

## Case Study #11

# COMMON GROUND COMMUNITY (USA) –

Combining permanent housing, social care support and a mixed community to increase stability for homeless young people and adults

The Common Ground Community uses high-quality, aspirational buildings to house vulnerable homeless people and with low-income or 'key' workers as part of a mixed community.



## APPROACH

Starting in New York City, they are using capital funding to rehabilitate some of the abandoned landmark hotels in the city (starting with the Times Square and Prince George hotels). Common Ground now provides supportive housing – with mental health, social care and substance misuse services on-site - in cities across the US.

It has specialist projects for young people 'aging out' of foster care. There are 1,200 young people leaving foster care in New York each year. 80% of them are moving into their own accommodation.

Common Ground provides a housing-first approach to even those with the most acute problems. Residents are offered a safe, permanent home without conditions. While support and rehabilitation services are provided on-site residents are not required to tackle problems such as substance misuse before moving in. The mixed community prevents homeless residents from becoming isolated.



## IMPACT

A 2011 cost-benefit analysis found that supportive housing was approximately half the annual cost incurred by a vulnerable homeless person living in hostel accommodation or on the street (\$24,190 compared to \$56,350).

Despite working with some of the most troubled young people and homeless adults Common Ground claim a 1% eviction rate.

Their housing-first approach has developed into a separate charity (Community Solutions) with a national campaign that by 2014 housed more than 100,000 chronically homeless people across the United States receiving state and federal funding.

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