HOMELESSNESS SYSTEM

UNDER

DECONSTRUCTION

Testing the Personal Transitions Service- returning power and choice to people experiencing homelessness

MAYDAY TRUST

logical thinking

Contents

Executive Summary, Pat McArdle (CEO)

In 2011, Mayday was a medium size supported housing provider, trying to tackle homelessness. We watched as some larger housing associations lost contracts in one area and picked them up in another. Our dilemma was that there were actually people dangling at the end of these contracts. Our research showed that 70% of those people who were non-priority homeless were unlikely to get any sort of support as a result of austerity and changes in government thinking.

At the time, Mayday was 100% state funded with a £4m turnover. The common experience within the sector was that the state provided for those who were most vulnerable. There was a moral obligation to do so and the scale of the problems was too significant for communities and civil society to cope. But it was clear that things were changing and I remember meeting a local MP from one of our delivery areas who challenged me when I said that Mayday was a voluntary sector organisation. He asked me 'how could it be when all our money came from the Local Authority?'.

It was at this time that we could see that this was not just a rainy day, this was climate change. I was originally taken on as CEO of Mayday Trust to look at mergers and acquisitions as the Board of Directors knew that, even as a medium size charity, we were too small to survive. We came close to a merger but before we took that final step we decided to review what we did and we started talking to people experiencing homelessness, both on the street and those living with Mayday. We talked to several hundred people and collated over 100 accounts in a series of blogs which we printed in a booklet called 'Wisdom from the Street'. We didn't ask what people needed or why they had become homeless; we asked what they thought of homelessness services and what impact these services were having on their lives. We didn't realise then just how much impact these blogs would have on Mayday's future vision and direction.

Contained in the Wisdoms from the Street is a very powerful account of what people had to say and there were two points that came through very clearly:

- Firstly, the current system and processes were not working for people who had become homeless. The humanity and individuality of people's situations became lost. People's experience of the system reinforced helplessness, hopelessness and exclusion from community.

- Secondly, the outcomes weren't good enough. Too many people were either trapped in the system or move-on only to return with a feeling of another failure under their belt.

This prompted a very different journey for Mayday and we made a pivotal decision at that time not to survive for survival's sake. We chose not to campaign to keep a system going that was clearly broken.

would like to be able to say that Mayday recognised that things needed to change in our approach to tackling homelessness but the honest answer is that 'austerity was the driver and mission became our purpose'.

We invested in research to identify alternative approaches to tackling homelessness. In 2012, we embarked on an 18-month journey of coproducing an asset-based approach with the frontline staff team and people living with the Trust. This work has shaped Mayday's new approach, the Personal Transitions Service (PTS). The purpose of the PTS is to respond to what people told us, to develop new structures, systems and processes that are centred on the person, that can be personalised and as a result people can achieve whilst feeling respected and taking back the power and control over their own lives.

The underlying principle is that homelessness, leaving care, prison or psychiatric hospital is a brief transition in someone's life, and with the right personalised intervention at the right time, people can achieve and sustain positive changes and independent living.

The Personal Transitions Service is an evidence-based model, that builds on 'what works'. Mayday's comprehensive review of robust evidenced interventions brought a collaboration with the Search Institute[1], who had spent over a decade researching and developing a positive youth framework. Mayday adapted the concepts of their *Developmental Assets*[2] into the PTS and worked with the Search Institute to develop a methodology to test the PTS on the ground, with a Proof of Concept supported by the Oxford City and County Councils.

The Proof of Concept did not set out to prove the Personal Transitions Services worked, but instead enabled Mayday to test if the Personal Transitions Service is a deliverable and scalable intervention.

This testing phase, alongside the wider Trust delivery, presented Mayday with invaluable learning and produced indicative evidence to encourage the Trust to progress to the next stage of the model development, which is a full implementation and research programme, working with a minimum of 2,000 people over the next two to three years. The learning and evidence from this work resulted in partnerships with a number of providers and local authorities, who are participating in the next stage of research programme. The programme is funded as a nation-wide pilot by Comic Relief and the Tudor Trust, who have supported the original Proof of Concept.

This report sheds light on Mayday's transformation from a small housing support provider running an inquiry into how people felt about the quality of support, to an organisation championing systems-change to support asset-based and personalised approaches. The report follows a chronological order, beginning with the early days of the inquiry and our response, organisational cultural change, model development and refinement, learning and evaluation, and tells stories of individuals* who have found their spark and successfully transitioned out of homelessness. The report brings together both our experience on the ground, and the findings from the research and evaluation team at the Logical Thinking Consultancy. I hope this report starts a wider debate about how we work together to create the paradigm shift needed to improve our responses to people experiencing homelessness.

1 http://www.search-institute.org/

2 See Appendix

* Some names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.

John

John has this unique ability to make a joke and put a smile on our faces, no matter the circumstances. He deeply cares about connecting with others, and over the past few months he has been putting a lot of effort to strengthen his relationship with his girlfriend and father. Knowing how personable John is like we do might make it difficult to come to terms with the fact that he had been barred from every hostel in Oxford for 'abusive behaviour' and 'chaotic' drug use. When Mayday met him, he was facing 11 months in prison and his engagement with services was sporadic.

When John went into prison, Mayday decided to continue working with him. During this time John build a good relationship with his Coach and together they made plans for his time in prison and his release. John told his coach that he has always loved football and tried out for professional teams when he was younger. In order for him to re-ignite this passion, Mayday linked him with a local football team. He met with the football coach whilst in prison, so he could hit the ground running when he came out. The trusting relationship with his coach, and his rediscovery of passion for football encouraged John to come off drugs and take courses so that he can get a job.

Upon release, John moved into a Mayday property, played football with his dad and started to look for work. He got back in touch with members of his family and had Christmas at home. He also continued to work with his coach and look at positive options for the future.

John is still facing ups and downs but the consistent, non-judgemental and positive support that his Mayday coach has given him an opportunity to build foundations, which will help him move towards a positive future.

4

1. Model Development

Inquiry: Wisdom from the Street

In 2011 Mayday Trust carried out a human inquiry into the support received by people experiencing homelessness. The Trust talked to over 100 individuals who were living with Mayday as well as those who were living on the streets. The result was the publication of Wisdom from the Street, a series of blogs highlighting the collective views and opinions of people accessing homelessness services.

There were two key observations:

1. Service focus is on 'fixing' problems and people

People who spoke to Mayday felt the aim of homelessness services was to find out what their problems were and then try to fix them. They felt the services didn't understand that people were not ready to give up the things that were helping them to cope. Many used drugs, alcohol or self-harming as ways to cope with traumatic experiences. Some did so to keep in with their friends, others to forget about their situations or just 'get through the night'. They needed something to help them through, but they could not find a positive experience to replace their current coping strategies. They often expressed how difficult they found it to move on from a feeling of failure and shame, and a place where their experiences were not validated by someone significant in their lives.

2. Interventions are not always relevant to what people need and want

People told Mayday that often, the help available to them was not what they needed at that point in time. Instead of being able to access what they knew would really help, they ended up attending key-working sessions that were more focussed on ticking boxes, rather than addressing what was really going on in their lives and what they felt they needed. The interventions were not 'real world'. Having to engage in activities that didn't reflect their interests, spending months on waiting lists and undertaking tasks and courses to prove that they were ready to move out of the homelessness sector was often further proof of how far they had fallen in life.

Research on evidence-based interventions

Reflecting on the findings of the inquiry, Mayday invested in research to find evidence-based interventions for people experiencing homelessness and worked with the Search Institute in the US to develop a framework for a new, highly personalised model which provides an alternative to traditional key-working, such as accommodation-related support or floating support.

This highlighted a significant body of research that demonstrates that individuals who spend too much time in their areas of weakness, rarely make significant sustained progress. However, this evidence has not informed interventions in the UK, where the service focus remains on needs and deficits. The majority of services require the individual to identify their needs, problems and issues and regularly report on these using measuring tools such as the Outcome Star and Recovery Star which provide subjective feedback of a person's progress against their identified deficits.

The research also suggested that people are more likely to take responsibility for their own lives and make the change that matters to them, if they have access to opportunities that build on their strengths. Likewise, individuals who feel their strengths and abilities are recognised by others are able to develop the necessary grit to bounce back from tough life experiences, and sustain positive change in long term.

Coproduction

Based on this evidence, Mayday embarked on an 18 month period of coproduction with people working and living with Mayday. The process focused on developing a viable model centered on building an individual's assets as a means for them to take control of their lives and make the positive changes they wanted for themselves. This differs from traditional support, which relies on needs and risks assessment to set goals defined usually around a narrow grouping of areas, such as maintaining tenancy, reducing substance misuse, offending behavior, improving physical and mental health or mediating family relationships. In other words, what success looks like in an asset-based and personalised approach is therefore fundamentally different: There are no limits to the outcomes people might choose to identify and work on, and their journey to achieve change that matters to them is entirely self-directed.

Four core concepts of the PTS

There are four key concepts within the PTS:

- *Personalisation:* Giving maximum choice and control to people, and delivering on what they want to change, when and how they want to do it. Moving away from 'one size fits all' culture also means that standardised and time limited interventions that deliver to the *lowest common denominator* are not used e.g. tenancy courses, sector led group CV writing sessions, etc.

- *Asset-based:* Using the concept of *Developmental Assets*[3] to facilitate people to see their strengths and gain a sense of their own identity based on their aspirations, so that their journey out of homelessness starts with the evidence of current strengths and successes rather than past deficiencies and failures

- *Advantaged thinking:* Having positive conversations about 'thriving and not just surviving' and offering hope and aspirational thinking, instead of interventions that attempt to 'fix weaknesses';

- *Relationships and purpose:* Focusing on building positive networks in the community and spending time with people who value, validate and offer support through tough times; and having a sense of purpose to carry on trying to achieve things that matter to them.

Three core interventions of the PTS

- *Coaching:* Inspirational Asset Coaches develop strong and trusting relationships with people, build on what's strong and facilitate individual progression.

- *Brokering:* Linking people with a range of resources and opportunities within their communities, so they can identify their aspirations and purpose and gain practical evidence that they can succeed and contribute

- *Building positive networks:* Working with volunteers to connect with other individuals and organisations in their local community, develop friendships and positive attachments.

3 See Appendix

2. Organisational Transformation

While most of this work currently happens within the sector, the structures and systems within organisations often fail to allow the consistency and emphasis required to truly embed a personalised and strength-based approach. Indeed, embarking on this work, Mayday Trust too did not expect the internal cultural transformation and systems-change that had to take place as a result of designing and delivering this new model. These changes were extensive and took two years to fully embed.

In order to truly deliver this personalised and strength-based approach, the culture, structures and systems within the organisation also had to change. Human Resources had to adapt new ways of recruiting and training staff, finance needed to develop the right systems to cope

with costing individual interventions and establish new procedures around personal budgets; and most importantly, our data capture systems had to change to reflect the methodology behind asset based data capture and progress measurements[4].

All of our policies, procedures and quality framework were re-written using advantaged, human language to reflect our ethos to respect and value the people we work with. Mayday has developed and written guidance to embed a personalised and strength-based delivery system. The operational guide contains: the philosophy and principles, theory of change, quality framework to ISO-9001 standard,

policies and procedures specific to the model, application forms, interventions, outline of the role of the volunteer, HR recruitment processes, the coach and manager training programme, data management systems and risk management systems[5].

Mayday also went through an extensive governance review and recruited new Trustees to the Board who are skilled in leading an organisation that had adapted a new approach to managing risk.

---

4   See section 6 for a detailed discussion of outcomes modeling

5   Throughout the Proof of Concept the guide has been amended and updated.
    This guide is now available to partner organisations to assist them in their transition.

3. Implementation and Measures of Success

Mayday Trust planned and phased the implementation of this newly developed model in three key stages:

- *Stage 1.* Collecting initial feedback on what works well and what needs changing from staff and people we were working with, especially in relation to definitions of success, including data gathering and measurement tools.

- *Stage 2.* The Proof of Concept which aimed to test the theories and principles behind the work and how well these could be actioned through work on the ground.

- *Stage 3.* Implementing qualitative and quantitative research to test if the PTS is a deliverable and scalable intervention. If this was the case, the Search Institute advised to proceed with a full research project with a minimum sample size of 2,000 people to evidence that the model was robust and effective.

Mayday initiated Stage 1 in Northamptonshire, but decided it would be preferable to deliver the Stage 2 (i.e. Proof of Concept) in an area where the Trust had no previous operating experience. Mayday's Board of Trustees agreed to part fund it, if matching funds could be found from an investor/commissioner. Mayday talked to a number of local authorities, and in 2014 Oxford City and County Councils agreed to support Mayday to deliver it. Further funding was secured in 2015 from Lankelly Chase Foundation, Tudor Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation and Wates Foundation.

The Proof of Concept set out to:

- Further develop the model on the ground

- Deliver an approach where the systems and processes that people experiencing homelessness engaged with were respectful, dignified and that individuals felt they were listened to and could use their aspirations to take control of where they wanted to go in life.

- Test whether increasing assets correlated to the individual achieving long term sustainable outcomes.

The success indicators therefore were:

- Advancements in any aspect of the Model

- Increased engagement with the Coaches

- Increases in individual assets as measured by the Search Asset Survey and evidence of hard outcomes.

The next three sections of this report looks at the success indicators. This comes from our reflections, hard data collated, experiences delivering the model, Logical Thinking's review of engagement with coaches, as well as our data on utilisation of assets and evidence on hard outcomes.

4. Advancements in the Model

The following of are some examples of how the Model developed and adapted as a result of the pilot:

Asset Coach Profile

The Proof of Concept evidenced the importance of the Asset Coach role. Asset Coaches not only build the critical initial relationship with the individuals, they also work autonomously and creatively with the individual to ensure that the balance of power remains with them and not the coach. The focus is for each individual to continually build evidence of their ability to achieve for themselves. Widening their own positive support network beyond their coach. More importantly, outside the homelessness sector is a priority. Mayday developed a strength-based recruitment process[6], which integrates work that has been done by Ernst and Young in their graduate programme which replaces competency and value-based HR recruitment procedures.

Personal Budgets

At the beginning of the pilot, Mayday had allocated £10,000 for people to access personal budgets as part of the personalisation element of the Model. The total sum spent was £1,400. This was due to the success of local 'brokering' where Coaches source items, services, taster experiences, opportunities in the local community based on an individual's aspirations. This gives people evidence that they can contribute to the community or achieve success in a particular interest area.

It also builds community integration and breaks down the assumption that 'homeless people should only access homeless services and projects'. Some examples of what people have used personal budgets for include purchase of a remote control car, a provisional driver's license leading to that person passing their theory test shortly after, a guitar, writing course, film course, art exhibition, entry fees for competitive sporting events including running and a football team, haircuts, nail treatments and new clothes which enable people to participate in groups and opportunities. Many individuals identified and chose to take part in activities outside of the Homeless Pathway environment, for example a chess player signed up to a club in Didcot, and an art enthusiast took part in an arts walk in London's East End.

Risk Management

As we began to deliver the PTS, there were many questions arising from the lack of needs and risks assessments and how risk would be managed by coaches who mainly lone-work. Mayday developed and implemented a robust risk management system and contracted a lone-working system called 'Crystal Ball', a digital solution that tracked coaches' activities and alerted a central location in the event of any incident. However, during the course of the pilot, we became aware that frontline staff did not feel the need to use Crystal Ball. They meet people in *places of purpose*, i.e. places that individuals choose to meet where they feel comfortable. These places are always in the community (such as libraries, coffee shops, museums) and so the element of risk was reduced. The risk management system, lone-working policy and management of incidents have been amended to reflect a number of mitigating factors that ensure staff safety, e.g. coaches communicate several times during the day via social media and that they risk assess ongoing situations without seeing the person they are meeting as an immediate risk. By managing risk openly and taking precautions in terms of positive communication between the team, coaches report they feel safer than when the worked in an office environment, because they feel they are in control of a risk management process, which is dynamic, informed and constantly updated.

6   http://www.strengthsselector.com/page.aspx/Home

5. Evaluation of the coaching approach

This section builds on the evaluation of the Personal Transitions Service in Oxford carried out by Logical Thinking, a consultancy supporting charities to undertake research and evaluation to better understand the needs of their communities and the impact of their work.

Logical Thinking conducted interviews with individuals who live or work with Mayday, all held in person and lasting between 45 minutes and an hour. The conversations were done on a non-attributable basis. The interviews focused on:

- Individual's initial engagement and relationships with Mayday

- The degree to which there is trust and understanding between the individual and their coach

- Individual's understanding of the Mayday model

- Individual's own development and progress

Additionally they conducted a review of case notes entered on the database by Mayday's coaches. This amounted to an investigation of more than 2000 records and case notes, with specific focus on:

- How coaches conducted the coaching sessions

- The content of the conversations or discussions between coaches and individuals they work with

Throughout the course of the Proof of Concept in Oxford, Logical Thinking also conducted regular review workshops with the coaches to understand the experience of the delivery. In 2016, 3 sessions of review workshops were conducted with the coaches.

5.1. Referrals

Mayday has a solid reputation but getting referrals through official routes has always been a challenge. Over the course of the project, Mayday worked with 113 people – a little over half of the original target.

Mayday benefitted from word-of-mouth referrals, where people who were already engaged with an Asset Coach recommended others to seek a referral into Mayday. Logical Thinking found that many people who work for and with Mayday speak glowingly about their approach and their enthusiasm has been vital in convincing new people to come on board:

'The lady said they got some good people who work with Mayday. Also I've known some people who've gone through…' (Alex)

'If I'm honest, because [the coach I met] totally sold it to me and I totally believed in her. She believed, I could tell by speaking to her…I can totally tell just by watching her how absolutely into this Mayday thing she was and I thought if anybody's that far into it, it has to be a good thing…She's so into it, so excited about it. She showed me some of the charts and stuff and the assets. She was actually having enthusiasm for it that sold it to me…' (Adam)

'I used to have this other worker that left… she told me about Mayday Trust and how good it can be. How good it will be to get a coach in there. I got with her, she referred me to Mayday.' (Jamie)

5.2. Engagement

Based on case review, Logical Thinking segmented the coaching process into three periods: initial contact, trial phase, and continuing engagement.

Initial contact typically took 1 to 2 sessions (i.e. upwards to 2 weeks). Very often, people would miss their first appointment. This required coaches to chase people up to reschedule which resulted in a more robust bond between them.

Seeing the PTS as a new approach makes for better engagement

People living or working with Mayday talked about wanting to try something different. They felt that Mayday offered a real alternative to the current homeless pathway in Oxford.

'Yeah there is a difference. Like Mayday were like you have a meeting or you can like, I can phone [the coach] whenever, I make an appointment to see her of if she's got time she can see me. With [hostel staff] they are working in the hostel, there is a lot of that, it is their job [to run] the building. So it's like they haven't got enough time to sit down and chat like you would with Mayday. . . . When I was in [hostel] it's more just like chatting, it's like everyday kind of stuff but it was never, like sit down and like really wanted to know stuff. It's like they didn't want to know, if you know what I mean…. They were there just doing their job and that was it. With Mayday it's more a friendship more than anything else I think.' (Alex)

'I met [my coach] . . . and then she told me a bit about Mayday and everything like that and I decided to go with Mayday because I found it a little bit less intrusive. Do you know? I just find sometimes I don't really want to have someone being thrust upon me all the time, not every dark period where I drink, you know . . . 'cause it doesn't help to have to be forced upon, so yeah. I go through those dark times and then what I like about Mayday, they're not too hands on, you know?'
(Adam)

'Cos most of the hostels in Oxford, you stay about a year and then if you haven't been kicked out then they usually try and move you on. But the thing is, the only place to move you on is to one of the other hostels. . . And that's all you do. You just bouncing backwards and bounce and bounce about and it was, it's just to keep sub-culture going. . . The support structure there to help us is the one that puts all the obstacles up. The Mayday Trust are not like that, it's not jumping through hoops and all the rest of it.'
(Lou)

Logical Thinking also found that people working with Mayday were nearly 4.6 times more likely to engage within the first six sessions, when coaches talked to them about Mayday's approach during the trial period[7]. Coaches' actions to physically locate a person experiencing homelessness, being proactive in finding and having a conversation with them, as well as maintaining face-to-face contact created a sense of genuine commitment and that attention was given to them.

7 This result is significant at $p < .05$

"

Sam

Sam is a keen gardener and has a passion for plants, flowers and the great outdoors. For him, gardening has always been much more than deciding which bright perennial to choose for the patio, or growing food alone – connecting with nature and the physical exertion for the garden is his proven remedy for stress.

When Sam decided he was ready to work with his coach, he was clear that he wanted to build on his passion for gardening. His coach brokered a spot in a community garden, and Sam began looking after the gardens of elderly people in Oxford.

This experience also marked his desire to connect with more people. His relationship with his family has been fractious from his early teens, due to his reliance on alcohol – which also led to him becoming homeless two years ago. 2016 was the first Christmas he spent with his family, who he says are proud of his new sobriety.

Sam worked with his coach to secure a private rented flat through a council move-on scheme. This was a big move for Sam, as it involved moving to a completely new town and starting afresh. His new one-bed flat offered him a safehaven from his experiences of paranoia which was exacerbated by the hostel environment. Sam continued to work with his coach to adjust to living in a new town, and establishing connections in his new community. Sam is now looking forward to a future in which he hopes to take up training to become a full-time professional gardener.

"

Challenges in Engagement

The proportion of people who did not engage[8] increased from 17% in 2015 to 56% in 2016.

The defining influence on the drop in engagement was the introduction of Mayday accommodation. In 2016, Mayday began offering accommodation in Oxford. As a result, half of the individuals were referred through the housing scheme. It was observed that people who did not live with Mayday but chose to work with a Coach were four times more likely to engage in the first six sessions.

This new provision changed one major element in the model – offering people a choice to work with Mayday. Individuals who were offered accommodation with Mayday are obliged to work with Mayday coaches. Although people can choose not to move into Mayday's accommodation, most people felt that they could not turn down an offer of accommodation and this element of pressure affected their sense of control.

This observation highlights the crucial role and importance of voluntary engagement. When individuals have active choice and control over their engagement with a service, they are more likely to trust their coaches[9] and participate meaningfully. Conversely, when coaching is made mandatory, individuals feel far less in control of their progress and see coaching as yet another 'box to tick' to move out of homelessness, and therefore engage less enthusiastically, or not at all.

Persistent Outreach Improves Engagement

Despite the reduction in engagement in the trial period, people who did engage chose to continue to work with a Mayday coach beyond 6 sessions. Over half of the people who initially did not engage, went on to work with their coach for 6 sessions, and a third for more than 12 sessions, not counting the cancellations.

Coaches' persistence was the single success factor in re-establishing engagement. In many occasions, coaches found innovative ways to reach out to people, including sending messages through third parties, e.g. friends, staff at the accommodation, letters, leaving phone messages. As a result of this persistent approach, people felt the sincerity of the connection and therefore realised they were valued:

'Well, initially, I didn't want to work with [the coach] because I didn't want to work with anybody because I don't trust people…but I didn't want to work with anybody, "Why should I explain myself to yourself?"… I like music, so then [my coach] says, "I can get you a grant or something later to get a guitar." I'm like, "Yeah, because it will give me something else to do with my time," you know? Then, she put me in for music lessons… When I meet [my coach], it was totally different, because she's just good at her job and she's honest, and I'm not used to this. …That actually changed my way of thinking. Normally, I would not interact with people. My way of thinking is like, "No, can't be bothered with that." She changed my way of thinking completely.' (Drew)

'But, no I get on really well with him . . . last year I went for a bit of a mental breakdown last year, I wasn't playing ball [inaudible 00:23:12], I wasn't engaging, I just was not playing ball at all. Every time they came to see he didn't know what to do, he couldn't talk to me, I just gave him the cold shoulder and he was "I just don't know what to do with you like this." And then I slipped myself out of it and we started going to the gym and he would come every Thursday afternoon, we used to go to the gym, spend an hour at the gym and it was "Why couldn't you have got me doing this earlier?"… Sometimes it winds me up but then other times … I know he's just … sometimes I need encouraging, you know what I mean?' (Lou)

Stability and Engagement

Logical Thinking's qualitative review of the case notes reveal that people's stability was a key factor in establishing ongoing engagement in the coaching relationship. Mayday's original Theory of Change factors this in, however it focuses on the bigger practical issues such as accommodation, drug and alcohol addiction, mental health issues and involvement in the criminal justice system. These are some of the root causes of instability, but they are also issues that require longer, systematic and structural interventions to address.

Mayday found simple and effective ways to create a sense of stability, by establishing routine and ownership, as an alternative to focusing on the more systemic issues described above. For example, Mayday provided people with diaries to keep note of their appointments or schedule regular coaching sessions. These basic strategies have considerably boosted engagement and reduced absences at coaching sessions.

'He would teach me exactly, and I'll write, make notes of it, and I've got this diary you know, with me, that every time I can just go back to it for reference and stuff like that, so he was very helpful in stuff like that.' (Frankie)

---

8 Non-engagement was defined by three or more cancellations within the first six sessions and the content of the discussions noted. This proportion excludes those who only had one session with the Mayday coach.

9 See: Initiating contact and trust, on p.12

Buy-in & Understanding of Mayday Model

People's understanding and buy-in to the Mayday's model was also a factor that affected the engagement. The more discussions about the *Developmental Assets*[10] people had, and the more the reinforcement of ownership and control, the more continuously engaged people became. This understanding and buy-in also had an impact on positive outcomes achieved and sustained further down the road.

Number of Sessions Attended

People see their coaching sessions as effective and valuable. Logical Thinking found a statistically significant inverse relationship between actual sessions attended and the rate of cancellation, meaning more sessions attended result in more likelihood of engagement, less cancellations.

Actual Sessions Attended vs. Cancellation Rate

Cancellation Rate vs *Actual No. of Sessions Attended*

Trendline for Data series 1…
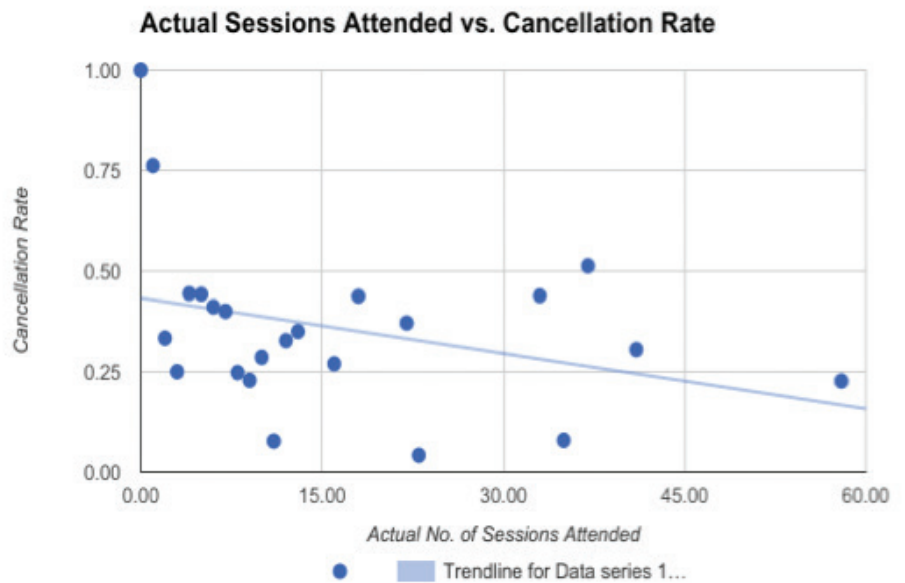
10 See Appendix

5.3. Trust and relationship

A strong connection with the coach was a prime motivator and about 86% of people have either initiated contact, disclosed new information, or asked for help during their coaching relationship. This is a clear indication of a high level of trust with the coaches built upon a strong relationship.

This strong coaching relationship was usually established within the first 6 sessions of the coaching sessions. On average, 1 in 5 people either initiated contact, disclosed new information, or asked for help in every coaching session in the first 12 sessions (3 months). Over the 3-month period, these indicators increase and peak at around the 5th session. Understandably, as the coaching relationships progressed, these incidences decreased, as people became more self-reliant and less disclosure is needed.

People echoed trust during the interviews, and said they felt free to talk to the coaches about everything. There was usually a period of time when people held back somewhat while they were getting to know their coaches, but as the relationships blossomed, they felt more comfortable sharing worries and thoughts and asking for help outside of the typical needs.

'Well I think, well, for it to go further you know, for it to make it work, I think there has to be trust, I think it's very important. It's like a relationship really, you know? To build something, you gotta build a foundation you know? You gotta build a platform, something to work on and… Yeah, and I think you know, Mayday Trust you know, and the staff there understand that really well, so I mean, it was very important for them to make me feel comfortable and welcome at all times, and that's how I felt. And I think you know, I mean, and it worked, and it worked. (Frankie)

'Yeah I tell her everything, like if I have any problems covering ESA, benefits, I tell her that. The other issue, I had a couple last weekend, I told her about that as well… Half way through I got to know her a bit more and then I was able to tell her how I feel about what my feeling are that day and if I'm feeling stressed.' (Jamie)

Initiating contact

Having choice and control over initiating contact was a crucial element people value in their relationships with their coaches. People mostly make contact to either schedule a coaching session, communicate or share information, find out what is going on various things, or reschedule a pre-existing session.

Disclosure and trust

People's disclosure of information is a significant indicator of their trust. Logical Thinking's analysis of data showed that people were more likely to reveal information as the coaching relationship grew and disclosures were markedly more frequent in the first 6 sessions. Better information also enabled coaches to provide more appropriate advice and tailor resources.

People shared rich and wide-ranging information with their coaches. At the start of relationships, people were likely to disclose information about alcohol addiction, drug usage, or problems with their accommodation at the start of the coaching relationship. As people became more familiar with their coaches, they unveiled more personal matters, such as their relationships, their worries, or mental health issues.

'I share stuff that's going on, she knows all about my [inaudible 00:15:20], you know and pretty much everything like a friend, you know? She knows everything about how I feel about my daughter and you know and I burst into tears in front of her once, you know? I feel that confident, you know, when with her, but you know?' (Adam)

'I can talk to her about other things that, you know, outside of college or bike pedals or whatever it might be. We go to meditations, which is really good.' (Sean)

'It could be about anything really, what I've done over the weekend or being with friends or gone to see family, like cause I hadn't seen my family for a while, then I ended up going to see them and then

Initiated contact, Disclosed new information and Asked for help vs. Session Number
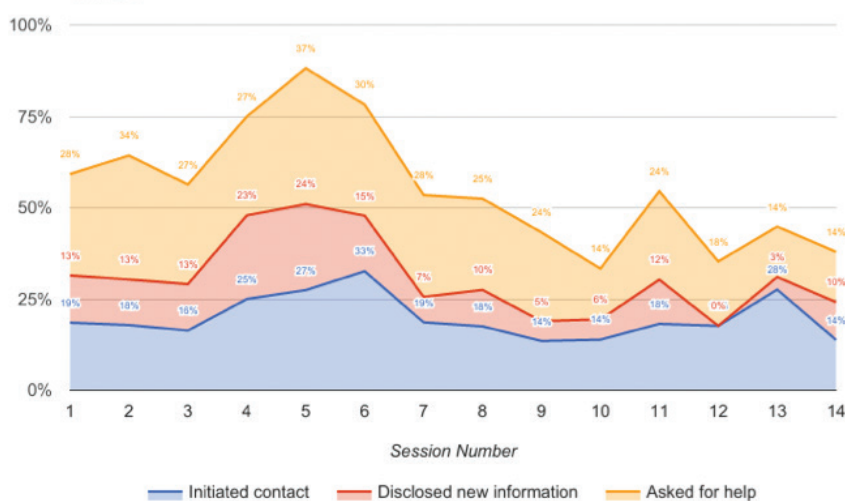
like catching up with them and stuff and planning stuff with my job, helping me with my CV and things like that. Talking about my hobbies, getting and doing hobbies again…' (Alex)

It is important to note that asset-oriented conversations have encouraged people to open up. Discussions about hobbies and interests prevented people from closing down and encouraged them to speak freely to get to the heart of what matters to them.

Asking for help

Another indicator of a solid foundation of the relationship between people and their coaches is the number of times they proactively sought support. Assistance people sought was diverse, including:

- Housing situations (applications, current housing arrangements, conflicts with housemates)
- Benefits application
- Relationship with families
- Advice on personal matters
- Accompanying to court, medical appointments, or groups like Turning Point
- Issues with access to primary and secondary healthcare
- Information, advice and assistance to access education, volunteering, and training
- Help with organising or planning activities
- Identifying and applying to jobs (including writing CVs)
- Help for another friend
- Crisis & emergencies (fights, things stolen, incidents requiring police involvement)

When asked what made people to begin trusting their coaches, they talked about the coaches' persistent presence and non-judgmental attitudes.

Always present and supportive

In the interviews with Logical Thinking, people talked about how much they valued coaches' consistent presence. People felt that coaches were always available, only aphone call away and their willingness to help was evident. They appreciated coaches were there for them, even after periods of disengagement:

'so I took that bad and I really relapsed a bit, but then [my coach] just left me alone for a few weeks and I came back out and you know, she just sent a text, do you wanna meet up? I'd be like, oh I'm not feeling very well and she would let another week go by and she's, you wanna meet up?...You know, not really in my face all the time, you know? Just standing back and then I just let my emotion fail me and said you know, you wanna meet up? And I was like, I would love to meet up, you know, and then we had a nice meeting and that's just genuine friendly chat and the next time start talking about, are you ready to move forward again? Yes, I'm looking forward to going back into education…' (Adam)

'Just really happened as I go along really cause [my coach] been so supportive. So I decided to keep on cause I need as much support …' (Eddy)

Non-judgemental attitude

Coaches' non-judgmental attitudes in weekly conversations were also a prominent factor in building trust and forging good relationships. Over time, as people got to know coaches better and became more confident that they would not be judged, as a result they told more about themselves, and sought help.

'It got easier once you know, I got to know her and I trust her. I did pretty much from [inaudible 00:13:18] judging people and I liked her from the minute, so enthusiastic and bubbly and she's not judgmental. There's no way she's looking down at anyone.' (Adam)

Steve

"A conversation about cars and driving rekindles Steve's youthful passion. Steve has recently aced his theory test (71 out of 74) and is on the cusp of passing his practical test. He looks forward to receiving his driving license, starting to make a living out driving and moving to his own home.

Steve had quite a reputation in the local homeless pathway. When he was referred to Mayday, we were informed Steve has been in and out of the criminal justice system since the age of 13, and repeatedly engaged in drugs, violence and crime. The services wrote Steve off 'as hard to engage' and this in turn led Steve to write himself off. Reflecting on the past 37 years, he cannot believe how much he has changed his life around in just over year.

For Steve, it was a Ferrari test-drive that sparked a change. Having built a solid relationship with his coach, Steve was ready to uncover his passion for driving. Mayday provided a Personal Budget to cover the cost of a passenger experience day in a Ferrari and Ariel Atom. The experience of traveling in a fast car got Steve to finally pursue his own licence so that one day he can test drive a Ferrari himself. The experience of a fast car oozing raw power has led Steve to discover his own power. He came off his methadone script and stopped injecting drugs. He began studying diligently for his driving theory test and investigating local driving instructors.

Here is Steve, anticipating soon to pass his test, attending a course to get him to employment and making big plans for a very different future."

www.arielmotor.co.uk

5.4. Learning and understanding

The evaluation carried out by Logical Thinking demonstrated that people, who understood the idea and purpose behind the *Developmental Assets*, almost always made more progress in their development. A regular review of how their asset development was progressing also served as a continuing motivation for people. Their understanding of *Developmental Assets* as means to achieving hard outcomes empowered people to apply their assets in a variety of situations.

Logical Thinking recommends the coaches to reinforce the asset development aspects of the Mayday model. Their review of case notes highlighted that the majority of the *Asset Plans* focused on the achievement of hard outcomes, or did not explicitly state how these activities might contribute to the individual's asset development. In interviews, some echoed a lack of understanding of what purpose their assets served. The focus on outcomes without clear discussion on assets in some cases resulted in people avoiding discussions or activities that are not directly related to getting out of their homeless situation, and increased their likelihood to disengage entirely.

Developmental Assets was set up as an auxiliary tool to identify and build on individuals' strengths, rather than the core purpose of the Asset Coach role. Furthermore, the model, which takes personalisation as a key approach, meant individuals can opt in and out from filling out surveys. This is why all coaches did not always explicitly discuss asset-development with every person they work with. Mayday will continue to test how discussions around Developmental Assets can impact on rates of achievement and sustenance of hard outcomes in long term.

5.5. Exploration and development

Mayday's Developmental Asset approach identifies a set of skills, experiences, relationships and behaviours that empower people to become more resilient and independent. This is achieved through people connecting with a variety of activities, classes and community groups:

'It's the positive way they work with you instead of focusing on the bad aspects. They come at it from the other side. And coming at it from the other side of the fence, it's a bit alien but it works because when you start getting out doing things that you're interested in, things you enjoy, that you've got passion for, you wake up and you feel better. You've got a purpose, you've got something. It gives you that motivation, that drive again…' (Lou)

Exploring activities

Mayday presented individuals with real life opportunities. The review found they were able to try to more activities and develop their assets than before. Activities included:

- taking part in one-off activities, such as arts tours, watching sports
- doing sports & exercise
- participating in group activities or projects
- volunteering
- attending college, courses & workshops
- going out in their local area and participating in community events
- connecting to formal support groups
- getting ID/ library membership

Additionally, Mayday started a volunteering programme, which links people with opportunities in their communities. People saw this connection as a rewarding experience:

'It's like the carrot and the stick. And it's the carrot, I'm used to stick. It was a bit alien, I thought no, give it a try. Anything

that you're interested in and things that you want to do to progress, they sort of encourage and they'll try and see if they can help you, if they can get a bit of funding or whatever…' (Lou)

Autonomy, responsibility and motivation

Coaches were successful promoting autonomy and self-reliance. Logical Thinking's review of case notes showed that coaches consistently promoted a sense of ownership, by handing over the responsibility to people. Coaches should be commended in their initiative to take on a supportive role providing information and advice as requested, and empowering people to take self-action to make things happen. As a result, people interviewed expressed a powerful sense of independence:

'and it's getting that drive without having to go through the long procedure of you've got to go see somebody, you've got to tell them how fit your life is, tell them all your problems, and it's like why the hell am I telling them this for, it's a waste of bloody time 'cos they can't do bugger all about it. Well, who's going to do anything about my problems? Is she going to do anything about my problems? Or am I going to do something about my problems?' (Lou)

To be honest . . . I'm quite self-reliant. [. . .] take responsibility for your own crap. You can't expect everybody to do everything for you. And I think in the homeless sector everything is expected [. . .] to be done for you. And there is a bit of "You've got to get off your backside and do something," you know what I mean? To be honest, at the end of the day, nothing is going to get done unless I get off my ass and get around and do it. [The coach] can do a bit of the leg-work and chase up information and stuff, but at the end of the day, I've got to get off me backside and I think that there's so many people who just expect everything to be done for them. (Adam)

You have got support and there are people that want to support you, want

to help you, you know, but you've got to help yourself as well, you know, they can't do everything, they can't drag you out, you know. (Drew)

People who succeeded in achieving their goals also talked about how the coaching approach helped them to focus on carrying out their own goals. They said coaches helped break down their longer-term goals into smaller achievable actions and accomplishing small steps created a sense of success and motivated them to carry on:

'Being more focused. I was trying to do too many things at once. When [my coach] showed me, like, rather than doing everything at once, set a goal, and then like do it and succeed with it. Rather than do too many things and not be able to do it. Then it just builds up over time and you get better at it.' (Alex)

Focus on hard outcomes

Logical Thinking's review of case notes suggested that coaches tend to focus more on assets that are directly linked to the hard outcomes (i.e. Support, and Constructive Use of Time). As such, coaches veered towards recommending activities or support directly linked to those hard outcomes[11], for example, going to Turning Point for substance misuse, bidding on council housing, completing employment applications, or taking employment related college courses.

These activities are concrete and easily understood as they have a direct link people's pathway out of homelessness. However focusing on tangible hard outcomes creates short-term gains over long-term benefits and does not fully implement the PTS.

Logical Thinking also found that the discussions on Developmental Assets generally becomes less frequent over the time spent with coaches.

The development of less tangible assets, such as positive identity, social competence, positive values, or empowerment, can prevent people from burn-out as they encounter a failure or obstacle, and therefore should be viewed as equally important. Burn-outs can manifest into long periods of disengagement. For example, when a person fails their applications for council housing, they can feel upset and stop engaging with the coaches for several weeks; or a person who has spent several sessions discussing how they might attend a class or access to a support service might not show on the day of their appointment and become unreachable for a stretch of time. These burn-outs can be attributed to low self-confidence, social competence to try new things, meet people in new environments, or resilience to overcome adversities. People can also disengage when they lose interest in achieving pre-determined hard outcomes, especially if they feel pressured to attain these goals in a relatively short period of time.

Improvement in self-identity and confidence

However, it was clear from the interviews that the longer people worked with their coaches, the more improvement they made in their self-identity, confidence and empowerment:

'Well my confidence in speaking to new people because [my coach] encourages me- tries encouraging me to talk to new people and now I'm getting a bit better at that…I've got to change doctor's surgery…So I'm a bit worried about doing that. I just worry that they're not gonna listen. If new people … for example if I get a new doctor, they're not gonna listen, they don't know me so they're not gonna listen. It takes me time to get used to new people.' (Jamie)

'I used to be quite shy and like not talk a lot at all and me now talking is quite a big deal… they make you feel like you don't have to worry like about like stuff. Everyone's human actually you know what I mean. We're all, if we were, it's not a scary world really at the end of the day. Is it?... Yeah, yeah. I used to worry about what other people thought so I'd be quiet a bit more, well a lot. But now I don't think that anymore.' (Drew)

Average No. of Developmental Asset Discussions (per Client)
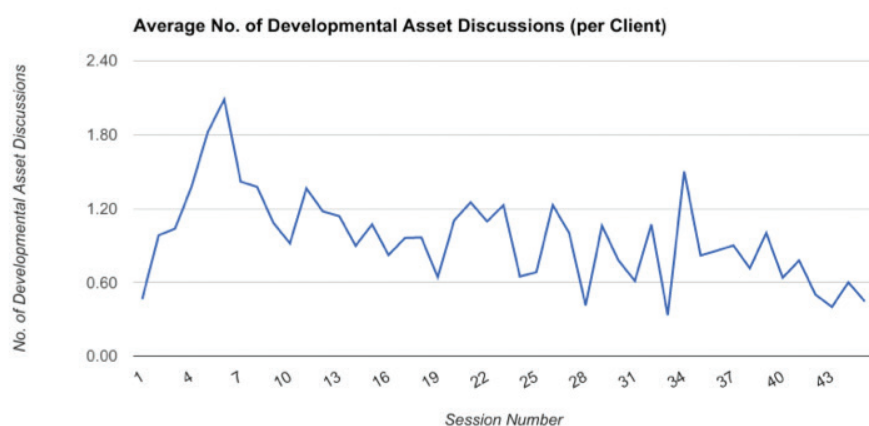
11 Reduced offending, sustained accommodation, managing mental health & wellbeing, reduced substance misuse, sustained employment, education or training.

A common theme in the interviews was how supported people felt at Mayday. This newly-gained sense of support was due to the strengthening of their formal and informal support network. Formal support wise, people were linked with many other organisations that could provide critical aid on specific issues. These organisations ranged from advice centres, housing bodies, mental health services, legal advice. They also had access to opportunities in local community such as volunteering centres, colleges for training and education, social groups, arts centres, music studios, sports clubs where people can engage in their interests and hobbies.

Some people achieved and maintained connection with their families, and these individuals have seen their relationships with families improve. Case reviews also showed that coaches had frequent discussions around how people can improve their relationships with friends and family, as well as planning family visits.

George

George was in high spirits as he prepared to cook Christmas dinner for the household: a 3 bird roast of goose, turkey and chicken with roast potatoes, mash, honey coated carrots and parsnips with greens and pigs in blankets. George has always been passionate about cooking but his hostel for four years did not have a kitchen for him to enjoy cooking or give him a choice over what and when he eats. Unlike most of us, he can enjoy the dinner guilt free, considering the paces he is putting his Coach through at the gym weekly.

George is in his early 40s and has experienced homelessness for over 20 years, going from one institution to another. In these twenty years, he struggled with substance misuse issues and had tried to quit so that he can make a better life for himself. George is very quick witted, intelligent and very mechanically minded but being caught in the system never gave him the platform to develop his assets.

This has not been an easy journey for George and the 9 months we have worked alongside each other have not always been fun and laughter. George decided he wanted to get an allotment to grow some vegetables so his Coach brokered an opportunity for an allotment in the city. George found some barriers in the way with his substance misuse problems and he ended up quitting the allotment. Upon reflection George decided to make a conscious effort to gain control of his substance misuse problems and over the course of 3 very difficult months, he managed to get clean.

George has been volunteering for an organisation in Oxford doing landscaping and gardening twice a week, where he is meeting people. This is also a project designed to lead to employment. He is now in a position to secure his own property through a council scheme. He enjoys cooking, keeping fit and continues to take his positive steps towards a better life that he so deserves.

6. Outcomes

This section brings together quantitative data collected during the Proof of Concept for PTS in Oxford, and looks at the profile of people we have worked with, identification and utilisation of their assets and an evaluation of the degree to which they have achieved 'hard outcomes'.

6.1. Profiles of people we worked with

Mayday worked with some of the most marginalised and entrenched individuals in the homeless pathway in Oxford. Many of these people have been part of the system for extended periods and in some cases many years.

Initially, Mayday received referrals from providers in the Oxford Homeless Pathway. Providers selected people, who had refused to engage with services for extended periods or who had been in and out of a range providers and lived 'chaotic lifestyles'. In the latter part of the Proof of Concept, Mayday were successful in two of the Housing Related Support contracts for people experiencing homelessness, namely 'Complex Needs' and 'Complex Progression' and the project took referrals for these accommodation projects. The PTS was still delivered at the support element of the contract with housing related support needs being met separately to ensure the power dynamics of the PTS were not compromised.

83% of people who came to Mayday were male. The average age across Proof of Concept was 39 (< 25 = 8%;

26-55 = 84% ; >56 = 8%); this in contrast to the profiles across Mayday Trust services which is composed of 70% men and 30% women with the average of age of 35.

The ethnicity profile highlighted a high percentage of white British men at 78%, the remaining population identified as:

- White other : 6%
- Mixed white black African : 3%
- Asian / Asian British Pakistani : 3%
- Asian / Asian British Bangladesh : 3%
- Black / Black British Caribbean : 3%
- Black / Black British African : 3%

There were a high level of complex issues that people presented with. 71% of people we have worked with presented with physical health problems, 65% with mental health problems, 59% have been involved in criminal justice system and 38% had substance misuse issues. These issues correlated to the amount of time people had experienced homelessness and the effects that life on the streets had had on them.
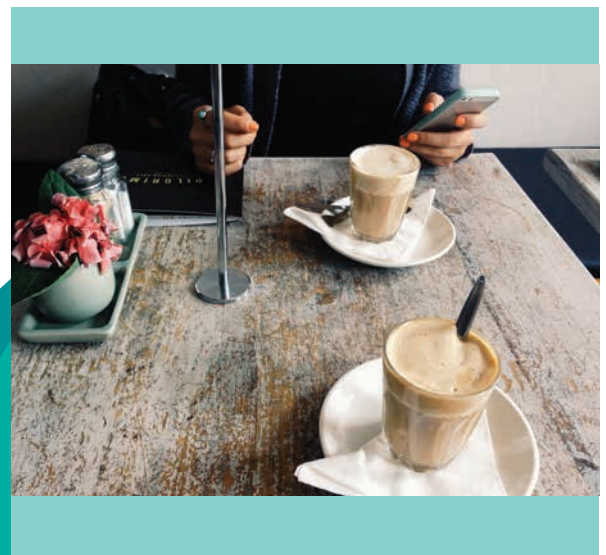
6.2. Asset utilisation

Asset Survey

A key component of the model is the Asset Survey which is a measuring tool based on the Search Institute's *Developmental Assets*. Mayday adapted the tool from a young person's context to people experiencing tough life transitions, such as homelessness, leaving prison, psychiatric hospitals and care.

The Search Institute has carried out extensive research on the core internal and external assets people might need to thrive in their lives and in their communities. Their research demonstrates that Developmental Assets are significant indicators of behaviours, and link to hard outcomes. The lower a person's asset score, the more likely they are to get into harmful behaviours. Conversely, the higher their scores, the more likely people are to thrive, contribute to their local community and reach their potential. For example, a study[12] with 99,462 young people across the United States found that two-thirds of those with fewer than 10 assets were problem alcohol users, while only one-tenth of those with 31-40 assets were. Though the percentages differed somewhat from one at-risk behaviour to another, more assets always predicted a far less likelihood of at-risk behaviour- alcohol abuse, drug use, tobacco use, risky sexual behaviour, etc. With every increment of 10 assets, percentages of at-risk behaviour declined, usually by 10-15%.

Proof of Concept Asset Surveys

During the Proof of Concept, the Asset Survey was completed on a voluntary basis, at a frequency of every 3 months. Not all individuals who took part in the Proof of Concept completed an Asset Survey as this was offered as a choice not a requirement. 88 people have completed 1 survey, 20 people have completed a second survey and 11 people have completed a third survey.

These surveys show that out of 88 people who took part:

• 23% had under 20 as an asset score

• 37% had a score between 21 and 30

• 30% had a score between 31 and 40

• 10% had a score over 41

Furthermore,

• 14/20 individuals increased their asset scores in 2nd survey – 70%

• 7/11 individuals increased their asset scores in the 3rd survey – 64%

The lowest asset score was measured as 8, in contrast the highest asset was 51, out of a possible 60.

---

12 Daniel, Eleanor A. (2002) "A Fragile Foundation: The State of Developmental Assets Among American Youth, Peter L. Benson, Peter C. Scales, Nancy Leffert, Eugene C. Roehlkepartain," Leaven: Vol. 10: Iss. 1, Article 12. Available at: http://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/leaven/vol10/iss1/12

Individuals have a unique collection of assets to build upona

The implementation of the Asset Survey as a core component of the strength-based system within the PTS presented a very different insight into the capabilities of individuals which need to be further tested at the next stage of the delivery and research programme.

Regardless of their life experiences, every individual who participated in the survey to date were able to identify some assets that they could build upon. Furthermore, no two individuals had the same Asset Survey result, highlighting that every individual requires a personalised approach to how they want to develop and lead their progress. Without the Asset Survey, an individual who may come to a service with a history of mental health, substance misuse and offending, may find their assets overlooked. The PTS approach, with the Asset Survey at the heart, can help to identify an individual's assets and work with them to help themselves rather than trying to 'fix' their problems.

Having noticed this discrepancy between a person's assets and 'needs' profiles, coaches report a change in how they collect and review information prior to meeting a person. Unless there are serious safety issues, coaches prefer not to see the person's previous needs assessment, and start with their relationship with the person with a conversation about their strengths.

4 in 5 people have higher internal asset scores than external asset scores[13]

The initial asset scores highlighted that a higher percentage of people came to Mayday with lower external assets than internal assets. While it is too early to make definite statements at this stage, this indicates that when people are experiencing homelessness their external assets decrease, so the focus may need to be on building positive networks rather than interventions focusing on increasing self-belief or identity. This is an area that could be explored further in the wider research programme because better targeting of the support people require would achieve better results and maximise the use of resources.

No clear correlation between 'complex needs' and 'risk of harmful behaviours'

The Proof of Concept showed that only 1 in 4 people identified as 'complex needs' have assets scores below 20, therefore most at risk of harmful behaviours. Therefore further exploration into the use of the asset-tool as an alternative and more robust way of identifying those who are at most risk would be beneficial..

No clear correlation between 'complex needs' and 'risk of harmful behaviours'

The Proof of Concept showed that only 1 in 4 people identified as 'complex needs' have assets scores below 20, therefore most at risk of harmful behaviours. Therefore further exploration into the use of the asset-tool as an alternative and more robust way of identifying those who are at most risk would be beneficial.

Early indication suggests that the PTS is effective in increasing assets

For the period of the Proof of Concept, the sample size was too small to conclusively state that the PTS increases people's assets. However, asset scores combined across Mayday services yields statistically significant data showing an increase of 5% assets over a period of 3 months as a result of working in a PTS model. This is a sufficient indication for Mayday to continue to the next stage of testing looking at the extent to which increase in assets result in hard outcomes. Below is an account of the hard outcomes achieved within the Proof of Concept.

13 Based on 88 people who have opted in to complete the Asset Survey.

6.3. Hard outcomes

As part of Mayday's model, the final part of the coaching journey theorises that people would begin to attain or sustain five hard outcome goals – reduced offending, sustained accommodation, managing mental health & wellbeing, reduced substance misuse, and sustained employment, education or training – by using and applying their Developmental Assets.

People working with Mayday during the Proof of Concept, have achieved the following outcomes[14] :

	Data until January 2017
Sustained accommodation	73%
Less risk from substance misuse	36%
Engaging in volunteering / training or employment	36%
Sustained social network	87%
Reduced usage of high cost services	44%
Reduced re-offending	67%

Accommodation outcomes – February to October 2016

Mayday has 31 units of accommodation: 21 units for complex needs and 10 units complex progression. *For the period – 9 months:*

* 40 people have been accommodated

* 10 have moved on (25%)

* 30 are still working with us.

Length of stay

* Average length of stay for people who already moved on was 7.0 months

* Average length of stay for people who are still housed with us is 7.6 months

* Average of length of stay (current and previous) is 7.4 months

* Level of voids is 0%

* From the City's data chain report, Mayday had the lowest level of voids in the Pathway

Move-ons

Of the 10 people that have moved on from Mayday;

* 6 had a planned move-on (60%)

* 1 was evicted due to arrears,
  2 were evicted due to behavior,
  1 passed away.

 Of the 6 planned move-ons:

* 5 moved into supported housing

* 1 took a LA tenancy (general needs)

14 Based on 113 people, represented as a percentage of needs met.

7. Learning from the challenges

The PTS Proof of Concept in Oxford has been a hugely interesting piece of work, and was only made possible with the support of both the City and County Councils, trust funders and other local providers. Mayday has benefited from the willingness and openness of the providers, and the support they have received from the council officers who have sought collaboration across a variety of stakeholders and took a robust approach to managing what may be seen as reputational risk.

In developing the PTS, Mayday has learnt that taking a truly personalised and strength based approach meant dispensing with all deficit-based processes, including needs and risk assessments, traditional human resources processes, finance systems that overlooked personal budgets, and data capture systems that only record the meeting of pre-defined needs. This was a complex process that took over two years from conception to refinement.

The Proof of Concept has shown that to truly deliver personalised and asset based work, a paradigm shift in approach is required alongside whole system change. Mayday learnt that this is not possible by just transforming internal organisational culture, structures and processes. It also demands wider external transformational change to enable the delivery changes on the ground to flourish.

Based on the experience of delivering the Proof of Concept, Mayday has found that the best way to achieve this shift, is by listening to people experiencing homelessness, through grassroots delivery of the PTS and encouraging change to happen organically. This ensures that change responds accurately to local dynamics and circumstances and stands a greater chance of being responsive, locally owned, sustainable and relevant to the people who need to recapture their power.

This means that the 'systems changers' are people on the street, the workers and individuals on the ground who are bringing about change through their actions, values and behaviours. These system changers need the leadership of organisations and funders that firstly give them the freedom to break the rules, listen to them and then can make sense of their experiences to translate into strategy and policy change.

Challenging existing traditional practices and processes that have often been the norm for many years can be extremely difficult, especially as austerity has created highly competitive and unstable local environments. Mayday's learning is that frontline teams need additional support and recognition for their role as system changers.

Communicating about the PTS

Mayday's introduction to the homelessness sector in Oxford came at a time of imminent local re-tendering as well as wider significant changes in commissioning for homelessness services. This naturally caused some initial friction and skepticism. Further problems arose because some local providers were not entirely clear about the nature of Mayday's model and approach and initial communication around this had not been as strong as it might have been.

Providers often question whether the PTS is significantly different to services and practices that are currently being offered. Indeed, our experience shows that many organisations deliver aspects of personalisation and asset-based approaches, however, the critical aspect of PTS is its whole-system approach. In other words, the PTS is as much about creating the right conditions (such as processes, policies, backroom functions and impact measurements) as frontline delivery. In the absence of this whole-system approach, personalised and asset-based practice cannot keep the focus on the person as it is still working within a deficit based framework.

Throughout the Proof of Concept, others delivering more traditional services maintained the position that positive enforcement and asset building should remain as a secondary and complementary function of support services which are essentially there to 'meet a need'. As discussed in detail throughout the report, the PTS is built upon the principle that developing internal and external assets is key for individuals to bounce back from tough times and thrive in their lives and communities. Individuals, who are recognised for their assets, feel more motivated to take initiative and apply their assets in a variety of situations and achieve and maintain their hard outcomes. Therefore, the PTS suggests that assets are the closest proxy to achieving hard outcomes. Organisations that support hard outcomes without asset development may hit the target, but miss the point – that when individuals take the lead in deciding and acting for themselves they are more likely to achieve their outcomes and have the necessary resilience to navigate future difficulties.

As a result of the experience in Oxford, Mayday has learnt the importance of communication to reduce feelings of resistance and skepticism amongst providers and to create more positive working environments for frontline staff. Clarity of the PTS model, the difference it provides and the motivations of the new way of working need to be made clear from the start and throughout the delivery process so that lines of communication between commissioners and providers remain open and strong.

Low levels of referrals

The Proof of Concept had set out to deliver the PTS to a minimum of 220 people, consisting of various people including those from the existing homelessness pathway, individuals from the young people's pathway, probation referrals and care leavers. Referrals have mostly been received from the homelessness pathway, which amounted to a total of 113 individuals.

As a result of the difficulties during the implementation phase and communication with other providers being affected by systemic uncertainty, there was a short fall in numbers of people being referred to Mayday Trust. Arrangements made at the senior level had not effectively filtered down to operational teams, which also led to a reduction in the number of referrals received from the homelessness pathway.

Due to the lower number of referrals, volunteers were not effectively engaged, so the full extent of the approach has not been tested. Additionally, we have not been able to evidence the staff: people ratio, or test our assumption that an Asset Coach could potentially work with between 35 and 50 people at any one time.

Recently, Mayday has been successful in receiving referrals from new areas such as probation and the young people's pathways which, as well as providing new referral routes into the project, has also opened up the service to test how the PTS works with people coming out of prison, as well as the preventative nature of the model on young people entering the system.

Staff turnover

Over the period of the Proof of Concept, there has been high staff turnover within the team.

Mayday did not anticipate the level of resilience that Asset Coaches would require to work autonomously, negotiate barriers to delivering innovation whilst simultaneously driving systems change at a delivery level.

This learning informed our continued development of the staff profile to ensure that people who are recruited as Asset Coaches demonstrate the required strengths, have the ability to work autonomously and have strong resilience to not only deliver the PTS alongside individuals who are at very difficult stages of their lives, but to survive the unchartered environment of grassroots systems change.

The high levels of staff turnover during the Proof of Concept draws attention to the difficult decisions our coaches and managers need to make every day to challenge and change existing practices and cultures in their local areas as well as the emotional strain systems-change can have on their lives. Emotions can be both positive, such as celebrating an achievement of a person they are working with, and negative, such as being criticised or dismissed for doing things differently.

Mayday had already implemented team based reflective practice and close individual supervision as part of the support processes, but extended this to an organisational level so that frontline staff could share some of their challenges, frustrations and achievements across the Trust and receive a wider network of support and validation as part of a wider movement for change.

Mayday has also taken important steps to ensure that the experiences and expertise of frontline staff inform strategic processes and shape our public messaging, so that they can shape the change process nationally alongside innovating locally. This one-team approach has set up a dynamic feedback loop that helps us to evaluate our performance and make adjustments when necessary.
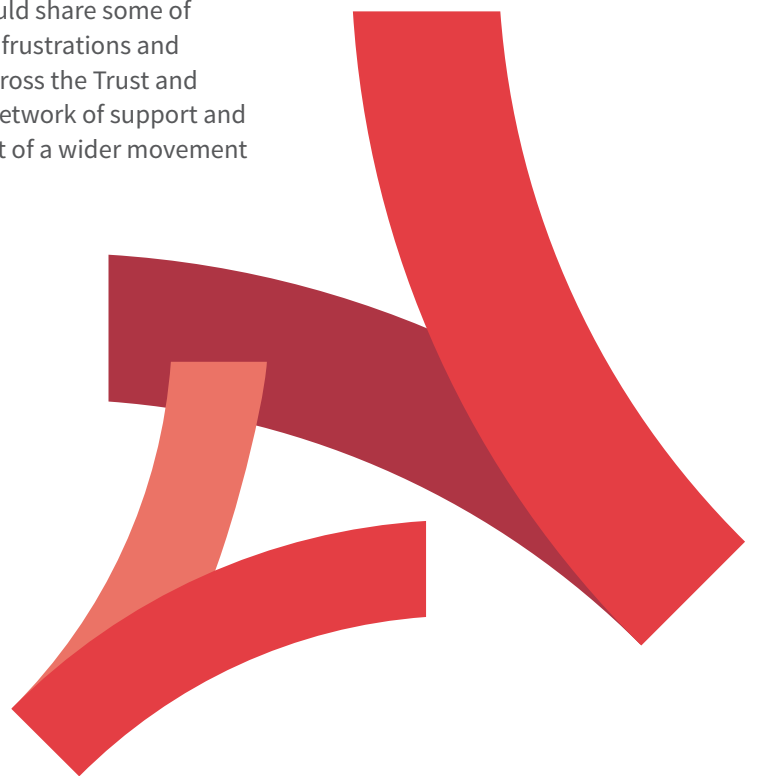
8. The need for wider systems change

The Personal Transitions Service has been developed to address the root causes of long-term homelessness. Wisdoms from the Street has shown that the short term focus that delivers fixes and takes away choice and control from people have been deeply embedded in a homelessness system that limits real progress. We have gone through a major organisational transformation to fundamentally alter all of the components and structures that cause the system to behave in this deficit-based way.

The Proof of Concept has given Mayday the opportunity to change systems through grass-roots delivery. We believe that as an organisation working on the ground, we can challenge assumptions and behaviours and mitigate against consequences by delivering and showing that personalisation and asset-based approaches can be purposefully delivered. Our methodology of systems-change is deeply rooted in identifying the social change needed, prototyping various aspects of the system we wish to build and 'being and doing' the change we wish to see.

Challenging the system from within, operating continuously with and against the system has been challenging, but we have been encouraged by the feedback from the people who have been through PTS expressing Mayday offered a positive and equitable alternative to existing homelessness services.

The interviews carried out by Logical Thinking continue to highlight the grass-roots demand for systems-change:

People do not want to be defined as their experience of adverse life experiences and have a say:

'The staff member who was conducting the interview, "We need you to do this," and I went, "I'm not doing nothing." This is just me being silly. They went, "No, it's better for you." I remember the words, "You're a very vulnerable person." I said, "No, I'm not. I'll fight anybody I'm not a vulnerable person." He went, "Well, you're a vulnerable person. You've had your money stolen off you by your friends." I said, "Yeah, I have, and…"' (Drew)

People do not want to miss opportunities due to risk-averse systems:

'I got out of prison, been stuck in a hostel and then probation says "You can't go to college 'cos you can't get to college and back to the hostel in time for curfew." And I missed the best opportunity I've ever had for me to actually move forward in my life.' (Adam)

People want meaningful alternatives to move on from homelessness:

Because I've been in and out of all the supposedly support services and it was five years and they just kept me in the same place. I wasn't going anywhere. They take you in but then they've got nowhere, they can't offload you 'cos there's nowhere for you to go. […] There is this bubble of homelessness and addicts who just don't get used. And this, there's no help. Obviously, the help is there but it's not there, if you know what I mean. (Lou)

At Mayday, I was trusted enough to have friends stay over, there was no curfew and now you are offering me a positive move-on but my new provider has a curfew and I can't have a friend stay over, I am going backwards, its mad. (Lee)

As the Proof of Concept comes to an end, Mayday is aware that a number of system behaviours need to change in order to enable the PTS to flourish across the country:

Personalisation

Both Lou and Lee highlight the existence of blanket policies that are not flexible in adapting to the requirements of the individual and thus trapping them within the system for longer periods than are necessary. Movement and progression within pathway approaches often operate within set guidelines and do not allow for people who, with coaching support, could effectively move on from hostels or supported housing into mainstream housing.

Personalisation has long been a cross-party goal to transform public services with the recognition that individuals know best how their lives work and how enhancements can be made. There is still a long path until local commissioning and service delivery make the cultural adaptation to shift the balance of power to the individuals. As highlighted in this report, this transformation needs to start with people's experiences of current systems and procedures, and a whole-systems response to accommodate their feedback.

Mayday is aware that the local systems around personalisation, and particularly personal budgets, reflect the central government requirements and barriers to delivering personalised support. Mayday has recently presented to the Department of Communities and Local Government and has been in dialogue with sector partners in how the systems-change can promote personalised and strength-based work.

Outcomes-based commissioning

In order to achieve a truly personalised service offer, the definitions for funding need to be given not in terms of outputs achieved or processes to be followed, but what outcomes might be achieved. Setting outputs, e.g. set amount of hours support per person or requirement for everyone to undertake tenancy support, detracts from the ability to offer 'right interventions at the right time'. For example, through delivering the Proof of Concept, we found that the amount of hours required for each individual to achieve the change they wanted in their lives vary significantly with some people requiring minimal intervention but access to opportunities, while others initially requiring a more intensive support and a wider network. An outcomes-based approach could fundamentally shift the emphasis from what and when a provider will offer to what outcomes people need to achieve for themselves to lead happier and more independent lives.

It is understandable that evidencing hard outcomes is not always easy, especially when they are framed as preventative measures, such as reducing alcohol use, and as such it is easy for commissioners to fall back on measures of process or activity as a proxy, e.g. how many people have been registered with their GP. There is clearly a continuum for outputs through to outcomes, but as the stories have demonstrated, individuals can achieve outcomes as a result of positive engagement and asset building. An individual can discover their passion for gardening and reduce drinking in order to make new friends in their gardening

club and pursue their aspiration to become a landscaper. The next stage of the research programme will provide more evidence into the relationship between the Developmental Assets and hard outcomes, and continue to test if assets can provide a positive alternative to traditional methods of measuring progress.

Currently providers can meet the requirements of outcomes-based commissioning in different ways. For example, a provider might suggest running an apprenticeship programme and can put through a large volumes of people. This may tick the box for 'getting involved in training and employment' but may not necessarily meet the aspirations of each individual. Establishing Developmental Assets as proxies, in this scenario, would also mean that the commissioning supports personalisation and asset-development as well as the outcomes. In other words, the impact measurement tools in PTS can support commissioning in local areas and produce creative and effective service delivery.

Assessments

As Drew highlighted, assessments, in general, are not person-led. People are often subjected to a detailed needs and risk assessment and given a vulnerability score to assess their eligibility. Too often, people are not asked what specific support they require or what their abilities or motivations are to resolve any of their own barriers in order to move out of homelessness. The continuous focus on needs and risks continues to disempower people and over time, creates feelings of despair and institutionalisation. Many of these individuals then attract a 'multiple complex needs' label, which only enforces institutional identities and negative behaviours. In this way, people are unable to make positive progress and subsequently present to high cost services.

Eligibility

There is emerging evidence to suggest that some of the people termed 'complex needs' do not require some of the high cost interventions given to them, for example drug rehabilitation and long periods in hostels and supported accommodation before being able to move into the community and successfully sustain their own accommodation. Additionally, barriers to the right accommodation were apparent and people were excluded from entering appropriate support due to issues such as not passing alcohol tests in dry house hostels.

HOMELESSNESS SYSTEM UNDER DECONSTRUCTION

9. Next steps

Social investment

Mayday is exploring new ways to finance highly personalised, asset based work. The PTS has been developed to work as a spot purchase model and with social investment. In 2017, Mayday Trust in Northamptonshire began working alongside First for Wellbeing CIC and Bridges Fund Management to deliver a PTS Social Impact Bond for young homeless NEETs. As the 'smallest SIB in the world', we hope this will encourage more local authorities to explore social investment as a way to fund asset-based work and open up the market to smaller organisations.

National innovation partnership

The interest in the PTS model led Mayday to hold two national events in 2016 in Manchester and London to present the experience and learning from the initial stages of development. Each event was attended by approximately 100 organisations and commissioners from across the country.

During the events, Mayday called for *Innovation Partners* who are organisations and commissioners interested in further testing the PTS model with Mayday as part of the third stage development phase. Over 80 organisations, providers and commissioners, expressed an interest. Mayday has now establish an initial partnership of organisations that share the core values and principles of the PTS and are willing to take on the challenge of not only adopting a new approach to delivery, but changing their internal systems and culture and challenging systems in their local areas.

Comic Relief and Tudor Trust have invested in funding the partnerships to scale up the Personal Transitions Service as a nationally significant pilot. The partners that Mayday will be working with to deliver this are (in alphabetical order):

- **999 Club, Deptford** – Provides a day centre with a range of services and a winter shelter to people rough sleeping in Deptford and surrounding areas
- **Brick Project, Wigan** – provides accommodation, services and a foodbank for people experiencing homelessness
- **Changing Lives based in the North East** – is a national, registered charity that provides specialist support services for up to 6000 vulnerable people and their families every month
- **Derventio Housing Trust:** provides support to people experiencing homelessness across Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Nottinghamshire
- **Nomad Housing in Sheffield** – provides high quality and holistic supported accommodation and support services across Sheffield and South Yorkshire
- **SHYPP Hereford** – provides supported Housing, training and employment opportunities for young people aged 18-25 years old across Herefordshire
- **South Northamptonshire Council** – is funding an asset Coach in South Northamptonshire to deliver the PTS as part of their housing strategy

As a collective, the partnership will deliver the PTS with 2,000 people over a 2-3 year period and aim to evidence that the PTS is a robust and credible replacement to traditional models that allows individuals to sustainably transition out of their tough times quickly, with dignity and respect.

Appendix:

Developmental Assets (The Search Institute)

External Assets

❤️ **Support**

People need to be surrounded by people who love, care for, appreciate, and accept them.

☀️ **Empowerment**

People need to feel valued and valuable. This happens when they feel safe and respected.

⭐ **Boundaries and Expectations**

People need clear rules, consistent consequences for breaking rules, and encouragement to do their best.

⬇️ **Constructive use of Time**

People need opportunities to learn and develop new skills and interests with other youth and adults.

Internal Assets

💡 **Commitment to Learning**

People need a sense of the lasting importance of learning and a belief in their own abilities.

🧭 **Positive Values**

People need to develop strong guiding values or principles to help them make healthy life choices, including responsibility, empathy and self-control.

☺️ **Social Competencies**

People need the skills to interact effectively with others, to make difficult decisions, and to cope with new situations.

👍 **Positive Identity**

People need to believe in their own self-worth and to feel that they have control over the things that happen to them.

MAYDAY
TRUST

10c Littlegate Street
Oxford, Oxfordshire OX1 1QT
Tel: 01865 670 028
www.maydaytrust.org.uk
enquiries@maydaytrust.org.uk
twitter.com/MaydayTrust
facebook.com/MaydayTrustOfficial