Evaluation of the Mortgage Breathing Space scheme

conducted for the Money Advice Service What Works Fund

July 2018

Penny Wymer
Prof David Devins
Martel Reynolds

Contact: p.wymer@leedsbeckett.ac.uk or 0113 812 4471

Funded by

Contents

Project team and acknowledgements 3

1: Executive summary 4

2: Overview of the project 7

2.1 What the project was intending to achieve: aims and outcomes 7

2.2 About this project 7

2.3 Context within which the innovation has taken place, scale, operational etc. 10

2.4 Changes to the project 11

3: Overview of the evaluation approach 12

3.1 Project aims 12

3.2 Evaluation approach 12

3.3 Existing research 12

3.4 Methodology 13

3.5 Changes to methodology 14

4: Key findings: outcome and impact evaluation 15

4.1 Increasing ability and identifying what measures are most effective (Linked to the MAS Ability strand) 15

4.2 Developing skills and confidence across wider areas of financial capability (Linked to the MAS Mindset strand) 20

4.3 Ongoing engagement and connections (Linked to the MAS Connection strand) 23

4.4 Conclusions 27

4.5 Impact on the What Works Fund priorities 27

4.6 Lessons learned 28

5: Economic evaluation 30

5.1 Delivery costs based on client type 30

5.2 The costs and consequences of homelessness and mortgage repossession 33

5.3 The costs of providing MBS versus the costs of not doing so 35

6: Limitations 37

6.1 Appropriateness of the approach 37

6.2 Capacity for future evaluation or for continuation of this evaluation 37

7: Implications and Recommendations for Policy and Practice 39

7.1 Capacity for Sustainability 39

7.2 Mainstream provision 40

7.3 Potential for similar interventions in the private-rented sector 40

8: Sharing and Learning Activity 41

8.1 Promoting future rollout of MBS 41

8.2 Sharing learning with others ... 41
8.3 Developing learning for MAS ... 41
8.4 What could be done differently in future ... 41
10: Appendices ... 42
Appendix A: Theory of Change Outcomes ... 42
Appendix B: Full copy of the survey questionnaire ... 44
Appendix C: Full breakdown of WMDC case studies ... 62
Appendix D: Original Theory of Change in full ... 69
11: References ... 73

Project team and acknowledgements

Evaluation team, from Leeds Beckett University

Penny Wymer
Prof David Devins
Martel Reynolds

We are very grateful for the assistance of the following members of Wakefield Council:

Janet Howley
Jane Brett-Littlechild
Georgia Bruce

We would like to thank all the participants on the scheme who provided survey responses and agreed to be interviewed, for contributing their time and experience towards the project and for being willing to revisit what was frequently a highly emotive and stressful subject. We would additionally like to thank the stakeholders from other bodies and agencies who gave up time for interviews.

1: Executive summary

Project context

Since 2009, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council (WMDC) has been delivering Yorkshire and Humber's regional Mortgage Breathing Space (MBS) scheme, which offers assistance to homeowners who are in mortgage difficulties or under threat of repossession. The assistance is twofold: 1) an interest-free secured loan to pay off mortgage arrears and/or mortgage instalments for up to 12 months (if needed); 2) financial advice and financial capability guidance. The scheme was recently reviewed, and a revised version has been piloted through the MAS What Works Fund with the objective of empowering homeowners to improve their own financial capability through an assisted self-help model. Clients met with support officers at WMDC or in their own homes (~4 review meetings per year), received materials to read and work with at home and were also able to access as-needed support by phone or email (see section 2.2).

Summary of evaluation approach

This is a summative evaluation focused on outcome and impact evaluation, with a secondary section on economic evaluation, mainly testing the extent to which the new programme has produced increases in clients' financial capability, financial stability and general wellbeing over the course of the time post-loan. It includes before and after surveys of clients (n=52) as well as interviews with both clients (n=6) and key stakeholders (n=5). The before-and-after client surveys were conducted in person at review meetings between July 2017 and April 2018. Client and stakeholder interviews were conducted in April and May 2018.

The core research questions for the evaluation were:

- What support measures are more (and less) effective at developing better decisions for each client's needs and circumstances? *(Linked to the MAS Ability strand)*
- Can averting a mortgage crisis improve client skills and confidence across wider areas of financial capability? *(Linked to the MAS Mindset strand)*
- Are clients motivated to develop financial capability skills and confidence once their immediate crisis is resolved? *(Linked to the MAS Connection strand)*

Summary of key findings

Outcome findings

- Many clients' understanding of their own financial products (especially mortgages) and of the range and nature of financial products and services in general showed notable improvement across the board. Only 16% (n=8) of respondents had a good or reasonable knowledge of mortgages beforehand – afterwards this had risen to 52% (n=27).
- Clients' understanding of their own financial situations improved, with a sharp drop in the proportions of those unable or unwilling to think about or begin to engage with their financial issues.
- Many clients showed substantial increases in confidence and skill in dealing with financial issues, both in dealing with their own finances (e.g. creating and tracking budgets) and in dealing with banks, utilities and creditors. Only two clients reported always or mostly feeling in control of their finances at the start of the programme – afterwards, 33 did.
- Clients broadly reported more optimism about their financial future at the end of the programme and showed improved understanding of how to navigate those issues if and when they arose (e.g. greater awareness of the options available to deal with debt.) 71% (n=36) said they had good or fair knowledge of options for dealing with debt after the programme, compared to 21% (n=11) before.

- Most clients at the end of the programme were much more aware of debt issues, as well as having a much better understanding of their rights and options when in financial difficulty
- Clients' financial situations are generally more settled, though not all had achieved stability by the time of the second survey, and indicators of good financial practice are visible. 81% (n=42) said their ability to deal with financial difficulties had become better or much better.
- The MBS team all now hold an IMA-accredited Certificate in Money Advice and Practice. They have also made several small but fruitful changes to the way the application and review process works, with a cumulative effect of improving engagement, clarifying procedures, and dramatically reducing the number of 'emergency' client contacts from 2-3 per week to 1-2 per month.

Economic findings

While it was not possible to rigorously demonstrate the cost-benefit of MBS versus no intervention, due to the complexity of the situations involved, the evaluation reviews some recent research on the costs of homelessness in the UK and estimates that the cost of an MBS loan to the public sector (and ultimately the taxpayer) is half, or even less, of the costs that would be accumulated by the same client becoming homeless, or threatened with homelessness, and requiring housing by the LA.

Recommendations

- The revised MBS programme and way of working appears to be having good effects, and at minimum should be continued in its current form.
- The scheme would benefit from additional publicity to ensure that its intended client base across the region is aware that it exists and of who to contact.
- Recent developments in finance and policy may forecast an increase in repossessions and hence in MBS applications which the service could not easily sustain at its current resource level.
- WMDC and partner LAs should be prepared to invest money and staff time into supporting the project in order to allow it to expand both to meet current unmet need and to be ready in case repossession rates begin to rise.
- The scheme should continue to maintain good management information and client data in order to monitor progress going forward, especially if it expands.

Summary of limitations

Methodological limitations

- The evaluation is at Level 2 of Nesta's Standards of Evidence.
- The data has not been matched for analysis; the findings examine only clients who took part in the revised version of the programme.
- There is a risk of sampling bias in the findings. WMDC pre-emptively excluded some clients from the sampling pool for reasons of ethics, e.g. extremely vulnerable clients. The sample size is also not as large as would have been ideal.
- The sample size was not large enough to support testing for statistical significance.
- There is a risk of the halo effect in the findings. The nature of MBS is such that participants encounter it at a time of crisis which it usually solves: the sheer positive associations of the resolution may mean participants did not report negative or critical feelings about specific aspects of the programme.

Relevance

- The project has demonstrated that clients in crisis are willing to engage with money advice and financial capability training/support even on such a heavily stigmatized topic as mortgage arrears, that most will make significant budgetary and lifestyle changes if given information and support to do so, and that these financial capability improvements will often persist beyond the immediate crisis.

Generalisability/Transferability

- We would expect these findings to be generalizable to similar client groups in other regions of the UK if the basic elements necessary for delivery are replicated (see section 7) – that is, 'struggling' and 'squeezed' homeowners facing or in danger of repossession, with disproportionate numbers of older, disabled and nonworking clients.
- By the nature of the project it is unlikely to be of particular relevance those MAS defines as 'cushioned', who are more likely to be able to weather on their own the gaps in income the MBS loan acts to bridge.

Summary of learning and sharing activity

WMDC have disseminated information about the old and revised versions of MBS to public bodies, charities and community groups across the region and will continue to do so. Findings of the project and this evaluation will be taken to partner LAs as the first step in developing locally tailored publicity and redevelopment plans. Learning from the project will also feed into the Wakefield Money Smart project. The team also plan to develop a public online resource derived from things found to work well on the MBS programme, that will provide generally accessible help and guidance with better budgeting and debt management.

2: Overview of the project

2.1 What the project was intending to achieve: aims and outcomes

Since 2009, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council (WMDC) has been delivering Yorkshire and Humber's regional Mortgage Breathing Space (MBS) scheme. This unique scheme offers assistance to homeowners who are in mortgage difficulties or under threat of repossession, usually as a result of a life-affecting event for example, redundancy, ill health or the breakdown of a relationship. The client base is a mix of what MAS defines as 'struggling' (not financially resilient, no real savings buffer) and 'squeezed' (managing, but with little provision for coping with income shocks), with more in the latter category than the former. More detail on demographics and client circumstances is given in section 5.1.

Financial support is provided (if needed) through an interest-free secured loan to pay off mortgage arrears and/or provide ongoing mortgage instalments for up to 12 months. Loans are applied as a last resort measure where sustainable homelessness prevention alternatives are not suitable. Some homeowners take out the loan to enable them to stay in their homes, where they have the means to continue in ownership for the long term. Others use it to support them through the sale of their home, to maximise the market value rather than the low return and high costs likely if the property is repossessed and sold by the lender. Either way, at the end of the programme (either after three years or upon sale completion), homeowners repay the loan in full. In addition to the financial support, homeowners also receive financial capability skills training to address other problem debts as well as ongoing wider support throughout the loan period.

Whilst the scheme has been running successfully for nearly a decade, helping over 350 households across the region, the Delivery Team had noted that within a year of the initial mortgage crisis being addressed approximately 25% of homeowners remained in or slipped back into financial difficulties, which both undermined the objectives of the scheme and also inhibited clients' ability to pay back the loan. Following a review of the scheme, it was proposed that a change in the way of working on the post-loan element of the scheme - moving away from a "problem resolver" model to a participant-enabling one – would help address these issues. This revised scheme, with the focus on the client rather than the Homeowner Support Officer (HSO) taking ownership of the resolution of any new or ongoing difficulties, would be piloted through the MAS What Works Fund with the objective of empowering homeowners to improve their own financial capability through an assisted self-help model. This focus on building clients' capability is reflected in the TOC outcomes, especially 2, 3, and 6.

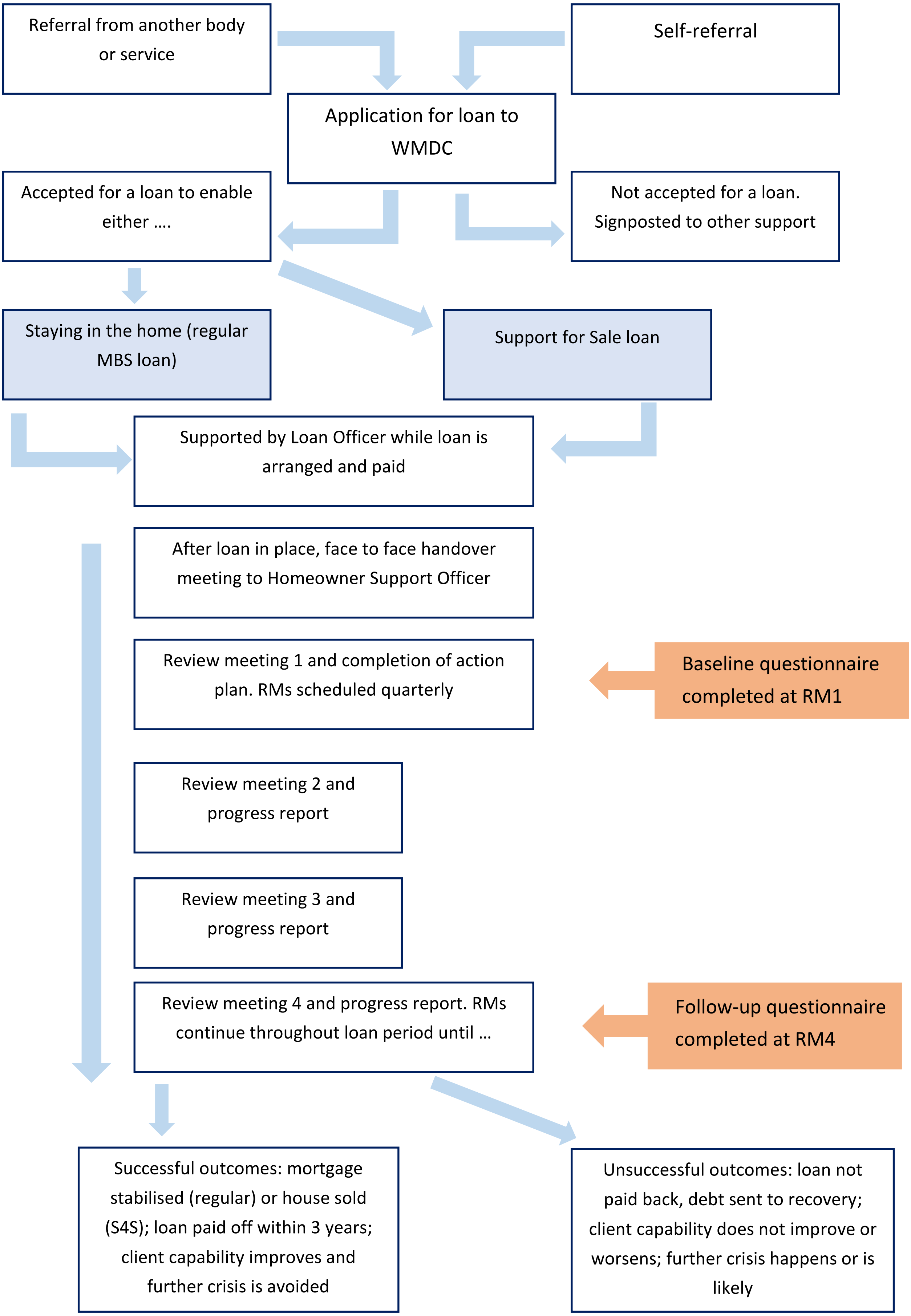
The financial capability element of the MBS project operates under the Council's wellbeing powers and does not provide a full range of formal debt advice; as such, it is not required to be FCA-regulated, as was established by WMDC legal services in 2014. The financial capability intervention is focused on debt control and money management, and identifies options and generates solutions for clients to consider. The MBS support officers may provide basic information about, but do not give any advice on, insolvency, IVA, bankruptcy, debt relief orders, pension or equity release and do not give financial advice about the MBS product itself (all MBS clients receive independent financial advice on the MBS product). A key Theory of Change (TOC) outcome for the project was for all members of the MBS team to gain a formal money advice qualification to support the expansion of this side of the scheme; all have now completed a Certificate in Money Advice and Practice through the Institute of Money Advisers.

2.2 About this project

A key component of the pilot MBS project is the bespoke one-to-one support provided at quarterly review meetings by the HSO. Following an initial capability review and compilation of an up-to-date financial statement for each client, the HSO produces an agreed Action Plan detailing the client's responsibilities and what actions need to be taken before the next quarterly review meeting. Depending on the complexity of the case and abilities of the participant(s), these may range from clients merely opening received post, securing missing paperwork, exploring additional benefits entitlements, swapping utility providers or, for the most capable, contacting their creditors directly.

As the project progresses, participants are reviewed against their action plan and, when appropriate, moved onto more complex tasks such as financial planning or liaison with other services. Throughout the support programme participants are provided with fact sheets and useful information to help them achieve the actions and come to a better understanding of their individual financial situations (per TOC outcome 1) Participants can also contact the team at any time if they require any additional support or ad-hoc advice and have information about other sources of support (per TOC outcome 4.) See Figure 1 below of the MBS process.

Fig. 1: MBS process



2.3 Context within which the innovation has taken place, scale, operational etc.

At the time of the evaluation, the project operated across 19 of the 21 Local Authorities making up Yorkshire and the Humber; WMDC have since succeeded in bringing one Authority on board as a full partner and obtaining an agreement in principle for the remaining one to join the scheme. The scheme originally operated on a ‘hub and spoke’ principle, with Wakefield receiving completed loan applications from LA partners to take forward to completion. Once loans had been completed, the clients were passed back to the partner authorities to deliver the regular post-loan review meetings. However, this model lacked consistency and capacity and so in 2014 it was agreed that the WMDC Homeowner Support Team would take on the time-consuming loan application process and provide wider review support. At the time of the MAS submission, removal of the review process from partners to the HSO was implemented as a result of inconsistencies in Partner approach to the critical review element.

Currently partner authorities refer clients to WMDC, which issues loans, assigns support officers and handles budgeting. Where needed, clients will be referred back to services local to them for support with other issues (e.g. mental health support or help with legal representation.) All clients are offered independent financial advice before they sign up, via a referral to one of a list of local IFAs aware of the scheme. Legal recovery, where necessary, is led by WMDC following scoping and approval from the client’s LA.

The project receives between forty and 100 referrals per year, with a peak in 2010-11 of 124 referrals. (A full breakdown is given in table 1.) Of these, only a minority – between one-tenth and one-half – progress to loan completion stage, although they meet the eligibility and appropriateness criteria for a loan. (Some fail to disclose vital eligibility information or cease to engage with the process, whilst some lenders and co-owners refuse consent for an additional loan to be secured on the property. This results in applications ceasing at this point.) The key aim is to support homeowners to remain in ownership if possible in the longer term. However, for some where this is not possible, loans support the process of sale and downsizing or moving to a more suitable tenure. The business case is that it is cheaper to issue a loan rather than deal with the consequences of homelessness (including direct financial costs to the LA; indirect financial costs e.g. to the NHS; and human cost.) This also brings service benefits, as it reduces the input needed from other pressured services such as the homeless team. The costs and estimated savings are discussed further in section 5.

Table 1: Referrals and loans issued by financial year

	Financial Year							
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Referrals	124	106	109	116	77	39	44	93
Loans Issued	47	34	27	39	17	10	9	8
Alternative measures	22	30	22	20	28	10	6	8
Average loan size	£8,890	£5,712	£7,350	£8,206	£7,147	£9,390	£8,700	£11,596

2.4 Changes to the project

The original evaluation plan – reflected in the original context and rationale to the Theory of Change, given in full in Appendix D – encountered difficulties in late 2017, on three main points: first, difficulty recruiting sufficient new programme participants (and hence survey respondents) to build a sample of the size envisioned; second, lack of engagement from some existing clients; and third, the time and resources needed for large-scale face-to-face survey administration proving unviable. In order to produce more viable data within a reasonable timeframe, the project team proposed supplementing a smaller survey dataset with more qualitative interviews; and in order to boost response rates to both the interview and survey components, proposed offering participants a small incentive (£10/survey, £25/interview). The changes were agreed with MAS and approved in January 2018. This extended the final delivery date to the end of June 2018.

3: Overview of the evaluation approach

3.1 Project aims

The aim of the evaluation is to establish whether a mortgage crisis intervention aimed at preventing homelessness can be successful in improving longer-term attitudes and behaviours towards money management including budgeting, credit and debt. To achieve this the project explored the following research questions:

- What support measures are more (and less) effective at developing better decisions for each client's needs and circumstances? *(Linked to the MAS Ability strand)*
- Can averting a mortgage crisis improve client skills and confidence across wider areas of financial capability? *(Linked to the MAS Mindset strand)*
- Are clients motivated to develop financial capability skills and confidence once their immediate crisis is resolved? *(Linked to the MAS Connection strand)*

The project was funded against MAS policy questions 3.1 and 3.2:

- How can we help working-age adults to improve their financial capability, develop budgeting and tracking habits, build up a savings buffer to withstand financial shocks, and/or set financial goals for key life events?
- How can we help people who are excluded from mainstream credit options to make well-informed decisions about selecting and using credit options available to them, and to build understanding of how to improve their credit worthiness over time?

The research questions examine 3.1 from the perspective of using a crisis intervention as an opportunity to try and build client financial capability in other areas and which will last (and to try and determine what methods are effective for this.) The evaluation addresses 3.2 less directly but does touch on building clients' understanding of debt, credit and credit-based financial products (see section 4).

The research will also monitor benchmark data from the previous iteration(s) of the scheme to examine whether key indicators such as levels of engagement and return to financial difficulties have been impacted by the new processes.

3.2 Evaluation approach

The evaluation used a summative approach to examine the outcomes achieved by participants on the pilot programme. Summative evaluations are the standard model used to find out whether projects have achieved their objectives and anticipated outcomes. Widely used across government departments (e.g. DCLG's England European Regional Development Fund Programme 2014 to 2020: Project Summative Assessment Guidance), NHS and education-sector summative evaluations allow project managers and funders to understand what works and provides a clear insight into the process of change. Given MAS's Theory of Change model and the overarching aims of the What Works Fund, a summative approach was the most appropriate for evaluating the MBS scheme.

3.3 Existing research

Whilst there are many evaluations looking at the efficacy of debt advice and financial capability schemes, the MBS scheme is unique in addressing threatened repossessions by giving homeowners direct access to the money needed to stabilise the situation, alongside the provision of debt counselling and financial capability support.

As such, the relevant research is limited, with the closest analogue of recent years being the government-backed Mortgage Rescue Scheme, whereby homeowners in trouble could sell their house to their LHA and remain in it as tenants. This was set up in 2008 in something of a hurry, in response to the financial crisis, and was evaluated in 2010 by a team from the University of York and Heriot Watt University, funded by DCLG (Wilcox et al. 2010). The evaluation looked only at the first year of the scheme, but found that it had prevented 629 repossessions, provided over 20,000 households with financial advice, and generally contributed to “market confidence at a time when the magnitude and duration of the recession were unclear” (p.9). The evaluation recommended it be continued with a lower grant rate and noted enthusiasm from LAs “for MRS to become a permanent feature of homeless prevention” (p.3); in the event, the scheme was shut down ahead of schedule in 2014. The MRS scheme offered safety net provision to the most vulnerable clients and on the basis of those who were considered to be in priority need. The approach excluded many homeowners from accessing any help when they faced difficulties.

Income Support for Mortgage Interest (ISMI) was introduced in 2009 and existed as a state benefit until 2018, when it changed to being administered as a loan. The waiting period to access the benefit was initially 13 weeks but extended to 39 weeks in 2017, prior to moving across to a loan basis. It was also part of the package of support schemes introduced soon after the recession and had the aim to “assist more homeowners, and sooner, and thereby prevent possessions.” (Ford et al. 2011, p.1.) The success of ISMI was evaluated in 2011 by the University of York, funded by DWP (Ford et al. 2011). The evaluation found it “highly beneficial” in preventing repossessions (p.4) although much of this benefit was reversed by a sharp cut in the interest rate ISMI would cover – from 6.08% to 3.63% – in October 2010. The changes to the current Income Support Mortgage Interest benefit will also be considered in the Implications and Recommendations section.

3.4 Methodology

The aim of the summative evaluation was to use survey questionnaires to establish a baseline position for the cohort at the start of the initiative and then again at the end of the intervention. This would allow the study to compare the two positions to establish the distance travelled by participants and the extent to which the outcomes were achieved.

The survey questionnaires were developed through consultation with the WMDC Delivery Team, with questions being selected from the MAS framework to match and reflect the Theory of Change outcomes (see Table 2 overleaf and Appendix A) and respond to the research questions. The surveys were conducted face to face by the HSO at the first client review meeting and then again at the fourth review meeting, approximately one year later.

The quantitative aspect of the research was augmented by a number of in-depth qualitative interviews. These were in two groups: the first set were conducted with clients, to gain further insight into their experiences of the scheme. The second set were with the Delivery Team and other key stakeholders, such as an Independent Financial Advisor, a representative from a homeless charity, and those involved in the mortgage repossession process (a lender representative; a member of the WMDC homelessness team; and a District Judge.) The aim of these interviews was twofold: firstly to establish what worked well in terms of the outcome evaluation, and secondly to explore the economic costs and effectiveness of the initiative.

In addition, existing management information (MI) was analysed via an online questionnaire to establish a benchmark position with former (i.e. completed) clients of the MBS scheme. Table 2 below details what methods were used to generate information corresponding to each TOC outcome.

Table 2: Theory of Change outcomes and methods

A complete copy of the Theory of Change is given in Appendix D.

TOC Outcomes	Analysis of MI and historical data	Pre and post intervention survey of current participants	In depth interviews with current participants	In depth interviews with key stakeholders
Clients understand their individual financial products, their situation and the potential implications **(Aligned to RQ1)**	-	✓	✓	✓
Clients finances improve within 3-6 months due to better decisions **(Aligned to RQ1)**	-	✓	✓	✓
Clients develop confidence and skills to manage their finances and deal with financial difficulties as they arise **(Aligned to RQ2)**	-	✓	✓	✓
Clients develop a positive approach to dealing with their money in the future **(Aligned to RQ2)**	-	✓	✓	✓
Clients are able to better manage their money and plan for the future **(Aligned to RQ2)**	-	✓	✓	✓
Clients are open and receptive to change and know where to go to get support **(Aligned to RQ3)**	-	✓	✓	✓
Quality of advice provided is underpinned by a recognised money/debt advice qualification **(Aligned to RQ3)**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quality of service provided increases as a result of better understanding of what works well and less well **(Aligned to RQ3)**	✓	✓	✓	✓

Hardcopy data generated through the surveys was collated using SurveyMonkey and then downloaded into SPSS for analysis purposes. The in-depth interviews were analysed using a thematic analysis process to establish meaningful patterns related to the research questions whilst also allowing new themes to develop.

3.5 Changes to methodology

The original evaluation plan aimed to engage 70 current or new clients in the survey process. The study was also due to conduct four in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, and two with clients.

However, the project encountered difficulty both in recruiting new programme participants (numbers having reduced over time as a result of them repaying their loans) and engaging some existing clients (who were deemed too vulnerable to participate), reducing the number of available respondents to the point where it became clear that the dataset would not be large enough to support robust statistical analysis. The team therefore revised the methodology, with the aim of still producing a useful amount of data while reducing reliance on survey responses. As such, the revised plan achieved 52 responses to the before-and-after surveys, plus six in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and four with current clients.

4: Key findings: outcome and impact evaluation

The findings from the baseline and follow-up surveys with the current recipients of the MBS scheme are presented below. Given the final sample of respondents is relatively small (n=52), any figures stated as percentages are for indicative use only as the bases are too low for these to be statistically robust. Survey responses were not matched for analysis.

The key research questions identified for the evaluation were:

- What support measures are more (and less) effective at developing better decisions for each client's needs and circumstances? *(Linked to the MAS Ability strand)*
- Can averting a mortgage crisis improve client skills and confidence across wider areas of financial capability? *(Linked to the MAS Mindset strand)*
- Are clients motivated to develop financial capability skills and confidence once their immediate crisis is resolved? *(Linked to the MAS Connection strand)*

Key findings for each of the research questions are presented below. Section 4.1 gives an overview of what kind of support the MBS scheme gives to clients and how useful clients found them; the change in clients' knowledge of their financial options before and after the scheme; and the extent to which clients understood and felt in control of their finances before and after the scheme. Section 4.2 looks at changes in clients' confidence in financial matters and their self-reported ability to deal with financial crises before and after the scheme. Section 4.3 looks at engagement and awareness at the end of the scheme specifically, and also considers the extent to which clients demonstrate financial capability on issues not related to the mortgage (such as ability to pay other bills on time.)

4.1 Increasing ability and identifying what measures are most effective (Linked to the MAS Ability strand)

TOC outcomes:

- *Clients understand their individual financial products, their situation and the potential implications*
- *Clients' finances improve within 3-6 months due to better decisions*

The initial phase of the programme is very practical and focuses on improving clients' understanding of financial products and concepts, as well as teaching them basic money management techniques (e.g. jam jar budgeting). To assess how effective this aspect of the scheme is, the surveys explored how useful participants found each of the different types of support they received, and the results are presented in table 3 below.

Table 3: Interventions and how useful recipients found them

Intervention received	Received inter-vention %	Received inter-vention #	% of recipients who found it … Not at all useful	Not very useful	Useful	Very Useful	Don't Know
Your Review Officer providing support whilst you made calls to your creditors	40	21	0	0	0	100	0
Help with future financial planning e.g. through jam jar accounts	6	3	0	0	0	100	0
Your Review Officer making calls to your creditors for you	85	44	0	0	2	98	0
Referral to other services for additional support	31	16	0	0	6	94	0
A financial statement	100	52	0	0	8	92	0
An action plan	96	50	0	0	12	88	0
Financial information fact sheets	65	34	0	0	15	85	0
Help with current financial planning e.g. through calendar work	29	15	0	0	27	73	0
Help with basic bank accounts	56	29	0	0	41	55	3

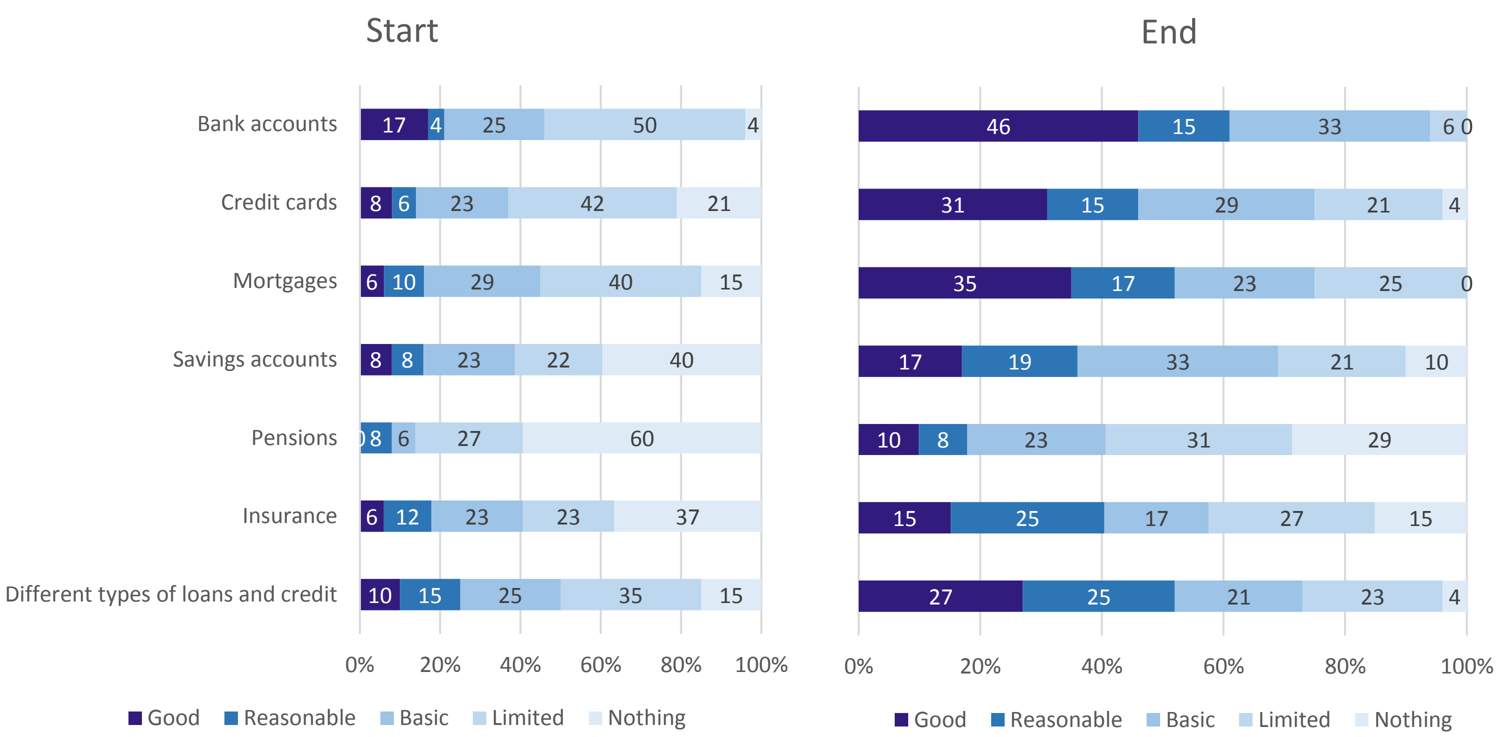
Total n=52. Participants only scored the usefulness of the support if they indicated they had received the intervention.

As can be seen from the data, in all cases, the majority of respondents who received each of the interventions deemed them to either be very useful or useful. Scoring most highly (100%) was the support provided by the HSO whilst making calls to creditors (n=21 of 21) and the help with future financial plans (n=3 of 3). Similarly the cohort also indicated that the HSO making calls on their behalf was very useful (n=43 of 44/98%).

Support measures that scored less well – but still helped a majority of participants – included help with basic bank accounts (n=16 of 29/55% found very useful) and help with current financial planning (n=11 of 15/73% found it very useful). Across all options no respondents recorded any measure as not very useful or not at all useful, highlighting the efficacy of the support team and materials provided.

To establish whether the MBS advice component has helped to build clients' understanding of what different financial products do, and assist in navigating the market to find options that are appropriate and useful for their personal situation, the research explored how good their knowledge was about various financial products before and after their time on the programme, as can be seen in figure 2:

Figure 2: Participant knowledge of financial products before and after the programme (n=52)



The data shows that at the start of the programme the only products where at least 20% (n=11 or higher) of respondents had good or reasonable knowledge were bank accounts, savings accounts and loans; at the end, more than 40% had good or reasonable knowledge about all products except pensions. The 'before' figures also highlight a general lack of financial knowledge across the cohort – it seems particularly noteworthy that, of a sample of 52 participants who by definition held mortgages, 15% (n=8) said they knew nothing about how mortgages worked at the start of the programme. All participants were of working or pensionable age: 60% (n=31) said they knew nothing about pensions.

As might be expected, one of the biggest increases in knowledge was about mortgages, with 52% (n=27) of respondents reporting a good or reasonable knowledge of mortgages afterward, compared to 15% (n=8) at the start; none afterwards reported knowing nothing. The proportions more than doubled of respondents with a good or reasonable understanding of credit cards (14% to 46%; n=7 to n=24), savings accounts (15% to 36%; n=8 to n=19), insurance (18% to 40%; n=9 to n=21), and types of loans and credit (25% to 52%; n=13 to n=27), while the proportion of those with a good or reasonable understanding of bank accounts almost tripled, from 21% (n=11) at the start to 61% (n=32) at the end.

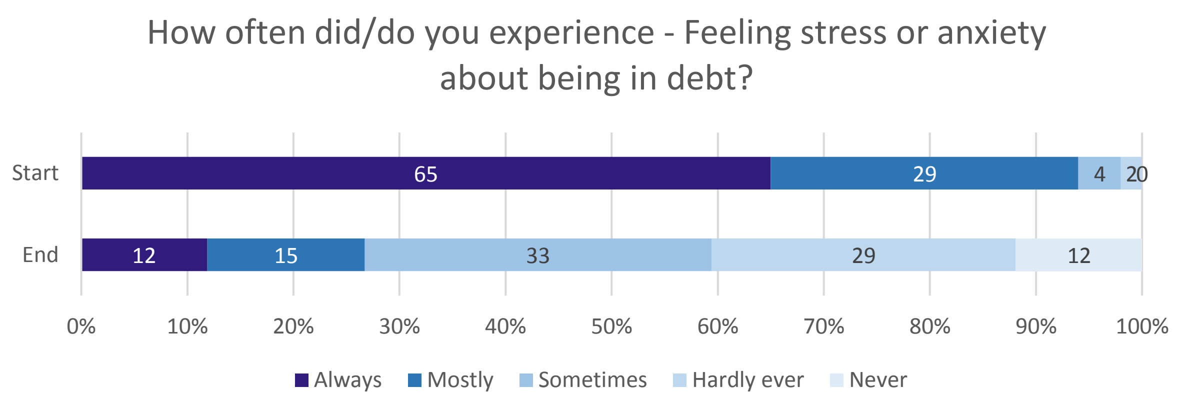
In addition to the practical skills needed to improve financial management, the HSO also works with the clients to help them better understand their financial situation. Many clients are at crisis point when they encounter the scheme – either having 'buried their heads in the sand' or unsuccessfully tried numerous other agencies to access support. As such, a good proportion of the initial review meetings and ad-hoc support is focussed on stabilising not only the clients' financial situation but also their emotional one in order to move forward.

The HSO therefore needs to assess the mindset of the clients when they start on the programme, their levels of stress and anxiety related to their finances, and their confidence in managing their own money. To look at the impact of this, clients were asked to rate how often they experienced the following factors at the start of the programme and how often they experienced them at the end:

- Feeling in control of your finances
- Feeling stress or anxiety about being in debt
- Being unable to sleep because of worry about your finances
- Being scared to answer the phone for fear of people chasing you for money
- Being scared to open your post
- Feeling the need to hide information about the money you owed

The resulting changes over the period of the project are marked, with the starkest change being the response to "How often did/do you experience [...] feeling stress or anxiety about being in debt?" (see figure 3.)

Figure 3: Participants' stress and anxiety (n=51 start, n=52 end)

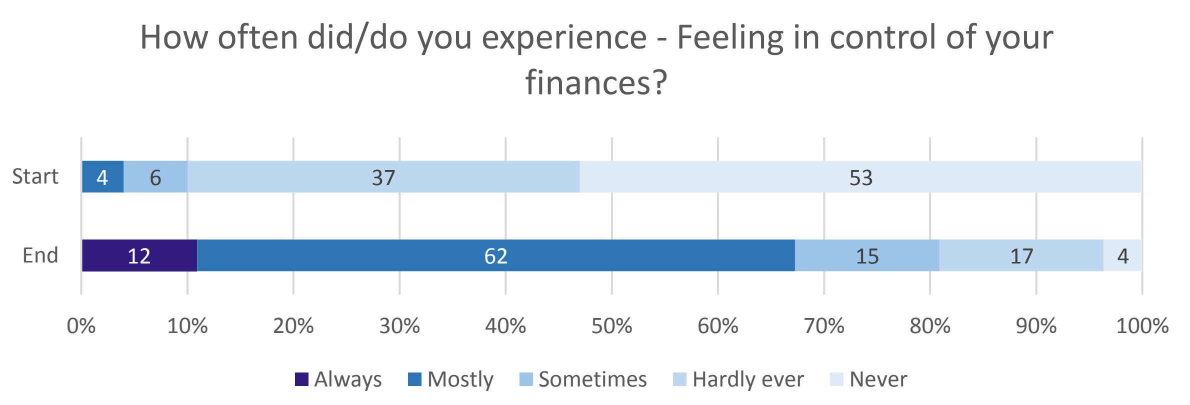


Start n=51; end n=52 (one participant did not answer these questions on the initial survey.)

At the beginning of the programme, 65% (n=33) of respondents said "always"; by the end of the programme this had reduced to 12% (n=6), and the proportion of clients who hardly ever, or never, felt stress had increased from 2% (n=1) to 41% (n=21). See figure 3.

In addition, zero clients reported "always" feeling in control of their finances at the start of the programme, and only 4% (n=2) "mostly" felt in control; 53% (n=27) reported "never" feeling in control. At the end of the programme, 12% (n=6) said they "always" felt in control and 52% (n=27) "mostly" did. See figure 4.

Figure 4: Participants' feeling of control (n=51 start, n=52 end)



Start n=51; end n=52 (one participant did not answer these questions on the initial survey.)

Other telling indicators of wellbeing are the 82% (n=43) of clients who initially reported “always” or “mostly” losing sleep due to financial worries; the 75% (n=39) who initially reported always or mostly being scared to answer the phone; and the 67% (n=34) who always or mostly stopped opening post. These illustrate the severe toll financial stress took on clients’ mental and physical health (often on top of existing health problems or disabilities). At the end of the programme, these figures were respectively reduced to 15%, 20% and 14% (n=8, n=10, n=7). This matches the findings of some other research on the health impacts of financial advice, e.g. Europe Economics’ finding that “debt advice had beneficial impacts upon the incidence of depression, anxiety and panic attacks” (Europe Economics 2018, p.1.)

The qualitative interviews bear this out, as client respondents mentioned the impact of the programme on their morale and wellbeing almost from the start. The case study below outlines just how dire the initial situation is for some individuals, and the type of scenario the scheme averts.

Fiona’s story

“I’d had a breakdown, I wasn’t opening any post or answering any calls or anything … I first went to CAB, with a carrier bag of letters that hadn’t been answered …”

Fiona was made redundant from her school after a decade of work, and wasn’t able to find another job quickly. Despite having never previously been in debt, she was soon in arrears with her mortgage and then in debt for other things, and the stress of being out of work on top of increasing pressure from her lender, all while trying to support her son, pushed her into a nervous breakdown. She stopped answering the phone or answering the door, and finally summoned up the courage to go to Citizens Advice, taking a bag of unopened letters.

CAB were able to go through her letters and establish what the situation was, and put her in touch with the debt charity StepChange as well as with MBS. MBS took over dealing with Fiona’s lender, and also sent someone to support her in court and confirm that she would have a loan to pay off the arrears.

MBS’ intervention interrupted court proceedings that had already started. Without them, the repossession would have gone through, and Fiona and her son would have been homeless.

Afterwards

“I’ve never had a lot of money so I’ve always had to survive as best I can, but it’s made me - put into perspective what is important, to make sure you get your priorities right.”

Stabilising the mortgage saw Fiona’s mental health improve dramatically and she is now back in work. She has paid off the MBS loan without missing a payment, and with careful budgeting managed to up her regular payments and clear the loan early. She no longer uses a credit card, and is gradually rebuilding her credit rating.

Names and details have been changed

In assessing “What support measures are more (and less) effective at developing better decisions for each client’s needs and circumstances?”, the data here indicate that clients found general basic financial information to be useful but that nearly all benefited from direct support from the HSO – either contacting creditors instead of the client or providing in-person support while the client did so.

There seems to be good indications that the scheme helps “*clients understand their individual financial products, their situation and the potential implications”* (TOC outcome.) Clients’ understanding of their own financial products (especially mortgages) and of the range and nature of financial products and services in general showed marked improvement across the board. Clients’ understanding of their own financial situations improved and their general emotional state showed distinct improvements, with a sharp drop in the proportions of those unable or unwilling to think about or begin to engage with their financial issues.

Looking at the other TOC outcome linked to this section, "*clients' finances improve within 3-6 months due to better decisions",* it was not possible to confirm a concrete improvement in clients' finances 'due to better decisions': in the case of MBS clients, six months post-crisis is often still not out of the woods – e.g. many respondents indicated that while they were better able to deal with their financial issues they were still not able to save routinely. However, the data demonstrates clear improvements in clients' day-to-day money management and general financial capability after one year.

When examining what support measures are more and less effective at developing better decisions for each client's needs and circumstances, the role of the HSO is fundamental. The HSO conducts the initial capability review to assess clients' needs and ability and then determines the level and type of support required. With the move to the more autonomous client-enabling model, the HSO needs to ensure the client has (or has the capacity to develop) the requisite ability and knowledge to undertake the recommended action. Encouraging the client to build confidence is also a key part of the HSO role, and is explored in detail in the following section.

4.2 Developing skills and confidence across wider areas of financial capability (Linked to the MAS Mindset strand)

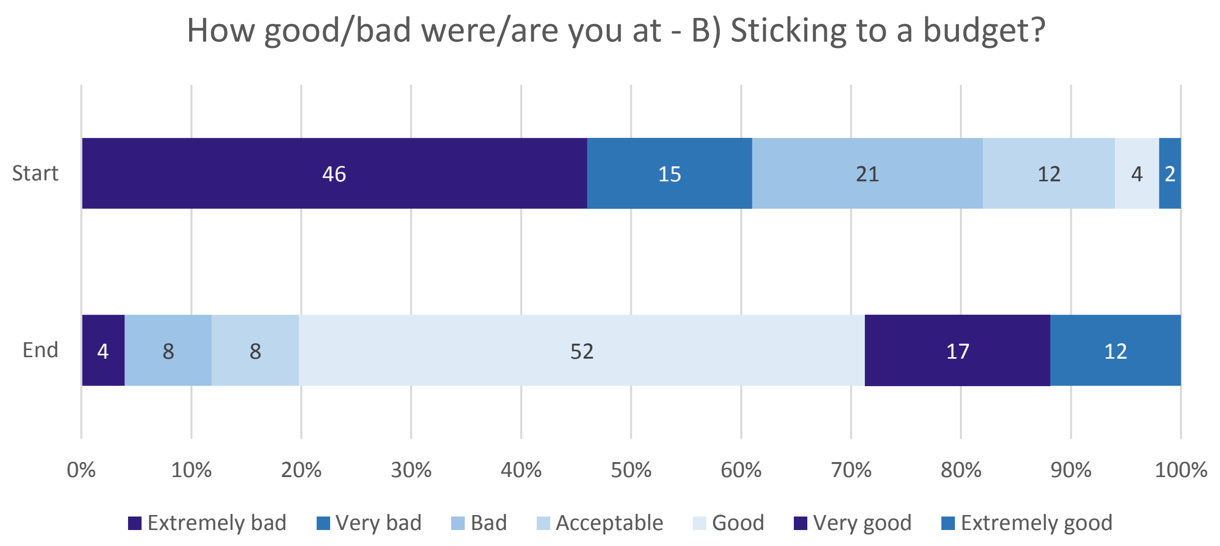
TOC Outcomes:

- *Clients develop confidence and skills to manage their finances and deal with financial difficulties as they arise*
- *Clients develop a positive approach to dealing with their money in the future*
- *Clients are able to better manage their money and plan for the future*

As the programme progresses, the HSO continues to work with clients to improve other aspects of financial capability, such as increasing the clients' confidence in managing their money and developing a positive approach to dealing with money in the future. The survey findings suggest that clients see a marked improvement in their financial capability in these areas – both in terms of things they undertook themselves (e.g. budgeting) and those requiring negotiation with other parties.

At the start of the programme, only 14% (n=7, of total n=52) of respondents were "very confident" to write down their income and expenditure, and only 10% (n=5) very confident to produce an income/expenditure calendar; by the end of the programme this had risen to 46% (n=24) and 45% (n=23). 29% (n=15) of respondents reported being "extremely bad" at creating budgets at the start, 46% (n=24) extremely bad at sticking to them (see figure 5), and 41% (n=21) extremely bad at keeping track of their spending. By the end of the programme, these figures had dropped to 0, 4% (n=2) and 4% (n=2) respectively.

Figure 5: Participants' ability to stick to a budget (n=52)

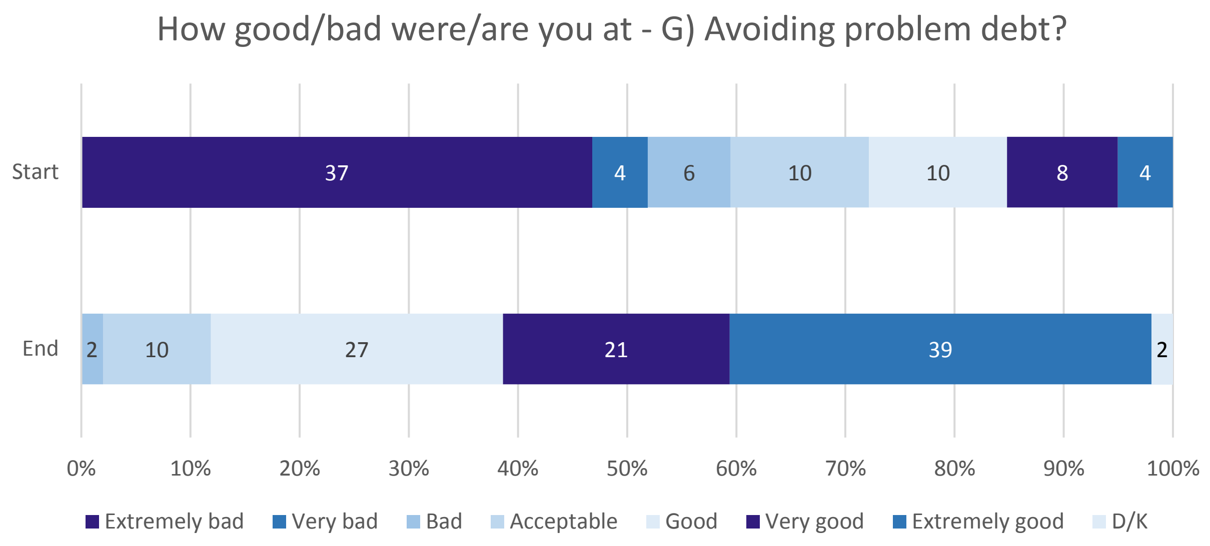


Respondents reported similar improvements in their confidence and ability to negotiate with (non-mortgage) creditors, with 53% (n=28) reporting at the end of the programme that they were "very" or "fairly" confident to call their creditors and 42% (n=22) that they were very or fairly confident to negotiate directly – up from 18% (n=9) and 16% (n=8) respectively at the start.

Clients also generally reported feeling more confident to research financial matters (including competing providers, financial products, and benefit entitlement.) The percentage of respondents who felt very or fairly confident to explore and switch utility providers for a better deal went from 18% to 71% (n=9 to n=37), and those very or fairly confident to switch bank accounts increased from 15% to 48% (n=8 to n=25). At the start of the programme, only 8% (n=4) of respondents said they were very or extremely good at checking tax and benefit entitlements; at the end of the programme this had risen to 46% (n=24). Similarly, the percentage of clients who said they were very or extremely good at finding affordable credit (as opposed to short-term/high-interest) had risen to 51% (n=26 of 51 – one participant did not answer this element), from an initial 6% (n=3 of 51).

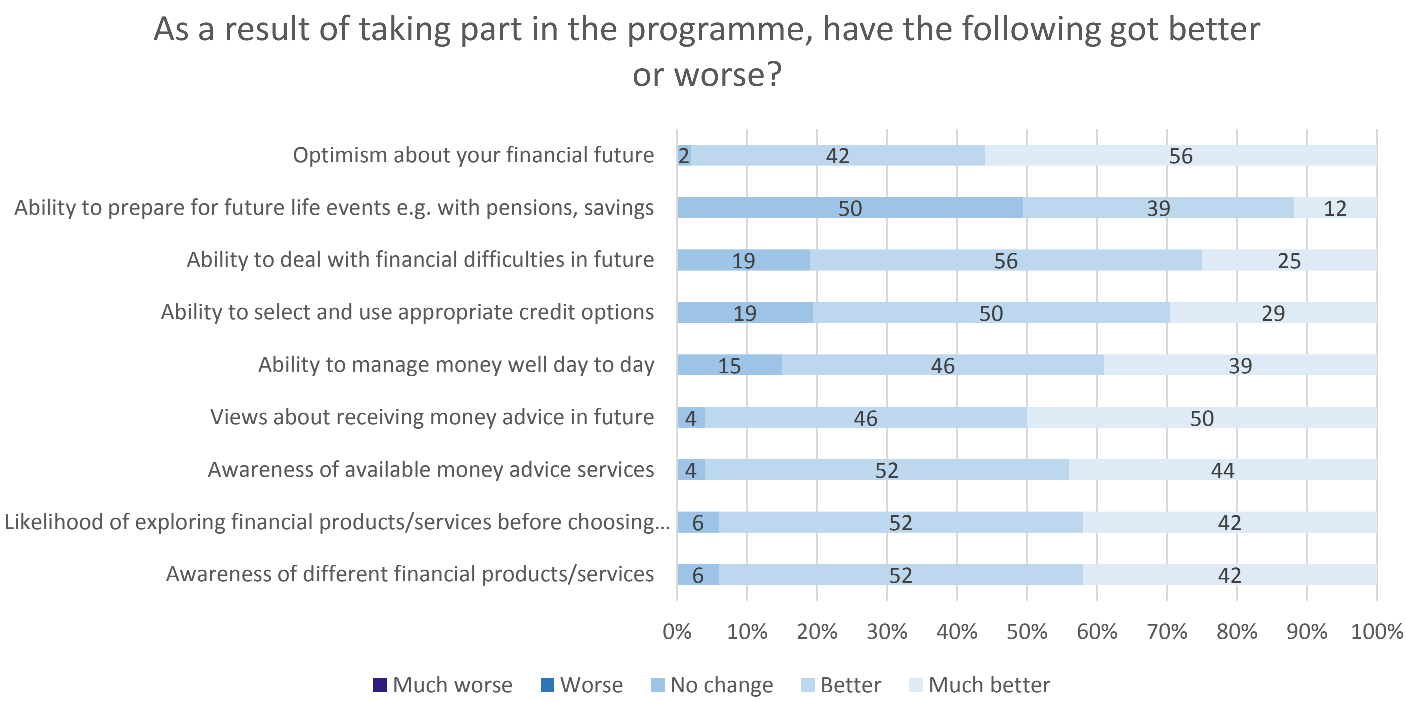
Overall, at the end of the programme, 60% (n=31) of participants said they were very or extremely good at avoiding problem debt and none said they were very or extremely bad at it. This represents an almost total reversal from the figures at the start of the programme. See figure 6.

Figure 6: Participants' ability to avoid problem debt (n=52)



Finally, in order to assess whether clients have developed a more positive approach to dealing with their financial situation and are planning for the future, the research explored participants' own perception of changes in their financial capability and attitudes to financial products, money advice, and their financial future, as highlighted in figure 7:

Figure 7: Participants' attitudes to finance and their financial future (n=52)



In the main, respondents reported a very healthy improvement across the board in their ability to respond to financial issues in the future. Encouragingly, zero participants – none, to any component of the question – reported that their awareness or ability had become worse; only a few reported no change, with one notable exception, where 50% (n=26) of respondents reported no change in their ability to prepare financially for future life events. This reflects the fact that some clients even some time post-crisis still often have straitened resources and/or poor credit; this may be an early indicator of which clients are most at risk of remaining in financial difficulties or of slipping back into them.

The contrast is striking, though, between this response and that of their perceived ability to *deal* with financial difficulties in future, where 81% (n=42) said it had become better or much better. This would seem to indicate that participants have gained substantial financial confidence, even if they still lack the resources to plan securely.

Other figures tend to bear out this impression: 85% (n=44) said their ability to manage money well day to day was better or much better; 94% (n=49) said their knowledge of different financial products was better or much better; 96% (n=50) had more favourable views of receiving money advice in future, a huge difference in mindset.

Overall clients showed substantial increases in confidence and skill in handling financial issues, both in dealing with their own finances (e.g. creating and tracking budgets) and in dealing with banks, utilities and creditors. Clients reported markedly more optimism about their financial future at the end of the programme and generally felt better prepared to navigate future financial issues, and showed improved understanding of how to navigate those issues if and when they arose (e.g. greater awareness of the options available to deal with debt.)

In assessing “Can averting a mortgage crisis improve client skills and confidence across wider areas of financial capability?” and the equivalent TOC outcomes, the data indicate a positive impact: the skills clients initially learn to help navigate the crisis appear to stick afterwards and be incorporated into clients’ financial planning across the board.

4.3 Ongoing engagement and connections (Linked to the MAS Connection strand)

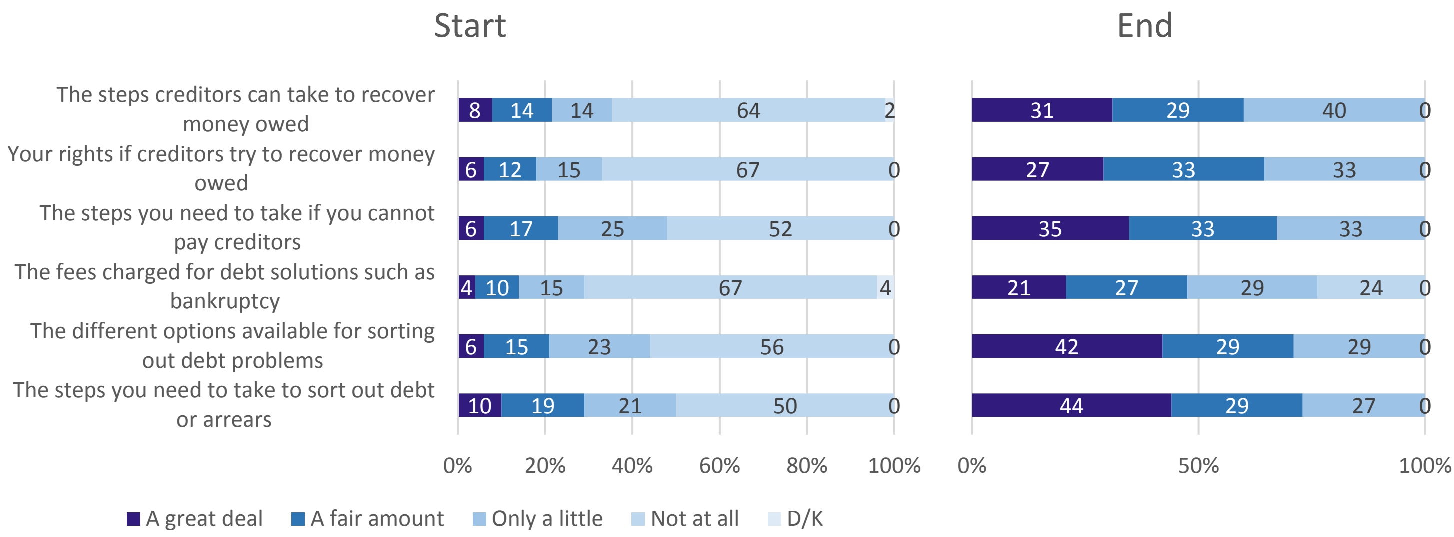
TOC outcomes:

- *Clients are open and receptive to change and know where to go to get support*
- *Quality of advice provided is underpinned by a recognised money/debt advice qualification*
- *Quality of service provided increases as a result of better understanding of what works well and less well*

The final elements of the outcome evaluation explored clients’ ongoing engagement once the immediate crisis is resolved, their ability to avoid returning to financial difficulties and their knowledge of the support available should they do so.

A key objective of the revised scheme is to reduce the number of clients that remain in or slip back into financial difficulties after the initial crisis is settled. To tackle this, the Delivery Team has focused on maintaining client engagement throughout the programme and ensuring clients are fully aware of issues around problem debt and how to avoid it. Figure 8 below sets out clients’ understanding of debt issues at the start and end of the programme, asking how much they understood about each point.

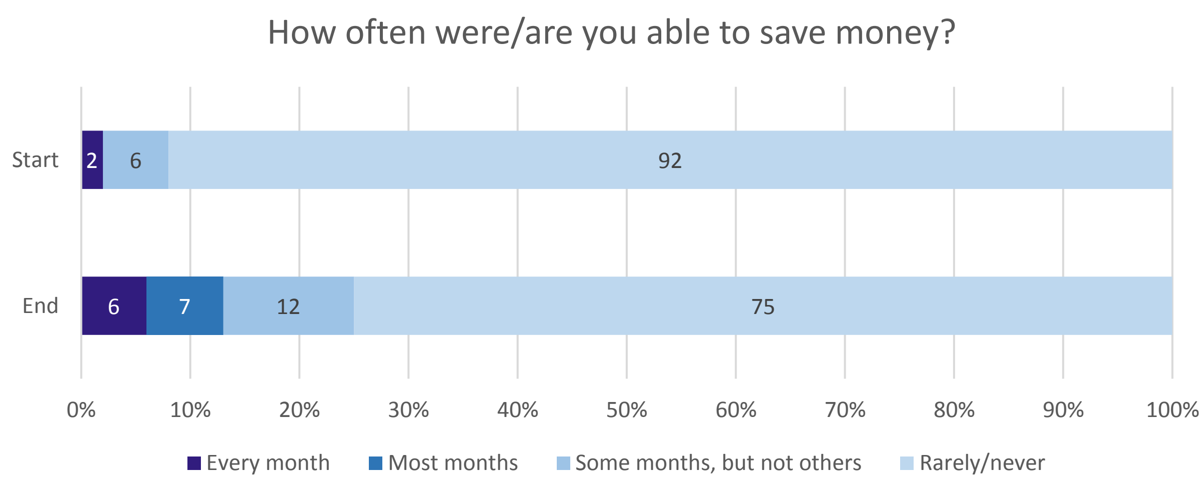
Figure 8: Participants' understanding of financial processes and their rights (n=52)



As can be seen, at the start of the scheme the majority of respondents stated they had little or no knowledge of most key factors linked to debt resolution and their rights as a consumer. Over the course of the programme, through the information sheets provided and tasks set in the action plan, the bulk of respondents now know at least a fair amount about most aspects of debt management. Of particular note is the increase in understanding of clients' rights (60% [n=31] now have a great deal or fair amount of knowledge, up from 18% [n=9]), the options for sorting out debt problems (71% [n=36], up from 21% [n=11]) and the steps to take if you can't pay creditors (up from 23% [n=12] with some knowledge at the start to 68% [n=35] at the end).

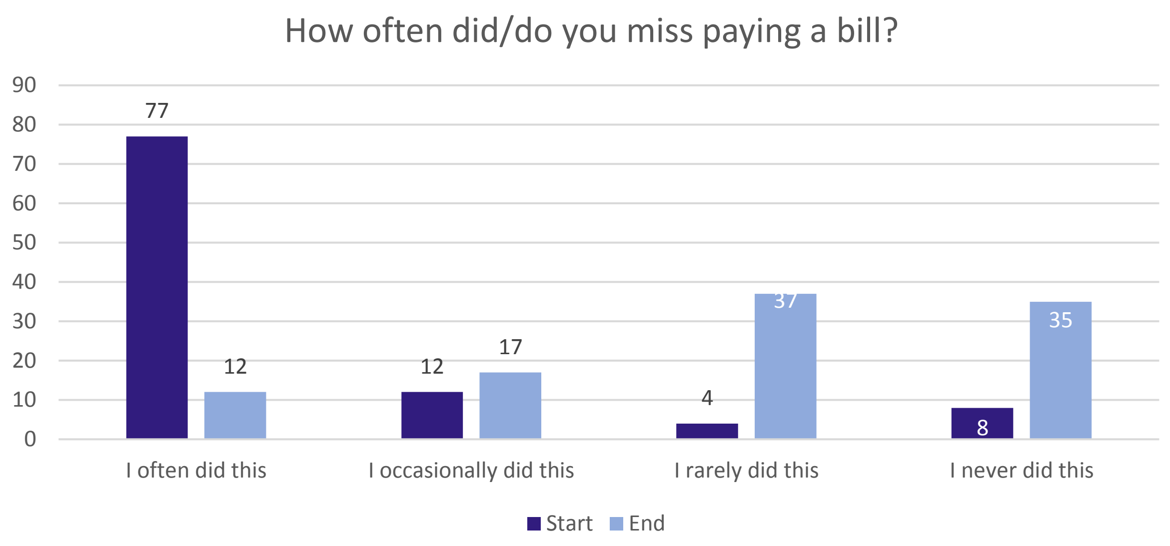
Other indicators that clients have better money management skills can be seen in the proportion of the client cohort that are able to save (figure 9 below). Initially over 90% (n=48) of respondents stated they were never or only rarely able to save. At the end of the evaluation period this had reduced to 75% (n=39) of the cohort. Whilst the majority are still not able to save regularly, it does indicate the direction of travel and the beginnings of a more financially stable future. See figure 9.

Figure 9: Participants' ability to save money (n=52)



Similarly, when asked to indicate how often they missed or delayed paying a bill, 77% (n=39) of respondents reported that they often did this at the start of the programme, whereas only 12% (n=6) recorded they did this at the end (see figure 10).

Figure 10: Participants' tendency to miss or delay bills



Starting n=51, end n=52 (one participant did not answer this question on the first survey.)

This highlights that clients' financial difficulties tend to stabilise, and that participants are demonstrating improved money management skills. By maintaining regular payments and keeping on top of bills clients are less likely to turn to emergency loans or incur short-term, high-interest payments. This improved situation is reflected in the case study of another client:

Stephanie's story

"Everything was just crumbling around me. I felt like I was drowning."

Stephanie was unexpectedly let go from the company where she had held a good job for twenty years. Unable to get another job immediately, and mired in tribunal proceedings, the arrears mounted up, and with no prospect of being able to clear the debt she slid into depression, at the lowest point attempting to take her own life.

She ended up going to her city council offices, who signposted her to the Mortgage Breathing Space scheme. MBS were able to offer Stephanie a loan to clear the debt while she got back into work and the tribunal settlement came through, and into a position where she was able to make payments again.

Before finding MBS, Stephanie had gone from a good income to almost nothing with no warning, and had no idea of how she was going to make ends meet – without the scheme, she would undoubtedly have lost her house and an already untenable situation would have become catastrophic. Without the MBS loan, Stephanie told us, she would likely not be here today.

Afterwards

Before losing her job Stephanie had, in her own words, "stuck her head in the sand" about her debts and was on a debt management plan. As well as the loan, MBS helped her build the skills to deal with her existing debt as well as mortgage arrears, and she has been living within her means for some time now. She is more confident in managing her money, and is in the process of rebuilding her credit rating.

“They took the fear and the stress and the admin away from me at a time when I couldn't have coped with it.”

Names and details have been changed

Another key indicator for the efficacy of the scheme is the level of engagement once the initial crisis has been resolved. As previously noted, the MI maintained by the Delivery Team and supported by the benchmark survey of previous clients found that a quarter of all previous participants slipped back into financial difficulties within a year of the original loan being made. In addition, their levels of engagement with and attendance at review meetings also reduced over this timeframe.

The research explored to what extent this behaviour could be influenced by procedural changes in the service provided by the Delivery Team. A key TOC element for improving quality of delivery was for all members of the Homeowner Support Team to undertake an accredited debt and money advice qualification to improve provision; all members now hold the Certificate in Money Advice and Practice through the Institute of Money Advisers.

As a result of this training and ongoing review of MI, the team implemented a number of procedural changes which have had a positive impact on clients’ engagement with the programme. For example:

- Including a face-to-face handover meeting from the client’s original contact (the Loans Officer) to the HSO - their contact for the remainder of the programme. Previously there had been a gap of up to three months between the sign off of the loan and the meeting with the HSO. The team recognised that this was too long for the client to go without any form of contact, which impacted on engagement and motivation.
- The Loan Officer facilitating the handover to the HSO, which maintains the circle of trust already developed between the client and the Delivery Team, allows the client to associate positive news (acceptance for the loan) with the HSO, and effectively continues the named single point of contact relationship already established. In addition, at this meeting both the LO and HSO are able to reiterate the importance of the client fully engaging with the scheme and maintaining regular contact.
- Restructuring the appointments process to shift the emphasis from relying on the client making appointments to the Delivery Team informing them of the date and time of the next meeting, and asking the client to contact them if this is not convenient.
- Reviewing and rewording all written communication with the client to simplify the language and technical terminology used, to focus on only one or two key actions or messages in each contact and to emphasise time-bound, agreed actions agreed rather than intentions (e.g. “By the next meeting you/I will have …”)

These simple but effective procedural changes have resulted in increased engagement across the board. For example, the proportion of clients needing to be chased to agree a review meeting has reduced from 38% of the benchmark cohort to just 12% with the current cohort, and the number of missed appointments (no-shows) has reduced from 16% to 6%. Increased engagement has also drastically reduced the number of ‘crisis callouts’ (i.e. the HSO being called out unexpectedly to resolve an emergency situation/attend court to deal with a creditor) from two or three contacts a week down to one or two a month.

Finally, the research compared the number of clients remaining or falling back into financial difficulties across the two programmes. Prior to the start of the pilot programme this figure had stayed constant at about 25% per year. Under the new scheme this has successfully been reduced to 17%.

Clients at the end of the programme were much more aware of debt issues, as well as having a much better understanding of their rights and options when in financial difficulty (see also 4.2). Clients' financial situations are more settled and indicators of good financial practice are visible. In gauging "Are clients motivated to develop financial capability skills and confidence once their immediate crisis is resolved?" the indications seem to be positive. There is clear support for the TOC outcome that "*Clients are open and receptive to change and know where to go to get support".*

The MBS team all now hold an IMA-accredited Certificate in Money Advice and Practice. They have also made several small but fruitful changes to the way the application and review process works, with a cumulative effect of improving engagement, clarifying procedures, and dramatically reducing the number of 'emergency' client contacts. These fulfil the TOC outcomes that "*Quality of advice provided is underpinned by a recognised money/debt advice qualification"* and "*Quality of service provided increases as a result of better understanding of what works well and less well.*"

4.4 Conclusions

- **What support measures are more (and less) effective at developing better decisions for each client's needs and circumstances?**

  All the types of support provided by MBS were rated useful or very useful by a majority of clients who received them, but the type of support the largest number of clients found most useful was intensive personal support from the HSO – either to make calls for them or to provide support whilst the client did so. The client interviewees also repeatedly brought up the vital quasi-pastoral role of the HSO – often, simply to be there and to be contactable when clients felt unable to manage.

- **Can averting a mortgage crisis improve client skills and confidence across wider areas of financial capability?**
- **Are clients motivated to develop financial capability skills and confidence once their immediate crisis is resolved?**

  The data indicates that averting the crisis can in many cases be a good opportunity to reach clients who would not previously have sought money advice, and that the support provided by MBS helps clients improve their general financial skills including in areas not directly related to their mortgage, and in many cases greatly improve their financial confidence.

4.5 Impact on the What Works Fund priorities

The overarching aim of the evaluation was to establish whether a mortgage crisis intervention aimed at preventing homelessness could be successful in improving longer-term attitudes and behaviours towards money management including budgeting, credit and debt, and the data certainly supports this position. The project has produced good indicative evidence of improvement in participants' financial wellbeing (current more than future); in their ability to manage money well day to day; in their understanding of debt and credit (cf. MAS policy question 3.2); in their general knowledge of financial products, services and processes (e.g. how to negotiate with creditors); and in their confidence to deal with financial issues should they arise.

Looking at MAS policy question 3.1, on helping adults improve their financial capability, the project's findings also indicate that, while reaching crisis point can certainly be a motivator for MBS clients to improve their financial capability (if only because, as one interviewee said, they never wanted it to happen again), they cannot meaningfully take steps towards this until the immediate threat is dealt with or at least staved off. It's also clear that in the case of MBS, which encounters its clients at an intensely vulnerable and traumatic time of their lives, personal rapport is crucial, especially at early stages. Improvements in financial capability only come once trust has been established.

4.6 Lessons learned

What works well

With the odd exception, the majority of the interviewees were genuinely enthusiastic about the scheme and the positive outcomes that it had had for themselves and their families; and were able to identify a wide range of factors that contributed to this. They include those relating to: the ethos to the project; the quality of the support; the project delivery and ongoing support; and most importantly, the peace of mind and reassurance of being given a lifeline at their lowest point. More details are given in table 4.

Table 4: What works

<table>
<tr>
<td>Approach
Non-judgemental and supportive
Face to Face in the clients home
Build confidence and trust
Realistic assessment of financial situation</td>
<td>Project delivery
Staffing is key – need knowledge, experience and ability to ‘push’ the client when needed
Ensure individual needs are identified and appropriate interventions are agreed
Good quality information in simple non-technical language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement
Continuity of contact – face to face handovers and named contacts
Regular contact and follow up
Clear, simple communications and timebound tasks</td>
<td>Wider Links
Good knowledge of and access to other services
Joined-up provision for complex needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">Clients’ Comments:

The reassurance and taking the stress away from me having to deal with my mortgage provider. The personal support was amazing – everyone I dealt with were great, helpful, supportive, calm and patient.

The support provided by the team has been amazing. The trust has been built up between us when at one point I just didn’t know if I would ever be able to trust anyone again.

Learning how to do a financial statement each month helped me and I still do one every month now. We are much better with our finances now.

The assistance provided by the scheme by attending court repossession proceedings. The knowledge of the scheme and how to apply this was invaluable. The scheme prevented the repossession of my house and gave me time to sell it at market value.

Someone to speak to face to face. I’m nervous on the phone and didn’t feel confident ringing my creditors but am better now. I make myself do it now and do feel more in control.</td>
</tr>
</table>

What worked less well

What became clear is that, while the shift in focus to building skills and supporting clients to resolve problems themselves has generally been successful, there is currently – and possibly will always be – a subset of vulnerable cases where clients require and continue to require intensive support and/or for WMDC to 'take ownership' of the crisis in order for it to be resolved. However, this is a small minority: it is evident that most clients substantially improved both their understanding of financial issues (Ability) and their confidence in dealing with them (Mindset) over the course of the programme. While all of the clients interviewed expressed their gratitude for the degree of support the HSO provides, it seems fairly clear that many of the straightforward and average cases might be manageable with less. (Indeed, one of the clients interviewed said as much.)

One possible solution might be a triage system, to identify vulnerable clients or those with multiple intersecting issues and prioritise those for intensive support, whilst maintaining a lighter touch (and managing expectations as regards support for non-mortgage issues, out-of-hours contact, etc.) with less complex cases. This mirrors what is already standard practice for homelessness prevention across LAs (though council obligations to those not deemed in priority need have extended under the new Act.)

Other outcomes

The project did not produce any unexpected outcomes, although interview comments did highlight a number of aspects of the MBS scheme not centred in this project, and which might be fruitful avenues for more in-depth investigation (e.g. the psychological impact of mortgage crisis and its aversion.)

5: Economic evaluation

Whilst the findings from the outcome evaluation provide a clear insight into the efficacy of the MBS scheme in improving financial capability and the impact it has on people's lives, it is also important to consider the cost implications of delivering the programme and the benefits (or otherwise) of doing so.

The MBS scheme, as far as is known, is unique in the support it provides, the way it is delivered and the funding model underpinning it. As such, the economic evaluation is unable to draw on any direct comparator projects in relation to value for money. Instead this section seeks to set out the costs of delivering the programme to different types of clients, based on MI from the Delivery Team, and what the potential costs would be if the scheme did not exist.

5.1 Delivery costs based on client type

The MBS client base is highly mixed; the one factor in common is that each household was in mortgage difficulties for an extended period prior to applying for the MBS loan. As mentioned in section 1.3, less than 50% of applicants meet the MBS eligibility criteria (i.e. insufficient equity in the property, lack of consent from owners and lenders or merely a disengagement with the process) and, as such, many of the current cohort could have easily ended up experiencing repossession had they not been accepted on the scheme.

The circumstances of clients' falls into crisis also vary substantially; by the time they contact WMDC, they may or may not have acquired other debts and may be at any stage along the repossession 'track', up to and including already having had a court date. The client base is a mix of what MAS defines as 'struggling' households (not financially resilient, no real savings buffer; arrears turn into crisis very quickly) and 'squeezed' ones (managing, but with little provision for coping with income shocks; may struggle along in arrears for some time before seeking help), with more in the latter category than the former. Additionally, many of these clients fall into groups that would struggle to raise alternative finance and/or who are not attractive candidates for competitive mortgage products. For example, whilst there is no 'typical' case, MBS clients are:

- often older (25 of 52 clients over 50)
- often have serious health issues or disabilities (36 of 52 clients were either disabled or the partner of a disabled co-applicant; 17 of 52 cited ill health as the main reason for their crisis). Even those who did not identify themselves to WMDC as ill or disabled frequently reported depression and anxiety around their finances, and other symptoms including disturbed sleep and increased anxiety around answering the phone or opening post (see section 4.)
- often, at the time of application to MBS, out of employment (32 of 52 clients received state benefits; 14 of 52 respondents cited loss of a job or failure of a business as the trigger point for their mortgage crisis).

Table 5 below shows the characteristics of clients in the current cohort.

Table 5: Characteristics and demographic information

		Number	*% of cohort*
Respondent gender (primary respondent, for couples)	**M**	20	*39*
	F	32	*62*
Age of respondent (primary respondent, for couples)	**<20**	0	*0*
	21-30	1	*2*
	31-40	8	*15*
	41-50	18	*35*
	51-60	20	*39*
	61-70	4	*8*
	70+	1	*2*
Marital status	**Single/divorced/widowed**	30	*58*
	Cohabiting/married	22	*42*
Ethnicity	**White**	51	*98*
	Asian	1	*2*
Employment status	**FT**	8	*15*
	PT	4	*8*
	Self-employed	8	*15*
	Benefits	32	*62*
Disability status (respondent, or at least one respondent of a couple)	**Disabled**	36	*69*
	Not disabled	16	*31*
Children living at home	**Yes**	15	*29*
	No	37	*71*
House was RTB	**Yes**	17	*33*
	No	35	*67*
Nature of intervention	**Stayed in house**	46	*88*
	Support for Sale	6	*12*

All the above make the process of finding new housing more difficult, even before the impact of poor credit or a recent repossession is accounted for. These factors, especially in combination, can also mean that clients are more vulnerable and require more intensive support from their HSO, or more instances of the HSO directly handling matters rather than supporting the client to do so.

Below are three example scenarios – not based on specific clients – that represent straightforward, average and challenging cases from the WMDC Delivery Team's experience. (A fuller breakdown of costs is given in Appendix C. Costs given are staff and overheads and do not include the actual sum of the loan, as this will be repaid or recovered.)

Case scenario 1		Minimum or straightforward intervention	
Brief description			
A client who has only the one mortgage, no CCJs or other orders. No wider debt issues other than priority debts with minimal areas. Client engages well, is honest and provides full disclosure of problem and solutions attempted. Client has engaged previously with lender and provides all requested information quickly. Lender is supportive and engages without incident/ no signature issues over consent and provides information and consents within reasonable timescales. Client obtains required IFA and turns round the Loan Offer Document within 1 week. Client owns problem and is willing to be supported and develop skills and confidence to tackle and resolve.			
Average total time to achieve loan completion within this scenario			8 weeks
Total person hours	59.5	**Total estimated cost**	£1,883.01

Case scenario 2		Medium or typical intervention	
Brief description			
A client with one mortgage and a secured loan, both of which are subject to some part of the loan payment, client with no other orders/CCJs but with 5 sets of unsecured debt, all of which need token payments etc. putting in place. Lenders are reasonable but leave something to be desired re action/attitude and providing information on time. Client engagement is OK but usually needs 1 gentle reminder.			
Average total time to achieve loan completion within this scenario			12 weeks
Total person hours	100.5	**Total estimated cost**	£3,127.77

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Case scenario 3</th><th colspan="2">Maximum or challenging intervention</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Brief description</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Client with mortgage, secured loan and two charging orders, multiple unsecured debts (seven or eight credit and catalogue accounts), poor engagement and an unwillingness to accept their situation. Lender is aggressive but very slow to send information and also challenges everything you ask for or suggest unless you threaten MCOB and the Ombudsman. Client needs hand-holding and pushing throughout the process; poor engagement; generally needs phone calls, text messages and letters to keep things moving; and is slow at returning information.

Final person hours and costs depend on whether a solution can be arrived at, or whether this is not possible and the case is sent for recovery.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Average total time to achieve loan completion within this scenario</td><td colspan="2">minimum 6 months; worst case more than 10 months</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Total person hours</td><td>150.5 (based on recovery alone, where clients have failed to engage and recovery action is progressed).</td><td rowspan="2">Total estimated cost</td><td>£4,075.47 (for recovery)</td></tr>
<tr><td>164.5 (where client engages and has reviews whilst a solution is developed and implemented – usually 24 months.)</td><td>£4,724.31 (best case figure where offers are agreed and reviews continue for a further 2 years).</td></tr>
</table>

5.2 The costs and consequences of homelessness and mortgage repossession

As is evidenced above, the cost of delivering the MBS scheme even in the most 'simple' case is not insubstantial and this rises considerably for the more complex scenarios. That said, this outlay needs to be considered in the context of the financial costs and social consequences which would be incurred if the support was not provided. The following section attempts to quantify these factors.

Putting a single numerical value on the cost – to Councils and ultimately to the taxpayer – of mortgage repossession is complex: as noted above, while there are some commonly-seen patterns, the reasons MBS clients fall into arrears and come to face repossession are many and varied, as are the types of household affected, and so it is hard to estimate what would typically happen if MBS did not exist and the repossessions prevented ended up going through. Insofar as it is possible to state a general case, the research found that where the MBS scheme enables participants to stay in their homes, or safely negotiate a sale and move to a smaller property, it is preventing the participants from ending up in more precarious housing, or homeless.

A number of previous studies and reports conducted by housing charities and the government estimate the cost to the public of homelessness, usually by attempting to add up the cost of the services provided to a homeless person by their local authorities, the health service, the benefits system, and other parts of government.

Some of the figures suggested by research in the last twenty years or so are:

- The 2012 *Evidence review of the costs of homelessness* (DCLG) report rounds up various estimates from the early 2000s; this includes a New Policy Institute estimate of £24,500 per person per year and a New Economics Foundation estimate of £26,000 pppa. It also notes a case from the 2009 *MEAM Manifesto* of a single person with multiple support needs costing more than £400,000 per year.
- *At What Cost?* (Crisis, 2015) gives four illustrative examples of possible costs of single people becoming homeless, of £9,336, £23,466, £25,556 and £40,256 pppa.
- *Better than Cure* (Crisis, 2016) estimates public spending of £34,518 per homeless person per year.
- Crisis' plan to end homelessness (PwC, 2018) estimates that preventing people at immediate risk of homelessness from becoming homeless saves 2.7 times as much as it costs (that is, for every £1 spent, £2.70 would be saved) over the next two decades. This includes estimates of reduced costs to the NHS and other public services, and of increased economic output as people are more likely to stay in employment.

Most of these estimates focus on single homeless people; hard data on the costs to the state of families becoming homeless is harder to come by. However, a 1999 report conducted by the JRF concluded that "the effects of mortgage repossession on families are so great that repossession should be avoided wherever possible" (Findings summary, *The social consequences of mortgage repossession for parents and their children,* August 1999.) The report also summarises the effects of repossession on a number of factors as outlined in Table 6 below.

Table 6: The social consequences of mortgage repossession

The social consequences of mortgage repossession					
The process of mortgage repossession and losing the family home may have consequences for:					
Social status and identity	*Personal and family relationships*	*Health and wellbeing*	*Quality of life*	*Future aspirations*	*Children's wellbeing*
Stigma Humiliation Embarrassment Loss of 'owner' status Sense of failure Letting family down Loss of confidence Loss of self-esteem Sense of regret Becoming 'second-class citizens'	Marital breakdown Relationship tension Split up of household Arguments Lost 'hopes and dreams' Loss of trust in relationships Parenting difficulties	Poor mental health Poor physical health Depression Stress	Homelessness Loss of lifestyle Poverty Long-term debt Insecure tenancy Social isolation Loss of job Loss of friends Unsuitable accommodation Lack of space Loss of personal possessions No access to credit Loss of pets	Financial insecurity Fear of the future Fear they can't buy house again No independence Social isolation Poverty in old age	Loss of friends Impact on schooling Poor health Emotional insecurity

Adapted from Nettleton S., Burrows R., & Seavers J. (1999) "Findings: The social consequences of mortgage repossession for parents and their children." JRF.

The authors found "dramatic and overwhelmingly negative" impacts on evictees' sense of self-worth; personal and family relationships; social networks and sense of social connection; physical and mental health; financial stability in both the short and long term; inclination and ability to stay in, or go back to, paid work (out of fear of provoking more pursuit from lenders of shortfall debt); children's schooling; children's social networks; and future aspirations.

A 2001 paper by one of the same authors found that homes with dependent children, especially lone-parent households, were at greater risk of repossession, and catalogued some of the specific fallout for children in repossessed households, including increased insecurity, damage to self-confidence, fear of staying overnight away from home, and less ability to concentrate and achieve at school (Nettleton 2001, p.82, 87-88.) As well as multiplying the cost of temporary accommodation, family homelessness also adds costs of childcare and child benefit; 47% of all statutorily homeless people in the English system are single mothers (European Observatory on Homelessness 2017, p.24) who are also less likely to be employed, adding in the cost of unemployment benefits in many cases. Of the 15 respondents with children still living at home in this sample, 6 gave their marital status as single – not a majority, but a greater proportion than that of lone parents in the UK as a whole (25% of all families with dependent children; ONS, 2014.)

More recently, a 2010 paper examined the connection between problem debt, with mortgage debt being one focus, and psychological health (Gathergood 2010.) This found poorer psychological health amongst those with problem debt – 6% more likely to report an anxiety-related illness - and also amongst their partners and spouses. It also found that this deterioration in psychological health is worse for debtors living in generally well-off areas, attributing this to social stigma.

5.3 The costs of providing MBS versus the costs of not doing so

As can be evidenced above, the social and economic consequences of not providing the MBS scheme would have had severe repercussions for the current client cohort. Taking the most conservative of the above costings for a single person being homeless for a year - £9,336 (*At What Cost?* (Crisis, 2015)) and comparing this to the most costly MBS intervention type at £4,724, there is a net saving of £4,612 in providing MBS support against not doing so.

Whilst this is a very simplistic calculation and does not take into account many other variables, it does give a useful indicator as to the cost-benefit of the scheme. In addition, in reality this saving would be many times higher when applied to some of the current cohort of clients – especially for those with families and/or more complex needs. As one client stated when responding to what aspect of the MBS scheme had been most useful:

> *"Allowing us to stay in the house. My elderly parents would have been homeless too if we had lost the house. That would have been a family of seven homeless …"*

The interviews with key stakeholders also raised some interesting findings relating to the costs of operating the scheme and the council's duty of care to prevent homelessness under the new Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2018.

Since the introduction of the HRA, a family or individual under threat of repossession or homelessness in Wakefield would initially come to the Housing Needs Service. HNS would attempt to identify preventative measures (e.g. potential buyers, life assurance funds); however if these were not available and there was no way to sustain the property then the homeowners would be passed to the Homeless Team. If no alternative accommodation could be secured (e.g. from family, or the homeowner being able to afford to rent themselves) then they would be passed to the Accommodation Team, who would be tasked with finding emergency accommodation – either a B&B, hostel or disbursed council housing if any was available. Then, depending on their circumstances, the family or individual would either be placed onto the social housing list (and could wait anything from a few weeks to several years to receive a secure social housing property) or apply for Housing Benefit and enter the private rented sector. The interviewee noted that residents *"getting faced with the threat of losing [the property] will involve the Authority's Housing Needs Service almost in its entirety – Advice, Housing Options, Homeless, Accommodation."*

Another stakeholder laid out what would happen to the people he encountered through the scheme, if MBS did not exist:

> *"These people would be made homeless. Wakefield Council would have a responsibility to house them, and because of the shortage of council accommodation these days these people would end up in private rented accommodation with the council paying out a significant amount of money for an indeterminate length of time as opposed to the short-term relatively small capital commitment of making the loan against an asset. To me it makes financial sense to do what Wakefield Council's doing. It seems to be a far better use of council taxpayers' money than just putting money in private landlords' pockets. And I say that as a private landlord."*

Several of the clients interviewed for this project also mentioned without prompting the low cost of the MBS loan – capped at £15,000 – compared to the cumulative cost to their local council of providing other accommodation (temporary, or in the private rented sector via housing benefit) if the house was repossessed.

Finally, when looking at the benefits of providing support schemes such as MBS, the Europe Economics report on the economic impact of debt advice (2018) notes that "the vast majority of personal debt" is mortgage debt (p.7). The report found substantial direct benefit to the provision of debt advice across a whole host of areas: improved health outcomes (and subsequent reduction in public health costs), improved productivity (and subsequent economic boost), and reduced likelihood of entering further debt. The savings made in these respects are very difficult to quantify but undoubtedly substantial.

6: Limitations

6.1 Appropriateness of the approach

A summative evaluation focused on indicative evidence is an appropriate approach – this corresponds to Nesta evidence level 2 ("You capture data that shows positive change but cannot confirm that you caused this"), which is a reasonable standard for an outcome-focused evaluation of a pilot programme. More survey responses would have allowed for greater depth of quantitative analysis (as it is, the data were not analysed for statistical significance), but the sample was of a good size considering the total client cohort. Survey responses were not matched.

Both the quantitative and qualitative processes produced good data, with the descriptive statistics showing clear trends and the qualitative interviews giving illuminating contextual background. Some sampling bias was unavoidable: as a matter of staff safety, WMDC excluded scheme participants who had been abusive or were at the time involved in legal proceedings with the council, and the sampling pool for interviews was restricted by WMDC ruling out certain clients as too vulnerable for a lengthy interview with a stranger. (Several of those who were willing and able to be interviewed still found the process highly emotionally taxing, as is evident in the transcripts.) There was also the issue that the WMDC historic data – especially demographic details of older cases – proved to be patchier than ideal, largely as a consequence of paper based records.

Another point of concern is the halo effect. The nature of the MBS scheme is such that participants encountered it at a time of crisis which, in almost all cases, it subsequently resolved. (As noted above, several of the cases where things did not work out were excluded from sampling on safety grounds.) The sheer positive associations of the crisis being resolved may well have eclipsed or overshadowed any negative or critical feelings about individual aspects of the programme.

While administered by WMDC, the project's 'catchment area' at time of writing included 19 local authorities and the project has already demonstrated good results for clients from areas with different housing, employment and demographic statistics. It seems likely that these findings would be further generalizable/transferable to similar client groups in other regions of the UK if the basic elements necessary for delivery are replicated. As noted in section 5, a similar client group would be 'struggling' and 'squeezed' homeowners facing or in danger of repossession, with disproportionate numbers of older, disabled and nonworking clients. (By the nature of the project it is unlikely to be of particular relevance to those MAS defines as 'cushioned', who are more likely to be able to weather on their own the gaps in income the MBS loan acts to bridge.) The specific nature of the MBS loan (that it is secured on the property) shapes certain other aspects of the scheme, notably the recovery process for non-cooperative clients, and limits the extent to which the findings can be applied in a rental context (see 7.3).

6.2 Capacity for future evaluation or for continuation of this evaluation

The study puts in place the foundations for further work from several approaches or looking at different aspects of the programme's delivery and impact. The questionnaire dataset has established a benchmark cohort as a starting point for comparative work or as the first point of a strong longitudinal study (possibly with a revised and/or simplified version of the survey, having now tested it.)

The study gathered a great deal of other data outside the scope of this report which could be fruitfully analysed – some that have already been discussed between the evaluation team and WMDC include a comparative study of clients' own reported capability at start and end, versus the HSO's assessment; a more detailed qualitative analysis of the interview transcripts, or perhaps employing a different methodology such as discourse analysis for insight into how people in crisis understand and describe their circumstances.

7: Implications and Recommendations for Policy and Practice

7.1 Capacity for Sustainability

MBS is sustained in its current form using residual funding from its creation in 2009. This is currently confirmed to be enough to make the expected level of loans and cover the salary of the HSO for the next two years and likely further if customer numbers stayed at their current level. It should be noted at this point that the MBS ‘pot’ loses money gradually over time: while the vast majority of clients are keen to repay the loan partly exactly so that it can be recycled for others, a few end up unable to do so and a very small number (including one of our interviewees) do not see an immediate need to pay it back. In these cases, the money may end up written off or inaccessible for long periods while the Council conducts legal proceedings to retrieve it. A cluster of repayment problems in a short space of time is unlikely but would impact the program’s sustainability while it was resolved.

A more immediate risk is that a large and/or sudden increase in client numbers would cause cash-flow issues in short order; various recent changes to the financial and policy landscape suggest such an increase may be likely. Some factors are: the recent conversion of the ISMI (Income Support for Mortgage Interest) benefit to a loan, and the fact that many people receiving or eligible for the old version have not applied for the new; the recent increase in the base interest rate, and the possibility of further increases soon; and the reappearance of 100% mortgages – homeowners with less equity in their property are more likely to enter arrears. There is also concern in the sector over an expected peak in maturations of interest-only mortgages, as many borrowers are unable to confirm with lenders how they plan to pay off the balance. (Independent, 2018.)

Almost all the interviewees, client and stakeholder, believed that there is unmet need already, but that people simply do not know about the service. This was borne out by the WMDC team’s experience of the number of clients reaching them essentially by chance. Better publicity is clearly needed, and should be freely available and publicly visible in places that people turn to or encounter first - courts, housing offices, and council-run One Stop Shops or equivalent, as well as CAB and high-profile debt and housing charities like Shelter or StepChange. (The lender representative interviewed noted that lenders rarely know of local options and will signpost to nationally-recognised bodies, like CAB or large charities.) This approach is supported by evidence from the survey data that clients in crisis, near the start of the scheme, had less confidence and more difficulty in seeking advice.

As it currently exists, the scheme places enormous weight on the roles of a few key people, notably the HSO. Any expansion of the programme would as a first priority need to spread the load: MBS deals with a variety of complex and difficult cases, and increasing the demands on the frontline would risk both reduction in service quality and staff burnout. Some strategies to mitigate this might be: steering more borderline cases towards Support for Sale, which reduces the likelihood clients will fall back into financial difficulties and is less intensive in terms of staff time; introducing a triage stage to applications, to identify clients who are already more capable, and prioritise face-to-face support for those who cannot manage without it; and bringing in more trained people at partner LAs, who can assist with connecting clients to local resources and, if needed, provide face-to-face support in crisis more practically than can a centrally placed HSO.

Any expanded scheme would need to maintain good management information and client data, with regular reviews, in order to effectively monitor success, catch any issues early, and continually improve.

7.2 Mainstream provision

Buy-in from partner LAs would be crucial to expansion, and would require them to allocate sufficient resource both in terms of loan funding and skilled, experienced staff for both administrative and client support functions. The project team believes that there would be clear benefits to doing so. Under the expanded homelessness prevention and relief duties mandated by the 2018 HRA, councils will need to implement more of this type of early-intervention, tailored support anyway, and MBS is a well-established scheme that can show ten years of positive outcomes. The reputational benefit of the scheme should also be considered, as well as the potential to build and maintain improved links between LAs and between LAs and other organisations working in the sector.

The team would recommend a designated champion in each LA – a trained point of contact able to liaise both with their own local services and with WMDC central administration, and to provide information and guidance to colleagues about the types of clients eligible for MBS and how to connect them to it.

7.3 Potential for similar interventions in the private-rented sector

The set of people in danger of homelessness due to income shock is by no means confined to homeowners, and it is possible that a similar type of loan intervention could help private renters during periods of financial challenge and offer another touchpoint for wider money-management support. The application of a loan could be used to clear arrears or help tenants with a deposit, plus the opportunity to build skills, confidence and capacity with the client might help them to manage their finances better and/or deal with financial crises better in the future.

The key difference, and potential obstacle, is that the MBS homeowner loan is secured on the property. Ultimately if a loan remains unpaid, WMDC can force sale and reclaim the money - although this is a last resort, only undertaken after detailed consideration and agreement with the client's LA and where there is a clear case of unwillingness rather than inability to pay.

By contrast, any help given to tenants could not be secured in this way, substantially increasing the risk. There would be little opportunity to recover the funds from a tenant refusing to repay, and after six years of non-engagement – or if the tenant moves and the LA cannot trace them – the loan would have to be written off as per the 1980 Limitations Act. As discussed above, the MBS scheme is still funded out of its original grant after approximately a decade in operation, and depends heavily upon loans being repaid in order to recycle the funds to new cases; any scheme operating a similar loan intervention in the private rented sector would likely need to operate on a different model able to withstand a greater degree of risk.

8: Sharing and Learning Activity

8.1 Promoting future rollout of MBS

WMDC are undertaking a number of plans to raise awareness of the MBS scheme both within Wakefield and across the wider region it serves, as the first step to rolling out the scheme on a larger scale and ensuring staff across areas and services are ready to refer to it as this starts to happen. On the latter, refresher training will be delivered to frontline delivery staff across the Partnership to embed learning and good practice, to improve cross-service links for working with vulnerable clients, and to generally raise awareness of the scheme and its benefits. The team have also briefed the leader of Wakefield Council on the changes to the scheme accompanying the MAS project.

The WMDC team will also be visiting regional partners (where this has not already happened) to discuss the project, identify locally-tailored ways to make it more visible and develop individual local communications/ promotion plans to support the proposed rebrand and relaunch of MBS. They will be giving a full presentation of findings, key learning and outcomes from this project to the Regional Steering Group in October 2018.

8.2 Sharing learning with others

Over the last 15 months WMDC have disseminated information about the scheme, the project and its findings at a variety of events throughout the region, aiming to connect both with the local community who may be in need and with other public and third-sector organisations supporting people with shelter or financial issues. These include: four community events; a presentation to the Leeds Debt Forum; a presentation and discussion with the Wakefield Food Bank Forum; a presentation to the Regional Financial Capability Forum; information dissemination to GPs as part of the "Healthy Home, Healthy You" event; two presentations of findings to the Regional Homes and Loans Group; close working with the Leeds City Credit Union, with Public Health, and with Social Care Direct to raise awareness of the project, showcase available help, and share good practice for linking vulnerable clients to appropriate financial services. Post completion of the project; presentations to three regional Homeless Forums on MAS project outcomes and good practice; and three syndication events (West/South Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, Humberside) to report on key findings, good practice and learning to key stakeholders in each region are planned.

8.3 Developing learning for MAS

Learning from the scheme and the project will also be fed into the development of the Wakefield Money Smart project to tackle poverty within the Wakefield District, of which Breathing Space and financial review form a key strand. Finally, the team are planning the development of a public online resource, based on knowledge gathered, to access for better budgeting and debt management.

8.4 What could be done differently in future

The recommendations for an expanded MBS given in section 7 would also apply to LAs looking to roll out a similar scheme rather than joining the existing one – for example, greater publicity to ensure that local need is not going unmet. The role of the HSO is key, but a new scheme might be able to mitigate the load by implementing triage and management of client expectations from the start of the programme. Alternatively, spreading the role across several staff from the beginning would also forestall the potential issue of loss of progress/rapport caused by transferring some staff to a new HSO partway through the process.

10: Appendices

Appendix A: Theory of Change Outcomes

Research Question	Theory of Change Outcome	MAS Outcomes framework outcome	Evidence
Q1 What support measures are more and less effective at developing better decisions for each client's needs and circumstances?	1. Clients understand their individual financial products, their situation and the potential implications (Ability strand).	**Managing well day-to-day**. Finances under control. Operating a bank account resilient to income/expenditure shocks. Maintaining a credit balance. Using tailored resource information to solve or head off problems. Mindset and ability strands within the MAS framework	97% now plan their spending very or fairly closely (up from 24%) 72% rarely or never miss paying a bill (up from 12%) More than 40% have good or reasonable understanding of all financial products except pensions 52% have good or reasonable knowledge of mortgages (up from 16%) 94% have better or much better awareness of financial products available 85% have better or much better ability to manage money day to day 79% have better or much better ability to select and use appropriate credit
	5. Clients finances improve within 3-6 months due to better decisions (Connection, mindset and ability strands)	**Preparing for and managing life events.** Reduced or removed reliance on quick fix, high cost solutions to financial issues. Improved bank balances, less critical events occurring. Mindset and ability strands within the MAS framework	77% have spoken with lender, 33% paid a lump sum, 29% increased regular payments 78% are now good or better at creating a budget 81% now good or better at sticking to a budget 79% now good or better at keeping track of spending
Q2 Can averting a mortgage crisis improve client skills and confidence across wider areas of financial capability?	2. Clients develop a positive approach to dealing with their money in the future (Mindset strand).	**Preparing for and managing life events.** Reduced or removed reliance on quick fix, high cost solutions to financial issues. Improved bank balances, less critical events occurring. Mindset and ability strands within the MAS framework	74% now always or mostly feel in control of their finances (up from 4%) 27% always or mostly feel stress or anxiety about being in debt (down from 94%) 98% now have better or much better optimism about their financial future
	3. Clients develop confidence and skills to	**Managing money well day to day/ Dealing with financial difficulties.** Approaches to	62% now very or fairly confident to deal directly with mortgage lender (up from 18%)

	manage their finances and deal with financial difficulties as they arise (Mindset and Ability strands).	support reduce. Clients resolve issues direct with creditors. Connection, mindset and ability strands in the MAS framework	54% now very or fairly confident to deal directly with other creditors (up from 18%) 42% now very or fairly confident to negotiate with creditors (up from 16%) 84% very or fairly confident to draw up a calendar of income and expenditure (up from 20%)
	6. Clients are able to better manage their money and plan for the future (Mindset and ability strands).	**Preparing for and managing life events.** Reduced or removed reliance on top up finance evidence of planning for future events, client begins to save or savings levels increase. Mindset and attitude strands within the MAS framework	81% better or much better at dealing with financial difficulties in future 51% now better or much better at managing future life events 100% found help with future financial planning very useful
Q3 Are clients motivated to develop financial capability skills and confidence once their immediate crisis is resolved?	4. Clients are open and receptive to change and know where to go to get support (Connection strand)	**Dealing with financial difficulties.** Advice services are accessed promptly when needed. Clients understands where to go to for support and help, and acts/ seeks help promptly. Client acts on advice given. Connection, mindset and ability strands in the MAS framework.	96% have better awareness of money advice services 96% have more favourable views of receiving money advice in future 55% now have good understanding of how to sort out debt/arrears (up from 3%) 48% now have good understanding of what to do if you cannot pay (up from 7%)
	7. Quality of advice provided is underpinned by a recognised money/debt advice qualification (Connection strand).	**Managing money well day to day.** Development of bespoke resource packs for clients, using a menu system. Staff complete and are successful in an accredited, recognised money advice qualification. Connection and ability strands in the MAS framework	All MBS team now hold one
	8. Quality of service provided increases as a result of better understanding of what works well and less well (Connection strand).	**Managing money well day to day.** Development of bespoke resource packs for clients, using a menu system. Staff complete and are successful in an accredited, recognised money advice qualification. Connection and ability strands in the MAS framework	MBS have adapted and improved their way of working as a result of implementing the project

Appendix B: Full copy of the survey questionnaire

WMDC Mortgage Breathing Space Scheme

Q5 Baseline & Follow Up Questionnaire 2018

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Mortgage Breathing Space Scheme, we are conducting a research project to evaluate how helpful it is for the people who take part. This will involve us gathering data about participants' financial knowledge and habits plus asking them their views of the service provided. Any information collected will be treated in the strictest confidence and no one will be able to identify you from the results.

Are you willing to take part in this research study?

(Please tick one box only)

Yes	☐ 1	*Continue*
No	☐ 2	*Terminate survey*

Section A: Referral to Service

1. How did you find out about the Mortgage Breathing Space Scheme?

(Please tick all that apply)

WMDC website/literature	☐ 1
Accessing another WMDC service	☐ 2
I was approached by WMDC	☐ 3
Via a partner authority	☐ 4
I was referred by a charity / advice agency e.g. CAB	☐ 5
I was referred by my bank / mortgage lender	☐ 6

I was referred by the court	☐ 7
I was referred by Jobcentre Plus / benefits service	☐ 8
I was referred by a social worker / social care service	☐ 9
Word of mouth	☐ 10
Internet Search	☐ 11
Other (Please Specify)………………………………………………	☐ 12
Don't Know	☐ 13

2. In the 12 months before applying for the MBS scheme, had you sought advice about money or your finances from anywhere else?

(Please tick one box only)

Yes	☐ 1	*Continue to Q3*
No	☐ 2	*Skip to Q4*
Don't Know	☐ 3	*Skip to Q4*

3. Who did you seek advice from?

(Please tick all that apply)

Free advice service e.g. CAB, Money Advice Centre etc.	☐ 1
A fee-charging advice company	☐ 2
An insolvency practitioner	☐ 3
Accountant, bank manager or other financial adviser	☐ 4
Solicitor/Lawyer	☐ 5
A social landlord	☐ 6
Friends or relatives	☐ 7
The internet	☐ 8
Some other source	☐ 9
None of these	☐ 10
Don't Know	☐ 11
Other (Please Specify)………………………………………………………………………	☐ 12

Section B: Managing Money Well Day to Day

4. Thinking back to when you first started on the scheme, how closely did you normally plan how you would spend your money over the coming week or month? For example, by drawing up a budget.

(Please tick one box only)

Very closely	☐ 1	*Continue to Q5*
Fairly closely	☐ 2	*Continue to Q5*
Not very closely	☐ 3	*Continue to Q5*
I did not plan my spending at all	☐ 4	*Skip to Q6*
Don't Know	☐ 5	*Skip to Q6*

5. And, how often did you keep to the budget you set?

(Please tick one box only)

Always	☐ 1
Most of the time	☐ 2
Sometimes	☐ 3
Hardly ever	☐ 4
Never	☐ 5
Do not budget	☐ 6

6. Similarly, when you first started on the scheme, how often did you delay or miss paying a bill, beyond the date it was due?

(Please tick one box only)

I often did this	☐ 1
I occasionally did this	☐ 2
I rarely did this	☐ 3
I never did this	☐ 4

(Hand the participant the showcards and ask them to turn to showcard 1)

7. Again, thinking back to when you first started on the scheme, can you tell me how often you experienced the following.

Can you say if you experienced this always, most of the time, sometimes, hardly ever or never. Firstly, how often did you experience……

(Tick one box per row)	Always	Most of the time	Some times	Hardly ever	Never	D/K
A) Feeling in control of your finances	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
B) Feeling stress or anxiety about being in debt	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
C) Being unable to sleep because of worry about your finances	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
D) Being scared to answer the phone for fear of people chasing you for money	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
E) Being scared to open your post	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
F) Feeling the need to hide information about the money you owed	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6

Section C: Preparing for Life Events

8. When you first started on the scheme, how often were you able to save money?

(Please tick one box only)

Every month	☐1	*Continue to Q9*
Most months	☐2	*Continue to Q9*
Some months, but not others	☐3	*Continue to Q9*
Rarely/never	☐4	*Skip to Q10*
Don't Know	☐5	*Skip to Q10*

9. Just thinking about the months that you saved money, was the amount that you saved…?

(Please tick one box only)

Roughly the same each month	☐1
A little different from month to month	☐2
Very different from month to month	☐3
Don't Know	☐4

(Ask them to use SC 2)

10. I'd now like you to tell me which of these best describes how knowledgeable you felt you were about these financial products when you started on the scheme.

For each one, can you tell me if you had a good knowledge, a reasonable knowledge, a basic knowledge, very limited knowledge or you knew nothing about it. Firstly, how knowledgeable were you about…..?

(Tick one box per row)	**Good**	**Reasonable**	**Basic**	**Limited**	**Nothing**	**D/K**
A) Bank accounts	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
B) Credit cards	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
C) Mortgages	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
D) Savings accounts	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
E) Credit unions	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
F) Investments	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
G) Pensions	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
H) Insurance	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
I) Different types of financial fraud	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
J) Different types of loans and credit	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6

Section D: Dealing with Financial Difficulties

(Ask them to use SC 3)

11. Thinking back to when you first started on the scheme, can you tell me how well you understood the following?

For each, can you say if you understood it a great deal, understood it a fair amount, only understood a little about it or you didn't understand it at all. First of all can you tell me how well you understood……:

(Tick one box per row)	**A great deal**	**A fair amount**	**Only a little**	**Not at all**	**D/K**
A) the steps you need to take to sort out debts or arrears	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
B) the different options available for sorting out debt problems	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
C) the fees that are charged for debt solutions such as bankruptcy, debt relief orders and debt management plans	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
D) the steps you need to take if you are not able to pay creditors	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
E) your rights if creditors try to recover money owed to them	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
F) the steps creditors can take to recover money owed to them	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

12. In the 12 months before you started on the MBS Scheme which, if any, of the following steps had you taken to reduce the amount of money you owed on outstanding debts including credit commitments and bill arrears. Had you…..?

(Tick one box per row)

	Yes	No	D/K
A. Increased your regular payments	☐1	☐2	☐3
B. Paid a lump sum towards them	☐1	☐2	☐3
C. Spoken to your lender	☐1	☐2	☐3
D. Consolidated your loans or credit cards	☐1	☐2	☐3
E. Set up a Debt Management Plan or Debt Arrangement Scheme	☐1	☐2	☐3
F. Arranged to write off some or all of your debts (e.g. applied for bankruptcy or a debt relief order or set up IVA)	☐1	☐2	☐3

(Ask them to use SC 4)

13. Thinking back to when you first started on the scheme, can you tell me how confident you would have felt about doing the following?

For each, can you tell me if you'd have felt very confident, fairly confident, not very confident or not at all confident. First of all how confident would you have felt to…..:

(Tick one box per row)

	Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	D/K
A) Write down your income and expenditure on a budget	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
B) Draw up a calendar of income and expenditure	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
C) Switch providers for a better deal on your utilities	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
D) Switch providers for a better deal on your bank account	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
E) Phone your mortgage company to discuss the money you owed them	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
F) Phone other creditors (e.g. credit cards / personal loans) to discuss the money you owed them	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

G) Negotiate with creditors or organisations you owed money to	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

Section E: Financial Ability

(Ask them to use SC 5)

14. Again, thinking back to when you first started on the scheme, I'd like you to tell me how good or bad you were at the following.

For each, can you tell me if you were extremely bad, very bad, bad, acceptable, good, very good or extremely good. So, first of all, how good or bad were you at……..?

(Tick one box per row)	Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Bad	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Extremely Good	Don't Know
A) Creating a budget	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
B) Sticking to a budget	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
C) Keeping track of your spending	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
D) Maximising your money by shopping around	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
E) Checking tax and benefit entitlements	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
F) Obtaining affordable credit	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
G) Avoiding problem debt	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8

(Ask them to use SC 6)

Section F: Basic Skills Check

15. And finally, I'd now like you to tell me how good or bad you think you were at the following when you first started on the scheme. Using the same scale as before can you tell me how good or bad you were at……..?

(Tick one box per row)	Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Bad	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Extremely Good	Don't Know
A) Working with numbers when you need to in everyday life? (For example working out your wages or benefits, or	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8

checking bills and statements)								
B) Writing in English when you need to in daily life? (For example writing letters or notes or filling in official forms)	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
C) Reading in English when you need to? (For example reading newspapers and magazines or reading letters, paperwork or forms)	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
D) Using the internet (For example sending email, using google, accessing Facebook etc.)	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8

Part 2 - Follow Up Questions

In the first part of the survey you answered questions about your situation and financial knowledge when you first started on the scheme. What I'd now like to do is ask you about your current position. So firstly…

Section G: Use of Services

16. Since you have been on the MBS scheme, have you sought advice about money or your finances from anywhere else?

(Please tick one box only)

Yes	☐1	*Continue to Q17*
No	☐2	*Skip to Q18*
Don't Know	☐3	*Skip to Q18*

17. Who did you seek advice from?

(Please tick all that apply)

Free advice service e.g. CAB, Money Advice Centre etc.	☐1
A fee-charging advice company	☐2

An insolvency practitioner	☐3
Accountant, bank manager or other financial adviser	☐4
Solicitor/Lawyer	☐5
A social landlord	☐6
Friends or relatives	☐7
The internet	☐8
Some other source	☐9
None of these	☐10
Don't Know	☐11
Other (Please Specify)…………………………………………………………………………	☐12

Section H: Managing Money Well Day to Day

18. Currently how closely do you normally plan how you spend your money over the coming week or month? (For example, by drawing up a budget)
(Please tick one box only)

Very closely	☐1	*Continue to Q19*
Fairly closely	☐2	*Continue to Q19*
Not very closely	☐3	*Continue to Q19*
I do not plan my spending at all	☐4	*Skip to Q20*
Don't Know	☐5	*Skip to Q20*

19. And how often do you keep to the budget you set?

(Please tick one box only)

Always	☐1
Most of the time	☐2
Sometimes	☐3
Hardly ever	☐4
Never	☐5
Do not budget	☐6

20. Currently, how often do you delay or miss paying a bill, beyond the date it is due?

(Please tick one box only)

I often do this	☐1

I occasionally do this	☐2
I rarely do this	☐3
I never do this	☐4

(Ask them to use SC 7)

21. At the moment, how often do you experience the following?

Can you say if you experience this always, most of the time, sometimes, hardly ever or never? So currently how often do you experience…….:

(Tick one box per row)	**Always**	**Most of the time**	**Some times**	**Hardly ever**	**Never**	**D/K**
A) Feeling in control of your finances	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
B) Feeling stress or anxiety about being in debt	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
C) Being unable to sleep because of worry about your finances	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
D) Being scared to answer the phone for fear of people chasing you for money	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
E) Being scared to open your post	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
F) Feeling the need to hide information about the money you owe	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6

Section I: Preparing for Life Events

22. Currently, how often are you able to save money?

(Please tick one box only)

Every month	☐1	*Continue to Q23*
Most months	☐2	*Continue to Q23*
Some months, but not others	☐3	*Continue to Q23*
Rarely/never	☐4	*Skip to Q24*
Don't Know	☐5	*Skip to Q24*

23. Just thinking about the recent times you have saved money, is the amount you save…?

(Please tick one box only)

Roughly the same each month	☐1
A little different from month to month	☐2
Very different from month to month	☐3
Don't Know	☐4

(Ask them to use SC 8)

24. I'd now like you to tell me which of these best describes how knowledgeable you are currently about these financial products.

For each one, can you tell me if you have a good knowledge, a reasonable knowledge, a basic knowledge, very limited knowledge or know nothing about it. So currently how knowledgeable are you about…..:

(Tick one box per row)	Good	Reasonable	Basic	Limited	Nothing	D/K
A) Bank accounts	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
B) Credit cards	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
C) Mortgages	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
D) Savings accounts	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
E) Credit unions	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
F) Investments	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
G) Pensions	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
H) Insurance	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
I) Different types of financial fraud	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
J) Different types of loans and credit	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6

Section J: Dealing with Financial Difficulties

(Ask them to use SC 9)

25. And at the moment, how well do you understand the following?

For each one can you tell me if you understand it a great deal, understand it a fair amount, only understand a little about it or you don't understand it at all. Firstly….

(Tick one box per row)	A great deal	A fair amount	Only a little	Not at all	D/K
A) the steps you need to take to sort out debts or arrears	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
B) the different options available for sorting out debt problems	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

C) the fees that are charged for debt solutions such as bankruptcy, debt relief orders and debt management plans	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
D) the steps you need to take if you are not able to pay creditors	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
E) your rights if creditors try to recover money owed to them	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
F) the steps creditors can take to recover money owed to them	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

26. Since you started on the MBS scheme, which, if any, of the following steps have you taken to reduce the amount of money you owe on outstanding debts including credit commitments and bill arrears. Have you…..?

(Tick one box per row)	Yes	No	D/K
A. Increased your regular payments	☐1	☐2	☐3
B. Paid a lump sum towards them	☐1	☐2	☐3
C. Spoken to your lender	☐1	☐2	☐3
D. Consolidated your loans or credit cards	☐1	☐2	☐3
E. Set up a Debt Management Plan or Debt Arrangement Scheme	☐1	☐2	☐3
F. Arranged to write off some or all of your debts (e.g. Applied for bankruptcy or a debt relief order or set up IVA)	☐1	☐2	☐3

(Ask them to use SC 10)

27. At the moment, how confident do you feel about doing the following?

For each one, can you tell me if you'd feel very confident, fairly confident, not very confident or not at all confident. First of all, how confident would you feel about…..:

(Tick one box per row)	Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	D/K
A) Writing down your income and expenditure on a budget	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

B) Drawing up a calendar of income and expenditure	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
C) Switching providers for a better deal on your utilities	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
D) Switching providers for a better deal on your bank account	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
E) Phoning your mortgage company to discuss the money you owe them	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
F) Phoning other creditors (e.g. credit cards / personal loans) to discuss the money you owe them	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
G) Negotiating with creditors or organisations you owe money to	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

Section K: Financial Ability

(Ask them to use SC 11)

28. So thinking about your current position, I'd like you to tell me how good or bad you are at the following.

For each, can you tell me if you are extremely bad, very bad, bad, acceptable, good, very good or extremely good. So, first of all, how good or bad are you at……..?

(Tick one box per row)	Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Bad	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Extremely Good	Don't Know
A) Creating a budget	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
B) Sticking to a budget	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
C) Keeping track of your spending	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
D) Maximising your money by shopping around	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
E) Checking tax and benefit entitlements	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
F) Obtaining affordable credit	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
G) Avoiding problem debt	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8

Section L: Basic Skills Check

(Ask them to use SC 12)

29. I'd like you to tell me how good or bad you are at the following. Using the same scale as before can you tell me how good or bad you are now at……..?

(Tick one box per row)	Extremely Bad	Very Bad	Bad	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Extremely Good	Don't Know
A) Working with numbers when you need to in everyday life? (For example working out your wages or benefits, or checking bills and statements)	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
B) Writing in English when you need to in daily life? (For example writing letters or notes or filling in official forms)	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
C) Reading in English when you need to? (For example reading newspapers and magazines or reading letters, paperwork or forms)	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8
D) Using the internet (For example sending email, using google, accessing Facebook etc.)	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7	☐8

Section M: Thoughts on the Scheme

(Ask them to use SC 13)

30. I'd now like to ask you about the types of information and support you received as part of the MBS scheme. First of all, can you tell me if you received this and if so, can you then tell me how useful you found it.

Please say if this was very useful, useful, not very useful or not at all useful. So, firstly, can you tell me if you received any…….:

(Tick one box per row)	i) Support Received?			ii) If yes, how useful was it?				
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Not at all useful	Not very useful	Useful	Very Useful	Don't Know
a) Financial information fact sheets	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
b) An action plan	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
c) A financial statement	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
d) Help with current financial planning e.g. through calendar work	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
e) Help with future financial planning e.g. through jam jar accounts	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
f) Help with basic bank accounts	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
g) Your Review Officer making calls to your creditors for you	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
h) Your Review Officer providing support whilst you made calls to your creditors	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
i) Referral to other services for additional support	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

31. Overall, how engaged would you say you were with the scheme?

(please tick one box only)

Not at all engaged	☐1
Partially engaged	☐2
Quite engaged	☐3
Very engaged	☐4
Don't know	☐5

32. What aspect of the MBS scheme has been most useful to you and why? *(please specify below)*

………

………

………

33. Is there any way the scheme could be improved? (probe for how)*(please specify below)*

………

………

………

(Ask them to use SC 14)

34. Now I'd like you to tell me if the following have got better or worse as a result of you taking part in the MBS scheme.

For each can you say if this has got much better, better, worse, much worse or if there has been no change. First of all……….

(please tick one box on each line)	Much worse	Worse	No change	Better	Much better	Don't Know
A) Your awareness of different types of financial products and services available	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
B) The likelihood of you exploring different financial products and services before choosing one	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
C) Your awareness of the range of money advice services available	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
D) Your views about receiving money advice and guidance in the future	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
E) Your ability to manage money well day to day	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
F) Your ability to select and use appropriate credit options	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6

G) Your ability to deal with financial difficulties should they arise in the future	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
H) Your ability to prepare for managing life events in the future e.g. with pensions and/or savings	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6
I) Your optimism about your financial future	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6

35. Do you have any additional comments you'd like to make regarding the MBS scheme or your financial capability? *(please specify below)*

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….

ONLY ASK THIS QUESTION IF THE INFORMATION IS NOT ALREADY RECORDED ON THE CLIENTS RECORD

36. As part of the research project, we need to record various characteristics of the participants. We already have a lot of this information from your original application form. However we do not have a record of your ethnic background. As such, can you please tell me if you are…..?

(please tick one box only)

White	☐1
Mixed/Multiple Heritage	☐2
Asian/Asian British	☐3
Black/Black British	☐4
Other *(Please specify)* ………………………………………………………………………………	☐5
Prefer not to say	☐6

37. As part of the second stage of the research, we would like to interview some people who have completed the MBS scheme in more depth. The interviews will be conducted in person, by phone, or via Skype (or similar) depending on the preference of the interviewee. Interviewees will be compensated with a £20 Love2Shop voucher.

Would you be interested in taking part in a follow-up interview? If so, the interview team will get in touch with you separately with more information.

Yes	☐1
No	☐2

Thank and close – remind the participant that all the information is completely confidential and will only be used by researchers involved in the project.

For Office Use Only

38. Please indicate where the client positioned themselves on the Blob Tree during this meeting:

(Please tick one box only)

Position 1	☐1	Position 12	☐12
Position 2	☐2	Position 13	☐13
Position 3	☐3	Position 14	☐14
Position 4	☐4	Position 15	☐15
Position 5	☐5	Position 16	☐16
Position 6	☐6	Position 17	☐17
Position 7	☐7	Position 18	☐18
Position 8	☐8	Position 19	☐19
Position 9	☐9	Position 20	☐20
Position 10	☐10	Position 21	☐21
Position 11	☐11	Don't Know	☐22

Interviewer Name: ……………………………………….. Date: ……………………………………………

Input By: ………………………………………………….Date: ……………………………………………

Appendix C: Full breakdown of WMDC case studies

Case scenario	Minimum or straightforward intervention		
Brief description			
A client who has only the 1 mortgage, no CCJs or other orders. No wider debt issues other than priority debts with minimal arrears. Client engages well, is honest and provides full disclosure of problem and solutions attempted. Client has engaged previously with lender and provides all requested information quickly. Lender is supportive and engages without incident/ no signature issues over consent and provides information and consents within reasonable timescales. Client obtains required IFA and turns round the Loan Offer Document within 1 week. Client owns problem and is willing to be supported and develop skills and confidence to tackle and resolve.			
Average total time to achieve loan completion within this scenario	8 weeks		
Service or stage of programme (enquiry, application and first year on programme)	**Person/role handling**	**Person hours**	**Cost including oncosts**
LOAN APPLICATION STAGE 1. Initial loan enquiry stage and eligibility, assessment stages. Referral paperwork, initial checks, initial assessment and development of rudimentary financial statement, in advance of telephone interview with client to fully establish the situation and wider issues. Post meeting updating of files, completion of financial statement after clarification. Decision on whether case viable or not, generation of options	Senior Loan Officer	4 hours	£108.24
2. Meeting to complete the loan application form, finalise financial statement, obtain copies of ID, proof of address, buildings insurance, bank statements and mortgage statements	Senior Loan Officer	4 hours including travel	£108.24
3. Post meeting work including letters and consents to creditors, client files updates, land registry checks, credit checks, arrange property valuation. Chase client for any outstanding paperwork not provided at interview stage and chase lender for information if delayed in responding (2.)	Senior Loan Officer	1.5 hours	£40.59
4. Review client circumstances once all information received, make loan offer, generate formal loan offer document through legal services	Senior Loan Officer	4 hours	£108.24
5. Client receives IFA on the loan offer and returns the signed loan document.	Independent Financial Advisor	1 hour	£300 (paid for by the project).
6. Final searches for the CH1, process payments through financial system, produce client invoice and update client files. Check	Senior Loan Officer/	1 hour	£27.06

payment received by lender and properly assigned.	Legal services		
7. Formal handover meeting with client and Review Officer post completion.	Senior Loan Officer/ Homeowner Support Officer	10 hours (2 x 5 hrs each inc travel)	£270.60
REVIEW PERIOD POST LOAN COMPLETION 8. 1st review meeting – face to face.	Homeowner Support Officer	1.5 hrs to meet 2 hrs to write up, produce action plan, financial statements, client files	£40.59 £54.12
9. Follow on work, in between review 1 and 2 - follow up on action plan notes, 1 to 2 telephone calls per month, update client file notes and action plans, give ongoing advice if client needs.	Homeowner Support Officer	1.5 hours	£40.59
10. Mini reviews 2 and 3 by telephone, adjust paperwork, update action plans/ financial statement/ client files, generate letter to client setting out actions etc. 1-2 telephone calls per quarter	Homeowner Support Officer	2 hours	£54.12
11. Review 4 – face to face (as per 8 and 9)	Homeowner Support Officer	5 hours	£135.30
12. Year 2 reviews (repeat 8 to 11.) Review 4 at 24 month discusses in detail client repayment method for their loan	Homeowner Support Officer	10 hours	£270.60
13. Year 3 reviews. Reviews 1 and 2 as per 8 and 9 with additional letter at 6 months before loan due date requesting client to provide evidence of repayment method and further discussion if not viable or not in place.	Homeowner Support Officer	7 hours	£189.42
14. Review 3 by telephone but also 3 months to due date discussion to ensure plans on track and remedial action identified	Homeowner Support Officer	2 hours	£54.12
15. Month 35 – 1 month to due date. Final meeting with client in preparation for repayment.	Homeowner Support Officer	2 hours	£54.12
16. Due date. Loan is repaid. Removal of secured charges, close case down, advise client.	Homeowner Support Officer	1 hour	£27.06
	Totals	**59.5 hours**	**£1,883.01**

Case scenario	Medium or typical intervention		
Brief description			
A client with 1 mortgage and a secured loan, both of which are subject to some part of the loan payment, client with no other orders/ CCJs but with 5 sets of unsecured debt all of which need token payments etc. putting in place, lenders are reasonably OK but push their luck a bit re action/ attitude and providing information on time. Client engagement is OK but usually needs 1 gentle reminder.			
Average total time to achieve loan completion within this scenario	12 weeks		
Service or stage of programme (enquiry, application and first year on programme)	**Person/role handling**	**Person hours**	**Cost including oncosts**
LOAN APPLICATION STAGE 1. Initial loan enquiry stage and eligibility, assessment stages. Referral paperwork, initial checks, initial assessment and development of rudimentary financial statement, in advance of telephone interview with client to fully establish the situation and wider issues. Post meeting updating of files, completion of financial statement after clarification. Decision on whether case viable or not, generation of options	Senior Loan Officer	4.5 hours	£121.77
2. Meeting to complete the loan application form, finalise financial statement, obtain copies of ID, proof of address, buildings insurance, bank statements and mortgage statements	Senior Loan Officer	4.5 hours including travel	£121.77
3. Post meeting work including letters and consents to creditors, client files updates, land registry checks, credit checks, arrange property valuation. Chase client for any outstanding paperwork not provided at interview stage and chase lenders for information if delayed in responding (2.) Advise client re token or otherwise payments that will need to be set up.	Senior Loan Officer	2.5 hours	£67.65
4. Review client circumstances once all information received. Chase client and lender if required for outstanding information. Make loan offer, generate formal loan offer document through legal services.	Senior Loan Officer	4 hours	£108.24
5. Client receives IFA on the loan offer and returns the signed loan document.	Independent Financial Advisor	1 hour	£300 (paid for by the project).
6. Final searches for the CH1, process payments through financial system, produce client invoice and update client files. Check payment received by lender and properly assigned.	Senior Loan Officer/ Legal services	1 hour	£27.06

7. Formal handover meeting with client and Review Officer post completion.	Senior Loan Officer/ Homeowner Support Officer	10 hours (2 x 5 hrs each inc travel)	£270.60
REVIEW PERIOD POST LOAN COMPLETION 8. 1st review meeting – face to face.	Homeowner Support Officer	2.5 hours for the meeting 3 hours to write up, produce action plans, financial statement, resolving unsecured debts	£67.65 £81.18
9. Follow on work, in between review 1 and 2 - follow up on action plan notes, 1 to 2 telephone calls per month, update client file notes and action plans, give ongoing advice if client needs.	Homeowner Support Officer	2.5 hours	£67.65
10. Mini reviews 2 and 3 by telephone, adjust paperwork, update action plans/ financial statement/ client files, generate letter to client setting out actions etc. 1-2 telephone calls per quarter	Homeowner Support Officer	3 hours	£81.18
11. Review 4 – face to face (as per 8 and 9)	Homeowner Support Officer	8 hours	£216.48
12. Year 2 reviews (repeat 8 to 11.) Review 4 at 24 month discusses in detail client repayment method for their loan	Homeowner Support Officer	19 hours	£514.14
13. Year 3 reviews. Reviews 1 and 2 as per 8 and 9 with additional letter at 6 months before loan due date requesting client to provide evidence of repayment method and further discussion if not viable or not in place.	Homeowner Support Officer	10 hours	£270.6+0
14. Review 3 by telephone but also 3 months to due date discussion to ensure plans on track and remedial action identified	Homeowner Support Officer	2.5 hours	£67.65
15. Month 35 – 1 month to due date. Final meeting with client in preparation for repayment.	Homeowner Support Officer	2.5 hours	£67.65
16. Due date. Loan is repaid. Removal of secured charges, close case down, advise client.	Homeowner Support Officer	1 hour	£27.06
17. These clients are more likely to be unable to repay at due date. Interest is now added on a daily basis and needs to be included going forward. Reviews continue whilst an offer to repay is out in place or loan is repaid in full. Additional reviews tend to be in place for 12-24 months	Homeowner Support Officer	19 hours (based on 12 months)	£514.14
	Totals	**100.5**	**£3,127.77**

Case scenario 3	Maximum or challenging intervention		
Brief description			
Client with mortgage, secured loan and 2 charging orders, multiple unsecured debt 7 or 8 credit and catalogue accounts), poor engagement and an unwillingness to accept their situation. Lender is aggressive but very slow to send information and also challenges everything you ask for or suggest unless you threaten MCOB and the Ombudsman. Client needs hand holding and pushing throughout the process, poor engagement generally usually needing phone calls, text messages and letters to keep things moving, slow at returning information. Final person hours and costs depend on whether a solution can be arrived at, or whether this is not possible and the case is sent for recovery.			
Average total time to achieve loan completion within this scenario	minimum 6 months; worst case more than 10 months		
Service or stage of programme (enquiry, application and first year on programme)	**Person/role handling**	**Person hours**	**Cost including oncosts**
LOAN APPLICATION STAGE 1. Initial loan enquiry stage and eligibility, assessment stages. Referral paperwork, initial checks, initial assessment and development of rudimentary financial statement, in advance of telephone interview with client to fully establish the situation and wider issues. Post meeting updating of files, completion of financial statement after clarification. Decision on whether case viable or not, generation of options	Senior Loan Officer	6 hours	£162.36
2. Meeting to complete the loan application form, finalise financial statement, obtain copies of ID, proof of address, buildings insurance, bank statements and mortgage statements	Senior Loan Officer	4.5 hours including travel	£121.77
3. Post meeting work including letters and consents to creditors, client files updates, land registry checks, credit checks, arrange property valuation. Chase client for any outstanding paperwork not provided at interview stage and chase lenders for information if delayed in responding (2.) Advise client re token or otherwise payments to unsecured creditors that will need to be set up.	Senior Loan Officer	3.5 hours	£94.71
4. Review client circumstances once all information received. Chase client and lender if required for outstanding information. Make loan offer,	Senior Loan Officer	6 hours	£162.36

generate formal loan offer document through legal services. (this is time limited and generally for this client would have to be produced and sent twice before client engages).			
5. Client receives IFA on the loan offer and returns the signed loan document.	Independent Financial Advisor	1 hour	£300 (paid for by the project).
6. Final searches for the CH1, process payments through financial system, produce client invoice and update client files. Check payment received by lender and properly assigned.	Senior Loan Officer/ Legal services	1 hour	£27.06
7. Formal handover meeting with client and Review Officer post completion.	Senior Loan Officer/ Homeowner Support Officer	10 hours (2 x 5 hours inc travel)	£270.60
REVIEW PERIOD POST LOAN COMPLETION 8. 1st review meeting – face to face.	Homeowner Support Officer	2.5 hours for the meeting 3 hours to write up, produce action plans, financial statement, unsecured and priority creditor actions.	£67.65 £81.18
9. Follow on work, in between review 1 and 2 - follow up on action plan notes, 45 minutes of telephone calls per week, update client file notes and action plans, give ongoing advice if client needs.	Homeowner Support Officer	12 hours	£324.72
10. Mini reviews 2 and 3 by telephone, adjust paperwork, update action plans/ financial statement/ client files, generate letter to client setting out actions etc. 1-2 telephone calls per quarter	Homeowner Support Officer	7 hours	£189.42
11. Review 4 – face to face (as per 8 and part of 9)	Homeowner Support Officer	11 hours	£297.66
12. Year 2 reviews (repeat 8 to 11.) Review 4 at 24 month discusses in detail client repayment method for their loan	Homeowner Support Officer	35 hours	£947.10
13. Year 3 reviews. Reviews 1 and 2 as previous with additional letter at 6 months before loan due date requesting client to provide evidence of repayment method and further discussion if not viable or not in place.	Homeowner Support Officer	13 hours	£351.78
14. Review 3 by telephone but also 3 months to due date discussion to	Homeowner Support Officer	6 hours	£162.36

ensure plans on track and remedial action identified			
15. Month 35 – 1 month to due date. Final meeting with client in preparation for repayment.	Homeowner Support Officer	5 hours	£135.30
16. Due date. Loan is repaid. Removal of secured charges, close case down, advise client.	Homeowner Support Officer	1 hour	£27.06
17. These clients highly likely to be unable to repay at due date. Interest is now added on a daily basis and needs to be included going forward. Reviews continue whilst an offer to repay is out in place or loan is repaid in full. Additional reviews tend to be in place for 12-24 months. Higher likelihood of escalation to legal recovery of loan including court action. Some cases progress to action because client won't pay as opposed to can't pay. Recovery action can take up to 2 years to complete.	Homeowner Support Officer/Home Owner Support Team Manager/ Legal Services/ Partner/ Special Cases Panel/ Regional Steering Group	23 hours (based on recovery alone where clients have failed to engage and recovery action is progressed). 37 hours (where client engages and has reviews whilst a solution is developed and implemented – usually 24 months.	£622.38 £1,001.22
Total person hours	150.5 (based on recovery alone where clients have failed to engage and recovery action is progressed). 164.5 (where client engages and has reviews whilst a solution is developed and implemented – usually 24 months.)	**Total estimated cost**	£4,075.47 (for recovery) £4,724.31 (best case figure where offers are agreed and reviews continue for a further 2 years).

Appendix D: Original Theory of Change in full

Context and Rationale

The existing Mortgage Breathing Space Mortgage Assistance Loan Scheme was launched in September 2009. Evaluation of project outcomes to date has shown that almost 25% of the 360 households directly helped through the Scheme have remained in or gone back into financial difficulties. This is evidenced by clients returning with a new or recurring difficulty with a priority debt within 1 year of initially getting the client to a balanced budget position with difficulties stabilised. Further assessment has shown that a cohort of clients have struggled from the outset of their loan period, and continue to return for help with the same type of financial issues (or the same ones not being resolved) even after any loan has been repaid. From this, we have concluded that at least a quarter of existing and previous clients have not developed financial capability skills, improved their attitude or confidence to budgeting and cannot manage their money any better now than at the point when they were first helped. It is now proposed to make changes to the post loan review element of the Mortgage Breathing Space (MBS) project to change the way of working and move away from problem resolver to enabler.

The goals of the proposed WWF submission are to work with clients against a framework of development and enablement with a clear aim of developing necessary skills, boosting client confidence and periodic assessment of these. The project will also assess whether client motivation wanes after the crisis intervention has been applied. It will measure client views at key points, of their confidence, motivation and any financial skills they feel they have developed. The views of the delivery officer as part of the review process will also assess the client's ability and motivation to manage their finances, and assess the level of skills developed, as a comparator. Both client and delivery officer will evaluate the resources and training received to assess what works well and less well in each client situation. Development of individual bespoke training and resource packages will underpin this approach with clients, plus with an end aim of uploading an overarching information resource for access by agencies, partners and the public on the basis of what works well, and what works less well. The assessment and development process will underpin the key research question namely – whether a mortgage crisis intervention aimed at preventing homelessness can be successful in improving longer term attitudes and behaviours towards money management. It will also assess what measures work well and less well both individually and across the client cohort to identify if better decision making, skills and behaviour have resulted in wider use by the client in terms of application elsewhere.

The proposed client cohort is made up of 95 current, expected new additions to the loan project and previous clients who have completed the loan process. A further assessment of a number of loans that were deemed to have failed will also be used. The cohort breakdown is as follows:

- **60 clients that are still live on the project**, either still within the 3 year deferred loan period or who are overdue with their loan repayment and are working towards making offers to repay or who are in individual repayment agreements with us. All unpaid loan clients are still subject to regular reviews as their loan conditions have not been satisfied.
- **A minimum of 7 new clients** who are working with us on their financial difficulties currently and which may result in a loan being administered or general support measures. This group will form part of the main cohort and will be treated the same as other live cases. However the timing of their inclusion may mean that they are not likely to receive a minimum of 3 review meetings during the WWF project period as per the live cohort, and thus they are reflected separately on the TOC table.
- **21 clients whose loans have been repaid in full**, in order to canvass their views on what worked well and less well, plus to assess confidence and motivation levels as a result of their working relationship with us.

- **7 previous client cases where the intervention is deemed to have failed** and the client home was lost following repossession action.

The outputs in the TOC table reflect the intervention approach that will be undertaken during the WWF proposal for each part of the cohort, and reflecting that some clients will need more intensive follow up e.g. follow on telephone interviews during the review period in addition to their quarterly review meetings.

continued overleaf

Inputs	**Activities** (across 95 clients – see context and rationale section)	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Direct Delivery: Homeowner Support Officer responsible for delivery and collation of data (1 FTE). **Evaluation:** 2 Snr Loans Off (0.25FTE) Project Support (0.5 FTE) Evaluation Lead – Leeds Beckett University (20days) **Evaluation Panel:** Homeowner Support Team Manager, Principal Finance Officer, Corporate Policy Manager. (total 36 days). Panel lead by Homeowner Support Team Manager IT support (10 days) **Financial Inputs**: WWF grant of £109k, in house resources of £560k tied into loans and staffing. **In kind support:** 19 Partners across Yorkshire and Humber re providing interview rooms without charge, sourcing and initial work with new clients. (Est 1 day per month).	1-2-1 face to face meetings with 60 clients (existing clients) x 3 times. 1-2-1 face to face meetings with 7 new loan clients x 1 (min). Additional telephone interviews with 25 clients (from the original 60) where extra support is needed x 3 times. 60 client self-assessment re financial skills, attitude & confidence x 3 times. Delivery Officer assessment on a minimum of 60 clients on skills/ attitude/ motivation/ confidence level x 3 times post review. Deliver 67 individual training sessions (for 60 existing plus 7 new client cases – see context section). Evaluation of 60 client and delivery officer assessment info x 3 times. 60 client resources packs adjusted. Telephone interviews with 21 previous clients to assess skills, motivation/confidence levels re what has worked well/less well. 7 client self-assessment re skills, attitude and confidence x1 (min) Delivery Officer assessment of 7 client and specialist views x 1 (min) Assess 7 baseline client cases where failure occurred. Evaluation of 7client and delivery officer assessment info x 1 times (min).	60 x 3 existing client meetings delivered. 7 x 1 new loan client mtgs (1 min). 25 x 3 extra interviews completed for those needing extra support. Development and issue of 67 resource/information packs tailored to the individual needs of the client 67 individual training sessions delivered. 60 actions plans x 3 times (live clients) 7 actions plans x 1 (min) (new clients) 21 x telephone calls to completed loan clients 21 x findings summaries completed for loan clients. 7 x findings summaries for failed loans 1 x overarching online resource/ information pack developed 4 x staff completion of CertMap qualification Number of homelessness applications reduce for post loan clients.	Clients understand their individual financial products, their situation and the potential implications (Ability strand). Clients develop a positive approach to dealing with their money in the future (Mindset strand). Clients develop confidence and skills to manage their finances and deal with financial difficulties as they arise (Mindset and Ability strands). Clients are open and receptive to change and know where to go to get support (Connection strand) Clients finances improve within 3-6 months due to better decisions (Connection, mindset and ability strands) Clients are able to better manage their money and plan for the future (Mindset and ability strands). Quality of advice provided is underpinned by a recognised money/debt advice qualification (Connection strand).[1] Quality of service provided increases as a result of better understanding of what works well and less well (Connection strand).[2]	People of all ages can develop financial capability skills and improved confidence in tackling financial difficulties. People of all ages can benefit from improved wellbeing as a result of being more able to manage/sustain their tenure. People of all ages can benefit from improved wellbeing as a result of managing their finances and reducing crises from occurring. Clients see improvements in their finances as a result of making better decisions People of all ages can prepare for and manage life events better. Improved partnership working through dissemination of client information/good practice to LA partners Loan funds recovered and recycled to help new clients

1: These are process outcomes, which will be measured through the process evaluation, i.e. interviews with staff etc. Participants will be asked through the review process whether these service improvements have improved the quality of advice received from their perspective and their connection to money management.

2: Ibid.

11: References

DCLG (2017). England European Regional Development Fund Programme 2014 to 2020: Project Summative Assessment Guidance. London: DCLG. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/705888/ESIF-GN-1-033_ERDF_Summative_Assessment_Guidance_v1.pdf (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

DCLG (2012). Evidence review of the costs of homelessness. London: DCLG. Available from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/costs-of-homelessness-evidence-review (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

Europe Economics (2018.) The Economic Impact of Debt Advice: A Report for the Money Advice Service. London: Europe Economics. Available from https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/corporate/economicimpactdebtadvice (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

European Observatory on Homelessness (2017). Family homelessness in Europe. Brussels: EOH. Available from https://www.feantsaresearch.org/download/feantsa-studies_07_web3386127540064828685.pdf (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

Ford, J. et al. (2011). An evaluation of the January 2009 and October 2010 arrangements for Support for Mortgage Interest. Sheffield: DWP. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214514/rrep740.pdf (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

Gathergood, J. (2010) "Debt and depression: Causal links and social norm effects." *The Economic Journal* 122, 1094-1114. DOI: Doi: 10.1111/j.1468-0297.2012.02519.x

Hughes, K. (2018) "Interest-only mortgages leave many owners facing possible eviction". *Independent,* 1 Feb. Available online at: https://www.independent.co.uk/money/spend-save/interest-only-mortgages-house-owners-eviction-lose-home-fca-debts-repay-providers-a8189211.html (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

Nettleton, S. (2001) "Losing a home through mortgage repossession: the views of children". *Children & Society* 15, pp.82-94. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/chi.608

Nettleton, S. et al. (1999) "Findings: The social consequences of mortgage repossession for parents and their children." York: JRF. Available from https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/social-consequences-mortgage-repossession-parents-and-their-children (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

ONS (2015). "Lone parents". In Statistical Bulletin: Families and Households: 2014. London: ONS. Available at https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2015-01-28#lone-parents (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

Pleace, N. & Culhane, D.P. (2016) Better than Cure? Testing the case for Enhancing Prevention of Single Homelessness in England. London: Crisis. Available from: https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/cost-of-homelessness/better-than-cure-2016/ (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

Pleace, N. (2015) At what cost? An estimation of the financial costs of single homelessness in the UK. London: Crisis. Available from: https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/cost-of-homelessness/at-what-cost-2015/ (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (2018) Assessing the costs and benefits of Crisis' plan to end homelessness. London: PwC. Available at https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/cost-of-homelessness/assessing-the-costs-and-benefits-of-crisis-plan-to-end-homelessness-2018/ (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

Puttick, R. and Ludlow, J. (2013) Nesta standards of evidence: An approach that balances the need for evidence with innovation. London: Nesta. Available at https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/standards_of_evidence_lMNHDLQ.pdf (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)

Wilcox, S. et al. (2010). Evaluation of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme and Homeowners Mortgage Support. London: DCLG. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6339/1648140.pdf (Accessed 25 Sept 2018.)