

Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee

Shelter in Manchester

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Until there's a home for everyone.

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Shelter

1. Overview of Shelter

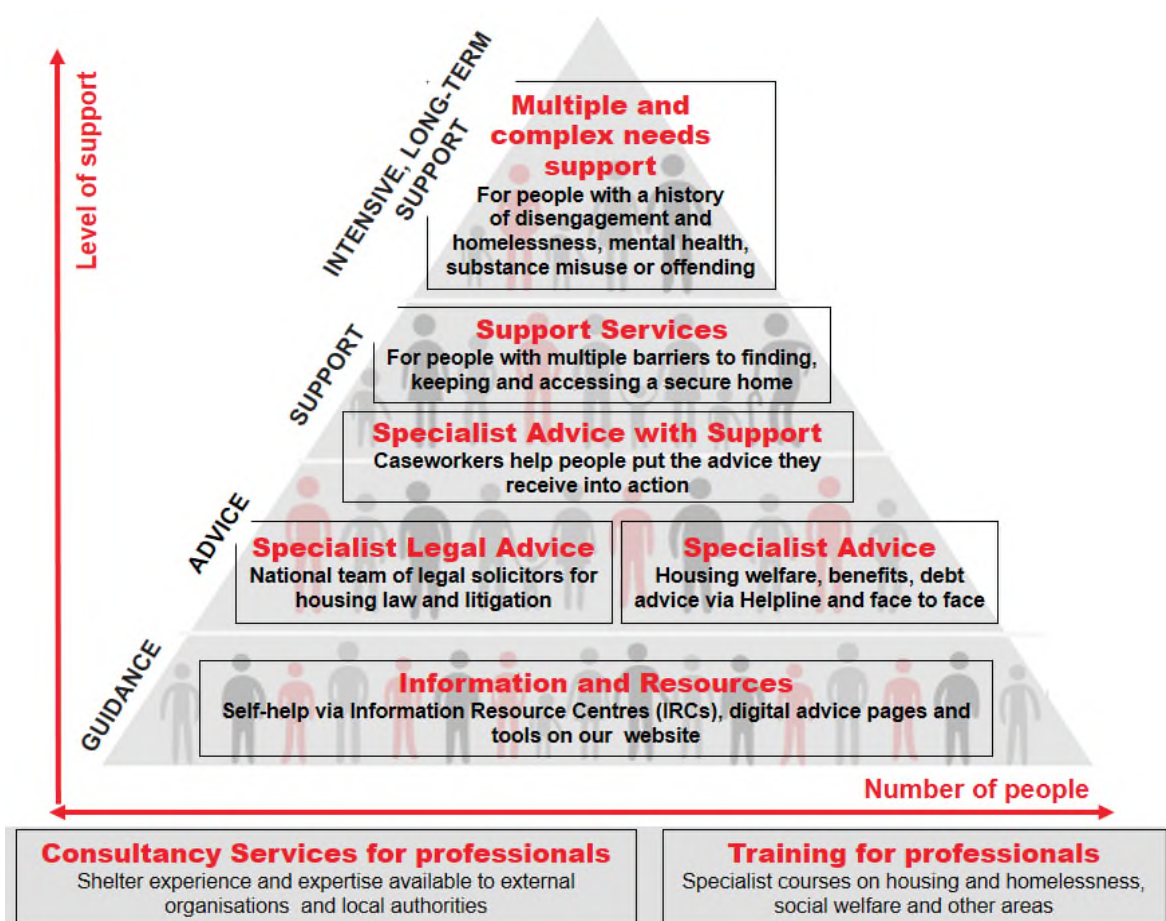
Shelter has been in existence for just over 50 years and it was the first organisation to establish a clear campaigning focus to tackle the root causes of homelessness and poor housing through policy, campaigns and delivery of services and support. We continue to gather evidence of the issues relating to homelessness to support positive change through our network of HUBs in most of the major cities.

Shelter helps millions of people every year struggling with bad housing or homelessness through our advice, support and legal services. And we campaign to make sure that, one day, no one will have to turn to us for help.

We're here so no one had to fight bad housing or homelessness on their own.

2. Shelter's Service Offer

Our services are delivered to meet our clients' needs face to face, by telephone, online and through other partnerships with other organisation's to empower people struggling with bad housing or homelessness to keep, access or improve their home.



- **Operations** deliver our face to face advice and support in hubs and services, in prisons and through other national contracts and specialist legal advice.
Focus: Developing hubs and the future of legal services
- **Telephone and Online Advice Services** deliver advice on our Helpline and website, and increasingly across other digital channels.
Focus: Future of telephone and online-based advice services
- **National Housing Advice Service (NHAS)** make our housing expertise and experience available to Citizens Advice, local authorities and other national

3. Services in Greater Manchester

Shelter Greater Manchester has been in Manchester and Greater Manchester for over 25 years and helps over 12,000 people per year facing bad housing or homelessness. We do this by offering a suite of services funded externally by City or local councils, housing associations or other grant making bodies and others services funded by Shelter's voluntary income which we use to help meet demand and to trial or pilot new services that will alleviate or prevent homelessness both now and in the future.

Access to our services is through drop-in, telephone or by appointment dependent on access route need.

Services that Shelter deliver within Manchester:

- **Information Resource Centres:** a suite of computers that offer digital access at our main office in Samuel Ogden Street and in our satellite Inspiring Change office in Swan Street. We provide guided self-help through a team of paid and voluntary IRC officers. Clients can expect support with identifying their problem, identifying options and will be encouraged to develop a personal action plan to guide their next steps.
- **Advice Support and Guidance:** Service offers a No Wrong Door approach to delivering advice on housing, benefits and debt at both generalist and specialist level with advocacy.
 - **Manchester Targeted Advice:** Funded by MCC via Citizens Advice Manchester, working in partnership to target our advice and support to those that are most vulnerable and likely to lose their home or struggle to access a home without specialist advice and support
 - **Benefit CAP:** Funded through DWP new burden money and delivered via a partnership led by Citizens Advice Manchester. We work with families affected by the benefit CAP to find a sustainable solution to their shortfall in income due to the CPA
 - **Personal Budgeting:** Assisting people moving onto Universal Credit to budget for both monthly income and managing payments to third parties such as the Landlord.

- **Legal Service:**
 - **Legal Help:** We are able to assist people with homeless reviews, advising on notices seeking possession and with disrepair cases where there is a significant risk of harm
 - **Legal Aid:** We are able to deliver housing representation and advice to people financially eligible for legal aid. We are able to represent clients at court and litigate on behalf of clients to try and keep people in their homes or assist with judicial reviews of the refusal of councils to provide clients with temporary accommodation pursuant to their homelessness duties
 - **Help at Court:** We provide assistance at court for people that attend unrepresented and can advocate for them. To deliver this we work with two additional providers WTB Solicitors and Platt Halpern Solicitors
- **Access Private Rented Sector:** a support service PRS service aimed at improving access to suitable and appropriate homes within the private rented sector. It is for individuals or families who are in housing need, and are experiencing multiple financial, legal and practical barriers to accessing such accommodation.
- **Housing First:** A well evaluated approach to tackling long term, repeated homelessness. It is a philosophy which has certain fundamental principles at its heart: a recognition of the intrinsic worth and potential assets of an individual whatever their life history, the provision of housing as a basic human right and that a safe home provides the best setting for people to address other difficulties in their life. We are currently piloting Housing First and are undertaking an evaluation of how it could work in Manchester, working in partnership the New Economy and the Centre of Housing policy at the University of York.
- **Inspiring Change Manchester:** is providing an innovative approach to supporting people with multiple and complex needs. This eight-year programme, funded through Big Lottery Fund's Fulfilling Lives project, has been designed and developed with service users to meet the diverse requirements of people living in Manchester with a variety of complex needs (including a history of problem drug and alcohol use, mental health or emotional well-being issues, accommodation problems and offending). The project aims to break down barriers that can prevent these people from leading fulfilling lives by delivering joined up support in a way that engages people who often have had unsuccessful contact with other services.
- **Building Better Opportunities:** Motiv8, Building better opportunities for Greater Manchester. Improving health and employment outcomes for individuals and families not involved with any other training or employment.
- **National Services:** people and organisations in Manchester also have access to British Gas Energy Trust services including securing grants to help with energy arrears. National homelessness Advice through our partnership with Citizens Advice,

funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government we enable frontline providers to deliver good quality housing and homelessness advice, and support and facilitate the prevention of homelessness.

- **Helpline:** Shelters Housing Advice Helpline open 365 days a year, 8 till 8 Mon to Fri and 8 till 5 at the weekend. The helpline also offers a web chat service 9 till 5 Mon to Friday

4. Outcomes

An integral part of the cities prevention agenda Shelter Greater Manchester helped over 12,000 people in 2015-16 and already helped over 11,000 people in 2016-17 to Keep, Access or improve a home.

5. Finance and People

Shelter receives funding from Manchester City Council but in addition brings approximately 1.3 million of additional funding every year to help the people of Manchester and greater Manchester

Employing over 60 full and part time staff and with a team upward of 20 volunteers and delivering in partnership across the City.

6. Strategic

Access to a home is a human right and Shelter works across the City and within Greater Manchester to make sure that everyone has access to a Safe, Secure and Affordable home. Our strategic priorities are a good fit with policy development in Manchester and Greater Manchester; our aims are to tackle the root causes of homeless and to explore innovative ways to end homelessness (and the social problems related to it) rather than to manage homelessness better.

Safe is about being in a supportive community, being free from harassment from rogue landlords, and living somewhere your children aren't at threat of electrocution because of the bad wiring or at risk of poor health from damp. It's also about knowing that if something happens which means you might lose your home, there is a safety net there to catch you.

Secure is about having a long-term tenancy so you can plan your life and your finances for more than a few months. It is about being able to raise issues without the threat of eviction. And it's about knowing there is appropriate, reliable and empathetic support there for you and your family if you lose your home.

Affordable is about making sure there are enough homes built, so that everyone in our society can buy or rent a home that doesn't mean they have nothing left to live on and that the prices of homes to buy, and private and social homes to rent, are in touch with what people earn and leave no one behind. It's about knowing that there is help available for the times when you might struggle to pay your rent or mortgage, to help you through the difficult times we all face.

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