

Housing First Network Wales

Terms of reference

(Updated 25th February 2021)

1. Purpose

The Housing First Network Wales is established to:

- 1.1. Act as a forum for exchanging information, experiences, learning and best practice between organisations involved in planning or delivering Housing First projects in Wales.
- 1.2. Support the successful delivery of Housing First projects and promote adherence to the Housing First Wales principles;
- 1.3. Aim to provide a collective definition and approach for Housing First projects and principles;
- 1.4. Provide opportunities for Network members to hear from, engage with and develop partnerships with external experts and partners;
- 1.5. Provide opportunities for others working in the housing and homelessness fields to learn from and adopt Housing First projects and principles;
- 1.6. Provide a space for new and emerging Housing First projects in Wales to be supported by the Network, with advice and support.
- 1.7. Inform and support the development of documentation highlighting good practice and lessons learned, or provide feedback on documentation that is already in development.
- 1.8. Discuss case studies and how people's lived experience can inform improvements in policy and practice..
- 1.9. Promote consistent methodologies of reviewing outputs, outcomes and the overall efficacy of HF services delivered throughout Wales.
- 1.10. Provide a space for Network members to inform Cymorth Cymru's work to influence Welsh Government policy.

2. General principles of operation

- 2.1. The membership and conduct of the Network should reflect and respect the diverse nature of the constituencies it seeks to represent, and to this end should strive for a membership that reflects equal opportunities, values and principles.
- 2.2. At times, members of the Network will discuss confidential matters; members are asked to respect confidentiality when it is required.
- 2.3. The Network will establish a robust and active definition of Housing First, and champion that approach to members.
- 2.4. The Network will aim to establish clarity on Housing First, in terms of who it is for and how the principles should be adhered to in Wales.
- 2.5. Although members of the Network might represent organisations delivering Housing First as well as, or in addition to, other kinds of support, they should bear in mind that the Network seeks to improve and expand the Housing First model across Wales as a whole, rather than focusing on specific organisations or geographical areas.

3. Membership

- 3.1. Membership of the Network is open to organisations who are either:
 - a) Delivering Housing First services already, and/or;
 - b) Planning on delivering services with Housing First principles, and/or;
 - c) Managing supported housing where Housing First is being delivered, and/or;
 - d) Interested in learning more / influencing Housing First development and implementation across Wales.
- 3.2. Observer status for other organisations with an interest in the work of the Network, but whose primary role is outside the homelessness sector may be agreed from time to time. Those organisations and Networks with observer status will be able to attend and contribute to Network meetings and give and receive information. The Network aims to have consistent links with other relevant Networks (such as Rough Sleepers Cymru and Substance Misuse Network) in order to maximise cross-pollination of ideas and alignment of priorities between these closely related Networks.

4. Meetings

- 4.1. The Network will meet quarterly unless special circumstances merit more frequent meetings.

5. Representation

- 5.1. Requests for representation on working groups, committees etc. concerned with Housing First will be offered to all Network members. Anyone interested will be asked to complete a short form stating their interest, explaining why and what skills they would bring to the role. Nominations will then go to the members for a vote.
- 5.2. Representatives fulfilling this role will seek to gather the views of Network members before attending meetings etc, and reflect the views of diversity of views expressed as well as a common Network stance where this exists. Views will be gathered through a variety of means including meetings, e-mails and other manageable means. Feedback to Network members via meetings and /or e-mail would also be expected.
- 5.3. It may be appropriate for Network members to attend an initial meeting on a one-off basis to establish whether future representation is appropriate, or to gather information to feedback to Network members.

6. Decisions

- 6.1. Decisions will be made at Network meetings through discussion and consensus. It is expected that all members will work towards this. Members reserve the right to record disagreement with any views expressed or majority decisions reached in the minutes. Decisions will be reached by those who attend the meeting, but with an expectation that controversial positions will be widely communicated across the Network.

7. Administration

- 7.1. In order to facilitate arrangements for meetings, members should confirm their attendance, giving as much notice as possible. The secretariat for the Network is provided by Cymorth Cymru, who will also hold the Vice-Chair position to ensure consistency over the lifespan of the Network.
- 7.2. When a Chair steps down from the group, Network members may express interest in and put themselves forward for the role. Depending on the number of interested parties, the Network may be required to vote on an incoming Chair. The role of the Chair, and what would be expected from the position holder, is described in more detail in a separate document.