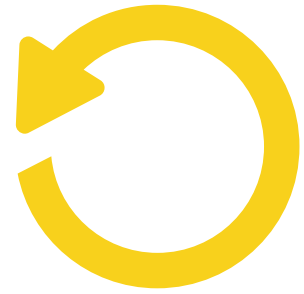


RESET

Housing support for ex-offenders



Our 'Reset' service provides support for ex-offenders in Buckinghamshire to access accommodation and make positive life choices to reduce the risk of them re-offending and returning to prison. The service, funded by Buckinghamshire Council, is available for people who are either leaving custody, vulnerably housed in the community, or homeless. Our team work closely with clients, up to 56 days prior to release, to find appropriate accommodation and provide intensive tenancy sustainment support. They also help them to apply for benefits, access work, training and education opportunities, and encourage community integration to build up positive networks, alongside any support they need with mental health and drug/alcohol issues.

This project was born out of our original floating support service, as a significant increase in referrals for people leaving custody as homeless was recognised. It became apparent that there was a real need to identify and support these clients prior to release, as the likelihood of them reoffending is high if they don't have anywhere to live. To do this, our team have built strong working relationships with the Probation Service so we can engage with clients at a much earlier stage – working with them whilst they're in prison to build up rapport and trust.

Sourcing accommodation is one of our major challenges, as many landlords are reluctant to accommodate this client group despite financial incentives. This means that many clients need to be placed in emergency accommodation to prevent them from rough sleeping and the subsequent risk of reoffending. Clients who are under 35 also present the additional challenge of only being eligible for the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) shared room rate, making it harder for them to afford to rent privately. Cross-sector collaboration has been crucial to overcome these challenges; we have worked hard to build relationships with local private landlords to help clients secure and retain tenancies and worked closely with the Probation Service, prisons, and various other agencies across Buckinghamshire to achieve the best outcome for clients.



*Without the support given to me by the Reset team, I think
I would have almost certainly re-offended*

- Service User



The success of this service can be recognised by the increase in referrals directly from prison (instead of through Buckinghamshire Council) as they start to recognise 'Reset' as a trusted support service.

100%

of clients helped so far remain in accommodation



54

individuals helped into accommodation (April 2021 - June 2022)



DANNY'S STORY

Danny* was released from custody without anywhere to stay - this was a huge disappointment and incredibly stressful. After 3 years inside he had been left to sleep on the streets, something which could have triggered old behaviours. Luckily a 'Reset' Support Worker was assigned to the case and moved him into emergency accommodation. They worked with him to understand his housing needs - a safe space for his children to stay, and away from any associates that could lead him to reoffending. His criminal record, along with a previous eviction would be challenging to overcome when approaching landlords, especially whilst trying to stick to the LHA price range.



Danny was so pleased when we found him a room in a private property, paid the deposit and rent advance, and helped him purchase the essentials he needed. He has gone from strength to strength, paying his rent and bills on time, engaging with the probation service, and having his children stay with him on the weekends. He's just started a degree with the Open University and has even applied to become a volunteer on our team to put his own experiences to positive use. We feel he will be a great role model to our clients!

Thanks to our service, we have been able to reduce the risk of offending and give Danny the much-deserved, second chance he needed. He now has an incredibly bright future ahead of him!

*(*name changed to protect the clients' identity)*