



Background Information and Criteria for the Housing First Scotland Fund 2018-2020

Introduction to Housing First

The Housing First approach, first developed in New York, is a successful method of helping people who are homeless and who have multiple and enduring support needs, to secure accommodation and be supported to live a sustainable way of life. Housing First differs from traditional tenancy support models in several respects. Traditional support workers may have caseloads of 20-40 people, whereas Housing First workers will typically support an initial caseload of 5-7 people. This number may increase over time as people require less support. Housing First employs active engagement, supporting people by recognising and emphasising their strengths and capacity for positive change, and links with relevant services that help to meet the full range of an individual's needs.

Housing First is also fundamentally a choice-led approach, which fully respects the choices of each person and supports their self-determination. The Housing First approach also allows for people to be rapidly rehoused in instances of housing loss.

Smaller caseloads enable more intensive, flexible and personalised support for people who have not been successfully engaged and supported by other housing services due to the complexity of their needs. Evidence suggests that, over time, those housed by Housing First require less support and, in some cases, may no longer require support. However, this is completely dependent on the individual and may take several months or years.

There is evidence to show that the Housing First model can help people with complex needs to sustain a tenancy; improve their mental health and physical wellbeing, and increase their contact with family and involvement with the local community. Key to the success of the Housing First model is the commitment by all agencies involved and the provision of person centred planning and flexible support for the individual for as long as required.

A useful online guide to Housing First and its Key Principles may be found here:
<https://housingfirstguide.eu/website/>

Programme Overview

Social Bite is a registered charity in Scotland which seeks to alleviate homelessness through innovative solutions from employment and support programmes, to temporary housing. Social Bite is on a mission to bring Scotland together, to build a collaborative movement to end homelessness. To do this, they recognised that there is a need to make houses available to homeless people, to fund a support resource for people to sustain their tenancies, and to support vulnerable and marginalised people back into society. The Housing First model fits this aim and, following evidence from commissioned research¹, Social Bite

¹ <http://www.socialbitevillages.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/EradicatingCoreHomelessness.pdf>

decided to invest in a programme to promote the roll-out of the Housing First approach across Scotland. The Housing First Scotland Fund is also being supported by The Merchants House of Glasgow.

The Housing First Scotland Fund will enable the delivery of the Housing First model in five Local Authority areas: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Stirling and Dundee over a two-year period from August 2018 to July 2020. Housing has been pledged in each of these areas to enable the programme to operate.

Provision of housing will be accompanied in each city by a programme of 'wrap-around' support for Housing First participants. Person-centred planning and support for the individuals involved in Housing First is vital and each geographic area will require experienced support providers to carry out the key activities associated with running a Housing First service. To provide the required breadth of support, providers in each area are encouraged to work together to develop a consortium. Each consortium requires a lead member to take overall responsibility for managing the project.

Applications will only be accepted on the appropriate form.

Eligibility Criteria

The funding programme is open to consortiums which will typically be made up from multi-disciplinary support services to provide expertise around areas such as mental health, physical health, employability, drug and alcohol misuse, and community justice. The consortium will also need to evidence that the methods they will use to deliver services will comply with the internationally recognised principles of the Housing First approach:

1. People have a right to a home
2. Flexible support is provided for as long as is needed
3. Housing and support are separated
4. Individuals have choice and control
5. An active engagement approach is used
6. The service is based on people's strengths, goals and aspirations
7. A harm reduction approach is used

Further detail on each of these principles is included as an Appendix to this guidance.

In Scotland, recent practice has also highlighted the value of peer support workers and actions to address the financial hardship and social isolation that people experience. Bids that demonstrate an ability to embed this kind of work will be more likely to be successful.

The high-level responsibilities of each consortium will be:

- Assembling a team to implement the programme.
- Identifying participants for the programme.
- Helping participants to secure a home.
- Providing support to the programme participants (including tackling social isolation, loneliness and sense of purpose).
- Connecting people with mainstream and specialist health and social care provision as required.
- Gathering data and supporting evaluation of the programme.
- Working collaboratively with Local Authorities to explore and develop plans for mainstreaming Housing First at the end of the grant period.

Only one consortium of support providers will be funded per area. Support providers will be able to form part of more than one consortium, however they will not be entitled to be a lead member of more than one consortium. The lead member of the consortium must be a registered charity in Scotland. All consortium members organisations who intend to provide direct housing first support should be registered with the Care Inspectorate.

Timetable				
Launch of Housing First Programme	Closing date for applications	Period for review of applications	Announcement of funding	Programme delivery to start
Tuesday 12 June 2018	Tuesday 10 July 2018	11 – 24 July 2018	Tuesday 31 July 2018	Monday 13 August 2018
How decisions on funding will be made				

Corra Foundation will review the material you send us and will contact you to discuss your plans so that we understand them fully. Applications will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- **Track record:** how well the consortium demonstrates good systems, processes and management; how effective past support of people experiencing homelessness has been; how knowledgeable the consortium is of the policies, organisations and context in the geographic area they plan to work.
- **Proposed plans:** realistic development and delivery plans; strong partnership; appropriate resourcing and finances.
- **Clear commitment to Housing First principles** within the delivery plans; ability to take part in a shared process of learning and evaluation; demonstrable ability to embed the voice of people with an experience of homelessness across and within the work.

We will present recommendations to an independent grouping that includes those with experience and knowledge of supporting people who are homeless and of the Housing First model, including those funding the programme, those with practical experience and with policy and evaluation expertise.

How much funding is available and for what

Funding for this programme is provided by Social Bite and The Merchants House of Glasgow. The funding will be split across five cities: Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen and Stirling and will fund two-year Housing First Programmes from August 2018 to July 2020. Each city has been earmarked a fixed amount of the available funds and consortiums are invited to bid up to the maximum allocated for each city. The maximum funds available to each city are listed in Table 1 (below).

Table 1		
City	Maximum grant per city:	Approx. No Participants
Glasgow	£900,000	78
Edinburgh	£650,000	56
Dundee	£400,000	33
Aberdeen	£400,000	33
Stirling	£100,000	8
		208

It should be noted by bidders that further funding commitments are being sought to augment the scale of the programme. If further funding is confirmed successful bidders will be invited to upscale their activity accordingly. The application asks bidders to summarise how they would upscale their projects. More detailed information on upscaling plans may be requested from successful bidders when further funding is confirmed.

The approximate number of Housing First participants that each city will engage through this two-year programme has been estimated based on a cost of £7,500 per year for each participant including direct support costs, furnishing tenancies, and overheads). Target participation numbers will increase if/when further funding is confirmed.

Formal written agreements are being established with housing providers that set out volume and availability of properties in each city, the terms of the tenancies, and the responsibilities of the housing providers. The Programme Partnership (Social Bite, Glasgow Homelessness Network (GHN), Corra Foundation) will support consortiums to develop their relationships with housing providers and ensure the required availability of housing is achieved.

Grants will be paid in advance in quarterly instalments. The level of funding provided in each instalment will be determined by each consortium's budget and cashflow forecast, and will be reflective of the number of Housing First participants being supported during that period. Grant funding for Housing First support will not exceed the number of houses that are available to participants. Consortiums will ensure that support and a personal housing plan is actively continued for any instance where it has not been possible to sustain a tenancy. The opportunity to 'try again' in a mainstream tenancy should remain part of that personal housing plan. These outcomes will be summarised in quarterly monitoring returns along with any 'lost contact' information.

Funds are expected to be utilised for: staffing and on costs for support provision; reasonable overheads; furniture and other supports to enable tenancies to be maintained. It is expected that consortiums will explore the potential to maximise support from statutory funds (such as the Scottish Welfare Fund) for individual participants.

Furnishing Costs: Where necessary, consortiums will be expected to provide support to furnish new tenancies. A provision for furniture costs should be included in the budget along with this application. There is no minimum (£) set for the amount that may be spent on furnishing a property. However, it is expected that a minimum package for a two-apartment home would include:

- **living room:** carpet, underlay, two-seater settee, two armchairs, a coffee table, curtains and curtain pole

- **bedroom one:** carpet, underlay, double mattress, double bed base, double headboard, a wardrobe, a five-drawer chest, curtains and curtain pole
- **kitchen:** lino, cooker, fridge freezer and blind/curtain where there a window
- **bathroom:** lino and blind/curtain where this a window
- **hall:** carpet, underlay and blind/curtain where there is a window

It is also expected that consortiums would be able to have a furnishing package in place on the day tenants move into a property. The cost of furnishing properties may not be recouped through any increases to peoples' rent.

Please note: Grant funding in year two of the Housing First Scotland Fund (2019/20) will be made available for distribution by Corra Foundation subject to the Boards of Social Bite Fund and The Merchants House of Glasgow being satisfied of progress and funding being available.

What happens when bids are successful

Successful consortiums will be expected to be ready to commence their activities within two weeks of their funding being confirmed.

Over the course of the two-year grant period, consortiums will be expected to participate in external events and training activities organised by the Housing First Scotland Fund. This will include a series of training events on Housing First delivered by Turning Point Scotland. These events will provide an opportunity for consortiums to explore how to strengthen their activities as well as sharing practice and learning with other cities.

Consortiums will be expected to develop direct relationships with Housing Providers in their City. The Programme Partnership will assist this process and mediate any issues that arise with the provision of housing.

This Housing First programmes across the five cities will be independently evaluated. Consortiums will be required to support this process by liaising with the evaluation team and supplying data necessary to conduct the evaluation. Consortiums will also be asked to complete quarterly progress reports to Corra Foundation. These will be based on a template to be supplied by Corra Foundation in advance.

The Housing First programme partnership

The Housing First Scotland Fund is funded by Social Bite and The Merchants House of Glasgow. Delivery partners are: Corra Foundation (funds management), Glasgow Homelessness Network (programme management), and Turning Point Scotland (training).

Appendix 1: Housing First Principles²

1. People have a right to a home. This means...

- Housing First prioritises access to housing as quickly as possible
- Eligibility for housing is not contingent on any conditions other than willingness to maintain a tenancy

² Adapted from Housing First England: *The Principles of Housing First* (2018) (<https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/principles-housing-first>)

- The housing provided is based on suitability (stability, choice, affordability, quality, community integration) rather than the type of housing
 - The individual will not lose their housing if they disengage or no longer require the support
 - All tenancies will be scattered, not congregated (e.g. not all in a single street or close);
 - The individual will receive a Scottish Secure Tenancy (from social and council landlords) or a Private Residential Tenancy (from private landlords)
 - The landlord will ensure housing management functions as standard, providing services (repairs, advice, support, adaptations etc.) and considerations (waiting list, transfer lists etc.) that all tenants would receive.
- 2. Flexible support is provided for as long as it is needed. This means...**
- Providers commit to long-term offers of support which do not have a fixed end date; recognising that this varies by individual needs, characteristics and experiences
 - The service is designed for flexibility of support with procedures in place for high/low intensity support provision and for cases that are 'dormant'
 - Support is provided for the individual to transition away from Housing First if this is a positive choice for them
 - The support links with relevant services across sectors that help to meet the full range of an individual's needs and that promote the role of positive social networks, community integration and meaningful occupation of time, including work, volunteering, learning and leisure
 - There are clear pathways into, and out of, the Housing First service.
- 3. Housing and support are separated. This means...**
- That where council, social and private landlords are also support providers, the landlord responsibilities and support functions will be carried-out distinctly separately
 - Support is available to help people maintain a tenancy and to address any other needs they identify
 - An individual's housing is not conditional on them engaging with support
 - The choices they make about their support do not affect their housing
 - The offer of support stays with the person – if the tenancy fails, the individual is supported to acquire and maintain a new home.
- 4. Individuals have choice and control. This means that they...**
- Choose the type of housing they have and its location within the context of available options
 - Have the choice, where possible, about where they live
 - Have the option not to engage with other services as long as there is regular contact with the Housing First support providers
 - Choose where, when and how support is provided
 - Are supported through person-centred planning and are given the lead to shape the support they receive.
- 5. An active engagement approach is used. This means...**
- Staff are responsible for proactively engaging their clients; making the service fit the individual instead of trying to make the individual fit the service.
 - Caseloads are small allowing staff to be persistent and proactive in their approach, doing 'whatever it takes' and not giving up or closing the case when engagement is low.
 - Support is provided for as long as each client requires it.
 - The team continues to engage and support the individual if they lose their home or leave their home temporarily.

- Housing Providers and support providers will actively collaborate to help people sustain a home, and rapidly respond to any instances of anti-social behaviour, rent arrears and safeguarding

6. The service is based on people's strengths, goals and aspirations. This means...

- Services are underpinned by a philosophy that there is always a possibility for positive change and improved health and wellbeing, relationships and community and/or economic integration.
- Individuals are supported to identify their strengths and goals.
- Individuals are supported to develop the knowledge and skills they need to achieve their goals.
- Individuals are supported to develop increased self-esteem, self-worth and confidence, and to integrate into their local community.

7. A harm reduction approach is used This means...

- People are supported holistically.
- Staff support individuals who use substances to reduce immediate and ongoing harm to their health.
- Staff aim to support individuals who self-harm to undertake practices which minimise risk of greater harm.
- Staff aim to support individuals to undertake practices that reduce harm and promote recovery in other areas of physical and mental health and wellbeing.

The Corra Foundation

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