

2009
2019

Ten years of
tackling multiple
disadvantage
nationwide

**M
E
A
M** Making Every
Adult Matter

CLiNKS
Supporting the voluntary sector
working in the criminal justice system

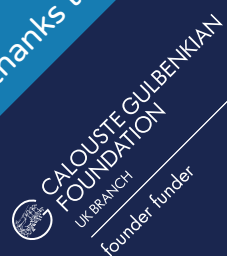
∞
homeless link

mind
for better mental health



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With thanks to our funders and supporters, past and present:



John Ellerman
 Foundation



Lankelly Chase



FOREWORD

When society organises and delivers services in silos, it damages the lives of people facing multiple disadvantage.

This was the recognition that led to the formation of the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) coalition ten years ago by the national charities Clinks, DrugScope, Homeless Link and Mind. It is a view shared by Collective Voice, who joined us in later years.

Criminal justice, substance misuse, homelessness and mental health are terms used to organise public services. These silos do not reflect the human experience of people facing these problems and they cannot, on their own, foster the solutions that help individuals transform their lives. The charities saw that they themselves were part of these silos and that something needed to change.

Ten years on, MEAM has worked with over 50 local areas across the country to improve the way that services are provided for people experiencing multiple

disadvantage, directly improving over 1,000 individuals' lives and indirectly supporting many more. We have used our learning to shape local and national policy and we have built a unique coalition that 'practices what it preaches' by working across the boundaries of our four organisations and in close collaboration with others.

This report reflects on the journey so far, told through the voices of the people we work alongside across the country - people with experience of multiple disadvantage, service providers, policymakers, commissioners and politicians. Despite considerable progress there remains much work to do, and we look forward to working with you all in the years to come.

Oliver Hilbery
 Director, MEAM



WHAT IS MULTIPLE DISADVANTAGE?

People facing multiple disadvantage experience a combination of problems including homelessness, substance misuse, contact with the criminal justice system and mental ill health. They fall through the gaps between services and systems, making it harder for them to address their problems and lead fulfilling lives.

It is estimated that 58,000 people face problems of homelessness, substance misuse and contact with the criminal justice system in any given year. Within this group, a majority will have experienced mental health problems. Women are under-represented in these figures, but nonetheless face considerable structural barriers and unique needs based on their gender that need to

be met. Similarly, people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities experience a range of social inequalities which contribute to their experience of multiple disadvantage.

People's likelihood of experiencing multiple disadvantage is increased both by growing up in circumstances of material deprivation and experiencing abuse or neglect in early life.

This group of people tend to be known to everyone, but are often served by no one as they are perceived to be 'hard to reach' or 'not my responsibility.' This can make services seem unhelpful and uncaring to someone experiencing multiple disadvantage who is seeking help.



WHY DOES IT MATTER?

People facing multiple disadvantage are often failed by services and systems that focus on singular issues. This makes it harder for individuals to address their problems, lead fulfilling lives and contribute fully to their communities.

This status quo is unacceptable. Evidence has shown that better coordinated interventions from statutory and voluntary agencies can improve people's lives and reduce the use and cost of unplanned crisis services.

But while some local areas are making progress on better coordinated interventions, others are not. In many local areas, services continue to operate

in isolation; people with experience of multiple disadvantage continue to have limited power over the decisions that affect them; and the national policy environment often fails to promote collaborative ways of working.

MEAM exists to change this and to improve the lives of people facing multiple disadvantage.

WHAT DOES MEAM DO?

The MEAM coalition has four strategic aims:

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1

Transforming local systems

We support local areas across the country to change the way that services, systems and people work for, and with, people facing multiple disadvantage.

//
2

Influencing policy change

We help policymakers and commissioners to understand the challenges experienced by individuals facing multiple disadvantage, and ensure policy helps people get the right support.

//
3

Promoting the value of every adult

We co-produce our work with people facing multiple disadvantage and support local areas to do the same. We promote the value of every adult in our society and improve insight and attitudes towards people facing multiple disadvantage.

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4

Building a strong MEAM coalition

We work together, optimising our collective skills, knowledge and voice to model and achieve the change we want to see.

AIM

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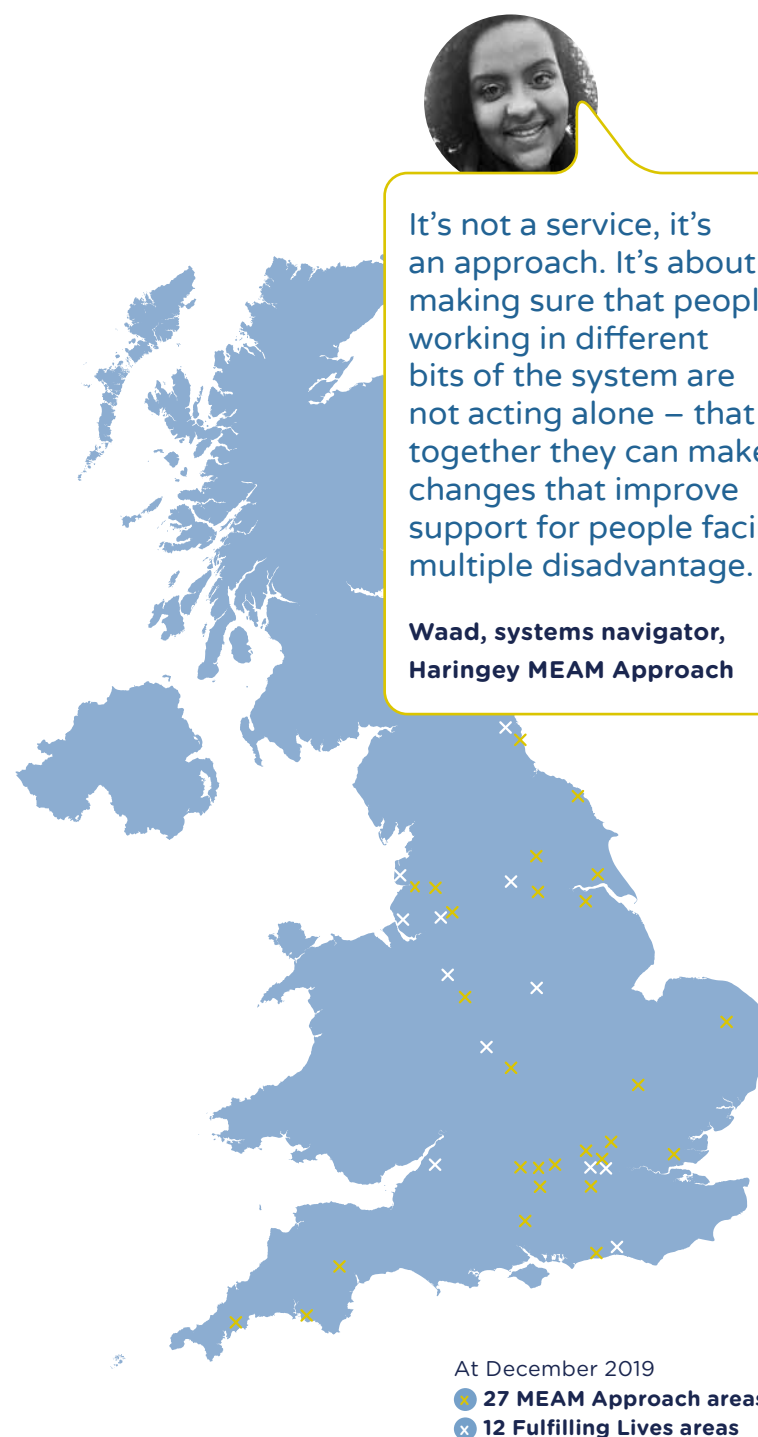
TRANSFORMING LOCAL SYSTEMS

MEAM supports local areas across the country to improve services and systems for people facing multiple disadvantage.

We do this using the MEAM Approach, a non-prescriptive framework that helps local areas to design and deliver better coordinated services. We also provide support to the twelve areas that form the National Lottery Community Fund's Fulfilling Lives programme.

OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS WE HAVE:

- Worked with 40 MEAM Approach areas and 12 Fulfilling Lives areas.
- Directly improved the lives of at least 1,000 individuals supported by coordinated and flexible interventions in MEAM Approach areas.
- Recorded a 44% increase in wellbeing and a 23% reduction in wider service use costs as a result of these interventions (updated evaluation findings pending).
- Supported MEAM Approach and Fulfilling Lives areas to create long-term changes to local systems, based on learning from what is happening on the ground.
- Built a vibrant network in which local areas support, encourage and learn from each other.



It's not a service, it's an approach. It's about making sure that people working in different bits of the system are not acting alone – that together they can make changes that improve support for people facing multiple disadvantage.

Waad, systems navigator, Haringey MEAM Approach

The MEAM Approach gave us the framework to start local conversations and find a shared vision. We wanted the right people around the table and for their services to benefit from being around the table...

Rachel, joint lead, Basingstoke MEAM Approach



Now I've got my own flat, a job, a girlfriend – before I didn't have any of that, I didn't have no goals whatsoever. You should have seen the clothes I was wearing, I just didn't care about myself, now I do.

Ashley, expert by experience, Blackburn with Darwen MEAM Approach



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2 INFLUENCING POLICY CHANGE

MEAM supports local and national policymakers to understand multiple disadvantage and develop policy which can improve people's lives.

We work with people in local areas to improve their knowledge of the policy process and influence local change. We engage with national government to help shape policy decisions through evidence from local areas. And we work to promote new thinking that can shape the policy environment of tomorrow.

OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS WE HAVE:

- Worked with over 100 people to bring the voice of people facing multiple disadvantage into the policy debate.
- Challenged and supported government on the key reforms of the last decade around homelessness, criminal justice, substance misuse, health and mental health, social care and welfare.
- Submitted evidence to hundreds of reviews, consultations and select committee enquiries.
- Developed a broad network of contacts in government who understand the importance of multiple disadvantage and look to MEAM for advice, support and evidence.
- Led the argument and business case for a national programme on individuals facing multiple disadvantage.



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[MEAM's submission] covered issues thoroughly and concisely, with points well referenced and robust sources cited – this is a blessing!

Civil servant



Thank you for such a lively and informative discussion yesterday. The breadth and depth of insight was fantastic and will certainly help shape our thinking.

Civil servant



Your evidence was really useful, interesting and powerful.

Parliamentary clerk



We're working with MEAM to think about how local policy impacts people facing multiple disadvantage and to develop a plan for influencing change.

Chris, joint lead, Norwich MEAM Approach

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3 PROMOTING THE VALUE OF EVERY ADULT

MEAM is committed to co-producing our work with people facing multiple disadvantage and helping local areas to do the same.

People with experience of multiple disadvantage help to plan and deliver our practice and policy work. We also provide direct support to local areas to expand and enhance their co-production activities.

We are currently seeking funding for two new programmes of work under this aim. One will focus on the attitudes and behaviours of staff in local services, while the other will understand, measure and improve the attitudes of the general public towards people facing multiple disadvantage.

OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS WE HAVE:

- Developed a network of people with experience of multiple disadvantage.
- Produced a theory of change to guide our co-production activities.
- Delivered bespoke support to MEAM Approach areas to improve their approach to co-production.
- Developed a peer research team to lead on evaluation fieldwork and sit on the evaluation steering group.
- Recruited an Involvement Coordinator.

Involving experts has been fundamental to the success of our partnership. We wanted it to be meaningful and for people to feel supported. One expert in particular has taken on a significant advisory role, not just for our local work, but also nationally on behalf of the MEAM coalition.

Craig, joint lead, Surrey MEAM Approach



Let me be quite frank about it... when I was first asked I thought it was tokenism. The ex-homeless guy – what does he know? But then, as I was listened to, and my ideas and thoughts were taken up, I thought yeah, I can actually contribute something here.

Charlie, expert by experience, Basingstoke MEAM Approach



It's not you're on one side and I'm on the other – we're a team together.

Mero, expert by experience, peer research team

Designing and delivering MEAM support to local areas has been a great experience.

Anne, expert by experience, Cambridgeshire MEAM Approach



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4 BUILDING A STRONG MEAM COALITION

The four charities have made multiple disadvantage a core part of their work and communications.

Together, we have created a team that sits across our four organisations, enabling us to collaborate across organisational boundaries and act in ways which have the best chance of achieving change. We encourage local areas and national government to do the same.

OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS WE HAVE:

- Built the MEAM staff team from 1 to 13 people, giving us national reach and wide cross-sector expertise.
- Set out our approach to collaboration in a legally-binding collaboration agreement.
- Made a senior commitment to MEAM, holding over 50 meetings of the MEAM Programme Board.
- Made clear commitments in our organisational strategies to multiple disadvantage and championed thinking on it across our organisations and our memberships.
- Ensured that our external communications and messaging reflect our collaboration on multiple disadvantage.

Social change depends on organisations collaborating to do things they couldn't alone, working across silos, pushing the boundaries of practice and collectively influencing the policy context within which they operate. MEAM is an exemplar and its model a hallmark for everything we do at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

Andrew Barnett, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK Branch), Founder funder



The sustained collaboration of the MEAM partners has succeeded in keeping minds collectively focused on multiple disadvantage, leading to breakthroughs with national funding and policy that hadn't previously seemed possible.

Julian Corner, Lankelly Chase



Tackling multiple disadvantage requires leadership and a focus on effectiveness and accountability. As a coalition, MEAM are in a great position to support areas with this, drawing on the expertise provided by coalition members and wider partners.

Laura Furness, The National Lottery Community Fund



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

We have seen good progress on multiple disadvantage over the last ten years, but there remains much work to do.

Since MEAM formed, we have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of local areas recognising the importance of multiple disadvantage and creating cross-sector approaches. We have seen the voice of people with experience of multiple disadvantage become louder and more urgent, and we have been encouraged by the passion of the people who work day-in, day-out for change.

This local work is, however, vulnerable.

Finance, outcome and accountability structures inherent within the current

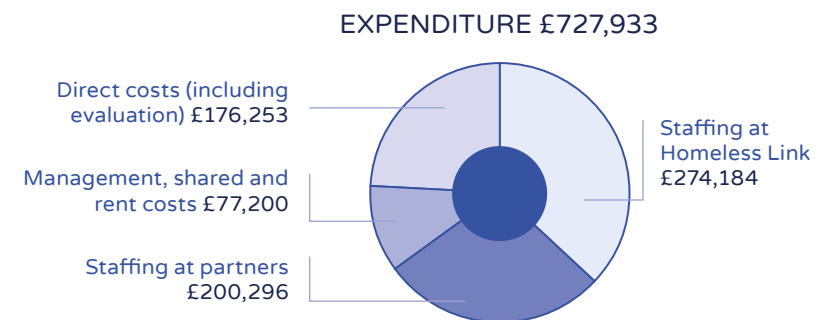
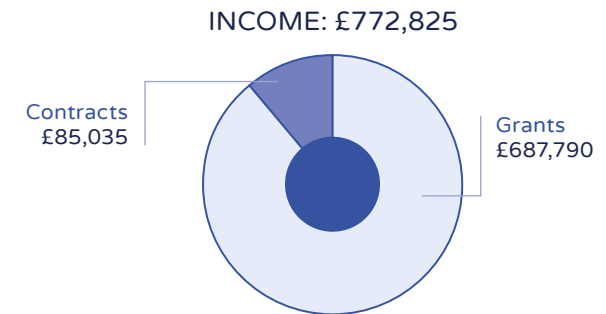
'departmental' system pull people back to tick-box outcomes, large caseloads, a risk-management approach and traditional funding streams, which rarely encourage cross-sector collaboration.

Poor public attitudes caused by a lack of understanding create a drag on vital investment in services, and reduce the political will for change. And the voice of people facing multiple disadvantage has to compete to be heard.

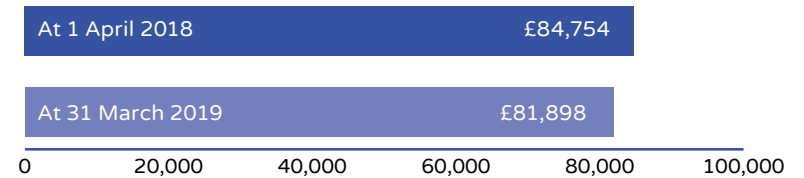
As we move into our second decade, we will continue to provide practical support to local areas. We will also redouble our efforts to improve public opinion, and to create a national policy environment that can bring services together rather than force them apart.

FINANCIAL HEADLINE

Below we present figures from the audited accounts for the 2018-19 financial year.



MEAM UNRESTRICTED SURPLUS



THE MEAM TEAM

Our work is delivered by two 'embedded teams' across the MEAM organisations. Governance is provided by the MEAM Programme Board. The list below is correct at December 2019.

LOCAL NETWORKS TEAM

Tassie Weaver
(1.0FTE, HL)
Head of Networks and Operations

David Hunter
(1.0FTE, HL)
Partnerships Manager, North

Safia Cragg
(1.0FTE, HL)
Partnerships Manager, London & SE

Tabatha O'Brien Butcher
(1.0FTE, HL)
seconded to GMCA)
Partnerships Manager, GMCA

Helen Gavaghan
(1.0FTE, HL)
Involvement Coordinator

Ruth Wallbank
(1.0FTE, Mind)
Partnerships Manager, Midlands

Michelle Butterly
(1.0FTE, Mind)
Partnerships Manager, London & SE

Amanda Sherriff
(1.0FTE, Clinks)
Partnerships Manager, South West

Natalie Maidment
(0.2FTE, Clinks)
Partnerships Manager, NE

LOCAL NETWORKS MANAGEMENT GROUP

Angela Lucas
Clinks

Tasmin Maitland
Anna Suswillo
Homeless Link

Marcel Vige
Mind

POLICY TEAM

Stephen Moffatt
(1.0FTE, HL)
Senior Policy Manager

Laura Greason
(Maternity, HL)
Policy and Practice Manager

Richard Lewis
(1.0FTE, HL)
Policy and Practice Manager

Jennie Corbett
(0.4FTE, HL)
Policy Manager

Ayaz Manji
(0.2FTE, Mind)
Senior Policy and Campaigns Officer

Will Downs
(0.4FTE, Clinks)
Policy Officer

POLICY MANAGEMENT GROUP

Jess Mullen
Nicola Drinkwater
Clinks

Jacqui McCluskey
Helen Mathie
Caroline Bernard
Kate Fitch
Homeless Link

Vicki Nash
Mind

DIRECTOR AND PROGRAMME BOARD

Oliver Hilbery
(1.0FTE, HL)
Director

Anne Fox
CEO, Clinks

Paul Farmer
CEO, Mind

Rick Henderson
CEO, Homeless Link

Oliver Standing
Director, Collective Voice

OUR THANKS TO:

The **experts by experience** who work alongside the team across the country

Baroness Tyler who served as chair of MEAM from 2013–2019

All MEAM alumni staff and experts who have contributed to the work of the coalition over the last ten years

Our funders and supporters (see inside front cover for acknowledgments)

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