**Database of Hoarding-Related Projects/Interventions**

**Project Title**:

Safe Spaces

**Project Location**:

Greater Leicestershire

**Project Lead**:

Rosemary Leach

**Lead Organization**:

Lightbulb

**Other Organizations involved**:

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, Charnwood Borough Council, Melton Borough Council, Harborough District Council, Blaby District Council, North West Leicestershire District Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, Adult Social Care, Social Prescribers, etc.

**Project Start date**: 2020 (support started 2021)

**Project end date**: N/A

**Funding obtained from?**

Originally: £45,000 from each participating council to amount to £315,000 overall.

This money is taken from the Better Care fund as the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) underspend from each council.

Better Care fund – underspendadd.

**Project Outline**

Aims:

Provide person-centred support for clients struggling with hoarding tendencies through the use of support officers who regularly visit the client’s home and can offer therapy, support groups and advocacy for clients.

Procedure:

Clients are referred to our service by other professionals. 2 support officers make a first visit for initial assessment. The team can then discuss the most appropriate avenues of support to take using a person-centred, multi-agency approach, with the team operating as the primary point of contact for the case.

One member of the team will visit the client in their home as frequently as they feel is necessary to provide the best level of support. Whenever the client is ready, the support officer visiting can help with removal of items. A consent form is used when removing items from a client’s home if it is there first-time removing items/ if there is concern that the client may later file a complaint. The attending support officer can also provide support for applications for options such as housing, benefits, etc. The support officers can also refer the client to therapies offered through the Safe Spaces service/ assist with a referral through the NHS. Our support officers can also help with referrals to external services to allow clients to access multiple avenues for support.

Once a client and the team believe that the client no longer needs the same level of support, the support officer as the primary source of contact for the case can begin to phase out home visits. This can happen over several months so the team can ensure that the client continues to receive support until the case is closed – in some cases, a support officer may still make occasional visits after the closure of their case to ensure the client can still access support if needed.

Measures of success?

Safe Spaces creates a dashboard quarterly that includes:

* Number of referrals per district
* Type of referrals (hoarding vs self-neglect) per district
* Number of cased on the waiting list/ closed cases/ withdrawn cases/ open cases
* Source of referrals
* Complexity levels of referred cases by district
* Number of contacts
* Outcomes of support

Recent evaluation also included reviews from referrers, the team and clients.

**Advice to share – Do’s and Donts?**

* Don’t rush the process.
* Don’t be judgemental.
* Don’t stick to one avenue of support – support should be multi-faceted.
* Prioritise trust and understanding with the client.
* Follow the client’s lead – let them go at the pace that works for them.
* Spread the word – let professionals know that your service is available.

**Website/other links to the project report (if any):**

[The Safe Spaces Team | Leicestershire | Lightbulb](https://lightbulbservice.org/safe-spaces-team/)

**Additional thoughts – e.g. what we wished we had done, what was perhaps missing?**

Acknowledge additional workload for Adult Social Care, as more people began asking for help after Safe Spaces became active – to remedy this for both ourselves and Adult Social Care, we are now adding a social worker to the service.

Originally, our business case stated that we would outsource the majority of support, but we now function with the Safe Spaces support team operating as the primary contact for clients and providing the majority of support offered.