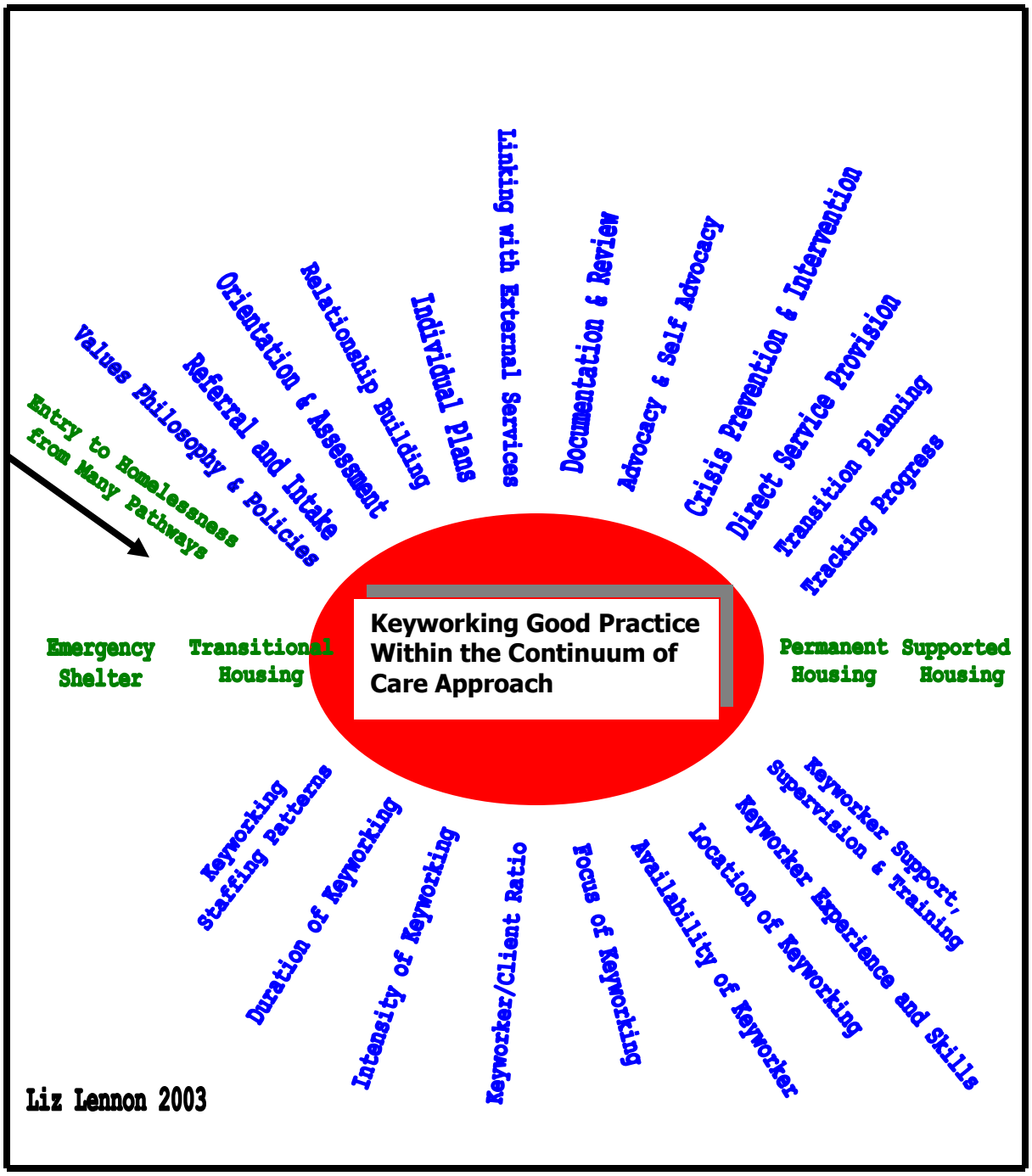
DRAFT REPORT

MAPPING KEYWORKING IN THE HOMELESS SECTOR IN DUBLIN. Nov 2003



1. Executive Summary & Aims of the Keyworking Project

This project aimed to do an initial mapping of keyworking in the homeless sector in Dublin. It was not within the scope of the work to do a deep assessment of results and outcomes of keyworking in organisations. Given the results of this initial scooping exercise a deep assessment would not be timely as many organisations are only now rolling out whole of organisation policies, standards and review systems of keyworking practice.

A number of organisations were selected to provide information on their keyworking policies and practices as well their views on the challenges regarding keyworking within the sector. In the main, they were selected because they work with the largest numbers of homeless people and have the biggest groups of keyworkers. Because of the nature and scope of the project only senior managers were interviewed. One group of keyworkers and their manager gave their time to discuss the elements of keyworking that I have developed as a framework for good practice.

The organisations and managers involved (around 20 people in total) were:

Dublin City Council Settlement Team Manager
Dublin City Council Team Leader for 3 Shelters
Depaul Trust Services Manager
Simon Dublin Service Standards Manager
Simon Dublin Emergency Services Manager
Simon Dublin Transition and Settlement Manager
Simon Dublin Supported Housing Manager
Rendu Apartments Manager
Balcurris Boys Home Ballymun (part of Arrupe) Manager and Workers
Open Access (previously Merchants Quay and Failte) Team Leader
Focus Ireland Deputy Director
Cedar House Manager

A short survey was sent to each person and then 1 to 1 in depth interviews were conducted that lasted from 1 to 2 hours. The information, ideas and opinions that managers contributed have provided key material for this report. The time given by managers was greatly appreciated.

It is important to see this project as a scoping/mapping exercise and not a deep level evaluation of keyworking. Nevertheless, the information provided does give a sense of where keyworking is at in terms of development as a framework for good practice in the sector.

Since 1998 much has happened regarding the development of services for homeless people in Dublin.In 2003 we are beginning to see the results of 5 years of focused work by all the organizations in the sector.

This keyworking mapping exercise is very timely. Six months or a year ago the information in this report would have been very different.

In the last 5, and particularly the last 2 years a number of factors have resulted in a significant improvement in service provision and coordination. The factors include;-

- Increased resourcing in terms of money and people to the sector
- The work of all the organizations involved in and with the Homeless Agency
- A move to professionalising the work of organizations
- Commitment by organizations to developing systems, policies and good practice frameworks
- An opening up of specific services and accommodation for the most marginalized homeless
- A slow breaking down of territoriality and personality based working – although it still exists

- A critical mass influx of workers from London in the last year who have taken up management positions in organizations. This has acted as a stimulant to challenging old perceptions and engaging in new ways of working

That is not to say that there is room for improvement on a number of levels within the sector.

There has always been some form of keyworking in the sector. In interviews managers said that much of the previous keyworking had been adhoc and uncoordinated. In the last 2 years and very much in 2003, organizations have focused on developing keyworking policies and practice.

In 2003 organisations have spent time and money developing a more focused and considered framework of practice for keyworking. In terms of stages of development I believe that the sector is in the development and early implementation stages of keyworking. That is, they have developed many of the elements of good practice detailed in this report in terms of values, policies, procedures, and systems. Many of these elements are only now beginning to be implemented as whole of organization practice.

As one manager said ***'2002 and 2003 have been very much about developing whole of organization frameworks for good keyworking practice. 2004 will be a consolidation period and in 2005 we can really assess the impact, results and outcomes of the work.'***

Some organizations have as recently as September 2003 hired keyworkers to work in projects that have never had a keyworking focus. Managers mentioned the challenges in terms of cultural change that faced them, particularly in projects that had been running for a long time. In many ways they felt it was easier (relatively) to bring keyworking as a model of good practice into new projects. This has happened in a number of projects that are from 6 months to 1 year old.

Managers mentioned the difficulty in managing the sometimes differing expectations of Statutory agencies regarding as one manager put it ***'Head on beds versus Keyworking'.*** This is important because if there is to be a commitment to effective and successful keyworking practice in the sector then funding and policy agencies will need to see that there may be less heads on beds and/or more keyworkers (to meet effective client/keyworker ratios). There are obvious resource implications. There is also a need for discussion between funders, policy makers and service providers regarding their expectations of the nature and timing of outcomes for particularly multiple needs homeless people.

Regardless of the difficulties there was a 100% commitment to putting in place a good practice keyworking framework within organizations and in the sector.

So what's the good news?

- All organizations have, or are in the process, of developing a keyworking good practice framework.
- Some organizations are currently in the process of reviewing the forms that are a critical part of documenting and monitoring keyworking.
- All organizations have been developing planned keyworker training in 2003 and into 2004.
- All organizations have formal and timely supervision for their keyworkers as well as team meetings on a regular basis.
- Communication and Coordination links – formal and informal – between and within organizations are improving.
- Recording and documentation processes are in place in all organizations.
- Most organizations are developing some form of whole of organization standards framework (some are developing their own; others are using the Homeless Agency framework; and

others are using PQASSO a London framework developed for and by homeless organizations) that will continue to inform keyworking practice as well as develop key performance indicators for evaluation.
- Some organizations have developed excellent IT systems to store and analyse keyworking data. Cedar House and Rendu Apartments have both developed excellent data base systems.
- In most cases staff to client ratios are good.
- The nature and duration of keyworking is in most cases regular and focused on where the client is at in their development.
- Individual assessments and care plans are being developed and used in all organizations.

And what's the not so good news?
- It will take another year at least for all the policy and systems work to become embedded in organisations and the sector.
- The sector needs to discuss their definitions of key working and other job functions such as project worker, support worker, settlement worker etc. There is also a need to dfine the distinctions between Case management and Keyworking.
- In terms of training, there is a need for the sector to develop its own accredited keyworking qualification. This training should be based on the model of good practice developed in this paper and encompass current methods of creative learning delivery.
- Communication and coordination still needs more work. At project worker level there needs to be further clarification of roles and function of workers in other organisations. At management level there needs to be an ongoing clarification of organisation purpose, function and key policies particularly given the work done in 2003 on keyworking practice that still hasn't been shared and the number of new managers in the sector.
- Information Technology systems are being developed in many organisations. It is important that they are developed within a framework of good practice and are compatible with the Links System.
- The Links system needs to have more buy in by some organisations. It would be useful to review ways of synthesising and sharing information back to organisations that input into it.
- While most organisations have good client to keyworker ratios there are a few that have very high ratios. Research has shown that keyworker to staff ratios and intensity of contact are key factors in achieving timely and positive outcomes for homeless people.
- There is a sense that referral forms are not reflecting the reality of a homeless persons situation and this is resulting in inappropriate referrals.
- Work still needs to be done to ensure a consistent standard of assessment when a homeless person uses a service. The section on assessment goes into great detail on this issue.
- Rota systems, particularly in emergency accommodation, are acting as a significant barrier to good keyworking practice. In reality, a keyworker on rota system may work 3 nights and then have a day off and then work a number of days. This can affect the level and consistency of contact with a person.This issue is explored in detail in the section on intensity of keyworker contact.
- There is a need to clarify the range and nature of a Keyworkers functions. Titles used to cover keyworking include:- keyworker; support worker; settlement worker; housing support worker; support worker. Clarification will have implications in terms of wages and wage parity between organisations as well as minimum standards of experience, qualifications and attitude.

The Homeless Agency has a continuing role in coordinating the discussions and recommended strategies in this report.

2. Keyworking – Elements Of Good Practice

What is a Keyworker and Keyworking?
A Keyworker is not a counselor – although critical skills such as activity listening and motivational interviewing are used in the work. A Keyworker is usually an identified member of staff who works in a specific way with a number of clients.

The term Keyworking is generally used to describe a system for providing individual planned care to a homeless person through a named member of staff.

Workers, particularly those in residential settings, do a range of work (dispensing medication; managing aggressive behaviour; helping people in and out of beds; making cups of tea and serving food) that involves relationship building and care but may not be Keyworking per se.

Keyworking and Case Management
In many countries Case Management as an approach to homelessness became popular because of several interrelated assumptions about the problems, causes and solutions of homelessness.

Gary Morse (1999) in his article 'Review of Case management for people who are homeless: Implications for Practice, Policy and Research' outlined some of the reasons why case management was considered a positive intervention strategy for changing and improving both the service system and individual client outcomes:-

1. Homeless people have multiple problems and unmet service needs
2. Services to meet their needs are contained within a fragmented system and disparate organizations
3. The service system is often structured and operated in a way that creates obstacles and barriers to meeting homeless peoples needs
4. Case managers have been seen as necessary to coordinate and negotiate access to services to ensure that clients needs are met

So – What's the difference between Keyworking and Case Management?
Good question. A scan of the literature reveals that case management and keyworking are sometimes discussed as one intertwined model of care – and this is across sectors. The framework for good practice developed in this report is a synthesis of elements derived from the literature and discussions in the homeless sector.

All the organizations interviewed and surveyed ticked all the elements (bar tracking) as part of a keyworkers job. These elements also encompass effective practice in any case management model.

So – what is the difference?
Generally, the idea of a keyworker is that person is a significant person and has a role in care planning etc. Case management comes into play to deal with the interlinking and exchanges between keyworkers and organizations. These are the points where a homeless person has 5 keyworkers (all working in different organizations) and they all need to coordinate their services. And it's not just about keyworkers – there is a responsibility for project managers and service managers to really work together to smooth the pathways and synergise the best possible service delivery (between the organizations) to meet the diverse needs of homeless people.

In my opinion (and I'm very open to an open discussion on this) keyworking seems to be something that happens in organizations and case management happens when you have to coordinate service delivery between organizations.

And we're not the only ones trying to define keyworking and case management. In February 2003 one of the key themes in a UK NSF Disabled Children's consultation programme was keyworking. A small portion of their discussions are in the box below:

Excerpts from notes 14 Feb 2003. Uk NSF Disabled Childrens Forum

- ***There are clearly different sorts of keyworking – ones at service level and someone who acts as a key point in a district who knows where key services can be accessed.***
- ***We need to move away from seeing keyworking as one person doing all the jobs.***
- ***In palliative care they have defined 3 levels of keyworking:-***
  1. ***practical***
  2. ***assessor/liaison***
  3. ***care manager***

Here are a few questions for the sector to discuss -

- Is keyworking a person or a concept or both?
- What is the difference between keyworking and case management?
- If a homeless person has numerous keyworkers (which they do) how is this streamlining their access to services to meet their needs?

Morse goes on to describe a case management framework that has been developed by a number of researchers. I have adapted some of the terms to more accurately reflect the homeless sector in Dublin. The framework is based on two pillars:-

1. **Service Functionality –** that is, what are the key elements (the what) of good practice
2. **Process or Operational characteristics –** the how of good practice.

All of the elements have a range of levels of intensity and application that will depend on the needs of the client and the focus of work done by an organization.

Keyworking Functions

1. Values and Policies
2. Referral & Intake
3. Assessment & Orientation
4. Relationship Building
5. Individual Plans
6. Linking to External Services
7. Documentation & Review
8. Advocacy & Self Advocacy
9. Crisis Prevention & Intervention
10. Direct Service Provision
11. Transition Planning
12. Tracking Progress

Keyworking Operations

1. Staffing Patterns
2. Duration of Keyworking
3. Intensity of Keyworking
4. Client/Keyworker Ratio
5. Focus of Keyworking
6. Availability of Keyworker
7. Location of Keyworking Service
8. Keyworker Skills & Experience
9. Keyworker Support, Supervision & Training

3. Keyworking - Values and Policies

3.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

All organizations interviewed have written policies on all key elements of keyworking. All policies are described and discussed as part of the induction process for new workers and managers.

Some policies have been in place for 2 years and are being reviewed in the light of practice. Other organizations have developed their policies in recent months and are in the process of explaining and implementing them into their projects.

3.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

It was not within the scope of this project to cite every policy and analyse it against criteria of good practice. Nevertheless, the policies that were seen appeared to take into consideration elements of good practice; were clearly written and provided guidelines regarding practice.

The issue that comes to mind is the sheer time and resources people have inputted to develop these policies within their organizations. While each organization would have specific foci for their policies because of the nature of their clients, there are also generic elements to policies and good practice in keyworking.

3.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

That all homeless organizations develop keyworking policies on the basis of an effective good practice framework by the middle of 2004.

3.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

1. If organizations were willing – to compile a file/database/info pack of the keyworking policies developed by organizations that would be shared with them. They could assess whether there were any gaps in their policy development as a result of a perusal of other organizations policies.
2. For those organizations (usually small) that have yet to develop keyworking policies the Homeless Agency could develop a series of policy development workshops as well as giving them the info pack so they could customize their own policies without reinventing the wheel.

4. Keyworking - Referral & Intake

4.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

All organizations that refer homeless people to services have a written referral form.
The intake practices of organizations vary and are, in part, about the kind of accommodation.

Emergency accommodation needs to be accessible immediately and referral and intake can occur within a matter of hours. Transitional accommodation services take more time deciding who to take into their project and a homeless person may have to attend up to 3 interviews over a period of weeks or months before entering.

In recent years policies on barring have been changed in emergency accommodation. Previously a homeless person could be permanently barred from a hostel for behaviour that was part of the reason why they were homeless. Most hostels no longer have a permanent barring policy and have developed a more flexible but still consistent approach to intake.

In past years people would have been excluded from services because of unrealistic goals regarding their behaviour e.g to be drug and or alcohol free. This has changed with both the development of specific accommodation such as wet hostels and hostels for drug users and a change in intake policies by some accommodation services.

The project managers involved with emergency accommodation (Depaul;Simon; Focus; Multi D; Crosscare; Night bus;) meet monthly to discuss referral issues. Managers also contact each other on 1 to 1 basis to sort out any immediate issues of concern. This is an example of elements of case management in practice.

4.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

One of the key issues with referrals that arose again and again was inappropriate referrals. The reasons for this range from:

- Lack of understanding by the referral agency of the client group and nature of the service they were referring to.
- As a number of people stated – ***'There are issues of accuracy as well as downright lying by not including critical information in referrals'.***
- Referring agencies sometimes don't clarify with clients why they are being referred to a service which results in the person not being accepted into a project or accommodation if they don't meet the organizations criteria.

4.4 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Organisations need to be clear about the purpose, function, roles and responsibilities of their services. This needs to be constantly communicated (in writing and face to face) with workers and managers in other organizations.

4.5 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

1. The policy info pack recommended in the previous section would help increase clarity and decrease confusion and frustration between organisations regarding referrals.
2. The Homeless Agency Directory could be updated and put on CD Rom.

5. Keyworking - Assessment & Orientation

5.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

The scope of this project did not allow for a deep level assessment of assessment and orientation practice.

Assessment is far from straightforward. They are conducted for a variety of purposes and organizations may use more than one method. Also, there would be variation regarding the depth of assessment.

Assessment can include:

- Gathering information from the client and others
- Assembling the information and making a coherent account of the clients situation
- Making decisions and plans
- Passing on the assembled material so that plans can be put into action
- Noting changes in the clients situation and altering the information initially available

If assessment are done well a number of things happen:

- People can be placed in appropriate accommodation and receive the services that best meet their needs
- Transitions can be achieved if assessment and planning is accurate
- There can be sharing of accurate and relevant information between agencies

There are four common assessment models used in the homeless sector that derive from other sectors:

- **Housing Assessments –** assess eligibility, priority and allocation of housing
- **Needs Led Assessments –** cover a range of life domains – health, finance, homeless history,living skills, social networks etc. Most Homeless services use this form of assessment
- **Risk Assessments –** a range of methods that encompass a description of known problems and a list of potential problems/risk behaviours that could occur. Some organizations are incorporating elements of risk assessment.
- **Health Assessments –** unless an organization provides a specific health service (eg substance abuse) a health assessment is usually included as part of an organizations general assessment procedures.

All organizations have written assessment forms.

The assessment process is seen in most organisations as a formal and informal process that begins when a homeless person enters the service. All organizations have policies on the nature and extent of the orientation period. They all have an understanding of the need for an adjustment period for the homeless person and only a few questions will initially be asked. This is particularly true of emergency accommodation services.

It's worth noting that assessment doesn't occur just at the entry into a service. Assessment is an ongoing part of the monitoring and development of a persons individual plan.

Clients all have access to any written information on the assessment (and other forms).

Keyworking – Assessment and Orientation

5.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

How many times does a homeless person get assessed? Too many to count. Often the assessment will involve questions that are emotionally laden and when repeated in numerous assessment across agencies can only increase a homeless persons sense of frustration and pain.

There is also the issue of assessing the multiple needs of some homeless people. The Multi Disciplinary Health Teams have been of some assistance in many emergency shelters in terms of this assessment issue.

Managers are aware of the complexity of assessments and have developed processes as well as support and supervision for workers. There is still room to develop consistent high standards of assessment. It is vital that the assessment form not become the focus of the assessment process.

Recording appropriate, relevant and clear information is seen as a critical factor by managers. There is still work to be done to improve this area in terms of training and supervision.

Sharing of relevant assessment information between organizations has improved but there is still a lot of work to be done before managers are satisfied.

This is where the difference between keyworking and case management becomes clearer. A keyworker may be involved in the assessment process when a homeless person enters their service. Case management is needed in terms of clear and honest assessment protocols and organizational sharing of assessment information across the sector.

5.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

1. Agreement is needed within the sector on the key elements of good practice needed in assessment.
2. Effective training, support and supervision in assessment process and recording must be a core part of keyworkers induction.
3. Effective exchange of accurate and truthful assessment information between organizations is needed.
4. There is a need to reappraise confidentiality policies. Rather that place confidentiality at the core of the policies, organizations should explore developing information policies that hold three things as important:-
   - Issues of privacy
   - Informed consent of clients
   - Information sharing between and within organizations
5. Assessment must be seen as an ongoing process and not a moment in time when a form is filled in.
6. Assessment forms must be well designed and user friendly. This will speed up administration, monitoring and most importantly, the willingness of workers to record information.

5.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

1. The Homeless Agency could coordinate an expert panel to develop protocols and guidelines for good practice in assessment that would draw on the existing good practice in the sector.
2. The Homeless Agency would include a module on assessment practice and recording as part of the recommended Keyworking training accreditation.
3. The development of a common assessment form is seen as important by managers but it seems that most organizations have developed their own. Perhaps it's not a form that is needed but a clear protocol and guidelines regarding a common standard of assessment practice.

6. Keyworking - Relationship Building

6.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

The quality of the relationship between the Keyworker and their client will have a direct impact on the success of keyworking.

As one project worker stated ***'What I feel is a success or failure can affect my relationship with a client as well as my expectations about the work. I have to be constantly aware of my own expectations and how they can affect my client and colleagues.'***

This is the part of keyworking that most workers enjoy and where their strengths and weaknesses arise. Sometimes too much heart is as bad as too much head. Boundary setting in keyworking relationships is seen as critical by managers. They are building in understanding of boundaries as a core part of keyworker training and supervision.

In assessing the nature, extent and impact of the relationships between keyworkers and homeless people it is worth considering that it:-

- **Reflects –** trust, empathy, authenticity and equality
- **Promotes –** participation and power sharing; clients rights and responsibilities; advocacy and self advocacy; independence; clarity and choice; and anti racist/sexist etc. attitudes and behaviours.

6.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

Establishing appropriate boundaries in the Keyworking relationship as well as clarifying roles, rights and responsibilities of Keyworkers and clients is seen as a critical issue by managers. Work is being done in terms of policies and supervision within all organizations.

6.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Continue developing policies, training and supervision regarding the development of respectful, supportive and appropriate relationships between keyworkers and their clients.

6.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

1. Gather examples of protocols, guidelines and policies regarding keyworking relationship building.
2. Include modules on relationship building in any sectoral accredited training.

7. Keyworking - Individual Plans

7.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

The development of individual plans for homeless people is directly informed by:-

- the quality of the assessment process and information
- the quality of the relationship between the Keyworker and the homeless person

From anecdotal information it appears that most clients are willing to participate in the development and action of an individualized plan to meet their specific needs.

It is a condition on entering most transitional accommodation that a person contract to participate in keyworking and therefore the development of a plan.

In a number of emergency shelters it is a policy that care plans be developed.

In most organizations there is a process and series of questions that are used to inform the development of the plan.

In all organizations clients read and sign their plan and any amendments that are made to them.

7.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

As with assessment processes there has been an improvement in practice regarding the development of individual plans.

There is still room for improvement in all organizations. This will be particularly evident in projects within organizations that have never used a keyworking model. In these projects workers have not been trained to develop plans for individual clients.

It is important that any plan respects client's autonomy as well as prioritizing their self determined needs. Managers emphasized the need to develop clear, timely and realistic goals in plans.

The issue of non attendance at keyworking sessions can arise particularly when a homeless person is in crisis. They may stay in bed or go out to avoid confronting the issues that have arisen. There is also a need for keyworkers to note when they have to postpone a session.

If a homeless person is accessing a range of services and they are all keyworking – does that person then have a number of care plans? What are the implications regarding both a consistent approach to care planning within and between organizations and a homeless persons efforts to achieve a range of goals in different care plans?

7.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

It is worth discussing from the sectors practical experience, how they see that multiple care planning can be streamlined and coordinated.

7.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

The Homeless Agency could coordinate a series of workshops to discuss this and other matters regarding keyworking. It would be useful to include (either together or separately) managers and keyworkers so that the discussions can inform both policy and practice.

8. Keyworking - Linking to External Services

8.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

Managers stated that links between some agencies had improved (eg links to detox services). Some organizations have developed service level agreements with each other.

A number of services were working directly in and with emergency shelters (eg needle exchange; Patch CWO's; Multi D Health Teams; Cedar House in Longford Lane; Simon outreach worker in Aungier Street).

Contacts both formal and informal between organizations at worker and manager level have improved.

Managers said that the Homeless Agency consultative fora had been of assistance in improving links between organizations.

8.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

There is still a need to clarify roles and responsibilities; policies and functions between organizations.

In the keyworking context there is an even greater need for clear and open communication and links both within and between organizations. Situations are arising where a homeless person can have a number of keyworkers. Confusion can arise regarding expectations of each others roles and functions. One manager suggested that ***'perhaps a keyworker could be designated as the lead keyworker and keyworkers in other organizations clarify their particular roles and responsibilities. For example, the lead keyworker may be in Simon and the DCC settlement keyworker is responsible for ensuring positive and clear links within the particular DCC homeless and housing sections.'*** Is this perhaps where case management comes in? This lack of clarity can, and is, affecting referral, intake and move on.

The reason why clear and open links between organizations are needed is to ensure that homeless people receive timely, relevant and active assistance to access the resources to meet their needs. While there have been improvements this aspiration still has some way to go before it is met.

Another issue that managers mentioned was around having a clear understanding of the different statutory agencies catchment areas. They (Health Boards; CWO's; Social workers; mental health workers etc.) all vary. Understanding and accessing the appropriate person and service is difficult.

While the Homeless Agency forums had been seen as helpful – and the transitional housing forum was seen to be working very well – managers were interested to know what was happening regarding the emergency and settlement forums.
Another issue is that while forums for managers to link had been developed the only real opportunity for keyworkers to meet was through cross agency training.

8.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

There is a need to continue to discuss and decide the nature and level of links between organizations in terms of keyworking and case management.

8.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Continue to coordinate these discussions.
Explore ways for keyworkers to meet and discuss their work and ways to improve coordination.

9. Keyworking Documentation & Review

9.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

All organizations have developed, and many are currently reviewing, documentation policy and practice.

Some organizations have developed excellent Information Technology data storage and analysis systems that are in daily use by workers and managers. Rendu Apartments and Cedar House have developed excellent IT systems that are user friendly and provide detailed and relevant information for planning, review and action. Other organizations are in the process of assessing their IT needs.

Daily logs, care plans, incident reports and supervision reports are the key documentation tools for keyworkers.

All organizations have a process of reviewing care plans (ranges from every week to every 3 months) by keyworkers; with keyworkers and managers; and in keyworking teams. Team meetings occur in all organizations on a weekly to fortnightly basis. One project has team meetings every 6 weeks.In some organizations each worker will bring a case to a team meeting for discussion, review and support. In others the keyworkers meet fortnightly, outside of team meetings, to discuss issues.

Some organizations have developed performance indicators against a series of good practice elements. Other organizations are in the process of developing and implementing their standards frameworks which will include performance indicators as well as monitoring and review processes.

9.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

In every organization there are workers who perceive written documentation as a lesser part of their work when compare to the face to face keyworking with homeless people. Managers are working to deal with this issue in a number of ways:-

- Developing policies on documentation, review and monitoring practice
- Working with individual in supervision
- Implementing training

There is frustration by workers and managers about (internally and externally) duplication of information. As one project worker stated ***'I write what's happening in the daily log – then I write the same thing in the clients file – and then…..'*** This is a critical issue regarding information collection, analysis and flow within and between organizations. Some organizations are currently reviewing their information flow process and the implications regarding documentation.

9.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Any IT systems need to be able to integrate with the Links system.

9.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Review the current usage of the Links system and assess the issues regarding interfacing with homeless organisations IT systems.

10. Keyworking Advocacy & Self Advocacy

10.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

All organizations were very clear that keyworking is about a move to independence and not the creation of dependence for homeless people. Organisations also emphasised the development of self advocacy practices by homeless people as a key part of advocacy practice.

This element of keyworking practice was not explored in detail in interviews with managers because of time constraints. A lot of interview time was spent exploring the issues of referral, assessment and linkages between organizations.

10.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

One clear issue that managers mentioned was the need for keyworkers to be clear about their objectives when presenting a case to other organizations.

10.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

This is an element of keyworking that requires further discussion in terms of the nature, extent and good practice involved in being an advocate and developing self advocacy skills with clients.

10.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

This element could be included in any sectoral discussion on keyworking .

11. Keyworking Crisis Prevention & Intervention

11.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

Organisations are developing and implementing policies and procedures on crisis prevention and intervention. They have also developed internal organization training and supervision programmes.

One organization is training all its staff in ICMP (Individual Crisis Management Plan) which involves up to 10 days of external training. They are currently building in ICMP protocols within their keyworking system.

Most organizations are looking to be proactive and are building in preventative strategies before a crisis occurs. There are also protocols when an incident occurs.

Health and Safety has assumed a higher priority in organizations. Some projects have had external health and safety assessments. All organisations have built health and safety issues into induction and training.

11.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

No major issues except for the usual regarding ongoing improvement in policy and practice.

11.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Health and Safety protocols and practice need to become even more embedded in organizations but definite progress has been made.

11.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Ensure that there is a common standard regarding crisis intervention as well as health and safety in the sector.

12. Keyworking Direct Service Provision

12.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

In larger organizations such as Dublin Simon and Focus Ireland there has been a vertical integration of services. That is, they have developed services that cross sectors – detox; rehab; education and training etc.

Other organizations have a very clear policy (particularly in transitional accommodation) that they will link their clients into existing external services as this can build their pathway to independence.

Some organizations (particularly emergency shelters) are encouraging external services (eg. Multi d team; needle exchange; Patch CWO's;) to deliver some of their services within the hostel environment.

Basically, organizations are making decisions regarding the nature and extent of service provision within their projects on the basis of need, resources, policies and non duplication.

12.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

Resources (people, buildings, time, will, skill and money) are an obvious issue in the development of any services. There are more trained and experienced people entering the sector at worker and manager level. Money has increased in the last few years but it will continue to be an issue as benchmarking; wage parity and ongoing costs increase.

This project was not intended to act as a physical audit on the buildings that are used to provide services. The physical infrastructure has improved but there is some way to go particularly in some hostels. A particular issue in hostels is the fact that they were very rarely custom built for the service provided and spaces for workers; meetings and private keyworking sessions are at a premium. While they may meet minimum health and safety standards they are not really creating a quality working environment.

12.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Continue to work together to ensure that any direct service provision is relevant to the organizations stated mission and meets a real need.

12.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Explore whether there is a need to conduct a physical audit of hostels regarding their physical capacity to conduct keyworking good practice. A recent physical audit by Homeless Link in London of homeless organizations is worth looking at to see whether it's framework would be useful (attached as a separate file).

13. Keyworking Transition Planning

13.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

All organizations have policies on transition planning and they are being clearer about the length of stay in their projects. Part of the keyworking process is to work with the homeless person to develop goals regarding move on.

One project sends their clients a letter after a year stay and then at 2 three monthly intervals letting them know that transition is inevitable. This is supported by ongoing keywork.

13.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

There are a number of issues for the sector in terms of transition planning:

- The existing undersupply of appropriate move on accommodation
- Some homeless people are unwilling to move on. This is a paradox that has arisen in hostels. As they have improved the nature of their services some homeless people feel safe, respected and supported in a hostel. Managers are aware of this issue.
- Another issue is the lack of a clear sense of the links from emergency accommodation to transitional housing. Some managers felt that intake policies into transitional accommodation were too stringent in that some of their clients would need to be keyworked for years before they would be eligible for transitional accommodation – and by then ***'the client may as well go straight to permanent and possibly supported accommodation'.***
- Transition is the feedback loop to the issues stated in the intake and assessment section. It is at transition and referral points in keyworking that the gaps in information; accommodation and cross agency working become most visible.

13.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

There is a need for the sector to explore how to improve transfer and handover of information about a homeless person when they move from one accommodation service to another.
There is a need for clarity and increased linkages between and within accommodation continuum of care points.

13.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Continue to work on the issues of transition.

14. Keyworking Tracking Progress

14.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

Some organizations are tracking clients using the Links system but tracking is not seen as a keyworking role in many organizations. Perhaps this is where case management takes over?
Some organizations provide some post settlement support.

14.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

One manager commented that ***'in our hostels there are a core of people that may stay for a few days and then we never see them again – where do they go?'***

14.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

There needs to be more buy in to the Links system.

14.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Explore with the sector what is required in terms of tracking.
Explore what could be developed in terms of longtitudinal tracking processes.
Explore how information on the Links system could be synthesized and create an information feedback loop to organizations in t he sector.

15. Keyworker Staffing Patterns

15.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

There are two keyworking patterns:

- **Individual caseloads –** within a project/service a homeless person would have one keyworker although they will have day to day contact with other workers.
- **Teams with shared caseloads –** This works in different ways. In some organizations have interdisciplinary teams that bring a mix of skills in dealing with a homeless persons multiple needs. One organization has developed a keyworking team approach where 5 keyworkers work with 10 people.

15.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

One of the critical issues identified by managers are the rota systems that operate in many services, particularly hostels. This results in keyworkers working some nights and some days thus affecting consistency of keyworking. There are also real resourcing issues regarding rotas and developing a pool of good relief workers.

One organization has dealt with this issue by separating night and day functions. That is, they employ project workers (with very specific job descriptions) at night and keyworkers during the day. If any incidents arise the project workers will inform the keyworkers. Another organization has a policy that they only do keyworking during the day.

In one service there is one keyworker on day shift and another on the night shift. They do not have time to meet for face to face handover and their client/keyworker ratios are very high. This is not a formula for fast and effective outcomes.

15.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

The sector needs to explore the real issues with regard to rota systems and their impact on keyworking. This study only scratched the surface of what is a critical issue.

15.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Commission research on current rota systems; what's working; what are the key issues; and solutions that organizations are using and could develop. Perhaps investigating why and how keyworking should operate at night.

16. Duration of Keyworking

16.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

Nearly all organizations are now running time limited keyworking. In the main this ranges from 1 to 2 years with some services as focused as 3 months.

16.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

The usual issue regarding appropriate accommodation was raised.
Some homeless people are either reluctant to move on because they feel safe in the present accommodation or they have very low motivation to change or manage their lives. Both issues are being dealt with by managers in the context of organizational policy and individual keyworking plans.

16.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Continue to provide a realistic time focus for keyworking that is directly related to the homeless persons needs.

16.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Continue to work with the sector on developing appropriate accommodation options.

17. Intensity of Keyworking

17.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

Informal contact between keyworkers and their clients can happen daily or when the keyworker is on roster.

Formal keyworking contact (where the keyworker and client meet to review progress; adjust and change the plan) occurs in organizations from weekly to fortnightly – and in one service there is a range of intensity of contact depending on the progress of the client. There are also 6 weekly and 3 monthly broader reviews of care plans in some organizations. This is important because research has shown that the intensity of keyworking contact plays a critical part in increasing the chance of successful outcomes for homeless people.

17.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

Managers noted that it was important for keyworkers to maintain regular formal keyworking contact as well as including any observations from their informal contact into keyworking sessions and documentation. Moving this policy into practice is happening but time is needed before practice is consistent. This is particularly evident in services where keyworking is a practice as recent as September 2003.

One of the key issues is to train and support keyworkers so they can develop realistic goals and buy in by homeless people.

17.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Continue embedding policies into consistent good practice.

17.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Continue to support the sector.

18. Client/Keyworker Ratio

18.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

Client/keyworker ratios will vary depending on the extent and nature of a homeless persons needs.

Ratios in shelters run by non government organizations interviewed range from 1:1.5 to 1:6.The 3 DCC shelters that have just begun keyworking have ratios that range from 1:10 to 1:16. Settlement services have a ratio that ranges from 1:10 to 1:15. Transition services have ratios that range from 1:1 to 1:5 to 1:19 depending on the range and intensity of needs presented by their clients.

18.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

Ratios and staffing patterns have an interlinked impact. Even those services with low ratios may not always have a consistent keyworking presence because of the rota systems in place. Research has shown that maintaining good client/keyworker ratios (related to nature and intensity of needs) is a critical element in effecting real change in a homeless persons life. Managers said that maintaining effective ratios has resource and funding implications as well as **'heads on beds funding policy'.**

18.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Continue to explore issues regarding ratios.

18.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Develop a policy regarding effective ckient/keyworker ratios that relates to extent and nature of need.

Explore the funding and policy implication of good practice in client/keyworker ratios.

19. Focus of Keyworking

19.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

The focus of keyworking in the organizations interviewed covers the gamut of effective keyworking practice and all the elements detailed in this report.

All keyworkers develop plans that cover many aspects of a homeless persons life. In some cases the needed services are sourced within their organization and other services are accessed from other organizations within the homeless sector and across sectors (health, drugs and alcohol services; education and training; job placement etc.). In purpose specific services such as the DCC settlement service clients are referred to specific services with support from their keyworker.

19.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

These issues have been mentioned in another section but are worth repeating:-

- There is a continued need for clarity regarding the purpose and function of services so that appropriate referrals can be made.
- The specific roles and responsibilities of keyworkers in organizations must be clarified if proper case management both within and between organisations is to occur.

19.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Recommendations made in previous sections.

19.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Recommendations made in previous sections.

20. Availability of Keyworker

20.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

Keyworker availability ranges from normal office hours to night or day work depending on the rota system in place. Some shelters only have keyworkers at night because the service is closed during the day.

Some services have extended their office hours from 7am to 7pm.

20.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

The rota system issue has been detailed in another section. Basically, the rota system means that some people may not see their keyworker for 3 days. This may not always be a problem because there are always other workers available for contact. It may be a problem when scheduling regular and consistent formal keyworking sessions.

20.2 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Recommendations made in a previous section

20.3 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Recommendations made in a previous section

21. Location of Keyworking Service

21.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

Most organizations provide their keyworking service within their projects. That is, in the hostel or drug service.
Outreach workers provide their service in a range of locations including the streets.
Some organizations will occasionally send keyworkers into client accommodation such as B&B's.

21.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

While the physical location of service have improved in the last few years there is a need to assess and improve the physical spaces in services that are available for effective and formal keyworking sessions. For example, many hostels were not purpose built and the offices and keyworking spaces are inadequate.

21.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

No recommendations

21.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Explore the physical location standards for keyworking.

22. Keyworker Skills & Experience

22.1Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

It was not within the scope of this project to do an indepth analysis of keyworker skills and experience.

In general, many workers have worked in the homeless sector before or have transferred from youthwork or community development sectors. Some keyworkers have formal qualifications that range from certificates to degrees.

22.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

There is a need to agree the essential skills (across the sector) required for a keyworking position. This will also mean that benchmarking and wage parity issues will also arise as well as clarity in job titles.

22.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Recommendations made in previous sections.

22.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Recommendations made in previous sections.

23. Keyworker Support, Supervision & Training

23.1 Current practice within the Dublin Homeless sector

All organizations have regular supervision of keyworkers that ranges from every 2 to 6 weeks.

Nearly all organizations have weekly or fortnightly team meetings to discuss policies, work issues and clients.

Some managers and supervisors observe some keyworking sessions in order to provide clear feedback in supervision sessions.

Nearly all organizations have developed annual training plans for workers and managers. Training is accessed internally or through Homeless Agency and other organizations. All organizations have induction policies and practices as well as selection policies.

23.2 The issues and opportunities that have arisen regarding Keyworking

There is a need to explore the capacity of the sector to develop its own accredited training for keyworking. Currently there is no specific formal qualification in Ireland that is appropriate to develop and train good keyworkers.

23.3 Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Initial discussions between human resource managers; training managers and service managers (for most organization who don't have a specific HRM manager) are needed to tease out the framework for exploring the development of a formal accreditation within the sector.

23.4 Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

The Homeless Agency act as coordinator of the initial discussions and potential development process for a formal keyworking training accreditation in the sector.

Appendix 1 - Recommendations for Broad Sectoral Action & Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

1. Values and Policies

Broad recommendations for sectoral action

That all homeless organizations develop keyworking policies on the basis of an effective good practice framework by the middle of 2004.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

1.If organizations were willing – to compile a file/database/info pack of the keyworking policies developed by organizations that would be shared with them. They could assess whether there were any gaps in their policy development as a result of a perusal of other organizations policies.
2.For those organizations (usually small) that have yet to develop keyworking policies the Homeless Agency could develop a series of policy development workshops as well as giving them the info pack so they could customize their own policies without reinventing the wheel.

2. Referral & Intake

Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Organisations need to be clear about the purpose, function, roles and responsibilities of their services. This needs to be constantly communicated (in writing and face to face) with workers and managers in other organizations.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

1. The policy info pack recommended in the previous section would help increase clarity and decrease confusion and frustration between organisations regarding referrals.
2. The Homeless Agency Directory could be updated and put on CD Rom.

3. Assessment & Orientation

Broad recommendations for sectoral action

1.Agreement is needed within the sector on the key elements of good practice needed in assessment
2.Effective training, support and supervision in assessment process and recording must be a core part of keyworkers induction.
3.Effective exchange of accurate and truthful assessment information between organizations is needed.
4.There is a need to reappraise confidentiality policies. Rather that place confidentiality at the core of the policies, organizations should explore developing information policies that hold three things as important:-

- Issues of privacy
- Informed consent of clients
- Information sharing between and within organizations

5.Assessment must be seen as an ongoing process and not a moment in time when a form is filled in.
6.Assessment forms must be well designed and user friendly. This will speed up administration, monitoring and most importantly, the willingness of workers to record information.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

1.The Homeless Agency could coordinate an expert panel to develop protocols and guidelines for good practice in assessment. The panel would draw on the existing good practice in the sector as well as international good practice.

2.The Homeless Agency would include a module on assessment practice and recording as part of the recommended Keyworking training accreditation.
3.The development of a common assessment form is seen as important but it seems that most organizations have developed their own. Perhaps it's not a form that is needed but a clear protocol and guidelines regarding a common standard of assessment practice.

4. Relationship Building

Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Continue developing policies, training and supervision regarding the development of respectful, supportive and appropriate relationships between keyworkers and their clients.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

1. Gather examples of protocols, guidelines and policies regarding keyworking relationship building.
2. Include modules on relationship building in any sectoral accredited training.

5. Individual Plans

Broad recommendations for sectoral action

It is worth discussing from the sectors practical experience, how they see that multiple care planning can be streamlined and coordinated.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

The Homeless Agency could coordinate a series of workshops to discuss this and other matters regarding keyworking. It would be useful to include (either together or separately) managers and keyworkers so that the discussions can inform both policy and practice.

6. Linking to External Services

Broad recommendations for sectoral action

There is a need to continue to discuss and decide the nature and level of links between organizations in terms of keyworking and case management.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Continue to coordinate these discussions.
Explore ways for keyworkers to meet and discuss their work and ways to improve coordination.

7. Documentation & Review

Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Any IT systems need to be able to integrate with the Links system.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

Review the current usage of the Links system and assess the issues regarding interfacing with homeless organisations IT systems.

8. Advocacy & Self Advocacy

Broad recommendations for sectoral action

This is an element of keyworking that requires further discussion in terms of the nature, extent and good practice involved in being an advocate and developing self advocacy skills with clients.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency

This element could be included in any sectoral discussion on keyworking .

9. Crisis Prevention & Intervention

Broad recommendations for sectoral action

Health and Safety protocols and practice need to become even more embedded in organizations but definite progress has been made.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Ensure that there is a common standard regarding crisis intervention as well as health and safety.

10. Direct Service Provision

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
Continue to work together to ensure that any direct service provision is relevant to the organizations stated mission and meets a real need.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Explore whether there is a need to conduct a physical audit of hostels regarding their physical capacity to conduct keyworking good practice. A recent physical audit by Homeless Link in London of homeless organizations is worth looking at to see whether it's framework would be useful (attached as a separate file).

11.Transition Planning

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
There is a need for the sector to explore how to improve transfer and handover of information about a homeless person when they move from one accommodation service to another.
There is a need for clarity and increased linkages between and within accommodation continuum of care points.
Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Continue to work on the issues of transition.

12.Tracking Progress

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
There needs to be more buy in to the Links system.
Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Explore with the sector what is required in terms of tracking.
Explore what could be developed in terms of longtitudinal tracking processes.
Explore how information on the Links system could be synthesized and create an information feedback loop to organizations in t he sector.

13. Staffing Patterns

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
The sector needs to explore the real issues with regard to rota systems and their impact on keyworking. This study only scratched the surface of what is a critical issue.
Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Commission research on current rota systems; what's working; what are the key issues; and solutions that organizations are using and could develop. Perhaps investigating why and how keyworking should operate at night.

14. Duration of Keyworking

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
Continue to provide a realistic time focus for keyworking that is directly related to the homeless persons needs.
Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Continue to work with the sector on developing appropriate accommodation options.

15. Intensity of Keyworking

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
Continue embedding policies into consistent good practice.

Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Continue to support the sector.

16. Client/Keyworker Ratio

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
Continue to explore issues regarding ratios.
Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
1. Develop a policy regarding effective client/keyworker ratios that relates to extent and nature of need.
2.Explore the funding and policy implication of good practice in client/keyworker ratios.

17. Focus of Keyworking

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
Recommendations made in previous sections.
Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Recommendations made in previous sections.

18. Availability of Keyworker

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
Recommendations made in previous sections.
Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Recommendations made in previous sections.

19. Location of Keyworking Service

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
No recommendations
Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Explore the physical location standards for keyworking.

20. Keyworker Skills & Experience

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
Recommendations made in previous sections.
Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
Recommendations made in previous sections.

21. Keyworker Support, Supervision & Training

Broad recommendations for sectoral action
Initial discussions between human resource managers; training managers and service managers (for most organization who don't have a specific HRM manager) are needed to tease out the framework for exploring the development of a formal accreditation within the sector.
Potential role and actions for the Homeless Agency
The Homeless Agency act as coordinator of the initial discussions and potential development process for a formal keyworking training accreditation in the sector.

An Example of a process of assessment

This model of assessment is adapted from *The Art of Assessment* (Middleton, 1997, p.48), and was chosen because it offers a framework for thinking through the assessment process independently of local forms and procedures. A good assessment will roughly follow the pattern shown, with additions and omissions, forward and backward loops, according to the situation being examined.

1 Establishing a working relationship

- Timing
- Establishing ground rules
- Acknowledging feelings

2 Data collection

- Aspirations: what the individual wants
- Barriers/problems/stresses
- Resources/sources of support
- Coping mechanisms
- Expert evidence
- Evidence from other agencies

3 Analysis

- What the individual wants
- Identifying changes that are required
- Identifying risks
- Identifying opportunities
- Identifying the role of service providers
- Costing
- Weighing up the options

4 Planning

- Draft proposals
- Negotiation
- Recommendations
- Arrangements for review
- Ensuring quality

Appendix 3 – A 3 Stage keyworking process

Published by Providence Row Charity and Providence Row Housing Association with support from the London Housing Foundation. 2003.
Finding the key – A good Practice guide for workers in wet hostels.

This is an excerpt from a 10 page report.

Key working toolkit
The following toolkit builds on the areas discussed previously. It is deliberately simplistic outlining a step-by-step progression through the initial process.

Stage I
1. A key worker should be involved in the initial assessment interview for individuals being referred to the hostel.

2. A key worker should greet the individual on their admission to the hostel.

3. The key worker should complete with the individual the initial paperwork required on hostel admission. Only essential paperwork should be completed at this stage.

4. The key worker should accompany service users on an initial tour of the building, ensuring that all the important landmarks are pointed out.

5. The key worker should ensure that service users are provided with a service map and are aware of mealtimes, in-house services, and the whereabouts of all staff.

6. The key worker should provide information on the project locale, including local bus routes, shops, post office, parks, and local services that might be appropriate.

7. The key worker should closely monitor service users' early days in the service, through regular informal chats and ongoing observation. Focus areas should include: the ability to socialize, orientation to physical environment, awareness of daily schedules, physical and mental health issues, and behavioral patterns.

8. The key worker should observe and monitor the service user's daily alcohol intake and its impact on behavior and coping abilities.

9. The key worker should write up a profile of the service user based on the above observations and interactions. This write up should form the basis of the initial care plan.

Stage 2
1. The key worker should then arrange the first structured key work session with the individual. The timing of the session should be geared to intelligence gathered about the individual's drinking patterns.

2. The key worker should include feedback of their initial observations in the first session, testing their validity and relevance to the service user.

3. The key worker should use the first session to identify initial focus areas, including orientation to new surroundings, familiarity with the hostel layout and the services provided, socialization with other service users, physical and mental health issues, behavioral issues, and patterns and impact of alcohol use.

4. The key worker, having identified the key focus areas, should identify areas to tackle in the first month and break these down into manageable steps.

5. The key worker should inform the resident of the individual life mapping exercise which will occur in Week 2 and seek to explore the life history of the drinker, identifying strengths, limitations, areas of interest, existence of significant others, and hopes and aspirations for the future.

6. The key worker should then use the original information gathered from observation of the service user in conjunction with insights gained from the life mapping exercise to construct a care plan that is agreed between the key worker and the service user.

Stage 3

1. The key worker should then set regular key work sessions the content of each being recorded in relation to progress achieved on agreed action points.

2. The key worker should reinforce areas of positive achievement throughout the key working process and explore with the service user the reasons for plans not working it.

3. Key workers should regularly review action plans with the service user and update or amend them as appropriate to changing individual circumstances.

4. Key workers should use supervision as a place to discuss action planning with service users, as a means of monitoring their practice and gaining objective insights.