



Case Studies of Supported Exempt Accommodation in Scotland

Supported exempt accommodation in Scotland

In Autumn 2022, the Housing Support Enabling Unit conducted a survey of providers of housing support to learn more about the quality and models of supported exempt accommodation in Scotland. The results, although from a relatively small sample of 16 providers, give insight into the various service models that are treated as supported exempt accommodation by the housing benefit system. Fourteen providers reported that they had at least one service treated as supported exempt accommodation by the housing benefit system.

Some providers responded that their organisation did not have any supported housing services that were treated as exempt accommodation. Other provider organisations suggested that while some of their services were treated as exempt accommodation, other similar services were not, dependent on the local authority in which the service was located. The information required by local authorities within a housing benefit claim also differed. Some local authorities required a breakdown of intensive housing management costs into specific functions. Other local authorities would accept a claim with only a headline cost. Providers also alluded to discrepancies of regulation between local authorities, including how often an HMO licence had to be renewed and associated costs, even though HMO legislation applies nationally.

Through the survey, financial sustainability emerged as a common concern. One provider noted ‘... the cost-of-living crisis will impact our outgoings heavily and may result in closure of services if these costs can’t be covered.’ It was also suggested that the threshold for approval of a supported accommodation claim is being raised. Providers are supporting people with more complex needs, while some people are excluded from services if their needs are not deemed to be high enough.

The survey responses make clear that there are various models of supported exempt accommodation that provide high quality support in Scotland. All supported exempt accommodation in Scotland is regulated through the Care Inspectorate.

With the help of providers, the Unit has created the following case studies:

Case Study 1: Housing support for young people with experience of homelessness or care

Case Study 2: Supported accommodation for adults with a learning disability

Case Study 3: Supported accommodation for people 16+ as part of a leased agreement

Case Study 4: Sheltered housing for older people

Although these case studies offer a snapshot of different models of supported housing, they do not form an exhaustive picture of supported exempt accommodation in Scotland. While these services are provided by different organisations with different targeted outcomes, common themes include embedded partnership between services and local authorities,

IJBs, and HSCPs; tailored and flexible person-centred support; and evaluation and self-assessment involving the people using services.

Case Study 1: Housing support for young people with experience of homelessness or care

What is the service?

This service provides transitional supported housing for young people with experience of homelessness or care. The service is provided by a housing association and consists of accommodation for 13 young people in a shared residential setting alongside offering 40 secure tenancies where young people are supported in their own homes.

What model does the support take?

This service avoids a staircase model by enabling young people to go into accommodation that matches their needs. Young people are funded for 19 hours of support, but support is available 24/7. Young people in their own tenancies are funded for seven hours of support. Night service support is critical as often young people need support outside of normal working hours.

The service provides enhanced housing management to help young people set up a tenancy, claim housing benefit, maintain rent payments, access support for repairs and maintenance, and receive support if there are anti-social behaviour issues.

What outcomes does the service achieve?

The targeted outcomes of the service are not only crisis and homelessness prevention, but also personal growth, employment, and helping young people develop social skills and emotional resilience. The service aims to help reduce interaction with the criminal justice system and develop tenancy sustainment skills until young people are able to manage independently.

In the most recent Care Inspectorate Report, the quality of care and support was graded as 6- excellent, as was the quality of management and leadership. Young people in the service reported how the supported accommodation had made a difference to their skills:

'Before I came here, I didn't know how to cook or wash. Staff really helped me. They helped to budget. I used to spend my money the day I got it. I'm much better now at managing this. I think along with all the other things they've helped me with, I could manage my own house.'

'I had my own tenancy but I couldn't keep it so I came here. The staff are extremely helpful. Always available and very nice people.'

'I'm very happy with my support. I like it here. It's not where I thought I'd be but the staff are extremely helpful. They got me on a course and I got a bike that I helped to refurbish. It gets me around.'

The Care Inspectorate report makes clear that the service is supported by a committed and passionate team of staff. The Inspection also picked up on the culture of self-evaluation within the service that meant that the young people using the service had a key role in shaping provision. The service has an Investor in Young People accreditation and invited young people to lead assessment of the support. The Care Inspectorate reported that this meant the service delivered tailored support and 'excellent outcomes for each young person.'

How is this service funded?

The service is part funded through the local Health and Social Care Partnership, in addition to Housing Benefit funding which covers the eligible service charge.

The rent is £329.74 monthly plus a service charge of £579.44 which are both eligible for Housing Benefit. There is also a personal energy charge that is not eligible for Housing Benefit.

Summary

This service is a source of pride for the provider, because of the high standard of service made available on a limited budget. The service runs alongside a housing support service which supports young people living in their own self-contained tenancies. The most recent Care Inspectorate report noted a strength of the service was that young people were supported by a key worker, offering continuity when transitioning to a tenancy with the Housing Association.

The service provided by the housing association is a clear example of high quality supported exempt accommodation, evidenced by the positive outcomes delivered for young people with experience of homelessness or care.

Rent	£329.74
Service Charge	£579.44
Total HB Eligible Monthly Costs	£909.18

Case Study 2: Supported accommodation for adults with a learning disability

What is the service?

Completed in 2018, the accommodation is provided by a housing association through the provision of three self-contained properties located within a small, supported housing development, created through the conversion of a former church manse house. The project was funded through a Housing Association Grant and by the housing association through private finance.

The service supports adults with a learning disability. Two of the properties are one-bedroom flats for tenants with low-level support needs, while the other property is a three-bedroom flat designed to support a tenant with more complex needs. The design and size of this flat with additional staff facilities enables onsite support to be in place 24/7. Physical works were undertaken to the three-bedroom flat as it was converted to provide greater resilience to the structure and fittings to reduce the risk of damage should the tenant present behaviours which challenge.

From the outset, a multi-disciplinary team worked with the housing association and family members to redesign the former manse house and wider environment into a small supported housing development ensuring it met the needs of the prospective tenants.

Each tenant has a Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement with the housing association to guarantee full tenancy rights. The housing association has an operational protocol in place with the care providers which sets out the roles and responsibilities of each partner in delivering the supported housing service to the tenants, including liaison arrangements. A copy of the operational protocol is provided to the local authority, as part of the wider commissioning arrangements for the service.

What model does the support take?

Care and support are provided through family networks and external care and support providers commissioned by the local authority, while the staff team from the housing association provide a full housing management and maintenance service through visiting support. The properties include telecare through the provision of a communal warden call system and integrated fire detection system.

The housing association meets regularly with tenants, their families, the local council, and the care provider to enable effective monitoring of the service.

What outcomes does the service achieve?

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The Housing Support Enabling Unit is a partnership initiative between Coalition of Care & Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, funded by the Scottish Government.

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The key outcome is that the service enables adults with a learning disability to live in a safe and homely setting, adapted for their specific needs, and to remain within their community.

An integrated support service involving the tenant and their family, care provider and the housing association ensures tenants can sustain their tenancy through safe, secure and well-maintained housing, with a range of care and support. To date, no vacancies have arisen within the service which reflects the joint planning applied when the service was being designed, and the integrated, person-centred service delivery thereafter.

In the latest Care Inspectorate Report, the quality of care and support was assessed as 5- very good, and the quality of management and leadership was assessed as 5- very good. The report notes that:

'People experienced warmth, kindness and compassion in how they were supported and cared for and staff demonstrated genuine commitment to supporting people to get the most out of their lives. Staff knew people well and worked in regular consultation with other healthcare professionals to promote a safe, consistent approach to their care and support. People could therefore be confident that any changes to their health or support needs would be promptly responded to.'

'We visited a number of supported people throughout the inspection and saw very good examples of how outcomes had improved for them. By working with the supported person, families and relevant others the service could identify what was important to them in their lives and plan the support to achieve this. The personal outcomes approach format effectively evidenced improved outcomes for people including increased confidence, physical health, independent living skills and social interaction.'

How is this service funded?

For the one-bedroom flats, there is a total charge of £579.80 monthly, with £485.53 for rent and £93.97 for service charge.

For the three-bedroom flat, there is a total charge of £776.50 monthly, with £682.53 for rent and £93.97 for service charge.

Both the rent and service charge are housing benefit eligible. The service charge covers ground maintenance, communal cleaning, and safety and security systems. The housing association does not provide enhanced housing management though it provides a full landlord service.

Summary

This service is an example of exempt accommodation providing quality support that enables people with a learning disability to live independently and sustain their own tenancy. While support is provided by an external organisation, it is clear that cooperation

and evaluation enable positive outcomes for tenants living in this service. Through funding from the housing benefits system, people living in this accommodation can maintain a safe and secure tenancy that is appropriate for their needs.

One-bedroom flat	
Rent	£485.53
Service Charge	£93.97
Total HB Eligible Monthly Costs	£579.80

Three-bedroom flat	
Rent	£682.53
Service Charge	£93.97
Total HB Eligible Monthly Costs	£776.50

Case Study 3: Supported accommodation for people 16+ as part of a leased agreement

What is the service?

This supported exempt accommodation service is for people between the age of 16 and 30 who may have experiences of or have been at risk of homelessness, experienced mental health problems, moved on from care agencies, experienced family breakdown, or experienced drug or alcohol dependencies. This service supports up to eight residents and six volunteers who live together in a shared house.

What model does the support take?

Twenty-four-seven support is provided through live-in volunteers and a staff on-call system. An average of 28 hours is spent with each tenant per week. In this service, the live-in volunteers offer some of the support that would usually be provided by a concierge.

The service is part of a leased agreement. The property is leased from a housing association.

Enhanced housing management covers:

- Additional allocation administration
- Additional HMO requirements
- Additional wear and tear, repair and maintenance
- Utility contract management
- Pest control
- Refuse removal
- Porter/concierge/warden for building security
- Health and safety checks including fire system, security system, and electrical appliance checks
- Cleaning of communal areas
- Communal heat and light
- Communal redecoration and furniture

What outcomes does the service achieve?

Residents are supported to develop their confidence to live independently and develop the life skills and experience they need to eventually move on and flourish in their own home. Outcomes are assessed using Outcomes Star and Homes Star. The outcomes assessed include 'trust and hope, safety and crime, alcohol and drugs, caring for myself, how I spend my time, my health, how I feel, my money, and friends and relationships'.

In the latest Care Inspectorate report, the quality of care and support was described as 5- very good, the quality of staffing was 5- very good, and the quality of management and leadership was reported as 4- good. The Care Inspectorate after speaking to service users and staff reported the following:

'The accommodation was described as offering a safe and supportive base. Service users said they felt empowered to direct the pace and direction of the work they undertook...'

'We saw some very good enabling outcomes across a broad range of service users aspirational goals, including; supporting people to stay safe, sustain their tenancies, develop skills of everyday living, engage with professionals from health and social care agencies, access permanent accommodation and interact positively with community resources for education, social and recreational purposes.'

The service is unique in its peer-support model which integrates residential/day volunteers alongside residents. For people who use this service, it may be the first time they have engaged with support through someone who 'chooses to be there' rather than a paid member of staff. This dynamic creates a new way of engaging with others and helps foster trust and respect while developing diverse cultural relationships along the way.

How is this service funded?

There is a £295.98 weekly charge which is eligible for housing benefit. This includes £156.25 of rent costs including health and safety and maintenance, and £139.73 of other enhanced housing management costs.

However, the service funded through housing benefit is complemented by other support provided to the people living in this accommodation. Support is funded out with housing benefit through local authority spot purchase from both adult and children's funding.

Summary

This is an example of high-quality housing support classed as supported exempt accommodation enabled through the housing benefit system. The young people living in the service can achieve positive outcomes through the support they receive in a positive community setting.

Rent	£625.00
Service Charge	£558.92
Total HB Eligible Monthly Costs	£1183.92

Case Study 4: Sheltered housing for older people

What is the service?

This supported exempt accommodation is provided by a housing association in partnership with the local authority to offer support for older people, in the form of extra care housing within a sheltered housing setting. The development is made up of 30 one- and two-bed flats.

Each flat has a living room, shower or wet room, kitchen and separate bedroom, but there is also a communal lounge and communal laundry facilities.

What model does the support take?

The rent and service charge provides tenants with an on-site development manager. All tenants have a community alarm connected to Telecare provided by the housing association. The average time spent with each tenant for the enhanced service with telecare ranges from 30 minutes to an hour per week. There are regular security and communal property checks which provide a secure environment and engagement for tenants.

Enhanced housing management covers the following provisions for tenants:

- Minor repairs and maintenance that a tenant would be expected to do themselves in a general-needs tenancy such as changing lightbulbs and unblocking sinks.
- Ensuring barrier-free accessibility to communal facilities and the community around them.
- Communal services including gardening, window cleaning, and cleaning of communal areas.
- Provision of accessible materials and documentation to support the tenant's understanding of their tenancy.
- 24/7 contact services for repairs and general enquiries.
- An increased number of inspections and property visits.
- Ongoing liaison with other parties involved in the provision of care and other support services to the tenants.

Out with the rent and service charge there is an 'extra care' housing service, registered with the Care Inspectorate, which provides a site-based care at home service to those who require the service. This is a commissioned service purchased on behalf of the tenant by the HSCP for those assessed as requiring care. The service is available 7am to 10pm and provides a full range of care at home services including medication to level 3, lifting, meal support and personal care.

All tenants can purchase home support privately and those that have a commissioned package can purchase additional support.

What outcomes does the service achieve?

The aims of the service are to support older adults to sustain and improve wellbeing, and interact with their neighbours and the wider community. The supported exempt accommodation service allows tenants to maintain independence for longer and improve their ability to make choices and have control over their own lives.

A recent care inspectorate report for the care at home service associated with the sheltered housing service was graded a 5 - very good for quality of care and support, and 5 - very good for quality of staffing. The report states:

'People experienced consistent and stable support as a result of there being regular teams of staff in each of the developments who communicated well with each other.'

Comments from people who used the service included:

'I feel safe.'

'I'm well looked after.'

'Very nice staff.'

The housing association which provides this service reports positive levels of satisfaction among tenants for this service. Residents of the service are involved in decision-making through an Annual Development Meeting and regular communication and consultation between the housing association and residents.

How is this service funded?

The rent for this service is £382. The service charge is £205 with a personal heating charge of £22. Both the rent and service charge can be claimed through housing benefit, while the heating charge is ineligible.

Tenants receiving care funded through the local health and social care partnership have a Housing with Care charge to pay to the HSCP. The housing association does not collect this.

Summary

This supported exempt accommodation service allows older people to maintain independence in a safe and secure environment. Through partnership with the local council and health and social care partnership, people living in this service are able to access flexible, quality housing support.

Rent	£382.00
Service Charge	£205.00
Total HB Eligible Monthly Costs	£587.00

About the HSEU

The aim of the Unit is to offer support and assistance to providers of housing support and supported housing across the voluntary sector, the private sector and to Registered Social Landlords. You can find out more about the work of the Unit on our website.

The HSEU is a partnership initiative between Coalition of Care and Support Providers Scotland (CCPS) and Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) and funded by the Scottish Government.



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