# O Arch.



### Welcome

It is always a great joy to read the Arch Annual Report and reflect on all that has been accomplished in one year. These pages reflect both the scale of the challenge we face in Brighton & Hove and the remarkable commitment of the people who make Arch what it is. As a specialist, not-for-profit healthcare provider our aim is to provide exceptional, compassionate healthcare to people experiencing homelessness; and to ensure that those who are too often unseen or unheard, receive the highest possible standard of support to meet the needs they have.

There are ever-increasing numbers of people living in Brighton & Hove with housing insecurity, sleeping rough, living in temporary accommodation or relying on the goodwill of friends and acquaintances for a roof over their head. These dire housing conditions can cast a long shadow over a person's health and wellbeing. Every day our team are working across the city helping people who are facing serious crises with their health, navigating trauma, handling complex social and medical needs and the exhausting uncertainty of not having a secure home. Our mission is to meet people in these moments with dignity, specialist expertise, kindness and humanity.

This year, the teams from our GP surgery, hospital in-reach team, street outreach project, health engagement team and step-down beds have gone



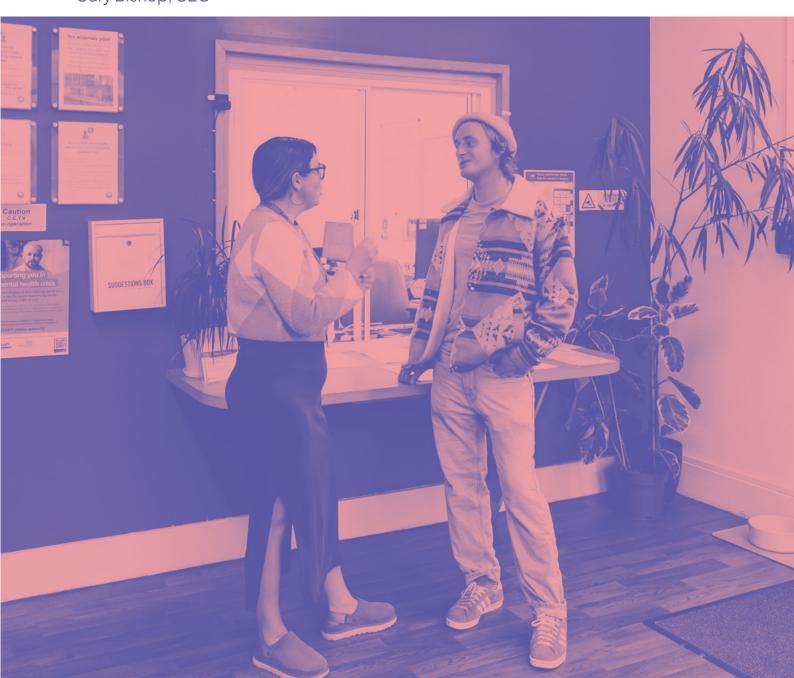
above and beyond to remove barriers, prevent crises, and support people to recover and rebuild their lives. The work is often deeply challenging, yet it is carried out with kindness, curiosity, professionalism and respect. The Outstanding rating we continue to hold from the Care Quality Commission is a testament to the quality of care that our staff provide in every circumstance.

Arch continues to play a central role in shaping the wider homeless health system in the city. Through leadership of the Integrated Care Team for Homelessness and Multiple Compound Needs, supporting city-wide partnerships, delivering training, and our continued co-production work with Common Ambition, we are helping to create a more coordinated, effective response to the health needs of people who are experiencing homelessness. We are proud to work alongside colleagues in the NHS, Brighton & Hove City Council, the brilliant local charities and people with lived experience to drive this change.

The demand for our services continues to rise, and the pressures on our patients are profound. Yet we remain hopeful. Hopeful because of what many of our patients tell us about their progress. Hopeful because of the dedication and compassion of our staff. Hopeful because of the passion of colleagues and partners. And hopeful because we believe that, together, this city can build a future in which no one's health is defined by their housing situation.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.
Very best regards,
Gary Bishop, CEO

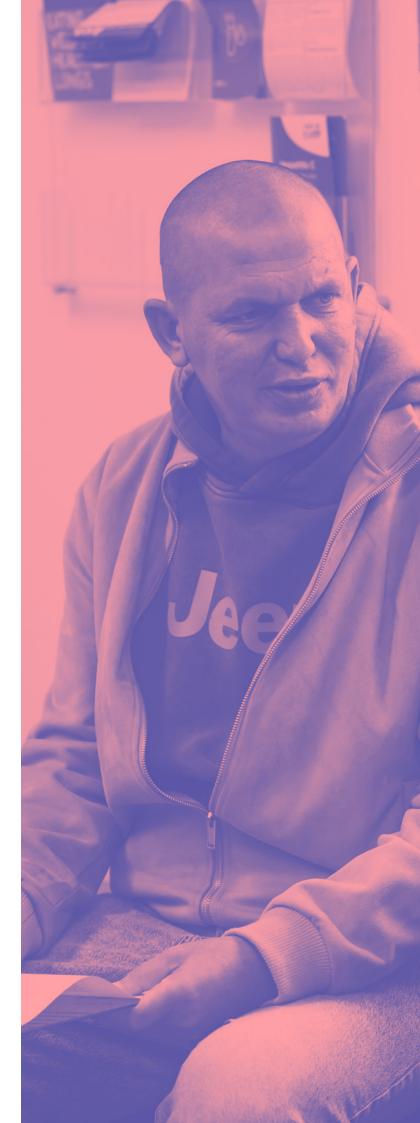
It is always a pleasure coming here, even when it is for something worrying.



# Arch Health CIC

Arch Health CIC is a local non-profit healthcare provider which is commissioned by the NHS to deliver specialist care for people experiencing homelessness in Brighton & Hove. Our services include a GP surgery, hospital in-reach services, community outreach, co-production, health engagement, city wide leadership and step down beds. Arch holds an OUTSTANDING CQC rating and is led by some of the UK's leading specialists in homeless healthcare.

Since 2017 we have worked with NHS colleagues, Brighton & Hove City Council, patients and partners to generate a vision of the future of homeless healthcare in the city, and under current agreements we are commissioned to provide specialist healthcare services to the city until at least 2028. We plan to use this time to explore every opportunity to improve the health and wellbeing of people who are without a secure home in Brighton and Hove. We are committed to this because periods of homelessness can have a devastating impact on a person's life and we believe that excellent, caring, primary health care can prevent long term suffering and save lives.





### **Values**

At Arch we pride ourselves on living our values every day, in our interactions with our patients, partners and each other.

This has enabled us to build up a strong, supportive, and now award-winning workplace culture.

#### Examples of our values in practice

#### Honesty and integrity:

We are uncompromising in our work, providing an honest voice even when this feels uncomfortable. This honesty is important for our patients, staff, commissioners, and partners. It is also vital to our leadership roledevelopment of city-wide strategies for system change and improved outcomes for patients.

#### Kindness and humanity:

We go out of our way to treat patients with dignity and respect - most are known to the staff and clinicians on first-name terms.

Every year we hold a remembrance event to mark the lives of those who have died whilst facing homelessness in Brighton & Hove.

This is a chance to acknowledge & celebrate the lives of those who were too often overlooked during their lifetimes. Feedback from patients, including the quotes you will find throughout this report, consistently demonstrate the impact being treated with care, compassion and kindness can have on a person's life.

#### **Collaboration and Community:**

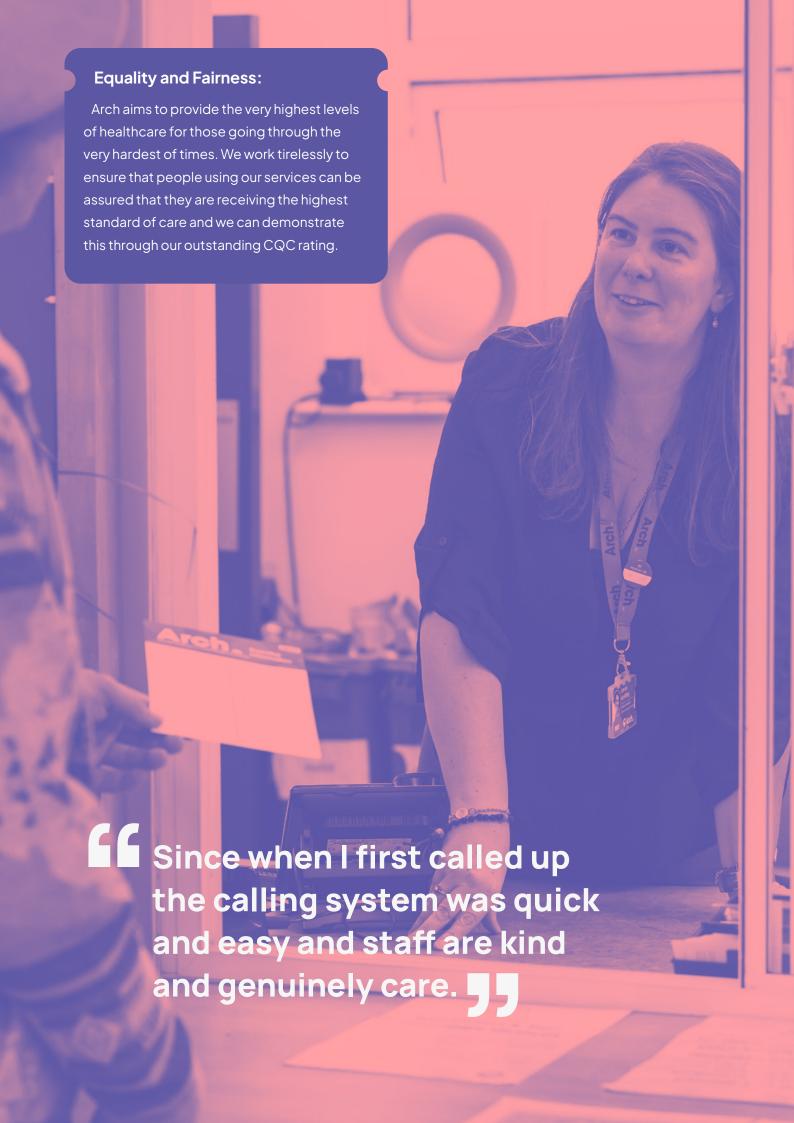
We initiate strong partnerships with dozens of organisations in Brighton and Hove which enable us to achieve so much for our patients. For example, our partnership with Brighton & Hove City Council has enabled us to continue providing the Step Down Beds service, which offers clinically supported accommodation for people who are leaving hospital, so they can recover properly. Our hospital team also works closely with the city council's colocated housing officer at the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton, to ensure safe discharges for patients and that no patient is discharged to the street.

#### **Excellence and curiosity:**

We are the lead partner in the major coproduction project, Common Ambition, which works across Sussex to elevate the voice of patients to improve health and care systems. The steering group, made up of experts by experience, is conducting in-depth research into systems, and establishing new ways of working, to effect change.

We also support the wider system workforce with regular online homeless health tutorials, and an annual homeless health conference.

These bring together people from a multitude of organisations to connect and network, and also hear from leading voices across the city and further afield. We cover a range of topics which in previous years have included: liver disease and alcohol related brain injury, suicide prevention, frailty and first aid, autism, paranoia, chronic pain, and recovery from addiction.



### Context

Homelessness in Brighton & Hove continues to be a significant and growing issue, with thousands of residents facing housing insecurity and rough sleeping.
As of 2024, nearly 3,600 people in the city are experiencing homelessness, including a staggering 1,400 children. The number of people living in temporary and emergency accommodation has risen by 75% in 10 years. Despite herculean efforts by many to address the crisis, the numbers continue to rise.

According to the city council 76 individuals were found to be sleeping rough in November 2024. Demand for homelessness services is rising rapidly. In 2024, the council recorded 2,624 requests for homelessness support, and 2,366 formal applications for help were made.

The affordability of housing remains a key driver of homelessness. The average monthly rent for a one bedroom flat in Brighton & Hove is now around £1,164–£1,197 per month. These soaring costs put significant pressure on low-income households, with many forced into temporary or unstable accommodation. The city's housing crisis is compounded by a shortage of affordable and social housing. Over 7,500 people are currently on the waiting list for social housing, with long waiting times and few vacancies.

Homelessness has a serious impact on health. According to the Faculty for Homeless Health, people experiencing homelessness are 34 times more likely to have tuberculosis, 50 times more likely to have Hepatitis C, 12 times more likely to have epilepsy, six times more likely to have heart disease, and five times more likely to have a stroke. Clearly, homelessness has a huge impact on the physical health of the individual. Furthermore, recent research by Homeless Link showed that in addition to physical health problems, 86% of individuals who are homeless have mental health problems, 39% take drugs or are recovering from a drug problem and 27% have, or are recovering from, an alcohol problem.

The vast majority of the people we care for at Arch have a complex combination of multiple physical needs, mental ill-health, substance misuse and homelessness, all of which conspire against their overall health and wellbeing. For all these reasons it is vital that our services are holistic and person centred, ensuring that people are supported to access the care they need.

If you wish to read more about homelessness and better understand the issue and how it affects those experiencing it, there are excellent resources available at:

Crisis: www.crisis.org.uk

Shelter: www.shelter.org.uk

Museum of Homelessness:

www.museumofhomelessness.org

Homeless: www.homeless.org

Emmaus: www.emmaus.org.uk

St Mungo's: www.mungos.org

#### People experiencing homelessness are:

34x

more likely to have **tuberculosis** 

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more likely to have **epilepsy**  50x

more likely to have **hepatitis C** 

**6**x

more likely to have heart disease

5x

more likely to have a stroke

86% have mental health problems

39% take drugs or are recovering from a drug problem and

27% have, or are recovering from, an alcohol problem

## Surgery

Arch Healthcare is a specialist GP surgery which actively seeks out opportunities to support many of the most vulnerable people in the city. The environment is warm, welcoming and supportive to patients and staff alike. We have 1400 registered patients, many of whom are known to staff by their first name and our reception team are often praised by patients and other services for their kind and welcoming manner. We register on average 10 patients a week and deduct a similar number.

Our patients are largely people currently experiencing homelessness. This includes people sleeping on the streets, living in emergency or supported accommodation or sofa surfing. We also care for people who have recently experienced homelessness as well as members of the Travelling community. Many of our patients have a combination of physical, mental or substance misuse conditions and thus require specialist primary care and attention which we endeavour to provide with every interaction. Our clinicians are highly trained to deliver this care, and work closely with other healthcare providers in the city to help 'join up' care as much as possible.

Whilst a lot of people 'pass through' our surgery, many of our patients have been with us for a long time. When our patients become very unwell or die it can be tough for the whole team. Each month at our practice meeting we pause to remember any patients who have died. We also hold an annual remembrance event to remember, to pay our respects, and to contribute to the voices calling for an end to the injustice of people dying whilst experiencing homelessness. Each member of staff at Arch is able to access counselling to help them to process their own emotions and stay healthy through the challenges of working in a service like ours.

Arch Healthcare is a challenging but incredibly fulfilling place to work. The team are amazing, provide excellent care, support each other when things don't go to plan, and celebrate the many successes when patients find positive ways forward in their lives.

I have ever had. The Best receptionist team. Best Nurses and Best Doctors... I wish I didn't have to leave this surgery. It makes me almost want to be homeless again. Thanks for everything.



# Hospital Inreach / Pathway Team

Our hospital inreach team - known as Pathway - grew from four, to nine over the course of the last year. The team consists of a GP, housing and advocacy specialists and nurses who work together to identify and support anyone who has been admitted to hospital whilst homeless. Our co-located housing officer from the city council has been with the team since March 2024 and in the year 2024–25 supported over 110 patients into all types of accommodation to relieve their homelessness.

The whole team is made up of a partnership project between Arch, Sussex Community Foundation Trust, Brighton and Hove City Council, and Justlife. The Pathway team works to support patients to complete their hospital treatment and have somewhere safe and suitable to go to upon discharge. Over the last year alone, this small team - most of whom are part-time in their roles - worked together to support almost 590 patients who found themselves in the Royal Sussex County Hospital: both Brighton and Hove residents and those from out of the area.

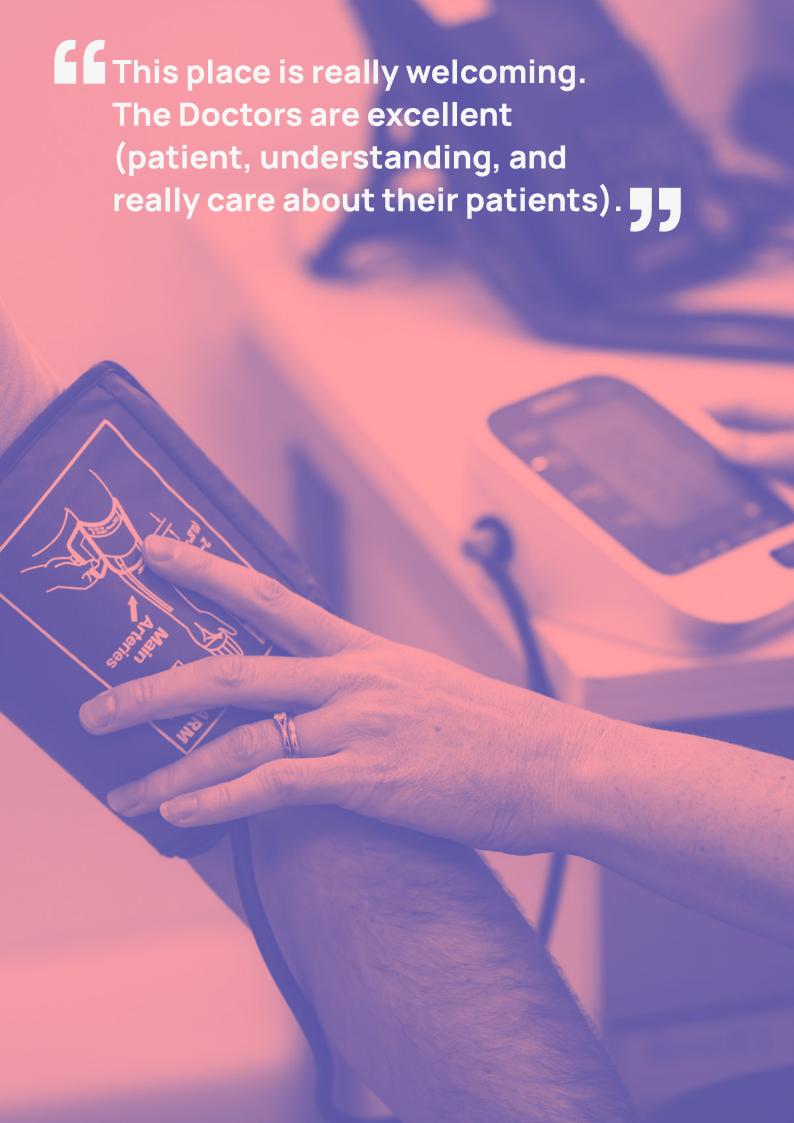
Patients are admitted for a wide range of complex conditions such as vascular issues (groin abscesses, DVTs) which often result in amputations, infections of the bone and heart, uncontrolled diabetes, overdoses, liver failure, skin infections, and pneumonia.





The Pathway team aims to improve health outcomes by:

- Supporting patients to stay in hospital for the duration of their treatment. (For example, the team provides "dignity packs" with clothing and toiletries, changes of clothes, as well as magazines, books or tv cards. These help to support a dignified, bearable hospital stay, ensuring patients receive all their necessary treatment, and engage with our team in order to recover fully.)
- Managing the time and manner of discharge, to ensure this is completed as safely as possible.
- Chairing MDT's for more complex patients so as to ensure the right treatment and discharge plans are being made.
- Liaising with housing services to ensure no one is discharged onto the streets.
- Registering patients with a GP if needed.
- Making referrals to services such as Adult Social Care, Integrated Nursing Team, Justlife and local substance misuse services to ensure ongoing support when returning to the community.
- Providing formal training and shadowing opportunities to clinical staff and trainees which supports hospital staff to gain an understanding of the challenges facing people without a secure home, and how to best provide tailored, effective care.



# Health Engagement

Arch works closely with our partners at Justlife, who deliver Health Engagement services in the community to Arch patients. The Health Engagement team consists of five outreach workers who provide intensive, non-clinical support to people experiencing homelessness with specific health needs.

The service is designed to support individuals with significant and unmet health needs, using an assertive outreach model to engage those who may find it difficult to access traditional healthcare services. The team's work focuses on reducing barriers to care and improving overall health outcomes for patients experiencing homelessness.

In addition to health-related support, the team also assists patients with housing and financial needs. Between April 2024 and March 2025, the team supported 110 patients to access and improve their housing, as well as referred them to additional support services.

Three new members of the team have joined in the last 12 months and have been undertaking training while building relationships with other support services across the city.

# Some examples of the day to day work are:

- Accompanying people from hospital to their accommodation
- Ensuring people can access
   prescriptions and health appointments,
   including booking and attending
   appointments when needed
- Connecting people to mental health, substance misuse, and other relevant services
- Advocating on behalf of patients regarding their health needs
- Supporting people to understand and manage their health conditions
- Progressing housing applications and supporting clients to sustain tenancies
- Supporting people to maximise their income and ensure they receive the benefits they are entitled to
- The Health Engagement Team meets fortnightly with the Arch Nurse Director to ensure every opportunity is taken to improve a person's health and wellbeing. These meetings provide clinical advice and support better access to healthcare by helping outreach workers understand patients' health needs, which services to contact, and expected waiting times.

### **Outreach team**

The extended Outreach service has now been running for three years. The team is made up of a GP, an Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP), and a Health Engagement Worker (HEW).

Arch Outreach aims to deliver healthcare to those who cannot access mainstream health services. Many of our patients experience mental health challenges, substance use, or self-neglect. Referrals come from Arch surgery staff, CGL SOS, and accommodation providers across the city. In addition, we run monthly dropin sessions at the Clocktower Sanctuary and Jubilee Library. We also visit people at their sleep-sites, in their accommodation, or meet them in a local café.

#### **Building Trust**

A big part of our work is establishing trust. Often, small acts of kindness go a long way: bringing someone their favourite drink, gifting an Arsenal calendar to help someone remember their appointments, or putting together a small bag of clothing and toiletries before a hospital admission. These gestures can be the first step toward sustained engagement.

#### **Our Work Includes:**

- Supporting GP registration
- Assessing and managing a range of health conditions, including minor illnesses, injuries, and long-term chronic diseases
- Liaising with secondary care teams to help patients navigate complex appointment systems
- Collaborating closely with keyworkers and other support agencies
- Referring patients to appropriate support services
- Facilitating health screenings





#### Successes in the Past Year

As a team we continued to identify gaps in provision and barriers our patients were experiencing. This year saw a number of hostels change their levels of support and we worked closely with accommodation providers and supported patients who were moved. We used this as an opportunity to connect with many who had struggled to engage with services.

A major focus this year has been strengthening our relationships with secondary care teams and raising awareness of the difficulties our patients face in the hospital environment. We successfully coordinated planned day attendances involving multiple teams for several of our patients. This has allowed same-day investigations and treatments - removing the need for overnight admissions, which many of our patients find too challenging. These positive experiences have led to improved engagement and increased trust from our patients in healthcare services.



## **Step Down Beds**

The partnership project between Arch, Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC), and New Steine Mews Hostel to provide a step down service is now in its fifth year and is an embedded service in the city. We provide patients who are discharged from hospital with accommodation in a supportive hostel environment. Residents of Step Down Beds benefit from daily clinical visits and dedicated support workers to ensure they can recover fully after leaving hospital. The service also supports patients to stay within the community by moving temporarily into New Steine Mews hostel where they receive care and treatment, in order to prevent readmission to hospital.

Referrals into Step Down Beds are identified by the Pathway / Hospital inreach team who refer patients within the hospital and carry out an initial assessment. Where appropriate, a referral is made to Step Down Beds, if the referral is accepted, the Pathway team will then ensure the safe transfer of the patient to the hostel.

The Arch nursing team provides specialist clinical care during daily visits, ensuring residents are registered at Arch 's GP surgery and referred to relevant support services such as substance misuse and mental health. The team also supports patients to link in with other primary and secondary care services which can support their health and recovery.

BHCC manage the accommodation at New Steine Mews Hostel and provide

Personal Assistants to support patients while they are in Step Down Beds. Personal Assistants support patients to attend appointments, provide companionship, help with benefit applications and advocate on behalf of the patient. They also support patients to access food and laundry services and help develop and manage move-on plans.

Brighton and Hove City Council and the NHS Integrated Care Board commissioned this work through the Better Care Fund and we continue to work with commissioners to ensure the future of this service.

## There have been many positive outcomes for those accessing this service including:

- Lower rates of unplanned hospital admissions and unscheduled care including a reduction in attendances at Accident & Emergency departments.
- Stabilising physical health and managing long term conditions.
- Stabilising mental health and supporting patients to engage with mental health services.
- Improved health engagement, including GP registration, and check ups with dentists, sexual health clinics, specialist services for diabetes as well as secondary care teams.
- Improved medication management.
- Moving on to permanent accommodation.

# Common Ambition Co-production project

Common Ambition improves support systems for people experiencing multiple compound needs (MCN) in Brighton and Hove through co-production and advocating for lived experience voices to be central to service and system change. Arch is the lead partner of this project and we are delighted to be working in partnership with Justlife as well. The project has been further developed since its first three years of operation and is now a model supported by The Health Foundation. Additionally, the project has been awarded service contracts from Brighton and Hove City Council's Housing and Public Health departments, Changing Futures and Sussex Community Foundation.

This year the project has two distinct programmes of work, one continuing to focus on homelessness and health and a new strand of work focussing on drug and alcohol services and systems. In both streams of work, the aim is to strengthen systems to better meet the needs of people experiencing MCN through the co-creation of service ideas and models. local system policy and strategy, and best practice recommendations and training with those who have experienced the systems first hand. Common Ambition achieves these goals using its own codeveloped, trauma-informed co-production practice.

#### Homelessness and Health programme

This programme of work is focussing on improving homelessness and health services as well as the wider system of support. It is designed and delivered by a steering group made up of people who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness, the Project Manager (from Arch), and two Participation Leads (from project partner Justlife). The group meets for two hours each week.

This year has been full of achievements resulting in real impact, and has been marked by strong collaboration and partnership working. We worked closely with Brighton and Hove City Council's housing department to consult on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy as well as reviewing the wider housing service offer. Our co-designed training for medical students was codeveloped (with Dr Kate Pitt from Arch and Sara Emerson, Health Engagement Service Manager at Justlife) into a mandatory lecture and is now a permanent part of the medical school curriculum. We partnered with Imogen Blood Associates to evaluate the Changing Futures Multiple Compound Needs Multi Disciplinary Team pilot, leading a peer-led evaluation process and sharing our recommendations through a series of collaborative sessions. We hosted consultation events with frontline staff, CEOs, and service managers to explore the development of a homeless health

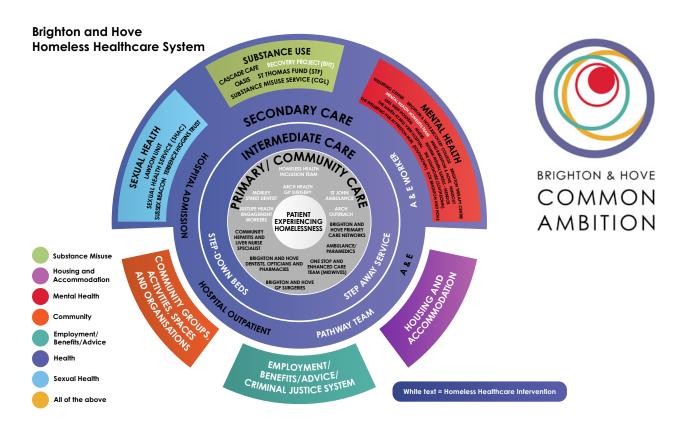
hub, and supported Arch Healthcare in designing evaluation procedures for their Outreach and Step Down Beds projects. This programme of work also co-designed a sector-wide training on co-production, which was delivered free of charge in summer 2025.

#### **Drug and Alcohol programme**

This programme of work is focussing on supporting the city's Combatting Drugs Partnership to deliver its strategic goals and embed co-production in drug and alcohol service improvement and system change. It is designed and delivered by several groups of people who have experienced drug and alcohol harms, including a central steering group and a women's group.

The highlights in the drug and alcohol workstream have included a significant system and service level impact, including the creation of three system maps (drug and alcohol, women's, and mental health-

related systems), a detailed drug and alcohol journey map, and six co-produced prototypes—such as the widely supported 'health and support card.' We contributed to shaping the Combatting Drugs Strategy and co-designed GP training, while also hosting lived experience-led events and presenting at system meetings. Our focus on women has resulted in women's needs being embedded in commissioning priorities, the formation of the Women's Rehab Action Group, and the ongoing use of our 'Putting Women on the Agenda' initiative to evaluate services. We've supported 22 members' personal development, with participants reporting increased confidence, deeper understanding of systems, and transitions into work, education, and volunteering. Lastly, we've strengthened partnerships with services like CGL, Oasis, Cascades, St Thomas Fund and BHT Move On, with Common Ambition-hosted events promoting collaboration and amplifying lived experience to drive real change.

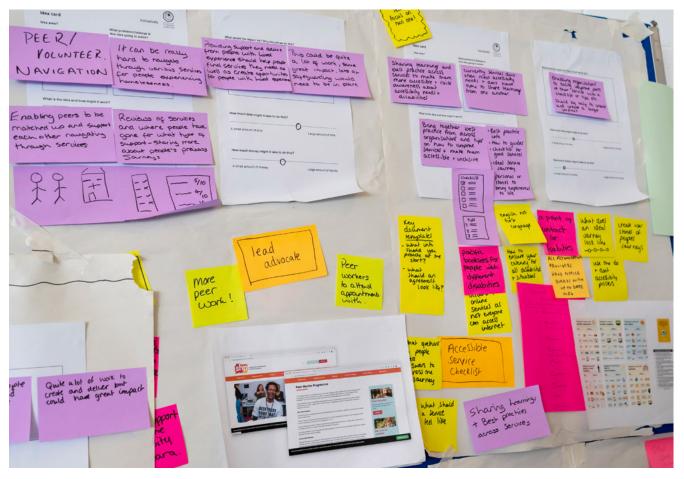


# City-wide homeless health leadership

Over the course of the year, we delivered an extensive programme of teaching, training and system leadership to strengthen inclusion health locally and regionally. We provided multiple sessions for Year 4 medical students on safe discharge planning and the complexities of homelessness, alongside workshops for Year 2 students co-designed and delivered with the Common Ambition team and Justlife. In total, more than 200 medical students received specialist homelessness teaching over the year. Additional sessions were provided for

Foundation Doctors, GP trainees, hospital social workers, A&E teams, and nursing students, with a focus on trauma-informed care, outreach models, and managing complex needs.

Team members contributed widely to multi-agency development, including drug and alcohol-related harm audits, Alcohol Related Brain Damage (ARBD) pathway development, Trans, Non-Binary or Intersex (TNBI) steering group work, providing diabetes training for hostel staff, and preparatory work for new outreach pilots.



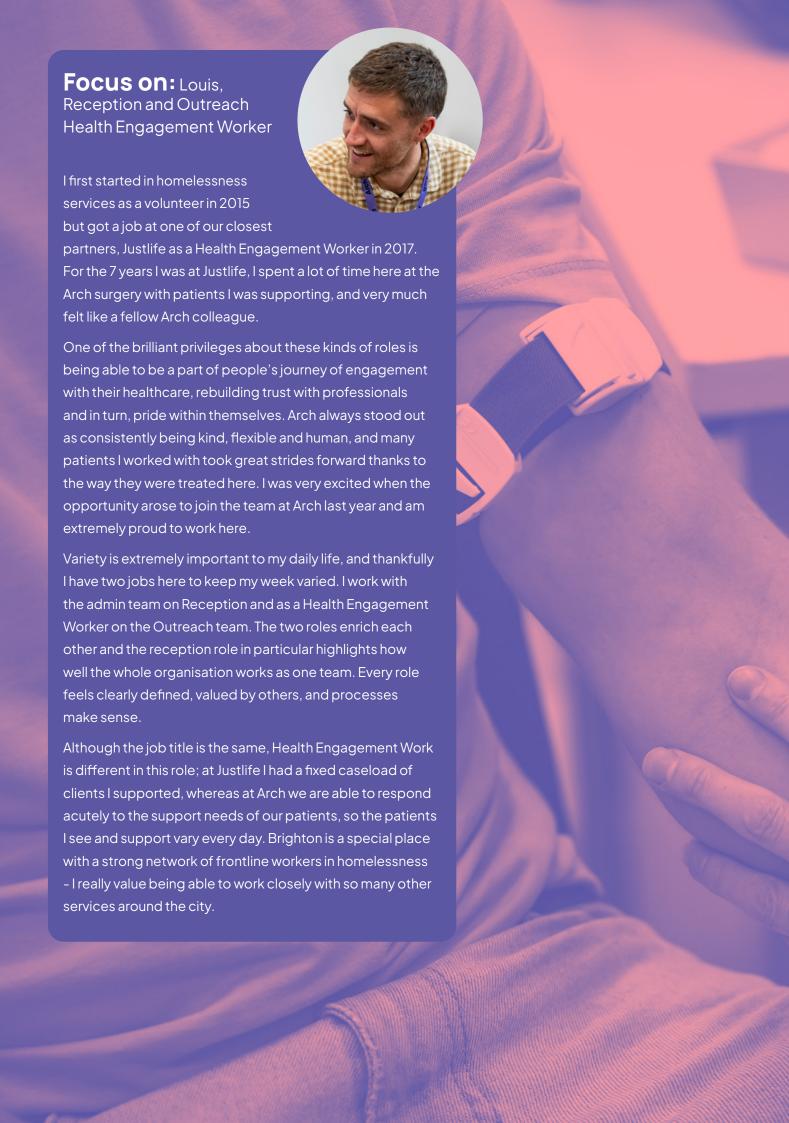


Shadowing opportunities and professional exchanges supported skills development across both clinical and housing sectors.

We continued to play a significant leadership role within the city. Our annual Homeless Health Conference—attended by 130 participants from 35 organisations—offered 15 workshops, two plenaries and keynote sessions. The conference programme included sessions on: paranoia, sexual health, menopause and homelessness, dual diagnosis, respiratory disease, and co-production. As well as providing practical learning and opportunities to share insight and experience, the event also provides a valuable space for frontline workers to connect and reflect.

Our national influence also grew through participation in Pathway educational events, collaborative research, NHS England visits, and contributions to the development of primary care ADHD pathways and ARBD case review processes. Collectively, this work continues to shape more equitable, informed and coordinated healthcare for people experiencing homelessness across the country.

Everyone always has a smile. Brilliant for patient wellbeing.





# A vision for homeless healthcare in Brighton & Hove

Over the last year Arch has undertaken significant leadership roles with the Integrated Care Team (ICT) for Homelessness and Multiple Compound Needs in Brighton & Hove.

Through the ICT we are supporting significant transformation in the way that care is delivered to our patients. Through improved coordination across healthcare, social care, and the voluntary sector, we aim to integrate care pathways that address health, social care and housing needs. We are working with partners to create a future where healthcare for people experiencing homelessness and multiple compound needs is integrated across disciplines and easily understood by those who need to access our services.

Aligned with the NHS Long Term Plan, we are committed to working with partners to shift care from hospital to the community, progress from analogue to digital solutions, and move from treatment to prevention. These transitions are crucial in addressing the deep-rooted health inequalities faced by people experiencing homelessness and multiple compound needs.

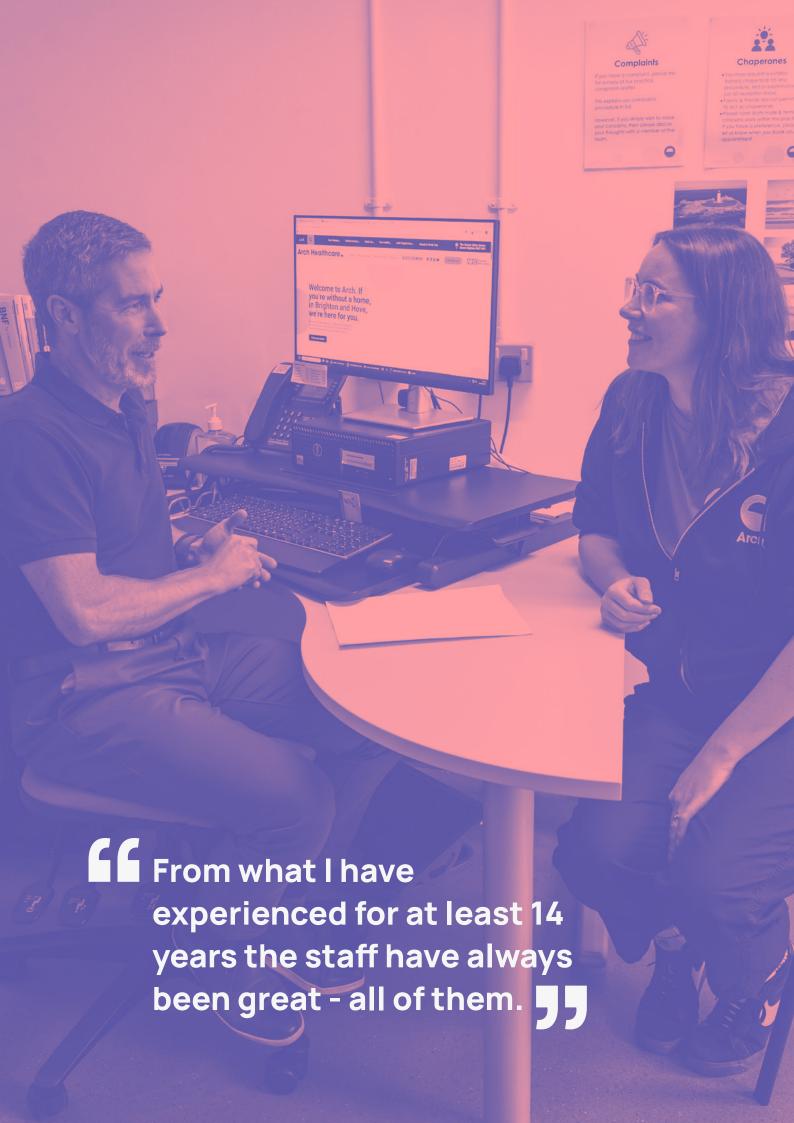
The ongoing closure of NHS England and reduction in the size of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) presents an opportunity to reimagine care delivery. We aim to shift from a system that responds to crisis to one that prevents it - prioritising community-based, preventative healthcare over hospital-based treatment.











# Our conclusion and request

This report is a small snapshot of the work we completed in a 12 month period. It is impossible to quantify or describe the daily interactions which our staff and clinicians have with people who are in crisis and suffering greatly as a result of things that have happened to them.

As a team we continue to respond to the needs of our community, always looking for gaps and opportunities to innovate and bring together partners to solve problems and improve things.

The need for our services is growing, there are more people living in our city without secure accommodation now than ever before. Sadly, we do not see an end to that trend any time soon as inequalities continue to rise across the country and certainly in Brighton & Hove. Our commitment is to continue to design, create and deliver services for as long as they are needed but our hope is that as a city we can come together to end, once and for all, the need for Arch Healthcare and other specialist services.

We are always interested to hear from supporters, partners, potential staff, fundraisers and co-conspirators who would like to join us as we create a better future for homeless healthcare in the city.

Please do get in touch.



### **Details**

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#### **Company Numbers:**

**Community Interest Company Number:** 09989518

Website: www.archhealthcare.uk

**Bank Name & Address:** Coop Bank, Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale, WN8 6NY

**Auditors Name:** Plus Accounting, Preston Park House, South Rd, Preston, Brighton and Hove, BN1 6SB

#### **Non-Executive Directors:**

**Bobby Dhol** 

Dr Chris Sargeant

Alistair Hill

#### **Executive Directors:**

Dr Tim Worthley

Gary Bishop (CEO)

Hannah Bishop

Dr Natalie Lewin





The staff are always warm and welcoming.
Also very understanding and I don't know where I would be without them and their help. Actually it's not worth thinking about where I'd be.

