



Social Impact Report 2018/19



Supporting homeless and vulnerable people in North Lincolnshire

Introduction from Andrea Houghton, Manager

Welcome - We are delighted to be able to share with you our **Social Impact Report for 2018-19**.

The Forge Project is committed to working alongside every person who attends the Day Centre. Staff work individually in supporting people who are rough sleeping, homeless, vulnerable or are at risk of homelessness.

We work collaboratively with service users to build on their strengths and skills, build on their resilience and developing coping strategies, to develop a purpose, whether this is housing, employment, education or positive social activities to enable them to rebuild their lives. Over the past year it has been a pleasure to see many individuals transform their lives.

Homelessness is still a huge problem locally and nationally and we are working harder than ever to tackle the problem, to help prevent people from becoming homeless, to make the homeless experience as brief as possible and to ensure that people can build new lives in secure homes in the community.



We endeavour to work co-productively with individuals to ensure that the services we provide are appropriate and meets their needs. We also have a successful approach to partnership working and over the last year we are pleased to have been able to build on existing partnerships and develop new ones in the Day Centre to increase the effectiveness of our services. The increased number of partner agencies attending the Day Centre has enabled more in-depth partnership working, expanding the Day Centre services to more of the mutual clients who have complex needs.

Over the past year the new afternoon activities have enabled the service users to develop new skills, reducing their social isolation and improving their well-being. They are encouraged to volunteer at the project and it is encouraging to see their confidence and self-esteem grow as their self-belief improves and they find a sense of identity.

We look forward to expanding both the services in the Day Centre and the afternoon activities to further meet the needs of the people attending The Forge Project.

Our Purpose, Aims and Outcomes

Our Purpose

We are here for the homeless and vulnerable within our community, providing a safe place, promoting emotional and physical well-being and opportunity for change.

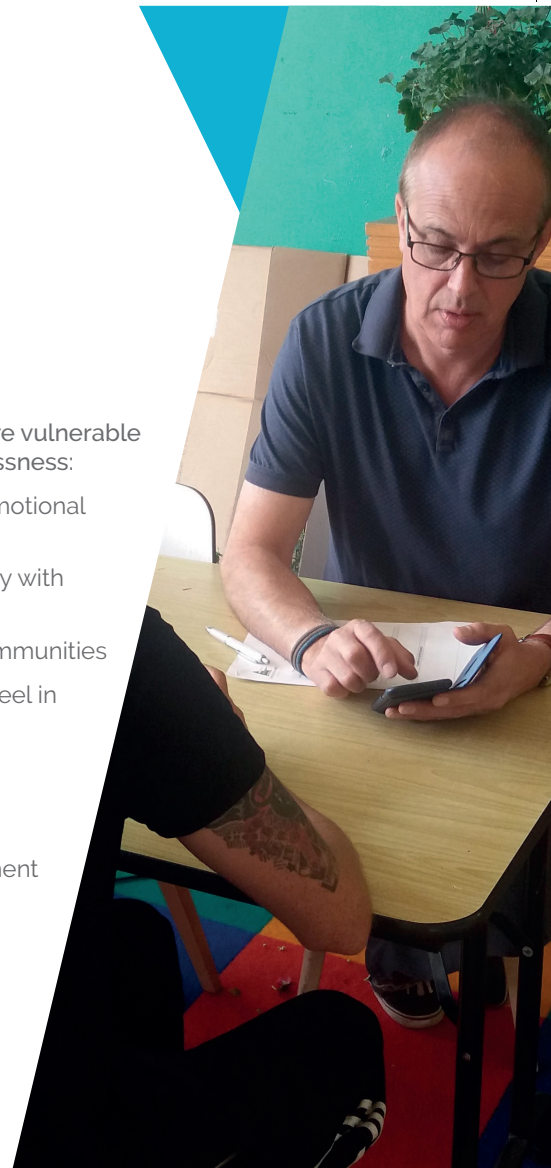
We do this by:

- Providing a welcoming, non-judgmental and safe environment where service users can socialise, obtain a nutritious meal; learn new skills and access services that are otherwise not easily accessible to this client group.
- Liaising and working in partnership with a range of other organisations to effectively signpost, make referrals and access services and educational/training/leisure facilities for our service users, providing emotional and specialist advice and support appropriate to their needs.
- Offering individual/group activities designed to meet and address the diverse needs of our service users in order to build confidence.

Outcomes

We hope that people who are vulnerable to homelessness and rooflessness:

- Enjoy good health and emotional well-being
- Feel valued and are happy with their lives
- Are active within their communities
- Make good choices and feel in control of their lives
- Live free from abuse and exploitation
- Have freedom from discrimination or harassment
- Are economically independent



About The Forge Project

We have a welcoming Open Door



The **Day Centre** has become a 'hub' for partner agencies and service users to receive support both at a point of crisis and delivers continuing support. Partner agencies attend the Day Centre on a weekly basis to meet with mutual clients to enable them to access services in an environment where the service users feel safe.

The Forge Project's drop-in **Day Centre** is open Monday to Friday 9.30 – 12.45 for people to visit. Everyone is welcome and can access, breakfast, hot drinks and a nutritious hot lunch. Rough sleepers can have access to the shower and laundry facilities, clean clothing, sleeping bags and essential hygiene items.

We offer emergency support to people in crisis and long-term help and support to enable people to look towards a brighter future. A future where they have a home, can move towards education, training or employment or take up a voluntary role in the community depending on where they are in their lives. We help people to recognize their potential, raise aspirations and reach their goals.

Our **Day Centre** continues to offer a befriending service and whoever attends the project is guaranteed a warm welcome by people who care. Our staff and volunteers offer friendly support for people to improve their physical and mental health and their housing situation.

People can get **support** with issues surrounding tenancies; benefits; drug/ alcohol issues; personal issues; or other areas that people feel that they need support in.

Adults with poor mental health wellbeing, can access the Mental Health Link Worker, working on an individual or group session basis, covering low level interventions such as coping with low mood and anxiety etc. They can attend the inclusive afternoon activity sessions which can increase wellbeing and reduce isolation.

Preventing Homelessness

Nationally there has been a

165%

increase in homelessness in the last nine years*

North Lincolnshire is included in this and there has been a

74.2%

increase in people attending the Day Centre over the last year

The Forge Project is a core part of the homeless pathway to support people to build their skills, confidence and resilience, to move out of homelessness for good. We work in partnership with other agencies to reach those most in need. Over 2018/19, The Forge Project supported clients who are homeless or were previously homeless to build on their resilience and tackle the wider issues of becoming homeless again.

*Accredited by estimates from MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government).



Statistics

Over the year 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019



102 females attended
301 males attended

136 were homeless

132 were rough sleeping

13 people were disabled

63 had alcohol issues

196 had drug issues

86 had mental health issues

The aid given during this period...

117 sleeping bags given

1,052 pieces of clothing given

68 times IT support

110 foodbank referrals

159 times job centre support

58 crisis parcels were given out

148 items of toiletries

366 times rough sleepers had showers

213 times rough sleepers had laundry done

There was a total of 403 individuals attending with 9,222 individual visits over the year.

64 people were referred into the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol and night provision with the local authority since November.

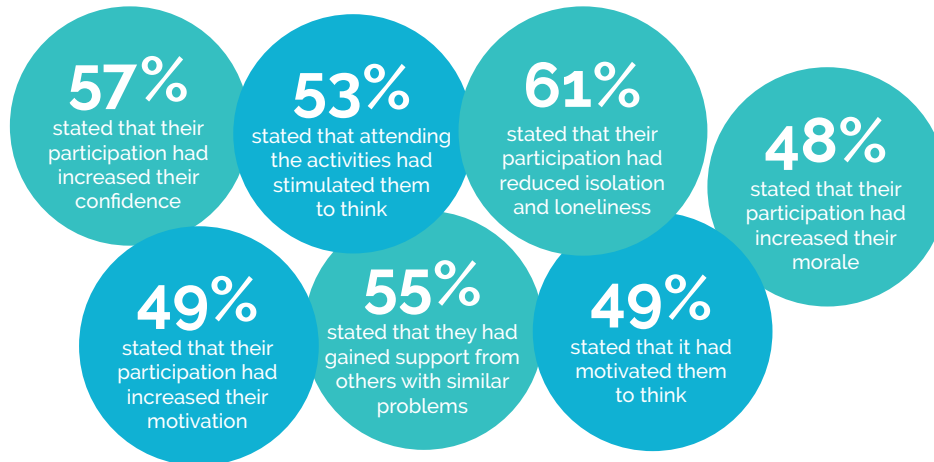
Afternoon Activity Sessions

Our Purpose

61 service users attended the afternoon activity sessions, 3 afternoons per week – some service users attended all sessions.

We open during the afternoons of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday for activity sessions such as baking, crafts and gardening. These activities can help to reduce social isolation and improve mental well-being and confidence.

Via feedback evaluation forms:



Mental Health Link Worker

We purchase the services of a Mental Health Link Worker through Scunthorpe and District MIND. The Worker attends on a Monday each week.

The results of this:

- 32 people attending were better able to manage their mental health issues. This is based on the number of different individuals who sought help with the Link Worker and engaged in one-to-one support during the year, it does not take into account that the majority of these individuals have had multiple sessions, some on almost a weekly basis.
- This is based on evaluation sheets and on one-to-one individual sessions and group session work.

The number of people with increased self-esteem and confidence

11

The number of people with reduced stress and anxiety

39



Testimonials from service users

"I receive low Universal Credit and live in a B&B where there is no cooking or washing facilities. This place is a kind of Godsend."

"It is a social place – people to talk to – we have all got our pasts and our addictions, there is no judgement here, it is a safe place."

"The help and support we get from this place is unparalleled – it keeps you emotionally and mentally stable – just someone to talk to."

"I feel that my mental health would be worse if I could not come here – a lot of people would be stuck."



Volunteering

22 volunteers from the community volunteered for the project on a weekly basis.

8 service users regularly volunteer for the project.

Why I volunteer....

Statements from volunteers:

"I get a kick out of it – I like the people who come here. I do a lot of volunteering work and I like this place the best."

"I volunteer to give something back, it feels good volunteering to help people."

"It gives me a lot of pleasure to help people – it helps my mental health and gives me happiness."

"It is a step up the ladder, has improved my confidence and I feel appreciated."



Thank you!

A huge thank you to our tremendous supporters.
We couldn't do it without you.

Thanks to Nisa and MADL for producing our impact report.

It cost
£139,000
last year to run
The Forge.



Nisa
Making a Difference Locally





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