Supporting People

induction pack
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Dear Colleague

The Supporting People Programme was inspected by the Audit Commission in September 2007. The outcome of the inspection was “good with promising prospects”. The Audit Commission made some recommendations in relation to the programme which the Commissioning Body for the programme has been project managing. One of these was to improve the performance management and governance of the programme by ensuring that all members of the governance bodies are provided with comprehensive guidance and induction.

As a result of the above it has been agreed that induction packs should be provided for all new members of the Core Strategy Development Group and Commissioning Body. The Commissioning Body was also anxious that other elected members who may well have an interest in the programme should also be included. Therefore induction packs will be made available to all elected members within the Kent area via a link to the Supporting People website and elected members will be advised of this. The other recommendation made was that the Head of Supporting People should be available to provide an induction and overview session over and above the contents of the packs to elected members on an annual basis.

I sincerely hope that the induction pack will enable elected members to feel that the programme is much more open and transparent following their reading of the pack. Should anyone have any comments or queries about the induction pack Melanie Anthony will be happy to hear (melanie.anthony@kent.gov.uk, 01622 694937).

Yours sincerely

Graham Gibbens
Chair, Supporting People in Kent Commissioning Body
Cabinet Member For Adult Social Services
A Programme of Partnership

Supporting People induction pack
What is the Supporting People Programme?

Supporting People is the Government’s long-term policy to enable local authorities to plan, commission and provide housing-related support services, like homeless hostels, women’s refuges and sheltered housing, with a view to helping vulnerable people live independently.

The programme began in 2003 and brought together funding streams from a wide variety of sources including health, probation, housing benefit and social services into one central pot. Nationally the programme cost £1.72 billion for 2005 - 2006. The programme aims to deliver high quality and strategically planned housing-related support services which are cost effective and reliable, and which complement existing care services.

The purpose of this support is to prevent the problems that can cause vulnerable people to become homeless, build up debts or rent arrears, need hospital treatment or move into care, and to help them to have a better quality of life; independent in their community.

Nationally the programme is funded and monitored by the Communities and Local Government (CLG) department who pass this money to administering authorities. In Kent the county council is responsible for administering just over £32 million for Supporting People services.

The programme is much more than a county council activity – it is a working partnership, made up of representatives from the Kent Primary Care Trusts, Kent Probation, the 12 district and borough councils, and the support agencies who provide and rely upon housing-related support for vulnerable people.
Who is the programme for and what support can it deliver?

The programme aims to help a wide range of vulnerable adults, many of whom are not traditional users of statutory social services.

They include:

- Homeless people who need support or people who are at risk of losing their home
- People with physical, sensory or learning disabilities
- People with mental health problems
- People who misuse drugs or alcohol
- Young people at risk or who are leaving care
- Ex-offenders, people leaving prison or people at risk of offending
- Refugees who have been given leave to stay in the country
- Women or men fleeing domestic abuse
- Teenage parents
- People living with HIV/AIDS
- Travellers and Gypsies
- Older people with support needs
- Mentally disordered offenders
- Rough sleepers

Housing related support can help people with many housing related matters, including:

- Managing debts, budgeting and applying for benefits
- Getting on with neighbours
- Setting up home and resettlement support
- Understanding tenancy agreements
- Dealing with other agencies, such as health and advice services
- Staying safe at home
- Life and social skills
- Taking up daytime activities, training and employment in a community

The programme cannot help with:

- Personal care, like washing and dressing
- Healthcare or administering medication
- Specialist counseling or treatment
- Property maintenance or removals
The Supporting People programme aims to help to reduce homelessness, offending and reoffending, anti-social behaviour and admission to hospital or nursing care. It can also help people to be more in control of their lives, their finances and their future. The best people to tell us about what the programme can deliver are the people who have used them.

“Before I came to the refuge I had a horrible life. I was living in a shared house run by a homeless shelter. I had split up with the father of my baby but he kept coming round and threatening to kidnap [my daughter]. He wouldn't leave me alone and he did get physically abusive a couple of times, [and] the abuse I suffered was also psychological.

I had never been as happy as when I was offered a place in refuge. I have been able to get on with my life without feeling suffocated, but I know people are looking after us as well. Since we’ve been here my daughter has changed. She used to be difficult to look after, constantly crying. Now she is a happy baby, sleeping through the night and very content.

I now have a new flat to move to and I am ecstatic! I’m really happy to finally have a place on my own. If I hadn’t been offered a place in refuge, I would have lost everything.”

K. (Former resident of women’s refuge)

“I had been homeless for many months. I knew very little about the world and how it worked. I spent many months on the street, relying on friends to put me up on the sofa and only eating when they were kind enough to offer me food. I had no income and had no idea that I was entitled to benefits or how to claim it. A support worker arranged for me to have an interview at the Project.

I felt a bit worried about living in a large place, but soon settled in. It was great to have my own bed and even better to have my own room. I met other lads from different backgrounds and have made many friends. This has given me confidence that I was lacking when I arrived.

The staff were very helpful from the start. Firstly helping me with food parcels so that I could eat, until I was helped in claiming my entitlements for benefits. I was given a key worker who I was able to confide in with my problems, both past and present. He also encouraged me on a regular basis to start thinking of my future and helped me onto a course in music. I hope that if I get the right grade I can apply for a place at university. I feel that the project has helped me mature and to feel optimistic for my future”

M. (Resident of homeless hostel)
The Supporting People grant is paid to administering authorities like Kent, under certain rules or conditions. These grant conditions state that the money may be spent on “welfare services” but stops short of defining exactly what these are.

As an Excellent Authority, Kent County Council and the Commissioning Body that governs the programme in Kent has voluntarily adopted the guidance that is issued with the grant conditions. The grant is spent on welfare services that:

- Focus on housing related support
- Are provided on the basis of vulnerability
- Are part of a planned package of support
- Are provided to people who are over 16
- Exclude statutory services
- Exclude personal, health or social care

Kent’s eligibility policy was last agreed in 2007. It is regularly reviewed by the programme’s governing bodies to make sure that Supporting People in Kent can continue to meet its grant conditions and fund services that are relevant, value for money and of good quality.
What Supporting People services are there in Kent?

In Kent we provide assistance in four main ways:

**Accommodation-based services**
These 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 the service user has to live at a certain address to receive the support.

**Floating Support**
This free service provides support for short periods of time from a few weeks up to two years. When the service is no longer needed, it “floats” away to the next person in need. Floating Support can help people in any kind of housing; it doesn’t matter whether they are tenants, living in temporary housing or homeowners. Support can be given to single people, couples or those who are part of a family group. Outreach or resettlement services are also delivered in this way, for example, to people who are homeless and living on the street.

**Home Improvement Agencies**
These are ‘not for profit’ organisations. Home Improvement Agencies’ main purpose is to assist vulnerable homeowners or private sector tenants, who are older, disabled or on a low income to remain in their own home by carrying out necessary repairs, maintenance work or adapting their property. These services aim to ensure that the home is safe, secure and warm.

**Community Alarms**
Community alarms provide a round-the-clock monitoring service. It helps older people, or those with disabilities who need assistance because of a fall, or some other emergency. When the alarm unit is activated it sends a signal to a specialist centre where equipment automatically identifies the location of the call. Trained operators are able to talk to the user, and can check if the emergency services need to be alerted.
As you might expect with such a broad strategic programme, there is a great deal for members to be interested in. From reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, to preventing homelessness and improving life chances, the programme has a wealth of opportunity to offer the people of Kent and has enjoyed the interest and support of elected members from parishes, districts and county since inception.

District and borough councillors have a crucial role to play in the Commissioning Body. They make decisions about the direction of Supporting People and ensure that the programme truly reflects local needs and issues.

In addition to involvement in the governance of the programme, members are kept abreast of Supporting People issues with regular newsletters and any press releases made about developments in the programme. The Head of Supporting People also provides ad hoc briefing sessions on request.

Twice a year, the Head of Supporting People reports to the county council’s Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee to provide an update on progress and performance within the programme.

The team also report to any of the time-limited county select committees that are appointed such as the Alcohol Misuse Select Committee. Decisions taken within the programme may be subject to closer examination by the County Council’s Cabinet Scrutiny Committee. In previous years the Supporting People annual business plan has been examined by this committee.
The partnerships in the programme are reflected in its governance arrangements.

**Commissioning Body**

The Supporting People Commissioning Body meets every quarter and makes decisions about the implementation and operation of the programme in Kent by consensus, according to its memorandum of understanding. Its key roles are to:

- approve the Supporting People strategy
- monitor the work of the Supporting People Core Strategy Development Group and the Administering Authority
- ensure that effective scrutiny of decisions takes place
- guide the work of the Supporting People team

The Commissioning Body is made up of elected members and senior officers from each of the twelve district and borough councils, Kent Probation, West Kent Primary Care Trust, Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust, Kent Adult Social Services and other directorates within the county council that are relevant to the programme, such as Children, Families, and Education. Minutes, papers and meeting dates are available on the Kent County Council website. http://www.kent.gov.uk/committees/supporting-people-commissioning-body

**Core Strategy Development Group**

The Core Strategy Development Group (CSDG) is an officer group that supports the Commissioning Body. It is responsible for ensuring the progress of the Supporting People programme and responding to the Commissioning Body’s directions for developing the Supporting People Five-Year strategy. The group has terms of reference to guide and steer the content of the strategy through:

- analysing information and making recommendations
- bringing information and expertise about particular service areas/service user groups
- making sure there are strong working links to related strategic agendas

The Core Strategy Development Group meets on a quarterly basis and is made up of a wide membership of stakeholder organisations, including provider representation.
What are the priorities of the Supporting People programme in Kent?

The programme has a Five-Year Strategy, 2005-2010, which sets out the priorities and targets for that period. You can find a copy of the strategy and targets at www.kent.gov.uk/supportingpeople. Many of the targets set have already been achieved, including:

- Establish effectively run governance bodies
- Strong partnership working, for example in agreed countywide protocols for vulnerable young people, people with mental health problems, offenders and vulnerable families with dependent children
- Improved service user involvement in the programme
- Agreed Eligibility and Reconnection Policies
- Strategic reviews of older persons services, floating support services and short-term accommodation-based services
- Needs identified and new services commissioned, including specialist services
- Delivery of services within the grant, effective financial monitoring, and value for money and benchmarking exercises carried out
- Regular performance reporting to the governance bodies, including data on the alignment of the programme with the Local Area Agreement
- All services reviewed by April 2007 and issuing of steady state contracts
- Improvements in the quality of services
- Regular promotion of the programme through a wide range of media

The targets for the remainder of the strategy period are:

- Implement the recommendations of the Audit Commission
- Implement the transition of the programme funding into the area-based grant
- Continue to implement the outcomes of the strategic reviews of short-term accommodation-based services and older persons services
- Incorporate the National Supporting People Strategy into the Kent Programme
- Plan for the next Five Year Strategy 2010-15
What local partners have an interest in the Supporting People programme?

Because of its broad scope the programme is of interest to a wide range of partner agencies.

**Crime Reduction Partnerships, Police and Probation**
As well as generic services that assist people to comply with their tenancies, services that reduce crime and anti-social behaviour such as those for ex-offenders, people fleeing domestic violence and substance misuse problems are all of interest to our colleagues in these services.

**Health**
Services for teenage parents, people with HIV/AIDS, people with mental health problems and those for older people such as home improvement agencies (HIAs) and community alarm services are among those keenly advocated by midwives, district nurses and hospital staff. Its contribution to the prevention of admission and assistance with successful discharge is recognised.

**Children, Families and Education**
Services for those fleeing domestic violence, with mental health problems, learning disabilities and services for teenage parents are among those of particular priority to colleagues with an interest in safeguarding children. Generic services can contribute to stabilising the home environment by improving economic wellbeing, reducing anti-social behaviour and preventing the negative impact of homelessness.

**Local Authority housing, Private/Registered Social Landlords**
Prevention of homelessness and repeat homelessness is a key objective of the programme and a shared objective with colleagues in the housing profession. By tackling debt, promoting tenancy compliance and offering services that enable people to remain in their own homes, the programme can assist.

**Adult Social Services**
By complementing social and personal care supplied by social services, housing-related support services such as community alarms, sheltered housing and HIAs can help older people maintain their independence. Alongside this, services for those with learning disabilities and mental health problems can help them achieve independence for the first time.
How does the programme contribute to the Local Area Agreement?

With such a wide range of client groups and partner agencies, it’s no surprise that the programme contributes and underpins many National Indicators, including the 35 in the Local Area Agreement. The programme in Kent has an excellent track record of contributing to the Local Area Agreement, having exceeded its target in previous years.

Here are some of the targets the programme assists, organised into the themes of the Kent Agreement.

**Economic success**
- **NI 163** Proportion of population aged 19-64 for males and 19-59 for females, qualified to at least Level 2 or higher
- **NI 152** Working age people on out of work benefits

**Learning for everyone**
- **NI 161** Learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy
- **NI 162** Learners achieving an Entry Level 3 qualification in numeracy
- **NI 117** 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)

**Improved Health, Care and Wellbeing**
- **NI 39** Rate of Hospital Admissions per 100,000 for Alcohol Related Harm
- **NI 125** Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation/intermediate care

**Stronger and Safer Communities**
- **NI 21** Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police
- **NI 32** Repeat incidents of domestic abuse
- **NI 3** Civic participation in the local area

**Enjoying Life**
- **NI 8** Adult participation in sport and active recreation
- **NI 110** Young people’s participation in positive activities

**High Quality Homes**
- **NI 141** Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living*

* National Indicator 141 is specific to Supporting People and is included in the agreement.

You can find out more about the Kent Agreement at www.kentpartnership.org.uk
How is the performance of the programme monitored and managed?

To make sure that the programme is delivering its strategic objectives, there are a number of ways its performance is managed and monitored.

**Workbook returns**
Provider make performance returns to the Supporting People team in quarterly workbooks. The workbooks give information on performance indicators, for example how full the service has been, how many people have used it and how many have achieved independence or moved on in a planned way. The Supporting People team then report this information to the CLG. In turn the CLG compare what is being achieved in Kent with other Administering Authorities, regionally and nationally. Two of the indicators in the workbooks form part of the National Indicator Set for Local Government. One of these is included in the latest Local Area Agreement (LAA2) for Kent.

**Quality Monitoring**
Services are visited by Monitoring and Review Officers to test the quality of the service being offered and to ensure that the contract providers have with Supporting People is being upheld. They are measured against the Quality Assessment Framework – a tool devised by CLG. The visits include consultation with people who are currently using the service, to find out now they feel about the quality of the service they receive.

**Outcomes Framework**
The National Outcomes framework was implemented by the CLG in the Summer of 2007. It places an emphasis on providers to report on the effectiveness of their intervention with service users. The returns are collated and published by the Centre for Housing Research in St Andrews on behalf of the CLG.

The Supporting People governing bodies in Kent use these indicators to discuss the performance of the programme in every quarterly meeting and decide if any further action is needed.

Progress on the LAA2 target is also reported to partners such as Kent Housing Group.
With services for 21 diverse client groups, the Supporting People programme is relevant to a wide range of national and regional bodies.

Supporting People service users include, for instance, individuals and families who are homeless. The programme links into national and regional bodies who are interested in housing provision e.g. the Housing Corporation, the Regional Housing and Planning Board, and the Regional Housing Forum.

The Communities and Local Government (CLG) department grant-fund the programme, and the programme delivers on some of their key national themes. The team provide performance management information in order that CLG can monitor how well the programme in Kent is delivering.

Supporting People also provides services to people who are of interest to the Department of Health, and delivers on their agendas e.g. mental health, learning disability, people with a physical disability and older people.

The programme is involved with offenders, young offenders, and substance misusers. There is also a strong link nationally with the Ministry of Justice, and more locally the Kent Probation Service and Prison service. There is common interest in offenders, and mentally disordered offenders.

In Kent Supporting People works closely with regional bodies that are relevant to the programme. It has connections to the lead officers group consisting of all the Heads of Supporting People in the South East, and a cross authority group of other local authorities (Kent, Medway, Surrey, and West and East Sussex).

There are other regional and national bodies that Kent Adult Social Services has a relationship with that are also relevant e.g. the Association of Directors of Social Services.

The programme is also subject to inspection, so is mindful of current Audit Commission thinking, and those of other inspection bodies.
What is the Supporting People team and what does it do?

The Supporting People team is part of the County Council’s Adult Social Services Directorate. The team is responsible for running the programme according to the direction given by the Commissioning Body.

The team does not run or deliver any housing related support services itself. Instead it has contracts with other organisations including other council departments, voluntary and community sector organizations, registered social landlords and private companies who deliver services to vulnerable people.

Policy and strategy
- make sure that the programme reflects the local and national priorities.
- work closely with stakeholders to make joint plans and policies to ensure that the programme is delivering the services people need now and in the future.

Performance and Review
- gather and analyse performance data from all aspects of the programme to make sure it is delivering what we planned.
- report the information to central government and to the governance bodies in Kent.

Contracting and Finance
- monitor the contracts that the programme holds with providers.
- make payments to providers for their services and commission new services and investigate complaints.
- visit services, inspect for quality, and help providers to improve their services.

Floating Support Referrals
- hold the waiting list for most floating support services in Kent.
- receive and process applications for floating support,
- give assistance and advice to referrers and applicants.

Information and Consultation
We publicise the programme across the county and consult with service users, providers and other organisations about services.
How does Supporting People plan its work?

The programme’s Five-Year strategy sets out the priorities and targets for the years ahead. The strategy is agreed by the governance bodies, who oversee progress in meeting its aims and targets.

To make sure that the strategy is achieved, each year the Supporting People team proposes an annual plan which describes the work that will be undertaken during that year. The plan identifies the components of the Five-Year strategy that will be worked upon during the year, along with any other significant pieces of work that must be carried out, for example the recommendations of the Audit Commission Inspection.

The Core Strategy Development Group and the Commissioning Body agree the annual plan with any amendments they have. They monitor progress against the plan twice a year.

The annual plan informs a workplan that is produced for the governance bodies each year. The workplan enables members of the Core Strategy Development Group and Commissioning Body to have a timetable of decisions to be made that year.

Within the Supporting People Team itself, the annual plan is used to create unit and individual action plans so that each team member is clear who has lead responsibility for coordinating delivery of the component parts of the strategy.
How can people access Supporting People services?

Accommodation-based services

Although most services accept self-referrals, the most common gateway to accommodation-based services is via the local district or borough council. Local assessment panels will agree whether referrals can be made to individual services. The services themselves decide if they are able to provide a service to any one individual. There are some special cases:

- **Direct access hostels**
  As the name implies, these services accept the majority of their referrals from people who use them. They are usually placed quickly or on an emergency basis, where there may not be time to go through the waiting list procedure.

- **Women’s refuges**
  Kent refuges participate in the national scheme whereby women and children who are placed there are seldom from the local area. Access to refuges is coordinated by the provider, in conjunction with the National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247.

Home Improvement Agencies

Referrals for the services of Home Improvement Agencies can be made to Social Services Occupational Therapy Bureau or to the local district/borough council.

Floating Support

The waiting list for access to most floating support services in Kent is held centrally by the Supporting People team. The telephone number is 08458 247 100 or enquiries can be dealt with at floatingsupport@kent.gov.uk

For all services, Kent has developed a local online directory to help people to explore what is available in the area. You can find the local directory on the Kent County Council website at www.kent.gov.uk/supportservices

The Communities and Local Government department has developed a national directory. You can find it at www.spdirectory.org.uk
How does Supporting People involve service users in the programme?

The service user involvement statement sets out Supporting People’s commitment to listening to the views of service users about the services they have received or may do in the future.

The team has taken a number of steps to ensure that this statement is put into practice, which has included:

- Setting up a service user panel to find out their opinions on issues that may affect them – like what new services are needed, or what they think about any new or changed policies that may affect them. The panel meets four times a year.

- Making sure that panel members are rewarded for their time by way of vouchers and reimbursing travel costs for coming to the meetings.

- Holding an annual service user conference. The theme and workshops of the conference are decided by the panel. Over 200 service users attend this conference and the feedback has been encouraging.

- Ensuring that people who use housing related support services are asked what they think about service quality in any contract monitoring visit.

- Employing two former service users to work alongside our monitoring and review officers to interview current service users about service quality.

- Making use of existing service user groups to consult with people regarding their views about the programme and including them in any strategic reviews.

- Recruiting a Service User Involvement and Consultation Officer to be specifically responsible for taking forward our ambitions to include and involve service users in all aspects of the programme.
Every Supporting People service has a contract with the Supporting People team to provide a good housing related service. To make sure that services comply with that contract, they are visited by the team’s Monitoring and Review Officers, who test service quality. This test includes talking to people who currently use the service, to find out what it’s really like. Support providers are encouraged and assisted to find ways to improve the quality of their service for people who use them. Part of that test is to make sure that all Supporting People services have both a complaints and safeguarding procedures and Adult Protection procedures that work if things go wrong.

If you are worried about a Supporting People service, we would recommend that you talk to the provider first if you can and ask to see a copy of their complaints procedure.

If you are still not satisfied then come and talk to us. Where necessary, we are able to investigate complaints and work with users, providers and stakeholders to make improvements.

The team does not have the power to investigate safeguarding concerns itself, though we do record and ensure that they are transferred to safeguarding teams for investigation. If you are worried that a vulnerable adult is being subjected to abuse you should follow the Kent and Medway Adult Protection Protocols immediately. You can find the protocols here http://www.kent.gov.uk/SocialCare/adults-and-older-people/adult-protection

Supporting People produce a leaflet about what to do if you wish to complain about a service that we fund. The leaflet is available to download from our website as well as in hard copy.
Support services in Kent are provided by a wide range of organisations from sole traders and charitable organisations to large registered social landlords. The services they provide are very diverse too, from adult placements and community alarms to homeless hostels and women’s refuges.

It’s important to the programme that the viewpoints and perspectives of these organisations and the people they support are heard and included in shaping the programme.

There are two provider forums, east and west, that give the opportunity for frontline staff to come together and discuss the issues, ideas and dilemmas that they face in the course of their work. It’s also an opportunity to find out the latest news and to give their views on any forthcoming developments. The meetings are held quarterly, each chaired by an elected provider representative. They are attended by local Monitoring and Review Officers from the Supporting People team, who can answer questions or queries and make sure that providers’ concerns are fed back to the wider team.

The Executive Board of Providers is a body of senior officers from provider organisations. They also meet quarterly and focus on strategic matters relating to Supporting People.

The chairs of the east and west forums and of the Executive Board each have a place on the Core Strategy Development Group, one of the governing bodies of the programme in Kent. There is also provision for one other provider representative to be co-opted onto the group if there is a particular issue that requires their skills and expertise.

In addition to their inclusion in the governance structures of the programme, providers have individual opportunities to tell us their views during any strategic review or other consultation events.
As you might expect, every Supporting People-funded service in Kent has a contract which sets out in some detail what both parties can expect from one another. The service specification, which accompanies the contract, gives more precise information about what the service should deliver for the vulnerable people it supports.

The Supporting People team tests the quality of services provided by its contractors against the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF). The framework has been developed by the government and lays down the standards expected in A, B, C and D graded services in five core areas.

- Assessment and Support Planning
- Security, Health and Safety
- Safeguarding and Protection from Abuse
- Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion
- Client Involvement and Empowerment

Provider organisations are expected to deliver services that meet at least with the minimum standard, grade C of the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF). A full copy of the QAF and the standards expected can be found at www.kent.gov.uk/supportingpeople

In addition to providing quality services, providers are expected to supply a number of data returns to either the Supporting People team or to the CLG via the Centre for Housing Research at the University of St Andrews.

These returns include:

- Quarterly performance workbooks
- Outcome returns
- Client record forms
- Client subsidy forms

Finally, all provider organisations undergo a process of accreditation, during which the Supporting People team ensures that the business is sufficiently robust to hold a contact within the programme.
It is important that the Supporting People grant is spent on the best quality services. 

The Supporting People team routinely monitors that services are being used fully, appropriately and are achieving the outcomes for vulnerable people that will promote their independence.

Services are visited by the team's Monitoring and Review Officers. They undertake reality checks to make sure that the service is delivered to at least the minimum standards, and to help providers make their services even better. The officers are accompanied by service user involvement workers. They bring a unique perspective as they have previously used Supporting People services. During the reality check they talk to current users of the service to find out what it's really like. Once visited, services are graded A, B, C or D to denote their achievement and an action plan may be issued and monitored if further improvements are needed.

It's important to the programme that the team and providers do their best to build on that grade. In Kent we have a great track record of improving service quality. We do this by offering incentives, like a competitive advantage to those services that perform well, and giving support and guidance to those who need help.

New ideas and creativity can bring fresh perspectives to services. The programme has funded Innovation and Good Practice Grants to providers to stimulate ideas and new ways of working to improve outcomes for service users. Examples include:

- Nationally accredited training courses for services users
- “How to” packs for providers who wish to include service users in their recruitment processes

Finally, the programme itself is subject to inspection by the Audit Commission to test how well it is delivering its objectives. The programme is measured against Key Lines of Enquiry (KLoE) which are specific to Supporting People. You can find them here:

http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/kloe/downloads/1403supportingpeopleKLOE.doc
There are lots of places to look to find out more about the Supporting People programme and keep up to date with the latest developments.

For a Kent perspective, we would always recommend keeping an eye on our website for the latest news, tendering opportunities, consultations and information locally. You can also find all the forms and protocols you need.

Visit us at www.kent.gov.uk/supportingpeople

We also distribute a quarterly newsletter – look out for your copy or download it from our website. If you’d prefer to talk to someone about issues specific to your district or borough, why not try your local Monitoring and Review Officer? Find their contact details on our website.

For a national picture try the Supporting People website
www.spkweb.org.uk

and the site for Communities and Local Government
www.communities.gov.uk

For information about client record forms or outcomes visit
www.spclientrecord.org.uk

For information about Supporting People inspections by the Audit Commission visit
www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation or Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation based</td>
<td>The housing related support being delivered is linked to specific properties with a service. These properties may include self-contained or shared accommodation. It may also include staff based in an office or a visiting arrangement. Accommodation based services are also known as “Supported Housing”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation</td>
<td>This is a regular assessment of a support provider to check if they are able to provide a good quality Supporting People service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administering Authority (AA) or Administering Local Authority (ALA)</td>
<td>The local authority which receives the Supporting People (SP) grant and administers contracts for the SP services on behalf of the Commissioning Body.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area-Based Grant (ABG)</td>
<td>Area Based Grant is a general grant allocated directly to local authorities as revenue funding to areas. It is allocated according to specific policy criteria rather than general formulae. Local authorities are free to use all of this non-ringfenced funding as they see fit to support the delivery of local, regional and national priorities in their areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit Commission</td>
<td>An independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is used responsibly, economically and effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banding</td>
<td>All floating support applications received onto the central waiting list by the Supporting People team are prioritised or banded according to the needs of the individual who needs support. There are 3 bands A, B and C and they are described in the Floating Support protocols.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Band A | Those individuals who are in highest need of floating support are banded A on the central waiting list. They include those who:  
  - Are under threat of eviction  
  - Experiencing domestic abuse or harassment  
  - Are under 18  
  - Sleeping rough, in their first tenancy, setting up a new dwelling or going to move-on accommodation after a period in an accommodation-based service  
  - Are vulnerable due to having been institutionalised |
| Band B | Those individuals who are in medium need of floating support are banded B on the centralised waiting list. They include those who:  
  - Need help managing finances  
  - Lack parenting skills or life skills |
| Band C | Those individuals who are in lowest need of floating support are banded C on the central waiting list. They include those who:  
  - Need advocacy, advice and assistance with liaison  
  - Are unable to maintain themselves or their property |
<p>| Benchmarking | A comparison of similar services by quality, performance and cost. This is one of the ways of ensuring the quality of services provided in Kent. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation or Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best Value</td>
<td>A duty on local authorities to assess and review the services they provide for local people and improve them by the best means available. This must be done in consultation with the people who use the services and the wider local community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BME</td>
<td>Black and Minority Ethnic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block Contract</td>
<td>The purchase of support services for more than one person, usually before the service is delivered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block Gross Contract</td>
<td>A contract for a support service which is delivered for a short period, i.e. less than two years. Payments are made for a fixed number of service users. Service users are not charged for the support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block Subsidy Contract</td>
<td>A contract for a support service which is usually long-term or permanent e.g. sheltered housing. Grant payments to the provider will vary, depending on how many people receiving the support service qualify for the subsidy at any given time. Providers tell the SP team on a monthly basis who has moved in and out of their service, and the subsidy payment is adjusted accordingly. Some service users may be charged for this service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>The total number of support packages or accommodation with support units deliverable at any one time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice Based Lettings (CBL)</td>
<td>A new system in the allocation of social housing designed to offer more choice and involvement for customers in selecting a new home. Available social rented housing is let by being openly advertised, allowing customers to 'bid' or 'register an interest' in those homes which are advertised widely in the neighbourhood (e.g. in the local newspaper or on a website).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Record Form</td>
<td>Forms used to monitor all new clients who use Supporting People services. The statistics are then collated by The Joint Centre for Scottish Housing Research (JCSHR) and data is used to help SP teams identify needs. Details available at <a href="http://www.spclientrecord.org.uk">www.spclientrecord.org.uk</a> These are completed by providers each time they take on a new client. Details such as previous type of accommodation, client group and ethnicity are recorded so Supporting People teams can monitor who is using the services. No personally identifying details are recorded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioning Body</td>
<td>The group is made up of representatives from all of the partners involved in Supporting People, such as Housing, Social Services, Health (PCT) and Probation. Its role is to strategically direct and scrutinise the programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Monitoring</td>
<td>Contract monitoring is the regular process undertaken by Administering Authorities to ensure that providers comply with the requirements of the contract and are performing effectively. Contract monitoring is an extremely important process as it provides regular information to update authorities’ understanding of the quality and effectiveness of Supporting People services and the Value for Money the programme achieves. In Kent, much of the contract monitoring is conducted by local Monitoring and Review (M &amp; R) Officers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Schedules</td>
<td>These are part of the Supporting People contract and contain details of the services to be provided in the contract and the cost of each service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Strategy Development Group</td>
<td>This multi agency group provide a strategic steer to the programme and report to the Commissioning Body. Membership includes provider representation.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Cross Authority Group (CAG)</td>
<td>Neighbouring AA’s working together to plan and develop policies and services across the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Authority Provision</td>
<td>A service designated by the CLG to provide support for service users originating from another Administering Authority (AA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLG</td>
<td>Department for Communities and Local Government (formerly the ODPM).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Payment</td>
<td>Direct payments are paid to people who have been assessed as needing help from social services, and who would like to arrange and pay for their own care and support services instead of receiving them directly from council commissioned services. A person must be able to give their consent to getting direct payments and manage them, even if they need daily help to do this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV/DA</td>
<td>Domestic Violence/Domestic Abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility Criteria (EC)</td>
<td>A document that sets out what tasks Supporting People money can pay for and those it cannot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Capacity Contracts</td>
<td>A contract under which the units to be paid Supporting People grant are fixed at a number agreeable to both the Provider and the Supporting People team. The number of units relates to housing benefit claimants. The contract changes from a block subsidy model to a block gross model to assist with budget monitoring and budget setting for both the Provider and the Supporting People team. The contract value agreed is subject to review should the amount of units available fall below 10% of the capped amount.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floating Support</td>
<td>This kind of support is &quot;attached&quot; to the person, not the property and can follow a service user if they move to another address. It only lasts for as long as the client needs it and then &quot;floats&quot; away to the next person in need. The service user does not need to live at a certain address to receive the support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floating Support protocols</td>
<td>This countywide agreement describes how the waiting list for floating support will be administered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
<td>The national co-ordinating body for Home Improvements Agencies (HIA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Condition</td>
<td>Produced by CLG, these conditions set out how the money paid to the AA is to be spent and how the programme is to be managed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home improvements Agency (HIA)</td>
<td>An agency which enables vulnerable people to maintain their independence in their chosen home for the foreseeable future. &quot;Vulnerable people&quot; may include older people, people on low incomes, disabled people etc. Their homes would usually be private rented leasehold or owner occupied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Benefit (HB)</td>
<td>A means tested benefit paid to council or private tenants who need help paying their rent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Related Support (HRS)</td>
<td>Support specifically aimed at helping people to establish themselves, or to stay in their own homes. Examples of housing related support include helping people learn to manage their own money, apply for benefits, keep their home secure and access other services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)</td>
<td>The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 combines a number of indicators, chosen to cover a range of economic, social and housing issues, into a single deprivation score for each small area in England. This allows each area to be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation. Together these various Indices make up the Indices of Deprivation 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual budgets</td>
<td>Individual Budgets take the money which Social Services would spend in meeting someone’s care needs and puts the user in control of how that money gets spent. The user’s needs are assessed, advised of the amount of money they are entitled to and enabled to be at the centre of the planning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KASS</td>
<td>Kent Adult Social Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSVT</td>
<td>Large scale voluntary transfers of council housing. This could be to a private company or to a registered social landlord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Agent</td>
<td>A managing agent is an organisation providing housing management services (such as collecting rent) on behalf of another body, often a Registered Social Landlord (RSL). The managing agent may also provide the support services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Directory of Services</td>
<td>A directory of all Supporting People funded services in England which is accessed via the Communities website or at <a href="http://www.spdirectory.org.uk">www.spdirectory.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHF - National Housing Federation</td>
<td>Also known as the Natfed the NHF provides advice and support for not-for-profit housing providers. Their website address is <a href="http://www.housing.org.uk">www.housing.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Care Trusts (PCT)</td>
<td>Primary Care Trusts are responsible for planning and providing healthcare services. In Kent there are 2 PCTs: West Kent, and Eastern and Coastal Kent, both are partners in the SP programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicators (PI's)</td>
<td>Performance statistics submitted to the Supporting People teams by Providers. They are used as part of contracts and monitoring: Key Performance Indicator 1 (KPI1) measures the percentage of people who have maintained independence (KPI2). Key Performance Indicator 2 the number of service users who have moved on in a planned way from temporary living arrangements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement</td>
<td>The process to obtain materials, supplies and contracts, obtaining best value through open and fair competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Assessment Framework (QAF)</td>
<td>Quality assessment framework. Providers self assess their service against national objectives (such as consulting service users on how they want the service to be run). The Supporting People team use the results as part of the benchmarking process with the aim of continually improving the quality of services in Kent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Social Landlord (RSL)</td>
<td>A non profit making voluntary group, generally a housing association, formed to provide affordable housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheme Manager</td>
<td>A scheme manager is the support worker who manages a housing related support service. The term is also used to describe the support worker within a sheltered scheme (may have been termed a ‘warden’ previously).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Review</td>
<td>A service review examines the support provided to see if there is a need for it, if it is good quality support, if it gives value for money and if there needs to be any changes.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Service Users</td>
<td>The term “service users” is used to refer to people who use Supporting People services and also to carers and advocates where applicable. It is important that, in consulting and involving service users, providers also seek the views of carers and advocates where service users may not be able to participate fully.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service User Involvement</td>
<td>The processes and mechanisms by which the AA consults and engages with people who use the service, or who may use the service and ensures that their views are reflected in the programme. It is good practice and a grant condition that providers involve service users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheltered Housing</td>
<td>Housing specifically for older and or disabled people. Includes a block or group of houses with a resident or visiting warden and individual house, bungalow and flats which receive support from a mobile warden or pendant (emergency) alarm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLS</td>
<td>Supporting People Local System. A local authority computer system used to hold service provider, payment and client details for the Supporting People programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERIG</td>
<td>South East Regional Implementation Group. This group comprises the Lead Officers of Supporting People programmes across the region. They meet to consider issues of national and regional policy and liaise with CLG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPkweb</td>
<td>The Supporting People Knowledge website (published by CLG) - this is accessible to all by logging onto <a href="http://www.spkweb.org.uk">www.spkweb.org.uk</a>. The Kweb contains all the guidance and related documents on the Supporting People programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported Housing</td>
<td>These are services that provide both accommodation and support together to enable people to live independently. Examples of supported housing services include women’s refuges, sheltered housing and homeless hostels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td>People or organisations that form part of the SP programme. Stakeholders share or contribute to the aim of the SP programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting People Distribution Formula</td>
<td>A formula developed by the DCLG to decide how much of a Supporting People grant each Administering Authority will be allocated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting People Grant</td>
<td>Money from the government to pay for the housing related support services under the Supporting People programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting People</td>
<td>The programme came into effect on the 1st April 2003 to deliver housing-related support services to vulnerable people through a single funding stream, administered by local authorities according to the needs of people in their area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting People Five Year Strategy 2005-2010</td>
<td>The strategy is a five year plan giving detailed supply and needs mapping information across the county in relation to the various vulnerable client groups that the Supporting People programme supports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Provider</td>
<td>The organisation providing housing related support services paid for by Supporting People. Organisation types include registered social landlords, voluntary sector organisations, local authorities, charities and the private sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Service</td>
<td>A service eligible for funding through Supporting People. This could include advice on maintaining a tenancy, help with filling in forms, help with keeping accommodation safe and secure etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure neutral</td>
<td>Tenure neutral floating support services means that support can be offered to an individual regardless of the sort of housing they live in e.g. private rented, social housing, owner occupied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook</td>
<td>The workbook is completed on a quarterly basis by each service (except community alarms) under contract with the Supporting People team. It is the means by which the Supporting People team gathers Performance Indicator information required by central government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validation Visit</td>
<td>A reality check by a SP Local Monitoring and Review Officer to a support service to establish whether the Provider is achieving the standards they are contracted to deliver. Supporting People team members will also consult with service users, staff and stakeholders to find out their views of the service. The aim of these visits is to work with providers to improve the quality of the services in Kent, and for the findings to feed into strategic decision making.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Links**

The following links may provide further insight into the programme.

- [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)
- [www.spkweb.org.uk](http://www.spkweb.org.uk)
- [www.spdirectory.org.uk/DirectoryServices](http://www.spdirectory.org.uk/DirectoryServices)
- [www.sitra.org.uk](http://www.sitra.org.uk)
- [www.housing.org.uk](http://www.housing.org.uk)
- [www.kent.gov.uk/supportingpeople](http://www.kent.gov.uk/supportingpeople)

**Contact the Kent Supporting People Team** supportingpeopleteam@kent.gov.uk

Please tell us if you think that any other terms or links should be included in this glossary.
This document is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages. Please call 01622 694607 for details.