

University of  
**Salford**  
MANCHESTER



## Cold Homes and Mental Wellbeing

Dr Graeme Sherriff  
Sustainable Housing & Urban Studies Unit  
University of Salford

# Methodology

- Training in qualitative interviewing for mental health service users (4).
- Collaborative research design.
- Interviews by and of mental health service users (11).
- Transcription, analysis and write up.

University of  
**Salford**  
MANCHESTER



SHUSU  
Sustainable Housing &  
Urban Studies Unit

'I was frightened to  
put the heating on.'

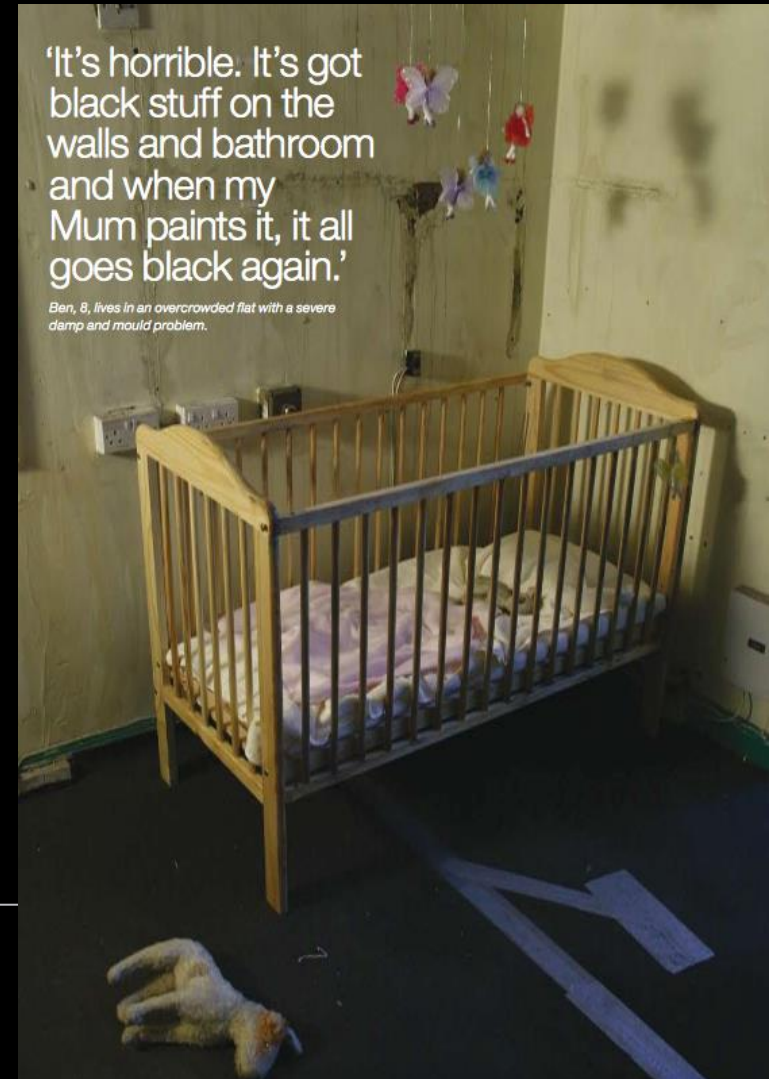
Evaluating the Changes4Warmth  
approach to cold homes and mental health

Graeme Sherriff  
March 2016



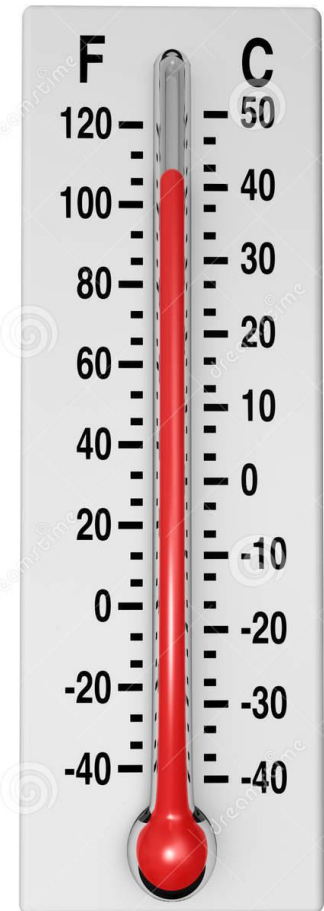
# Cold homes and wellbeing

- Worsening existing physical conditions
- Poor conditions, control
- Impacts on (related) household budgets
- Social isolation
- Child development
- Stress and anxiety from financial pressure



# Cold and mental health

- *'If you're warm, you're well.. If you're cold you're not well,'*
- *'Perhaps my concentration and my get-up-and-go. Your motivation is a bit...'*
- *'Yes I'd say being too cold does bring you down a bit at the end of the day.'*



# Stress

- *'I was frightened to put the heating on...'*
- *'I'm having to deal with everything on my own so I just literally got all the bills in my name and I didn't know if I'd done right or wrong'.*



# The home visit

- *'She was quite happy to stay as long as it was needed to go through everything.'*
- *'To me there was no rush.'*
- *'I do feel that if there had been a problem, i.e. with my anxiety, there would have been no problem rearranging it, breaking off...'*



# Confidence in contacting utilities

- *'Yes, I need a bit of help – I won't be frightened of admitting it now, put it that way.'*
- *'Having the advice of [the home visitor] does give you a lot more confidence and you know what to actually say to companies.'*



# Energy efficiency, and control

- *'She's told me loads of things that I can do like tucking the curtains behind the radiators and draught excluders and all things like that...*
- *... I'm more knowledgeable about where the energy is leaking from, so to speak.'*



# Energy efficiency, and control

- *'Yes, so that's where I am at at the moment but because I know that I am saving money and I can see it on the Owl that I'm a bit happier for turning the heating on now.'*



# Managing temperature



- *'If I'm having a really bad day I know I can leave the heating on a bit longer, but I have learnt [about] the thing that they give you to keep an eye on how hot you're supposed to be.'*

# Summary

- Experience of cold homes
- Stress of managing bills
- Approaches to support and advice
- Confidence in dealing with utilities
- Sense of control

# Summary

**Graeme Sherriff**

**g.sherriff@salford.ac.uk**

**@graemesherriff**

University of  
**Salford**  
MANCHESTER



SHUSU  
Sustainable Housing &  
Urban Studies Unit

**'I was frightened to  
put the heating on.'**

Evaluating the Changes4Warmth  
approach to cold homes and mental health

**Graeme Sherriff**  
March 2016



University of  
**Salford**  
MANCHESTER

SHUSU  
Sustainable Housing &  
Urban Studies Unit