

Response from Matthew's House for Homelessness Scrutiny Working Group on 17 May 2018

3 Questions:

What do you think is working well in Swansea?

- 1)The support for vulnerable and homeless people is growing from the community aspect and charitable support groups. There is not one evening a week now where someone homeless or hungry can't eat.
- 2)Housing Options is local and available to the centre of Swansea

Where are the gaps in provision?

- 1)Couples struggle far more in homeless situations.
- 2)Immediate council housing seems to be a shortage including hostel and short term accommodation
- 3)The support alongside homelessness when finding accommodation for the underlying issues some may face (Debt, Mental health, Substance misuse). Do the council link with other services alongside the homelessness issues?.

What is not working so well?

- 1)Weekend Support and out of Hours. There doesn't seem to be anything.
- 2)Being open on Sunday evenings we are often caught in a volatile situation with people struggling with nothing. Many occasions we have tried and tried and there is nothing immediately after 2pm weekdays. We understand this is a difficult issue to support and solve but there seems to be no clear route of next steps for people in a crisis. We have more information from local charities and support agencies rather than the council at our project as these groups have come to share information with us.
- 3)The Wallich prepared a document that shows Lots of support in and around Swansea but I think it could still have more information on it and it is something the Council should adapt and work closer with the agencies supporting vulnerable people locally.
- 4)The new money donation for homeless system in Swansea doesn't seem to be clear on how these donations are being used and governed.
- 5)Visually and from what we hear in meetings and through rough sleepers themselves, we hear more about progressions and developments supporting homeless individuals being supported by other charities in our city than the council in Swansea.

The understanding I have from Swansea council is this:

Head to housing options for an appointment, they will advise you for the next steps and there is a waiting period while support is looked for.

We have a couple who have been with us for months and are still sleeping rough and are awaiting their call for somewhere to go. Even if it is temporary. Our food parcels in this situation can only be ready to eat goods that will last until we open again. This is one of many situations.

In 3 days this week we served more than 430 meals to which an average of 80% were given to vulnerable people with a number these either rough sleeping, in temporary accommodation in hostels or b&b's or at risk due to financial difficulties.

We would benefit as a project with step by step knowledge of the housing process, selection criteria and issues the council face that limit improvements to the service they provide while try to prevent homelessness.