

Safe as Houses Project Evaluation Design

Key research questions

1) How is the early roll-out of Universal Credit (UC) affecting rent payment behaviours among social housing tenants in the London borough of Southwark?

Research Question	Research sub questions	Research Methods	Considerations
<p>Evaluate the impact of changes to how housing cost support is claimed, calculated and paid for <u>social housing tenants under UC</u> – looking specifically at whether rent payment <u>behaviours among that group are changing</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the <u>impact of new UC claimant journey on tenants rent payment behaviour compared to HB process</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comparative analysis (UC v's HB claimants in other parts of the borough) of rent paying behaviours. Rent account analysis and impacts modelled. • Qualitative in depth research with residents to understand their experience of the different processes (UC/HB) emphasising resident understanding of process/ communications/ tone/ timeline of changes. 10-15 interviews from each group. • Interim findings from first round of interviews, followed up with in depth qualitative interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that any panel of resident research gets a full idea of the customer journey through UC/US (Universal Support) – picking up the barriers/needs of those with multiple complex needs. [DWP will benefit from these findings – Lord Freud interested in customer journey and anything to test/trial] • A second round of interviews to get a bigger panel of work to understand identified residents of interest – to get deeper findings on what residents need or what could be improved.

<p>Identify obstacles to positive behaviour change, particularly where the absence of such change may make it more difficult for social housing tenants to cope with the new arrangements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What barriers do residents have to engaging with UC system? • What processes are impacting residents' ability to successfully maintain their tenancy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative in depth interviews to explore resident barriers – triangulated with quantitative analysis. • Workshop with Housing Income team and HB team to understand the 2 different processes. • Qualitative research Southwark staff. 2-5 in depth interviews with Southwark stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent account analysis will be able to 'scale' claimants in terms of changes in rent arrears. • 2 Hour workshop session. Finding on HB process will be actual, but UC process will be inferred. Workshop could include Local Support Team. • In depth interview with staff and stakeholders to collect information on the UC/US process from the Southwark perspective.
<p>Where obstacles are identified developing proposals / recommendations on how these might be addressed</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One day workshop • Presentation of interim findings and discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop is designed to present initial findings from rent account analysis and first round of interviewing. • Discussion will then identify what issues to address in the second round of interviews and which claimants to interview.

2) How are identified changes in behaviour – or the absence of behaviour change – affecting the tenancies of those social housing tenants who are receiving housing cost support under the new arrangements?

Research Question	Sub question	Research Methods	Considerations
<p>Evaluate the effectiveness of arrangements for making payments to social landlords and the associated safeguards for rental payments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the implications of APA processes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA data analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide APA data for interim findings, or bring them in at a later date? • Could associated impact of APA be included in claimant interviews (impact on debt, property bidding)
<p>Evaluate the effectiveness of communication with social housing tenants intended to increase their readiness for new arrangements and enhance their ability to cope</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In depth interviews with residents. • Workshop with Housing Income/ HB teams on communication methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it is possible to get JCP WC or script process for WCs – then we can use this guidance on WC having the conversation with UC claimants. This would be to compare communications.

Evaluating the accessibility and effectiveness of the forms of support available to help individuals identified as needing support to budget effectively and improve their financial independence		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAB interviews 	
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3) How is the early roll-out of Universal Credit (UC) affecting rent payment behaviours among residents in temporary accommodation?

Research Question	Research sub questions	Research Methods	Considerations
Evaluate the impact of changes to how housing cost support is claimed, calculated and paid for temporary accommodation residents under UC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the <u>impact</u> of new UC claimant journey on tenants rent payment behaviour compared to HB process What is the impact to the LA in collecting TA costs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comparative analysis (UC v's HB claimants in other parts of the borough) of rent paying behaviours. Rent account analysis and impacts modelled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UC claimants from May, June and July 2016 Analysis of rent payments up to October 2016

Timetable:

Research output	Date Deliverable	Notes
Inception meeting	w/c 10 th October 2016	
Local Authorities to send TA data	Contractor to receive data on 17 th October 2016	
Fieldwork design/materials sign off	Sent to Southwark COP 28 th October for final sign off 11 th November	
TA rent a/c analysis	w/c 24 th October 2016	
TA rent a/c analysis report	w/c 28 th November 2016	
Southwark send data	Contractor to receive data on 6 th January 2017	
Housing rent a/c analysis	w/c 9 th January 2017	
Resident fieldwork and analysis	w/c 23rd January – 3rd March 2017	
Interim findings presentation and workshop	21 st /22 nd March 2017	
Secondary fieldwork	April – May 2017	
Final report	June 2017	Need 1 week comment and one to two weeks to address comments

Specification Methods:

Will need contractor to deliver:

Interim fieldwork

- Quantitative research – comparative analysis of treatment control data (UC/HB process) – contractor to suggest the model and analysis they could conduct.
- Interim qualitative:
10-15 depth interviews from each of the treatment (UC) and control (HB) groups.
- Up to 5 interviews with Southwark stakeholders/providers
- One workshop with Housing Income and HB teams
- 1 day interim findings workshop. Part 1 to deliver slide deck of interim findings and to discuss policy implications and recommendations, part 2 to consider options for further research.

Final fieldwork:

- Panel of resident research - follow up themes or characteristics of interest. 20 interviews (10 UC/10 HB).
- Potential additional stakeholder workshops/ final in depth interviews.

Key Outputs/deliverables

We anticipate that the following will be achieved:

- TA analysis within October/ November 2016 with report delivered in early December 2016
- Fieldwork within January/ February/ March 2017
- Slide Deck of initial findings to be presented on 21st/ 22nd March 2017
- Final report June 2017

Assumptions behind timetable/methods – compressed turnaround

Temporary Accommodation analysis

- Southwark to collect data on rent accounts/other data. This must be data closed on 16th October 2016.
- w/c 10th October Southwark data analyst pulls data together to send to contractor.

Social housing tenants

- w/c 10th October 2016 contractor develops fieldwork materials (28th October sent to Southwark). Southwark respond by 4th November for comment with sign off 11th November.
- Southwark to collect data on rent accounts/other data. This must be data closed on 7th January 2017. It will need to include customer contact details [address, email, phone] for recruitment of residents into qualitative panel research.
- Contractor will recruit, conduct and analyse 20-30 interviews (10-15 UC/10-15 Control) – by COP 14th October (4 weeks fieldwork and analysis time).
 - Implications – no time for opt in/out with customers. To be recruited they will be phoned directly by a researcher. Incentives to be offered to achieve the research volumes. We anticipate that a contractor will budget for £20 per participant in any qualitative research (e.g. £20 love to shop voucher).
- Recommend slide deck and a workshop/briefing – to deliver on the 21st/ 22nd March 2017.
 - Workshop/briefing outputs on rapid research findings:

- *Early findings on the customer journey*
- *Impacts on rent behaviour (drawn from quantitative and qualitative research)*
- *Policy implications*
- *Recommendations for further research and Southwark to action if necessary.*

Final phase research: Southwark to make decision on scale (numbers of interviews) of follow up research after workshop. This could include a further workshop with key stakeholders/ Southwark officers.