



HTS 2020/21 Covid response and social impact report

*Analysis of the social impact generated by
HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd
during the Covid-19 pandemic*

August 2021

Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to perform a social impact analysis of selected HTS Group activities in 2020/2021 with particular emphasis on activities responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The dominant issue throughout 2020-21 was of course the Covid pandemic. As such this report is designed to demonstrate how HTS Group has responded to the pandemic and continued to deliver social impact and tailored its services to mitigating negative impact.

This report explores the social impact generated across several outcome areas and through a range of social impact analysis techniques.

The report uses contextual analysis, wellbeing valuation, cost benefit analysis and economic multiplier techniques to measure and evaluate social impact outcomes.

Key findings are:

- HTS Group contributed significantly to the Covid pandemic response in 3 main impact areas: supporting the public health response, mitigating negative economic impacts, protecting, and enhancing the wellbeing of staff and the Harlow community.
- HTS Group still continued to create social value in relation to key core CSR objectives as well being able to quantify social impact through **work experience, protecting and enhancing employment, apprenticeships, volunteering, and supporting community organisations.**
- Of the activities which can be monetised HTS created £383,185 social (wellbeing) value and £171,630 of public sector costs savings and economic benefits as well as making £90,000 worth of donations and staff time to charitable and community causes in the 2020-21 year.
- Analysis of the Streets2Homes partnership project update report shows that HTS renovation of Bromley Cottages has continued to play a part in generating additional social outcomes such as reducing rough sleeping, helping to move people into secure tenancies and tangible access to a range of services. (full report at Appendix I, available by kind permission of Streets2Homes)



- For the second year in succession HTS has improved its impact on the local economy by increasing the economic contribution generated through recruiting staff locally and using local suppliers.
- It is likely more social impact was generated by HTS however the evidence does not exist to demonstrate all of these outcomes.
- Recommendations include adoption of a Social Impact Framework to deliver activities specifically related to Covid and partnership working as well as establishing a social impact working group and further investigation into how to adopt the local wealth building concept in Harlow.

Section summaries

The report is split into the following six sections:

Section 1 provides a description of the activities of HTS Group in the context of the Covid pandemic.

Section 2 HTS Covid response identifies the main ways in which HTS responded to the pandemic.

Section 3 Social Impact assessment: assesses and quantifies the social impact created through HTS activities, partnership projects such as Streets2homes, linked to Covid response and CSR strategy themes.

Section 4: Social Impact measurement techniques: Explains the methodology adopted in the social impact assessment and how social value is measured using contextual analysis techniques, Housing Association Charitable Trust (HACT's) UK Social Value Bank, Commission for New Economy Unit Cost database and Local Multiplier 3 calculations

Section 5: Recommendations

Section 6: Summary and the future

Appendices

Section 1: Background HTS Covid response.

The Covid pandemic affected everyone in the country in some way during 2020-21 and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The pandemic has changed how organisations operate and enormous social and economic changes have been and will continue to be felt in communities.

A key source of data on the Covid impact is the Office for National Statistics (ONS) opinions and Lifestyle survey¹. As of August 2021 the survey reported that 41% still think their wellbeing is negatively affected by the pandemic and it estimates 33% of the British population feel that it will take more than a year for life to return to normal or even that life will never return to normal.

Economically during 2020-21 there was a sharp increase in Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit claimants demonstrated by the graph in table 1 below. Despite a reduction in claimants during the early part of 2021 it is expected that unemployment will rise again as a result of the ending of the furlough scheme after September 2021.

The pandemic highlighted that older people, young people, the vulnerable, those in poor health and from an ethnic minority background were disproportionately affected. These demographic groups were and are being impacted on disproportionately in a number of ways ranging from their day-to-day finances to their employment and mental health. For younger adults (16-39) depressive symptoms were more than double (29%) compared to (11%) before the pandemic².

For all the reasons above it has never been more important for HTS to implement its vision.

Where Harlow is a place where people want to live and work as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles for employees

The pandemic has demonstrated the importance of organisations making a difference for their employees and the community. Impacting on the pandemic clearly aligns with HTS's aim to be acknowledged as an industry leader in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and be an organisation with a well-established programme in the community actively engaging with environmental, charitable, and people-based initiatives.

¹

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/coronavirusandthesocialimpactsongreatbritain/latest>

²

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19latestinsights/wellbeing>

Section 2: HTS Covid response

Through the established Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme, HTS' was well placed to make an effective Covid response. This response has been delivered in three major impact areas outlined below. All of the responses link into the existing CSR Strategy and add to and enhance what has previously been delivered.

Impact area 1: Supporting the pandemic public health response:

Background and context: The Public Health response to the pandemic was multi-faceted and involved the establishment of large-scale testing, provision of PPE as well as the introduction of local and national restrictions on daily life.

In 2020-21 HTS have:

- ✓ Established a Coronavirus testing centre, welfare, and rest facilities on HTS premises. (Case study Appendix 2)
- ✓ Protected staff through paying for Covid lateral flow tests prior to them becoming freely available.
- ✓ Provided PPE/NFP to charitable organisations such as St Clare Hospice, Harlow Council, Rainbow Services and Veolia.



Impact area 2: Mitigating negative economic impacts

Background and context: The full extent of economic impacts of the pandemic are still being felt and will continue to be felt. Table 1 in section 3 below demonstrates a sharp increase in unemployment during the pandemic in Harlow. The percentage working age population out of work is higher in Harlow compared to the South East and nationally in England. This is despite the furlough scheme protecting an estimated 9million jobs nationally³.

In 2020/21 HTS have:

- ✓ Retained all staff with none being furloughed.
- ✓ Continued to commit to and recruit apprentices and provide traineeships.
- ✓ Recruited 22 additional staff of which 4 were previously unemployed.

Impact area 3: Protecting and enhancing the wellbeing of staff and the community.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/furlough-scheme-extended-and-further-economic-support-announced>

Background and context: The UK assesses wellbeing by using 4 national wellbeing questions. How satisfied are you with your life nowadays? Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?, overall how happy did you feel yesterday?, overall how anxious did you feel yesterday? **Diagram 1** in section 3 below demonstrates how the pandemic has impacted negatively on all these measures.

In 2020-21 HTS have:

- ✓ Trained 6 staff as mental health first aiders.
- ✓ Received excellent customer satisfaction, positive feedback (687) and plaudits.
- ✓ Increased the number of voluntary service days which HTS provides to the community such as supporting Harlow Credit Union and Harlow Food Bank.
- ✓ Contributed to the success of the Streets2Homes project.

Section 3 Social Impact assessment

Impact area 1: Supporting the pandemic public health response

Along with many areas of the UK Harlow was affected by three different waves in the Covid pandemic.

In the context of a pandemic social impact measurement changes its emphasis and becomes more about demonstrating how negative impacts are mitigated particularly on those most at risk. Impact measurement becomes about estimating how many peoples' health and wellbeing has been protected and understanding the negative impact avoided.

HTS has played a role with the establishment of a Harlow testing centre which will have resulted in a reduction of transmission, giving people reassurance that they do not have Covid and when a test is positive people getting the medical support they need.

In social value terms physical and mental health are the two most important drivers of wellbeing. Identifying Covid cases early is acknowledged to reduce transmission and therefore reduce the risk of poor health. The social value or wellbeing burden of avoiding transmission of Covid is currently unresearched. However, there is research into the social value of avoiding conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, coronary heart disease and obesity through NHS health checks. This study reveals that wellbeing cost/burden of high blood pressure per person is £15,934⁴. Avoiding this burden and protecting wellbeing in relation to contracting Covid clearly is something which will provide a social value although this is not available at present.

It is reasonable to assume that HTS will have played a role in reducing cases and avoiding infections through their establishment of the testing centre. This impact would have been particularly important before the roll out of the vaccination programme. However, it is difficult to ascertain how much of a benefit HTS will have delivered. This

⁴ Fujiwara, Keohane, Hotopp, Ball (2017) Measuring the Social Value of NHS Health checks A pilot study.

will be subject to further research as more data becomes available into how Covid has impacted on wellbeing.

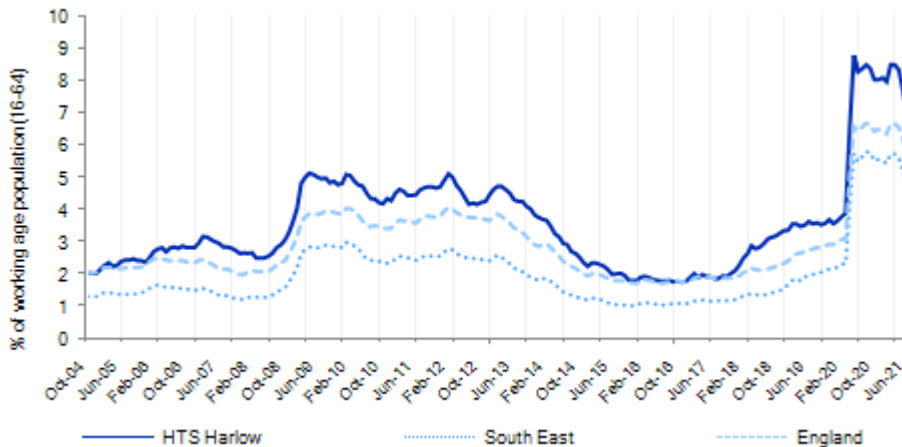
Impact area 2: Mitigating negative economic impacts.

Employment is important to wellbeing. Avoiding furlough and redundancies will protect wellbeing particularly at a time of great disruption. Even in Summer 2021 the pandemic is still having an impact with 41% of respondents to the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (Covid 19 module) reporting their wellbeing is still affected by the pandemic.

Even 1x redundancy when the individual does not secure another job result in an average wellbeing reduction of £14,443⁵. It will also potentially increase the burden on the state through increased expenditure on benefit support. By keeping all employees in work wellbeing is therefore protected.

Given the impact of the pandemic on young people and employment it is particularly important that HTS continues with its apprenticeship and training programmes. For example, in Harlow unemployment rates for the 18-24 age group is higher than the national England average and South East averages (source DWP)

Table I below demonstrates how unemployment benefit and Job seeker allowance claimants have increased during the first year of the pandemic. It is worth noting that the impact has been greater in Harlow as compared to the South East and England as a whole.



Relevant CSR work Programmes: (Employment and work experience)

Clearly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic there is a specific need to provide employment opportunities and protect existing ones.

In 2020-21 HTS is impacting positively on local employment in the following ways:

- ✓ 7 x apprenticeships/trainees were in post across different departments in the organisation with more planned for 2021-22.

⁵ <https://www.hact.org.uk/uk-social-value-bank>

- ✓ HTS recruited 4 previously unemployed workers out of a total of 22 new appointments.
- ✓ Despite the pandemic HTS also runs several work experience programmes which are designed to inform future work choices, provide opportunities for young people to prove themselves and help instil positive attitudes and behaviours expected at work⁶.
- ✓ HTS is a disability confident employer which means a commitment to recruiting, retaining, and developing disabled people. Currently 10% of the workforce are identified as disabled well above the minimum statutory requirement threshold of 3%. This is a significant figure as nationally people with disabilities are often under-represented in the workforce, with disabled people 28.6% less likely to be in employment than non-disabled people⁷.
- ✓ Providing 2 work placements of 39 days, 8 weeks in total.

Relevant CSR work Programme: Maximising HTS' economic impact on the Harlow Community.

- ✓ This report calculates a Local Economic Multiplier in section 3 below (Table C). This calculation is useful when demonstrating how HTS impacts economically locally. Being able to identify and improve the local economic contribution is a starting point to understanding how HTS connects to the emerging Community Wealth Building movement defined as:
- ✓ *A people-centred approach to local economic development. It reorganises local economies to be fairer. It stops wealth flowing out of our communities, towns, and cities. Instead, it places control of this wealth into the hands of local people, communities, businesses, and organisations⁸*
- ✓ HTS as a locally authority owned company committed to public service values and ethics employs over 70% of its workforce resident in Harlow and buys over 66% of suppliers from local suppliers. As such more wealth is retained in the hands of local communities and stops wealth flowing out to surrounding areas. HTS was able to return a 'profit' of to the Council in 2020-2021 of £945,000 which is then able to be recycled to support local public services such as maintenance of parks, playgrounds, social care provision, or business support.
- ✓ Full details and analysis found in LM3 section (table 5 below).

⁶ <https://www.tes.com/news/work-experience-it-really-worthwhile>

⁷

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/bulletins/disabilityandemploymentuk/2019>

⁸ <https://cles.org.uk/what-is-community-wealth-building/>

Impact area 3: Protecting and enhancing the wellbeing of staff and the community.

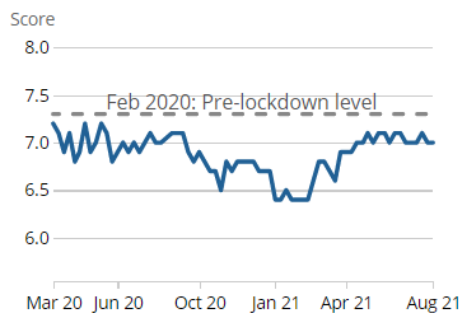
Table 2 below illustrates how wellbeing has been negatively affected by the pandemic⁹. Each of the graphs below shows how life satisfaction, feelings of being worthwhile, happiness are consistently reported to be below the pre pandemic levels. Anxiety levels can be seen to higher particularly in the March to April period 2020.

Table 2: Measures of wellbeing in Britain (March 2020 to August 2021)

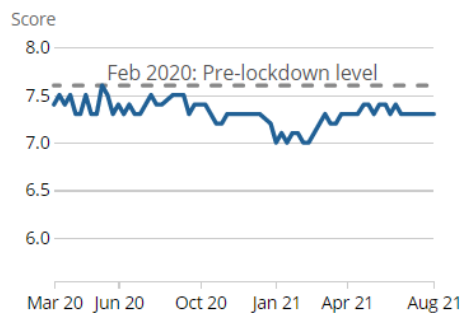
Well-being measures are worse than their pre-pandemic levels

Adults in Great Britain, March 2020 to August 2021

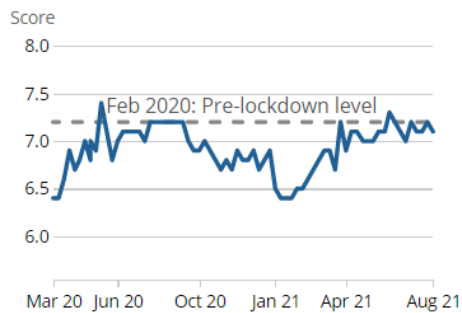
Overall, how **satisfied** are you with your life nowadays?



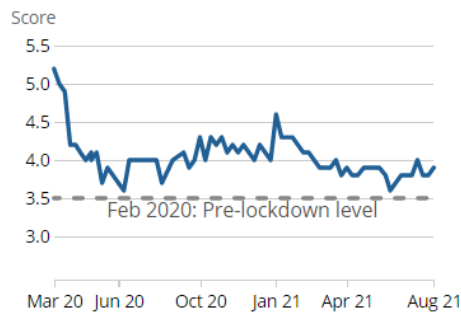
Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are **worthwhile**?



Overall, how **happy** did you feel yesterday?



Overall, how **anxious** did you feel yesterday?



A whole range of drivers have contributed to these figures, these include concerns about children, home schooling, finances, employment, working from home and isolation. In particular there was a marked increase in anxiety at the beginning of the first lockdown with almost half of the population reporting high anxiety scores. Worries around changes and finance did affect people and their mental health. One in eight adults (12.9%) developed moderate or severe mental health symptoms during the pandemic.¹⁰ This did bounce back as people adjusted to lockdown although loneliness,

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19latestinsights/wellbeing>

¹⁰ <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Covid-Mental-health-briefing-Nov-2020-.pdf>

and those with disabilities were shown by the ONS as being particularly vulnerable to higher levels of anxiety¹¹.

The training of mental health first aiders is designed to address this issue amongst HTS staff and recognise early symptoms and workplace mental health issues, provide the necessary skills to support people and to signpost colleagues to the most appropriate support.

Relevant CSR Programme: (Partnership with Schools and Charities)

Partnerships with Schools and Charities bring numerous benefits. Research from the Careers and Enterprise Company states that early interventions can bring a lasting impact on children's development and perceptions of different occupations and of the subjects enabling access to them¹².

HTS is active in local schools and with Charities in the following ways:

- ✓ By providing staff and involvement in the Crucial Crew project where HTS provided a virtual presentation on the environment to students.
- ✓ Supporting 5 different charitable organisations or causes in the local community in a variety of ways. (Harlow and District Chamber of Commerce, HTS Butterfly Ball, Harlowsave Credit Union, Harlow Playhouse, St Clare Hospice, local football club sponsorship).



- ✓ Providing volunteer governors for 3 local academies/schools.
- ✓ Sponsorship of special character award for Burnt Mill Academy.
- ✓ Partnering and renovation of the Streets2Homes Step 2 (Bromley Cottages) Accommodation project.

Not only do these activities impact on the recipient organisations but also demonstrate to the community and other stakeholders that HTS is an ethical community focused business.

It is important to note the impact of HTS involvement in the Streets2Homes Step 2 Accommodation project. The project was done at cost without margin thereby

¹¹

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/coronavirusandanxietygreatbritain/3april2020to10may2020>

¹²https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/1145_what_works_primary_v7_digital.pdf

representing a financial contribution to the project which has delivered significant impact from May 2019 to May 2020,

During this time 36 residents who were previously homeless have moved into secured tenancies in the private sector, Council properties or have moved in with friends and family or other supported accommodation.

The wellbeing social value calculation associated with this service where people move from homelessness to more secure accommodation is £824,315.

The project brings additional wellbeing improvements and financial savings to the state as a result of service users engaging with drugs/alcohol and mental health services. For example, successful drug and alcohol treatments result in 44% reduction in the number of dependent individuals re-offending. This is in addition to £21.5 billion cost of alcohol related harm to society in England. It is calculated by Public Health England that there is a social return of £3 for every £1 invested in alcohol treatment and a social return of £4 to every £1 invested in drug treatment¹³

Being an ethical community focused business is important as increasingly employees, investors and other stakeholders are questioning the ethical credentials of business. Undertaking activities such as those mentioned above can in turn provide business benefits such as improved employee motivation and retention. For example, 62% of Millennials report wanting to work for a company which makes a positive impact¹⁴

Relevant CSR Programmes: (Staff wellbeing, living wage and upward upgrade of staff)

HTS are impacting positively on their workforce in the following ways:

- ✓ Cycle to work scheme set up for implementation in 2021-22.
- ✓ Internally promoting circa 15% (57) of staff into higher position/salaries over the period since 1st February 2017. Promotions can improve job satisfaction in the short term and can be an important element of improving wellbeing¹⁵.
- ✓ The Local Government Pension Scheme with a 21.8% employer contribution is 7 times higher than auto enrolment requirements and 3-4 times higher than most company employer contributions.
- ✓ All staff now receive at least the Real (Foundation) Living Wage recommended wage which is voluntarily paid based on the cost of living of a basket of goods and services and what people need to get by.¹⁶
- ✓ Staff wellbeing is underpinned by health and safety and HTS operates an internal award scheme to encourage and ensure the company fleet of over 200 vehicles is operated safely and considerately.

¹³ <https://app.box.com/s/p52mrjh78yrshd9smogm350s7ougg11>

¹⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2015/may/05/millennials-employment-employers-values-ethics-jobs>

¹⁵ <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/resources/job-quality-and-wellbeing/>

¹⁶ <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/what-real-living-wage>

HTS for the second-year running has gained a national award for Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Gold Awards.

Gold Award For health and safety performance is recognition and proof of HTS commitment to maintaining and improving health and safety standards. RoSPA gold award winners have achieved a very high level of performance, demonstrating well developed occupational health and safety management systems and culture, outstanding control of risk and very low levels of error, harm, and loss.¹⁷

Finding a secure rewarding career is difficult and feeling your job is secure is both closely related to improved wellbeing along with positive relationships with colleagues and managers. The What Works Centre for Wellbeing reports that employment is one of the top three drivers of personal wellbeing with partner relationships and health particularly mental health¹⁸



In summary by providing internal promotions, offering staff benefits, provision of in-house training, providing secure terms and conditions including high health and safety standards. HTS is committed to many of the factors which determine good staff wellbeing.

Relevant CSR programme: Core work in improving the environment.

An attractive well-maintained environment is crucial to wellbeing¹⁹. HTS provides core services which impact significantly on how people feel and their life satisfaction. Grass cutting and landscaping, street and grounds and housing repairs all impact on how an individual feels. This is demonstrated in the HACT report *Valuing Housing and Local Environment Improvements*²⁰. The report demonstrates that improvements such as removal of litter problems, resolutions of problems with mould, damp and condensation, rectification of floor, ceiling, and door problems impact positively on wellbeing. Diagram 2 illustrates how housing and environment impact on life satisfaction²¹.

¹⁷ <https://www.rospa.com/Awards/Winners/2019/Gold-Awards>

¹⁸ <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/resources/job-quality-and-wellbeing/>

¹⁹ https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Places-spaces-people-wellbeing-May2018V2_0119660900.pdf

²⁰ <https://hact.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/Archives/2017/01/Valuing%20Housing%20and%20Local%20Environment%20Improvements%20-%20Jan%202017.pdf>

²¹ <https://www.hact.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/Archives/2017/01/Valuing%20Housing%20and%20Local%20Environment%20Improvements%20-%20Jan%202017.pdf>

Diagram 2: How Housing and Environmental factors improve life satisfaction

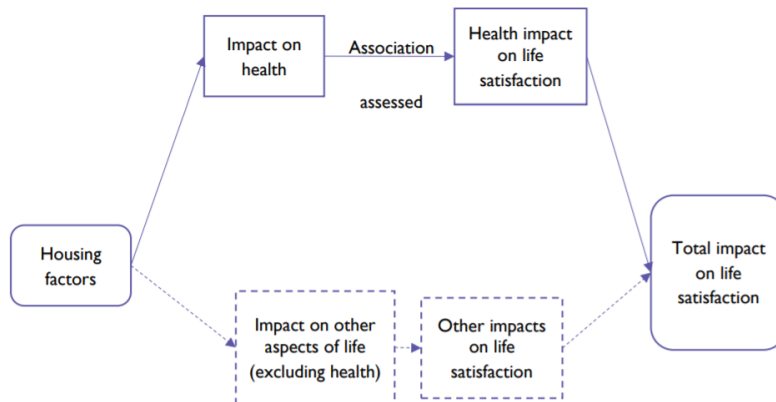


Diagram 2 demonstrates the importance of HTS core services in generating social impact in relation to improvements in health but also potentially in relation to lower energy bills for customers and affordable warmth. Recognition of these core services should in time become a standard part of the social impact reporting process.

In August 2020 HTS provided crucial support in reopening 43 playgrounds (after they were closed because of the pandemic) following safety inspections. Opening playgrounds after being shut during the pandemic was a crucial step in improving wellbeing by improving social/community cohesion, improving wellbeing of the whole family, improve social relations/interactions and increase social capital,²²

It is widely accepted that Social, Economic and Environmental impact are inextricably linked²³. Activities and actions which protect and harm the environment also impact on a whole variety of social and economic outcomes.

HTS states a commitment to minimising the impact of its activities on the environment. HTS publishes an environmental policy statement online ²⁴ and states a commitment to ‘respond to the social, economic and environmental expectations of our community, our customers, and our stakeholders’.

HTS have received recognition of positive impact in this area by winning the international CSR excellence awards operated by the Green Organisation. The awards aim to improve environmental performance, encourage the efficient use of resources, enhance the competitiveness of organisations, and support the wider goals of sustainable development, including social benefits through community and staff involvement.

²² <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/community-hubs-green-space-April2021.pdf>

²³ <https://www.bitc.org.uk/blog/why-social-environmental-and-economic-sustainability-are-inextricably-linked/>

²⁴ <http://www.htsgroupltd.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Environmental-Policy-Statement-2018.pdf>

Section 4: Social Impact Measurement techniques

Contextual analysis

Any social impact analysis should consider the local and national context in which it operates. This is important for a variety of reasons.

- ✓ It enables HTS to cross reference CSR activities in the context of local and national need.
- ✓ It helps to provide insights into how HTS is currently tackling issues at a local geographical level, for example it allows HTS to understand and become more aware of social issues in their communities and ask where support is most needed and assess whether business operations, CSR projects and programmes are aligned effectively to that need.
- ✓ Contextual analysis allows us to assess the extent of HTS contribution to key local issues.

The report makes use of several information sources to analyse and understand key issues in the Harlow Local Authority area drawing from the open data tool Community Insight²⁵.

Wellbeing valuation and the UK Social Value Bank

As in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 this report has drawn heavily on the UK Social Value Bank (UKSVB)²⁶ to assess the social impact created.

Launched in 2014, the UKSVB is a HACT resource that offers organisations and businesses a way to understand the social impact of their investment in communities. The UKSVB was derived using the wellbeing valuation approach and features as part of HM Treasury Green Book²⁷ guidance that sits at the heart of policy evaluation approaches within UK Government.

Over 100 outcomes have been valued based on their relationship with life satisfaction. To do this, large national datasets were analysed to identify how people's self-reported wellbeing²⁸ changes due to different life circumstances. Analysis reveals the impact of these various outcomes on life satisfaction and calculates the amount of money that produces the equivalent impact on life satisfaction.

The UKSVB offers a proportionate way to measure social impact and enables a cost: benefit calculation. It has become the housing industry-standard method to measure

²⁵ <https://www.communityinsight.org/>

²⁶ <http://www.hact.org.uk/value-calculator>

²⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685903/The_Green_Book.pdf

²⁸ How satisfied they are with their life on a scale of 0-10, from 'not at all' to 'completely'.

social impact, has been downloaded over 18,000 times and more than 300 organisations have attended training and use the model in their business decisions.

It is recommended that the assessment of social impact using the UKSVB begins before any activity is delivered. This way the necessary evidence can be collected to meaningfully measure outcomes using before and after data (the type of evidence required varies by outcome). If evidence is not collected before activity starts, then the 'before' position of individuals may be missed and may result in a less accurate social impact assessment as positive social value may be missed.

HTS have collected data on the activities delivered in 2020-2021 and recorded the resulting outputs and achievements in Table 4. A full review of this data has been carried out and has been analysed retrospectively using HACT's Value Calculator tool and applying the UKSVB.

The analysis concentrates on individuals who directly experience a wellbeing benefit from the activities or interventions funded and/or delivered by HTS. This includes those who receive training and move into employment, for example. The state also experiences knock-on benefits from HTS investment through the outcomes experienced by the individuals leading to reduced public spending or increased tax and national insurance contributions.

Table 3 below shows the social value created for the individual through activities delivered as part of the project where available outcomes in the UKSVB exist. Seven different UKSVB outcomes were utilised in the analysis.

Points to note:

- It is certain there are some additional outcomes that were achieved but due to the evidence available for example in relation to the core activities of HTS. Therefore, no value has been claimed for improvements to the environment or physical improvements to housing.
- There are some activities as part of the programme that were delivered that do not have a corresponding value in the UKSVB. This does not necessarily mean that an activity (particularly in relation to fundraising and charitable support) did not create social impact but that it is not possible to assess it currently.
- The value for each outcome in the UKSVB is applied on a per person per year basis.

New Economy Manchester - Unit Cost database

This report also explores the value of achievements to the state and economy, it does this by drawing on New Economy Manchester's Unit Cost Database²⁹. This database contains more than 600 cost estimates compiled through government reports and academic studies. The database includes costs across the following outcome areas:

²⁹ [Research: Cost Benefit Analysis - Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/research/cost-benefit-analysis)

crime; education & skills; employment & economy; fire; health; housing; and social services.

The project was funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Troubled Families Unit and delivered by Greater Manchester and Birmingham City Councils. Work to develop and update the database is being undertaken by New Economy (Greater Manchester), with further support from Department for Communities and Local Government and other Government departments.

The data has been subject to a rigorous validation process, including assessing the robustness of the original source documentation, considering how data has been derived from constituent cost elements, comparing costs to related data, and exploring the availability of more recent/robust sources. The data has also been reviewed by analysts from the relevant Whitehall departments.

Different types of value are available, both fiscal and economic using the Commission for New Economy model. This report has used the fiscal values which measure the costs or savings to the public sector as well as economic measures which demonstrate the increase in earnings and growth in the local economy.

Calculations using the New Economy Manchester-Unit cost database are detailed in table 4.

Local Economic Multiplier (LM3)

Organisations can make a huge difference to their localities by local buying, recruiting, and encouraging staff to spend locally. Local Economic Multiplier (LM3) analysis can be used to measure the economic impact of an organisation in a local economy by analysing three rounds of spending. This helps organisations understand how they are contributing to the local supply chain and wider economy.

LM3 is calculated in three stages.

- ✓ **Round 1** Organisational turnover and staffing costs.
- ✓ **Round 2** Where and with who the company spends their money.
- ✓ **Round 3** Where and how suppliers and employees re-spend their incomes.

The New Economics Foundation and the Countryside Agency published the report 'The Money Trail, Measuring Your Impact on the Local Economy using LM3'³⁰ in 2002. The principles and calculations outlined in the report have been used to calculate an estimated LM3 score for HTS.

LM3 calculations in Table 5 were based on information and estimates provided by HTS and as such are not as accurate as they might be if questionnaires were undertaken with staff as to the Geographic location where they spend their salaries.

Deadweight

³⁰ <https://neweconomics.org/2002/12/the-money-trail/>

Deadweight, or ‘what would have happened anyway’, is an important part of social impact analysis. To give an accurate picture of social impact a percentage reduction is applied reflecting that a proportion of the outcomes would have happened anyway.

The UKSVB applies average deadweight figures from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Additionality Guide³¹. This prevents overclaiming as it does not assume a direct cause and effect relationship between an outcome and an intervention. Using HCA figures saves additional research or a less robust figure being used.

Deadweight reductions on values are 15% for employment and training outcomes, 19% for community and social outcomes, and 27% for health outcomes.

³¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/additionality-guide>

Table 3: Wellbeing Social impact (wellbeing) created by activity – for the individual

Description of activity	Source of data	UKSVB outcome/ value	Average person value	No. of beneficiaries	Total social value (minus deadweight)
Impact theme: Mitigating Economic Impacts					
Apprenticeships x 7	Update report	Apprenticeship	£2,353	7	£13,060
Employment of unemployed	Update report	Employment	£14,433	4	£49,071
Impact theme: Protecting and enhancing wellbeing of staff and community					
Continued Paringdon Youth Football Club (assumption that sponsorship results in 5 additional members who would not have normally attended)	Update report	Go to youth clubs or organised activities	£2300	5	£5182
Volunteering (Board members). HTS staff serve on 3 different organisation boards.	Update report	Regular volunteering	£3,249	3	£7772
Work experience. HTS provide unpaid work experience with schools and offers to the wider community.	Update report	General training for job	£1567	2	£2575
1 steering group member St Clare Hospice	Update report	Regular volunteering	£3249	1	£2591
Training of Mental Health First Aiders	Update report	Vocational training	£1124	6	£5195
Refurbishment of 5 new properties for those on Council waiting list	Update report	Estimated moving from temporary to secure accommodation	£8019	1	£8019
Training	Update report	General training for job	£1567	227	£292,311
Total				256	£383,185

Table 4: Social value created by activity – for the state and economy

Description of activity	Source of data	Value Business productivity	Value Economic benefit	Value (cost saving) to the state,	No. of beneficiaries	Total social value (minus 15% deadweight)
Impact theme: Mitigating economic impacts						
apprenticeships assumed on level 3	New Economy Manchester – Unit Cost Database	£20,352 (per organisation)	£1924.75	£1390	7	£43,555
Unemployed to employed Fiscal benefit	New Economy Manchester-Unit cost Database		£44,699	£6932	4	£51631
Unemployed to employed improved health outcomes	New Economy Manchester-Unit cost database		£45,267	£6444	4	£51711
Unemployed to employed increased income	New Economy Manchester-Unit costs database		£20,949	£3824	4	£24,733
Total					19	£171,630
Impact theme: Protecting and enhancing wellbeing of staff and community						
Donations and time in supporting community organisations	Internal data	n/a	n/a	n/a		£90,000

The Unit Cost Database has a limited number of values and so was not possible to attach a value to all of the outcomes reported. The table below includes the values and calculations that did align with the outcomes. Where annual benefits are listed one year of value has been applied to be conservative and prevent overclaiming. Additional value has been included based on the HTS calculation of the value of time and donations to community activities.

Table 5: Local Multiplier 3 calculation 2020/21.

Spending Round	Amount
1 Organisation turnover	£20,708,817
2 Local supply chain spend	£8,276,400
3 Staff salary spend (estimated 50% local spend)	£6,115,095
LM3 Calculation	£35,100,312/£20,708,817=1.69

Based on estimates of 50% local spend for both HTS suppliers and staff an LM3 score of 1.69 has been calculated. This means for every £1 spent by HTS £1:1.69 is further generated in the local economy. Local economy in this context is defined as Harlow and wider Essex/Herts postcodes with 66% of total supply chain spend benefiting local Harlow/Essex/Herts Companies. This compares to previous years figures in 2019-20 and 2018-19.

It is possible to interrogate the figures and provide much more accurate figures if an analysis was done of staff spend which would provide greater certainty to the figures produced. This further analysis is out of scope to this report.

To put the LM3 score into context a LM3 score of 1 is the lowest possible and 3 is the highest. A realistic upper limit would be 2.5 as there will always be some spend outside of the Borough. The HTS score represents a positive contribution to the local economy to be considered in relation to the wellbeing and financial/economic impacts highlighted in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 6: Combined Results –Analysis summary

In reports such as this, the value that accrues to different beneficiary groups through the same outcomes can be added together to produce an overall combined social value illustrated in the table below.

Social Impact	Value	%
Wellbeing	£383,185	69%
The State and economy	£171,630	31%
Total	£554,815	100%

Key findings

Combined overall

- Most of the social impact reported is wellbeing created for the individual (69%) with the state and economy accruing (31)
- There is a large contribution made by regular volunteering to wellbeing impact.

For individual wellbeing (Table 3);

- An estimated 256 people experienced a measurable outcome (it is acknowledged that it is likely that many more individuals were engaged but the necessary evidence is lacking to claim value from the UKSVB)
- The highest value recorded per project was employment training for staff £292,311.

For the state and economy (Table 4)

£171,630 was generated as a combination of increased productivity, savings to the state and increased individual income with less demand on health services.

As a multiplier to the local economy (Table 5);

- A LM3 score of has been calculated. For every £1 spent by HTS there is a multiplier in the local economy of £1.69. This score should be used as a benchmark for future economic analysis.

Partnership outcomes

HTS is actively involved in partnership projects across Harlow, all of which generate additional social value. It is not possible to claim this social value separately for HTS but it is important to ensure that HTS' contribution is recognised. The Streets2 Homes project providing services and accommodation for the homeless is an example of how HTS contributes greatly to local partnership initiatives.

Additional potential outcomes

Other outcomes are likely to have generated measurable social impact (however information is not available to evidence this), including:

- HTS has played a significant part in the Harlow Covid response. The impacts of this are currently being felt and as yet no methodology exists to demonstrate the positive impact. Future work is needed by social value professionals to understand and quantify this value in the future.
- The UKSVB includes values around changes to the physical environment of the home, including improvements to energy efficiency, local environment and repairs to property. Evidence that renovation work led to these improvements would enable a social value calculation to be undertaken.
- HTS provides Harlow Council with a profit which helps the Council to maintain and improve local services. Further discussions with the Council on how this resource is recycled in the community would enable further social impact and local wealth building evidence to be evidenced and included in future reports.

- An agreed three-year funding programme with Paringdon Sports and Social Club worth £15,840 additional social benefits will be measurable in 2021/2022. This arrangement should be monitored in terms of future wellbeing impact.
- Due to the higher-than-average pension contributions HTS offers (3x the typical traditional defined benefits schemes). There is also potential to investigate and test whether recent retirees report higher levels of wellbeing, health and life satisfaction as compared to other non-HTS recent retirees.

Section 5: Recommendations

2020-21 was understandably dominated by the pandemic. These recommendations are similar to 2019-20 recommendations and are still valid and made with the aim of HTS understanding better the creation of social value and to improve and manage social impact activities in the future including an on-going Covid response.

Recommendation 1: Develop an ongoing social value measurement framework to respond to mitigate negative impact of Covid.

HACT believes that adopting a social value measurement framework is a crucial approach. The framework should be linked to Corporate aims, Covid response and CSR Strategy being driven by a theory of change³² model, be strongly informed by local community need, help to communicate social impact with stakeholders and link to national or international agendas.

Benefits of adopting a formal framework are improving outcomes for the community and staff, identification of what is working well, grow social awareness in the organisation, promote systematic data collection processes, plan activity and monitor outcomes.

Every metric adopted in the framework should help to improve outcomes, enrich decision making and influence stakeholders. When considered with local community socio-economic profiles and local authority priorities adopting a social value framework can demonstrate to all stakeholders' clear priorities, leadership, alignment with LATCO priorities and demonstrate robustly how progress is being made.

Recommendation 2: Collect data as you go (particularly in relation to core services.)

Although the data that has been collected has made this retrospective analysis possible, if data had been collected with clear social impact goals as part of a framework prior to this analysis a more accurate and meaningful report could be produced. Starting collecting data and inputs at the beginning of the year would enable quality and relevant evidence and inputs (e.g., pre and post surveys data, age, post code, when, length of time, type of intervention) to be collected and enable improved social impact reporting that can be used in informed decision making. This recommendation should also apply

³² <https://www.thinknpc.org/resource-hub/ten-steps/#:~:text=%20Theory%20of%20change%20in%20ten%20steps%20,contribute%20to%20impact%3F%20Outcomes%20happen%20before...%20More%20>

to partner charity organisations receiving funding and support from HTS. This data collection exercise should include information about core service delivery.

Recommendation 3: Use Social Impact analysis to develop future initiatives.

It is recommended that HTS gradually builds up an understanding of ‘what works’ and use this when planning future social impact programmes. This will be achieved through understanding project inputs as well as outcomes and spending time evaluating what is working well. Adopting this approach will put HTS in a strong position as an informed organisation who has evidence of the most effective way to invest a limited pot of money and resources in a community.

Recommendation 4: Develop an organised Harlow wide local community wealth building programme (building on the LM3 calculation).

Undertaking a full more detailed LM3 study will build on the estimated score produced of. This represents an improvement from 2018-2019 (LM3=1.55) and 2019-2020 (LM=1.61) and 2020-21 (LM=1.69). In future HTS could set a target and develop a local wealth building action plan to improve this ratio further.

This Harlow wide local wealth building programme could be investigated with the Council, NHS Trust, Housing Associations, Harlow College, HTS (Housing and Regeneration) Ltd and other place-based rooted in and with an interest in the Harlow community.

Recommendation 5: Establish or develop a social impact working group to oversee progress of social value measurement framework.

Understanding social impact is crucial to demonstrating progression and benchmarking progress. Establishing a working group to monitor impact with cost benefit analysis is one way of identifying improvements utilising a social value measurement framework (recommendation 1).

Other ways of assessing progress include producing [full social accounts](#) which should include a stakeholder analysis and survey, a social accounting panel to verify and sign off results and develop an understanding of what changes. Board members and other stakeholders such as customers can also be asked to ask key impact questions to clarify thinking such as who is experiencing change, what change is experienced, how much change is attributable to HTS. ³³

Recommendation 6: Agree and request Social Value information from partnership projects

HTS is involved in numerous partnership projects. It is important that HTS tracks the impacts of these projects in order to help understand the full impact of HTS. Key social value information should be requested at the start of each partnership to help to demonstrate the case for the time or resources invested.

³³ <http://www.socialvalueuk.org/ten-impact-questions/>

Section 6: Summary and the future

This report demonstrates that HTS has delivered positive social impact results in a particularly difficult year due to the Covid pandemic. As a LATCO with a commitment to CSR programmes there is evidence that all HTS CSR activities are being progressed.



The report through contextual analysis and a breakdown of the wellbeing benefit, economic benefits to society provides an overview of how that social impact is being created.

Looking to the future, HTS operates in an ever-changing environment which is more uncertain with the Covid-19 pandemic. These impacts are currently being felt and increasing into 2021-2022. The pandemic is shifting the way organisations think about and deliver social impact work. Housing associations, Local Authorities contractors, suppliers, and public-sector bodies will continue to look for value for money from their spend and organisations are increasingly thinking about social impact when awarding contracts and in their day-to-day activities.

The creation of the development company HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd offers further opportunities social, economic, and environmental value creation in several ways such as providing affordable housing for those in housing need or homeless, by economically boosting the local supply chain, by providing employment and training opportunities and improving life chances of tenants. As the company begins to develop it will be possible to demonstrate social impacts associated with relieving homelessness and reducing overcrowding. Parts of Harlow are well over the England average as classified in the Index of Deprivation Household overcrowding indicator³⁴ and 109 households in 2018-19 were accepted as homeless and in priority need by the Council³⁵. HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd will in time begin to address these issues.

Along with The Social Value Act 2012 which was a major driver in changing thinking around social value there will be additional pressures to ensure that communities most at risk of negative Covid-19 impacts are mitigated. These pressures may also be additionally impacted upon by the UK leaving the EU.

A robust social value programme underpinned by a measurement framework linked to community wealth building activities will become more important than it has ever been in 2021-22 and into the foreseeable future.



³⁴ Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>)

³⁵

https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/housing_databank/results?area_selection=J%2C22UJ&data_selection=A1&selected_min=1997&selected_max=2019

Appendices

Appendix I

Review and Update of Streets2Homes Step 2 Accommodation Project

09/05/19 to 09/05/20



Background

The Step 2 Project at Bromley Cottages is a 9-bed supported accommodation project consisting of two adjacent properties that are located near shops and services but not within a residential area. The surrounding environment is woodland, and the property is accessed by single access road / cycle track.

The project aims to relieve and prevent rough sleeping and support the resident to gain skills and remove the barriers that have prevented them from securing accommodation or sustaining a tenancy in the past.

The project was developed in partnership with Harlow Council with funding from the government Rough Sleeper Initiative fund.

The project opened to residents on the 9th of May 2019 this report covers data from this date and the following 24 months to 9th of May 2021 and includes both quantitative and qualitative data. We gained feedback from both staff and beneficiaries.

Support Provided

Support staff are on site from 9.30am to 12 midnight 7 days a week, 365 days a year, out of these hours there is an on-call provision.

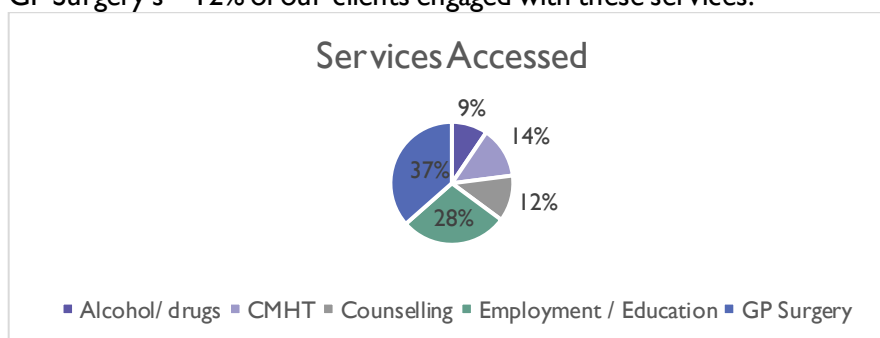
Over this period, we were able to house 42 clients who were either rough sleeping or at imminent risk of rough sleeping. The average stay was 147 nights. The average stay is longer than we anticipated for the project however, this was due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 lockdowns and the need to reduce risks to both staff and residents during the pandemic.

When a new resident arrives, we (in partnership with our corporate supporter Astro Lighting) provide a starter pack which includes all they will need such as new bedding, covers, towels, toiletries, cutlery, cooking utensils, plates, cups, towelling robe and slippers etc. This then becomes their own property to take away with them when they move on.

Whilst the residents are within the service our staff work with them to co-produce individualised pathway plans. Residents are supported to achieve the agreed outcomes and goals set within the pathway plans. Staff support them to develop general living skills, offer emotional support, advice, guidance and provide assistance to enable them to access other services that may be required.

Below are the results of the statutory services that the clients have been helped to access within the timeframe.

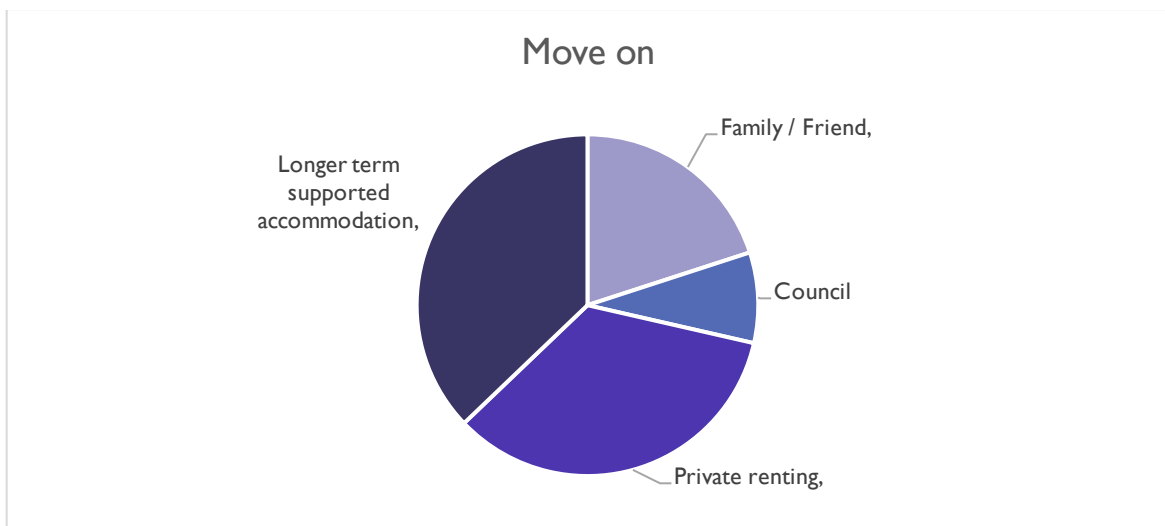
- Alcohol and drugs services – 37% of our clients engaged with these services.
- Community Mental Health Team – 14% of our clients engaged with these services.
- Counselling – 12% of our clients engaged with these services.
- Employment and Education - 28% of our clients engaged with these services.
- GP Surgery's – 12% of our clients engaged with these services.



A key goal and outcome that our residents are working towards is seeking and securing more permanent accommodation for when they are ready to move on.

Below are the results of the types of accommodation our residents moved onto.

- 13 of our residents secured tenancies with private renting.
- 13 of our residents moved on to long term supported accommodation.
- 7 residents moved on to stay with family or friends.
- 6 of our residents still reside with Bromley Cottages and have not yet moved on.
- 3 of our residents were house by the local council.
- None of our residents went to or returned to prison.
- None of our residents became street homeless.



We recently asked clients that had moved on from Bromley Cottages to complete a questionnaire on how their time at Bromley Cottages had gone. 26 previous residents responded. The results will be used to improve the services.

Positives from the survey

All participants in the survey said they were made to feel welcome and were made aware of the support available.

All ex-residents have sustained their move on accommodation.

Residents felt staff were friendly and supportive.

What we can do better in the future

The responses did not identify any common themes however, we will share any comments made with staff to consider in future.

Staff working within the project have stated that although challenging at times working within the project is also extremely rewarding.

Jon Pask, Supported Accommodation Manager says “It is a privilege to be part of a charity that empowers people daily to move from homelessness into housing. To work in an environment that allows for staff to have time to be with, listen to and support the clients, that takes time for people affected by trauma and empowers them to not allow their past to become their future”.

CASE Study - G.H (Current resident)

The Police took me to the travel lodge after things went wrong with my wife. At the Travel lodge I started feeling unwell, so I called for an ambulance and was admitted for 7 days due to a blood clot on my foot and leg. The hospital wanted to discharge me, but I had nowhere to go until I had a visit from the staff at Streets2homes and they brought me to Bromley cottage.

When I arrived, the place was nice and clean and the staff were helpful, they listened but didn't put pressure on me. Within a couple of days, I was eating better, had more money in my pocket and was feeling much better in myself.

It's nice to have people around and I get on well with all the other residents. I am now looking to move on into my own place but am really grateful that it's up to me where I go, and I am not being pushed into living somewhere that I won't be happy in.

CASE STUDY – SD (Ex-resident)

I looked up on the internet homeless in Harlow and found the address for Streets2homes.

I had been living in a tent in a woodland area for the past 12 months but my tent and sleeping bag had been vandalised by youths and I was in desperate need to find some housing.

I went to Streets2homes centre and was given a room at Bromley cottages which gave me an opportunity to get back on my feet. I have done a lot in the short time since I moved here, such as I got support to contact social care to request my care records for my childhood which was spent in the care system. I have also completed my CSCS course with the help of the staff at Bromley.

I have been in many different housing projects over the years but for me Bromley Cottages is different in that you are made to feel welcome and not just another name and given a key and see you next week. The staff are available when you need them, and I got to go at my own pace without feeling pressurised.

I was helped to move on into my own studio flat and I remain in contact with the staff and now work as a volunteer for Streets2homes so that I can help the people that helped me.

Cara Stevens, Senior Housing Operations Manager, Harlow Council District Council stated, “This is an excellent example of partnership working to achieve the same goals and objectives in assisting those in need in line with the governments Rough Sleeper Initiative project”.

What have we learnt?

As this was a new project in 2019, we have continually reviewed and improved services in response to feedback. The pandemic has had a negative impact on the progress we anticipated however, thanks to procedures implemented and staff at the cottages we were able to continue provisions safely throughout the periods of government-imposed restrictions.

A review of move on options has identified a need for longer term supported accommodation provisions for many of our residents. The on-going support need is not as intense as what is offered at this project, but support is still very much needed to continue and maintain the progress made.

We do not have many rules at the project, we do however, ask that residents are considerate of one another and therefore do not come home under the influence of drugs or alcohol, do not invite guests to the property. This is not always popular when residents first move in, but the survey identified these requests where respected, understood and generally made everyone feel safe.

Some residents have settled very well and are reluctant to move on, we have identified we need a more structured, time effective plan to move residents on. We will be implementing new procedures by 2022 that will be structured around the Critical Time Intervention model.

The residents and staff identified the need for a communal area to meet and socialise, eat together etc. We were fortunate to secure funding from Essex Community Foundation, Astro Lighting and The Chocolate Run to build a garden room which will be open this summer.

We are immensely proud of what we have achieved and are grateful to Harlow Council and the Rough Sleeper Initiative funding, corporate supporters and the local community for the opportunity to develop such a project.

The Future

We will strive to develop additional accommodation projects to tackle homelessness and prevent rough sleeping. We have identified certain groups that struggle to secure accommodation and will concentrate our efforts on those most in need. We aim to create sustainable projects that offer long term solutions to the ongoing issues of homelessness.

Appendix 2

Case Study: HTS Group Ltd - Coronavirus Testing Facility 2020/21

On 23rd March 2020, the UK government placed the country into a lockdown due to the outbreak of a Coronavirus pandemic, Covid-19.

By September 2020, the government had set up Coronavirus testing stations providing approximately 250K tests per day across the UK to support the reduction of the spread and infection rate of Covid-19, but there was no facility for this in Harlow.

HTS Group Ltd were approached about working with the NHS in the setting up of a testing facility at its Mead Park depot site in Harlow.

HTS agreed to this as a positive and essential contribution to the health and wellbeing of its staff and to the wider community in helping reduce the spread and infection rate of Covid-19 where people who tested positive would then be required to self-isolate to protect others.

HTS allocated 30% of its parking capacity and provided welfare and wellbeing facilities in its offices starting with 4 days per week and quickly increasing to 7 days a week.

Prior to commencement, risk assessments were carried out by our operations team and signed off in consultation with the trade unions as an (HSE) Covid-19 secure company to ensure that there was minimal risk to the health and wellbeing of our employees.

The testing facility commenced in earnest in September 2020, being run by NHS Staff who were also provided with access to our rest and welfare facilities'

At its peak in Harlow, positive cases of Coronavirus were 1365 per 100K and the town was the third highest local authority in the country. Current figures show that this is down by 80%, at 282 per 100K. The total number of deaths registered to-date in Harlow due to Covid-19 is 565.

The latest data nationally shows over 273 million tests have now been completed, just under 7 million have tested positive and 133K deaths have occurred.



There is currently no available data on the contribution of testing other than the 7 million people who have tested positive who would then be required to self-isolate to protect other from infection.

Although not quantifiable either statistically or financially at the moment (no data available), by using the top level of positive tests (7M) and self-isolation to protect others, this in itself is indicative as a contributing factor to controlling and reducing the spread and infection rate of the virus.

HTS were proud to have been chosen as a suitable site to support the local community in its fight against Covid-19 and the continuation of the testing facility at its Mead Park depot offices over the last year.

SHEC Manager Mrs Dunlop said, “It is fantastic that HTS are involved and assisting the community in its fight against Coronavirus, even in our small part, and we are and will continue and be passionate about the health, welfare and wellbeing of our workforce and the wider community and proud to serve Harlow and our local communities in this way.”

These words are echoed by the Managing Director of HTS, John Philips. Mr Philips said: “I am very proud that HTS is proving to be a strong community leader on this and as always we are continuing to serve Harlow as promised to the residents of Harlow”.

Data sources: gov.uk, ONS and NHS.uk