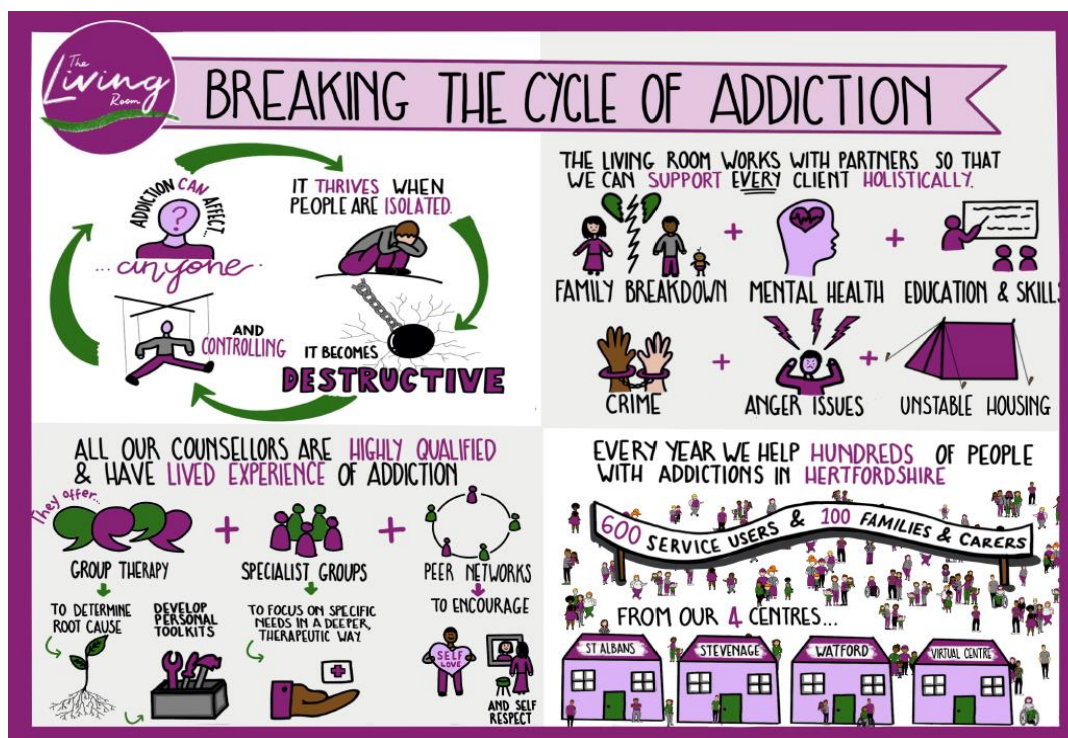




Breaking the cycle of addiction

Impact Analysis Report 2022

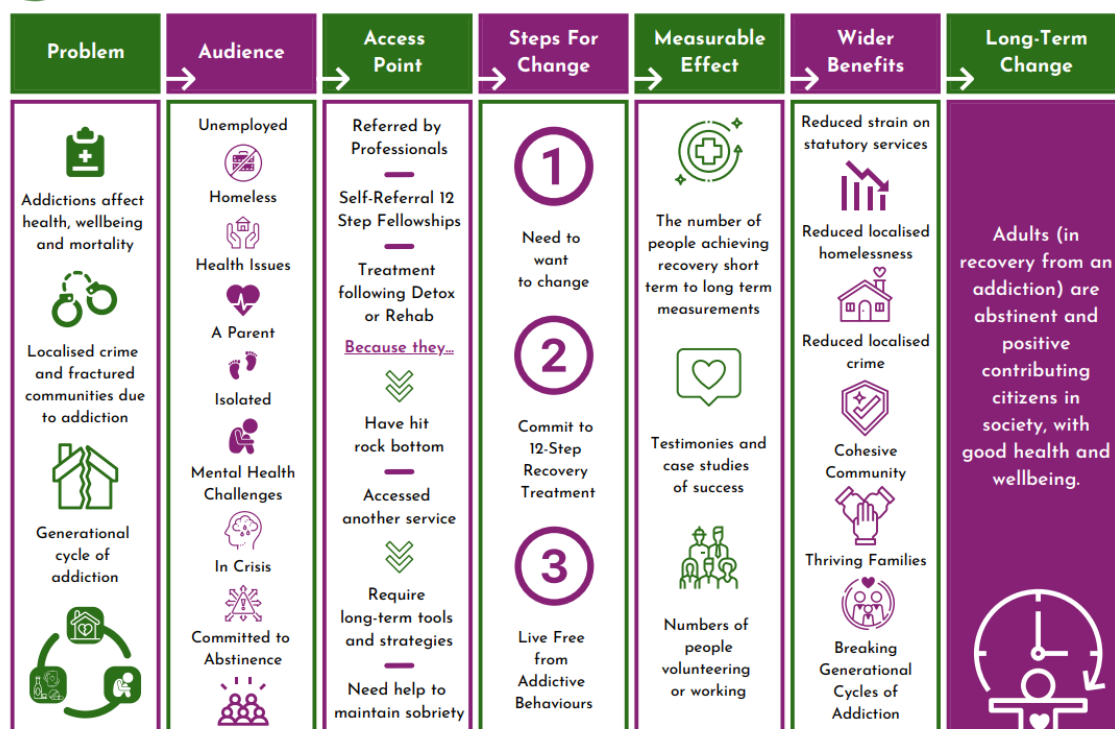
How well does our method of treatment achieve the intended outcomes, long-term?



The Living Room's theory of change describes our intended outcomes for people who have accessed our services. Adults who have been affected by any addiction or multiple cross addictions attend our treatment services for 10 months on average. We need to know whether our interventions and the hard work that people affected by addiction put in to achieve sustained and sustainable recovery, have the outcome of abstinence and become contributing citizens with good health and wellbeing.



The Living Room - Theory of Change For The Client



Question:

Can we say that The Living Room is successful in achieving its intended outcomes?

Our Answer:

The long-term changes we are working towards in partnership with our clients, is that adults are abstinent and contributing citizens in society – The results from this evaluation, where the majority of people who responded saw a positive change in their lives, across all areas surveyed, would suggest that The Living Room is achieving its intended outcomes.

The overall impact for people that have attended our services, is one of improvement across all areas of wellbeing.

Highlights

22 out of 24 (92%) of our 'main group' graduates (those attending with their own addiction issues) reported being able to manage and sustain their abstinence better after treatment at The Living Room. This correlates with a similar number who now have improved mental and emotional health.

A 72% improvement can be evidenced in the current self-care and living skills of the main group graduates who responded to our survey. They recorded an average of 4.2 out of 5 for their self-care and living skills, compared with 2.5 upon entering treatment.

Increased stability in the lives of our graduates (across all groups i.e., main group and those attending the family and carers support group – 32 responders) is evidenced with an impressive 82% improvement in their social network and familial relations. This indicates not only a marked improvement in their overall wellbeing but also an enhanced connection with society.

Non-offending scores show that few people are offending at the time of accessing our service, 6 out of 24. This number reduces to only 2 out of 24 after graduation.

Our main group graduates report an average 100% improvement in their emotional and mental health after treatment, initially reporting an average score of 1.9 out of 5 rising to 3.8 out of 5 after graduation.

Managing accommodation is always a key area for concern amongst The Living Room's clients. Upon entering treatment only 5 responders rated their housing situation as high at 5/5. However, after having attended The Living Room, 21 out of 24 of our graduates report a score of 5 out of 5 (no housing concerns at all).

Physical and mental health are often negatively impacted for those who live with or care for family members who suffer from the disease of addiction. This can be evidenced in the fact that none of the 8 'family and carer' responders reported a score of 5/5 for the questions enquiring about physical health and their emotional and mental health upon entering treatment at The Living Room. However, after treatment five responders reported

themselves as 5/5 for their physical health and four reported themselves as 5/5 for their emotional and mental health, which is a massive change.

The most impressive improvement within our survey can be seen amongst the family and carer group attendees and their increased satisfaction with their social networks. All graduates of this group reported a disconnection from others in their life when starting their engagement at The Living Room, however, a 132% improvement in satisfaction in this area can be seen since engaging.

We accept that we are unable to attribute our clients' improvement solely on engaging in treatment at The Living Room. However, the added comments from our graduates and their sustained recovery indicate the value of attending treatment and the significant positive impact it has had on their future.

Quotes from our 2021 graduates:

"I'm a better parent and the relationship between my children and myself gets better every time".

"The Living Room has done an amazing job, there is nothing else I can think of that you could have done".

"I loved (and sometimes hated) every part of my journey. The counsellors delivered the perfect balance of care while also ensuring that clients were held accountable. I felt safe to speak about all of the things I had previously felt so ashamed about. I found a tribe of people who understood, even if their addictions looked different outwardly".

"I was a lost soul not knowing where to turn or go peers and counsellors hold a massive part of my recovery which I am eternally grateful for".

"Having a safe space to explore my feelings. The additional workshops were great ways to learn new tools and become more self aware".

Graduate Progress Analysis

In June 2022, there was a data gathering exercise to analyse the outcomes achieved over a length of time for clients who had 'graduated' from treatment from The Living Room in the year 2021 (January to December). This means to have an agreed leaving date, made jointly by the client and their keyworker, and then to leave our daily service. All people that graduate are invited monthly to a 'post-graduate' meet up.

Overview: How well does our method of treatment achieve the intended outcomes once a client has graduated?

The Living Room supports people with any addiction. We provide daytime, abstinence-based, non-time-limited peer-based support, group therapy, facilitated by two trained counsellors with lived

experience of recovery. Anyone in Hertfordshire (over the age of 18) can access our service, if they are committed to abstinence.

People begin their treatment with us at any point in their abstinence journey and each person's journey is individual; in how they engage, the outcomes they achieve and the length of time they need to achieve sustained recovery from their addiction.

The long-term changes we are working towards in partnership with our clients, is that adults are secure in their recovery from addiction and contributing citizens in society, with good health and wellbeing. We wanted to track people's journey once leaving the service through graduation and test whether intended outcomes were achieved.

Parameters and data gathering explanation

People that attended our service on short-term basis (i.e., attended for a period of less than 3 months) were not considered in the evaluation as that data contains many 'assessed but did not engage' clients. Such clients may not have attended group or only attended a minimal number of sessions, thereby not having had enough time in, or experience of, treatment at The Living Room to have an accurate appreciation of its effectiveness.

The people contacted to take part in this evaluation have attended The Living Room in a regular, structured way, giving them an informed overview of our treatment and therefore able to give a truly reflective assessment of their current wellbeing compared to when first accessing treatment.

The cohort for this year's evaluation was gathered from all 4 centres (Stevenage, St Albans, Watford and the Hertfordshire Hub) targeting people who had graduated between 01/01/2021 and 31/12/2021.

How many people took part?

- 94 graduated clients were contacted to take part in the evaluation.
- 1 person's contact information was incorrect.
- We received 32 responses, a 34% return.
- All responders completed the survey online without assistance.
- Clients surveyed had a variety of addictions including drugs and alcohol, disordered eating, co-dependency, gambling, and other behavioural addictions.
- The cohort comprised graduates from The Living Room's addiction groups and the family and carers groups.
- 24 responders attended our main addiction groups.
- 8 responders attended our family and carers groups.
- The cohort had spent a minimum of 3 months in treatment, graduated 'addiction free' and had given us consent to contact them via email and/or telephone.

A similar exercise conducted in 2021 (for 2020 graduates) surveyed 43 graduates with 22 surveys completed, a 52% response rate. The lower cohort available for 2021 survey can be directly attributable to the effects of working during the COVID19 pandemic. There were more graduations in 2021 (94 compared to 43 in 2020).

What questions were asked?

- 1) Which addiction did/do you consider to be your main addiction? *

- 2) Which other addictions did/do you consider you suffer from? *
- 3) How are you managing with abstinence? *
- 4) How is your physical health?
- 5) How would you rate your emotional and mental health?
- 6) How are you managing with staying clear of criminal activity? *
- 7) Are you motivated and taking responsibility?
- 8) How would you rate your current self-care and living skills?
- 9) Please tell us about your current housing situation. *
- 10) How satisfied are you with your social networks and family relationships?
- 11) Are you currently in paid employment?
 - If yes, please let us know how you work.
 - If not in paid employment, please tell us what your current situation is.
- 12) Have you accessed addiction support from any other organisation since attending The Living Room?
 - If yes, which?
- 13) Do you currently attend a fellowship?
 - If yes, which?
- 14) Did you have any idea of what to expect before coming to The Living Room?
 - Was this accurate?
- 15) Which part of your experience at The Living Room worked well for you?
- 16) Has attending The Living Room changed how you feel about yourself?
- 17) Overall, since leaving The Living Room how satisfied are you with your recovery?
- 18) Do you think attending The Living Room has benefited your recovery?
- 19) What could The Living Room have done more of or differently to support you in sustained recovery?
- 20) Is there a member of The Living Room staff whom you would like to give a special mention to?

*Questions posed to those attending main addiction groups (not family and carer/co-dependency clients)

How did we conduct the survey?

We used Microsoft Office Forms to collect individual survey results.

Clients received an emailed link to the evaluation, along with an explanation of the reasons for requesting the information. A contact email address was included in the email should anyone have any questions about the evaluation or whether they required assistance to complete. No requests were received, to assist with completing the survey.

In certain questions clients were asked to rate their current feeling/circumstance between 1 to 5, where 1 indicated a low score or undesirable outcome and 5 indicated a high score or positive outcome.

Comparisons were made with clients' scores during their 'time in treatment'. These scores were taken from their wellbeing scores during their treatment journey to compare like-for-like against their current scores in the evaluation.

We use a 'Recovery Wellbeing Wheel' in treatment to record scores for client wellbeing and those scores are rated 'out of 10' therefore those scores were divided by 2 to allow like-for-like comparison with this survey.

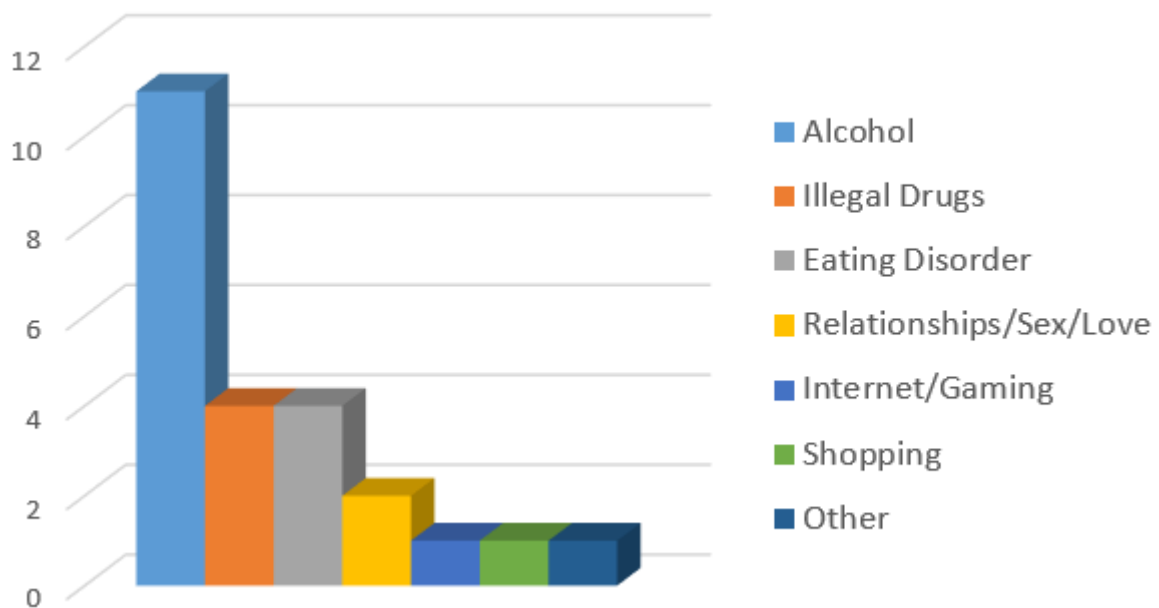
This evaluation was started in May and this report finalised in July 2022.

Survey Results

Question 1.

Which addiction did/do you consider to be your main addiction?

*This question was only answered by those attending our main addiction groups.



24 main group clients surveyed

Nearly half of responders (eleven) named alcohol as their main addiction with illegal drugs (four) and eating disorders (four) the other prevalent addictions.

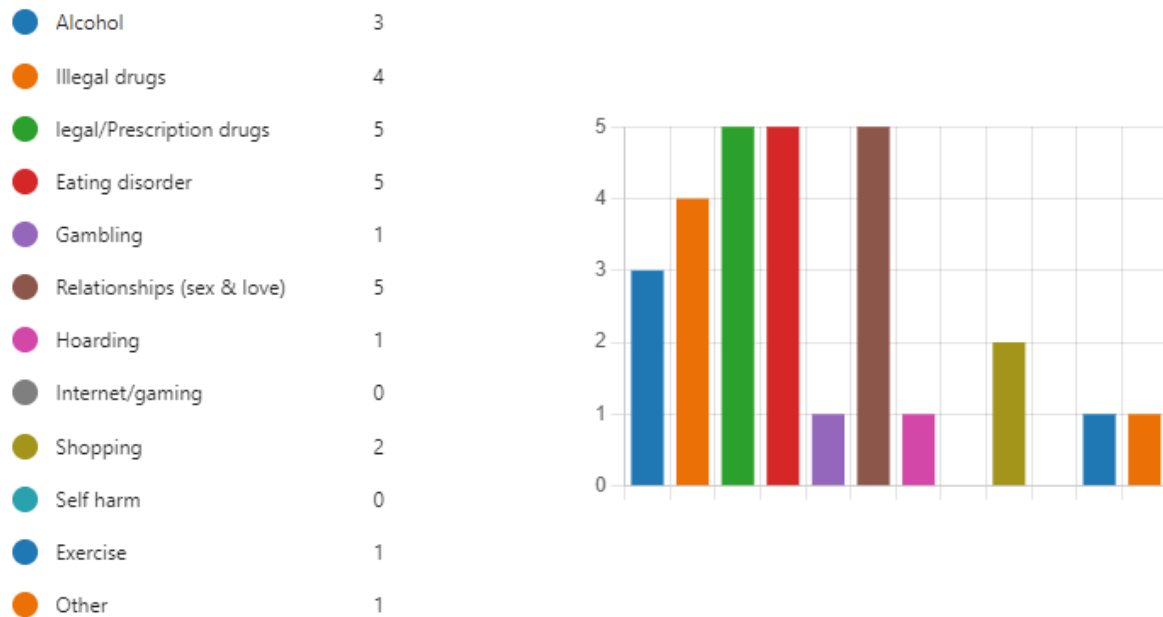
This result remains consistent with last year's findings which showed a similar spread. Internet/Gaming and Shopping (both one) appear as a 'main addiction' for the first time in this year's report.

Question 2.

Which other addictions did/do you consider you suffer from?

*This question was only answered by those attending our main addiction groups.

Apart from naming one 'main' addiction we asked our cohort to indicate any number of other addictions they consider themselves to suffer from.



9 responders indicated they had no addictions other than their main addiction, however 28 instances of other addictions were selected amongst the remaining 15 responders in this cohort. This clearly indicates a prevalence of individuals suffering from multiple addictions in our group.

It is not known (the question wasn't asked) whether our cohort struggled with these different addictions concurrently or whether they had occurred independently at different life stages.

9 responders = 1 addiction (main)

6 responders = 2 addictions

7 responders = 3 addictions

1 responders = 4 addictions

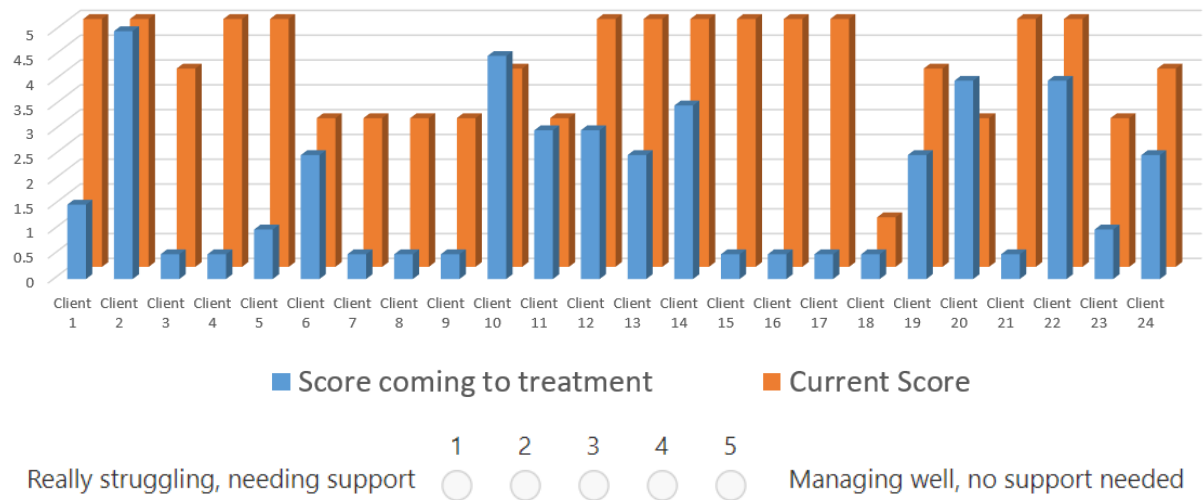
1 responder = 5+ addictions

Results did not indicate whether being addicted to one substance/behaviour directly correlated with addiction to another.

Question3.

How are you managing with abstinence?

*This question was only answered by those attending our main addiction groups.



Of the clients that attended The Living Room for a substance or behavioural addiction, 22 out of 24 clients (92%) reported that they were able to manage their addiction better after treatment than when first accessing support.

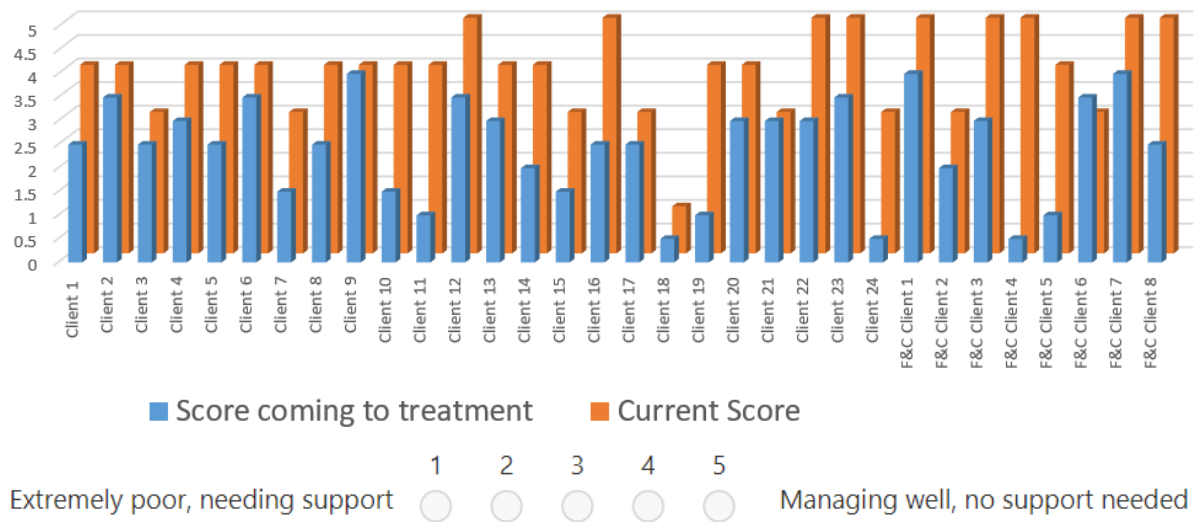
Half of graduates now rate themselves as a '5' – managing well – no support needed'.

6 clients who rated themselves 5 in our survey had previously rated themselves as '1' or below when they first attended The Living Room. 2 clients' score improved from 0.5 to 5.

Our graduates achieved an average score of 1.9 out of 5 in managing their addictions at point of entry to treatment. After treatment they report an average score of 4.1 which equates to a 116% improvement.

Question 4.

How is your physical health?



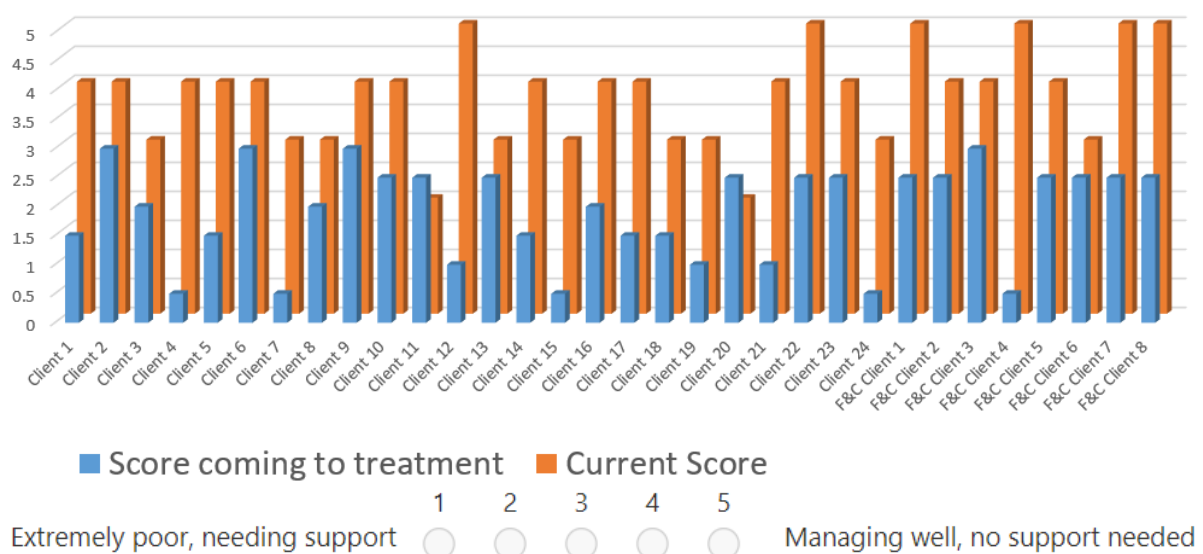
31 out of 32 clients reported an improvement in their physical health after engaging with The Living Room. Our clients' average score at start of treatment was 2.4 out of 5 whereas it is now 3.9

18 out of 32 responders reported an increase in physical health of 1.5 points or more.

A 62.5% increase in overall physical health has been achieved by our graduates whilst still living in the shadow of the effects of the COVID19 pandemic. This figure reflects a significant improvement when compared to the previous year's cohort who achieved a 32% increase.

Question 5.

How would you rate your emotional and mental health?



30 of 32 responders reported an improvement in their overall emotional and mental health after treatment at The Living Room.

Some of the biggest improvements were seen in those who scored the lowest scores when entering treatment; 5 clients improved from a score of 0.5 to a 3 or above. This includes 1 client moving from a score of 0.5 to 4 and another who moved from 0.5 to 5.

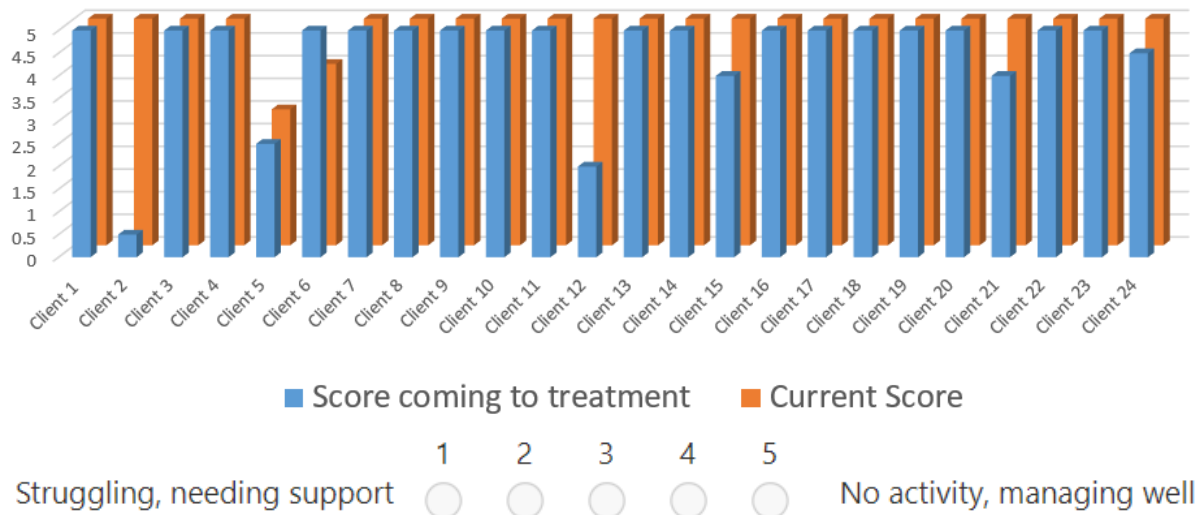
No clients scored higher than 3 at start of treatment. However, 21 responders recorded a 4 or above at time of survey.

This year's results show a higher percentage of responders who reported an improvement in their wellbeing, 100% - moving from an average score of 1.9 to 3.8. This is compared to a 90% improvement in last year's figures.

Question 6.

How are you managing with staying clear of criminal activity?

*This question was only answered by those attending our main addiction groups.



18 out of 24 responders rated themselves 5 (no criminal activity) at treatment start, this number increased to 22 at time of survey.

Client 2: previously 0.5, now 5

Client 12: previously 2, now 5

Client 5: previously 2.5, now 3

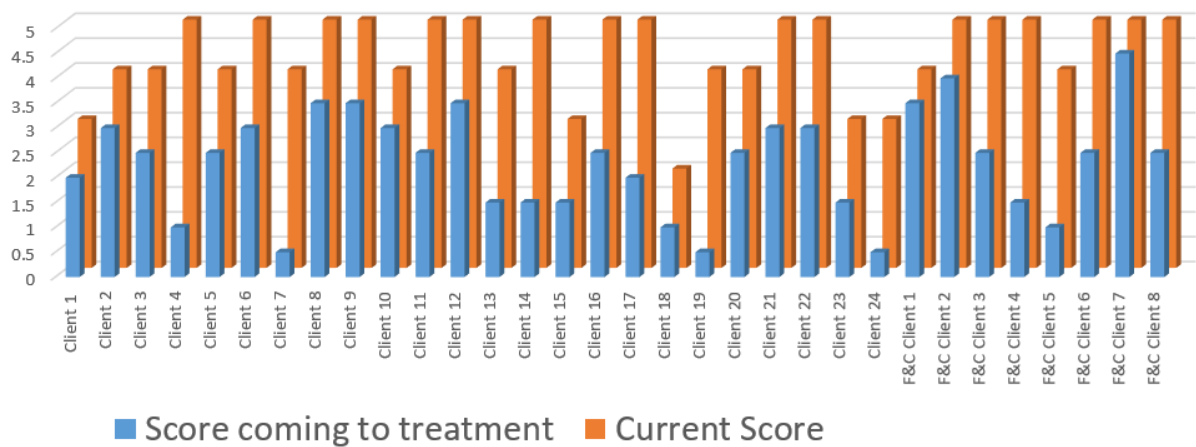
We have removed the results polled by the Family and Carers group in this year's results as each client consistently scores themselves as 5 out of 5.

There is no correlation between the addiction of co-dependency and criminal activity.

Scores in last year's survey showed a similar percentage improvement in our 2020 graduates where an improvement from 9 out of 13 responders reported 5/5 at start of treatment rising to 11 out of 13 after treatment.

Question 7.

Are you motivated and taking responsibility?



Not motivated, not taking responsibility 1 2 3 4 5 Fully motivated, taking full responsibility for own actions

One of the biggest areas of improvement for our graduate cohort (as in previous years' surveys) was in their ability to be motivated and taking responsibility for their own actions.

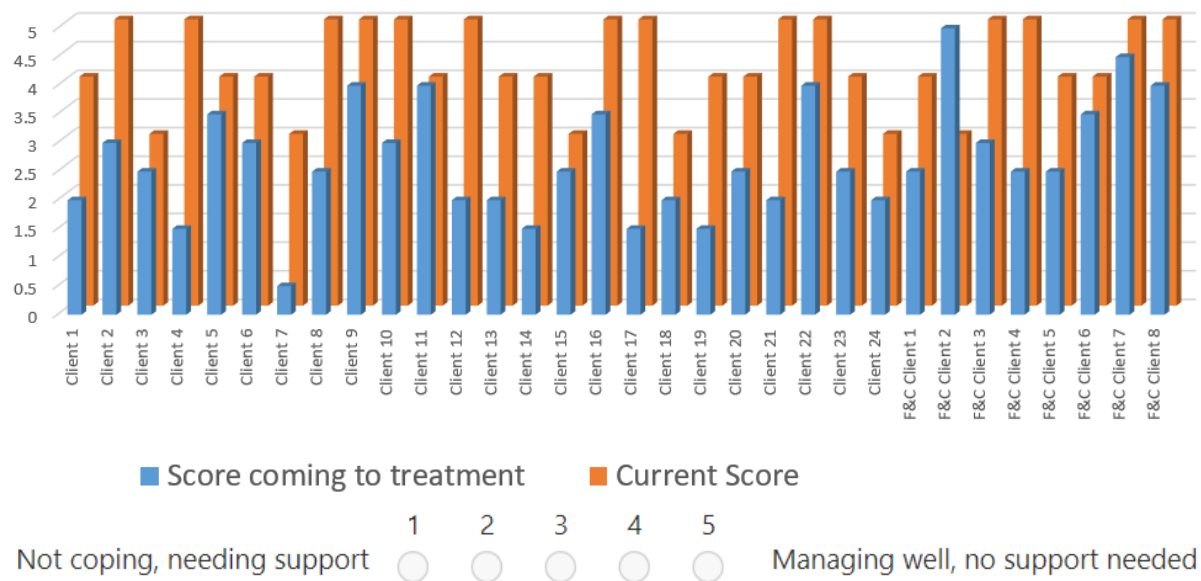
All responders scores improved, notably client 4 who moved from a score of 1 out of 5, to 5 out of 5.

After treatment at The Living Room our responders rated an average score of 4.3 out of 5 indicating that they are largely motivated and taking responsibility for their actions compared to 2.3 out of 5 during treatment. This reflects an 87% average improvement in this vital element of a sustained recovery.

No clients scored themselves as 5 out of 5 when first entering treatment. However, 17 clients (53%) scored themselves as 5 out of 5 after treatment at The Living Room.

Question 8.

How would rate your current self-care and living skills?



A solid improvement can be seen in our responders with 31 out of 32 responders reporting an increase in self-care and living skills after treatment. An average of 4.2 out of 5 is evidenced now compared to 2.5 out of 5 upon entering treatment.

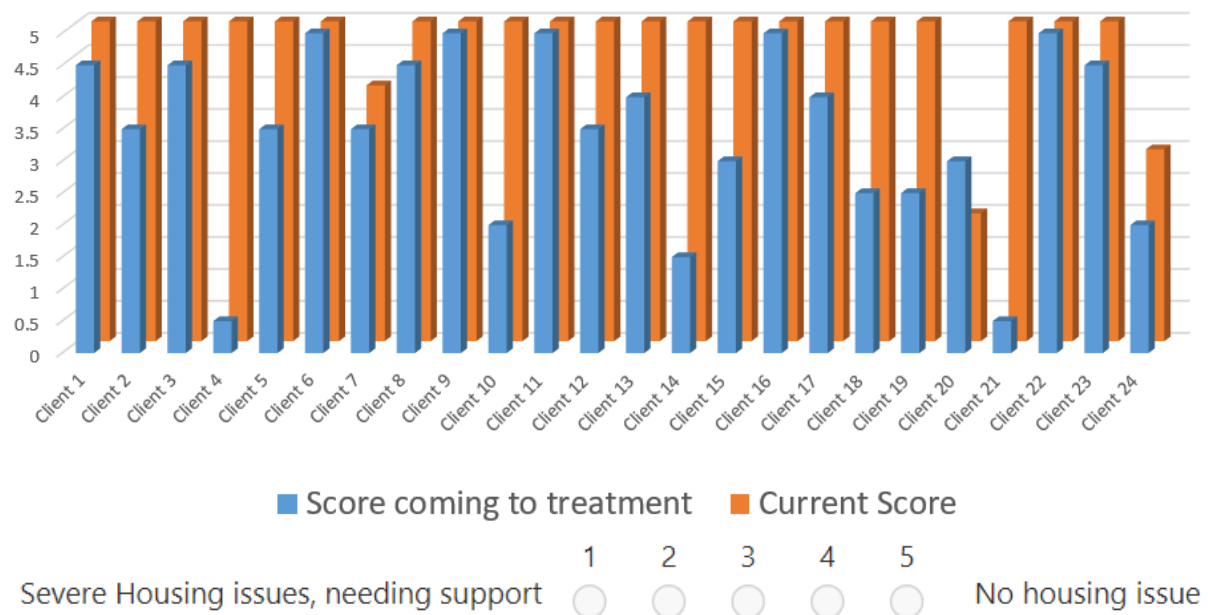
26 responders reported a score of 4 or above after attending The Living Room, with an average improvement across the cohort of 1.8 points.

If we concentrate on improvements within the group who originally scored the lowest at the start of treatment (2.5 or below), then we can see a notable average improvement of 2 points.

Question 9.

Please tell us about your current housing situation?

* results shown are for clients of main addiction groups only



Another area of improvement can be found around housing stability and their managing accommodation.

At point of treatment start only 5 out of 24 responders could rate their housing situation as a 5 out of 5, i.e. 'no housing issue'. The average score was 3.4 which was markedly lower than previous years' average (2020 = 4.1 and 2019 = 4.5)

However, after treatment 21 out of 24 graduates now report a score of 5 out of 5, no housing issue. 2 clients improved their score from 0.5 to 5

Of the 3 responders who reported less than 5/5 after graduation

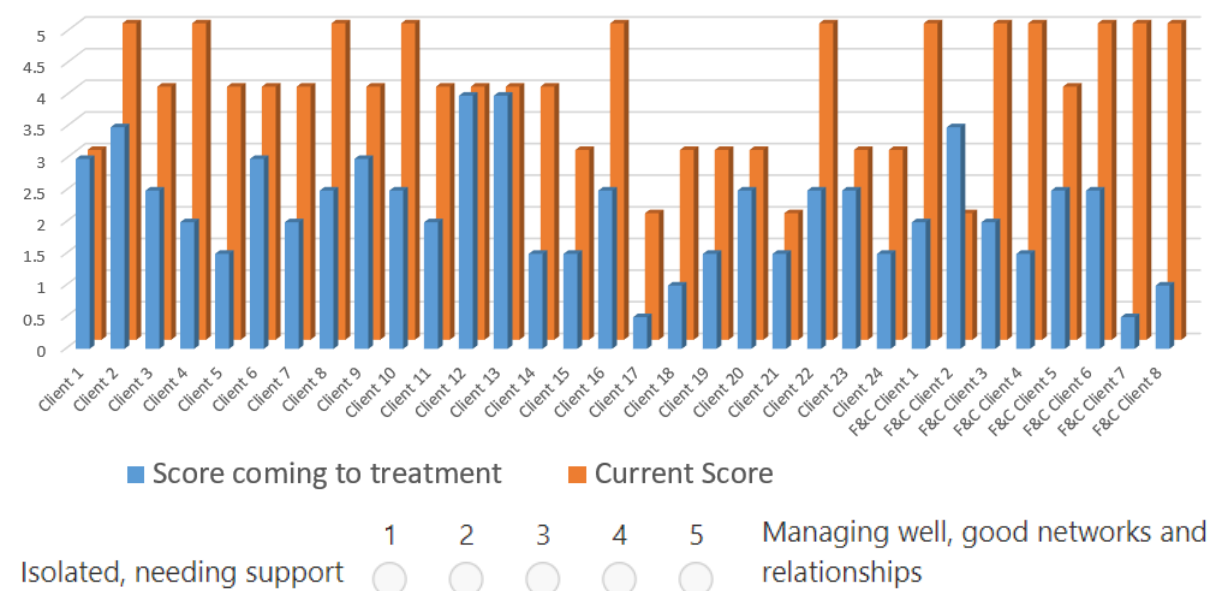
1 clients improved their score from 2 to 3

1 client improved their score from 3.5 to 4

1 client worsened their score from 3 to 2

Question 10.

How satisfied are you with your social networks and family relationships?



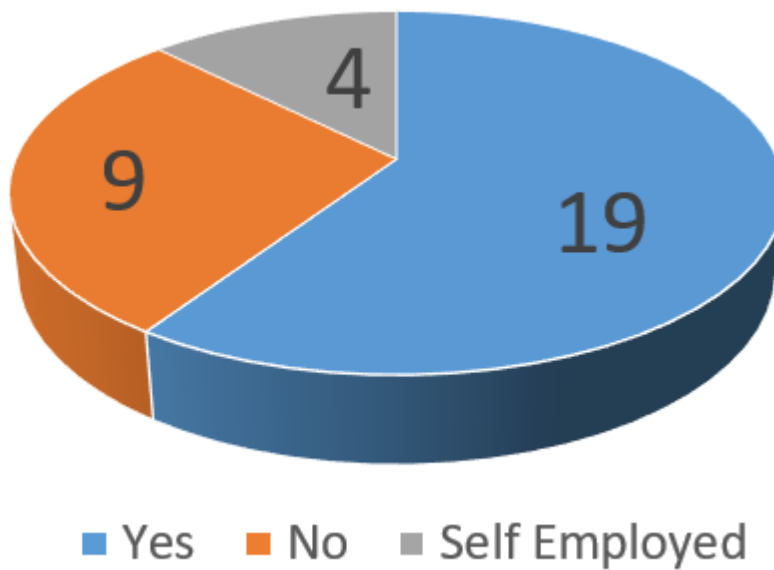
A key contributor to continued abstinence from addictive behaviours and therefore our graduates' long-term well-being is the ability to connect with others; to increase and maintain healthy social and familial relationships. Isolation is a common concern for a large majority of our clients upon entering treatment and applies equally to those attending our main addiction groups and the family and carers groups.

1 client improved their score from 0.5 to 5
 2 clients improved their score from 2.5 to 5
 16 responders improved their scores by 2 points or more.

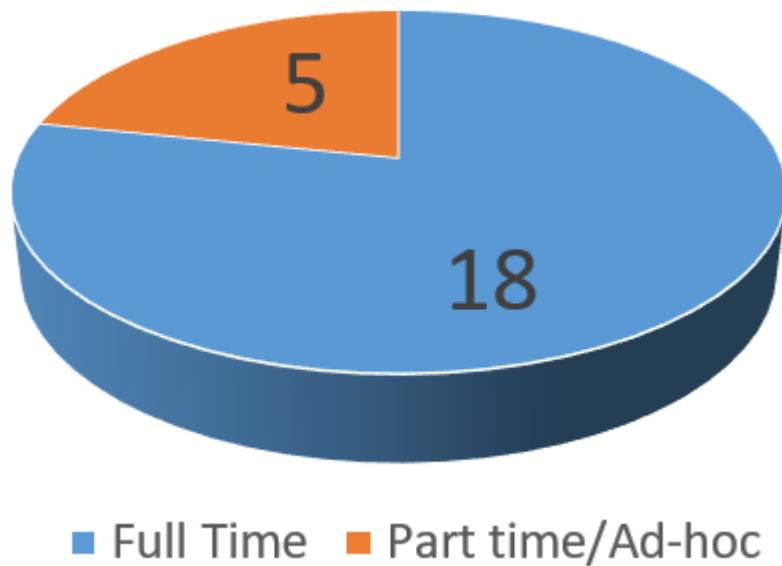
IMPACT: An average score of 4 after graduation reflects an 82% improvement in our responders' social networks and family relationships now compared to an average of 2.2 when they entered treatment at The Living Room. When viewed alongside last year's survey, which reported a 53% improvement in the same category, we can robustly evidence the positive impact The Living Room has on our clients' well-being in this critical area of self-care.

Question 11.

Are you currently in paid employment?

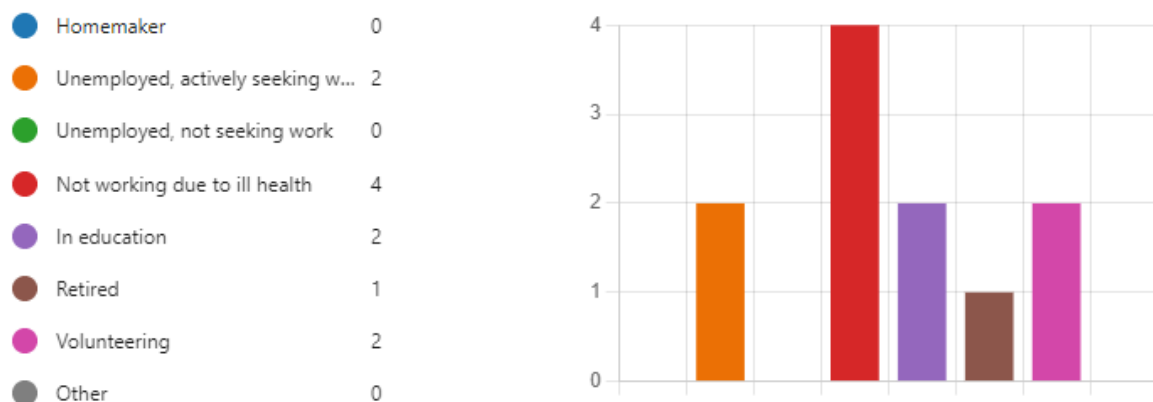


- If yes, please let us know how you work:



23 responders currently in paid employment (inclusive of 4 self-employed workers)
9 not currently employed in a paid position.

- If not in paid employment, please tell us what your current situation is:



9 responders are not in a paid position. The most selected response indicates that 4 of those 9 graduates are currently unable to work due to ill health. 2 are in education and 2 are unemployed but actively seeking work. 1 is retired.

Volunteering has been selected by 2 responders. 1 is a volunteer and in education, and one volunteer is unable to work in a paid position, due to ill health.

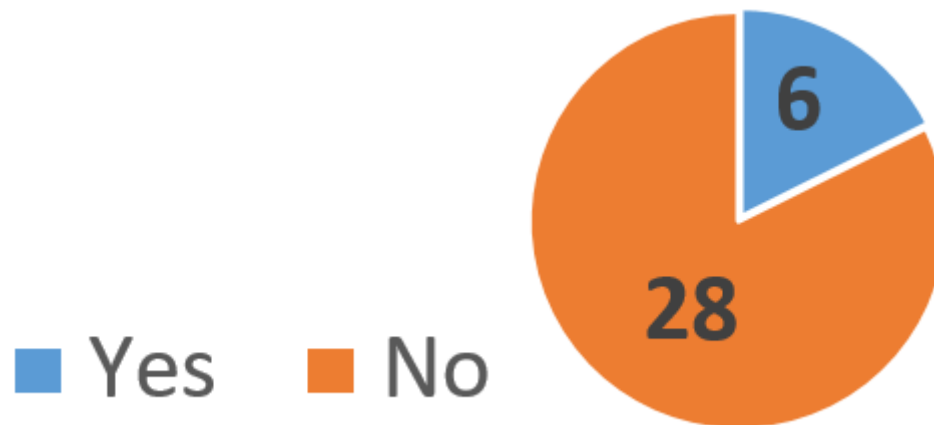
We compared the group's current (after graduation) working situation with when they first attended The Living Room:

- 2 responders who previously worked as a homemaker are now in full time work.
- 2 responders had not worked for over a year due to ill health. 1 has now entered full time education and 1 has gained full time employment.
- 4 responders who were unemployed at time of treatment have now found employment: 2 part-time and 2 full-time.

IMPACT: At point of entry to treatment, 8 of the 24 attendees of our main addiction group were in full or part time employment. Since graduation 18 of that cohort are now in full/part time employment and 2 are volunteering. The remaining 4 are in education, retired or actively looking for work.

Question 12.

Have you accessed addiction support from any other organisation since attending The Living Room?



If yes, please name the organisation/s that have provided support.

- Resolve
- Emerging Futures
- CBT via NHS
- NHS psychiatric services
- PATH NHS
- AIDARS

We surveyed our cohort and 88% (4) of our responders have not accessed any other organisational support since attending The Living Room (not including self-help or fellowship groups).

When viewed alongside the impressive results seen in our question, 'How are you managing with abstinence' it may be concluded that the majority of the 2021 cohort are secure in their recovery and have not needed further support, other than The Living Room, to maintain this.

This is positive in a societal context as every graduate in non-supported recovery frees up spending from the public purse to be redirected towards those in need.

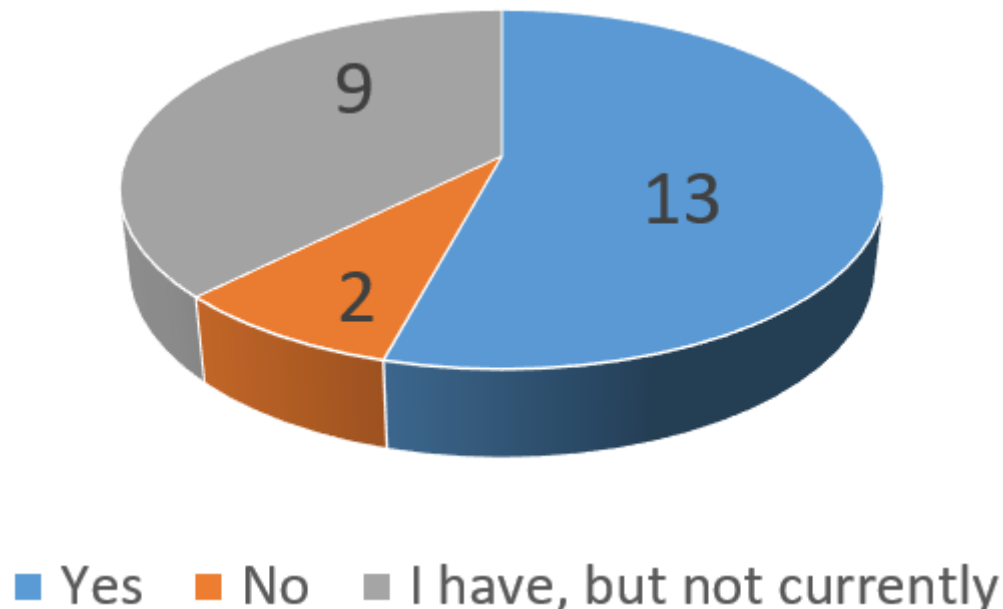
In last year's report (2020 graduates), a similar number of responders (14%) accessed further support to maintain their recovery. In 2019's cohort the number was larger at 25%. The continued reduction in numbers accessing other support in this year's survey can, we believe, be attributed to The Living Room's success in its aim to 'break the cycle of addiction' rather than a reduction of the availability of other services.

Question 13.

Do you currently attend a fellowship?

This question was asked of our main addiction group clients and our family and carers groups. Their results have been separated.

Main addiction groups' results:



The most attended fellowship is Alcoholics Anonymous (10)

Other fellowships attended

- Cocaine Anonymous (6)
- Overeaters Anonymous (5)
- Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (4)
- Co-Dependents Anonymous (2)
- Narcotics Anonymous (1)

Of the 13 clients that answered 'yes' 8 attended more than one fellowship.



Family and carers group results:

No clients attended fellowship meetings after graduation.

Question 14.

Did you have any idea of what to expect before coming to The Living Room? - Was this accurate?

No, I had no idea what to expect when I first arrived. I was quite apprehensive but also wanted to get going with my recovery. It surpassed my expectations in every way, it was welcoming yet challenging and there was no hiding in that room. It was an incredible experience.

It was much better than I imagined. I didn't expect to get to level of connection with myself and others the way I did at the living room

Better than I imagined. I never thought I'd see it through.

I was very nervous, and it wasn't what I expected. Wanted to give up on the first few meetings but after I realised how this group was going to help me and I could relate to everyone I realised how much I needed to be in there

I was not aware that The Living Room dealt with such a wide range of issues and assumed that it would only be a drugs and alcohol service, so I was pleasantly surprised when other issues such as eating disorders, love addiction, gambling, etc were brought up as it helped me deal with my issues holistically as well as discover that my substance misuse was also entangled in my other troubles in many ways.

The Living Room was absolutely amazing, they helped me work through some last trauma and allowed be to gain confidence. I am back in full time work and absolutely loving my life now.

The Living Room was all I expected and more.

Better than imagined. A lifesaving organisation. Saved our family

Question 15.

Which part of your experience at The Living Room worked well for you?

Group counselling, relationship with my key worker and fellow clients.

Being able to communicate with others with similar experiences

Group counselling which was my nightmare beforehand. Relation to others and from others. Support from counsellors. Meeting and making connections with peers

I loved (and sometimes hated) every part of my journey. The counsellors delivered the perfect balance of care while also ensuring that clients were held accountable. I felt safe to speak about all the things I had previously felt so ashamed about. I found a tribe of people who understood, even if their addictions looked different outwardly.

Being encouraged to identify emotions daily. Finding my voice and honouring my truth with the support of peers and counsellors

I think the main part is being exposed to all different parts of recovery and thereafter being more comfortable with engaging with recovery following leaving TLR.

Generally, I was a lost soul not knowing where to turn or go peers and counsellors hold a massive part of my recovery which I am eternally grateful for

All the counsellors were lovely, I particularly remember my keyworker. Loved the activities we used to do in the afternoon e.g., music sharing, sharing our art, playing games.

Company in my otherwise solitary existence, the combination of human contact, accountability with using. Discipline and structure during lockdown got me through an otherwise unendurable solitude .

I think drug group was helpful as it gave us chance to sit in a more intimate setting. We also all had a chance and were encouraged to speak. I really enjoyed my relationships with peers and keep those to this day. The counsellors were also top class so I'm very grateful for their support.

The relationships and support I got from the counsellors and my peers. Knowing I wasn't alone and being in a safe place to share my inner most thoughts and feelings.

Group counselling - learning that I'm not the only one with similar problems. It's not just always me.

The people of the group, as well as being strict to attend daily.

Having a safe space to explore my feelings. The additional workshops were great ways to learn new tools and become more self-aware.

I definitely benefited from the group work and challenging thought patterns and behaviours. This really helped me. I also made some amazing friends who I cherish.

The counsellors were so supportive and kind, I felt they were there for me and were generally lovely, caring and kind.

I genuinely enjoyed the check in at the start and end of the groups as reminding myself of my day-to-day progress was encouraging. I also benefitted from the Thursday creative afternoon sessions - expressing myself through painting, music, etc was therapeutic for me. The specialist groups helped such as the women's group and the disordered eating group. The counsellors were always helpful, and my peers all seemed nice.

The friendships I built with other clients was invaluable at the time. The support from the counsellors and being challenged by them to change how I think was also invaluable.

Group therapy, learning from others, support from peers, Understanding the concept of letting go.

Weekly counselling, both on Zoom during lockdown and in-person after, worked well for me. I like both sessions, in the morning when we had a chance to talk in depth while others contributed; and in the afternoon when we explored a theme.

Being able to talk about my problems and feelings. I enjoyed goals and group games.

As most of my time spent at The Living Room, I was doing most of my recovery on zoom.

Question 16.

Has attending The Living Room changed how you feel about yourself?

Yes, I feel a lot more confident and better about me.

Yes. I am positive. I have self-worth and esteem.

The Living Room helped me break free from the shackles of shame and enabled me to start seeing myself how others see me.

It has certainly changed my outlook, I was lost! TLR helped me find my feet again. I have to say that I am incredibly lucky, my living arrangements and current foray into academia are pretty easy going. I don't have to find a house or job, but then again, this didn't happen by accident.

Yes. I now know my worth and boundaries I need to keep peace in my life.

Absolutely, I am more self-aware and I'm able to observe myself more when I get into certain triggering headspaces.

My general outlook on life have managed to get back into full time work I never dreamt I'd get there.

Yes. I have stopped hating myself and learnt how to manage my feelings in a better way.

I've seen that vulnerability and asking for help is the opposite of a sign of weakness.

Yes, I have self-worth and respect. I can put in boundaries and not feel crippling guilt for it. I feel free from self-loathing.

Yes, I'm a better parent and the relationship between my children and me gets better every time.

Yes, I'm so much more grown-up and mature about my life decisions. I feel like a completely different person in a good way, since joining The Living Room.

I am more confident; I know my worth and I now know how to talk about my problems rather than keeping them bottled up.

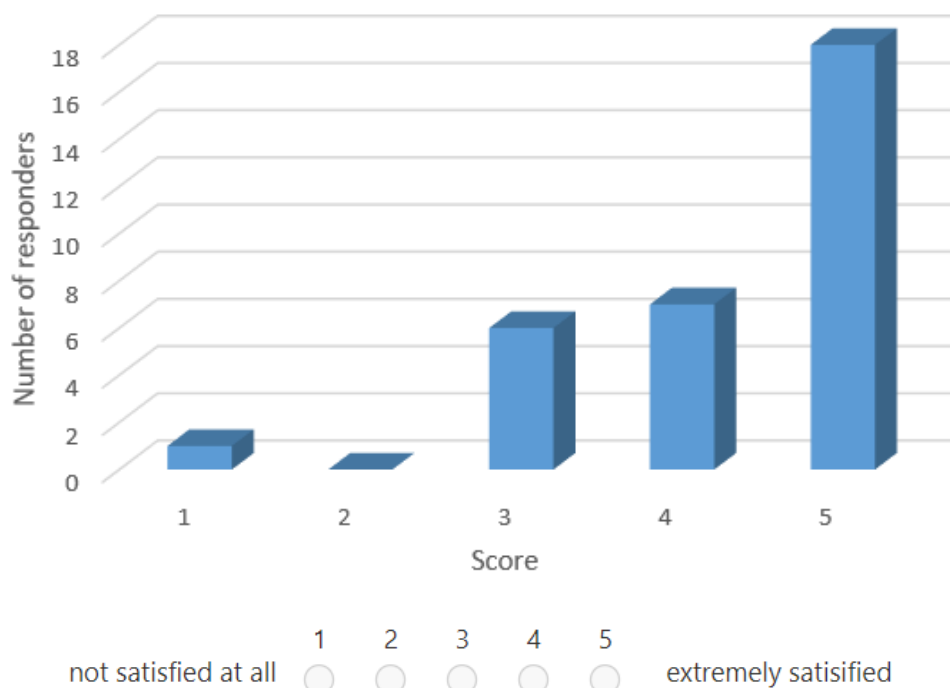
Yes, it's taught me I'm a good person who has a lot to offer others.

Yes, I'm in a much happier place and starting to build my own family.

It helped me changing my relationship with my teenage son.

Question 17.

Overall, since leaving The Living Room how satisfied are you with your recovery?



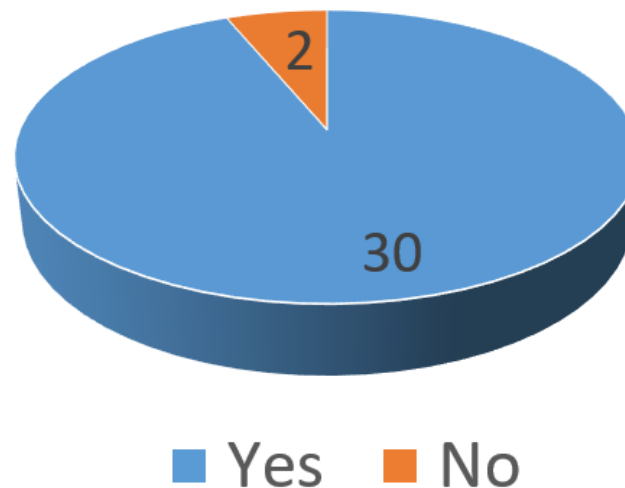
78% of responders rated themselves as 4 or above when considering their satisfaction with their recovery since graduation.

56% rated themselves a 5 out of 5 – 'extremely satisfied' with their recovery.

Only 1 responder (3%) rated their satisfaction with their recovery as below 3 out of 5.

Question 18.

Do you think The Living Room has benefitted your recovery?



94% of our responders' state that The Living Room has benefitted their recovery.

Question 19.

What could The Living Room have done more of or differently to support you in sustained recovery?

I guess being in contact with me on a regular basis when I left, but this wasn't something I needed. The support I have in OA is fantastic.

I think they did all they could to keep things going with COVID.

There's now an aftercare group which is so beneficial for connection and after care.

The only thing I ever asked for on the feedback form was that the creche was open full time so I could have attended every day. I now realise just how lucky I was to attend when I did, while the creche facility was available. There's no way I would have been able to get well without that support.

I would have liked longer in treatment but by the time I left it had already been 9 months.

Nothing, I thought the service was fab.

Not much, it was brilliant as was, when I needed it

I would genuinely say nothing. I think if I was really suggesting something that would enhance the service, I think adding some form of bereavement support/ counselling once a week would be very helpful.

I think perhaps more 1-2-1 counselling with keyworker, more face-to-face but that was difficult given we were in lockdown.

I can't think of anything, everything was on offer if I needed to reach out. Although I did feel pushed to attend other meetings which I had tried and didn't work for me, even when explaining it was still pushed. The Living Room and my own research and books got me sober.

Nothing, they did the best they could with me!

Considering that the world was in isolation due to the pandemic, and everything was on zoom - I thought The Living Room did a fantastic job. The counsellors were brilliant in checking in on me and my peers was supportive. Due to my own life choices and the controlling relationship I was in, I started attending less and less and I think that that had an impact on my recovery. After I relapsed and needed a detox again as well as rehab, I explained this to my key worker and that I would have to stop attending The Living Room due to my lack of sobriety – my key worker was nothing but supportive that I had made the choice to go to rehab and wished me luck. I genuinely don't think The Living Room could have done more for me given the circumstances.

I think it was good, it's hard because I've definitely improved a lot with my addiction, but still struggle with other disciplines, like finding a new job that I'd be happier with.

The support has been fantastic. It would be a good idea to facilitate the setting up of alumni network when we graduate from the Family and Carers Group.

When the person I care for had a serious relapse, after I initially left the group, I applied to re-join the TLR carers group. Since I left, my health issues worsened. The group had reverted to face to face, but I knew attending a full day's session would be too much for me physically. I therefore asked if I could attend the morning session only, but this wasn't possible. The only thing that might have been useful was the evening online carers group. Sadly, I was unable to commit to that due to other engagements. Carers in Herts suggested Resolve. If that hadn't have happened I'm not sure what my situation would be now. I think some disability awareness training would be useful for staff.

An evening group would have been good, because of my work I had to stop coming.

More meetings in real but due to pandemic it was impossible.

Question 20.

Is there a member of The Living Room staff whom you would like to give a special mention to?

All the counsellors really. They challenged me in different ways and through my interactions with them I discovered stuff about myself I didn't realise, so thank you! (Herts Hub)

Amazing ecocentric people. All lead by example and were great inspirations (Stevenage).

My key worker was fantastic and was an absolute rock of stability during a period of upheaval with staff (Watford).

I appreciate every counsellor that was there for me in my time there, they all bring something different that has helped me have my light bulb moments and helped shaped me to who I am today. So, to all the counsellors, a deep thank you for everything (St Albans).

I would like to thank my key worker. He was always supportive and ready to listen to me. He helped me highlight certain things in my life that I hadn't really thought of in conjunction to my drinking and drug use. It was also during this time that I think I started to realize that my recovery was going to be a lifelong journey and there was no quick fix, but how important support and small, steady, and consistent changes help day to day to create the life I want and am happy living. I think that the sessions did help to further set a foundation on which I then started building further upon when I went to residential rehab and further therapy and continue to work on every day. It helped with day-to-day structure and having more of a "grown up" approach to my recovery (St Albans).