

Aberdeen City Council

DRAFT

Supporting People

Strategy

2003 – 2008

If you would like a copy in large print or another format or have any comments or questions on this the Aberdeen City Council Draft Supporting People Strategy and Action Plan, please contact:

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INTRODUCTION

What is Supporting People?

Supporting People is a new, integrated policy and funding framework for housing support services. It is for people in supported accommodation or those who are in receipt of flexible support.

The Scheme was introduced throughout the UK in April 2003, with the aim of the provision of good quality services, which enable vulnerable people to live independently in the community, in all types of accommodation and tenures, in ways that are focused on service users needs.

Supporting People puts housing support services on a secure legal footing. It introduces systematic and strategic processes to assess and record needs, while also considering the supply of support services and accommodation in Aberdeen and where appropriate, bordering authorities.

The Supporting People Strategy will set out the main priorities for the provision of housing support services within the Aberdeen City Council area for the next five years. Whilst being an independent document within the Local Housing Strategy, it will link to other strategies and plans within Aberdeen and the bordering local authorities of the former Grampian Region.

What is Housing Support?

Housing support is not a new development, with Sheltered Housing being the prime example of a long standing housing support service. However, through the introduction of the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme in April 2000, commissioners have looked to establishing new housing support services for some client groups, who would not have been deemed as a priority for funding through Community Care budgets.

Housing support can refer to many different tasks. Twenty One of these have been prescribed for payment through the Supporting People grant, via the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001(Housing Support Services) Regulations 2002. It has been the intention of the Scottish Executive that no services previously eligible for funding should be excluded.

The definition adopted for the purposes of this strategy is contained in Section 91(8) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 :

‘ “housing support services” include any services which provides support, assistance, advice or counselling to an individual with particular needs, with a view to enabling that individual to occupy, or continue to occupy, as the person’s sole or main residence, residential accommodation other than excepted accommodation.’

Aberdeen*utures* (Aberdeen City's first Community Plan) identified a number of challenges for the Council and its partners relating to social care and housing. The relevant key aims are:

1. to deliver a comprehensive programme of care to those who need support and their carers.
2. to improve the quality of housing and environment for individuals and the community. This would be undertaken by ensuring 'that people with greatest need and the most restrictive choice benefit from initiatives and investment to improve their living environment and personal circumstances.'

The housing challenges are dealt with in the Local Housing Strategy, whilst those relating to social care are addressed in the Joint Community Care Plan and related care group plans or strategies, such as the Older Persons Strategy.

In response to these challenges and the implementation of Supporting People, Aberdeen City Council established a Core Co-ordination Group (CCG), whose membership consists of officers from various services within the Council, an elected member, the NHS in Grampian, Communities Scotland, Registered Social Landlords and housing support providers.

Whilst no service recipients or their representatives (family/carer) are a member of this group, Aberdeen City Council felt this was a glaring omission which required to be addressed. Rather than facilitating the token representation of one or two people on this group, the CCG took the decision through the network groups established by the Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) to create an "Open Forum". In creating this link, it has enabled recipients of services, their families and employees of housing support service providers to attend meetings or briefings, enabling their voice be heard.

The Supporting People Strategy and its Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by Aberdeen City Council and its' partners. The tasks set are achievable and this document intends to be a work-in-progress document.

POLICY & CONTEXT

Local Policy

The position of the Supporting People Strategy in relation to other initiatives and strategies developed by the Council is illustrated in Appendix 1.

The Community Plan – *Aberdeen futures*

Aberdeen futures is the generic title for a programme of change developed by the Council and its partners for the City of Aberdeen. The programme is based on Aberdeen City Council working together with associated bodies (such as health and education providers, police, the voluntary sector and business enterprise agencies) to make the City a viable and enjoyable place in which to live, work or visit.

Aberdeen futures is underpinned by the key objectives of achieving social inclusion and sustainability. These relate to ensuring a better quality of life for everyone and are crucial to the environmental, social and economic wellbeing of the city.

Local Housing Strategy

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 Section 89, there is a statutory duty on each Scottish local authority to produce a Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The LHS will assess housing provision and the provision of related services, covering all housing tenures.

Aberdeen City Council and six other local authorities agreed to pilot the requirements set out in the draft guidance on Local Housing Strategies issued by Communities Scotland. In March 2004, a draft LHS will be published as part of an evolving process.

With its strategic objective of maximising choice in housing provision and support combinations for all vulnerable groups, while eradicating unnecessary admissions to institutional care, the LHS will be a catalyst in developing and implementing Supporting People.

Homelessness Strategy

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to carry out an assessment of homelessness, to prepare and to submit a strategy for the prevention and alleviation of homelessness. The Homelessness Strategy was resubmitted in October 2003.

It is recognised that homelessness is rarely purely a housing problem. Those who become, or are at risk of becoming, homeless often have wide and complex needs. Government funding, known as the Rough Sleepers Initiative, is integral to the Homelessness Strategy. The availability of appropriate housing support is an essential component in achieving a sustainable solution to homelessness.

Equal Opportunities

The Supporting People strategy will address issues of accessibility and equality of opportunity for all housing support service users and providers.

All partners will work together to ensure equality of treatment, without prejudice or discrimination based on class, gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability, illness, offending background, cultural background or circumstances.

There will be monitoring of equality of opportunity for staff and service users, set targets and it will be ensured that training is provided. There will be a written equal opportunities policy, which will set out our commitment to promoting and seeking to achieve equality of treatment for all.

Social Inclusion

Social Inclusion policies or initiatives are those that seek to prevent or reverse, people's experience of being excluded from the social, political, economic or cultural life of their community.

There are a number of factors that can contribute to people experiencing the above. These include poverty, poor education, unemployment, or belonging to a disadvantaged group in society. A combination of factors is usually involved. Given this, promotion of social inclusion requires a co-ordinated approach across all Council services and within partnership working between the local authority and other bodies, such as voluntary, public or private sector. Social Inclusion is an overarching theme of both the community planning process and the Supporting People Strategy.

Joint Community Care Plan

Each local authority has a statutory requirement, under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990, to produce a three-year plan, which outlines the priorities for community care provision in terms of revenue and capital expenditure. The plan is produced in conjunction with the various planning groups for community care client groups and outlines the strategic framework and future.

The planning group's composition consists of relevant statutory, voluntary agencies and representatives of service users and carers. One aim of the Plan

is to have a 50/50 split of service user to professional representation on all groups. These groups are responsible for identifying the gaps in services or provision in the City and discussing and recommending priorities for expenditure when the needs arise.

Domestic Abuse

Under the banner of Health and Social Care Forum review of all services and facilities for those suffering domestic violence in the city has been conducted and work is now commencing on development of a strategy to address gaps in services re-provisioning or replacement of current services.

Strategy Group has been developed with a view to reporting on a draft strategy early in New Year and a work plan to flow from this by the end of March 2004.

Joint Health Improvement Plan

The Health and Social Care Forum under Community Planning has recently produced the first draft of this plan and is currently consulting on this for a re-draft in January 2004 and completion by the end of March 2004. The plan will set health, health improvement and health quality targets for Aberdeen City and include monitoring and evaluation systems for the plan to remain relevant, dynamic and inclusive.

Commissioning Strategy

A Commissioning Board will be established for all Social Care Services and in Summer 2004 the Board will be extended to incorporate Supporting People.

The documents currently incorporated within the Aberdeen City Joint Community Care Plan are:

- Aberdeen City Council Children's Service Plan
- Aberdeen City Council Community Plan
- Aberdeen City Council Corporate Strategic Plan
- "Our City, Our Health", A Health Strategy for Aberdeen City
- NHS Grampian Health Improvement Plan
- Modernising Community Care and Joint Future Plan
- Aberdeen City Community Care Housing Strategy
- Aberdeen City Older People's Strategy
- Aberdeen City Mental Health Framework 1998-2004
- Joint Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities in Grampian
- "The Same As You", National Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities
- Aberdeen City Learning Disability Partnership in Practice (PiP) Agreement
- Aberdeen City Joint Strategy for People with a Physical Disability

Aberdeen City Drugs Action Team Strategy
Aberdeen Alcohol Action Team Alcohol Strategy
Strategy for Carers in Aberdeen
Joint Health Improvement Plan
Domestic Abuse Strategy
Commissioning Strategy

Legislation

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

This is the relevant legislation which enables local authorities to provide housing support services for individuals and defines which housing support tasks are eligible for funding through the Supporting People grant is contained in Section 91.

Section 91(1) states that:

“The Scottish Ministers may pay grants to local authorities towards expenditure incurred by them in providing, or contributing to the provision of prescribed housing support services.”

Section 91(8) states that:

“housing support services” includes any service which provides support, assistance, advice or counselling to an individual with particular needs with a view to enabling that individual to occupy, or continue to occupy, as the person’s sole or main residence, residential accommodation, other than excepted accommodation.

Excepted accommodation is defined in section 91(9) as the following:-

- Accommodation provided as part of a care home service. However, accommodation occupied by an individual in receipt of Housing Benefit payable under Schedule 1B of the Housing Benefit (General) Regulations 1987 at 31 March 2003 will be eligible for funding, as will accommodation in receipt of SNAP (Special Needs Allowance Package) during the financial year ending on 31 March 2003; and
- Residential accommodation provided for offenders and persons under supervision (whether in whole or part for which a grant has been paid under section 27B of the Social Work (Scotland) 1968 Act.

The prescribed housing support services are the twenty-one tasks contained in the schedule to the Regulations [Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (Housing Support Services) Regulations 2002].

The Vision and Aims of the Strategy

Supporting People Day (1 April 2003) heralded the end to a hectic period of activity for local authorities, housing and support providers. They were aiming to ensure that as many people as possible who were eligible for housing support services, through the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme, applied.

The establishment of these services in some circumstances was without any strategic planning and as a consequence Supporting People has inherited the funding of some services which may no longer meet individuals needs. Due to legislation we are required to continue the funding of these services until a service review has been conducted.

The introduction of a framework for service review will ensure that the Council is able to check that the service provided meets Best Value requirements. It will also offer scope to check that the recipient of the service is satisfied with all parts of the service and the organisation providing it. Reorganisation within Aberdeen City Council has created a Commissioning Team. Their remit will include benchmarking with other authorities to ensure that quality and cost-effective services are being delivered.

Housing support services have to be flexible and dynamic. In Aberdeen, services meeting this description already exist, making the difference for a vulnerable person in maintaining or securing accommodation. The action plan within this Strategy aims to systematically review all services.

Services which do not reflect strategic aims or fail to meet the main objectives of the Supporting People agenda have to address the above or will no longer be used as a provider by the local authority. The Supporting People grant cannot be passed onto providers if the service fails recipients in terms of service delivery or accommodation provision.

Aberdeen City Council has already identified accommodation based projects which are key to the delivery of this Strategy. These are the “pipeline” projects with Capital Funding. Revenue funding has been sought for the housing support elements of these services, which will be provided in the accommodation once completed. This will be achieved over the next three years.

Housing support is a dynamic initiative. The challenge for all authorities across the UK is to deliver the Supporting People agenda within a capped budget. The true measurement of success of Supporting People in Aberdeen is not solely quantitative, relating to the number of people using services, but also has a qualitative element, regarding the number of people who have successfully moved onto independent living and sustained tenancies.

Commissioners of services are beginning to recognise that SMART or assisted technology can be used to enable an individual to remain in their accommodation. This can avoid unnecessary staff interventions, leading to benefits for staff and more effective use of resources. New technology that promotes independent living should be investigated and deemed where appropriate maximised.

The national aims of the Supporting People programme are to

- Increase support for vulnerable clients
- Promote social inclusion
- Support people in their own community
- Promote independent living
- Adopt an enabling approach
- Promote safer communities
- Offer choice
- Provide services which meet Best Value requirement
- Provide services which respond to individuals needs
- To enable strategic planning

Whilst Aberdeen City Council in partnership with voluntary agencies is fully committed to promotion of national aims of the Supporting People Initiative, strategic aims will be addressed further in this Strategy document for each client group locally. The services for all client groups will see re-provisioning and re-modelling.

ABERDEEN – “OIL RICH, THE CRUDE FACTS”

Demographics

Population

The information obtained from the 2001 Census indicated that population of Aberdeen City is 211,910. These figures show the following trends.

Age of population	1991	2001	2011
0-16	37,509	34,690	31,009
16-24	34361	31006	36,643
25-44	66483	65708	49,776
45-64	44399	48064	58,478
65-74	17532	17706	16,995
75 and over	13,836	14736	16,479
TOTAL	214,120	211,910	209,382

Source: Strategic Forecasts for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire 2000-2016 (Autumn 2001)

Tenure

The 2001 Census provides the tenure profile for accommodation in Aberdeen City is as follows:

Tenure	Estimated Number	% of Total
Owner Occupier (with or without mortgage)	59,217	61.0
Local Authority Rented	22,662	23.4
Housing Association Rented	3,357	3.46
Private Landlord (Rented)	7,441	7.67
Other	4,336	4.47
Total	97,013	

Source: 2001 Census

The projection of increase of households in Aberdeen is 14% over the next 10 years in comparison to a Grampian wide figure of 7%.

Housing Need

The LHS details housing need within Aberdeen City. A comprehensive housing needs survey (HNS 1999) was commissioned by the North East Housing Planning Alliance (NEHPA) to look at estimates of numbers and types of households in housing need. This included the support needs of those living in Aberdeen City.

The HNS not only identified housing need across all sectors but also provided the most detailed information on local households with special needs, which had not been available previously. As this has been the only housing related survey covering these matters, it is a planning baseline.

The definition of special needs used within the HNS was:-

- Frail elderly
- A physical disability
- A learning disability
- A mental health problem
- Vulnerable young people and children leaving care
- Impaired sight/hearing
- Other

*Additional work has been undertaken to identify the housing support needs of people with learning disabilities. However, it is acknowledged that the biggest information gap is where adults are living with elderly parents, who are also their carer(s) and not known to services. The paramount aim of the Council and its partners is better planning. In October 2002, as part of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, Aberdeen City Council commissioned Deafblind Scotland to identify hidden need within households which require housing support services now or in future years. Another piece of research commissioned by NEHPA through the LHS has been to investigate the needs of Black Minority Ethnic Communities, which includes housing support needs. It is expected that this research will be completed in 2003, outwith the timescale of the preparation of the draft strategy.

- The HNS estimated that there are 11,080 households in Aberdeen with one or more special needs member. This represents 11.4% of all households. Within this group, 10.5% have a single need whilst 0.9% have multiple needs. "Physically disabled" is the main category of special needs. In the context of special needs households there are 6,422 (57.9%) households with physically disabled household members and 3,236 (29.2%) with "frail elderly" household members.

Housing Support Services in Aberdeen – Analysis of current provision and gaps in services.

This section of the Strategy will outline the existing provision of housing support services. These consist of accommodation based (supported accommodation) and “floating” support services, across all client groups eligible for support services through the Supporting People grant. Gaps in these two categories are identified. The section will outline where provision is planned through pipeline funding or will require to be addressed, within the life of this document, upon the identification of capital and or revenue funding.

Whilst Supporting People funding will have a critical part to play in promoting independent living, it is one of a number of funding stream and therefore should not be viewed as a panacea. It is crucial, when individual’s needs are assessed that an appropriate overall package of support is provided.

Eligible client groups in relation to Supporting People are:

- Mental Health Problems
- Learning Disability
- Physical Disability
- Sensory Impaired/ Disabled
- Women Fleeing Domestic Abuse
- Homeless
- Vulnerable due to young age
- HIV/Aids and other blood borne viruses
- Dementia
- Acquired Brain Injury
- Older People
- Travelling People
- Substance Misuse
- Ex-Offenders

- Terminally ill
- Refugees
- Vulnerable adults, with multiple needs, who do not fall within the above categories.

Mental Health Problems

Key Analysis

Aberdeen City Council and the then Grampian Health Board, in developing a Joint Mental Health Strategy, looked at national and Grampian rates of expected psychiatric illness and service use:

Total City Population = 217,260
Total Adult (over 20) Population = 167,127

a) Number experiencing mental illness	43,065	26%
b) Number consulting Primary Care (91% of a)	39,189	23%
c) Number identified as having mental illness (56% of b)	21,907	13%
d) Number referred to Mental Health Services (12% of c)	2,659	1.6%
e) Number admitted to Psychiatric Hospital (35% of d)	938	0.6%

For the purposes of this Strategy, it has been assumed that the figures between c) and d) should be the maximum uptake in housing support services for this client group (3,597). However, it must be stressed that the potential service recipient has the right to decline or end a service being offered to them.

There are presently people known to the Social Work Service who receive a service. The provision range varies from low to high needs. The high needs services, in the main, are 24 hour accommodation based support services which are regulated as Care Home services by the Care Commission. These are not viewed as housing support services and would not be eligible for funding via the Supporting People grant, unless the service is restructured and provided in a different format.

The medium needs services are a mix of accommodation-based support services, floating support and outreach services, providing support to people in their own accommodation.

This category has seen the biggest restructuring in the last three years, with a shift from two to three person group homes to single person tenancies where housing support is being provided, dispersed across the city and linked using new technology. This re-provisioning was the result of research undertaken through the Mental Health Framework accommodation sub-group in 2000 and statistical information provided by the Care Programme Approach Co-ordinator on unmet need. The research and data provided evidence that there was a significant gap in the provision of single supported tenancies.

Initially the local authority, in partnership with a voluntary sector provider, piloted two single supported tenancies. A positive response was received from the relevant service users. As a consequence, Aberdeen City Council approved an additional delegated power, which allows the allocation of the appropriate number of one bedroom properties to the client group when a group home is returned for allocation as family housing. Whilst this re-provisioning is likely to produce two to three group homes being returned for re-allocation within the next two years, it is clear that a mix of provision of accommodation is required to offer choice.

The low needs services are “floating” support or outreach services which provide up to ten hours support a week over a period of time. People within this category of service will either move out of the service or, depending upon their circumstances, move to a medium or high level service. There have been significant developments in low needs services over the last two years, with a number of new services coming online and others due to commence within the forthcoming financial year.

The developments for this client group since the introduction of the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme have been extremely positive and there have been a number of innovations e.g. housing support services for people with Korsakoffs Disease and for people with Huntingtons’ Disease.

Trends

The biggest concern for Aberdeen City Council is the needs of people who are in accommodation, unknown to services and requiring support to maintain their accommodation. Whilst all front-line staff have been briefed on Supporting People, it is clear that there are anonymous people living in the community who will reach a crisis and depending upon their actions, may lose their accommodation as a consequence.

There is a requirement to continue to provide single supported tenancies based upon the research referred to previously. A gap in the provision of supported accommodation is for people with a dual diagnosis.

The existing and planned provision (known as pipeline projects) for this client group are outlined in the table below.

Mental Health

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	56	0
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	138	4
TOTAL	194	4

Table1

Re-provisioning is an issue, which the local authority will require to address with its partners. Both housing and support providers need to respond to the changing needs (for example low level service, respite service) and aspirations of this client group and expectations of commissioners of services.

Strategic Aim

A significant deficit was identified in the provision of services for people with a dual diagnosis and young people who have mental health problems. A floating support service for the latter was being developed under THBS, but due to the provider being unable to recruit staff, this service was unable to be established.

The recruitment and retention of staff is an issue for not just providers and commissioners for this client group but throughout the service provision of care and support. It is too early to measure the success of the recent national publicity for social care staff undertaken by the Scottish Executive.

Learning Disability

Key Analysis

The estimated number of people in Aberdeen City with a learning disability is likely to be over 5,000. Figures for mild or moderate learning disability are around 20 people per thousand of the population, giving an estimate of 4,260 people in Aberdeen experiencing the above. Profound, multiple disability, or those likely to require higher levels of support estimates are around 3 to 4 people per thousand, resulting in figures of 650 to 850 people in Aberdeen City. It is estimated that the number of people with learning disabilities is likely to increase by 1% over the next 10 years. Therefore there would be a rise in the trend to 4,750 (mild or moderate) and 750 to 950 (profound or multiple) by 2010.

For the purposes of this strategy, the mild to moderate category of learning disability has been focused on. However, with the closure of Woodlands and Ladysbridge Hospitals, some people with profound or multiple disabilities have accessed or are intended to access high level housing support services. There will be a care component due to these individuals' complex needs, but this will be provided within a housing support model.

Historically, in Aberdeen, people with learning disabilities were provided with accommodation and support in registered environments. Only a few were allocated a tenancy in their own right, usually with little or no support. With the production of the National Learning Disability Strategy, 'The Same As You' and the local Learning Disability Strategy, it was the intention that provision, in terms of accommodation and support, would change dramatically over a three-year period.

The range of services provision ranges from low to high needs. The high needs services are, in the main, 24 hours accommodation-based support services. These are regulated as care home services by the Care Commission and as such not eligible for Supporting People funding.

The medium needs services are a mix of accommodation-based support services and floating support services. This includes grouped living settings, following de-registrations within the City. This category has been subject to the biggest remodelling in the last five years. There has been a shift from large group homes (four or five people sharing), to shared or individual tenancies based upon service user needs. This is in contrast to the "one size fits all approach" which was adopted in the early days of hospital re-provisioning.

This shift was the result of analysis of referrals, assessments and breakdown trends for services. This work led Commissioners to adopt a more flexible approach. One difficulty was accessing funding to enable this to occur. With the cessation of the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme, Supporting People will

face the test of whether the supply of new services (including the floating support model) will meet the demand.

Trends

The biggest difficulty which the Council and its partners face for this client group is the failing health of older carers. These are mainly parents or relatives who have been the principal unpaid carer of a person with learning disabilities, who reside in the family home. They were unable to access a housing support service under THBS, as their relative did not meet the criteria.

The above highlights an area of unmet need, which is not currently addressed via Supporting People.

Research conducted during the preparation of the Local Learning Disability Strategy indicates that there are over 200 known people on the waiting list for accommodation based services: 132 high needs, 46 medium needs and 30 low needs.

It is expected that a high proportion of those with high needs are likely to be offered accommodation as part of a Care Home service. For those who do choose a housing support service, a significant number of individuals will have lived at home with parents. They will require an intensive package initially, but once lifeskills are gained, these packages may reduce.

There have been exciting developments for this client group over the last three years and there are examples to evidence this. These have ranged from the first non-registered service for people in three two-bedroom properties to people taking responsibility for their own home. Without the changes in legislation relating to the Care Commission, Housing and Legal Capacity these and many other positive developments would not have been able to take place.

The introduction of the Adults With Incapacity Act 2000 has assisted all sectors by providing statutory guidance when issues arise over legal capacity. This has raised major concerns for the housing providers when offering tenancy agreements. It is acknowledged by all sectors that further work requires to be done to satisfactorily resolve this issue.

The existing and planned provision for this client group is outlined in the table below.

Learning Disability

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	161	50
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	45	0
TOTAL	206	50

Table 2

Strategic Aim

Identify unmet need for this client group by focusing on putting processes in place that will identify and monitor potential clients especially people with learning disability in an unpaid carer environment. Ensuring that young adults with a Learning Disability are given every opportunity to develop, a “short term” supported accommodation service should be established to bridge the gap between parental home and independent living.

Ensuring that service provision is of a high quality and sustainable will be achieved by having a well structured service review process in place.

Re-provisioning is also an issue with this client group. The large grouped living settings are no longer appropriate due to the inflexibility of accommodation, ageing residents/tenants and changing needs or aspirations. However, when re-provisioning takes place, difficulties in identifying and securing sites suitable for all concerned may result in delays. The local authority has started to address some of these requirements with all stakeholders. One resource being currently re-provisioned is a large Victorian house, which is used as an 18 place "hostel". It is being re-provisioned over two sites in Aberdeen in close proximity to its existing base

Physical Disability

Key Analysis

The most recent local survey which outlined the needs, aspirations and prevalence rates for people with a physical disability was entitled "One in Seven". The survey estimated that the number of people with physical and sensory disabilities aged under 65, living in the community in Aberdeen, was 13,040.

Those with profound or multiple disabilities historically have lived in residential care services. In some cases, due to the inability to provide adequate accommodation and care/support, people with high needs have moved into nursing care. Aberdeen has a ward within a NHS setting, which is dedicated to the rehabilitation of people who have acquired a physical disability as a result of an illness, road-traffic accident or other circumstances. There is a difficulty re how to discharge people to appropriate community settings. This is due primarily to the shortage of suitable accommodation and in some cases, the lack of support services in certain parts of Aberdeen.

The main provider of accommodation based support in Aberdeen is Margaret Blackwood Housing Association, who have two developments. A recently completed housing development, involving a number of partners, responded to the challenge of providing a sustainable mix of accommodation. This was designed to meet the housing and support needs of a number of families who, within their household have at least one member with a physical disability and/or other disabilities.

Trends

There was a relatively low uptake of THB from this client group. It is likely that this is due to the majority of people with physical disabilities receiving support from their partner or other family member. As a result, they may not have been able to access THBS for the cost of this support. It is, however, essential that these individuals' needs are identified and recorded. Therefore, if the position arises where their principal carer is no longer able to offer support, the individual will be supported in their accommodation.

The existing and planned provision known as "pipeline" projects for this client group are outlined in the table below.

Physical Disability

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	63	0
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	40	1
TOTAL	103	1

Table 3

Strategic Aims

It is clear that to meet the support needs of people with a physical disability, the accommodation must be appropriate. This can be achieved through good design or the use of adaptations and SMART or assisted technology to enable independence in existing provision. The employment of a Housing Occupational Therapist has assisted in addressing this. However, it is essential that new developments include a percentage of accommodation, which is designed to wheelchair standards by involving the occupant. A Disabled Persons Housing Service, which will provide advice and information to people with all types of disabilities is under development and will offer a service by the end of 2004.

Aberdeen City Council is also considering piloting a health, housing and support assessment team. This would build upon current good practice. The team will seek to identify people with accommodation and support needs, liaise with commissioners and providers, to address these requirements.

Sensory Impaired/Disabled

Key Analysis

Grampian Society for the Blind is in contact with 937 visually impaired people who live in Aberdeen. However, estimates suggest that at least as many and possibly twice as many are unknown to the Society. Aberdeen and North East Deaf Society have a total of 1039 people registered with them in Aberdeen as having a hearing impairment. The RNID estimates that approximately one in seven of the population has some degree of deafness, in which case there are potentially 30,000 people with a hearing impairment in Aberdeen. Both organisations report an annual increase in the number of people presenting themselves or being referred to them for advice and assistance.

Trends

It is estimated that there are 95 deafblind people (those who have a severe degree of combined visual and auditory impairment, resulting in problems with communication, information and mobility) in Aberdeen. Aberdeen City Council provided funding to Deafblind Scotland to identify and research the needs of deafblind people in Aberdeen. This research indicated that the recently established Communicator Service which is funded to provide support for five people requires to expand significantly over the next ten years as individuals needs change.

Sensory Impairment

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	0	0
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	6	1
TOTAL	6	1

Table 4

Strategic Aims

The provision of aids and adaptations is a low level housing support which continues to be funded. However, in most situations specialist assessments are required to identify the appropriate adaptations to maintain independence. It is clear that there is a huge training need for budget holders around the positive impact that these low level supports can have for this client group.

Domestic Abuse

Key Analysis

Recent research in the form of an Assessment and Audit for the Homelessness Strategy in Aberdeen, cited the biggest cause of homelessness (36%) as relationship breakdown, which included domestic abuse. Aberdeen City Council currently provides four properties to two different Womens Aid organisations within Aberdeen. The other refuge accommodation is provided through local Housing Associations. It is accepted that provision currently meets Scottish Executive requirements and the demand within Aberdeen.

Trends

There is a gap in provision for those who have experienced domestic abuse regarding floating support when leaving the above settings. They may have built-up a trusted relationship with individuals or an organisation and do not wish to consider another support provider at that stage. This provision was a floating support “pipeline” project. However, it would appear that this project will have to be delayed, due to limited revenue funding for growth elements of provision.

Domestic Abuse

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	30	0
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	0	20
TOTAL	30	20

Strategic Aims

Continue to provide effective support to the service providers working in this field whilst continuing to support Domestic Abuse Strategy and linking Homelessness Strategy with Supporting People Strategy to deliver services.

Homeless (Including Rough Sleepers)

Key Analysis

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 placed a duty on Aberdeen City Council to conduct an assessment of homelessness and to complete a strategy for the prevention and alleviation of homelessness. One essential item is the availability of housing or other support services, to address the factors which led to the individual's homelessness. The preventative measures required to maintain that person in their current accommodation are also fundamental.

Trends

From the assessment research completed for the Homelessness Strategy the main cause of homelessness in Aberdeen was found to be relationship breakdown (36%). However, from the 'headline' detail the majority may have been able to maintain their accommodation with the appropriate support services. The causes of homelessness identified in Aberdeen were as follows:

Relationship Breakdown	(36%)
Prison/Prison Discharge	(12%)
Eviction	(12%)
Drugs/Alcohol Problems	(8%)
Rent Arrears	(8%)
Financial Problems	(4%)
Recent arrival in Aberdeen	(4%)
Unable to manage accommodation	(3%)
Other factors	(12%)

Homeless/Ex-homeless

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	193	0
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	133	24
TOTAL	326	24

It should be noted that these figures appear in other client group totals e.g. substance misuse etc. Table 5

Aberdeen City Council and its partners have temporary accommodation for homeless people. The change in legislation on 1 October 2002, where local authorities were required to provide temporary accommodation "for a reasonable period", to non-priority homeless applications has resulted in Bed and Breakfast establishments being used. This was an action that this Council had ceased for over a decade.

The main gaps in housing support services for ex-homeless people are services which address alcohol and drugs misuse. It was expected that these would be developed over the next financial year with “pipeline” funding. However, as this funding is not available for floating support services, the Council and its partners will require to re-visit potential funding for these services.

“Generic” housing support services do exist across Aberdeen and due to the nature of the individuals receiving support, people are likely to have a relatively short time frame within the service.

Strategic Aims

The challenge ahead for all concerned is working together to address these individuals’ requirements and looking at ways of accessing appropriate resources such as the Homelessness Strategy monies for example.

Young People (16-24)

Key Analysis

Aberdeen City Council has recently re-provisioned one of its long-standing “hostel” provision for looked-after young people to a more socially inclusive location, but it acknowledged that more requires to be done to meet the needs of young people. Aberdeen Foyer provides an opportunity for young people to access accommodation, education/training and employment through a holistic approach, which until the Foyer’s inception was not readily accessible. Supporting People will require to ensure that the innovation, which has developed over the last decade for this client group, continues to be encouraged. This can only happen with the commitment of everyone to the partnership arrangements, which has been established.

The benefits system is one of the main issues which lead to difficulties being encountered by young people. The national Supporting People charging policy for housing support services stipulates that the majority of services used by young people “short term” services are exempt from charging, regardless of financial circumstances. This will allow potential clients to accept housing support services since they are exempt from charging.

Trends

The existing and planned provision known as “pipeline” projects for this client group are outlined in the table below.

Young People (16-24)

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	43	54
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	7	8
TOTAL	50	62

Table 6

Strategic Aims

A number of projects for young people are being developed and are expected to be in operation in the following financial year. This will be dependent upon funding. These include intensive supported accommodation for approximately 7 young people with 24 hour cover, an extension to the existing supported landlord scheme. An additional twenty tenancies to the Young Single Persons Housing Project and a floating support service for young people with mental health

difficulties. It is important to link the future work of Supporting People Initiative for this client group with the Homelessness Strategy.

HIV/Aids And Other Bloodborne Viruses

Key Analysis and Trends

The total number of people in Grampian known to have HIV (at 31 March 2000) was 161. The development of anti-retroviral treatments has meant that fewer peoples' conditions are progressing to AIDS and reported cases in Grampian (as at 31 March 2000) were 37. There has been training and awareness raising across Grampian carried out by Health Promotions and other agencies.

Strategic Aims

There exists no dedicated housing support service for individuals diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. However, it is expected that 'generic' housing support services should be able to respond to the main issues with additional support if required being provided by specialist services. Similar to other client groups, the success in providing housing support service to people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS to maintain independent living will depend on partnership working – voluntary sector and statutory agencies alike.

Dementia

Key Analysis

Currently there are three multi-disciplinary/multi-agency old age psychiatry teams, aligned to GP practices, which enable people remain in their own homes, residential or nursing homes, rather than hospital care. Support to individuals and their carers, living in the community, is also provided by primary care teams, including GP's.

Trends

It is estimated that 2,250 people in Aberdeen have dementia, with 400 “new people” being diagnosed every year. Within those figures it is estimated that 1,350 people with dementia live in their own accommodation, the remainder residing in residential care, nursing homes or hospital. It is further estimated that 675 will have mild dementia, 975 moderate and 630 severe. Whilst dementia is commonly regarded as a condition which affects older people, it should be acknowledged that ‘early onset dementia’ affects people under the age of 65, indeed around 70 people within this age group in Aberdeen are estimated to have dementia.

A multi-agency group established a housing support service for people under 65 with dementia. Whilst the service is attempting to deliver supports initially up to 20 people, as the service establishes itself, it is likely to see an expansion due to the rising number of people being diagnosed. Gaps in service occur when the principal carer, (in most cases a partner or relative) is unable to provide care (respite or other reasons). In these instances the housing support service in conjunction with other agencies will be able to close these gaps.

The existing and planned provision known as “pipeline” projects for this client group are out lined in the table below:

Dementia

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	0	0
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	22	0
TOTAL	22	0

Table 7

Strategic Aims

This Strategy challenges the notion that dementia affects older people through further research of this category.

It is necessary to continue to closely monitor a budget that will be available for a whole range of services.

Acquired Brain Injury

Key Analysis

The definition used refers to damage acquired at some point in time after birth, but not due to any degenerative disease. This includes damage to the brain caused by traumatic injury, lack of oxygen, bleeding or infection. Common causes are road traffic accidents, physical assault, falls, industrial or sporting accidents and viral illnesses.

In Aberdeen, through the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme, housing support services have been provided to two individuals, both of whom had not been able to sustain previous placements due to the placements' inappropriateness.

Trends

Research into the incidence and recovery of people with acquired brain injury was conducted over a year in Glasgow

These rates have been applied to Aberdeen and give an estimate that between 100 and 200 people require some degree of rehabilitation

Acquired Brain Injury

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	0	4
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	2	0
TOTAL	2	4

Table 8

Strategic Aims

The Head Injury Task Group is carrying out research to clarify the needs of these people. A "pipeline" project identified the needs of three people with an acquired brain injury who are currently in hospital. Due to the nature of their circumstances it has not been possible to identify suitable accommodation and this may have an impact of delivering this service.

It should be acknowledged that much work remains to be done to respond to the needs of this client group but there is a clear commitment from the agencies involved to work together to meet these requirements which is primarily work towards assessment and analysis.

Older People

Key Analysis

A small increase in the number of people of 65, currently 31,888, is projected to rise to 31,921 by the year 2010. The increase in over 55's, is more dramatic, from 3719 (1999) to 4063 (2010). (General Registrar Office - Standard)

Trend

Older People

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	2742	80
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	2756	
TOTAL	5498	80

Table 9

Aberdeen has significant provision for older people of sheltered housing, nursing home and other care settings. There has however been a decrease in demand for 'meals on wheels' and home care in the last five years. The introduction of a charging policy and revision of eligibility criteria could be cited for being partly responsible for these.

Housing providers continue to report a high demand for sheltered/very sheltered accommodation, which given land availability and high cost of developing this provision, will not meet the applicants' assessed or perceived need.

Aberdeen has one of the largest Private/Owner-Occupied sheltered housing provision, with nine already established schemes and one under development which should be available for occupation in 2004. Changes in benefit legislation have meant that people receiving financial assistance to the costs of their warden service will no longer receive this directly. Initial work did not identify anyone in Aberdeen across the nine developments who would be affected by these changes.

Strategic Aims

The service review of sheltered housing is expected to work with providers to address in a more comprehensive manner the issue of low demand sheltered housing blocks. Aberdeen City Council, over a number of years had a working

group of officers looking at this issue. However, they were only able to deal with issues of bedsits in blocks, where a handful occurred and the block was in a fairly high demand area. Letting difficulties are experienced in some areas because of the location of the property or type of dwelling e.g multi-storey. Whilst it may be acknowledged that a block should be remodelled, this may require major Capital investment and sensitive handling due to the vulnerability of the people involved.

A review of the Sheltered Housing wardens service provision is currently being undertaken in Aberdeen, this will consult with tenants on their views on how the Sheltered Housing warden service should be delivered. This will not replace the Supporting People service review, however staff involved in the latter will ensure that where possible no duplication occurs.

Any enhancement to the existing service will have financial implications for the Council and service recipient, as there is likely to be an increase in cost, which will not be covered by the Supporting People grant irrespective of the individuals financial circumstances.

One scheme which has been included as a 'pipeline' project will see the replacement of an all bedsit sheltered housing block with a new sheltered/very sheltered housing development in close proximity. It has taken over eight years to acquire a suitable site for this re-provisioning. It must be stated that this may not be unusual when looking at the scale of the provision and the availability of suitable, affordable sites. There is also the need for the sensitivity when re-modelling what individuals see as their home.

Older people require low level supports which enable them to remain in their own accommodation and not move into sheltered/very sheltered or other provision until genuinely necessary. This includes home care services, aids and adaptations service, small handyman services, garden assistance schemes and community alarm schemes. The delivery of these services is also key to the Joint Futures Agenda.

Finally, assist accommodation services by providing information on gaps in service for older people and provide advice on meeting overall requirements for older people.

Travelling People

Key Analysis

It is estimated there are between 70 and 100 families who either use the recognised site or other encampments. These individuals/families will have immediate issues, which require to be addressed. Aberdeen has a site available to travelling families, which was extended in 2000 to create an additional ten places and within this site there is one place suitable for wheelchair users. The site borders the Aberdeenshire Council boundary and much of the facilities used by families when living on the site are in Aberdeenshire e.g. Education, Leisure, etc.

Trends

Travelling People

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	0	0
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	30	6
TOTAL	30	6

Table 10

Strategic Aims

Research into the needs of Travelling People has been commissioned by the three local authorities and Communities Scotland in the former Grampian Region, who piloted the LHS. This research will recommend support requirements and cite examples of good practice, which could be developed locally.

Aberdeen is considering a request for part-funding from a voluntary sector provider who will provide housing support, information and advice and education to travelling people (The funding partner will be Aberdeenshire Council)

Addictions

Key Analysis

Addictions is one of the biggest deficits in primary client groups requiring a housing support service. It should be noted that there is a high level of people receiving services through 'other' client groups. Existing service providers in the drug/alcohol field do provide services, which in part could be classed as housing support services. However, the Supporting People regulations are clear that they will not fund specialist counselling – rehabilitation would be within this classification and exclude it from funding.

Trends

It is estimated that there are 84,000 of the population within Aberdeen who experience problematic alcohol use and about 12,500 are medium risk and 3,300 are at high risk. It is estimated that every year 1,254 people are treated for drug misuse (this equates to 55 per 10,000 of the population). Other information or referrals was that the average age of those referred was twenty-four.

Addictions

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	0	0
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	278	252
TOTAL	278	252

Table 11

Strategic Aims

There is a significant unmet requirement for residential rehabilitation services and a multi-agency working group is developing proposals for this in Aberdeen. It was initially envisaged that the staffing employed would provide housing support services to people requiring assistance, on the basis of part-funding which would come from Supporting People pipeline funding. However, the earlier indication of up to 50% match funding for this pipeline floating support and other services has not materialised. The partners will require to review the proposal and potential funding sources given the above.

The Drug Action Plan will play a key role in the implementation of the tasks within this section of the strategy.

Ex-Offenders

Key Analysis

Supporting People can assist ex-offenders who are not statutory clients. Many ex-offenders will be known to other services such as drug, alcohol, mental health. Aberdeen City Council has recently approved the extension of a Supported Tenancy Scheme which attracted funding through the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme but following a review the funding was transferred to Criminal Justice.

Trends

Ex-offenders

Support Model	Existing spaces	Pipeline projects
Supported Accommodation	4	0
Floating Support or Outreach Services providing housing support	0	0
TOTAL	4	0

Table 12

Strategic Aims

It is essential that preventative support be provided to all ex-offenders before or after release from prison to enable the individual to get out of the cycle of offending. The Drug Action Plan will play a key role in the implementation of the tasks within this section of the strategy.

Refugees

At present the Council is unaware of anyone with refugees status moving into Aberdeen. However, individuals or families who were to move into the area would be offered appropriate housing support, the nature of which would be based upon an assessment of need.

Terminally ill

Housing Support Services can be provided to people who are terminally ill. The most common of these are home care services. Whilst the Supporting People Team holds no specific information on recipients of services who are terminally ill, this does not mean that the Supporting People grant could not fund housing support for these individuals. Indeed, funding may be required to respond to other circumstances, such as an individual requiring support with their accommodation as a consequence of their partner having a terminal illness.

Strategic Aim

Aberdeen City Council and partners will continue to monitor the situation.

Resources

Introduction

Aberdeen City Council was allocated three-year funding from the Scottish Executive to deal with the administrative processes required to implement Supporting People. For 2003/04 this amounts to £327,000. The Supporting People Team in Aberdeen is a 'virtual' one, with various team members having responsibilities for issues other than Supporting People, However, there is a core team consisting of 5 people. As Supporting People evolves this figure is likely to change.

Funding

Prior to 1 April 2003, housing support services in Aberdeen were funded through a combination of Communities Scotland's Special Needs Allowance Package (SNAP), Transitional Housing Benefit and rent pooling. The Supporting People Grant replaced these funding streams on 1 April 2003.

Aberdeen City Council has been awarded a Supporting People Grant of approximately £11.5 million plus the inflation rate (final figure still to be confirmed). This will be used to fund housing support services provided to clients who qualify for Housing Benefit or are in receipt of housing support services that are exempt from charging. Those who do not qualify for Housing Benefit and receive a chargeable service, will be billed in accordance with our charging policy for non – residential services.

A request for additional revenue funding totalling £2.3 million was submitted to the Scottish Executive for "pipeline" projects with capital investment. Aberdeen City Council has received stage one approval for seven projects – four learning disability, two older people and one mental health. The exact level of funding is still to be confirmed.

The Supporting People grant will continue to fund existing services previously provided via Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme, Special Needs Allowance Package and Rent Pooling. This creates a difficulty with the Supporting People budget already utilised and the only slippage coming from spot purchase services being freed up, either newly assessed people requiring housing support join a waiting list or are considered for funding through other sources.

It is likely that in most cases, a person requiring housing support will come from a Community Care client group, therefore the existing eligibility criteria for Community Care should be applied and in line with the Joint Futures agenda funding would be provided via the Community Care budget.

Charging

Aberdeen City Council has considered their charging policy for housing support services. This is consistent with the charging policy for non-residential services. The services have been split into two categories, sheltered housing and non-sheltered/floating housing support.

Sheltered housing will have a weekly charge because historically the service was charged for with the rent. Aberdeen City Council has decided not to charge self-funders for the cost of the warden service in 2003/04. A decision in respect of 2004/05 onwards will be made in the near future.

The non-sheltered/floating support will be charged at the hourly rate of £7.60, based on the outcome of a financial assessment to clarify what if any contribution an individual should make towards the cost of the housing support service received. Any shortfall will be met by the local authority.

An analysis of information contained on existing self funders suggests that there are less than ten service recipients in floating support/accommodation based services other than sheltered housing and housing with extra care.

The table below illustrates the funding for each client group. This is based on annual contract values.

Client Group	Block Contract	Spot Purchase
Older People	£1,680,244	£781,255
Learning Disability	£3,410,435	£916,604
Mental Health	£1,066,139	£1,576,049
Physical Disability	£273,236	£10,250
Homeless	£727,354	£353,018
Young People	£720,391	£100,302
Domestic Violence	£114,190	£0
Sensory Impaired	£0	£58,733
Ex-Offenders	£81,713	£0
Addiction	£0	£323,900
Travelling People	£0	£0
Refugees	£0	£0
HIV/AIDS	£0	£0
Dementia	£0	£0
Acquired Brain Injury	£0	£0
Terminally Ill	£0	£0
Other	£0	£0
Total	£8,073,701	£4,120,111

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Aberdeen City Council intends to establish a monitoring and evaluating framework to measure the achievements of the strategic aim and the delivery of the action plan.

Initially a short-life working group comprising of officers from the Council, Health, Communities Scotland, Housing providers, Support Providers and essentially service recipients and their relatives or carers will consider the format of the framework.

The Scottish Executive as a Condition of Grant placed an obligation on all Local Authorities to review services purchased with Supporting People funding during the transitional period of 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2006.

As a number of services combine housing support and social care as part of an integrated, holistic service, several funding streams may be involved. This being the case, it may be appropriate to review other services provided by the organisation at the same time. The most common situation would involve Supporting People grant alongside Social Work funded care services, with separate contracts for each funding stream.

A short-life working group meets to develop the service review process and documentation. This involves Officers from Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Council to try to ensure a consistent approach is taken which will assist service providers who in the main will have identical services across the three authorities and whilst being subject to three authorities review processes will welcome a level of consistency.

The reviews should provide a structured and transparent process of managing change where this is necessary to achieve service improvement.

However, it should be noted that in some circumstances, i.e. to inform the Authority's own Best Value review or where there is an unexpected change in demand for provision, it may be beneficial to carry out all or part of the review before the time previously set.

Aberdeen City Councils' service review programme timetable is appended to this strategy.

Supporting People Communication Strategy

One of the Supporting People strategic aims is a Communication Strategy. This document is envisaged to drive the consultation process. Aberdeen City partners have formed a Communication Group that is set out to, in first instance secure funding to be able to co-ordinate the consultation process.

Aberdeen City Council in partnership with Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO), Housing Associations, NHS Grampian and other stakeholders will link in with user networks and set up calendar of event that will assist better planning and organisation and also feed in with existing consultation frameworks in Aberdeen City.