

REPORT

By: Caroline Highwood - Director of Resources, Kent Adult Social Services

To: Supporting People in Kent Commissioning Body

19 March 2009

Subject: **Kent Move-On Accommodation Strategy**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

For Decision

Summary: **The report presents the Kent Move-On Accommodation Strategy that sets out the processes that support vulnerable people moving on from supported to independent accommodation.**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Kent Move-On Strategy was developed by a subgroup of the Kent Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing). Supporting People was represented at this sub-group.
- 1.2 The purpose of the strategy is to facilitate the timely move-on of vulnerable people from supported accommodation to independent accommodation and improve their access to local move-on accommodation.

2.0 Context

- 2.1 The development of a Kent Move-On Strategy was a recommendation arising from the strategic review of short-term accommodation-based services under the heading 'Adopt a whole systems approach to improving the delivery of supported accommodation in the longer term'.
- 2.2 Recommendations made by the Audit Commission following inspection in September 2007 reiterated the need to improve the strategic approach to Supporting People and specifically to develop a Kent Move-On Strategy.

3.0 Key Move-On Mechanisms

3.1 The strategy identifies the following processes as key mechanisms in facilitating move-on from supported accommodation:

- Nomination agreements. The extension of referral arrangements for access to social rented housing beyond statutory requirements by districts/boroughs.
- Choice-based Lettings. Vulnerable housing applicants will be supported to engage in the bidding process for properties they are interested in. The Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing) developed a 'Vulnerable Persons' Strategy' specifically for this process that sets out how such individuals will be supported to engage in the scheme. Supporting People was represented on the working group.
- Rent deposit/guarantee schemes. This is to improve access to private sector rented accommodation. Supporting People is match funding district/borough rent deposit schemes to enable more people to move on from supported accommodation.
- Provision of Floating Support. To ease the transition from supported to independent accommodation.

4.0 Monitoring

4.1 The outcomes of the strategy will be monitored by a subgroup of, and reported to the Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing). The outcomes will also be reported to the Commissioning Body, Core Strategy Development Group, and the Kent Homeless Officers Group (a sub-group of the Kent Housing Group).

4.2 The strategy is a living document and will continue to evolve and be amended by agreement.

4.3 Annex A contains an audit of supported accommodation for vulnerable people and people having moved on from supported accommodation funded by Supporting People over the last 2 years. Other information concerns vulnerable people who were referred for social rented housing through the Single Agency Assessment in East Kent. Data on such referrals is collated centrally by the east Kent authorities. Local Authorities in west Kent operate different versions of Joint Assessment Referral processes. Unfortunately, data is not collated centrally and the individual authorities were unable to provide data at the time of drafting the strategy. It will be part of the subgroup's remit to devise ways to start collating the information from west Kent through the Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing).

4.4 The table which relates to the number of individuals moving on from supported accommodation funded by Supporting People from 2006-2008 includes disproportionately high figures for Canterbury, Swale and to some extent Maidstone in short term accommodation-based services. This is because these particular districts and boroughs have a concentration of

short term supported accommodation which is not to be found elsewhere in the county. The figures therefore look higher than perhaps at first appearance they should.

- 4.5 The strategy includes at Annex E an action plan outlining further work to be undertaken by the subgroup, in collaboration with service providers, on a countywide approach to nominations and identifying service users who are ready for move-on to independent accommodation.

5.0 Service User Consultation

- 5.1 The result of service user consultation during the strategic review of short-term accommodation-based support services fed into the development of the strategy.
- 5.2 Service users expressed a need for timely move-on to prevent becoming institutionalised and a need for support during the process itself.

6.0 Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and found that the strategy has a low impact since it seeks to address potential restrictions to accessing services.

7.0 Financial Impact Assessment

- 7.1 The anticipated financial impact of the strategy on the programme in Kent arises from a one-off payment of £662,300 to match fund district/borough/probation rent deposit schemes.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The Kent Move-On Strategy maps the mechanisms that enable vulnerable people to move from supported to independent accommodation.
- 8.2 The strategy includes the links of the Supporting People programme into those mechanisms,
- 8.3 A subgroup of the Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing) including Supporting People, will monitor the outcomes of the strategy and undertake further work to agree countywide nomination agreements and a framework identifying 'tenancy ready' service users.
- 8.4 The Core Strategy Development Group accepted the report and Move On Strategy and agreed to recommend the strategy for acceptance by the Commissioning Body.

9.0 Recommendations

The Commissioning Body is asked to:

- (i) Agree to the Kent Move-On Accommodation Strategy as detailed in Appendix 1.

Claire Martin

Head of Supporting People

01622 221179

Ute Vann

Policy & Strategy Officer

01622 694825

Appendix 1: Draft Kent Move-On Accommodation Strategy

Background Documents:

Report on Strategic Review of Short-Term Accommodation-Based Services, March 2007

Report on the Audit Commission Inspection December 2007

Kent Supporting People Annual Plans 2007-08 and 2008-09

Appendix 1: Draft Kent Move-On Accommodation Strategy



Kent Move-On Accommodation Strategy

Introduction

The Kent Supporting People programme provides a range of supported accommodation-based services for people with a variety of housing related support needs and whose permanent living arrangements have broken down including:

- Homeless people
- People leaving institutions, such as prison, hospital or residential care homes
- People in short-term crisis such as women and children fleeing domestic violence

The main objective of those services is to promote independence and enable service users to access and maintain suitable long-term, or permanent housing, and to 'move-on' to a more settled and stable way of life. This strategy describes the arrangements and structures in place in Kent to facilitate this process. It also identifies areas for future development and improvement.

The strategy was developed by a sub group of the Kent Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing) that was comprised of a number of representatives from a wide range of agencies.

Background

The Kent Move-on Strategy is grounded in a strategic approach by acknowledging that agencies must work together to find solutions to the move-on shortage. The move-on strategy operates within a strategic context determined by a variety of crosscutting agendas, including:

- Supporting People
- Homelessness
- Social inclusion and Sustainable Communities
- Tackling health inequalities
- Crime reduction

This strategy also acknowledges that there is an unequal distribution of supported accommodation around the 12 districts and boroughs in Kent and that further work will be required to address this in order to create more provision and choice for the service user.

The Strategic Context

Supporting People

The strategic review of short-term accommodation-based supported housing in Kent carried out in 2006/07 by Supporting People found that:

- There is 'silting up' of short-term supported housing due to a shortfall in supply and lack of access to move on accommodation. This is an ineffective use of resources and may result in institutionalising individuals unable to move on when ready
- The wide range of differential allocation arrangements for accessing move on accommodation across the county creates confusion among support providers as well as inconsistencies
- Some decisions on allocations of move on appear to be made on a historic rather than strategic basis
- Districts/boroughs are unable to house vulnerable people appropriately
- Supporting People grant is spent on support that is no longer required

In line with what has been recognised locally, the Audit Commission inspection report (2007) for Kent Supporting People identified the need for a Move-On Strategy as part of strengthening the strategic approach to Supporting People.

For Supporting People link to www.kent.gov.uk/supportingpeople

District/Borough Homelessness Strategies

Homelessness strategies have a strong emphasis on prevention with the key priorities of:

- Increase numbers of people prevented from becoming homeless
- Reducing levels of repeat homelessness
- Keeping levels of rough sleeping as close to zero as possible
- Ceasing use of bed and breakfast for homeless families and 16 & 17 year olds
- Halving the number of people in temporary accommodation (including the numbers of single homeless vulnerable people) as measured against the base line of December 2004

Local authorities are expected to respond to the challenges through a variety of measures including:

- Greater access to the private rented sector as well as the social rented sector for permanent and temporary accommodation
- Increased and improved housing related support services
- Making better use of the social rented stock, e.g. under-occupation, overcrowding, Decent Homes Standard

Sustainable Communities: Homes for All, 2005

This document sets out the Government's policy objectives for Choice Based Lettings which include greater mobility for those moving into, or within social housing and making better use of social housing stock. This will impact on vulnerable people moving on through ensuring that they can make informed choices and that the processes are more transparent.

Local Area Agreement (LAA2), 2008

As part of the LAA 2, 2008, Supporting People delivers against National Indicator 141, 'to help vulnerable people in short-term supported accommodation to move to independence': 71% of Supporting People clients in short-term supported accommodation to move into independence over the next three years (from a baseline of 65.7%). Other indicators under the agreement include:

- NI 32 - Repeat incidents of DV
- NI 117 - 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- NI 136 - People supported to live independently through Social Services
- NI 139 - Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates
- NI 140 - Drug users in effective treatment
- NI 145 - Adults with a learning disability in settled accommodation

- NI 149 - Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation
- NI 156 - Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation –PSA 20
- NI 159 - %age decent council homes – Communities and Local Government DSO

Environmental Sustainability

NI 187 – Tackling fuel poverty – people receiving income based benefits living in homes with low energy efficiency – Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs DSC

Towards 2010 target

The development of more housing for older people, disabled people and those with special needs is encouraged under the subtitle 'Improved health, care & wellbeing' with a target of 400 across Kent.

DoH White Paper, Our Health, Our Care, Our Say, 2006

This paper calls for access to health services to be designed around individual need, with fast and consistent care delivered to a consistently high standard and where possible, into people's own homes. There is greater emphasis on enabling people to attain / maintain the greatest level of independence in the community. There needs to be adequate throughput to short-term supported housing and moving on to independent accommodation in order to ensure that vulnerable people are enabled to return to a more independent and stable form of housing. This will also free up places in supported housing for other people who might otherwise have to live in more institutional forms of accommodation.

1. Who is the Move-On Strategy aimed at?

All service users in short and long term supported accommodation, irrespective of funding stream.

Accommodation based services

Such services deliver supported housing which provides a stable environment and extra help for vulnerable people. Support is linked to the building where the service is delivered. This means that service users have to live at a certain address to receive the support.

Short-term accommodation is defined as aiming to

- a) Bring about independence following the provision of housing related support of under two years of duration.
- b) Increase the capacity for independent living through a package which has an intended duration of less than two years

Long-term accommodation also promotes independence as its principal objective but is more open-ended in duration.

2. Audit of Move-On Data (See Annex A)

This includes

:

- Unit number of supported accommodation, by client group funded by Supporting People and Kent County Council

- Number of referrals for social rented housing through the Single Agency Assessment (this referral mechanism only operates in East Kent. West Kent districts/boroughs use Joint Assessment Referral systems but were, at the time, unable to provide data.)
- Move-on from supported accommodation funded by Supporting People 2006-08

3. Barriers to Move-On

- Lack of affordable social housing across Kent
- Length of time waiting to access independent accommodation
- Managing the expectations of service users and providers of supported provision
- Lack of support or resettlement provision, e.g. floating support
- Arrears from a previous tenancy
- Lack of access to treatment for people with drug and alcohol problems
- Lack of life skills needed to sustain tenancies
- Resources are finite, e.g. floating support, provision of social rented housing
- Previous history of non-sustainment of tenancies (landlord expectations)

4. Improving Access to Accommodation

4.1 Social Housing

Access to social housing is via the housing register in the relevant district or borough. To be considered for housing advice or assistance from the Local Housing Authority (LHA) applications should always, in the first instance, be made to the LHA where the applicant has a local connection.

Ensure a housing register application has been made together with referrals via JARP/JARS (West Kent) and SAA. (East Kent) only if appropriate and by statutory agencies**

4.1.1 Nominations Agreements

Districts will consider extending the referral arrangements beyond the statutory arrangements and it is recommended that the nominations agreement as used by Canterbury City Council (Annex B) may be used as an example of good practice and be adopted across Kent. (Note: short-term supported accommodation is not included in the Choice Based Lettings Process)

In addition applicants must meet the following criteria:

- be aged 16 or over
- The applicant must be willing to address any behaviour that might make them unsuitable to be a tenant or restrict/reduce their priority for housing on the local authority Housing Register, e.g. a commitment to re-pay any previously accrued rent arrears or other housing related debts, or dealing with anti-social/violent behaviour.

Social landlords will need confirmation of who will act as guarantor for a tenancy for those service users under the age of 18 years. For example, some social landlords will accept a litigation friend as guarantor, as agreed in the Young Persons Homelessness Protocol.

**JARS – Joint Assessment Referral Scheme for applicants with supported housing needs.

JARP – Joint Assessment & Referral Panel for applicants with supported housing needs. (JARS/JARP are forms used by West Kent LHAs and obtainable from those LHAs.)

**SAA - Single Agency Assessment to be used by statutory partner agencies where A service user requires re-housing due to a health/support need. (SAA forms are used by East Kent LHAs and are obtainable from those LHAs)

Move- on to Housing Association accommodation is via the housing register.

4.2 Choice Based Lettings (CBL)

CBL fundamentally changes the way that households will be able to access social housing. CBL means that applicants will be more active in searching for vacancies by expressing an interest (making a bid) for properties they feel would be more suitable for their needs

All local housing authorities in Kent will be operating CBL—known as Kent Homechoice, by the end of 2009. Rather than homes being allocated by the council, CBL allows tenants and prospective tenants who are on the housing register, to bid for the available properties they are interested in. Available homes will be advertised on the internet and in a fortnightly free sheet, allowing applicants to see what council or housing association properties are available in the area and enabling them to play a greater role in the process of selecting their home.

There is a CBL vulnerable persons' strategy outlining methods to ensure inclusion for all. Supported housing providers are able to assist their service users to access the CBL system by helping them to bid, or by bidding on their behalf for suitable accommodation.

For Kent CBL link to www.kenthomechoice.org.uk

4.3 Private Rented Sector (PRS)

Because Kent is a region of high demand, and has an acute shortage of, social housing, a large percentage of people on the housing register are unlikely to be offered a property and so would be waiting for years with no realistic prospect of being housed. Therefore, accommodation in the private sector needs to be promoted.

4.3.1 The private rented sector may be a more accessible option for many people but there are difficulties in accessing this due to:

- Requirements for rent deposits and rent in advance
- Letting agent fees
- Restrictions on local housing allowance for under 25's (single room rents)
- Private Landlords unwilling to accommodate tenants with certain vulnerabilities
- Lack of support for both tenants and landlords
- Local housing allowance, e.g. the process itself, allowance is paid in arrears, not being paid direct to landlords

4.3.2 Increasing access to private rented sector

- Managing expectations
- Use of rent deposit schemes/bonds from local housing authorities (see annex C)
- Use of other rent deposit schemes, i.e. Supporting People and probation (see annex D)

- Use of landlord fora to form links with landlords from the PRS and promote decent homes standards
- Encouraging savings schemes for service users
- Exploring the use of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)
- Ensuring that a referral for appropriate support has been made and is in place (wherever possible) before the take-up of the tenancy and is provided during the transitional period.
- Ensuring support providers and service users are aware that local housing allowance can be paid direct to landlords in cases of vulnerability (refer to housing benefit section on local authority websites for local vulnerable person safeguards)

4.3.3 Reconnection Policy

Supported housing provision is not evenly spread across Kent, with some districts having little or no supported accommodation. This leads to an influx of service users into those districts with support services. Providers, should wherever appropriate and reasonable, encourage service users to reconnect with their originating area.

4.4 Shared Ownership

There are some Registered Social Landlords who specialise in shared ownership for people with a learning disability, e.g. Advance Housing. www.advanceuk.org.

4.5 Floating Support Referrals

These provide support to service users across all tenures and seek to empower service users to continue to develop life skills and address blocks to living independently without support. Referrals can be made by providers, advocates or by the service user.

In Kent, referrals for floating support services are administered centrally by the Supporting People Team. The Team holds and manages the waiting list and allocates referrals to support providers when their services have space for new service users.

All documentation related to floating support, including referral forms and description of processes, is available on the Kent Supporting People website on www.kent.gov.uk/supportingpeople

The provision of pre and post tenancy floating support plays an important role in enabling people to secure, prepare for, and sustain their move-on accommodation. There is an identified role for floating support users across all tenures and seek to empower service users to continue to develop life skills and address barriers to living independently without support. Referrals can be made by providers, advocates or by self-referral by the service user.

5.0 Priorities and Actions (Annex E – Action Plan)

- Agree framework to identify 'Tenancy Ready' service users
- Ensure that there is a provider group in each district, with terms of reference to agree nominations
- Providers to manage service users expectations re access to housing within their support plans
- A toolkit to be available for providers and service users re access to housing
- Monitoring framework to be agreed and implemented – JPPB subgroup to monitor

6.0 Monitoring

Outcomes from the Move-on strategy will be reported to the JPPB (Housing), Kent Homeless Officers Group, and SP Commissioning Body and at the provider fora.

Data will be collected via the CBL system, Supporting People and the Single Agency Assessment process and will be monitored by the sub-group.

ANNEX A

AUDIT

Units of Accommodation-Based Supported Housing, Supporting People and KCC Funded (excluding Older People with support needs)

| Specific | Long Term | Short Term |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Generic | 15 | |
| Mental health | 139 | 182 |
| Learning difficulties | 358 | 22 |
| Offenders or risk of | | 76 |
| Homeless families | | 51 |
| Young people leaving care | | 90 |
| Young people at risk | | 190 |
| Domestic violence | | 93 |
| Teenage parents | | 21 |
| Rough sleeper | | 21 |
| Drug problems | | 35 |
| Alcohol | | 11 |
| Physical/sensory disabilities | 167 | |
| Single homeless | 22 | 385 |

Annex A cont'd

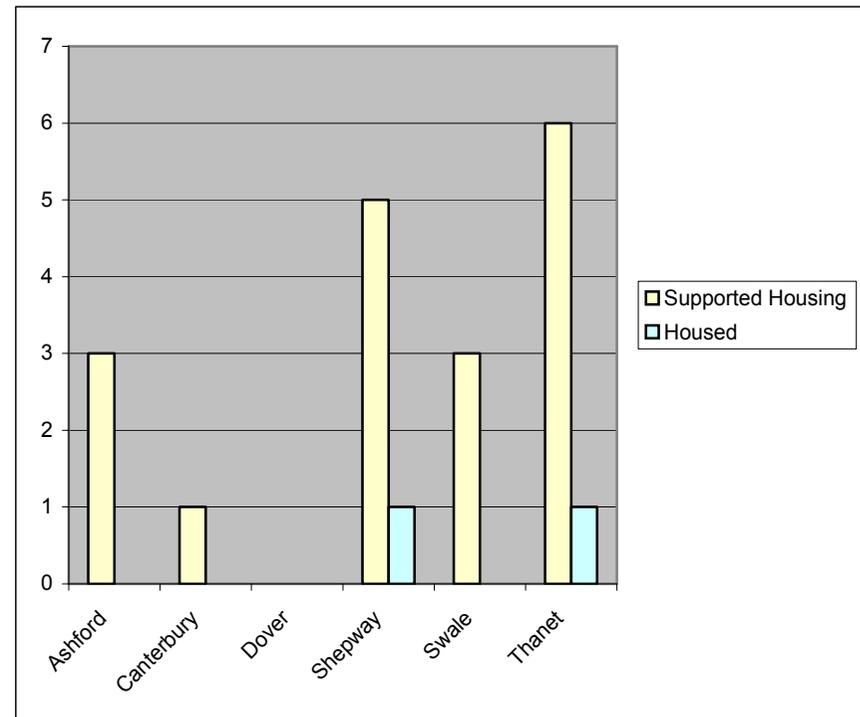
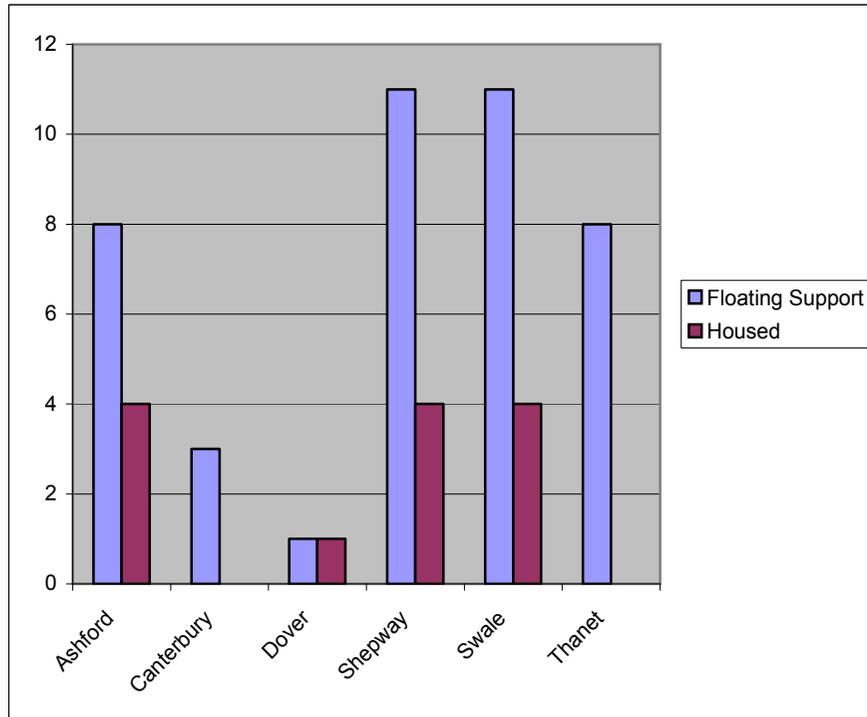
Number of people with support needs who have been referred for social rented housing via Single Agency Assessment, April 2007-March 2008 (East Kent only)

| | Ashford | Canterbury | Dover | Shepway | Swale | Thanet |
|---------------------------|----------|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Floating Support | 8 | 3 | 1 | 11 | 11 | 8 |
| Housed | 4 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| Supported Housing | 3 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 6 |
| Housed | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Independent Living Scheme | 7 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Housed | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

Note: Single Agency Assessment referrals only operate in East Kent. Districts/boroughs in West Kent operate slightly differing Joint Referral Assessment processes but were unable to provide data.

Annex A cont'd

Number of Referrals for Social Rented Housing by Single Agency Assessment (East Kent only)

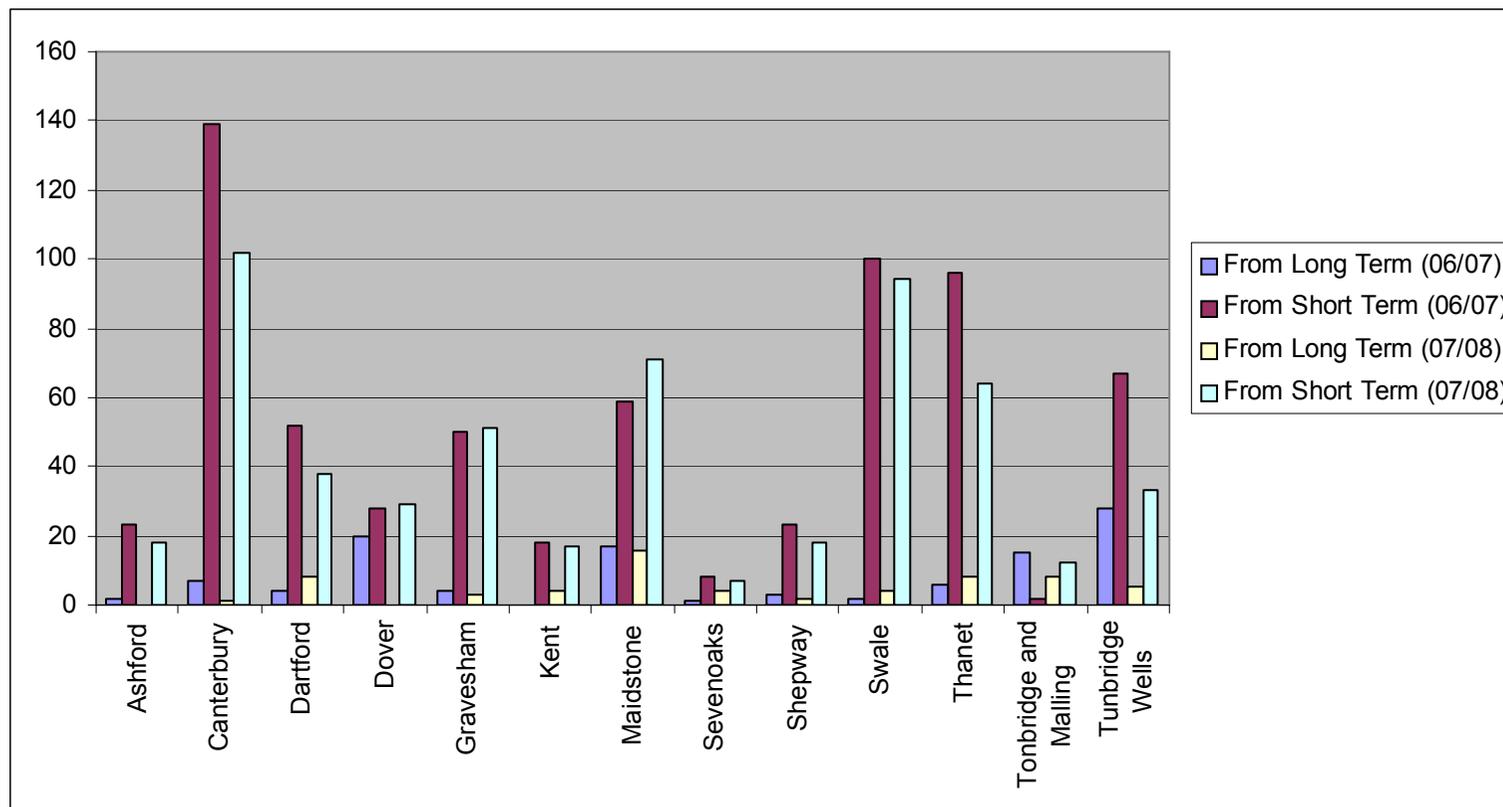


Annex A cont'd**Number of Individuals Moving On from Supported Accommodation funded by Supporting People 2006-2008**

| District | From Long Term (06/07) | From Short Term (06/07) | From Long Term (07/08) | From Short Term (07/08) |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Ashford | 2 | 23 | 0 | 18 |
| Canterbury | 7 | 139 | 1 | 102 |
| Dartford | 4 | 52 | 8 | 38 |
| Dover | 20 | 28 | 0 | 29 |
| Gravesham | 4 | 50 | 3 | 51 |
| Kent | 0 | 18 | 4 | 17 |
| Maidstone | 17 | 59 | 16 | 71 |
| Sevenoaks | 1 | 8 | 4 | 7 |
| Shepway | 3 | 23 | 2 | 18 |
| Swale | 2 | 100 | 4 | 94 |
| Thanet | 6 | 96 | 8 | 64 |
| Tonbridge and Malling | 15 | 2 | 8 | 12 |
| Tunbridge Wells | 28 | 67 | 5 | 33 |
| Total | 109 | 665 | 63 | 554 |

Annex A cont'd

Number of Individuals Moving On from Supported Accommodation funded by Supporting People 2006-2008



Note: The differences in move-on between districts as shown in the above graph correlates to the distribution of supported accommodation in the 12 Kent districts and boroughs

Model of a Nominations Agreement

Canterbury City Council/Porchlight nominations protocol and procedure

There are 27 nominations each year to CCC accommodation for residents of supported housing who are ready to live independently. Porchlight are the gatekeepers of these nominations but will refer residents other supported housing providers as well as their own residents.

Other providers who can access these nominations:

- Scrine Foundation
- CRI – The Cedars
- Stonham

These providers can only nominate a maximum of one resident per quarter.

The co-ordinators of the nominations are Gill Bryant, Strategic Area Manager and Yusupha Tunkara Service Manager

The following lays out guidelines and criteria for referring a resident for a nomination. These criteria apply to the resident whether they be in Porchlight housing or other supported housing.

Residents of supported housing in Canterbury should only be nominated for council accommodation if they fit the following criteria

1. Have a local connection to the CCC area
2. are ready to leave supported housing
3. have completed approximately 1 year in supported housing
4. have addressed their support needs enough to enable them to live relatively independently with no support or some low level support such as floating support
5. have no rent arrears or are addressing them consistently

1. Local connection

This means they must have family in the CCC area or have lived in the area for the past 5 years or were in care in the area. Some exceptions may be made to this rule if they have been fleeing domestic violence or they have been placed in the area under the Probation service. If the latter applies, then a letter of support from probation must be sort to confirm they can not return to their original area.

2. Ready to leave supported housing

Both resident and support worker must agree on this.

3. Completed 1 year in supported housing

Normally 1 year is required (this could be 3 months in short stay hostel and a further 9 months in a longer stay supported housing project). It should be noted that once a nomination is made, the resident may have to wait a further 6 months or longer for a nomination to come through.

However exceptions to the 1 year requirement can be made. Some examples are:

- if the person has a long history of rough sleeping
- is not suitable for shared accommodation
- has medical reasons
- has been in supported housing previously
- if the resident has started in long term and stable employment

Each case will be determined individually.

4. Addressing support needs

Referrals will need to show that the client has engaged with services and built up some links outside supported housing. It may be appropriate for the resident to have completed some training on basic life skills.

5. Rent arrears

If the client has rent arrears on a previous council tenancy or housing association tenancy, then they can not be nominated until they have started to address these consistently for a minimum of 3 months and continue to do so once nominated.

How to apply

All referrals for nomination must have first completed a housing needs application to Canterbury City Council. It is important that this is done as soon as possible to the person coming into supported housing and does not have to wait until a nomination is being sort.

If the resident already has an application into the council, it important that any change of address or other details are updated. Residents should make sure that they chose as many areas as possible on the form and they need to be aware that if they only choose a small selection of areas, it is unlikely they will ever be offered council accommodation. If the resident was not aware of this at time of application, they can always update their application. If there is a specific reason for not going to a certain area, please make this clear.

Assuming the housing needs form has been completed, to nominate a resident the keyworker must supply the following to Gill:

- Porchlight nomination form
- Copy of the current updated support plan
- Copy of the current updated risk assessment
- Letter of support from keyworker
- Copy of any incident reports

Once this has been supplied, Gill will contact the resident to arrange an informal interview with them.

Once this has been done, their nomination will be accepted or refused. If it is refused, clear reasons should be given to the resident and keyworker.

Once accepted, keyworkers are asked to send Gill a monthly update on the resident. If there is no specific change, this could be a short email stating there has been no changes. However if there are updates to the support plan, risk assessment or there have been any incidents of note, then they should be informed of this on the monthly update.

Further discussion on nominations should be made at the Accommodation Providers Forum with a view to prioritising residents. Gill will meet with the Housing Options Manager from CCC quarterly to discuss nominations.

ANNEX C

Rent Deposits (Local Housing Authorities)

| District/Borough | Rent Deposit Scheme | Deposit Bond Scheme | Other Funding | Who Qualifies?e.g. priority homeless/non-priority | Comments |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|---|
| Ashford | No | Yes | Prevention fund | Priority cases only for prevention fund. Priority /Non priority or intentionally homeless for deposit bond scheme. | Will send outline of schemes separately |
| Canterbury | Yes | No | No | Priority cases and Intentionally homeless | Completed 210 cases in 3 years |
| Dartford | No | Yes | No | Anyone with local connection, no rent arrears or anti-social behaviour and on a low income. Policy says income below £276 although we complete budget sheet to assess ability to afford a deposit. | Each property visited and photos taken as proof of condition. Will renew at the end of the tenancy if client has proof of saving to their own deposit. |
| Dover | No | Yes | No | Priority need and homeless. Also offered to intentionally homeless families. | Due to the success of the scheme it is now used mainly when B&B would be the alternative so as not to overload the Rent Deposit Officer. |
| Gravesham | Yes | No | Rent Guarantee Scheme; this scheme offers a deposit of £600.00 and £600.00 to be held by LL for rent in advance, which is refund by the LL after 12 mths of the tenancy. | Priority need cases only, or discretion will be applied for homeless applicants who are deemed intentionally homeless and they are in priority need. | We also operate a private leasing scheme, managed by Avenue Lettings. Applicants are assisted with this housing option, under the prevention route. These cases would be where a housing duty is owed by the authority. |

| District/Borough | Rent Deposit Scheme | Deposit Bond Scheme | Other Funding | Who Qualifies?e.g. priority homeless/non-priority | Comments |
|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---|--|--|
| Maidstone | Yes | Yes | Agent Fees | Must have local connection. Must provide evidence of homelessness or threatened with homelessness | The Rent Deposit Scheme we offer is more popular at the moment but this may change from April when the new laws come in regarding the holding of deposits. |
| Sevenoaks | Yes | Yes | Rent-In-Advance Loan | Non-Priority & Priority Need. Must have Local Connection and not have the means to fund own deposit and first months rent-in-advance. | |
| Shepway | Yes | Yes | Innovation Fund | Priority/Non priority discretion is used where a household is deemed intentionally homeless where it would cost the council B&B and storage costs. | |
| Swale | Yes | Yes | Swale Borough Council revenue funding- can not be used to access housing outside of Swale except for severe harassment and DV cases. Properties must also be inspected by our EHO's and meet SBC's Decent Homes standard. | From 1 st April 07 both priority and non-priority | Run by CASA Support on behalf of Swale Borough Council |

| District/Borough | Rent Deposit Scheme | Deposit Bond Scheme | Other Funding | Who Qualifies? e.g. priority homeless/non-priority | Comments |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| Thanet | Yes | No | No | Standard prevention tool Intentionally homeless/ overcrowded. Non-priority at our discretion. | |
| Tonbridge & Malling | Yes (interest-free loan available for up to equivalent of one month's rent as a deposit. Rent in advance not offered.) | Yes – bond to landlord up to the value of one month's rent, to a maximum of £750, to cover any damage etc in lieu of cash deposit | In exceptional circs, rent in advance paid (as an interest free loan, or paid back to the Council through HB). Also in very exceptional cases, can act as 'guarantor' by offering the bond in addition to the deposit as extra security, up to one month's rent (usually only where a duty is owed but no RSL will accept the household and entirely at the Director's discretion. | Anyone with a local connection to T&M, including non-priority households | Currently reviewing procedures to take account of Tenancy Deposit Protection (TDP) legislation and formalise circs where the additional assistance can be offered. |
| T'Wells | Yes | Yes | No | All homeless or threatened with homeless households with a local connection | Intentionally homeless households may be eligible for these schemes depending on reason intentionally homeless |

Rent Deposits (Supporting People)**SERVICE SPECIFICATION FOR: Rent Deposit Scheme**

The schedule describes the Service to be delivered under the Steady State Contract for Provision of Supporting People Services.

Working in partnership to provide high-quality, cost-effective and flexible welfare services for the vulnerable people of Kent, which promote independent living, facilitate social inclusion and keep them safe and secure. It is envisaged that welfare services will in time complement other service provision across the county.
(Kent Five Year Supporting People Strategy 2005-10)

1.0 Introduction

In entering into a contract with Kent County Council, as the Administering Authority, for a Rent Deposit Scheme funded under the Supporting People Programme, the Local Authority (LA) agrees to comply with this service specification. The specification states Kent County Council's requirements and is part of the contract for the delivery of a Rent Deposit Scheme to service users leaving Supporting People funded accommodation. Compliance with the contract will take place through regular monitoring and review of progress.

The particular service should: -

- Only be used for those leaving services funded by the Supporting People Programme
- Provide a quick and easy way for service users to access funds.
- To help service users to live independently.
- To help service users gain access to permanent accommodation they would not normally be able to afford.
- To help private landlords remain solvent by guaranteeing payment to them for any loss or damage.

2.0 The Aims of a Rent Deposit Scheme

The overall aim of the service is promoting people's independence and enabling service users in supported housing to access permanent accommodation without waiting to be re-housed by the LA when ready.

The main objectives of the Rent Deposit Scheme are:-

- To reduce the LA homeless register and to comply with government targets on reducing homelessness within the Borough.
- To help Supported Housing Providers move-on service users when their support package has been concluded.
- To promote people's independence.
- To help service users rebuild their lives and to re-connect to their defined areas of local connection.
- To encourage local landlords to utilise their properties better and widen use of the private sector
- To help vulnerable people back into affordable housing without getting into debt to do so.
- To support the achievement of the Kent Local Area Agreement 2008/11
- To reduce the risk of homelessness

3.0 Client Group

The Supporting People funded Rent Deposit Scheme will provide funds for Supported Housing residents only, who live in accommodation already supported by the Supporting People grant, irrespective of status, i.e. single people or families. The scheme may be used to reconnect those wishing to settle outside of the county of Kent.

The service is generic in nature in that it includes a range of the following client groups:

- Single Homeless People
- Homeless Families with support needs
- Those escaping from domestic violence or abuse

Includes single people aged 16 to 24 who may be:

- Living in unsuitable conditions.
- Living in temporary accommodation.
- Escaping domestic violence or abuse.
- Experiencing or have experienced issues with addiction.
- Clients of the Probation Service, Young Offenders Team or 16+ Team.

4.0 Service Availability

4.1 Access

A service user will be assisted by the support provider to make an application to the LA Housing Office; the LA will then administer the funds.

The LA should make reference to the Supporting People move on protocols and the reconnection policy

The Rent Deposit scheme may be used to assist vulnerable people to move into shared accommodation

4.2 Exclusions

Service users not living in SP funded supported accommodation.

Other reasonable exclusions are where

- People do not meet the receiving organisation's selection criteria and exclusion arrangements
- Applications are refused on the grounds of risk

The LA is expected to use its best endeavours to ensure the service is accessible to all minority and hard to reach groups within the County and provide a service that is responsive to the needs of Ethnic Minority groups and disabled persons.

The LA shall not assign its rights and /or obligations under this contract or sub-contract the provision of the service to any person or organisation without the previous written consent of the Supporting People Team.

No payments for rent deposits/bonds or rent in advance are permitted in respect of supported housing accommodation funded by the Supporting People Programme

The service will not be used for the sole purpose of discharging the LA's statutory duty

5.0 Service Values and Principles

The following values and principles will underpin all activities undertaken in the performance of the Service:

- The Grant will be a one-off payment, match funded to the LA's own budget for the financial year 08/09 for its own Rent Deposit/Bond Scheme. The LA will ensure that at least 85% of the grant will be used to fund rent deposits/bonds
- The Service shall promote and encourage choice and be based on promoting independence through support.
- Service users are supported in achieving their full potential.
- Service users shall be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect and will be at the centre of all decision-making that impacts on their lives.
- The Service shall seek to meet and promote the cultural and religious needs of service users from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The Service shall actively promote the opportunities for service users to be involved with the LA and seek their view in establishing good practice, reviewing policy and procedure, and maintaining and continuously improving delivery of the service in accordance with the principles of meaningful service user involvement
- The Service will liaise with other LAs providing services to vulnerable people in order to develop effective and efficient practices and partnerships, which will optimise the effectiveness of all services in Kent.
- The LA will ensure that reasonable procedures are in place to secure the return of the rent deposit at termination of the Tenancy Agreement

6.0 Quality Requirements

The LA will permit the Supporting People Team to have access to and inspect the quality of the Service provided in accordance with the terms of this agreement, including such evidence as may reasonably be requested.

The Service will have policies and procedures in place, to deal with Adult Abuse issues as appropriate. The written policies and procedures safeguard service users from any form of abuse or exploitation and staff are familiar with and follow these procedures.

There are procedures for responding to suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect which reflect multi-agency policies and procedures, including the involvement of the Police and other appropriate parties, in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and the Department of Health Guidance "No Secrets".

Any information given by service users in confidence or provided about service users, and any access to a service user's personal file will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Service's written policies and procedures, and in the best interests of the service user and any dependants.

The service provider will notify the Supporting People Team via email to supportingpeopleteam@kent.gov.uk (indicating **Safeguarding** on the subject line) immediately any Safeguarding or Protection issue is suspected. The Supporting People Team must be involved in any Safeguarding meetings.

7.0 Performance Indicators/Outcomes

The performance of the Service will be measured by the following indicators. These indicators may be supplemented during the life of the contract, and any changes or additions will be communicated to the Provider of the service.

The local authority shall report, on a monthly basis to the Supporting People Programme

- The number of households that have been assisted by the scheme

- How much funding was given on each individual occasion
- Which Supporting People Programme client group the funds were given to
- Where the service user moved on to
- How the funds have assisted people to maintain independent living
- From which scheme did the service user move
- On a quarterly basis how much of the funding has been returned

The service will be monitored via a monthly report on a template to be supplied by the Supporting People Programme.

- The service shall support the achievement of NI 141, '% of service users who are supported to establish and maintain independent living'.
- The service shall support the achievement of NI 142, '% of service users who have moved on in a planned way from temporary living arrangements'.

The Provider should agree to work with the Supporting People Team to develop and meet outcomes specific to each service user which will include the seven main outcomes for adult social care based on the concept of well-being, these being:

- Improved health and emotional well-being.
- Improved quality of life.
- Making a positive contribution.
- Choice and control.
- Freedom from discrimination.
- Economic well-being.
- Personal dignity.

ACTION PLAN

ANNEX E

| Action | Lead | Partners | By | Outcome |
|--|----------------------------------|---|----------------|---|
| Toolkit re Strategy to be developed for Providers to use | JPPB sub group | SP and KCC providers and service users | April 2009 | Consistent approach to move-on strategy |
| Framework to be agreed identifying 'tenancy ready' service users | JPPB sub group | Supporting People | June 2009 | Framework agreed and implemented |
| Provider fora to be set up in each district | Porchlight | Supporting People Providers Local Housing Authorities | June 2009 | Each district forum to share nominations on a 'tenancy ready' basis |
| Links to be made with private sector landlords through local Landlord Fora | Providers and Statutory Agencies | Housing Options Teams Private Sector Teams in Local Housing Authorities Service Users | September 2009 | Promote the use of good practice when service users are ready for move on |
| Providers and service users are enabled to access Choice Based Lettings system | Housing Options Managers | CBL Project Manager | Ongoing | To ensure equality of access to social rented accommodation |
| Raise awareness of local housing allowance payments direct to landlord, rent deposit schemes and discretionary hardship payments | Providers | Housing Options Teams/housing benefit teams | Ongoing | Increase access to private rented schemes |
| Develop a service user guide to accessing accommodation | JPPB sub group | Providers Service Users | June 2009 | Manage expectations of both service users and providers: to empower and enable service users to sustain a tenancy and to be aware of rights /responsibilities |
| Develop a framework to monitor the strategy and continue working on a countywide nomination agreement | JPPB sub group | Providers Supporting People | July 2009 | Framework agreed and monitoring schedule/meetings agreed |
| Develop a methodology to work on issues around unequal distribution of supported housing and potential options to address this | JPPB sub group | CBL Project Board Supporting People Providers Local Housing Authorities | July 2009 | Framework agreed so that move-on provision to address options. A schedule of meetings agreed. |