

# **SUPPORTING DOCUMENT 7**

**27\_11-03 Revision Draft  
November 2003**

**Clackmannanshire Council**

**Supporting People Strategy**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **Supporting People**

- 1.1. Supporting People is a new policy and funding framework for housing support for vulnerable people. The government has created a single revenue budget to be allocated to Local Authorities as an annual grant. The new budget and responsibilities came into effect on 1 April 2003.
- 1.2. Supporting People breaks the link between support and accommodation and the creation of a single budget enables a better focus for:
  1. Targeting provision on local needs through strategic planning.
  2. Improving the range and quality of services that are geared to the needs of people receiving support.
  3. Integrating support with wider strategies.
  4. Monitoring quality and effectiveness.
  5. Effective decision making and cost effective solutions.
- 1.3. A wide range of client groups is included in Supporting People. They include Mental Health, Learning Disability, Physical Disability, Older People, Addiction, Women at Risk of Violence, Young People, Homeless, Offenders and other vulnerable adults.

### **Supporting People Strategies**

- 1.4. As part of this new framework the Council has to prepare a Supporting People Strategy. This Strategy explains how the Council, with its partners, wants housing support services to change and develop over the next five years (to 2008). The Strategy is expected to take account of national policy and priorities.
- 1.5. The national priorities set by the Scottish Executive for local authorities for this first revision of the Strategy are
  - There is sufficient and appropriate supporting information available
  - There is a clear understanding of the information requirements that need to be met
  - There is a clear understanding of the main gaps and shortfalls in service
  - The structure of the Strategy provides a sound basis upon which to plan
  - The plan itself is consistent with national priorities

- The Action Plan provides a clear picture of what is to be done, the resource implications and how progress is to be monitored.
- 1.6. This Strategy complies with most of these requirements although work continues on resource implications and information requirements

### **Supporting People Implementation to Date**

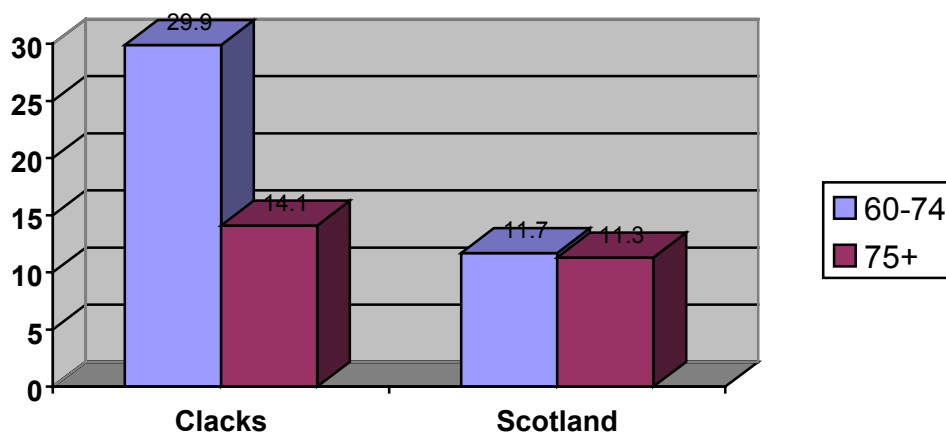
- 1.7. Supporting People came into operation on April 1, 2003. Before implementation, the council conducted considerable work to ensure that the transition to the new arrangements was as smooth as possible. Our successes include
- At transition, clients received consistency and continuity of service. There was no break in payments and few clients would have been aware of any change.
  - The majority (85%) of contracts with providers are signed and in place.
  - Feedback from our provider partners shows that they have felt informed and involved in the implementation process.
  - We have in place a Supporting People client database. The Supporting People Information System was developed internally at minimal cost and is compatible with the council's existing Community Care Information System.

### **The Local Context for Supporting People in Clackmannanshire**

#### ***Population***

- 1.8. In 2002, Clackmannanshire's population was estimated to be approximately 48,000. This represents a small increase on the previous 10 years. (GROS 2000 based population estimates, 2002)
- 1.9. At 2002, across Clackmannanshire around 2 out of 3 people (65 per cent) are of working age. Of the remaining population, 1 in 5 are children and 15 per cent are of retirement age (over 65 years).
- 1.10. Between 2001 and 2011, the population is projected to fall by just over 2 per cent but population estimates show that there will be major changes in the age structure of the population that will have an impact on Supporting People. Clackmannanshire has an aging population. The proportion of children and people of working age is falling faster than in Scotland as a whole while the proportion of older people is growing.

**Percentage change in number of older people, 2001-2011, Clackmannanshire and Scotland**



- 1.11. The chart above shows the projected percentage increase in the number of older people in Clackmannanshire and Scotland as a whole between 2001 and 2011. It shows that in Clackmannanshire there is projected to be nearly a 30 per cent increase in the number of people aged 60 to 74, and a 14 per cent increase in the 75 and over age group. This contrasts with an increase in Scotland as a whole of just 12 per cent in the 60 to 74 age group and 11 per cent in the 75 and over group.

### ***Planning for Supporting People***

- 1.12. The Community Planning Alliance for Clackmannanshire met for the first time in January 2001. The Clackmannanshire Alliance consists of the major public sector organisations that have a significant influence over the well being of the people of Clackmannanshire. Partners include the Council, Communities Scotland, Forth Valley health board and Central Scotland Police.
- 1.13. The Alliance is currently supported by the following four themed groups, with the addition of Regeneration and Community Safety themes likely to be agreed very shortly:
- Clackmannanshire Health Alliance
  - Economic Development Theme Team
  - Environment Theme Team
  - Social Inclusion Theme Team
- 1.14. These groups meet regularly to identify the major issues for Clackmannanshire both now and in the future. They also support the Alliance in preparing the first Community Plan for Clackmannanshire.
- 1.15. Supporting People is one means by which the overall goals identified by the partners for Clackmannanshire can be addressed. For it to have maximum impact, it must fit with other related strategies. Of particular

importance are the Local Housing Strategy, the Homelessness Strategy and the Joint Community Care Plan.

- 1.16. The Local Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Strategy are however at an early stage of preparation and whilst close contact and regular discussions continue to take place, the full alignment with these areas of work will have to take place over the course of the next year.

### **Development of the Supporting People Strategy**

- 1.17. Planning for Supporting People is a continuing process. This first revision of the Strategy concentrates on putting in place the structures and arrangements which will enable planning for Supporting People to develop over the coming years.

- 1.18. Our understanding of the gaps and shortfalls in current services has been informed by the following

- (a) Analysis of existing information on needs and current housing support services. This has included review of related Plans, and a range of data sets held by the Council. The mapping supply database of housing support services and the Supporting People Information System have been analysed extensively.
- (b) Three Supporting People seminars held in September 2002. The seminars were attended by professionals from a range of statutory and voluntary organisations in Clackmannanshire and by service users.
- (c) An Independent Living workshop held in September 2003. This was held to support the development of the Local Housing Strategy but the issues it discussed were of relevance to the Supporting People and the event served to make more explicit links between the two.
- (d) Ongoing consultation with key professionals both from within and outwith the council on the development of the Strategy.

- 1.19. The next section of this document summarises the main issues identified through these processes.

- 1.20. We know there are a number of gaps in the Strategy that need to be addressed. This is in part a result of the constraints we, along with other local authorities in Scotland, have faced in developing our first Supporting People Strategy:

- The lack of any agreed methodology for assessing housing support needs.

- The different timescales for the preparation of the Local Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Strategy making it impossible to align this first Supporting People Strategy with these closely related strategies
  - The fact that this is a new service and historical information about service users does not exist. Moreover, service providers themselves are not yet able to identify the extent of needs that may exist but are unmet within the community.
- 1.21. Some of these difficulties will disappear over time. Others require advice and guidance nationally.

### **Planning and Implementation Structure**

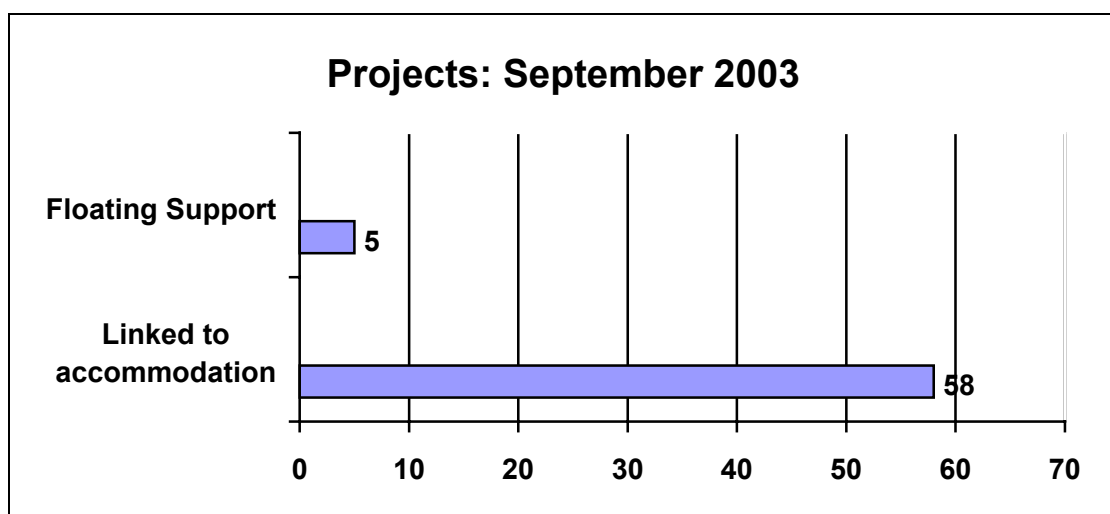
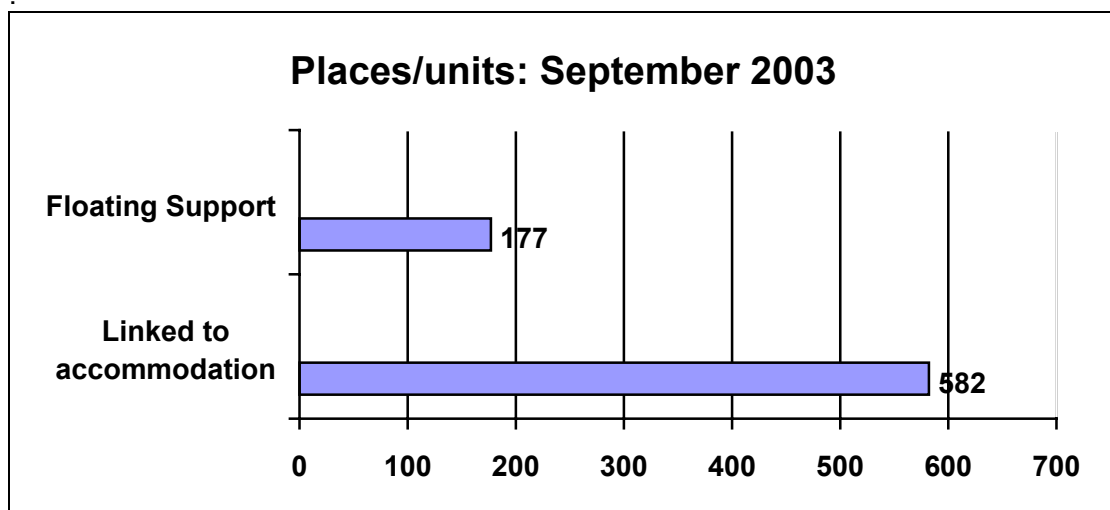
- 1.22. The Core Co-ordination Group, which took forward the early work on Supporting People, has now been reformed into the Supporting People Internal Team. It comprises Council heads of service and service managers from Housing, Child Care, Adult Care, and Criminal Justice, the Council's Contracts Officer (Services to People), a senior Health representative, and is chaired by the Council's SP lead officer. In addition to routine reporting to Council, senior officer and member champions have been identified (respectively) as the Executive Director of Services to People and the Convenor of the Housing & Social Services Committee.

The Core Co-ordination group had provider representation from the outset. A providers forum has now been set up to ensure providers remain fully informed and involved in the process.

## 2. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### Current Services

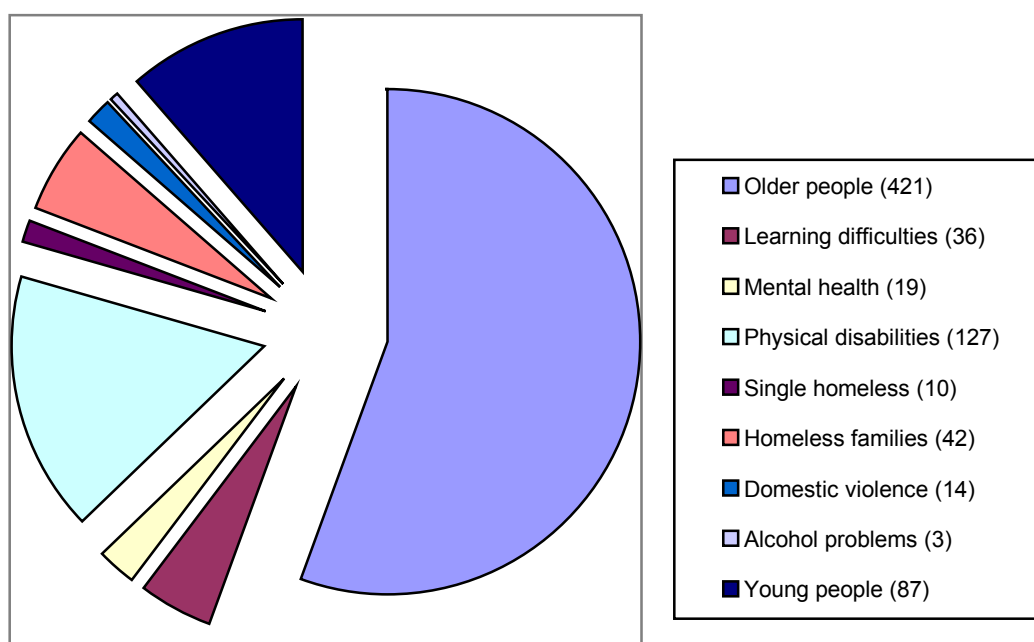
- 2.1. The following information relates to housing support services in Clackmannanshire at the end of September 2003.
- 2.2. In total at September 2003, Clackmannanshire had 759 housing support places in 63 different projects, shown below. This information has been extracted from the supply database (both SP1 and SP2).
- 2.3. The majority of current housing support services are linked to accommodation – 582 places listed on the SP1 database, 77 per cent of total provision. The overwhelming proportion of these places are located within the close proximity of Alloa.



Source: SP1 and SP2 Databases

- 2.4. Provision for older people dominates the supply of housing support services in Clackmannanshire, accounting for 55 per cent of the total (421 places).

#### No. of places by primary client group, September 2003



Source: SP1 and SP2 databases

- 2.5. Places for people with physical disabilities form the next largest group with 127 places, 17 per cent of the total.
- 2.6. Provision for single homeless people, people with mental health problems and people with alcohol problems is very limited. There is no provision at all in Clackmannanshire for people with drug problems or offenders/ex-prisoners

#### ***Housing Support Services Linked to Accommodation***

- 2.7. Clackmannanshire has a total of 582 places on housing support services linked to accommodation, nearly three quarters of them (421) for older people.
- 2.8. The vast majority of housing support services linked to accommodation (87 per cent) provide a permanent home for their clients. Just 4 per cent of provision is medium stay (more than one year) and 9 per cent is short stay (less than a year). There is no housing support service linked to accommodation in Clackmannanshire that is intended to provide accommodation and support on an emergency basis (up to one month).

- 2.9. This has clear implications for the future supply of housing support services as turnover in existing accommodation and support services is likely to be low. The precise nature of the current linkages between housing and support is to be reviewed in line with the clear recognition that for the future the balance of support needs to be moved towards floating service provision.
- 2.10. A particular issue is the lack of short stay accommodation with support for people with mental health problems in Clackmannanshire. Overall, provision for this group is very limited.

**Accommodation linked to support: Units by target duration of stay and primary client group**

Primary Client Group	Target length of stay			Total
	Permanent	Medium stay (more than 1 year)	Short stay (less than 1 year)	
Older People With Support Needs	421	0	0	421
People With Learning Difficulties	28	5	3	36
People With Mental Health Problems	13	6	0	19
People With Physical Disabilities	36	0	0	36
Women Escaping Domestic Violence	4	0	10	14
Single Homeless With Support Needs	0	4	6	10
Homeless Families With Support Needs	0	0	6	6
People With Alcohol Problems	0	0	1	3
Young People With Housing Support Needs	4	5	28	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>582</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	

Source: SP1 and SP2 Database

Other key features of the provision of housing support services linked to accommodation are

- **Accommodation Manager**
  - The majority of the accommodation in linked schemes is managed by RSLs (53 per cent of places). Forty five per cent is provided by Clackmannanshire Council housing department.

- The only other accommodation managers in Clackmannanshire are the Social Work Department (one place) and voluntary organisations or charities accounting for five projects and thirteen places.
- **Accommodation Type**
  - Places in accommodation with housing support services are dominated by supported housing representing over half of all provision (59 per cent), and sheltered housing representing just under a third (31 per cent)
  - Sheltered housing services account for under half (42 per cent) of all places for older people in Clackmannanshire. By contrast, 49 per cent of provision for this client group is in the form of supported council tenancies.
  - Clackmannanshire has a total of 20 places in registered accommodation funded through SNAP, 12 providing for older people and eight for people with learning difficulties.
- **Level of Furnishing**
  - Over three quarters of places in accommodation linked to support are unfurnished (449 places). Nearly half of these (206 places) are in Clackmannanshire Council supported tenancies for older people.
  - One in 5 places in accommodation linked to support is fully furnished.
- **Intended Age Group**
  - Fifty two per cent of places in housing support services linked to accommodation are intended for all age groups. This accounts for 305 places.
  - Surprisingly, just 227 places are classified as being intended for older people. This is despite the fact that older people are the primary client group for 421 places. The explanation is that many projects for older people have, as a secondary client group, people with disabilities.
  - There are just 20 places in Clackmannanshire targeted on young people aged 16 and 17, with a further 18 intended for young people of other ages.

### ***Floating Support Services***

- 2.11. There is a total of 177 places on five floating support schemes in Clackmannanshire accounting for just under a quarter of all provision. The table below shows the client groups catered for.

**Floating support services in Clackmannanshire: No of places by primary client group**

<b>Client group</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Homeless families	36	20.3
People with physical disabilities	91	51.4
Young people with support need	50	28.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100</b>

- 2.12. The table shows that floating support services currently cater for a very limited range of client groups in Clackmannanshire. People with physical disabilities is the largest target client group of existing projects.
- 2.13. Other key features of floating support schemes in Clackmannanshire include:
- Over three quarters of floating support places in Clackmannanshire are intended to provide permanent support for their clients. This includes all the places for people with physical disabilities, two thirds of the places for young people and just under half of the places for homeless families.
  - As with housing support services linked to accommodation, this profile indicates potential problems with existing projects' capacity to deal with new clients in the future.
  - All of the places on floating support schemes in Clackmannanshire are classified as providing for all age groups. Once again, this is explained by the projects for young people also catering for a secondary client group, in this case older people.
  - Twenty floating support places are targeted on single people. None of the other places target a specific household type.

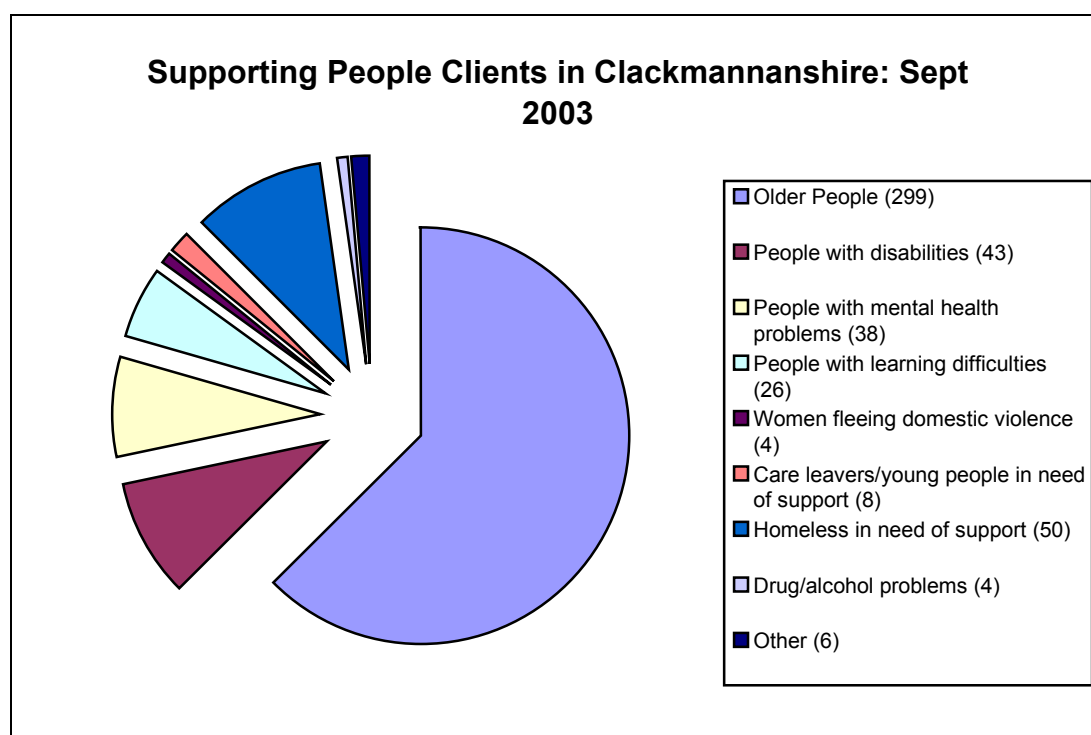
### **Supporting People Clients in Clackmannanshire**

- 2.14. The following information is taken from Clackmannanshire Council's Supporting People Information System. As at September 2003 we hold

detailed information on 478 of the 759 Supporting People clients and continue to populate the database with additional information gleaned from client interviews. The information shown below relates only to these 478 clients, all of who live in accommodation listed in the SP1 database. Clients receiving support through the five floating support schemes operating in Clackmannanshire are not yet included on this database.

### **Client groups**

- 2.15. The chart below shows the client groups of the 478 Supporting People clients described above.



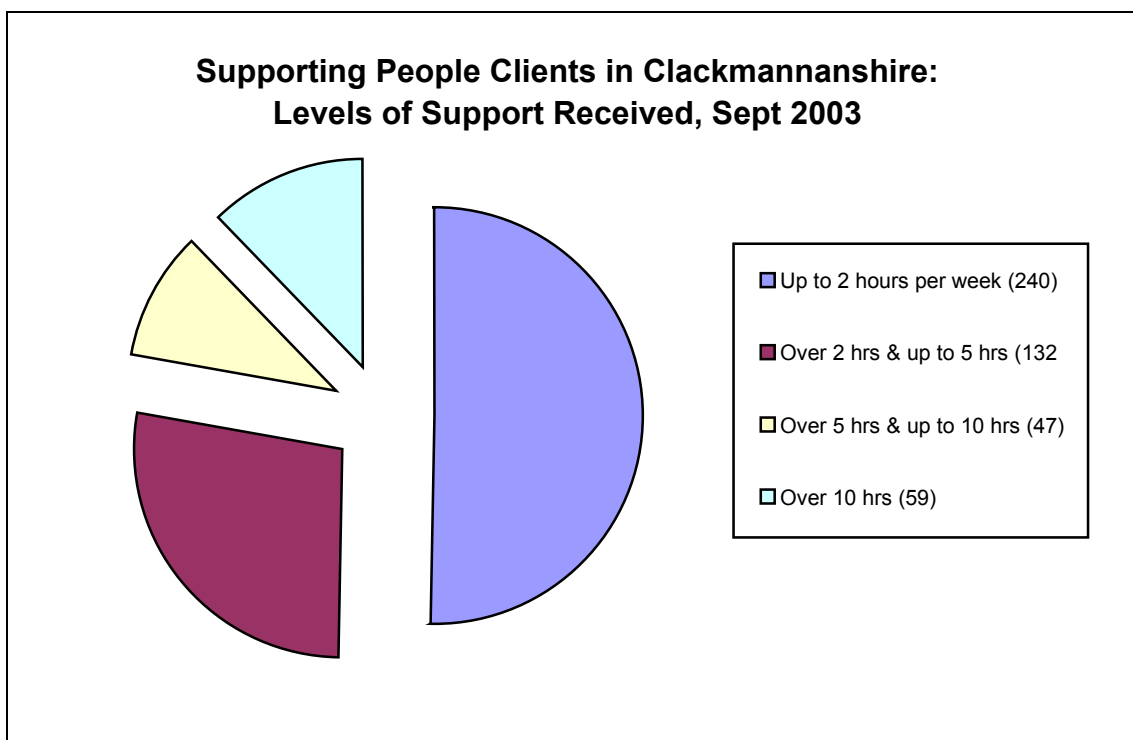
Source: Clackmannanshire Council Supporting People Information System

- 2.16. Sixty three per cent (299) of Supporting People clients in this group are older people. All of these have been recorded on the Supporting People Information System as having a physical disability or chronic illness. They have been reclassified as older people for the purposes of the Supporting People Strategy because they are over 60 years old.
- 2.17. The next largest group is homeless people in need of support. These account for 10 per cent (50) of the Supporting People clients on the database.
- 2.18. People with disabilities (9 per cent), people with mental health problems (8 per cent) and people with learning difficulties (5 per cent) form the next largest groups.
- 2.19. Women fleeing domestic violence, care leavers/young people in need of support, people with drug or alcohol problems and "other" clients

each account for fewer than 2 per cent of cases on the council's client database.

### ***Levels of support received***

- 2.20. The chart below shows the levels of support received by these existing Supporting People clients.



Source: Clackmannanshire Council, Supporting People Information System

- 2.21. The chart shows that the majority of current clients receive relatively low levels of support. Half (240) receive two hours support or less per week while just 59 clients (12 per cent) receive over 10 hours support per week.
- 2.22. Further analysis shows that the needs group of an individual client may have an impact on the level of support they receive. The table below shows the average number of hours support per week by client group.
- 2.23. The table shows that currently, people with learning difficulties and women fleeing domestic violence receive the highest levels of support. On average, support levels for older people are the lowest of all the client groups.

**Average total hours of support by client group, September 2003**

<b>Client Group</b>	<b>Hours of support</b>
Older People	2.35
People with disabilities	14.27
People with mental health problems	10.24
People with learning difficulties	31.70
Women fleeing DV	31.50
Care leavers/young people in need	4.00
Homeless	13.16
Drug/alcohol problems	3.25
Other	3.75

**Gaps and shortfalls in current services**

- 2.24. Housing support services in Clackmannanshire, as elsewhere, have developed in response to the availability of funding. The introduction of Supporting People provides a focus for the first time on these services, including an assessment of the extent to which they meet the need for housing support in Clackmannanshire.
- 2.25. In order to come to an assessment of housing support needs in any given area it is necessary to have a clear view of needs of the population and the services that are available to provide for them. There are a number of difficulties in achieving this clear view:
- As noted before, there is no agreed methodology for assessing local need. Most assessments use a combination of standard rates within the population together with other information from local records and the knowledge of professionals working closely with the client groups.
  - Supporting People database information is only beginning to develop. Whilst information on current supply is available, the information on service users is only now being collated systematically and information on those looking for a housing support service will only be gathered over a period of time.
  - Providers, commissioners, users and potential users are aware of the needs of people currently receiving a service but are less aware of unmet housing support needs.
- 2.26. For this first assessment in Clackmannanshire we have followed a similar method to that adopted in the East Lothian demonstration

project. However, time and resource constraints have meant the extensive work undertaken in East Lothian has not been possible here.

- 2.27. The East Lothian research estimated the number of people with housing, support and care needs by applying national research evidence to the local population ('prevalence') and then used other evidence drawn from existing information sources and from interviews to interpret and refine the analysis.
- 2.28. There are a number of limitations to this research approach:
- It does not enable the need for housing support (potentially eligible through Supporting People) to be distinguished from the need for property related solutions (such as aids and adaptations) or personal care services.
  - Those identified as in need include people who receive support from their family and friends and those who are in a position to make their own accommodation and care/support arrangements.
- 2.29. Nevertheless, the method enables a broad picture of the numbers of people in need of some form of support or care to be estimated. As information sources within Clackmannanshire improve and develop through the implementation of Supporting People, these estimates can be refined.
- 2.30. The same rates identified within the East Lothian research have been applied to the population in Clackmannanshire. This suggests the following levels of need.

#### Population Estimates for Housing, Support and Care Needs

Group	Estimated Number (to the nearest 10)	Comments
Older people with support needs (aged 65+)	1,480	21% of the population aged 65+.
People with learning disabilities (16-64)	430	Based on 100% of those with profound disabilities and 50% with moderate.
People with mental health problems (16-64)	760	Based on 2.4% of population (as East Lothian)
People with physical disabilities or sensory impairment	1,050	Based on 3.3% of population
Young people at risk	240	Based on homeless presentations (02/03) 100% of single homeless people aged 16/17 and 75% of single parents and single people aged 18-24

Single homeless people	120	Based on homeless presentations (02/03) 40% of single homeless applicants aged 25-64
Homeless families with support needs	50	Based on homeless presentations (02/03) 20% of homeless families applicants (excluding single parents under 25)
People escaping domestic violence	70	Based on homeless presentations (02/03) Includes 90% of homeless applicants with violence as reason

- 2.31. Change in the population over the next 10 years is likely to impact on the above numbers in the following ways
- The growth in the number of older people will increase the demand for housing support services from this group.
  - The reduction in the number of working age people is likely to result in a slight reduction in the numbers of younger homeless people requiring housing support.
- 2.32. This approach gives an indication of the relative scale of need for each client group and the overall size of the local population in need. Our approach also drew on other information – including other local data sets, and the interviews with service providers and conferences with service users, providers and stakeholders.
- 2.33. Drawing all of this information together we have identified the following general gaps and shortfalls in the current supply of housing support services in Clackmannanshire. We have also analysed the particular issues facing each of the client groups and these are annexed (Annex 1). This analysis shows that information on individual client groups is limited but key points are:
- It is clear that the overall population of people requiring housing support services is not large in Clackmannanshire.
  - There is likely to be a very limited level of need from some client groups (people with alcohol problems, people with drug problems, people with HIV/AIDS, refugees etc)
  - The extent to which some client groups overlap with each other needs to be clarified
  - Consultation has revealed that the key need for most client groups is the development of flexible, responsive, floating support services.

### ***Gaps and shortfalls in services***

- Current support services are dominated by those that are linked to accommodation. This limits flexibility in service provision.
- This is exacerbated by the fact that the majority of supported housing in Clackmannanshire is intended to provide a permanent home.
- Generally there is a lack of variety in the type of service available to those with housing needs. Provision is dominated by supported housing and sheltered housing.
- There is a general lack of floating support services. Those that exist cater only for a limited range of client groups. Moreover, the majority of them are intended to provide permanent support.
- There is a general lack of services in Clackmannanshire that provide medium or short term housing support.
- There is no emergency housing support service in Clackmannanshire, (apart from a limited Homelessness emergency service).
- There is a lack of services for people with housing support needs living in the owner occupied sector. This is likely in particular to affect older people and those with a physical disability.

### ***Move on & Access to housing***

The current preponderance of support tied to accommodation clearly poses significant issues in terms of housing access and the role and availability of move-on accommodation. The developments noted below point to a range of initial responses that will form part of the strategic shift needed to respond effectively to Supporting People.

- The NCH PATH project provides support to vulnerable young people enabling them to lead successful and independent lives in mainstream housing.
- Woman's Aid provides advice and assistance to move from refuge accommodation to mainstream housing and there are plans to extend their service to provide support to women and their children after they have left the refuge.
- Discussions are underway for joint Supporting People and Criminal Justice Service funding of a SACRO project, which aims to provide continuity of support for ex-offenders leaving prison and resettling in the community.

- A major review of housing allocations policies across the three main social housing providers in Clackmannanshire has already been identified as a priority through the Local Housing Strategy process. The closely related issue of developing a local Common Housing Register has also been prioritised. Housing support issues will be a prominent theme running through these core housing access topics.

### ***Individual Client Groups***

- 2.34. Annex 1 sets out information on the evidence of need and the provision of current housing support services for the individual client groups

### 3. THE STRATEGY

- 3.1. The introduction of Supporting People is a major undertaking and involves significant change in the arrangements for the funding of housing support services. Our major concern in the first year has been to ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements.
- 3.2. We are giving priority in this first review of the Strategy to ensuring that the structures are in place to support the continued implementation of Supporting People. This includes looking both at the way in which we do things in the Council and at the way we work with our partners.
- 3.3. We can only achieve the changes contained in this strategy by working in partnership
- with providers
  - with service users and their carers
  - with funders and commissioners both in the Council and in other agencies.

We have begun to establish these relationships and the Strategy sets out the ways in which we plan to extend and develop these further.

- 3.4. In developing this Strategy we have become aware of the lack of information on the needs for Supporting People services in Clackmannanshire. We need to have a clearer picture than is currently available of the total number of people who need housing support services and of the type and level of their need. We also need to learn more about the views and preferences of people in need to assist us in determining the most effective way of meeting their needs. We aim in this Strategy to put in place the building blocks to develop our understanding in these areas.

#### Supporting People Vision Statement

- 3.5. Clackmannanshire council has adopted the following vision for Supporting People.

*To provide a diverse range of well co-ordinated housing support services, which are integrated, responsive and comprehensive, and which meet the individual needs of people*

#### Supporting People Strategic Objectives

- 3.6. Building on our vision and based on an examination of the key issues for Clackmannanshire, we have drafted eight strategic objectives. These identify the main areas of change that we think are needed over the next five years of the Supporting People Strategy.

- To introduce the Supporting People arrangements in a way that causes minimum disruption to service users and providers.
- To establish a relationship with provider agencies that supports the sharing of good information and development of good practice.
- To develop and maintain information sources on the need for Supporting People services to support long term planning.
- To develop meaningful service user involvement in determining the nature and level of their support
- To ensure that all housing support providers deliver good quality and best value services through a process of service review and Best Value Review
- To ensure that existing and new services deliver good quality and best value housing support in line with strategic and commissioning objectives.
- To secure a shift in the balance of housing support services towards services that are not linked to accommodation.
- To ensure that the planning for housing support development integrates with other relevant strategies and plans.

### **Main Elements of the Strategy**

- 3.7. The Strategy, including the related Action Plans, is organised around the following

#### ***Service development***

1. Best value and service review
2. Individual assessments
3. Commissioning
4. Registration
5. Introduction of charging
6. Staffing

#### ***Partnership***

7. Relationships with providers
8. User involvement
9. Communication and strategy development

#### ***Strategic Planning***

10. Needs assessment information and long term planning
11. National policy issues
12. Option appraisal

## **1. Best value and service review**

- 3.8. The Council will aim to achieve services that consistently deliver best value in terms of
- Quality
  - Cost
  - Strategic fit.
- 3.9. The main method by which this will be achieved is by the system of service review. The Supporting People Team will develop the methodology for Service Review in consultation with partner agencies. It will be prepared in the early part of 2004 and will be issued for wider consultation.
- 3.10. The reviews will begin April 2004. Subject to the first reviews will be those services about which complaints have been received or there are other concerns about performance. Other reviews will be prioritised on the basis of a cost/quality comparison.

## **2. Individual Assessments**

- 3.11. Clackmannanshire Council aims to put in place systems and processes which enable housing support assessments that:
- are conducted in an objective manner
  - reflect a clear distinction between the support and care needs of users
  - are conducted by competent and confident assessors.
- 3.12. The Strategy proposes that individual housing needs assessments should be undertaken by service providers, as they are at present. This recognises that providers have assessment criteria relevant to their own services. It is also more realistic given the potential volume of assessments that may be involved.
- 3.13. The Council's role will be to set the principles and standards for the assessment. The Supporting People Team will develop an assessment tool for housing support needs. The tool will be able to stand alone or form part of the Single Shared Assessment. Service providers will be expected to use this assessment tool within their own assessment procedures.

## **3. Commissioning**

- 3.14. The Council will seek to achieve the following through its commissioning of housing support services
- An increase in the amount of support delivered entirely separately from people's housing or accommodation

- High quality, cost effective provision that, where possible, meets user choice.
- 3.15. By January 2004 it is planned to have drafted a commissioning strategy providing a clearer and longer-term statement of the commissioning intentions of the Council. The timescale will allow consultation with partners and the ability to take into account priorities set out in other related plans.
- 3.16. Once developed, the commissioning strategy will be reviewed annually.
- 3.17. To support the commissioning process the full contract will be drafted by the same date as the commissioning strategy – January 2004.

#### **4. Registration**

- 3.18. Registration with the Care Commission is a requirement for all housing support services and we will ensure that all Council Supporting People services are registered in the appropriate manner
- 3.19. However, the council also recognises that the introduction of Supporting People places great burdens on the providers of housing support services. We will offer professional support to providers in complying with the registration requirements of the Care Commission.
- 3.20. The Care Commission is a new organisation and will be a key partner of the council in the future. The Strategy sets the Council the task of developing a fruitful working relationship with the Commission over the period of the plan.

#### **5. Introduction of charging**

- 3.21. The Strategy commits the council to the development of a joint charging framework by April 2004. Work on the development of the framework will be undertaken jointly by the Supporting People Team and Adult Care.
- 3.22. The Strategy recognises that the introduction of charging will be an issue that could cause concern and worry to vulnerable people and it commits the Council to communicating proposed changes to service users sensitively and timeously. The Supporting People Team will produce a leaflet explaining the new rules to the public. It will also conduct a series of visits to sheltered housing complexes to explain the new regime to residents.

#### **6. Staffing**

- 3.23. The Council is aware that this Strategy commits it to an ambitious programme of change. It is committed to ensuring that it has in place a

staffing structure capable of carrying out all the work that we have committed ourselves to.

- 3.24. We have in place a Supporting People Team but we are aware that it will need to expand and develop to be able to meet the challenges of the future. By November 2003, the Supporting People lead officer will have finalised the proposed new structure for the Team with a view to commencing staff recruitment in January 2004.

### ***Partnership***

#### ***7. Relationships with providers***

- 3.25. The Council's intention is to develop a strong collaborative relationship with service providers.
- 3.26. More specifically the aim is to put in place structures and processes that will enable the following to be achieved.
- Information regarding good practice and the evolving SP system is shared between providers and the Supporting People Team.
  - Service providers are encouraged to work with each other to share best practice and develop better services
  - Promotion of a long term relationship between providers and the Supporting People Team
- 3.27. Many of the actions which have been set out in relation to service delivery are relevant to achieving this.
- 3.28. In addition, we intend to continue the work we have already undertaken to involve providers in the progress of Supporting People. In particular the Supporting People Team will continue to service the "Providers' Forum" meetings. This forum promotes strong working relationships between providers and is a focus for discussion of issues of mutual interest. It also provides providers with the opportunity to influence council policy and action.
- 3.29. In addition to this general forum, we will continue to meet with the two sub-groups of this forum that are assisting in the development of a local needs mapping tool and a service review methodology.
- 3.30. As progress on the strategy is made, we expect that other issues will emerge that would benefit from a partnership approach with providers. These will be brought onto the Action Plan as required.

## **8. User involvement**

- 3.31. Achieving user involvement in the planning and delivery of housing support services is a key element within our strategy. Our aims are to achieve
- Enhanced user understanding of their rights and provider's responsibilities under Supporting People.
  - Increasing service user control over their support arrangements
- 3.32. Our Strategy addresses the need for individual service users to be able to shape the service they receive and to have clear mechanisms by which they can complain if they feel that the service falls short in any way. As an essential element of user empowerment, we will prepare an information leaflet specifically for service users so that they are aware of what they are entitled to.
- 3.33. Our plans to develop a complaints procedures and a direct payments scheme are ways of ensuring that service users influence the way in which their services develop. We also want to ensure that service users are involved in Service Reviews and in ongoing contract management. Work is ongoing to determine the most appropriate way to achieve this involvement.
- 3.34. We plan a series of seminars for February 2004, which will follow up on the Supporting People seminars held in September 2002. As before, we will seek the participation of service users.

## **9. Communication**

- 3.35. Effective communication is at the heart of good joint working with all our partners. Our Strategy therefore involves
- Making sure that our partners have up to date information about policy and planning developments and about current housing support services
  - Ensuring that people have the opportunity to give feedback, to ask questions and to influence the development of housing support services in Clackmannanshire
  - Ensuring that the Supporting People Strategy fits with other relevant strategies.
- 3.36. Our approach will include the preparation of a directory of housing support services in Clackmannanshire together with contact details so that other service providers and commissioners can make contact directly with these services. This directory will be available on the Internet.

- 3.37. Our communications approach also includes the widest dissemination of this Strategy. Copies will be sent to all partners and an executive summary will be produced. As with the service directory, the Strategy and its summary will be available on the Internet.
- 3.38. This wide dissemination of the Council's strategy will support the ongoing process of consultation with our partners and service users. This consultation includes Council staff working on other strategies. Through this mechanism we will ensure that the Supporting People strategy "fits" with other relevant plans and strategies.

### ***Strategic Planning***

#### ***10. Needs assessment information and planning***

- 3.39. We are committed to improving and extending our understanding of the needs of those requiring housing support and to reflect this greater understanding through the continuing development and refinement of our Strategy.
- 3.40. We are keen to maximise and extend the use of existing information sources and continuous recording systems. As part of this we will continue to expand our Supporting People Information System, which holds records of all clients receiving a Supporting People service. New clients will be recorded on the system and we will visit self-funders to collect core information on them.
- 3.41. We are aware, however, that Supporting People is about more than those people currently receiving services and wish to increase our understanding of overall needs for housing support. As part of the Local Housing Strategy, Clackmannanshire Council will be developing a Supporting People Accommodation Strategy. Part of this process will involve the commissioning of research to determine the need for:
- Specialist housing
  - Dedicated supported housing
  - Housing support
- The Supporting People Team will play a key role in the specification and management of the research, timetabled for completion in mid 2004.

#### ***11 Influencing national policy***

- 3.42. The Scottish Executive has provided extensive guidance for local authorities on Supporting People and this has provided useful support.
- 3.43. However certain important issues remain to be addressed. Some of these require clarification from the Scottish Executive. We have identified three such issues to be raised with the Executive in the early stages of the strategy period.

- (a) The need for a national approach in relation to women's refuge accommodation.
  - (b) The extension of services to non-householders who require specific, time-limited support to prepare them to become householders.
  - (c) Additional funding to support the extension of Supporting People to owner-occupiers.
- 3.44. As implementation progresses, we are aware that other issues requiring clarification or action by the Scottish Executive will emerge. It will be our intention to add these issues to the work plan as appropriate and to continue a dialogue with the Scottish Executive on issues relating to implementation.

### ***Individual Client Groups***

- 3.45. There are a number of gaps in our understanding of the housing support needs of people in Clackmannanshire. Over the next five years, one of our main objectives will be to improve that understanding.
- 3.46. We are however aware that we have some more immediate decisions to make about the shape of housing support services in Clackmannanshire. Our initial analysis of the available information on the individual client groups suggests to us that a narrow client group focus is not appropriate at this stage in Clackmannanshire. This is because of:
- the small size of some individual client groups
  - the small size of the overall population requiring support
- 3.47. It is clear, however, that there are some common themes across the client groups
- (a) A shift from services linked to accommodation to more flexible, floating support services
  - (b) Increasing user involvement in the commissioning and specification of housing support services.
  - (c) Extending services to meet the housing support needs of those in owner occupation.
- 3.48. Given that these are common themes across client groups, it is our intention to give priority to the development of generic housing support services, capable of bringing in specialist client group focussed support where necessary.
- 3.49. At the same time, our strategy commits us to improving our knowledge of the needs of all potential Supporting People clients. As our research

and information sources improve they will be constantly reviewed. This will allow us to make decisions about whether to provide specific client group focussed services on the basis of good quality, up to date information.