

ASSIST SHEFFIELD STRATEGY 2021-2024: November 2020

FOREWORD

This Strategy marks the extraordinary achievements of volunteers, employees and trustees in developing ASSIST to this point. It provides an opportunity to refocus priorities to better meet the needs of clients over the next 3 years.

Contributors to the first iteration of this Strategy are listed in Appendix 3. Development of the Strategy has been delayed by several key members of the group either leaving ASSIST or being unable to contribute. Simultaneously, the national crisis related to Coronavirus has unavoidably distorted our original strategic aims. This has altered key parts of the strategy and left us playing 'catch up' in a rapidly changing environment. Three key areas have been most affected: firstly, the likely permanent closure of the night shelter, for infection control reasons, requires a rethink of emergency accommodation. Secondly, it has not been possible to move people on from ASSIST services at the usual milestones during the Coronavirus restrictions. Thirdly, the publication of the Home Truths report <https://www.acevo.org.uk/reports/home-truths/> which provides evidence that structural racism exists throughout the UK voluntary sector, together with the rise of the 'Black Lives Matter' movement, has led us in 2020 (in common with many other organisations within and without the Voluntary Sector), to look at ourselves and our interrelationships with clients in the context of equity, diversity and inclusion. These latter issues have been incorporated into a fifth strategic objective, not included in earlier drafts of the strategy, based mainly on feedback from staff.

In the context of this rapidly changing external environment, the initial version of the Strategy was consulted upon internally and externally over July and August 2020. The many constructive comments received from staff and volunteers have been incorporated into this Strategy.

At the start of March 2020 the organisation had in excess of 300 volunteers organised into 15 teams. An area of particular debate within the organisation has concerned the 3 Support and Advocacy day teams, involving 35 of the 300 volunteers. A Support and Advocacy Review has thus run alongside the development of this Strategy (please follow this **link** for further information on the Support and Advocacy Review). Remodelling and relaunching the Support and Advocacy Service is an important part of our Strategy, but not the overriding feature. The recommendations of Support and Advocacy Review report include:

- renaming the service as the "Support Service"
- relaunching this new 'client led' Support Service (when coronavirus restrictions allow) to enable safe face-to-face contact between clients and volunteers
- adopting a casework model with the same volunteers supporting individual clients throughout their time with ASSIST, using standardised documentation

- developing a consistent Support Service that is not divided into Day Teams, such that clients receive the same service whenever they attend.

BACKGROUND

ASSIST Sheffield was established as a registered charity in 2003 to support destitute refused asylum seekers who had no recourse to public funds; people amongst the most vulnerable in the community of Sheffield. Through the significant support of national and local funders, the generosity of individual donors, and the contribution of a large number of highly committed volunteers, the charity has been able to support a great many people who would otherwise have been in extreme hardship. ASSIST provides emergency as well as longer term accommodation, welfare payments and practical support, and works with other agencies to seek positive outcomes for service users. Raising awareness of the lack of rights of refused asylum seekers remains a key objective and ASSIST continues to challenge injustice at individual and policy levels.

At its inception, the original acronym for ASSIST was: 'Asylum Seeker Support Initiative Short Term' because it was envisaged at the time that ASSIST would exist for a short time only. It was expected that government policy would change in relation to enforced destitution of individuals who had not succeeded in their applications for asylum. However, there has been no change in policy; rather the environment for all asylum seekers has become more hostile over time. It is therefore critical that ASSIST continues its work to support people in this situation.

It is important that ASSIST looks to the future and sets clear priorities for the next three years, taking into account changes in the context in which it operates, and the views of our clients, volunteers and stakeholders. The experience of service users is central to its Strategy. The Client Voices Report (**see Appendix 1 for a summary**) provides rich and valuable information which has been used to inform this document.

The values of the organisation are described below. Of these, the empowerment of clients is perhaps the most important, given that empowerment is extremely difficult in a political climate designed to disempower asylum seekers.

To ensure the services provided by ASSIST are well coordinated and provide effective and focused support we plan to implement a three-stage model for our services that gives clarity and structure to clients. We will endeavour to ensure that our organisational core values underpin the way we work across all our services with clients and other stakeholders.

OUR PURPOSE, VISION, AND MISSION

ASSIST Sheffield is a charity overseen by the Charities Commission. It was established as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in 2013 and the stated objects (i.e. purpose), were described as follows:

- a) the relief and support of the inhabitants of the City of Sheffield and its environs ('the Area of Benefit') who are refugees or who are or who have been asylum seekers (including those people who are at the end of the asylum process or have had their applications for asylum refused) and who are in conditions of need, hardship, distress or social isolation
- b) the advancement of education of the public, other statutory and voluntary organisations in order to assist the inclusion of such inhabitants into the wider community.

The Charity's vision and mission were set out in the ASSIST Strategy of 2015 and remain as follows:

OUR VISION AND MISSION

Our vision is for all asylum seekers in Sheffield to live life with dignity and hope for the future.

Our mission is to enable asylum seekers with no recourse to public funds to build resilience against the effects of destitution and to make informed decisions about their future. We challenge the policy of destitution.

CORE VALUES

Throughout the history of ASSIST the way in which we work and deliver our services has been governed by our values. All those who support the charity are involved because they have a strong belief in the purpose and aims of the organisation and this is a driving force which unites everyone. By its actions, ASSIST is an anti-racist organisation.

Box 1 is an explicit articulation of the core values underpinning the way we work. They will henceforth be included in volunteer induction and reflected in all of our policies.

Box 1

OUR CORE VALUES

R**espect:** We respect and value the intrinsic dignity and worth of all individuals and celebrate diversity. We are committed to equality and creating a culture of inclusion and belonging.

E**mpowerment:** We recognise that our clients are resilient* individuals who have agency and the right to personal autonomy. ASSIST will commit to include clients in decision making wherever possible. We will support clients to take ownership of their lives and thrive.

S**ocial Justice:** Our work and campaigns are based on a deeply held belief in challenging social injustice, specifically the aspects of the asylum system that are inhumane. Where appropriate, ASSIST will participate in a wider movement to bring about social change, challenging racism and oppression.

P**artnership:** We seek diverse perspectives and strive to include the breadth of ideas, experience and skills of all clients, staff and volunteers. Where appropriate, we will collaborate and form strategic partnerships with other voluntary and statutory agencies.

E**mpathy:** We recognise the humanity in every person we interact with and treat people with compassion and kindness.

C**ompetency:** Informed by continuous learning and self-reflection, we aim for excellence and integrity in all our activities.

T**ransparency:** We are dedicated to and encourage transparency and openness in every aspect of our work.

*Resilience - ASSIST recognises that our clients have experienced many challenges in their lives, including in their country of origin, during their journey to the UK and once they have arrived here. We do not regard our clients as victims. We regard them as unique individuals and survivors with tenacity; and the ability to heal from their experiences, build positive social relationships, find purpose and thrive in their lives, with encouragement and support from ASSIST as appropriate for each individual.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

In considering future priorities, it is important to take stock of the progress made over recent years. The Strategy Group have also considered our current strengths and weaknesses, taking into account key issues identified in the Client Voices Report (**see Appendix 1**).

Progress and developments since 2015

- Expansion of accommodation for clients: we now have access to 35 rooms available in 9 ASSIST properties. In addition, rooms are available with Open Hands and volunteer hosts
- Increased funding to support to better achieve our aims
- We have listened to the views of service users and worked with clients to produce the Client Voices Report
- Teams and services have been reconfigured with the aim of providing a 'one stop shop'
- Our interpreter team has been developed offering support in a wide range of languages
- Following a review of organisational structure and decision making in 2017, leadership and management arrangements have been strengthened. Further information on developing decision-making structures is in **Appendix 4**. Examples include: the establishment of a well-functioning Leadership Team, comprising 3 senior employees and 2 volunteers and improvements to office accommodation (we now have an additional room at Victoria Hall and improved Wi-Fi and IT links)
- We have secured a stronger, more sustainable, financial base
- Development and strengthening of the staff team.
- Much stronger partnership links in particular with South Yorkshire Refugee Law & Justice, Red Cross and City of Sanctuary Sheffield

What we do: our offer

Our core values - our staff and volunteers share a set of core values uniting all of us in the work we do to support clients.

Our reputation - ASSIST has an excellent reputation within the City and has a high level of support from residents of Sheffield and with partners and funding bodies.

Our services - service users have valued the support provided by ASSIST, particularly access to safe accommodation. ASSIST has many effective services such as the Interpreting service, the Helpdesk, the Accompanying team, and Support and Advocacy Teams. We are unique in that we offer welfare payments to clients, while acknowledging that the small sum provided barely mitigates the severe problems of destitution.

Our volunteers – our unique strength is our highly committed and passionate volunteers. Over 300 volunteers now contribute at ASSIST, organised in to 15 separate teams, with a broad range of skills and expertise.

Areas for Improvement

Model of Support - we have not previously used a specific model to guide all our work with clients and provide an overarching framework for the support provided by our volunteers, so at times support has been provided in an inconsistent and ad-hoc manner. We have not always been clear in managing clients' expectations about the time limits of support.

Consistency in the Support Service - whilst the service was re-organised three years ago, the implementation lacked rigour and insufficient training was provided to enough volunteers at set-up. This led to inconsistent approaches between teams. The Client Voices Report (**see Appendix 1**) outlined a number of issues raised by service users about their appointments that echo these concerns. In addition, some volunteers have expressed the view that they have not always felt adequately trained or supported to undertake this difficult work. The recent Support and Advocacy Review provides a framework for revising and developing this part of the service.

Clarity of roles - ASSIST has grown rapidly over recent years, with increased numbers of volunteers and extra staff appointed. Volunteers are accountable to the Leadership Team and the staff team more widely. However, since the re-organisation, ASSIST has not fully reviewed how this works in practice at the interface of staff and volunteers. Volunteers often have relevant experiences and qualities that are not fully utilised in the team they join, and volunteers are sometimes unaware of developments elsewhere in the organisation. Greater awareness of ASSIST wide issues will enhance volunteers' identity with the organisation as a whole.

Diversity of volunteers - ASSIST recognises the value and positive contribution of our committed volunteers, often made over many years. However, there is scope for the volunteer group to be more diverse, and to include more people with lived experience of the asylum system.

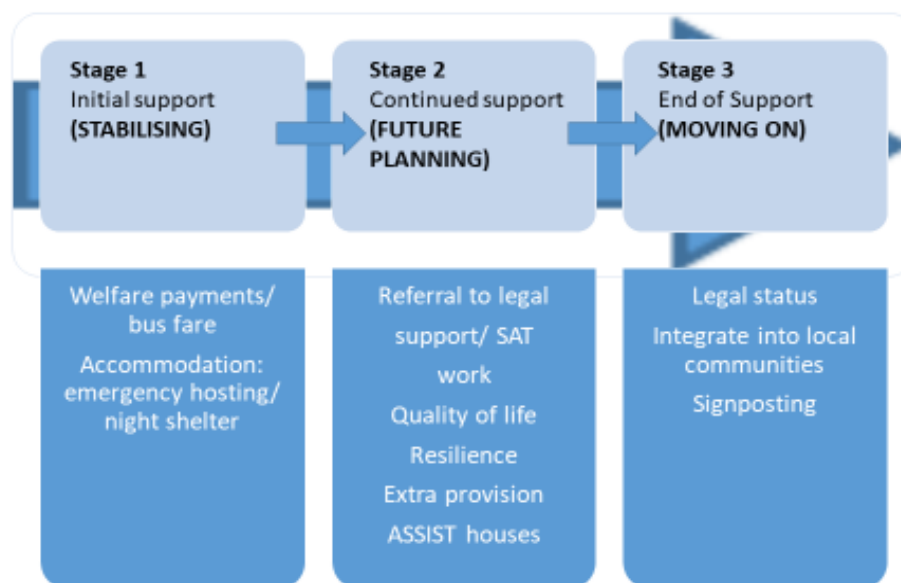
Reliance on grants and individual donors - a more diverse range of funding streams is needed to ensure the sustainability of funding in the future. ASSIST has hitherto been successful in securing funding, largely through the commitment, enthusiasm and expertise of its Grants Team and the Events Fundraising and Awareness (EFA) Team, but nothing can be taken for granted in a rapidly changing world.

A coordinated approach to campaigning – ASSIST has traditionally not taken a lead in campaigns, focussing instead on the core purpose of supporting refused asylum seekers. If this approach is to continue we need closer collaboration and coordination with other campaigning bodies, locally and nationally, so that the impact of our work can be more widely disseminated.

OUR PRIORITIES

Resources must be used to maximum benefit to meet the needs of service users. We therefore will adopt a 3 stage model of support as the core to development and improvement of services. The theory of change underpinning this model is detailed in **Appendix 2**. The 3 stages of the model are described in **Figure 1**. N.B. SAT in the diagram below refers to Support and Advocacy Team

Figure 1. Three stages of support provided by ASSIST



Strategic Objective 1: Further embed a 3-stage model

Service users are empowered to a find pathway out of destitution in a way that respects their agency and skills, is grounded in ASSIST values and is sensitive to individual needs at different stages of their journey

Why is this a priority?

Feedback from volunteers and team leaders in Day Teams is that a variant of a 3 stage model has been pursued for some time, but not applied consistently to all clients. Underpinning this model is a strengths based approach recognising that the vast majority of people served by ASSIST have the ability and motivation to find their own way out of destitution once the most pernicious effects of the hostile environment have been mitigated.

Stage 1 – Stabilising: initially the focus of support should be to ensure that a client’s situation is stabilised – that they have somewhere to live and money for food.

Stage 2 – Future Planning: once the client is in a more stable situation and their basic needs are met, ASSIST support should re-focus on supporting the client to plan for the future. This may involve: referral for assessment of their legal position, building their resilience, establishing social networks and improving language skills.

Stage 3 –Moving on: the final stage in the support model focuses on helping the client move towards independence where possible, with provision of signposting and other support.

The consistent application of this model will require some change for the whole organisation. For example, providing early legal assessment for clients has been recognised as a key area of support. We therefore need to consider whether to allocate more resources to support this area of activity, and to continue our partnership working with South Yorkshire Refugee Law and Justice (SYRLJ) via joint funding bids.

What are we going to do?

- Improve and develop our Support Services based on the recommendations of the Support and Advocacy Review
- Develop and improve training to Volunteer Teams. This will include training about the three-stage model and ASSIST values. Attendance at specified training will be a pre-requisite to volunteering depending on the volunteer role.
- Enable ASSIST to measure and record on CIVI each client’s trajectory through the 3 stages
- Analyse and respond to the factors that facilitate smooth transitions.

Who will lead/ be responsible?

Client Support Managers and Leadership Team

What will be the outcome of this change?

- Clients, staff and volunteers will know at any time where clients are placed in the 3 stages.
- Clients will have the appropriate support depending on their individual circumstances.

**Strategic Objective 2: Housing that provides stability to clients
People seeking sanctuary who are experiencing destitution are being provided with the stability they require to address the root causes of their situation**

Why is this a priority?

Many clients, in the context of Home Office enforced destitution, are at risk of street homelessness. The Client Voices report (see **Appendix 1**) suggests that provision of accommodation is the service most valued by our clients, and the area where ASSIST makes the most immediate impact on their lives.

Stability of long-term accommodation enables clients to fully engage in the legal process or otherwise take steps to move on with their lives. In most circumstances, clients prefer long term accommodation in a shared house to hosted accommodation. Clients report that the duration of accommodation provided (12 months as the standard with the option of an extension for up to six months) is too short. It does not always provide them with sufficient time to gather evidence and submit a fresh claim. This is exacerbated by long waiting times for legal support. A top priority for the organisation is therefore the provision of a range of accommodation for a duration that enables stability during stage 2 and before people move on to other forms of

accommodation support.

The Coronavirus pandemic and national crisis has highlighted that a night shelter model may no longer be sustainable from a safety perspective for clients and volunteers. Acknowledging the huge commitment made over many years by staff, volunteers and volunteer team leaders to make the night shelter a success, the night shelter may never re-open due to externally dictated factors, and gives the opportunity to develop alternatives.

What are we going to do?

- Expand the availability of hosted accommodation (especially emergency hosting) as an alternative to staying in the night shelter
- Increase the number of available bed-spaces in shared houses
- Explore alternatives to the current night shelter for the provision of emergency accommodation, particularly in light of COVID 19
- Forge partnerships with other housing providers, both locally and nationally, to help meet the needs of our client group; and raise awareness of the shortfall in the context of a national crisis in social housing provision
- Explore the possibility of offering accommodation to refugees with access to housing benefit, i.e. develop new income streams in order to then accommodate more ASSIST clients. This would be on the premise that any such accommodation would not reduce ASSIST's existing accommodation offer to destitute people.

Who will lead/ be responsible?

- Accommodation Manager leading the Accommodation Group.

What will be the outcome of this change?

- A stepwise increase in shared house accommodation available for clients
- A new funding stream arising from renting to refugees.

Strategic Objective 3: Partnership

ASSIST is working in partnership with other agencies to develop a community based response to destitution of people seeking sanctuary in our area

Why is this a priority?

ASSIST helps clients at a particular low point in their asylum journey, but as a small charity cannot hope to address all the complex needs of clients over time, if it operates in isolation. Increasingly, ASSIST volunteers and staff need to work with colleagues from partner organisations to deliver the most effective support to service users. It is important that ASSIST continues to strengthen its partnership working with other organisations, especially the City of Sanctuary, NACCOM, Solace, the British Red Cross, New Beginnings Project at Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) and South Yorkshire Refugee Law and Justice (SYRLJ). Partnerships can benefit our clients by providing to volunteer and opportunities to engage with meaningful day time and evening activities within their own communities. In turn, organisations can benefit from clients' expertise and lived experience. The 2020 Review of Needs, Services and Facilities for Refugees,

Asylum Seekers and Migrants in Sheffield (RASM)¹ report provides a useful directory of what other agencies are doing in Sheffield, and a framework for improved collaboration.

What are we going to do?

- Work in collaboration and with local partners to improve support provision for service users and increase capacity to apply for joint funding
- Continue developments with local voluntary and statutory organisations, for example the Archer Project, Solace, Sheffield City Council Housing Department, New Beginnings Project at VAS , City of Sanctuary and SYRLJ
- Build relationships with and create referral pathways with smaller migrant rights organisations in the region that have expertise in providing specialist support to our service users
- To share and learn best practice, from both local and national partner organisations, to increase support provision for our service users
- Continue to communicate and share ideas with faith communities (which in many cases form such a valuable part of clients' support systems)
- Ensure our clients are linked to food banks and related support facilities.

Who will lead/ be responsible?

- Leadership Team and staff.

What will be the outcome of this change?

- Stronger networks with local and national stakeholders
- Evidence of our service users benefitting from these stronger networks.

Strategic Objective 4: Campaigning and Awareness Raising
ASSIST will contribute more to raising the profile of asylum destitution both locally and nationally and gives voice to people with lived experience of the asylum system.

Why is this a priority?

ASSIST believes that refused asylum seekers should have the right to be able to live in safety from harm and persecution and have access to the support they require in the UK. We want to promote the human rights and dignity of refused asylum seekers and recognise that the destitution that asylum seekers are subjected to is wrong. As an organisation, we believe we have a responsibility to raise awareness, educate and campaign on relevant issues. We will continue to work in collaboration with people with lived experience to challenge policies and systems that push our clients to the margins of society. To become actively involved in campaigning will require strengthening and additional resourcing of existing structures.

¹ A copy of the report can be obtained from: rasmreview@gmail.com

What are we going to do?

- Raise awareness of the impact that destitution has on refused asylum seekers through engaging with organisations locally in Sheffield such as City of Sanctuary and SYMAAG) and feeding into national anti-destitution networks
- Develop an awareness raising strategy to communicate more effectively with faith and non-faith communities
- Develop a research strategy to feed into campaigns
- Develop our links with local councils in South Yorkshire to advocate for better access to local services for people with no recourse to public funds
- Utilise social media to communicate and further the aims of ASSIST and ensure website is updated regularly
- Involve clients wherever possible in campaign and awareness work

Who will lead/ be responsible?

Strategic Communications and Research subcommittee, Leadership Team, Community and Events Officer, EFA team.

What will be the outcome of this change?

- Greater awareness of ASSIST and the issues of asylum destitution within Sheffield communities
- ASSIST being recognised as a key organisation tackling asylum destitution locally and regionally
- Increased donations and more money raised from fundraising

Strategic Objective 5: increased diversity, equity and inclusion.

ASSIST will increase diversity among volunteers, trustees, and the staff team.

Everyone at ASSIST will be made aware of and act upon issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. ASSIST will make it more possible for people with lived experience of the asylum journey to participate within the organisation.

Why is this a priority?

Volunteers have been a huge asset at ASSIST since its inception, and in 2020 the profile of the typical volunteer as an individual is white, middle class, female, and retired. This is consistent with the profile of volunteers in all areas of the voluntary sector nationally (<https://data.ncvo/volunteering/demographics>). ASSIST aims to move to a position where volunteers, staff, and trustees are more representative of our client community, without losing the passion, commitment, and expertise of existing volunteers.

For many years, trustees have aspired to recruit clients as volunteers in areas where they can usefully employ their talents, and the Interpreting Team is a successful example of this. In other areas it has proved difficult to recruit and retain volunteers and staff members with lived experience of the asylum process, and it is a priority to address this.

In 2020, the Home Truths report <https://www.acevo.org.uk/reports/home-truths/> was published jointly by Voice for Change England and the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations. It has provided evidence of structural racism within the voluntary sector and developed recommendations for improving diversity, equity and inclusion within the sector, which is of relevance to ASSIST. Trustees have accepted the principle of adopting the recommendations of the Home Truths report, which will bring ASSIST into line with other charities. ASSIST needs to demonstrate a long term commitment to learning and reflection on these issues.

What are we going to do?

- Adopt the recommendations of the Home Truths report (**see Appendix 5**) starting with
 - Commission an ASSIST wide (Staff, Trustees and Volunteers) programme of training, learning and reflection to develop a shared understanding of racism as “ordinary, systemic and institutional”
 - Make a policy commitment to consult and involve clients in any decisions about the design of ASSIST services
 - Create and develop partnerships with BAMER(Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee)-led organisations and communities
- Work with City of Sanctuary, New Beginnings Project at VAS and other partner organisations to recruit volunteers with lived experience of the asylum system.

Who will lead/ be responsible?

- Leadership Team (with input from Anti Oppression Working Group), Human Resources subcommittee, Volunteer Coordinator.

What will be the outcome of this change?

- Increased awareness throughout the organisation of the issues raised by the Home Truths report
- Improved feedback from asylum-seeking communities about ASSIST’s work
- Increased recruitment and influence of volunteers and trustees from BAMER communities
- Increased involvement of BAMER communities in events, fundraising and communications
- More client centred design and delivery of services.

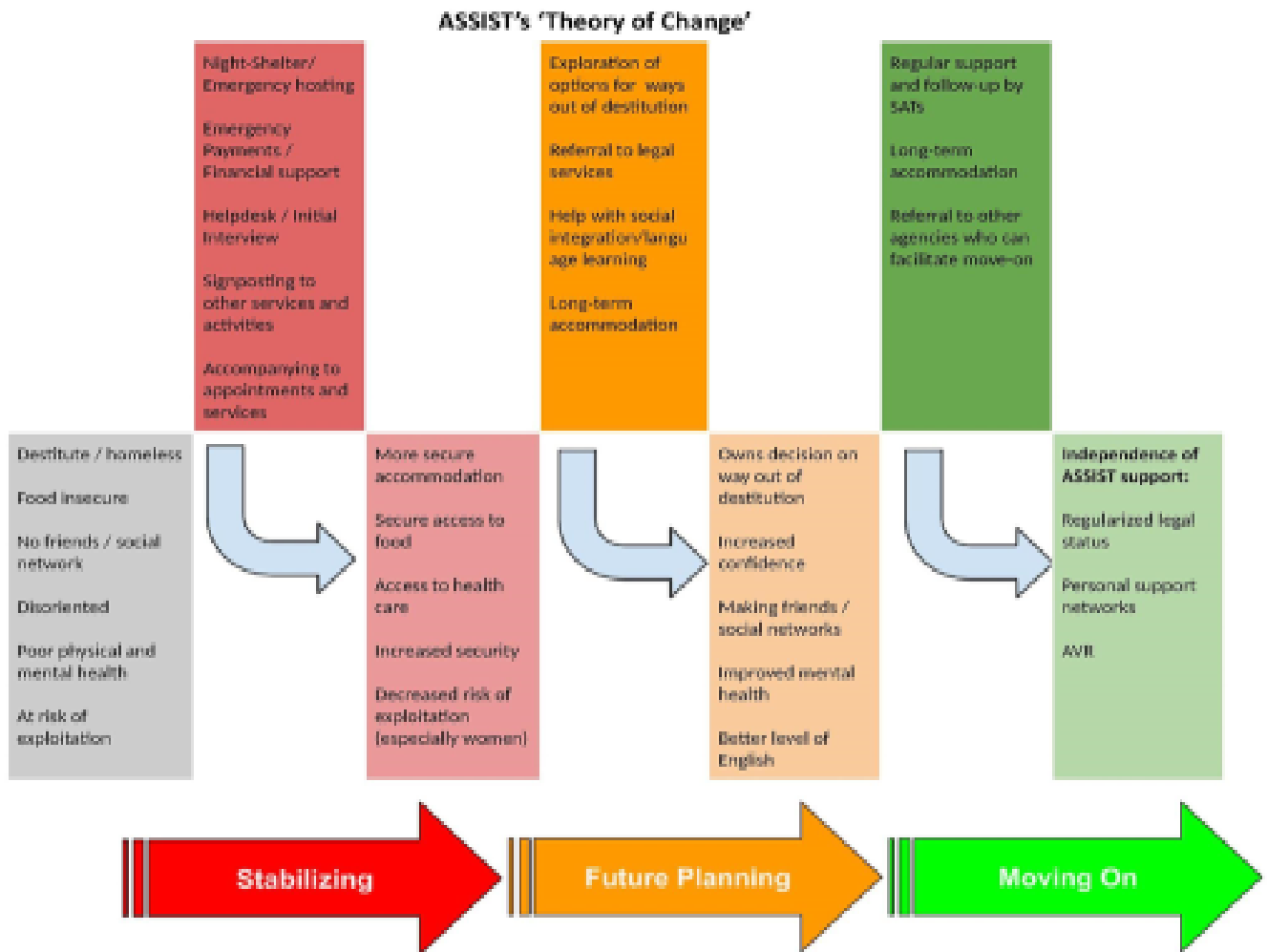
Appendix 1

CLIENT VOICES REPORT– MAIN FINDINGS

The Client Voices report was not conceived or developed as a piece of academic research, but gives a clear message from clients about aspects of their contact with ASSIST.

1. Welfare payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welfare payments did not appear to have been a major issue for clients, although bus passes were really appreciated by those who received them. - It was noted that the level of support was only enough to buy basic food, with no funding for essential hygiene requirements or underwear.
2. Collection of payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A suggestion that the frequency of payments could be reduced to make it easier for clients. Some would like more flexibility.
3. Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accommodation is highly valued - The issue of security of belongings in rooms was raised as rooms are ununlockable. (Could lockable cupboard be provided?) - There were questions raised about the fairness and transparency of allocation of rooms and the management of the waiting list management.
4. Time in accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A number of clients (6 of 19) expressed the view that one year was not long enough, as legal proceedings often took longer than one year.
5. Night Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Also, highly valued - Request for night shelter to open earlier and close later - Request for improved washing/showering facilities - Request for clothes washing facilities
6. Advocacy appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be upsetting, traumatising - Too many questions, 'makes me depressed' - Would prefer practical help - Advocacy training for Volunteers - A wish to choose time of appointment
7. Length of time of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The majority thought that support should be provided beyond 3 years - The needs of vulnerable and elderly clients should be considered in particular
8. City of Sanctuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The suggestion was made that the City of Sanctuary should be open in the evenings.

Appendix 2



Appendix 3

Contributors to this Strategy were:

Isabel Hemmings (Chair)	Trustee
Ceri Gallivan	Volunteer Help Desk
Dave Green	Volunteer Panel
Ishah Jawaid	Client Support Manager
Jochen Kortlander	Accommodation Manager
Ethel Maqeda	Trustee
Laura Mizzi	Trustee
Jerry Seymour	Trustee

We thank volunteers and staff for the many detailed and helpful comments which have been utilised to develop and finalise this Strategy.

Appendix 4

DECISION MAKING AT ASSIST

In common with other Charities, the 12 Trustees at ASSIST have a statutory responsibility for overseeing financial viability, setting strategy, and providing oversight and direction for ASSIST. Trustees get things done by working with senior employees in 3 Subgroups – Human Resources, Finance, and Strategic Research and Communications.

The Leadership Team comprises 3 senior employees and 2 volunteers, and is responsible for line managing the wider staff team and implementing strategy. The LT are broadly concerned with operational management, Trustees with governance; although there is inevitably some overlap.

The LT and Trustees jointly develop and update Policies and Procedures that are approved by the Trustee body. The LT has terms of reference that specify that they have primary responsibility for implementing Policies and Procedures, including those pertaining to ASSIST's volunteers.

The above decision making structure has been implemented following recommendations by external management consultants 2016/7.

Trustees are considering how to ensure that the client voice and the volunteer voice are heard throughout the decision-making process.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS STRATEGY

Once agreed by stakeholders, this strategy will be implemented by the Leadership Team over the next 3 years, via quarterly updates to Trustees.

Appendix 5: RECOMMENDATIONS OF ‘HOME TRUTHS’ REPORT - UNDOING RACISM AND DELIVERING REAL DIVERSITY IN THE CHARITY SECTOR

Progress in the charity sector requires strategies for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). The recommendations below attempt, in different ways, to instigate cultural change in how charities engage with BAME people – from addressing racism to changing everyday practice. The emphasis is not only on diversifying the workforce, i.e. on who does the work. Transformation in this area will be reflected in everything charities do: from how they work to what they do in wider society to target and enhance outcomes for BAME people.

Recommendations for the sector collectively (including charities, infrastructure bodies, funders and regulators)

1. Redefine racism as ordinary, systemic and institutional
2. Conduct an annual sector-wide ‘BAME Barometer’ survey to capture BAME experience in charities
3. Develop independent or third-party mechanisms for reporting and addressing racism in charities
4. Develop a plan on the use of regulation to accelerate DEI progress.

Recommendations for organisational policy

1. Integrate explicit race equity goals into charitable work
2. Report publicly on internal DEI targets
3. Publish ethnicity pay gap data
4. Change recruitment criteria, e.g. value attributes differently, including lived experience and alignment with institutional vision
5. Invest in supporting and safeguarding BAME charity people, including proper complaints procedures
6. Work with and pay BAME DEI specialists to improve practice.

Recommendations for CEOs and senior leaders

1. Learn more about racism and current anti-racist thinking
2. Take responsibility for learning how racism can manifest in your organisation
3. CEOs (with board chairs) should lead on and be held responsible and accountable for progress on DEI targets

Recommendations for funders

1. Invest in a DEI Transformation Fund geared to BAME-led initiatives
2. Become more interventionist in supporting charity sector DEI culture and practice, including making changes to application criteria to prioritise racial justice work