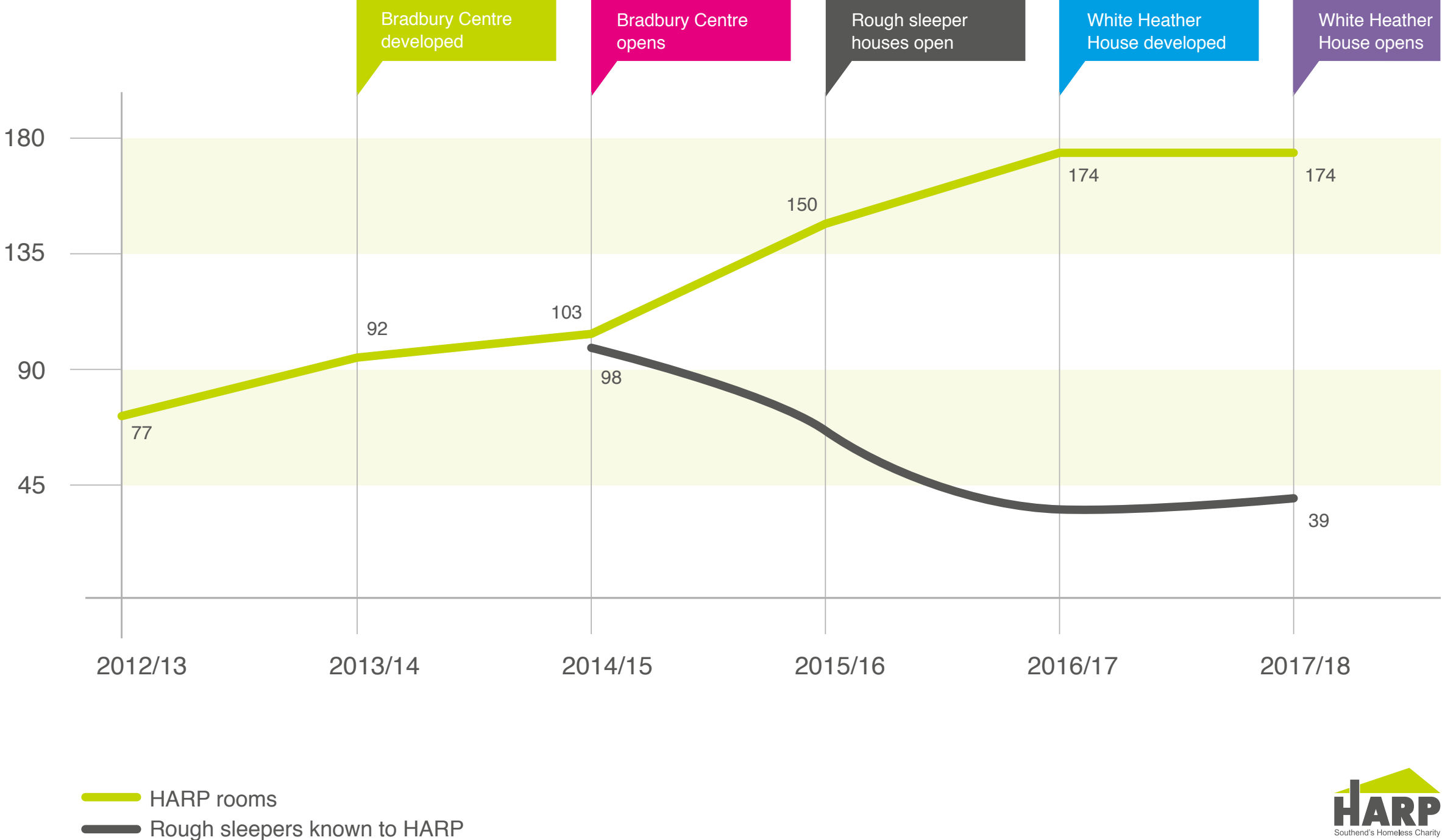
ROUGH SLEEPING IN SOUTHEND

Since embarking on the End Rough Sleeping strategy, as the number of rooms HARP provide has risen, the number of rough sleepers known to HARP at the end of each year has steadily dropped.

This is based on a snapshot as at 31st March each year of people engaging with HARP who are sleeping rough at that time.

MILESTONES

- 2013/14 – Bradbury Centre development begins
- 2014/15 – Bradbury Centre opens
- 2015/16 – Accommodation for long term rough sleepers opens
- 2016/17 – White Heather House women’s hostel development begins
- 2017/18 – White Heather House opens



THE BRADBURY CENTRE

In 2013, there was no central point for people in Southend to get the help they needed if they were facing homelessness. HARP operated a day centre in Westcliff, and a 14 bed night shelter half an hour's walk away in Southend.

The night shelter was not ideal, with shared rooms and facilities. People had to leave by 8.30 each morning to wander the streets with no guarantee they would have a bed the next night. This was not conducive to helping people move forward.

A key part of the strategy was to bring all services together under one roof. We acquired a derelict hotel in York Road and created a state of the art, one stop shop for homeless people, or people at risk of homelessness, to get the advice, support and emergency services that they needed.

HOW?

Day Centre

- Advice and support on housing and benefits
- Nutritious food
- Clean clothes
- Laundry facilities
- Showers
- Toilets
- Meaningful activities
- Medical services
- Links into accommodation and health related services

Night Shelter

- 18 bed night shelter with private, en suite rooms in the same building
- People could stay until more permanent accommodation could be found

STATS

- Over the last 5 years HARP have provided advice and support to 5,710 individuals that were either homeless or at risk of homelessness
- HARP have provided 60,000 meals and food parcels for rough sleepers in five years
- We've had around 49,000 visits to the Bradbury Centre since opening in March 2014

► IMPACT

- More people helped off the streets more quickly
- 1,133 homeless people housed between 2014 and 2018
- 40% of homeless people who came to HARP between 2014 and 2018 were housed
- 146 entrenched rough sleepers housed over 4 years

HOMELESS PREVENTION

In today's housing market, where accommodation is scarce, expensive, and in high demand, people with limited funds, lack of family support and no access to credit are in serious danger of ending up on the streets if they lose their accommodation.

Once a tenancy is lost, it is very difficult to find another home.

The first step in establishing the Bradbury Centre was to set up a Homeless Prevention Team, to ensure that, wherever possible, people were supported to keep their tenancies, to stop them becoming the next generation of rough sleepers.

HOW?

- We advocate on behalf of service users if they are threatened with eviction
- We provide training on how to sustain a tenancy
- We provide training on life skills, such as how to manage a budget
- We help people access the benefits they are entitled to

STAT

- Between 2014 and 2018, 1,606 people were helped by HARP who were at risk of becoming homeless

► IMPACT

- Between 2015 and 2018, of the people who came to HARP at risk of losing their tenancy, 97% kept their tenancy and didn't end up homeless

5,710
PEOPLE
SUPPORTED

97% KEPT
THEIR
TENANCY



HEALTH & WELLBEING

According to Crisis’ 2012 Homelessness Kills paper, homeless people are far more likely to die young. The average age of death for homeless men is just 47 years old, and just 43 for women.

Due to the strong correlation between homelessness and poor health, we embedded health and wellbeing into all aspects of our strategy.

HOW?

- Visiting doctor and nurse at the Bradbury Centre
- Referrals to GP
- Links to drug and alcohol services
- Counselling
- Links to dental, optician and chiropody services
- Working closely with paramedics and NHS teams

STATS

- In excess of 3,800 medical interventions on behalf of over 1,000 people since 2014
- A total of around 250,000 meals provided to all HARP service users over five years
- Supported over 1,500 individuals who reported having a range of short and long-term health needs

IMPACT

- **Estimated around £60m of public spending saved thanks to HARP housing 1,133 homeless people***
- **When surveyed, 100% of partners and stakeholders agreed that HARP improved the health of disadvantaged people**

“I feel I would be dead without HARP. I have a heart condition and although I struggled, it wasn’t until I went into hospital that I realised how serious my condition was. I came out of hospital and had 2 nights in the church shelters before being accommodated in HARP’s night shelter, which I believe saved me from a potentially far worse situation – mentally and physically - I felt at the point of breaking.” – HARP Service User

*A study in 2008 by the New Economics Foundation ‘Work it out: barriers to employment for homeless people’ indicated an annual cost to the state of £26,000 for each homeless person. £60m figure assumes all people were housed for 2 years.



CASE STUDY – DAVID

“It was like a weight being lifted, having somewhere to stay – somewhere safe.”

On his first day at HARP, David met his keyworker Vicky. Over the next few months, Vicky helped him to register with a GP, which led to him being diagnosed with a serious lung condition – something that past doctors had not spotted.

“If I didn’t come to HARP, I’d probably be dead now. If I had been on the streets long term, I wouldn’t have survived many cold nights with my illness.”

CRIME & COMMUNITIES

According to Sheffield Hallam’s 2010 Hidden Homelessness report, nearly 30% of rough sleepers admitted to committing a minor crime such as shoplifting or anti-social behaviour in the hope of being taken into custody for the night.

In our experience, rough sleeping can lead to a downward spiral, with deteriorating mental and physical health, an increased likelihood of self-medicating with drugs and alcohol to cope, which in turn can lead to anti-social behavior.

STAT

- In the past five years, 693 people have been helped towards a more positive lifestyle away from crime.

► IMPACT

“HARP have benefitted our strategic aim in reducing Anti-Social Behaviour and reducing those at risk of harm by providing a service which encourages and supports individuals with alcohol and drug addictions, and mental health issues.” – Essex Police

“Without this service there would be no support or accommodation for offenders who are the most chaotic and complex individuals, most with class A addiction which drives their offending and mental health issues of varying degrees.” – Chris Penrose, Integrated Offender Management Link Worker at Essex Police

**693 PEOPLE
SUPPORTED
AWAY FROM
CRIME**

IMPROVED LIFE CHANCES

After a period of homelessness people often report a loss of confidence, self-esteem and motivation, as their strength has been spent overcoming crisis.

A key aim of the strategy was to give people a sense of purpose and hope, through a comprehensive range of meaningful activities which aim to improve life-skills, rebuild confidence, aid recovery and offer vocational training opportunities.

STAT

- Over the last five years, HARP have provided meaningful activities to 1,643 people on 13,839 occasions.

IMPACT

“Thanks for the team believing in me when my self-worth was low. I was supported with gaining employment and made fully aware of my financial obligations from the start. This lesson will be carried into my new life of independence.” - HARP Service User

“Working in the kitchen at HARP has given my confidence a real boost. It has given me a lot of job satisfaction and the chance to work alongside other volunteers. I have really enjoyed being able to give something back for all that HARP have done for me.”

– Jane, HARP service user

MOVING ON TO INDEPENDENCE

Ultimately, the End Rough Sleeping strategy aimed to enable as many people as possible to live independently in the wider community.

To End Rough Sleeping, it’s not a simple case of getting people in to accommodation. It’s about providing a comprehensive package of support, accommodation and giving people purpose and belief in themselves, all by mobilising the right resources.

In this report, we’ve shown all the elements that have come together, from developing the Bradbury Centre, to investing in specialist teams, to creating bespoke accommodation for the various needs of homeless people.

IMPACT

- 1,324 people supported to live independently in the community since 2013/14
- A 228% increase in the number of people leaving HARP to live independently comparing March 2018 to March 2012

1,643
PEOPLE
ACCESSING
CONFIDENCE
BOOSTING
ACTIVITIES

228%
INCREASE
IN PEOPLE
MOVING
ON TO
INDEPENDENCE

LOOKING FORWARD

As HARP’s new Chief Executive, I feel privileged to be joining such a successful and impactful organisation. The work highlighted in this report really is lifesaving, and I hope we can continue to build on this success over the coming years.

What has struck me most in my short time at HARP is the passion of staff and volunteers alike for helping local homeless people. To me, this report shows how that passion has been translated into action through HARP’s services, with thousands of lives changed for the better as a result.

I’m very much looking forward to leading HARP on the next stage of its journey, looking at the ways in which we can maintain our excellent standards whilst improving our offering for the people who rely on us. I’m equally eager to get to know the team better, learning about their skills and plotting a course for the organisation so that, together, we can help every person who needs us.

For personal reasons, I feel that the cause of homelessness is very much “in my blood”. There has been direct experience of homelessness within my immediate family, so I know that this can happen to anyone - it could so easily have happened to me! As a result, I have the utmost respect and compassion for anyone facing homelessness, however that comes about, and I am so glad now to have an opportunity to do what I can to help those who are homeless or at risk of becoming so, through HARP.

The targets which HARP set itself five years ago were stretching, and those we are setting now for the coming five years are equally ambitious. They have to be, because the need for our services is as great as it has ever been, perhaps even greater. It’s not going to be easy, but with the work that has gone before we have a fantastic opportunity to reach yet more people and help turn more lives around, innovating as HARP has always done in order to find solutions to our service users’ problems.

Finally, I’d like to thank Gill, all of HARP’s Trustees, the senior staff team and everyone I’ve worked with at HARP so far, for all of the support and encouragement you have shown me, for which I am extremely grateful.

Jackie
Jackie Bliss
Incoming Chief Executive





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