**SHELTER**  
Realising Ambition service

**About the project**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Funding awarded:</th>
<th>£1.4 million</th>
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<td>Duration of funding:</td>
<td>3 years 7 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of beneficiaries:</td>
<td>569 children aged 8-14</td>
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<td>Areas of delivery:</td>
<td>Bristol and Sheffield</td>
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Shelter helps millions of people every year struggling with bad housing or homelessness through providing advice, support and legal services. Shelter’s service, also called Realising Ambition, supports children and their families deemed ‘intentionally homeless’ or at risk of becoming so due principally to antisocial behaviour. A three-tiered model delivers intensive support to stabilise root causes of problems, putting children on a path to avoiding offending and re-engaging in education and community life.

**Lessons learnt**

Shelter’s experience highlights how issues specific to a new replication area can lead to the need to adapt a service

Shelter’s Realising Ambition service is based on its Keys to the Future service which it was delivering in Knowsley. This service comprised of a three-tiered model with an initial assessment of need for a young person and their family (Tier 1), referral to external agencies or instigation of a multi-agency plan (Tier 2), or referral for intensive tailored support for the young person (Tier 3).

When delivering in its new replication areas Shelter found that the existing Shelter housing support services impacted on the type of referrals it received. It found that more young people were fast tracking to intensive support as referrals had already been filtered before being allocated to the Realising Ambition service. Shelter recognised the need to adapt its service to work with higher numbers at Tier 2 and 3 to take account of this. The organisation worked closely with the Realising Ambition consortium in order to do so. At times the process was challenging as both the consortium and Shelter needed to find the balance between ensuring the service was replicated faithfully but that it also met local need. A key learning from this was the need at times for services to be adapted in order for them to work most effectively. For Shelter the learning was also to pre-empt the impact of context before attempting replication.

The Realising Ambition programme has highlighted that a certain degree of adaption to a service can be needed when replicating. Shelter’s experience in the programme exemplifies this. This has been an important learning for the programme, one explored in the Realising Ambition Programme Insights series.

**Five key ingredients of successful replication**

The Realising Ambition consortium has mapped each project’s journey against our five key ingredients of successful replication. The key points from this follow below. Find out more about these ingredients.

- **A tightly defined and replicable service:** Shelter now has a strong logic model and a comprehensive manual for its service through being part of Realising Ambition. It continues to bring service delivery staff together to ensure these tools are used and kept ‘live’.

- **That is effectively and faithfully delivered to those that need it:** Shelter’s service comprises of a suite of interventions tailored to the needs of beneficiaries, which can make ensuring it is delivered with fidelity challenging. Shelter put processes in place to support staff to deliver the service in a way that adheres to the model. This included creating a cross-divisional project board to steer the project and a project manager to support local managers around fidelity.
Evidence is used to learn and adapt, as required: Shelter gathered outcome data for all the young people it worked with as well as established focus groups to seek reflections from service users. It used this evidence to look at areas in which it needed to adapt its service.

There is confidence that outcomes have improved: Shelter routinely collects both quantitative and qualitative data on its service. It shares this data both within the organisation at staff and board level, and externally with key stakeholders and funders.

The service is cost-beneficial and sustainable: Shelter has developed a written business case to sustain its Realising Ambition service; the service now makes up one of the core products for the organisation. The processes it developed through replicating, including approaches to stakeholder engagement, also now inform the standard operating procedures of the organisation.

Outcomes for beneficiaries

Each organisation has sought to monitor the outcomes of children and young people prior to and after service delivery. Find out more about outcome measurement in Realising Ambition.

Shelter delivered Realising Ambition to 569 young people across Bristol and Sheffield, including 218 young people receiving Tier 3 of the service. The organisation administered questionnaires from the Realising Ambition Outcomes Framework to 87% of young people at Tier 3 at the outset of service provision and to 57% of those at the end.

Analysis of these outcomes indicate a statistically significant reduction in aggression and misbehaviour scores, with 69% of young people's behaviour remaining stable or having improved over the course of the programme. Prior to the service, 39% of young people met a high-need threshold: this fell to 20% after the service.

In addition, 80% of young people demonstrated either stability or improvement between pre- and post-test in emotional regulation. Interestingly, although results demonstrated significant improvement across both sites, the Sheffield sample saw an 18% reduction in their high risk cases compared to 7% within the Bristol sample.

What next

Shelter’s Realising Ambition service is now one of the core service offers of the organisation. Repackaged as Intensive Family Support, Shelter is currently continuing to internally fund the delivery of the service in Sheffield and Bristol. Shelter organises its business planning on a regional basis, and each of Shelter’s regional hubs are being actively encouraged to consider how this intervention could be delivered in their area.

The organisation found the initial process of replicating challenging, but states that it learnt a great deal about what it takes to replicate through this. Shelter has gone on to develop a number of processes both for introducing new services to new markets and to areas where there is an existing Shelter presence, including stakeholder engagement plans. Shelter reports that its experience of replicating in Realising Ambition has supported them in doing so this.

Find out more

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