

A Strategy to Eradicate Rough Sleeping in York

We were delighted to talk to Professor Nicholas Pleace, Director of the Centre for Housing Policy (CHP) and Interdisciplinary Research Champion for the School of Business and Society. Nicholas' interests centre on housing exclusion, homelessness and inequalities linked to the built environment.

Nicholas has an international profile and has been a member of the European Observatory on Homelessness, operating under the auspices of FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless, a coalition committed to fighting homelessness in Europe. He is on the Editorial Boards of the European Journal of Homelessness and the International Journal of Housing Policy.

City of York Council has been restructuring its homeless services towards an increasingly person-centred and housing-led approach. Like many authorities, York used to work with people experiencing homelessness with a combination of outreach services and supported housing, which was designed to support and resettle people with complex needs who were experiencing homelessness. A problem with this approach was identified, not only here and in Europe, but around the world. People with very complex needs and disadvantages have tended to drop out of this type of 'housing pathway' before they can live independently, or get 'stuck' in the system and are unable to move on.

Nicholas and his colleagues, Dr Joanne Bretherton and Deborah Quilgars in CHP, have been doing

research on 'Housing First', which is a model and approach to ending homelessness, (designed for the minority of homeless people with multiple and complex needs) through housing and support provision, which bypasses 'supported housing'. The model supports people experiencing what is often long-term or repeated homelessness, by providing permanent housing with individual wrap-around case management and support, working with people experiencing homelessness co-productively (ensuring they have real choice

and control) to help them address their specific and complex needs, for as long as required.

Working alongside Imogen Blood & Associates (IBA) on "Housing First" for several years, Nicholas and his colleagues have also been involved in sharing their expertise with the City of York Council around a strategy for implementing this model in the City of York. Our collaboration with the City will draw on the extensive research that CHP has conducted on 'Housing First', including our collaborations with IBA.

This is an important piece of work which aligns with the University for Public Good and our tradition in social justice and combating inequality; it is a perfect example of the exchange of expertise

supporting a section of the City of York's visible and disadvantaged society.

The 'Housing First' model certainly has proof of success. Finland has almost eradicated homelessness using their own version of the 'Housing First' approach and the Republic of Ireland has also moved away from supported housing to 'Housing First'. Nicholas has led work on the strategic approach to homelessness in both countries, working with other international researchers.

There have been and will be bumps in the road as York moves towards ending rough sleeping and there will continue to be political, economic and social environmental issues in terms of cuts to welfare systems, relative reductions in NHS resources and huge pressures on housing supply, but the ambition is real and with the redirection of resources, the aim is to get people off the streets of York and to control/stop rough sleeping by 2026/27.



 @NicholasPleace

continued on next page 

'Rediscover, Reimagine, Rebuild'

York Festival of Ideas created and led by the University of York

For the past 12 years York Festival of Ideas has showcased inspiring and innovative academic research from the University of York and elsewhere across the educational sector by delivering free, inspiring and accessible events that demonstrate the relevance, impact and influence of academic research.



In that time Higher Education Investment Fund (HEIF) has played a vital role in helping us showcase the importance of research and the positive impacts it has on society.

In 2023 we delivered more than 200 events across 13 days with more than 100 local and global programme partners to an audience of just under 40,000 people from more than 100 countries. The scale of the Festival's impact can be further explored [here](#).

Alongside some contribution from HEIF, the Festival is funded primarily by external fundraising - sponsors and trusts and foundations who believe passionately, as we do, that there should be no barrier to accessing the joy and excitement of the world of research and ideas. This is achieved by harnessing the University's convening power

as a University for Public Good. The Festival was established to educate, entertain and inspire engagement and advocacy for the power of education, research and ideas through the provision of free events, targeting as diverse a range of audiences (local and global) as possible.

Our approach to programme curation is infused with a strong social and community ethos. The Festival is a platform from which audiences can engage with a wide variety of ideas, but also facilitates academic engagement and understanding of the diversity of experiences, opinions and actions of our audiences. Since Covid the Festival has delivered an increasing element of its programme to a global audience through online

events and as such has expanded the Festival's opportunity to create and nurture a community of global shared interests.

Contributions from university researchers (University of York and academic researchers from around the world) are the lynchpin of the Festival and are crucial to its success in driving awareness of and responses to global and local challenges. In 2023 over 270 members of the University of York community took part in delivering events in all kinds of subject areas, for people of all ages.

Feedback from both audience members and participants illustrate the mutual benefit that engagement with Festival events provides. For researchers, the opportunity to interact with the general public,

continued on next page →

from a range of demographic groups, opens up new ways of communicating and engaging audiences about their research and provides opportunities to gain insights and fresh perspectives from audience feedback. In turn this serves to influence future research questions and forges new alliances. For the audience, the opportunity to listen to and question the advances in cutting edge research, supports onward public trust in higher education at a time of increasing threats to public understanding and support for higher education.

The Festival indisputably provides audiences with unparalleled access to the inspiring and wide-ranging research taking place in York, but the Festival also provides the University with access to a community of inspiring individuals, who want to see and experience research in action. We are proud to provide this forum and opportunity for open dialogue between York's academic community and the public at a local and global scale as a key expression of our desire to be a university for the public good.



Introduction to IP and commercialisation 30 min online course

Have you considered how your research is applicable to industry? Have you ever wondered how Intellectual Property (IP) protection can be used to help drive impact from your research? Are you interested to learn more about how spin-out companies are formed?

This very well received, short online primer is the perfect place to start. Sessions run monthly and can be booked through the [Learning Management System \(LMS\) learning pages](#).

Next session: Wednesday, 22 November 2023, 1.00pm to 1.30pm