

10 Year Strategy

Introduction

Our ultimate vision is to eradicate homelessness in the North East of England by preventing it. We feel that our mission: to support vulnerable people who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress, in particular by the provision of temporary accommodation and assisting them on their journey to more independent living, will help us achieve that goal.

The next ten years will bring a range of challenges, some of which we cannot predict at this point in time. However, knowing where we are going as an organisation, and as a community, will help us deal with those challenges. In addition, it will help us towards our goal of making our local communities better, kinder and more inclusive.

This document provides a coherent and consistent vision and framework for the 700 Club's future. It recognises the impacts of homelessness in its entirety and the important role organisations such as ours play in combating the issues by building more cohesive, inclusive communities for the sake of our beneficiaries. This strategy is designed to be robust and adaptive and it defines specific objectives and indicators that will act as milestones on our journey over the next ten years.

Some key challenges that may represent constraints for the 700 Club in the attainment of the objectives of the strategy relate to the uncertainties surrounding future demands, in relation to both the type and volume of service provision required, and the availability of adequate funding. We cannot foresee how homelessness will evolve over the next decade nor can we predict accurate future financial estimates. However, we can safely forecast that the evolution of homelessness issues will be directly linked to the socio-economic situation in this country and the wider world.

The last ten years were a time of relative abundance and wealth. Yet in the same period, in Darlington alone, the 700 Club delivered over 142,000 bed nights to hundreds of people plus over 37,000 day units of floating support! The figures speak for themselves.

The forecasted uncertainties associated with the predicted difficult economic climate will certainly further increase homelessness and the risk of homelessness for all the client groups we work with. Even without the arrival of a recession, there are genuine and persistent concerns regarding the increased risk of homelessness amongst single people, couples and families in this country and in particular in the North East of England.

Organisations such as ours, that seek to be leaders in the field, that are very close to clients (service users) and are responsive to their needs, need to ensure they build their capacity and capabilities by achieving a solid financial position and sound governance. They can then reliably offer assistance and support to all those in need and contribute to the wider community as a whole. That is exactly what the 700 Club is doing.

Service Delivery and Improvement

The Aim

By 2018 the 700 Club aims to have a range of accommodation and supporting services available that will provide systemic support for our diverse service user groups on their journey to independent living and will help to prevent homelessness in Darlington, and the north east of England.

Indicators

1. High percentage of the 700 Club Service Users acquire basic skills for independent living
2. High percentage of the 700 Club Service Users progress into 'move-on' accommodation and independent living
3. Significantly low percentage of the 700 Club Service Users fails and becomes evicted from the accommodation offered
4. Accommodation and services offered are accessible and meet the need of diverse client groups
5. Percentage of the 700 Club Service Users secure employment, volunteering/placement experience and/or training and education leading to recognised accreditation or qualification increases year after year
6. The occurrence of homelessness in Darlington, and the areas of the north east of England where the 700 Club delivers its services, is lower than the national average
7. A distinct feeling of wellbeing that includes improved self esteem and self confidence is identified within the community of the 700 Club Service Users, by means of Service Users reviews, surveys and feedback sheets
8. A distinct feeling of better community cohesion and acceptance levels is identified within Darlington community, by means of stakeholders and Service Users surveys and feedback sheets

Objectives

1. To prevent homelessness and decrease/erase the vulnerability of the people that we house and support
 2. To improve life-chances and choices and achieve the optimal outcomes for our Service Users
 3. To support the communities where we deliver services by assisting the implementation of the local and national strategies
 4. To continue to develop and provide a range of services, advocacy and educational, social and leisure activities for Service Users in order to equip them for independent living
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1. In order to accomplish the prevention of homelessness and decrease/erase the vulnerability of the people that we house and support, the 700 Club will:

- Offer a range of quality and safe accommodation types in a range of locations, appropriate to meet need of diverse client groups
- Invest in our staff and volunteers and in new ways of working
- Endeavour to match support with need, through structured planning and balanced decision making
- Work with Service Users on a one-to-one basis, within a family setting and/or within a group, in a style and with a tempo best suited to their individual needs, thus ensuring the desired outcomes
- Collaborate with a range of organisations and agencies to offer a comprehensive support package suitable to individual requirements
- Develop volunteer-delivered services, such as mentoring, suitable to individual service user's needs
- Offer appropriate out-reach/floating support services
- Create opportunities for our Service Users to become positively involved with the communities where they live
- Use best practice and cutting edge research, as well as the creativity of our own workforce, to develop innovative service designs, services and applications that are relevant and appropriate for the Service Users' needs

2. In order to improve life-chances and choices and bring about the optimal outcomes for our Service Users, the 700 Club will:

- Deliver a diverse range of services which are professional, efficient, effective and equitable
- Offer a level of support that facilitates their own personal development in a homely, domestic environment which is friendly, safe and caring and promotes pathways to independence
- Actively liaise with other agencies that may also be providing support to our Service Users
- Encourage individuals to realise personal goals, ambitions and desires, enabling their full integration into their local communities and society as a whole
- Support Service Users' wishes and choices wherever possible
- Offer Service Users opportunities for personal growth to enable self esteem, skills and confidence to develop
- Employ the Service User's Charter as the foundation of our contract with our Service Users
- Provide our Service Users with various opportunities to help shape and develop the 700 Club
- Aim to enable, encourage and support our Service Users to take part in normal everyday activities, ranging from education, volunteering, to using transport, health, sports and leisure activities to making and maintaining friendships, finding and retaining employment and making a home

- Continuously evaluate our performance
3. In order to support the communities where we deliver the services, including assisting in the implementation of local and national strategies, the 700 Club will:
- Encourage partnership working and mutual respect between all who work in the 700 Club and people who access its services
 - Be open, honest, accountable and consistent in all our relationships
 - Promote our services and access to them
 - Ensure that all people who work or volunteer for the 700 Club are valued, respected and provided with opportunities for continuous development
 - Strive constantly to improve the quality of services in order to contribute to wellbeing of the people who use the services
 - Ensure that diversity, equality of opportunity, accessibility and inclusiveness remains paramount in all we do
 - Engage in appropriate research and collaborative working to support and develop best practice
 - Take part in activities, projects and programmes within the communities we serve to play a role in efforts towards social inclusion, community cohesion and sustainability of civil society
 - Strive to make a full contribution to the town-wide partnerships
4. In order to continue developing and providing a range of services, including advocacy, educational, social and leisure activities for the Service Users with the aim of equipping them for independent living, the 700 Club will:
- Inform the Service Users of what we can do to assist them on their journey to independent living, using a diverse range of modes of communication and including reviews meetings, newsletters, welcome packs etc
 - Regularly ask for, and act on, feedback from services users, and other stakeholders involved with our Service Users
 - Notify the wider stakeholder community, on a regular basis, about services and activities we provide for the Service Users
 - Offer a personalised support service to Service Users, to help them achieve their potential for independent living

- Offer certificates of attendance, for effort and/or achievement to Service Users when they engage with activities we offer
- Build trust and respect by openness and a positive attitude
- Identify and break down any barriers to participation
- Identify individual interests, goals, aspirations in life, likes and dislikes and utilise these details in order to enhance the learning experiences while the Service Users are with us

Timeline: Between 2008 and 2018

- Invest time, effort and resources into continually enhancing quality
- Identify and apply various means to further Service Users' engagement and empowerment
- Prioritise equal opportunities and diversity
- Invest time, effort and resources into human resources and workforce development
- Invest time, effort and resources into service developments and into improved/new ways of working and delivering services based on both best practice and innovation
- Invest time, effort and resources into partnership working
- Establish effective links between this part of the strategy, its delivery and our principal aims
- Ensure all staff at all levels, including the Board and volunteers, take ownership of and take an active part in some way in the delivery of the strategy
- Regularly monitor performance and evaluate outcomes to ensure efficient, effective and equitable services that match the needs of the charity's beneficiaries

Educational and Promotional Activities

The Aim

By 2018 to have contacted and engaged with the widest possible range of stakeholders and others to improve awareness, build connections and open up an array of opportunities in order to improve outcomes for homeless people in Darlington, and the north east of England.

Indicators

1. A high percentage stakeholders and others with whom we engaged feel they gained a better understanding of homelessness and related issues
2. A high percentage of the 700 Club Service Users, as well as the service users of other agencies with whom the 700 Club collaborates, progress into 'move-on' accommodation and independent living
3. A distinct feeling of better community cohesion and acceptance levels is identified within Darlington community, by means of stakeholders and service users surveys and feedback sheets

Objectives

1. To enhance the profile of the 700 Club, its mission, values, objectives and the contribution the organisation makes to the community
 2. To increase the level of awareness and understanding of homelessness and associated issues in their entirety amongst varied audiences
 3. To involve neighbourhoods and communities with the work and activities of the 700 Club
 4. To keep developing and providing a range of services, advocacy and educational, social and leisure activities for the Service Users in order to equip them for the independent living
 5. To work with agencies, organisations and others with which our Service Users are involved to offer them insight into the complexities of the homelessness world and to assist in breaking any barriers to communication, understanding and acceptance.
1. In order to enhance profile of the 700 Club, its mission, values, objectives and the contribution the organisation makes to the community, the 700 Club will:
 - Be more media proactive
 - Use the Board's personal and professional links and networks to promote the work of the organisation

- Redesign and re-develop the 700 Club web site and use it to its full extent, ranging from communicating the message, sharing research findings to attracting volunteers and donations
- Organise 'Open Day' events on an annual basis
- Organise and/or attend workshops, meetings, conferences and other types of events and gatherings in order to expand links and promote the work of the organisation
- Send appropriate information, such as service description, eligibility criteria, prioritising system explanations, Service Users charter, referral and risk of harm and needs assessment information, to stakeholders and relevant others on an annual basis
- Ask other agencies to advertise our services and means of accessing our accommodation within the client groups they serve
- Produce and send out a corporate Christmas card
- Ensure marketing material is designed by professionals
- Assist Service Users to devise and distribute widely an information card containing details of what they think other people should know about the 700 Club and homelessness.

2. In order to increase the level of awareness and understanding of homelessness and associated issues amongst varied audiences, the 700 Club will:

- Be more media proactive
- Use the Board's personal and professional links and networks to promote the work of the organisation
- Organise 'Open Day' events on an annual basis
- Organise and/or attend workshops, meetings, conferences and other types of events and gatherings to expand links and promote the work of the organisation
- Send appropriate information (such as service description, eligibility criteria, prioritising system explanations, Service Users charter, referral and risk of harm and needs assessment information) to stakeholders and relevant others on an annual basis
- Ask other agencies to advertise our services and way of accessing our accommodation within the client groups they serve
- Produce and send out corporate Christmas card
- Ensure marketing material is designed by professionals
- Assist Service Users to devise and distribute widely an information card that will contain details of what they think other people should know about the 700 Club and the homelessness.
- Conduct research within the organisation to support and illustrate the key message points we want people to digest

- Build a portfolio of positive examples and case studies, highlighting in particular any instances where community involvement supported the positive outcome, to illustrate the breadth of experiences and ways of securing a better life for a homeless individual or a family
 - Design, preferably in collaboration with other relevant agencies, promote and deliver training for individuals and organisations in all aspects of homelessness, from causes to ensuring positive outcomes for those affected
3. In order to involve neighbourhoods and communities with the work and activities of the 700 Club, the 700 Club will:
- Send wide ranging invitations to 'open days', annual general meetings and other events organised by the 700 Club
 - Keep distributing the 700 Club newsletters and ensure that neighbourhoods have phone numbers to enable contact to be made directly with the 700 Club streams of work giving any comments, contributions and feedback
 - Ensure we write to such contacts and explain what actions the organisation has taken as a result of the feedback received and how, if appropriate, the services, policies etc changed as a result of their contribution
 - Invite individuals and organisations to come and see how we work, the inside of the hostels etc.
 - Offer regular meetings with neighbourhoods where the 700 Club projects are located
 - Advertise volunteering opportunities within the communities and neighbourhoods where our projects are based
4. In order to continue developing and providing a range of services, advocacy and educational, social and leisure activities for the Service Users to equip them for the independent living, the 700 Club will:
- Inform the Service Users of what we can do to assist them on their journey to independent living using a diverse range of modes of communication and including reviews meetings, newsletters, welcome packs etc
 - Regularly ask for, and act on, feedback from services users, and other stakeholders that are involved with our Service Users
 - Notify on a regular basis wider stakeholder community about services and activities we provide for the Service Users
 - Offer personalised support service to Service Users to help them achieve their potential for independent living
 - Offer certificates of attendance, effort and/or achievement to Service Users when they engage with activities we offer

- Build trust and respect by openness and positive attitude
 - Identify and break down any barriers to participation
 - Find out about individual interests, goals, aspirations in life, likes and dislikes to enhance the experiences and learnings while the Service Users are with us
5. In order to work with agencies, organisations and others with which our Service Users get in touch to offer them insight into complexities of the homelessness world and to assist in breaking any barriers to communication, understanding and acceptance, the 700 Club will:
- Identify particular departments and/or teams with whom the 700 Club do not work closely but with whom our Service Users get in contacts, such as receptionists at the Town Hall, GP and dental surgeries, banks and post office workers
 - Follow up the actions identified under sections 1. and 2.

Timeline: Between 2008 and 2018

- Identify and set out a programme of activities that can be undertaken every year and timetable these on an annual basis
- Identify, contact and arrange meetings with a range of stakeholders. Involve the Board members in those meetings and presentations.
- Devise a spectrum of approaches for various stakeholders
- Aim to deliver between 5-10 small group/1:1 stakeholder meetings, in addition to the usual programme of activities, yielding 50 to a 100 close-working sessions over the next 10 years. The intention is to produce an extensive coverage of the stakeholder community
- Establish effective links between this part of the strategy and its delivery and other parts, in particular the fundraising and volunteering streams
- Ensure all staff at all levels, including the Board, take ownership and an active part in some way in the delivery of this part of the strategy

Funding and Fundraising

The Aim

By 2018 the Fundraising Sub-Committee aim to have developed a tried and tested, planned approach to funding and fundraising, that can support sustainability, growth and development of the 700 Club. To encourage involvement of 700 Club staff and members and the wider communities in which we provide our services, in attracting funding and fundraising events.

Indicators

1. Regular and reliable funding from a variety of sources
2. Projects identified, suited to funding applications
3. High success rate with funding applications, fundraising event and tendering exercises
4. Identification of major funders to replace the Northern Rock Foundation
5. The achieving of corporate sponsorship on a larger scale
6. 700 Club services and activities sustained and the organisational and service development evident

Objectives

1. To ensure that all mainstream and added value projects have appropriate and sustainable funding streams
2. Fundraising must be adaptable to deal with current and future changes to enable the 700 Club to meet the needs identified in the wider community
3. To have funds available to deal with emergency issues outside of our control
4. To work with other organisations to share expertise and set up new initiatives ie consortium bids
5. To consider 'Add-Ons' to other organisation's projects
6. Where appropriate to invite and encourage individuals to use their work and personal contacts to assist in fundraising
7. To ensure that the profile of the 700 Club is highlighted at every opportunity in a professional and appropriate manner
8. To encourage Service Users to be involved in all aspects of fundraising

N.B. A decision was made not to expand or prescribe this sub heading, therefore allowing flexibility in interpretation

Timeline: From 2008 to 2018

- Identify and list an annual programme of activities and timetable them
- Identify and contact a range of funders. Involve the Fundraising Sub-Committee in planning and organising
- Be prepared for the need to adopt a variety of approaches for various funding providers
- Ensure the organisation fulfils a range of criteria that will make the 700 Club attractive to funders and/or competitive when applying for funds
- Aim to deliver funds to support a variety of identified projects
- Establish links between the needs of the 700 Club and fundraising
- Encourage all staff and the Board to take part in fundraising events
- Fundraising Time Line is attached

Notes for the Time Line:

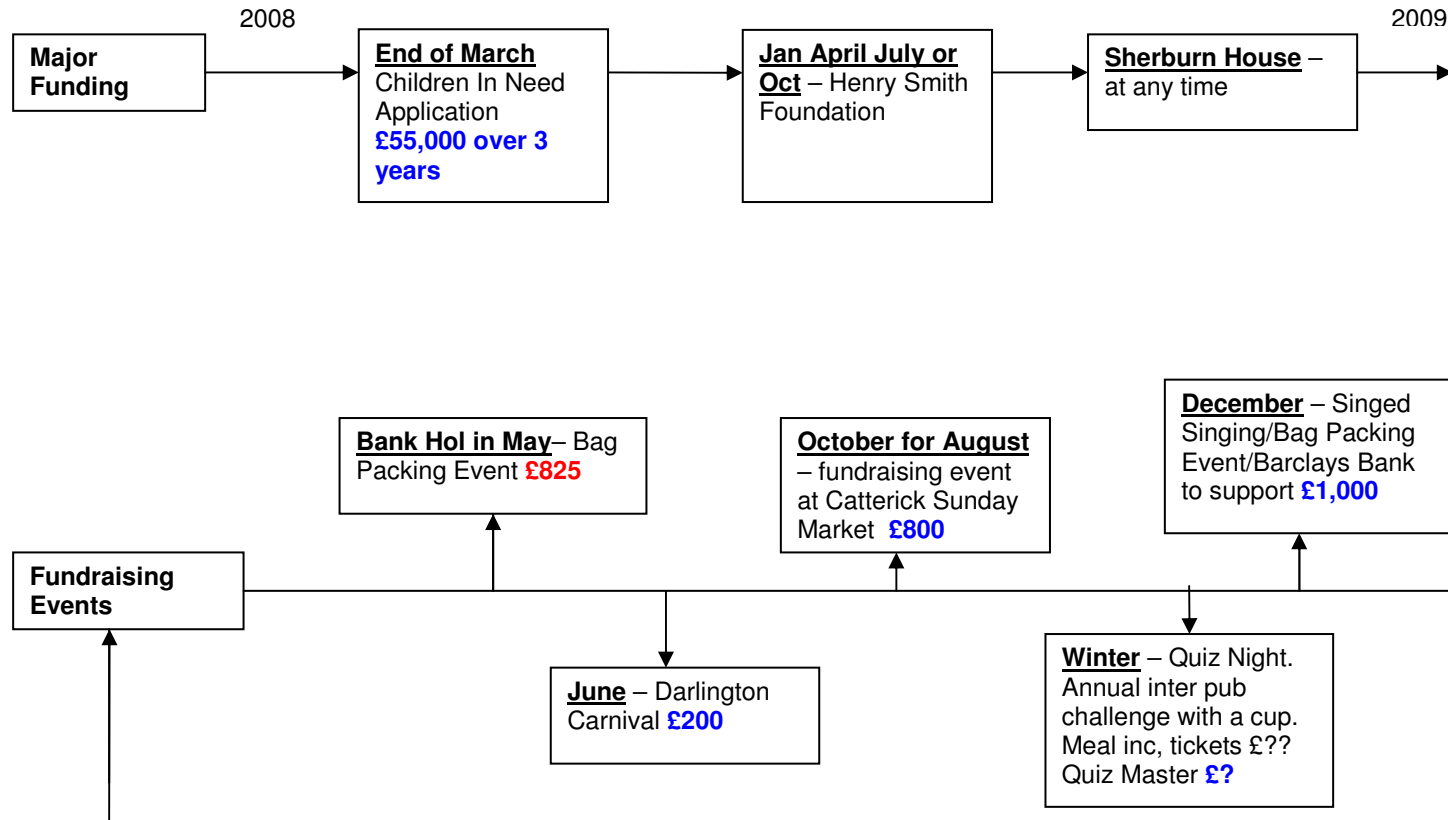
Major Funding Applications need to be planned on an annual basis. Planning needs to begin in October each year for the year ahead. Planning should include research of Service Users' needs and the wider communities and should be matched to available funding.

Smaller fundraising events can be amended as experience is gained, however the plan will be similar each year with new events being timetabled in.

Spreadsheet of all Funding Applications Made

Attached is the Spreadsheet of all Funding Applications Made. This documented must be completed accurately to ensure appropriate applications are made to appropriate funders and is to be held by the Chair Person of the Fundraising Sub Committee.

Funding Time Line



SPREADSHEET OF ALL FUNDING APPLICATIONS MADE

Funder	Date Application Made	Outcome	Amount Applied For	Comments
County Durham Foundation		Successful		Floating Support Worker for Under 25s over 3 years
Tudor Trust		Successful		Floating Support Worker for Under 25s over 3 years
County Durham Foundation		Successful		Stop2Night/Emergency Accommodation
Gannett Foundation		Unsuccessful		
Northern Rock Foundation		Successful		Volunteer Mentor Coordinator over 3 years
Children In Need		Awaiting Outcome		16-18 year old Floating Support Worker

N.B This spreadsheet is to be updated as an accurate historical record of funding applications

Final Notes

The 700 Club's long-term strategy covers a variety of topics such as ongoing challenges, service improvement, raising awareness and attaining funds to support the work.

The need to be flexible and ready to adapt to changing circumstances is a thread that runs through all sections as this will ensure the best outcomes for the communities we serve.

The annual reviews of this document, together with the production and implementation of the yearly business plans will ensure we stay on track and deliver in line with our mission.

With this document, the 700 Club reaffirms its longstanding commitment to supporting vulnerable people enabling them to take charge of their lives. The 700 Club's role in this respect is becoming better understood and appreciated, as its continuous efforts at supporting cohesive and inclusive communities. Through its work the 700 Club is increasingly acknowledged as both beneficial and necessary to the communities in which we operate.