

Supporting People in the East of England

Did you know that 'Supporting People' in the East.....

- Received £121 million funding in 2008/09
- Contracts with 444 providers
- Provides services for 21 different client groups
- Provided services to 97,000 households in 2007

What is 'Supporting People'?

Supporting People is a central government programme that **funds and determines strategic priorities** for housing related support. Supporting People **commissions** services that are aimed at helping vulnerable people to live independently and **monitors and reviews** housing related support services. The programme supports some of the most vulnerable and socially excluded members of our society.

What is housing related support?

Housing related support services help vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes. Services can be 'short-term' or 'long term' depending on peoples needs and include such things as:

- Advice on managing money.
- Advice on claiming benefits.
- Developing domestic or social skills.
- Personal and home safety.

Who does it help?

Some examples of client groups Supporting People support include:

- Homeless people
- Older people with support needs
- Young vulnerable people and teenage parents
- People with learning, physical disabilities and mental health problems
- People with drug or alcohol problems
- People escaping domestic violence.
- People who have recently come out of prison or are at risk of offending
- Gypsies and Travellers
- Refugees

What are the benefits of the Supporting People programme?

Financial benefits

Communities and Local Government (CLG) looked at the financial benefits provided through Supporting People investment and with links with health, social care and housing. The National Indicator Set and Supporting People Outcomes Framework should be used by commissioners to provide a basis for commissioning joined-up services that deliver outcomes relevant to housing, health and social care.¹ CLG identified the extent to which SP saves money elsewhere through preventing or deferring the use of more costly alternatives for example;

- Health interventions
- Committing or becoming a victim of crime
- Becoming homeless

The CLG research found that for every £1 of SP money spent there is a net gain of £1.78².

Space East research found that the net benefit of not-for-profit supported housing services to the East region is £12.6 million. This represents an added value service of 37%.

Uncosted benefits

CLG research has found that there are also a range of valuable but uncosted benefits from Supporting People services.

These vary from client group to client group, but may include:

- improved health and quality of life for individuals
- increased participation in the community
- reduced burden for carers
- greater access to appropriate services
- improved educational outcomes for children
- reduced fear of crime
- reduced anti-social behaviour

Supporting People also saves money and avoids costs elsewhere through intervention and prevention. For example, Home Improvement Agencies can organise for adaptations to be made to an elderly or disabled person's home, such as installing grab rails, which in turn reduce the likelihood of falls and subsequent hospitalisation and/or admittance into residential care.

¹ CLG/CSIP/Housing Corporation/Housing LIN document: Housing, care, support: a guide to integrating housing-related support at a regional level.

² This is an average figure so may be significantly greater or lower for other client groups.

What has Supporting People achieved in the region?

1. The programme has driven up standards of services

Since the initial inception of Supporting People in 2003, each SP team in the region has completed service reviews on all of their existing services. These reviews included establishing whether a service was strategically relevant, ensuring services met at least a level C standard on the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) and establishing whether the service was providing the appropriate services and was good value for money.

2. Supporting People have been successful in attracting capital funding from the Housing Corporation

- EERA has recommended that over 10% of the capital funding housing pot for the East is allocated to Supported Housing.
- The Supporting People East Region Group (SPERG) in partnership with the Housing Corporation and Housing sub-regions, have developed a method of prioritising capital investment bids in the region³.

3. Regional Accreditation process

Since June 2006 providers in the East have been regionally accredited by one authority in the region which has reduced bureaucracy for providers and Supporting People teams alike.

4. Regional Contract for Supporting People and Adult Social Care

Supporting People have worked with Directors of Adult Social Services for councils in the East of England to produce a regional contract for Mental Health and Learning Disability services. ADASS have agreed to adopt the Regional Standard:

- Terms and Conditions of Contract for care and support services;
- Service Specifications and Quality and Performance schedules for:
 - Care Homes
 - Home Care and
 - Supported Living Services – encompassing housing related support (Supporting People) and Home Care services

Subsequent work on contract standards and outcomes will start in 2009.

5. Regional Strategic Commissioning Toolkit

A Regional Strategic Commissioning Toolkit has recently been developed.

Based upon experience and lessons learnt from commissioning Supported Housing services in the region the toolkit is intended to be used as a practical guide to assist all commissioners interested in developing services.

The toolkit will act as a guide to help practitioners through the commissioning process from setting the strategic direction, building relationships, understanding needs, identifying what to buy and delivery. It is hoped that this could be used to develop and deliver solutions at both a regional and local level, depending on what best meets service user and

³ CLG/CSIP/Housing Corporation/Housing LIN document: Housing, care, support: a guide to integrating housing-related support at a regional level.

community needs and priorities. It will also contain case studies and examples of good practice based on the experiences of the Supporting People Teams.

SPERG are now in the process of sharing the work with their commissioning partners. The intention is to discuss how we can develop common and consistent approaches to commissioning which support and enable joint commissioning activities and the integration of services.

The Toolkit is expected to be ready for distribution in Spring 2009.

6. Supporting People East of England Regional Strategy 2008-11

Published in June 2008, the strategy provides an outline on the direction of travel and strategic priorities that have been identified to meet the housing related support needs of vulnerable people in the East.

Supporting People for the future.....Why it's important!

- Housing related services **reduce dependency and promote independence, health, wellbeing and social inclusion** across a range of departmental objectives, for example;
 - Local Area Agreements
NI142 - Number of vulnerable people supported to maintain independent living links with helping to achieve PSA 17 'Tackle poverty and promote greater independence and wellbeing in later life.'⁴
 - Public Service Agreement (PSA) 16
Increase the proportion of socially excluded adults in settled accommodation and employment, education or training. Supporting People contributes to meeting this PSA through its work with people with mental health problems and those with learning difficulties.
 - Department of Health Departmental Strategic Objective (DH DSO)
To ensure better health and well being for all – this covers the Department's objectives to help people stay healthy and well, empowering them to live independently, and tackle health inequalities.
 - Reaching those hard to reach and socially excluded groups, for example Gypsies and Travellers through the funding of travellers sites and Refugees through funding of cross tenure floating support services. Also, the development of a specialist floating support service in Cambridgeshire for people with HIV/Aids.
 - Joint commissioning
"The introduction of Supporting People placed local authorities in a central commissioning and procurement role for housing-related support, bringing together commissioners from housing-related support, health, social care, and probation into the Supporting People Commissioning Body."⁵

To assist the delivery of jointly commissioned services Supporting People have also agreed a joint contract with Social Care. This was approved by ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) in the Eastern Region on 3rd October 2008. Further work is continuing to develop jointly approved outcomes.

⁴ In total there are 41 indicators from the national indicator set that the Supporting People Programme contribute to in some way.

⁵ Needs Analysis, Commissioning and Procurement for Housing-Related Support. (CLG July 2008)

- The Programme highlights the importance of having local preventative and early intervention services available. There is more clarity about the role that transitional support services, such as hostels and foyers can play; and why plans for housing support must be related to the wider housing strategy and availability of next stage 'move on' accommodation⁶.

Housing related support can be provided through the Supporting People Programme to prevent problems that can often lead to hospitalisation, institutional care or homelessness and can help the smooth transition to independent living for those leaving an institutionalised environment.

- Supporting People is one of the largest revenue streams and plays an important role in supporting the Third Sector in becoming more innovative in its approach to tendering for services. For example in Suffolk the SNAP consortium bid delivering Floating Support contracts and a central access and referral agency across the county.⁷
- Supporting People will be part of the Area Based Grant from April 2010 contributing up to 40% of the overall ABG nationally, and upwards of a third regionally.
- In improving the links between Social Care, Safeguarding Adults and the Supporting People Team in Cambridgeshire, a Housing Providers Steering group was set up to specifically improve:
 - Providers QAF (Quality Assessment Framework) performance
 - Links between the ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) standards
 - The reporting of Safeguarding concerns, and
 - The links between Social Care Safeguarding coordinators.

As a result, a Countywide Safeguarding protocol specifically for Housing Providers was developed. This included changes to the reporting process that has raised the profile of non-statutory services where, previously, they may not have received the same level of service as that for statutory services. Overall the profile of Safeguarding has been raised with providers and clearer links and joint working between statutory and non-statutory services has been established. Also, safeguarding training has been developed specifically to meet the needs of housing providers, especially in the homeless sector. The work has also supported the appointment of two lead practitioners who can provide extra support and guidance to providers.

- Social Cohesion and safeguarding communities.

⁶ Independence and Opportunity – Our Strategy for Supporting People, Department for Communities and Local Government June 2007

⁷ HACT collaborate resource kit

Promoting equality of opportunity and enabling vulnerable people to participate fully in the social and economic life of their community.

- Involving service users in the development of services and the programme. For example, in Cambridgeshire, a service user was involved in the procurement of a countywide mental health floating support service.

For further information please contact:

Helen Heaps
Regional Strategy Officer
Supporting People in Suffolk
Endeavour House
Russell Road
Ipswich
IP1 2BX

Email: Helen.Heaps@acs.suffolkcc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01473 260736