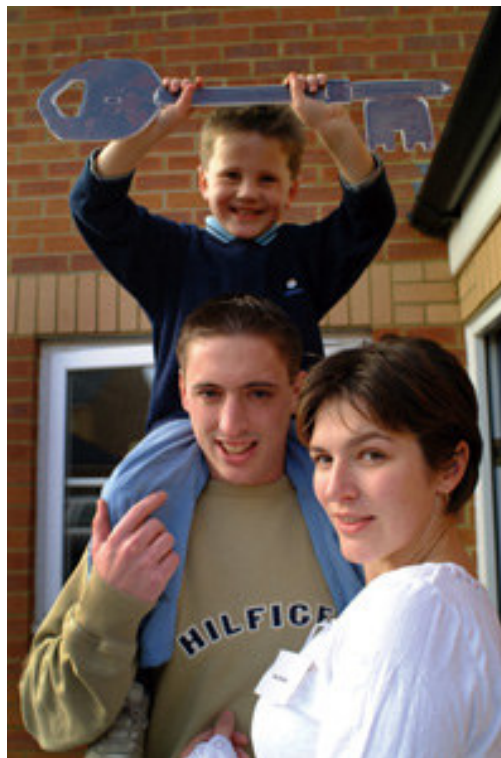




# ACCENT REGENERATION LTD

## RESEARCH OF TENANCY SUPPORT SCHEMES



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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

Accent Regeneration Ltd has been commissioned by Accent Group Ltd to carry out a national research analysis of established tenancy support schemes.

In order to assist with our study contact was made with over 30 national organisations, all having existing tenancy support schemes, ranging from local authorities, to housing associations, to voluntary and charitable organisations. A questionnaire was produced and forwarded to all identified organisations requesting information about their schemes.

Alongside the postal study a number of organisations were visited and interviewed in more detail. The results of the postal survey and interviews form the basis of the content of this document along with research into other tenancy support based publications and Government policy and legislative guidance.

The aim throughout this document is to keep it simple with a focus upon the development and delivery of tenancy support schemes.

## **Acknowledgements**

**In producing this guidance we would like to acknowledge the contribution made by the following organisations:**

**Burnley BC  
Darlington BC  
Horton Housing  
Housing Pendle  
Places for People  
Poole Housing Partnership  
Portsmouth City Council  
Restore Project  
Shield Project  
London Borough of Richmond  
Tameside Borough Council  
Amber  
West Kent Housing Association  
Staffordshire Housing Association**

## Overview

### The Social Rented Sector

Social rented housing provides an essential route into good quality affordable housing. The provision of social rented housing also supports Government priorities relating to sustainable communities, social cohesion and economic development.

The social housing sector is large, the North has 29% of the English population yet it has 33% of social housing with the following characteristics:-

- 53% of England's most deprived places
- Only 11% of national affordable housing resources
- An older than average housing stock with 18% of homes built before 1919
- An ageing population

*(Northern Consortium response to Professor John Hills Review of the Role of Social Housing)*

The current Government are aiming to build 75,000 new social rented homes between 2005/06 and 2007/08.

At present some 94,000 households are living in temporary accommodation with vulnerable young people being placed in bed and breakfast hostels.

Within the 2007/08 financial year Government funding is set to increase to £74 million to support new packages of measures. This is in addition to specific funding such as £90 million on improving hostels and £30 million on Extra Homes pilot. This will be underpinned by a £5 billion Supporting People programme that provides much of the funding for current established tenancy support schemes.

The Governments longer term programme is to move people from temporary accommodation into settled homes, at a price they can afford. In order to help address this the Government are speeding up their programme for delivering new social homes.

The soon to be published 2006 Housing Corporation strategy on tackling homelessness will have prevention at its heart. The strategy will promote best practice across the housing association sector with programmes on life skills support, debt advice and rent deposit schemes. There will also be plans for housing associations to work more closely with local authorities in order to help bring people out of homelessness much faster.

Increasing evidence shows that the social housing market is widening to include customers who would have traditionally been seen as first time buyers in the owner occupation market. This is due to the increases in property prices nationally and the inability of individuals to enter the ownership market due to affordability issues.

In the last 2 -3 years incomes in the North have risen by 9% whereas house prices have increased by 53%, and by 2011 house price inflation in the North is expected to outstrip national house price inflation.

Research by the University of York in 2005 highlights a significant intermediate housing market (households with incomes too high to qualify for housing benefit and too low to buy a home at the lowest quartile price). (*Northern Consortium response to Professor John Hills Review of the Role of Social Housing*)

A recent survey by the Citizens Advice Bureau showed that many people do aspire to home ownership, but may not be in a position to afford it.

In the social housing market turnover is slowing down e.g. Bradford has seen a 39% reduction in homes becoming available to let between 2004 and 2006. Similarly parts of the North are seeing demand for good quality; low cost rented accommodation rising dramatically e.g. housing providers in the North East are experiencing average choice based lettings bids of up to 44 per home and in the North West up to 80 bids per home. Evidence from the Oldham and Rochdale housing market renewal pathfinder shows that displaced owner occupiers and tenants of private landlords are choosing to rent from a social landlord. (*Northern Consortium – Response to the Committee on the ODPM inquiry into the supply of rented housing*)

Research by the Housing Corporation (Public Attitudes Housing 2006) may show that 82% of people aspire to own but if a proportion of those cannot afford to own, it is unsustainable and risky to encourage ownership. Recent CML research shows that the percentage of 25 – 34 year olds who aspire to buy within 2 years is declining which raises questions about long term future demand for home ownership.

Social housing has a vital role in the housing market to provide affordable homes and meet future demand. It will need to cater for various household types – those who are vulnerable, those on low incomes, those with average/middle incomes, and high earners, in communities that have the assets/amenities to meet their needs. Whilst social housing clearly provides a safety net for the vulnerable, it should not be a trap but a means to support the vulnerable to achieve their aspirations too, whether that is independent living, full time employment or shared ownership.

The role of the social housing sector is key in developing financial inclusion strategies, investment in local economies to create new jobs, support social enterprises and develop skills and training opportunities to enable residents to increase their income and achieve their aspirations.

The perception of social housing for those individuals who are vulnerable, socially excluded and economically inactive centres on the key issue of accessibility i.e. those in need are most eligible. Moving away from needs based assessment towards greater choice e.g. through choice based lettings is making social housing accessible to a more diverse range of citizens. However, choice based letting may only have a limited impact. The key barriers to social and geographical mobility lie in inequalities in education, income, health and employment, all of which can be compounded by poor housing conditions. These wider issues need to be tackled to allow for greater social and geographical mobility, and social housing providers are best placed in the market to do this.

As social housing providers increasingly look outwards and become social investors they will need support at the highest levels and throughout Government so that innovation, good practice and outcomes are both encouraged and disseminated to a



wider audience. By joining up this support and acknowledging the cross cutting role of social housing real partnerships can be developed. This in turn will send out a clear message to all about the very positive and important role of social housing.

Driving up standards in service delivery is a key challenge in transforming the social housing sector. There are many drivers for transforming service delivery, not least rising customer expectations, technological advancements and the growth in regulation. Double devolution and delivery of the Respect agenda will help to create the environment in which people take responsibility to drive forward improvements.

Social housing providers must be at the forefront of creating, designing and producing new homes to a higher standard so that no one can tell who owns and who rents, allowing flexibility to cope with changes in living, working and learning and equipping the homes of the future with the latest technology to support social and economic mobility.

As the social rented sector responds to the Governments decent communities and place making agendas the sector will become a more attractive choice. (*Northern Housing Consortium – Response to Professor John Hills review of the role of Social Housing – 2006*)

The increases in demand for social rented housing and the supply needed to meet this will bring along with it a greater need for the provision of support for individuals and families entering the rental market for the first time, or in the case of the young person, the housing market for the first time. Support will also be needed for existing tenants whose behaviour may be seen as socially unacceptable and are at risk of eviction or who are affecting the well being of the local community. This will be covered later in this document in the context of the reasons for tenancy support schemes.

### **Respect Standard for Housing Management**

The Respect Standard is aimed at social landlords' local authorities and housing associations). A landlord who signs up to the standard is making a public commitment to delivering good services to help stop anti social behaviour and to create a culture of respect. It is based upon things that landlords and partners have done over the last few years which have had positive results.

Respect is about all of us being considerate to the needs of others around us, caring about the communities in which we live and work as well as our own individual concerns. People care when respect is disregarded and people still feel that too little is done to deal with issues of anti social behaviour. Social landlords can play a part, working with their communities, the police and other service providers in helping to address and deal with issues of anti social behaviour.

The Government via the Respect standard expects landlords to communicate regularly with the community and to keep them informed as to what is going on via meetings, newsletters, leaflets and web sites.

Good landlords should be asking residents about the problems they experience within their neighbourhoods and to suggest what actions maybe taken to resolve them.

One measure that maybe adopted to assist with this process is the establishment of 'good neighbour agreements' setting out what the landlord will do to stop problems and what everyone in the community will do to ensure they respect their neighbours.

It is also about putting the community at the heart of the agenda so that landlords and residents can work together.

Some anti-social behaviour can be dealt with quite quickly and easily. However, if early intervention is not forthcoming problems quite often escalate. Where problems occur landlords and their partners should issue clear warnings and use such tools as acceptable behaviour contracts (ABC's) to warn people that if anti-social behaviour persists further tougher action will be taken. A local presence may also be beneficial in dealing with such issues and in building good working relationships with the community.

It is also good practice to let people know what standards are expected of them at an early stage and this maybe helped by explaining to them the terms and conditions of tenancy agreements.

Good landlords are expected to make the process of residents making complaints and reporting incidents to be simple and with as little stress as possible. Once complaints are received people will need support and information upon how the complaint is progressing and being dealt with. Support is especially important if court action takes place and evidence is required. Good landlords will need to make use of the powers afforded to them via Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO's), injunctions and measures to take away security of tenure.

Where measures are taken through the courts it is important to make sure they are followed up. If someone breaches an ASBO or an injunction this needs following up with action to enforce that breach.

Anti-social behaviour can stem from or be caused by family breakdown, lack of parenting skills, problems with drugs and alcohol and mental health issues. Different people will require different levels of support, ranging from housing officer or support worker visits through to more intensive support where problems are complex or long standing.

The Respect Standard consists of six commitments that a landlord, signing up to the standard, should deliver:

- Accountability, leadership and commitment
- Empowering and reassuring residents
- Prevention and early intervention
- Tailored services for residents and provision of support for victims and witnesses
- Protecting communities through swift enforcement
- Support to tackle the causes of anti-social behaviour

*(The above information has been extracted from – Respect Standard for Housing Management – A Guide for the Public – DCLG – August 2006)*

RSLs are sometimes not adequately represented in partnerships at neighbourhood level with the local authority often assuming the role as representative of social housing. Given the important role RSLs can play, it is essential that they are part of both the development and delivery of local ASB strategies. They also often require the support of partner agencies to progress ASB cases and may act as useful sources of information on the nature of local problems.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2007 the Government established the first wave of 40 Respect Areas which have earned the right to be exemplars of the Respect programme by their strong track record in tackling anti-social behaviour, and a willingness and capacity to do more.

All 40 Respect Areas have signed up to:

- Family intervention projects to tackle ‘neighbours from hell’;
- More parenting classes for parents struggling with troublesome children;
- Face the People sessions where the police, local authorities and others can be accountable to their public;
- Keep up the relentless action to tackle anti-social behaviour by using the full range of tools and powers available;
- Using the Respect Housing Standard to prevent and deal with any problems in social housing.

Of the 40 the following may have relevance to the Accent Group:

- Bradford MDC
- Burnley BC
- Kirklees MC
- Leeds CC
- Middlesbrough BC

A ‘Respect Handbook’ was published on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2007 and this maybe obtained from [www.respect.gov.uk](http://www.respect.gov.uk) and follow the link to Respect handbook.

### **Good Neighbour Agreements (GNA)**

Good Neighbour Agreements are usually agreements between landlords and their tenants but they can also be used by other organisations such as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships or Community Safety Partnerships. They maybe used to cover very small areas e.g. particular streets, small estates’ larger estates or even a whole stock holding. However, it is generally felt that GNAs have more effect when applied to smaller defined areas.

GNAs can be used for different purposes and in different ways. The main aim is to promote positive behaviour, however in addition GNAs:

- seek to give a clear indication that there is a commitment from the landlord and other agencies to tackling anti-social behaviour;
- seek to engage local residents and to encourage them to share responsibility for tackling nuisance behaviour and promoting positive behaviour;

- are used in conjunction with a range of other enforcement and preventative measures to address anti-social behaviour.

Good Neighbour Agreements can be used to do one or more of the following:

- reinforce the tenancy agreement;
- reassure tenants and residents that local concerns around ASB will be addressed;
- present a statement of desirable or positive behaviour and highlight the rights and responsibilities of tenants and residents (including children and young people), landlords and other service providers;
- contribute to the sustainment of community regeneration initiatives; and
- contribute to wider ASB strategies.

Good Neighbour Agreements are also used to address very local issues that concern residents such as car parking, dog fouling, abandoned vehicles and playing football in the road and to explain the actions that maybe forthcoming from repeated infringements.

### **Summary Content of a Good Neighbour Agreement**

The agreement sets out:

The aim of the agreement and residents' rights to a peaceful life.

The landlord's responsibilities and commitment to dealing with nuisance behaviour:

- a clear statement of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour;
- a commitment to prevent and tackle nuisance behaviour; and to respond appropriately and effectively to complaints;
- how complaints will be dealt with, including legal action;
- how residents will be informed about the progress of any actions; and
- that complaints will be reviewed regularly.

Residents' responsibilities:

- to respect others and behave in a tolerant and neighbourly way;
- to abide by the tenancy agreement and the law;
- to help ensure that the estate/street/area is a good place to live;
- to take responsibility of their own behaviour and that of their children; and visitors

*(DCLG – Respect and Housing Management – Using Good Neighbour Agreements – 2006)*

Overall the benefits of GNAs include;

- a reduction in complaints over time;
- fewer voids;
- more applications for homes on previously unpopular streets

- greater tenant and resident satisfaction;
- a greater willingness among residents to challenge and report anti-social behaviour and
- improved community cohesion

## The Private Rented Sector

Private rented housing has a varied and vital role in creating flexibility in the market, for the student market, move on accommodation, labour mobility and taking into account increasing house prices, the provision of affordable accommodation for the market overall.

The private rented sector has a part to play in housing those in need of accommodation and in some instances is an under used resource. In particular, the private rented sector has an important role to play in accommodating large homeless households where social landlords may not have suitable properties.

The 2000 English housing green paper argued that the privately rented sector was ‘...performing below its true potential’. In part, this was because the condition and management of parts of the stock were not good enough. Also it was evident that a small minority of landlords were exploiting their tenants. Also it was because some landlords were failing to deal with the anti social behaviour of their tenants. This maybe compounded by the fact that many anti social behaviour tenants were dependent on Housing Benefit, paid direct to the landlord and this in turn provided no incentives for the landlord to enforce tenancy agreements or manage the property effectively.

Recently Government has introduced, and is introducing new tools to help local authorities address the issue of poor landlord performance both in terms of property condition and tenancy management.

### Landlord Accreditation

Local landlord accreditation schemes were encouraged and many local authorities have now developed such schemes as a means of improving and maintaining standards amongst the ‘medium to good’ landlords operating within their boundaries.

In addition, the government supported the development of a National Approved Lettings Scheme, the aim of which was to establish a recognised ‘kitemark’ for professional managing agents.

A rent deposit scheme was introduced in England, the aim of which was to ensure that private landlords did not unfairly refuse to return tenant’s deposits

### Mandatory and Selective Licensing

In order to make the worst landlords better, a mandatory system of licensing for houses in multiple occupation was introduced.

More recently selective licensing has been introduced as a tool that maybe used to address the poor quality landlords, in areas where their inaction in dealing with anti social tenants is leading to area decline. Failure to obtain a licence would be a

criminal offence and no rent would be payable for a property where a licence was not in force. Properties occupied by tenancies granted by a registered social landlord are exempt from selective licensing.

The 2004 Housing Act allows Local Housing Authorities to designate an area as subject to selective licensing if it is or may become as an area of low housing demand and that other interventions are failing to resolve this. An area may also be subject to selective licensing if it has significant problems with anti-social behaviour where inaction of private landlords is a contributory factor.

### **Interim and Final Management Orders**

The Act also gives local authorities duties and powers to make Interim Management Orders (IMO's) and Final management Orders (FMO's) where there is a need to take control of a property that is being mismanaged by a private sector landlord.

The local authority can take over the management of the property for a period of up to five years (IMO's are for up to 12 months). The authority can undertake repairs, grant tenancies, collect the rent and manage the property in general, they may also charge for management time.

During the period of the management order the owner still has the right to sell the property

### **Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO)**

Whereas the IMO and FMO are about property conditions and quality of management, EDMO's are in place to bring empty properties back into use. They are mainly relevant in areas of housing demand due to the ability to find tenants in such areas, as against the same in low demand areas.

In that empty properties may need refurbishment to make them fit for habitation the local authority can carry out such works and redeem the cost from the rent, once the property is occupied.

### **Tenancy Deposit**

The 2004 Housing Act introduces tenancy deposit protection. Any deposit paid in respect of a tenancy which is an assured shorthold will be covered by this new legislation and require the recipient to hold the deposit in one of two ways.

The first will be a custodial scheme where the deposit is lodged with the deposit holder. At the end of the tenancy, if the landlord and tenant agree on the deductions, they let the authorised deposit holder know and the deposit is refunded accordingly as agreed. If there is no agreement, the deposit holder will divide the deposit in accordance with a court order.

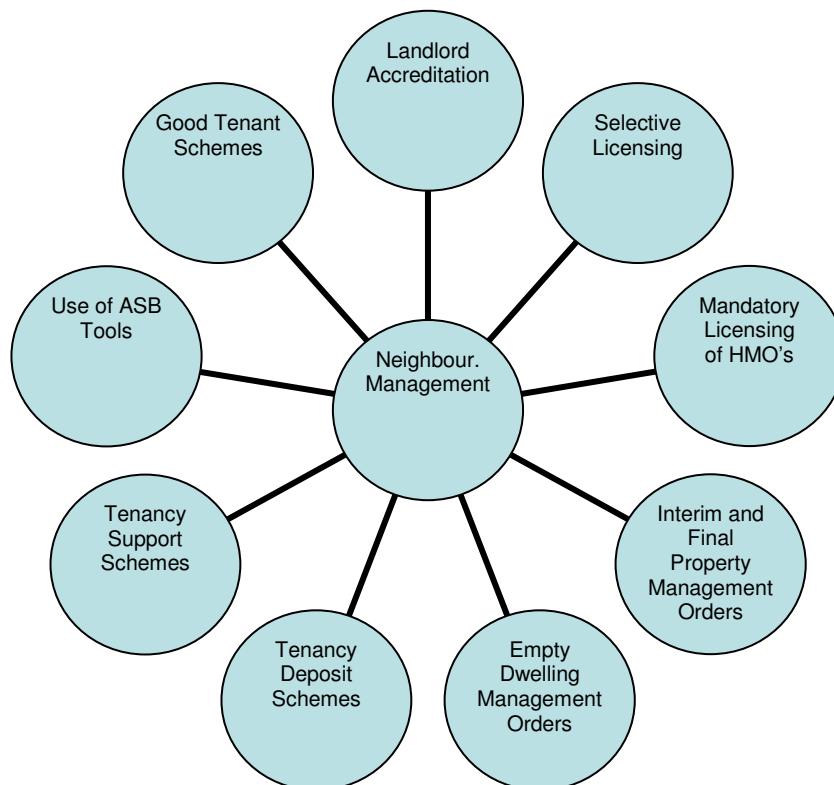
The second option is an insurance based scheme. The landlord or agent holds the deposit and arrange refund at the end of the tenancy as agreed between the parties. If there is disagreement the landlord or agent will have to send the deposit to the scheme provider who will then act like a custodial scheme. Insurance providers have to provide back up so that if the landlord does not forward the deposit the insurance will repay the tenant and will seek to recover the money from the landlord.

Schemes and participants are required to refund deposits within 10 days of any dispute being resolved.

The National Landlords Association (NLA) have recently announced (November 2006) that, in partnership with Hamilton Fraser Insurance (HFIS plc), it has been awarded a government contract to operate an insurance-based tenancy deposit protection scheme.

The scheme will safeguard tenants' deposits, ensure that they get part or all of their deposit back at the end of the tenancy if they are entitled to, and offer an alternative way of resolving disputes.

Lettings agents and other third parties acting on behalf of landlords, as individual landlords, will be eligible to join the scheme. The scheme allows the landlord to retain control over the deposit he receives from the tenant, which for many landlords is the most important safeguard against damage to the property.



*Private Rented Sector links to neighbourhood management*

**Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)**

Part 1 of the 2004 Housing Act introduces a new rating system that applies as much to home owners as it does to private sector tenants. It replaces the previous housing fitness standard of the 1985 Housing Act and brings in a 'people based' health and safety risk assessment considering the most vulnerable class of person who might occupy the property, and seeks to ensure it is satisfactory for them.

The assessment is based upon upon 4 groups, which contain 29 hazards. The 4 groups are:-

1. Psychological (such things as safety from intruders)
2. Protection from infection (food safety)
3. Protection from accidents (trips and falls)
4. Physiological (mould, damp, cold etc...)

A technical officer from the local authority will inspect the property and make a judgement as to the likelihood in the next 12 months of an 'occurrence' happening to someone in the most vulnerable group. The property is then scored in relation to its hazard rating, with hazards assessed by severity from A to J. Scores in the A-C category are deemed as category 1 and the authority need to take action to rectify such hazards. Scores in D-J ranges are deemed as less serious category 2 hazards and the authority may take action but is no generally obliged to.

### **Buy to Let**

Since the turn of the century the development of 'buy to let' escalated within the private rented sector.

Originally, Buy to Let was a scheme introduced by the Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA) and a panel of mortgage lenders in September 2006. It operated using loan finance to invest in housing for rent. Under the approved Buy to Let scheme, landlords were charged mortgage rates that were closer to those paid by owner occupiers. One condition of the scheme was that the borrower had to agree to the property being managed by a member of ARLA, thereby providing the lender with the security that the property was being professionally managed.

Buy to let proved to be highly successful for mortgage lenders. The Council of Mortgage Lenders estimated that in the year to June 2001, as many as 50,000 individuals invested in private rental housing for the first time, using Buy to Let mortgages.

In some instances private landlords were buying up portfolios of property in areas of decline that had been declared as housing action or renewal areas and were taking advantage of the housing grants being offered in such areas to refurbish the properties they were purchasing.

However, in some such areas, in the longer term, this proved detrimental to the future of the community in that poor housing management standards lead to further decline in the area and hence, this in some ways resulted in the tools being offered to authorities by the 2004 Housing Act.

### **Private Landlords**

In recent years, a lot of research has been carried out into the private rented sector, including private landlords. There are about 700,000 private landlords in England (ODPM 2003c). In England most individual landlords are in full time employment with only around 15% being made up of full time landlords (Crook and Kemp-1996b).



A small number of private landlords are involved in the building trade or in other property related trades or professions. Private individual landlords tend to have smaller portfolios of residential lettings than corporate landlords with the majority holding less than 25 lettings. The commonest method of acquiring stock is through purchase, however, in some instances and to a lesser degree this may be via inheritance.

Crook and Kemp (1996b) found that private landlords and their managing agents were largely positive about what it is like to own and let accommodation. The majority of landlords agreed that in general tenants looked after the property and paid the rent on time. However a proportion of private landlords had concerns about problem tenants and found the hassle and anxiety of property management to be a disincentive. Investor landlords own a substantial share of the lettings market. Their prime motive for involvement in the lettings business is capital gain or rental income (or both). Investor landlords' maybe individuals or partnerships.

Private landlords are a diverse group of individuals and organisations spanning a wide range of reasons and motivations for letting property.

In some areas local authorities are engaging with private landlords and Resident social landlords to help to increase the number of properties available for rent and to assist with homelessness prevention (Liverpool CC, Oldham BC, Ellesmere Port and Neston BC).

### **Home Owners Switching to Renting (Northern Housing Consortium Summary Report 2006)**

At the beginning of November 2006, the Northern Housing Consortium carried out research amongst its members to find out to what extent home owners in the North were moving away from home ownership into private renting. The results were based upon 29 local authority returns.

The majority of organisations (84.6%) had noticed a rise in the number of residents in their area moving away from home ownership and into social renting in the last 12 months. Just under two-thirds (63.6%) said that the rise in the numbers of home-owners switching to social renting was causing problems for them mainly due to:-

- Owners in Housing Market Renewal areas affected by clearance moving back into the rented sector due to supply/demand/affordability
- Demand for rented housing generally has increased and owner occupiers have added to this increase placing an additional burden on limited stock availability
- Increased homelessness and longer waiting lists impacting on the time homeless people spend in temporary accommodation
- Increased number of waiting list applications registered for socials housing, and
- Applicants trying to gain priority status to enhance their waiting time which has impacted on homelessness and medical priority assessment services.

Pressures, rather than choice, appear to be the main reasons why home owners are moving away from home ownership and into renting, these including: affordability,

inability to manage their home, divorce, separation, family stress. The main employment status of those moving away from home ownership is amongst the retired.

Other comments the Consortium received included:-

- Relocation equity loans are available in HMR areas of up to £35K, but some people do not want to take up interest free loans or are unwilling to take out a mortgage “at their time of life”. Renting is also favoured because it removes the need to finance maintenance and repairs
- A need to plan strategically for the future taking these market trends into account
- There is little movement in the private rented sector due to rising rents, poor standards, perceived insecurity and, a refusal by many landlords to take people on housing benefit, smokers and those who own pets.

### Homelessness

Statistics released by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2006 show that new cases of homelessness have fallen by nearly half since their recent peak 3 years ago. At the same time as announcing the figures the DCLG committed £47.2 million to help tackle and prevent homelessness.

Statistics show that 19,390 new households became homeless during July to September of 2006 – the lowest number for more than 20 years (taking into account a peak of 35,770 over the same period in 2003).

Figures also show a continued reduction of households in temporary accommodation.

The £47.2 million allocation has been allocated to local authorities to help them tackle and prevent homelessness in their areas and is a £3 million increase on the 2005/6 figure.

The Government has set a target of a reduction of the number of households in temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010. They are also intending to end the use of bed and breakfast establishments for homeless 16 and 17 year olds.

The private rented sector is crucial in assisting with the prevention of homelessness in many areas.

Preventing homelessness coming from the private rented sector may involve:

- Outreach work with private sector landlords
- Provision of advice and support to private landlords
- Use of a homeless prevention fund
- Ensuring an efficient and responsive housing benefit service
- Discretionary housing payments
- Referrals to floating support schemes
- A private landlords forum to enable issues of concern to be discussed

In addition to the above there are ways to help homeless and potentially homeless people access the private rented sector and to encourage new private sector landlords

to work in partnership to house homeless or potentially homeless households, including:

- Registers of properties that meet local standards
- Development of local landlord accreditation schemes
- Development of good tenant and tenancy support schemes
- Rent deposit and guarantee schemes
- Help with claiming housing benefit
- Negotiation of insurance packages for private sector landlords against rent loss and deposit
- Packages of property management services
- Basic or enhanced tenancy support

A number of local authorities and organisations have / are developing floating support services aimed at sustaining tenancies and assisting in preventing homelessness. Such schemes have been a focus of the research leading to the publication of this document.

### **Good Tenant Schemes**

Accent Regeneration have for the past 2 years delivered a good tenant scheme on behalf of Burnley BC and similarly provide a tenant referencing service to Barrow in Furness BC.

The role and purpose of the scheme is to carry out reference checks on private and social rented sector tenants who apply to join the good tenant scheme.

Reference checks are obtained from the Police, the local authority anti social behaviour team, local RSL's and the councils housing benefit section. A 3 year previous housing history reference check is also carried out.

The benefit of the scheme is that it provides a free reference checking service for private and social rented sector landlords, assists tenants in accessing the Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme and also helps to ensure that tenants have access to quality rented accommodation (in some areas the service may only be available to landlords who are members of a local accreditation scheme).

However, at present the scheme does not assist tenants who fail reference checks, for whatever reason, and more research is needed to develop the scheme to provide such assistance via enhancement into tenancy support provision, links to other established organisations that assist with homeless prevention, and building stronger links with landlord accreditation schemes and other such networks.

## Supporting People

The Supporting people programme was launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003. The aim of the programme is to provide a better quality of life for vulnerable people to live more independently and to maintain their tenancies. The programme provides housing related support 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.

The Supporting people programme provides housing related support services to over 1.2 million vulnerable people. The programme is delivered locally by 150 administering authorities, over 6,000 providers of housing related support, and an estimated 37,000 individual contracts. (*ODPM – What is Supporting People?*)

The objectives of Supporting People are:

- A programme that delivers quality of life and promotes independence
- Services that are of a high quality, strategically planned, cost effective and complement existing care services
- The planning and development of services is needs-led
- A working partnership of local government, probation, health, voluntary sector organisations, housing associations, support agencies and service users.

Supporting People client groups vary and may include:

- People who have been homeless or a rough sleeper
- Ex-offenders and people at risk of offending and imprisonment
- People with a physical or sensory disability
- People at risk of domestic violence
- People with alcohol and drug problems
- Teenage parents
- Elderly people
- Young people at risk
- People with HIV and AIDS
- People with learning difficulties
- Travellers
- Homeless families with support needs

The primary purpose of housing related support is to develop and sustain an individual's capacity to live independently in their own accommodation, examples of which maybe:

- enabling individuals to access their correct benefit entitlement
- ensuring they have the correct skills to maintain a tenancy
- advising on home improvements
- accessing a community service alarm
- home visits or on site full time support worker provision

Support services maybe short or long term in accordance with the required aims and objectives. Short-term schemes last for up to two years with the intention of moving

an individual on to independent living or increasing the ability to live independently. Long-term services are on a continuous basis and are often characterised as open ended.

All short-term housing related support services are free. Charges are only applicable to people in long-term services who can afford to pay, following an assessment of their financial circumstance. Those who cannot afford to pay are eligible to claim a subsidy from their local authority.

The Department for Communities and Local Government has the main responsibility for the Supporting People programme. It allocates a Supporting People grant to Administering Authorities and monitors their performances. Administering Authorities (unitary authorities and counties in two tier areas), are responsible for implementing the programme within their local area. The Administering Authorities contract with providers and partner organisations for the provision of Supporting People services. A Commissioning Body (a partnership of local housing, social care, health and probation statutory services) sits above an Administering Authority and plays a key role in advising and approving a Supporting People strategy.

In March 2004, four local authorities were awarded Beacon status for their work in developing effective Supporting People local partnerships. The authorities concerned were Oxfordshire, Suffolk, Salford and Telford and Wrekin.

Supporting People has been established and operated to date as a specific grant programme. This has been an invaluable part of the early implementation of the programme.

Some authorities have tended to regard Supporting People as an add-on, rather than a core function, with the separateness of the grant helping to reinforce this perception. Furthermore, whilst the separation of Supporting People as a ringfenced grant has to manage the risks of funds being diverted to other alternative services, it seems to have created a perception that this is public funding which can be invested in housing-related support. This has hindered investment into housing-related support, and seems to have held back integrated funding of care and support packages.

The inclusion of Supporting People within the Local Area Agreements seeks to bring together funding streams more creatively to improve and integrate services and increase user choice and control for individual users.

### **Local Area Agreements**

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) are a way of working to build a more flexible and responsive relationship between central government and local agencies (including local government). It enables national objectives and targets to be made real and meaningful at a local level.

In relation to Supporting People, LAAs provide an attractive route towards integrating services and setting programme outcomes. By combining Supporting people funding within a Local Area Agreement an authority is provided with greater flexibility as to how it spends this and to integrate it with other funding for local services. In the longer term this would permit structures unringfencing of funding whilst also

ensuring focused local delivery. The Government will be encouraging authorities to include Supporting People within LAAs as they are rolled out during 2007/8 and 2008/9 and the DCLG will be providing material in an LAA toolkit to support this.

### **Tools and Powers to Address Anti Social Behaviour**

Not preventing anti-social behaviour costs more in the longer term because it can lead to homelessness, ill health, social exclusion, educational underachievement and unemployment. It has been estimated that the costs to a landlord to evict a tenant for anti-social behaviour are between £6,500 and £9,500 (*Pawson, H et al, The Use of Possession Actions and Evictions by Social Landlords, ODPM 2005*).

Preventing homelessness and encouraging children to attend school brings wider benefits to society, especially in terms of employment and earning potential.

Tackling anti-social behaviour also has a positive effect on deprived communities. If people who would otherwise be evicted for unacceptable behaviour are allowed to remain in their homes, there is a reduction in the 'social churning' caused by rapid turnover of tenancies.

By way of an example, the Shelter Inclusion project was developed in partnership with Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council in 2002, to work with households to identify and deal with the causes of anti-social behaviour, and to build the skills people need to enable them to resolve their situation.

The project was piloted for three years and evaluated by the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York, with the support of the Housing Corporation. The evaluation found that the project succeeded in ending anti-social behaviour and promoting tenancy sustainment among the majority of households that had completed their time with the project.

#### *Key Findings*

- Of the 45 households that completed their time with the project, 60 per cent no longer exhibited any anti-social behaviour
- A further 11 per cent of these 'closed cases' were reported as showing improvements in their behaviour.
- 84 per cent of closed cases were assessed as no longer being at risk of homelessness following contact with Shelter Inclusion Project.
- Almost 50 per cent of closed case households were reported as making progress with money management and a small number of adults experienced an improvement in their economic status during their time with the project.
- Shelter Inclusion Project helped to re-engage marginalised children. Of the 34 children and young people who received direct support with education, 91 per cent showed improvements in school attendance.
- Service users reported that the project has made a significant difference to their lives. Many said it had raised their self esteem and prevented them from being evicted. Most service users felt more in control of their lives, and were managing to address their anti-social behaviour.

## **Tools and Powers**

### **Acceptable Behaviour Contracts**

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC's) are non-legally binding contracts between one or more local agency and someone who has behaved anti-socially, outlining what that person should or should not do. They are often used with children and young people, but can equally be used for adults, when a warning has been unsuccessful in addressing a problem.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour Injunctions**

An injunction is a civil order made by the county court to compel an adult (over the age of 18) to do something, or to prevent a particular action or behaviour. They can be applied for by social landlords against tenants, owner occupiers and non-tenants. Injunctions are used when someone is committing anti-social behaviour, including nuisance, verbal abuse, visitors causing nuisance to neighbours, untidy gardens and threats of violence or actual violence.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOS)**

Anti-social behaviour orders are civil orders that protect the public from behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress. ASBOs are not criminal penalties, but breach of an ASBO is a criminal offence. They can be made on anyone aged 10 or over who has displayed anti social behaviour in the previous six months. They are intended to protect the public from further anti-social behaviour.

DCLG have announced (9<sup>th</sup> January 2007) that for the first time Tenant Management Organisations will be given powers to apply for Anti Social Behaviour Orders. The new, additional powers, will give local residents a greater say in how their estates are run and support them in ensuring that disruptive, anti-social behaviour is dealt with swiftly and effectively.

### **Community Agreements**

Community agreements are written settlements reached between the residents of a community to resolve disputes. The agreement is based on the wishes of the majority, and facilitated by independent mediators who make private and confidential visits to each person involved. They are used when there is conflict or unrest within a neighbourhood.

### **Crack House Closure Orders**

When a property has been taken over by drug users or dealers of Class A drugs crack house closure orders can be used to close the house down and keep it closed. An order can last for up to three months, and can be extended for a further three months. During this time the property will be sealed, and it is an offence to enter or remain in the property.

### **Demotion Orders**

Demotion orders are used by landlords when a tenant, resident or visitor to the tenant's home has behaved or threatened to behave in a way which is capable of causing nuisance and affects the housing management of an area. They allow landlords to apply to the courts to reduce the security for tenants, by removing a number of tenancy rights, including the right to buy and the right to exchange. If a



tenant continues to misbehave then action can be taken to seek possession of their home.

### **Dispersal of Groups**

Dispersal powers are used in public spaces (such as shopping arcades or parks) where groups gather and intimidate and harass the public. Once an area has been designated a dispersal area then police can direct groups of two or more people to leave if they are causing a nuisance, and if they don't live in the area. They may be excluded from the area for up to 24 hours.

### **Family Intervention Projects**

When an agency has received numerous complaints about the behaviour of a family and the impact they're having on their local community, they can use a family intervention project to work with that family to change their behaviour. The family is offered help to address the causes of their behaviour, along with supervision and enforcement to ensure they change it.

### **Individual Support Orders**

Individual support orders can be attached to an ASBO against a person aged between 10 and 17. They contain positive obligations designed to tackle the underlying causes of the person's anti social behaviour, and are usually overseen by a member of the youth offending team or social services. The orders can last for up to six months, and can require the young person to attend up to two sessions a week. Failure to comply is a criminal offence.

### **Parenting Contracts**

Parenting contracts are voluntary agreements made between local agencies and a parent or parents. They set out what parents will do to address the anti-social behaviour of a child or children for whom they are responsible. They may contain an agreement to attend a parenting programme, or to ensure that a child attends school regularly. They are often made between schools or local education authorities with the parent(s) of a child who has truanted or been excluded from school.

### **Parenting Orders**

Parenting orders can be made by a court when there has been a problem with a young person's behaviour. They impose requirements on the parent(s) or guardian, which usually include their attendance on a guidance or counselling programme. Other requirements, such as ensuring that the child attends school, can also be included. Non-compliance can result in a fine of up to £1,000.

### **Parenting Programmes**

A parenting programme teaches parents techniques to improve their child's behaviour. They can be used at the first sign of problems, for example when warning about a child's behaviour is first given. The programmes focus on teaching parent skills to remedy the causes of problem behaviour by building a relationship with the child, use of praise and incentives and establishing consistent boundaries, with 'time out' for infringements. They are delivered by a range of organisations including the NHS, schools, children's centres and youth offending teams.

*(Source of information – [www.respect.gov.uk/article.aspx?id=9704](http://www.respect.gov.uk/article.aspx?id=9704))*



# Chapter 2

## About Tenancy Support Schemes

In producing the document there was a need to research the many varied types of tenancy support schemes that exist nationally. This involved locating providers of such services, contacting them, explaining our study and following this up with a questionnaire and in some cases carrying out personal interviews.

Tenancy support schemes are delivered by a wide range of organisations, that include:

- Housing Associations
- Local Authorities
- Charitable organisations
- Stand alone organisations

All however have the same purpose, to provide support to vulnerable individuals and families. Of the organisations contacted the following were seen as potential clients and recipients of tenant support:

Vulnerable young people
Homeless people
People with mental health problems
People with alcohol problems
People with drug dependency problems
People with a criminal history
Vulnerable families
Vulnerable elderly
People suffering domestic violence
People with previous tenancy problems
Persons in receipt of ASBO's
People from ethnic minorities

Most schemes did not target particular age groups or were gender specific, offering their services to all client gender and age groups. The type of support provided was similarly wide and varied, dependent upon the particular target client group; however, the following were evident:

Locating suitable properties to occupy
Assistance with tenancy sign up
Assistance with housing benefit provision
Assistance with utility company sign up
Advice on financial management
Mentoring support
Drug/alcohol dependency support
Education in social behaviour awareness
Life management support
Provision of/access to furniture recycling

Regular home visits
Advice on home maintenance

Agencies and organisations providing resettlement and tenancy support services have demonstrated that, in many cases, tenancies can be sustained even where people have high support needs, such as mental health and substance abuse problems. Not only does support prevent homelessness, it can also avert a range of other social problems and be extremely cost effective. The Audit Commission has found that a tenancy failure followed by hospitalisation for someone with mental health problems can cost over £5,000 in public expenditure, including £2,000 to the housing authority.

### Floating Support

Floating support may be provided to local authority, housing association or private rented sector tenants. The most common risk factors leading to homelessness are:

- disputes between young people and their parents or step-parents;
- experience of physical or sexual abuse;
- time in local authority care;
- learning disabilities;
- lack of qualifications and basic literacy skills;
- exclusion from school or persistent truanting;
- young parenthood;
- unemployment;
- alcohol and drug abuse;
- mental health problems;
- a combination of mental health, drug and alcohol problems;
- contact with the criminal justice system;
- previous service in the Armed Forces;
- marital or relationship breakdown;
- experience of violence from inside or outside the home, including racial and other harassment;
- previous experience of homelessness;
- lack of a social support network;
- failure to furnish or maintain a home: a warning sign that the tenancy may be failing;
- debts, especially rent or mortgage arrears;
- problems with neighbours; this can be a symptom of other problems, often linked to mental health and alcohol difficulties, as well as being a cause of eviction.

Research has also identified crisis points which can precipitate homelessness:

- leaving the parental home after arguments;
- leaving care without adequate support;
- leaving prison;
- discharge from the armed forces;
- marital or relationship breakdown;
- a financial crisis of mounting debts;
- eviction from a rented or owned home;

- a sharp deterioration in mental health or an increase in alcohol abuse.  
(*source of information – [www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1149891](http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1149891)*)

Tenancy support projects do not attempt to provide all support themselves, but where appropriate most arrange for services from other specialist agencies in the areas such as mental health services, drug and alcohol agencies, debt management schemes, befriending and mentoring schemes, probation services and Youth Offending Teams.

There are also tenancy support teams which specialise in clients with particular needs such as drug and alcohol problems. Where necessary, support workers can broker case conferences to bring together different services when tenancies are at risk. This may involve negotiation with other agencies to provide services for difficult clients with multiple needs.

Support is also needed for people in temporary accommodation, to help them keep that accommodation and prepare for a future potential permanent tenancy.

Specialist tenancy support cannot be provided as a part of ordinary housing management and requires specialist staff and separate funding. Since April 2003, funding for such services has been provided by the Supporting People programme administered by local authorities.

## **Specialist Services for Particular Groups**

### **Support Needs of Homeless Families**

There has been a tendency in the past to regard homeless families as simply being in need of accommodation to resolve their problems or where support has been provided it has tended to focus on the children, rather than the whole family.

There is a need within homeless strategies to:

- identify at risk families, for example through monitoring absences and exclusions from schools and through liaison with social services. In such cases recently developed Family Intervention Projects can assist in addressing ASB caused by ‘problem’ families and help to support them in addressing issues of ASB and in helping them to maintain their tenancies;
- Assess the support needs of families approaching the authority as homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- Monitor tenancy breakdowns and re-presentations by homeless families.

### **Relationship Breakdown and Domestic Violence**

Relationship breakdown is a major cause of homelessness and early intervention can help to prevent one or both parents becoming homeless. In some cases victims of domestic violence are housed in priority need, in others it is possible to prevent homelessness.

Advice and assistance can help to ensure that:

- one partner, usually the one with any children living with them, can keep the family home, or move to a more suitable one if, for example, there is a continuing threat of violence;
- the other partner does not become homeless. A significant proportion of homeless people are men who have had to leave a family home with no alternative accommodation;
- there is sufficient temporary accommodation, for example women's refuges, for emergencies caused by domestic violence.

### **Homeless Young People**

Within the homelessness strategy there is a need to consider separately services for young people. Most young people become homeless either because they have failed to settle after leaving care or because they have left their parental home after disputes.

Many parents of homeless young people have multiple problems including, physical and sometimes sexual abuse of their children, alcohol and drug problems, mental health problems, poor parenting, new partners and step-parents leading to disputes with children and poverty.

Family problems are also related to young people's behaviour including mental health, aggression and violence, problems at school, drug use, criminal activities and running away from home.

### **Support for Families with Young Children**

Many of the problems homeless young people experience in their families begin at an early age, many before they reach 16. The Social Exclusion Unit has found that running away is a strong predictor of later homelessness and that a main trigger for running away is family problems.

The Sure Start programme aims to improve children's chances in life through better access to family support and other services for families with children up to the age of three.

The Children's Fund is targeted on preventive work with children aged 5-13 and their families, with an emphasis on local voluntary groups. This is a potential source of funding for projects which help to prevent running away.

The Connexions service will provide advice, guidance and support for young people aged 13-19 and has the potential to play a central role in identifying those at risk of homelessness and guiding them towards preventive services.

### **Family Intervention Projects (FIPs)**

The primary objective of family intervention projects is to stop the anti-social behaviour (ASB) of a small number of highly problematic families and restore safety to their homes and to the wider community. FIPs use a twin-track approach with help for the families to address the causes of their behaviour, alongside supervision and enforcement tools to provide them with the incentives to change. A key worker 'grips' the family, the causes of their poor behaviour and the agencies involved with them, to deliver a more coordinated, intensive response.

The majority of existing projects are funded through the existing Supporting People grant awarded to local authorities on an annual basis, and outcomes can be positive with the vast majority of families achieving remarkable changes in their attitude and behaviour. The projects are also effective in achieving other outcomes such as preventing eviction and homelessness and improving school attendance.

Based upon the success of these projects the Respect Task Force (RTF) is working with 50 authorities who have agreed to develop a FIP. Communities and Local Government are working in close partnership with the RTF in ensuring that these projects are established effectively and that mainstream funding is identified to fund these new projects.

*(For more information see – [www.respect.gov.uk](http://www.respect.gov.uk))*

### **Support for Young People**

It is essential that social services and housing departments agree joint protocols to ensure that effective procedures are in place to support young people. The Children Act 1989 places duties on social services to assess vulnerable children and families to establish whether children are in need, requiring services to safeguard and promote their welfare. Nearly all homeless young people are likely to need some level of support to sustain a tenancy or other accommodation.

Housing young people before they are able to sustain independent living is likely to lead to a breakdown of the tenancy and can lead to long term homelessness.

Preventive services should:

- go through a reality check with young people to ensure they understand the difficulties of finding and keeping accommodation;
- discuss with them whether they would be better to stay at or return home until they are properly prepared for independent living, unless they are at risk of abuse or are unsafe at home;
- cover preparation for independent living, through information, advice and life skills training;
- refer them where necessary to specialist services.

Some areas have family mediation services which aim to negotiate for young people to return to their family home, or to stay there. These have proved successful in averting homelessness for a substantial minority of their clients and should be considered for all areas.

Where young people are re housed there will be a need for specialist resettlement and tenancy support for them, normally provided as a floating service which can gradually be withdrawn as they develop independent living skills.

Housing providers who specialise in housing and support for young people could also deliver a Connexions Personal Adviser service under contract to the local Connexions Partnership.

## Older People

Homeless people aged over 50 have particular needs for support. Some are reluctant to use general homelessness services and there may be a need to develop specialist services. Needs have been identified for:

- specialist outreach and day centre workers;
- specialist accommodation services such as sheltered housing, for homeless people who might have a long term alcohol problem and chaotic behaviour which makes them unsuitable for ordinary sheltered housing;
- some older homeless people might prefer shared housing;
- specialist mediation services for older people who have to leave a family home.

## Black and Minority Ethnic People

Homelessness strategies will need to consider the particular needs of black and minority ethnic (BME) people. Their needs can affect both the causes of homelessness and the services provided to respond to it.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a duty on local authorities to actively promote racial equality in their areas. The homelessness reviews might consider:

- reviewing the appropriateness of services for BME groups;
- improving the quality of services to homeless BME households with explicit recognition of cultural and social needs;
- reviewing the provision of translation and interpreting services;
- reviewing the extent to which the housing needs of different BME households are catered for. For example, for larger or extended households the provision of larger properties will be key to meeting housing needs.

There is a great diversity among the different BME communities. Culturally appropriate services should be provided and account taken of any special needs in terms of types of accommodation and location, There maybe, for example, a need for a specialist advice service for young black people, or for sheltered housing for Asian elders. It is important to involve different local community groups in consultation on the homelessness strategy.

## Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Responsibility for co-coordinating the provision of accommodation for asylum seekers has now passed to the National Asylum Support Service which contracts locally with accommodation providers including local authorities, RSLs, voluntary organisations and private landlords. Local authorities are still responsible for people who claimed asylum before the new arrangements and for a range of other services for asylum seekers and those granted leave to remain.

The Housing Corporation has produced detailed guidance for RSLs on housing and support services for asylum seekers and much of it is also relevant to local authorities and other providers. The Audit Commission has produced good practice guidance for authorities in the management of support to asylum seekers, covering the

identification of needs and strategic planning for a wide range of services for asylum seekers.

### **People Leaving Hospital**

Discharge plans for all people leaving hospital should ensure they have a safe and secure home to go to or, at the least, temporary accommodation where plans for such housing can be made. For example, Manchester City Council has set up a specific hospital discharge scheme for homeless people. Ensuring people leaving hospital do not become homeless involves joint work by health, social services and housing authorities, who should have joint protocols in place covering hospital discharge. Some housing authorities have made arrangements for advice staff to visit patients and for advice sessions to be run in hospitals. Assessments of potential vulnerability, under the homelessness legislation as a result of an institutionalised background, should be made before patients who are at risk of homelessness leave hospital

### **Prisoners and Other People in Contact with the Criminal Justice System**

Many homeless people have contact with the criminal justice system, often for a succession of relatively minor offences. They may also have substance misuse and mental health problems, which contribute both to their offending and to their homelessness. Research has found that prisoners who are homeless after their release are much more likely to re-offend than those with a secure home. Women who lose their children when they go into prison face additional problems. People who are vulnerable as a result of an institutionalised background are included in the new priority need categories under the homelessness legislation. Intervention can not only help to end this cycle of homelessness, prison and sporadic contact with crisis mental health services, it can also be cost effectively improving mental health and reducing offending behavior. Many prisoners who are at risk of homelessness receive little assistance on release, except perhaps a list of bed and breakfast accommodation.

Means of intervention include:

- close joint work with the probation service to prevent homelessness among their clients;
- support to homeless people who are in custody in police stations and prisons;
- court diversion schemes, which work to steer mentally disordered offenders, many of whom are homeless or at risk of homelessness, towards treatment and support;
- advice and support services for ex-offender clients, along with resettlement and tenancy sustainment services;
- advice and casework sessions in prisons run by local authorities or voluntary agencies. At best these start at the beginning of a prisoners sentence, so that there is maximum time to ensure they will not be homeless on release;
- action by advice workers in these schemes to ensure that, where possible, tenancies are kept on, or alternatives agreed with the landlord following release;
- related support to ensure that employment and training opportunities are available on release;
- help with tackling mental health and substance abuse problems that often contribute both to homelessness and to repeat offending;
- specialist prisoner support services for women and people from black and minority ethnic groups, for example Housing Advice for Black and Asian



Prisoners (HABAP) works inside prisons in West Yorkshire to give advice and assistance to prisoners;

- a nominated local authority officer to liaise with the probation service and prisons on the housing needs of released prisoners.

Revolving Doors operate a community based multi-disciplinary team which works with offenders referred by police, court and prison staff; helping them prepare for return to the community and providing long-term casework support to those with the most complex needs. They also have a Partnership Team, which can help other agencies develop their own schemes through training, project development and evaluation services.

High risk ex-offenders will require a multi-agency approach; involving probation and possibly the police and accommodation should form part of the package. They should not simply be refused accommodation, but efforts must be made to arrange the appropriate mix of accommodation, support and supervision to prevent re-offending.

### **People Leaving the Armed Services**

Ex-service personnel are over-represented among rough sleepers and other homeless people. Homeless people who are vulnerable as a result of having been members of the Armed Forces are now included within the priority groups under the homelessness legislation. The Rough Sleepers Unit (RSU) has been working with the Ministry of Defence, the Armed Forces and ex-services charities to ensure the best advice and support is given to service leavers at risk of homelessness and to rough sleepers who have been in the Services. For example, English Churches Housing group provides housing advice services (SPACES) within a barracks. Local authorities with a significant service presence in their areas should consider the needs of people leaving the services within their homelessness strategies.

### **Homeless People with Multiple Needs**

A person with multiple needs has been defined by Homeless Link, a merger between the National Homeless Alliance and Homeless Network as a homeless or formerly homeless person who has two or more of the following problems and usually lacks effective contact with services:

- mental health;
- multiple substance misuse;
- personality disorders;
- offending behavior;
- learning difficulties;
- physical health problems;
- challenging behavior;
- vulnerability because of age.
- 

People with multiple needs can make frequent demands on a wide range of public services, but not have their needs effectively met by any of them. For example, homeless people with mental health problems have been found to make frequent use of crisis services and to see more of the police than they do of social services, psychiatric outpatient services or community health services. Support services can help to ensure they access statutory mental health services when they require them



and so make a better and more cost effective use of services. For example, Kensington & Chelsea have a specialist post in the housing department to help find suitable accommodation for mental health service users. The officer works with care managers to assess the type of accommodation needed in each case.

Long term homeless people are the most likely to have multiple needs and to be the most difficult to help. Specialist services to help such people with multiple needs are being developed but are still limited in number. Voluntary agencies are usually in a better position to provide such services, because they are able to work in a flexible way and are not constrained by statutory priorities which may exclude such clients.

All homelessness strategies should consider the need to develop services for those with multiple needs.

## Homelessness and Private Sector Housing

Local authorities and voluntary sector partner agencies have a key role both in preventing homelessness among residents of private sector housing and in enabling access to private housing for homeless and potentially homeless people. The homelessness strategy should set out clear plans to make the best use of private housing to meet local needs, while maintaining and improving standards. The strategy should cover a range of measures and services.

### Access Schemes

*Access schemes* which help homeless and other low income people to access private rented housing. These schemes include:

- *Registers of suitable private rented properties.* Some of these have lists of approved landlords, or check individual properties to ensure they meet minimum standards. Some simply give out details of vacancies, others actively help clients to look for properties and others actively match tenants with landlords.
- *Rent deposit and guarantee schemes* which help to overcome the lack of a deposit and rent in advance for homeless people. These fall into two main types: schemes which pay a cash deposit for the client which is reclaimed when they move out and those which provide a bond guaranteeing to pay any claims for damages or sometimes arrears, up to a maximum amount.
- *Rent in advance schemes.* These aim to overcome any problems caused by delays in the payment of housing benefit. They pay the rent for an agreed period, which is then claimed back once housing benefit has been received. They are often combined with deposit and guarantee schemes.
- *Help with claiming housing benefit.* This can cover help with completing the application form, making sure the payment is made to the landlord, liaising with the housing benefit office if the payment is delayed and setting up fast-track arrangements with the housing benefit office for clients of their scheme. This support can be offered to both tenants and landlords.
- *Basic tenancy support,* including help with moving in, help with budgeting and sometimes a limited number of visits to identify any continuing support needs. Schemes usually offer only basic support and try to link clients into specialist agencies for any continuing support needs.

- Some schemes *mediate* in landlord/tenant disputes to forestall possible loss of the tenancy.

### Advice and Support Services

*Advice and support* to tenants and home owners at risk of losing their homes, including legal and money advice services.

*Tenancy support for private tenants.* At present the great majority of supported housing and tenancy sustainment work is provided in the social housing sector. The main exception is supported lodgings schemes, particularly for young people and others with support needs, where private landlords are funded to provide lodgings and basic support with help and supervision from agencies such as social services. The more flexible funding arrangements under Supporting People offer scope for extending tenancy support to the private sector, with support provided either by the landlord or in cooperation with the local authority or voluntary agencies. Such schemes would clearly need to develop robust mechanisms of supervision and quality control.

*Advice and help for landlords,* particularly those willing to house low income tenants at risk of homelessness. This help can include:

- legal advice on tenancies, to ensure landlords understand their legal rights and responsibilities;
- help with delays in payment of housing benefit;
- targeted use of housing benefit and top-up payments where tenants are having difficulty paying the rent;
- the targeting of renovation grants to encourage landlords to let to local authority nominations and to provide longer term tenancies;
- Landlords' forums which can provide collective training and advice for landlords on the good management of their properties and to ensure local authorities are aware of landlords concerns.

### Maintaining and Improving Standards

Improvement of standards in private rented housing, particularly in houses in multiple occupation. Poor conditions and bad management can cause some private tenants to become homeless. It is therefore essential to involve housing improvement and enforcement staff, who are in the environmental health department in some authorities, in the preparation of the homelessness strategy. There is a wide range of measures local authorities can take to improve standards in the private rented sector including:

- voluntary accreditation schemes to certify that landlords reach approved standards;
- compulsory registration schemes for houses in multiple occupation to ensure minimum standards;
- area improvement programmes, inclusive of selective licensing;
- enforcement action against individual poor condition properties;
- empty dwelling management orders, interim and final.

Environmental Health Officers can be the first to come in to contact with tenants at risk of homelessness and there should be arrangements for ensuring advice and support is available to these tenants. Enforcement work can also lead to tenants being

evicted and it is important to assess the position of tenants before taking action and to advise tenants of their degree of protection from eviction. The authority should also provide for re-housing of those who do lose their homes as a result of action by the authority.

*The prevention of harassment and illegal eviction.* Authorities should consider the scope for reducing these causes of homelessness and tenancy relations officers should be involved in formulating and implementing the strategy.

*Adaptations and improvements* can enable owners and tenants, particularly those who are elderly or disabled, to stay in their homes and Home Improvement Agencies and other such services should be included in the homelessness strategy.

*The efficient administration of housing benefit.* Delays in housing benefit payments can be a serious disincentive to landlords to accept tenants on benefit, including many homeless people and can also increase the risks of eviction. In some cases, special schemes have been set up to fast-track housing benefit claims from homeless people and other local authority nominees to private landlords. However, in the longer term the underlying causes of delay should be tackled, as tenants who are not nominated through special schemes will still be at risk and the general disincentive to landlords will remain. There are wide variations in the efficiency of different authorities in their administration of housing benefit.

# Chapter 3

## Case Studies

In order to gain an understanding of the many types of varied tenancy support schemes being delivered a questionnaire was devised and sent out with completed copies being returned from the following organisations, all of which have active tenancy support schemes or support linked projects.

In some cases, dependent upon locality projects were visited and interviewed.

Organisation	Project
Amber	Practical Housing Units
Burnley BC	Family Intervention Scheme
Darlington BC	Tenancy Support Service
Horton Housing Association	Community Support Agency
London Borough of Richmond	Resettlement Team
Pendle Housing	Tenancy Support Scheme
Places for People	Tenancy Support Scheme
Poole Housing Partnership	Tenancy Support Scheme
Portsmouth City Council	Tenancy Support Service
The Hope Centre	RESTORE
Middlesbrough BC	Shield
Staffordshire Housing Association	Tenancy Support Service
Tameside BC	Community Support Service
West Kent Housing Association	Tenancy Support Scheme

The following tables detail the questions asked and the responses in each case:

*Please provide a brief explanation/overview of your scheme*

Organisation	Response
Amber (Practical Housing Units)	<p>PHU's are nine stand alone modules that focus on skills required for accessing and sustaining a tenancy. They are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintaining a tenancy with support</li> <li>2. Managing receipt of social benefits</li> <li>3. Managing utility accounts</li> <li>4. Finding accommodation</li> <li>5. Budgeting and debt management</li> <li>6. Maintaining a healthy diet</li> <li>7. Planning for education, training and employment</li> <li>8. Safety and risk management in the home</li> <li>9. Developing community knowledge</li> </ol>

Burnley BC	In accordance with the current Government Respect Agenda, Burnley BC are looking to develop a Family Intervention Project (FIP) to offer intensive family support to families engaged in/at risk of ASB, eviction, homelessness etc..
Darlington BC	Supporting people funded support service for those homeless or threatened with homelessness. It is a 36 place floating support scheme operated by 3 full time equivalent support officers who assess and then support clients on a tenure blind basis to develop independent living skills.
Horton Housing Association	A range of support schemes supporting vulnerable individuals and families within their own homes. Contracts with a range of funders to specifically target mental health issues, alcohol, housing related issues and a service aimed at BME communities.
London Borough of Richmond	Providing support to vulnerable people in the borough to assist them to set up homes and maintain tenancies. We also apply for charitable grants, help and advice with benefits, accessing furniture and essential items and setting up utilities accounts. We also refer and liaise with other services, e.g. mental health teams, YOT etc....
Pendle BC	Scheme targeted initially at young vulnerable people and the over 65's. Help to maintain a tenancy (via a 12 month trial period and then assured tenancy granted, subject to compliance with tenancy conditions). The scheme has now been expanded to cover all vulnerable tenants regardless of age group. The housing officer decides who is vulnerable via a points system. Support may range from assistance with utility company connections through to full tenancy/family support.
Places for People	Working with vulnerable clients to provide sustainable tenancies via the provision of tenancy support services.
Poole Housing Partnership	The service aim is to empower residents of Poole Housing Partnership to be able to maintain their tenancies and to live independently.
Portsmouth City Council	The service provides short term support lasting up to 2 years helping tenants with practical support and advice to prevent homelessness and promote independence. Support provided includes financial, health and safety, living skills, advocacy, help with moving, sign ups, back to work or education.

Hope Centre	Resettlement project designed to assist ex-offenders and those who have undertaken rehabilitation to successfully re-integrate into the community.
Middlesbrough BC	Tenancy referencing, provision of private sector tenancy management, post tenancy support visits, ASB complaints in the private rented sector, landlord training, advice and support for landlords.
Staffordshire Housing Association	The service provides housing related advice, assistance and support to help vulnerable tenants to improve their quality of life, to maintain their tenancy and to live independently
Tameside BC	Housing related support depending on peoples needs. Support is provided within the service users own homes and is tailored to their assessed and agreed needs. Support offered around housing and tenancy issues, independent living, liaison with other agencies, health issues, budgeting and cultural issues.
West Kent Housing Association	We were awarded a contract by Medway Council to provide floating support (housing related) to 300 service users, for 3 years, for people who live within the council's borough.

*Why did you set up/establish the scheme?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	It was identified that the service users who were going through our accommodation based scheme had a skills shortage in the ability to maintain a tenancy. We, like many organisations, were delivering the necessary programme that would enable our clients to sustain an independent lifestyle, but there was nothing tangible, as far as evidence obtained by the service user to show the skills that had been learnt, therefore we developed Practical Housing Unit's (PHU's) to evidence distance traveled – nationally accredited through AQA.
Burnley BC	Scheme due to commence January 2007, bidding/funding commenced August 2006.
Darlington BC	To encourage sustainable communities, to support vulnerable people, to prevent homelessness and to encourage the development of independent living skills, reduce tenancy turnover and other problems e.g. rent arrears, damage to property and family break up.
Horton Housing Association	Originally to provide a service that promoted independence amongst individuals with severe and

	enduring mental health issues that helped to prevent them from being readmitted into psychiatric care and to work in partnership with local RSL's.
London Borough of Richmond	No answer
Housing Pendle	Scheme established in April 2003. Housing managers realised a need for additional support, Supporting People funding launched and resource used to support housing officers via a tenancy support scheme.
Places for People	Initially due to need and utilising Housing Corporation funding for such services. More recently the availability of Supporting People funding has been seen as a source of expanding and developing the scheme. The schemes are also developed and delivered to fit in with local housing strategies.
Poole Housing Partnership	To help and support the most vulnerable tenants within the Borough of Poole's housing stock, to ensure the increasing level of vulnerable individuals and families that were allocated council accommodation remained in that accommodation, trying to prevent rent arrears, ASB, neighbour disputes etc..
Portsmouth City Council	It was identified through transitional benefit that there was a need for this service.
The Hope Centre	We work in two of our local prisons, HMP Wymott and HMP Lancaster Castle and realised that the men (most of who have undertaken rehabilitation courses such as 12 step) needed assistance to re-settle and many needed to relocate away from the areas in which they had offended if they were to get a fresh start in life.
Middlesbrough BC	To fill a gap identified in the private rented sector and in relation to ASB issues in the sector. To deal with problem families and to challenge behavior and to support and address it.
Staffordshire Housing Association	In response to a high percentage of particularly new tenancies failing in their first year.
Tameside BC	Set up under supporting people in partnership with New Charter Housing Trust to support single people and families who have been homeless or face the threat of homelessness.
West Kent Housing Association	To extend our services as we already provide floating support in Kent, Sevenoaks Borough Council area.

*How is the scheme funded?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting people</li> <li>• Charitable donations</li> </ul>
Burnley BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Office</li> <li>• Housing Corporation</li> <li>• In kind contributions</li> </ul>
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> </ul>
Horton Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Authority finance</li> <li>• Supporting People</li> <li>• Social Services</li> <li>• NHS</li> </ul>
London Borough of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> </ul>
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> </ul>
Places for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> </ul>
Poole Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> </ul>
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> </ul>
The Hope Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charitable donations</li> </ul>
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood Renewal Fund</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> </ul>
Tameside BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> </ul>
West Kent Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> </ul>

*How wide does your scheme operate?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nationally</li> </ul>
Burnley BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nationally</li> <li>• Borough wide</li> </ul>
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough wide</li> </ul>
Horton Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough wide</li> </ul>
London Borough of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough wide</li> </ul>
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough wide</li> </ul>
Places for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nationally</li> <li>• Area focused</li> </ul>
Poole Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough wide</li> </ul>
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area focused</li> </ul>
The Hope Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regionally</li> </ul>
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough wide</li> <li>• Area focused</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough wide</li> </ul>



Tameside BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area focused</li> </ul>
West Kent Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough wide</li> </ul>

*How long did it take to establish the scheme?*

Organisation	Response
Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-6 months</li> </ul>
Burnley BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-6 months</li> </ul>
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6-12 months</li> </ul>
Horton Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6-12 months</li> </ul>
London Borough of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6-12 months</li> </ul>
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0-3 months</li> </ul>
Places for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-6 months</li> </ul>
Poole Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-6 months</li> </ul>
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6-12 months</li> </ul>
The Hope Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12-18 months</li> </ul>
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0-3 months</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12-18 months</li> </ul>
Tameside BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0-3 months</li> </ul>
West Kent Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As soon as contract commenced, we were already set up for approximately 150 service users.</li> </ul>

*How was demand for your scheme determined?*

Organisation	Response
Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of the services that we were providing</li> </ul>
Burnley BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-social behavior levels</li> </ul>
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness statistics</li> </ul>
Horton Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness statistics</li> <li>• Via partner RSL's</li> </ul>
London Borough of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness statistics</li> <li>• Via partner RSL's</li> </ul>
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness statistics</li> <li>• Crime and disorder statistics</li> <li>• Anti-social behavior levels</li> <li>• Via established tenant groups</li> </ul>
Places for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness statistics</li> <li>• Political support</li> <li>• Crime and disorder statistics</li> <li>• Anti-social behavior levels</li> <li>• Via resident private sector landlords</li> <li>• Via partner RSL's</li> <li>• Via established tenant groups</li> </ul>

Poole Housing Partnership	No answer
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness statistics</li> <li>• Crime and disorder statistics</li> <li>• Anti-social behavior levels</li> </ul>
The Hope Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime and disorder statistics</li> <li>• Anti-social behavior levels</li> </ul>
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political support</li> <li>• Crime and disorder statistics</li> <li>• Anti-social behavior levels</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness statistics</li> </ul>
Tameside BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via partner RSL's</li> </ul>
West Kent Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via council and Supporting People</li> </ul>

*Who are the main recipients of your scheme?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable young people</li> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• People with drug dependency problems</li> <li>• People with criminal history/offenders</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> </ul>
Burnley BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• People with drug dependency problems</li> <li>• People with criminal history/offenders</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> <li>• People suffering domestic violence</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> <li>• People in receipt of previous ASBO</li> <li>• People from ethnic minorities</li> </ul>
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> </ul>
Horton Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> <li>• Persons in receipt of previous ASBO</li> <li>• People from ethnic minorities (and refugees)</li> </ul>
London Borough of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable young people</li> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• People with drug dependency problems</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with criminal history/offenders</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> <li>• People suffering from domestic violence</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> <li>• Persons in receipt of previous ASBO</li> <li>• People from ethnic minorities</li> </ul>
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable young people</li> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• People with drug dependency problems</li> <li>• People with criminal history/offenders</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> <li>• People suffering from domestic violence</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> <li>• People from ethnic minorities</li> <li>• Rough sleepers (via referral)</li> <li>• Women's refuge referrals</li> </ul>
Places for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable young people</li> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• People with drug dependency problems</li> <li>• People with criminal history/offenders</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> <li>• People suffering from domestic violence</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> <li>• Persons in receipt of previous ASBO</li> <li>• People from ethnic minorities</li> </ul>
Poole Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable young people</li> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• People with drug dependency problems</li> <li>• People with criminal history/offenders</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> <li>• People suffering from domestic violence</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> <li>• Persons in receipt of previous ASBO</li> <li>• People from ethnic minorities</li> </ul>
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable young people</li> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• People with drug dependency problems</li> <li>• People with criminal history/offenders</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> <li>• People suffering from domestic violence</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons in receipt of previous ASBO</li> <li>• People from ethnic minorities</li> </ul>
The Hope Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• People with drug dependency problems</li> <li>• People with criminal history/offenders</li> </ul>
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable young people</li> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• People with drug dependency problems</li> <li>• People with criminal history/offenders</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> <li>• People suffering from domestic violence</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> <li>• Persons in receipt of previous ASBO</li> <li>• People from ethnic minorities</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> <li>• Vulnerable elderly</li> </ul>
Tameside BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable young people</li> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> </ul>
West Kent Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable young people</li> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• People with alcohol problems</li> <li>• People with drug dependency problems</li> <li>• People with criminal history/offenders</li> <li>• Vulnerable families</li> <li>• People suffering from domestic violence</li> <li>• People with previous tenancy problems</li> <li>• Persons in receipt of previous ASBO</li> <li>• People from ethnic minorities</li> </ul>

*What type of support is provided?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating suitable properties</li> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol dependency support</li> <li>• Education in social behavior awareness</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> </ul>
Burnley BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive family support</li> </ul>
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating suitable properties to occupy</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Mentoring support</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol dependency support</li> <li>• Education in social behavioral awareness</li> <li>• Life management support</li> <li>• Provision of/access to furniture recycling</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>
Horton Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating suitable properties to occupy</li> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Mentoring support</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol dependency support</li> <li>• Education in social behavioral awareness</li> <li>• Life management support</li> <li>• Provision of/access to furniture recycling</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>
London Borough of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating suitable properties to occupy</li> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Provision of/access to furniture recycling</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating suitable properties to occupy</li> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Mentoring support</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol dependency support</li> <li>• Education in social behavioral awareness</li> <li>• Life management support</li> <li>• Provision of/access to furniture recycling</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>

Places for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating suitable properties to occupy</li> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Mentoring support</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol dependency support (referral)</li> <li>• Education is social behavioral awareness (partly)</li> <li>• Life management support (partly)</li> <li>• Provision of/access to furniture recycling (referral)</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>
Poole Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol dependency support (referral)</li> <li>• Provision of/access to furniture recycling</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Mentoring support</li> <li>• Life management support</li> <li>• Provision of/access to furniture recycling</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>

The Hope Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating suitable properties to occupy</li> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Mentoring support</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol dependency support</li> <li>• Education in social behavioral awareness</li> <li>• Life management support</li> <li>• Provision of/access to furniture recycling</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating suitable properties to occupy</li> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management (referral)</li> <li>• Mentoring support</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol dependency support (via referral)</li> <li>• Education in social behavioral awareness</li> <li>• Life management support (via multi agency)</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training (referral)</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating suitable properties to occupy</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Mentoring support</li> <li>• Life management support</li> <li>• Provision of access to furniture recycling</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>
Tameside BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Education in social behavioral awareness</li> <li>• Advice on employment/training</li> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>
West Kent Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating suitable properties</li> <li>• Assistance with tenancy sign up</li> <li>• Assistance with housing benefit provision</li> <li>• Assistance with utility company sign up</li> <li>• Advice on financial management</li> <li>• Life management support</li> <li>• Provision of/access to furniture recycling</li> <li>• Regular home visits</li> <li>• Advice on employment and training</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice on home maintenance</li> </ul>
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*How many staff work on the scheme?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	No answer
Burnley BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Project manager</li> <li>• 6 Tenancy support officers</li> <li>• 0.5 admin. Staff</li> </ul>
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.5 Project manager</li> <li>• 3 Tenancy support officers</li> <li>• 0.5 admin. Staff</li> </ul>
Horton Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 Project managers</li> <li>• 26 Tenancy support officers</li> <li>• 1 admin. Staff</li> </ul>
London Borough of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Principal officer</li> <li>• 6 Resettlement officers</li> </ul>
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Tenancy support officers</li> </ul>
Places for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Project manager</li> <li>• 2 Senior tenancy support officers</li> <li>• 11 Tenancy support officers</li> <li>• 1 Admin. Staff</li> </ul>
Poole Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Tenancy support officers</li> </ul>
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Project manager</li> <li>• 14 Tenancy support officers</li> <li>• 2 Senior tenancy service officers</li> </ul>
The Hope Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Project Manager</li> </ul>
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Project manager</li> <li>• 1 Tenancy Support officer</li> <li>• 2 Admin. staff</li> <li>• 1 Tenancy enforcement officer</li> <li>• 1 Referencing officer</li> <li>• 0.5 Senior management support</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Project manager</li> <li>• 2 Tenancy support officers</li> </ul>
Tameside BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Project manager</li> <li>• 4 Tenancy support officers</li> </ul>
West Kent Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Project Manager</li> <li>• 22 Tenancy Support Officers</li> </ul>



*What is the annual operational cost of the scheme?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	No answer
Burnley BC	£100K - £150K
Darlington BC	£100K - £150K
Horton Housing	£150K - £200K
London Borough of Richmond	Not known
Housing Pendle	£64.82/week via Supporting People, other costs carried by Housing Pendle
Places for People	£440K
Poole Housing Partnership	£100K - £150K
Portsmouth City Council	£487K 2006/7 £440K 2007/8
The Hope Centre	No answer
Middlesbrough BC	£75K - £100K
Staffordshire Housing Association	Not known
Tameside BC	No answer
West Kent Housing Association	Not known as yet as only started 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2006

*How do you publicise your scheme?*

Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>
Burnley BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing LA web site</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> <li>• Housing options team</li> <li>• Estates management team</li> </ul>
Horton Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated web site</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> </ul>
London Borough of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not publicised. Referrals received via homeless unit</li> </ul>
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated web site</li> <li>• Existing LA web site</li> <li>• Local media (at launch)</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>
Places for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated web site</li> <li>• Local media</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Posters at local venues</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>
Poole Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing LA web site</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local media</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing LA web site</li> <li>• Local radio (one off 2 hour programme)</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Posters at local venues</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>
The Hope Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated web site</li> <li>• Existing LA web site</li> <li>• Local media</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Posters at local venues</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing local authority/RSL web site</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>
Tameside BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>
West Kent Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated website</li> <li>• Existing LA/RSL web site</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Posters at local venues</li> <li>• Via our partners</li> </ul>

*When did your scheme commence?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	November 2004
Burnley BC	January 2007
Darlington BC	2001
Horton Housing	1995
London Borough of Richmond	1998
Housing Pendle	April 2003
Places for People	1992
Poole Housing Partnership	2002
Portsmouth City Council	April 2003

The Hope Centre	September 2005
Middlesbrough BC	May 2004
Staffordshire Housing Association	January 2003
Tameside BC	March 2003
West Kent Housing Association	October 2006

*How many tenants have used the scheme to date?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	200-400
Burnley BC	Only just being launched Jan 07
Darlington BC	50-200
Horton Housing	1000+
London Borough of Richmond	600-1000 since 1998
Housing Pendle	50-200
Places for People	Over the length of the scheme (15 years) each tenancy support officer deals with 60 support cases per annum.
Poole Housing Partnership	50-200 during 2006, 400-600 overall
Portsmouth City Council	1887 as at 19.12.06
The Hope Centre	15 individuals assisted with resettlement
Middlesbrough BC	1000+ since 2004
Staffordshire Housing Association	200-400
Tameside BC	50-200
West Kent Housing Association	50-200

*Can you define your main achievements to date?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	No answer
Burnley BC	Only just being launched Jan 07
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of Level B Supporting People</li> <li>• Awards for quality front line service (4 star winner across the council)</li> <li>• Increased length of tenancies</li> <li>• Contributed to a real reduction in homeless presentations (over 50% in the last 12 months)</li> <li>• Contributed to a reduction in arrears, repossessions, and damages</li> <li>• Contributed to a reduction in neighbour complaints</li> <li>• Lots of compliments and increased satisfaction</li> </ul>

Horton Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of high quality support services to an increasingly wide range of service users</li> <li>• Demonstration of continuous improvement and best practice throughout all schemes and successful accreditation from local authority administering Supporting People team</li> </ul>
London Borough of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team started in 1998 with 3 officers and a very small client group. We now work with 100+ clients at any one time</li> <li>• We have received very good reviews and carry out annual consultancy work with our service users</li> </ul>
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants achieving secure tenancies as a result of tenancy support</li> <li>• Only 1 eviction in 4 years</li> <li>• Positive feedback from scheme recipients</li> <li>• Established trust with scheme recipients</li> </ul>
Places for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Award for the Preston HELP Scheme</li> <li>• General success rate of supported tenancies</li> </ul>
Poole Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowering and supporting residents in transferring and exchanging more suitable properties due to variety of reasons, such as, harassment</li> <li>• Significant reduction in amount of rent arrears through liaison with housing benefit and empowering to set up and pay rent agreement</li> <li>• Budgeting and support with money management (links with CAB)</li> <li>• Accessing other support services such as addiction and mental health agencies</li> </ul>
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in rent arrears</li> <li>• Write off various debts</li> <li>• Only one of the 1887 cases has resulted in eviction</li> <li>• Ongoing increase in weekly benefits</li> <li>• Production of tenancy support newsletter</li> <li>• Good working rapport with residents and residents focus groups</li> </ul>
The Hope Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have assisted around 15 individuals in their attempt to re-settle through the programme</li> <li>• We have provided housing for 6 of these men over the time they were with us. Most of the others have been housed by Inward House projects in Accrington, who we have worked closely with</li> <li>• We have been able to help 3 of the men</li> </ul>

	obtain employment for the first time in many years
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in ASB</li> <li>• Improvement in reduced crime statistics</li> <li>• Area cleanliness improvements</li> <li>• Unique approach to selective licensing</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieving C's in SP review</li> <li>• Service still operating at full capacity 4 years on</li> </ul>
Tameside BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased numbers of service user take up</li> <li>• Increased number of bed spaces</li> <li>• Over 50% planned move-ons from the service, showing positive tenancy sustainment</li> </ul>
West Kent Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To early to say</li> </ul>

*Have there been any problems along the way, if so can you describe them?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	No answer
Burnley BC	Only just being launched N/A
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hiccups in partnership working</li> <li>• Some clients have been very challenging</li> </ul>
Horton Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has not always been easy to persuade some housing providers of the benefit of floating support services</li> <li>• Often support is seen as a residential solution rather than one delivered throughout the community as a whole</li> </ul>
London Borough of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of resources in the borough due to funding</li> </ul>
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for lone worker policy</li> <li>• Need to safeguard support officers</li> </ul>
Places for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff absence may cause problems with one to one case work</li> <li>• Funding restrictions and project sustainability due to access to funding</li> </ul>
Poole Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of direction early on with the service</li> <li>• Raising the profile of the service and promotion of the service, especially externally was an issue that needed to be addressed</li> </ul>
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initially getting the other agencies to understand our role and not just pass their cases on to us, especially where they might have a statutory obligation</li> <li>• Referring people on who have reached the</li> </ul>

	<p>maximum of 2 years support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased paper work</li> </ul>
The Hope Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems have occurred in some cases due to relapses, but we have learned from these and implemented necessary changes in procedure</li> <li>• Our biggest problem is access to accommodation. We have two three bedroom properties at our disposal but we desperately need links with housing providers for move on accommodation in the area</li> </ul>
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff retention due to funding uncertainty</li> <li>• Short term funding</li> <li>• Staff recruitment on short term contracts</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding time to fit in all client work and SP statistics/paper work</li> <li>• SP do not fund admin support</li> </ul>
Tameside BC	No answer
West Kent Housing Association	To early to say

*How do you see the scheme developing in the future?*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Response</b>
Amber	<p>Because the Practical Housing Unit's are so flexible and can be used across a range of provision, I envisage that the scheme will develop immensely. The following organisations are just some examples of the work that we are carrying out, or negotiating with:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NOMS – Approved provider programme, delivering PHU training in prisons and probation services.</li> <li>▪ SP authorities – as a tool for evidencing outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Providers of accommodation based and floating support.</li> <li>▪ Care leaver's scheme.</li> <li>▪ Youth justice board.</li> <li>▪ Accredited tenancy schemes.</li> </ul> <p>I am being contacted on a daily basis by organisations that would like to know more about our programme. This interest has led to us, as an organisation, diversifying into this area of training housing advice workers and helping organisations evidence the work they do to their funders.</p>
Burnley BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inclusion of outreach/dispersed accommodation.</li> <li>▪ Inclusion of RSL's and private landlords.</li> </ul>
Darlington BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Striving to meet level A of QAF.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May consider limited expansion if SP can fund.</li> <li>▪ Continues service improvements.</li> </ul>
Horton Housing	Our project will respond to any development opportunities following the Supporting People service review programme. It is anticipated that the general need for floating support type services to all client groups will increase as a result.
London Borough of Richmond	We are always striving to develop and improve our service which is why we consult our clients on an annual basis. From our findings we are then able to implement changes for the better.
Housing Pendle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As the company develops, home visits after sign up.</li> <li>▪ Need to secure funding after March 2008.</li> </ul>
Places for People	Hopeful award of Lancashire CC Supporting People contract in 2007 for one, or all, of the 3 prime areas (East Lancs, Central Lancs, North Lancs) and linking to other established tenancy support services. This would mean that Places for People would administer a £1,000,000 Supporting People budget in any of the above awarded contract areas, allocating staff and resources as applicable to areas of need within the funded boundaries.
Poole Housing Partnership	The service is continually changing and striving to improve. It is currently working towards the B&A's with Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework. It is also looking at improving ways of developing the service. It is working on better links with stakeholders as well as closer involvement with internal departments to ensure we deliver the best service to our clients. Need to keep developing ways in which we empower the client and just as importantly to Supporting People, how we are evidencing the empowerment side of the role.
Portsmouth City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Looking to expand the service to assist the private sector.</li> <li>▪ Reviewing paper work and amalgamating forms.</li> <li>▪ Promoting home working and flexible working to aid customer service.</li> <li>▪ Linking in work in relation to the Respect bill and the possible set up of an intensive support scheme.</li> </ul>
The Hope Centre	We are looking for RSL partners to assist us. Our biggest need at the moment is for more move on accommodation, once scheme users have completed the six month programme with us.
Middlesbrough BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support to selective licensing.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use of skills and knowledge to set up and deliver a landlord accreditation scheme.</li> <li>▪ Linking selective licensing and landlord accreditation.</li> <li>▪ Bring Respect Standards into the private rented sector.</li> <li>▪ Financial contributions from users.</li> <li>▪ Mainstream funding access.</li> <li>▪ Partnering with service users.</li> </ul>
Staffordshire Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More tenant/service user involvement in developing the scheme</li> </ul>
Tameside BC	<p>We are looking to support increased numbers of people with mental health problems, due to demand for this type of support. Something we can provide through our support workers having trained and knowledge in this area.</p>
West Kent Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I see our service developing by increasing our service users and promoting ourselves and the service we offer, so other agencies have a greater awareness of us.</li> <li>▪ To continue to provide an excellent service that makes a difference to people's lives.</li> </ul>



## Marketing and promotion

The following information is taken from selected examples of the marketing and publicity literature used by tenancy support organisations who have contributed to this research.

### 1. Portsmouth City Council

#### Tenancy Support – Practical advice to help you manage your tenancy

##### How can Tenancy Support help me?

The type of support we offer is tailored to suit each individual and may include:

- introducing tenants to existing support networks
- improving basic living skills (including reading and writing) and getting people back into training and education
- helping tenants manage their money and get the most out of their income
- providing advice about safety and security
- supporting parents

If you need longer-term support, we can help you find the best organisations and agencies to help you.

##### Who can get the service?

The Tenancy Support Service is only available to our tenants. To get the service, you need to answer ‘Yes’ to these questions.

- Are you a council tenant?
- Are you having problems that might affect your home or your neighbours?
- Are you likely to experience problems with your tenancy because you have particular difficulties?

We also offer our service to all new tenants.

##### How does the service work?

Once we have all your details we will arrange for someone to visit you within 10 working days.

Sometimes we have to place people on a waiting list. If this is necessary we will write and advise you and let you know how long you will need to wait.

Specially trained Tenancy Support Officers will visit you at home to discuss what help you need, what you want to achieve and what they can do to help. This discussion is written down in a ‘support plan’ and we will give you a copy to keep. The Tenancy Support Officer will then either provide the support themselves or put you in touch with someone who can.

Often, the Tenancy Support Officers will need to contact other organisations or agencies on your behalf. We will ask your permission to do this and we will give you copies of all the documents relating to the support we give you.

**How much does the service cost?**

The service is completely free to our tenants. The Government pays us to make sure support is available to everyone who needs it.

**What happens if I decide I don't want the service anymore?**

That's not a problem. Simply let your Tenancy Support Officer know and we will agree a date to end the service.

**What's the difference between Tenancy Support and Social Services?**

The Tenancy Support Service is not intended to replace care packages provided by Social Services, the NHS or to carry out work that these services have a duty to provide. However, Tenancy Support Officers will work together with any other agencies that are already providing support.

## 2. Poole Housing Partnership

**Tenancy Support Service****What is the Tenancy Support Service?**

The Tenancy Support Service offers help and advice to Poole Housing Partnership residents. The service can help you if you are experiencing difficulties maintaining your tenancy or living independently.

Initially, support is given for 3 months. After this period a review of the support you get is carried out. Your needs are reassessed and further support will continue if appropriate.

If you need more specialised support at the end of, or during the period of your support, your Tenancy Support Officer will make referrals (with your agreement), to other specialist agencies.

**What support can we provide?**

- Accessing other support services, such as addiction support groups or mental health agencies
- Referring to relevant agencies regarding accessing local facilities and training
- Budgeting and support with paying arrangements with regard to bills such as, gas or water
- Offering advice on looking after and security of your home
- Claiming welfare benefits, including housing and council tax benefit
- Help and advice in dealing with neighbour disputes
- Assisting with applying for, and understanding home choice, mutual exchange and the priority panel
- Dealing with correspondence including filling in forms
- Gaining confidence in dealing with authorities
- Accessing groups and services relating to your faith, religious beliefs or cultural needs

**How does the service work?**

When we receive a referral, two PHP officers will visit you to carry out an assessment visit. By consulting you, a decision will be made as to whether you are happy to work with the service and to find out what kind of support you need.

A Tenancy Support Officer (TSO) will be allocated to you and they will arrange an appointment to meet you on a regular basis, usually in your own home.

The TSO will work with you to draw up a Support Plan, that empowers you to achieve the agreed outcomes.

The TSO's aim is to help you live independently and to develop the skills and confidence you need to cope without support.

The support you receive is monitored by your TSO once a month. After three months, the ongoing support and outcomes are reviewed and a decision is made as to whether you require further support from the service.

When the agreed outcomes are achieved and the support is no longer required, an exit plan will be discussed and put in place.

**Am I eligible?**

If you are a Poole Housing Partnership resident who is experiencing difficulties coping with your tenancy, or if you are struggling to live independently, you can use the service.

**Who can refer?**

Any professional supporting you is able to refer you to this service. This may include your Housing Officer, Social Worker or Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN).

Self-referral to the service is also accepted. The Tenancy Support Team will assist you if you wish to make a self referral.

### **3. Horton Housing Association**

**Community Support Agency****What is Horton Housing Association?**

Horton Housing Association (HHA) is a voluntary sector, not for profit organisation. At Horton we aim to meet the housing and support needs of some of the most socially excluded people in our community. To achieve this we have developed a range of services to offer both quality and choice. The Community Support Agency is one of the services we provide.

**What is the Community Support Agency?**

The Community Support Agency has a range of support services for vulnerable people throughout the Bradford district. The service is home based so you will usually be visited in the place where you live.

The Community Support Service also offers specialist support for clients who are homeless and living in temporary accommodation and for refugees. Another of our

leaflets explains about that part of our service, which is called Bradford Homeless Team.

## **What do we hope to achieve at the Community Support Agency?**

### **Aims**

- to provide high quality housing related support services to vulnerable people, couples and families, which are responsive to their needs, circumstances and aspirations in order to prevent them becoming homeless; and
- to support and encourage clients to develop existing skills and gain confidence in their ability to manage their own homes independently

### **Objectives**

- to work with people referred to the service to assess their support needs and draw up agreed programmes of housing related support designed around their individual needs and circumstances
- to work with clients to enable them to gain confidence and develop the skills required to live as independently as possible
- to engage positively with clients who are socially excluded and have difficulty in accessing services
- to identify any additional source of support that may be required and to make referrals for clients or encourage them to self refer as appropriate
- to contact other services where there is concern for the welfare of clients
- to liaise closely with other services that are involved with clients e.g. CPA Key Workers, Housing Officers, GP's, Department of Work and Pensions etc
- to assist clients to resolve instances of harassment or abuse from others if this is causing a nuisance to other people, and
- to monitor and evaluate service provision.

### **Outcomes**

- reduced incidences of homelessness or threat of eviction
- reduced frequency of admission to psychiatric care
- increased ability to manage a tenancy successfully
- minimised risk of abandoning a tenancy
- maximised income through welfare benefit and debt advice, and through improved money management skills
- links to specialist and statutory services to address complex housing needs
- reduction in harm associated with alcohol and substance misuse
- referrals to appropriate treatment services
- support networks having been explored and established
- educational and employment options having been examined as part of personal development, and
- less involvement with the criminal justice system.

### **Who is the Community Support Agency for?**

The Community Support Agency is for you if your circumstances match any one from this list.

- Supported Tenancies@Yorkshire(st@y): You live in a house managed by one of the six Bradford Community Housing Trusts operating across the Bradford Metropolitan District.
- RSL Floating Support Scheme (FS): You are a tenant of any housing association in the Bradford area.
- Community Alcohol Support Team (CAST): You have problems with alcohol misuse and related issues.
- Care Programme Approach (CPA): You have severe and enduring mental health problems and are supported via the Care Programme Approach.
- South & West Primary Care Trust (S&W): You are vulnerable and have a GP who forms part of the South and West Primary Care Trust.
- City Support Services (City PCT): You have contact with the City Primary Trust's Therapeutic Resource Team and have a GP based in inner-city Bradford. This part of the service is aimed particularly at members of black and minority ethnic communities.
- Community Integration Initiative (CII): You are vulnerable, isolated and socially excluded in some other way. This includes having personal, social, emotional or economic problems.

Priority is given to people assessed as being most 'at risk' and support services are allocated in line with the Agency's Selection and Allocation Policy. If you have any special requirements or needs we will see if we can meet them as part of the initial assessment. We do not provide a service that includes bathing, cleaning, shopping or other tasks generally referred to as 'personal care'.

### **What support does the Community Support Agency offer?**

Support is tailored to individual needs. Staff and clients work this out together. We call this 'needs assessment and support planning'.

At the Community Support Agency we can offer a range of support services designed to develop tenancy management skills. These can include the following:

- assistance with identifying your support needs
- assistance with setting up and maintaining a home or tenancy
- assistance maximising welfare benefits income
- ensuring contact is made with utility services and seeing that bills are dealt with effectively
- assistance with establishing personal safety and security and advice on home maintenance and self-care
- encouragement to develop skills and confidence around budgeting, cooking, shopping etc.
- encouragement to become more widely involved in community activities and to establish and maintain support networks where appropriate
- providing timely support designed to reduce stress at times of crises and prevent homelessness and institutionalisation.

## **What can clients expect from the Community Support Agency?**

- You will have your own dedicated support worker.
- You will have a support plan, agreed between yourself and your support worker. It will include the goals that you want to achieve.
- Your needs and support plan will be reviewed on at least a quarterly basis or at such time when your needs change significantly.
- You will be able to have your support plan reviewed at any time if you think your needs have developed or changed in any way.
- You can involve a carer, friend, family member or other professional in drawing up your support plan if you wish.
- You can disagree with any needs assessment or support plan and will be provided with information detailing how to appeal against any decisions made with regard to your support, including the right to formally complain.
- You will have the right to see any written information with regard to yourself subject to our Confidentiality Policy.
- You have the right to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and without discrimination.
- You will be consulted about the service we provide and any changes that we propose.
- We will give you a handbook setting out these rights, how to get copies of our policies and procedures and how you can have a say in how the service is run.
- You will be advised about your right to complain about any aspect of our service.

We have policies and procedures to make sure that our staff are well trained and professional, so that they provide a good service and you are safe in their care. If you want to see a copy of any of our policies please ask. Or if you have a problem please tell us.

## **What is expected of clients?**

You also have some responsibilities.

You will be expected to meet with your support worker on a regular basis in order to:

- discuss support needs and contribute to your support plan;
- identify the goals to be achieved;
- agree the actions that need to be put into place to achieve these goals;
- work in a positive way towards achieving them.

We realise that each client will have his or her own skills and capabilities in doing this and we aim to make the process as friendly and welcoming as possible.

The project reserves the right to withdraw the support if any staff are subject to threats of violence or behavior that could be considered as threatening or intimidating.

## **4. Middlesbrough BC**

### **The Shield Project**

The following information focuses primarily on the tenant referencing part of the Shield Project rather than elements of tenancy support, by way of providing an alternative angle on tenancy management.

#### **Reference Information for Private Landlords**

The Shield Project aims to assist all housing providers to work together to prevent some of the problems that can be associated with letting properties and managing tenancies.

The scheme is designed to assist you in finding suitable tenants who have a proven track record of successful tenancies.

#### **How do I become a member?**

You must become a member to use the Shield Project. To do this you will need to sign up to the terms and conditions of membership which will advise you of the services the scheme can provide. You can become a member of the scheme at any time by either signing up at the office or by requesting and returning your membership forms by post. When you have signed up as a member of the scheme, you will be provided with all the necessary paperwork to enable you to use the service.

#### **What will the reference information cover?**

The reference information will cover the main areas that landlords have told us are important in making an informed decision prior to offering a tenancy. These include details of any previous rent arrears, damage to property, abandonment of, or breach of tenancy conditions and complaints regarding the tenant's involvement in nuisance or anti-social behavior.

We can obtain 6 years references from all local authorities, housing associations and most private landlords.

This is currently a free service.

#### **What is required for a reference to be provided?**

In order to supply your reference, we will require your prospective tenant to complete an application form providing information on their current and previous landlords and addresses.

When you become a member, you will be supplied with application forms for prospective tenants to complete, these forms will need to be forwarded to the scheme either by person or by fax/post. Alternatively, you can ask your prospective tenant to call into our office where they can complete the form immediately.

It is essential that all prospective tenants sign the application form, giving permission for us to access tenancy-related information and that their signature is witnessed before we can proceed with the referencing process.

### **How will I receive the reference information?**

We will contact you as soon as we have received the reference information to enable you to make a decision about granting a tenancy. You can receive this information by telephone or by calling into the office. We can also supply you with written confirmation of the content of the reference should you require it for insurance purposes. Written references will need to be held in accordance with the Landlord Contract Data Protection (1998) requirements.

### **What should I do when I receive the reference?**

When you receive the reference, you will need to decide whether or not to grant a tenancy. If you choose not to proceed, you should inform the person you were considering granting a tenancy to as soon as possible.

If you do decide to proceed please ensure that your tenancy agreement is comprehensive. As a member of the project we can supply you with free tenancy agreements to meet your property criteria. We also recommend that you ask your new tenant to sign our post-tenancy authorisation form; this will enable you to provide a reference directly to us when the tenancy ends.

### **Tenancy sign up**

We can also offer a tenancy sign-up service whereby the main elements of the tenancy agreement will be explained to your tenant to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.

### **Training**

We can offer training for landlords on issues associated with letting and managing properties. Please contact us if you are interested in attending training events or have any suggestions for new courses.

### **What do I do when the tenancy is due to end?**

If you have a property that is empty or due to become vacant because you do not intend to renew a tenancy term with your existing tenant, you can call into the office or telephone us and we will register your property details on our 'to let' register.

If the tenant that is vacating your property has signed an authorisation form for you to supply the scheme with a post-tenancy reference please forward this to us.



## **If we request a reference from you**

If we make a request for a reference relating to one of your previous tenants, we will supply a reference form for you to complete and return to the scheme in a stamped addressed envelope.

In order for the scheme to work effectively and benefit all landlords, we hope that you will co-operate with us by returning completed references as soon as possible. If you receive a request and feel unclear about how to complete it, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## **Information for Prospective Tenants**

You have applied to rent a property from a landlord who is a member of the Shield Project. This Project is designed to assist landlords in obtaining references on prospective tenants seeking accommodation. If you wish to rent a property from a landlord who is a member of this project please read this leaflet carefully.

## **The Application Form**

If you are interested in renting a new property you will need to complete an application form giving details of your housing history. By signing the application form, you will be giving your permission for checks to be made on your character and conduct in any previous tenancies you have held. This information will help the landlord to decide if they will grant a tenancy.

The information that will be requested about you will include details of any rent arrears, complaints involving nuisance/anti-social behavior, damage to property or if you have breached or abandoned a tenancy without giving the correct period of notice. When the landlord has received the reference information about you, a decision can then be made about offering you a tenancy.

## **What if I do not give my consent?**

Some landlords may choose to grant you a tenancy without obtaining a reference; others may feel they require a reference to inform them of how you have conducted previous tenancies. The purpose of the project is to provide this information. If you do not give your consent for a reference it will be up to you and your prospective landlord to decide on the most appropriate way to proceed in these circumstances.

## **The Post-Tenancy Authorisation Form**

If you are granted a tenancy, you will be asked to sign a post-tenancy authorisation form which will give your new landlord permission to provide a post-tenancy reference. The post-tenancy reference will contain the same type of information as the reference form which will include details of rent arrears, complaints involving nuisance/anti social behavior, damage to property, or if you have breached or abandoned a tenancy without giving the correct period of notice. The post-tenancy reference will be sent to the project at the end of your tenancy.

### **Who will have access to information about me?**

Landlords, Housing Associations and Local Authority Housing Services who are members of the project can supply information in the form of a reference if you have given your consent to this.

All information obtained by the Shield Project will be held in a central reference bank, in the strictest confidence and used for the sole purpose of your housing application. The decision to grant you a tenancy, or not to grant you a tenancy, will always be made by the landlord.

### **Can I apply to see a reference held about me?**

Under the terms of the 1998 Data Protection Act you can apply to see the information that is held about you.

You can do this by:

- Contacting the Data Protection information security officer at the address detailed on this leaflet
- or
- By contacting the project directly

### **What if I disagree with my reference?**

All landlords completing a reference form sign to confirm that the information they are providing is a true and accurate account of the way in which you conducted your tenancy.

If you feel the information supplied about you is inaccurate you can make an application to have your comments attached to the reference.

When a new landlord applies for a reference concerning you they will be given the reference information, informed of your comments and advised to speak to you and to the previous landlord directly before making any decision.

# Chapter 4

## Sources of Reference

During the course of carrying this research and producing this document information has been utilised from the following sources:-

- DCLG - Tackling the Changing Face of Homelessness  
[www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1504466](http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1504466)
- Northern Consortium – Response to the committee on the ODPM enquiry into the supply of rented housing
- CIOH – Private Renting in Transition
- Northern Consortium – North West Regional Homeless Strategy 2006 (NWRHB, August 2006) – consultation response
- Housing Manual – Working with the Private Rented Sector
- DCLG – Supporting People  
[www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1150136](http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1150136)
- Northern Consortium – Response to Professor John Hills review of the role of social housing
- DCLG – Respect Standard for Housing Management – A Guide for the Public – August 2006
- DCLG – Respect and Housing Management – Using Good Neighbour Agreements – 2006
- [www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1502150](http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1502150)
- [www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1149897](http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1149897)
- [www.respect.gov.uk/members/article.aspx?id=9796](http://www.respect.gov.uk/members/article.aspx?id=9796)
- DCLG – Priority review of the by social landlords of legislative powers to tackle anti-social behavior

## Chapter 5

### Contacts

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>E mail</b>
Amber	Hugh Symons	21 Redwood Close Exmouth Devon EX8 5NS	Hugh.symons@amberweb.org
Burnley BC	Joanne Swift	18-20 Nicholas Street Burnley BB11 2AP	jswift@burnley.gov.uk
Horton Housing Association	Mark Hanson	Chartford House 54 Little Horton Lane Bradford BD5 0BS	Mark.hanson@hortonhousing.co.uk
Darlington BC	Chris Burke	Town Hall Darlington DL1 5QT	Chris.burke@darlington.gov.uk
London Borough of Richmond	Louise Brice	Room 3 Civic Centre 44 York Street Twickenham Middlesex TW1 3BZ	L.brice@richmond.gov.uk
Housing Pendle	Sue Smith	Town Hall Albert Road Colne Lancashire BB8 0AQ	Sue.smith@housingpendle.co.uk
Places for People	Dawn Simcock	Park House 89 Preston New Road Blackburn BB2 6AY	Dawn.simcock@placesforpeople.co.uk
Poole Housing Partnership	Kieren Johnson	Beech House 28-30 Wimborne Road Poole Dorset BH15 2BU	Kieren.johnson@poole.gov.uk
Portsmouth City Council	Valerie Searley	John Pounds Centre 23 Queen Street Portsea Hampshire PO1 3HN	Valerie.searley@portsmouth.gov.uk

The Hope Centre	Margaret Jackson	Watson Street Oswaldtwistle Lancashire BB5 3HH	admin@thehopecentre.co.uk
Middlesbrough BC	Monica Marron	Shield Scheme Vancouver House Gurney Street Middlesbrough TS1 1QP	Monica_marron@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Staffordshire Housing Association	Julie Ogden	2-4 Woodhouse Street Stoke-on-Trent ST4 1EJ	Julie.ogden@staffshousing.org.uk
Tameside BC	Claire Bates	63-65 Grosvenor Street Stalybridge Tameside SK15 2JN	claireb@peoplefirsthousing.co.uk
West Kent Housing Association	Tanya Vines	128 High Street Rainham Kent ME8 8AR	Tanya.vines@wkha.org.uk