

Scoping workshop guidanceIntroduction

Commitment to Collaborate

Introduction: Delivering an effective scoping workshop

Welcome to the guide for your scoping workshop. This is a useful step in preparing your approach towards achieving the C2C (Commitment to Collaborate) framework as set by the Homelessness Taskforce of the West Midlands Combined Authority. Our collective aim is to identify and address critical issues related to the prevention and relief of homelessness within the West Midlands.

Workshop context

The region faces complex challenges, and homelessness remains a pressing concern. As you embark on this journey, you clearly recognise the need for organisations and partnerships to adopt a targeted, strategic, and collaborative focus. Your scoping workshop will aim to identify key areas where your efforts can make a tangible impact.

Three useful workshop exercises

Issue identification and impact assessment:

In your first exercise, you'll collaboratively identify the issues affecting homelessness prevention and relief. Participants will assess each issue you identify based on its impact and the effort required to address it. This initial ranking will guide your subsequent steps.

Stakeholder influence assessment:

The second exercise considers stakeholder dynamics. You'll evaluate the level of control and influence that the stakeholders involved — whether internal or external to your organisation — have over each issue.

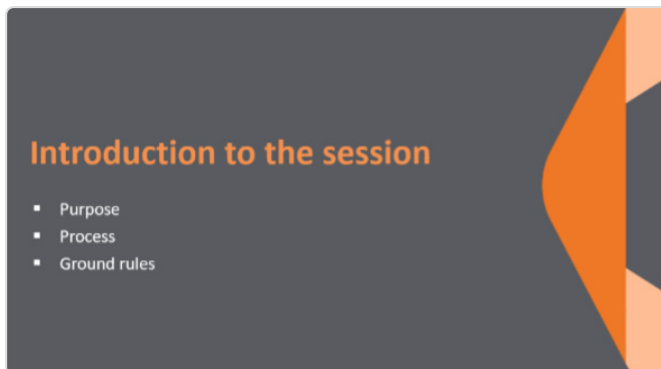
Importance and urgency evaluation:

Your final exercise centres on urgency and importance. Participants will weigh the importance and urgency of each issue to arrive at the priorities to focus on. Urgent and important matters may require immediate attention, while others can be phased in over time.

Iterative refinement

At each stage, you'll refine your focus by eliminating less critical issues. This iterative process ensures that your subsequent C2C workshop is focused to maximise your impact. Thank you for your commitment to creating positive change. Let's work together to transform your communities and enhance the lives of those affected by homelessness. The success of your C2C initiative lies in your thoughtful decision-making throughout the process.

Slide 1 and 2 – Introduction to the session



Aims of the day

Welcome everyone to the scoping workshop. Emphasise the workshop is an important event to shape your approach in achieving the C2C (Commitment to Collaborate) standards set by Homelessness Taskforce of the West Midlands Combined Authority.

This part of the event is an opportunity for a senior leader and project sponsor to emphasise the importance of this work to the organisation. They could then hand over to a facilitator to lead the participants through the process and ground rules. Highlight your objectives for the day as follows:

Identify an area of focus for your C2C work:

You'll explore critical aspects related to homelessness prevention and relief. Your goal is to pinpoint specific areas where your efforts can make the most meaningful impact.

Consider key issues:

You'll explore the challenges faced by your community in the prevention and relief of homelessness. By understanding these issues, you'll pave the way for effective solutions.

Collaboration choices:

You'll deliberate whether to emphasise external collaboration with stakeholders or internal collaboration between functions before engaging external partners. Your focus will be on areas where those involved have some level of control or influence.

Empowering action:

Rather than dwelling solely on problems, you'll emphasise actionable steps. Your approach centres on what each of us can contribute to drive positive change.

Next steps:

Following this session, you'll convene again with relevant stakeholders for a deeper dive into the chosen areas of focus. In the subsequent workshop, you'll:

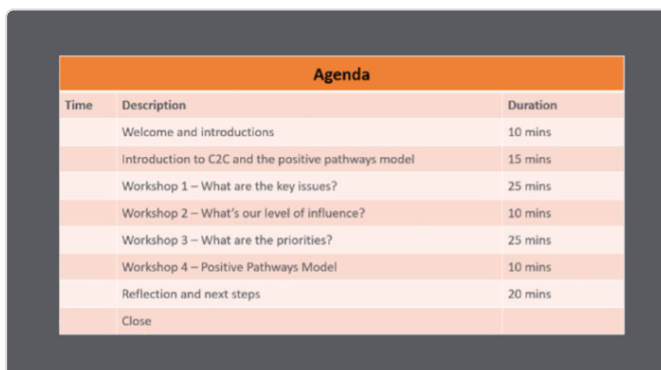
- Unpack the key issues from the scoping session, exploring the specific challenges
- Craft a small number of high-level pledges that align with your broad strategic objectives
- Develop an action plan of actionable steps for each pledge

Suggested ground rules

Before beginning, establish a respectful and inclusive environment by establishing some simple ground rules. The following ground rules are suggestions, but you can substitute your own:

- Confidentiality: To promote free discussions, what's shared here stays here
- Equal consideration: All ideas are valued equally
- Voluntary participation: Engage at your own comfort level
- Respectful dialogue: Though you may disagree, every viewpoint matters

Slide 3 - Agenda



Agenda		
Time	Description	Duration
	Welcome and introductions	10 mins
	Introduction to C2C and the positive pathways model	15 mins
	Workshop 1 – What are the key issues?	25 mins
	Workshop 2 – What's our level of influence?	10 mins
	Workshop 3 – What are the priorities?	25 mins
	Workshop 4 – Positive Pathways Model	10 mins
	Reflection and next steps	20 mins
	Close	

Welcome and introductions

It's worthwhile asking a senior leader and sponsor of the project to deliver some opening remarks to set the context, tone, and objectives of the workshop.

Depending on the size of the session and participants, this is also an opportunity for introduction of any external facilitator and participants. Anticipate around 10 minutes but tailor for your specific context.

Introduction to C2C and the Positive Pathways Model

Delivery of a brief overview of the Commitment to Collaborate (C2C) as set by the Homelessness Taskforce of the West Midlands Combined Authority. Followed by an introduction to the Positive Pathways Model and its relevance to addressing homelessness. This is a brief overview that should last up to 15 minutes.

Workshop 1 – What are the key issues?

The first session engages participants in identifying key issues impacting homelessness prevention and relief. Participants will rate each issue based on its impact and the effort required for resolution. The exercise should last around 25 minutes.

Workshop 2 – What's our level of influence?

The second session assesses the level of control and influence stakeholders have over each identified issue. The exercise should last around 10 minutes.

Workshop 3 – What are the priorities?

The third session evaluates the importance and urgency of addressing each issue to determine priorities. This exercise should last about 25 minutes.

Workshop 4 – Positive Pathways Model

The final 10 minute workshop session translates the identified priorities into the Positive Pathways Model. This will help to focus the subsequent C2C workshop onto a specific part of the pathway to maximise impact.

Reflection and next steps

The final session reflects on the outcomes of the workshops and key insights gained. Participants will decide which priorities to take forward for consideration against the C2C framework at a future workshop. This includes who should be involved. Discuss next steps and how the outcomes will inform the C2C initiative. This should take around 20 minutes.

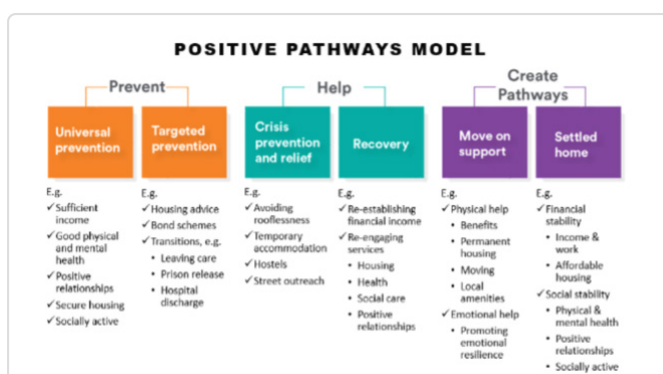
Close

Summary of key takeaways from the workshop. Remind participants of any follow-up actions and next meeting dates. Officially close the workshop.

Breaks

Incorporate breaks into the session as required. It's important to have refreshments available and to provide lunch to encourage participation if necessary. Encourage participants to get refreshments and take a comfort break as an when they feel the need. This will make best use of the time available.

Slides 4 and 5 – Introduction to the Positive Pathways Model



Purpose of the Positive Pathways Model

The purpose of the model is to provide a framework to tackle homelessness head-on, armed not just with relevant theories, but with practical tools that help to shape our language and mutual understanding. The Positive Pathway Model provides a way of thinking about the various stages of homelessness, their characteristics and the protective factors that prevent people from falling into housing crisis or help to reach then sustain recovery. The model is like a compass, guiding toward effective strategies, pledges, and actions.

Collaboration beyond boundaries

This challenge transcends individual efforts. It's a collective endeavour — one that often demands collaboration beyond our usual circles. By working together it may be possible to design homelessness out of existence. In working through the C2C toolkit, ask who else do we need at the table?

The solvable challenge

Homelessness can feel like an unsolvable puzzle — a maze. However, we're not helpless spectators. Emphasise that by working together towards key actions, particularly through early intervention, we can catch people and households before they fall. Equally, we can also support people to recover and sustain their place in a community following a housing crisis.

Understanding homelessness

Context and adaptation

The Positive Pathways Model, tailored for this use by the Homelessness Taskforce within the C2C toolkit, but what does it entail?

Perception of key issues

Identifying your insights into the critical issues, you'll explore your experience of what promotes or frustrates homelessness prevention and relief.

Categorising the issues

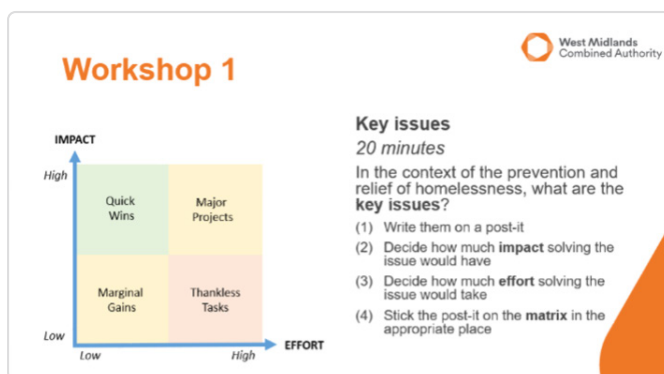
As you dissect these issues, you'll categorise them into three dimensions within the Positive Pathways Model:

1. Prevention:
Issues that impede or accelerate the slide into housing crises
2. Help:
Issues that fast-track or inhibit the provision of effective assistance, empathy, or practical solution
3. Create pathways:
Issues that promote obstruct or promote move-on to sustainable permanent accommodation

Linear or Circular?

The model may seem linear, but life rarely is. The Positive Pathways Model can also be considered circular — where the “universal prevention” and “settle home” categories meet.

Slide 6 – Workshop 1, identifying the key issues



20 minutes: Identifying key issues

This exercise considers the key issues that either frustrate or promote the prevention and relief of homelessness in the context of your work.

Task 1 – 10 minutes

Split into small discussion groups of two or three people. Reflect on your work and its impact on homelessness prevention and relief. You're going to identify the key issues that either promote or frustrate the prevention and relief of homelessness. Reflect on your experience and training, write each issue on a post-it note using clear capitals.

Task 2 – 5 minutes

For each issue identified, consider the impact of resolving the issue for people experiencing homelessness. Include any obvious secondary impacts. Overall, is it a 'higher' impact or a 'lower' impact for people experiencing homelessness?

Similarly, for each issue identified, consider the effort required to resolve the issue. You can think about effort in terms of costs such as money, time, political capital, or opportunity costs. Overall, does resolving this issue require 'higher' effort or 'lower' effort? Place your post-it notes on the chart based on your assessment of impact and effort.

Task 3 – 5 minutes

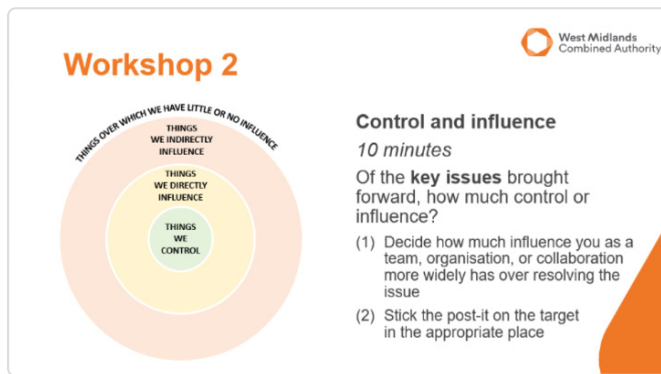
Consider the issues identified. Resolving some of these may be too hard, too costly, or not impactful enough to be worthwhile resolving. You should discuss this, particularly any identified as “Marginal Gains” or “Thankless Tasks”. Eliminate any issues the group feels it's not worthwhile addressing for the above reasons.

Mark each remaining issue based on its position on the chart so that you'll know its category later, e.g., MP for “Major Project”, QW for “Quick Win”, MG for “Marginal Gains”, or TT for “Thankless Tasks”.

Task 4

Finally, snap a photo of the chart with all remaining post-it notes in situ, visible, and legible.

Slide 7 – Workshop 2, sphere of influence



10 minutes: Narrowing the scope

As you go deeper into your scoping session, you refine the focus further. As a whole group, you will assess the degree to which you have control or influence over resolving each of the issues that remain.

Make sure you have photographed the post-it notes from the previous session and categorised them before continuing.

Task 1 – 5 minutes

Gather the post-it notes from the previous workshop chart that have survived the initial scrutiny. These represent the core issues you'll explore further.

Consider how much control or influence you have over what's needed to resolve the issue on each of the post-it notes. Plot these on a pre-prepared target chart like the one illustrated on the slide. Place those issues where you have a high degree of control at the centre of the target. Place the remaining issue further away from the centre as your degree of influence diminishes. Do this for all of the post-it note carried forward from the previous workshop.

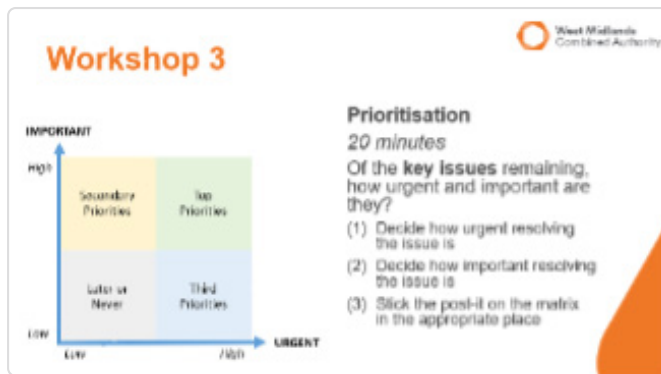
Task 2 – 5 minutes

Now, consider the issues on the outer rings. Some may be beyond or on the outskirts of our ability to influence the outcome. Discuss which post-its notes you want to eliminate from further consideration and remove those from the target.

Task 3

Finally, snap a quick photo of the chart with all remaining post-it notes visible and legible.

Slide 8 – Workshop 3, prioritisation



20 minutes: Urgency and importance assessment

You now have a set of issues that would have an impact if resolved and over which there is a degree of control or influence. In this next workshop exercise, you will assess each of the remaining issues in terms of its importance and urgency.

Make sure you have photographed the post-it notes from the previous session and categorised them before continuing.

Task 1 – 15 minutes

Gather all the issues that remain from the previous session. Reflect on each issue's significance:

- **Impact on homelessness:** To what extent does the issue affect individuals experiencing homelessness? Consider both immediate and long-term effects.
- **Alignment with strategic goals:** Does the issue align with or hinder our organisation's long-term objectives and values? Or does it frustrate our collaborative efforts?
- **Relative importance:** Is the issue of higher or lower importance compared to others?

Now, gauge the urgency of each issue:

- **Immediate attention:** Does addressing the issue require immediate action due to time sensitivity?
- **Short-term consequences:** Are there negative repercussions from not promptly resolving the issue?
- **Pressure and stress:** Will delaying resolution cause additional pressure or stress either to the system or the people involved?

Finally, record your considerations:

- Plot each post-it note on the chart based on its assessed level of urgency and importance.

Task 2 – 5 minutes

Refinement process:

- Consider whether any issues warrant elimination from further consideration.
- Think particularly hard about those labelled "later or never" and "third priorities."
- Remove them from the chart.

Task 3

Quickly snap a photo of the chart with all remaining post-it notes visible and legible.

Slide 9 – Workshop 4, the Positive Pathway Model



10 minutes: aligning issues on the pathway

You're now in a position to align the remaining issues with the Positive Pathways Model. In this final exercise you will consider where each issue fits into the pathway. This will help you to decide where you whether to focus your efforts on prevention, help, or creating pathways.

Make sure you have photographed the post-it notes from the previous session and categorised them before continuing.

Task 1 – 10 minutes

Gather the post-it notes that survived your scrutiny. Consider each in turn and place each post-it note in the appropriate columns on the chart, i.e., prevent, help, or create pathways, as shown on the slide. Note that some issues transcend boundaries. If an issue fits in multiple columns, you can either duplicate the post-it note and place it accordingly, or place it in the specific column that reflects the considerations or reasons for recording it as an issue in the first place. The last of these two options is recommended.

Task 2

Snap a photo of the chart with all remaining post-it notes visible and legible.

Slide 10 – Reflections and next steps



20 minutes: concluding discussion

This session is an open discussion based on the outcomes from the workshops as a final fine-tune of your focus. Use these critical questions to guide your next steps:

“Does it feel right” check:

- Reflect on the emerging issues and priorities.
- Do they resonate with your current reality? Trust your instincts.
- Eliminate or refine any that don't.

Positive Pathway Model Focus:

- Identify which column(s) of the Positive Pathway Model most warrants your attention.
- Each column represents a strategic dimension — choose wisely. Try to avoid the temptation to take it all on.

Internal collaboration or external collaboration:

- Some issues lie within our organizational boundaries.
- Collaborate internally—tap into our collective expertise.
- Other issues demand broader perspectives.
- Engage external partners—amplify our impact.

Stakeholder involvement:

- Determine who needs a seat at the table based on the internal vs external collaboration decision.
- Inclusion fosters diverse insights and shared ownership.
- However, each additional stakeholder, particularly in the context of multi-agency partnerships, adds complexity in terms of administrative processes and governance.

Next workshop session:

- Set a date for your full C2C workshop session where you'll transform these issues into a few pledges and actionable steps to prevent and relieve homelessness.