

## SUPPORTING PEOPLE: Review at National and Local level

Providers across Scotland continue to grapple with the task of consolidating housing support services amid continuing speculation about future funding. Despite this, service managers and commissioners are positive about the contribution being made by the SP Programme.

### Supporting People - making a difference.

**Steve Ebbitt, Chief Executive of Glasgow Simon Community** told the Unit recently, 'The Simon Community works with homeless people. Supporting People has allowed us to develop a tenancy sustainment team and to pilot a number of cluster flats associated with a residential project. The transition from a high care project to a tenancy is a big step for service users and Supporting People has meant that we have been able to help a lot of vulnerable people through this period of transition'.

In **Perth and Kinross**, commissioners reported that, 'The Supporting People programme has been fundamental in helping people access floating support in situations where previously there was no way of providing assistance. The beneficial effects are being seen particularly amongst people who have been homeless and for people with mental health problems. We are already noticing that people are returning homes or sustaining their home in situations where previously they may have had to move into a more supported environment'.

### THE UK WIDE PICTURE

At a governmental level focus is clearly on the cost of Supporting People. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) recently commissioned Matrix Research and Consultancy to answer the question: *Why does the Supporting People cost £2.8b UK wide when the original estimate was £300-£400m?* The resulting report was published in May 2004 entitled Supporting People: Review of the Development of the Policy and Costs of Housing-Related Support Since 1997.

The report considers how the THB System evolved and how well it did what it was designed to do. It considers the various factors affecting take up of THB. In the chapter on Scotland it points to national and local government structure for the relatively high uptake of THB compared with England and other parts of the UK.

The Report acknowledges that:

- take up of THB varied across authorities and between countries
- the THB System operated at a time when various government initiatives to promote social inclusion were underway and that THB was called on where no other funding was available. The report does not go on to quantify this.

The full report can be viewed at: [www.spkweb.org.uk](http://www.spkweb.org.uk) (Chapter 1 of the Report presents a Summary of its findings)

### Distribution Formula - England

In the light of the Matrix Report the ODPM has decided to develop a 'Distribution Formula' to be used in England to determine grant allocation to each area.

In a recent discussion with an ODPM official the Unit learned that work on a new SP distribution formula is expected to be completed by early October. Once the formula had been agreed it will be used, initially, to help inform allocation of grant (although this will depend on pace of change issues) rather than being the only factor to determine it. ODPM recognises that the pace of change has to be such that service users are not left without support. The application of the formula is, therefore, likely to be phased in over a number of years.

### Spending Review at the Treasury

The ODPM has spent the last few months working up a submission to go into the Spending Review. Once the submission has been made, the Treasury will determine the overall Supporting People grant for England for the next 3 years. This will give the Scottish Executive an indication of the maximum amount of funding that will be made available for Supporting People in Scotland.

Review

Funding

SP Forum

Care Commission

Training

Contracts



The Supporting People Enabling Unit is a partnership initiative between Community Care Providers Scotland (CCPS) and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA), funded by the Scottish Executive.

# National Review In Scotland

As reported in the Units May Bulletin, 3 MSPs will negotiate the final sum for SP for 2005/06 and beyond, taking into account the needs of the SE Development Department (responsible for social justice and housing) and the SE Health Department (responsible for health and community care).

Margaret Curran, as the Minister responsible for the allocation of Supporting People funding in Scotland, established a Reference Group in February this year to oversee the review of SP. The results of this review will help inform the negotiation of the final sum for SP.

**Peter Millar, Chief Executive of The Richmond Fellowship Scotland is taking part on the Reference Group and has provided the following update:** The Reference Group is chaired by Geoff Huggins, Head of the Housing Division at the Scottish Executive. It is Geoff who also reports back to the Minister. The Reference Group has representation from local authorities, CoSLA and providers. Providers are represented through Community Care Providers Scotland (myself and Malcolm Matheson, Director of Key Housing

Association) and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (David Bookbinder, Policy and Practice Coordinator, SFHA).

## The Reference Group's remit

The Group is considering whether the different levels of funding allocation to local authorities and variations in average client costs are justifiable and reflect value for money. Where this is not the case, the Group hopes to identify what action is needed.

## Information gathering and analysis

The Reference Group's task is a complex one. It is assisted by Pricewaterhouse Coopers in the gathering and analysis of data from local authorities. **The Reference Group hopes to complete its work over the summer period when a report of the outcomes will be published.** This will be eagerly anticipated by the voluntary sector as the findings will have important implications for the many thousands of individuals supported by a similarly large number of staff in the sector throughout Scotland.

# Remaining Funding Decisions 2004/05

## Argyll & Bute and West Dunbartonshire

Bill Clarke of West Dunbartonshire Council advised the Unit, 'on 30<sup>th</sup> June we found out that West Dunbartonshire has been awarded a Supporting People grant totalling £17.5M. This is £1.7m less than the THB claims led us to expect and has created a challenging situation for us to manage'. Argyll & Bute Council also received a £1.7m cut making its total grant £14.9M. Council Leader, Councillor Allan Macaskill commented, 'we appreciate that the 2005/06 budget is likely to be further reduced. We hope that in light of the £1.7m cut in our 2004/05 budget, future allocations will take account of the good work and dedication of staff and services in Argyll and Bute to deliver support to those most vulnerable in our communities'.

## Pipelines 2004/05 subject of review

Decisions about new pipeline projects for 2004/05 are on hold in most local authorities pending funding announcements from Ministers. At a recent meeting at the Scottish Executive, Geoff Huggins made it clear that decisions about pipeline projects will be viewed very much in the context of local authority grant allocation for next year.

In some areas providers of supported accommodation are being advised to negotiate with Communities Scotland about a possible change of use of developments as they near completion. This may not be as straightforward as it appears. It can be problematic to consider change of use, for instance where capital funding has been obtained from the Domestic Abuse Refuge Accommodation Programme. In such a case it would not be possible to look at change of use except on a temporary basis e.g. for people who are homeless. Providers then face the risk that funding is

not secured in the end and the provider may have to re-negotiate change of use all over again.

## Highland

David Goldie, Head of Housing Strategy in Highland acknowledges that the fact that pipeline 2004/05 funding review has posed real problems in the area including impacting on a hospital closure programme. What had looked like an example of successful joint working between health, housing and social work to help 35 people move out of long stay hospital to their own or shared tenancies over a 3 year period has now foundered at year 2 because of the pipeline review. One consequence of the delay is that new properties being developed for this purpose are now being absorbed into general needs housing provision much to the disappointment of all those involved.

## Where does this leave the development of new housing support services?

As has been widely reported in England, planning for any new housing support services has come to a halt as future revenue funding through Supporting People cannot be guaranteed by any local authority. In Scotland, Communities Scotland is not able to agree capital funding for any project which will have a housing support element to it unless a local authority can confirm funding. At the moment this is unlikely unless another project in the area has closed. At a recent meeting with local authorities and providers, Geoff Huggins from the Scottish Executive stated that given the development programme for supported housing had doubled in size in the last 4 years then he would not expect discussions to be taking place about new projects until 2006 at the earliest.

## Supporting People Contract Values 2004/2005

Four local authorities are offering an uplift.

Local Authority	No uplift	Uplift agreed	Decision awaited	Change determined by individual review
Aberdeen City	✓			
Aberdeenshire	✓			
Angus	✓			
Argyll & Bute			Scottish Executive to review funding for Oct 2004- March 2005	
Clackmannanshire	✓			
Dumfries&Galloway	✓			
Dundee	✓			
East Ayrshire		2.9%		
East Dumbartonshire	✓			
East Lothian	✓			
East Renfrewshire	✓			
Edinburgh	✓			
Falkirk				✓
Fife	✓			
Glasgow	✓			
Highland			✓	
Inverclyde			✓	
Midlothian	✓			
Moray				✓
North Ayrshire	✓			
North Lanarkshire	✓			
Orkney		3%		
Perth&Kinross				✓
Renfrewshire	✓			
Scottish Borders			✓	
Shetland	✓			
South Ayrshire		1.5%		
South Lanarkshire	✓			
Stirling		1.5%		
West Dunbartonshire			Scottish Executive to review funding for Oct 2004- March 2005	
West Lothian	✓			
Western Isles	✓			
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>

**East Ayrshire** has used grant claimed as THB third part commission money and made efficiency savings to fund an uplift but cannot make a commitment to do the same next year.

In **Orkney** the council has increased contract values, for 2004/2005 subject to future grant offers. In recent correspondence with Community Care Providers Scotland a spokesperson for the council explained:

'The Orkney Supporting People Forum made a decision to award an inflationary rise of 3 % to all projects funded through the Supporting People Grant with the exception of those provided by the Department of Community Social

Services. The Supporting People Forum agreed that in order for the Voluntary Sector and housing providers to continue to provide the high level of service required locally they would need inflationary costs to be met. This has only been possible by the Department of Community Social Services agreeing to make savings within its own Supporting People projects.'

John Tupper from **South Ayrshire** explained that South Ayrshire had been able to offer an uplift by 'closely monitoring the use of services and ensuring swift uptake of capacity including recycling of non-contact hours due to missed appointments or hospital stays'.

# Supporting People Forums

Research undertaken by the Unit in March, showed that providers identified good dialogue and communication with local authorities as very important for the success of the SP programme. Providers across Scotland have found supporting people forums and conferences to be a useful way of finding information and meeting with others and have made a real effort to use them effectively.

## Conference

Jim O'Neil of Dumfries and Galloway SP Team commented: "We wanted to discuss service reviews with providers of housing support so we arranged a conference. The event was very well attended with almost universal attendance from providers as well as stakeholders in the NHS and Social Services. Providers were encouraged to comment on the service review tool we intended to use and had a real chance to influence the design of the review process."

Sue Johnston of the Richmond Fellowship attended the conference and said "I really enjoyed it. I found the discussion enlightening and it was good to get to speak to other people in the field. Following on from the conference I was asked to go to other SP meetings and have found that useful too."

## National Picture

In April the Unit asked all SP teams if they had an SP Forum in their area and found that most did.

Status of SP Forum	Local authority areas
Active	16
Being developed	4
No SP Forum	12
Total	32

Of the twelve areas that do not have SP Forums, three said that providers are invited to strategic planning groups rather than to groups specifically focused on Supporting People. A further two said that the geographical spread of providers makes it very difficult for them to meet except on an occasional basis.

Some providers mentioned that they had attended Supporting People Forums at the very start of the initiative but their attendance had tailed off and the forum had folded. Now that they are working within the

Supporting People framework they are keen to help re-launch a forum.

## Active Forums

East Renfrewshire has a Supporting People forum which meets on a regular basis. The SP team helps support the meeting by providing a room and refreshments but the forum is led by local providers who set the agenda and chair the meeting. Carol Mackie of East Renfrewshire Womens' Aid said "I attend the Supporting People forum and find it useful. I have learnt from other peoples' experiences and hope that this will help Womens' Aid avoid some of the pitfalls of the Supporting People programme."

In Highland the SP Forum takes a different format as the local authority arranges occasional meetings, inviting providers and guest speakers. Peter Cattonach of Birchwood attended a forum in April and said: "I found the SP meeting informative as it gave me the chance to discuss live issues with colleagues from other agencies. I also thought the input from guest speakers was useful."

## Developing the Forum

West Lothian LA has conducted a survey to find out what providers think about its SP forum and has invited providers to contribute ideas for developing the forum. Providers requested more responsibility in the running of meetings by playing a greater role in setting the agenda.

## Diversity of Service

A significant challenge for any SP Forum is the diversity of service, organisations and client groups that comes within the SP programme. In order to ensure meetings focus on everybody's top priorities some local authorities have chosen to hold different meetings for groups of providers e.g. RSLs, floating support providers, providers according to client group. If you feel your local approach works well please get in touch with the Unit so we can help others find out about it.

## Taking Part

The Unit has attended SP Forums in a number of areas including Aberdeen, West Lothian, North Lanarkshire, Highland, Fife and East Renfrewshire and will take part in future forums in East Lothian and South Lanarkshire over the summer. Local authorities across Scotland inform the Unit when Forums are taking place so that it can arrange to take part particularly where the forum is just getting off the ground.

# News From The Care Commission

## Registration with the Care Commission

Providers of services that are required to register with the Care Commission should have done so by now. The registration process is in two stages and both must be completed.

The Care Commission is currently processing over 600 applications for registration and hope that many of these will be completed by the end of July 2004. However, by early June approximately 500 service providers had not complied with the second stage of registration.

In June, the Care Commission's Communication Team commented: "There are a variety of reasons why services have not completed the registration process. The review of the benchmark for branches created some delays as applicants reconsidered their applications. Some organisations raised concerns about the fee levels and some people do not understand the seriousness of not progressing with their application. "

The Care Commission is clear that those service providers who have not progressed to stage two of the registration process should do so immediately.

## Inspection Framework in development

The Care Commission will start inspecting housing support services in 2005.

The Care Commission has an External Reference Group which is made up of providers, local authorities and other stakeholders, and offers the Care Commission providers' perspective on issues to do with policy and practice.

The group met on 11 June to discuss the development of the inspection framework. Heather Dall and Liz Norton of the Care Commission went over the essential elements of the inspection process: Self Evaluation, Pre-Inspection Process and keeping Service Users and Carers central to the process. They also discussed how the Care Commission will manage communication with national providers to co-ordinate information and avoid duplication during the inspection process.

A number of issues were discussed by group members including:

- Involving Service Users in the inspection process and the value of advocates.
- The role of lay assessors
- The importance of building positive relationships with Care Commission Officers
- The amount of notice providers require before

an inspection takes place

- The inspection of integrated care at home and housing support services.

During the day, the Care Commission explained that it had been considering how to inspect services provided in people's homes rather than in a Care Home setting. It clarified that service users receiving support in their own home would be asked to participate in the inspection process but this would be done on a voluntary basis and service user would be asked to opt in to the process rather than being left only with the option of opting out.

The Care Commission will use the information it gathered during the consultation day to shape the inspection process.

## Pilot Inspection Project

The Care Commission is developing a framework for inspection and is looking for a number of services to volunteer to participate in a pilot inspection scheme. The Care Commission would like to include a wide variety of organisations within the pilot so that the sample genuinely reflects the variety of services providing housing support. Members of the External Reference Group have been approached to join in and volunteers from voluntary, private and council managed services will also be sought. It is intended that the sample should reflect different sizes of service as well as different client groups and geographical areas. The Care Commission will use its website as well as the Unit's to recruit and update providers.

## Amendment Order

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (Payment of Grants for Housing Support Services) (Amendment) Order 2004 allows housing support services to be funded by Supporting People though not necessarily registered with the Care Commission.

As reported in the Unit's last Bulletin the types of services which will not need to register include:

- Services providing advice on energy efficiency
- Emergency call centres
- Welfare advice centres
- Services involving shopping

**The Scottish Executive is in the process of exchanging letters with the Care Commission to clarify which other services need not register. Discussion continue about adult placement services/supported lodgings and hostel services.**

# Training

Providers of housing support are facing changing and challenging times. The success of THB take up in Scotland has been due, in part, to the ability of providers to build capacity to meet demand. In the Unit's recent survey involving 45 providers, 80% reported that they are managing expansion as a result of providing services through Supporting People. Alongside this business expansion comes a new regulatory framework and a requirement that in 2006 the housing support workforce will seek registration with the Scottish Social Service Council. All this is in addition to new and developing policies and procedures under Supporting People.

The following aspects of training and development can be distinguished in order to equip and develop staff involved in managing and providing housing support services.

- Supporting People Programme: background, framework and role within the wider housing, health and social care agenda
- Business management and capacity building
- Professional training in housing support leading to a qualification

## Supporting People Programme

The Unit is organising a round of regional events in September. The focus of this first round of events will be:

- contract negotiation
- examination of the full contract draft core clauses developed by the LA Solicitors Group
- negotiating contract value

The main objective of these events is to provide an opportunity for providers to give feedback on the draft core clauses.

Other topics that have been prioritised for future events are **service reviews** and **funding framework** including **monitoring and recording systems**.

The Unit is also playing a role in shaping the content of national conferences and providing speakers as well as having an input into the training other organisations are providing.

## Business Management and Capacity Building

Glasgow Homeless Network (GHN) has found that many small providers in Glasgow value access to training in business management. Small organisations typically highlight the need for assistance in practical matters such as personnel, accounts and contracting. GHN has tried to meet this need with a number of courses. In May GHN organised a training day entitled "Preparation for

contracting, tendering and working in partnership." The day was designed to give organisations the information they needed as well as helping them consider the pros and cons of entering into partnership with other small providers. Pat Niblett of GHN says "Glasgow Homelessness Network organised the event. It was a good session and we would consider running it again if there was sufficient demand".

## Professional Training

In South Ayrshire the Supporting People team recognised that providers need assistance with staff training. The SP Team conducted a survey and found out that providers are keen to attend training in:

- Welfare rights and benefits: to help staff provide advice to service users on obtaining appropriate benefits.
- The legal aspects of tenancies: to ensure tenancy related issues such as neighbourhood nuisance and rent arrears are dealt with effectively.

The SP team worked with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to develop a day course on welfare rights and benefits. The course runs once a month and has been very well attended. A similar course, on the legal aspects of tenancies, is being developed in conjunction with Ayr Housing Aid.

Ayr College runs an SVQ3 on Independent Living and the SP team have worked with the college to ensure the course includes elements relevant to providers of housing support. There has been considerable interest in attending the course which will start in August 2004.

For updates on the required qualifications for staff go to the Scottish Social Services Council website on [www.sssc.uk.com](http://www.sssc.uk.com)

## Do you want to share something?

The Unit's website has an area on its Open Forum devoted to training issues. If you have any ideas for events or you want to get together with others to develop an event you can post your thoughts there.

The forum can be used to:

- Alert others that you are interested in specific topics
- Check out if anyone is already organising an event
- Notify others of events you are planning

The Unit will help by signposting to events and trainers as well as take note of topics for regional events it is organising.

## Monitoring Quality in England

In England it was decided to keep housing support out of the national regulatory framework for care. Instead local authorities, within the SP programme known as Administrative Authorities (AAs), are responsible for maintaining standards and accrediting organisations. An overarching Quality and Monitoring Framework, which is followed by AAs across England, has been developed to help determine quality and effectiveness of service. The Quality Monitoring Framework has several elements:

- Quality Assessment Framework (QAF)
- Service Review
- Validation Visits
- Accreditation of providers
- Performance framework

QAF is a tool that providers use to self-assess their performance against a set of national standards. AAs can then visit services to ensure that the information submitted is accurate. A single framework has been developed for use by AAs across England. The costs of carrying out accreditation and monitoring are not passed onto providers as registration and inspection costs are in Scotland.

Whilst a national framework does have the advantage of being consistent approach, it does mean that providers in England are not able to negotiate local variations of the framework. There are no plans to adopt this approach in Scotland. However, for anyone interested in gaining further insight into the Framework go to [www.spkweb.org.uk](http://www.spkweb.org.uk) under General Documents Quality and Monitoring.

## Service Review in Scotland

The extent to which local authorities have undertaken Service Reviews varies across the country. Some have decided to wait for further guidance from the Scottish Executive but others have recognized that in order to complete all reviews by 2006 the programme needs to start sooner rather than later.

In Perth and Kinross a Service Review process and tool are being piloted. So far five reviews have been conducted. The process involves various questionnaires completed by the provider, by stakeholders such as care managers, and by service users as well as the submission of documents and performance information on referrals and outcomes. The council is meeting all service managers as a matter of course in recognition that in this first round of reviews there is still a 'getting to know you' function of the review.

One of the main concerns that the Unit has become aware of among providers is that service review tools may duplicate what the Care Commission will be inspecting on in the future. Providers are working with Aberdeen City Council,

for example, to try to ensure this does not happen. If your service has taken part in a service review and you would like to share your views on how it was carried out, you can use the Open Forum area of the Unit's website.

## Full Contracting Framework: Update

**The Scottish Executive aims to produce a Full Contract Framework in October 2004 for consultation. This framework will include Core Clauses and Variable Clauses as models for Las to use. It is hoped that CoSLA will help promote its adoption.**

### Core Clauses

The group of 26 local authority solicitors are continuing their work to agree Core Clauses which they will all be happy to use within Supporting People Full Contracts.

The group is currently consulting with colleagues in their local authority Supporting People Teams and have had input from the Scottish Executive. The group plans to make the draft available to providers for comments in Autumn. The Unit is planning regional events in September to assist providers throughout Scotland to examine the draft and to make comments.

### Variable Clauses

The Scottish Executive has now set up a working group to consider the clauses not being developed by the Solicitors Group those clauses deemed to be 'variable'. The Group includes providers, local authorities, CoSLA, a solicitor, SFHA and the Supporting People Enabling Unit. The Group is chaired by the Scottish Executive.

### ...And in the meantime?

**In the Unit's May Bulletin it was stated that the Scottish Executive was advising local authorities to use Letters of Agreement for new projects rather than Interim Contracts.**

Pat Bagot of the Scottish Executive has now sent a letter to local authorities in recognising the concerns that both local authorities and providers have expressed about continuing under letters of agreement. The Scottish Executive appreciates concerns that housing support services have been operating within a less than robust contractual framework for much longer than was anticipated. Rather than advising local authorities to hold off entering into Interim Contracts, the Scottish Executive is now asking local authorities to share with them examples of Interim Contracts that have been successfully agreed. There is scope for those working on the Full Contract Framework at a national level to build on some of the work already done in negotiating local Interim Contracts.

To see the full letter go to: [www.scotland.gov.uk/Housing/supportingpeople/spca.pdf](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Housing/supportingpeople/spca.pdf)

# For Your Noticeboard

## Supporting People Enabling Unit News Flash Service

The Unit has developed a news flash service which means you can receive emails alerting you to particular developments in the Supporting People programme as soon as they happen.

Two news flashes were sent out in May. The first updated providers that the element of the Supporting People grant previously paid as SNAP is now a permanent component of the Supporting People Grant. The second drew providers' attention to an article in Inside Housing Magazine that explained how a new distribution formula was going to be used to calculate SP funds in England.

To register for the service enter the unit's website address: [www.ccpscotland.org/spunit](http://www.ccpscotland.org/spunit). At the bottom of the page there is a section called "Mailing List". To register enter your name and email address and click subscribe. You will be sent an automatic message explaining how to confirm your subscription. The Unit has subscribed all the email addresses on its database. To unsubscribe you can either phone the Unit or respond to a newsflash with the message "unsubscribe".

## Future Events

### 30th September - Perth

Career Development Center Ltd (CDC): Annual Supporting People Conference: 'Clearing the Mist'. For conference details and registration contact: George Livingstone Tel: 01463 798 880 Email: [george.livingstone@cdc-net.co.uk](mailto:george.livingstone@cdc-net.co.uk)

### 7th & 8th October - Dunblane

Scottish Housing and Support Conference: SPEU will help plan this conference and will participate in a 'Marketplace' workshop. For more information, phone Norma Jones, Conference Co-ordinator: 0131 538 8191 or check the website: [www.joa.co.uk/shasc.html](http://www.joa.co.uk/shasc.html)

### 3rd & 4th November - Edinburgh

Community Care Conference: Providers can register for Community Care Live Scotland online at [www.communitycare.co.uk/cclivescotland](http://www.communitycare.co.uk/cclivescotland) or call for a registration form on 0870 787 3812. The Unit is in discussion about a plenary slot on Supporting People any further ideas or suggestions for the programme should be forwarded to [sarah.bartlett@rbi.co.uk](mailto:sarah.bartlett@rbi.co.uk).

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