Improving Financial Confidence programme evaluation

Final Report to Big Lottery Fund

Summer 2017

Jenny Williams, Sharon Collard, Danny Friedman, Sara Davies, David Hayes, and Katharine McKenna

Contents

Executive Summary

Evaluation approach

Ecorys, the Personal Finance Research Centre at the University of Bristol, and Cobweb Consulting were commissioned to undertake the evaluation of the Improving Financial Confidence (IFC) progamme.

The main evaluation tasks were:

- Project inception and programme analysis
- Supporting projects to self-evaluate and monitor outcomes
- Facilitating project learning and sharing via an online portal
- Conducting qualitative case studies and evaluation workshops
- Analysing outcomes for beneficiaries and landlords
- Exploring the potential legacy and sustainability of the programme

Evaluation context

The Improving Financial Confidence programme has been delivered against a backdrop of considerable change and uncertainty in the social housing sector. The programme was originally designed to raise the skills and confidence of beneficiaries, primarily social housing tenants, to help them adapt to the Universal Credit environment. However this was based on the assumption that beneficiaries were lacking the abilities to manage their money effectively. In practice projects found that many beneficiaries had well developed financial capabilities, but were unable to make ends meet in the context of the welfare reforms and changes to benefits, particularly the introduction of the 'bedroom tax'. The programme therefore evolved into a mix of crisis intervention work and supporting beneficiaries to develop new budgeting skills in accordance with wider economic changes; including wage freezes, zero hours contracts and the benefits cap.

The programme was originally set up to support three core target groups: new tenants, young tenants and tenants moving in and out of work. Targets were ambitious, as it was anticipated that much of the support could be delivered through group interventions. This proved challenging given the higher level support needs of beneficiaries. In recognition of these challenges the Big Lottery Fund agreed to relax the original target cohorts for the programme, broadening the criteria to any social housing tenants. In addition projects could draw up to 25% of their beneficiaries from the private rental sector.

'Test and Learn'

The Improving Financial Confidence programme was implemented using 'test and learn' principles, which projects consistently reflected enabled them to pilot different approaches and adapt delivery as lessons were learnt. Projects explained that the first operational year was often focused on development work, establishing a local presence, and building relationships with local providers to ensure the project was well aligned with existing provision and added value to local services.

Key findings

The key findings are summarised from the programme evaluation below.

Engagement

The evaluation identified the following key success factors in engaging beneficiaries:

- Establishing effective and diverse referral routes. This ranged from core partners such as Citizens Advice through to specialist support providers such as the Probation Service and Women's Centres.
- Allowing time to build the brand locally. Projects developed a sales approach and community presence, through promoting the project at community events and fostering an open door policy. Projects also highlighted the importance of establishing a physical presence, such as through shopfronts or recruitment activities at other service providers' premises.
- Conducting outreach support and home visits. This approach was employed successfully in both urban and rural areas, to support vulnerable clients who would be unable to travel to centralised provision owing to the cost of travel, and mental health concerns.
- Building and maintaining a trusted relationship between project worker and tenant, and using every-day language.

The methods identified above helped to address initial challenges, such as many housing providers setting up their own in-house support services for tenants, reducing the need for referrals to IFC provision. However the recent cut to housing budgets has resulted in many of these services being cut, and it is hoped that within the last year of the programme this will increase traffic to those IFC projects continuing into 2018.

Delivery models

A strength of the programme is the application of 'test and learn', which has given projects the flexibility to test different approaches and adapt their delivery models. This has generated learning which can inform future delivery models, particularly around realistic assessments about the level of support required by many tenants to strengthen their skills and confidence to manage their own finances in the longer term.

The evaluation highlighted the following key success factors in relation to delivery:

- Providing tailored one-to-one support, focused on supporting behaviour change through action planning and practical approaches.
- Group activities worked well with some groups, particularly young people/ new tenants.
- Combining financial capability advice with everyday activities such as cooking on a budget and DIY/ decorating around the home.
- Making the connection between money management approaches and beneficiary health and wellbeing
- Encouraging beneficiaries to develop online money management skills, in the context of Universal Credit

- Integrating IFC into tenancy support
- Recognising that many beneficiaries welcomed a combination of group and one-to-one support
- Understanding peer mentoring and volunteering approaches and activities that work well, such as support for group activities, and recognising that more intensive one-to-one support tends to be best provided by fully trained paid staff.

Outcomes and impacts

The evaluation captured outcomes at the beneficiary and landlord levels.

Follow-up data is available for 10,129 tenants, some 29% of the total number of beneficiaries for which a full beneficiary record was created. Analysis is therefore possible for a significant proportion of the IFC beneficiaries to explore changes to beneficiaries financial confidence, use of financial products and experience of financial difficulty. Bank account ownership was relatively high amongst beneficiaries; about 85% of people had a current account at both baseline and follow-up. The level of credit union membership also stayed fairly stable, this rose very slightly from 6% to 7% at follow up stage. The percentage of tenants with home contents insurance rose from 8% to 14%. At the baseline stage, 13% of tenants were behind with payments on at least one loan. This fell to 9% at the follow up. 28% were in rent arrears at the baseline and this fell to 23% at the follow-up.

Financial confidence was measured using the MyFC tool. A small group of beneficiaries, (1516), started the IFC programme sufficiently early on in the delivery period for follow up data to be gathered from them six months after they left the programme, to demonstrate the extent of changes in their financial capability over time. Of these 1516 respondents, the mean MyFC score at baseline was 0.07, increasing to 0.32 when the second score was captured and 0.41 at the second follow-up. Although only based on a relative small sample, this does suggest a sustained change in financial confidence for beneficiaries after engagement in IFC projects. It is positive that the financial knowledge and money management skills gained by beneficiaries are being maintained, as demonstrated by the increase in MyFC score at the third follow up point.

The programme also achieved a number of wider beneficiary outcomes:

- Many IFC projects reported providing assistance to IFC beneficiaries to access additional or increased income by applying for additional benefits, accessing private pensions that were not in payment or applying to charitable trusts and foundations, for example, for hardship grants to clear debts or to furnish homes.
- Beneficiaries commonly reported reduced stress levels as a result of the IFC support they received. For example some projects helped beneficiaries apply for a Debt Relief Order (DRO), to manage payment demands and help establish realistic repayment plans.
- Some beneficiaries gained work with the support of project-related activities such as job clubs, budgeting advice which increased their confidence to deal independently

with their finances, and support and signposting to specialist support to help strengthen their mental health.

The evaluation was also designed to demonstrate the benefits and impacts of effective approaches on both individual social housing tenants and the social housing landlords' 'bottom line', in terms of reductions in rent arrears and evictions. Baseline data was collected to asses the impact of the IFC programme on individual landlords, in relation to housing management activities where performance is affected by tenant behaviour. The key landlord outcomes were:

- The impact of the programme on rent arrears was mixed. The median level of cash rent arrears carried by landlords at the latest time point data was collected for was £319,409. This represents a £155,142 reduction on the baseline level of £474,551 – a 33% reduction. Although not large, in the context of the broader environment of welfare reform and the austerity agenda, this is a positive result. However, the amount of cash arrears relates strongly to the size of the stock and the number of tenants. So, if data is taken primarily from smaller landlords, the cash figures would be a lot lower than if a number of larger landlords with higher rent rolls were involved.
- Another arrears indicator monitored was the proportion of tenants more than two months behind in their rents. Often short-term arrears are the result of delays in the Housing Benefit system, or the way rent accounting systems work, and the introduction of Universal Credit, with its built-in delay factor will have exacerbated this. Longer-term rent arrears are more likely to be ascribable to tenant behaviour. We found that the proportion of tenants more than eight weeks behind in their rent had steadily increased from the baseline figure of 6.8% to 7.4% and then to 8%.
- 'Short term' voids are empty homes that do not have significant disrepair problems, and are expected to be quickly re-let to new tenants. While not a direct indicator of the impact of the IFC programme, faster turnover times and lower levels do show that a housing association has less of a problem with failing or abandoned tenancies than others with higher rates. The ability of the IFC programme to get potential residents 'tenancy ready' was cited as a factor in enabling homes to be let quickly, or less desirable properties let at all. Here the programme does show a positive impact. The time taken to let empty homes has fallen slightly over the period of the IFC programme, from an average of five weeks at the baseline stage, to 4.2 weeks at the final data collection point. This is partly reflected in the snapshots of the actual average numbers of voids. After an initial increase in numbers between the baseline and mid-point, from 27 to 35, the final figure reduced to 30. This pattern is reflected in the void loss figures – the amount of rent that has remained uncollected because a property was empty. From an initial base of a median figure of £2,634 per month, void losses increased to £2,955 at the mid-point, but then reduced to an average of £2,789 at the latest measurement point. This represents a 6% increase on the baseline figure.

The statistical evidence needs to be seen in the context of more qualitative data, particularly that obtained through the case studies. These indicate that firstly, there are benefits to tenants that are less tangible in terms of their monetary and performance impacts on landlords, but

are nonetheless important for the longer-term sustainability and stability of tenancies. These are often through increased confidence in dealing with money matters, the breakdown of barriers relating to social isolation, and improved health and wellbeing – all of which makes successful tenancies more likely. Secondly, the case studies indicate that particularly for projects that were housing association managed and / or had a single, large-scale social landlord at their centre, learning from the IFC programme has resulted in structural and organisational change and development, such as the mainstreaming of IFC-type financial capability and inclusion activities into the day to day work of the organisation.

Programme legacy

The evaluation identifies a number of ways in which the IFC programme is generating a legacy, both in terms of direct activities that are being mainstreamed and/or sustained and wider learning that is supporting the development of new and emerging programmes and provision, including:

- Mainstreaming activities within lead organisations, through the continuation of roles and taking forward the work through new structures or core services. For example some housing providers are incorporating IFC support for beneficiaries into their core offer. In some areas Citizens' Advice is continuing IFC activities, particularly through volunteering initiatives.
- Sustaining activities and utilising knowledge through new projects or programmes, particularly the Big Lottery Fund's Building Better Opportunities and Help through Crisis programmes and the Money Advice Service's What Works Fund.
- Informing housing provider approaches to social value, which recognise the importance of building a trusted relationship with tenants, providing support and advice to help them maintain their tenancies.
- Gaining private sector investment to roll out training programmes in new contexts, using IFC approaches. Whilst this was only achieved by one or two projects, it demonstrates the importance of networking and undertaking influencing work.

Recommendations for future planning

Originally, the evaluation aimed to act as a catalyst for investment by the social housing sector in effective approaches to improve financial confidence in the longer term. However, given the changed operating context and shifting policy around financial confidence, the evaluation subsequently took a wider view of the sustainability of IFC activity rather than solely examining the business case for social housing landlords. In this final report, evidence is presented on the different mechanisms that projects have pursued to sustain IFC project activity. Recommendations are presented in the form of a potential menu, or suite of suggestions for organisations looking in the future to deliver activity to address financial confidence, to think about how to approach preparing future funding bids or business planning. Providers are invited to consider the following questions:

- Are you offering what the community really wants?
- Are you testing out your tools and approach with your community?

- How are you avoiding competition and promoting co-production with other community-based organisations?
- Are you free to innovate?
- Do you have built-in flexibility?
- Have you evaluated your overall operating mode?
- Have you thought enough about branding and image?
- Do you intend to provide holistic or focussed services for the community?
- Have you designed and built in monitoring and evaluation arrangements?
- Do you have the most appropriate leadership agency?
- Is all of your organisation fully on board?
- Are you choosing the right partners?
- How have you planned for engaging community volunteers?
- Asking the difficult questions: can you afford not to do it?

1.0 Introduction

In 2011, Ecorys, the Personal Finance Research Centre at the University of Bristol, and Cobweb Consulting was commissioned by the Big Lottery Fund (BLF) to undertake an evaluation of the Improving Financial Confidence (IFC) Programme. This final report presents the findings from this evaluation, drawing together quantitative and qualitative evidence collected throughout the 5 years of the evaluation.

1.1 Overview of the Improving Financial Confidence Programme

The Big Lottery Fund's Improving Financial Confidence programme was a £31.7 million investment which aims to *"enable social housing tenants in England to become financially confident and feel included as a result of the support from their social landlords"*. The programme supported 37 projects in total across England. Projects were funded for an initial three, four or five years. Projects have subsequently been allowed to use their underspends to continue activity, with the programme extension running through to mid-2018.

The programme was one of the Big Lottery Fund's first strategic investments and was developed in consultation with a number of stakeholders including the Money Advice Service, National Housing Federation and the Financial Conduct Authority (formerly known as the Financial Services Authority).

The original three target groups for the programme were: tenants moving in and out of work, first time tenants, and young tenants due to the need for financial confidence at times of transition. Thirty-seven projects in local authority areas across England were awarded between £500,000 and £1 million each over three to five years. The projects took a partnership approach and each partnership includes the Local Authority, social housing landlords and local advice services or Citizen Advice service. The lead partner for each project was a voluntary community sector organisation or a social housing landlord.

The Improving Financial Confidence programme was designed as a preventative programme, with the first three of the four programme outcomes concentrating on improving social housing tenants' financial confidence and equipping social housing landlords to realise the benefits of financial inclusion services:

- Social housing residents have greater access to appropriate and affordable financial services and products
- Social housing residents have increased skills and confidence to use financial products and services and will continue to apply these skills and this confidence
- Social housing providers engage with most in need residents to enable them to understand the relevance of financial inclusion and capability services

The fourth programme outcome focuses on the strategic approach to the investment:

- Social housing and financial sector organisations have increased awareness of the impact of a range of approaches to engaging social housing residents in financial inclusion activities

The programme adopted a 'test and learn' approach with all projects being strongly encouraged to take an innovative approach to delivering financial confidence activities to explore 'what works' and doesn't work for different types of social housing tenants in different geographic areas. The purpose of this was to capture the learning from the different approaches taken and to share this widely to influence how financial confidence activities are delivered in the future. The three to five years delivery timescales for projects also allowed this learning to be acted upon by projects. Those projects in existence for five years in particular were encouraged to take time to plan their interventions and reflect and respond to the on-going learning.

The environment in which the projects delivered dramatically changed over the course of the programme principally due to welfare reform and in particularly the introduction of Universal Credit and housing benefit payments direct to individuals. The operating context for the programme is examined further below in section 1.1.1. In essence the IFC programme evolved into a primarily crisis support service, providing intensive advice and support at key periods and working with beneficiaries where possible to stabilise and improve their financial options. This has made engagement work and the retention of beneficiaries far more challenging that was originally anticipated, as the programme was originally conceived as a prevention and awareness raising programme. The level of beneficiary support required has also been intensified by high numbers of beneficiaries for whom English is their second language, beneficiaries with mental health issues and those experiencing poverty despite their ability to manage their finances. Given their higher level of support needs, beneficiaries also require support over a longer timescale than was originally anticipated.

The main change to the IFC programme, as a result of the external environment, was the broadening of beneficiary target groups to include all social housing tenants which took place on 1st June 2014. From 2015-16 onwards, IFC projects have also been able to recruit 25% of their beneficiaries from the private rental sector. The decision to broaden the target groups was in response to the low numbers of beneficiaries and recognition that all social housing tenants and some private sector tenants on low or insecure incomes would benefit from IFC support; particularly in light of welfare reform.

Widening the beneficiary target groups was largely positively received by projects, with many reporting that it helped to increase their overall beneficiary numbers whilst supporting them to help the most in need social housing tenants. Projects commonly reported that the change to the beneficiary target groups made it more straightforward to explain the criteria to referral partners, which was felt to have encouraged some referral partners to make referrals to IFC. However the change to the beneficiary target groups made little difference to some projects. This tended to be the case where

projects have a targeted remit such as supporting young people in supported housing, who are accessing social housing for the first time.

The programme originally intended to reach 150,000 beneficiaries in total. The evaluation captured data on 43,836 individuals who were engaged in the programme. While this number of individuals is indicative of the reach of the programme some caution is needed as projects variously reported engagement with individuals through events or dissemination of materials which were not captured through the creation of a beneficiary record. Given the more challenging operating context projects generally reported a lower level of reach than originally planned. Big Lottery Fund recognised this changing context and responded by assuring projects:

"We listened to our grant holders and learnt early on in the programme that our beneficiaries required a greater depth of intervention than anticipated. Rather than changing our target reach number, it remains as a reminder of the learning around how much time you may expect an individual requires support to increase financial confidence, and how much they actually want. We now know that for support to be impactful, mass numbers cannot be the driver" (Ellen Dunlevy, Funding Manager).

1.1.1 A changing operating context

The operating context for the IFC programme changed dramatically from the time of its inception. Below we summarise the key features of the macro-economic environment; welfare reform and public policy; and policy changes affecting social landlords' finances that had a significant impact on the 37 projects and the services they delivered

1.1.1.1 *The macro-economic environment*

The Financial Conduct Authority's 2017/18 Business Plan[1] highlights some of the key features of the current UK macro-economy relevant to the Improving Financial Confidence programme and its sustainability:

- UK economic growth, while slower than previous decades, has recovered since the financial crisis. However, the latest projections suggest that economic growth could slip below the post-crisis average over the next three years.

- Private consumption has remained the main driver of growth and consumer credit lending has continued its rapid growth. UK household indebtedness is at a very high level by historical standards; and the household cash savings ratio has fallen since 2010. Households are vulnerable to any potential shocks to their employment, income or debt servicing costs.

- Unemployment has fallen since the financial crisis, while employment growth has been in less-secure forms, such as self-employment, part-time or short-term

[1] Financial Conduct Authority, Business Plan 2017/18. Available at: https://www.fca.org.uk/publication/business-plans/business-plan-2017-18.pdf [accessed 25 April 2017]

contracts and zero-hours contracts. Income variability associated with these employment trends combined with weak income growth could reduce households' resilience to changes in financial circumstances. The ONS reported a 20% increase in the number of zero hours' contracts between 2015 and 2016 with nearly three per cent (903,000) of the workforce on such contracts, taking home wages that are approaching half those of average earnings. This leads to long-term job and income insecurity.[2]

- A sustained rise in inflation is likely to put further pressure on household budgets. CPI inflation reached 2.3% in February 2017 and the Bank of England projects that it is more likely than not to stay above the 2% target in subsequent quarters. This could increase the pressure on households, leading to a lower growth rate of real consumer spending.

- There has been a prolonged period of negative real interest rates and these are expected to remain low or negative. There are concerns about the potential impacts of a persistent low interest rate environment on the behaviour of consumers, firms, and financial stability.

- The UK's decision to leave the EU creates uncertainties, with potential knock-on effects for the UK economy. It is currently unclear how these will materialise. The National Institute of Economic and Social Research has estimated that low income households stand to lose between £930 and £5,500 per annum in lost benefits and tax credits, depending how severely the fiscal deficit related to Brexit develops. Households with children and single disabled people would be the worst affected.[3]

1.1.2 Welfare reform and public policy

Welfare reform has had a significant impact on the services that IFC projects deliver, their ability to achieve positive outcomes for beneficiaries and their own sustainability. The last four years have seen an increasingly hostile external environment for the people targeted by the Improving Financial Confidence:

- Welfare reforms are reported to have taken significant sums of money out of the economy, estimated to reach £27 billion a year by 2020-21, equivalent to £690 a year for every adult of working age. The impact of this is geographically uneven, but generally the more deprived the local authority the greater the financial loss.[4]

[2] ONS, *Contracts that do not guarantee a minimum number of hours*, 2016 https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/contractsthatdonotguaranteeaminimumnumberofhours/march2016#how-many-no-guaranteed-hours-contracts-are-there and Resolution Foundation, *Zero-hours contracts: casual contracts are becoming a permanent feature of the UK economy*, 2016 http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/media/blog/zero-hours-contracts-casual-contracts-are-becoming-a-permanent-feature-of-the-uk-economy/

[3] Angus Armstrong and Katerina Lisenkova, *Brexit and low income families* (2016). Available at: http://www.niesr.ac.uk/blog/brexit-and-low-income-families#.WP8E1Gnyupo [accessed 25 April 2017].

[4] https://www4.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/welfare-reform-2016_1.pdf

- £132 million lost in benefit payments through the sanctions regime, plus an administrative cost of £30 million per annum; 24% JSA claimants suffering sanctions, and 26% of these actions were overturned on appeal. According to the National Audit Office, the policy is enforced in a "capricious"… way .[5]

- A 16% increase in rough sleeping in England between 2015 and 2016 (and a 51% rise in the two years between 2014 and 2016).[6] One of the areas that has seen the biggest rises in rough sleeping (Manchester) is also one where IFC has operated.

- Since 2014, a 300% increase in the number of homeless households where children are illegally accommodated in B&Bs, with a record 124,000 children housed in all forms of temporary accommodation; this accompanied by a 12% increase in the number of evictions from private rented accommodation over the last year, as rents continue to be unaffordable to those on lower incomes or claiming benefits.[7]

- The negative impact on access to specialist advice brought about by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (2012) which came into effect in April 2013. For example, in the year before the changes, CAB with legal aid contracts provided specialist advice in approximately 136,000 cases to help people struggling with legal problems relating to debt, welfare benefits, housing, family and relationship breakdown, employment disputes and immigration. Changes introduced under LASPO withdrew support for approximately 120,000 of these cases.[8] The Big Lottery Fund's Advice Services Transition Fund helped to plug that gap, as will its new Help Through Crisis programme.

1.1.3 Policy changes impacting on social landlord finances

The impact of welfare reform changes on beneficiaries has been noted above, but there are parallel effects on the ability of local authorities, housing associations and other Registered Providers to maintain their financial health. This could act as a disincentive to invest in IFC-related activities, both currently and in the future.

- Prime among the policy initiatives that have impacted on associations and other social landlords is the introduction of annual 1% reductions in rent levels, for the four years between 2016-17 and 2019-20, brought in under the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. This will result in a fall in income of £3.85 billion for housing associations / Registered Providers (NHF 2015) and of £2.6 billion for local authority / ALMO landlords (LGA 2017). Social landlords will be struggling to keep

[5] Comptroller and Auditor General, *Benefit Sanctions*; National Audit Office, November 2016
[6] DCLG, *Rough Sleeping Statistics Autumn 2016, England*, 2016 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/585713/Rough_Sleeping_Autumn_2016_Statistical_Release.pdf
[7] DCLG, *Live tables on homelessness and temporary accommodation* https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness
[8] *Impact of changes to civil legal aid under Part 1 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012*. House of Commons Justice Committee Report (2015)

their mainstream services functioning effectively in their reduced resourcing environment, and finances available for maintaining and rolling out services offered under the IFC programme will be harder to justify. In 2017 housing association landlords had reduced repairs expenditure by 7.3%.[9]

- The government in the 2015 summer budget put forward proposed plans to reduce the Benefit Cap (including support for housing costs) for families to £23,000 in London (£15,410 single claimants) and £20,000 elsewhere (£13,400 single claimants). The new benefit cap levels came in in November 2016.

- The delayed roll-out of Universal Credit has to some extent diverted attention from its impending impact on landlords and tenants. IFC programmes have been instrumental in helping prepare tenants for direct, monthly payments, and the need to be able to budget and save effectively. An increase in rent arrears associated with the move to direct payment of benefits to tenants (and away from rent paid direct to landlords), coupled with the built-in delays inherent in the Universal Credit payment system is of considerable concern. The roll out is now scheduled to finish in 2022 (but see below).

- Research from the beginning of the roll out has shown a continuous pattern of increasing rent arrears, primarily because Universal Credit is paid monthly in arrears. On top of this, the first seven days of a claim are ineligible for payments, and there are often further delays in claims processing, so it can take at least six weeks from when a claim is made for the first payment to reach the claimant's account[10], and secondarily because of the monthly rent direct system. The current position shown in the latest research carried out by the bodies representing ALMOs and retained council housing found that some 86% of tenants in receipt of Universal Credit were in rent arrears, compared to 37% of all tenants (ARCH/NFA 2017)[11.] As noted below, Universal Credit is overwhelmingly viewed as a negative initiative, by landlords and tenants alike.

- Rental income is going to be further effected by government proposals to cap the housing element of Universal Credit to the Local Housing Allowance rate. Those on Housing Benefit who signed agreements after April 2016 will already be affected in 2019, but current proposals are to extend this to all Universal Credit Claimants from 2019. Those worse affected are under 35's, whose eligibility will be restricted to the Single Room Rate of LHA. Meanwhile, those under 21 will from April 2017 lose automatic entitlement to any Housing Benefit at all, making it practically impossible to let a social housing dwelling to an unemployed young person. And from 2018 entitlement will be reduced for families with more than two children.

[9] http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/associations-slash-spend-on-major-repairs-as-rent-cut-bites/7018441.article
[10] https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/universal-credit-an-introduction
[11] ARCH/NFA, *Universal Credit – Progress Update 2016. NFA & ARCH Welfare Reform Survey Findings* (January 2017). Available at: http://www.almos.org.uk/include/getDoc.php?did=7759&fid=9105

- Although supported housing is temporarily exempt from the 1% rent reduction, there are plans to peg Housing Benefit to LHA rates in 2019, with local authorities expected to make any 'top ups' required[12.], The continuing uncertainty about its long-term position will make the likelihood of recommissioning existing services and commissioning new ones more doubtful, leaving those most vulnerable exposed. There are discussions underway about 'localised' systems for meeting supported housing costs under Universal Credit, but there is no clear model developed.

- On the more positive side, the government's Housing White Paper: *Fixing a Broken Housing Market envisions an enhanced affordable housing development programme*, moving away to a certain extent from the previous government's single-minded focus on owner-occupation.

The changing operating environment was reflected upon by projects in the evaluation workshops held in quarter one of 2017:

"*Context wise it couldn't be much bleaker…but it does mean that the work we are doing is important and it's great to see the help we can give families. We had a client recently who we saw all the way from street homelessness, into a hostel, into their first flat, into furnishing his first flat and getting his kids to come and visit and then he went into full time employment…It's great for seeing the value of the work we can do…It's no wonder we are getting over-subscribed recently."* (Evaluation workshop participant)

1.2 Evaluation aims

Ecorys, the Personal Finance Research Centre at the University of Bristol, and Cobweb Consulting were commissioned to undertake the evaluation of the IFC progamme in December 2011 to:

"Assess, and to demonstrate to the social housing and financial advice sectors the need for, and the practical usefulness and benefits of, a range of approaches to improving the financial confidence of social housing residents, so that these can be replicated and taken up to achieve sector-wide change (subject to evidence emerging during the contract)."

The evaluation was structured to evaluate each of the four outcomes outlined in page one. For more details, our full evaluation framework can be found in Annex Two. The evaluation produced robust evidence regarding approaches that are effective in improving social housing tenants' financial confidence; across target groups as well as specific to individual groups and in different contexts.

The evaluation was also designed to demonstrate the benefits and impact of the effective approaches on both individual social housing tenants and the social housing

[12] http://www.housing.org.uk/topics/supported-housing/local-housing-allowance-cap-and-supported-housing/

landlords' 'bottom line', in terms of reductions in rent arrears and evictions. Originally, the evaluation aimed to act as a catalyst for investment by the social housing sector in effective approaches to improve financial confidence in the longer term. However, given the changed operating context and shifting policy around financial confidence, the evaluation subsequently took a wider view of the sustainability of IFC activity rather than solely examining the business case for social housing landlords. In this final report, evidence is presented on the different mechanisms that projects have pursued to sustain IFC project activity. This is presented in the form of a potential menu, or suite of suggestions for organisations looking in the future to deliver activity to address financial confidence, to think about how to approach preparing future funding bids or business planning. Throughout the report approaches that were identified as successful and/or important considerations emerging from the IFC delivery experience are also highlighted as future planning considerations for organisations planning to develop financial confidence activity.

1.3 Summary of the evaluation approach

A combined evaluation and learning approach was pursued by the evaluation team to support the test and learn ethos of the programme. The evaluation involved four work streams:

- **Project inception and programme analysis** – undertaking analysis of all project approaches; establishing an over-arching evaluation framework and indicators; and building an online database for capturing beneficiary and landlord outcome data. The data analysis contained in this report is based data entered into the system by the end of March 2017. The beneficiary data is matched at three time points – the start and end of the intervention and six months following completion, so financial confidence levels can be compared over time to explore whether projects are producing an immediate effect and if this brings about longer-term change for some beneficiaries. However it is important to note that as the projects were funded for different lengths of time – between three-five years- some of the projects are continuing until mid-2018 and so data was not available for their full cohort at that time of the research. Big Lottery Fund took the decision to remove the requirement for projects to collect beneficiary and landlord date from 1st April 2017. This has freed up projects to innovate and report on learning from their projects in different ways, often focusing on more qualitative aspects such as the mentoring role. This decision was taken to encourage individual projects to gather evidence to help them make the case for mainstreaming or sustaining their project locally beyond the lifetime of the national evaluation.

- **Project support and engagement** - support to projects to collect baseline and follow-up data and to self-evaluate, and a series of case studies examining project delivery.

- **Online learning resources** – developing and maintaining of a public facing website and a secure project portal including a resource library for projects.

- **Dissemination and communication** – establishing and maintaining an external reference group/ expert advisers to provide expert guidance, developing and implementing a communications strategy including presenting at regional and national conferences, holding meetings with key stakeholders, producing a quarterly e-newsletter; developing and maintaining IFC website and press releases as required.

Several additional evaluation activities were undertaken during for the final 18 months of the evaluation, to capture further in-depth qualitative learning from across the programme. These included a series of five **evaluation workshops** and a **project proforma** for completion by projects towards the end of the evaluation. This latter evaluation activity invited contributions from all projects, but with its focus on sustainability of project activity, those who were nearing the end of their delivery period most readily responded.

1.4 Report Structure

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- In Chapter 2: Referral and Engagement Approaches we explore the success factors and lessons learned concerning referral and engagement approaches.
- In Chapter 3: Effectiveness of Delivery Approaches we review the progress made with testing different approaches
- In Chapter 4: Partnership Approachess we report on partnership approaches which have worked well in developing, implementing and sustaining IFC activity.
- In Chapter 5: Beneficiary Outcomes we report on analysis of the beneficiary outcome data.
- In Chapter 6: Landlord Outcomes we report on analysis of the landlord data to assess the evidence on the business case from a social landlord perspective.
- In Chapter 7: Sustainability and Future Planning we examine ways in which IFC activity is being sustained in the current operating context.
- In Chapter 8: Conclusions and Next Steps we bring together the preceding chapters to conclude on the overall progress of the programme, and suggest next steps for those projects continuing to deliver through to early-mid 2018.

2.0 Referral and Engagement Approaches

Key learning from the programme

- **Building the brand locally**. It generally took IFC projects 12-18 months to really get into their stride, build their brand and find the right 'hook' (or hooks) to get people interested in their services. From Year Three onwards, this paid off in increased numbers of beneficiaries being referred and accessing IFC services, which meant projects made good progress in achieving their targets.

- **Target groups**. The decision by Big Lottery Fund to open the programme to all social tenants and a small proportion of private sector tenants made a significant difference to the numbers and types of people the IFC projects could help. It opened new partnership opportunities and made it much simpler for IFC projects to explain the criteria to partners.

- **Beneficiary numbers**. IFC projects also boosted their beneficiary numbers by successfully applying the programmes 'test, learn and adapt' ethos to group-based delivery of IFC services (which were necessary to reach targets). Projects often struggled to generate viable numbers of tenants for workshops from scratch, especially where they relied on housing providers to make referrals. As a result, some completely re-structured their offering to focus on community engagement with a wide range of local organisations already used by potential beneficiaries. Among other things, this approach had the advantage of 'acceptance by association' and helped overcome low trust among beneficiaries.

- **Partnership working**. It was crucial for IFC projects to spend time educating partners about what financial capability means and how it can benefit their own organisations and service users; and reinforcing these messages in the face of staff turnover. Projects described largely unforeseen tensions between IFC services and housing providers that could negatively impact on partner engagement and referrals unless IFCs were able to convincingly 'sell' the benefits of their services.

- **Social media**. IFC projects used social media such Facebook and Twitter to raised awareness and share information about their services but these were not major referral routes. In Chapter Seven we describe the legacy of IFC projects, which included online resources and webtools

2.1 Introduction

Low levels of beneficiary engagement was a key challenge for some IFC projects initially with IFC projects reporting mixed success in their early activity to attract potential

beneficiaries. Since then, the broadening of the target group to include all social housing tenants and some tenants renting in the private sector assisted IFC projects to develop clearer and more effective referral and engagement approaches. The following sections outline the key learning from IFC projects on what works in engaging participants and establishing effective referral mechanisms. .

2.2 Building the brand locally

Improving Financial Confidence was designed to be a preventative programme that helped tenants before their situation reached a crisis point. But as IFC projects found, financial capability is generally "*not a seller's market*" unlike other services such as debt advice or welfare benefits advice. As one project worker observed: "… *they may not be looking for help as nothing may have gone wrong yet*."

Consequently, IFC projects had to commit a good deal more resource than they anticipated to find the right 'hook' (or hooks) to get beneficiaries through the doors in any number. From the experience of various IFC projects, these hooks included:

- **Sales approach**. A 'sales team' that could sell the benefits of a financial capability service to potential beneficiaries and partner organisations, and challenge low knowledge or negative views about IFC and financial capability more generally.
- **Ongoing community engagement**. Dedicated community engagement and support staff, such as Bristol's Pennywise and Liverpool's Financial Capability Hub, who had an ongoing role in raising and maintaining the profile of their projects.
- **Physical presence**. Shopfront premises that encouraged people to come in and have a look, for example by placing job adverts at the front of the premises. For example, midway through its four-years, 1st Call Hyndburn relocated its main Hub to a shop unit within a local Arndale Centre which increased footfall, was close to bus and train stations and offered free parking. The Hub also offered free WiFi access, which was a 'pull' factor for potential beneficiaries.
- **Open door policy**. A 'no wrong door' policy, as operated by Norwich's Money Wise, Home Safe which meant they helped people wherever possible (regardless of housing circumstances) and signposted them to other services they didn't offer such as welfare benefits and debt advice.
- **Trust.** While finding the right 'hook' was important, for IFC projects to build up a relationship of trust with beneficiaries took time and could not be rushed, something that Bristol Cashpointers felt was particularly important for the vulnerable young people that it helped: *"The establishment of a trusted relationship is really important, I don't think a lot of housing associations have that relationship with their young tenants"* (Cashpointers IFC Project).
- **Language**. Using the right language and getting the message right were key to encouraging beneficiaries to get involved with IFC services. Some IFC projects avoided terms such as 'budgeting' and 'money management' altogether because they felt these were putting people off. Some of the alternative words and phrases used instead were

‘ways to save money’, ‘looking at your income’ and ‘helping with payments’. In Chapter Three we look at how projects integrated IFC with other activities such as cooking and employment support to get beneficiaries involved.

Engagement case study – Establishing a brand and local awareness

The **Sick of Being Skint (SOBS) project** was led by Pennine Housing 2000 (part of Together Group). The first year of SOBS was largely spent in developing the brand and promoting the service across the geography through road shows and money matters events. SOBS took part in some of the regional Big Lottery fora. They have used their web site, texting, Facebook and Twitter to promote SOBS, and received a fair amount of coverage in regional newspapers and websites. This initial work was vital to raise awareness amongst the community as well as local agencies. This partnership work was further enhanced by establishing a project steering group with external membership, including the other major landlord, Yorkshire Housing, and the local authority.

Future planning: Building your brand locally

When planning future provision it is worth:

- ✓ Investing in sales/ marketing staff to promote the benefits of financial capability
- ✓ Educating partners about what financial capability means and how it can benefit their own organisations and service users
- ✓ Securing engagement and support staff that can maintain a community presence
- ✓ Raising the profile of your offer by using shopfront premises in busy areas
- ✓ Using social media such as Facebook and Twitter to raise awareness and share information
- ✓ Offering incentives to engage with your initial offer,
- ✓ Operating an open door policy; support for all and signposting to other support
- ✓ Recognising the time required to build trust with beneficiaries to bring about change
- ✓ Using jargon-free language which focuses on every-day tasks such as paying bills
- ✓ Integrating financial capability into every-day activities such as cooking

2.3 Trusted relationships

As we discuss below, the IFC programme is a partnership model, with formal IFC partners comprising housing association, local authorities and community-based organisations (often advice services). These formal partners (especially housing providers) were expected to be a major source of beneficiary referrals, but the anticipated referrals did not always materialise. As a result, projects struggled to generate viable numbers of tenants for workshops from scratch and found that, in any

case, one-to-one support was more popular. In these circumstances, other partners (including those not in the 'formal' IFC partnership) played an important role.

Group-based IFC delivery was nonetheless important if projects were to achieve their target numbers. Consequently, IFC projects applied a 'test, learn and adapt' approach to group-based delivery of IFC services. Several completely re-structured their offering to focus on community engagement with a much wider range of local organisations that were already used by potential beneficiaries. IFC delivery was typically integrated into other services or programmes already provided by these community organisations.

In this way, IFC projects could 'piggyback' on an existing community of service users, and take advantage of '*acceptance by association'* (as it was described by one IFC project) whereby beneficiaries were happy to participate in a service that was provided through an organisation with which they already had a trusted relationship. In contrast, IFC projects reported that low trust could deter tenants from getting involved in IFC or similar services where they were delivered by their landlord (see below).

Examples of trusted relationships

Working with partners who were already engaged with potential beneficiaries was an important factor in helping to meet targets for IFC projects such as Minted (Tameside), Citizens Advice Knowsley and Lambeth FACE. Target audiences included parents and carers who used Children's Centres, users of health centres, and students of adult education institutions.

Similarly, Better Off in Wolverhampton (BoW) found that its informal partners, including substance misuse centres and Children's Centres, were very keen for their service users to access IFC activities on their own premises, both in group and one-to-one sessions.

Moneywise Haringey used '*acceptance by association'* to deliver IFC workshops to a local primary school's Parents Forum, where the Forum's co-ordinator had been looking for services that its members would find interesting. Although not specifically targeted at social tenants, Moneywise believed it was largely reaching its intended audience:

"*I think the majority of parents probably are social tenants, but that's not how we engaged with them, we engaged with them as parents."* (Moneywise IFC Project)

Money Savvy Southwark partnered with a community organisation to reach Latin American beneficiaries whom it otherwise would not have been able to work with. The partner organisation provided '*acceptance by association'* but also practical support such as a translation service.

As we discuss in Chapter Three, IFC projects also applied a 'test, learn and adapt' approach to what they delivered, moving away from a fixed model of IFC services to flexible, personalised activities that were relevant to the audience.

Engagement case study – New tenant support

Making Money Count (MMC) was delivered in Fenland, led by Clarion Housing Group (formally Circle Housing Roddons). A high degree of engagement success was achieved by offering one-to-one sessions in the home for new tenants. The New Horizons Officer contacts tenants in the first week of their tenancy and offers immediate support to help 'settle in'. A successful 80% service uptake was achieved. Key factors in the high level of engagement were that tenants knew that they had not been singled out and the opportunity to get practical help is what appeals. Beneficiaries valued the initial visit taking place in their own home, preferring to discuss their financial difficulties in confidence in a familiar setting. The worker's skills in local languages were also important.

2.4 A holistic, independent, impartial service

Where housing providers had their own in-house financial inclusion or financial capability officers (see below), some IFC projects reported that tenants preferred to access their service instead. They felt this was because IFC looked at the tenant's whole financial situation (rather than just their rent); and because tenants were worried about talking to internal housing teams about their money worries and support needs, in case it put their tenancy at risk. In contrast, IFC services were independent and impartial.

2.5 The role of partners in engagement

The IFC programme is a partnership model, where housing providers (and other community-based organisations) are intended to be the main source of beneficiary referrals, while also helping to build the IFC presence and brand.

As noted above, IFC projects often experienced far fewer referrals from their housing provider partners than they anticipated, in some cases because housing providers set up their own in-house teams to deliver financial capability activities or because funding cuts reduced the capacity of housing staff to promote IFC services to their tenants. There was also evidence that tenants did not always want to approach their landlord if they had money worries, which undermined IFC projects original plans for landlords to be a major referral route.

2.5.1 Educating partners and addressing tensions

Projects described the importance of building strong partnerships; spending time educating their partners about what financial capability means and how it can benefit their own organisations and service users (and regularly reinforcing those messages);

and putting in place systems to monitor referrals and partnerships so that IFC resources are targeted on engaged partners.

IFC projects variously reported largely unforeseen tensions between IFC services and housing providers that could negatively impact on partner engagement and referrals. Some of these tensions have come about in part because of changes in the operating environment faced by housing associations. They included:

- **Focus on rent recovery**. Housing providers' increased focus on rent recovery meant they were not always keen on IFC services that offered debt advice to their tenants, for fear they would recover rent more slowly, for example under a debt payment plan. For IFCs, the 'selling point' to counter this view was that debt advice and financial capability support helped tenants to offer realistic repayment offers that they were more likely to stick to, rather than agreeing unaffordable arrangements that would quickly break down.
- **Achieving rent arrears targets**. Linked to this, housing officers could be reluctant to refer tenants to IFC services because they were concerned it would interfere with their ability to achieve their own targets.
- **Preference for in-house services**. Similarly, where housing providers employed their own financial inclusion or financial capability officers, these workers could be reluctant to refer tenants to IFC services because they were concerned to protect their own posts. However, IFC projects felt that the services offered by in-house teams were not always as comprehensive as IFC, for example focusing only on rent arrears to the exclusion of other debts.

On the other hand, cut-backs in public services could also open doors for IFC services, with downsized organisations keener to access the free service offered by IFC than they had been in the past.

Future planning: Approaches for Housing Officers delivering financial capability advice

- ✓ Building honest, genuine relationships with tenants to provide a basis for dialogue
- ✓ Coaching beneficiaries to empower them to make informed choices
- ✓ Enabling beneficiaries to engage with debt advice and develop realistic repayment plans
- ✓ Recognising that by working with tenants, they are more likely to recover rent arrears
- ✓ Offering a holistic service which supports tenants to review and manage all their debts

2.5.2 IFC for staff in partner organisations

Another aspect of educating partners was improving the financial confidence of staff in partner organisations, not just their service users. This yielded positive results for IFC projects in the form of more, and better, referrals. For example, Norwich's Money Wise,

Home Safe trained hostel workers to encourage them to initiate ‘money conversations’ with residents, which they found difficult. This was effective at increasing rates of referral and the project felt strongly that staff training was the first step in beneficiary engagement.

Similarly, as part of its Financial Inclusion Health Check for Organisations, Get on With Money in Bromley-by-Bow Staff provided staff with tools and activities so they could offer on the spot support and have better ‘money conversations’.

3.0 Effectiveness of Delivery Approaches

Key learning from the programme

- **Adapting content to user needs**. IFC projects used a 'test, learn and adapt' approach to change their IFC content and delivery to better meet the needs of partners and beneficiaries; and to respond to welfare reform. Beneficiaries often required immediate crisis support (such as debt advice) to stabilise their finances before any work could begin to improve their financial confidence and change their financial behaviours. This learning helped to shape IFC services, as did the complex needs of beneficiaries.

- **Health and wellbeing.** Health and wellbeing came through as an important feature in IFC delivery, with projects reporting significant numbers of beneficiaries with physical and mental health problems; learning difficulties; and poor basic skills. Helping these beneficiaries to achieve good outcomes included being flexible, providing emotional support, working with expert partners, signposting to specialist services, and offering ongoing support sometimes over considerable periods of time.

- **Technology in IFC delivery**. The few IFC projects that originally intended to develop apps or use smart cards in their delivery mainly decided not to progress these elements of their service. The exception was Haringey's Moneywise which developed an app that had over 7,000 users in two months. Digital inclusion did feature quite widely in other IFC projects, though, linked to online benefit claims; job search; and help to use apps and online tools such as price comparison sites.

- **Integrating IFC into tenancy support**. Projects experience of delivering IFC as part of a tenancy support package was mixed. Where participation was a mandatory part of a pre-tenancy scheme it worked well. Getting new tenants (who had already obtained a tenancy) involved in IFC activities to help them sustain their tenancy was more difficult.

- **Peer mentoring**. IFC projects experience of peer mentoring was generally positive, especially to engage young people. Some projects had scaled back their ambitions to reflect the challenges of recruiting suitable peer mentors. Retaining peer mentors once trained was also an issue, and the same was true for volunteers due to moves into paid work.

- **Innovative partnerships**. There were examples of innovative partnership working such as IFC projects funding partners to deliver pilot schemes; and piloting innovative delivery with new partners.

3.1 Test, learn and adapt' in IFC delivery

Over the five years of the programme, IFC projects used a 'test, learn and adapt' approach to shape their services to the needs of partners and beneficiaries. These needs were heavily influenced by the rapidly changing operating context which impacted both on beneficiaries' ability to manage their money with confidence; and (as lead partners) on housing providers' and local authorities' finances and priorities.

3.1.1 Adapting content to user needs

Projects highlighted the importance of developing IFC content for group-based delivery to provide:

- Diagnostic assessment and support, where beneficiaries were offered some type of financial health check followed by a 'prescription' of IFC activities
- An Integrated approach, where IFC was delivered in tandem with other services such as employment support or ESOL training
- Embedded financial literacy in workshops, where financial skills were incorporated in 'learning by doing' activities such as managing a community project or cooking and eating well on a budget.

As described in Chapter Two, IFC projects extended the number and range of their partners to open new opportunities for group-based delivery, where beneficiary engagement was based on '*acceptance by association'.* Successful adaptation of content centred on more personalised workshops and a flexible approach that reflected the needs of the target audience, rather than delivering a standard IFC product.

Examples of adapting IFC content

- **Modular, mentor-focused training**. Hull & East Riding's "Quids-In" successfully moved away from volunteer-led poorly-targeted group delivery sessions in years one and two (where the project tried to generate attendance at workshops from scratch) to modular, mentor-focused training that was flexible and had personalised content for specific audiences, such as probation service clients or residents in domestic violence refuges.
- **Portfolio approach**, Likewise, following low referrals and poor take-up Haringey's Moneywise adapted its original model of six group sessions to a portfolio of four modules (banking, saving, and borrowing; maintaining a tenancy; savvy shopping; and cooking) that they could use flexibly and customise to suit the audience.
- **Personalised training linked to independent living skills**. In addition to one-to-one support, Bristol Cashpointers introduced group-based IFC linked to independent living skills such as cooking on a budget or furniture upcycling. Based on the success of this work, they provided customised training sessions for car mechanic apprentices which centred on budgeting and getting ready for work; understanding payslips; and opening a bank account. For an organisation working with young people with disabilities they delivered personalised groups that looked at being safe with money and spotting risky situations.

General learning from these and other projects was that content should be fun and interactive, have a concrete outcome, and be relevant to everyday life.

Early in the programme, IFC projects found that problem debt was a major issue for many tenants and required one-to-one specialist support. The beneficiary data shows that over half of beneficiaries (57%) had some financial difficulty and most (83%) were in receipt of benefits or tax credits. In response to this need, some IFC projects employed their own debt and/or welfare benefits staff; others referred beneficiaries to other services for specialist help. Hull & East Riding's "Quids-In", for example carried out an initial community gateway assessment with beneficiaries and made '*no-fuss'* referrals to other services such as debt and welfare benefits advice.

The few IFC projects that originally intended to develop apps or use smart cards in their delivery decided not to progress these elements of their service. This was due to the more intense support required by beneficiaries; and the wide availability of free money management apps and online tools. Digital inclusion did feature heavily in IFC projects, though, linked to online benefit claims and job search; and help to use apps and online tools such as price comparison sites. Some examples of digital inclusion activities are given in the sections below.

3.1.2 Adapting delivery to user needs

Working with tenants who often had complex needs (such as problem debt, health issues, addictions, low basic skills) meant that IFC projects had to adapt their delivery. It was common for projects to report spending far more time working with beneficiaries on a one-to-one basis than anticipated, as they needed more intensive support to move forward with their personal finances. This had a knock-on effect when it came to meeting targets, at least in the early years of the programme.

Among the adaptations to delivery were:

- Working at the beneficiary's own pace
- Working with beneficiaries over a longer timeframe
- Offering flexible ways to engage with IFC
- Accepting that no-shows were part and parcel of the programme (while trying to minimise their occurrence).

Examples of adapting delivery

The walk-in sessions at hostels and community venues delivered by Norwich's Money Wise, Home Safe came with the option for people to pre-book a longer appointment. Beneficiaries could engage at the pace that worked for them and move between services. For example, beneficiaries might come back to Money Wise, Home Safe once they had a plan in place to deal with problem debt, for further budgeting help and support. The service had learned over time that improving financial confidence can be a slow process:

"It can take many months to demonstrate to a client that small changes can have a positive long-term impact on their finances." (Money Wise, Home Safe)
Partner organisations valued this approach, as this testimonial shows:
"MoneyWise HomeSafe has given our residents independent advice within our hostels at a time and date that is convenient to themselves. It has meant that they can discuss financial issues with someone who is independent of the landlord free from any judgment or criticism ... Our client base very much has a hand to mouth existence, this allows them to plan and take small steps to prioritise, save and think about the future … A set plan is not followed but rather created on an individual basis, goals are achievable and realistic." (Services Manager Norwich, Genesis Housing Association)

Like Money Wise, Home Safe, Tameside's Minted IFC project offered home visits, which were the only way that some beneficiaries could access the service:

"*There's always help and support if I need it because you are able to do home visits which has helped me as otherwise I would not be able to access the service*". (Beneficiary, Minted Tameside)

In a different sort of delivery adaptation, Norwich's Money Wise, Home Safe decided to bring the delivery of IFC services in-house rather than out-sourcing them to delivery partners. This made the service easier to manage and, as a result, more successful. The main issue was that different delivery partners had different understandings and expectations of IFC and what they could or should deliver, that proved difficult to manage. For others thinking about using delivery partners, the learning was to set clear parameters and expectations from the outset.

3.1.3 Adapting to welfare reform

In May 2016, the full Universal Credit service for all claimant types began to rollout nationally and in July 2016 it was announced that this rollout will complete by September 2018. Full service means that claimants have an online Universal Credit account to manage their claim e.g. to report changes, send messages to their work coach and find support. Some IFC projects were in full service areas. Claimants not in a full-service area manage their claim by telephone. In February 2017, free online support was launched to help Universal Credit claimants with their personal finances, in the form of the Money Advice Service's Online Money Manager.[13]

The beneficiary data shows that most beneficiaries (83%) were in receipt of benefits or tax credits. This meant that Universal Credit and welfare reform impacted significantly on the IFC programme. Early on, delays to Universal Credit rollout meant that IFC projects did not get the expected numbers of tenants affected by the changes. This changed from Year Two, when IFC projects started to support Universal Credit rollout

[13] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-budgeting-support-for-universal-credit-claimants

and people affected by other welfare reforms. Ways that IFC projects adapted their services to welfare reform included:

- Adding Universal Credit and welfare reform training to IFC delivery
- Training IFC workers about Universal Credit and other changes to support affected beneficiaries
- Working with Job Centre Plus to develop group-based training to support claimants transition to Universal Credit
- Providing personal budgeting support for Universal Credit Delivered Locally pilots
- Helping claimants to open bank accounts
- Helping claimants affected by the Under-Occupancy Charge to apply for Discretionary Housing Payments
- Supporting claimants' online skills to use (or prepare to use) full service Universal Credit.

Adapting to welfare reform: Support with job seeking and digital skills

1st Call Hyndburn's centrally-located Hub has free internet access and offers support to help people get online. Mark called into 1st Call to ask for advice about job seeking. The Job Centre helped him to set up an email address but he had no idea what to do with it and was struggling to understand how to search for a job online due to his lack of computer skills. The Job Centre sent him on a course but the pace was too fast and by the end of the week he said he was feeling lost and depressed with no way out of unemployment.

Over the next few months, staff at 1st Call worked one-to-one with Mark to help him understand how to send and receive emails and search for job vacancies. They also supported Mark to put together a CV and showed how to attach this to job applications forms and emails.

Helping claimants open bank accounts

Hull & East Riding's "Quids-In" worked with DWP to establish a Hub where IFC staff helped claimants to open a bank account. It was important to ensure that beneficiaries knew "Quids-In" was separate from DWP, and that it offered an independent, impartial service. "Quids-In" discovered that some beneficiaries believed they had to attend the Hub or else face benefit sanctions, due to the wording of an automated text reminder sent by DWP. As the automated text message could not be changed, it was agreed that DWP would call claimants to remind them to attend instead.

3.2 Health and wellbeing

Health and wellbeing came through as an important feature in IFC delivery, with projects reporting significant numbers of beneficiaries with physical and mental health problems; learning difficulties; and poor basic skills. The beneficiary data shows that 29% had an illness or disability that limited their day-to-day activity; and 30% of young people had a tenancy support worker or lived in supported housing. IFC projects reported high levels of mental health issues among the people they worked with as well. Bristol's Pennywise estimated that 70% of its beneficiaries had mental health issues. In its Year Four annual report, Wis£r Wonga described how 37% of its young casework clients had mental health problems (including 20 clients who had attempted suicide); and more than 40% reported drug and alcohol misuse. Better Off in Wolverhampton also highlighted that some beneficiaries who self-referred to the project had a mental health concern which had not been formally identified. Where possible the project's support workers developed a rapport and signposted them to specialist agencies for support.

Helping these beneficiaries to achieve good outcomes included adapting content and delivery in the ways described above. More than that, though, it involved:

- investing time to build trust;
- providing emotional support;
- working with expert partners ; and
- signposting to specialist services

These approaches are demonstrated in the case studies below.

Examples of IFC projects supporting beneficiary health and wellbeing

Sandwell Financial Services Hub was a partner in the People in Mind "Money Champions" scheme. PIM Money Champions are a team of volunteers with experience of mental illness who befriend and support other individuals with mental ill health, with their money and budgeting worries. PIM Money Champions offer handholding and emotional support for financial, budgeting and money matters.

When clients are referred to PIM Money Champions, Money Champions identify any urgent and immediate debt or money worries and make referrals to professional advice services. They also complete a risk assessment to understand the individuals state of mental health and if there are any risks of suicide or self-harm. Where appropriate, further referrals are made to Kaleidoscope Plus Group (a health and wellbeing charity in the Midlands), People in Mind (Kaleidoscope Plus Group's client involvement network), or external services for any required mental health services. For example, this could be a self- referral to the PIM Depression and Anxiety Peer Support Group or a referral to the Kaleidoscope Plus Group Talking Therapies/IAPT service.

Money Champions make either bi-daily or weekly calls or text messages to the client ensuring that any mental health concerns are stabilised and any urgent debt concerns are being managed. Once the client's situation is stable, the befriending and handholding support can commence and Money Champions encourage their clients to continue to face up to and manage any existing debts.

Better Off in Wolverhampton (BOW) employed a Mental Health Support Worker to help beneficiaries with higher needs. One of their clients was a single male with long term mental health condition, who received Employment and Support Allowance and Severe Disablement Allowance. He got some welfare benefits support from the day centre he attended and was referred to BOW to get help to manage his money and possibly open a bank account.

At the initial meeting with the Mental Health Support Worker, the client couldn't manage to go through all the IFC paperwork in one go, so attended another meeting to complete it. Although he missed some appointments, over time the client came to trust the Mental Health Support Worker and disclosed that he had debt problems dating back several years, which explained his difficulties managing his money. He was very apprehensive about approaching anyone for help and had been trying to sort things out himself, without much success. The Mental Health Support Worker explained the debt advice process and arranged for the client to attend a debt advice service. The worker met the client outside the CAB debt advice drop-in to accompany him and give him some moral support. The client got through the first appointment and felt more confident to attend subsequent appointments on his own. He applied for a Debt Relief Order and worked with BOW to manage his finances. He set up a new bank account to pay for his bills, and encouraged fellow day centre users to contact BOW for support.

The Mental Health Support Worker was overseen by a flexible Project Manager, who often worked out-of-hours, to ensure support was in place for tenants. This involved evening work, which was important in integrating the project into the local community.

3.3 IFC pre-tenancy and for new tenants

Engaging people at pre-tenancy stage and making IFC services an integral part of a new tenancy seemed to work well, particularly with priority groups for housing such as young people leaving care.

Examples of how this worked in practice included:

- Making IFC services a mandatory part of applying for social housing for young care and support leavers
- Signing up people for IFC services at the same time as they signed for a new tenancy or for choice-based lettings

- Encouraging teams that dealt with new lets or housing options to refer their tenants to IFC
- Producing a Pre-tenancy Financial Assessment to help housing officers refer new tenants to IFC services.

In contrast, IFC projects including Lambeth FACE and Norwich's Money Wise, Home Safe found it difficult to get new tenants (who had already secured their tenancy) engaged in IFC. It was felt new tenants were often in a 'honeymoon period' of settling into their home and not particularly receptive to IFC messages.

Examples of pre-tenancy IFC activities

Money Wise, Home Safe successfully developed a service to deliver pre-tenancy support and preparing hostel residents to move on to independent living. From experience, the service put in place strict parameters around participation to try and prevent residents dropping out, and encouraging participation, for example by awarding a certificate of participation for completers.

Robert and Lisa took part in the 'Ready to Rent' tenancy preparation course run by **Minted in Tameside.** They lived in supported accommodation and hoped to be offered a social housing property. They were referred to Minted by their landlord to access the Ready to Rent tenancy preparation course. The course consists of an individual assessment session followed by five two-hour workshops which explore the rights and responsibilities of the tenant, as well as practical skills such as sourcing furniture, managing household bills, and saving money. The Ready to Rent course made Robert feel more confident about taking on a tenancy, dealing with the bills and managing his own money issues without getting stressed.

3.4 Peer mentors and volunteers

Peer mentoring involved training volunteers or young apprentices as 'money mentors' to deliver IFC sessions and provide ongoing support for beneficiaries. The benefits for volunteers included work experience and, in some cases, qualifications. Learning from the IFC programme around peer mentors and volunteers more generally includes:

- Having realistic expectations about the number of beneficiaries who may be willing and able to commit to training and acting as peer mentors
- Having clear expectations and role descriptions for peer mentor and volunteer posts
- Thinking about how to manage peer mentor and volunteer turnover. Liverpool's Financial Capability Hub, for instance, trained 110 volunteers, 60 per cent of whom have gone on to employment, further education or other volunteer roles
- Making sure there is dedicated resource to train and support peer mentors and volunteers, for example employing a Volunteer Co-ordinator
- Not relying on volunteers to deliver core services.

Examples of peer mentoring

Ingleton House in Lambeth provides accommodation and support to vulnerable adults over 55 years of age. **Lambeth FACE** trained five members of Ingleton House's tenants and residents' association (TRA) as Money Mentors. In discussion with residents, the Money Mentors identified interest in an IFC workshop focused on pensions and benefits. With the help of Money Mentors, Lambeth FACE delivered a workshop to 12 residents, which was very well received by residents and staff. In total, 16 of Ingleton House's 25 residents have received support from Lambeth FACE.

Wis£r Wonga Young Apprentices Programme 2013-2016. Four Young Apprentices were supported by Plymouth Training and Consultancy and Citizens Advice Plymouth to undertake their NVQ qualifications in Youth and Community Work. The apprentices spent one year with the Wis£r Wonga casework team, and one year with the Wis£r Wonga community projects team. In 2016, all four apprentices gained their Level Three NVQ qualifications in Youth and Community Work. Here's one of the apprentices talking about their experience:

"*During my second year working on the project I was meeting with residents in supported and social housing on a one to one basis to discuss their financial needs and improve their budgeting skills. I have supported people to open bank accounts, access the credit union and set up payment plans for their arrears. While doing this I have also completed my level three youth work qualification …which has enabled me to move forward and successfully apply for a full time professional Youth and Community Worker role on the WOW [Wis£r Wonga] project staff team, to support the project until it finishes in 2018*."

4.0 Partnership Approaches

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the partnership approaches used to oversee and deliver IFC projects, demonstrating the level of collaboration used throughout the project cycle, from joint bid development through to joint dissemination activity.

4.2 Governance arrangements supporting joint ownership of projects and commitment to building programme legacy

IFC lead partners (typically housing or advice providers) were reported by stakeholders to have strong ownership of projects and a commitment to build programme legacy. Making sure that lead partners' senior management teams and governing bodies (such as trustee boards) understood the benefits and achievements of IFC was an important task for the projects, some of which had their own Boards. Some examples of governance arrangements that supported IFC legacy included:

- Citizens Advice Wolverhampton was the lead partner for Better Off in Wolverhampton. The senior management team strongly supported the IFC project's achievements, which they shared with the organisations governing body (the Trustee Board). Sustaining the IFC service in some form was part of the organisation's business plan and backed by the Trustee Board.
- Money Savvy Southwark had worked hard to demonstrate the value of IFC services to key decision-makers such as local authorities and landlords, for example using landlords' rent arrears data to show the positive impact of IFC; and supporting the rollout of welfare reform across the borough.
- The Board of 1st Call Hyndburn supported and guided the project as it developed and helped cement good partner relationships as key partner organisations (such as the local authority and housing providers) were represented on the Board. The Board helped to formalise procedures and validate changes to the service over time. In addition, 1st Call Hyndburn submitted regular updates to the Hyndburn Homes Board (their main housing partner) which helped secure support from Board members for the service to continue.
- The Sick of Being Skint (SOBS) project led by Pennine Housing 2000 utilised Calderdale's well established local voluntary sector, comprising many agencies who already work with each other. From the start SOBS was keen to ensure value added, and not duplicate the work of other agencies. A project steering group with external membership was set up, including the other major landlord, Yorkshire Housing, and the local authority which oversaw the development and implementation of the project.

Future planning: Governance for effective delivery

- ✓ Project managers need to work flexibly, outside normal office hours, particularly evenings
- ✓ Recognising the inter-play between poor financial capability and physical and mental health problems; learning difficulties; and poor basic skills
- ✓ Working closely with expert partners to provide new and holistic support for beneficiaries
- ✓ Creating structures so beneficiaries are signposted to specialist services where necessary
- ✓ Supporting peer mentors to increase project capacity
- ✓ Tailoring the support offer to individual tenants needs

4.3 Working with housing providers

As noted in chapter one, housing providers are experiencing a challenging operating environment, particularly the introduction of annual 1% reductions in rent levels, for the four years between 2016-17 and 2019-20, brought in under the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, which will result in a fall in income of £3.85 billion for housing associations / Registered Providers (NHF 2015) and of £2.6 billion for local authority / ALMO landlords (LGA 2017). This means social landlords may be struggling to keep their mainstream services functioning effectively in their reduced resourcing environment, presenting challenges for some of their partnership working with IFC projects, and reducing the finances available for maintaining and rolling out services developed by the IFC programme.

The IFC programme provided a range of opportunities for housing providers to strengthen their partnership work, for example:

- The Sick of Being Skint (SOBS) project led by Pennine Housing 2000 (part of Together Group) worked with 'internal partners' from its Welfare Benefits Team and two Money Advisers, utilising their skills as part of the IFC project to Pennine Housing 2000 tenants.
- The MoneyWise HomeSafe project provided support for housing providers by basing an officer in the local Court on possession day or notice of seeking possession day. This arrangement only became possible after in-depth development work with landlords to explain their purpose was to ensure tenants are realistic in the court proceeding about what they can repay, and therefore supports the interests of the housing provider as well as the tenant.
- The Lambeth FACE project has increasingly become the agency to go to, as housing provider officers have needed to refer more tenants for advice to reduce their workloads, in the context of shrinking resources.
- The Wis£r Wonga project partnered with social housing providers from Devon and Cornwall Housing Association, working alongside their community development workers to build trust on local estates. This worked well in engaging with beneficiaries for IFC support.

IFC projects generated important learning around challenges in this area, for example:

- The Monkey project encountered operational difficulties in engaging housing association partners to refer tenants to Monkey, due to a combination of IT incompatibility, uncertainty as to Monkey's role and 'offer', the dispersed nature of tenants, and potential 'competition for clients'.
- The Hackney Money Smart project explained that some local housing agencies employed their own financial officers, and were reluctant to refer to the project as they were under pressure to demonstrate the value of their in-house support offer, to safeguard these positions in the context of restructuring.
- The "Quids-In" project recalled informally training housing providers, to understand the value of a third party supporting the financial capability of their tenants, by exploring a range of financial capability advice models, to open up conversations with tenants who had limited communication with their housing provider.
- The MoneyWise HomeSafe project realised early on that housing officers were reluctant to refer tenants to the project, as the project was perceived as preventing housing officers from hitting their targets.

4.4 Working with local authorities

Local authorities were excluded from being the lead organisation for IFC projects, but often played a key role on management/ steering groups. Partnership working with local authorities could be challenging and took time to establish, but generated important learning and results. For example:

- The Sick of Being Skint (SOBS) project led by Pennine Housing 2000 fostered a strong relationship with the local authority, which helped develop the safeguarding and enterprise aspects of their IFC project.
- The "Quids-In" project worked effectively with the local authority on the issue of court proceeding associated with debt recovery. Leaders from the debt and housing teams met with the project to agree how best to use their limited resources to maximise debt recovery whilst reducing the fees of prosecuting tenants. "Quids-In" noticed that the engagement of different local authority teams evolved over time:
  "Bits of the council who wouldn't speak to us now want our help to put their rent arears down." (Evaluation workshop participant).
- The Knowsley District Citizens Advice led project receive referrals from the Emergency Support scheme at the local authority. However this has been challenging, with a high failure to attend IFC support, as it can be perceived as a mandatory action.
- The Wis£r Wonga project in Plymouth identified learning around developing a neighbourhood approach with the local authority. The project has four target neighbourhoods and concentrated on one neighbourhood at a time to create a snow-balling approach through word-of-mouth spreading from one neighbourhood to the others. Project workers attributed its success to piggy-backing on existing activity, such as linking up with the **local authority's neighbourhood wardens**, using a detached

community work approach, asking people what support they wanted, rather than implementing a pre-defined model.

Local authorities also helped broker relationships between the project and local agencies. For example MoneyWise HomeSafe recalled that they delivered activities in **hostels** which worked well in reaching tenants in temporary accommodation. The local authority identified this need by consulting their housing lists team who asked if they could run a workshop for hostel residents. This worked well as participants could use their certificate of attendance to help them move on to gain more permanent accommodation. This was a project success as most of the participants had had a failed tenancy in the past, and so the workshops helped improve their skills and confidence to enable them to manage their money, and tenancies, more effectively in the future. The support in hostels was provided through a mix of walk-ins and appointments, to help participants build up trust with support providers. Another important aspect of this work was providing training for hostel support workers, so they felt better equipped to have challenging conversations with residents about money and budgeting.

"It's almost training your sales force to promote exactly what it is we do". (Evaluation workshop participant).

4.5 Working with Citizens' Advice

Around a third of the IFC projects were led by a Citizens' Advice Bureaux, and the majority of IFC projects have worked effectively in partnership with Citizens' Advice throughout the project lifecycle. Citizens' Advice has been an important referral partner for many projects, for example Hackney Money Smart highlighted the value of their partnership with Citizens' Advice in generating referrals, particularly people who had been affected by the Benefit Cap.

CAB led case study – helping to sustain tenancies

The **Money Savvy Southwark project** is funded for five years from 2013-18 and is led by Southwark Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB). The project aims to empower community residents to increase their money management skills, with a focus on preventing homelessness and sustaining tenancies. The project partners include the local authority, housing associations, building and repair companies such as Keepmoat Homes, a law centre, and utility providers such as Thames Water Debt Project. Money Savvy Southwark also delivers training workshops for Community Champions and trains frontline workers. For example, frontline workers from a national building company which repairs local social housing stock have received training to support their interactions with tenants to help sustain tenancies more effectively.

4.6 Working with other local partners

IFC projects participating in the evaluation workshops highlighted the development time required in the first year or two of the project cycle to meet local providers and align the project offer with local activities, to generate interest and take-up.

"It's that personal contact you've got, we outline we are there for what they want. Make sure that's what they want." (Evaluation workshop participant).

IFC partnerships commonly engaged a range of local support agencies, who recognised the complementary support provided by the projects. The range of local partners that added value to IFC projects included:

- The Monkey project developed strong and successful relationships with a range of **voluntary sector organisations** (such as SHAID working with single homeless people), Centrepoint, the local Credit Union and the various furniture reuse projects.
- The SOBS project delivered 50 'Money Matters' group-based activities for **schools** and **colleges,** which worked well in reaching those who had not yet started tenancies (or built up debts).
- The "Quids In" project also found working with **colleges** worked well, enabling them to disseminate preventative messages, before young people amassed credit cards and debts. The project originally aimed to reach 24 students but actually connected with 160 students through this route.
- The Wis£r Wonga project set up a stall at the two main **Universities** in Plymouth, providing information packs on the use of credit cards, debit cards and bank accounts, and used a range of successful engagement techniques including mocktails and 'pin-the-fin-on-the-shark' to stimulate discussions about loan sharks. These initial awareness raising activities led to workshop delivery in colleges and universities that generated a good level of take-up. The projects also worked with school children from 14+ years through their community projects.
- Harringey Moneywise established community-based partnerships that worked well as the Moneywise workshops complemented the support provided by other local organisations. The project engaged many different types of community organisations, including local **schools** and **addiction services**, that recognised the impact of the IFC workshops on the behaviours and confidence of their groups. The workshops on savvy shopping and cooking on a budget were seen to be the most effective; the six month follow-ups from care leavers suggested that there had been some long-lasting effects in their shopping and eating habits in particular. There was also some indication that school children were more inclined to save once they had attended an IFC workshop.
- The 1st Call Hyndburn project developed a diverse partnership to support their IFC outreach delivery, to complement their High street shop front. This included working with a local **theatre group, schools, a drop-in centre, Alzheimer Support, food banks**, and Community Solutions.
- Several projects have developed effective partnerships with the **Probation Service.** For example the MiNTed Financial Capability project develop a strong link with the Probation Service as they work closely with one of the social landlords linked to the project, Charter Housing. The MiNTed Financial Capability project have also delivered workshops at **Children's Centres,** which has helped expand the project and linked them into other partners. The project is up-skilling women identified by the Probation Service to help them make the transition back

into society and managing a household budget, to help them sustain a tenancy. This is beneficial for the Probation Service. The Knowsley District Citizens Advice led project also worked with the Probation Service and Prisons. The project participated in the market places in prisons, and people due to be released could attend an IFC workshop supported by the Probation Service.

- The Knowsley District Citizens Advice led project also worked with Shontel, a **theatre company**, who delivered some performances in Children's Centres. Using the medium of theatre to explore financial capability was very well received by young adults, reaching college students who would not have engaged with the project through more traditional routes. The theatre company reached 3-400 students over a couple of days. This demonstrate important learning about the value of taking IFC support to harder-to-reach groups in creative ways, rather than inviting them to an unfamiliar setting.
- Hackney Money Smart and Wis£r Wonga worked with **faith leaders** and church groups.
- Several projects had attempted to work with **banks,** with limited success. For example Barclays bank and HSBC were on the original steering group for the Hackney Money Smart project but this reduced over time owing to completing demands on staff time.

4.7 Collaborative working

A key lesson identified by projects attending the evaluation workshops was the importance of making contacts and becoming known in the local area, and accepting that some partnerships would endure better than others.

"Making contacts with different groups and organisations and building a relationship with them…[being invited to give workshops in organisations] was one of outcomes". (Evaluation workshop participant).

IFC projects worked collaboratively with local providers in a variety of ways to become established local partners. Some providers offered in-kind support in the form of free meeting space, in recognition of the usefulness of the IFC intervention for their service users. Projects highlighted the value in working with existing groups and services, for example:

- The "Quids-In" project teamed up with an existing **domestic violence project**, and **alcohol and drug abuse groups** to build connections with harder-to-reach groups.
- Several projects noted difficulties in engaging **JobCentre Plus**, partly owing to the delays in rolling out Universal Credit. However a number of IFC projects were able to collaborate with JobCentre Plus, with the JC+ viewing themselves as an active partner, such as Better Off in Wolverhampton.
- Several projects utilised **partner premises** to try and reach potential beneficiaries. For example MoneyWise HomeSafe offered twilight sessions at Barcalys bank but found there was a very low foot-fall in branch. The project

therefore developed more online activities and community events, which were more successful in engaging beneficiaries. Over the course of the project, MoneyWise HomeSafe engaged 50 agencies as referral partners, and in a local evaluation exercise, around 80% stated that they did not know where else they would refer their clients onto, highlighting the gap plugged by the project.

Partnership working case study – Delivery of IFC through other services

The **Cash Pointers programme** was led by 1625 Independent People (1625ip) and focused specifically on young people as a target group. It demonstrated successful partnership working to enhance the engagement of beneficiaries and delivery of IFC training and support. 1625ip actively pursued partnerships with schools, training providers, other youth groups, and offered to deliver sessions that were appropriate to their particular students, service users and clients. These organisations often had the trust of their users, and were happy for 1625ip to deliver financial training to them. Cash Pointers demonstrated the importance of embedding financial capability training into all aspects of young people's lives, and at any place where they may turn for support.

Several projects participating in the evaluation workshops noted difficulties around the deployment of delivery staff from other agencies, and recommended that core delivery staff are all employed by the lead organisation in future. The deployment approach encountered a number of problems including duplication of training, monitoring and data entry, and misunderstandings and inconsistency in the delivery of support. Projects commented that a more successful approach was for the lead partner to employ all the delivery staff, and for them to be based in partner agencies as necessary, as this allowed for more flexibility in outreach and consistency in the support provided.

A number of projects delivered **community events** in collaboration with other local providers and found this a particularly successful way to engage with potential IFC beneficiaries. For example:

Collaborative working case study – community events

The **Pennywise project** established a successful network of local providers who delivered local community evens known as Blue Monday events, which were held in the largest shopping centre in Bristol city centre and involved between 40-60 different organisations. The events provide advice on a range of issues including money management, mental health, and employment. The events were designed to be lively and engaging, including live music, and free massages. This approach helped the events develop a strong brand and reputation. Consequently the events have grown year-on-year, and it is hoped that they will be continued by partner organisations.

4.8 Innovative partnerships

As described in Chapter two, IFC projects generally extended the number and type of partners they worked with over their lifetime, to reach more potential beneficiaries. Some projects found that informal partners (i.e. that were not formally part of the IFC consortium) were much more enthusiastic participants than their formal (housing) partners. Examples of innovative partnership working included IFC projects funding partners to deliver pilot schemes; and piloting innovative delivery with new partners.

Examples of innovative partnerships

Bristol Cashpointers IFC developed Community Award projects that enabled other organisations to take the lead delivering IFC. Cashpointers match-funded community groups to undertake specific projects with eligible cohorts of young people around any topic if it involved improving financial confidence and skills. One theatre group produced a play about young people coping with money problems, while a music project got young people writing songs relating to money and finance.

Hull & East Riding's **"Quids-In"** IFC project ran a successful Home Visits Pilot in partnership with the council's WarmZone team. This came about because "Quids-In" worked with a beneficiary living in fuel poverty because of a poorly insulated, damp home. "Quids-In" noticed that he lived in one of three identical co-located blocks owned by the same social landlord. In collaboration with the landlord, "Quids-In" ran a door-knocking pilot to offer residents a WarmZone assessment, IFC services and referrals to other agencies. Over four months, most of the residents in the 58 tenanted properties took up services and achieved financial outcomes amounting to over £13,000 and soft outcomes such as helping residents engage with mental health services. The WarmZone team identified a potential solution to the heating issues affecting the whole block, potential funding sources to cover the installation costs, and potential fully funded improvements to insulation.

Sandwell Financial Services Hub funded SWEDA, a business support organisation, to deliver a service called 'Money Project – Waste or Save?' to Sandwell residents. The service offered free financial help and support on topics such as living on a limited budget, banking made easy, how to access financial services and a financial jargon buster. Among other things, SWEDA supported clients to learn about online banking and how to save money using an online budgeting tool and comparison websites.

4.9 Volunteers

Projects attending the evaluation workshops highlighted learning around the use of volunteers as delivery partners. Some volunteers had originally been tasked with similar roles to paid workers and this proved challenging as the higher level support needs of many beneficiaries emerged, with many living in crisis and chaotic situations. This resulted in volunteering models

needing to be reviewed, and increased recognition given to the need to provide pastoral care for volunteers. Examples of successful volunteering models were:

- "Quids-In" developed a volunteer role within their generalist advice unit, having trained volunteers to provide fincap advice. Volunteers are supported by an existing volunteer support worker, and experienced volunteer.
- The MiNTed Financial Capability project supported beneficiaries identified by a wide range of partners including the Probation Service and Children's Centres. Beneficiaries were up-skilled women to help them make the transition back into society and managing a household budget, to help them sustain a tenancy. A number of beneficiaries progressed into volunteering roles as Money Mentors, which should also help to sustain the project.
- A number of projects commented on the suitability of volunteers helping with administration tasks, publicity, social media (including websites and Facebook) and helping to organise events.
- The Lambeth FACE project successfully trained 38 money mentors, but found retention varied. At the time of the research the project was exploring the potential of incorporating the money mentor workshop within the local tenant and resident association network, to potentially support volunteer engagement and sustainability.

Projects at the evaluation workshops reflected on the challenges of creating meaningful volunteer opportunities. For example Hackney Money Smart and Coventry CAB's SORTED project trained volunteers to support the core paid staff and increase project capacity, but found that once they were trained they tended to leave after a few months, as they were able to move into paid employment.

Some projects noted that volunteers could be less reliable/ wanted more flexibility than paid staff and this created a difficulty as beneficiaries liked consistent support from the same worker.

- "Quids-In" found working with volunteers at the initial outreach stage was risky because some felt pressurised to provide an immediate answer, as potential beneficiaries had unrealistic expectations.
- MoneyWise HomeSafe reflected that they originally intended to train peer mentors (volunteers from the original client group). The project tested the feasibility of the model by running a volunteer training mentoring course, but this was expensive and only recruited three volunteers. The original intention was that a paid worker would deliver the initial session and then peer mentors would provide follow-up support. However learning from this trial revealed that beneficiaries wanted on-going one-to-one support from a paid worker. The project therefore reallocated the budget to employ a community engagement officer.

Participants at the evaluation workshops agreed that it could be complex for volunteers to replace delivery staff to provide one-to-one support. The group agreed it would not be appropriate for volunteers to conduct home visits. Confidentiality and data protection issues

also need to be carefully considered in the use of volunteers, particularly when they are known to participants personally. Volunteers also need detailed training and on-going support.

4.10 Partnerships supporting dissemination and influencing work

IFC projects reflected that partnership approaches enabled their findings to be disseminated more effectively than if they had been working in isolation. For example the 1st Call Hyndburn project reflected that most of their dissemination had been facilitated though local voluntary and statutory sectors networks and relationships, as well as word of mouth. The local area around Accrington has a multiplicity of voluntary sector groups and forums, and ensuring that all parties were up to speed on developments has supported the project's influencing work. The central location of the drop-in centre, and the presence of many different voluntary sector agencies in the centre also helped with dissemination to diverse audiences.

4.11 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to recognise the diverse partnerships developed by IFC projects. The formal partnerships with local authorities and housing providers helped to steer projects and safeguard their legacy by ensuring that lessons were fed into local strategic structures. The second tier of partnership activity with local statutory providers including colleges, schools and youth services, and voluntary and community providers helped to build effective local networks, some of which will utilise learning from IFC in their on-going work with a wide variety of groups.

5.0 Beneficiary Outcomes

Key Findings

Beneficiary baseline characteristics and situations

- Over half (57%) reported some financial difficulty.
- Almost three in ten respondents (28%) were currently behind with their rent payments, rising to almost half (48%) of 'tenants moving in and out of work'.
- Aside from rent, the most common arrears that respondents reported was water debt (21% overall; 36% among 'tenants moving in and out of work').
- The average MyFC score at the baseline for all respondents was +0.03 (so somewhere in the middle).

Evidence of change

- Of those respondents that had been followed up, 84% saw a positive change in their MyFC score.
- The average MyFC score for all respondents who were followed up increased from 0.05 at the baseline to 0.35 after IFC. The range runs from +1 (excellent level of financial confidence) to -1 (very poor level of financial confidence).
- Among those followed-up, the number of tenants in rent arrears or behind with a loan fell between the baseline and the follow-up.
- Among those followed-up, 14% of tenants had home contents insurance, compared to just 8% at the baseline.
- The use of high-cost credit also fell slightly, from 11% at the baseline to 9% after IFC.

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter we examine the beneficiary data collected from IFC projects. In total, data on beneficiary outcomes was collected for 43,836 individuals[1]. This includes full data from 39,295 beneficiaries which was generated from the creation of individual beneficiary records by project staff at the start of an individual's participation in IFC activity (baseline data). Project staff were asked to then update the record following an individual's completion of IFC activity (follow up data) and then if possible to add a further update 3-6 months following completion. In addition to the baseline data, follow-up data for 10,129 cases allows us to look at the impact of the projects on respondent's MyFC scores, and changes to key indicators including rent arrears and arrears on personal loans; having a bank account and home contents insurance; use of high-cost credit, and credit union membership.

[1] This number of individuals is indicative of the reach of the programme but some caution is needed as one-off survey returns were not received for all projects utilising this method and projects variously reported engagement with individuals through events or dissemination of materials which were not captured through the creation of a beneficiary record.

IFC projects over time highlighted the number of beneficiaries participating in the programme through one-off events or workshops. A one-off survey was designed to capture evidence of change amongst this group where completion and follow up of full beneficiary records was not appropriate or feasible in the delivery context. The Improving Financial Confidence survey for one off events has been completed by 4,541 beneficiaries over the lifetime of the programme.

In addition, data for the final analysis is based on the data from 39,140 beneficiaries[1] in total who have engaged with the 37 IFC projects over the course of the programme.

5.2 Money matters

Positively, at the start of their involvement in the IFC programme, most beneficiaries (82%) had a current or basic bank account. In contrast, only a small proportion had home contents insurance (7%); this figure dropped to 3% of 'young people', but rose to 10% of 'other social housing tenants'. This suggests that although beneficiaries had some awareness of basic financial products, there was potential for increased access to financial products for money management.

Overall, more than a third of respondents (36%) had some form of fixed-term loan or goods bought on credit at the start of their involvement in the IFC programme.[2] This included 1% of respondents who said they had a loan from an unlicensed lender, or 'loan shark'. More specifically:

- 11% of respondents reported having a loan from a payday lender, pawnbroker or home credit lender (such as Provident Financial).
- 14% of tenants owed money to a friend or relative (who did not charge interest); and 17% had a Social Fund loan.

More than a tenth of respondents (11%) had a credit card, rising to 17% of 'tenants moving in and out of work'. Overall, 11% of respondents were overdrawn, increasing to 16% among 'tenants moving in and out of work'.

Fewer than one in ten respondents (6%) were credit unions members at the start of their involvement in the IFC programme. 'Tenants moving in and out of work' were more likely to be members of a credit union (10%). An original premise of the IFC programme was to raise beneficiaries' awareness about the benefits and importance of savings, but less work

[1] Note that the data reported here relates to IFC beneficiaries who belong to the programme's target groups. Data for 3600 people who participated in IFC but fell outside the main target groups has been considered and checked, but not included in this analysis.

[2] Bank loan; goods bought on credit; loan from a payday lender, pawnbroker or home credit lender; credit union loan; loan from an illegal lender; loan from friend or family.

has been done on this as projects have needed to re-focus activities on supporting beneficiaries experiencing financial crisis.

5.3 Financial difficulties

More than half of beneficiaries (57%) reported some financial difficulty on joining the IFC project.[1] Specifically, three in ten (28%) were currently behind with their rent payments. Understandably this appeared to be a specific issue for 'Tenants moving in and out of work' (rising to 48% for this group). Where rent arrears were reported, some 16% of beneficiaries also reported having a Notice Seeking Possession (NSP), suggesting that rent arrears had reached a serious level triggering action by their housing provider. This represents a 10% increase on the 2015-16 figure, indicating the impact of the worsening operating context and higher level of need for crisis support amongst IFC beneficiaries during the latter period of the programme. Similarly, 12% of beneficiaries had been evicted from a property in the past, although 3% of these tenants had only been evicted once. The reported increase in beneficiaries experiencing financial difficulty may be because the projects are providing a greater amount of pre-tenancy work.

Aside from rent, the most common arrears that beneficiaries reported were household bills. Again, the specific group of tenants moving in and out of work reported a greater propensity to be in debt to service providers. Beneficiaries most commonly reported water debt (21% overall; 36% among 'tenants moving in and out of work'); Council Tax debt (21% overall; 38% among 'tenants moving in and out of work'); and fuel debt (12% overall; 20% among 'tenants moving in and out of work'). This latter figure can be assumed to be lower due to potentially high numbers of tenants using pre-pay plans or meters.

This shows that the beneficiaries being engaged by IFC projects are those who have the potential to be impacted positively by the project activity as they demonstrated various degrees of financial difficulty.

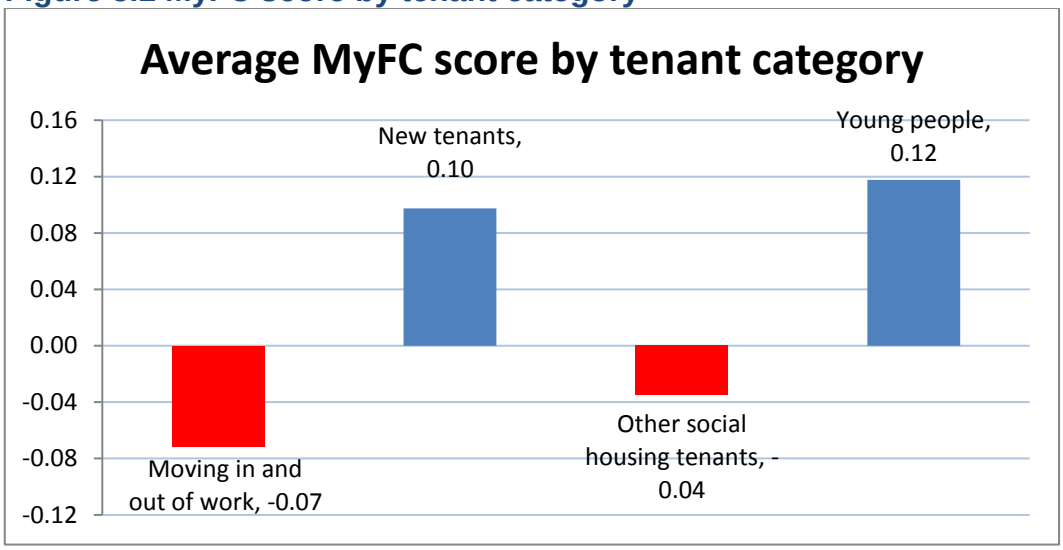
5.4 Financial confidence (MyFC score) at the baseline

The 'MyFC' tool is designed to assess individual beneficiaries' financial confidence incrementally on a scale of +1 (excellent) to -1 (very poor). It allows for a measure of distance travelled, by comparing scores pre-and post-participation (initial findings on these changes are reported below).

The average MyFC score for all beneficiaries at the baseline was +0.03 (so somewhere in the middle). Figure 4.1 below presents the averages for each tenant / target group category.

[1] Behind with housing payments, Council Tax or household bills; had Notice Seeking Possession; had been evicted; had Suspended Possession Order; behind with credit repayments; unable to make minimum credit card repayments; had unauthorised overdraft.

Figure 5.1 MyFC score by tenant category



Base size: 28,298

As the chart shows, 'Young people' had an average MyFC of +0.12, which was higher than both 'new tenants' (+0.10) and 'other social housing tenants' (-0.04), and 'tenants moving in and out of work' (-0.07). The latter group, who typically will experience unstable levels of income and potential additional costs associated with starting or leaving employment understandably, have the greater levels of need in respect of financial confidence.

5.5 Evidence of change/distance travelled

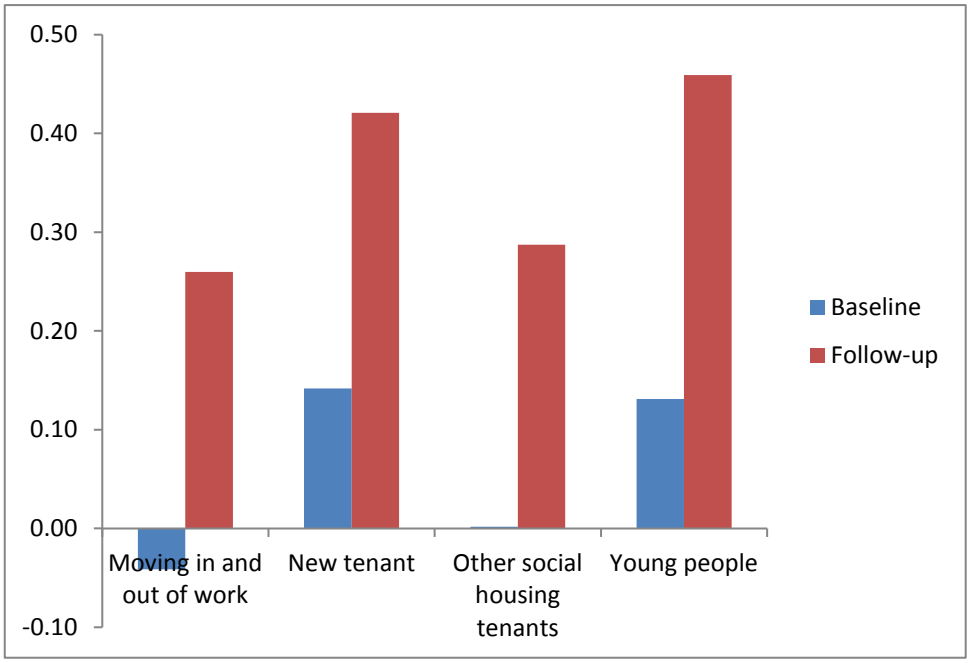
Follow-up data is available for 10,129 tenants, some 29% of the total number of beneficiaries for which a full beneficiary record was created. Analysis is therefore possible for a significant proportion of the IFC beneficiaries to explore changes to beneficiaries financial confidence; levels of rent arrears; having a bank account; having home contents insurance; arrears on personal loans; credit union membership and having high-cost credit. The changes were explored between the baseline and the last time the beneficiary was followed up. With the findings presented here, we need to be mindful that it is not possible to say whether these changes are directly attributable to beneficiaries' involvement in the IFC projects but the IFC activity is likely to be a significant contributing factor in any change evidenced.

5.5.1 Change in financial confidence (MyFC score) after IFC

Positively, a significant majority (84%) of beneficiaries who were followed up saw a positive change in their MyFC score after taking part in IFC project activities. This provides a clear indication that IFC activity contributed towards their improved financial confidence. When the findings are examined by tenant category, the rates of improvement are broadly equal, with 87% of 'new tenants', 84% of 'tenants moving in and out of work', 'and 82% of 'other social housing tenants' show an improvement in their MyFC score; compared to 81% of 'young tenants'.

Overall, the average MyFC score for beneficiaries who were followed up increased from 0.05 at the baseline stage to 0.35 after the IFC projects, showing an overall positive trend for all tenant groups. Figure 4.2 below provides a further breakdown according to the individual tenant categories.

Figure 5.2 MyFC score at follow-up compared to baseline, by tenant category



Base size: 10,129

As the chart above illustrates:

- For 'tenants moving in and out of work' who were followed up, MyFC increased from -0.04 at the baseline to 0.26 at follow-up.
- For 'new tenants' who were followed up, MyFC increased from 0.14 at the baseline to 0.42 at follow-up.
- For 'other social housing tenants' who were followed up, MyFC increased from 0.00 at the baseline to 0.29 at follow-up.
- For 'young people who were followed up, MyFC increased from 0.13 at the baseline to 0.46 at follow-up.

This demonstrates a fairly consistent level of improvement in MyFC scores across the target groups. However, around one in ten respondents (9%) who were followed up showed no change in their MyFC score, and a small minority saw a worsening position from the baseline (8%, 763 tenants). Anecdotal evidence from workshops with project staff attributed this potential negative change as being related to increased awareness of financial issues and products following IFC. For example through participation in IFC activity an individual became aware of products such as contents insurance or the

potential negative consequences of high interest credit and so indicated a lower level of financial confidence at the immediate post participation point.

Changes in MyFC score were also examined in the context of the intensity of the level of support received. Of the 10,129 people followed up, over two-thirds (69%) received 1-5 hours of support. 'Young People' were most likely to receive more than five hours of support (31% compared to 21% overall); while 'other social housing tenants' were the least likely (10%). The analysis suggests that greater levels of change were evident where more than five hours of support were received. Those who received less than five hours of support had a MyFC score of 0.05 at the baseline. This increased to 0.34 at the follow-up. Even more significantly, those who received more than five hours of support had an average MyFC score at the baseline of 0.02. This increased to 0.38 at the follow-up. This indicates that the greater focus of projects on one-one support, although meaning that the projects are not able to reach as many beneficiaries, for those who access the more intensive support positive outcomes are being achieved for individuals.

5.5.2 Change in accessing financial products

There is some evidence of change in terms of the financial products held by beneficiaries from when they joined the ICF projects to being followed up. Bank account ownership was relatively high amongst beneficiaries; about 85% of people had a current account at both baseline and follow-up, which was fairly consistent across the tenant categories. The level of credit union membership also stayed fairly stable; at the baseline, just under 6% of tenants who were followed up were members of credit unions. This rose very slightly to 7% at follow up stage.

The percentage of tenants with home contents insurance rose from 8% to 14% of those who were followed up. This was particularly noticeable among 'new tenants'. While 10% had home contents insurance at the baseline, this rose to 28% at the follow-up. The case study research revealed that home insurance products were a focus of many of the new tenant activity delivered by IFC projects to account for this level of change.

5.5.3 Change in financial difficulty

At the baseline stage, 13% of tenants were behind with payments on at least one loan. This fell to 9% at the follow up. This was most pronounced among 'tenants moving in and out of work', falling from 21% to 15% at the follow-up. This is positive given this group were reported to have the greatest levels of financial difficulty when joining IFC projects. At the baseline, 11% of tenants had a loan from a payday lender, pawnbroker or home credit lender. This fell to 9% at the follow up.

Of the 10,129 tenants who have been followed up, 28% were in rent arrears at the baseline. This fell to 23% at the follow-up. Rent arrears among 'tenants moving in and out of work' fell from 44% to 33%, and among young tenants from 20% to 16%. 36% of 'other social housing tenants' were in arrears at the baseline, falling to 28% at the follow-up. In contrast, there was a rise in rent arrears among 'new tenants' from 11% at the baseline to 13% at

the follow-up. Although a small level of change, it is an anomaly in the largely positive trends emerging from the data. Evidence from the case study work and project staff workshops strongly suggests that the welfare reforms are a factor in this rise in rent arrears.

5.5.4 Change after a one-off session

IFC projects over time highlighted the number of beneficiaries participating in the programme through one-off events or session. A one-off survey was designed to capture evidence of change amongst this group. Beneficiaries were asked to complete three questions before the event and the remaining questions after the event had taken place. The Improving Financial Confidence survey (one off events) had been completed by 4,541 beneficiaries allowing some analysis of change in attitudes after a single experience of IFC activity.

Before and after attending a one-off IFC event, beneficiaries were asked to rate their knowledge of or ability to manage a number of items on a scale of very poor (-3) to excellent (+3). The results are presented in figure 4.4. On average beneficiaries reported improvements in their knowledge of and ability to manage all items. Particular improvements were recorded for 'My ability to pay my rent and keep my tenancy', which increased by 1.95 from an average score of 1.05 to 3; and 'My knowledge and awareness of different financial services and products', which also increased by 0.97.

Figure 5.4: Please rate your knowledge of or ability to manage the following from very poor (-3) to excellent (+3)

	Before the event	After the event	Difference
My knowledge and awareness of different financial services and products such as credit cards, bank accounts, saving accounts, contents insurance.	0.61	1.58	0.97
My ability to get the financial services and products that meet my needs	0.45	1.00	0.55
My ability to get professional help and advice to sort out money problems ('Professional help' includes things like an independent financial adviser, citizen's advice bureau or the Money Advice Service website.)	0.51	1.43	0.92
My awareness of how much money I get and the bills I need to pay each week/ month	0.68	1.61	0.93
My ability to budget and manage my money	0.95	1.70	0.75
My ability to pay my rent and keep my tenancy	1.05	3.00	1.95
My ability to pay other household bills on time e.g. gas/ electricity	1.04	1.70	0.66
My ability to sort out money problems myself without anyone else's help	0.75	1.55	0.80
My ability to cope with the stress and worry caused by money problems	0.55	1.36	0.81
My ability to manage moving between jobs without getting into money problems	0.35	1.28	0.93

The average MyFC score before the event was +0.16. This increased to +0.23 after the event. Again while some caution is needed around direct attribution to IFC activity, there is evidence that even a single, one off engagement with IFC activity potentially makes a positive change to financial capability. What is also not captured in this analysis is the level of and instance of subsequent engagement in IFC activity following an initial exposure to the project through a one off event.

5.5.5 Longer term change

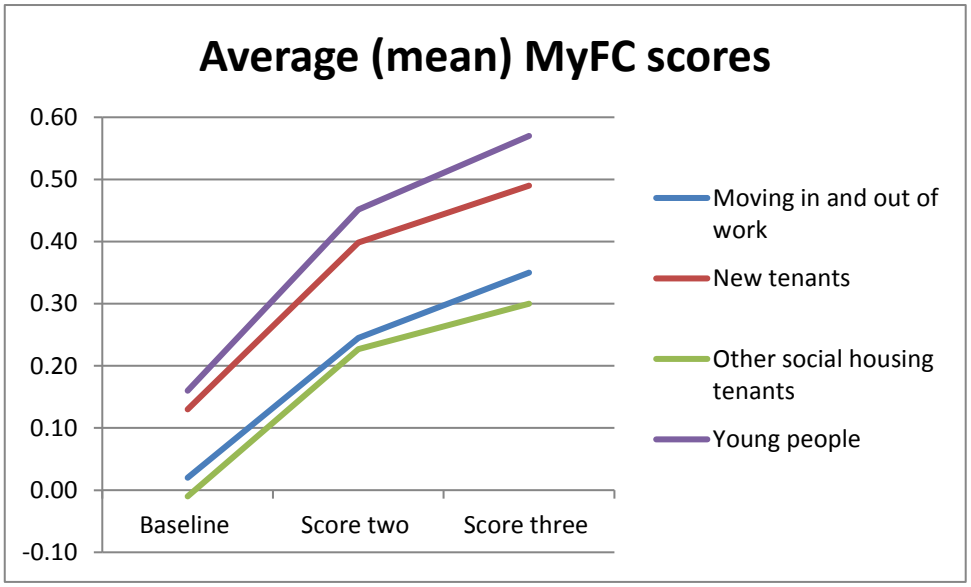
For a small group of beneficiaries (1516), they started their involvement with IFC sufficiently early in the delivery period to allow an additional follow up point to have been undertaken, allowing change in MyFC scores to be examined across three points in time as follows:

- Baseline/score 1
- Interim/score 2
- Follow up/score 3

Of these 1516 respondents, the mean MyFC score at baseline was 0.07, increasing to 0.32 when the second score was captured and 0.41 at the second follow-up. The specific group scores, as shown in figure 4.3, were as follows:

- For 'young people', MyFC increased from 0.16 at the baseline to 0.45 at follow-up to 0.57 at the second follow-up.
- For 'new tenants', MyFC increased from 0.13 at the baseline to 0.40 at follow-up to 0.49 at the second follow-up.
- For 'other social housing tenants', MyFC increased from -0.01 at the baseline to 0.23 at the first follow-up to 0.30 at the second follow-up.
- For 'tenants moving in and out of work', MyFC increased from -0.02 at the baseline to 0.25 at follow-up to 0.35 at the second follow-up.

Figure 5.5 Average (mean) MyFC scores



Base size: 911

Although only based on a relative small sample, this does suggest a sustained change in financial confidence for beneficiaries after engagement in IFC projects. It is positive

that the financial knowledge and money management skills gained by beneficiaries are being maintained, as demonstrated by the increase in MyFC score at the third follow up point.

5.5.6 Wider beneficiary outcomes

Feedback from IFC projects garnered through case study research, project evaluation reports and the evaluation workshops identified a wider set of positive outcomes for beneficiaries, from participating in IFC activities. (Where figures are presented in this section they have not been verified by the evaluation team).

Many IFC projects reported providing assistance to IFC beneficiaries to access additional or increased income by applying for additional benefits, accessing private pensions that were not in payment or applying to charitable trusts and foundations, for example, for hardship grants to clear debts or to furnish homes. As examples, in a single year the following were reported by projects:

- Sick of Being Skint (Pennine Housing) reported £217,562 generated for beneficiaries in the form of rent rebates, housing benefit appeals and successful grant applications.
- Fit4YourFuture (Boston) reported that 229 individuals had applied for new benefits or amended their existing claims.
- Know Your Money (Middlesbrough) estimated it had obtained about £0.5 million for young people in social housing, plus £0.7 million for young people in other housing tenures.
- Sorted (Coventry) had made 327 grant applications, with an average award of £145.
- Sandwell Financial Services Hub estimated that beneficiaries had benefited from £40,013 one year from benefit claims, furniture and white goods and grants.

Beneficiary outcomes case study – lasting change for care leavers

The Moneywise project was based in the London Borough of Haringey; with Haringey CAB was the lead organisation. The delivery model evolved resulting in a series of modules which could be delivered in a 2-hour workshop. Modules covered varying money management themes, which could be delivered individually or as a series. The project delivered to a wide range of target groups. The feedback they received on their sessions was very positive, from all groups, and suggested that the workshops had had an impact on the behaviours and confidence of attendees. The workshops on savvy shopping and cooking on a budget appeared to be the most effective; the six month follow-ups from care leavers suggested that there had been some long-lasting effects in their shopping and eating habits in particular.

In other examples provided by projects, the support for beneficiaries included helping them to reduce expenditure, for example by applying for concessionary travel pass, switching energy supplier or improving energy efficiency of their home.

Beneficiary outcome case study – increasing income

Miss S lived in a supported housing scheme and was initially referred to **Sandwell Financial Services Hub (SFSH)** by her support worker. Miss F was aged 18 years and was pregnant with her first child. Miss S was on a low income, initially working full time as an apprentice and only in receipt of housing benefit. She was looking to move to a new property in the future but was struggling without any disposable income to purchase the necessary furniture and white goods for the property, alongside equipment for the baby.

The SFSH support worker provided Miss S with information on energy efficiency to save money on her utility bills, free fruit and milk information for which she would qualify on her baby's arrival, and details for eligibility for a potential grants from Sure Start Maternity. Further support was provided for Miss S by applying for grants, on her behalf, to purchase essential white goods she needed, from charities. Midland Heart is a national social housing provider and at learning of Miss S's situation Midland Heart provided Miss S with a fridge freezer and washing machine. Further to this Midland Heart also provided Miss S with a property. A further application was put to the Charles Akrill Trust and was successful. Miss S received funding for the cooker and its installation.

Other projects reported providing help to beneficiaries to transition to Universal Credit and deal with the impact of welfare reform. For example, help to apply for Discretionary Housing Payments where beneficiaries incurred under occupancy charges or were subject to the benefit cap. Emerging from examples reported on this subject was a recurrent theme around a key outcome for beneficiaries being reduced stress once their full financial situation was revealed and solutions out in place. For example, Pennywise in Bristol

reported 53% of their beneficiaries who responded to a feedback survey reporting improvements in their mental health following engagement. This is further illustrated by this beneficiary case study:

Beneficiary outcome case study - Reduced stress

At the time of engaging with the **Lambeth FACE** project, a beneficiary was facing debt of several thousand pounds and was reliant on her adult children to financially support her during the period of time when a benefits claim was being processed. This followed her losing her job to become the carer for her elderly mother. The whole situation was causing great stress to the individual and resentment amongst the wider family of the financial support being provided.

The project worked with her to identify the full extent of the debts and to identify the options available. She decided to apply for a Debt Relief Order (DRO), which would offer the best stress relief from debt payment demands and give her an opportunity to start afresh.

When the project next spoke with her, she sounded much happier, and expressed her appreciation for what they had done on her behalf. She also informed them that the situation with her family had improved now she is able to contribute to the household bills. Her stress levels were down and she is sleeping better now that her debts are under control.

It was acutely recognised by several projects that an individual's financial situation could be enhanced by gaining employment. As such several projects had created close working relationships with employment support agencies or had created in-house job clubs. At the mid-point of their operation several projects were reporting positive outcomes are beneficiaries in terms of employment, for example:

- Fit4YourFuture reported that 24 beneficiaries had gained work through its job club, along with support to manage their new finances
- 45 young people had gained employment with the help of Know Your Money's in-house job club.
- Pennywise Bristol reported that 27% of their beneficiaries who responded to a feedback survey have subsequently moved into work, training or education

Coming through strongly was evidence of wider outcomes for beneficiaries relating to increased confidence and greater independence in dealing with financial matters. Projects were conscious of the time-limited nature of their inputs so a positive outcome regularly reported was a beneficiary having impetus and confidence to engage with financial services firms and creditors themselves.

Beneficiary outcome case study – increased confidence to deal independently with finances

A client with a long term mental health condition was referred to the **Better off in Wolverhampton** project to receive some budgeting and money management support. Over a series of meetings, a level of trust was built which led to disclosure of significant debts. An appointment was made where the Mental Health Project Worker met with the client at the debt team drop in at Citizens Advice Bureau. The client mentioned that he was very apprehensive to do this as it was a very challenging thing for him to do. The caseworker put the client at ease giving a thorough explanation of the process, meeting time and place to reduce any anxiety the client may have been feeling. The caseworker met with the client in the queue at the front of the building to empower him and give him some reassurance.

The client completed the appointment with the debt adviser and had to return for follow up appointments with great confidence. He had a debt relief order and worked with Better off in Wolverhampton to manage his finances with much more confidence.

After this the client felt empowered to do much more for himself, he attended any follow up appointments with the debt advisors alone. He contacted the local bank and set up an additional bank account so that he could have separate one for his bills. He persuaded friends from the day centre that he attended to make appointments with Better off in Wolverhampton.

6.0 Landlord Outcomes

6.1 Landlord management data

The most straightforward method for assessing the impact of the IFC programme on individual landlords operating in individual projects was to systematically collect a suite of baseline data related to housing management activities where performance is affected by tenant behaviour. These comprised:

- Landlord assessment of the MyFC score across the potential client group
- Data on rent arrears and rent collection rates
- Data on short term voids, void periods and void losses
- Possession Orders, NOSPS / NSPs and evictions
- Court costs and staff costs involved in managing arrears
- Percentage of staff time handling arrears
- Provision of advice and financial inclusion services.

Initially, baseline data for participating landlords was collected. Most landlords were able to supply data specific to the local geography of the IFC project, however in most cases the data relates to all tenants in the particular landlord / tenant 'patch', not just IFC beneficiaries. Since the start of the programme, landlords were asked to annually provide updated 'snapshot' data covering the same categories of housing management activity in the baseline, to see what changes had resulted during the period their tenants were benefiting from the projects. The data collected has been of variable quality, but at the date of this report, 130 landlords[1] across 34 projects provided at least baseline or one years' worth of monitoring data.

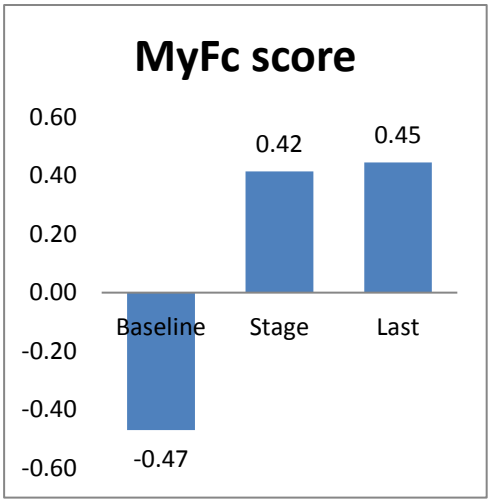
The data cleaning process removed substantially incomplete or duplicate data sets, or instances where just baseline data has been supplied, leaving 61 'pairs' of datasets – that is, 61 instances where a project-specific landlord has been able to provide comparable baseline data and data for at least one year into the project. In fact, many have supplied multiple years' worth of data:

[1] In this context when we refer to landlord, this means a landlord participating in a particular IFC project. Several landlords participated in more than one project, and each instance of participation is counted separately.

Period	Number of landlords
Baseline plus one year	27
Baseline plus two years	14
Baseline plus three years	18
Baseline plus four years	2

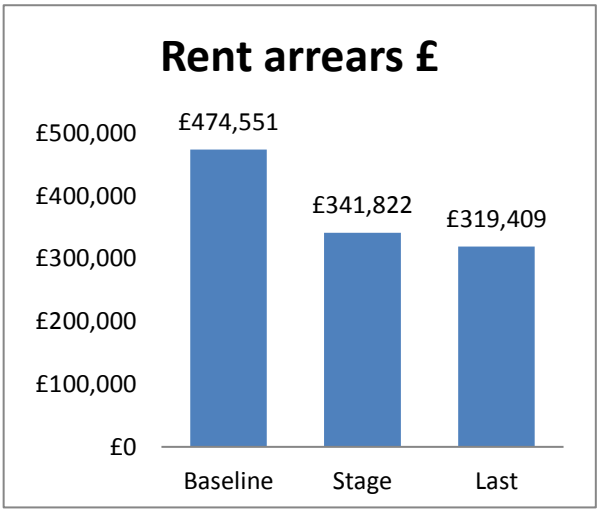
The provision of data from multiple years allows analysis to track performance across time, so instead of just a baseline and current measure, a midpoint measure is included in the analysis – usually the second or third year of a project – as well as a final or most recent measure. Two datasets had 2016-2017 as the latest snapshot, with 17 having 2015-2016, and 15 having 2014-15.

6.2 MyFC score



While the MyFC test is primarily about beneficiaries' self-assessment of their financial confidence, it was considered relevant to ask landlords to give a general impression of the overall financial confidence levels of the tenants they were putting forward to the IFC schemes, and then periodically re-asking the question. The MyFC scoring system operates on a range of -1 (extremely unconfident) to +1 (extremely confident). The range of scores assessed at the baseline, stage point and the last measure was wide (from minus 0.8 to plus 1), but the median increased strongly from the baseline measure of -0.47 to +0,42 at the stage point, and then showed a continuing, slight increase to +0.45.

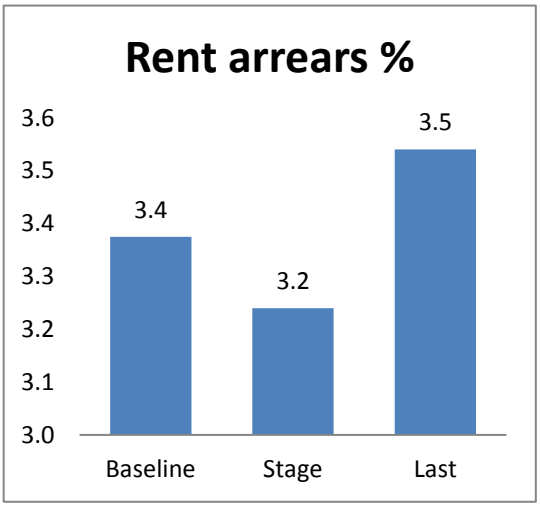
6.3 Rent arrears and rent collection

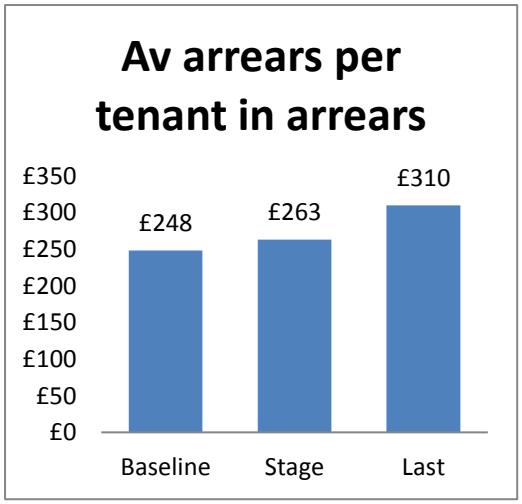


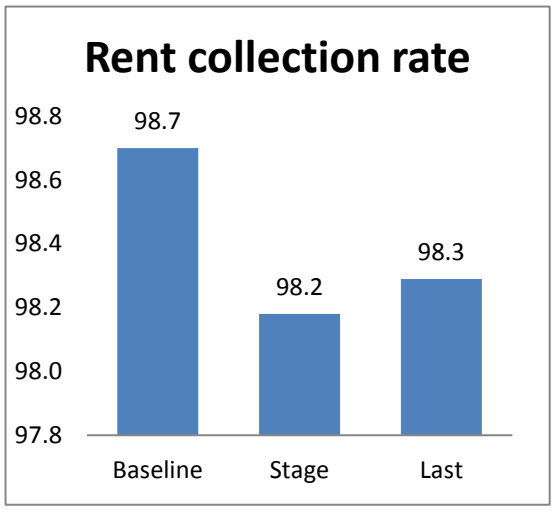
The median level of cash rent arrears carried by landlords at the latest time point was £319,409. This represents a £155,142 reduction on the baseline level of £474,551 – a 33% reduction – following a downward trajectory shown by the stage position. Although not large, in the context of the broader environment of welfare reform and the austerity agenda, this is a positive result. However, the amount of cash arrears relates strongly to the size of the stock and the number of tenants. So, if data is taken primarily from smaller landlords, the cash figures would be a lot lower than if a number of larger landlords with higher rent rolls were involved. A more meaningful way to express rent arrears is therefore as a proportion of the rent roll on currently occupied stock, which avoids the size / cash problem.. Here the position is less positive. In spite of a reduction from 3.4% of the rent role to 3.2% at the stage position, the proportion of arrears has now increased to 3.5% of the rent role at the latest position.

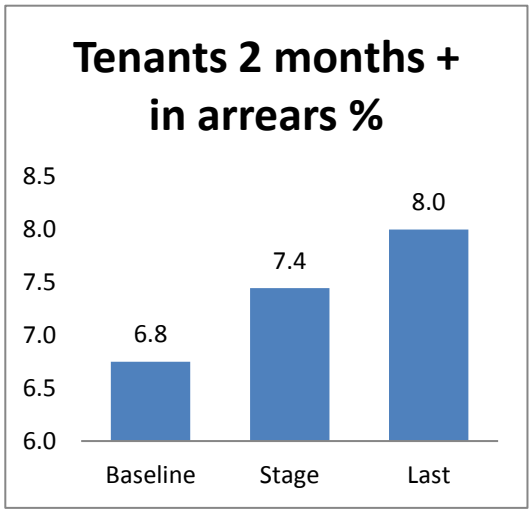
This is also reflected in the average arrears per tenant in arrears, which has increased from £248 at baseline to £263 ant the stage point, and now to £310 at the latest point – an 18% increase on the baseline position.

The overall rent collection rate represents a mixed picture. Coming in at a 98.7% rate at baseline, it dropped sharply at stage point to 98.2, and has since rallied slightly to 98.3%









Although these figures cannot be described as 'good' in terms of broader housing management standards, remembering the choice of location, relative deprivation of the areas where IFC projects are operating, and the series of cuts to housing benefit entitlement, benefit caps, and the introduction of Universal Credit in some areas, the slight improvement in rent collection rate is encouraging .

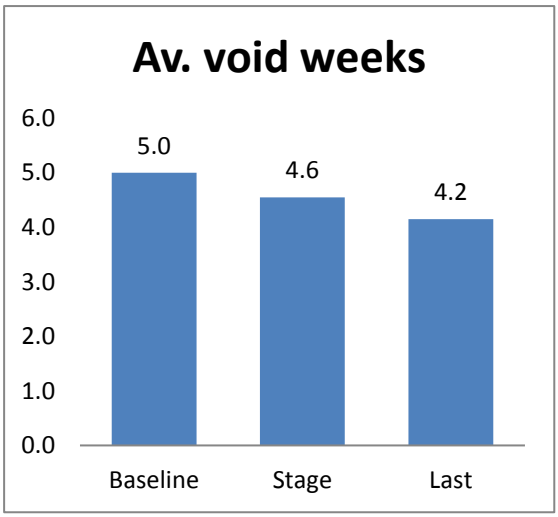
The other arrears indicator monitored was the proportion of tenants more than two months behind in their rents. Often short-term arrears are the result of delays in the Housing Benefit system, or the way rent accounting systems work, and the introduction of Universal Credit, with its built-in delay factor will have exacerbated this. Longer-term rent arrears are more likely to be ascribable to tenant behaviour. We found that the proportion of tenants more than 8 weeks behind in their rent had steadily increased from the baseline figure of 6.8% to 7.4% and then to 8%.

Considering the arrears position more generally, though it is disappointing that that the proportion appears to have increased over the lifetime of the programme, this finding should be seen in context: as discussed in Chapter One, the programme was delivered in parallel with the series of welfare reforms that accompanied the austerity budgets, including benefit capping, the 'bedroom tax', changes to the Local Housing Allowance and curbs on the housing-related benefits that younger people could claim. It was also delivered during the early stages of the roll out of Universal Credit, and there is substantial evidence quoted elsewhere in this report on its impact on arrears, due to the triple effect of delayed monthly payments, payments to tenants rather than landlords, and heavy reliance on IT literacy and access to make claims. The wider economic and austerity climate during the period has not helped, with sluggish wage growth outstripped by inflation, and the increase in zero hours and 'gig economy' jobs and contracts.

While it is difficult to make any judgements about the impact of the programme had all these negative factors not been in play, it is probably safe to assume that the position of participating landlord's balance sheets would be worse now had they not benefitted from the programme.

Moreover, the delays in the full roll out of Universal Credit have enabled projects and individual landlords to test, learn and develop different tools to help counter the effects as full service Universal Credit is rolled out by 2018 and, more importantly, when the substantial numbers of remaining benefit claimants are moved on to Universal Credit by 2022.

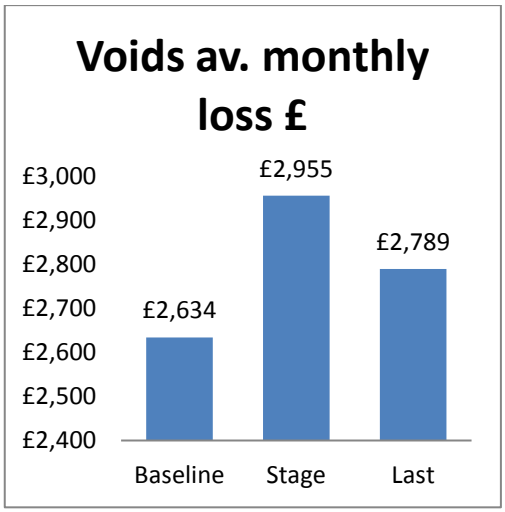
6.3.1 Short-term voids

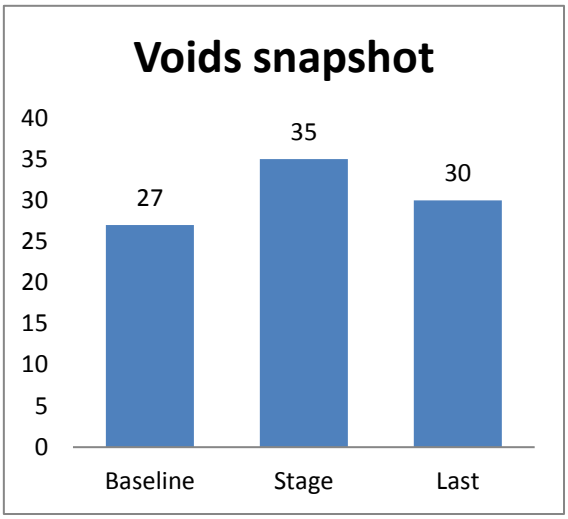


'Short term' voids are empty homes that do not have significant disrepair problems, and are expected to be quickly re-let to new tenants. The numbers, turnover times, and losses of income from having short term voids are a significant indicator of the ability of tenants to retain their homes, the numbers that abandon their homes, and the ability of landlords to quickly let their homes to those eligible for them and able to pay the rents. While not a direct indicator of the impact of the IFC programme, faster turnover times and lower levels do show that an association has less of a problem with failing or abandoned tenancies than others with higher rates. The ability of the IFC programme to get potential residents 'tenancy ready' was cited as a factor in enabling homes to be let quickly, or less desirable properties let at all. Here there is better news. The time taken to let empty homes has fallen slightly over the period of the IFC programme, from an average of five weeks at the baseline stage, to 4.2 weeks currently.

This is partly reflected in the snapshots of the actual average numbers of voids. After an initial increase in numbers between the baseline and stage monitor, from 27 to 35, the figure has now reduced to 30

This pattern is reflected in the void loss figures – the amount of rent that has remained uncollected because a property was empty. So, from an initial base of a median figure of £2,634 per month, void losses increased to £2,955 at the stage monitor, but have now reduced somewhat, to an average of £2,789 at the latest measurement point. This represents a 6% increase on the baseline figure.

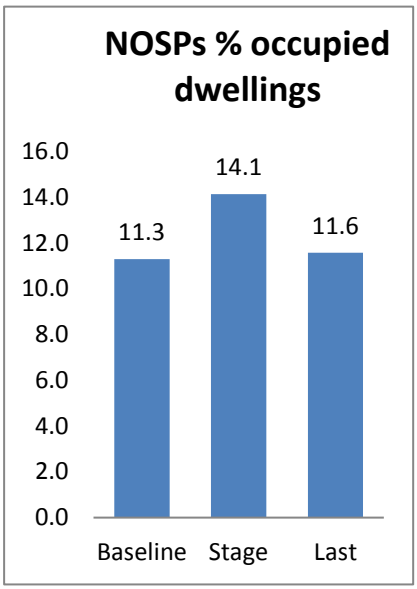


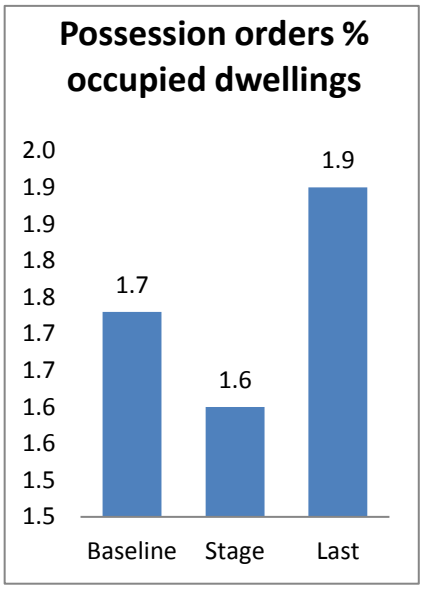


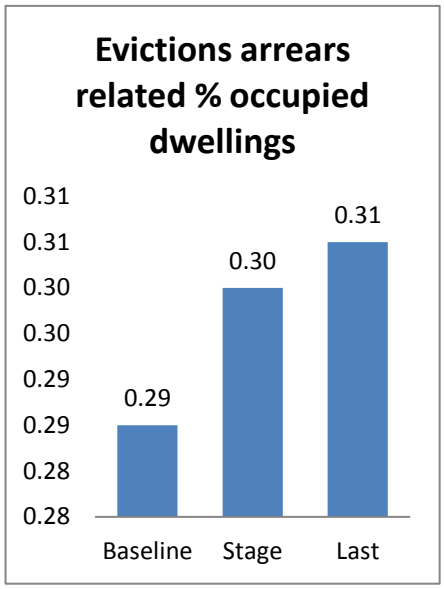
6.3.2 Notices of Seeking Possession (NOSPs/NSPs), Possession Orders and evictions

While not all enforcement action taken by landlords is about rent arrears (for example anti-social behaviour is a frequent cause of action), a substantial amount is rent-related. The legal process follows a path of issuing a 'Notice of Seeking Possession' (or 'Notice Seeking Possession' for Council / ALMO tenants), court proceedings that may result in a Possession Order being granted, and, at the last resort, eviction proceedings. Many Possession Orders are suspended pending arrangements to repay arrears.

The baseline figures showed that over the previous 12 months on average 11.3% of occupied tenancies had had NOSPs/NSPs issued. The proportion increased at the stage position to 14.1%, but has subsequently reduced again to close to its base position, at 11.6%. However, the number of Possession orders actually taken out, by following through a NOSP with a court appearance, has increased on the baseline figures, which themselves had seen a reduction at the stage point. Alongside this, the number of evictions carried out had increased relatively gradually among the landlords / projects examined. The rate per occupied tenancy had gone up marginally from 0.29% of occupied dwellings to 0.31%.





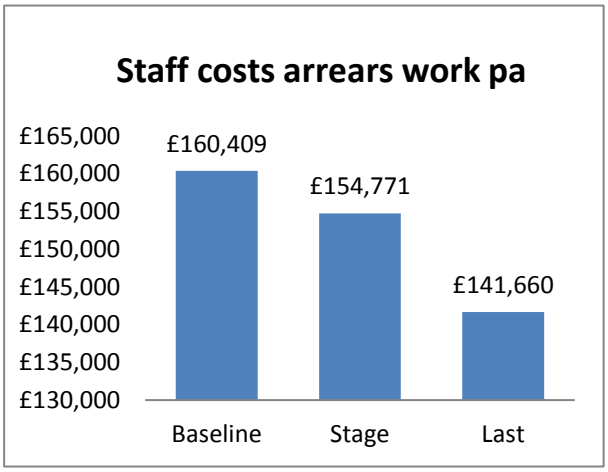


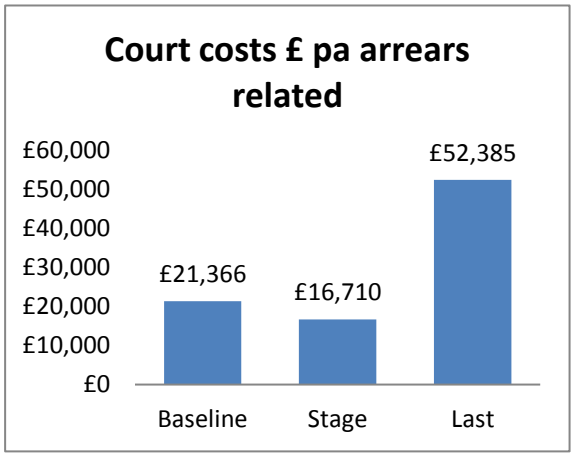
These are only evictions following court proceedings and the issue of a Bailiff's warrant – these figures exclude any abandonments.

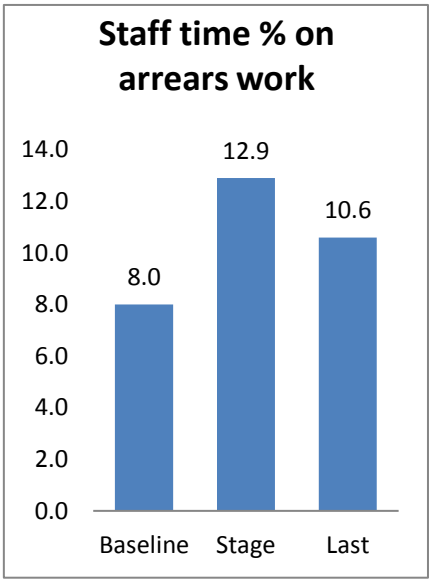
6.3.3 Resources

Landlords were asked to estimate the annual costs of carrying out arrears possession and eviction action in the courts including staff time, court and legal fees, and bailiffs costs. Over the 12 months preceding the collection of the baseline figure, landlords estimated they were spending on average nearly £161,000 on staff costs per annum. This reduced over the lifetime of the IFC programme, going down to £155,000 at mid-stage, and then to £141,660 at the latest monitoring point, a reduction of 12%. However, although staff costs have reduced, the proportion of time devoted to arrears work has increased on baseline figures), from 8% to 10'6% (though down from a stage point high of 12.9%). This indicates that landlords are either (or both) finding more efficient ways to undertake arrears work, or that it is being undertaken at a more junior staffing level.

Court costs on the other hand had fallen at the stage point but they have now increased substantially (proportionately up 60%). This will be a reflection of the increased activity going into Possession Order and eviction work.







6.4 Financial capability work

Landlords were asked whether they provided welfare benefits, debt advice or money management training for their residents outside the IFC programme. 85% of landlords were providing some form of additional advice or training at the baseline monitor, and this had reduced slightly, to 76% at the latest stage. They were also asked if they provided any other financial inclusion activities or products, and if so, of what nature. At the baseline measure, 65% were providing these extra services, which included: affordable loans, contents insurance, working with / developing Credit Unions, support accessing bank accounts, white goods schemes, furniture supply schemes, furnished tenancy schemes, and fuel and energy advice and loans. There was little sign of these services being reduced over the monitoring periods, with 65% continuing to provide them at the latest monitoring period.

6.5 Conclusion

Like several aspects of this study and evaluation, assessing causality and consequence is rife with difficulties. Apart from methodological issues relating to the multiple data collection systems run by different landlords, housing management performance and performance indicators have had to be captured against a rapidly changing housing and social policy environment over the IFC programme lifetime, particularly in the areas of welfare benefit reform and central government constraints on public sector (and especially in this context housing association) income generation..

The statistical evidence also needs to be seen in the context of more qualitative data, particularly that obtained through the case studies. These indicate that firstly, there are benefits to tenants that are less tangible in terms of their monetary and performance impacts on landlords, but are nonetheless important for the longer-term sustainability and stability of tenancies. These are often through increased confidence in dealing with money matters, the breakdown of barriers relating to social isolation, and improved health and wellbeing – all of which makes successful tenancies more likely.

Secondly, the case studies indicate that particularly for projects that were housing association managed and / or had a single, large-scale social landlord at their centre, the learning from the IFC programme have resulted in structural and organisational change and development, such as the mainstreaming of IFC-like financial capability and inclusion activities into the day to day work of the organisation.

Purely in terms of the quantitative data relating to landlords, we can at best say that it is ambiguous. The key indicators of the impact of the IFC programme, relating to arrears and rent performance are by and large negative in their implications. Performance relating to voids is more positive; as is data on staff costs. Whilst it has proved impossible to disentangle causality relating to the economic and social policy environment from the IFC programme, we would argue that the data shows a degree of resilience displayed by participating landlords in the face of a profoundly negative environment in which their residents and their organisations have had to operate over the last five years.

7.0 Sustainability and Future Planning

Learning from the programme

Three ways in which IFC projects conceived making the business case for further funding were mainstreaming volunteer-led services; demonstrating the benefits to organisations of positive beneficiary outcomes; and social value. Helping housing providers comply with good practice and relevant charters was also mentioned.

Of these, **making a business case** to fund IFC services generally centred on positive beneficiary outcomes that could potentially save money for local authorities, housing providers, employers, health services etc.

Sustainability routes: The expectation that housing providers would be a route to sustainability and future funding for IFC services did not materialise for many projects. While housing providers were often supportive of IFC, they could not fund the activity or else had funded (narrower) in-house services. Some IFC projects saw more scope to link IFC activities to the health and wellbeing agenda.

Future funding: Other sources of funding sought by IFC lead organisations include the Money Advice Service What Works Fund; Big Lottery Fund programmes such as Reaching Communities and Building Better Opportunities; and the European Social Investment Fund.

IFC legacy: The IFC legacy comprised wide-ranging positive outcomes for beneficiaries and volunteers; greater profile and embedding of financial capability services in public bodies and civil society organisations; and tried-and-tested resources available free of charge.

7.1 IFC projects: building the business case

Three ways in which IFC projects conceived making the business case for further funding were mainstreaming volunteer-led services; demonstrating the benefits to organisations of positive beneficiary outcomes; and social value. Helping housing providers comply with good practice and relevant charters was also mentioned.

7.1.1 Mainstreaming

There seemed few opportunities to mainstream IFC services at the scale they had been delivered over the programme. This was largely because the operating context for housing providers and local authorities (key IFC partners and potential investors) had worsened significantly over the last few years. As a result, they were generally not able to invest in IFC services post-Big Lottery Fund, as had been anticipated, even if they valued and

supported the work of IFC. As we saw in earlier chapters, some housing providers had started to provide what they considered to be similar services in-house.

A small number of projects were able to mainstream IFC provision into their core services and training offer. For example, all staff at 1625ip received training in financial capability support, and the Cash Pointers module has been adopted as part of their core services. The Cash Pointer project helped to embed and formalise financial capability training across all 1625ip's services. The materials developed though the IFC project will be available for ongoing use, and Cash Pointers staff are also offering this training other organisations they are working with. Cash Pointers principles will also be applied through the Ask Us programme, which 1625ip is delivering with Citizens Advice and the local legal advice centre, supporting young people.

The continuation of some IFC delivery through volunteers was a mainstreaming opportunity mentioned by several Citizens Advice services that were IFC lead organisations:

- Citizens Advice Knowsley and Citizens Advice Liverpool (the Volunteer Hub's lead organisation) both saw scope for their trained IFC volunteers to continue some level of IFC service without further funding.
- Similarly, Citizens Advice Tameside (lead organisation for Minted IFC) was working with partners to recruit volunteers to continue some IFC delivery. It if was unable to secure any further funding for IFC services, the volunteers could be managed as part of Citizens Advice Tameside's volunteer programme.
- Citizens Advice Hull & East Riding (lead organisation for "Quids-In") saw opportunities to train some financial capability volunteers to work with its generalist advice team as a way of mainstreaming IFC activities.

Sustainability case study – Online resources sustained

Making Money Count (MMC) led by the Clarion Housing Group (formally Circle Housing Roddons) developed a project website www.makingmoneycount.org.uk with a wide range of practical easy to read information and resources. The website has been adopted as portal for three other projects covering financial confidence and has expanded across the Local Enterprise Partnership area as a permanent legacy from the project.

Other mainstreaming ideas were:

- To incorporate some IFC staff and functions into a funded debt advice service (Better Off in Wolverhampton).
- To train housing association staff (such as debt advisers or financial inclusion officers) to deliver IFC workshops (Lambeth FACE).

7.1.2 Beneficiary outcomes

Making a business case to fund IFC services generally centred on positive beneficiary outcomes that could potentially save money for local authorities, housing providers, employers, health services etc. For example, in parallel to its IFC service Citizens Advice Knowsley (IFC end date February 2018) was involved in a Better Off Finance Project funded by the European Social Fund and Big Lottery Fund. This comprised three key workers who delivered financial capability and employability support. It anticipated that the combined positive outcomes from Better Off Finance and IFC would make a strong base for funding bids they planned to make in the next 12 months.

Outcomes mentioned by IFC projects included:

- Reduced risk of problem debt (including rent arrears and Council Tax debt)
- Reduced risk of homelessness
- Improved rent sustainability
- Financial independence and resilience making tenants more able to weather financial shocks and preparing them for employment or training
- A healthy living environment for tenants that supported activities such as employment and training.

The evidence to support a business case based on beneficiary outcomes would come from the IFC evaluation (programme and project level) and included beneficiary data, case studies, financial gains for beneficiaries (such as debt under management, savings from utility switches) and financial gains for housing providers (reductions in rent arrears). None of the business case proformas mentioned counterfactual evidence.

7.1.3 Social value

Social value refers to the wider financial and non-financial impacts of programmes, organisations and interventions, including the wellbeing of individuals and communities, social capital and the environment.[1] An estimation of social value could help build a business case for further funding to continue IFC services.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act came into force in 2013. For housing associations, the legislation means they must be prepared to define the social and economic value and impact of the services they offer when tendering for a service from a local authority or another relevant body. Housing associations may also wish to analyse the social value of their own activities with a view to securing contracts with other public bodies. The Homes and Communities Agency also requires housing associations to publish a value-for-money self-assessment each year, as part of its value-for-money standard.

The business case proformas included social value estimates of some IFC services, which seem likely to be part of the lead housing association's value-for-money self-assessment:

[1] http://socialvalueportal.com/what-is-social-value/

- 13 Group estimated that the added social value of Middlesbrough's Know Your Money, Keep The Change IFC project was £2.2 million in 2015-2016.
- Places for People estimated that Bristol's Pennywise IFC project generated a social value more than £4.5 million from the £1 million grant it received from Big Lottery Fund.
- Cotman Housing Association estimated that the social value of Norwich's MoneyWise, HomeSafe was around £400,000 for 2016-17.[1]

SROI is a principles-based way of measuring social value which Citizens Advice Hull & East Riding planned to use to quantify its IFC services, along with an impact evaluation.

Hackney CAB, the lead organisation for Money Smart IFC, planned to carry out a cost benefit analysis of its services with Hackney Housing – which would quantify the benefits and costs of the service in relation to the resource invested.

7.2 Sustainability routes and funding sources

The expectation that housing providers would be a route to sustainability and future funding for IFC services did not materialise for many projects. While housing providers were often supportive of IFC, they could not fund the activity or else had funded (narrower) in-house services. Specific services that housing providers were interested to sustain included:

- Support for tenants to access external health and wellbeing services
- Support for tenants around Universal Credit and welfare reform
- Employment and training services
- IT and digital skills.

Some IFC projects, like Hull & East Riding's "Quids-In", perceived more interest from community and social care services than from housing providers, from a 'social prescribing' perspective. They were looking to work more with health and wellbeing services such as the local Early Help team.

Wis£r Wonga in Plymouth was developing IFC workshops to deliver across schools (which they would charge for), also linked to the health and wellbeing agenda.

Challenges for projects around exit planning including identifying funding sources they could apply to; the resource required to bid for funding, especially large, complex programmes; and trying to source support **for** beneficiaries when IFC projects came to an end.

Where sustainability had been achieved it was often on a much smaller scale, or for a shorter time period that originally envisaged. For example the Pennywise project managed to secure some extra funding to sustain their one-to-one support for an extra year, from March 2016-17. Some of this income derived from the frontline staff training budget, which sustained their Community Engagement officer role for several months.

[1] There were no details of the methods used to calculate social value in any of these cases.

Few projects managed to secure private sector investment to sustain their activities. One project demonstrating success in this area is the Money House project.

Sustainability case study – private sector investment to continue and extend training

Hyde Housing led a successful project for young people delivered in a local flat by trainers with experience of youth work. The training materials were developed by MyBnk, who are taking the project forward with two-year funding secured from JP Morgan. The project has been extended beyond Greenwich to Newham, and the target group extended to include University students. The project team believe they were successful in securing private sector funding because they cultivated an image that the training was *"unique",* and could demonstrate success in reducing rent arrears and evictions.

7.2.1 Funding applications

A number of IFC projects had successfully applied for funding or been part of funding bids that allowed them to continue some IFC activities but not necessarily with the same beneficiary groups or at the same scale:

- The Zone in Plymouth, one of Wis£r Wonga's lead partners (IFC end date March 2018), was a partner in a successful application to the Money Advice Service's What Works Fund programme, led by Youth Access. The funding was from April 2017 for an 18-month project to test the effectiveness of YIACS (Youth Information, Advice and Counselling Services) in improving young people's financial capability.
- 1625ip have also secured funding through the Money Advice Service's What Works Fund to run a peer education programme for children aged 14 – 18 who are outside mainstream education. The project will fund two staff members until April 2018. 1625ip have also secured separate funding from a high street bank (Royal Bank of Scotland) for a programme that recruits volunteers and trains them to run one-to-one sessions with young people at 1625ip, using existing materials and training developed through the IFC Cash Pointers project. 1625ip have also secured part-funding from Bristol Energy for a post that will work with young people at 1625ip, to carry out a house challenge (similar to a room makeover), to help them develop the skills and know-how to save money on energy bills. A Cash Pointers staff member has also independently won funding to set up an informal financial education service at a foodbank, based on the principles learnt through Cash Pointers.
- Citizens Advice Southwark, Money Savvy Southwark's lead organisation (IFC end date March 2018), had successfully applied to the Money Advice Service What Works Fund to evaluate the Money Champions peer education scheme that formed a core part of its IFC service, focused on welfare reform. It had also received funding from DWP to provide budgeting and digital support to Universal Credit claimants in the borough's Job Centre Plus offices.
- 1st Call Hyndburn (IFC end date April 2017) had received additional funding from its lead organisation Hyndburn Homes to continue IFC services over 2017/18 while it awaited the outcome of a large funding application (see below). Hyndburn Homes had

also successfully applied for funding from Big Lottery Fund's Building Better Opportunities programme for a two-days a week post over three years to work with young residents, which included helping them to stabilise and manage their finances.
- The Monkey project in County Durham has managed to secure some European Social Funding (ESF) for their Money Mentor programme, which will fund some posts for 18 months from September 2017.

The outcome of other funding applications was pending:

- Citizens Advice Liverpool, the Volunteer Hub's lead organisation (IFC end date March 2018) was awaiting the outcome (due May 2017) of its application to NESTA's Savers Support Fund[1] that would expand some of its IFC activities geographically and digitally to help people vulnerable to financial shocks.
- Norwich's Money Wise, Home Safe (IFC end date November 2017) had applied to the Big Lottery Fund's Reaching Communities programme to continue and expand its IFC service to a wider range of people over a larger geographical area by employing two full-time advice workers to worth with anyone aged 16+ in Greater Norwich.
- 1st Call Hyndburn (IFC end date April 2017) was a partner in a county-wide European Social Investment Fund bid, which would fund a project manager and support officer along with operational and marketing costs for three years. If successful, the project would provide one-to-one support for people with complex needs to move towards volunteering, education and employment, including elements of the IFC service.
- Citizens Advice Wolverhampton, Better Off in Wolverhampton's lead organisation (IFC end date December 2017) had applied for funding to scale up its IFC services across the region.

Some funding applications were unsuccessful:

- Hull & East Ridings "Quids-In" had applied unsuccessfully to the Money Advice Service What Works Fund to evaluate elements of its IFC service.
- Norwich's Money Wise, Home Safe had applied unsuccessfully to the Tampon Tax Fund to fund some of its IFC services

Other IFC projects (including Minted Tameside; Citizens Advice Knowsley and Hull & East Ridings "Quids-In", Lambeth FACE) planned to identify external funding sources and apply for funding in 2017/2018, their final year of IFC.

[1] http://www.nesta.org.uk/project/savers-support-fund

Sustainability case study – Delivery partner on a Building Better Opportunities project

The **New Direction project** led by RAISE has achieved sustainability for the staff delivering the home visiting element of delivery. This has been achieved through its membership of a partnership, led by the Women's Organisation that was successful in applying for funding through Big Lottery Fund's Building Better Opportunities Programme (BBO). The delivery of the New Direction project meant RAISE was able to offer experience, which enhanced the lead organisation's track record and reputation in providing financial capability training to support behavioural change, which supported the finding bid.

Sustainability case study – Continuing targeted work through Help Through Crisis

Haringey CAB, lead for the **Moneywise project**, has won funding as part of the Help Through Crisis programme, the Big Lottery funded initiative. Some of the staff from Moneywise project are now working on this programme, and this is one way in which the learning will be carried forward. Specifically, project staff are to continue to provide the workshops for care leavers as part of the Help through Crisis delivery.

7.3 IFC legacy

The perceived legacy of IFC projects included:

- Positive benefits for beneficiaries and volunteers on a wide range of outcome measures that extended beyond improving financial confidence.
- Raised profile, understanding and skills around financial capability among partner organisations and stakeholders, for example enabling frontline staff to have better 'money conversations' with their service users, and upskilling specialist teams such as Carer Leavers teams.
- Ongoing community projects such as work clubs.
- Online tried-and-tested resources that were freely available to other organisations that wanted to deliver IFC services.
- Hackney Money Smart is working with local providers to identify the indicators to measure that would best make the case for continuing IFC activity.
- "A number of providers were exploring the potential to achieve a legacy through supporting Social Care (community care and support) and social prescribing. "Quids-In"" is undertaking an impact analysis and social return on investment to help measure social value and achieve a legacy. "Quids-In" have noticed an increase in referrals from Social Services, and would like to identify legacy funding from health and wellbeing providers, as this area is seen as offering more scope than Housing teams. The project is keen to demonstrate that it can support health and wellbeing outcomes, building on outcomes identified by Warmzone around tackling fuel poverty.

A number of projects were hoping to achieve a legacy through pilot work:

- Potential to co-fund activities with local authorities. For example, the ”Quids-In” project was in discussion with the Early Help team at the local authority about potentially setting up a pilot for financial capability support to be provided alongside midwives visiting women having a third child. The Early Help team asked “Quids-In” to design an accessible welfare reform leaflet for distribution.
- The MoneyWise HomeSafe project was developing a pilot with Norwich prison. The pilot is focused on support for prisoners from the open wing (42 inmates), who work and keep 60% of their salary. The financial capability support will help beneficiaries to manage their bank account and debit card, and avoid accruing any debts. The Police Commissioner may be interred in funding the initiative at some stage.

The key challenges identified by projects reducing their ability to achieve a legacy through the IFC project being taken on as a core service included:

- Staff turnover, particularly amongst those in strategic positions in partner organisations.
- The reduction in budgets for social housing providers. To address this challenge a minority of projects were exploring the feasibility of achieving a legacy by incorporating their support into online modules, such as Lambeth FACE.
- The small scale/ restrictive nature of potential funding from other sources such as private and charitable trusts.

7.4 Future planning – a menu / suite of ingredients to help you make the business case for financial capability provision

This section draws on the main lessons and learning that have emerged as projects have assessed ‘what works’ in terms of building their activities, and making the case for sustaining them. It should be treated as a potential menu, or suite of suggestions, some of which may be appropriate, as projects and partners reach the end of their BIG funding, and need to prepare approaches to other funding bodies that look robust, confident, and persuasive in order to continue their work.

It can also be used as a checklist for potential new projects, outside the IFC framework but with the same concerns and problems faced by the communities that the IFC engaged, in helping develop initiatives.

Following the BIG Lottery Fund’s strategic approach, this suite encourages organisations to draw on the strengths and talents of individuals, local communities and partners in the shaping and delivery of projects.

Are you offering what the community really wants?
A number of projects found that, with the best intentions in the world, the demand for their particular services and tools was not there on the ground, when set up and running. Using secondary data – e.g. indicators of deprivation, poverty statistics, income and employment

statistics – is an adjunct and not a substitute for primary research among potential client / beneficiary groups. Surveys can be useful, but one to one interviews, small group work, and deliberative events will enable you to get a better feel for what is really wanted, and help you lay out the evidence (alongside secondary data) that your project is worth funding in a robust way. Communities and potential beneficiaries need to spark and catalyse the development of initiatives, rather than being perceived as passive beneficiaries of services.

Are you designing your tools and approach with your community?
Linked to the above, positive input, feedback and promotion by potential service users is one of the strongest marketing resources you will have. This does not come unless you fully-engage with your client group from the start, and give them an active role in shaping the project, its activities, and its tools. Finding forums where you can meet potential service users (via voluntary sector agencies for example) and working with them to shape your proposed relaunch or new service will help make your proposal / bid much more credible.

How are you avoiding competition and promoting co-production with other community-based organisations?
In the early days of some IFC projects there was perceived competition for beneficiaries, between the IFC project and the money advice or related support offered by individual landlords. Given the current financial climate this is less likely to be a problem, but projects should look to providing complementary and collaborative services with partners, rather than duplicative services. Finding a common shared direction alongside other community stakeholders will strengthen your credibility. Getting this right also relates to the earlier section on doing your research, to make sure you are proposing to provide what the community actually wants. Open engagement with potential partners from an early stage will help you get this balance right and enable you to demonstrate a joined up approach in meeting local financial capability needs.

Are you free to innovative?
If you want to work innovatively in the field of early action (for example, developing a debt prevention service), you should first of all check that sufficient acute need provision is available locally. This will ensure you are able to focus on testing innovative preventative activities, and can signpost people to acute need support if necessary, so your own programme does not get diverted into providing crisis intervention support.

Do you have built-in flexibility?
While you will always want to present a clear, coherent case to funders, you also need to be structured so you can respond to environmental change. For example, many projects thought they would be dealing with Universal Credit much earlier than was the case, and they needed to be able to change their offer to something more relevant when Universal Credit was deferred. You will (from your existing evidence base and additional research) be aware of the underlying support / advice / capacity building needs of your local community: make sure your staffing and back-office structures are sufficiently flexible to meet these needs in different ways. But alongside this, you need to have confidence that the local community and service users will quickly let you know if you are getting it wrong, or need to change.

Have you evaluated your overall operating mode?
This report has illustrated the range of approaches different agencies have taken, from large-scale 'upstream' group activities and engagement, to intensive one to one mentoring programmes, and all stages in between. Ensuring that potential service users voices are heard in determining how the project should operate is a key element in getting it right Projects need to review and evaluate with potential service users which approach (or combination of approaches) has worked best, and build on that basis; and the possibility of change in approach over time can also be factored in (part of being flexible). Sometimes the model of approach is dictated by the environment – e.g. the use of a shop front in an urban environment, or an outreach approach in sparsely populated rural settings. So be mindful about what is and is not possible or appropriate in your own unique environment – do you expect to go out to find and meet your beneficiaries, or do you expect them to come to you?

Have you thought enough about branding and image?
Linked to the operating mode you choose are issues about name, visual presence, and launch (or relaunch) strategies. Some projects initially adopted an outgoing roadshow approach to spread the word about their existence and attract clients; others found that in-house publicity and promotion was enough. Many 'piggy-backed' on existing community events to establish a presence, and encourage word of mouth. Some projects involved their client groups – particularly young people - in the naming, design style and overall 'face' of the project to great success. Potential investors are going to want to be assured that you have strong sense of the public relations activities (including media of all forms) required to attract both clients and additional funding, and that project and service users have been fully-engaged in developing the project 'brand'.

Do you intend to provide holistic or focussed services for the community?
Many projects found that starting to talk about money concerns was a 'can-opener' that brought out a range of issues, including underlying poverty, health and wellbeing, education, training and employment, literacy and numeracy, digital exclusion and many other issues. Projects need to be clear how they are going to deal with this: are they going to build in partnerships and referral mechanisms, deal with an expanded range of issues themselves, or stick to core purpose and use signposting? Who and how will projects consult on the shape of services they will provide? Funders will want clarity on how the project fits in with the bigger picture of social and economic need.

Have you designed and built in monitoring and evaluation arrangements?
'If you can't count it, it doesn't count' is a cliché but has an underlying truth. The IFC programme should have given projects strong statistical and qualitative baselines to build their cases, and are probably in a lot stronger position today than they were originally, to build evidenced, researched cases on both financial capability needs, and the impact of financial capability work. New and relaunched projects will need to make sure that proportionate measurement, monitoring and evaluation is integral to new proposals from day one – including measurement of social value and return on investment. The programme recognised that front line organisations often felt it onerous or second-order to put time into detailed monitoring, so proportionality needs to focus on the most important outcomes of initiatives where possible, rather than inputs or outputs. Reflecting the

voice of the service user and of the wider community that the project serves will be an essential element of monitoring and evaluation.

Do you have the most appropriate leadership agency?

Some IFC projects were embedded in and led by social landlords; others were led by voluntary sector agencies, particularly Citizens Advice offices. Each approach has its pros and cons: the landlord-based approach has the advantage of a 'captive audience' of potential beneficiaries and easier communications between relevant staff (e.g .money advisers and rent collection officers). On the other hand they may not be able to access the wider services that make up a 'holistic' approach, nor necessarily be able to access tenants of other landlords. Voluntary sector agencies in the lead will be able to access a wide range of skills and services, but they may struggle to get commitment from landlords to come on board, and get a steady flow of clients through their doors. There is no easy answer to this, but both for IFC projects seeking to continue and new projects, some consideration and awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of different leadership roles in your structure will be essential in convincing resources of your viability and stability.

Is all of your organisation fully on board?

A prerequisite for the success of an IFC initiative has been a strong and active commitment from the senior management / Board of the lead organisation, and a further commitment to promote the project across the breadth of the organisations concerned. Investors and grant-making bodies will need assurance of this. There were a number of instances where within social landlords there was a degree of tension, or at least disengagement, between housing management staff (whose priorities were preventing rent arrears) and project / financial inclusion staff (whose priorities were preventing poverty). There are of course strong reasons why these agendas are not incompatible, but top level commitment is essential in making the case. For voluntary sector agencies, the difficulties were that sometimes IFC resources tended to be regarded as corporate sums that could be diverted to other activities, and again a strong commitment to the mainstream project was essential from the top.

Are you choosing the right partners?

Linked to the above are the decisions you'll need to make about what partners to approach. Experience seems to have shown that a smaller number of strongly committed partners who bring a range of skills and competencies to the table is better than strings of those who only sign up nominally: you will spend all your time chasing them for little reward. 'Trusted' partners is the watchword, and trust is born out of symbiosis: all partners must see they are gaining from the relationship, it can't be a one way street.

How have you planned for engaging community volunteers?

A number of projects worked with or used volunteers as part of their service delivery model. The social capital that can be both generated and used, and the impact that volunteering can have on individuals' life chances is considerable. But putting this route into your business or development plan needs careful consideration: while volunteers (including client peer volunteers) will add resources and depth to your operation, they will need recruiting, training, supervision and 'feeding' with enough, suitable work. Some tasks will be inappropriate or beyond the capacity of volunteers; conversely, over-reliance on volunteers may be risky if you cannot continuously

refresh their ranks: the ‘offer’ for many volunteers is quasi-work experience, and the good ones will rapidly gain employment.

Asking the difficult questions: can you afford not to do it?

Many ‘home’ organisations of IFC projects have cited the harsh economic climate, the changes to housing association funding, and the current and potential impact of the rolling out of Universal Credit as reasons why they are not able to mainstream IFC activities at the end of funding, at least not without substantial additional grant-based funding. However, a few housing organisations have turned this paradigm on its head, and argued that in the longer term they cannot afford ***not*** to continue and indeed expand the services.

Ideally, this continuing or new function should be jointly focused on ‘catching them young’ – making sure that new and young tenants have a package of relevant budgeting, financial literacy and associated measures to support them from the inception of their tenancy; and on remedial work, intervening where residents are already in arrears or other forms of debt that will impact on their tenancies.

The argument goes that all the evidence from the initial introduction of Universal Credit signals a disaster in terms of revenue collection, as full service Universal Credit is introduced between now and 2018 across England and Wales; and there is an even worse prognosis running up to 2022, when long-standing claimants who had not been moved over by 2018 (and have had no experience of Universal Credit) are forced to transfer en masse. These factors are resulting in forward looking associations carefully reviewing their business plans, and looking to see where shifts in the balance of staffing resources can be made, to resource a continuing IFC function.

These are of course very difficult and challenging questions, and there are implications for the delivery of mainstream housing services – repairs, maintenance, customer care, ASB, allocations, to name but a few - that are dear to residents’ hearts. Nonetheless, at the very least, Boards and senior managers need to understand the impact of not continuing IFC work, and what level of priority it should take in the association’s overall business plan, financial projections, and corporate priorities.

8.0 Conclusions

The Improving Financial Confidence programme has been delivered against a backdrop of considerable change and uncertainty in the social housing sector during a period of significant welfare reforms and changes to benefits. The programme therefore evolved from an original preventative programme into a mix of crisis intervention work and supporting beneficiaries to develop new budgeting skills in accordance with wider economic changes.

The Improving Financial Confidence programme was implemented using 'test and learn' principles, which projects consistently reflected enabled them to pilot different approaches and adapt delivery as lessons were learnt. It also allowed flexibility in the programme to respond to the delivery context and profile of beneficiaries in need of support, allowing the widening of the target groups beyond specific groups of social housing tenants. This flexibility and the adaptions made by projects allowed robust testing of approaches to the engagement of beneficiaries and delivery of interventions. The programme has and continues to, through those ongoing projects, generate significant learning associated with the delivery of financial confidence and money management support in the often challenging circumstances tenants find themselves in. The following summarises the key learning points identified by the evaluation of the IFC programme.

Engagement

The evaluation identified the following key success factors in engaging beneficiaries:

- Establishing effective and diverse referral routes. This ranged from core partners such as Citizens Advice through to specialist support providers such as the Probation Service and Women's Centres.
- Allowing time to build the brand locally. Project developed a sales approach and community presence, through promoting the project at community events and fostering an open door policy. Projects also highlighted the importance of establishing a physical presence, such as through shopfronts or recruitment activities at other service providers' premises.
- Conducting outreach support and home visits. This approach was employed successfully in both urban and rural areas, to support vulnerable clients who would be unable to travel to centralised provision owing to the cost of travel, and mental health concerns ranging from anxiety and depression.
- Building and maintaining a trusted relationship between project worker and tenant, and using every-day language.

The methods identified above helped to address initial challenges, such as many housing providers setting up their own in-house support services for tenants, reducing the need for referrals to IFC provision. However the recent cut to housing budgets has resulted in many of these services being cut, and it is hoped that within the last year of the programme this will increase traffic to those IFC projects continuing into 2018.

Delivery models

A strength of the programme is the application of 'test and learn', which has given projects the flexibility to test different approaches and adapt their delivery models. This has generated learning which can inform future delivery models, particularly around realistic assessments about the level of support required by many tenants to strengthen their skills and confidence to manage their own finances in the longer term.

The evaluation highlighted the following key success factors in relation to delivery:

- Providing tailored one-to-one support, focused on supporting behaviour change through action planning and practical approaches.
- Group activities worked well with some groups, particularly young people/ new tenants.
- Combining financial capability advice with everyday activities such as cooking on a budget and DIY/ decorating around the home.
- Making the connection between money management approaches and beneficiary health and wellbeing
- Encouraging beneficiaries to develop online money management skills, in the context of Universal Credit
- Integrating IFC into tenancy support
- Recognising that many beneficiaries welcomed a combination of group and one-to-one support
- Understanding peer mentoring and volunteering approaches and activities that work well, such as support for group activities, and recognising that more intensive one-to-one support tends to be best provided by fully trained paid staff.

Outcomes and impacts

The evaluation captured outcomes at the beneficiary and landlord levels.

Follow-up data is available for 10,129 tenants, some 29% of the total number of beneficiaries for which a full beneficiary record was created. Analysis is therefore possible for a significant proportion of the IFC beneficiaries to explore changes to beneficiaries financial confidence, use of financial products and experience of financial difficulty. Bank account ownership was relatively high amongst beneficiaries; about 85% of people had a current account at both baseline and follow-up. The level of credit union membership also stayed fairly stable, this rose very slightly from 6% to 7% at follow up stage. The percentage of tenants with home contents insurance rose from 8% to 14%. At the baseline stage, 13% of tenants were behind with payments on at least one loan. This fell to 9% at the follow up. 28% were in rent arrears at the baseline and this fell to 23% at the follow-up.

Financial confidence was measured using the MyFC tool. A small group of beneficiaries, (1516), started the IFC programme sufficiently early on in the delivery period for follow up data to be gathered from them six months after they left the programme, to demonstrate the extent of changes in their financial capability over time. Of these 1516 respondents, the mean MyFC score at baseline was 0.07, increasing to 0.32 when the second score was captured and 0.41 at the second follow-up. Although only based on a relative small sample, this does suggest a sustained

change in financial confidence for beneficiaries after engagement in IFC projects. It is positive that the financial knowledge and money management skills gained by beneficiaries are being maintained, as demonstrated by the increase in MyFC score at the third follow up point.

The programme also achieved a number of wider beneficiary outcomes:

- Many IFC projects reported providing assistance to IFC beneficiaries to access additional or increased income by applying for additional benefits, accessing private pensions that were not in payment or applying to charitable trusts and foundations, for example, for hardship grants to clear debts or to furnish homes.
- Beneficiaries commonly reported reduced stress levels as a result of the IFC support they received. For example some projects helped beneficiaries apply for a Debt Relief Order (DRO), to manage payment demands and help establish realistic repayment plans.
- Some beneficiaries gained work with the support of project-related activities such as job clubs, budgeting advice which increased their confidence to deal independently with their finances, and support and signposting to specialist support to help strengthen their mental health.

The evaluation was also designed to demonstrate the benefits and impacts of effective approaches on both individual social housing tenants and the social housing landlords' 'bottom line', in terms of reductions in rent arrears and evictions. Baseline data was collected to asses the impact of the IFC programme on individual landlords, in relation to housing management activities where performance is affected by tenant behaviour. The key landlord outcomes were:

- The impact of the programme on rent arrears was mixed. The median level of cash rent arrears carried by landlords at the latest time point data was collected for was £319,409. This represents a £155,142 reduction on the baseline level of £474,551 – a 33% reduction. Although not large, in the context of the broader environment of welfare reform and the austerity agenda, this is a positive result. However, the amount of cash arrears relates strongly to the size of the stock and the number of tenants. So, if data is taken primarily from smaller landlords, the cash figures would be a lot lower than if a number of larger landlords with higher rent rolls were involved.
- Another arrears indicator monitored was the proportion of tenants more than two months behind in their rents. Often short-term arrears are the result of delays in the Housing Benefit system, or the way rent accounting systems work, and the introduction of Universal Credit, with its built-in delay factor will have exacerbated this. Longer-term rent arrears are more likely to be ascribable to tenant behaviour. We found that the proportion of tenants more than eight weeks behind in their rent had steadily increased from the baseline figure of 6.8% to 7.4% and then to 8%.
- 'Short term' voids are empty homes that do not have significant disrepair problems, and are expected to be quickly re-let to new tenants. While not a direct indicator of the impact of the IFC programme, faster turnover times and lower levels do show that a housing association has less of a problem with failing or abandoned tenancies than others with higher rates. The ability of the IFC programme to get potential residents 'tenancy ready'

was cited as a factor in enabling homes to be let quickly, or less desirable properties let at all. Here the programme does show a positive impact. The time taken to let empty homes has fallen slightly over the period of the IFC programme, from an average of five weeks at the baseline stage, to 4.2 weeks at the final data collection point. This is partly reflected in the snapshots of the actual average numbers of voids. After an initial increase in numbers between the baseline and mid-point, from 27 to 35, the final figure reduced to 30. This pattern is reflected in the void loss figures – the amount of rent that has remained uncollected because a property was empty. From an initial base of a median figure of £2,634 per month, void losses increased to £2,955 at the mid-point, but then reduced to an average of £2,789 at the latest measurement point. This represents a 6% increase on the baseline figure.

Programme legacy

The evaluation identifies a number of ways in which the IFC programme is generating a legacy, both in terms of direct activities that are being mainstreamed and/or sustained and wider learning that is supporting the development of new and emerging programmes and provision, including:

- Mainstreaming activities within lead organisations, through the continuation of roles and taking forward the work through new structures or core services. For example some housing providers are incorporating IFC support for beneficiaries into their core offer. In some areas Citizens' Advice is continuing IFC activities, particularly through volunteering initiatives.
- Sustaining activities and utilising knowledge through new projects or programmes, particularly the Big Lottery Fund's Building Better Opportunities and Help through Crisis programmes and the Money Advice Service's What Works Fund.
- Informing housing provider approaches to social value, which recognise the importance of building a trusted relationship with tenants, providing support and advice to help them maintain their tenancies.
- Gaining private sector investment to roll out training programmes in new contexts, using IFC approaches. Whilst this was only achieved by one or two projects, it demonstrates the importance of networking and undertaking influencing work.

8.1 Recommendations for future planning

Originally, the evaluation aimed to act as a catalyst for investment by the social housing sector in effective approaches to improve financial confidence in the longer term. However, given the changed operating context and shifting policy around financial confidence, the evaluation subsequently took a wider view of the sustainability of IFC activity rather than solely examining the business case for social housing landlords. In this final report, evidence is presented on the different mechanisms that projects have pursued to sustain IFC project activity. Recommendations are presented in the form of a potential menu, or suite of suggestions for organisations looking in the future to deliver activity to address financial confidence, to think about how to approach preparing future funding bids or business planning. Providers are invited to consider the following questions:

- Are you offering what the community really wants?
- Are you testing out your tools and approach with your community?
- How are you avoiding competition and promoting co-production with other community-based organisations?
- Are you free to innovate?
- Do you have built-in flexibility?
- Have you evaluated your overall operating mode?
- Have you thought enough about branding and image?
- Do you intend to provide holistic or focussed services for the community?
- Have you designed and built in monitoring and evaluation arrangements?
- Do you have the most appropriate leadership agency?
- Is all of your organisation fully on board?
- Are you choosing the right partners?
- How have you planned for engaging community volunteers?
- Asking the difficult questions: can you afford not to do it?

Around a third of projects are still delivering in 2018, and it is hoped these projects will be able to influence local support structures for Universal Credit, in line with the original programme intent. The evaluation team would also encourage projects and the Big Lottery Fund to work with mental health providers and policy makers to share learning on the interconnection between mental health, poverty and financial capability during the final year of the programme.

Annex One: Improving Financial Confidence programme case studies

Cash Pointers

Introduction

The Cash Pointers programme ran from 2013 to 2017, and was led by 1625 Independent People (1625ip). They initially partnered with nine other organisations, primarily housing associations. The project broadened its remit, and the type of partner organisations, eventually working with around 70 different organisations over the course of the four years.

Delivering IFC training/support to tenants

The planned model consisted of both one-to-one sessions and group work. Initially the project delivered one-to-one sessions with young social housing tenants that were referred from the partner housing organisations, to improve their financial skills and confidence. The project took a casework approach to these sessions; with tenants seeing a caseworker up to four or five times, and working towards a number of outcomes, such as awareness of financial products, or practising budgeting techniques.

As the project progressed, group work was introduced. The group work linked financial capability with independent living skills, such as cooking on a budget, or furniture upcycling. The project incorporated these sessions into the existing 1625ip support programme, and then approached other youth organisations, adapting the sessions to the needs of the audience, focussing on job readiness for apprentices, for example.

A number of diverse and creative methods for delivering the IFC programme emerged. The project ran competitive room-makeover challenges, where tenants were each given £50 and helped to makeover a room in their home. 1625ip adapted their existing peer education programme on preventing homelessness to deliver money management training, which they took to schools and employment training charities. 1625ip also let other organisations take the lead in working with Cash Pointers; Community Award projects were match-funded projects whereby community groups ran a range of projects with eligible cohorts of young people linked to improving financial confidence and skills.

Engaging tenants in IFC training/support

1625ip actively pursued partnerships with schools, training providers, and other youth groups, and offered to deliver tailored sessions for their students, service users and clients. The project particularly targeted beneficiaries who were likely to go into social housing, such as young people from deprived areas, or care leavers, and approached the organisations that these young people already used, as they had often gained the trust of their users. These organisations were really happy for 1625ip to deliver financial training to their users. It was a combination of a variety of approaches, as described above, and the skills of the staff in youth work that ultimately proved successful in engagement.

Working with partners

Cash Pointers staff were very positive about their partnership work with housing providers, who were seen as offered as much support as they could, reflective of their need for the Cash Pointers service, coupled with the competing pressures faced by social housing

providers. The partnerships built with youth service providers, however, were a particular strength of the project, as Cash Pointers had more to offer these organisations, Cash Pointers demonstrated the importance of embedding financial capability training into all aspects of young people's lives, at any place where they may turn for support.

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training/support

The Cash Pointers project evaluation indicated that young people who participated in the programme felt more confident in money management and were better at budgeting than before. For example, some beneficiaries had managed to pay off their debts and rent arrears following the Cash Pointers advice. Cash Pointers also noted improvements in beneficiaries' wellbeing and mental health at the end of the programme.

Sustainability and legacy of the project

All staff at 1625ip have received training in providing financial capability support, and the module is now part of 1625ip's core services. Financial capability training has therefore become embedded in more formalised and structured ways at 1625ip as a result of the Cash Pointers project. The project materials are also available for on-going use, and Cash Pointers staff are offering training to all the organisations involved.

In terms of future funding, 1625ip have secured funding through the Money Advice Service's What Works Fund to run a peer education programme for children aged 14 – 18 who are outside mainstream education. This project will fund two staff members until April 2018. 1625ip have also secured funding from a high street bank (Royal Bank of Scotland) for a volunteering programme, training volunteers to run one-to-one sessions with young people at 1625ip, using existing training approaches and materials. Part-funding has also been secured from Bristol Energy for a post that will work with residents in 1625ip shared houses, carrying out a house challenge (similar to their room makeover) and raising awareness about how to save money on energy bills. Cash Pointers will also inform the Ask Us programme, a project 1625ip are running with Citizens' Advice and the local legal advice centre, offering advice to young people. 1625ip are also still pursuing funding through the Children and Young People's Service to work with foster carers and those who are about to leave care. Separately, one Cash Pointers staff member had independently won funding to set up an informal financial education service at a foodbank, based on the Cash Pointers principles.

Haringey Moneywise

Introduction

The Moneywise project ran from 2013 to 2017, and was based in the London Borough of Haringey. Citizens Advice Haringey was the lead organisation, and partnered with six local Housing Associations, nine advice and support organisations and Haringey Council. Over the course of the project, partnerships were formed with a wide range of community organisations, including local schools and addiction services.

Delivering IFC training/support to tenants

The planned model was to deliver a series of six group sessions, providing an overall programme of financial confidence support. The difficulty of gathering enough people at one time to make a series of workshops viable resulted in a revision of the plan to deliver the training via a one-off, two hour workshop. The final full programme was based around four different sessions: banking, saving and borrowing, new tenancy, savvy shopping, and a cooking session. Eventually, the project developed a portfolio of modules that could be adapted to suit each audience and the number of sessions required. This enabled the Moneywise team to consider the age and vulnerabilities of beneficiaries in each group.

Haringey Moneywise also employed two fully qualified debt advisors to see people at one-to-one sessions for two years of the programme. This was introduced as project staff recognised that some beneficiaries wanted to discuss their financial situation confidentially, particularly if they were struggling financially. The addition of the one-to one services became an integral part of the holistic money management programme.

Engaging tenants in IFC training/support

Both the project staff and the staff from Homes for Haringey reported that the eligibility restrictions on tenants was a big barrier to engagement at the start of the programme. Moneywise staff explained that this restricted them to finding beneficiaries through housing providers; whilst Homes for Haringey found it difficult to identify and engage eligible tenants.

Success in engaging beneficiaries more widely came when the programme restrictions around only recruiting social housing tenants were lifted. Moneywise found that the most effective engagement technique was identifying already established groups to offer the workshops to. The project approached schools, technical colleges, drug and alcohol services, Tottenham Hotspur Foundation, and a wide range of community groups that they felt could benefit from financial confidence training. The other strand to the Moneywise engagement work was establishing a presence and ‘brand’ in the community; activities included hosting stands at community and housing events, as well as organising their own events.

Working with partners

In general, the project experienced some challenges in working with the initial housing partners. The project experienced difficulties in engaging enough beneficiaries to make the initial workshops viable, even with Homes for Haringey support. One of the challenges was

some overlap with existing service provision, as Homes for Haringey were already paying for a Citizen's Advice advisor to provide debt advice.

The community-based partnerships were generally more successful because the Moneywise workshops were complementary but different to what groups themselves were providing. By engaging with many different types of community organisations, the Moneywise staff started to build up a network around Haringey.

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training/support

Moneywise received positive feedback from all groups, and suggested that the workshops had had an impact on the behaviours and confidence of beneficiaries. The workshops on savvy shopping and cooking on a budget appeared to be the most effective; the six month follow-ups from care leavers suggested that there had been some long-lasting effects in their shopping and eating habits in particular. The feedback also indicated that some school children were more inclined to save once they had attended the workshops.

Sustainability and legacy of the project

The workshop materials are available to organisations wishing to deliver workshops in the future, and the Moneywise staff are happy to train staff from organisations to deliver their own workshops. The contact for Haringey schools is the borough lead for financial education in schools, so Moneywise are confident that workshops will continue in schools.

Citizens Advice Haringey has secured funding through the Big Lottery Fund's Help through Crisis programme. Some of the Moneywise staff are now working on the Help through Crisis programme, and this is one way in which project learning will be carried forward. The wider community links built with organisations though Moneywise will help ensure their relevance to this new programme. The workshops for care leavers, for example, will continue to be delivered as part of the Help through Crisis programme.

1st Call Hyndburn

Introduction

The project ran from 2013 to 2017, and was led by Hyndburn Homes. Key partners were local community agencies Community Solutions and YNOT; Shontal Theatre Group, local schools and colleges, Citizens Advice, and Hyndburn Borough Council.

Delivering IFC training/support to tenants

The original model was based on (1) the concept of referring newly-starting, young tenants to Community Solutions for a financial capability assessment, and then to consider recruiting some of them for a volunteer programme, with volunteers providing budgeting and support to other tenants. However, this changed to Community Solutions recruiting tenants and other volunteers directly. (2) Running a drop-in centre staffed by three professionals with support from volunteers. This only expanded rapidly when the premises moved to a shop front in a shopping centre (3) Engaging schools and colleges through drama activities, led by Shontal (4) Providing detailed Money Management courses in schools and colleges. Key success factors were the shop front, where job adverts were used as a 'hook' to attract people in, who were then engaged around wider financial matters; the informal and friendly approach of staff; good communications and integration with complementary services around in Accrington; and the quality of the volunteers. Key learning identified were difficulties in referral processes; the difficulties around retaining trained volunteers, and ensuring sufficient / appropriate work for them.

Engaging tenants in IFC training/support

The initial approach around tenancy referrals was not very successful, and hoped for referrals from other local housing associations never really materialised. However, the move to shop premises and the ease with which tenants were able to use the services provided changed this. Additionally, when the eligibility criteria was opened up, the project was able to engage a much wider range of beneficiaries, including older tenants, private renters, and owner-occupiers, who visited the shop and were appropriately advised. Word of mouth was also very important in building up the client base – the area is closely knit, and family or friends had a key role in spreading information about the drop-in centre.

Working with partners

Partnership working was particularly important in the delivery of services outside the shop front, such as the theatre work with schools, training of volunteers, and Money Matters training in schools. At the drop-in centre, good relations with other community and statutory groups (e.g. Citizens Advice, Alzheimer Support, food banks, and Community Solutions) were important in providing holistic services for local people.

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training/support

Tenants and residents benefitted both through improved financial capability, but also through growing in confidence and self-esteem, and learning to deal with their own problems without over-reliance on 1st Call Hyndburn. The project reported footfall of between 30 - 50 per day. The principle benefit of the project for Hyndburn Homes has been

the ability to fill hard to let properties in sheltered schemes that might otherwise have remained empty.

Sustainability and legacy of the project

Three years core continuation funding has been secured from the European Social Investment Fund. Additional funding from the Big Lottery Fund's Building Better Opportunities, (BBO), programme is also in place. If these funding bids had been unsuccessful, Hyndburn Homes had guaranteed a further year's funding to keep the project running. Longer-term mainstreaming plans were not in place at the time of the research. The continuation funding will resource the current staffing level (three professionals) plus a team of around ten volunteers. A BBO adviser also works part time out of the shop front, and other voluntary sector agencies run sessions on the premises.

One volunteer commented: *"I don't know what everyone would do if we had to close down. So many people need us. They'd still be queuing outside the door if we shut down."*

Dissemination activities/ Influencing work

Most dissemination has been though local voluntary and statutory sectors networks and relationships, as well as word of mouth. Accrington has a multiplicity of voluntary sector groups and forums, and sharing project learning and developments with all parties had been important. The central location of the drop-in centre, and the presence of many different voluntary sector agencies in the centre also helped to disseminate project learning.

Sick of Being Skint (SOBS)

Introduction

This project ran from 2012 to 2017, and was led by Pennine Housing 2000 (part of Together Group). The main partners were Calderdale MBC, Calderdale CAB, Project Challenge, Yorkshire Housing, the local Youth Offending Team, (YOT), local church-based charities, Credit Union, Barclays Bank, local schools and colleges, and YMCA.

Delivering IFC training/support to tenants

Initial activities were (1) 42 roadshows around Calderdale, including rural areas, often piggy-backing on other events, (2) A set of 50 'Money Matters' group-based activities delivered for schools and colleges. (3) After two years the project focus moved on to more personalised one-to-one casework. A team of four staff took referrals (mainly from within the housing association, from Income Officers). Key success factors were: the SOBS 'brand' (name, colours, logos); using the schools/college-based 'captive audience' for the Money Matters courses (enabling the project to reach students before they started tenancies or built up debts); being able to use tenancy records and control of the Choice Based Lettings scheme to target pre-tenants potentially vulnerable to financial problems at the start of their tenancies – project staff viewed being able to access this data as crucial. Key learning identified by project staff found that lack of financial capability was often inter-generational, and that young people could support their parents in these areas; and that word of mouth was enough to keep momentum going even after the roadshows had finished.

Engaging tenants in IFC training/support

Young Foyer residents were involved in scoping the activities of the SOBS project, and choosing the project name. An adaptable and flexible approach was essential for the one-to-one work. Project staff highlighted the importance of not being too formal, and it was essential not to be judgemental. Project staff explained that time and space was needed to build up a relationship of trust with beneficiaries, particularly young people. Texting was a successful tool for engaging young people (and older people) to remind them about appointments and keep in touch. The distinctive SOBS branding encouraged beneficiaries to view advisers separately to the landlord role of Pennine 2000. Advisers explained that many beneficiaries experienced complex issues, multiple problems and social isolation. Financial confidence was just one support need experienced by many beneficiaries, particularly older clients.

Working with partners

Generally partnership working was successful. Calderdale has a full and varied voluntary sector, comprising many agencies who already work with each other. From the start the SOBS project was keen to ensure value added, and not duplicate the work of other agencies. A project steering group with external membership was set up, including the other major landlord locally, Yorkshire Housing, and the local authority. The project had a strong relationship with the local authority, which helped develop the safeguarding and enterprise aspects of the project.

Additionally, Pennine 2000 has ‘internal partners’ in the form of a Welfare Benefits Team and two Money Advisers, whose skills were drawn upon to support Pennine 2000 tenants.

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training/support

Approaching 1400 people attended SOBS Roadshows or Money Matters events; around 1000 initial one-to-ones and affordability checks were undertaken; and 373 tenants progressed onto on-going one-to-one support. SOBS estimates that around 700 people had improved skills and confidence after participating in project training.

Project staff estimate that a minimum of £200,000 of benefits and grants claimed and rent arrears and other debts reduced was achieved by the project.

Sustainability and legacy of the project

The SOBS project is being mainstreamed as a Tenancy Sustainability Service. The Together Group (of which Pennie 2000 is a member) agreed that they could not afford to stop the key services provided by SOBS because *“what you save in one area you lose in another”.* The Together Group is therefore introducing a new Tenancy Sustainability Service building on the SOBS model. The new Service will employ 12 staff (a significant increase on the current four), working across three geographical locations and supporting tenants in other parts of the Together Group. The majority of the one-to- one services provided by the SOBS project will be continued through the Tenancy Sustainability Service.

Dissemination activities/ Influencing work

The first year of the project was largely spent developing the SOBS brand and promoting the service through Road Shows and Money Matters events. The project team have shared learning with other local organisations through the regional Big Lottery fora. The SOBS project has also been promoted on their website, and via texting, Facebook and Twitter. The project has also received a fair amount of coverage in regional newspapers and websites.

Monkey

Introduction

This project started in mid 2013 and ends in March 2018, and is led by Livin (the largest social landlord in County Durham). Partners include Cestria Community Housing, Derwentside Homes, SHAID, Durham County Credit Union, Centrepoint, Durham CAB, Durham County Council, FISCUS, other registered providers and voluntary sector agencies.

Delivering IFC training/support to tenants

The approach Monkey took to providing services changed during the project lifetime. Approaches and activities included: 1) Initially a co-ordinated assessment and referral system for local housing providers using Monkey as a central hub to efficiently refer tenants to 'Finance, Fuel and Furniture' advice, services and resources, primarily IT based though involving self-assessment forms; 2) Monkey resourcing local agencies to provide community-based finance advice / training, fuel and reuse furniture supplies to those in need (including negotiating 'Discount Card' deals to access furnishings and materials); 3) Funding the provision of relevant courses and training, including developing peer mentors to champion financial awareness and capability among young people; and 4) Latterly, developing a Money Mentor one-to-one support and advice service. Key learning identified by project staff in relation to delivery included: complex IT-based referral models between several landlords were not practical; lack of clarity about the 'offer' could undermine support; flexibility in being able to realign recourses to more effective delivery mechanisms (Money Mentors) was essential.

Engaging tenants in IFC training/support

Monkey signpost and refer beneficiaries to financial support services following their initial assessment. Over time it became clear that the initial 'hands off' paper and IT based referral system was not meeting the full needs of many tenants and did not align with many landlords' systems. Feedback indicates that the initiatives around developing access to cheaper fuel, furniture and white goods through a range of services, and the training and peer mentoring support models are successful. However analysis of applicants' expressed requirements (and of their MyFC self-assessment results) indicated the need for a one-to-one Money Mentor service, to address financial capability issues both before and after crises had occurred. For example, project staff highlighted that a 'crisis' could emerge when a pre-tenant was offered a rented home without having the skills, resources, or knowledge immediately in place to make a success of the tenancy, and therefore would need financial capability support. Key learning includes ensuring that the 'lived experience' voice is used to inform the content of training courses; identifying opportunities for engagement (e.g. 'saving for Christmas', 'saving for a holiday'), and undertaking awareness raising activities at larger-scale public events.

Working with partners

The project experienced mixed results in relation to partnership working. There were substantial operational difficulties in engaging housing association partners of Livin to refer their tenants to Monkey, due to a combination of IT incompatibility, uncertainty as to

Monkey's role and 'offer', the dispersed nature of County Durham tenants, and potential 'competition for clients'. However, strong and successful relationships were established with other types of voluntary sector organisations (such as SHAID working with single homeless people), Centrepoint, the local Credit Union and various furniture reuse projects.

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training/support

Over 1,600 new beneficiaries engaged with the Monkey project during 2016-17 (including 385 under 25 years of age). Nearly 2,600 beneficiaries accessed improved fuel and furniture solutions, and 186 beneficiaries engaged in learning courses to improve their financial skills. Over the same time period, via the Monkey referral model, over 2,700 residents have been assisted with furniture, 1,708 with carpets, and 741 with fuel support. Over 450 beneficiaries have received benefits or money advice, and around 700 referrals were made to Credit Unions or lower cost banking services.

Sustainability and legacy of the project

Monkey has been fortunate enough to be able to tap into the Tyne and Wear Building Better Opportunities, (BBO) programme, which is funded until April 2019. The resources available are primarily focused on the Money Mentoring model, rather than the original 'umbrella' approach. The Money Mentoring model is therefore being rolled out across the Tyne and Wear region, but there was uncertainty at the time of the research about the future resourcing of activities for residents in County Durham. Livin are concerned about the ending of the Money Mentors programme in County Durham as it is seen as being beneficial to their tenants (especially in the context of the rolling out of Universal Credit). Monkey staff are approaching external funding bodies for post 2018 finance, but some schemes, such as the furniture and fuel support schemes, are expected to achieve self-sufficiency over the next year

Dissemination activities/ Influencing work

Monkey achieved wide exposure across County Durham, primarily through word of mouth among beneficiaries, and also through its strong branding and image; it was perceived particularly by professional organisations, as inclusive, 'warm' and friendly. However further awareness raising activities could help potential beneficiaries understand the link between the brand and money and debt advice.

Hackney Money Smart

Introduction

Hackney Money Smart, (HMS), was launched in 2012 and ends in 2017. Citizen's Advice is the lead partner. Other partners include Hackney Housing; the social housing team within the local authority, and local housing associations.

Delivering IFC training/support to tenants

The project aims to build sustainable tenancies, and was informed by a pilot project funded through the Awards for All programme. HMS provides group workshops and one-to-one support. The group workshops align budgeting advice with everyday tasks such as food shopping or benefits, explore the importance of prioritising bills and debts, and introduce beneficiaries to appropriate financial services and products. These practical workshops are activity based, for example learning about budgeting through testing branded and non-branded food products and converting weekly budgets into monthly budgets. The workshops act as a gateway to the one-to-one sessions. The workshops are delivered by two financial officers and several volunteers. A key success factor is the training and personal development of the volunteers, which enables them to effectively assist beneficiaries to work towards their financial capability goals. The one-to-one sessions are delivered by financial officers from Citizen's Advice and take between 1.5 to 2 hours. This includes a full assessment exploring (un)employment issues and budgeting.

Engaging tenants in IFC training/support

A key learning point from the first year was the level of activity required to engage local groups and organisations including children's centres, housing associations and elderly groups. Engaging these organisations was crucial to the subsequent take-up and success of the project.

Hackney Housing and other organisations refer people to HMS through a simple online referral system. The monitoring system enables HMS to keep track of potential workshop attendees and remind them about upcoming events. Partners emphasised the importance of HMS being an independent body, as tenants were less likely to engage with support provided by the local authority. The voluntary nature of the support was also noted as an important factor, as initially some partners referred tenants to the programme as a mandatory step to avoid eviction, and this was not always taken-up. A waiting list is maintained to enable eligible beneficiaries to access the programme as soon as possible. This was important as attendance at the one-to-one sessions was most likely if the referral had been made within the previous two weeks.

Transparency and building trusted relationships were also key factors identified by Citizen's Advice in successfully engaging tenants. A financial inclusion officer explained; *"the best way to get people to listen is to show you are honest with them…show something personal about yourself, it helps them to open up."*

Working with partners

The partnership between Citizen's Advice and Hackney Housing was described by partners as a "win-win" situation. The project supports beneficiaries to learn about prioritising debts, such as rent arrears. In this way the project is building the skills and confidence of beneficiaries, enabling

tenants to reach a payment agreement with their housing provider, reducing the numbers falling into arrears and being evicted. Partnership working has created a more proactive "joined up" approach, between Citizen's Advice and Hackney Homes, which is helping to reduce debt escalation, as they are sharing information more effectively.

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training/support

Project partners and beneficiaries alike commented that HMS has benefited tenants by supporting the development of their financial skills. Financial officers also advocated on behalf of some beneficiaries on the point of eviction, helping to save their tenancy by coming to a satisfactory agreement and agreeing a payment plan with the local authority. Beneficiaries reported improved mental health and sleeping patterns, reduced anxiety and increased confidence as a result:

"Money Smart saved me from becoming homeless and they helped me manage my debts…now they're all paid back…After (the officer) helped, the fear of debt completely abated. Before I would get scared about money or getting blacklisted…all was very frightening. He just explained and made me see other debts in perspective."

"I know (the project) makes a massive change. I see clients who have been struggling for years not able to maintain or manage finances, now manage finances for the first time in their life. For the first time clients are saving because of us. They can see a future." (Financial officer)

Hackney Homes has recorded a reduction in rent arears and evictions over the last few years. Partners believe HMS has had a substantial impact in bringing about this outcome. Hackney Homes recorded an average reduction in arrears of £90.53 per tenant referred to HMS, compared to a reduction of £16.24 overall (non-referrals and referrals combined) between 2013-15. The partnership has also raised the profile of some partners, particularly Citizen's Advice, increasing their involvement in the local authority's strategic planning boards and consultations, such as advice reviews.

Sustainability and legacy of the project

Sustainability options are discussed at HMS's steering group meetings. Citizens' Advice is exploring how learning from HMS can inform their future planning and be continued through other programmes. HMS is also achieving a legacy by influencing the training of financial inclusion officers at Citizen's Advice. The local authority has shown the evidence of eviction and arears reduction to the local Housing Board, and hope that any finance collected will be reinvested in the service.

Other projects have evolved from HMS. For example, learning about how to address people's complex needs informed the successful bid led by Citizen's Advice for their Crisis Empowerment and Change project funded through the Big Lottery Fund's Help through Crisis programme. Citizen's Advice also utilised learning around the linkages between financial strain and mental health in their successful bid for Healthy Money Club funding from the Public Health team at the local authority.

Making Money Count

Introduction

Making Money Count (MMC) is funded from 2013 to 2018 and delivered in Fenland. Clarion Housing Group (formally Circle Housing Roddons) is the lead partner and the project partners are CHS Group, Rural Cambs Citizens Advice and Fenland District Council. The project also links up with other local housing providers such as Accent, Axiom and Sanctuary and provides open access services in the community via Citizens Advice.

Delivering IFC training/support to tenants

The project's aim is to help new tenants and tenants in and out of work build their confidence and skills to manage the financial challenges they face. The original model included one-to-one in the home sessions for new tenants, supplemented by community outreach through the New Horizons Bus, volunteer Money Mates and frontline worker training. The delivery model has changed significantly over time in response to the need for longer and deeper support to help work through some of the vulnerabilities and complex financial circumstances that tenants face.

The one-to-one sessions in the home for new tenants have stayed the same throughout the programme. The New Horizons Officer contacts tenants in the first week of their tenancy and offers immediate support to help 'settle in'. The offer is presented as 'business as usual' and has very high take up. A holistic assessment of the tenant's situation and needs is made and practical assistance with grants, foodbank vouchers and income maximisation as well as referrals to specialist support e.g. debt advice, floating support. This is a relatively brief intervention with around 1 in 4 needing more in depth support.

Alongside this the Citizens Advice offer has developed from general outreach and group training, to a much more focused service helping to resolve challenges for those facing more severe issues, particularly problematic debt., Following the relaxation of the eligibility criteria, Citizens Advice referrals are received from hostels, Job Centre, Probation, and self-referrals via the Citizen's Advice drop-in service. The Citizens Advice Money Coaches (all of whom are now paid workers) provide up to ten hours support and apply for a wide range of grants as well as providing practical support with managing bills and changing money behaviours.

Digital support has remained relatively consistent throughout. The digital outreach tutor provides one-to-one IT training and employment support sessions in the home with up to ten hours of support. Beneficiaries can borrow a laptop and a Wi-Fi dongle with 3 months of credit. for free internet access The project now offers a tablet option accessed by a community based digital triage for those needing lighter touch support where internet access is the major barrier.

Although the project had some success integrating support with community events, such as the monthly 'Love Your Home' events, most of the general outreach had low take up. An original key component of the service was the New Horizons Bus taking money support into the more rural and isolated parts of the district. After extensive trialling this approach was stopped as the need for more personal in the home services was evident.

The project also offered financial capability group sessions. Those provided to frontline workers were very successful in generating interest and referrals to the project and building local skills and knowledge. However sessions aimed at reaching tenants had very low take up and were eventually stopped. Instead a project website was constructed www.makingmoneycount.org.uk with a wide range of practical easy to read information and resources.

Engaging tenants in IFC training/support

The vast majority of outreach is completed by the New Horizons Officer completing proactive calls to all new tenants with a successful 80% service uptake. The service is not advertised as a budgeting or money initiative but as help to settle in. Tenants know that they have not been singled out and the opportunity to get practical help is what appeals. The digital offer was more readily taken up following a one to one about the individual benefits and difference and employment support was incorporated into digital learning as 'life goals support'. More recently the inclusion of screening questions at Citizens Advice in all gateway assessments has provided another successful engagement pathway

Building trust is the key engagement factor. Many beneficiaries have had poor experience of services and/or feel disconnected. Beneficiaries interviewed highlighted the outreach worker's listening skills and patience in explaining what actions to take – *'she had time to listen*'. Beneficiaries valued the initial visit taking place in their own home, preferring to discuss their financial difficulties in confidence in a familiar setting. The worker's skills in local languages were also important.

Working with partners

The project developed a strong partnership and was able to have some tough conversations – particularly in relation to reallocating budget and changing service provision, e.g. the withdrawal of the New Horizons Bus. The project also felt the partnership with the Big Lottery was very effective with increasing trust and investment in the project based on the outcomes achieved. The project has also encouraged more joint working locally e.g. setting up the local Universal Credit working group and running conferences to share learning and best practice. Innovative approaches to developing financial capability locally have also been trialled with local partners such as CCORRN and the Rosmini Centre.

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training/support

Beneficiaries commented that the project increases their financial confidence and skills to manage their money and motivation to ask for help if needed. .Practical support to access white goods, and advocacy e.g. liaising with the council about utility bills and help to arrange affordable payment plans were highly valued. Project workers encouraged beneficiaries to do as much as they could for themselves and created short action plans to support this, offering back up and follow on support if needed. The project has led to sustainable behaviour change among some tenants, as one beneficiary explained: *"I will still carry on with the budgeting like [the officer] taught [me] how to…When you are in a situation I am in and get the help you need, you stick to it."*

Sustainability and legacy of the project

The project was developed in component parts and these are being taken forward in different ways:

- New Horizons Building Better Opportunities Project is expanding the MMC model of one to one money support combined with digital and employment in a new £1.2m project
- Embedding good practice in holistic money assessment in the new Local Assistance scheme
- The www.makingmoneycount.org.uk website has been adopted as portal for three other projects and has expanded across the LEP area as a permanent legacy
- Raised profile of financial capability within local learning and strategic agendas, e.g. Universal Credit working group
- Changed ways of working, e.g. Citizens Advice now offer ongoing support from the same advisor / money coach and offer home visits and have integrated financial capability in their gateway with key screening questions.

Making Money Count is now led from the Community Investment team at Clarion Housing Group and an early objective is to take the learning from this project and see how it can be scaled up into a face to face offer across different locations as a key part of their guidance offer to all residents.

New Direction

Introduction

The New Direction project ran for four years from January 2013- 2017 and was led by RAISE.[22] The project aimed to improve the financial capability of Liverpool City Region social housing tenants, working with partners from Liverpool City Council, Citizens Advice, and housing associations including Liverpool Housing Trust.

Delivering IFC training / support to tenants

Tenants received practical help, ongoing support and advice to address and increase their understanding of their financial situation. Although basic money guidance had been available before, the project sought to provide a more holistic service aimed at increasing financial capability and confidence through tailored support and home visits. New Direction was designed to help tenants maintain their tenancies. Project workers helped tenants create individualised action plans and budgets and navigate financial services. The project workers provided additional assistance with opening bank accounts, as many tenants had not had a bank account before. The project workers also negotiated with energy providers on behalf of tenants to agree payment plans. New Direction was originally intended as a longer-term capacity building service to support people moving onto Universal Credit. However, in practice many tenants needed support with more immediate cash flow crises arising from changes to their benefits as a result of the welfare reforms, particularly the 'bedroom tax'.

New Direction workers took part in a four-day training course on financial capability before briefly shadowing another worker prior to working independently with tenants. A key success factor was the project workers having the autonomy to approach each case flexibly. Project workers reported high levels of job satisfaction and all staff were retained for the project duration.

Engaging tenants in IFC training / support

The project established 32 referral routes, although most referrals were generated by RAISE and Citizen's Advice, owing to Registered Social Landlords, (RSLs), often having their own in-house provision. One-to-one support provided through home visits was particularly effective in building relationships with more vulnerable tenants, who gradually became more comfortable discussing their financial difficulties with a project worker. This approach worked well as the project workers supported tenants to organise their finances and build confidence in identifying and reviewing relevant paperwork.

Telephone calls were the preferred mode of first contact with tenants following referral, as they gave project workers an opportunity to explain the project and benefits of getting involved. On average tenants received four visits but this varied depending on need. In many instances, a lack of confidence and poor mental health contributed to tenants' financial situations. Ongoing engagement and practical support helped some of these tenants break out of negative financial

[22] RAISE is an independent charity which gives free, confidential, high quality advice and training around Welfare Benefits, Debt, and Money Management issues http://www.benefitsadviceteam.co.uk/

cycles. The use of 'guided conversations' worked well, focused on practical activities, such as how to set up a direct debit, and how to prioritise debts and payments.

Working with partners

One of the project strengths was regular meetings with its planning group, which increased dialogue between local RSLs and the delivery partners. Project partners met and exchanged ideas and best practices at key intervals. The project built on existing partnerships and networks, such as the Liverpool Welfare Reform Group, which includes representatives from all the main housing providers in Liverpool, the City Council, RAISE and the DWP. The project helped raise awareness of financial capability issues at a number of local forums.

"*[It] certainly helped put budgeting and access to financial services on [the Liverpool City Council Poverty Action Group's] agenda. Quite often poverty action groups tend to focus on benefits, income coming in, rather than how it goes out." (Chief Officer)*

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training / support

The project filled gaps in existing service provision and supported just under 3,000 people in total. The bespoke support model, whereby project workers designed individual action plans with beneficiaries, led to tenants feeling more in control and confident about their financial capability. The trusted relationship between project worker and tenant was central to the success of the project, enabling multiple issues to be dealt with in one visit. Tenants developed a greater understanding of income and expenditure, and many have overcome challenges they had initially found very daunting, such as managing their paperwork, opening a bank account and setting up a direct debit. Many tenants were experiencing low-level mental health issues such as anxiety or depression and reported a sense of relief after making progress in addressing their financial situation with support from New Direction.

Liverpool Housing Trust, (LHT), reported that having a New Direction worker based in their office had successfully raised awareness of financial capability support amongst their tenants, and helped to personalise the service, making it more appealing to tenants.

Sustainability and legacy of the project

Staff retention was a key success factor of the New Direction project and supported sustainability. All New Direction staff have moved over to the Big Lottery funded Building Better Opportunities, (BBO), project and will continue to deliver home visits through the new programme. The increased knowledge of financial capability support developed through New Direction meant RAISE was well placed to inform the partnership led by the Women's Organisation to secure BBO funding to continue its work, albeit with a different target group. New Direction enhanced the lead organisation's track record and reputation in providing financial capability training to support behavioural change, which will support future funding bids.

It has not been possible to mainstream the New Direction approach within the RAISE core model owing to a lack of funding. However, joint home visits between New Direction project workers and RAISE's internal welfare and debt teams helped maintain tenants trust as they move onto core

services. LHT is continuing the outreach approach through BBO and its 'Works for Me' employability programme.[23]

[23] Works For Me is a Symphony Housing Group, groupwide initiative designed to create employment opportunities for our tenants across all member organisations including Liverpool Housing Trust (LHT) http://www.lht.co.uk/working-with-us/works-for-me/

Pennywise

Introduction

The project ran for four years from 2013-17 and was led by Places for People Neighbourhoods. The project aimed to improve the financial capability of local people, working with partners including Bristol City Council, The Bristol Partnership, MIND, Rethink Mental Illness, local housing providers, Citizen's Advice, the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute, and utility companies including Wessex Water.

Delivering IFC training/support to tenants

Pennywise's delivery model consisted of one-to-one sessions and group work. The one-to-one sessions were delivered at local partner offices, or as home visits. The home visits provided support for vulnerable beneficiaries. The number of one-to-one sessions varied, depending on the needs of each beneficiary, but on average beneficiaries received between three to five sessions across one or two weeks. Group work was delivered through workshops organised with local partners, for example, housing associations helped organise pre-tenancy workshops, and workshops were also delivered in Children's Centres. The Learning Communities' team from the local authority provided a venue, and helped deliver several workshops, which explored themes such as budgeting and managing a tenancy.

The Pennywise team consisted of five mentors who predominantly delivered the one-to-one sessions, and a Community Engagement officer who delivered the group work. The mentors were based on-site at local partner offices. All staff were employed by Places for People Neighbourhoods and reflected that this worked well as they were *"embedded within the organisation."* Approximately six regular volunteers also helped with administration.

Pennywise became aware of the link between financial wellbeing and mental health, and found that many beneficiaries had mental health issues. The content of the debt and budgeting workshops was therefore updated to explore links to wellbeing and mental health. For example, workshops explored how healthy eating can be achieved on a budget and support mental health. Some of these workshops were delivered in collaboration with a mental health provider. Pennywise also developed a training course for mentors to support beneficiaries with mental health needs, including an overview of Mental Health First Aid.

Engaging tenants in IFC training/support

Pennywise targeted new tenants and those moving in and out of work. Engagement approaches worked well, recruiting the target number of beneficiaries. The main referral partner was the local authority, and Pennywise staff delivered presentations to their frontline staff, explaining the benefits of the project. Referrals were also received from other housing providers across the city, such as The Bristol Partnership, and mental health charities including MIND and Rethink Mental Illness. The project management board included key organisations who referred onto the project, such as advice agencies and housing providers.

Working with partners

Pennywise developed a robust partnership, at both strategic and operational levels. The project board included a partnership manager from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), and the project secured funding from Bristol Water and Wessex Water to support clients who were struggling to pay their bills. The strength of the partnership with the local authority was demonstrated by the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) team agreeing to include a disclaimer in the DHP application form for tenants, stating that their information would be shared with a budgeting organisation that would help them develop a longer-term budgeting plan. This enabled Pennywise to contact local authority housing tenants directly.

The partnership organised an annual Blue Monday Event in the main shopping centre, and Citizens' Advice worked closely with Pennywise's Community Engagement officer to develop these. Up to 60 local organisations take part in the events, reaching members of the public who would be unlikely to attend a drop-in session. A Pennywise mentor was based in the Citizens' Advice office, increasing the support available for clients who needed longer term support.

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training/support

The following change outcomes were achieved amongst the 293 beneficiaries who provided data on entry to, and exit from, the project.

- The number of beneficiaries behind with their rent payments reduced from 158 to 134
- The number of beneficiaries who had a savings account increased from 40 to 52.
- The number of beneficiaries who had a notice of seeking possession order (NOSP) decreased from 44 to 33.

Pennywise supported 74 Wessex Water clients who had debt repayment arrangements in place in 2014, and 120 clients in the same situation in 2015-16. Pennywise provided impartial budgeting advice to the clients, and Wessex Water commented that this support empowered their customers to engage more proactively with them as a utility provider.

Sustainability and legacy of the project

Pennywise received match funding from Bristol Water and Wessex Water during the main delivery phase. The project secured funding from the local authority and other organisations which enabled the project to be extended from November 2016 to the end of March 2017.

Pennywise will achieve a legacy through the Blue Monday events, as partner agencies have some resources to keep the event going: *"Blue Mondays is a very good legacy that Pennywise… has left us with." (Citizens Advice)*

The local authority will continue to use Pennywise materials to support their tenants, and Citizens Advice is using some of the tools, such as the outreach quizzes and presentation materials, in their outreach work. The tools developed by the project are available online.[24]

[24] http://www.pennywise.org.uk/

Dissemination activities/ Influencing work

The Pennywise project manager is informing service provision by being a board member on local groups and forums including the Wessex Financial Capability Forum, Bristol Housing Partnership and the Bristol Independent Mental health Network. Pennywise have also sold some of their training materials to Places and People, and other organisations, and created advertising boards on budgeting for local Children Centres.

Learning from Pennywise has been incorporated into several research studies. For example, a University of Bristol research study on the impact of the recession on mental health was informed by survey responses from Pennywise beneficiaries. The Pennywise project was also cited as good practice by the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute in a research study exploring the link between mental health and financial problems.[25]

[25] Money and Mental Health Policy Institute, Tasneem Clarke, Rose Acton and Merlyn Holkar, *The Other One in Four, How financial difficulty is neglected in mental health services,* published December 2016. Available at: http://www.moneyandmentalhealth.org/theotheroneinfour/

Money Savvy Southwark

Introduction

The project is funded for five years from 2013-18 and is led by Southwark Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB). The project aims to empower community residents to increase their money management skills, with a focus on preventing homelessness and sustaining tenancies. The project partners include the local authority, housing associations, building and repair companies such as Keepmoat Homes, a law centre, and utility providers such as Thames Water Debt Project. Money Savvy Southwark also works with smaller community partners.

Delivering IFC training/support to tenants

The project supports a diverse range of beneficiaries, including people from the local Latin American community, older people, ex-offenders and some people with experience of being homeless. The project supports beneficiaries transitioning onto Universal Credit, people affected by the benefit cap and some with large rent arrears. Money Savvy Southwark is also providing tailored support for the traveller community. Support for beneficiaries is provided via community workshops and one-to-one support. The workshops cover a variety of themes linked to welfare reform and budgeting. For example workshop topics include eating on a budget and growing your own food, helping beneficiaries develop the skills and know-how to manage their finances effectively. Some themes are covered in a single event whilst others are explored through a monthly series. The workshops are delivered in community venues which are well known and sometimes timed to coincide with other events, such as a food bank opening day. Most beneficiaries attend workshops, but one-to-one support is available if more intensive or confidential support is needed.

Money Savvy Southwark is delivered by staff and volunteers. Paid staff are based in several job centres, offering one hour meetings to ensure accessibility for beneficiaries. For example, outreach staff are based in Peckham job centre two days a week, London Bridge job centre two days a week and Kennington job centre one day a week. The outreach workers offer advice and support on a range of financial issues such as for people who have recently lost their job or those returning to employment. People are then encouraged to attend the workshops for further information and support.

Money Savvy Southwark also delivers training workshops for Community Champions and trains frontline workers. For example, frontline workers from a national building company which repairs local social housing stock, have received training to support their interactions with tenants to help sustain tenancies more effectively.

Community Champions and volunteers are integral to the delivery model. Community Champions are members of the community who provide practical budgeting support and advice on the welfare reforms. Volunteers provide general support at outreach events such as helping beneficiaries sign up for the workshops and assisting in the workshops. The volunteers are supported by a Volunteer Coordinator.

Engaging tenants in IFC training/support

Money Savvy Southwark staff highlighted the importance of adapting project materials to resonate with the relevant target groups. *"It's about adapting resources, materials and delivery...for the market…The idea is to embed budgeting in a fun relatable way to (them)." (Project manager)*

Creating an atmosphere of trust between project staff, volunteers and beneficiaries was also very important, ensuring beneficiaries engaged with the project voluntarily, rather than seeing it as a requirement of their housing association.

Money Savvy Southwark experienced a high demand for financial capability support as a result of the welfare reforms and this has continued as Southwark is a full service borough for Universal Credit, which has acted as "a catalyst" for people asking for support.

Working with partners

The governance structure for Money Savvy Southwark is overseen by the CAB's Trustee board, which includes the chief executive, senior management team, business development lead and project manager. The project was led by a strong partnership including the local authority, housing associations and building and repair companies. The partnership is working effectively at both strategic and operational levels, and the core partnership team meets quarterly to review project success and identify areas for enhancement; *"the key decision makers are [the] partners…We always listen to them and run ideas by them." (Project manager)*

The workshops were designed in partnership, bringing in a range of local organisations to add value. For example, Garden Organic attended some welfare reform events to explain how people can grow their own vegetables with limited resources. The workshops have also brought in employability organisations to support beneficiaries looking for work and apprenticeships, and provided mental and physical wellbeing advice for beneficiaries returning to work.

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training/support

The project is surpassing its targets and has received positive feedback from beneficiaries who feel it has turned their life around. The project has gained momentum and is well embedded locally; *"people see the need… they are all completely bought in now because we have done so many [workshops], they don't need convincing, we're there and they know we need to do it for their community." (Project manager)*

Some volunteers have progressed into paid employment within Southwark CAB, and this has helped sustain other volunteers, as they are keen to develop the skills and experience to help them progress into paid work.

Sustainability and legacy of the project

Money Savvy Southwark are very active in promoting and disseminating project learning. The project manager attends community meetings and hosts stalls at local events, and meets with organisations interested in learning from the Money Savvy Southwark approach. Gaining acceptance by community organisations has been very important in enabling the project to achieve *"accepted by association"* within the local community.

The project manager also attends a number of forums, such as the Financial Capability Forum for Central and East London led by Southwark CAB. Project learning has also been disseminated at local business forums and the local homelessness forum. Sustainability options are discussed regularly by the partnership, as they are keen to secure funding to continue the project. Digital inclusion organically emerged as a prominent part of the programme, and Southwark CAB were commissioned by the DWP to provide personal budgeting and digital support as a result. At the time of the research Money Savvy Southwark were applying for local funding to expand their digital inclusion offer to train Community Champions to deliver digital support and money management help in their communities.

Money Savvy Southwark has secured funding from the Money Advice Service's What Works Fund to evaluate the project.

The Money House

Introduction

The Money House project ran from early 2013 to the end of 2016 and was led by Hyde Housing. The project aimed to help young people manage their tenancies, to reduce their likelihood of building up rent arrears, and potentially being evicted. Hyde Housing worked with project partners from the local authority, Greenwich Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB), MyBnk, Meridian Money Advice and the YMCA.

Delivering IFC training/support to tenants

The Money House project provided training for 16-24 year olds, available as a five-day or one-day training course that ran on weekdays, between 10.30am to 3.30pm. The training covered budgeting and income, benefits and banking, borrowing, tax advice, and independent living skills. The training was delivered by two full-time trainers, and two part-time assistants. The trainers recruited came from a youth work background, and had the skills to deliver training sessions that were lively and dynamic. The project team believe that the success of project was partly attributable to this training approach.

Other key success factors were: the curriculum being informed by feedback from young people under 25, and the training course being delivered in a flat. This approach worked well as it provided a relaxed environment, in the style a 'Big Brother' house. This was more appealing to young people than traditional training environments which could remind them of school. The project was delivered using practical, interactive techniques, providing a positive learning experience. The flat environment helped young people explore what was involved in managing a tenancy. This ranged from practical everyday tasks such as reading a meter and utility bills, to decisions around furnishing a flat and the costs involved. The project also included activities such as cooking sessions, which the project team reflected worked well as a fun activity, and helped young people reflect on the training in a real-life environment.

Engaging tenants in IFC training/support

Hyde Housing highlighted the importance of maintaining a strong relationship with referral partners. The main referral partner was the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The local authority made it mandatory for young people who were interested in entering a tenancy arrangement with them to attend the Money House training, particularly those in care and support settings. The Money House training is integrated into the local authority Pathway Plan for young people. The project engaged a high number of beneficiaries, and also received referrals from Greenwich CAB, Meridian Money Advice, the Peabody Trust and other voluntary providers. Delivering the training in small groups also helped maintain engagement.

Working with partners

The project's main partners were the Royal Borough of Greenwich, Greenwich CAB, MyBnk, Meridian Money Advice and the YMCA. All partners made important contributions to the project. For example, the trainers and assistants were employed by Greenwich CAB and Meridian Money Advice, MyBnk developed the training materials, and the YMCA leased the flat used to deliver the training sessions.

Representatives from the Money House partner organisations also sat on the project steering group, alongside other housing associations such as Galleon. The project team reflected that the steering group worked well because it was focused on operational activity. Strategic oversight of the project was provided by its governance board that met every six months, and included senior representatives from the local authority, Hyde Housing and MyBnk.

Outcomes and impacts of IFC training/support

The Money House trained almost 600 young people, and learners who completed the course gained two accredited qualifications in personal budgeting and group work.

Feedback from beneficiaries was consistently positive, with 99% of those who attended the five-day training course stating they felt more confident about their financial situation. Of the 63 young people who completed training in the first two years and were housed by the Royal Borough of Greenwich, none have been evicted[26].

The project also carried out an impact evaluation, which reported that Money House graduates are three times less likely to be in high rent arrears (over £500) compared to their peers who had not attended the training. The project also conducted a cost benefit analysis that showed the project is making a positive return on investment.[27]

Sustainability and legacy of the project

Two-year funding has been secured from JP Morgan to continue the project. This is being delivered by MyBnk from January 2017, and the project has been extended beyond Greenwich to Newham. The target group for the follow-on project has also been extended to cover University students. The follow-on project is following a similar delivery model, but on a larger scale. MyBnk are exploring adding digital skills and employability training modules into the course, and providing flexible versions of the training to local authorities and landlords, adapted to their needs and budgets.

The project team believe they were successful in securing private sector funding because they cultivated an image that the training was *"unique",* and could demonstrate success in reducing rent arrears and evictions. The development of a training product that could be sold on has also supported the legacy of the project.

Dissemination activities/ Influencing work

Hyde Housing actively disseminated project lessons at national and regional events, and hosted open days at the flat and invited a wide range of stakeholders including diversity managers from housing associations. Hyde Housing have also sold some Money House packages containing training materials and training approaches to other organisations, including the Stone Foundation in Ipswich and Rural Action Derbyshire.

[26] The Money House, Sharing Success, final presentation, December 2016

[27] The Money House: Providing support to young tenants at risk of arrears presentation, Aisha Shillingford, Money House Project Lead

Annex Two: Evaluation Framework

Theme	Evaluation aims	Key research questions	Evidence	Data sources	Timescale
Access	• Social housing residents have greater access to appropriate and affordable financial services and products	Impact: What improvements to the wider community / neighbourhood environment could be attributed to the initiatives, and what are the best ways of measuring their outcomes?	**Quantitative evidence**: Increase/decrease in deprivation statistics **Qualitative evidence**: Perceptions of local community members	• Index of Multiple Deprivation • Neighbourhood statistics • Case studies	Annual reports
		Impact: To what extent has IFC enabled Social housing tenants increase their access to appropriate and affordable financial services and products?	**Quantitative evidence** Number of beneficiaries that are now able to access financial products and services that meet their needs.	• Myfc • online database – beneficiary data	Intervals throughout evaluation
Skills	• Social housing residents have increased skills and confidence to use financial products and services and will continue to apply these skills and this confidence	Impact: How has the support offered affected beneficiaries' level of confidence and skills? How far do beneficiaries attribute this to support from the project? What other factors do they feel are relevant?	**Quantitative evidence** Number of beneficiaries that report an improvement in their abilities to mange their money. Number of beneficiaries that report an increase in their confidence to use financial products and services. Number of beneficiaries that report an increase in their ability to use financial products and services. **Qualitative evidence** Beneficiaries' views on the impact of the increase in their financial skills and confidence and the extent to which this is as a result of taking part in IFC. Details of any other financial confidence related support received. Project staff's perceptions of how IFC has affected participants' confidence and skills.	• Myfc • online database – beneficiary data • Case studies – beneficiary interviews • Case studies – project staff interviews	Intervals throughout evaluation Annual reports

Theme	Evaluation aims	Key research questions	Evidence	Data sources	Timescale
				• Self evaluation e.g. research diaries	
		Impact: Has an increase in financial skills and confidence led to a change in their financial situation? If so how? To what extent it is a sustainable change? How far do beneficiaries attribute this to support from the project? What other factors do they feel are relevant?	**Quantitative evidence**: Number of participants that have a reduced level of credit card/ loan debt. Number of participants previously with rent arrears that less/ no rent arrears. Number of participants previously in arrears on household bills that are no longer in arrears **Qualitative evidence**: Beneficiaries' views on their financial situation and the impact of the increase in their financial skills and confidence and the extent to which this is as a result of taking part in IFC. Details of any other financial confidence related support received. Project staff's perceptions of the extent to which participation in IFC has led to a (positive) change in participants' financial situation.	• Baseline and follow up data – participants and social housing providers • Case studies – beneficiary interviews/ • Case studies – project staff interviews • Self evaluation e.g. research diaries	• annual reports • 2013 onwards
		Process: What do IFC beneficiaries feel about the focus, design and delivery of support? What improvements or further support would they find useful?	**Qualitative evidence**: Beneficiaries' views on the support received from IFC projects. Beneficiaries' views on how IFC projects compare with any other financial confidence support/ activities previously accessed.	• Case studies – beneficiary interviews • Self evaluation e.g. research diaries	• Case study reports • Annual reports
Engagement	• Social housing providers engage with most in need residents to enable them to understand the relevance of	Process: How have projects and partnerships identified and engaged potential beneficiaries?	**Qualitative evidence**: Descriptions of the engagement approaches taken Project staff views on the effectiveness of the engagement approaches. Details of how the approaches compare with approaches used in previous financial confidence activities.	• Monitoring information to BIG • Case studies	Intervals throughout evaluation Annual reports

Theme	Evaluation aims	Key research questions	Evidence	Data sources	Timescale
	financial inclusion and capability services	Process: What specific issues arise in engaging and providing financial confidence and awareness building support to people in social housing in general, and to those in the three target groups in particular?	**Qualitative evidence**: Project staff and partners' views on barriers to/ overcoming barriers to engagement of target groups, compared with previous engagement activities for all social housing tenants. Project staff and partner views on barriers to/ overcoming barriers to delivering activities to the target groups, compared with previous engagement activities for all social housing tenants. Beneficiaries' views on the financial confidence activities delivered to them including any suggestions for improvements. (If applicable) details of how IFC activities compare with any other financial confidence related activities they have accessed in the past.	• Case studies • Project learning events • Project portal • Any self evaluation reports	Intervals throughout evaluation Annual reports
		Impact: Are there examples of good practice that can be shared concerning engaging beneficiaries?	**Qualitative evidence**: Project staff and partner views on effectiveness of engagement of beneficiaries (verified by Ecorys/ ERG).	• Case studies • Project learning events • Project portal • Resource Library • Learning events	
Influencing/ sustainability	• Social housing and financial sector organisations have increased awareness of the impact of a range of approaches to engaging social housing residents in financial inclusion activities.	Impact: Which approaches to delivering financial confidence activities are most successful? Why is this?	**Qualitative evidence**: Strategic stakeholders/ ERG members' views on the effectiveness of the difference approaches to delivering financial confidence activities. Project staff/ partner' views on the effectiveness of the approaches taken to deliver financial confidence activities.	• Case studies • Project learning events – discussion topics • Project portal – discussion topics • Self evaluation evidence • External reference group meeting notes • Counterfactual	Intervals throughout evaluation Annual reports

Theme	Evaluation aims	Key research questions	Evidence	Data sources	Timescale
		Process: Can the approaches taken be scaled up or replicated elsewhere? What variables do we need to take account of?	**Qualitative evidence**: Project staff and partner views concerning the replicability of activities. External partners views of the replicability of activities.	• Case studies • Project monitoring/ self evaluation reports (where available) • External Reference Group meeting notes	Annual reports / case studies in the 3rd, 4th and 5th years of the evaluation
		Process: What part have housing providers played in supporting individual projects?	**Qualitative evidence**: Project staff and partners and social housing providers' views on the involvement of social housing providers. Participants' views on the involvement of social housing providers.	• Case studies • Project monitoring/ self evaluation reports (where available)	Annual reports
		Process: What challenges do social housing providers see in providing this sort of support? What improvements would housing providers make to the way that projects are run?	**Qualitative evidence**: Social housing providers' views on the challenges in delivering IFC activities and changes required.	• Case studies • Project monitoring/ self evaluation reports (where available) • Project learning events – discussion topics • Project portal – discussion topics	Intervals throughout evaluation Annual reports
		Impact: What benefits (economic and social) have housing providers received from participation?	**Quantitative evidence**: The rate of increase/ decrease in rent arrears and possession orders and related costs for social housing providers involved in IFC. **Qualitative evidence**: Social housing providers' views on the social benefits of IFC	Baseline and follow up data – social housing providers Counterfactual Case studies Project monitoring/ self evaluation reports (where available)	Intervals throughout evaluation Annual reports
		Process: what plans are being made to either mainstream the initiatives into the day-to-day activities of the association, seek	**Qualitative evidence**: Social housing providers and projects' plans for continuation	Case studies Learning events/ meetings	Annual reports / case studies in the 4th and

Theme	Evaluation aims	Key research questions	Evidence	Data sources	Timescale
		additional continuation funding, or prepare an exit strategy from the activity?		Project monitoring/ self evaluation reports (where available) Clusters – peer mentoring/ cascade/ integrated approach	5th years of the evaluation
		What are the strategic links between social housing providers grappling with a changing social security benefits and economic environment and incentivising IFC activities?	**Qualitative evidence**: IFC projects' views on the extent to which social housing providers were keen to be involved in IFC. Social housing providers' views on the reasons for engaging in IFC and any barriers they faced in engaging. Social housing providers' views on why other social housing providers might choose not to be involved in IFC ERG members' views on reasons why social housing providers might choose not to be involved in IFC	Case studies Learning events/ meetings Project monitoring/ self evaluation reports (where available) External Reference Group meeting notes	Annual reports Through the evaluation
		What are the most effective ways to roll out the preventative proactive IFC approach, and avoid slipping into reactive crisis management in this worsening environment?	**Qualitative evidence**: IFC project staff views of the ways to roll out IFC approach effectively. ERG members' views of the ways to roll out IFC approach effectively and any ways to prevent approaches becoming crisis management. Social housing providers' views of the ways to roll out IFC approach effectively.	Case studies Learning events/ meetings Project monitoring/ self evaluation reports (where available) External Reference Group meeting notes	Annual reports / case studies in the 4th and 5th years of the evaluation

Theme	Evaluation aims	Key research questions	Evidence	Data sources	Timescale
		What measures can / should housing providers take to ensure the long-term monitoring of the outcomes of initiatives (on both individuals and social housing providers' business plans)?	**Quantitative evidence:** Number of participants that have a reduced level of credit card/ loan debt after involvement in an IFC project. Number of participants previously with rent arrears that less/ no rent arrears an IFC project. Number of participants previously in arrears on household bills that are no longer in arrears an IFC project. **Qualitative evidence** Social housing providers' perceptions of the longer terms impacts of the IFC activities.	Myfc Online database - beneficiary and landlord data follow up Counterfactual Case studies	Final year of evaluation