Move Up, Move On at Crisis Skylight Birmingham

Evaluation Report

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Disclaimer

This report draws on statistical data which are collected by Crisis. The authors had no input into the collection or validation of these data. The statistical analysis within this report was undertaken by the authors and they are responsible for any errors in that analysis. Views expressed in this report are not necessarily those of Crisis or the University of York.
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Summary

• This report presents an evaluation of the Move Up, Move On project which was supported by the Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities programme from 1st August 2011 to 31st July 2014. The Move Up, Move On project is a part of Crisis Skylight Birmingham. The report was prepared during April 2014, meaning that not all data covering all outcomes are yet available at the time of writing.

• There is clear evidence from multiple sources that the Move Up, Move On project was achieving the core goals which had been set for the project. Informal and accredited learning was being delivered to homeless and vulnerably housed people, who were engaging with the opportunities offered by the Move Up, Move On project at high rates. Key strategic outcomes were being achieved. Qualifications were being earned (217 people earning 571 qualifications and accreditations from August 2011 to March 2014) and volunteering and employment opportunities were being secured as a result of engaging with the informal and accredited learning offered by the Move Up, Move On project. Forty-eight homeless and vulnerably housed people had secured paid work as a result of engaging with the Move Up, Move On project at Skylight Birmingham.

• There is a clear and ongoing need for the informal and accredited education being offered by the Move Up, Move On project. This need is illustrated by the levels of engagement, 869 people having used the project at the time of writing, the very positive view that people using the service, usually referred to as members of Skylight Birmingham, have, and the rate at which successful outcomes are being achieved.

• Not all the targets agreed between the Big Lottery Fund and Crisis had been fully achieved at the time of writing. There were indications of progress in meeting targets related to reducing isolation, earning basic skills qualifications, increased self-esteem and confidence and particularly in relation to enhancing employability. However, heavy reliance on voluntary feedback from members of Skylight Birmingham may have led to underreporting of positive outcomes, as people often do not take the time to provide feedback on services they were using.

• The results of this evaluation were made more robust through the use of three sets of outcomes data that could be used for cross verification of results. The data sources were anonymised administrative data and Skylight Birmingham member feedback data provided by Crisis and the results of interviews and focus groups conducted by the University of York. All three sets of data provided clear, consistent, evidence that targets were being achieved, or were successfully being worked towards and of attainment of the strategic goals of the Move Up, Move On project at Skylight Birmingham.

• The Move Up, Move On project is a part of Skylight Birmingham. The project provides a wide range of informal and accredited learning for homeless and vulnerably housed people, who once engaging with the Skylight Birmingham service, are referred to as members of Skylight Birmingham. The learning provided includes classes and activities focused on the creative, visual and performing arts, health and well-being, life skills and basic skills.

• The informal and accredited learning offered by the Move Up, Move On project is a part of the wider strategic goal of Skylight Birmingham and the wider Crisis Skylight programme to promote positive transformations in the lives of homeless and vulnerably housed people.
by enhancing and enabling their social integration. The services draw on the Crisis Theory of Change model which emphasises good health and well-being, employment and financial security, housing stability and good relationships and social networks.

- The goal of the programme, Skylight Birmingham and Move Up, Move On is to bring homeless people back into the community and society in social, economic and personal terms, reconnecting them to communities from which they have become disconnected and stigmatised.

- The core goals, achievements and progress towards targets agreed for the Move Up, Move On project and Skylight Birmingham are clearly compatible with the specific goals of the Reaching Communities programme and the wider strategic aims of the Big Lottery Fund. There is a shared emphasis on enabling reconnection with community and enhancing life chances. The other elements of support and services provided by Skylight Birmingham, which fall outside the scope of this report, focusing on one-to-one support towards social integration and specific support for homeless people with mental health problems are also orientated towards these shared goals.
1 Introduction

About this report

This report presents an evaluation of the Move up, Move On project which is a part of the Crisis Skylight service in Birmingham. The Move Up, Move On project was supported through the Reaching Communities programme operated by the Big Lottery Fund.

The Move Up, Move On project provides 10 week programmes of informal and accredited learning at Skylight Birmingham. The core goals of the Move Up, Move On project are to enable homeless and vulnerably housed people to learn new skills, build up their self-esteem and confidence, to counteract their social isolation and marginalisation from community life and also to enhance their employability. The Move Up, Move On project seeks to achieve this goal through providing a mix of informal and accredited learning, ranging from arts-based activity, including both visual/creative and performing arts, through to accredited basic skills qualifications in English, IT and maths and training for vocational qualifications.

This evaluation of Move Up, Move On was conducted alongside an ongoing programme evaluation by the University of York. This programme evaluation is designed to test Crisis Skylight at a strategic level, by using a longitudinal methodology to look at the achievement and sustainment of gains in social integration, among 135 people using Skylight services over the course of 2013-2015.

Chapter two summarises the goals of the Reaching Communities programme which is operated by the Big Lottery Fund and then relates these goals to the Move Up, Move On project at Skylight Birmingham. Chapter three explores the extent to which the targets that were set by Crisis for the Move Up, Move On project were achieved during the period 1st August 2011 to 31st July 2014. The final chapter discusses how the general achievements and approach of the Move Up, Move On project reflect the goals of the Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities programme and discusses the extent to which specific targets were met.

This evaluation report is designed to explore the extent to which the outcomes specified for the Move Up, Move On project, as supported by the Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities Programme, were achieved during the period 1st August 2011 to 31st July 2014. This report is an independent piece of work conducted by the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York. The report draws on anonymised administrative data and anonymised feedback, from people using Move Up, Move On informal and accredited learning, collected by Crisis using a set of feedback forms. In addition, this report draws on the results of interviews with 26 people using Skylight Birmingham during the Summer of 2013, including eight in a focus group and a further 18 in face to face interviews.
2. The Move Up, Move On project

Introduction
This chapter describes the origins and design of the Move Up, Move On project at Crisis Skylight Birmingham. The chapter begins by summarising the goals of the Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities programme. The following sections describe the development of Skylight Birmingham, the role of the Move Up, Move On project within Skylight Birmingham and how both the design of Skylight Birmingham and the Move Up, Move On project relate to the core goals of the Reaching Communities programme.

The Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities Programme

The aims of the Reaching Communities programme closely reflect the strategic goals of the Big Lottery Fund, which are to improve the lives of people in communities who are most in need in the UK. Reaching communities is focused on people who face multiple barriers to social integration in the sense that they are excluded from normal social interaction with neighbours and the wider community, lack social supports and may also need help to live independently and to access education, training and paid work.

The core goals of the programme can be summarised as follows:

- Giving people who are not well socially integrated a better chance in life, by enhancing their access to training and development that will enhance their life skills, enabling them to integrate within a community.

- Strengthening communities through promoting activity among citizens to collectively improve their lives and solve problems.

- Enhancing the urban and rural environments for communities to access and enjoy.

- Promoting healthier and more active people and communities.

In addition, the Reaching Communities programme also seeks to support those people who have become ‘hard to reach’ because they are isolated from the community due to lack of self-confidence or unmet support needs.

The Big Lottery Fund is described as an outcomes funder, i.e. grants are made on the condition that there is an identified means of monitoring and demonstrating positive impacts on individuals’ and communities’ lives and life chances. This report is primarily focused on describing the extent to which the Move Up, Move On project at Skylight Birmingham has met the outcomes which Crisis specified when originally seeking funding from the Reaching Communities programme.

Skylight Birmingham and the Move Up, Move On project

The roles of the Crisis Skylight Programme
Homeless people face multiple barriers to social integration and are consequently among the populations targeted by the Reaching Communities programme:

- Homeless people experience

1 www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_reaching_communities
stigmatisation because they are often assumed to have mental health problems or a severe mental illness and/or as actively refusing to conform to expectations that the UK has of a citizen, i.e. to be a socially and economically productive member of a community and wider society. Popular culture can see homelessness as a ‘choice’ that manifests as an individual involved in problematic drug and alcohol use while avoiding paid work.³

- There is evidence suggesting popular images of homelessness are often not correct. Sustained and recurrent homelessness can be associated with mental health problems and drug and alcohol use, but there are also clear associations with sustained worklessness, low educational attainment linked to instability of environment while still a child and poor physical health. Some homeless people have never experienced social integration as an adult, while in other cases what were stable lives have collapsed around them. Homeless people can also have very low self-esteem linked to stigmatisation by wider society.⁴

Homelessness research from the UK and economically comparable countries in Europe, North America and Australia shows that recurrent and sustained homelessness can be as much about a lack of social integration, not being a part of a community and wider society, as it is about lacking adequate housing.⁵

Crisis Skylight is intended to transform the lives of homeless people. This transformation centres on promoting social integration with the goal of overcoming isolation, poor health, a lack of structure and meaning in life and in reducing the experience of sustained worklessness that is often associated with homelessness.

Skylight seeks to promote this positive transformation by promoting economic integration through securing paid work. The Skylights also seek to build self-confidence and to improve health and well-being, enabling homeless people to develop skills to create and sustain positive social networks as sources of emotional support and to integrate within their community. Skylights are designed with reference to the Crisis Theory of Change model which has four domains:

- **Promotion of good health and well-being**, centring on good physical health and stable mental health, including management of problematic drug/alcohol use, healthy living and access to any appropriate support, care and treatment.

- **Employment and financial security**, including maximisation of benefits (welfare rights support), budgeting skills and financial literacy and, in particular, securing and sustaining paid work.

- **Achievement of housing stability**, centring on sustaining adequate, affordable housing and ensuring any required housing advice and housing related support services are in place.

- **Good relationships and social networks**, including increasing confidence and self-esteem, forming and sustaining positive relationships and engaging with and feeling a part of the community.

Within the Crisis Theory of Change, homelessness can be represented as all these domains being in a negative state, i.e. health is poor, there is no employment

or financial security, housing is not stable and someone is isolated, bored and lonely and excluded from the community. When all these domains are negative, there is also a heightened risk that homelessness will either be sustained or recurrent. UK and global research evidence generally supports the underlying logic of the Crisis Theory of Change.6

The Crisis Skylight programme offers education, training, arts-based activities, support with health and well-being and a range of job seeking services. Services are delivered using a mix of one-to-one support and group-based and classroom sessions. Skylight services operate in Birmingham, Coventry and Warwickshire, Edinburgh, London (two services7), Merseyside, Newcastle, Oxford and South Yorkshire.8

Skylights use either a building-based model or an outreach based model. Building-based Skylights have their own dedicated classrooms, art rooms and studio spaces and each also has a social enterprise Skylight café, open to the general public, which provides training and work experience in catering. By contrast, the outreach based model delivers accredited education, informal learning, arts-based activities and one-to-one support through using a mobile team which goes to daycentres, hostels, supported housing, refuges and other services in which homeless people are present.

Each Skylight offers a range of services:9

- Arts-based activities that centre on the performing, visual and creative arts, including drama clubs and theatrical performances and an array of painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, carving, papier mâché, collage and work with wood or ceramics. Arts-based activities are designed to promote self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Accredited basic and intermediate level education, including courses in English, maths and computing (IT).
- Support with job seeking, ranging from CV development through to mock interviews and job search. Crisis Changing Lives grants10 enable the people using Skylight to develop their own business ideas, to become self-employed using an artistic talent, or to fund further (externally provided) education or training.
- One-to-one support provided using a mixture of progression coordinators/coaches (whose role centres on enabling social integration), work and learning coaches, mental health coordinators (specialist support for homeless people with mental health problems), Smartskills tutors (providing one-to-one basic skills education in Birmingham and Merseyside and housing coaches (assistance with accessing private rented housing).

The goals of the Crisis Skylight programme bears a clear and also a close relationship to the core goals of the Big Lottery Fund and to the specific aims of the Reaching Communities programme. Skylight is mainly designed to deliver outcomes centred on improving the well-being, life chances, social supports and community integration of homeless and vulnerably housed people as individuals. However, by potentially reducing homelessness Skylight may also support other Reaching Communities aims, by promoting the integration of homeless people with communities.

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7 Skylight London and Crisis Skylight Bermondsey
People using Skylight Birmingham are referred to as members of the Skylight. This convention is adopted throughout this report.

**Skylight Birmingham**

Skylight Birmingham was delivering its first term of informal and accredited learning by the end of September 2010, with the work and learning coaches and Smart Skills tutoring also beginning operations at that point. Birmingham was designed to function as an outreach-based model Skylight. While there had been an earlier experiment with using an outreach-based approach in Edinburgh, logistical issues in the Scottish Skylight had meant it was not to become truly operational until 2013, which meant that, in effect Birmingham was the first of the outreach based Skylights to become fully operational.

Birmingham represented a radical departure from the two building-based Skylights that had been up and running in London and Newcastle for some years. These two earlier Skylights had dedicated buildings in which there was studio and classroom space and rooms in which one-to-one support could be delivered. Birmingham had a small office space which served as an administrative base, but all its services, ranging from informal and accredited learning through to one-to-one support were to be delivered using mobile staff and tutors who went to daycentres, hostels, refuges, supported housing and other services which were used by homeless people across Birmingham. The Skylight in Birmingham was designed to go to where the homeless people in the city were, not as a building-based hub that offered informal learning, accredited education, arts-based activities and one-to-one support which homeless people had to travel to. Since the development of Birmingham, four other outreach based Skylights have started operations including a service which is linked to Skylight Birmingham based in Coventry and Warwickshire,\(^\text{11}\) a revamped Edinburgh service and outreach-based Skylights in both Merseyside and South Yorkshire. By contrast, only one further building-based service has been developed in Oxford, joining the existing building-based Skylights in London and Newcastle.

Currently, Skylight Birmingham provides a wide range of services including:\(^\text{12}\)

- **Promotion of good health and well-being services** which include a well-being group, cookery classes and sessions on managing family relationships. There is also a mental health coordinator service, focused on providing a forum, group-based support and one-to-one support for Birmingham Skylight members with mental health problems.

- **Employment and financial security services** include employability drop-in sessions and one-to-one support from work and learning coaches, covering careers advice, help with CVs, mock interviews, job searching and practical help, such as buying interview clothes and arranging transport to job interviews. The work and learning coaches also facilitate access to the education and vocational training offered by Skylight Birmingham and enable access to externally provided education and training opportunities. A range of informal and accredited learning is on offer including basic study skills, basic skills courses in English and Maths, computer (IT) skills courses and ESOL courses in English. One-to-one basic education with a Smartskills tutor is also available.

- **Services for the achievement of housing stability** include tenancy management advice group sessions and practical one-to-one support from the work and learning coaches and mental health coordinator.

\(^{11}\) Shared senior management.

\(^{12}\) The current timetable for Skylight Birmingham can be found at: www.crisis.org.uk/pages/crisis-skylight-birmingham.html
• **Services promoting good relationships and social networks** include courses in visual and creative arts and in performance art. The role of arts-based activities and courses, alongside providing meaningful, structured and enjoyable activity, is to enhance social skills and promote self-esteem and confidence among members of Skylight Birmingham. Activities have included visits to five major West Midlands arts venues and at the time of writing include drawing, poetry (performance), guitar, band, drama, singing, jewellery, photography and printing classes and a magazine group.

• In common with other Skylights, Birmingham encourages members of Skylight Birmingham, to use a series of feedback tools, including forms, attendance at local members forums and also sending members to the National Members’ Forum.

**Move Up, Move On**

The Move Up, Move On project encompasses a wide range of the informal and accredited learning provided by Skylight Birmingham. The focus of the project is on group based activities and taught classes. Move Up, Move On does not include the one-to-one support provided by Skylight Birmingham’s work and learning coaches, nor the one-to-one education provided through Smartskills tutors.

Move Up, Move On was developed following a consultation with other homelessness service providers in Birmingham. While some provision was in place, this consultation identified a range of gaps in existing provision of informal and accredited learning:

• Arts and drama classes.

• Literacy, numeracy, computing (IT) classes and ESOL classes.

The goal of Move Up, Move On was essentially to fill these gaps in existing informal and accredited learning by providing a range of informal and accredited learning. At the time of writing, this includes:

• Drawing classes.

• Performance poetry classes.

• Guitar lessons (beginners and advanced classes).

• Photography and photographic skills classes.

• Trips and talks sessions (includes visits to working artists and galleries).

• Jewellery making classes.

• Printing skills classes.

• Podcasting classes.

• A band class.

• Magazine group.

• Basic skills in English and ESOL\(^{13}\) English classes.

• Basic skills in Maths classes.

• Basic and intermediate computing (IT) skills classes.

• Life skills classes in areas including cookery, tenancy management and family relationships and support with health and well-being.

The lines between activities can be fuzzy, in the sense that what is defined as one form of classroom or group based activity also has the potential to influence an individual’s...
capacity in other areas. Basic skills English classes might lead to someone joining the magazine group or performance poetry sessions and, in so doing, that person’s English might be further improved, perhaps leading to their securing intermediate or advanced qualifications in English. Guitar lessons might aid in the development of self-confidence, but might also, if someone has sufficient talent, be the basis of a full time or part time employment, giving guitar lessons both a role in developing self-esteem and in directly enabling economic inclusion within a wider goal of promoting social integration. Similarly, accredited learning might enhance life skills in various ways, alongside making someone potentially more employable or enabling them to access intermediate or advanced accredited learning. For example a Skylight Birmingham member might, once the basics of literacy and numeracy are acquired, be much better equipped to run their own household than was previously the case.

Move Up, Move On is at the core of what Skylight Birmingham seeks to achieve in terms of developing and promoting Skylight members’ social supports, community engagement and participation, economic integration and health and well-being. Informal learning around creative, visual and performance art and the accredited learning available from Skylight Birmingham, alongside group-based learning and support focused on life skills and well-being, are fundamental to the operation of the Skylight. Effective delivery of Move Up, Move On is so integral to Skylight Birmingham that a failure to deliver the project would negatively impact on the achievement of the strategic goals of the entire Skylight Birmingham service.

The relationships between the goals of the Move Up, Move On project at Skylight Birmingham and the Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities programme can be summarised as follows:

- The Move Up, Move On project is designed to improve the life chances of a group of people who are demonstrably marginalised from mainstream social, economic and community life. There is strong evidence that homeless people face multiple barriers to social integration.
- Through the provision of informal and accredited learning focused on promoting self-esteem and self-confidence, enhancing life skills and well-being and delivering qualifications relevant to further education and seeking employment, the Move Up, Move On project is designed to enhance individual life chances, well-being, health and promote social integration. These project goals closely reflect the targets of the Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities Programme.
3 Outcomes for the Move Up, Move On project

Introduction
This chapter begins by describing the four key targets specified for the Move Up, Move On project when funding was sought from the Reaching Communities programme operated by the Big Lottery Fund. The progress made towards achieving these targets is then reviewed. The chapter then moves on to explore the extent to which the Move Up, Move On project delivered on the strategic goals it was envisaged to achieve and presents the views of members of Skylight Birmingham on Move Up, Move On services. The final section of this chapter notes some caveats about the data available for outcome measurement.

The Skylight Birmingham members using Move Up, Move On
Skylight Birmingham was a highly active service. According to anonymised administrative data shared with the University research team, during the period 1st August 2011 to 30th March 2014, 869 people had used informal and accredited learning, provided through Move Up, Move On, at Skylight Birmingham.

The people who became members of Skylight Birmingham were fairly evenly divided in terms of gender, though there were fewer women overall (44%) than there were men (56%).14 The proportion of women Skylight Birmingham was working with was considerably higher than has often been reported in previous research on homelessness services.15 There was also a greater degree of engagement with women than has yet been achieved by other Skylights.16

Skylight Birmingham worked with a number of services specifically for women, including women whose homelessness was associated with gender based/domestic violence. This joint working with women-only services gave Skylight Birmingham better engagement with women experiencing homelessness than is often experienced by generic hostel, supported housing and daycentre services, which tend to be dominated by homeless men and which may sometimes be avoided by homeless women for that reason.17 Concerns that women's experience of homelessness is underrepresented in policy, research and service development and commissioning are widespread, not just in the UK but throughout Europe.18 Skylight Birmingham showed relatively high levels of engagement with women who were homeless or vulnerably housed, showing success in working with a group who are often very hard to reach.

The largest group of Skylight Birmingham members were aged 25-44 (45%), with a further 26% aged 18-24. People aged under 18 were unusual (3%) and although there was some representation of people in late middle age (18% aged 45-54), people aged 55 and above were unusual among the members of Skylight Birmingham (7%).19 This age profile both reflects the characteristics of homeless populations and the role of

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14 Based on 813 people, data were missing in 56 cases, though Skylight members could opt not to answer the question on gender.
19 Based on data for 827 people.
Skylight Birmingham as a service aimed at promoting social integration, including economic inclusion through paid work, i.e. a considerable range of informal and accredited learning (along with other services) was aimed at people of working age into employment. Ethnicity, reflecting the diversity of Birmingham as a city, was mixed. Most Skylight Birmingham members were White (61%), with Black/Black British people being the next largest group (18%), followed by people with an Asian background (10%) and a mixed background (9%), with other ethnic groups being rarer (2%). The majority of members reported British nationality (74%), though there was a small group from the A2/A8 countries of the European Union (12%) and a few members were from Africa (3%) and from a range of other countries (8%).

Figure 3.1 summarises the housing situation of members of Skylight Birmingham who used informal and accredited learning provided through Move Up, Move On (by number of people).

Source: Crisis Administrative Data, 839 members of Skylight Birmingham who reported their housing status at first contact with Skylight Birmingham.

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20 Based on data for 841 people.
21 Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia.
22 Based on 797 people.
23 In a B&B hotel with no alternative accommodation, in a homeless hostel, in a night shelter (direct access), sleeping rough, squatting, hidden homelessness (staying with friends, family because of no alternative accommodation being available) and in supported housing.
not currently homeless had to have a history of homelessness and/or be in a situation where their current home was at risk. Overall, just over half of the members were in either a hostel or supported housing (55%), with those who were rough sleeping (5%) and experiencing hidden homelessness (7%) representing smaller groups.

Past history of homelessness was also widespread. Thirty-six per cent of members reported a history of sleeping rough, 49% had a history of staying in homeless hostels and 43% of hidden homelessness.\textsuperscript{24}

Support needs were widespread. Based on self-reporting at first contact, 44% of members who used informal and accredited learning during the period 1\textsuperscript{st} August 2011 to 30\textsuperscript{th} March 2014 reported either current mental health problems or a history of mental health problems. Issues with current, or previous, problematic use of drugs and/or alcohol were reported by 35% of members at first contact with Skylight Birmingham and 30% reported a history of experiencing domestic violence. Negative experiences were also widespread, with 54% reported having experienced relationship breakdown and 43% having experience of relationship breakdown.\textsuperscript{25} Just over one quarter reported they had been in care as a child (26%) and 37% reported having been in prison at some point in their lives.\textsuperscript{26}

Information on educational attainment were not always complete,\textsuperscript{27} but when asked about their highest level qualification at first contact with Skylight Birmingham, 22% reported they had no qualifications and 23% reported their highest qualification was at or below NVQ level 1.\textsuperscript{28} There were a group of Skylight Birmingham members who reported their highest level qualification were equivalent to GCSE grade A*-C through to A level/ BTEC (NVQ level 2 to 4), who collectively represented 36% of the members. A small group reported their highest qualification was foreign (9%) but only few members reported being educated to degree level (4% had NVQ 5 level qualifications). Some people had vocational qualifications (8%). Unemployment was near universal at first contact.

There was strong evidence that the informal and accredited learning provided through the Move Up, Move On project was successfully working with a population with high support needs who were in a clear majority of cases homeless and who often had experience of homelessness, including sleeping rough. Within this, there was also evidence of unusual success in engaging with homeless women, who can be a hard to reach group.

Informal and accredited learning at Skylight Birmingham

Eight hundred and sixty nine people became members of Skylight Birmingham and took part in at least one informal and/or accredited learning activity during the period 1\textsuperscript{st} August 2011 to 25\textsuperscript{th} March 2014. At the time of writing these were the most recent data available. However, as the Move Up, Move On project was due to end at the end of July 2014, total activity over the duration of the project will obviously be higher.

Overall, 869 members took part in 10,312 informal or accredited learning activities, an average of just under 12 sessions per person (11.8). However, the distribution of informal and accredited learning activities was quite skewed towards the lower end, with 50% of members during the period taking part in four or fewer activities during the period 1\textsuperscript{st} August

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\textsuperscript{24} Based on data from 493 people.
\textsuperscript{25} Based on responses from 678 people.
\textsuperscript{26} Based on responses from 405 people.
\textsuperscript{27} Based on responses from 415 people.
\textsuperscript{28} Equivalent to or below GCSEs grade D-G.
2011 to 25th March 2014. Those taking part in ten or more informal and accredited learning activities during this period represented one quarter of members, with another quarter (25%) undertaking between five and nine activities. Accordingly, the median number of informal and accredited learning activities attended was four and the mode was one activity.

The most common forms of informal and accredited learning undertaken between 1st August 2011 and 25th March 2014 were basic skills, including English and maths, English classes, maths classes and computing/ information technology (IT) classes (33% of all sessions) and arts-based activity (50%, which was evenly divided between creative and visual, 25% of sessions, and performance art, also at 25% of sessions). Table 3.1 summarises the sessions provided using University of York research team devised classifications of activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage of all activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic skills</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing/IT</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/Literacy</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All basic skills</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative visual art</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance art</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All arts-based</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and well-being</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life skills</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The reality of informal and accredited learning provided by Skylight Birmingham, was more diverse than the summary presented in Table 3.1 might suggest. Arts-based activities that were creative and/or visual for example included photography and digital photograph software, drawing and mixed media art, sculpture, textiles, creative writing, poetry and ceramics classes and groups. Performance art included drama and music classes, podcasting and DJ skills. Basic skills education included different levels of training, from mixed introductions to English, maths and IT, through to sessions focused on each specific subject. As can be seen, sessions focused on life skills, which included managing money and a tenancy, health and well-being sessions and member participation/involvement were also provided. It is important to note that some categories of activity overlapping, for example digital photography taught practical IT skills through teaching members about image manipulation, creative writing, while an arts-based activity, enhanced communication and literacy skills and so forth.

There was clear evidence that Move Up, Move On was providing extensive informal and accredited learning opportunities to homeless and vulnerably housed people with support needs between 1st August 2011 and 25th March 2014.

**Views of Move Up, Move On**

Views expressed in member feedback forms

All Skylights actively encourage members to provide feedback on their activities. Alongside the use of local and national members’ forums, each Skylight also provides a range of feedback forms that members can complete, choosing whether or not to identify themselves in the process. The feedback forms ask for comments on services and are demarcated by types of Skylight activity, and there is a form specifically focused in informal and accredited learning activities, as supported by the Move Up, Move On project.
3. Outcomes for the Move Up, Move On project

Anonymised data from these feedback forms was shared with the University of York research team for the period 1st August 2011 to 31st December 2013. In total, 279 members of Skylight Birmingham opted to complete a form about the informal learning and accredited learning they had received during that period. These 279 members represent 32% of all those who had used informal and accredited learning during the period covered by this report.

During the period August 2011 to July 2013, feedback was provided using agreement or disagreement with a series of statements.29

### Table 3.2: Feedback from members, original feedback form, August 2011 to July 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question/statement</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Base*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved communication skills1</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved time management skills1</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased confidence and self esteem1</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased motivation1</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased trust in other people1</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting people1</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widening my horizons</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have learnt new skills from this course</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend the course to others in a similar situation</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The resources and course materials were suitable</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The room was suitable for the course</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teaching was clear</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tutor was helpful and supportive</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was sufficient information about the course</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This course has helped me towards achieving my long term goals</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the course: I want to continue taking part in Crisis activities</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the course: I want to do volunteering (outside of Crisis)</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the course: I want to find a job</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the course: I want to go onto further education/college</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Anonymised feedback data from Crisis, covering the period August 2011 to July 2013. (1) These questions were originally prefaced with this statement “As well as learning skills related to the course, I enjoyed other benefits including:” * number of responses to each question.

29 i.e. Strongly agree or agree, disagree or strongly disagree.
For the period July 2013 to December 2013, an alternative form was used to provide feedback and the responses of members are shown in Table 3.3.

Using both the original and revised feedback methods, it can be seen that a very positive view of informal and accredited learning provided by Skylight Birmingham through the Move Up, Move On project was taken by members of the Skylight. While total positive responses dipped somewhat, when the transition was made to a new feedback form, the view of informal and accredited learning, according to member feedback, remained very positive. One notable change in the indicators was in the number of members reporting they would trust others, but this may have been related to how the question was being phrased.

There was strong evidence, from feedback received from a large group of members of Birmingham Skylight, that informal and accredited learning provided via the Move Up, Move On at Crisis Skylight Birmingham – Evaluation Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Total Base*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has your confidence and self-esteem improved?</td>
<td>41% 60%</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has your motivation increased?</td>
<td>38% 62%</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has your trust in others improved?</td>
<td>68% 33%</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you benefited from meeting other people?</td>
<td>33% 68%</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you found your Skylight course useful?</td>
<td>12% 89%</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have your communication skills improved?</td>
<td>38% 62%</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have your relationships with other people improved?</td>
<td>43% 57%</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have your skills developed?</td>
<td>31% 69%</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have your time management skills improved?</td>
<td>39% 61%</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The resources and course materials were suitable</td>
<td>0% 100%</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The room was suitable for the course</td>
<td>3% 97%</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teaching was clear</td>
<td>2% 99%</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tutor was helpful and supportive</td>
<td>0% 100%</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the course: I want to find a job</td>
<td>24% 77%</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the course: Go on to further education/college</td>
<td>25% 75%</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the course: I want to Volunteer</td>
<td>20% 80%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the course: I want to move on to the next level of the Skylight course</td>
<td>15% 85%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you recommend this course to a friend?</td>
<td>2% 98%</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>24% 76%</td>
<td>1,186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Anonymised feedback data from Crisis, covering the period July 2013 to December 2013.

* Number of responses to each question.
Up, Move On project was generally very well regarded by the people who were using it.

Interview and focus group results
The members of Skylight Birmingham interviewed by the University of York research team often emphasized the attractiveness of the informal and accredited learning that was available. From the perspective of these members of Skylight Birmingham, a variety of activities, were seen as enjoyable, offering structured and meaningful activity and opportunities for socialisation, alongside having practical value. The high quality of the informal and accredited learning, from the perspective of Skylight Birmingham members, was also commented on.

The first time I came in here, I wasn’t doing much, maybe doing the odd art on a Thursday morning, and then it was advertised on the board and I saw the courses and I thought I need to go for something like that and I’ve just been doing them ever since.

When I first started I actually came here to do…I’ve done a bit of craft work and cutting out cardboard shapes and stuff. And I thought it’s going to be oh, it’s going to be another one of these groups that’s going to be a little bit patronising. But I soon found it is completely different. It brings out your own personality and what you can and can’t do, and it does give you skills as well, like I’ve been playing bass guitar as well through Crisis, and drama.

Both arts-based activities and accredited courses could give Skylight Birmingham members a sense of accomplishment, a tangible achievement might be a completed piece of art, a musical or written composition or a certificate showing their achievements in the English, maths or information technology courses. This sense of achievement was described as building up and reinforcing self-confidence and self-esteem.

…when I first started doing the English course I was thinking to myself well, do I really need to learn this because I already know it?... But the more you continue with the course the more you’ll learn, there was stuff that I didn’t learn and that I didn’t know. So it’s a sense of achievement at the end of the day.

So you’re learning from doing this stuff as well. I mean one of the things it’s supposed to do, not just the magazine but Skylight but generally is it’s supposed to do things like… I mean if you’ve been out of work for a long time, if you’ve not worked or whatever you can lose confidence.

They’ve been really helpful. It helps me with confidence, with which way to progress forward, which way to go...and what to avoid.

Yeah I think so, it’s given me more self-confidence, that’s the most important thing, I was pretty reclusive when I first come here, I wouldn’t sort of mix with many people, but it’s given me more self-confidence and it gives me a sense of achievement, especially the drama.

It’s a sense of achievement. Does it help you feel more confident about doing things, that you can do things that are productive, that are useful, that you can learn stuff...

Accredited learning was seen by some Skylight Birmingham members as a direct route to employment. Being able to demonstrate achievements to potential employers, through the accreditation and certificates they were awarded when completing courses, was viewed as particularly important by many of the members who were talked to.

I got used to proper English and proper maths, because I failed all my exams when I was at school, but I’ve done it all here and passed everything.
If you go to a potential employer and say well, I’m going to Crisis. So what? But if you can say look, this is what I’ve done with Crisis and I’ve got accreditations for this, that and everything else, then yeah.

Yeah, that’s the one, NOCN anyway, which is a good thing, instead of just saying you’ve attended a course; it’s actually can be on your CV as well which is good.

Representatives of external agencies and services working alongside Skylight Birmingham tended to have a positive view of the informal and accredited learning that was on offer. There was a perception that the education and informal learning delivered by the Skylight was relatively high quality and well-resourced. The range of informal and accredited learning on offer was also thought to be quite extensive.

I think they have a high standard of tutors…and I think also that they don’t, in any way, patronise clients Staff member from external agency.

Yeah, so I think they’ve, kind of, broadened the range of things, so it’s not just the obvious things you’d think, like, art, IT, that sort of thing, but things that are more specialist really and that’s really good, because it offers people more choice…and they can really gain confidence through that. Staff member from external agency.

The Agreed Targets

In the application to the Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities programme to support the Move Up, Move On project from 1st August 2011 to 31st July 2014, the following four targets were set for the project. At the time of writing, full data were not available for the second six months of year three of the project.

1. Annually, 250 homeless and vulnerably housed people will have reduced feelings of isolation through participating in a learning activity (informal or accredited), thereby facilitating reintegration into the local community. At the time of writing, 233 members of Skylight Birmingham were recorded as having reduced feelings of isolation, using the measure employed by Crisis.30 Using the measure developed by Crisis, only partial success had been achieved in respect of this target. Two hundred and thirty-three members of Skylight Birmingham were recorded as having achieved this target over the duration of the project, 31% of a total target of 750 members. However, as is noted below, the chosen form of measurement may have led to under-reporting of successes.

2. Annually, 58 homeless and vulnerably housed people will have learned new skills through gaining at least one accredited basic skills qualification, thereby improving their readiness to progress into further learning. At the time of writing, 67 members of Skylight Birmingham had so far achieved this target over the duration of the project, representing partial achievement of a project lifetime target of 174 members earning at least one basic skill qualification (39% of the project lifetime target).

3. By the end of the project, 360 homeless or vulnerably housed people will have increased self-esteem and confidence through participating in meaningful activity, thereby improving their ability to make positive change in their lives. At the time of writing, this target had been partially...
achieved with 203 members (56% of the target) recorded as having attained increased self-esteem and confidence, using the measure developed by Crisis.\textsuperscript{31} Again, as is discussed below, there is some evidence to suggest that there may have been under-reporting of increases in self-esteem and confidence due to the chosen form of measurement.

1. By the end of the project, 180 homeless and vulnerably housed people will have improved their employability through developing their time management and communication skills. This target had been exceeded at the time of writing, with 202 members of Skylight Birmingham reported as having achieved this goal (112% of the project target) using the measure developed by Crisis.\textsuperscript{32} There is some evidence to suggest that the chosen method for recording success in relation to this target may have underrepresented the extent to which it had actually been achieved (see below).

According to the measures employed by Crisis, performance in relation to the four main targets of the Move Up, Move On project has been variable. As is discussed in more detail below, reliance on self-reporting of improvements in feelings of isolation, increased self-esteem and self-confidence and to time management and communication skills, by members of Skylight Birmingham may have resulted in underrepresentation of actual results. The majority of targets had not, however, according to the measures agreed by Crisis and the Big Lottery Fund been met at the point of writing. The lowest apparent performance was in relation to target 1, at 31% of the intended goal, followed by target 2 at 39% and target 3 at 56%. Only in respect of target 4, did Skylight Birmingham both achieve and then exceed the target with a recorded success rate of 112%.

Drawing on anonymised Crisis administrative data and looking at the milestones set for each target, it is possible to review progress towards each target in more detail.

**Target 1: Improvement in feelings of isolation**

As noted, target 1 for Skylight Birmingham was an annual target that 250 members would report reduced feelings of isolation resulting from participating in informal and/or accredited learning activities. This annual target of 250 members meant that there was, in effect, a project duration target of 750 members of Skylight Birmingham, which as reported above had been partially met at the time of writing (31%, 233 members). Looking at the annual totals for years one to three, the extent to which the target was met was recorded at 32% (80 members) in year one, 43% (107 members) in year two and at 18% (42 members) in year three. At the time of writing, year three was not yet complete, which meant that this total and the overall project duration may well be higher than is recorded here, perhaps closer to that reported in year two. Within this annual target there were three sets of bi-annual milestones:

1. 125 members to take part in a learning activity every six months during years one to three of the project. This target had been exceeded during both halves of year one (184% of target in first six months and 102% of target in second six months), again in year two (161% and 141%) and during the first six months of year three (248%). At the time of writing full data were not available for the second half of year three.

\textsuperscript{31} Based on members of Skylight Birmingham who reported that they strongly agreed or agreed that they had increased self-confidence on a feedback form after completing informal and/or accredited learning activities.

\textsuperscript{32} Based on members of Skylight Birmingham who completed a feedback form and who reported they strongly agreed or agreed that they had increased time management and/or improved communication skills after completing informal and/or accredited learning activities.
2. 125 members to report they were ‘meeting people’ and/or had ‘increased trust in other people’ every six months during years one to three of the project. Here, rates of reported success, using self-completed feedback forms were lower. In year one, reported figures were 14% for the first six months (17 members) and 50% for the second six months (50%), in year two the figures were 43% and 42% for the first and second halves of the year. For the first six months of year three, the figure was 37% of the target, with figures for the second six months of year three being unavailable at the time of writing.

3. 100 members to become new members of Skylight Birmingham by completing a first contact form33 every six months for the duration of the project. This target was greatly exceeded during year one, with 223% (223 new members) being achieved in the first six months and 254% (254 new members) being achieved in the second six months. The same pattern was recorded in year two at 268% for the first six months and 280% for the second and also during the first six months of year three (289%), with data for the second six months of year three not being available at the time of writing.

Target 2: Accredited basic skills qualifications

As noted, target 2 was for 58 Skylight Birmingham members to have learned new skills through gaining at least one accredited basic skills qualification. Over the duration of the project, at the time of writing, this target had not been fully achieved, with 39% of the intended project duration goal having been attained (67 members rather than 174 members). Looking at the results by year, 14 members (24% of the target) secured at least one accredited basic skills qualification in year one, with a notable increase being reported in year two (32 members, 55% of target) with 36% of the target being reached in year three. At the time of writing, data for year three were not yet complete. This meant that this total and the overall project duration may well be higher than is recorded here, perhaps closer to that reported in year two. Within this annual target there were three sets of quarterly and bi-annual milestones:

1. 18 members were to enrol on a basic skills course during every quarter of every year of the project. In year one, this target was exceeded for all four quarters (188%, 34 members in quarter 1, 216%, 39 members in quarter 2, 261%, 47 members in quarter 3 and 127%, 23 members in quarter 4). In year two, there were similar results (283%, 211%, 222%, 233%) during the first quarter of year three the target was greatly exceeded (616%) with lower levels, still exceeding the target, being reported in quarters 2 and 3 (322%, 116%) and data not being available for quarter 4 at the time of writing.

2. 29 members were to gain at accredited qualification every six months during the course of the project. Performance on this target improved over the course of the project. During the first half of year one only 17% of the target (five members securing a qualification) was achieved, rising to 31% (nine members) during the second half of the year. By the first half of year two, 35% of the target was being achieved, rising to 76% in the second half of that year and reaching 72% in the first half of year three. Data were not available for the second half of year three.

1. Milestone three was shared with target one, i.e. 100 new members to be recruited during each six months for the three year duration of the project (see above, under target 1).
Target 3: Increased self-esteem and confidence

Target 3 was, as noted, for 360 members to have increased their self-esteem and confidence through participating in a meaningful activity. As noted above, at the time of writing, this target had been partially achieved with 203 members (56% of the target) recorded as having attained increased self-esteem and confidence. Within this target, there were a mix of bi-annual and annual milestones:

1. 125 members to take part in a learning activity every six months during the life of the project. This milestone was shared with target 1 and was exceeded (see above under target 1).

2. 100 people to become members of Skylight Birmingham every six months during the life of the project. This milestone was shared with targets 1 and 2 and was exceeded (see under target 1).

3. 120 members to report increased confidence and/or increased motivation as an added benefit of participation in meaningful activity. This milestone had been partially fulfilled, with 63% of the target (76 members) being reached in year one and 71% (85 members) in year two. During year three, for which data were not complete at the time of writing, 35% of the target had been reached, this meant that the total at the end of year three may well be higher than is recorded here, i.e. perhaps closer to that reported in year two. Overall performance in delivering outputs for this milestone over the course of the project may also be higher.

Target 4: Improved employability skills

Target 4 was for 180 members of Skylight Birmingham to have improved their employability through developing their time management and communication skills during the lifetime of the project. As reported above, this target had been exceeded (112%, 202 members) by the time of writing. It was also possible that target 4 would be further surpassed as the data for year three of the project were not yet complete at the time of writing. Three bi-annual and annual milestones were set for target 4:

1. 125 members to take part in a learning activity every six months for the duration of the project. This milestone, which was exceeded, was shared with targets 1 and 3 and is reported on under target 1 (see above).

2. 100 people to become members of Skylight Birmingham during each six months for the duration of the project. This milestone, which was again exceeded, was shared with targets 1, 2 and 3 and is reported on under target 1 (see above).

3. 60 members of Skylight Birmingham per year, over the course of the project, to report increased time management skills and/or increased communication skills as an added benefit of participation. In effect, this milestone was an annual breakdown of target 4, i.e. a milestone of 60 members per year over three years to achieve a project duration target of 180 members. As noted, when looked at cumulatively, this target was surpassed (112%), in year one the target was exceeded (125%, 75 members), and in year two (140%, 84 members). During year three, for which data were not complete, 72% of the target had been met. It is therefore possible that the year three milestone will be surpassed.

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34 Measured by members completing feedback forms and reporting they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that their confidence and/or motivation had increased.
Other achievements of the Move On, Move Up project

Delivering employment and volunteering opportunities

Additional Skylight Birmingham targets that are linked to those specified by Crisis when seeking funding from the Reaching Communities programme are worth mentioning at this point in the report. These relate to the achievements of Skylight Birmingham in moving members into paid work, into volunteering and in securing qualifications.

- Forty-seven members of Skylight Birmingham had secured employment at the point of writing. Twenty jobs had been secured in year one, a further 20 in year two and seven in year three. As data were not complete for year three at the time of writing, a higher overall level may be achieved for year three.

- Forty-eight members of Skylight Birmingham had moved into volunteering, 17 in year one, 21 in year two, and 10 in year three, though again data were not complete for year three, meaning a higher total could be achieved.
3. Outcomes for the Move Up, Move On project

- Two-hundred and seventeen members of Skylight Birmingham secured one or more accredited qualifications during the period 1st August 2011 to 25th March 2014. In total, these 217 members secured 571 qualifications, an average of just under three per person (2.6). In most instances, however, members had secured one or two qualifications during that period, the median was one qualification per member, as was the mode and only 25% of members had secured three or more qualifications. Most qualifications were in arts-based subjects (32%), followed by basic skills (23%, including English, Maths and IT), this was followed by accreditations in performing arts (21%) and in personal development (23%).

- Accredited learning and qualifications, while important, were only one indicator for Move Up, Move On, because the project also provided informal learning opportunities through arts-based activity, health and well-being sessions and life skills training.

Limitations and strengths of available data

The targets which were agreed between Crisis and the Big Lottery Fund for the Move Up, Move On project were measured using quite specific indicators, which for targets 1, 2 and 4, relied on Skylight Birmingham members who had completed specific questions on the feedback form focused on informal and accredited learning. Reliance on voluntary member feedback as a tool for performance monitoring brings both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are that voluntary feedback is a direct indicator of the opinion of people using the services which is being evaluated, a clear indicator of whether a service is valued or not, which is in itself core to assessing how effective that service is in delivering the intended outcomes. The disadvantages tend to centre on the rates at which people opt to provide voluntary feedback and while, in overall terms, the rate at which members completed feedback forms was quite high (279 completed feedback forms, see above), it was still the case that a majority of members did not provide feedback.

Any service that uses voluntary feedback will encounter the issue of often quite high numbers of people not choosing to respond to the offer to provide comments on the service they had used. These raises general caveats about voluntary feedback as a source of performance monitoring, centred on the possibility of underreporting or over-reporting of success because the results may not be representative. Regardless of the type of service that is collecting voluntary feedback, or which people that service is working with, it will often be the case that many people, when asked for feedback, will not provide it, this applies to commercial companies seeking customer feedback, universities asking for student feedback or to hospitals asking patients for feedback as much as to homelessness services.

Some particular potential challenges faced Skylight Birmingham in respect of collecting feedback from members. Contact levels with informal and accredited learning were often quite low, i.e. some members only attended one session (see above), which meant the opportunities to collect feedback were often relatively restricted compared to a situation in which someone was engaged with informal or accredited learning for several weeks or months. Equally, support needs were high and levels of literacy were sometimes low, which might have meant that some members found using a self-completion feedback form challenging. The Skylight attempted to provide alternative means to allow members to present feedback, through various participative activities, but again, engagement levels were not high. There may also have been issues around using an outreach model, sustainment of contact with building-based Skylights, where feedback forms are always
on hand, is in some respects higher than for outreach based Skylights,\(^{35}\) again perhaps allowing for more opportunities for feedback to be provided.

While a third of the people using informal and accredited learning as members of Skylight Birmingham did complete feedback forms, the majority did not, and this might mean there was underreporting of outcomes. There is also the possibility that those who did provide feedback, which as seen above was generally very positive, were not representative of members of Skylight Birmingham as a whole.

Three sources of data were available on Move Up, Move On at Skylight Birmingham, which were the anonymised administrative data, the anonymised feedback forms and the views from Skylight Birmingham members collected by the University of York in the Summer of 2013. Each data source was independently collected and can be used for cross verification, i.e. there is a greater chance that any single source of data is accurate if the other two sets of data point in the same direction. In this instance, all indicators about the Move Up, Move On project and the informal and accredited learning provided through that project are generally very positive. This enables this evaluation to state that there is good evidence that Move Up, Move On is, in general and strategic terms a success, based on records from Crisis administrative data, feedback from Skylight Birmingham members and the results of the University of York fieldwork. Thus, in this context, there seems more likelihood that successes in respect of the four targets agreed with the Big Lottery Fund are being under reported, rather than it being the case that negative results or opinions are being under reported.
4 Findings

Introduction
This final section of the report summarises the main findings and presents the main conclusions of the evaluation of Move Up, Move On.

Key findings
• There is clear evidence that the Move Up, Move On project is delivering informal and accredited learning that is viewed very positively by the homeless and vulnerably housed people who are members of Skylight Birmingham. Feedback, focus group and interview results all indicate that the range, quality and practicality of the courses and activities on offer are often praised by members of Skylight Birmingham.

• There is considerable evidence of a need for the informal and accredited learning that is on offer, with high levels of activity being reported for the Move Up, Move On project since its inception in August 2011 and up to the point of writing. Large numbers of homeless and vulnerably housed people, many with support needs, have used informal and accredited learning and there is no indication that demand is lessening.

• High demand for informal and accredited learning exists alongside tangible evidence that homeless and vulnerably housed people, not only often thought highly of these services, but they were also moving into positions of greater social and economic integration following their contact with informal and accredited learning. Successes included 48 members moving into volunteering, 47 members securing employment and 217 members earning 571 qualifications and accreditations during the course of the Move Up, Move On project to date.

• Progress towards the targets agreed between the Big Lottery Fund and Crisis appeared more mixed, but there is a possibility that heavy reliance on feedback from members of Skylight Birmingham to monitor outcomes may have been producing undercounts of positive outcomes. There is nevertheless tangible progress towards reducing isolation, attainment of accredited basic skills qualifications, increasing self-esteem and confidence and enhancement of employability skills. Moreover, the results in relation to agreed targets have to be seen in a context in which three independently collected sets of data all gave a very positive picture of the Move Up, Move On programme and what it was achieving at the individual and strategic level.

• Direct feedback from the people using a service is always an important gauge of how successful that service is. However, there are challenges in relying on voluntary feedback from Skylight Birmingham members as a primary means by which service performance and project outcomes are assessed. These difficulties centre on relatively low response rates (to specific questions) and the inherent difficulties in engaging homeless people, or indeed any service user group, with voluntary feedback mechanisms. Targets that centre on the goals of the project, but which have a greater reliance on outcomes that can be monitored administratively, alongside a continued effort to gather the opinions of Skylight Birmingham members, could enhance the monitoring of this project in future.
About Crisis

Crisis is the national charity for single homeless people. We are dedicated to ending homelessness by delivering life-changing services and campaigning for change.

Our innovative education, employment, housing and well-being services address individual needs and help homeless people to transform their lives. We measure our success and can demonstrate tangible results and value for money.

We are determined campaigners, working to prevent people from becoming homeless and advocating solutions informed by research and our direct experience.

We have ambitious plans for the future and are committed to help more people in more places across the UK. We know we won’t end homelessness overnight or on our own. But we take a lead, collaborate with others and together make change happen.

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