

The role of housing and housing providers in tackling poverty experienced by young people in the UK

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Aims

1. To identify measures that work in tackling poverty amongst young people (16 to 25 year olds) who do not live in the parental home
 - a focus on the role that housing providers can play.
 - Includes young people who are not in employment or education as well as those who are (though not full time students).
2. To investigate the feasibility of implementing these measures in each part of the UK.

Partners

Centrepont: UK's leading charity for homeless young people, supporting 16-25 years olds with housing, learning, health and life skills.

The Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust: provides housing and a variety of care and support services in Yorkshire and the North East of England.

Community Housing Cymru (CHC): the representative body for housing associations and community mutuals in Wales, all not-for profit organisations.

Housing Europe: network of 41 national & regional federations with about 41,400 providers in 19 countries.

Research methods

- Literature review
- Data analysis
- Consultation with European housing providers
- 10 UK case studies of projects which are undertaking innovative new work in addressing youth poverty
- Synthesis, dissemination, sharing findings with others

What are the sorts of ways in which housing and housing providers can impact on poverty?

	Housing provision	Wider work of housing organisations
Direct impact on poverty	Keeping rents low Maximising development of sub-market housing	Assistance claiming benefits
Impact on employment	Providing housing in locations with transport to employment centres	Providing training opportunities to tenants
Impact on wider consequences of poverty	Providing energy efficient housing Providing a secure long-term home	Budgeting advice Tackling anti-social behaviour and crime

UK context – key issues (1)

- Young people's incomes have fallen in recent years – despite rises in other age groups.
- Youth unemployment is 16.2% - not as high as some other European countries
- Young people are leaving home at a later age than previously Half of 20 to 24-year-olds lived now with their parents – affordability of housing is a key issue here.
- Of young people who have left home:
 - 65% rent privately
 - 26% rent from a housing association or local council
 - 9% own a home (mostly with a mortgage)

UK context – key issues (2)

- 209,000 households headed by young people live in social housing, sub-market housing provided by housing associations or local authorities
 - Rents generally around 60% of market rents, but rising
 - Only around 12% of these young people are in employment (45% unemployed, 10% students, 27% lone parents or ill/disabled).
 - Those not in work, or in low paid work can claim Housing Benefit which covers up to their rent. 168,000 (80%) claim Housing Benefit in social housing.
- Around 28,000 are living in some form of temporary or supported housing often because they are homeless. This includes
 - Foyers, hostels and women's refuges (with support provided)
 - Bed and breakfast accommodation (no support)
 - Self-contained accommodation but on a temporary basis
- 533,000 rent privately, 130,000 of whom claim Housing Benefit (24%)
- Government has made cuts to benefits, and further cuts to Housing Benefit for under 21s are proposed by the Conservative party (election in May 2015)

So what does all this mean?

- It is getting harder for young people to leave home in the UK
- Most of those that do are reliant on state support at least at first
- Some are also in need of advice, support, assistance in managing a tenancy, budgeting, finding work, living independently
- There's a growing need to find ways to help young people avoid poverty, or find ways out of it:
 - Cheaper forms of housing?
 - More effective support?
 - Ways of helping young people support themselves?

What we are interested in from housing providers in Europe:

- The types of services provided for young people on low incomes including those who are not in work or education.
- Examples of new or innovative practice in tackling poverty among young people
- Any evaluations of their impact or evidence of what works in tackling poverty of young people
- How transferable these examples might be to the UK. Rather than advocating simple policy or practice transfer we want to use international evidence as a source of new ideas and challenges to thinking and actions in the UK.

Further information

Project website:

www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/Projects/Start-Year/2014/role-housing-housing-providers-tackling-poverty-experienced-young-people-UK/Project-Website

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