



Adult Social Care Select Committee
14 May 2015

Single Homelessness in Surrey

Purpose of the report: Scrutiny of Services

To provide an update on single homelessness in Surrey and how Adult Social Care works to support single homeless people

Introduction:

1. 'Supporting People', as it was originally branded, was launched on 1 April 2003 as the Government Programme for housing related support. It is a partnership programme carried out through joint working relationships with service providers and partner agencies such as borough & districts, the Probation Services and health services.
2. The core objective of the Housing Related Support Programme is to commission non-statutory support services for vulnerable adults in Surrey. This includes older people, those with disabilities, those with mental health issues, vulnerable young people, those with an offending or substance misuse history, those experiencing domestic abuse and those who are at risk of homelessness. Support may be provided in purpose-built schemes or by means of visiting support in the community.
3. Surrey County Council (SCC) has a formal duty to provide preventative services under the Care Act, enabling people to remain as independent as possible in the community. Housing related support is a key strand as it supports individuals who, in the main, do not meet Adult Social Care eligibility criteria but who would need more intensive and costly intervention if the services were not there.
4. Key outcome for housing related support services is helping people to re-engage with their families, access local community services and to reduce dependency on statutory services. Many of the outcomes that the Friends, Family and Community Support Programme are working towards are reflected in the housing related support service specifications:

- “I have access to a range of support that helps me to live the life I want to remain a contributing member of my community.”
- “I have a network of people who support me – carers, family, friends, community and, if needed, paid support staff.”
- “I have opportunities to train, study, work or engage in activities that match my interests, skills, abilities.”
- “I feel welcomed and included in my local community.”
- “I feel valued for the contribution that I can make to my community.”

Moreover, services help people to contribute social capital, for example, through encouraging volunteering and peer support.

5. As of 2015/16, housing related support forms part of those Adult Social Care preventative services that will be protected through use of the Better Care Fund, offering a degree of protection from wider cuts to local authority funding.
6. Currently the programme is delivered through a range of contracts and grants via 73 organisations with a forecasted spend of approximately £11 million for 2015/16. The majority are voluntary and community organisations, ranging from small providers who deliver a single service to larger providers with several services. Other service providers include housing associations and borough councils.

The Benefits of Housing Related Support

7. Financial Benefits

- 7.1 Housing related support services save money by reducing spending on other services such as residential care, homeless applications and hospital admissions. An independent Government evaluation carried out in 2009 (1) estimated that nationally it saved £3.4 billion for a £1.6 billion investment. The study is based upon the alternative service provision that would be required by individuals in the absence of housing related support services. In 2009 the total savings for Surrey were £33.4 million for expenditure of £18 million.
- 7.2 The research showed that people in receipt of housing related support services have fewer propensities to use the following public services:

Other Public Service	% Reduction in Use
Appearing in Court	35%
Attending Outpatient Appointment	25%
Acute Mental Health Hospital Admission	35%
General Hospital Admission	30%

Treatment for Alcohol Problems	35%
CPN Visit	50%
GP Appointment	30%
Admission to A & E	25%
Experiencing Homelessness	100%
Tenancy Failure	40%
Arrest for Prostitution	40%
Emergency Dental Treatment	50%

- 7.3 The Housing Related Support Programme is a genuine national 'invest to save' item of public expenditure. Every £1 spent on housing related support will save other public services - not least the NHS - £2 by providing not just a cheaper alternative but one that engages the client and provides a route to greater independence and dignity.

8. Health Benefits

- 8.1 Housing related support services support all vulnerable adult client groups including those who are homeless or who are at risk of homelessness. Homeless Link research (2) makes the links between homelessness and poor health – and resulting pressures on health services. Using data from more than 2,500 homeless people, 'the unhealthy state of homelessness' reveals that over 7 in 10 homeless people suffer from one or more physical health problems and an even higher proportion report having a mental health issue. Analysis indicates that many of these issues are severe in nature and occur at levels far higher than the general population. The high health needs of homeless people have a major cost impact on the NHS, as they are heavy users of acute and primary care services. Research indicates that homeless people are four times more likely to seek help from acute NHS services, for example A&E, than the general population, a situation which the Government estimates to cost around £85m per year. The annual cost of healthcare for a rough sleeper with a high level of need can be more than 20 times as much as the cost among the general population.

Single Homeless Provision in Surrey

9. Winter Shelters

- 9.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government has advised all local authorities to provide a single figure each year of an actual count or an estimate of the number of rough sleepers thought to be sleeping out on a single night in their local authority district. In 2014, the borough and district councils in Surrey provided an estimate of the number of rough sleepers on a single night in November. The figures show a 39% increase from the previous year, most notably in Runnymede. These figures

demonstrate the need for developing more services to end rough sleeping in Surrey.

- 9.2 A winter homeless shelter run by Transform Housing & Support has shown a real need for more year-round services for single homeless people to avoid them sleeping rough. The shelter was open to homeless people from Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne. It was run by Transform in partnership with Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne borough councils, the Rentstart charities from the three boroughs, SCC, Walton Charity and other local organisations.
- 9.3 The shelter demonstrated that many single homeless people are at risk of sleeping rough and there is a clear need for more year-round services to help prevent rough sleeping:
- 48 referrals were received in three months – equivalent to one every two days.
 - 37 single people were offered a bed at the shelter and 28 people accepted this offer.
 - The youngest person referred to the shelter was 19, while the oldest was 63.
 - The shelter helped men and women, although the majority of referrals (87.5%) were male.
 - Many people were homeless because of relationship breakdown, job loss or ill health.
 - 50% of people who stayed at the shelter were supported to find permanent housing.
- 9.4 Transform report that they have received enormous voluntary support in respect of the winter shelters over the last two years. In the first year there was initially substantial local community resistance to the scheme – which was eventually turned around by others in the community, particularly local churches. They received donations of bedding, clothes and food, people got together to cook batches of hot meals and a number of people visited in the evenings just to talk to the people they had helped. This last year, there has been a lot of goodwill – particularly from the residents of Whiteley Village with similar generosity and the Whiteley Village caterers producing a hot meal every evening.
- 9.5 Guildford, Woking, Waverley and Surrey Heath councils work in partnership to provide Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) covering the four boroughs. The purpose of SWEP is to ensure that no one suffers harm or dies on the street during periods of severe weather, to ensure that emergency accommodation is available to anyone (including those not normally eligible) and to engage clients and link in with support services.
- 9.6 The basic trigger for SWEP to operate is a Met Office forecast of temperatures at or below 0 degrees for three consecutive nights,

however, other weather factors are considered in particular, and for the first time this year the wind chill factor.

- 9.7 The additional emergency bed spaces have been provided by the two housing related support funded night shelters, York Road Project in Woking and Number Five in Guildford. Other hostels also offer space and this has been vital this winter and helped to meet the unprecedented demand faced this year.

10. Housing Related Support Funded Services

- 10.1 There are currently ten housing related support funded services developed specifically for single homeless people with support needs, delivered by 8 organisations providing 495 places at an annual cost of approximately £2.2m. Of these, three are direct access hostels where the length of stay is very short.

Borough/District Area	Annual Cost (£)
Guildford	1,009,390
Waverley	301,896
Spelthorne	283,442
Mole Valley	198,830
Elmbridge	190,101
Woking	117,508
Runnymede	53,395
Tandridge	33,549
Epsom & Ewell	23,140
Reigate and Banstead	17,355
Surrey Heath	9,248
Total	2,237,854

- 10.2 There are four women’s refuge services for women and children fleeing or at risk of domestic abuse, providing 29 places through three providers at an annual cost of approximately £341k. In addition to this a contribution of £90k is made to the Surrey Community Safety unit who together with the Police, borough and districts, Children’s Services and the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Office fund the Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach service.
- 10.3 There are three generic visiting support services geographically spread across the County providing 360 places delivered by three organisations at an annual cost of approximately £841k. They report that 60% of the referrals have a low level mental health issue usually treated at primary care level. The problems are linked to low income, debt and welfare rights issues. The generic services have a high annual capacity above their nominal contractual level as interventions are short term and demand constant. They have

achieved a good level of success in assisting people to both obtain and maintain their tenancies thus avoiding homelessness.

- 10.4 Current providers of these services have confirmed that demand for their services is consistently high to the point of 100% occupancy and that the complexity of the needs of the users of these services is increasing.

11. Planned Additional Provision

- 11.1 Elmbridge Borough Council have recently submitted a proposal for investment in services providing support to people who are either homeless and / or rough sleeping or who have mental health problems. There is a mismatch of supply and demand for services catering for this client group within Elmbridge and limited ability for other services in Surrey to accept referrals from elsewhere in the county. The night shelters in Guildford, Woking and Leatherhead all report regular approaches for help originating from North Surrey, but each give priority to those with a local connection and opportunities to help those from Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne are limited.
- 11.2 From April 2015, SCC have committed £50k of housing related support funding to enable greater local provision to help overcome these problems and help the clients concerned to remain linked into local support networks which should ultimately assist in terms of re-settlement. It is hoped that greater local provision will avoid the need for the winter shelter next year.

Conclusions:

12. There is little doubt that without these homelessness prevention services there would be a rapid increase in rough sleeping, aggressive street begging and an increased threat to community safety in Surrey.
- 12.1 The Council fully recognises the value of these services and is committed to working with our colleagues in the borough and districts to prevent homelessness, preserve community safety and prevent the need for expenditure on high cost interventions.

Recommendations:

13. It is recommended that the Committee:
- a) Endorse the current approach to housing related support for single homeless people in Surrey.
 - b) Propose that the Health and Wellbeing Board consider including homelessness in their priorities when their current strategy is reviewed, to support working across agencies on this issue, and ensure the alignment of commissioning strategies.

c) Propose that the Housing Related Support Programme develop links with the Surrey Family Support Programme to explore potential areas of joint work.

Next steps:

14. The borough councils of Elmbridge, Guildford, Runnymede, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Waverley and Woking have formed an alliance (SHAWS) which aims to end rough sleeping in west Surrey and further develop the services available for single homeless clients. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have awarded SHAWS a pot of money to support these aims. This is really positive news and will enable plans to build on existing services.

14.1 There is a similar partnership, also funded through this grant, in the four districts in the east of the county. The East Surrey Outreach Service (e.S.O.S.) is managed by Stonham, part of the Home Group, and is commissioned by the district councils of Mole Valley and Tandridge and the borough councils of Epsom and Ewell and Reigate and Banstead. The aim of the service is to reduce homelessness and provide support and guidance to entrenched rough sleepers with complex needs, as well as those who might be facing homelessness for the first time.

14.2 In addition, the Homes and Community Agency has confirmed that homeless people will benefit from a new £55 million fund to upgrade existing accommodation and provide new housing. The fund is now open for bids, and will be used over the next 2 years. The money will be used for 2 types of projects:

- ‘The Homeless Change’ project will provide upgraded hostel accommodation to improve physical and mental health outcomes for rough sleepers and to help reduce A&E attendances.
- ‘The Platform for Life’ project will create new low-rent shared accommodation for young people who want to work, but are struggling to hold down a job or attend college because of a lack of stable housing.

14.3 SCC is currently in liaison with two of the larger providers of housing related support looking at potential opportunities for expansion of some of their services using this funding. Where possible, given the constraints of public funding, Adult Social Care will continue to work with housing authorities and service providers to explore future developments particularly in areas of the county where single homeless provision is low or absent.

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Sources/background papers:

- Capgemini for Communities and Local Government, 'Research into the Financial Benefits of the Supporting People Programme, 2009'(1)
- Homeless Link 'The unhealthy state of homelessness: Health audit results 2014'(2)
- St Mungo's Broadway "Homeless Health Matters: the case for change, October 2014"
- West Surrey Homelessness News, Issue 1, March 2015