

Evidencing the Impact of “Strengths based working” on long term outcomes.





The Challenge:



- > Public services are failing the individuals they strive to support. Often falling short of their primary objective: **improving lives.**
- > They are **transactional** and **deficit-based.**
- > Addressing people's **symptoms** (homelessness) rather than the **root causes**, even though many challenges people face are complex and require more holistic solutions.



The Alternative:

- > Listening in place of “fixing”
- > Creating an identity outside of “the problem”
- > Innovating
- > The right intervention at the right time
- > Enabling motivation through rebuilding confidence and self-belief. Focusing on abilities, skills and potential.
- > Collaboration and codesign of services
- > Reflective practise
- > Self-efficacy of staff

What is Strengths based working as a context establishment?

“A **collaborative** process between the person supported by services and those supporting them, allowing them to work together to determine an outcome that draws on the person’s **strengths and assets**. As such, it concerns itself principally with the **quality of the relationship** that develops between those providing support and those being supported, as well as the elements that the person seeking support brings to the process.”

(Social Care Institute for Excellence, 2015)

KBOP

Structure:



Partnership working between KMC, DCMS, BOP and 8 Specialist delivery organisations.



Introduction of adaptive management and innovation, centralised referral and allocation process, ecosystem orchestration and relational service integration.



Flexible funding and personalised budgets.

Objectives:



Develop solutions to enable improved housing access & sustainment, facilitating long term independence.



Increase flexibility & innovation in service delivery through introduction of adaptive management process, collaboration, coproduction & accountability.



Overcome limited contract management & market stewardship by introducing new quality standards and values across all providers.

Delivery:



Adopt a person-led, transitional and strengths-based response to support. Empowering individuals to identify their goals, ambitions and motivators for change



Provide holistic front-line support to anyone aged 16+ across multiple areas inc housing, wellbeing, employment, substance misuse, financial stability, support networks, improving health and reducing risk of domestic abuse.



Integration of specialist services focusing on peer support, mental health, reducing risk of reoffending and addiction.

GMBOP

Structure



Partnership working between GMCA, BOP, Calico and 5 other delivery organisations



Non-financial support like technical assistance, information and resources



Flexible funding and personalised budgets.

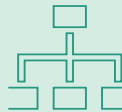
Objectives



Establish early intervention points to prevent homelessness by using proactive measures to identify and address risk factors early on



Develop sustainable, long-term solutions for homelessness, that address the root causes of homelessness and lead to lasting stability and self-sufficiency for affected individuals



Build an understanding of systemic and institutional barriers that perpetuate homelessness, informing policy and practice changes for the better



Partners work jointly with Bridges to identify opportunities to improve their internal operations, their programs and their relationships within their community

Delivery



Adopt a person-centred approach, utilising the psychological intervention of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to empower young people to identify and achieve their goals



Provide holistic front-line support to assist young people across multiple areas including their: employment, wellbeing, financial stability, support networks and meaningful activities



Integration of specialist services focused on mental health and LGBTQI+ young people to help provided additional, targeted support in these specific areas

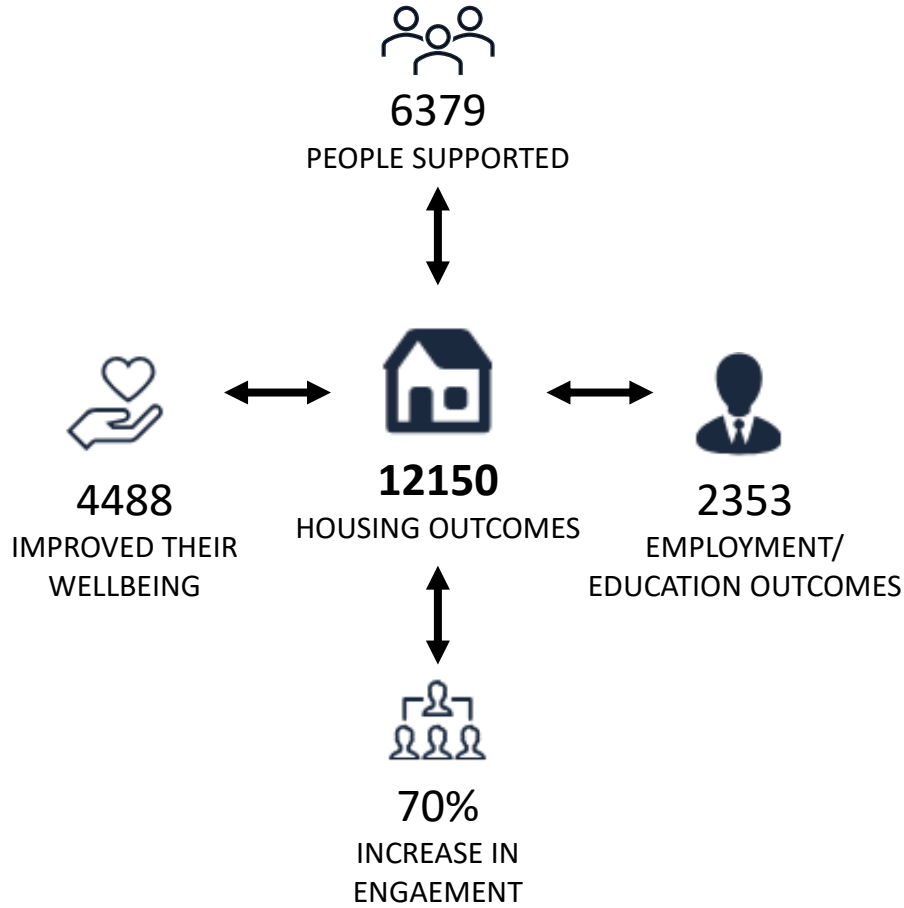


Why this approach works:

- > Strengths-based working is designed to challenge, motivate, raise awareness of, and capitalise on the individual's strengths.
- > Front-line services were designed to be personalised and holistic, empowering individuals to help themselves and fostering sustainable change.
- > We also sought to develop a strengths-based partnership to deliver this service and encourage the wider system to adopt strengths-based approaches.

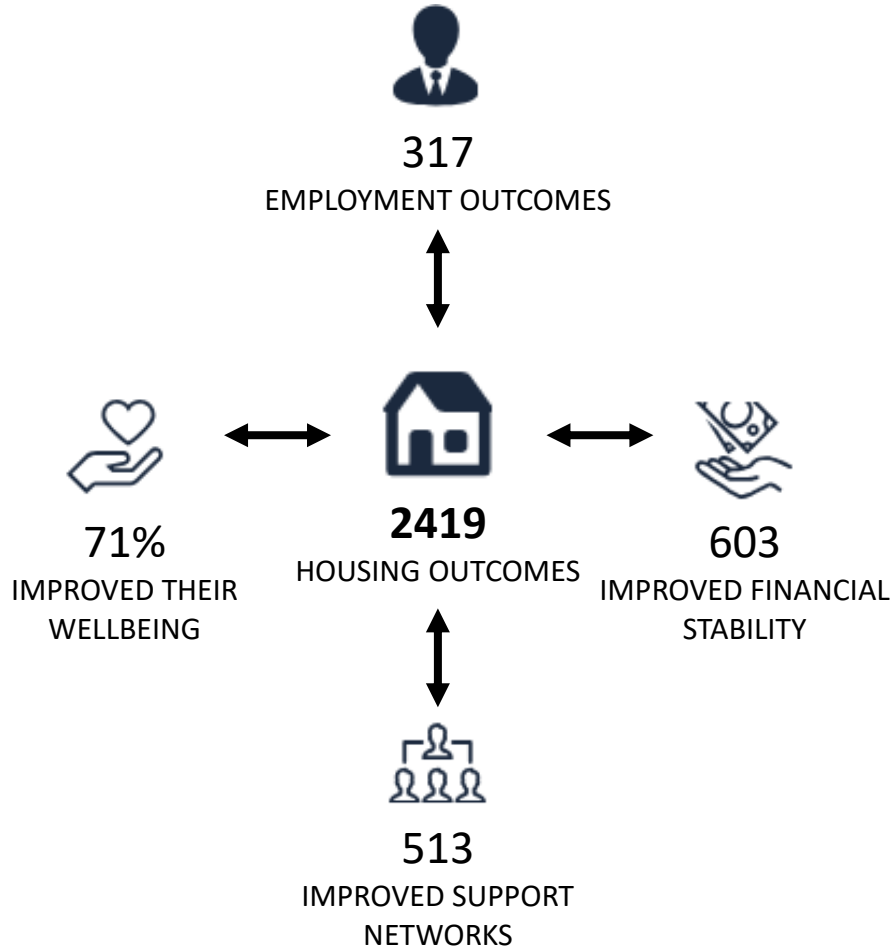


Why it works: Data Sets KBOP





Why it works: Data Sets GMBOP





Current evidence is limited

A review of strengths-based approaches in social work and social Care (2021)

Strengths-based approaches are being embraced by policy makers and practitioners, but questions remain about:

- their definition (how they are distinct from other approaches, and how they should be conceptualised)
- their effectiveness and feasibility (including their intersection with local authority eligibility thresholds)
- how they should/can be evaluated.

“Evidence of improved outcomes for adults who use social care services as a result of employing strengths-based approaches is limited at present.”

Qualitative Comparative Analysis

- Deals with a limited number of complex cases.
- Each case is considered as a “complex combination of properties, a specific ‘whole’ that should not be lost or obscured in the course of the analysis” (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009: 6).
- Answers the question: what combination/s of factors lead to a specific outcome?
 - *Are any factors necessary and/or sufficient for an outcome?*
 - *Are any factors necessary for a combination to be sufficient?*

Understanding impact in complex systems

- > *“If ... we live in a world of great causal complexity, then a common pattern will be for outcomes to result from different combinations of causal conditions.”* (Ragin, 2000: 103)
- Limitations of traditional quantitative methods: Often oversimplify complex social phenomena by focusing on isolated variables and linear relationships, failing to capture the intricate causal dynamics.
- Limitations of qualitative methods: Provide rich insights into social phenomena but struggle to establish causal patterns and generalize findings due to their inherent subjectivity and difficulty in handling complex interactions.

Learning: individual practice

- > Theory of change included:
 - > reflective practice
 - > self-efficacy
 - > innovation
- > Data collected from a sample of front-line workers (N = 65) measuring reflective practice, self-efficacy and innovativeness, then linked to outcome data.
- > Broadly, staff who most strongly exhibited characteristics associated with SBW achieved better long-term outcomes.
- > QCA allows more nuanced understandings of impact eg



Accommodation sustainment targets for 12 months were more likely to be achieved if:

- Frontline staff across partners with lower Strengths-based level have high innovativeness scores and have a lower caseload, or
- frontline staff have lower innovativeness scores, but they also have a low workload, and secure longer meetings with participants, or
- Frontline staff have a high workload, but are innovative and arrange long meetings.

Due to be published on-line
Sep 24.



Learning: organisational level

- > What this means for service delivery:
 - > Evidence on programme effectiveness & continuous learning
 - > Values based recruitment
 - > Embedding effective practise into organisations and systems.
 - > Framework developed to identify if services are working in a strength-based way
 - > Benefits of analytical and problem-solving utilisation
 - > Enabling leadership approaches (transformational, authentic)
 - > Practical tools, examples of implementation and staffing models (Eg: lower caseloads)
 - > Effective data to evidence trends and impact. To inform learning
 - > Ability to identify staff able to replicate behaviours of approach

Learning: Scaling at system-level



Outcomes Partnerships enable 3 crucial improvements into local public services

Collaborative Design

From:

Programmes designed centrally – often in isolation from other parts of government – and implemented in a top-down way



To:

Projects that are collaboratively designed, and designed to be collaborative

Flexible Delivery

Fixed-specification contracts, delivered to rigid budgets, for groups of people with identical “needs” or “problems”



Flexible, personalised services that constantly evolve and improve as they learn

Clear Accountability

Arms-length contracts with limited visibility on progress, success, or key learnings



High quality, secure, objective data, with deep independent research into what is and isn't working

Contact Us to continue the discussion:

- > [Bridges Outcomes Partnerships | People powered partnerships](#)
- > www.KBOP.org
- > www.gmbop.org
- > https://academic.oup.com/swr/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/swr/svae015/7721588?utm_source=advanceaccess&utm_campaign=swr&utm_medium=email

Speaker contacts:

- > sarah@kbop.org or [Sarah Cooke | LinkedIn](#)
- > Rachel@gmbop.org or [Rachel O'Connor | LinkedIn](#)
- > Lydia@gmbop.org or [Lydia Hutchings | LinkedIn](#)
- > Chris Fox:
<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:share:7224367309996388352/>