

Our objectives:

Our goal is to help the largest possible number of rough sleepers to move into affordable rental housing, and to achieve that affordable housing provision become the institutional, national policy level solution to homelessness. We support this through the introduction and promotion of new, cooperation-based social work methods. Our main activity is based on an innovative idea: we renovate vacant, run-down municipal apartments with the help of volunteers, as well as the participation of the homeless families who will then be able to move into the apartments. Besides, we also intend to set up a housing management agency, to involve privately owned vacant housing into affordable housing provision. Furthermore, we also aim to actively support the adoption of the Housing First method in Hungary, and its application within social policy. Our entire work is open and transparent, and our related continuous communication campaign aims at raising awareness about homelessness and the housing crisis, and calling attention to the individual and social consequences of housing problems.



The current homeless provision system is unable to provide a realistic and sustainable way out of homelessness, and is especially inadequate for rough sleepers living in self-built huts. For these people, institutional care often means a step back, as people living in their self-built dwellings and managing their own household would not be able to keep most of their belongings, nor can they retain their household composition, e.g. couples cannot move into the same room, nor even necessarily the same institution. Housing First offers individual housing, and provides a real possibility of social integration for roughly the same cost. We believe that housing must be the first step in social support, and not its final goal.

Our activities: 'From Huts to Homes' and 'Housing Now!'

Since beginning our work in 2012 we have been helping homeless persons move into renovated municipal flats. We renovate vacant, run-down municipal dwellings with the help of volunteers as well as hut-dwelling rough sleepers, that is, the prospective tenants, in partnership with other civil society organisations, and with the support of individual and organisational donations. Members of the target group have no chance of ever obtaining long term, sustainable individual housing in any other way, as according to the vast majority of municipal decrees, homeless persons are ineligible for municipal rental housing. At the same time, municipalities often have a low quality housing stock with many dilapidated, even uninhabitable flats, which they have trouble utilizing. This may also be the case for many privately owned apartments;



therefore we recently began working on finding innovative ways to utilize private dwellings in affordable housing provision.

This way tenants can exit homelessness, for which they hardly have any other chance. Intensive social work, based on the Housing First approach, is a fundamental part of our work, in which stable housing is considered the first step in social reinsertion. The goal is to help clients retain their housing in the long run, for which we identify employment opportunities, and in some cases even offer jobs to our tenants. Some of our clients had no regular income whatsoever upon moving in their new housing, and today they are able to cover their bills on time.

Since 2015 we have also been working on demonstrating that privately owned housing can also be used to alleviate the housing crisis, through integrating unused privately owned flats into our housing management system, and rent them out at a discount rate to our clients, while we guarantee upkeep and maintenance to owners. Our intention is to expand this range of our activities into an independent programme under the social rental agency 'Housing Now!'. This provides a solution to persons implicated in the housing crisis, and also to the owners of 400,000 privately owned vacant flats in Hungary. This work is assisted by Tesz Hungary Foundation, whose support allowed us to include the first three privately owned dwellings into our programme.

As house prices rose significantly in 2016, we launched our mobile home investment programme, in which we install up to two Scandinavian style second-hand mobile homes on plots either purchased or granted right of use, which is significantly less expensive than standard housing, while providing the same level of comfort. On the other hand, the investment programme also allows for the simpler involvement of support, which facilitates the expansion of the 'Housing Now!' programme. Supporters will be able to invest in a socially sensitive manner, with a return on investment over time. The business plan of the concept is currently being developed by MacterCard's team in a pro bono programme. The first mobile home is planned to be installed in summer 2017.

Work!



Our case management is based on two pillars: partnership, and sustainable housing through ensuring stable income or employment. This is supported by the 'Give Work!' concept. Persons living in poverty often undertake temporary work, almost always on the black market. This makes them vulnerable, as often they aren't even given their promised low pay, they have neither social security coverage nor pension funds, is not included in the obligatory annual 30 work days to be justified for most social welfare entitlements, and being unable to prove their work experience also impedes searching for a formal, reported job. 'Give Work!' project was developed to respond to these challenges, in which we provide an online and an offline interface and organise regular group meetings to our housed clients and other persons living in homelessness or

housing poverty. our goal, on the one hand, is to support their long term insertion into the formal labour market; and on the other, to help them find formal, registered temporary work, and through it provable work experience and income, until they find a stable position. These interfaces inform potential employers about the services offered by clients, and provide a quality guarantee on behalf of our association. In the

meantime, our social workers and peer group members support clients and one another in identifying job and vocational training opportunities. One of our housed clients is currently being employed by our association as mason on another renovation; this inspired the concept of the 'Give Work' project.

Volunteers

It is not accident this photo was chosen for a poster calling for volunteers: it perfectly shows the importance of volunteering in our work. Our volunteers come from very diverse backgrounds, with very diverse experience. On the picture, a homeless member of the activist group City is for All is teaching the basics of masonry to a volunteer, coming from a much more advantageous social background. This situation is not infrequent, and working with homeless persons does not only change the life of our clients, but also the perception and attitudes of our volunteers. The involvement of prospective tenants in renovation works serves changing social perception and prejudices against the homeless, as well as helping them gain skills and possibly work experience, and perhaps building a supporting network during the renovation works.



Results and publicity



Our Housing First programme is successful: the life quality of our housed clients is significantly improved, and they are becoming independent and self-reliant in their changed circumstances. Our work currently helps secure the housing of 33 people in 14 family households, and even beside them we help clients with advice and donations.

The significance of our work is not limited to our regular and occasional case work. We intend to widely and continuously publicize our activities in the media, on facebook, and on our blog, as well as inform about the need to overarching reform of homeless provision, and housing poverty measures in general.

We believe that this is strongly supported by the fact that our clients are given room to express their own experience, showing their own effort in solving their situation, and thus demonstrating that homelessness and housing poverty are systemic problems, which nonetheless have a human

face: that of our clients'.

Besides our media coverage, our work is presented in our introductory video at www.utcarollakasba.hu/rolunk, and our facebook page at www.facebook.com/utcarollakasba (in Hungarian).

If you have any questions about our program please contact us at utcarollakasba@gmail.com or +36 30 6017694