



changing lives
reducing crime

My home, my year

Nacro Housing Review 2012-2013



Message from the Chair



Housing and support services are a very important part of what we do at Nacro. As a sign of our commitment to your housing services, we have appointed a new Director of Housing, Joanne

Drew. Like all of us, Joanne is keen to develop and improve our housing services and make them available to even more people. See opposite for more on Joanne.

We are also really committed to involving our service users in everything we can. In the coming year we aim to get our Service User Council involved in some of the decisions Nacro takes nationally, on top of the work it already does locally.

We know that providing long-term stable housing and support is vital to helping our service users to go on to lead successful, independent lives. But we also know that times are tough for many of the people we house and support, particularly with the changes to welfare benefits, and we are actively working behind the scenes and with service users to respond to this challenge.

In response to your feedback, we will also be doing even more work to influence the government and other key players on policy issues. Ensuring that your voice is heard is a priority for us.

I look forward to working with you over the next year.

Matthew Litobarski, Chair of Nacro

Two become one

Nacro is merging with Nacro Community Enterprises (NCE) which is Nacro's housing arm. This means that Nacro and NCE will become a single legal organisation – called Nacro.

Joanne Drew, Director of Housing, said:

'This is an excellent move, which will help us to grow and to deliver the best possible outcomes for our service users and for the people who fund our services.'

Whilst everyone at Nacro is excited about these changes, nothing will change in the way that your service is run from day to day – it's just that the paperwork will be different.

Joanne Drew

Joanne Drew joined Nacro in September 2013 as its new Director of Housing.

Joanne has worked in the housing field for a long time, has a lot of experience, and has held jobs with local authorities, housing associations and other charities.

Joanne is really keen to hear what service users across the country have to say and wants you to play an important part in helping to develop Nacro's services in the future.

So if you would like to talk to Joanne, get in touch at joanne.drew@nacro.org.uk.



Some of Nacro's housing achievements in 2012-13



We housed **1,144** people with an average length of stay lasting 11 months.



We also supported a further **1,210** individuals in their own homes.



All our housing met the Decent Homes Standard.



We provided housing in: Essex, London, West Berkshire, Lincolnshire, Nottingham, Derbyshire, Birmingham, Manchester, Merseyside and Wales, as well as floating support services in Staffordshire and Blackpool.



67% of you moved on successfully.



We collected **97%** of all the rent owed to Nacro.



95% of repairs to your home were completed within the time promised.



We provided **1,030** bed spaces in properties managed or owned by Nacro housing.

What we plan to do next

Nacro services are already dedicated to providing value for money (see page 6 for more on this). On top of this, we will also:

- improve the standards of our properties
- improve the process we use to provide you with support so we can give you the best possible outcome from your time with us
- install Wi-Fi in a number of Nacro's own properties
- introduce opportunities for service users to become peer mentors so they can use their own experiences to help others.

Who uses Nacro's services?



of you came from black and minority ethnic communities.



of you had a disability.



of you were ex-offenders.



Listening to you

Your say on your service

At Nacro we want to hear what you think of the services we provide. So we have a national Service User Council made up of service user representatives from each housing area in the country.

This year our Service User Council got together with our trustees and senior managers in a number of workshops to look at how we do things now and how we could do things differently in the future.

Some of the subjects covered were house rules, the use of shared housing, Nacro's policy on drugs or alcohol, minimum standards for furniture and equipment and Nacro's approach to involving service users in its work.

The feedback from these sessions helped us when we reviewed our policies and practices. One example of where we are doing things differently as a result of what you told us is the new minimum standard we have introduced for furniture and equipment.

Your thoughts on your property

We recently asked service users to tell us what they thought about the property they lived in.

We gathered all that information together and then got our housing management team together for a training day to tell them all about what you had said.

They found the information really useful and reinforced their promise to listen to what our service users say and to work together – with other staff and service users – to make sure all Nacro's properties are of a really good standard.

To get things right and make sure we bring in the changes that you asked for, our team managers will now work with service users to develop an action plan of things that need to be done over the next year.

We also want to hold some training for service users so that they have the skills to carry out property inspections themselves (more details to follow on this) – another example of us working together to achieve quality standards.

Our housing in action

What happens to people who have nowhere to go and who just need a second chance and some support to make a fresh start in their lives?

It's often these people – the very people who need help the most – who end up homeless because they are unable to find somewhere to live because of things that have happened in their past.

Nacro decided it needed to do something to change this. So we started working with private landlords and local authorities to find suitable properties which we could then let to people who were also in need of a bit of support in the short term.

Nacro's scheme is called the Housing Resettlement Service. The scheme has been so successful that in one area Nacro took on 10 new properties and let them all in the space of one day.

By initially offering support, Nacro can ensure that the tenants not only get a property, but that they are able to keep it, providing a stable home for them and in some cases their family. Equally, landlords feel able to let their properties with the confidence that they will be managed and looked after properly.

People using the service have told us that they are really pleased with the standard of their property and to have the opportunity to live in good quality accommodation.

All our partner agencies are also delighted that there is a new option on offer for people who would otherwise have been left homeless and unsupported.

If you'd like to know more about our Housing Resettlement Service and where we are based, please contact your local area office.

**'The place is great,
it feels like the
home I never had.'**

Value for money

As we all know, these days it's more important than ever to make sure we all get the most we possibly can for our money. This applies to Nacro too. Our funders are having to cut back their resources which means that the pot of money they are able to give organisations like Nacro is smaller than it used to be. It also means they expect us to achieve more using less money.

Making sure that all our services provide value for money is at the centre of everything we do at Nacro. Whether we are buying something or providing a service, we always make sure we've got the maximum possible benefit from the money we've spent.

But of course, it's not just about money. We also look very closely at the quality of the service we provide you with and how we provide it in order to work out if it's good value.

So what have we been doing recently to achieve value for money?

- 1** We are developing new much needed services, not only in housing but also in education and substance recovery so that we can provide the maximum possible benefits to our service users and their neighbourhoods. Nacro aims to grow by 40% over the next three years.
- 2** The way that we manage the properties you live in is really important. We are exploring the best ways to make sure any maintenance or repairs you need done to your property are carried out in the most effective way.
- 3** We have reduced the size of our management structure to lower our costs. We are also training more volunteers and mentors to help improve the way we deliver our services.

But that's not all. We are constantly looking at all our areas of work, our staff and the systems we use to communicate with each other, our funders and you to see if there's anything else we can do to provide a better, more effective service.

Get involved

We are always keen to hear your views on whether our services give you the quality you expect.

So if you have any ideas or would like to play your part in helping Nacro to achieve value for money, please attend your local service user meetings or contact your support worker to ensure your ideas are shared with us.

Together, we can achieve the '3 Es' that will help Nacro to deliver value for money: economy, efficiency and effectiveness.