



## Working residents? Employment-related support, barriers, and outcomes for people living in exempt (supported) accommodation.

### Project Aims

Research indicates that being homeless or in precarious housing creates significant challenges for individuals experiencing homelessness, particularly in relation to mental health, family relationships, maintaining social networks, employment, and physical health (including substance abuse). Despite evidence of the numerous, far-reaching benefits of individuals engaging in paid work, there are significant challenges within current homelessness and welfare systems in the UK which suggest that they do not effectively support homeless people to move into paid work.

Local evidence suggests that people living in supported accommodation encounter multiple, complex barriers to work. Housing services tend to regard employability as outside of their remit and so are inadequately supported and equipped to deliver such interventions. Those who do pursue paid employment can incur debt, and even face eviction, as they navigate complex benefits systems and significantly increased rent costs. This deters many staff and service users from pursuing paid employment whilst living in supported housing. The employment-related needs of those in supported housing, therefore, are not always explored and addressed.

Despite considerable evidence that homeless people can and do work whilst living in supported housing, little is known about their experience as 'working residents', or those delivering support. Furthermore, the general lack of embedded employment-related provisions within supported housing, is worrying for a city such as Nottingham where the government's work and benefit data identifies above average unemployment, people in low paid/skilled work, and below average numbers in higher paid/skilled jobs, with pay levels significantly below regional and national averages.

This project uses a case study approach to explore current employability practices within an East Midlands-based charity, Framework, which offers supported housing to homeless and vulnerable people. The project seeks to understand the barriers to work faced by individuals in supported housing, examining tensions between the employment and housing-related needs of residents, and housing providers, within the current UK socioeconomic and political context; aiming to increase our knowledge and understanding of 'what works' within these settings.

This project has been co-created and is supported by researchers from Nottingham Trent University, the University of Nottingham, and partners at Framework. The successful candidate will be enrolled at the University of Nottingham.



## Project Aims

1. Explore the lived experiences and perceptions of 'working residents' and working within supported housing settings in relation to employment, housing, and benefits.
2. Produce an intersectional analysis of people's challenges and barriers in relation to housing, employment, and welfare.
3. Explore how the voices of those most likely to experience homelessness and/or unemployment can be identified and effectively incorporated into policy processes.

## Supervisory Team

1. Lead Academic Supervisor: Dr Steve lafrati, UoN
2. Academic Co-Supervisor: Professor Geraldine Brady, NTU
3. Community Supervisor: Jess Smith, Framework

## Key Details

Host University:	The University of Nottingham
School / department:	Sociology & Social Policy
Start date:	03 April 2024
Financial offer:	Tuition fees covered in full (worth approx. £15k across full PhD programme). Monthly stipend based on £18,622 per annum, pro rata, tax free.
Working hours	Full-time (minimum 37.5 hrs per week), or part-time (minimum 20hrs per week).
Working Style:	Primarily in-person at host university. Flexible working supported. Working pattern to be agreed between successful candidate and lead supervisor.



# Competencies

## Co(I)laboratory Core Competencies

Category	Competency	Assessed: Application (A), Interview (I)
<b>Comprehension and evaluation</b>	Strong understanding of the project and its subject matter.	A / I
	Analytical, researcher mindset with keen attention to detail.	A / I
	Communicate complex concepts with clarity and precision.	A / I
	Able to identify connections, patterns, gaps, and irregularities in information/data.	I
	Able to interpret data/information confidently with logic and empathy to derive meaning.	I
<b>Social and emotional</b>	Demonstrable experience of responding effectively changing contexts, information and demands.	A
	Ability to persevere in the face of challenges/failures and to remain constructive in developing solutions.	A
	Demonstrable passion for learning with clear drive and curiosity to undertake this specific research project.	A / I
	Willingness to immerse oneself in the research subject matter and make a contribute to new knowledge through a PhD.	A / I
	Strong desire to make a positive community impact through the research.	A / I
	Willingness to think deeply about complex concepts and engage with academic ideas and theory.	A / I
<b>Preparedness and potential for success</b>	Experience of working, collaborating and communicating effectively with different stakeholders.	A
	High level of self-motivation and ability to work with minimal guidance.	A / I
	Strong organisational and time-management skills with the ability to balance and prioritise multiple tasks.	A / I
	Ability to identify potential challenges and complexities and thoughtfully consider possible solutions.	A / I
	Able to identify the technical, personal, or professional skills required for a task and take action to develop these.	A / I
<b>Community Context</b>	Genuine desire to undertake community-engaged research over more traditional approaches to research.	A
	Understand the impact of and need for the inclusion of diverse experiences and points of view in research.	A / I
	Appreciation/understanding of the importance of community insight and experience in the generation of new knowledge.	A / I
	Awareness/understanding of the broader societal context related to the subject matter of the project.	A / I



Project Specific Competencies			
Essential	Assessed: Application (A), Interview (I)	Desirable	Assessed: Application (A), Interview (I)
Understanding of current work/research/debates relating to housing, multiple and complex needs, and employability.	A / I	Experience of working or researching within housing and/or the homelessness sector.	A / I
Understanding of contextual issues related to homelessness like mental ill health, offending, substance misuse, etc.	A / I	Understanding or experience of employability and supporting people in their pursuit of recovery and/or resettlement	A / I
Demonstrable understanding of, or relevant background in, the social sciences.	A / I	Experience of conducting research-style interviews and thematic analysis.	A / I
Experience researching or working with sensitive issues and/or demonstrable ability to engage appropriately with difficult topics.	A / I		

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