

Caer Las response to CCS scrutiny working group on Homelessness

Response has been informed by the following services:

Outreach Services

Caer Las' outreach services support rough sleepers, street workers and people in crisis to access the specialist support and safe accommodation options (in Swansea this includes Access Point).

Paxton Street Hostel

This project provides supported accommodation to 13 people who are rough sleeping / homeless and who need support in resettling back into the community and finding a home. Due to the client group experiencing multiple disadvantages there can be a higher instance of substance use and mental health issues in this project.

Older People Services (OPS)

This project is made up of three supported accommodation services; Ty Betty Williams (4-bed shared house), John Morris House (8 semi-independent flats) and St Matthews Court (5 independent flats with floating support). The project supports older people who have been homeless and have long term addictions, who are stable in their substance use and when ready can move towards abstinence and resettlement into the wider community.

Tenancy Support

This project supports people living in their own homes who are at risk of becoming homeless or who have recently moved into a new home after a period of homelessness.

What is working well?

- Multi agency working:
 - Swansea Night Shelter (SNS)
 - Winter provision for when the weather is severe/cold
 - Emergency beds at Dinas Fechen and Paxton Street
 - Access to homeless nurse
 - Tenancy support for rough sleepers moving into immediate independent accommodation

What is not working so well?

- Swansea Gateway System:
 - Lack of coordination and poor communication between stakeholders
 - Gateway would benefit from having a dedicated coordinator
 - Data from Gateway enable performance management of system/services e.g. void management, positive move on, referrals vs refusals, length of stay
- Dual diagnosis
 - Lack of access and entry into to dual diagnosis support (mental health and drug/alcohol treatment) is a barrier to move on and will impact on many people's ability to recover from homelessness and the risks of future homelessness.

- Access to care
 - Individuals in supported housing who require personal care have consistent and prompt access to assessment and support.
- Resources on reactive measures to short term homelessness issues impact on investment in long term solution options
 - Although there is great value in SNS and other services to meet presenting need - especially where there is risk of harm to people from rough sleeping, resources need to be focused on preventative / tailored options that affords long lasting change – targeting people who the current system doesn't work for.
 - This will include people who face multiple disadvantages and have multiple, co-existing and complex needs, are likely to be rough sleeping and face the most barriers to transitioning towards stable, independent living.
- Access to social housing and PRS move on options
 - This includes long waiting lists for access to the move on panel and the barriers to eligibility.
 - PRS rent levels are above LHA rates.
 - Prison leavers having reduced options for resettlement from prison, creating cycle of prison, homelessness, prison.

Gaps in provision

- Coordinated Gateway for all supported accommodation is Swansea. We would welcome the opportunity to be involved in such a development.
- Access to assertive and flexible approach to people who are unable to access services due to dual diagnosis. This could be improved by Swansea having a network that brings together stakeholders from health (inc mental health), D&A services and housing.
- Equity in access to assessment and support for people with personal care needs – similar option could be as above re network.
- The provision of intensive, open ended, flexible and tailored made / bespoke support, to people who face multiple disadvantages (who are likely to be excluded from current services and / or repeat users), creating long lasting and sustainable change.
 - The housing first approach is a good example of this kind of offer and Caer Las would welcome the opportunity to pilot this approach with a small group of entrenched rough sleepers, following a successful pilot in Cardiff.
 - Resourcing and enabling existing services to work in a different way that is right for the individual. This should be informed by this evaluation of where the blocks and barriers are to accessing services and / or where services need to change.